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NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

To: Chief Fire Officers
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities
Chairs of Fire Authorities
Directors of HR (Fire Authorities)

Members of the National Joint Council

16 June 2021

NJC/3/21

NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL MEETING – 3 JUNE 2021

Pay offer

1. The **attached** pay claim had been provided by the employees' side of the NJC on 29th April.
2. At the above meeting, the employers' side responded with an offer of 1.5% on all pay rates and Continual Professional Development payments with effect from 1 July 2021.
3. The employees' side is now considering its response.

Additional Bank Holiday – Queen's Platinum Jubilee

4. Following government decisions an additional bank holiday on Friday 3rd June 2022 to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee was announced across the UK.
5. There is no automatic entitlement to such a bank holiday on this day under the terms of the National Joint Council's Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).
6. The Employees' Side of the NJC had therefore submitted a claim seeking:

‘...agreement for the award of an additional public holiday for all Grey Book personnel and that the award should reflect the same arrangements in respect of all other public holidays as detailed in the Scheme of Conditions of Service via the NJC’.
7. At the above meeting, it was agreed to award the bank holiday and that it be treated in the same way as other such holidays in the Grey Book for leave and pay purposes.
8. The Spring Bank Holiday in 2022 has been moved from the last Monday in May to Thursday 2nd June. For the avoidance of doubt, the usual provisions contained within the Grey Book for the Spring Bank Holiday shall apply.

Yours faithfully,

NAOMI COOKE
MATT WRACK
Joint Secretaries



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Our Ref: MW/sll

29 April 2021

Naomi Cooke
Employers' Secretary
Fire and Rescue Services
National Employers
18 Smith Square
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Dear Naomi

June NJC: Fire Service Pay 2021

We have discussed the issue of pay 2021 at meetings of the NJC joint secretaries and of the NJC lead members. At these meetings, we have set out the position of the FBU. We are approaching the June meeting of the NJC and the pay settlement date. We have also expressed our view that the employers' side should be in a position to respond to us on the issue of pay with an offer earlier than in previous years. We hope this can be done by the June meeting so that an offer on pay is available for consideration by our members prior to the settlement date of 1st July.

You are aware that a decade of austerity and government pay freezes has reduced real wages for firefighters. This has undermined morale in the service and created real hardship for our members and their families. The employers' side has an obligation to address this and to avoid turning the fire and rescue service into a low pay industry.

Both sides of the NJC will be aware that firefighters (including emergency fire control staff) have delivered outstanding public service since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic early in 2020. They have ensured that we continue to deliver a first class fire and rescue service despite the safety challenges posed by Covid-19. Furthermore, they have delivered numerous additional Covid-related activities which have assisted the effort to tackle the pandemic. We should all be extremely proud of the contribution they have made. After a hugely challenging year, the employees' side of the NJC expects this contribution to be acknowledged; that includes by delivering a real increase in pay.

1. **Pay increase:** Using CPI as the measure of inflation a competent firefighter needs an increase of more than £4,000 to restore real wages lost over more than a decade of austerity. Therefore a settlement for 2021 should urgently begin to address this through an immediate and significant pay rise as well as by setting out a roadmap for further significant improvements in pay.

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2. **Pay progression:** We have set out our concerns about the impact of the current flat pay structure on our members. You are aware that this has had the effect of hitting employees on Grey Book rates harder than those in sectors with systems of pay progression. CPD should be equalised and could be incorporated into a new system of pay progression beyond the competent rate.
3. **New roles:** The employees' side has also previously set out the union's expectation for any agreement in relation to broadening the role of a firefighter. We remain committed to developing the work of our service in the face of changing risk. This must be done by negotiation and agreement. It also requires investment from the governments of the UK. Nevertheless, these discussions should be immediately progressed.

In view of the above, the employers' side of the NJC needs to urgently address these issues by means of an immediate and substantial pay increase to NJC rates of pay. We hope this can be concluded prior to 1st July.

Yours sincerely

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

Matt Wrack
General Secretary