

# UK TODAY

## Greedy Public Service Bosses

By Hannah Moore

Most of us have had a decade of pay cuts, pay freezes and spending cuts. We have been trying hard to live on lower wages when the cost of living has gone up.

But the bosses who should be working to serve the public – in our hospitals, our universities, our police forces and our councils – have been cashing it in. They have been lining their own pockets and cheating the taxpayer out of millions of pounds.

### What we have uncovered

- The leader of a hospital who is paid £1.26 million a year despite the hospital being in financial trouble.
- Council leaders earning over £400,000 a year whilst at the same time cutting services to local people.
- A council boss who claimed over £2,000 a month for his Porsche.
- University leaders paid in excess of £400,000 a year.

Nursing wages are going down. The pay of NHS nurses will have fallen by 12% by the end of this decade, yet some hospital bosses have given themselves huge pay rises. A shocking number of managers in the NHS are paid more than £100,000 a year. Is it any wonder our health service is in crisis?

And what about our police forces? Police chiefs have complained about the cuts to services but some of them are reported to be on more than £200,000 a year. The starting wage for a recruit is under £20,000.

Some of the most shocking examples come from our university leaders. Even some of those in charge of universities with the poorest results are paid massive salaries.

Pay awards for those who work in public services are supposed to be clear for all to see. Many of the details of these pay deals are hidden in the small print.

### Action

To discover more about inequality in public sector pay, go to [www.hmoore.biz](http://www.hmoore.biz).

## Association of Senior Management (ASM)

### ***Report on 'Risks to Public Sector Management' – Executive Summary***

#### **Introduction**

There have been widespread negative comments in the media about the pay of senior managers in the public sector such as those working in the NHS, police and education. Our research found that there is a great risk that managers in the public sector feel victimised and unrewarded. This is evidenced by a significant increase in the numbers of unfilled public sector vacancies at the highest level. One of the principal reasons is that managerial staff can command much higher wages for the same skills if they work for privately owned companies.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Comparison**

Senior managers in the private sector in the UK can expect to take home a six-figure salary. With bonuses, many earn more than £1 million a year. By comparison, those working in the public sector lag far behind.

Better pay is just one factor. Attractive benefits coupled with differences in cost of living can make a significant difference to the real benefits of a particular job. For example, research shows that a university leader in Australia is not only paid twice as much as his or her British counterpart, but that other benefits, such as health insurance, relocation expenses and extended holidays, make the job even more appealing. Over half of applications for leadership jobs at a top university in Australia were from UK-based applicants.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Choices**

The apparent witch-hunt\* against senior managers in the public sector means society is faced with a stark choice. The first option is to stop paying them for their skills and professionalism and apparently 'save money', which will result in many experienced managers leaving for a life in the private sector or abroad. The other option is we can value these high-flying managers and pay them fairly, to ensure public services in the UK remain in the hands of dedicated professionals.

#### **Summary**

Unless our public sector managers feel valued, research indicates that they will continue to leave the sector altogether.<sup>3</sup> To encourage managers to stay in public jobs in health, education and police, it is recommended that their pay and benefits should be increased to match the level of responsibilities they have.

<sup>1</sup> 'Survey of Management Pay' - Glasgow University Nov 2017

<sup>2</sup> 'Where to work' - International Economist magazine Jan 2018

<sup>3</sup> Annual wage comparisons - Dept for Employment July 2018

\* The term 'witch-hunt' was first used in the Middle Ages when thousands of women were accused of practising witch-craft and were burnt at the stake. Nowadays it is used to describe any campaign against a particular group of people.

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## Forum



### This week's topic is 'Public Sector Pay and Inequality'.

Posted: Today



Ray

I'm a senior manager in a large hospital and I'm paid far less than I could earn at most private companies. And before someone asks, the reason I stay at my job is that I take pride in working for the NHS, helping in some small way to improve the lives of others. You don't get that feeling working for HSBC or Google!

What does concern me, however, is that 33,000 nurses left the NHS last year and recruitment of new staff is almost impossible. The NHS is facing a 15% increase in demand every year. Although I received a reasonable pay rise last year, nurses only received a miserly 1.2% pay increase. You do the maths!

Posted: Today



Cecil

For all those who complain how much some people get paid, I have a message – shut up and pay up. The highest compliment you can pay someone is to be jealous of them.

Posted: Today



Cal

Get rid of the parasites that are milking the system. Who's going to miss a few managers in the NHS? Or a copper sitting in an office? Or some geezer in an ivory tower? We need nurses, lecturers, and bobbies on the beat. Let's get back to reality before it's too late!

Posted: Today



Rahima

I'm a student with a massive debt which will take years to pay back. However, once qualified, I hope to get a job that pays well, possibly with the police or health service. I'm happy to see managers paid a good salary for what they do. It means that I will be able to pay off my student debt, earn a decent salary and pay my taxes so everyone benefits.