



Briefing

TO: Branch Secretaries

BB/70/17

8 November 2017

Pay Ballot

A decisive yes vote by tens of thousands of PCS members in our consultative ballot on pay sends a powerful message to the government to act to scrap the 1% public sector pay cap and fund above inflation pay rises.

The ballot, run by the independent Electoral Reform Service and which closed on Monday 6 November, consisted of 2 questions:

1. Do you agree that the pay cap should be scrapped; and that funds should be made available to provide you with an above inflation pay rise?
2. If the government refuse to scrap the pay cap, are you prepared to take part in industrial action?

On the first question 98.9% voted yes, while on the second question 79.2% voted yes. Overall there was a turnout of 48.8%.

The government must act now on pay – and we must keep up the pressure.

Major achievement

This result is a major achievement for PCS.

- We achieved almost 100% rejection of the pay cap
- Just under 80% of participants in the ballot have confirmed that they are prepared to take part in industrial action.
- Almost half of our members have participated in the ballot.

- This is the highest turnout by far in any ballot in the history of PCS, the nearest being the 2004 industrial action ballot for which turnout was 41%.
- We recruited 3,000 new members

The ballot process was a massive structure test to indicate the strength of the opposition to pay restraint amongst our membership. Participation is just shy of the 50% threshold now required as a mandate for industrial action in statutory ballots. We can build from here. This is therefore a fantastic result at this stage in the campaign on public sector pay.

Next steps

We will receive a breakdown of the vote in a couple of weeks in time for our December national executive committee to consider the result and plan the next steps. On considering the analysis, we can start the task of building our union in the context of our key objectives for 2018-2020.

We are now in a position to take our positive message to other public sector unions in the coming weeks and seek to co-ordinate the growing overall opposition to the government's pay policy in the run up to the budget and beyond. PCS will be looking to work with other unions to develop a united campaign across the public sector for fair pay for all. We will propose a united pay strategy at a meeting of the TUC's public sector liaison group.

In the meantime, branches should encourage all members to continue to strengthen the pressure on chancellor Philip Hammond to scrap the cap and fully fund pay rises in the budget on 22 November. Members can use the PCS pay calculator (www.pcs.org.uk/calculator) to see how much they and their families have lost because of the cap. Results can then be emailed to the chancellor. A separate briefing on activity in the lead up to the Budget and the pay calculator will be issued shortly.

Thankyou

We would like to record our thanks to the army of reps and activists across the UK who worked tirelessly to get out the vote, and to the staff and lay leaders that prioritised organising support to workplace activities and phonebanking over 10,000 members.

Mark Serwotka
General Secretary

Janice Godrich
National President