



DWP Group Conference 2022

MOTIONS BOOK

Standing Orders Committee (SOC)
Report No.1 Conference Agenda



Public and Commercial Services Union | pcs.org.uk

Introduction to the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) Report No. 1

Standing Orders Committee (SOC) Report No.1

1. The duties of the SOC are set out in rule 31 of the PCS DWP Rules and Constitution.

2. Categories of Motions

The SOC received **84** motions electronically. Of the motions received **9** have been marked “X”. **40** have been marked “A” **to be debated**. The remaining motions have been allocated “B”, “C”, “D”, or “E” markings as per standing order A34.

- A** Motions for debate, grouped under subject headings.
- B** Motions which confirm existing policy.
- C** Motions which seek to reverse policy as determined by Conference in the past two years.
- D** Motions capable of being dealt with by correspondence with the Group Secretary.
- E** Motions covered by composite motions in Category A.
- X** Motions which are out of order.

3. Duration of Conference

The duration of Conference will be one and a half days and while the SOC do not believe that there will be sufficient time for all motions marked “A” to be debated, we have taken steps in timetabling which we believe will maximise the number of motions considered. We hope that all participants at Conference will cooperate in progressing business as far as possible.

4. References Back

References back of this report, giving details of the branch’s reasons, must be in writing and addressed to the Secretary of the SOC, PCS, 3rd Floor, Town Centre House, The Merrion Centre, Leeds, LS2 8LY, to arrive no later than **noon on Thursday 19th May 2022**.

The SOC will issue details of the references back received to Conference delegates by 4.00pm on Sunday 22nd May 2022. (The Standing Orders relating to references back can be found at standing orders A14-A16, circulated with Group Conference Circular No 3.

5. Emergency Motions

A branch wishing to submit emergency motions for consideration by the SOC must do so online only to the Secretary of the SOC, to arrive no later than **noon on Thursday 19th May 2022**.

6. Representations to SOC

The SOC will be available between 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm in the West Bar of the Brighton Conference Centre to meet with delegates to discuss reference back of this, and further reports, on Sunday 22nd May 2022, **by appointment only**.

7. The guillotine shall, subject to the Presidents discretion, be operated so that when the quota of time fixed by the timetable for any section or sub-section is expended, no matter at what stage the debate may be, the vote shall be taken as if the motion “the vote now be taken” has been carried.

8. We recommend that in order to manage business of Conference the following time limits shall apply:

Movers of motions 4 minutes

Seconders, rights of reply and all other speakers 3 minutes

9. All ballots and card votes conducted at Conference shall be overseen by the Group Scrutineers.

10. Guillotined motions

It is the intention of the SOC to bring some guillotined motions back onto the agenda in a short session prior to the close of Conference. Branches requesting that a motion be included in the “Guillotine Section” should contact the Standing Orders Committee at Conference. A pro-forma will be available for this purpose.

11. The SOC wish to record its thanks to the staff in the Group Office for their hard and demanding work in the preparation of this report and support to the Committee.

Ian Bartholomew

Secretary

John Freeman

Chair

John Livingstone

Sian Thomas

We have given a total of 9 motions an "X" marking for the reasons shown below

X74 (no instruction to GEC)

X75 (no instruction to GEC)

X76 (beyond remit of DWP conference)

X77 (beyond remit of DWP conference)

X78 (no instruction to GEC)

X79 (beyond remit of DWP Conference)

X80 (no instruction to GEC)

X83 (Conference can't instruct a sub committee)

X84 (not printed)

Conference Agenda

Mon, May 23, 08:45 – 09:00	Opening of Conference
Mon, May 23, 09:00 – 09:02	Appointment of Tellers
Mon, May 23, 09:02 – 09:15	Adoption of Standing Orders Reports
Mon, May 23, 09:15 – 09:30	Presentation of Group Report
Mon, May 23, 09:30 – 10:00	Office Closures
Mon, May 23, 10:00 – 10:30	Staffing
Mon, May 23, 10:30 – 11:30	Operations
Mon, May 23, 11:30 – 12:00	Distinguished Life Membership
Mon, May 23, 12:00 – 12:30	Guest Speaker 1
Mon, May 23, 12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH BREAK
Mon, May 23, 13:30 – 14:30	Conditions of Service
Mon, May 23, 14:30 – 15:00	Employee Deal
Mon, May 23, 15:00 – 15:15	BREAK
Mon, May 23, 15:15 – 15:35	Guest Speaker 2
Mon, May 23, 15:35 – 16:00	CMG Issues
Mon, May 23, 16:00 – 16:30	Health and Safety
Tue, May 24, 09:00 – 09:30	Welfare
Tue, May 24, 09:30 – 10:00	Union Organisation
Tue, May 24, 10:00 – 10:30	Employee Relations
Tue, May 24, 10:30 – 11:15	Equality Issues
Tue, May 24, 11:15 – 11:45	Guillotined Motions
Tue, May 24, 11:45 – 12:00	Vote of Thanks & Conference Closure

Motions for Debate (category A)

Office Closures

A1 Office Closures

Covers E41, E42, E43, E44

DWP Glasgow (047066)

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

Office Closures and redundancy avoidance.

Conference notes DWP proceeding with a number of office closures based on the “People and Locations” programme from 2017 and that a number of offices continue to have “transitional” status under those plans.

Conference further notes the concerning way that closures such as the Cosham site as well as the plans for moving members into the new Ty Taff site in Cardiff have been handled.

Conference is concerned at the DWPs attitude toward members and their rights under redundancy avoidance as well as DWPs recalcitrance in considering and implementing viable options to avoid redundancies.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

1. Ensure the DWP is held to all of the redundancy avoidance measures within the Cabinet Office protocols
2. To ensure the Department actively use all of the workforce management guidance, including options of working from home where agreeable by the member, to avoid redundancy
3. To ensure that measures are used as redundancy avoidance not only compulsory redundancy avoidance as seems to be the preference for DWP in some cases
4. To press for the offer of vicinity schemes to members in nearby offices in all cases where redundancy cannot be wholly avoided in order to maximise opportunities for those who wish to remain in DWP to do so
5. To consider action up to and including local and national group-wide strike action should compulsory redundancy be imposed and work with branches to deliver this

Staffing

A2

Covers E45, E46, E47, E48

DWP Durham House (047125)

DWP Wirral (047019)

This conference recognises the work undertaken by the DWP GEC regarding staffing in DWP over a number of years and commends their record on securing permanent contracts for members brought in on FTA contracts, as well as the success in having members employed via the Brook Street recruitment agency transferred into DWP on Direct Temporary Recruitment terms.

Conference recognises that the current staffing levels in DWP across numerous Directorates is woefully inadequate to deliver the services to the public that they are entitled to expect. This has been clearly demonstrated with over a thousand members being transferred into Retirement Services to deal with the State Pension Correction Exercise from other DWP areas such as Universal Credit and Child Maintenance Group, as well as support having to be drafted in from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Northern Irish Department for Communities. None of these are areas of DWP or OGDs who could afford to lose significant numbers of staff in this manner.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. To campaign for DWP to undertake a full root and branch examination of their staffing requirements and to ensure that they are fulfilled at a level which supports high quality public services in DWP
2. To campaign for significant recruitment in DWP to urgently address the current shortages

A3

Covers E49, E50, E51

DWP Sheffield (047008)

DWP South East Wales (047116)

DWP staffing levels have once more begun to slide, with almost 3,000 fewer staff in December 2021 than were employed in August 2021. This is a clear and present danger to the wellbeing of all other DWP staff, whether working in Jobcentres, Service Centres or other offices by virtue of the enormous pressure being heaped on staff to pick up the slack.

In this context, while the permanency granted to many temporary staff is welcome, we must acknowledge that there is still a pressing need to keep those AOs who were not made permanent. We must also campaign for all EO and HEO temporary staff to be made permanent without condition.

Conference asserts that 30,000 additional staff are needed across DWP, with the option for more should the government decide to drastically increase interest rates to reduce inflation which potentially could mean devastating levels of unemployment leading to yet further unacceptable levels of stress on already hard pressed members. DWP has already proved, that recruiting large numbers of staff is not enough. Staffing allocation must be determined on the basis of manageable workloads for all, and jobs offered must be permanent.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC:

- To submit clear, reasoned-through demands on staffing levels for each of the key operational areas overseen by the Department.
- To urgently work with branches and the GEC's advisory committees to identify in each operational area – including Corporate Centre if appropriate – workload safeguards.
- To include within these workload safeguards limits the number of mandatory appointments or telephone calls per day, as well as methods of giving workers control of their day.
- To consult with branches, reps and members on all of the above before submitting final demands to the employer, including by bulletins, mass meetings and rep meetings.

- To work with branches to raise the confidence of members to fight for the additional staff, and to see the benefits that will accrue from this.

Conference asserts that industrial action will be necessary to win this campaign. The question of how to structure and when to launch a ballot is complicated by the on-going national pay campaign, but the two questions can be linked, through the pressure on members either in the workplace or through rising bills at home, and through how DWP is funded to offer permanent jobs or pay rises.

The GEC is therefore instructed to consider at every meeting how and when to launch a ballot on staffing. Conference believes that the ideal scenario is a national ballot on staffing across all branches and operational areas, coordinated with any national ballot on pay. This cannot be set in stone in advance, however, and should not rule out campaigns in specific operational areas.

The GEC is also instructed to regularly bring together branches covering each major operational area to discuss the mood of members, impact of campaigning activities, what further activities are needed to build members' confidence and what the next steps are in the campaign.

Operations

A4

Covers E52, E53, E54, E55, E56, E57

Group Executive Committee ()

DWP Wirral (047019)

Conference condemns the ongoing pressure that Jobcentre staff are experiencing with unacceptable and unachievable demands continuing to be placed upon them. The introduction of mandatory face-to-face appointments from April 2021 has seen Work Coaches being placed under unacceptable pressure with an expectation that they conduct 15-20 ten-minute interviews a day or face disciplinary action. This has resulted in a well-being crisis in Jobcentres with many Work Coaches reporting that they are unable to take breaks. Furthermore, Work Coaches are expected to cover the appointments of their colleagues, in addition to their own. Subsequently, Work Coaches, in many instances, have reported that they are forced to carry out administration work outwith 09:00-17:00 and in many cases at home. This unacceptable treatment has been challenged by Group negotiators at every meeting with senior Universal Credit management since last April. Amazingly, DWP continue to challenge the figures provided by Work Coaches and refute that there is a well-being crisis in the Jobcentre network.

Conference notes that the GEC have conducted two consultative ballots on the issue of Jobcentre safety and since then have surveyed members and encouraged branches to hold members meetings with GEC speakers. There have also been two Facebook Live/Zoom meetings for Jobcentre members, with around 1,200 members attending both. It was clear from both of those meetings that a large number of Work Coaches have had enough and are struggling with the demands placed on them daily. Work Coach empowerment, a concession won because of the first ballot, was quickly reneged on with the introduction of mandatory face-to-face appointments in April 2021. In addition, the fact that Hybrid Working is not available to Jobcentre staff, adds to the pressures they face daily and prevents urgent respite. Conference believes the introduction of the Way to Work campaign will see even more pressure on our members with the real possibility of a large increase in sanctions and Unacceptable Customer Behaviour.

Conference acknowledges that Jobcentre managers have also been placed in an unacceptable situation with many forced to carry out unreasonable demands which create perverse behaviours, with many reporting to the GEC that they have been subjected to bullying.

Conference instructs the incoming GEC to continue to campaign using all means necessary to protect the well-being of Jobcentre members and force DWP to:

- Acknowledge that there is a well-being crisis in the Jobcentres and actively do something to address this and support staff
- Reinstate Work Coach empowerment and reverse the policy of mandatory face-to-face interviews
- Reinstate the quality interventions with claimants and move away from the quantity approach
- Allow Hybrid Working or flexible home working for all Jobcentre staff
- Demand that no Work Coach or Jobcentre member of staff is put in any danger and that the appropriate security is put in place
- Provide all necessary support for Jobcentre managers and an end to the bullying culture.

A5

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes that DWP staff may request an emergency transfer in exceptional circumstances. Existing policy definitions those circumstances as; witness protection, domestic abuse, harassment/bullying from individuals outside of the department, or other exceptional circumstances which make a move imperative.

Final decisions are taken by the independent virtual group Secretariat and by an independent national virtual group, consisting of a Workforce Planning and Resourcing (WPR) team member, a Trade Union member and on

occasions, an HR Business Partner.

