

PCS Mandating Meeting Agenda

Opening Remarks

Election of Tellers

Emergency motions to R&C Group Conference

1. **That this conference** notes that in response to Parliamentary Questions lodged by Chris Stephens MP, the Chancellor's office confirmed that as of 1st April 2017, there were 339 staff in post in the National Minimum Wage unit, whilst there were 83 vacancies. Conference notes that in the same response, the Chancellor's office praises the government for the work it's doing in enforcing the NMW, despite the fact that campaign groups such as Better Than Zero are highlighting massive abuses of NMW legislation across the country.

Conference also notes that whilst these vacancies (which account for almost 20% of the capacity) exist in such an important area of the department, there is emerging evidence of a much wider staffing crisis within CCG. An MB issued to branches at the beginning of April 2017 has received a high level of response leading to the GEC escalating over 40 cases to Employee Relations and it is believed that over 100 people in Glasgow alone have been given substantive job offers within CCG but have been waiting for a start date for over a year as evidenced by the queries received by the local MP.

The basis of the problem relates to the generic vacancies being advertised within CCG, where candidates apply for a generic job which is subsequently matched to a specific vacancy when one becomes available. Not only is this a questionable way of doing things, but it's caused a specific problem for members in LB, where vacancies within LB only started being matched to the generic trawl after the application & interview phased of the recruitment programme had ended, leaving many members within LB feeling aggrieved that they are unable to apply for these jobs.

Similarly, members on AWP's have been given no assurances that their AWP's will be honoured if they take up jobs they're being offered, complicated by the fact that they're being asked to do full-time training (sometimes for extended periods). In addition to this, members have faced all-too-typical shambolic levels of communications from the department over this and the response to concerns raised by PCS has been lacklustre.

There is also emerging evidence that the shortages in staffing in a number of areas within CCG has led to an unofficial blanket ban on partial retirements and part time working patters, these trends are affecting staff currently in substantive posts and appear widespread.

Conference agrees that CCG's approach to recruitment has been a disaster and condemns the department over this. Conference instructs the GEC to...

- Continue to issue briefings to gather data from members affected by this
- Demand that the department completely rethinks how it approaches recruitment exercises, fully consulting PCS in the process
- Take legal advice to assess the legitimacy of the department refusing to confirm that AWP's will be honoured when members take up new rules, including from an equalities perspective
- Run a highly public & political campaign bringing attention to the disparity between recruitment backlogs in some areas and high-levels of vacancies in others

Motions to R&C Group Conference

1. **Conference acknowledges** that HMRC's drive over the last few years to 'Modernise' staff conditions has led to a plethora of differing Terms and Conditions (T&C's) of employment across HMRC. HMRC have even had the audacity to blame the workforce for demanding

these detrimental changes during Francis Maude's rigged consultation on T&C's several years earlier.

This multi-tiered mess has resulted in people on different levels of pay for doing the same job, and having different annual leave and sick pay entitlements based simply on when they were recruited or promoted. This is exemplified by the mess that is RCDTS, which is a private company wholly owned and run by HMRC where there are overlapping pay scales. Where in the private sector would someone's T&Cs actually get worse because they were moving up the organisation?

Conference calls upon the GEC to campaign to end HMRC's ludicrous policy of reducing T&C's on promotion and to work towards a fair, equitable and workable system of recognition, reward and T&Cs that does away with multi-tier T&Cs. This is to be done on a no detriment basis, harmonising to the best T&C.

In conducting this campaign the GEC is also to seek legal advice as to whether HMRC's current T&Cs are in breach of any legislation that covers those staff that have protected characteristics.

2. **That this conference** notes that HMRC has continued to implement its plans for Building Our Future, with the first wave of office closures and compulsory redundancies having now been issued. Conference also notes that to date there has yet to be any group-wide campaign launched against Building Our Future, nor have we built towards one. This is in part due to the fact that both members' and branches' attitudes towards BoF are at different stages - many feel that they will not be affected by the office closure programme or that office closures are so far in the future that they haven't got to grips with what it means for them. However, this is no excuse for a lack of a group-wide campaign, despite previous conference motions and the fact that members are already losing their jobs

Already, some branches have run excellent campaigns supporting members and saving jobs and the GEC has helped apply political pressure, however this work needs to be stepped up and emulated in every branch across the UK. However we cannot leave branches to fight isolated local campaigns to defend offices and let the employer divide and conquer by shutting down offices one by one. For every office that is closed, our overall strength decreases and only makes fighting the next wave of closures harder. We need the group to take a lead on fighting against BoF both politically and industrially, providing the arguments, resources and support to branches to build a campaign and to organise and recruit. Only through a unified and national campaign can we make the argument for keeping tax local and for investment for a fair and well-resourced HMRC.

