

CWU “postpones” vote on Royal Mail deal to head off rejection: Demand strike action and remove Ward and Furey!

Statement by the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (UK)
24 May 2023

Communication Workers Union (CWU) leaders Dave Ward and Andy Furey have again “postponed” a ballot on their rotten agreement with Royal Mail, while still claiming it is “the right agreement for this moment in time” and “will secure the future of the company, jobs, and the service.” The only problem, they insist, is that Royal Mail management has created a “toxic environment” by imposing “failed revisions” that prevents its immediate adoption.

What a rotten self-serving lie! The CWU Postal Executive signed off on these revisions in a joint statement with Royal Mail on March 2, and then agreed to recommend a surrender deal hatched by Ward and Furey with management.

The company has already pushed through its intended revisions for the end of the 2022-23 financial year boasting it has eliminated 10,000 jobs ahead of schedule. All thanks to the CWU.

The three conditions cited by Ward and Furey for reinstating the postal ballot are based on defending the union apparatus as the right arm of management. Their call for the restoration of the Industrial Relations framework is premised on delivering “realistic” and “achievable” productivity and that savings targets “are achievable.”

We all know what these phrases mean in practice. Royal Mail says jump and the CWU asks “how high.” The CWU has already agreed to jointly approach the government to reduce the Universal Service Obligation to five days.

The problem for the CWU leadership is that the back-breaking speed ups and cost-cutting being imposed have triggered an avalanche of opposition, ensuring that if a ballot were held it would produce a resounding NO

vote.

They are trying to secure Royal Mail’s cooperation in making a limited and short-term tactical retreat to disarm postal workers through further “negotiations.” Ward and Furey are desperate to prevent an immediate rejection of their deal. Hence their appeal for a “mass meeting” over Zoom between “every CWU Representative and Manager in the UK”!

It is time to put an end to this grotesque farce! It is no longer necessary for a ballot to be held on a deal that should never have been agreed in the first place. The CWU has all but openly admitted it would have been rejected.

Every postal worker knows this, with a flood of comments on social media including, “The truth is the union knew they’re about to be hammered with massive NO vote” and “I think there is nothing left for us to do now but scrap the deal and announce [strike] dates.”

This is what must now be done. Postal workers must organise in every workplace and branch to demand the resumption of strike action shelved since last December and for the 96 percent strike mandate delivered in mid-February to be finally honoured.

But this means a determined and organised struggle against the CWU apparatus, including against those reps who have acted as local enforcers for the executive. The fight against Royal Mail can only be waged in rebellion against the CWU leadership which acts as a direct arm of the company in destroying jobs, wages and conditions.

The demand must be made for Ward, Furey and the rest to be removed from office and for the union’s funds and the conduct of the strike to be put in the

hands of the rank-and-file. The dues of the membership must be used to provide strike pay, not to fund six figure salaries for Ward and company to negotiate surrender terms.

We call on all postal workers to attend this Sunday's online Zoom meeting of the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee to discuss this fightback. Register here to attend.



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