The GEC has been made aware of cases involving domestic abuse that have slipped through the net due to a lack of understanding and a failure to identify the signs or impact on survivors. This can cause further serious mental detriment to members.

Conference believes that there must be a greater awareness of domestic violence and the implications for members dealing with the impact built into this process. Conference therefore calls for specialist training on the effects of domestic abuse for all involved, with the aim of improving their understanding, so aiding the decision-making process, and providing the required support for all those seeking transfer.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate specialist training on domestic abuse for all involved in emergency transfer committees
- Monitor the number of domestic abuse emergency transfer cases
- Review the whole process of emergency support offered by DWP for PCS members experiencing domestic abuse

A6

Covers E58, E59

DWP Glasgow (047066)

DWP Durham House (047125)

Conference notes that DWP has undertaken a re-structuring exercise of the DWP complaints teams and that as a result a significant number of members have been moved from the centralised complaints function within CED into the various Directorates whose complaints they work on.

Conference understands that assurances have been given by the Department that the Directorates will not use this as a way to denude the complaints teams of staff levels, knowledge and experience on complaints teams and that they will remain a priority for the Department.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. Ensure that the Department does not renege on its assurances around staffing, knowledge or experience levels
2. To press for recruitment into complaints teams in the various Directorates to ensure that quality is maintained for service users without increasing workloads for members
3. To keep complaints performance under scrutiny and raise any significant impacts on quality or workloads with the Department at an early stage

A7

DWP Highlands, Islands and Grampian (047070)

It is a national disgrace that the use of foodbanks has continued to rise, and more people than ever are in food and fuel poverty. Conference believes that this situation is exacerbated by DWP rules on payment of fares to attend Jobcentres for mandatory appointments.

Current rules state that fares can only be refunded for additional attendance i.e. more than once every two weeks. The only exception to this is where the journey is over one hour in each direction and will result in being away from home for more than four hours.

In urban areas, where Jobcentres are within walking distance or accessible by reasonably priced public transport, the impact on claimant's income may not be significant. However, in rural areas, claimants can find themselves having to spend up to 10% of their benefit just to meet with their work coach.

For example, claimants attending my own Jobcentre from a town 13 miles away have a 45-minute bus journey,

so do not qualify for a refund. The cheapest fare available is £9. To attend our neighbouring Jobcentre, those living just 4 miles away must pay £6 for a ten-minute bus journey. Means tested benefits are paid to those who do not have enough to live on, so the idea that we then ask them to use some of that benefit not for living expenses, but for travel to a Jobcentre, is totally unacceptable. Our members are the ones who have to deliver the message that fares cannot be refunded. Our members have to make it clear that failure to attend appointments can result in sanctions. And our members are then expected to build a supportive relationship and work constructively with claimants who resent having to be there due to cost.

Conference calls on the GEC to take action to ensure no claimant is left financially worse off by attending mandatory appointments in the Jobcentre. The incoming Group Executive Committee is instructed to

- Raise the issue with DWP senior leaders
- Work with our parliamentary group to end this robbery of means tested benefits
- Work with claimant support organisations to raise awareness and encourage them to apply pressure on MP's via all routes available to them.
- Highlight the issue through the TUC.

A8

Covers E60

DWP Durham House (047125)

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes the work undertaken by members working in Retirement Services to address problems with State Pensions under the State Pension Correction Exercise (SPCE) and the millions of pounds already re-paid to Pension claimants who had been underpaid. Members have worked extremely hard to right claims which had been underpaid for what in many cases was years, and even decades.

This work has been very complex and members have had to manage with enormous scrutiny in the media and in Parliament and with a whole new set of circumstances and with guidance and training which had to be built from the ground up on how to correct these cases.

Despite the hard work of members and the large numbers transferred into the SPCE from other parts of DWP along with support from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland it is clear that significant further investment is needed if the target to clear outstanding cases by 2024 is to be achieved.

Members have raised concerns with issues such as training provision, clarity and consistency of instructions and levels of Leadership support due to high TDA levels.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

1. Press for proper resourcing of the SPCE alongside the rest of Retirement Services via permanent recruitment
2. Demand improvements to training and instructions for members working on the SPCE
3. Ensure TDA levels are brought down and that long-term vacancies are filled by substantive members at the appropriate grades

Distinguished Life Membership

A9

Covers E62, E61

DWP Leicestershire (047043)

DWP Birmingham North (047054)

Conference agrees that Chris Willars be awarded Distinguished Life Membership in recognition of his years of hard work and dedication to PCS and its members in DWP, and to the trade union movement.

Conditions of Service

A10

Covers E63, E64, E65, E66, E67, E68

DWP Birmingham South (047053)

DWP Durham House (047125)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay, 5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

Conference recognises that this has put mounting pressure on PCS DWP members that are forced back to work too soon instead of being able to recover free from financial hardship or further sickness. In addition, unscrupulous private companies that are used for outsourced workers such as cleaners and security guards used in DWP suffer inferior sick absence policies with only statutory sick pay for the first period of their absence. This often leaves members working on private contracts with the choice to work whilst ill or being in financial hardship.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

A11

DWP Glasgow (047066)

to staff.

These include generic apprenticeships in Customer Service, Leadership and Management and Business Administration and business specific schemes such as Service Delivery in Work and Health and Service Excellence and those under the general heading of Operational Delivery Profession.

These are offered at various levels and are open to different grades but primarily AO, EO and HEO.

These Apprenticeship schemes are usually supported by a private sector contractor who provide the Talent Coach. Capita, for example, are the parent company behind many of the apprenticeship schemes offered by DWP.

While PCS generally supports the principle that our members should be encouraged and supported to participate in continuous personal and career development and recognises that many members will benefit from the experience of being on such an apprenticeship we firmly believe that such learning, which is in addition to the training required to carry out the job, must be on a voluntary basis and not compulsory.

It is therefore a concern that DWP has again begun advertising full time vacancies with the following condition :

DWP takes development seriously. Our aim is for our colleagues in these roles to be appropriately skilled and qualified – as determined by the business. To support this aim you may be required to undertake a work based qualification, which may be in the form of an apprenticeship, which will support you in further developing your professional knowledge and skills for this role and your future career development. The qualification can be undertaken in work time, you agree to take this job on the basis that you may be required to undertake a work

based qualification; a candidate's failure to participate fully in the professional programme, once appointed, may be a breach of their employment contract.

Many members were recruited in 2018 and 2019 subject to this condition and PCS reps received complaints and objections about the compulsory nature of the apprenticeship requirement and that it was unfair, having been recruited on merit through fair and open competition, that their continuing employment should be subject to this additional condition.

Members also complained about the arbitrary application of this condition as not all new staff were enrolled on an apprenticeship, that the subject material was not relevant to the day job and disputed the assertion that the apprenticeship supported them in their role, the lack of support from provider and continuity of talent coaches, difficulty in getting access to 20% of time, failure to recognise existing skills and experience and the stress of being forced to undertake an apprenticeship which many viewed as a distraction that added little value to their ability to do the day job.

Conference calls on the GEC to

1. Oppose the imposition of a contractual requirement to undertake a work-based qualification in job adverts and to enter into negotiations with DWP to ensure that such work based qualifications and apprenticeships are voluntary rather than compulsory.
2. Support individual members who have reasonable grounds for challenging the imposition of the condition that they participate fully in an apprenticeship scheme and that this is a contractual requirement on which their continuing employment depends.
3. Undertake a survey of branches and members in DWP who are apprentices to seek feedback on their experiences, positive and negative, to identify bargaining issues to improve the apprenticeship offer in DWP and to highlight issues where private sector providers are failing to provide value for money. Report findings to next ADC at the latest.
4. Engage with DWP Learning to seek improvements in the information and guidance available to DWP staff via the Intranet on the Apprenticeship Offer.

A12

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes that the processes for dealing with unfair decisions with the present grievance and appeal decisions have changed over the years, with a distinct disadvantage to employees and union members.

Many branches have suffered problems where the decisions and meetings have been delayed months have not been followed timeframes and policy.

Harassment and bullying complaints are often stopped from being investigated by HR mediation and investigation service. decisions must be shown to be fair, unbiased, independent and do not involve collusion and this can only happen if all harassment and bullying complaints are done by people not involved in the district or management area or chain.

There are often problems with grievance decisions where excuses are made for management behaviour that would not be acceptable if it was being done by non-management employee and shows bias towards management

Grievance and appeal decisions are often done by management who have no proper training in grievance decisions and also have no idea how to write decisions, often missing any rationale in their decision and how they came to the decision

As we are told so often the appeal is the final and end of process and closes the process, whereas in the past there was protection from bad decisions and unfair biased decisions by the civil service board. .

All appeals should be done outside the area or district and by other management who have had no contact with the local management – who are independent and can show this.

Therefore, conference instructs GEC to:

Make sure policy is changed to make sure management keep the times for grievances and if this is not done, without strict reasons the grievance or appeal will be upheld in the employees favour like it is does in court procedures.

Protect our members by getting a panel set up to protect employees from flawed and incorrect, unfair and biased decisions

Ensure that all Grievance and appeal decision makers have proper evidence of qualification and training in proper decision making and equality and have a good record of their decision making

That all decisions must have a proper written rationale in their decision and how they came to the decision, answering all points made in the interview, in submissions and evidence and if this is not done then the decision goes in favour of the member

ensure that in decisions on appeals and grievances, any information or points or facts that are ignored or pushed aside to the get decision that favoured the department, the decision must be changed and the policy changed to recognise this. Points raised in alpha and numerical should be addressed and none of them should be ignored in both grievances and appeals.

change policy and procedure to make sure all harassment and bullying complaints are done by people not involved in the district or management area or chain.

A13

DWP Coventry & Warwicks (047055)

Conference recognises the excellent work done by reps across PCS in representing members in all types of disciplinary cases against a hostile employer. Conference will also be aware of the many difficulties reps face in dealing with often misleading and incorrect advice from the Human Resources department, in particular the Complex Case Advisory Service.

A recent case involved a member being charged with Gross Misconduct for having a piece of departmental I.T equipment (hidden) and stolen from his (locked) car when even a cursory glance at DWP's guidance would show that there was no case to answer. Through the intervention of his PCS representative, the member was absolved of any responsibility and was found not guilty of any misconduct but not before the member had the stressful experience of facing losing his job.

Conference recognises that the role of HR/CCAS is to give advice and not instruction but understands that most Managers put a great deal of emphasis on the advice given them from this source. This is often crucial in determining whether an individual is potentially guilty of misconduct and if so, what the outcome should be.

Conference therefore calls upon the GEC to approach DWP to discuss the role of CCAS and the advice they give to Managers. Where PCS determine that incorrect advice has been given by HR/CCAS there must be an immediate escalation via the Department to raise the issue of the incorrect advice with the individual who gave that advice to ensure ownership and accountability and that there is no detriment to the member.

A14

DWP Fylde Central Benefits & Services (047139)

This conference notes that since the pandemic it has been demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubt that it is possible for members to work from home, and to carry out the vast majority of functions associated with their roles.

Conference notes that there have been many instances where members have applied to work from home, on a permanent basis, only for this to be declined for reasons of not being able to fulfil the entire role whilst working from home. Conference believes that this approach is disingenuous and is being used as a deliberate means to try and stop contractual homeworking requests.

Conference instructs the incoming GEC to open negotiations with the employer about the need for applications to contractually home work to be considered in line with the manner in which people worked from home during the pandemic (when it was accepted in the vast majority of cases that they were working effectively from home).

Conference further instructs the GEC to request statistics on the number of applications to contractually home-work and the numbers that are accepted, the figures to be broken down by Business Unit.

A15

DWP Leeds HQ (047011)

Monitoring of Staff

With the Return to the Workplace and Hybrid Working now in place, we find that some Corporate Centre Directorates are monitoring staff to ascertain whether they are in the workplace 2 days per week or not. One Director is demanding line managers send weekly reports detailing their staff's planned attendance for the following week. Some are also using records of connection to the office wi-fi and LAN servers to monitor that staff are in the office.

This micromanagement is unacceptable and is putting more pressure on staff and line managers. We believe it may also be contravening GDPR.

Conference instructs the GEC to demand this semi-covert monitoring is stopped and enter into negotiations regarding any form of compliance checking for Hybrid Working.

A16

DWP Fylde Central Benefits & Services (047139)

Conference notes that on 9th November 2021, it was announced that DWP Warbreck and DWP Ryscar would close in autumn 2024; and the members would be moved to Talbot Gateway (Blackpool town centre).

