

PCS CONFERENCE 2015

DWP LEFT UNITY

This has been a tough year for DWP members and the removal of check-off has really tested the strength of our organisation. With 80% of our members signed up to direct debit though, our reps have risen to the challenge. PCS has done better than any other union faced with this challenge but it is clear that there is a lot of hard work ahead.

Withdrawing check-off is an attempt to weaken the strength of PCS but we will come out a stronger, determined and independent union so the government's vindictive attack will have failed.

It is good to be able to report then that we have had achievements in both Garston and Glasgow when groups of our members, supported by our Left Unity leadership, stood together to take action.

In Garston, the threat of their office closing led to members in DWP Liverpool branch taking 9 days of strike action to try to prevent the closure. Whilst the action didn't save the office, it led to many important gains and improvements for those members and they were clear that having a strong union, and being prepared to stand together, got them those improvements.

In the Glasgow Universal Credit office, management tried to impose stringent Festive leave levels. Members were furious and the branch balloted with an overwhelming vote for strike action. So desperate were DWP to avoid a dispute in Universal Credit that they immediately shifted, and kept moving, until the members had the leave that they requested and no action was needed.

Both of these disputes were resolved to the satisfaction of the members because the union organisation is strong, with high membership density and members understand the importance of sticking together to defend themselves.

The Left Unity - led GEC have now reached a stage in negotiations over Universal Credit and how it will be implemented though, that leave us no alternative but to ballot members working there for industrial action. At group conference we will debate the issues and in particular, take a position to DWP's attempt to implement "Ways of Working" – a term already hated by our members which has wider implications for the rest of DWP.

DWP pay talks are due to start straight after conference and there is no doubt that pay levels in DWP are at rockbottom now. Members are rightly furious about the continued restraint of public sector pay. Our members deserve fair pay and are prepared to fight to get it.

The election of a wholly Tory government will no doubt see them push ahead with more cuts, further privatisation and attempts to drive through more anti-trade union legislation. They will also attempt to increase their attacks on the welfare state, or social security as we prefer to call it. PCS acts in solidarity with claimants and community groups and never will that be needed more than in the period ahead.

With all of the attacks we face, we need as much solidarity as possible – a divided left is simply not acceptable during the period ahead – United we really are stronger. Left Unity will continue to lead the way on PCS DWP campaigns. We wish delegates a fraternal, successful conference. Let's stay united for the battles that lie ahead of us.

DWP CONFERENCE MOTIONS

Our recommendation on the motions on the DWP conference agenda:

MONDAY

Union Organisation – support all except

A8 - Oppose

The details of branches sign up rate has been important to show branches how well they have been doing and to give an indication of where resources should be offered to support branches.

Privatisation – support all

Health & Safety – support all except

A19 - Remit/Oppose

In many offices the control measures that have been discussed and introduced have been seen positively by reps who would not want to return to just podiums. Podiums are just one control measure we would want reps to have access to a range of measures not just impose one - the podiums on every JC

CMG – support all

Welfare reform – support all except

A60 - Remit/Oppose

Unclear what the intention of the motion is but the demand is that labour market decisions should be cancelled on front line. This could put JC members at risk and under pressure to overturn decisions. If remitted the issue of improving the hardship process could be taken forward to meet the urgent need of the public and also the safety of our members.

Pay – support all

Attendance Management – support all except

A90 - Oppose

Individual's health conditions should already be taken into account for trigger points. Age in itself does not mean higher sickness absence and proposal in the motion would be unlawful discrimination on the basis of age under the Equality Act.

Conditions of Service – support all

TUESDAY

Staffing – support all

Operations – support all

Contact Centres – support all

Industrial Relations – support all

Equality – support all

BLOCK VOTE ELECTIONS AT CONFERENCE

There are a number of vacancies this year. If you know of someone who would be interested in standing, please nominate them and the DWP Left Unity National Committee will issue a recommendation after nominations close.

Scrutineer – Tracey Hanlon, Lindsay Miles and Rory Souter elected unopposed
There is 1 vacancy

Group Black Members Committee – Jeremy Bedford, Harminder Lothian, Ratnam Maheswaran were elected unopposed
There are 3 vacancies

Womens Committee - Serena CHEUNG, Pauline CRAWFORD, Lesley CROWDEN, Rachel HEEMSKERK, Katya LAWDER, Liz McGACHEY, Viv PERKINS, Sian THOMAS, Carrie-Anne WATKINS, Rachael WATTS, Jackie WOOD were elected unopposed
There is 1 vacancy

Equality Committee – Left Unity recommends:
Jan BAXTER, Grace BELLERBY, Chris CLARKE, Bridget CORCORAN, Pauline CRAWFORD, Lesley CROWDEN, David CUNNINGHAM, Brian FALLON, Rachel HEEMSKERK, Harminder LOTHIAN, Liz McGACHEY, Colin TURNER

LGBT Committee - Jan BAXTER, Jeremy BEDFORD, Bridget CORCORAN, David CUNNINGHAM, Brian FALLON, Alan ROBINSON, Mark STEEDMAN, Colin TURNER were elected unopposed - **There are 4 vacancies**

Young Members Advisory Committee – Tom Kennedy-Hughes, Sarah Spencer elected unopposed - **There are 12 vacancies**

DWP LEFT UNITY RALLY

Sunday May 18th – UMI Hotel - 1930pm

Please note: There will be no DWP LU rally on Monday night this year

Come and discuss how Left Unity can build for the Alternative and win for PCS members

Guest Speakers (In a personal capacity):

- **Chris Baugh, LU Assistant General Secretary**
- **Fran Heathcote, LU DWP Group President**

All Welcome

Monday 19th May – 6pm
Hewitson suite, Brighton Conference Centre
PCS in a hostile environment –
How should we change the union?

Chair – Janice Godrich Speaker – Mark Serwotka

PCS has been under attack from the Tories for standing up to their brutal austerity cuts. We are fighting a concerted attempt to destabilise our finances, as well as campaigning against huge cuts in the civil and public services. Our commercial sector members continue to organise against hostile employers.

In changing circumstances, the NEC has agreed to carry out a strategic review of the structure of the union.

Come to the fringe meeting to discuss how we can build an even stronger PCS.

National Left Unity Rally
at Paginini Ballroom, in THE OLD SHIP
WEDNESDAY 1830 until 8pm

CHAIR

JANICE GODRICH – LUNC CHAIR

GUEST SPEAKERS

- Mark Serwotka - PCS General Secretary (personal capacity)
- Martin Mayer – United Left (UNITE)
- Hillsborough Justice campaign group speaker
- Zita Holbourne PCS NEC (personal capacity)

VOTE LEFT UNITY - JOIN LEFT UNITY

Left Unity is an open democratic organisation where all socialist reps can discuss ideas and formulate PCS policies. Anyone who is a socialist and is committed to organising the union in the best way for members along socialist principles can join us.

Unity is our strength. Join Left Unity to campaign for a strong union and a fairer society.

If you want to join Left Unity, please complete and return this tear off slip

Name:.....

Address:.....
.....
.....

Branch:.....

Tel

number:.....**Email:**.....

Please return to **Katrine Williams – DWP LU Secretary**, or any LU GEC member