# UB40 backs Birmingham bin workers in ongoing pay strike amid city waste crisis



Members of the Birmingham bin workers’ strike have received vocal support from local band UB40, who have called on the workers and their union to persist in their ongoing pay dispute. The strike has led to significant rubbish accumulation in the city, prompting government and council officials to urge acceptance of what they describe as a “fair and reasonable offer.”

Speaking to Sky News, UB40’s drummer Jimmy Brown expressed strong solidarity with the striking workers. “We’re fully on their side,” he said. “I think they shouldn't give up, they should still be fighting. Working people shouldn't have to take a reduction in their incomes, which is what we're talking about here. We're talking about people being paid less and it seems to me with prices going up, heating, buying food, inflation and rents going up then people need a decent wage to have a half decent life… keep going boys!”

The dispute has sparked action on the picket lines once again, with some bin workers fearing they could lose up to £600 a month if they accept the current terms proposed. Robin Campbell, guitarist for UB40, added his support, stating: “We have total utter support for the bin men and all trade unions. The other side is always going to say they've made a reasonable offer - the point is they're the ones who've messed up, they're the ones who've gone bankrupt, they're the ones now trying to reduce the bin men's wages.”

Lead singer Matt Doyle also addressed the consequences of the strike, acknowledging the difficulties faced by the city amid rising waste levels. “It's a shame that what we're seeing is all the images of rats and rubbish building up, that is going to happen inevitably, but we've just got to keep fighting through that,” he remarked.

The strike has had significant effects on Birmingham, where approximately 22,000 tonnes of rubbish piled up on the streets, leading Birmingham City Council to declare a major incident last month. In response, local government minister Jim McMahon visited the city and highlighted that 85% of the accumulated waste has since been cleared. “We have a plan in place now to make sure it doesn't accumulate going forward,” he said.

Mr McMahon encouraged continued dialogue between the union and local authorities, emphasising the importance of negotiations conducted in “good faith.” He indicated that a deal could be arranged, stating the government felt there was an agreement “that could be marshalled around.” Mr McMahon also acknowledged the efforts of hundreds of workers who had worked “around the clock” to manage the rubbish clearance amid the dispute.

At present, talks between the parties are understood to have been paused, with discussions not expected to resume until the following week. Meanwhile, government and council officials continue to press for a resolution, urging bin workers to accept the proposed pay offer to bring an end to the ongoing disruption.

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

## References

* <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2025/04/15/tuhl-a15.html> - This article provides information about the ongoing strike of Birmingham bin workers, who rejected a council offer that included pay cuts and the elimination of certain roles. It also highlights the workers' determination to continue the strike and the council's efforts to break it.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birmingham_bin_strike> - This Wikipedia entry details the Birmingham bin strike, which began in March 2025 over pay disputes and the elimination of Waste Recycling and Collection Officer roles. It mentions the significant rubbish accumulation and the council's responses to the strike.
* <https://www.unitetheunion.org/news-events/news/2025/april/birmingham-bin-workers-overwhelmingly-reject-partial-offer-from-council> - This news article from Unite the Union reports on the overwhelming rejection by Birmingham bin workers of a council offer that did not protect them from pay cuts of up to £8,000. It reinforces the workers' stance against the proposed terms.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the origin of the article discussing support from UB40 and the ongoing disputes between Birmingham bin workers and their employers, though no specific article link is provided.
* <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/> - While not directly related, this official Birmingham City Council website could provide updates or statements regarding their position on the strike and negotiations with the union.