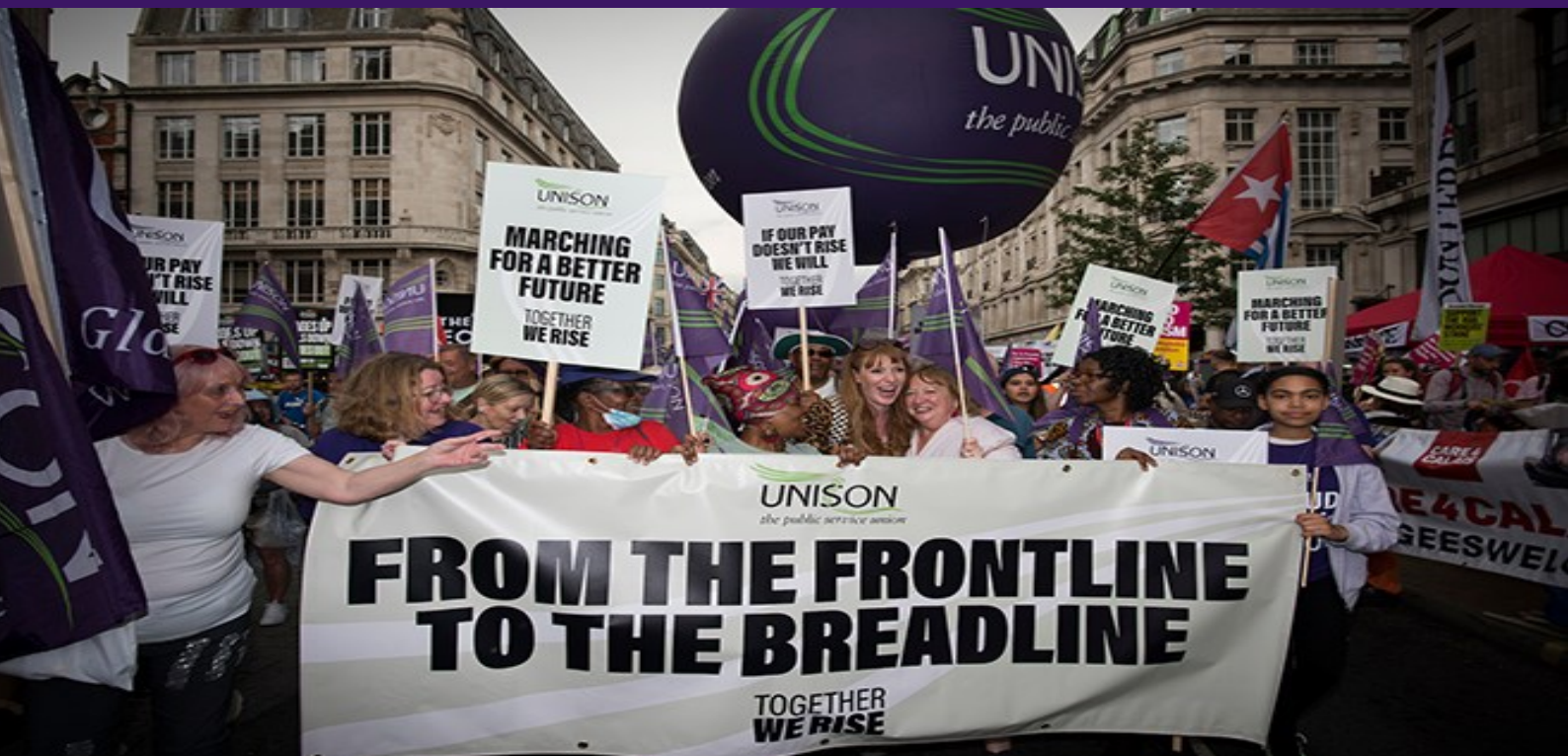


## TUC MARCH AND RALLY, SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2022, LONDON

UNISON Supporting the TUC “BRITAIN NEEDS A PAY RISE” march and rally in London and the ongoing Cost of Living Campaign

### UNISON TAKES TO THE STREETS



[https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2022/06/unison-members-demand-better-on-londons-streets/?utm\\_medium=email&utm](https://www.unison.org.uk/news/article/2022/06/unison-members-demand-better-on-londons-streets/?utm_medium=email&utm)

Thanks to all those who participated in the TUC “We Demand Better” March and Rally in London on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2022. It has been described as the biggest labour movement mobilisation since 2011. After a 12 noon start, marchers were still arriving at Parliament Square when the rally ended at 2.45pm.

UNISON North West were well represented, and a sea of purple and green surrounded the UNISON balloons at the head of the march as the UNISON block was at the front, itself a tribute to the building our union activists achieved.



## **WAGE RESTRAINT? NO! TIME FOR PROFITS RESTRAINT**

Yet we all know, this is the beginning, not the end, of an ongoing struggle. In a week where rail strikes have dominated the media, the workers side of this argument has received more cover than usual. What emerges is a picture of 9% inflation, average wage rises in the private sector of around 7%, albeit influenced by disputes, and a government determined to hold public service workers to 2 or 3%. The very workers who were clapped and lauded during the pandemic are now being made to pay yet again for a crisis, firstly to pay for bailing out the banks, and now to compensate for excessive profits in the oil and gas industry that triggered this inflation. Several speakers at the march echoed the truth that high profits are driving inflation, not wages. The end result is a statistic that public service workers are 4% worse off in real terms than in 2010, whilst others are 4% better off, itself a derisory improvement compared to workers in Europe.

## **KEY WORKERS PAYING FOR THE CRISIS HURTS OUR ECONOMY**

The bias against our public services is at the root of all our economic problems. It was clearly laid bare by James Grundy “red wall” Tory MP for Leigh on this week’s “North West Politics Show”. He didn’t even let the mask slip, he repeatedly said it openly, public sector wages must be contained as the private sector, which he says creates the wealth to fund the public sector, can’t be taxed any more. He even said the private sector and tax payer “propped up” public services. Challenged effectively by Mike Amesbury MP, a UNISON member and supporting Labour MP for Weaver Vale, this line of argument is flawed. Without our public education, NHS, transport network and crucial local services, which have grown over the last half century before 2010, we would be much poorer than we are now. Public services provide the platform for our economy to succeed. Whilst austerity, supposedly to save money leaves every service requiring tens of billions of pounds to fix. We need a balance between public services, manufacturing, food production and other services. We do not have such a balance. For example, if we don’t pay care workers more eventually we can’t provide care as they abandon ship for better paid work. Workers have to give up work to look after relatives. How much does that cost our economy and how will we pay for it?

## **AUSTERITY HAS COST US DEAR. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!**

It is as if each public service were a house where when the crack in the pointing appeared, the Tories said we can’t spend on that. Now we have to repoint the whole wall on all of them. The media have allowed Tories to get away with opposing public spending by asking others, how would you pay for it? Yet they have never asked the Tories how will you pay the higher cost of not investing in essential public services. From the care services, the NHS, education, and also climate change. The cost of inaction will be greater costs down the line.

