

# Strike at British Gas 'unavoidable' as company set Xmas deadline to accept offer or be fired



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Strike action at British Gas in the depths of winter is now “unavoidable” after British Gas signalled it will plough on with its fire and rehire plan, GMB union warned today.

The latest twist comes as the company’s owner Centrica refused last-ditch negotiations and rejected calls to withdraw its threats.

GMB said Centrica must take full responsibility for the disruption that is now unavoidable by this irresponsible confrontation with their own loyal workforce.

Centrica has issued a new deadline of December 23rd for British Gas workers to accept an offer that has been overwhelmingly rejected already or be fired.

This latest Centrica threat comes after a ballot of 7,500 gas and electrical engineers saw 86% vote against an offer from British Gas parent company Centrica that would amount to pay cuts of around 10% on much of the workforce from next year.

GMB members at British Gas are currently voting on industrial action in a ballot on the threat by Centrica CEO Chris O’Shea to fire and rehire the entire workforce.

The industrial action ballot closes on December 17th – with strike action possible anytime from New Year’s Eve.

The use of controversial ‘fire and rehire’ tactics has been roundly condemned across the political spectrum, including by Treasury Minister Steve Barclay and Business Minister Paul Scully, as well as Labour leader Keir Starmer, Scotland First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Wales First Minister Mark Drakeford.



**Justin Bowden, GMB National Secretary said:**

“The company response to the 86% rejection of pay cuts by members in a very high turnout ballot is to set a deadline of 23rd December for them to accept the same offer or be fired.

“This means that strike action in the depths of winter is now unavoidable.

“British Gas must take full responsibility for the disruption that is now unavoidable by this irresponsible confrontation with their own loyal workforce.

“GMB will be meeting with senior representatives in the company to work out what emergency cover can be provided during the strike.”



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