

Thursday 20 December 2007 No.4

CAMPAIGN MEETINGS TO BE HELD ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN THE NEW YEAR



The Union is to hold meetings in every region of the UK on the issue of ill-health pensions early in the New Year to build the campaign for Justice for Firefighter Pensions and succeed in our demand that the highly detrimental Government guidance is reverted to the position in 2004.

All members will receive details in due course and as many as possible urged to attend.

The disgraceful attack on ill-health and injury pensions threatens every firefighter of all duty systems and every officer of all duty systems. It has already left several firefighters without a pension or a job.

It is critical that all members get involved in this campaign.

So, in the meanwhile, keep up the political pressure by taking a minute to send a letter or e-mail to your MP to outline our case and urge them to support us – this can be done easily by visiting the FBU website at www.fbu.org.uk

This political lobbying *is* having an effect. It has already prompted the launch of a parliamentary Early Day Motion (EDM) which will help to raise the profile of our cause.

The Union's campaign is progressing well in other respects too. We have won our first legal battle without having to go to court. We have also managed to win over the vast majority of the fire and rescue service in

support of our campaign. And it is increasingly apparent that the only people who agree with the CLG stance are the CLG pension officials themselves.

Over the Christmas period, FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack and National Officials will continue to lobby Ministers to give a favourable response to our demands.

Martin Marrion addresses FBU Region 2

By now, few FBU members will not know of Martin Marrion and the injustice he and two London colleagues have suffered at the hands of LFEPA, aided and abetted by the department of Communities and Local Government.

Martin recently travelled to Belfast at the invitation of FBU Region 2 (Northern Ireland) to address its Annual General Meeting, at which FBU representatives listened in horror bordering on disbelief, whilst Martin talked us through the background of how he found himself with no job, no pension and no money, *reports Tony Maguire, FBU Northern Ireland Regional Secretary.*

Says Tony: "Regional AGMs are normally festive affairs at which committee members can report on the previous year's work and plan for the next. But Region 2's meeting was a more serious and contemplative affair at which members took on board the scale of

the issue facing Martin Marrion, his colleagues and this Union.

“The technical details of his situation almost faded into the background as Martin spoke with a great amount of quiet dignity and amazingly, without bitterness, about the underhand manipulations and administrative nightmare that have robbed him and his family of the right to security and peace of mind in retirement. His situation is due to blind adherence to CLG guidance! I am reminded of the Nuremberg defendants who pleaded they were following orders!

“Any one of us reading this could find ourselves in his situation. The FBU must pursue a political and legal solution to this injustice but if political or legal solutions are not available, the leadership of this Union and its members must face up to what has to be done.

“The FBU has a fine record of opposing injustice and we all have an interest in addressing this outrage. If we cannot put this right we will have lost our reason to exist!

“Martin Marrion’s story is chilling in its simplicity and the FBU representatives present when he spoke, left our AGM much wiser and in no doubt about what this Union must do.

“The written word cannot always convey the effect of injustice at a human level and before FBU members reach decisions on the future course of this campaign, they would do well to listen to Martin Marrion speak about how he and his colleagues have been treated.

“Many of us are veterans of a range of FBU campaigns and we have become conditioned to being in constant struggle at one level or another. But having listened at first hand to Martin talk of his experiences over recent months, it is evident that *Justice for Firefighters Pensions* is an absolutely critical campaign. “

More information

More details about how the change in guidance on ill-health pensions affects you - and what you can do to protect yourself and your colleagues - are contained in a special booklet (a Firefighter Special on Pensions) that all members should have received before Christmas.

FBU Confidential Freephone

Stress and Support Line

0800 783 4778

Stressed?

Bullied?

Get help from the Union

FBU Freephone

Legal Advice Line

0808 100 1061

For advice on personal injury, family law, wills, conveyancing, personal finance and consumer issues

For disciplinary and employment-related queries contact your local FBU rep