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Mr Stuart R Pulley
5 Halwyn Terrace
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Dear Mr Pulley,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the pension age of firefighters.

I have noted your concerns and can assure you that I very much recognise that fire-fighters provide the British public with a vitally important service and consistently put themselves in danger in order to protect us all.

In regards to pensions the Government's proposed Final Agreement, published in May 2012, set out that the Normal Pension Age for firefighters will be 60, which is in line with current arrangements for members of the New Firefighters Pension Scheme 2006. The Department commissioned a report into the implications of a normal pension age of 60. The report found that a significant proportion of firefighters will maintain operational fitness until the age of 60, provided that they are sufficiently fit when recruited and maintain medium to high physical activity levels.

The Proposed Final Agreement already allows firefighters to access their 2015 pension scheme benefits from age 55 with an actuarial reduction. In recognition of trade unions' concerns, the Government has proposed enhanced retirement arrangements for active scheme members who are aged 57 and over.

The Agreement is now subject to further negotiation between Ministers and the Government; I await the result of these negotiations with interest.

I hope that this information serves to clarify the current situation for you.

Thank you once more for your email, please do not hesitate to let me know if you feel that I can be further assistance to you in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sarah Newton MP