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To: All Members (Retained)

Dear Brother/Sister

FBU Consultative Ballot 5% Revised Pay Offer

All Retained Duty System members of the FBU will soon be receiving a consultative ballot on whether to reject or accept the employers revised 5% pay offer for 2022. The Executive Council is clear that, although an improvement on the previous 2% pay insult, after more than a decade of real terms cuts, 5% doesn't even begin to address the attacks RDS firefighters have faced on their pay.

That is one of the reasons why The Executive Council recommends ***that the revised pay offer is REJECTED***.

There are widespread and increasing difficulties in relation to the recruitment and retention of RDS firefighters. This has created, among other things, increasing problems regarding the availability of appliances crewed by those working retained duties in many FRSs. This severely affects our RDS members' safety in addition to their pay.

This is why the union set out clearly in our 2022 pay claim sent to the National Employers in May of this year that this matter should be addressed by the employers proposing significant improvements in the pay and rewards package for RDS firefighters, **which should include a substantial increase in the annual retaining fee**.

To accept 5% now would close the door on further negotiations on all points of our pay claim in relation to settlement for this year.

RDS firefighters provide a service of huge value to our communities, and often at great personal sacrifice. This was demonstrated even more so by the additional voluntary activities taken on by large numbers of RDS members throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic. **We make no apologies for demanding that our RDS members receive fair and proper pay and reward in return for the commitment they give.**

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In addition to this:

- At a time of such high inflation, the Executive Council does not believe that the revised offer represents fair pay for the fire service. When inflation is taken into account, the 5% offer still represents a further significant **cut in real wages** and follows years of austerity, pay stagnation and falling real wages.
- Firefighters and firefighters control have already lost pay worth 12% in real terms over the last decade and, taking account of the contribution on the frontline throughout the Covid crisis, the Executive Council firmly believes that now is the time for our employers to deliver fair pay.
- When we were initially presented with the 2% insult, we were told it was a final offer and the employers had no more to offer. We are now told that 5% is a final offer and the employers have no more to offer. The change in their position is a direct result of the determination shown by FBU members. That determination is needed again to demand improvements.
- Government and employers have been telling us for over a decade that we either have to accept low pay or cuts – but then they try to force through both. **Enough is enough.** Our aim is to achieve fair pay for all FBU members.

The current situation cannot continue and only through standing and fighting together can we possibly hope to achieve a desperately needed pay rise.

A home address ballot will be conducted and members can cast their vote to reject or accept the offer made by the fire service employers. **The ballot commences on Monday 31 October 2022 and concludes at midday on 14 November 2022.**

You may cast your vote by post OR by using a secure web vote. Please note that you may only vote once – if you return a vote by both post and internet your vote will be spoilt.

The Executive Council unanimously recommends that the offer is rejected and that you vote 'REJECT'.

Yours in unity.



Matt Wrack
General Secretary

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