



FIRE BRIGADES UNION

CONFERENCE 2022

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL POLICY
STATEMENT**

FBU STRUCTURE - NATIONAL OFFICERS

For more than a decade, FBU conference has on several occasions debated the need to re-structure. This has been driven by the need to tackle new and emerging challenges within our industry and to ensure we are able to meet changing financial challenges. This has included making occasional difficult and unpalatable decisions.

Traditionally the full time officials of the union (as defined within Rule D5) are those employed at Head Office i.e. General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary and National Officers.

Over years the union had created certain provisions which created significant cost pressures. These included:

- a. Support in relation to housing costs
- b. A specific pension scheme designed for full time officials
- c. Financial provision for full time officials who suffered defeat in election

The Executive Council has given considerable attention to these issues in order to reduce costs and ensure sustainability while providing good conditions of service to officials in these roles.

- The provision of FBU mortgages was ended and no current official is in receipt of a housing loan from the union.
- A new pension scheme has been introduced to cover all FBU employees (including officials). During 2021 steps were taken to merge the two schemes so that the last two active members of the officials' scheme (RDBS) would transfer onto the new FBU Pension Scheme.
- New arrangements were introduced to recompense employed officials in the event of losing an election (and therefore employment).

All these alterations have made the union systems more financially viable, more sustainable and more cost effective for members.

While these various provisions have been reviewed and amended, measures were put in place to reduce other risks. Conference agreed at various times to suspend elections for National Officers. The elections for General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary are covered by statutory requirements and could not be suspended in the same way. These measures meant that some national officers did not face election after their initial election.

In 2012 Conference agreed to reduce the number of National Officers from four to three. Subsequently, in 2017 and following agreement of an Emergency Motion, Conference instructed the Executive Council to appoint a temporary National Officer. This was further developed in 2019, when Conference agreed an emergency resolution titled **FBU Organisation and Structure Review** from the Executive Council which supplemented the Executive Council statement to that Conference also titled **FBU Organisation and Structure Review**

The emergency resolution proposed the following recommendations all of which were agreed

- 1. The current situation with two elected National Officers based in Head Office shall be maintained*
- 2. The elections for these positions shall remain suspended for reasons previously agreed, aside from when a vacancy arises*

3. *The position of a third National Officer, as set out in the Rule Book, shall be left vacant whilst the task and finish group complete their work and until Conference has the opportunity to further consider on the structure of Head Office*
4. *The Executive Council shall appoint two Officials who would operate under similar arrangements and Conditions of Service to the current temporary National Officer*
5. *The Executive Council shall consider the individual merits of each case and make an assessment, in consultation with the Officials concerned, what working arrangements would best suit the individuals concerned*
6. *These positions would be open to any fully paid-up Member of the Union with at least five years' continuous membership*
7. *The Executive Council shall have licence to appoint other Officials on a temporary basis to fulfil specific roles that have been identified from time to time*
8. *The Executive Council shall make the necessary arrangements for these measures to be introduced and will report further to Conference 2020, including any necessary rule changes.*

Regrettably, the Executive Council must report that the work of reviewing the structure has been significantly disrupted by the two years of pandemic and remains unresolved.

The current position is that the rule book provides for three elected National Officers. There are in post two appointed National Officers and one elected National Officer.

It is recommended that:

1. An election for a National Officer be held at the earliest opportunity
2. The current appointed National Officers shall continue in post for five years from the decision of the Executive Council on 12th November 2019
3. This would produce a situation of four national officers
4. The Executive Council will fully review the provision of and arrangements for full time officials including any necessary rule changes.

A report will be presented to Conference 2023, including any further changes necessary.

Amendment 1

Page 2, numbered point 2.

After '12 November 2019' **insert** ', after their terms are finished these will be elected positions'

LONDON

Amendment 2

Page 2, second numbered point 3.

After 'four' **insert** 'elected'

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Amendment 3

Page 2, final sentence

Delete 'further' **insert** 'potential'

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