



FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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TO: ALL MEMBERS

Dear Brother/Sister

PENSIONS: NO REVISED PROPOSALS; GOVERNMENT AGREES TO DELAY LAYING OF PENSION REGULATIONS FOR A THIRD TIME

The Executive Council met today and heard reports from various meetings which have taken place on different aspects of pensions. The meetings/discussions which have taken place since the Executive Council last met have included:

- Meetings and other discussions between FBU officials and officials of DCLG.
- A further meeting was held with DCLG Fire Minister, Penny Mordaunt on Wednesday 1st October.
- Separate discussions and meetings around the issue of fitness and capability with FBU officials, officials from DCLG and the Fire Service Employers.
- Discussions between lawyers from the FBU and DCLG on various issues

The Executive Council was informed that no revised proposals have been presented by DCLG. The Fire Minister did inform the FBU that she was still considering the issues we have raised and was still discussing all her options with her Department. The Fire Minister was informed very clearly at the meeting on 1 October of the frustration among FBU members which had arisen because of the further delays and in view of her previous assurance that work by DCLG (including discussions elsewhere in Government) would be concluded by the week commencing 8 September.

As previously reported to members, any revised proposals from DCLG will need discussion and sign-off elsewhere (by HM Treasury) and it appears that discussions between DCLG and HM Treasury are still under way. While this is extremely frustrating, it does suggest that there may be attempts being made to revise the current (unacceptable) proposals.

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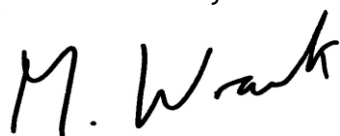
As a result of this delay - caused by DCLG - FBU officials had again raised the issue of DCLG plans regarding the laying of new pension regulations. You will recall that the timetable for this has already been delayed twice. As a result of the concerns raised, Penny Mordaunt has once again put back the laying of regulations; this time until *at least 20 October*. She has subsequently confirmed this in writing. The Executive Council, although frustrated on other matters, acknowledged that this move was welcome and was essential if DCLG were serious about dialogue continuing. This further delay does not assist DCLG in making progress on the introduction of the proposed new pension and does clearly allow the possibility (but not guarantee) of further changes being made.

The Executive Council is well aware of the frustrations of members. FBU members will recognise the likelihood that, if any revised proposals are made, DCLG will try to make them as minimal as possible. Therefore it is the task of FBU negotiators to try to maximise any changes to the benefit of FBU members. In these discussions, negotiators continue to press for changes in *all* aspects of the attacks on our pensions.

The current discussions are the longest period of continuous dialogue for some time and some may take this as a positive sign. However, the Executive Council is well aware of the risk surrounding these discussions and is clear that no progress is made until revised proposals are made. At that point, it would be for members to consider any such changes. It is also entirely possible that DCLG, for whatever reasons, does not make such revision and simply continues with the current attack on our pensions in exactly the same form. In such circumstances, members should be ready for the continuation of our fight by every means available, political legal - and of course industrial.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', with a stylized flourish at the end.

MATT WRACK
GENERAL SECRETARY

[0560MW]