Conference further notes that at the time of the announcement there were circa 3100 staff housed at Warbreck and Ryscar. However, Talbot Gateway has capacity for 1400 DWP staff at any given time. The employer has stated that the new building has been designed for 40% of the staff to be in at any given point in line with hybrid working.

Conference believes that the employer has always indicated that hybrid working isn't contractual, and therefore can be removed on a whim of management.

Conference believes that the employer cannot be allowed to have it both ways, either hybrid working is contractual and therefore estates can be planned on 40% occupancy, or it isn't (and therefore Estates have to be planned on the basis of the availability of a desk with their team for everyone who may need one).

Conference instructs the incoming GEC to open negotiations to raise the above as a matter of urgency and report back to Branches. Conference further instructs the GEC to seek legal opinion if the employer refuses to accept the contradictions in its position.

A17

DWP Leeds HQ (047011)

Excess Fares

Excess Fares is normally paid when members move home office and their travel expenses increase as a result. It is normally paid for 3 calendar years.

When the first lockdown came, the majority of DWP were sent home and many have continued to work from home, as instructed for nearly 2 years. Staff who were receiving Excess Fares had the payments stopped until they returned to the office.

Now staff have returned to work in the office, either office based or on a hybrid basis, thinking their Excess Fares would start where it left off, only to find that although they have not used Excess Fares for 2 years, the end date for the Excess Fares will not change. For example: member awarded excess fares 1 March 2019 for 3 years with and end date of 28th Feb 2022. They have only received Excess Fares from 1st March 2019 – 23 March 2020. Excess fares will still end 28th Feb 2022. So members are losing out on nearly 2 years of this payment. This is not a trivial amount of money. Some members in HQ Leeds Branch are losing up to £140 per week. Conference instructs the GEC to enter into negotiations to change the Excess Fares Policy so there is an exception for those who were having to work from home due to the pandemic to have the time spent working from home added to the end date of the initial award of Excess Fares and for those who have already lost their Excess Fares because of this, to have it reinstated. Also conference instructs the GEC to negotiate to have the payments backdated to when the members returned to the office, Pro Rata if hybrid working.

Employee Deal

A18

Covers E69, E70

DWP Wigan Area (047015)

DWP Sheffield (047008)

Conference condemns the maximum 2.5% pay offer made by the employer in 2020, the pay freeze imposed by the government in 2021 and the inadequate response by DWP in offering payments of between £145 and £250 to staff for their hard work during one of the toughest years civil servants have faced. After 15 years of austerity, every single civil servant is worse off than before.

Inflation between 2016 and 2021 averaged 3% according to the Bank of England. This does not take into account that prices have risen even faster for working class people, something now acknowledged by government statisticians. Nor does it take into account that inflation in 2022 exceeded 5%, or the expected long-term impact of rising energy costs, which will hit almost all other prices.

Any gains made under ED have now been eroded. For those who opted out, pay has fallen dramatically. This is unlikely to be corrected by DWP's offer to allow people to now opt-in to the Employee Deal, on terms as yet unreported to branches and unlikely to correct the disadvantage those who opted out have suffered since 2016.

Further, Conference notes that there continues to be no demonstrable business need for staff to work past 5pm, or to work on Saturdays. Compulsory extension of the Department's operating hours and expansion of the working week have achieved absolutely nothing for the people who rely on the services DWP provide and have merely complicated the lives of staff and managers.

This was recognised by DWP during the pandemic, when one of the first emergency measures undertaken by the Department was to reduce the operating hours back to 5pm. Pay is also bound up with staffing – which contributes a cost to DWP's overall wage bill and the need for which has been masked by extending operating hours and putting massive pressure on existing staff.

Conference instructs the GEC:

- To demand sufficient additional funding for DWP pay to provide a 10% pay award for all staff, with additional money to raise all staff to the pay maximum for their grade.
- To demand a reduction in DWP operating hours to 5pm and the removal of compulsory Saturday working for all staff, to remove any remaining divisive elements from ED.
- To link the questions of pay and staffing. Additional money is needed to secure permanency for all staff, to recruit additional staff and reduce the immense pressure on existing staff.
- To demand a reduction in the working week to 35 hours as part of pay negotiations with the DWP in 2022. DWP must make good on its rhetoric around work-life balance.
- To share information with branches at every stage of negotiations, to ensure that pressure from and mobilisation of members is maintained, in readiness for a sustained campaign.

The GEC is instructed to use all available methods, up to and including industrial action, to secure these demands, as part of the union's national campaign if possible but independently if not.

A19 MOTION A19 FALLS with Motion E71, if motion A18 is Carried.

Covers E71

DWP Nottinghamshire (047042)

DWP South Humberside (047001)

This conference notes that the Employee Deal was agreed and endorsed by the majority of the membership and recognises that in terms of general improvements in pay it has enhanced the pay of the majority of members.

However conference also notes that the pay deal only lasted for four years and members are now facing what amounts to a pay cut in real terms when inflation and increases in heating cost etc are taken into account. DWP

has now offered to allow members who opted out the chance to opt in – but this would not address the difference in pay across DWP. Equally there is no option to withdraw as individuals from Employee Deal even though there is no longer anything in it for us. Any future pay will be outside this – so there is nothing to be gained from being in Employee Deal.

While the pay deal had a finite date – the rest of Employee Deal does not which means that members have had to continue to do Saturdays and lates without the compensation of ongoing pay improvements. At the same time this has not been administered equally with some sites never having had Saturday working and the employer has never truly used the Saturday working in the spirit as it was intended so it has now become a ‘thing’ that has to be done depending where you work.

We have also had the ridiculous situation post lockdown where the drive for face to face appointments has highlighted that weekend appointments don’t actually count for anything stats wise with those appointments moved to weekday ones in order to hit weekly face to face ‘asks’.

Conference therefore believes that Employee Deal has reached the point where it is now redundant and therefore conference instructs the incoming GEC to withdraw from the current deal (as either side can do as part of the deal collective agreement from 01/07/20) and either seek to negotiate a new improved deal across all grades or return to the standard week and focus all efforts on the proposals laid out in DWP/MB/020/22.

A20

DWP Bucks & Oxon (047108)

1) Conference notes that Work and Health districts are expecting staff posted to a REEP site to cover Employee Deal Saturday rotas in the parent sites. Local TU have consistently opposed this as being outside of the spirit of the employee deal rules as many of the REEP sites have fewer than 30 staff. Staff are asked to either ask their customers to attend a different site or do work outside of their caseloads and do not regard the work expected as a normal working day. This also impacts on their own caseload work . Staff concerns were exacerbated during Covid and some staff used section 44 to refuse to attend as the risk assessment clearly said staff should not transit between sites.

PCS have advised that the Detached Duty guidance may be interpreted to allow for a return to a home office for urgent business need or H&S reasons and that the request would be reasonable. Conference disputes this view. The Detached Duty guidance states that staff can be recalled to a home office for an urgent business or Health and safety reason. As the planning for Saturday working is done at least 3 months in advance there is no urgent business reason. No other staff on DD or who have moved office are expected to return to their home office unless a real issue of urgency is identified. Conference therefore instructs the GEC to ensure that ED planning does not include an expectation for workers to move sites.

CMG Issues

A21

Covers E72

DWP Tyneside & Northumbria (047120)

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference recognises that the staffing shortages within Child Maintenance Service (CMG) due to recruitment and/or promotions into Retirement Services, Universal Credit and Jobcentres. Many experienced staff at CMG have been lost to these exercises and there has only been a handful of newer staff recruited into CMG mainly on FTA contracts or agency workers in Belfast.

Conference further notes that the CMG system and procedures are needlessly complicated and for any new staff there is significant period before members are confident with their abilities. CMG have over the years had focussed on getting it right first time and make that call, make that difference. Our members want and need better training and consolidation throughout their time at CMG.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Campaign for all CMG FTA contracts or agency workers now and, in the future, to be made permanent from day one.
- Negotiate with DWP for fresh long-term permanent AO recruitment into CMG.
- Negotiate with CMG so members have easier access to consolidators and/or floorwalkers throughout their first few years at CMG.
- Seek to work on a joint campaign with our sister union NIPSA for the benefit of CMG agency staff in Belfast.

A22

Covers E73

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

DWP Tyneside & Northumbria (047120)

Conference notes the work already undertaken by CMG looking into their ongoing software problems regarding staff with problems with accessibility. These members are the ones most affected by the constant updates of the 2012 system and are covered by the Equality Act (2010). Often the experiences of those using accessibility software has been left as an afterthought by the constant updates.

Conference notes the creation of an Assistive Software user group by CMG for those with specific assistive software Zoomtext, JAWS, Dragon or ReadWrite (Text help).

Conference instructs the GEC to:

Continue supporting any member(s) who are experiencing difficulties with their assistive software and reasonable adjustments being adhered to.

Negotiate with CMG for those with assistive software not outlined above to be included in above mentioned group.

Campaign within and negotiate with CMG to make the 2012 System easier to use for assistive software users.

Health and Safety

A23

DWP South East Wales (047116)

This conference notes: -

- Reckless actions of the Tories who are not even bothering to stop the spread of Covid-19 and scrapping self-isolation in England to please their mates in big business
- The lack of normal colds and flu viruses spreading through the community as workers stayed home whilst they were ill and infectious and checking if they had covid-19
- Movement of management to treat covid-19 just like any other virus and put pressure on staff to come back to work too soon

This conference therefore instructs the GEC to: -

- Review the attendance management procedures in the light of the experience of the pandemic with the emphasis on
 1. Keeping all viruses and infections out of the workplace
 2. Supportive sickness absences procedures
 3. Preventing the spread of covid-19 in the workplace
 4. Supportive approach to staff with long-covid and recognise that pressure to return to work too soon when members have covid-19 could contribute to ongoing symptoms and impact.
 5. Ensuring members do not feel under pressure to work even at home when they are not well enough to do so
- Review the safety of buildings to ensure that good ventilation measures continue recognising this is positive in preventing the spread of all viruses in the workplace.
- Continue safety control measures to prevent the spread of covid-19 in workplaces
- Provide covid-19 tests to staff to identify when they are positive and help keep the virus out of the workplace.

A24

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

Conference notes the updated 5 tests issued to branches by the national Union in November 2021:

- i) No forced return to workplaces
- ii) Workplaces must be safe places
- iii) Staff must be individually assessed
- iv) Outbreaks must be controlled
- v) Hybrid working opportunities must be normalised

Conference further recognises that the pandemic is far from over, with new variants being discovered and rates of infections still high within society.

On this basis we believe that mass returns to office working remains something which should be met with extreme caution and that any enforced returns to offices for members must be resisted and members safety prioritised.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC with immediate effect to:

1. Demand that members are not forced to return to offices whilst infection rates remain high
2. Work with the national union to highlight and challenge instances of forced returns to offices where

this is unsafe using all methods including legal and industrial action as appropriate to protect members, particularly those who are vulnerable.

3. Continue to highlight and promote members rights under Health and Safety legislation to remove themselves from a dangerous workplace.

Welfare

A25

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes when DWP announced the introduction of the 'Way to Work' campaign they claimed it was designed to use the strength of the job market to fuel the recovery by getting people back into work. 'Way to Work' is predominately targeted at claimants in the Intensive Work Search group on Universal Credit. The main objective of this campaign is to get 500,000 claimants into work by June 2022. However, conference is clear the claim of the department that this campaign is all about supporting benefit claimants must be challenged. The very fact that DWP are tightening the Intensive Work Search regime, and in doing so shortening the timeline for compelling claimants to look for a job in any sector, Permitted Periods, from three months to four weeks, increases the misery on the unemployed. Conference condemns that DWP have admitted that they are exploring whether they can make the existing sanctions be felt more immediately.

The move by the Government to target Universal Credit claimants, making it easier for them to be sanctioned, is yet another example of the most vulnerable in society being expected to pay for the pandemic. The removal of the £20 Universal Credit uplift in September, and the refusal to reinstate it despite widespread criticism, has already left many observing that the Government are making the poorest in society pay for the furlough scheme and money squandered by the Government during the pandemic. History is repeating itself as the very same thing happened following the financial crash in 2008.

Since the reopening of the Jobcentres in April 2021, there has been an alarming amount of Fast Track Incidents reported. The ramping-up of sanctions will undoubtedly exacerbate the situation and worryingly see an increase in Unacceptable Customer Behaviour cases, with the safety of Jobcentre staff and security guards at risk.

