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Drivers reject deal to make them the highest paid in the region and opt for a 12-week bus strike

Drivers at Go North East have turned down a landmark offer that would have made them the best-paid bus drivers in the region. Instead, Union members will start a 12-week strike from Saturday, 28 October.

The proposed deal would have increased hourly rates for drivers to £14.15. For drivers working a standard week annual pay would have risen by almost £2,700 yearly, meaning a 10.3% boost to pay. Drivers who chose to work overtime stood to gain over £3,000 per year.

When the deal was initially announced indicative surveys showed driver opinion favoured accepting the deal. However, lobbying by trade union representatives to force a 'no' vote proved successful.

Go North East business director, Ben Maxfield said, "We are baffled. Drivers wanted an above inflation deal, no changes to conditions and top-of-the-market rates. We responded to each and every one of those demands, which makes it hard to understand why the union would press ahead with 12-weeks of industrial action".

"This has become a strike entirely of the union's own making".

Ben Maxfield continued, "Immediately after learning of the ballot outcome, we appealed to the union to reconsider and suspend the strike. Unfortunately, this was met with a flat refusal".

The company's primary concern now is for passengers across the region who face massive and unnecessary disruption to their daily lives as result of Unite's strike. Please rest assured Go North East remain committed to finding a solution as swiftly as possible.

There will be no Go North East buses running during these dates, except contracted School Services. For the latest updates on service disruptions and further information, passengers are advised to visit the company website.

[Go North East website](#)