



PCS INDEPENDENT LEFT

For a fighting, democratic union

SEC Conference Bulletin 2025

NEC Elections: What is to be done?



The Independent Left want to change this union and how it is run, not just the personnel of the NEC. This has been reflected in our slogan “For a fighting, rank-and-file controlled union” as long as the IL have existed. If the PCS is to survive and thrive it must be genuinely democratic, drawing on members and reps’ knowledge to build campaigns which will meet contemporary challenges.

Despite the **Coalition for Change** winning a narrow majority last year, Left Unity have abused the offices of General Secretary and President to prevent the NEC from hearing their motions or building the national campaign. LU have forced inertia for the sake of their faction’s political gain.

The General Secretary has unilaterally spent close to £1m on staffing changes designed to bureaucratically insulate her, and a further £640k on redundancies for those who don’t align with her narrow political vision, refusing to even consult the NEC about it. LU acts now only as a way for its leadership to escape modern civil service privations; via facility time, travel and subsistence, or well-paid jobs in the bureaucracy.

Left Unity offer members nothing. Their moribund grip on PCS must be broken.

Members can do this by nominating and voting for IL and our slate of Coalition for Change socialists, standing on a truly transformational platform.

It’s vital that we prepare for the challenges that face us by winning the battle for democracy, and re-launching the national campaign on pay, jobs and pensions, and building our strike fund. We must begin to fight for the flexible working rights that all members deserve. In the 2025 elections our aim is to win an overwhelming NEC majority with our Coalition partners, and enact the radical program of change we need.

The IL will fight for:

- Pay restoration – civil servants have lost 15-38% since 2010. No more civil servants on NMW!
- A return to national pay bargaining, by any industrial or legal means
- An end to the ‘two-tier’ workforce, where newer staff have worse terms and conditions
- Flexible working – our work, our way! Campaigning for a four-day week with no loss of pay
- Pension justice – stopping and reimbursing overpayments, no raising the retirement age
- Equality – fight discrimination legally and industrially. Empower and defend our trans and non-binary siblings in the face of attacks
- Mass-unionisation of outsourced workers. End their poverty pay and conditions and bring them back in-house so they can work with dignity and security
- Work with the overlooked ~5% of civil servants on the Digital and Data Framework to secure a better deal
- Responsive legal services which work for, not against, reps and members
- Climate justice with a worker-led just transition- no jobs on a dead planet!
- Conditions and safeguards for use of artificial intelligence (AI); utilisation should be responsible and socially useful, for the benefit, not detriment, of civil servants and citizens

(cont. overleaf)

Join the IL

The PCS Independent Left is a long-standing organisation of reps and activists from a diverse selection of employers, regions, and grades. We take a lead in our workplaces to instil the principles of open, democratic representation and competent grassroots organising. We are not just around at election time but work to represent, organise, agitate and negotiate on behalf of members all year round.

We encourage you to vote for our candidates, but we also want to engage more activists and members. Please contact or join us through the QR code or social media details below.



**Read the
Coalition for
Change's joint
programme at
bit.ly/PCSIL**

Motions to look out for

- A2** More progressive taxation
- A7** Free public transport
- A14** Trans rights
- A15** Neurodiversity
- A16** Sex work decriminalisation
- A21** National Care Service
- A22** Socialist Green New Deal
- A23** Public ownership and democratic control of energy
- A26** PCS members’ visas
- A27** 4 Day Week campaign
- A28** Long COVID
- A29** Sick pay provision and attendance management
- A31** NEC + NDC + SEC joint collaboration on industrial action and National Campaign





Yes, the levy paid for strike action!

Strike pay comes out of the Fighting Fund. From May last year, members paid the levy into the FF. This raised around £550k each month. Separately the default 50p per member (which is ringfenced out of regular subs) was also paid in. This brought in over £80k per month.

So since May 2024, from the regular contributions and the additional levy, the Fighting Fund received a total £630k or so a month. PCS has paid out well over **£3m in strike pay** in that period!

For the striker, it is hardly going to matter to them whether their strike pay came from the levy or the 50 pence – money is money. And that's true for the FF. It's just one account and all the money is deposited into it. To claim as Left Unity do that there is a difference, you have to invent an accounting trick or illusion and divide the FF into two. Into one half goes the levy and into the other goes the 50 pence contributions.

It's from the '50 pence bit' of the FF that it is claimed FM and other strikers are paid, not from the 'levy bit'. The problem is that the strike pay being paid out is more than

the £80k coming in from all those 50 pences. So it is also claimed that money is 'borrowed' from the levy half of the FF by the 50 pence half to pay the strikers...

We leave it to you to decide whether this is a way of evading the truth that money is money and the strikers' pay is actually coming from the levy. Indeed even if you buy into accounting engineering, the strikers are being paid from the levy, even if you regard that pay as borrowed money.

This 'borrowing' means that the 50 pence half of the Fighting Fund is increasingly in debt to the levy half. We estimate that the 'debt' is now over £1m and climbing.

In order for LU to maintain the pretence that the levy is not funding the strikes they claim that the debt will eventually be eradicated by transferring money from the General Account – this is where our subs and other income goes into – to the FF. Yet despite the increasing 'debt' they have not proposed any transfer of money from the General Account. Which is consistent with the reality that the levy is paying the strikers, and they know it.



IL instigated the debate over pausing and reviewing the levy and our votes were vital in getting the levy paused. We did so even though we knew that the levy was in fact funding the action.

The problem with the levy is that it was unfairly structured and has continually been weaponised by LU. It was clear from the Gen Sec's craven videos and emails to members, openly using her position to attempt to influence the elections, that it was not possible with the levy in place to have a rational discussion on suitable long term strike funding arrangements. That's why we did what we did – to replace the temporary levy with a lower level permanent contribution, which will minimise the need for any temporary levies in future.

Building a campaign to win (cont. from front page)



We must have a campaign which meets these challenges and inspires confidence. Since 2006, the IL has said that pay can't be separate – our campaign will link pay, the right to flexible working, office closures, the erosion of sick pay and other rights, and the injustices faced by those in privatised functions. Each can create disputes and exert leverage on the employer for the other.

Disaggregated ballots, which the IL long argued for, show we can get mandates when campaigns are not rushed for the purposes of LU's election drives. We must be creative and use national and selective

strikes, as well as action short of strikes, and take advantage of the government's travails to exert the maximum industrial leverage.

In order to run transformational campaigns, PCS must become more agile, democratic, and forward looking. To do this we need:

- To enable reps to use membership data and resources to communicate directly with members, without bureaucratic gatekeeping
- Transparency regarding negotiations with the employer and the proceedings of the NEC
- Presidential term limits to prevent senior lay reps becoming part of the bureaucracy
- A permanent arrangement, approved by Annual Delegate Conference, for sustainably building the Fighting Fund, and avoiding temporary levies
- Elections of Full Time Officers who hold bargaining responsibility for our members, on wages which reflect those of members
- Empowering regional committees, devolved nations, and sidelined groups (PSg, Met Police, Culture) with more decision-making powers and funds
- Electoral reform and considering the use of STV (Single Transferable Vote) for ballots instead of MMFPTP (multi-member First-Past-the-Post) for fairer, more proportional representation

And if you want to help shape our work to change PCS, join the IL for just £2 per month.

