

Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill St
London, EC1M 5LG
Telephone 020 7187 7335
Employers' Secretary, Simon Pannell

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES National Employers

Andy Dark
Assistant General Secretary
Fire Brigades Union
Bradley House
68 Coombe Rd
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey, KT2 7AE

22nd August 2017

Dear Andy,

I write in response to your letter of 17th August, which has now been considered by members of the Employers' Side of the NJC.

We understand and fully share the view that a key issue is increased pay and as such we want to be able to implement a 2.0% increase on basic pay and continual professional development payments backdated to 1st July 2017. We have therefore considered the letter in that context.

We have every intention of being able to identify the scope of activities jointly by November and are fully committed to doing so beginning as soon as possible for both parties. Work would still remain on identifying the content of a broadening the role agreement and for both parties this will also be influenced by the availability of appropriate and sustainable funding which, unlike the work around scope of activities, is outside of the control of the NJC. Governments are currently in recess or otherwise unavailable, party political conferences are looming on their return and the work we have jointly commissioned by *New Economy* to allow us to be able to put forward the best case possible will not be completed until the end of October. With the best will in the world such funding would not actually be available to use until the next financial year (April). But this would still be within the current pay settlement year (2017/18). Therefore our genuine belief is that while we will do all that we can to make as much progress as possible it will not suit either party to set such a firm cut off point during negotiation.

We absolutely appreciate the work currently being undertaken by employees through the trials but we also recognise that the greatest opportunity to secure increased pay levels is to continue to provide such services to communities while negotiations continue on broadening the role and to maintain our position as a trusted partner.

This negotiation cannot afford to be so fragile and tenuous as to undermine any funding discussions or the trust of partner organisations.

As indicated above we want to be able to implement a 2.0% increase as soon as possible and to work together to agree a mutually acceptable deal in the longer term leading to further increases including stage two and for 2018/19, 2019/20 and potentially 2020/21. Given the negative impact that uncertainty over the trials would have, we feel we could only do so if the trials continue as we work towards a permanent deal by April and putting the best possible case jointly to governments.

The rationale behind the employers' position is that we need clarity that we have an agreed way forward with you before it would be possible to action such a pay increase. We note the possibility in your letter of a further consultation exercise at this time with the trials continuing during the consultation period and can confirm that, should the outcome of such a consultation exercise be to accept the offer, agreement can be reached immediately thereafter to implement the 2.0% increase at stage 1.

Given the points above and our shared aspirations we would ask you to reconsider the employees' side position and commence work with us as soon as possible to achieve those aspirations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Simon Pannell', written in a cursive style.

Simon Pannell
Employers' Side Secretary