# Military planners enlisted to assist Birmingham's refuse collection crisis



In Birmingham, England, a significant crisis has unfolded as military planners are enlisted to assist in managing an escalating refuse collection crisis following a month-long strike by waste disposal workers. The strike commenced on March 11, sparked by disputes over pay, and has resulted in thousands of tonnes of rubbish accumulating on the city’s streets, leading to concerns of a public health emergency.

With attempts to tackle the crisis already underway, Birmingham City Council has called for help from neighbouring authorities, further prompting the UK Government to step in. This intervention involves assigning a small number of office-based military planners to provide temporary logistical support to the council. A Government spokesperson clarified, “The Government has already provided a number of staff to support the council with logistics and make sure the response on the ground is swift to address the associated public health risks.”

These military planners will not be dispatched to collect rubbish but rather focus on logistical challenges posed by the crisis, adding another layer of support to existing measures that include additional vehicles and crews from surrounding councils and the opening of household waste centres for Birmingham residents.

The recent developments include comments from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, who urged members of the Unite union to consider an “improved” deal to resolve the industrial action. In contrast, Health Secretary Wes Streeting described the situation as having “escalated way out of hand.” The dispute has further intensified the fraying relationship between the Labour Party and the Unite union, with general secretary Sharon Graham defending the striking workers against what she describes as “constant attacks and briefings.”

Graham highlighted the nature of the conflict, asserting, “It is important to reiterate the truth, as opposed to the lies being peddled in an attempt to distract. This dispute is not about greed or increased pay. This dispute is about workers losing up to £8,000 of their pay – which for some is almost a quarter.” The council, however, contends that only 17 workers will experience a pay reduction and that the actual financial impact is less severe than claimed by the union.

In the wake of these developments, a further ballot will take place on Monday regarding the proposed deal aimed at bringing an end to the strike. The situation remains precarious as both sides navigate the complexities of the dispute amidst the growing concerns over health implications for the community.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.circularonline.co.uk/news/birmingham-bin-strikes-explained-what-is-the-dispute-about/> - This article explains the cause of the Birmingham bin strike as a dispute between Unite the Union and Birmingham City Council over the removal of Waste Recycling and Collection Officer roles, which could lead to pay cuts for workers.
* <https://www.waste360.com/waste-collection-transfer/birmingham-uk-waste-collection-strike-leaves-17-000-tonnes-of-waste-uncollected> - The article highlights the impact of the strike, with over 17,000 tonnes of uncollected waste in Birmingham, and describes the city council's response to the crisis by declaring a major incident.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides information on the overall situation in Birmingham during the refuse collection crisis, including the involvement of military planners and the political tensions involved.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/birmingham-bin-strike-military-planners-logistics-b2327951.html> - This article would discuss the role of military planners in addressing logistical challenges during the Birmingham waste crisis and the broader implications of the strike.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-65232708> - This BBC article likely covers the ongoing strike in Birmingham, providing updates on negotiations and the public health concerns arising from the uncollected waste.