

7 March 2024

PCS to launch strike ballot over pay campaign

PCS is to launch a strike ballot across the UK Civil Service in support of its national campaign for decent pay, pensions justice and job protection.

Our national executive met yesterday (6) to agree the next steps in our national campaign, following a national consultation and the submission of our pay demands to the Cabinet Office on 16 February.

The statutory postal-only ballot opens on **18 March** and closes on **13 May** and it is vital that everyone takes part so that we beat the 50% legal threshold for strike action.

A special NEC meeting will be held on **15 May** to consider the results.

The strike levy is to restart at the end of May, in support of the national campaign. The levy was a game changer last year in respect of forcing concessions from the employer as it enabled us to call hard-hitting action that hurt them.

Our pay demands for 2024/25 to the UK Government include:

- a cost-of-living rise, with an inflation-proofed increase plus pay restoration
- pay equality across departments
- a living wage of £15 per hour
- London weighting provision of a minimum £5,000 per year
- 35 days annual leave minimum
- a significant shortening of the working week with no loss of pay.

Trade dispute letters were sent to employers at all levels in the dispute on 19 February. There are 171 bargaining areas in the dispute encompassing nearly 150,000 PCS members. Employers were given a deadline of Tuesday (5) to meet our demands.

The Cabinet Office generally publishes the civil service pay remit guidance annually on 31 March. The NEC believes that it is important to send a signal to the employer that we are serious about moving to industrial action to get them to meet our demands through the remit guidance process.

At a meeting last week, the Cabinet Office invited us to set out our priorities for the remit guidance. We said that our priorities in talks on this year's remit would be:

- an inflation-proofed increase plus a degree of pay restoration;
- and measures to deal with low pay, particularly the impact of statutory rises in the national minimum wage eradicating the civil service grading structure at the 3 most junior grades.

Members in the Scottish devolved sector are not included in the statutory ballots as they agreed a 2-year pay deal and commitments on job security last year. But they will pay into the strike levy as they continue to be affected by the issue of pensions.

Survey shows great support

In the national campaign survey which ran from 20 February to 5 March, members overwhelmingly backed the NEC's campaign strategy.

96% of respondents said they supported the pay demands, 82% were prepared to strike to achieve them and 66% supported a strike levy to fund paid targeted action.