

GMB calls on shareholders to block British Gas boss's 'obscene' pay rise



It is difficult to know which is more unbelievable: the size or timing of Iain Conn's pay rise

GMB, the energy union, has written to [Centrica's institutional shareholders](#) asking them to [block chief executive Iain Conn's 44% pay rise](#).

Between them, the organisations hold about 80% of the company's shares.



Earlier this month Centrica, which owns British Gas, announced Mr Conn's was pay was **set to increase to £2.4 million** and praised his "resilience".

The pay rise was confirmed just days after British Gas workers in Leeds and Glasgow were told their sites were under threat of closure as the latest part of a reduction of 4,000 jobs in the company's customer business by 2020, on top of 5,000 job losses since 2015.

And just the day before the rise was announced, 7,000 British Gas workers had voted to accept deep cuts to their retirement pensions in order to support the company return to competitiveness.

In 2018, British Gas lost 742,000 customers; its share price is just above £1 having more than halved under Iain Conn's leadership, whilst profits have fallen massively.

Ahead of Centrica's AGM on May 13, GMB has asked shareholders to block Mr Conn's 'unbelievable' pay rise.



Justin Bowden, GMB National Secretary, said:

"GMB is calling on all Centrica shareholders to reject the frankly staggering proposal to increase Iain Conn's pay.

"Resolution two at the AGM next month includes the proposal to increase Iain Conn's remuneration by 44% - we are calling on shareholders to vote against it.

"GMB has 15,000 members in Centrica, many of whom are themselves shareholders, who are being asked to accept redundancies, cuts to their pensions and a series of largely detrimental changes to their terms and conditions.

"Ordinary Centrica workers are not being offered 4% pay rises, never mind 44%.

66 Centrica boss gets 44% pay rise after 'challenging year' <https://t.co/xhxOVspRkq>

— BBC Business (@BBCBusiness) April 8, 2019

"The resulting loss of confidence since the announcement of Iain Conn's planned rise runs right through the company from top to bottom.



“From call centre staff earning 1/120th of the CEO’s pay, to the very highest levels of management are utterly demoralised by the poor judgement and lack of leadership.

“It is a classic boardroom case of ‘do as I say, not as I do’.

“The company lost 742,000 customers in 2018. Profits have taken a hammering. The share price hovers just above £1. Yet the Centrica Board proposes to reward this litany of failure with a 44% rise for the boss.

“GMB urges shareholders to vote against this obscene pay rise.”

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