

8 September 2024

TUC: PCS leader calls on government to give civil servants a pay rise

Motion passed unanimously as Fran Heathcote addresses TUC Congress in Brighton

The leader of the UK's largest civil service union has today challenged the Labour government to end austerity and give civil servants a pay rise.

Fran Heathcote, general secretary of the 190,000-strong Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union told delegates to TUC Congress in Brighton:

"The above-inflation pay deals agreed this year are welcome, but do not go far enough. We need pay restoration in our public services.

"We accept that won't come in one year or even two – but we should collectively be calling for a pay restoration strategy across the public sector.

"It would be good for recruitment and retention, good for the quality of our public services and good for the economy too.

"If this Government wants the highest sustained growth in the G7, let me tell them they won't get it without sustained growth in workers' wages."

In a wide-ranging speech, she also:

- warned the government against promising a "painful Budget" and "tough choices" which, she will say, "means misery being heaped on working class people"
- called on the government to allow PCS to negotiate direct with them, centrally, rather than with 200 separate employers
- demanded the government end the gender, disability and ethnicity pay gap in the civil service

Fran Heathcote said: “Every single person in this room, every single member of a trade union and every single person in this country relies on well-functioning public services – and our members who deliver them every day of the year.

“And Congress, we all know the damage that austerity has done to those public services and to the pay and living standards of our members.

“Earlier this year PCS commissioned academic research on the economic effects of increasing civil service pay, and the results show that boosting civil service wages more than pays for itself through the benefits it would generate in the wider economy.

“I’m also pleased to tell Congress that the same holds true for other public sector workers too – it’s not just civil servants that are magical – with the greatest benefits arising from boosting the wages of the lower paid.

“So we expect this Labour government to end austerity in our public services and in the pay packets of our members.”

ends