Group conference instructs the GEC to launch a campaign following conference with the following demands:

- No to office closures - To maintain local tax presences in our communities
- No compulsory redundancies, transfers or redeployment
- For all exit packages offered to be provided under the original terms & conditions
- For recruitment for additional staff to deliver a well-resourced and fair tax system.

To implement this campaign, conference further instructs the GEC as follows:

- Include a BoF campaign agenda item at each GEC meeting to discuss the wider campaign and what support branches require
- To identify branches or regions where practical support is desired to commence campaigns & distribute campaign packs via the regional hubs as a means of practical assistance
- Monthly updates via circulars to branches
- Produce a publicly available briefing pack setting out the economic arguments against BoF including the impact of on tax collection & customer service
- Use this as a tool to provide a coherent & cohesive educative plan throughout all branches, targeting those branches who believe themselves "least affected" by BoF
- Continue political work with the PCS Parliamentary Group and actively seek to involve branches, reps & members in lobbying political figures

- Tie the campaign for jobs and offices into the regions, including the consultation over Scottish taxation
 - Join up with the DWP group and other groups facing office closures to link up campaigns where possible.
3. **That this conference** notes the discredited & discriminatory Performance Management system has once again delivered results in line with the outcomes shown in previous years. Conference agrees that in line with PCS policy the current system must be brought to an end as quickly as possible.

The statement by the HMRC Chief Executive on the 7th December 2016 confirming the intention to introduce changes to the Performance Management System can be welcomed as an indication that the failings of the current performance management system have at last been recognised by the employer. Conference also welcomes the commitment to engage fully with PCS around the development of the new system.

Conference notes though that the pace of change suggested by the employer is not in line with members' expectations. The minimal changes indicated by the employer for 2017/18 do not go far enough, noting that other civil service employers have moved to make deeper & faster changes to their systems.

Conference instructs the GEC to raise the demand with the employer that the current performance management system must be brought to an end with the aim of introducing an agreed new system by April 2018.

Conference agrees that any new system should meet the criteria determined by PCS policy & be underpinned by a collective agreement with the employer. The terms of the collective agreement if achieved should be subject to membership consultation in the form of a ballot to determine whether the new system is acceptable to members.

Emergency motions to PCS National Conference

1. **That this Conference** recognises and condemns the horrific treatment of the LGBT community based in Russia by its Government and local authorities.

Conference reiterates our commitment to equality and human rights and is appalled at reports emanating from Russia in recent weeks of men being detained, beaten and in some instances murdered in the region of Chechnya based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Conference notes that this escalation is just the latest in a long line of attacks against the Russian LGBT community who have found themselves the victim of fear mongering and oppression whilst being blocked from exercising their human rights, including the right to assemble with numerous Pride marches banned, by Russian authorities.

Conference believes that all individuals should be free to be who they are regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity without fear of persecution or violence within their communities or from those in authority no matter where they are in the world.

Conference calls on the NEC to:

- Call for the Government to take action to ensure that Russia meets its human rights obligations regarding the treatment of its LGBT citizens
- Call on the Home Office to take steps to ensure that those LGBT citizens trying to escape this brutal oppression are supported and offered refuge here in the UK
- Prepare an International LGBT strategy in collaboration with Proud and relevant Groups where members may be based abroad, and,
- Actively support Amnesty International as well as local Russian based LGBT organisations and activists in campaigning against the brutal treatment of Russian LGBT citizens

Motions to PCS National Conference

1. **Conference notes that** the value of average earnings in the civil service has fallen in comparison with inflation by 8%. Conference also notes that PCS research has shown that average earnings in the civil service have fallen behind earnings in the rest of the public sector by 3%. With inflation projected by the Office of Budget Responsibility to rise, and the government's 1% public sector pay cap due to continue until 2019/20, our members face an unprecedented squeeze in the real value of their earnings.

