

# THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

**27 June 2008**

## BUCKS FIRE CREWS WELCOME FIRE AUTHORITY DECISION OVER SHIFT CHANGES

Buckinghamshire fire crews have welcomed the decision of councillors not to rubber stamp plans to change their shifts. The plans will not now be recommended to the full fire authority meeting in September.

More than 120 firefighters, officers and emergency fire control staff and their families protested outside the meeting at the plans which they said would damage family life. The proposals would have seen their day shifts extended from 9 hours to 12 hours alongside an earlier start time of 7.30am and a later finish time of 7.30pm.

Fire crews say those changes would have caused havoc with childcare, undermine their family life and make a mockery of management claims of being a family friendly employer.

Ricky Matthews, Buckinghamshire FBU brigade secretary said: "Buckinghamshire's fire crews are delighted with the decision of our councillors. They listened to both sides before making their decision which we think is the right one.

"They listened to our genuine concerns about the plans to extend our already long working day by 3 hours and changing our start and finish times. The plans would have played havoc with childcare arrangements and our family life.

"All we want to do is to continue to work to keep the people of this County safe at all hours and every day of the year. That can be achieved within a sensible shift system that works for us and the public we serve."

Those fire crews who work shifts do so in 48 hour blocks of two 9 hour day shifts (9am to 6pm) followed by two 15 hour night shifts (6pm to 9am). The proposals would introduce 12 hours day working and 12 hours night working and would not mean an increase in hours worked but how they are worked.

Contact: Ricky Matthews (FBU brigade secretary and a firefighter at Great Holm Fire station) on 07917 065863.

The Fire Authority Executive Meeting took place on 26 June at Bucks County Council Sports and Social Club, Stoke Mandeville, HP21 9DR