

# Members' Briefing REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All Members**

cc: **Branch Secretaries, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for info)

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

Website: **YES**

Action to be taken: **For the attention of all members**

Date: **26 May 2022**

Ref: **R&C/MB/026/22**

## **JOIN THE FIGHT FOR YOUR JOB**

### **PCS prepare to fight 91,000 Civil Service job losses**

- **Government plans for Civil Service cuts threatens more than 20,000 HMRC jobs**
  - **All PCS members should get ready to fight for jobs and fair pay**
    - **Not a member? Join PCS now and fight for your job**
  - **PCS National Conference votes for Autumn ballot for action**
    - **Join the TUC demonstration on 18 June**

Following Prime Minister Boris Johnson's announcement of the government's plans to cut 91,000 jobs in the Civil Service over the next three years, PCS is immediately launching our campaign to fight the cuts.

#### **Massive job-cuts threatened**

The announcement by the government, that they plan to axe 91,000 civil service jobs over the next three years, means that just as members in HMRC are still recovering from the largest departmental redundancy exercise in memory, the department has been given a month to draw up plans to reduce its staffing by a further 20-30% over the next three years. Furthermore, the government has made it clear that they won't allow these cuts to wait Year 3, but the job losses must begin in as soon as possible in Year 1.

**What this means in real terms is that if the government presses HMRC for the full 30% cut in staffing, more than 20,000 jobs in the department will be in jeopardy. Even if the government opts for the lower 20% option, almost 14,000 jobs are facing the axe.**

It's not long since Ministers approved the recruitment of thousands more staff in Customer Compliance Group, just to handle the 'business as usual' work. Likewise on top of recent recruitments, plans had been approved to recruit hundreds more staff in Customer Services, again just to deal with existing workloads.

So, we know there's no justification for these job losses. Frankly HMRC know there's no justification for the job losses, given the fact they've recently been frantically looking to recruit staff.

It's all well and good the Chief Executive's message to staff saying "*the Civil Service must consider how we can streamline our workforce and equip ourselves with the skills to be an even more effective, lean and innovative service that continues to deliver for the people we serve*", but with potentially tens of thousands of staff losing their jobs, this will either put even more pressure on the staff who are left, or involve HMRC stopping doing huge swathes of what we do. It's hard to see how the latter can be described as "continuing to deliver for the people we serve".

Then there's the threat of more privatisation. What we can't rule out is the government once again taking the opportunity to shovel huge amounts of public money to their cronies in the Private Sector, to try to take advantage of the chronic understaffing their senseless job-cuts will have created.

## Get organised

Over the coming weeks, we'll be organising meetings with members to keep you up to date on the campaign and prepare the ground for the battle that is ahead of us. We'll make the best use of technology we can, to make your attending as easy as possible. Make sure you take the opportunity to take part.

If you haven't already done so, let PCS have your personal/non-work email address and your mobile phone number. We'll only use it to keep you informed about PCS matters. You can update your details securely online by registering for [PCS Digital](#) or by contacting your local PCS rep, and asking them to enter your details securely on the PCS Organising App.

Remember this is a government that simply does not care about the people it employs. It was more than happy to classify HMRC staff as 'Key Workers', and to applaud you for pretty much saving the economy through your work on the furlough schemes; but now they think the worst of the pandemic is over, normal service is resumed, and yesterday's economic saviours are to be tomorrow's sacrificial lambs.

## Not a member? You need to join PCS

If you know a colleague who's not a member of PCS, then show them this briefing, and tell them how vital it is that they join PCS, to strengthen the union that will be fighting for everyone's job and for fair pay. If you've read this briefing and you aren't yet a member of PCS, then [join today](#).

## National Conference votes for industrial action ballot

Faced with more attacks on pay in the Civil Service, all made against a backdrop of rocketing inflation and astronomical energy bills; on the first day of this year's PCS National Conference, branch delegates voted overwhelmingly for a ballot for industrial action in this coming Autumn. Even though this year's pay award in HMRC is well above the latest pay cap already announced by the government, it is around half the rate of inflation – which will shoot up still further when the Autumn energy bill increases take effect.

The government has already made taking industrial action more difficult than ever, by demanding a 50% turnout in any ballot, even though there's no minimum turnout for ballots for elections to the House of Commons! To put that point in perspective, if everyone standing in a by-election for the House of Commons since 1997 had needed a 50% turnout, only 24% of the winning candidates would have been elected.

Despite this dictatorial-style restriction, in the recent consultative ballot, if just 35 more members in each HMRC branch had voted in the ballot, the group would have beaten the turnout required in a statutory ballot. So you can see that despite the huge obstacles the government has placed in front of members fighting for jobs and fair pay, it wouldn't take much more for PCS members in the second largest government department to get over those obstacles.

It's indisputably true to say that a big turnout in the Autumn ballot for action will send the clearest message to the government, that whether it is fighting for fair pay or fighting to defend our jobs, PCS members will take whatever action is necessary to win.

## Get involved! Join the TUC demonstration on 18 June!

The TUC – the body that brings together all Trade Unions in the country – is organising a huge demonstration in London on 18 June. In the wake of the 91,000 job cuts announcement and the renewed attacks on Civil Service pay, as one of the larger Unions in the country, members are strongly encouraged to join the demonstration.

[Details of the event, and how you can get involved, are on the PCS website.](#) Transport is being arranged and we'll keep you informed of further details as we get them. Come along and say "We demand better!"

**LORNA MERRY**  
Group President

**MARTIN KELSEY**  
Group Secretary

If you require this publication in any other format such as Braille or large print please contact the Group Office at [responseteam@pcs.org.uk](mailto:responseteam@pcs.org.uk) or call 0151 298 3900