PCS have rightly opposed the sanctions regime since they were introduced and have been at the forefront of the campaign for them to be abolished. PCS can be proud of the work done by our members to support the most vulnerable people in society. Conference, however, reaffirms we can and must do more.

Conference instructs the incoming GEC to continue campaigning against benefit sanctions and in doing so:

- Work with the PCS Parliamentary Group, TUC, claimant groups and any other organisation that shares our aims and values to fundamentally oppose sanctions.
- Continue the campaign to abolish Universal Credit and replace it with a benefit system that treats claimants and staff with dignity, respect, and fairness.

A26

Covers E58

DWP Sheffield (047008)

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

Conference notes with disappointment the absence of any significant work in the last two years by the Group Executive Committee on the welfare campaigns that PCS DWP Group has historically been well known for.

Significant changes made by the Tory government in 2020, during the early part of the Covid-19 pandemic were often made without the union intervening to ask, such as improvements to Statutory Sick Pay and the "Trust and Protect" measures which extended benefit awards by a year in UC, PIP and DLA and which drastically reduced the number of sanctions in the working age benefits.

The Tory government made these changes not out of concern for those who claim benefits, but out of concern that their cuts to staffing in DWP had left us unable to cope with the skyrocketing number of benefits claimants as the economy was largely shut down. As soon as the pressure was past, they reinstated assessments and renewed pressure to sanction when they could.

Group Conference notes that the GEC did protest the removal of the concessions made to claimants at the beginning of the pandemic. These small moves are rather overshadowed by the practical inaction of the Group Executive when the government sought to cut furlough rates, to cut the additional Universal Credit payments, measures which affect claimants and members.

In the background, the Tory government is clearly laying plans for further welfare changes. This includes the abolition of Housing Benefit, with significant consequences for benefits like Pension Credit; the plans laid out in the Disability Green Paper such as alterations to the assessment process for UC, ESA and PIP and further cuts to pensions.

Group Conference does not expect a Tory government to simply concede everything the GEC asks for, in its role as the elected representatives of those workers who administer the benefit system.

Group Conference does expect that the GEC should, when faced with an important public consultation that affects thousands of members as with the Disability Green Paper, get members involved, organise mass consultation, ask for time and premises to get member input and should publicly advocate for the pro-welfare, pro-claimant, anti-cuts political approach of the union.

In 2021, the GEC did not do this.

The GEC is instructed:

- To produce a public response to the welfare changes proposed by the government and to monitor any further welfare changes throughout the coming year.
- To campaign publicly against detrimental changes.
- To keep members and branches informed of and involved in such campaigns.
- To renew our historically close campaign links with claimants' organisations, the National Pensioners Convention and unions working with the unemployed, to seek a united front between DWP workers and those who rely on the welfare system.
- To ensure that adequate physical materials – posters, leaflets, stickers – exist to promote and explain our opposition to sanctions, welfare profiteering, privatisation and the scapegoating of those who rely upon the services DWP provide.

A27

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

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Union Organisation

A28

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes the successes of campaigning within DWP group over the past year, with one notable example being the department introducing measures to keep claimant facing staff safe in December 2021.

Conference believes that key to successful campaigning is organisational strength. Without a large, vibrant membership and a strong activist base, it is unlikely that campaigns will be successful. At the same time, recruitment of new reps, activists and members to PCS is difficult without successful campaigning showing the value of having a campaigning, organised union within our workplaces.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown the value of digital tools in both campaigning and organising, but as traditional, proven methods become safe to do, we should be integrating the two approaches to adopt a new campaigning strategy for the post pandemic age (and the point where we live in such an environment, not before).

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- 1) Communicate with branch and regional activists about the use and implementation of the model branch campaign plan when instigating local, regional and national campaigns
- 2) Modify the model branch campaign plan where appropriate based on feedback around best practices
- 3) Monitor the Covid-19 situation going forward regarding the safe implementation of leafletting, face to face recruitment/campaigning and larger car park meetings
- 4) Continue to use digital campaigning/recruitment platforms such as Microsoft Team and Zoom and share best practice around the usage of these platforms
- 5) Recommend ways of successful integration of traditional campaigning and organising methods with digital ones (when safe), and seek out examples of best practice to share
- 6) Continue to demonstrate new updates in the PCS Digital membership platform useful for campaigning and organising
- 7) Hold regional and national digital meetings of organisers and other activists where appropriate
- 8) Encourage the regular maintenance of branch records (through the model branch organising plan), utilising this information to plan organising and recruitment within branches

A29

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

Conference notes the ongoing PCS national campaign regarding Pay and Pensions and that the DWP Group's involvement is vital if this is to be successful.

We further note that due to the combination of rising interest rates, the planned increases to National Insurance contributions, the ongoing pension robbery of Civil Servants, the increasing fuel and energy prices and the £20 cut to Universal Credit for claimants (including our members), members are suffering a huge attack on their standards of living.

Conference recognises the enormous impact this is having on members and their families' wellbeing and reaffirms our support for the National Campaign on pay and pensions.

The conference instructs the GEC with immediate effect to:

1. Work with the NEC and full time offers to build support for the National Campaign over Pay and Pensions
2. To engage with branches regarding the campaign, encouraging members meetings to highlight the

issues and offer GEC speakers to attend these meetings

3. To produce material highlighting the real term costs to members of pay restraint combined with inflation, pension overpayments, fuel and energy costs

4. To highlight the demands made as part of this campaign and how these are reasonable when compared to rising costs

5. To highlight disproportionate impacts of the above on minority groups

A30

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

This conference notes the gaps in arrangements to support members working in corporate roles. For example

- During the pandemic there are no formal structures to discuss members specific issues within the corporate hubs with the SRO.

- Corporate Centre branches are not consistently notified of new starters to enable recruitment meetings to be set up.

- There is little communication on areas of concern specific to Corporate Centre members to provide feedback on negotiations and seek concerns from members.

This conference instructs the GEC to:

- Review PCS Corporate Centre consultation arrangements, to formalise consultation by DWP improve on on site/business unit specific policy implementations with PCS at the respective sites/business units where change is planned, and to improve representation of members. This should be conducted with the full participation and discussion with branches representing these members and a paper presented in time for AGM's in 2023 to enable branches to present any necessary motions or rule changes.

- Negotiate a process for ensuring that business units provide information on new joiners at each site when they join so recruitment meetings can take place.

- Provide regular briefings on negotiations impacting Corporate Centre and consult with Branches/Members on those negotiations.

A31

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes the successful relaunch of the DWP Young Members' Advisory Committee, and the new activists coming through this structure.

Conference recognises the need to constantly refresh the committee as DWP Young Members reach the age of 28 and "age out".

Conference agrees that it is really important to encourage DWP young workers into activity, so that we keep PCS as vibrant as possible and that the key to good organising is participation and engagement, which will only be achieved if PCS is viewed as relevant and if branches actively participate in encouraging young workers to join the union and be actively involved in it.

Young workers need to feel that PCS is relevant to them and feel empowered to not just join, but to have a say and play their part.

Conference therefore instructs the incoming GEC to work with all DWP branches to encourage the recruitment and engagement of young workers in all PCS activity and campaigns, in order to build the strongest possible network.

A32

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

The evidence is now overwhelming that global warming and extreme weather events are linked to climate change and since the first earth summit in Rio in 1992, the emission of greenhouse gases has actually increased. Capitalist governments including our own, continue to 'green wash,' and have shown themselves incapable of the decisive and radical action needed to arrest and reverse the damage caused by climate change. It is capitalism itself that has been shown to be the obstacle to the scale and pace of change needed to end our reliance upon the burning of fossil fuels and move to a zero-carbon economy by 2050.

Conference believes that PCS and other trade unions must use their collective power to win support for the decisive action needed to protect our planet.

This becomes even more important in view of COP 26. The agreement reached will not cut greenhouse emissions in the timescale required nor keep the increase in the earth's temperature to within 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius.

Group Conference notes that the GEC, despite a clear instruction from last year's conference have failed to:

- Build a network of Green Reps in DWP PCS and embed activity through branches, regions, and nations.
- Seek agreement with DWP for Green workplace reps, Trade Union led environmental risk assessments, and develop workplace-based statistics to track improvements on the environment in every workplace. This is then to be regularly reviewed with management in workplaces, regions, nations, and with departmental management.
- Have Climate Change/Green as a standing Agenda Item at every GEC, outlining the latest statistics with recommendations for improvements
- Strengthen the links between the trade union and environmental movement in UK and globally through joint campaigns.

Consequently, this conference instructs the GEC to implement conference policy, and to seek to influence positive progress on climate change. In doing so provide regular updates to branches on how it has influenced progress for DWP specific recommendations that DWP is accountable to parliament for. Eg

- Ensure all departmental policy decisions, and procurement decisions, are consistent with the Net Zero goal.
- Working with BEIS, DfE, MHCLG and the Home Office, develop a strategy for a Net Zero workforce that ensures a just transition for workers transitioning from high-carbon to low-carbon and climate-resilient jobs, integrates relevant skills into the UK's education framework and actively monitors the risks and opportunities arising from the transition. This strategy should include the development and roll-out of plans for training and skills, with buildings and manufacturing being priority areas.
- Design industrial decarbonisation policies to support and create jobs, especially in regions with reliance on industrial jobs.
- Develop and implement plans to make all public-sector buildings and vehicle fleets within the department's remit zero-carbon in the long term, switching to ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030 and halving emissions from public buildings by 2032. This must be part of a coherent cross-government strategy including an updated set of Greening the Government commitments, multi-year spending commitments and annual reporting.

A33

DWP North and Outer East London Branch (047033)

This Conference condemns the DWP's penny pinching Estates strategy and the DWP's provision of poor quality REEP sites.

The Conference notes many REEP sites have

- Inadequate canteen facilities
- No first aid rooms
- Poor heating
- Poor ventilation
- Insufficient space
- Inaccessibility for staff and customers with disabilities

- New screened desks with a lack of social distancing

In addition, there appears an inflexibility from Management to address such changes (often citing contractual issues)

This Conference believes Management should provide changes to significantly improve the quality of these sites or seek replacement sites where this is not possible

This Conference instructs the GEC to negotiate urgent changes to the specification of REEP sites and improvements to existing sites.

This Conference instructs the GEC

- 1) to survey members in REEP sites to ascertain their existing concerns and actions they are willing to take to address these concerns.
- 2) Campaign for DWP sites to be publicly owned
- 3) Campaign for increased funding for DWP sites

Employee Relations

A34

Covers E81, E82

DWP Durham House (047125)

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference agrees that formal arrangements for trade union consultation at local level should be introduced under the DWP Employee Relations Framework.

Conference recognises that in the absence of a formal procedure for trade union consultation at local level the formal process for Collective Grievances, under DWP Grievance Procedure paragraph 11, may provide a means for collectively resolving disputed issues at a local level.

Conference notes that in the absence of an acceptable resolution this process may help to build a basis for a statutory ballot under employment law.

Group Conference instructs the Group Executive Committee to:

- Seek improvement of the DWP Employee Relations Framework for the introduction of formal trade union consultation arrangements at local level
- Provide guidance for PCS Branches, in the absence of formal consultation arrangements at local level, for circumstances where it would be appropriate for a Collective Grievance to be brought with trade union support.
- Provide guidance for members in support of collective trade union action under the Collective Grievance procedure for resolving grievances.

A35

DWP Coventry & Warwicks (047055)

Conference recognises that the time and cost in organizing and running an indicative ballot regarding industrial action is the same as running an actual ballot.

Conference also recognises that there is no advantage given to negotiating strength given by a favourable opinion expressed by a consultative ballot.

Conference further notes that if a favourable opinion is expressed in favour of industrial action that in order to take industrial action a further ballot is required entailing more time and cost and delaying any industrial action that is planned.

Conference therefore calls on the DWP group executive committee to cease organizing and running indicative ballots for industrial action and to move to full industrial action ballots where industrial action is being considered.

A36

DWP Birmingham South (047053)

Conference notes :

That the global pandemic has further highlighted the importance of health and safety in the workplace and in wider society.

The vital role PCS has played nationally and through its network of local Health and Safety representatives in highlighting concerns and negotiating national policies – always putting the safety of the staff and public first.

Conference agrees :

That having to negotiate month on month with DWP management effectively cap in hand for TU Covid related

H&S time to be treated as official duty is not a helpful or supportive way of doing business.

