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# PCS delivers devastating dossier to DWP: staff and services at breaking point

PCS officials handed over a dossier at DWP HQ today (Tuesday 5 December), detailing the near collapse of benefit services and deliberate neglect of the most marginalised in society.

PCS asked the permanent secretary for the Department for Work and Pensions, Peter Schofield at London HQ, Caxton House, to accept the [dossier, which contains 50 testimonials of PCS members working in DWP](#). Unfortunately, despite our formal request, a more junior member of staff was sent by DWP leadership to take receipt of the dossier.

While workers speak of their passion for public service, it is impossible to ignore the context of dire mismanagement.

Staff are frequently ill through stress. This is predominantly attributed to understaffing, failures of recruitment and retention, poor conditions and low pay. Hard-working staff despair at the quality of service being delivered to the most vulnerable in society. Over 20,000 of those staff are now paid below the National Living Wage and will need to receive a pay rise in April to bring them up to that level.

One frustrated member writes:

“I have been a civil servant for 46 years and have never seen morale as low. Offices are functioning on good will and colleagues literally have no more to give.”

Another says:

“We recently received a visit from a DWP regional director. Our staff shortages were covered up by drafting additional people from other Jobcentres just for this day.”

Tragically, another remarks:

“Our teams are badly understaffed. The absolute bare minimum is getting done and vulnerable customers are falling through the gaps.”

PCS calls on the government to remedy this disaster as a matter of urgency. Because of failures to recruit and retain, DWP is running at 30,000 below required staffing levels. DWP group president at PCS, Martin Cavanagh, says:

“It is a disgrace that the failure of ministers and this government, to provide our members with the extra staff they need and the pay they deserve, is having such a devastating effect on them. They are amongst the hardest working public servants and are providing a vital service.

“Many of society’s most marginalised are becoming desperate. We call on ministers to read as much of this dossier as they can stomach, take responsibility, and provide our members with the tools to do the job and the standard of living they have earned.”

PCS has called for an urgent meeting with the Secretary of State, Mel Stride, and the Permanent Secretary, Peter Schofield, to discuss how this crisis can be remedied. PCS is demanding additional easements are introduced in the short term and 30,000 additional staff in the longer term to fix a broken system.

[Read the dossier online.](#)

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