



You are worth more than a derisory 2%

Pay Offer and Member Consultation

On 18th May 2022 the Government opened the long anticipated White Paper Consultation on Fire Service Reform. With an initial statement from Home Secretary Priti Patel the consultation makes no attempt to mask its clear intent to tear up tried and tested practices that secure our communities and our members the highest standards of provision and protections afforded by today's modern Fire and Rescue Service.

Then on 27th June 2022, Fire and Rescue employers delivered a further insult for firefighters. A pay offer of just 2% in the midst of a cost of living crises and a current rate of inflation of 9.1% (CPI, year on year May 2022).

The FBU set a 21 day period of consultation with the membership to gauge their response to the pay offer, which the Executive Council recommended to reject. The timing of both the pay offer and the White Paper can be seen as nothing other than pure provocation with the Government at the heart of both these issues.

It is by no accident that the employers used the term 'affordability' in their offer, knowing that each and every service has had their funding slashed to a point where services are now selling land, property and other assets to maintain a level of response that is simply being driven into the gutter.

Whilst many Chief Fire Officers have seen successive bonuses as a pat on the back for their compliance Firefighters have seen over a decade of pay restraint, caps and cuts.

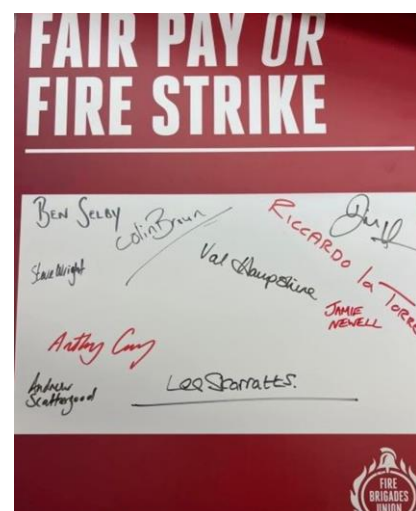
It is clear that our members see this for what it is. Since the 27th June Regional and Brigade Officials have visited branches and heard the frustrations but one thing is clear. In the current climate, with fuel and energy rocketing in price and property prices soaring our members have had enough.

Every Brigade in the South West voted to reject the derisory 2% pay offer and discuss the next steps.

Due to no improved offer being received we are now preparing to ballot for Strike action. The aim is to be balloting in 5 weeks.

Let's be clear, No Firefighter or any trade union relishes the thought of going out the doors but as so many across the country have articulated;- They can't afford to accept the offer, so they can't afford not to fight for fair pay.

UNITY IS STRENGTH



Fighting for the Fire & Rescue Service

Protecting Firefighters & Control Staff

TUC Rally London 18/06/2022

On Saturday 18th June 22 was the “TUC – We Demand better” Rally in central London where the UK’s trade unions marched together with a unified message **“the workers of this country, that kept this country going through covid, that stepped up and delivered, demands better pay, conditions and recognition for the work we do”**.

Hundreds of firefighters, firefighter control and Root members from all 4 corners of the UK attended and supported the event. The FBU Pipe Band led the way for the FBU contingent with the spine-tingling echoes of Celtic tunes resounding through the city streets of London. The passion and pride that our members emitted was an extremely proud moment. South West members were part of this contingent.



The March cascaded through the streets of central London starting at Regents Park, snaking through historical streets such as Regents Street, Piccadilly Circus, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, past Nelson on his column, into Whitehall, Parliament Street and terminating at Parliament Square Garden opposite the houses of Parliament. In Parliament Square Garden there was a stage and podium for speakers from trade unions, representing all industries. These passionate speakers were filling the air with their messages, inspiring their comrades, and letting the Conservative Government know that are failing the hard-working people of this country.

The General Secretary of our Union Matt Wrack, as usual stirred the crowd and inspired all trade unionists, backing the members he represents and total solidarity for all.

**Be proud to be part of the FBU,
be proud to be in the UK FRS,
own the right to say
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH
and never be bullied into giving
up what those that came before
us fought for!**

**Get out, organise, support in
solidarity, and show up in
force.**



***Fighting for the Fire &
Rescue Service***

***Protecting Firefighters &
Control Staff***

Control Staff are The Frontline of the Frontline

For most members of the public if you mention Fire Control they have no idea who you are talking about or that they even exist! All they are aware of are firefighters on fire engines.