That is has often been through the knowledge and expertise of PCS Health and Safety reps that actions have been correctly taken and that local managers (often without any training) have been assisted and educated in carrying out their duties

Conference instructs the GEC :

To reopen Departmental negotiations in order to remove the TUD cap on Health and Safety activities and have it permanently classed as official time.

Equality Issues

A37

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes with concern the increase in cases of race discrimination within DWP. The GEC are receiving an increasing number of cases of:

- direct discrimination - unacceptable language and behaviour from staff and customers
- potential indirect discrimination - serious failings in the DWP digital system

These incidents are hate crimes against our Black members and must be fully investigated as such.

Although there are processes in place for UCB and also for Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination we find that those processes are not followed robustly enough, police are very seldom called for racial hate crimes without strong pressure being applied by PCS, even when the crime is clearly evidenced. Further to this, even when an investigation is instigated, we find that there is a serious lack of understanding of the trauma members are experiencing which is severely compounded by the lack of support they receive from management.

DWP prides itself on its anti-race discrimination programme and its wellbeing polices yet our Black members are seeing no 'wrap around support' when faced with the most traumatic of circumstances. We hear the message, 'it starts with me', but Conference believes that fighting racism starts with DWP, and it starts with having a dual process – providing staff with immediate and prolonged support whilst also fully investigating the incident.

Every case of racial abuse impacts the person resulting in physical, and mental detriment, feelings of anger, frustration, hurt, and anger again, this damage to the health and wellbeing is a work-related injury. Any other attack would bring first aid, but Black members are left to sit alone, or sent home and expected back in the next working day.

There is a gaping gap in policy and procedure for our members enduring such circumstances. None of this is acceptable, and Conference demands better!

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate a policy of immediate and meaningful support for staff that have been abused by bigots, discriminators, harassers, and bullies, both within the department and those that use DWP services
- Ensure that policy also allows for a period of Working from Home or Special Paid Leave for all members that have suffered any form of discrimination
- Demand that DWP immediately enlist their technical team to block all racist words from entering the DWP digital space
- Press DWP to roll out the programme of training that has been in the pipeline for two years that has not yet reached the members that desperately need educating
- Work with DWP to ensure racism and all forms of discrimination are met with zero tolerance, and dealt with more swiftly and robustly

A38

DWP Nottinghamshire (047042)

In DWP Nottinghamshire Branch we have run a couple of events on Domestic Violence. Our District Manager has encouraged her Work Coaches to have this training. Impressive. But DWP is much wider than LNR & LNR have not included colleagues in CFCD or DMA. Nottinghamshire Branch want to see a Domestic Abuse Specialist in every office / District. Why? Here are some stats that might persuade you.

1. How many women will experience Domestic Abuse in their lifetime? 1 in 4
2. In Britain, 2 people are killed by their partner every week

3. On average, how many times is a women assaulted before she seeks help? 35
4. How many men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime? 1 in 6
5. A women is three times more likely to be assaulted if she is Pregnant
6. What Percentage of abuse victims are targeted by their partner at work? 75%

There are more types of abuse than just Violence?

- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Coercive Control

Domestic Violence training is 45 minutes (with 15 minutes after to unwind / ask questions / recover – you will need this)

This training should include senior leaders, All DWP not just Jobcentres. We should advertise the J9 initiative. Our offices should be safe places for our staff and Customers.

This conference instructs the incoming GEC to negotiate with DWP management to:

- All Staff in DWP to receive the Domestic Violence training so they can spot indicators and know where to signpost people
- All sites / districts to have a Domestic Abuse specialist
- All sites / jobcentres to advertise J9 initiative.

GEC to update conference 2023 on their progress in this issue

A39

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference notes with concern cases of sexual harassment in DWP appear to be on the rise, particularly involving newer employees in the department and younger women workers.

More than four-fifths of young women in the UK have been subjected to sexual harassment, (source UN Women UK (March 2021). A poll by the TUC revealed that 7 in 10 (68%) disabled women surveyed have been sexually harassed at work. Over 1 in 2 women and nearly 7 out of 10 LGBT+ workers are sexually harassed in the workplace.

Conference believes there is an urgent need to establish how many PCS members in DWP are experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace, or who have experienced sexual harassment, and to take measures to support our members in reporting it.

Conference calls on the GEC to:

- Work with the department to monitor and review the reporting process and consider specialist HR support for managers in dealing with these cases
- Produce a survey around sexual harassment to establish the scale of the problem
- Review the structures for support in reporting such incidents, including via EAP
- Work with DWP to promote training and awareness about sexual harassment to all employees
- Negotiate a policy that allows for immediate and prolonged support including Working from Home or special paid leave if and when required, for all members suffering sexual harassment and/or abuse in the workplace

A40

Group Executive Committee ()

Conference welcomes the gains the GEC have made for our members in special leave provision for mothers of babies born prematurely, establishing a provision of up to 4 weeks special leave to be added to maternity leave.

Conference is concerned however that as Maternity leave begins immediately, and no account is taken of long hospital stays eating into this, mothers are often left with a shortfall, facing a choice between financial detriment or caring for their child.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

- Continue to press DWP via negotiation to implement 12 weeks neonatal leave for babies requiring care, as per pending legislation

Other Motions (categories B, C, D, E & X)

Office Closures

E41 Covered By A1

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

Conference notes DWP proceeding with a number of office closures based on the “People and Locations” programme from 2017 and that a number of offices continue to have “transitional” status under those plans.

Conference further notes the concerning way that closures such as the Cosham site as well as the plans for moving members into the new Ty Taff site in Cardiff have been handled. Conference is concerned at the DWPs attitude toward members and their rights under redundancy avoidance as well as DWPs recalcitrance in considering and implementing viable options to avoid redundancies.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

1. Ensure the DWP is held to all of the redundancy avoidance measures within the Cabinet Office protocols
2. To ensure the Department actively use all of the workforce management guidance, including options of working from home where agreeable by the member, to avoid redundancy
3. To ensure that measures are used as redundancy avoidance not only compulsory redundancy avoidance as seems to be the preference for DWP in some cases
4. To press for the offer of vicinity schemes to members in nearby offices in all cases where redundancy cannot be wholly avoided in order to maximise opportunities for those who wish to remain in DWP to do so
5. To consider action up to and including local and national group-wide strike action should compulsory redundancy be imposed and work with branches to deliver this

E42 Covered By A1

DWP Durham House (047125)

Conference notes DWP proceeding with a number of office closures based on the “People and Locations” programme from 2017 and that a number of offices continue to have “transitional” status under those plans.

Conference further notes the concerning way that closures such as the Cosham site as well as the plans for moving members into the new Ty Taff site in Cardiff have been handled. Conference is concerned at the DWPs attitude toward members and their rights under redundancy avoidance as well as DWPs recalcitrance in considering and implementing viable options to avoid redundancies.

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5. To consider action up to and including local and national group-wide strike action should compulsory redundancy be imposed and work with branches to deliver this

E43 Covered By A1

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes DWP proceeding with a number of office closures based on the “People and Locations” programme from 2017 and that a number of offices continue to have “transitional” status under those plans.

Conference further notes the concerning way that closures such as the Cosham site as well as the plans for moving members into the new Ty Taff site in Cardiff have been handled. Conference is concerned at the DWPs attitude toward members and their rights under redundancy avoidance as well as DWPs recalcitrance in considering and implementing viable options to avoid redundancies.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

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To ensure the Department actively use all of the workforce management guidance, including options of working from home where agreeable by the member, to avoid redundancy

To ensure that measures are used as redundancy avoidance not only compulsory redundancy avoidance as seems to be the preference for DWP in some cases

To press for the offer of vicinity schemes to members in nearby offices in all cases where redundancy cannot be wholly avoided in order to maximise opportunities for those who wish to remain in DWP to do so

To consider action up to and including local and national group-wide strike action should compulsory redundancy be imposed and work with branches to deliver this

E44 Covered By A1

DWP Edinburgh, Lothian & Borders (047063)

Conference notes DWP proceeding with a number of office closures based on the "People and Locations" programme from 2017 and that a number of offices continue to have "transitional" status under those plans.

Conference further notes the concerning way that closures such as the Cosham site as well as the plans for moving members into the new Ty Taff site in Cardiff have been handled. Conference is concerned at the DWPs attitude toward members and their rights under redundancy avoidance as well as DWPs recalcitrance in considering and implementing viable options to avoid redundancies.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

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3. To ensure that measures are used as redundancy avoidance not only compulsory redundancy avoidance as seems to be the preference for DWP in some cases
4. To press for the offer of vicinity schemes to members in nearby offices in all cases where redundancy cannot be wholly avoided in order to maximise opportunities for those who wish to remain in DWP to do so
5. To consider action up to and including local and national group-wide strike action should compulsory redundancy be imposed and work with branches to deliver this

Staffing

E45 Covered By A2

DWP Wirral (047019)

This conference recognises the work undertaken by the DWP GEC regarding staffing in DWP over a number of years and commends their record on securing permanent contracts for members brought in on FTA contracts, as well as the success in having members employed via the Brook Street recruitment agency transferred into DWP on Direct Temporary Recruitment terms.

Conference recognises that the current staffing levels in DWP across numerous Directorates is woefully inadequate to deliver the services to the public that they are entitled to expect. This has been clearly demonstrated with over a thousand members being transferred into Retirement Services to deal with the State Pension Correction Exercise from other DWP areas such as Universal Credit and Child Maintenance Group, as well as support having to be drafted in from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Northern Irish Department for Communities. None of these are areas of DWP or OGDs who could afford to lose significant numbers of staff in this manner.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. To campaign for DWP to undertake a full root and branch examination of their staffing requirements and to ensure that they are fulfilled at a level which supports high quality public services in DWP
2. To campaign for significant recruitment in DWP to urgently address the current shortages

E46 Covered By A2

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

This conference recognises the work undertaken by the DWP GEC regarding staffing in DWP over a number of years and commends their record on securing permanent contracts for members brought in on FTA contracts, as well as the success in having members employed via the Brook Street recruitment agency transferred into DWP on Direct Temporary Recruitment terms.

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Conference instructs the GEC to:

To campaign for DWP to undertake a full root and branch examination of their staffing requirements and to ensure that they are fulfilled at a level which supports high quality public services in DWP

To campaign for significant recruitment in DWP to urgently address the current shortages

E47 Covered By A2

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

This conference recognises the work undertaken by the DWP GEC regarding staffing in DWP over a number of years and commends their record on securing permanent contracts for members brought in on FTA contracts, as well as the success in having members employed via the Brooke Street recruitment agency transferred into DWP on Direct Temporary Recruitment terms.

Conference also recognises however that the current situation in DWP with high levels of staff working on various types of temporary contracts; Fixed Term Appointments, Direct Temporary Recruits, Apprenticeship programmes and Social Mobility Apprenticeships is of concern to many of the members on these contracts.

Conference further recognises that the current staffing levels in DWP across numerous Directorates is woefully inadequate to deliver the services to the public that they are entitled to expect. This has been clearly demonstrated with over a thousand members being transferred into Retirement Services to deal with the State Pension Correction Exercise from other DWP areas such as Universal Credit and Child Maintenance Group, as well as support having to be drafted in from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Northern Irish Department for Communities. None of these are areas of DWP or OGDs who could afford to lose significant numbers of staff in this manner.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. Press DWP to make all members recruited under Open and Fair competition to be made permanent immediately
2. For all members recruited on non-open and fair recruitment to be offered access to an open and fair recruitment with a permanent role offered if successful
3. For all such members to be offered support by DWP in the form of appropriate coaching to maximise their opportunities for success on these exercises
4. To campaign for DWP to undertake a full root and branch examination of their staffing requirements and to ensure that they are fulfilled at a level which supports high quality public services in DWP
5. To campaign for significant recruitment in DWP to urgently address the current shortages

E48 Covered By A2

DWP Glasgow (047066)

This conference recognises the work undertaken by the DWP GEC regarding staffing in DWP over a number of years and commends their record on securing permanent contracts for members brought in on FTA contracts, as well as the success in having members employed via the Brook Street recruitment agency transferred into DWP on Direct Temporary Recruitment terms.

Conference recognises that the current staffing levels in DWP across numerous Directorates is woefully inadequate to deliver the services to the public that they are entitled to expect. This has been clearly demonstrated with over a thousand members being transferred into Retirement Services to deal with the State Pension Correction Exercise from other DWP areas such as Universal Credit and Child Maintenance Group, as well as support having to be drafted in from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Northern Irish Department for Communities.

