

Cheshire FBU News

August 2008

Inside This Issue

1	Day Staffing Pensions	5	RDS Holiday Pay
2	Positive Hours Anyone?	6	Cheshire FBU Online
3	Diversity in Action	7	Special thanks
4	Nine Day Fortnight	8	Stop Message

1. Day Staffing Pensions

As the first member of staff on the day staffing system was looking forward to his retirement and pension he was hit by the shock revelation that the agreement signed by the FBU and the Authority was not to be honoured. The pension provider must have asked Martin Hill (DCLG Pensions Adviser) if he was retained, turn out, PH and disturbance allowance pensionable his answer was NO and he sent a letter to all FRA's to say the same (see letter on Cheshire web site www.cheshire.fbu.org.uk).

It seems that management were surprised by this revelation, surely they would have checked with DCLG to see if they could make these payments pensionable before offering them to the FBU and staff?

If they did not then maybe they should sit the other side of the table at these 'Insight' days and learn a few basics?

The FBU is holding meetings with the day staffers to gauge their opinions on being sold a duty system with the major selling point being the pensionability of the extra salary, and having it removed.

The Brigade Officials and Management are working hard in order to achieve the expected payments for our members on retirement and officials are in close contact with the Assistant General Secretary Andy Dark.

2. Positive Hours Anyone?

Some Station Managers have been told to get WM to make sure staff do some work after midnight up until 2AM this is being done by trying to convince staff that these are positive hours, it has also been reported to the newsletter that staff are being threatened at certain locations that if they don't do the Station Managers bidding then working this two hour period will be enforced, it has been said in some quarters that the wholtime are now the most productive yet poorly remunerated and treated element of operational staff who offer 24/7 cover and it is hard not to argue with that. The Optimum Crewing agreement is quite explicit

3. Diversity In Action

Go onto the Cheshire intranet and try and download the power point slides for the WM seminar. You will find that not one slide is downloadable; this became unavailable after members flagged it up to management that they found it highly offensive. But don't worry, there are plenty printed off before it mysteriously became unavailable. Interested in what it is?

How would you classify yourself? Here are your choices:

1. Player
2. supporter
3. terrorist
4. corpses

Now the next part of the exercise is match 1 to 4 with the choices below:

- A. can and will
- B. can but won't
- C. would but can't
- D. can't but wouldn't

Then consider

"Where do the corpses, terrorists and supporters come from?"

The task is then to turn them all into players.

OK, there you have it, we have been dehumanised and seemingly don't warrant being referred to with dignity or respect within senior management circles.

Well members, let's not drop to their level by creating our own derogatory categories of management and their short comings, if this offends you then write in to HR and complain or take it straight to your CFA councillor, and ask their opinion as whether this upholds our core values.

Remember the sign in HQ?

"What you permit you promote".

4. Nine Day Fortnight.

As one of the last duty systems to undergo a review, the nine day fortnight is under pressure to be changed, not for the benefit of those working it obviously.

The new system is more about saving money that bringing in a better system you know the old saying "if it is working, break it". As the number of uniformed staff working this system seems to go down every week the pressure is obviously on from Senior Managers to get all day staff working the same core hours. This matter is currently going through consultation and thanks go to the staff working the system, who have fed ideas and opinions into Brigade Officials.

The reviews of Community Safety and Fire Safety have pinpointed a high number of jobs transferring from Grey to Green book and this will lead to even more non-uniformed staff working a different system to that currently worked by uniformed staff.

Any developments will be reported back to affected members and the representatives.

5. RDS Holiday Pay

All those RDS members sit down to read this

Can you remember raising with the union about being short changed on holiday pay, it was before computers were invented. Well, deep breath now, no fainting, they have finally agreed that two RDS members have been short changed.

If you think you have been underpaid then get your figures to a brigade official and who knows it might get sorted a tiny bit quicker now.

The main reason for the delay is solely down to management's unwillingness to tackle the problem. Why what is the problem? They would have to admit that they have allowed all different ways of claiming holiday pay and have not managed this element of your conditions of service very well at all.

It is easy to see why RDS staff have been so poorly treated when the Service has barely any policies that are applicable to its Retained Firefighters.

6. Cheshire FBU Online.

After a few false starts the new website for Cheshire FBU is online and open to visitors. It contains all the information members need locally including minutes of consultation meetings, health and safety forms, a specific page for Union learning, as well as an up to date list of your Brigade Officials.

All editions of the newsletter can be downloaded from the site and if you want your copy before it hits the streets you can use the subscription facility on the home page. Any ideas and suggestions about how to develop the site would be greatly appreciated just use the contact us link.

You can find us at <http://www.cheshire.fbu.or.uk>

Special thanks.

The newsletter would like to pay tribute to a member who retired during July. Bro Dave Caruthers was a active member of the FBU virtually from the moment he joined the Service 30+ years ago. He held many positions throughout the Union in Cheshire and was always active at Branch and Brigade Committee level. His work latterly as Membership Secretary took up many hours of his time whilst also holding down a branch officials post.

Many thanks Dave and best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

Stop Message.....Stop Message.....Stop Message.....Stop Message

Question: When are the core values of the Service not the Core values?

Answer: When senior managers decide the needs of the business are greater.

**To contribute to further issues of Cheshire FBU News contact your
Branch rep or email: cheshirefbunews@googlemail.com**