



Congress House
Great Russell Street
London WC1B 3LS

Paul Nowak General Secretary
Kate Bell Assistant General Secretary

Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HMT
1 Horse Guards Road
SW1 2HQ

from: Sian Elliott
direct line: 0207 467 1277
email: selliot@tuc.org.uk

1 March 2024

Dear Chancellor

Protect our public services

We are writing to you on behalf of millions of public sector workers.

They are all committed public servants, who just want to get on with their jobs and serve their communities. But they are under intolerable pressure. After 14 years of chronic underfunding the UK's schools, hospitals and local authorities are on their knees.

Everywhere is in crisis. Waiting lists are soaring, classrooms are falling down, courts drowning with huge backlogs, prisons are dangerously overcrowded and councils struggling to provide much beyond even the most basic of services.

At the heart of all these problems is a significant absence of resources and an intensifying recruitment and retention crisis.

Every month experienced and dedicated public servants are quitting in their droves because they are burned out, feel downtrodden and undervalued. Across the NHS and social care alone there are nearly 300,000 unfilled vacancies. And four times as many teachers and headteachers are quitting the job for other careers than was the case in 2010.

This is simply unsustainable. Crumbling public services are having a devastating impact on the country and the economy. People's inability to access crucial services is making the population sicker and forcing many to miss days at work or leave the labour market entirely. This is why it's vital that you provide extra funding for our public services in the Budget. The country cannot afford not to invest in its public services.

Strong services and better living standards are the route to sustainable growth. Prioritising politically-driven tax cuts while decimating services is the wrong choice.

We appeal to you to put country before party and to protect schools, care homes, hospitals and community health services, police and emergency services, our civil service and local government. The health, future prospects and wellbeing of millions depends on it.

Yours sincerely

Paul Nowak, General Secretary, TUC
Christina McAnea, General Secretary, UNISON
Gary Smith, General Secretary, GMB
Sharon Graham, General Secretary, Unite
Daniel Kebede, General Secretary, NEU
Patrick Roach, General Secretary, NASUWT
Paul Whiteman, General Secretary, NAHT
Mike Clancy, General Secretary, Prospect
Fran Heathcote, General Secretary, PCS
Dave Penman, General Secretary, FDA
Matt Wrack, General Secretary, FBU
Steve Gillan, General Secretary, POA
Jane Pritchard, General Secretary and CEO, Royal College of Podiatry
John Cowman, Chief Executive, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Gill Walton CBE, Chief Executive, Royal College of Midwives
Paul Donaldson, General Secretary, HCSA – the hospital doctors' union
Roy Rickhuss CBE, General Secretary, Community
Ian Lawrence, General Secretary, NAPO