None of these are areas of DWP or OGDs who could afford to lose significant numbers of staff in this manner.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. To campaign for DWP to undertake a full root and branch examination of their staffing requirements and to ensure that they are fulfilled at a level which supports high quality public services in DWP
2. To campaign for significant recruitment in DWP to urgently address the current shortages

E49 Covered By A3

DWP South East Wales (047116)

This conference notes the: -

- Continuing backlogs of work across the DWP
- Workload pressures and micro-management of our members
- Emphasis on numeric targets rather than quality of the service to the public
- Continuing threat of closure of transitional sites despite the experience of the pandemic
- Statement from the Permanent Secretary that 7000 Work Coach staff were not needed at the Select Committee.

This conference is disappointed that management did not make all the FTA AOs and EOs permanent and failed to change decision to close transitional sites.

This conference instructs the DWP GEC to: -

- Fight for job security and local jobs for ALL our members - both temporary and permanent staff and challenge management trying to create division between these members
- Properly instigate a staffing campaign with an accurate reflection of how many more extra staff the DWP needs now involving branches to bring real pressure on senior DWP management.
- Demand all the transitional sites are retained to make room for additional staff.
- Reinstate regional consultation with PCS with all parts of the DWP to ensure that all recruitment and vacancy filling is planned across DWP with a proactive, supportive approach to find jobs for unassigned members, hardship cases and equality moves.
- Demand digital solutions which have worked throughout the pandemic are used to overcome arguments from management that staff "are in the wrong place"
- Whilst demanding all FTAs are made permanent – scrutinise and challenge the figures that management say they need to maximise the opportunities for all
- Implement DWP group policy to build support to coordinate local campaigning into wider collective group campaign to enable collective action to be delivered to halt office closures and use the union's collective strength in defence of members jobs, offices and good quality services to the public.

E50 Covered By A3

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

DWP staffing levels have once more begun to slide, with almost 3,000 fewer staff in December 2021 than were employed in August 2021. This is a clear and present danger to the wellbeing of all other DWP staff, whether working in Jobcentres, Service Centres or other offices by virtue of the enormous pressure being heaped on staff to pick up the slack.

In this context, while the permanency granted to many temporary staff is welcome, we must acknowledge that there is still a pressing need to keep those AOs not made permanent. We must also campaign for all EO and HEO temporary staff to be made permanent without condition.

Conference asserts that 30,000 additional staff are needed across DWP, with the option for more should the government decide to drastically increase interest rates in order to reduce inflation which potentially could mean devastating levels of unemployment leading to yet further unacceptable levels of stress on already hard pressed members. DWP has already proved, that recruiting large numbers of staff is not enough. Staffing allocation must be determined on the basis of manageable workloads for all, and jobs offered must be permanent.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC:

- To submit clear, reasoned-through demands on staffing levels for each of the key operational areas overseen by the Department.
- To urgently work with branches and the GEC's advisory committees to identify in each operational area – including Corporate Centre if appropriate – workload safeguards.
- To include within these workload safeguards limits the number of mandatory appointments or telephone calls per day, as well as methods of giving workers control of their day.
- To consult with branches, reps and members on all of the above before submitting final demands to the employer, including by bulletins, mass meetings and rep meetings.

- To work with branches to raise the confidence of members to fight for the additional staff, and to see the benefits that will accrue from this.

Conference asserts that industrial action will be necessary to win this campaign. The question of how to structure and when to launch a ballot is complicated by the on-going national pay campaign, but the two questions can be linked, through the pressure on members either in the workplace or through rising bills at home, and through how DWP is funded to offer permanent jobs or pay rises.

The GEC is therefore instructed to consider at every meeting how and when to launch a ballot on staffing. Conference believes that the ideal scenario is a national ballot on staffing across all branches and operational areas, coordinated with any national ballot on pay. This cannot be set in stone in advance, however, and should not rule out campaigns in specific operational areas.

The GEC is also instructed to regularly bring together branches covering each major operational area to discuss the mood of members, impact of campaigning activities, what further activities are needed to build members' confidence and what the next steps are in the campaign.

E51 Covered By A3

DWP Wigan Area (047015)

Conference is alarmed that DWP staffing levels have once more begun to slide, with almost 3,000 fewer staff in December 2021 than were employed in August 2021. This is a clear and present danger to the wellbeing of all other DWP staff, whether working in Jobcentres, Service Centres or other offices by virtue of the enormous pressure being heaped on staff to pick up the slack.

In this context, while the permanency granted to many temporary staff is welcome, it must also be acknowledged that there is still a pressing need to keep those AOs who were not granted permanency. We also oppose any conditions attached to offers of permanency to EO or HEO grade temporary staff. All of these staff have demonstrated their capability and must be made permanent.

Conference asserts that 30,000 additional staff are needed across DWP, with the option for more should the government decide to drastically increase interest rates in order to reduce inflation. DWP has proved, however, that recruiting large numbers of staff is not enough. Staffing allocation must be determined on the basis of manageable workloads for all, and these jobs must be permanent.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC:

- To submit clear, reasoned-through demands on staffing levels for each of the key operational areas overseen by the Department.
- To urgently work with branches and the GEC's advisory committees to identify in each operational area – including Corporate Centre if appropriate – workload safeguards.
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- To work with branches to raise the confidence of members to fight for the additional staff, and to see the benefits that will accrue from this.

Conference asserts that industrial action will be necessary to win this campaign. The question of how to structure and when to launch a ballot is complicated by the on-going national pay campaign, but the two questions can be linked, through the pressure on members both in the workplace and at home, through rising bills. The key demand is more money for both pay and staffing.

The GEC is therefore instructed to consider at every meeting how and when to launch a ballot on staffing. Conference believes that the ideal scenario is a national ballot on staffing across all branches and operational areas, coordinated with any national ballot on pay. This cannot be set in stone in advance, however, and should not rule out campaigns in specific operational areas.

Throughout the campaign, the GEC should regularly bring together branches covering each major operational

area to discuss the mood of members, impact of campaigning activities, what further activities are needed to build members' confidence and what the next steps are in the campaign.

Operations

E52 Covered By A4

DWP Wirral (047019)

Conference recognises the unrelenting pressure that jobcentre staff have been placed under during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Conference also deeply appreciates the outstanding work of members, reps, branches and the GEC to mitigate and address many of the unjustifiable decisions taken by DWP management at all levels throughout this time.

However, despite constant demands from GEC to maintain safe working, many of the safeguards negotiated are being eroded.

Jobcentre staff are struggling. Unlike other areas of DWP Jobcentre staff are being forced back into the workplace in large numbers with no access to 'hybrid' working.

Staff are being instructed that they must complete an unwarrantable minimum number of face-to-face interviews per day or disciplinary action will be taken against them.

Staff being told that they can only book face to face interviews with the use of telephony only becoming an option in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement by a manager.

Jobcentre staff diaries are being filled by managers with inappropriate interviews to provide skewed MI for daily 'league tables.'

Members are being forced to refer vulnerable claimants and claimants with severe health issues to commercial providers such as Reed and Serco. This is despite knowing that the provision offered by these providers is wholly unsuitable.

Support for staff by managers is unavailable due to the pressure for statistics that managers need to supply or themselves face disciplinary action.

On top of all this Jobcentres are closing on an alarmingly regular basis due to COVID outbreaks amongst the staff.

Conference instructs the GEC to continue to campaign and use all means necessary to combat the risk to our members and force DWP to: -

- Reverse its policy of face to face by default claimant interviews.
- Cease the pursuit of senseless statistics which only drive perverse practices.
- Reintroduce the quality not quantity approach to interventions with claimants.
- Allow hybrid working as the norm in jobcentres to reduce the number of staff in offices until it's safe.
- Ensure staff get appropriate support from managers regarding their health and wellbeing.

E53 Covered By A4

DWP Tyneside & Northumbria (047120)

Conference recognises the unrelenting pressure that jobcentre staff have been placed under during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Conference also deeply appreciates the outstanding work of members, reps, branches and the GEC to mitigate and address many of the unjustifiable decisions taken by DWP management at all levels throughout this time.

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E54 Covered By A4

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

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E55 Covered By A4

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

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Reverse its policy of face to face by default claimant interviews.

Cease the pursuit of senseless statistics which only drive perverse practices.

Reintroduce the quality not quantity approach to interventions with claimants.

Allow hybrid working as the norm in jobcentres to reduce the number of staff in offices until it's safe.

Ensure staff get appropriate support from managers regarding their health and wellbeing.

E56 Covered By A4

DWP Glasgow (047066)

Conference recognises the unrelenting pressure that jobcentre staff have been placed under during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.

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- Ensure staff get appropriate support from managers regarding their health and wellbeing.

E57 Covered By A4

DWP Edinburgh, Lothian & Borders (047063)

Conference recognises the unrelenting pressure that jobcentre staff have been placed under during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Conference also deeply appreciates the outstanding work of members, reps, branches and the GEC to mitigate and address many of the unjustifiable decisions taken by DWP management at all levels throughout this time.

However, despite constant demands from GEC to maintain safe working, many of the safeguards negotiated are being eroded.

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- Allow hybrid working as the norm in jobcentres to reduce the number of staff in offices until it's safe.
- Ensure staff get appropriate support from managers regarding their health and wellbeing.

E58 Covered By A6

DWP Durham House (047125)

Conference notes that DWP has undertaken a re-structuring exercise of the DWP complaints teams and that as a result a significant number of members have been moved from the centralised complaints function within CED into the various Directorates whose complaints they work on.

Conference understands that assurances have been given by the Department that the Directorates will not use this as a way to denude the complaints teams of staff levels, knowledge and experience on complaints teams and that they will remain a priority for the Department.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

1. Ensure that the Department does not renege on its assurances around staffing, knowledge or experience levels
2. To press for recruitment into complaints teams in the various Directorates to ensure that quality is maintained for service users without increasing workloads for members
3. To keep complaints performance under scrutiny and raise any significant impacts on quality or workloads with the Department at an early stage

E59 Covered By A6

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes that DWP has undertaken a re-structuring exercise of the DWP complaints teams and that as a result a significant number of members have been moved from the centralised complaints function within CED into the various Directorates whose complaints they work on.

Conference understands that assurances have been given by the Department that the Directorates will not use this as a way to denude the complaints teams of staff levels, knowledge and experience on complaints teams

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Conference instructs the GEC to:

Ensure that the Department does not renege on its assurances around staffing, knowledge or experience levels

To press for recruitment into complaints teams in the various Directorates to ensure that quality is maintained for service users without increasing workloads for members

To keep complaints performance under scrutiny and raise any significant impacts on quality or workloads with the Department at an early stage

E60 Covered By A8

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes the work undertaken by members working in Retirement Services to address problems with State Pensions under the State Pension Correction Exercise (SPCE) and the millions of pounds already re-paid to Pension claimants who had been underpaid. Members have worked extremely hard to right claims which had been underpaid for what in many cases was years, and even decades.

This work has been very complex and members have had to manage with enormous scrutiny in the media and in Parliament and with a whole new set of circumstances and with guidance and training which had to be built from the ground up on how to correct these cases.

Despite the hard work of members and the large numbers transferred into the SPCE from other parts of DWP along with support from other Government Departments such as HMRC and the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland it is clear that significant further investment is needed if the target to clear outstanding cases by 2024 is to be achieved.

Members have raised concerns with issues such as training provision, clarity and consistency of instructions and levels of Leadership support due to high TDA levels.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC to:

Press for proper resourcing of the SPCE alongside the rest of Retirement Services via permanent recruitment

Demand improvements to training and instructions for members working on the SPCE

Ensure TDA levels are brought down and that long-term vacancies are filled by substantive members at the appropriate grades

Distinguished Life Membership

E62 Covered By A9

DWP Birmingham North (047054)

Birmingham North propose Rory Souter for Distinguished Life Membership.

Rory was an activist and Rep serving members in Coventry and Birmingham area for over thirty years.

He also served as a scrutineer to Group conference for many years.

E61 Covered By A9

DWP Leeds HQ (047011)

Conference agrees that Kate Ahern be awarded Distinguished Life Membership for her years of hard work and dedication to PCS DWP Group and its members in the Corporate Centre and her branch HQ Leeds Branch.

