

Dr. Sarah Wollaston M.P.

Member of Parliament for Totnes



House of Commons

London

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SW/ns
11th November 2014

Thank you very much for your further email with regard to fire fighters pensions.

I do understand your concern with regard to the disparity in what is being offered to fire fighters in the rest of the UK compared to England and I appreciate your distress on this matter. I am afraid, as I have said to you before, I do not think there will be any movement on this.

Nonetheless, I do understand your concern and hope that you find the following information from the Department for Communities and Local Government of interest:

The Government has made substantial changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 since discussions began in 2011. The issues raised by all parties have been considered methodically to arrive at the best deal available for firefighters. The deal on the table is fair and gives firefighters one of the most generous public service pensions available – £19,000 a year after a full career, rising to £26,000 with the state pension.

The Government is consulting on an amendment to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to ensure that no firefighter aged 55 or over will face a risk of being left without a job or a good pension. These proposals underpin the fitness and capability processes that exist within individual fire and rescue authorities and complement the work being undertaken by a fitness group chaired by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser, Peter Holland.

Members will also earn more pension for each year that they are a member of the 2015 scheme than if they were in the 2006 scheme. The reformed 2015 scheme further improves on the existing firefighters' pension schemes by removing the cap on the amount of pension that can be earned, providing pension enhancements when taken after Normal Pension Age, and giving members greater flexibility by allowing partial retirement. The 2015 scheme also introduces a career average pension arrangement, which is a fairer pension scheme for lower paid members who tend to have flatter career progression. The Government has arrived at this final scheme after extensive

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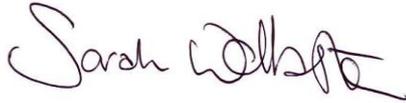
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consultation and consideration. It is a sustainable and fair pension package, which takes into account the unique and vital role of firefighters.

Thank you for getting in touch.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Wollaston". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Sarah Wollaston MP

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