

Date: 12th June 2009

ALL MEMBERS

Brigade Committee Emergency Resolution

Dear Brother/Sister,

As Lord Acton, the noted moralist and historian stated in 1887 – **“Power tends to corrupt, absolute power corrupts absolutely”**.

Merseyside FBU Brigade Committee has observed with great interest the detailed and growing revelations with regards to the misuse of tax payers money by MP'S throughout the UK. The ongoing revelations, the unprecedented resignation of the Speaker of the House of Commons and the new legislation and independent body that will oversee and question all expenses claims are evidence of public anger and a desire for transparency and accountability to justify all areas of public money expenditure.

The revelations on inappropriate claims and misuse of public funds are continuing with more details being released daily and causing further embarrassment and public anger.

The effects of these revelations will undoubtedly have repercussions throughout all public services for some considerable time. The loss of faith within the established political system by voters and tax payers is immeasurable at this time. William Pitt (The Elder) who was prime minister between 1766 and 1778 stated – **“Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it”**.

In light of the £23.125 million already saved by MF&RS over the last four years, identified as cashable savings by the Audit Commission. MF&RS have agreed another £5 million must be saved within their budget.

This means that as a public service, year after year, there are job cuts and downgrading of emergency fire cover and appliances to meet this new £5 million budget crisis.

As a publicly funded service, ultimately accountable to the government and the tax payer, Merseyside FBU Brigade Committee strongly believes that MF&RS should be subject to the same level of scrutiny and be able to justify every expense met by the tax payer.

This Brigade Committee believes that rather than waiting for the inevitable fallout from this growing public scandal to affect MF&RS and its expenses and claims procedures, it would be prudent for MF&RS to publish senior management and fire authority claims and expenditure including receipts for consultants and contractors, over the last four years showing detailed explanations of every penny of public money spent and every expenses claim submitted and why it was paid.

The effect of doing this could restore faith in MF&RS as a transparent and accountable service whilst at the same time proving that MF&RS has not, in any way, misused public money. The FBU are willing to give time and resources to MF&RS to assist in this task.

Merseyside FBU believe that this would satisfy the concerns of the tax paying public and our members alike and would be welcomed as an honest, open and appropriate course of action for a publicly funded service who is attempting to save a total of £28.125 million over a short period of time citing budgetary constraints as their main reason.

Yours in Unity

Mark Dunne
Brigade Chair