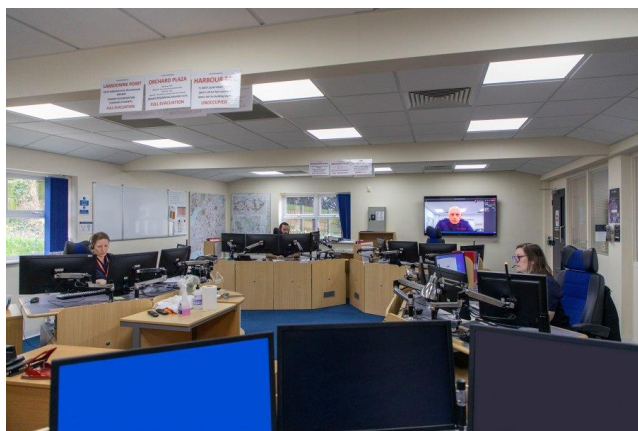
For many years FRS' also have not been sure where Control sit within the Service structure. Services' do not recognise them as operational as they don't sit on a fire appliance or actually travel to the fire or earn the same amount as firefighters! They also don't fit in with the corporate structure within the service, so they remain an afterthought or an addition.

At annual conference this year there were several resolutions related directly to Control. They were all well received and passed unanimously. A resolution to recognise fire control staff as operational along with one to look at a further review into Control pay with a view to narrowing the pay gap are just a couple of examples.

As the article in the recently published firefighter magazine succinctly put it as soon as Control say 'Fire Service' they are in attendance at the incident! Control are the officer in charge of an incident until the fire service resource on the ground arrives.

Like the role of a firefighter, the role of a firefighter control has evolved over the years. It isn't just a case of pressing a button to turnout a fire appliance, for those who thought it was, it never has been. As with every role in the fire service, technology for Control has moved forward at a pace. Although the new technical advances, when they work, are great tools there has to be an expert to operate and interpret the results. Local knowledge is still a vital part of Control Members skills to make sure the quickest and most appropriate resource is mobilised.

Control staff deal with a vast range of calls from fire alarms activating to MTA, Fire Survival, Multiple Fire Survival to road traffic collisions to mental health calls and more. All of this is done with less staff than there were 12 years ago, but receiving more calls. The pressures and mental strain on our members is immense. The recent multitude of social media reports praising Control members for their phenomenal work during the recent hot weather is fantastic. But, it isn't just during hot weather periods that there is pressure on our Control colleagues it is all day every day and this is rarely recognised.



If you are not aware what you Control Room colleagues do contact them, ask to visit so you can learn and appreciate that they are part of the team.

It is incumbent on all members to make sure that everybody is aware that....

Control Members are; 'Operational'. They are 'Part of the Team'. They are 'The Frontline of The Frontline'!



Fighting for the Fire & Rescue Service

Protecting Firefighters & Control Staff



Summer and Winter of Discontent for the Fire Service??

EC member Val Hampshire

In simple terms the answer to this is YES! As all members are aware, we have received a derisory pay offer of 2% which has been resoundingly rejected by the members. We, like other unions have no choice but to fight for a decent pay rise.

The cost of living crisis means in real terms our members are facing at least a 12% cut in pay. Add this to the astronomical hike in inflation, which hits everyone's day to day living expenses. Firefighters like other workers are being pushed toward the poverty line.

Firefighters do not deserve that. They deserved to be recompensed for their vital work. No worker should be used to line the pockets of the fat cat bosses and shareholders.

Our research clearly shows that firefighters are four times more likely to get cancer than the average working person. Members deserve recognition and recompense for that risk.

But with this dreadful tory government who are more interested in partying with their pay masters rather than supporting the workers in this country.

Further attacks to members in the guise of reform within the government's White Paper will mean members will have to fight and fight hard to obtain the pay and to keep the hard fought for conditions which are deserved.

So I say to all members, become active. Get involved in your branch meetings. Volunteer to give assistance to your reps when requested. Attend picket lines of other unions to show solidarity and support.

Remember that:

Unity IS Strength

Fighting for the Fire & Rescue Service



Contact Your Rep:

Avon: Amanda Mills
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Cornwall: Stuart Pulley
Stuart.Pulley@fbu.org.uk

Devon and Somerset: James Leslie
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B&EMM: Lionel McCrea
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Retained: Darren Halpin
darren.halpin@fbu.org.uk

LGBT: Nic Hobbs
nicola.hobbs@fbu.org.uk

****URGENT FOR ALL MEMBERS****

Make sure your membership details are up to date.

To do this contact your local Brigade Organiser.

Avon – Alex Brine – 07554 424624
Cornwall – Gary Cotton – 07708 905758
D & S – Dave Lock – 07801 575360
DW (North) – Alex Davidson – 07917 065875
DW (South) – Scott Blandford – 07711 005069
Gloucestershire – Rosie Tully – 07836 797866

Protecting Firefighters & Control Staff