

News from the National Executive Committee

Issue 05 2017

Below is a summary of the major decisions of the September meeting of the NEC

Elected by the membership every year, the national executive committee (NEC) is the governing body of PCS, responsible for running your union in line with the policies established by you and other members through national annual conferences and membership ballots.

Mark Serwotka General secretary **Janice Godrich** President

Informed

National Pay ballot

The effect of austerity on the public sector, and the public sector pay cap, emerged as important themes of the general election and have developed and grown in significance in wider public and political debate since. The NEC affirmed its July decision to hold a national consultative ballot of all those members affected by the public sector pay cap. The ballot has two questions: support for scrapping the pay cap and investing in a pay rise; and willingness to take action if the government doesn't meet this demand.

Recently, the government has suggested it may lift the pay cap for certain public sector workers – senior civil servants, police and prison officers in an attempt to divide the trade union movement and workers. The NEC was clear that the pay cap must

be ended for all public sector workers immediately, and money must not come from existing funds, and that more co-ordination was needed from unions on this issue.

The NEC decided on a high profile campaign to promote a yes vote in our consultative ballot of all members covered by the public sector pay cap. As agreed at the July NEC, the ballot will be timed to maximise pressure on the chancellor in advance of the autumn budget and further information will be issued to branches and members, including branch briefings, advice to reps and videos from the general secretary to members. Every branch involved in the ballot will be required to make sure their members are ballot-ready.

The NEC also agreed to support the TUC campaign of action, including the

pay demonstration on October 17, and to pursue further discussions with public sector unions about joint campaign activity in line with our motion to TUC congress (see page 2).

John McDonnell MP

Following the horrific terrorist attack in Manchester which meant that John McDonnell was unable to address Annual Delegate Conference (ADC), the July NEC invited the Shadow Chancellor to the September NEC.

John was welcomed by both the NEC and the TUC delegation, and spoke about the important role PCS played in the development of Labour party policy ahead of the election, and the contribution of this work to their very successful manifesto. John particularly welcomed the local support PCS branches gave to over 90 Labour candidates in the run up to the election, which saw dozens of candidates explicitly supportive of PCS policies elected to parliament.

John expressed his solidarity for our pay campaign and welcomed our consultative ballot of members on breaking the pay cap, restating the Labour party's policy of ending the pay cap for all public sector workers. John also outlined Labour's commitment to investing in public services and restoring trade union rights, including collective bargaining, and pledged to challenge any attempt by the government to use parliament to change redundancy terms and conditions following our CSCS victory in court.

Photo: Mark Campbell



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TUC congress

The NEC decided on PCS attitudes to congress motions from other unions and agreed interventions and allocated speakers from the delegation. Interventions included on civil service resourcing in light of Brexit, on staffing levels at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, on cuts to the EHRC, closing the gender pay gap, and tackling discrimination and low pay experienced by black workers.

PCS motions to congress were decided at the July NEC, focusing on public sector pay and on social security. The first motion on pay calls for a united campaign of activity across the public sector to break the pay cap, including a national demonstration and the coordination of strike action.

The second motion, on social security, calls on the TUC to oppose government plans to close dozens of Jobcentres and support offices, condemns cuts built into Universal Credit and sets out our core principle that social security for every citizen is a fundamental human right.

CSCS

The NEC received an update on our significant victory in the High Court in July. The court has ruled it was unlawful for the previous Tory government to exclude us from talks over its latest cuts to redundancy terms.

We successfully took a judicial review after being excluded from consultation over changes to the civil service compensation scheme – which governs voluntary and compulsory redundancy terms. Civil servants made redundant in the last eight months could now have a claim for compensation after being left thousands of pounds worse off.

The Cabinet Office excluded PCS because we refused to sign up to its outrageous pre-conditions, including significant cuts to members' redundancy entitlement. That would have meant accepting, in advance of the talks, that the terms of the redundancy scheme would be cut by around 30% – a loss of thousands of pounds for some members. In a consultative ballot,

96% of our members voted to reject the employer's offer.

The NEC welcomed the judgement as a major victory for us and all civil servants, and highlighted the value of belonging to a trade union that is prepared to fight back.

The NEC was updated on the campaign, including workplace materials, to promote and inform on the judgement and what the ruling means for members and all civil servants.

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