1. The pay deal doesn't match inflation

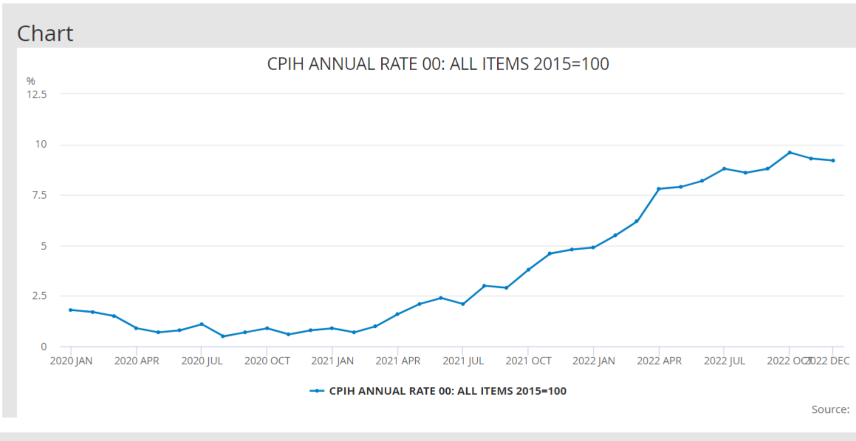
The most frequent comment in rejecting the pay deal was that the offer doesn't meet inflation

This is a difficult question to address.
As a negotiating committee we start talking with the business in October or November and, traditionally we may have looked to inflation in February, with the agreed pay increase being applied in July.

With a need to pull this forward to April, we have looked to the December figure as a guide. Also we either use CPI or CPIH, and not RPI which is often higher but it not widely used (apart from in newspaper headlines!)

In December 2021, CPIH was 4.8%

Title	CPIH ANNUAL RATE 00: ALL ITEMS 2015=100
Unit	%
Release date	18-01-2023
Next release	15 February 2023
2021 OCT	3.8
2021 NOV	4.6
2021 DEC	4.8
2022 JAN	4.9
2022 FEB	5.5
2022 MAR	6.2
2022 APR	7.8
2022 MAY	7.9
2022 JUN	8.2
2022 JUL	8.8
2022 AUG	8.6
2022 SEP	8.8
2022 OCT	9.6
2022 NOV	9.3
2022 DEC	9.2



(Source: ONS)

In 2021 NHBC proposed an increase in the pay bill of around 7% in the first year of a two year proposal, which was well above inflation. While we accept that some members of staff would only receive 4% this was a minority. The pay deal did not go to ballot given the other contractual changes, but all members of staff signed their new contract so this was a 100% acceptance of the new terms.

As a committee we do not know your individual pay, or how the proposed rise will affect individuals. Clearly this is personal data which cannot be shared and even if it were offered to us, we would refuse.

Inflation was not predicted to increase to the level it has. World events overtook us, and energy and food bills have increased, which disproportionately impacts the lower paid.

This year we have started from a basis of high inflation and with a reasonable approach to what is both affordable in the short and long term for the future of the company.

With this in mind, along with the effect of inflation on the poorer sections of the membership, we pushed for a deal which reflects higher percentage increases for the lower paid, alongside a financial minimum known as the ‘underpin’.

It was never going to be the case that we could achieve a 10% rise or more, and you will see that those public sector workers, whose pay has been held at artificially low increases over the last few years through austerity, are unlikely to achieve rises of this level despite extensive industrial action.

The fact that the original offer by the business, as was set out in the ballot communications, was less than we achieved at negotiation.

This highlights the added value of having experienced negotiators operating in a collective bargaining environment and is one of the key benefits of your union membership.

2. Company cars

A second question which was put frequently was on company cars.

These do not form part of the pay deal and are not a contractual entitlement. As we have said many times, the SA cannot negotiate in this area and we have no rights on consultation either.

The cars which were withdrawn was on the basis of the terms of the company car agreement, which was the employee would be using the car for 4000 business miles per year. This is quite a low threshold.

The cars which were withdrawn were not being used for this mileage and, in many cases, had not been used to this level for more than one year.