

VOTE PCS INDEPENDENT LEFT

GEC Elections
2011

The last year has not been a good one for members in DWP.

In Jobcentres

- Members are forced to make unreasonable referrals to stop benefit payments to vulnerable people.
- Fixed term appointment staff are being sacked and a staffing crisis is only round the corner.

In Pensions Disability and Carers Service

- Work continues to be downgraded.
- Members on telephony are still ruled by the Workforce Manager system which has now been introduced in the wider Department.
- Many Local Service members will lose their jobs.

In Shared Services

- Members face privatisation.
- Contact Centre members' conditions are unacceptable.

In Benefit Centres

- Many offices are earmarked for closure.
- Targets are being increased as are the use of Performance Improvement Plans.
- Automated Service Delivery is a threat to all jobs in benefit processing.

In the Contact Centre Directorate

- Offices are threatened with closure.
- An obsession with Average Handling Times leads to excessive pressure on staff and an inferior service to the public.
- We have to justify the amount of time we spend in the toilet.
- The transfer of Crisis Loan work to local authorities is a threat to thousands of jobs.

Where ever we work

- The Government's attacks on the public sector mean we all have an uncertain future.
- We face Performance Improvement Plans, not so you can improve, so you can be disciplined or sacked.
- We face Attendance Management action if we are unfortunate enough to be sick too often, even if we have a disability and are protected by the law.
- We face disciplinary sanctions for simple mistakes such as sending an email to the wrong address or typing in the wrong national insurance number.
- Some of us haven't had a consolidated pay rise for four years and won't be getting a pay rise this year. Those that do receive a rise will get one that is below inflation – a pay cut in real terms. What has the current GEC done about this? Nothing.
- Our terms and conditions are constantly eroded and the union is unclear about our contractual rights.
- We face staffing cuts, we may lose our jobs or we may be the ones suffering work related stress due to lack of staff.
- We have an employer which increasingly encourages a bullying culture to get more work out of us in less time.
- We have a union which is unable or unwilling to insist on our rights under equality law.

For a better Union vote Independent Left

It is not impossible to change any of these things, but to do so we need a new Union leadership which will take a different approach with the employer. We will insist on effective and open negotiations. Secret negotiations only benefit the employer. Union reps and members should have a right to know what is being discussed.

We will consider effective industrial action at all stages of campaigns to force the employer into binding negotiations. Strike action should not be seen as an end in itself but as a means to an end. It should not just be used as a weapon of last resort. It should be used whenever it is necessary and has members support.

We will support all groups of members who wish to take industrial action in line with the Union's rules. It is disgraceful that members in the TPIP sites had to wait 16 months to have a two day strike. The strength of the union comes from its members. Our leaders should not hold us back.

We will not capitulate when faced with managements' plans but we will be reasonable with them when it is in our members' interests to be so. The union should not be fooled by managements' assurances that we will not be privatised but we should be able to negotiate about issues such as the allocation of facility time

Equality will be an underpinning principle in the whole bargaining agenda. We have to tell management that they have got away with acting unlawfully for the last time. We will do no deals with them until equality impact assessments are carried out before every major change and they stop discriminating against our members.

Please vote for our candidates for the GEC.

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Annette Wright

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Christine Hulme

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Bev Laidlaw
Declan Power
John Puttock
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Charlie McDonald
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