



[Fran Heathcote](#)

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We're keeping up the pressure on pay

"If ministers refuse [to raise pay levels for next year] they know we're ready to re-ballot for strike action."

After an overwhelming 90% of members voted to support our campaign strategy, we're now in talks with the Cabinet Office, making our case for centralised pay talks and demanding the government addresses systematic low and unequal pay in the civil service.

While our strategy has already more than doubled the government's proposed pay offer and put a bonus £1,500 cost-of-living payment in our members' pockets, we're clear this alone is not enough to end the dispute.

We're a strong union and our employers know this, which is why only five out of 212 have so far refused to pay the £1,500. We're keeping up the pressure on them to do so, and on the government to raise pay levels for next year. If ministers refuse, they know we're ready to re-ballot for strike action next year.

We campaign on issues other than pay and conditions, of course, including Safe Passage for refugees. We took our campaign, supported by more than a dozen other trade unions, to both TUC and Labour party conferences, arguing the case for an effective and humane way to stop the boats.

We also released a statement on the appalling situation in the Middle East. We condemned the massacre of Israeli civilians by Hamas, but we also condemn, and are campaigning against, the Israeli government's bombardment of Gaza, which has killed thousands of civilians, including children, which we believe is in breach

of international law.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to thank our outgoing general secretary Mark Serwotka for his tireless work over the last 23 years. His principled leadership has seen the union grow in membership and stature over two decades. He leaves PCS in a much stronger place than when he was elected. As president, I've worked very closely with Mark for the last five years. I like to think we've made a good team because we share the same values and determination to win for our members.

I'm sure I speak for all our members when I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement. Thanks, Mark, for all you've done for the union.