

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (UK) pass resolution in defence of striking Birmingham bin workers

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (UK)
29 April 2025

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) passed a resolution in support of the 350 Birmingham bin workers at its meeting on April 27. We publish the resolution below.

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee at Royal Mail sends its solidarity to Birmingham bin workers now in the seventh week of their fight against massive pay cuts, the slashing of the safety-critical Waste Recycling and Collection Officer (WRCO) role and the downgrading of crew sizes by a quarter.

Your determined struggle against the cost-cutting drive of Labour-led Birmingham City Council and its unelected commissioners is a direct challenge to the savage austerity agenda by local authorities across the UK.

This is why you are facing a strikebreaking operation by the Starmer Labour government, working with BCC officials to mobilise police, security guards and army planners to coordinate scabbing by private contractors supported by neighbouring councils.

Last week's announcement of talks at ACAS, with Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham declaring, "we could be in touching distance of a deal", combined with her refusal to publicly defend the WRCO role, are a warning that a sellout deal is being prepared behind your backs.

We can speak from bitter experience. Our year-long dispute was ended in April 2023 after talks at ACAS where Communication Workers Union officials led by Dave Ward helped draw up a national agreement enforcing every single one of the company's demands, including seasonal hours, longer duties, attacks on sick-pay and a two-tier workforce with all new hires on inferior pay, terms and conditions.

It is necessary to seize the initiative by establishing a rank-and-file strike committee, demanding complete oversight over all negotiations and ensuring no compromise on workers' demands against removing the safety-critical WRCO role and associated pay cuts.

Birmingham bin workers must not be left to fight alone! This means turning out to other refuse, council and transport workers to close down the strike-breaking and appeal for support.

The threats and blackmail of council leaders and the Starmer government must be rejected. Frontline workers are not responsible for the financial crisis of BCC, or for decades of underfunding by central government.

It is not the jobs and pay of frontline workers which are unaffordable. Society cannot afford the funnelling of billions to the super-rich, including by unelected commissioners in Birmingham and a Labour government gutting public services and slashing welfare and the National Health Service to fund military re-armament and war.



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