Conference welcomes the launch of our 2017 pay campaign, backed up with expert research, and the action aimed at influencing the Treasury and Cabinet Office to enable departments to negotiate pay settlements above the 1% cap. Conference agrees that the campaign should now involve Group action on pay claims, jointly across Groups where possible, and that civil service wide action should be kept under review.

Conference notes that TUC Congress 2016 carried a PCS motion calling for the TUC to actively support and coordinate strike action across the trade union movement on the pay cap. Conference further notes that discussions with other public sector unions on the possibility of a joint public sector campaign aimed at breaking the pay cap have not been fruitful to date. Conference agrees that these discussions should continue whilst we campaign to the maximum possible extent for increases in our members' pay in the civil service and related areas above the 1% pay cap.

Conference instructs the NEC to:

- Campaign for an end to the pay cap in the civil service and related areas
- Urge groups and national branches to develop campaign plans to involve members at workplace level in pay campaigning during the 2017 pay round
- Co-ordinate the campaigns of groups and national branches in order to maximise the impact of any campaigns or industrial action
- Develop living wage campaigns for members working on low pay in the civil service and on government contracts
- Continue to make the case with the TUC and other public sector unions for joint union action to break the 1% pay cap
- Continue to campaign for national bargaining in the civil service in order to establish a common pay and grading structure and equal pay for work of equal value

2. **The union has** faced financial difficulty over the past 6 years as a result of a reducing potential membership base and attacks on the union specifically.

We have also maintained comparatively low membership sub-rates. However, as the cap remains at 26,001 many of our better paid members pay less of a proportion of their income than our lower paid and part-time members.

With this in mind, conference agrees to instruct the NEC to make the necessary changes to add 3 additional levels to the monthly sub-rates at:

- 26,001 to 28,000;
- 28,001 to 30,000 and
- 31,001 +

The rates for these levels will be congruent to the percentage calculated for the existing bands.

The NEC are instructed to ensure all members affected by this change are notified of the changes as soon as possible and placed on the new rates in good time thereafter.

3. **Conference notes the** result of the EU referendum in June 2016, and that in February 2017 MPs voted overwhelmingly in favour of triggering Brexit negotiations, beginning the two year process of Britain leaving the EU.

Conference notes with concern that the White paper formally setting out the Government's plans for Brexit said nothing about the resources the civil service and related areas would

need to cope with withdrawing from the EU, while ministers remain wedded to spending cuts that would mean tens of thousands of job losses.

Conference notes that following the EU referendum PCS called for cuts and privatisation plans to be put on hold, and that substantial extra resources made available for the work required in implementing Brexit.

Conference rejects the Chancellor of the Exchequer's stated position that the UK could become a low wage, tax haven economy after Brexit.

Conference believes the Labour party and the trade unions must fight for the alternative of investment in the economy and in public services. We believe that there should be protection for working people's employment rights, pay and pensions. And the rights of trade unions in the Brexit process.

Conference is deeply concerned that following the EU referendum there has been a sharp increase in racism, xenophobia and related hate crime.

Congress condemns right wing politicians and media for channelling the injustice felt in many working class communities into blaming migration and migrants for low pay, unemployment, housing shortages and poor public services.

Conference welcomes the publication of the new PCS pamphlet 'Brexit: why we must unite against racism and fight for an alternative to cuts'. Conference believes that a united anti-racism campaign making the positive case for migration and diverse communities, combined with anti-austerity campaigning fighting for decent jobs and public services is vital.

Conference instructs the NEC to:

- Continue to call for a halt to job cuts in the civil service and related areas, and demand that the government engages with trade unions on ensuring sufficient resources are put in place to deliver Brexit in government departments,
- Campaign for an alternative economic policy as part of the Brexit process including ending public spending cuts and privatisation, and the renationalisation of essential public services,
- Campaign for workers employment rights to be guaranteed after Brexit
- Campaign to defend the jobs of EU nationals and their right to remain in the UK now and in the future,
- Step up anti-racist campaigning that:
 - Promotes the benefits of migration and the freedom of movement of workers, including promoting their cultural and economic value to society and the need to provide a refuge from war, persecution and economic crisis:
 - Opposes the exploitation of migrant workers as cheap labour by seeking to organise all workers in trade unions, demanding collective bargaining with employers, and defending all workers' rights,
- Combine anti-racist campaigning with anti-austerity campaigning which demands investment in local and national public services including health, education and housing.

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Note of thanks