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Circular: 2017HOC0518MW

25 September 2017

TO: All Members

Dear Brother/Sister

Pay and Conditions: Executive Council Update

As reported in circular 2017HOC0509MW, the fire service employers have now proposed by recent correspondence a 1% increase in NJC rates of pay. The Executive Council has begun consideration of the current position. The Executive Council noted that a 1% increase in pay will not address the falling real wages of our members nor will it address the pay concerns debated at our conference in May. The Executive Council will address our response to this in due course, including what consultation is necessary with members on the latest position. It was also agreed that the union's negotiators should seek further discussion with the employers to clarify a number of issues arising from the employers' letter.

Strategy on future of the fire and rescue service

The Executive Council also discussed the wider position in relation to the union's policies and strategy for the future of our service and our profession. Our position and strategy on the future of the fire and rescue service has been developed by discussion at the conference of our union over several years. It is a policy which aims to address the need to take account of changes to the fire and rescue service and changes to the risks faced by our communities. It has also taken account of trends and developments in the fire and rescue services in other countries as well. The policy aims to ensure the viability and sustainability of our service and to make the case for investment and standards in order to defend and improve jobs, pay, conditions and quality of service. It takes account of the fact that our service has always evolved and developed and this remains the case today in the most challenging of times.

November budget

The coming November budget is an opportunity for central government to start to address issues such as the underfunding of our service. It could provide the chance to lift the public sector pay cap and provide the funding necessary to support real pay increases for firefighters and others in the public sector. We all know achieving this will not be easy but the Executive Council remains committed to lobbying government for improved funding, including for potential new areas of work. We are also committed to joint campaigning with other unions and through the TUC for investment in public services and the scrapping of the pay cap.

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Review of results of NJC trials

In relation to the recent NJC trials on non-contractual areas of work, the Executive Council agreed the need to identify and analyse in detail the various failings and errors as well as the areas of good practice which arose during the trials. The Executive Council tasked Head Office with progressing this.

The Executive Council will meet again soon to discuss developments including further discussions with our employers.

Best wishes.

Yours fraternally

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Wrack', with a stylized, cursive script.

Matt Wrack
General Secretary

MW/sll