

THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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MERSEYSIDE FIRE CREWS TURN UP PRESSURE ON FIRE AUTHORITY AS UNION ANNOUNCES EIGHT MORE DAYS OF STRIKE ACTION

Merseyside fire crews are taking eight more days of strike action. The fire authority has been given the statutory notice of the start of strike action from 10.00 on 12 September until 10.00 on 20 September.

The strike is in opposition to proposed cuts which include:

Cutting 120 firefighter posts – one in ten of the workforce –in addition to the 68 posts cut last year;

Introducing a 96 hour week at some fire stations;

Cutting 15 emergency fire control operator posts –one in four of the workforce

Axing four fire engines at night time;

There will be fewer rescue appliances, fewer firefighters on fire engines and a longer wait for crews to arrive at all 999 emergencies.

Les Skarratts, Chair of Merseyside FBU said: “We’re happy to reach a negotiated agreement in talks. At present the talks have stalled and they will give us no dates for future meetings which is bitterly disappointing.

“Merseyside fire crews, including those in emergency fire control, are absolutely determined to maintain momentum and keep up pressure on the fire authority. We are leaving senior managers in no doubt that we will have either thrashed out a deal by 12 September or the next set of strike action commences.

“We have formally proposed bringing in the specialist national fire service negotiators to assist us in resolving this dispute. That is the correct procedure and they have huge experience in assisting the resolution of disputes, especially on those issues covered by national agreements and which are not only local issues.

“Our morale is high, our determination to stop savage cuts across the Merseyside fire and rescue service is unwavering. We have tremendous support from a public which has rumbled managers who claim they can improve a public service by cutting it.

“The public know we’re not doing this because we want more money or better conditions. It’s not about what’s in it for us, it’s because we know these cuts are wrong and will impact on our safety and public safety.”

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