

# Branch Briefing REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All PCS Representatives and Advocates in HMRC**

cc: **VOAC** (for information)

Can this Briefing be circulated via HMRC IT systems: **NO**

Website: **YES**

Action: **For the attention of all PCS representatives and advocates**

Date: **1 July 2022**

Ref: **R&C/BB/030/22**

## PREPARING FOR THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

**All reps and advocates invited to provide feedback to help us develop our organising and comms strategy**

### Background

To implement the National Organising Strategy, each Group has been asked to produce a union building and organising plan which reflects:

- The priorities of increasing participation
- Builds union power
- Recruits new members to the union

Group plans are to be set in the context of:

- Winning the national campaign demands
- Reflecting local and employer specific circumstances
- Recognising that local disputes are a vital way of building the union

The Group Executive Committee (GEC) met on 28<sup>th</sup> June and agreed the preliminary actions needed to gather the information and data we need to develop our organising and comms strategy.

### Gathering feedback from all reps and advocates

All reps and advocates have been sent a copy of this briefing directly as it can't be shared on HMRC systems. Branch officers should now agree a process that provides all reps and advocates with the opportunity to provide feedback. This could be done by holding a meeting or by asking for feedback by correspondence. The feedback received can then be used to develop a collective response on behalf of the branch.

Please remember, any discussions about the national campaign can't be conducted using HMRC systems. Branches can obtain a Zoom licence to hold meetings about the campaign and WhatsApp is another quick and easy way to share information securely.

We would encourage everyone to be completely open and honest when providing feedback. Having an accurate picture of the barriers that branches face will give us the best possible chance of developing an organising & comms plan that will set us up for success.

## **Sharing the branches response with the GEC**

PCS Organising & Campaigning Hub Leads will be arranging meetings with the branches in their area to discuss the feedback received. These meetings need to take place before 12<sup>th</sup> July.

## **How this feedback will be used by the GEC**

The feedback will be used to develop our groups organising & comms plan. We will also be sharing it with the National Union so we can work together to provide branches with as much support as we can.

## **Feedback required from branches**

1. **Reviewing the data from the previous ballots:** Data on the previous ballots is available from PCS Hub Leads. We would encourage branches to review this and to reflect on any lessons learnt and best practice.
2. **Barriers to participation:** What were the barriers to reps and activist's participation in the previous consultative ballot? What can we do to overcome those barriers?
3. **Delivering effective Industrial Action:** do branches have any initial thoughts on the areas where we could deliver effective industrial action?
4. **Any other feedback from branches:** e.g. what do you need to successfully deliver a high turnout in the forthcoming statutory ballot?
5. **Model Branch Plan:** After branches have reviewed the model branch organising plan (see annex A) can they identify any risks, issues, constraints, or dependencies associated with delivering this in their branch?

## Model Branch Organising Plan

(from the PCS National Organising Strategy)

### Current Data

Branch Name:  
 Membership Level:  
 Potential Membership:  
 Density:  
 No. of Reps  
 No. of Unique Position Holders:  
 No. of advocates:  
 Activist-to-member ratio:  
 % Member Personal Email:  
 % Member Mobile Phone:  
 % Home Ballot Address:

### Basic organising questions

**Inductions.** Are there currently or likely to be any new staff starting over the next year? If so; how do we get access to inductions or other introductory meetings? Who in the branch will take the lead on this and that each new joiner is contacted and asked to join the union? Would reps benefit from training or guidance on carrying out inductions or any other recruitment tasks?

**New starters.** Who takes responsibility for looking at the new joiner figures each month? Who takes the lead on ensuring that each new joiner is welcomed to the union and contact information for the branch provided for them?

**Apprentices.** Apprentices can be either new recruits to your organization (usually the majority, but not always) or existing employees. Do you get existing stats from the employer and/or your national group leads? Do you have any apprentices in your workplace? If yes, make sure you get access to their induction. Training is available from the PCS Academy to support ULRs and other reps on what is an apprenticeship, and how to recruit, organise and support apprentices.

**Training and Development.** Do the existing activists need any training? Are there keen members or new starters who could be encouraged to become Advocates? Who takes the lead for identifying training needs and ensuring reps and members are encouraged to attend PCS Academy courses? Is the branch aware of the new digital routes for accessing PCS training?

**Retention.** Each month there are likely be a number of lapsers and leavers. Who takes responsibility in the branch for checking the report on PCS Digital for recent lapsers and leavers? Who takes responsibility for contacting the lapsers and leavers to see if we can persuade them to stay in PCS?

**Local Campaign Issues** For the year ahead what are the most important local workplace issues for the branch? (List as many as appropriate)

Have members (and non-members) been surveyed or consulted by the branch on these issues to identify which they feel strongest about and to gauge their willingness to campaign on them? If not, who would take the lead on preparing a survey for all staff?

Has a campaign been prepared for one or more of these issues to take forward over the next year? If not, when can a full meeting been arranged to complete one?

### **National Campaign**

If your branch is part of the national pay campaign then this following section will help structure upcoming actions over the following year. Previous engagement data we hold is:

% of Members who told us they voted in 2022 pay ballot:

% Turnout in 2022 pay ballot:

% of Members who completed the last national survey on pay:

% of Members who told us they signed the Government Pay Petition:

**General and basic steps.** The data showing which members completed the above actions is located on PCS Digital. What general steps can be taken to prioritise and engage the members who did not take part in any of the above actions; that is how can the branch increase your own members' engagement over the following year? (Things to think about: increasing contact information; branch visibility; local communications such as leaflets and posters)

**Specific and targeted steps.** Over the next year, the national campaign will employ a variety of tests to ensure that branches are ballot ready. These will include actions such as online surveys, petitions and meetings. What specific steps can the branch take to target the currently unengaged members so that they take these actions? (Things to think about: mapping the workplace; targeted persuasive conversations; use of the Organising App)

### **Targets for the Year**

Taking all of the above (Basic Organising, Local Campaigns and National Campaigns) into account, what would be an achievable monthly target for the branch to aim for to increase the following:

- Membership (and Density) levels
- Member Personal Emails
- Member Mobile Phones
- Member Home Ballot addresses
- Activist Ratio
- Member Engagement

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