

# GMB: Swindon Council putting children at risk with cuts



## Council plan to reduce pay and status of key staff in child protection

GMB, the union for social workers is warning Swindon Council that their pay and grading review will cut pay and leave children at risk.

The review, described repeatedly by the union as 'botched' will affect the pay of many front-line staff, including Independent Review Officers (IROs) and Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) from the council's social work department.

These staff deal with child protection and safeguarding and are now in dispute with their employer over this pay cut, which would result in some managers earning less than those working under them.



The 9 affected GMB members have voted unanimously for strike action.

**Andy Newman, GMB Branch Secretary said:**

“It is extraordinary that Swindon Borough Council have reduced the pay and status of the key staff with responsibility for quality assurance in child protection. They are putting children at risk.

“Very senior managers in SBC social work have told GMB of their concerns about child safety and tell us that the Labour Councillors just seem out of their depth.

“While Council leaders try to claim they inherited the problems from the previous administration, senior managers tell us that the wheels came off in September, long after the Labour Councillors took over.

“An inadequate Ofsted report reflected that there were pre-existing problems, but the situation hugely deteriorated after the Labour council leaders, despite warnings from GMB, ploughed ahead with pay cuts.

“There are now three separate industrial disputes involving social workers at Swindon Borough Council.

“The inactivity of council leader, Jim Robbins, is the most extreme lack of leadership since Nero played his fiddle while Rome burned.”

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