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Briefing

Branch Briefing BB-51-26
To: Branch Chairs, Secretaries and Workplace Representatives

20 August 2026

Civil Service Pensions Crisis Update
The next major update from the Cabinet Office on efforts to get Capita deliver an acceptable level of service and clear the huge backlog of cases is due in September. The Cabinet Office cancelled the scheduled 14 August meeting.

It gives me no pleasure to report that I remain sceptical about whether the latest deadlines will be met. At the last count there were still over 17000 outstanding cases. Capita have repeatedly made promises that they have not kept. Meanwhile thousands of pension scheme members remain without access to either pension quotes to enable them to retire or without access to their pension as income following retirement.

PCS members have continued to contact the union with personal testimonies. Members' personal stories range from those with serious illnesses attempting to retire to spend more time with families, to people running up credit card debts and borrowing at a time they should be relaxing after life- long service. Once again, I would like to thank PCS reps for asking affected members to send information about scheme members delaying their retirement. Instances can still be reported via editor@pcs.org.uk.

I will ensure that the pensions scandal caused by Capita is not swept under the carpet, and that this union will continue to exert maximum pressure to solve this crisis. The personal testimonies from members assist us enormously in doing this.

Parliamentary pressure
Members of Parliament are also receiving large numbers of complaints and requests for assistance from constituents. At the weekly meeting with the Cabinet Office on 7 August PCS negotiators asked if Capita have a system in place for dealing with MP's complaints. It appears that complaints made to MP's will not be given any more priority than other cases, which will anger politicians working on behalf of constituents.

Capita would do well to remember the damning condemnation of their performance in Parliament and the Ministerial statement that the service would be insourced now if it were possible.

PCS has strong links with MPs through our PCS Parliamentary Group. We will continue to work closely with these MPs to ensure the maximum parliamentary pressure is placed on Capita to clear the backlog. We will also be urging MPs to support the PCS demand that the service is insourced.

Pensions modeller
Director of Civil Service Pensions Richard Vianello stated (Taskforce update 14) that Capita expect to make a new pensions modeller available from October 2026. Again, I am sceptical.

They are in effect promising to have a product ready in October 2026 that was supposed to be rolled out in April. I will report further after the September update.

Inadequate resources
I reported in previous briefings our view that that Capita have not put in place sufficient resources to deliver civil service pensions. This is clearly demonstrated by the need to allocate over 140 civil servants to clear the backlog. The company is also yet to deliver promised upgrades to IT systems.

Advice for members
Scheme members are reminded to register for the member portal as the first option in pursuing late quotes or other related issues and contacting Capita via the portal. Members can send a form to make a complaint and/or call 0300 123 6666 or write to Civil Service Pension Scheme, PO Box 713, Darlington, DL1 9JZ.

The Pensions Ombudsman can direct the scheme manager or administrator to compensate for distress and inconvenience. The first step is to follow the complaints procedure which starts with a complaint to Capita. After 30 days, unless the complaint is resolved, complete and submit form IDR1 to Capita to begin the Independent Dispute Resolution process. Where the first stage fails to resolve the issue, the case goes to the Scheme Manager using form IDR2. It is important to use these processes. The Pension Ombudsman will only consider cases that have been taken up via the IDR process.

Sign the Megaphone Petition
Over 12,500 people have signed our Megaphone petition demanding an end to the Civil Service Pension Crisis and for pension administration to be brought back in-house.

The petition will be delivered to No.10 Downing Street on Monday 24 August at 12.00 am.

I urge all PCS members, friends and colleagues to sign the petition before August 24 to make the strongest possible case that civil service pensions administration should be insourced now.

- If you are retiring, remember to join PCS ARMs.
- Demand insourcing and an end to the pensions crisis by completing our e-action.
- Ask your MP to demand the Synergy payroll and HR contract is paused
- Contact editor@pcs.org.uk where members have been forced to continue working

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