

# Manufacturing update: wage protection secured



The government's announcement on 20<sup>th</sup> March on the provision of **direct pay protection** to all employees - at a rate of 80%, up to a maximum of £2500 per month, is a major victory for Unites campaign to put people first. The deal will prevent working people falling into abject poverty over the coming weeks and months and ensure that our businesses remain viable through this unprecedented period, ready to ramp up as we come through the coronavirus pandemic.

For weeks now our shop stewards and officers have been protecting members pay and job security with negotiated agreements, while nationally Unite has been working hard to build the industrial and political alliance necessary to protect workers and businesses, to secure pay protection for millions facing growing insecurity as the virus and government advice has led to short time working, lay-off and otherwise viable businesses facing closure.

#### The package includes:

- ⇒ **State protection for workers' wages at 80% of gross pay**, to a maximum £2,500 a month and backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> March. Employers can, and should, top up the 20% to full pay.
- ⇒ **This is a job protection scheme and workers must be kept on payroll while not working to access the scheme.** We are continuing discussions with government to ensure those on short-time or workshare arrangements can access 'wage top up' under the scheme.
- ⇒ Access to **Universal Credit for self-employed workers**
- ⇒ **Interest free loans for businesses** to ensure jobs are protected and companies forced to mothball are ready to ramp up at the end of this crisis.

Negotiating such a deal was never going to be straightforward, many questions will only be answered in coming days as the detail emerges, and **so much remains to be done to genuinely protect the self-employed and those reliant on sick pay or social security.**

We will continue to fight this fight.

- ⇒ The agreement to backdate protection to 1<sup>st</sup> March means that **all those laid off in recent weeks should now be immediately reinstated** and brought under the protection of the scheme. No excuses, no delay, TODAY!

**RIGHT NOW** we have to ensure that both our own employers and those in our supply chains move quickly to ensure workers are protected and businesses supported, providing confidence and security for an increase in hours or return to work at the end of this crisis.

We will produce regular updates for stewards over the coming days and weeks as things progress. In the meantime, stay safe, protect your families and please help those around you.

In solidarity

Steve Turner

**Assistant General Secretary**