



**5 - Support for Members who work in Administration**  
***Feedback from Conference***

## Support for Members who work in Administration

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Following the merger of PTC and CPSA to form PCS around ten years ago, two of our largest groups of members have been foresters and admin staff. Although the introduction of common terms and conditions of service means that the boundaries of these groups are now less sharply focused, and recent years has seen a significant growth in membership from staff in other occupations (such as education and recreation), it is the case that foresters and admin staff still form the core of our membership.

However in recent years the GEC has been concerned that members who work within the admin cadre have not been adequately represented within our internal structures (such as on branch committees), and in addition individuals who join the FC in admin-based roles are becoming less likely to join a union. The GEC would therefore like to know:

**“As a Group, can we do more to attract and support members who work in admin / office based roles—and if so, what?”**

Feedback from Conference delegates was:

**1) Are there any issues of particular concern to admin/office staff that we should be paying more/some attention to?**

- a) There is concern that there will be a dilution of the ‘quality’ of the job if there is an introduction of ‘specialist’ posts.
- b) Some staff are unhappy at perceived inequality in standards when it comes to FJP reviews.
- c) Favouritism
- d) Lack of understanding during times of personal upheaval/stress due to domestic situation
- e) Lack of understanding of the job admin staff actually do.
- f) Reinforce to Line Managers that facility time is available for all staff to participate in union activities. Many staff are intimidated into not pursuing union activities. It is easy for managers to make life difficult for admin staff who stand up for themselves.
- g) A reduction in overall ‘head count’ and reorganisation means worry for admin staff. They are not mobile grades and tend to be overlooked as dispensable during reviews.

**2) Would you support a standing or ad-hoc group to explore any issues of particular interest to admin staff?**

- a) Staff – including admin - tend to flag up concerns when some situation affects them so a separate group is not necessary.
- b) Would be no point having another talking shop.
- c) There could be an additional meeting within the conference purely for admin staff.

**3) Should we reserve places for admin based staff on our committees?**

- a) Not much input on this but the general consensus was that it would be better to co-opt admin staff onto committees where appropriate rather than reserve/positively discriminate in favour of admin staff.

**4) Are there any particular barriers that prevent or deter admin staff from joining or becoming active within the union?**

*These might be work related (e.g. grade, flexi, transport), or 'personal'.*

- a) Line managers who do not allow facility time or make life very uncomfortable for those who stand up for their rights.
- b) Many women have tight schedules balancing work and families and do not have time to become active.
- c) Admin staff, particularly women may feel intimidated in an atmosphere dominated by male foresters.