Conditions of Service

E63 Covered By A10

DWP Durham House (047125)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay, 5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

Conference recognises that this has put mounting pressure on PCS DWP members that are forced back to work too soon instead of being able to recover free from financial hardship or further sickness. In addition, unscrupulous private companies that are used for outsourced workers such as cleaners and security guards used in DWP suffer inferior sick absence policies with only statutory sick pay for the first period of their absence. This often leaves members working on private contracts with the choice to work whilst ill or being in financial hardship.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

E64 Covered By A10

DWP North East & Mid Wales (047128)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay, 5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

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Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

E65 Covered By A10

DWP Tyneside & Northumbria (047120)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay,

5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

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Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced workers parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

E66 Covered By A10

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay, 5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

Conference recognises that this has put mounting pressure on PCS DWP members that are forced back to work too soon instead of being able to recover free from financial hardship or further sickness. In addition, unscrupulous private companies that are used for outsourced workers such as cleaners and security guards used in DWP suffer inferior sick absence policies with only statutory sick pay for the first period of their absence. This often leaves members working on private contracts with the choice to work whilst ill or being in financial hardship.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.

Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

E67 Covered By A10

DWP Glasgow (047066)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay,

5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

Conference recognises that this has put mounting pressure on PCS DWP members that are forced back to work too soon instead of being able to recover free from financial hardship or further sickness. In addition, unscrupulous private companies that are used for outsourced workers such as cleaners and security guards used in DWP suffer inferior sick absence policies with only statutory sick pay for the first period of their absence. This often leaves members working on private contracts with the choice to work whilst ill or being in financial hardship.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

E68 Covered By A10

DWP Edinburgh, Lothian & Borders (047063)

Conference notes the motion A26 of DWP Group being passed at Conference 2021 which covers levelling up of HR policies.

Conference notes the inconsistency with sick pay within the DWP for staff recruited after 14th October 2013 and its outsourced workers. Staff recruited from 14th October 2013 only have a maximum of 5 months full pay, 5 months half-pay on the condition that they have worked for the department for at least 5 years and that they start with only 1 month full and 1 month half pay increasing by one month per year of service.

Conference recognises that this has put mounting pressure on PCS DWP members that are forced back to work too soon instead of being able to recover free from financial hardship or further sickness. In addition, unscrupulous private companies that are used for outsourced workers such as cleaners and security guards used in DWP suffer inferior sick absence policies with only statutory sick pay for the first period of their absence. This often leaves members working on private contracts with the choice to work whilst ill or being in financial hardship.

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- Negotiate and campaign for all DWP staff recruited after 14th October 2013 to have levelled up sick pay to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, so all staff would have parity.
- Continue to campaign for outsourced worker parity for sick pay with DWP staff.

Employee Deal

E69 Covered By A18

DWP Sheffield (047008)

Conference condemns the maximum 2.5% pay offer made by the employer in 2020, the pay freeze imposed by the government in 2021 and the response by DWP in offering payments of between £145 and £250 to staff for their hard work during one of the toughest years civil servants have faced. After 15 years of austerity, every single civil servant is worse off than before.

Inflation between 2016 and 2021 averaged 3% according to the Bank of England. This does not take into account that prices have risen even faster for working class people, something now acknowledged by government statisticians. Nor does it take into account that inflation in 2022 exceeded 5%, or the expected long-term impact of rising energy costs, which will hit almost all other prices.

Gains made under ED have now been eroded. For those who opted out, pay has fallen dramatically. This is unlikely to be corrected by DWP's offer to allow people to now opt-in to the Employee Deal, on terms as yet unreported to branches and unlikely to correct the potential disadvantage for those who opted out have suffered since 2016.

Further, Conference notes that there continues to be no demonstrable business need for staff to work past 5pm, or to work on Saturdays. Compulsory extension of the Department's operating hours and expansion of the working week have achieved absolutely nothing for the people who rely on the services DWP provide and have merely complicated the lives of staff and managers.

This was recognised by DWP during the pandemic, when one of the first emergency measures undertaken by the Department was to reduce the operating hours back to 5pm. This question is also bound up with staffing – which contributes a cost to DWP's overall wage bill and the need for which has been masked by extending operating hours and putting massive pressure on existing staff.

Conference instructs the GEC:

- To demand sufficient additional funding for DWP pay to provide a 10% pay award for all staff, with additional money to raise all staff to the pay maximum for their grade.
- To demand a reduction in DWP operating hours to 5pm and the removal of compulsory Saturday working for all staff, to remove any remaining divisive elements from ED.
- To link the questions of pay and staffing. Additional money is needed to secure permanency for all staff, to recruit additional staff and reduce the immense pressure on existing staff.
- To demand a reduction in the working week to 35 hours as part of pay negotiations with the DWP in 2022. DWP must make good on its rhetoric around work-life balance.
- To share information with branches at every stage of negotiations, to ensure that pressure from and mobilisation of members is maintained, in readiness for a sustained campaign.

The GEC is instructed to use all methods, up to and including industrial action, to secure these demands, as part of the union's national campaign if possible but independently if not.

E70 Covered By A18

DWP HQ Sheffield (047012)

Conference condemns the maximum 2.5% pay offer made by the employer in 2020, the pay freeze imposed by the government in 2021 and the response by DWP in offering payments of between £145 and £250 to staff for their hard work during one of the toughest years civil servants have faced. After 15 years of austerity, every single civil servant is worse off than before.

Inflation between 2016 and 2021 averaged 3% according to the Bank of England. This does not take into account that prices have risen even faster for working class people, something now acknowledged by government statisticians. Nor does it take into account that inflation in 2022 exceeded 5%, or the expected long-term impact of rising energy costs, which will hit almost all other prices.

Gains made under ED have now been eroded. For those who opted out, pay has fallen dramatically. This is unlikely to be corrected by DWP's offer to allow people to now opt-in to the Employee Deal, on terms as yet unreported to branches and unlikely to correct the potential disadvantage for those who opted out have suffered since 2016.

Further, Conference notes that there continues to be no demonstrable business need for staff to work past 5pm, or to work on Saturdays. Compulsory extension of the Department's operating hours and expansion of the working week have achieved absolutely nothing for the people who rely on the services DWP provide and have merely complicated the lives of staff and managers.

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- To share information with branches at every stage of negotiations, to ensure that pressure from and mobilisation of members is maintained, in readiness for a sustained campaign.

The GEC is instructed to use all methods, up to and including industrial action, to secure these demands, as part of the union's national campaign if possible but independently if not.

E71 Covered By A19

DWP South Humberside (047001)

This conference recognises the failures to protect members' rights in the implementation of the 2016 Employee Deal with extending operating hours practices. Conference also recognises the pressure being placed on members to work patterns they are unable to; which can include discrimination to carers, people with disabilities, parents and other groups; whilst at the same time public-facing members in Jobcentres face a lack of productive work on a Saturday and after 5pm compared with core weekday operating hours simply to have a presence without demonstrating any form of measured value.

Additionally, non-public facing parts of the business such as Service Centre and non-customer facing colleagues are under pressure to commit to working patterns that do not take into account personal circumstances and responsibilities. The pressures demonstrated by management have resulted in bullying and heavy-handed conversations to force members to commit to working patterns under significant duress.

Conference seeks the withdrawal of compulsory Jobcentre operating hours after 5pm weekdays and on a Saturday; and a requirement that staffing must be met on a genuinely voluntary basis across all other parts of the business outside of 9am-5pm Monday-Friday operating to reflect core Jobcentre hours. Conference seeks a withdrawal from the 2016 Collective Agreement leading to entering a formal dispute with DWP if these conditions are not met.

CMG Issues

E72 Covered By A21

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference recognises that the staffing shortages within Child Maintenance Group (CMG) due to recruitment and/or promotions into Retirement Services, Universal Credit and Jobcentres. Many experienced staff at CMG have been lost to these exercises and there has only been a handful of newer staff recruited into CMG mainly on FTA contracts or agency workers in Belfast.

Conference further notes that the CMG system and procedures are needlessly complicated and for any new staff there is significant period before members are confident with their abilities. CMG have over the years focussed on getting it right first time and make that call, make that difference. Our members want and need better training and consolidation throughout their time at CMG.

Conference instructs the GEC to:

Campaign for all CMG FTA contracts or agency workers now and, in the future, to be made permanent from day one.

Negotiate with DWP for fresh long term permanent AO recruitment into CMG.

Negotiate with CMG so members have easier access to consolidators and/or floorwalkers throughout their first few years at CMG.

Seek to work on a joint campaign with our sister union NIPSA for the benefit of CMG agency staff in Belfast.

E73 Covered By A22

DWP Tyneside & Northumbria (047120)

Conference notes the work already undertaken by CMG into their ongoing software problems regarding staff with problems with accessibility. These members are the ones most affected by the constant updates of the 2012 system and are covered by the Equality Act (2010). Often the experiences of those using accessibility software has been left as an afterthought by the constant updates.

Conference notes the creation of an Assistive Software user group by CMG for those with specific assistive software Zoomtext, JAWS, Dragon or ReadWrite (Text help).

Conference instructs the GEC to:

- Continue supporting any member(s) who are experiencing difficulties with their assistive software and reasonable adjustments being adhered to.
- Negotiate with CMG for those with assistive software not outlined above to be included in above mentioned group.
- Campaign within and negotiate with CMG to make the 2012 System easier to use for assistive software users.

Welfare

X74 No instruction to GEC

DWP Essex (047050)

Conference notes that over 40,000 people have died from Covid in care homes during the pandemic in an overwhelmingly privatised system that puts profit before safety.

The Health and Social Care Bill will make it even easier to award contracts to private health care providers. The top three owners of care homes in the UK are private equity companies.

We further note that over 300,000 elderly and vulnerable people are now on the waiting list. An already chronically underfunded NHS has an even greater shortage of beds because social care places are not available to discharge people into.

Average pay for care workers is a paltry £8.50 an hour. One in four are on zero-hour contracts. With that level of pay it's not surprising that there is a shortage of 170,000 care workers.

The 2019 Tory election manifesto pledged to fix social care and not raise the rate of income tax, VAT or National Insurance. This has been revealed as a lie and ordinary workers are being made to pay an increased in national insurance.

Conference supports additional funding for both the NHS and for social care, not at the expense of low paid workers including colleagues in PCS. Again working-class people are being made to pay for a crisis not of their making. Increasing national insurance contributions have hit working people in the pocket just as food and energy prices are going up and workers are facing attacks on their wages and conditions through 'fire and rehire' etc.

The Government has shown during the pandemic that money can be found, especially when it comes to giving contracts worth billions to their big business friends in the private sector. It is the wealthy who should be coughing up to fund the NHS and social care, not low-paid workers. The Trades Union Congress has calculated that if capital gains tax - the tax on profits from assets like stocks and property - was paid at the same level as income tax, that would alone generate £17 billion a year for funding health and social care.

Conference believes that taxing the rich and big business should be just the start. We need to be able to plan health and social care based on need not profit. There should be no place for private profiteers in our health and social care system. Everyone should have access to free universal health and social care in an integrated system based on need not profit. It should not be based on ability to pay.

Conference believes these issues are important for PCS members irrespective of age and instructs the NEC to support union demands for a 15% pay rise for Health and Social Care workers and to campaign for:-

- o Opposition to the Health and Care Bill
- o Opposition to NI increases, tax the rich and big business to fund health and social care.
- o Social care to be brought into public ownership as part of a national integrated health and social care service.

X75 No instruction to the GEC

DWP South East Wales (047116)

This conference notes that over 40,000 people have died from Covid in care homes during the pandemic in an overwhelmingly privatised system that puts profit before safety.

The Health and Social Care Bill will make it even easier to award contracts to private health care providers. The top three owners of care homes in the UK are private equity companies.

We further note over 300,000 elderly and vulnerable people are now on the waiting list. An already chronically underfunded NHS has an even greater shortage of beds because social care places are not available to discharge people into.

Average pay for care workers is a paltry £8.50 an hour. One in four are on zero-hour contracts. With that level of pay it's not surprising that there is a shortage of 170,000 care workers.

The 2019 Tory election manifesto pledged to fix social care and not raise the rate of income tax, VAT or National Insurance. Instead there is no fix for social care and ordinary workers are being made to pay increased national insurance contributions.

Conference supports additional funding for both the NHS and for social care, but not at the expense of low paid workers including colleagues in PCS. Once again working-class people are being made to pay for a crisis not of their making. Increasing national insurance contributions have hit working people in the pocket just as food and energy prices are going up and workers are facing attacks on their wages and conditions through 'fire and rehire' etc.

The Government has shown during the pandemic that money can be found, when it comes to giving contracts worth billions to their big business friends in the private sector. It is the wealthy who should be coughing up to fund the NHS and social care, not low-paid workers.

