



SOUTH WEST REGION

Avon - Cornwall - Devon & Somerset - Dorset & Wiltshire - Gloucestershire

**To: Cllr Nigel Moor FRTPI FRSA
Cabinet Member - Fire, Planning & Infrastructure
Gloucestershire County Council**

5th Oct 2017

Dear Councillor Moor,

PAYMENT OF CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

I am writing to you in my role as the senior official of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) within the South West Region and in regard to the level of Continual Professional Development (CPD) payment within Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS).

As you may be aware, the CPD Scheme within Fire & Rescue Services is designed to recognise and reward employees who are able to demonstrate continual professional development. It was set up by the National Joint Council (NJC) in 2006 with the first payments scheduled from 1st July 2007.

The initial level of payments were agreed in 2006 by taking into account estimated net savings resulting from the 15- year long service payment being phased out. This resulted in CPD payments being set at different levels across different Fire & Rescue Services.

However at the time that these payments were set, the NJC made clear their expectation that all Fire & Rescue Services were to '*explore ways in which the value of a Continual Professional Development payment can be brought up to a minimum level of £500 per annum (full-time equivalent)*'.

In 2006 there were four Fire & Rescue Services in the South West where payments were set at a level below the £500 minimum. Since that time three of these Fire & Rescue Services have increased the payments to at least match the expectations of the NJC. This now leaves Gloucestershire as the sole Fire & Rescue Service in the Region still paying CPD at a rate well below the NJC recommended minimum, currently £366.

Local Officials of the FBU have raised this issue for a considerable period of time through the normal negotiating process within the Service, however to date the payment within Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Service has remained well below the level encouraged by the NJC over eleven years ago.

I have recently raised this issue with the Chief Fire Officer and am urging that the management & politicians responsible for Gloucestershire FRS think again on this

issue and prioritise a no strings attached increase of this payment to the minimum recommended level of £500 as a matter of urgency.

Raising CPD to the recommended minimum level is a local decision and, against a background of national pay freezes & pay caps, it is a way that FRS's can show their staff that they properly value them.

The service provided by the Firefighters and Emergency Fire Control Staff within Gloucestershire is both lifesaving and wide ranging. They have continued to provide this service despite increased pressure and additional workloads due to budget restrictions and cuts. Their professionalism has never wavered despite outrageous national cuts to their pension and pay provisions. However, the impact that the long term pay cap and austerity agenda has had on the morale of public sector workers is well documented and obvious.

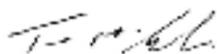
Recent events have shown the high value and esteem that the public place on Firefighters and Emergency Fire Control Staff. This must be reflected in practical terms by those responsible for the pay and conditions of these same public servants.

Now that Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service has found itself in the position of being the only Service in the South West to pay CPD at a rate below the recommended level it needs to address this matter and correct it as a matter of urgency. I stress again that the raising of CPD to the recommended minimum level is a local decision, however so would be the ongoing decision to refuse to do so even after eleven years.

Clearly the message to Staff would reflect which route the Service decides to take.

I urge that you now put in place the necessary measures to achieve a commitment to increasing the CPD payment to the minimum recommended level and I am of course available to discuss this matter with you further if you should wish however

Yours sincerely,



Tam McFarlane
Executive Council Member
Fire Brigades Union - South West Region