

The news that the talks process in Northern Ireland is now, effectively, to be put on hold over the summer comes as no surprise, but it will be greeted with disappointment and concern – Smith

Owen Smith MP, Labour's Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, commenting on the Northern Ireland Secretary's update on political talks, said:

"The news that the talks process in Northern Ireland is now, effectively, to be put on hold over the summer comes as no surprise, but it will be greeted with disappointment and concern. It is never a good idea to have a political vacuum in Northern Ireland, especially through the summer months, and it is regrettable that the Government has not been able to bring about agreement between the parties after more than six months of stasis.

"For some weeks now that the political parties have felt under little pressure to come to a deal and that is why it has been frustrating that the Prime Minister has so steadfastly refused to engage properly in the talks process. I share the Secretary of State's hope that a deal can be done when the parties return in the Autumn, but if that hope is to materialise into a reassembled executive, the Conservative Government will need to engage with greater energy and focus."

Sajid Javid's speech to local councillors at the LGA conference took no responsibility for the Tory-made crisis that local government is currently facing- Gwynne

Andrew

Gwynne MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, commenting on Sajid Javid's speech at the LGA Conference, said:

“Sajid Javid’s speech to local councillors at the LGA conference took no responsibility for the Tory-made crisis that local government is currently facing.

“There was no acknowledgement of the Tories’ 40 per cent cuts to local authorities since 2010, no mention of local government finance reform and still no clarity on the government’s plan for reform of business rates.

“Local government need leadership that will stand up for them and invest in local public services. This Tory Government has continually failed local communities – it is now time for a Labour Government that will stand up for the many not the few.”

Ends

[Yet more division at the top of government- McDonnell](#)

John

McDonnell MP, Labour’s Shadow Chancellor, responding to the Chancellor’s comments on public sector pay, said:

“This represents yet more division at the top of government. The Chancellor’s remarks show that he is more interested in fighting with his fellow Tory cabinet colleagues, than for better incomes for working families in our country.

“The firefighters, police officers, nurses, and ambulance drivers who put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe have been abandoned by a Tory government intent on holding down their pay, while ploughing ahead with tax giveaways to a wealthy few.

“It is now time for this out-of-touch Chancellor and shambolic Government to stand aside. Only a Labour Government will give our public sector workers the pay rise they deserve and end austerity in the national interest.”

Ends

[The shocking findings of this report should serve as a wake-up call to this Government- Lewell-Buck](#)

Emma

Lewell-Buck MP, Shadow Minister for Children and Families, commenting on the Children's Commissioner's report on measuring the number of vulnerable children, said:

"The shocking findings of this report should serve as a wake-up call to this Government who have so far refused to even measure the scale of the problem let alone come up with effective policy solutions.

"From the 800,000 children suffering from mental health difficulties, the 46,000 thought to be in gangs, or the 119,000 homeless or in unstable housing, these figures lay out the startling facts about the lives of vulnerable children who have largely been ignored by this Government.

"The Government should be taking action now to support every child and ensure that they are safe, secure, and have a roof over their head.

"Labour will enshrine the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into law, as we tackle the root causes of vulnerability, such as housing, crime, and poverty, deliver universal infant free school meals to address food poverty and school based counselling in secondary schools to support vulnerable children, as we ensure every child gets the best possible start in life."

Ends

[Report reveals harsh and unfair](#)

reality of Tory pay freeze on hard working public sector workers – McDonnell

John

McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, commenting on the Report to the Office of Manpower

Economics, which shows that growth in public sector pay since 2005 was eradicated by 2015 as a direct result of the Tories' pay freeze, said:

"This a damning report that reveals the harsh and unfair reality of the Tories'

pay freeze on hard working public sector workers. The fact that some of the pillars of our community and the public sector such as teachers, doctors and police officers are seeing their pay cut exposes the double standards of a government that likes to praise their work but will not actually truly reward it.

"It further highlights why it is so vital that we need action immediately from the Government. We cannot continue with more empty words or infighting from members of the Cabinet while those in our public sector, such as nurses, are being forced to rely on food banks to make ends meet.

"Only Labour has a costed plan that would end the public sector pay freeze, and introduce a £10 per hour real living wage, so that we build the high wage, high skill economy of the future. And if the Tories are not prepared to meet this basic test of fairness, then they should step aside and let us lead in the national interest."

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