Conference believes that taxing the rich and big business should be just the start. We need to be able to plan health and social care based on need not profit. There should be no place for private profiteers in our health and social care system. Everyone should have access to free universal health and social care in an integrated system based on need not profit. It should not be based on ability to pay.

Conference believes these issues are important for PCS members irrespective of age and instructs the NEC to support union demands for a 15% pay rise for Health and Social Care workers and to campaign for: -

- Opposition to the Health and Care Bill
- Support a mass public health education programme to promote vaccination take-up, including paid time off work to attend information sessions and vaccination appointments, and for post-vaccine recovery.
- Opposition to mandatory vaccination as a condition of deployment in health, social care and other sectors.
- Opposition to NI increases, tax the rich and big business to fund health and social care.
- Social care to be brought into public ownership as part of a national integrated health and social care service.

Union Organisation

X76 beyond remit of DWP Conference

DWP Essex (047050)

Conference notes the UK government announcement in November 2021 of a £210 million grant for the development of small modular reactors (nuclear fission reactors) to a consortium of private investors, led by Rolls Royce. The first five SMR's are expected to cost £2.2bn each and are not expected to be available until after 2030. This announcement follows the introduction of the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Bill the previous month, which charges consumers in advance for the costs of new nuclear reactors as well as any future increases. This Regulated Asset Base (RAB) funding method is expected to raise £12billion through increased electricity bills from April 2022. The National Audit Office estimates £50bn construction costs for the reactors at Hinkley Point C in Somerset, more than eight times the original estimate. The cost of Sizewell C is almost certain to be more than the £20billion estimate.

Another major problem of nuclear energy is the potential for catastrophe and threat to human life, demonstrated over the years by the accidents at Windscale, Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima. There is potential for terrorist attacks, insider sabotage, cyberattacks or aircraft crashes that could all lead to widespread disaster. There are also problems of transportation and safe storage of waste which has radioactive lifespans of thousands of years. The mining of Uranium is also a major health and safety issue and at the current rate of uranium consumption, with conventional reactors, the world supply of viable uranium will only last for 80 years.

Conference recognises that the problems of carbon emissions and global warming have to be dealt with by moving away from the burning of fossil fuels. But there is the availability of alternative cheaper low carbon renewable energy supplies, rather than nuclear energy. 1100 wind turbines can generate the same output as the Hinckley Point C reactors at less than a quarter of the cost. Variability in wind power production can be offset with hydro output at peak demands. In addition to UK hydro capacity the 450 mile submarine power cable to Norway that opened in October 2021 allows the export of wind generated power to renew hydro capacity and importation of electricity at peak demand. The production of green hydrogen as an energy storage medium is also a solution to enabling large scale renewable integration

Other renewable supply includes solar energy that currently provides 4.1% of UK electricity. Wave power generation and tidal power stations, such as the EDF Rance power station in Brittany, show the enormous potential in the UK. The Southampton District Energy Scheme also shows the potential for geothermal projects if investment were available and the proposed 650 mile Icelink electricity interconnector between Iceland and Great Britain would enable the import of reliable geothermal electricity. All of these projects could provide jobs and offset any job losses involved in abandoning nuclear energy.

Conference therefore instructs the NEC to oppose proposals for new nuclear energy projects within the TUC and to argue the case for renewable energy supply.

X77 beyond remit of DWP Conference

DWP Cornwall (047094)

Conference recognises that local trades councils are crucial to achieving working-class solidarity, and for this they need increased support and encouragement from Congress.

Conference notes that Trades Council input to the TUC is restricted to one delegate to Conference, and no representation on the General Council. Furthermore the single motion to conference that is currently allowed was hard-won and success only came in recent years.

Conference believes that Trades Councils should have a delegation to Congress larger than the current one delegate, and that Trades Councils delegations to Congress should be able to speak and vote on any motion or other business.

To this end, this Conference resolves:

To support any proposal to allow Trades Councils having a delegation of at least three from Congress 2023;
To support any proposal to allow the Trades Councils' delegation to be entitled to speak and vote on any Congress motion or other matters;

To support any motions to Trades Union Congress to allow for a Trades Councils' Representative on the TUC General Council.

X78 No instruction to GEC

DWP South East Wales (047116)

Conference notes the absence of significant member-facing activity on the demands of our National Campaign since early 2019. Conference does not accept that such activity had to cease during the pandemic

Conference welcomes the launch of a consultative ballot in early 2022, noting that there were branches which called for this last year and who were opposed by the NEC.

Conference welcomes the inclusion of demands such as on annual leave, London weighting, a £15 per hour living wage, and a backdated cut in pension contributions, even though some of these demands were previously denounced by NEC members as a "shopping list". Conference further welcomes that targeted material has been produced, if limited in amount.

Regardless of the outcome of this ballot, members cannot wait another year for action on pay, pensions, redundancy terms, rights at work and staffing. The position facing members – huge pressure at work and huge pressure on bills at home – is becoming desperate.

Members must be given the confidence to fight, and a mandate must be sought by whatever means are necessary to launch the industrial campaign we know is needed to win on any of these issues. This includes disaggregating the ballot and re-balloting weaker areas, concentrating resources in those areas in ways similar to the UCU Four Fights campaign.

Conference accepts the NEC pay demand of 10% as a first step towards reversing 15 years of austerity, with appropriate underpin to ensure those at bottom of their pay band are not disadvantaged. Conference instructs the NEC to further demand:

- A minimum rate of pay of £15 per hour across all employers with appropriate additions to safeguard London pay weighting.
- A return to national civil service bargaining, alongside an agreed pathway to bring outsourced staff back into the public sector on advantageous terms.
- Reversal of detrimental conditions introduced as part of the Civil Service Reform terms; a reduction of the working week to 35 hours maximum with no loss of pay or benefits.
- Recruitment of 100,000 additional staff across the core Civil Service bargaining areas; permanency for all existing temporary staff and extra staff for outsourced areas.
- Contractual safeguards on workloads, to ensure that staff safety and wellbeing is central to the calculation of how many staff each employer needs in the future.
- For members to have access to the pension scheme of most benefit to them, with reduced contributions, reduced retirement age and increased value for members.
- No detrimental changes to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme; for intervention by the Cabinet Office to strengthen redundancy safeguards on all private sector

Should these demands not be accepted by the employer, the NEC is instructed to take all necessary measures to prepare the union for significant industrial action, including by coordinating with other public sector trade unions.

The NEC should work with groups and national branches to target campaign materials, relating them back to the particular priorities of members in each area.

X79 Beyond remit of DWP Conference

DWP HQ London (047039)

Conference agrees the following principles for the future of the union:

Contested Group, NEC and Senior Elected Full-time Officer (General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary) elections should be conducted on the principle of proportional representation and therefore conducted via Single Transferable Vote or the Alternative Vote where only one position is available.

Conference instructs the NEC to agree a timetable for the implementation of this for the Group and National elections of 2023.

X80 No instruction to GEC

DWP Durham (047121)

This Conference notes with concern the rising cost of living, which will have a major impact on individuals and the families of thousands of trade union members in our region.

In-work poverty is already at record levels, with increased casualisation, zero hours contracts and a Universal Credit system that is not fit for purpose to support families and lift them out of poverty. The impact of the pandemic and years of public and private sector pay restraint have compounded the problem, with the value of workers pay falling dramatically over the last 10 years. Workers are now working harder and more flexibly, for less pay in real terms.

Despite the heroic role played by both public and private sector workers in delivering vital services during an unprecedented pandemic, pay looks set to be subject to restraint with workers once again paying for the cost of the crisis.

Many face a bleak year in 2022 and beyond, with energy bills rising by up to 50%, national Insurance contributions increasing by 1.25%, rising food bills, cuts to Universal Credit, inflation at a 30 year high (CPI 5.4% January 2022), and increased transport costs.

Surveys of trade union members have revealed families running out of money well before payday and struggling to pay bills and buy food.

This Conference condemns the government for ripping up the pensions cost-sharing agreement for public sector schemes and for passing on the cost of the McCloud/Sargeant remedy to scheme members. We welcome the joint legal action by unions to challenge this pensions robbery.

We call on the regional council to coordinate campaign activity in our region, to include:

- An early meeting of the Northern Public Services Alliance to agree coordinated campaign activity on pay and pensions
- Using the media and political contacts to highlight the need for a major programme of pay restoration that recognises the vital contribution made by all frontline workers across public and private sectors during the pandemic
- Joint public and private sector campaigning, including support for the TUC's ongoing key worker pay campaign
- Expose the absence of real "levelling up" or any "northern powerhouse" using the media and political contacts
- Coordinated support for trade unions in the region engaged in industrial action struggles over pay and pensions.

Employee Relations

E81 Covered By A34

DWP Cambridgeshire (047049)

Conference agrees that formal arrangements for trade union consultation at local level should be introduced under the DWP Employee Relations Framework.

Conference recognises that in the absence of a formal procedure for trade union consultation at local level the formal process for Collective Grievances, under DWP Grievance Procedure paragraph 11, may provide a means for collectively resolving disputed issues at a local level.

Conference notes that in the absence of an acceptable resolution this process may help to build a basis for a statutory ballot under employment law.

Group Conference instructs the Group Executive Committee to:

Seek improvement of the DWP Employee Relations Framework for the introduction of formal trade union consultation arrangements at local level

Provide guidance for PCS Branches, in the absence of formal consultation arrangements at local level, for circumstances where it would be appropriate for a Collective Grievance to be brought with trade union support. Provide guidance for members in support of collective trade union action under the Collective Grievance procedure for resolving grievances.

E82 Covered By A34

DWP Bradford (047002)

Conference agrees that formal arrangements for trade union consultation at local level should be introduced under the DWP Employee Relations Framework

Conference recognises that in the absence of a formal procedure for trade union consultation at local level the formal process for Collective Grievances, under DWP Grievance Procedure paragraph 11, may provide a means for collectively resolving disputed issues at a local level

Conference notes that in the absence of an acceptable resolution this process may help to build a basis for a statutory ballot under employment law.

Conference instructs the Group Executive Committee to:

- Seek improvement of the DWP Employee Relations Framework for the introduction of formal trade union consultation arrangements at local level
- Provide guidance for PCS Branches, in the absence of formal consultation arrangements at local level, for circumstances where it would be appropriate for a Collective Grievance to be brought with trade union support.
- Provide guidance for members in support of collective trade union action under the Collective Grievance procedure for resolving grievances.

Equality Issues

X83 Conference can't instruct a sub committee of the GEC.

DWP Bucks & Oxon (047108)

DWP are a Disability Confident Leader employer and as such we would expect them to lead in making adjustments for employees with health conditions & disabilities when they join the organisation and once they're employed with the Department.

Unfortunately, this is often not the case. Over recent months we have seen multiple instances of new employees joining, having raised their health condition or disability with Civil Service recruitment. Once they've arrived in DWP sites, chiefly Jobcentres, there's been little knowledge (and sometimes appetite) amongst Line Managers to make reasonable adjustments, with the local PCS Reps getting involved in countless cases.

Additionally, we've had instances of experienced staff where the Department has failed to make reasonable adjustments in its internal and external recruitment processes, including two in our Branch who had their declaration of long term disability seemingly ignored during a recent external HEO recruitment exercise and another with a Workplace Adjustment Passport in place who was told that a role which was advertised by Expression of Interest as Hybrid working, couldn't be guaranteed as Hybrid once they'd been offered it, even though they needed this adjustment for their health. Upon sending their Workplace Adjustment Passport to the recruiting Line Manager after accepting the role and giving notice in their current role they were told that 'if you accept the role we will have to undertake a new OHS and review the Adjustment Passport' as if to threaten the employee & suggest that the employee & their prior Line Management weren't believed. As a result, the employee pulled out of the new internal role, which would've constituted temporary promotion, as they felt the Line Manager showed little understanding or empathy towards Health & Disability.

PCS Bucks & Oxon branch think this is wrong on any level but particularly for one of the largest public sector organisations in the Country and one which is proud to call themselves a Disability Confident Leader.

Conference therefore instructs the GEC Equality Group to survey DWP members to gather numbers and examples of staff who have been discriminated against, for health and disability reasons.

The GEC is further instructed to use the results of this to force the Department to provide much better HR training for managers, including around Health, Disability & other protected characteristics & what a Reasonable Adjustment may look like. We hope this will help reduce the high instances of Discrimination & unfair treatment occurring to our members in DWP.

Notes