

'Tax Amazon to pay for lockdown' - poll shows public backs levy to fix council budgets



Voters want covid profiteers to fund devastated services

Ahead of local elections, poll shows voters want covid profiteers to fund frontline workers and devastated public services

A windfall tax on companies like Amazon is the most popular way to cover the £2.8 billion cost of lockdown to councils, according to exclusive new figures.



The poll of more than 1,000 adults, conducted by Survation on behalf of GMB, shows a rise in corporation tax is the second most popular way of plugging the financial gap.

 **chart showing the most popular ways of plugging the financial gap**

The Local Government Association **estimates the local authorities** will have lost out on £2.8 billion in income during the pandemic.

The most popular policy for addressing the shortfall was a windfall tax on online delivery companies that have reported higher profits during the pandemic (the top priority for 35%), followed by a general rise in corporation tax (supported by 23%). The least popular policy was a rise in council tax (5%).

The polling emerges as Amazon's main subsidiary **announces record sales of £38 billion** – but paid no corporation tax.

“ The public knows the true value of our frontline workers and are telling politicians to do the right thing by the care workers, nurses, NHS staff, schools staff and local government workers who stood by us all. We need a windfall tax on the covid profiteers to fund our frontline workers and shredded public services.

Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary

Other findings from the poll include:

- Almost half (44%) think average local government salaries are too low and only 11% said they were too high
- Refuse collectors are among the most popular local government occupation among the public (with 78% taking a positive view of refuse workers), following increased visibility throughout the pandemic.

GMB represents hundreds of thousands of workers in the NHS, local government and social care.

Rehana Azam, GMB National Secretary, said:



“Millions of workers put themselves at risk to keep our country afloat during the pandemic, with many of them only entitled to poverty statutory sick pay if they got covid symptoms and had to self-isolate.

“The public knows the true value of our frontline workers and are telling politicians to do the right thing by the care workers, nurses, NHS staff, schools staff and local government workers who stood by us all.

“Amazon is a global giant, exploiting workers and communities across the globe.

“They’re quids in from this pandemic and despite scooping a boat load of cash they still dodge paying their taxes.

“We need a windfall tax on the covid profiteers to fund our frontline workers and shredded public services. Politicians should take heed as the UK goes to the polls.”

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