

20 December 2023

A message from the HMRC Group President and Group Secretary

A message of seasonal best wishes to all PCS members in HMRC and VOA, from the group president and secretary.

This last year has been another challenging one for PCS members working in HMRC and the VOA. In the pay survey we recently conducted, you told us that the cost-of-living crisis has hit you hard; and we all know that even though we've made significant progress - through a radically improved headline increase and a lump-sum payment - the department has yet to properly get to grips with what is still a crisis of low-pay in HMRC and VOA; and of course, the hardship that low-pay creates can feel particularly cruel at this time of year.

Despite this, the progress we have made has shown us how we can make a real difference when we decide to make a stand together. The action by PCS members in departments across the civil service, including here in HMRC, taken under the banner of our national campaign, was pivotal in securing that progress. The industrial strategy we adopted, raising an additional 'fighting fund' to sustain members in taking targeted, longer-term action, has shown us the way to campaign for further improvements in the future.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support in delivering that progressive strategy, because you were all part of it; whether it was by taking the longer-term action, or by contributing to the fighting fund that allowed that action to be sustained.

The campaign is not over, and our national negotiators continue to meet with the Cabinet Office to press for further improvements aimed at benefiting civil servants, whichever department they work in. If we can't make the progress we need through those negotiations, we could still see the need to resume action in 2024.

One thing we do know about next year is that we'll have a new general secretary, Fran Heathcote, who will be succeeding Mark Serwotka when he retires in

February. Fran and Mark have worked closely together for a number of years, and so we can be confident that the measured and progressive leadership we have now will be continuing in the years to come.

So, with the festive period now upon us, whether or not you celebrate Christmas, can we take the opportunity to wish you all that you would wish for yourselves; and say that we look forward to once again working with you – and standing alongside you – in the year ahead and beyond.

Yours fraternally,

Lorna Merry, PCS R&C group president

Martin Kelsey, PCS R&C group Secretary