

GMB union's Political Fund Ballot

Activist Briefing



Political Fund Background

The Political Fund is our union's campaign fund. It allows us to fight for our members not just in the workplace, but also wherever power lies.

Most trade unions have a Political Fund that is separate from other members' contributions. It is a legal requirement that our political work is paid for out of this fund and only those that have opted-in pay for it.

We are asking members to vote **YES** to keep the Political Fund so we can keep campaigning to make work better.

The campaign and how you can help!

We are asking members to vote **YES** to keep the Political Fund – to keep our voice, keep campaigning and keep making work better.

To ensure our members keep their political voice, we need to ensure:

- 📌 As many members as possible understand why we need the Political Fund.
- 📌 That as many members as possible vote **YES** in the ballot to keep our Political Fund.
- 📌 Encourage our members that do not pay into the Political Fund to contribute – it is pennies a month.

As an active GMB member, here are some actions you can take:

- 📌 Familiarise yourself with the reasons the Fund is important to members.
- 📌 Talk to members about the Fund, in conversations, and at your branch meeting or in communications.
- 📌 Distribute leaflets and materials to members.
- 📌 Speak to every member about voting **YES**.
- 📌 Remind members once the ballot papers have been sent to vote **YES** and return their paper as soon as possible. **All members with a vote should have their ballot papers by the 12th October.**



Why do we need a Political Fund?

Decisions that affect our members aren't just taken by employers, they're also taken by governments, from council chambers across the country to our parliaments.

Pay, pensions, working hours and conditions, employment rights, the future of the industries our members work in – these are just some of the issues politicians' shape and decide.

At its most fundamental level, the Political Fund allows us to brief politicians on GMB campaigns, spend money printing materials for political audiences and pay for travel for you, our members, to speak or lobby politicians directly.

What has the Political Fund done for members?

Thanks to GMB's Political Fund, we have been able to:

- 📧 Campaign for changes to the law to protect our members, like our Protect the Protectors campaign which secured stronger penalties for people who assault our emergency workers.
- 📧 Bring our members to speak to politicians directly about their campaigns, like the ambulance workers we brought to Parliament earlier this year.
- 📧 Use politics to put pressure on employers, like making sure ASDA bosses were grilled by MPs on select committees.
- 📧 Fight for important protections for our members during the pandemic, working with other unions to secure furlough and changes to statutory sick pay.
- 📧 Stand against laws that undermine our union's work, like the government's latest anti-strike Bill.

Losing our Political Fund would mean fighting employers with one hand tied behind our backs. Without it, we will be less effective, less influential, and less likely to win the campaigns our members need.



Why do we need a ballot?

In the 1980s laws were introduced that were intended to make it as hard as possible for trade unions to campaign on behalf of their members. This included the need for trade unions to ballot members by post on whether a trade union kept their Political Fund every 10 years.

No other type of organisation has to run a ballot of its membership like this kind – businesses and employers can do as much political as they want without any limitations.

That's why it's important for us to keep the Political Fund, so we can keep campaigning and keep making sure your voices are heard at every level.

What will the ballot paper look like?

We've included a sample image of the ballot paper here.

Please note this is not the actual ballot, just a representation of the appearance. Unfortunately, the wording of the ballot paper is confusing to understand but it is set out in law and cannot be changed.

The key point is that we need members to understand the importance of GMB union having a Political Fund and of voting YES so we can keep campaigning to make work better.

THE RESOLUTION is that the political objects set out in section 72 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (reproduced overleaf) be approved as an object of the Union

Do you vote in favour of the Resolution?

YES

NO



Which members get a ballot?

All GMB members regardless of whether they contribute to the Political Fund will have a vote. So, the ballot is also an opportunity to sign up members that currently do not contribute. If members do not pay into the Political Fund they can opt in at any time they just need to go this in writing.

The fund itself is pennies a month (currently 1p a week or 52p a year) so considering what members contribute and who benefits it is worth it. The more members that contribute the more we can campaign politically to make work better.

Get resources

If you want to get hold of materials for the campaign, please look at our website on www.gmb.org.uk/voteYES or email politics@gmb.org.uk

Contacts

If you have any questions about the Political Fund ballot or what you can do to help, please contact one of your political officers:

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