

No. 666/2018

23rd November 2018

Dear Colleagues

POST OFFICE: CHRISTMAS EVE TRADE DISPUTE – CROWN OFFICES - NOTICE SERVED FOR AN INDUSTRIAL ACTION BALLOT

Branches and our members working in Crown Offices will be aware we have a longstanding trade dispute with the Post Office in regard to Christmas Eve opening hours. Traditionally our members have enjoyed a 1230 closing time, which has been "custom and practice" for many years. However, when Christmas Eve last fell on a week day in 2015 our members took strike action from 1230 to 1600 in defence of this benefit.

As there has been no resolution to this dispute in the intervening period, the Postal Executive has now, after very careful consideration, endorsed the policy to ballot our Crown Office members for strike action over this matter. Obviously our primary focus at the moment is the Save Our Post Office Campaign and the activities planned for Saturday 1st December. Consequently the Postal Executive decision has not been taken lightly and has taken into account fully the fact that many of our members have been calling for this course of action. The ballot timetable is as follows:

- Notice has been served on the Post Office **today** for an industrial action ballot of all Crown Office members
- Ballot papers will be despatched next Friday 30th November 2018
- Ballot closes Monday 10th December
- Also on Monday 10th December the legal 14 Days' Notice will be served on the Post Office for strike action.

Branches are advised that the Postal Executive has also determined a policy whereby a formal proposal has been tabled to the Post Office with the aim of seeking a resolution to this dispute via negotiations. To this end, I am pleased to confirm that further talks with the Post Office are now scheduled for Monday 26th November at ACAS and this will involve Dave Prince, the Chief Conciliator. In the event that an agreement is reached, assuming Postal Executive endorsement, the ballot for strike action can be withdrawn. Conversely if talks break down or if negligible progress is made, Branches will be required to engage with our members in order to ensure a good yes vote in this ballot. Further developments will be reported following the ACAS meeting.

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary