



THEY SLASH YOU BURN



STOP THE CUTS IN OUR FIRE SERVICE

The FBU is fighting a hard hitting campaign against dangerous cuts in the Fire & Rescue Service using the media and political lobbies to get our points across. The Union has published large adverts in the national press with pictures of George Osborne and David Cameron, entitled "They Slash, You Burn". The advert addressed the public directly – spelling out that cuts endanger our

ability to protect the communities we serve. At a Westminster lobby General Secretary Matt Wrack said "we make no apology for our hard hitting campaign. We are putting a professional case to politicians as to why cuts are wrong and they need to realise the potential consequences." See more reports on page 2.

***Fighting for the Fire &
Rescue Service***



***Protecting Firefighters &
Control Staff***

SW FBU MARCH ON LONDON!

Firefighters and Emergency Fire Control Staff from across the South West made recent trips to London in defence of our Service. In October FBU Members & Officials from Brigades in the Region marched under the Cornish FBU banner and joined colleagues from across the UK in the TUC protest march for "A Future that Works"

Around 150,000 working people marched through the streets of London in a powerful demonstration against the coalition Government's cuts to vital public sectors, including the Fire & Rescue Service. The march ended in Hyde Park where a wide range of speakers outlined the alternative to austerity in order to deliver social and economic justice. More reports of the day, including photos and a short video, are available on our Facebook and youtube site (details on back page).

Firefighters from across the Region continued their campaigning work by joining colleagues at the FBU national lobby of Parliament on Nov 7 in Westminster. South West members lobbied their MP's in Parliament against dangerous cuts in the Service and alerted the public to the growing threat posed to the Fire Service



Cornish Banner proudly flying under Big Ben

by the government's relentless drive for austerity cuts.

The Fire Brigades Union is ratcheting up its campaign to raise public awareness of the deep damage the further cuts will inflict. FBU South West Official Tam McFarlane said "recent figures show that the public has lost almost 1,500 frontline Firefighters since



2010, including around 160 in the South West alone."

"Under Government plans the overall figure could increase by a further 6,000 jobs by 2015 and Fire Stations and appliances are under threat. This cannot carry on. FBU members from across the South West have been meeting their MP's and telling them that these cuts will compromise public safety and we expect our politicians to act. If our MP's let us down then we will be holding them to account at election time"

CORNWALL COUNCIL HALTS PRIVATISATION PLANS

Councillors in Cornwall have voted unanimously to halt a plan that would have seen public jobs and services moved to the private sector. The plan would have seen a joint private venture running key services such as benefits administration, personnel and library services. BT and US Company CSC were bidding to takeover these areas.

In August, Cornwall's Cabinet ignored the will of the full County Council who had previously voted against pursuing this idea. Instead of following the will of the Council, the Cabinet instead tried to forge ahead with the plans anyway. Democracy was being ignored. The full Council reacted by unanimously voting through a motion to review the proposal but also to consider other options.

The FBU in Cornwall is affiliated to Cornwall Anti Cuts Alliance who are very active campaigning against cuts and austerity, and are



Stuart Pulley

against the privatisation of public services. Recent public campaigning managed to collect more than 6000 signatures against the sell-off.

Conservative leader Alec Robertson, who wanted to push ahead with the plans, was subsequently removed following a no confidence vote.

Cornwall FBU Brigade Secretary Stuart Pulley said "This was an example of effective campaigning between Trade Unions and Anti Cuts groups who share a common aim in preventing the privatisation of Public Services - Unity is strength."

"Cornwall FBU will be maintaining close links with local anti cuts groups and trade unions as we are fundamentally opposed to privatisation. We will also be looking to the Council to maintain this position and ensure a Fire Service in Cornwall that remains a public service fit to serve the public."

Cornwall FBU increases Officials!

Cornwall FBU has upped its negotiating team to meet the challenges ahead. The new Officials, on an acting basis are: **Chair:** Tim Edwards; **Vice Chair:** Mike Tremellen; **Vice Sec:** Rich Simpson. They will assist current **Brigade Officials** Stuart Pulley and Jon Castleden.

NEW TEAM FOR FBU SOUTH WEST!



New Regional Secretary Phil Jordan

The South West Region has a new team of Regional Officials ready and willing to take the fight for FBU Members forward. Following the retirement of our previous and long standing Regional Secretary John Drake, the election for a successor was held. The successful candidate was Phil Jordan, with a high number of nominations across the Region.

Phil, a Firefighter from Gloucestershire, has been a Union Official for 20 years and had previously held the post of Regional Chair for the South West. Phil represents the Union on the South West TUC and has been very active in the local Trades Council movement. On accepting the post Phil said "I want to thank everyone who nominated me for this very important role and assure every Member in the South West that I will leave no stone unturned in the fight for FBU Members."

The election for the vacant post of Regional Chair produced the subsequent election of Avon Firefighter Kevin Herniman. Kevin is

a former Brigade Secretary of Avon FBU and previously held the post of Regional Official. Following his election Kevin said "I am proud to be elected as the Regional Chair for the South West and I am committed to fighting on behalf of all our Members in these challenging times."

South West EC Member Tam McFarlane welcomed the elections saying "John Drake was rightly regarded as one of the most effective Trade Unionists in the South West. He helped our Region to gain a reputation for successful, effective campaigning and we wish him a long and well deserved retirement. Phil and Kevin have always played a big part in our Region and now, following their election success, FBU Members can be assured that the Region continues to have a strong, effective and committed team fighting on their behalf."



New Regional Chair Kevin Herniman

See a video tribute to former Regional Secretary John Drake at our **South West FBU** YouTube site.

AVON FBU TELLS FIRE AUTHORITY: ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

In this feature Gary Spindler, Brigade Chair in Avon, explains the work being carried out by the local Union and has a clear message for the Fire Authority:



Gary Spindler Avon

For a number of years Avon FBU has fought against local cuts through dialogue with management and the Fire Authority. Although this hasn't always stopped cuts completely, we have been able to achieve

agreement on acceptable ways forward.

Since the start of the Comprehensive Spending Review we have been involved in the introduction of Aerial Ladder Platforms (ARP's) and very recently Water Rescue Pumps. Both of these came as a

result of fighting off initial Switch Crewing proposals from management, and although not ideal, the Avon FBU believed they were a preferable alternative in the circumstances of the time.

Now we are facing further cuts, imposed by central Government, to the service of around £3.5m over the next few years, or the equivalent of 70 frontline posts (around 1 in 10). We have already seen a reduction of around 48 frontline posts, and following a 30% reduction in the support side of the Service, it is clear that if this latest round of cuts goes ahead it is going to have a massive impact on the frontline service, the very same frontline service that David Cameron said would be protected!

Simply looking around the country, and even around our very own Region, we can see many proposed changes around Shift Patterns being forced through. Many of these are extremely 'un-family friendly', and attempt to mask the cuts being made. Services consult with the public,

promoting the argument that nothing has, or will, change for them when they dial 999. Of course, we know that lots will change for them, they will have longer response times, being delivered by a massively reduced workforce. With longer response times comes an increase in the likelihood of injury or worse due to fire or any other life threatening situation that we may be called to assist with.

We now need every Member to increase pressure on MP's, we need to make sure they are clear on the effect that the continual cutting of Fire Service budgets will have on their constituents. We're not in the business world responsible to shareholders; we are a Public Service with a responsibility, more often than not, to help the public in their darkest hour of need.

With every Firefighter and Fire Appliance lost our ability to carry this out effectively for the public, and safely for ourselves reduces. ***Enough is Enough!***



**South West EC Member
Tam McFarlane**

The series of adverts recently launched by the Union, entitled “They Slash, You Burn” has created quite a stir in some circles.

No sooner had the adverts appeared in the national press than Government issued critical press statements and a number of MP’s raised objections. But its time for Government and MP’s to start listening and stop criticising, because the only opinion that truly matters belongs to the professionals in the Service, and they overwhelmingly welcomed such a powerful statement about the cuts in our Service.

The adverts represent an escalation in the Union’s anti cuts campaign and has coincided with a number of high level rallies, demonstrations and political lobbying, some of which is reported in this bulletin.

These events are important because they raise public awareness of cuts and take our message and concerns direct to the heart of the Government. The largest of these events was the TUC organised march in London. This had a large FBU delegation amongst its 150,000 attendees and once again the South West Region

had a significant presence in the FBU ranks. Many people commented on the presence of the Cornwall FBU banner being carried past Parliament and this was a very visual representation of how widespread the anger is at vicious front line cuts.

This event was quickly followed by the Union’s lobby of Parliament which saw FBU Members from across the UK gather at Westminster to lobby their MP’s against cuts to the Service. Once again our Region was well represented and I know that South West MP’s were left in no doubt as to the anger felt by Firefighters & Control Staff regarding frontline cuts in the Service.

***Politicians should be
clear: cut the Fire
Service and you will
have a fight on your
hands!***

Just prior to the lobby, the 2nd reading of the public sector pensions bill took place in Parliament and I wrote to all MP’s in the South West to express the anger and outrage felt by FBU Members regarding these unjust, unfair and shameful attacks on Fire Service pensions. With the review into normal pension age in the Fire Service due to report soon, I know that all of us will agree with the General Secretary who told the lobby that “the battle over Fire Service pensions is far from over”.

All this work proves that the only body fighting for the future of the Fire & Rescue Service is the FBU. In the South West we are determined to fight back against dangerous cuts and we want every Member to play their part. We need to send a clear message to those with responsibility for the Fire Service: ***cut the Fire Service and you will have a fight on your hands!***

Unity is Strength!

FOLLOW THE PROFESSIONALS!

The FBU in the South West is committed to keeping our Members posted about news, updates and the work we are doing on their behalf. By using modern communication tools we can keep you up to date quickly, no matter where you work. Follow us on our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube sites and get all the updates as they happen. Full details below:



Follow us on our own Facebook page: Go to ***South West Region of the Fire Brigades Union*** and hit the “like” button. You will receive updates on our work and links to how we are fighting for you locally.



Follow us on Twitter at @southwestfbu



Keep up to date with our videos at ‘***South West FBU***’

You can also follow us on our website at: www.southwestfbu.com

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FBU SOUTH WEST

The Fire Brigades Union is the premier Trade Union for professional Firefighters and Control Staff across the UK. The South West Region is the largest Region in England and we cover Avon, Cornwall, Dorset, Devon & Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire FRS’s.

We represent over 85% of uniformed staff across the UK. Our members cover every role from Firefighter to Area Manager, including the retained duty system. We are committed to protecting our Members, their interests at work and to ensuring that the public receive an excellent and professional Fire & Rescue Service. Join the professionals, contact us at:

www.southwestfbu.com

