

# Update Regarding Implementation of the Continual Professional Development Scheme

## Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Alan Taylor, Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Louise McKenzie, Assistant Chief Officer on 01743 260201.

### 1 Purpose of Report

This report updates Members of the Human Resources Committee on the implementation of the Continual Professional Development (CPD) Scheme.

### 2 Recommendations

That the Committee note the contents of the report.

### 3 Background

Members will recall receiving information in March about the completion of negotiations on the introduction of a CPD Scheme for staff conditioned to the Grey Book.

### 4 The Agreement

The agreement means that the first payments under the Scheme will be due from 1 July 2007. Transitional payments were agreed in principle in Circular NJC/10/06 for staff in receipt of a long service increment since 1 October 2006 of £165 due in January 2007 and £206.25 due in June 2007. However NJC/03/07 instructed that the transitional payments should not be actioned until confirmation from the Pension Scheme is received that the payments are pensionable.



## 5 Current Situation

Although the Pension Scheme Regulators have agreed that the CPD payments should be pensionable we have received circulars EMP/6/07 (Appendix A) and EMP/7/07 (Appendix B), which advise that further consideration will need to be given to how to action the change and that the Fire Brigades Union have indicated that they require time to consider the impact of the proposed new arrangement before committing to formal agreements.

Until such agreements are reached we have been advised that we are unable to action the payment of the transitional payments (due in January and June) but that we should continue to plan for a positive outcome.

To that end CPD application forms have been issued and are currently being assessed and verified. Letters are due out to individuals by 1 June 2007, informing them of whether they will receive payment or not, with a view to commencing monthly payments to all successful staff from 1 July 2007.

## 6 Financial Implications

The net financial impact is expected to be an additional £40,000 a year. Each successful applicant will receive an annual payment of £615 (pro-rata for retained duty staff) and, whilst the cost of this is currently estimated to exceed the saving from the cessation of the Long Service Increment, it is anticipated that extra costs could be met from within the pay and prices provision. Early indications show that not all staff, who are entitled to claim, have submitted claims.

## 7 Legal Comment

There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

## 8 Equality Impact Assessment

The CPD Scheme is a national scheme agreed by the National Joint Council, which includes employee representation. The introduction of the scheme is therefore mandatory. Officers have considered the Service's Brigade Order on Equality Impact Assessments (Personnel 5 Part 2) and have decided that there are no discriminatory practices or differential impacts upon specific groups arising from this report. An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has not, therefore, been completed.

## 9 Appendices

**Appendix A** Circular EMP/6/07

**Appendix B** Circular EMP/7/07



## 10 Background Papers

### National Joint Council:

Circular NJC/10/06

21 December 2006 - Continual Professional Development Payments

Circular NJC/03/07

7 February 2007 - Continual Professional Development Scheme

Implications of all of the following have been considered and, where they are significant (i.e. marked with an asterisk), the implications are detailed within the report itself.

Balanced Score Card		Integrated Risk Management Planning	
Business Continuity Planning		Legal	*
Capacity		Member Involvement	
Civil Contingencies Act		National Framework	
Comprehensive Performance Assessment		Operational Assurance	
Efficiency Savings		Retained	
Environmental		Risk and Insurance	
Financial	*	Staff	*
Fire Control/Fire Link		Strategic Planning	
Information Communications and Technology		West Midlands Regional Management Board	
Freedom of Information / Data Protection / Environmental Information		Equality Impact Assessment	*



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**Appendix A** to report on  
Update regarding Implementation of  
Continual Professional Development Scheme  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority  
Human Resources Committee  
7 June 2007

## **FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES National Employers**

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**To: Chief Fire Officers  
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities  
Chairs of Fire Authorities  
Directors of Human Resources  
  
Members of the Employers' Side of the NJC**

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25 April 2007

CIRCULAR EMP/6/07

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Continual professional development scheme**

1. You will recall from circular NJC/3/07 that agreement was reached at the NJC meeting on 6 February 2007 on the introduction of a Continual Professional Development Scheme, subject to acceptance by the regulators of the respective pension schemes that Continual Professional Development payments shall be pensionable.
2. A decision from the respective pension regulators was jointly requested as a matter of urgency and authorities asked to plan for a positive response.
3. We have now been advised by Communities and Local Government (CLG) that exceptionally on this occasion Ministers are prepared to agree that CPD payments should be pensionable under the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension scheme (LGPS). However, further consideration will need to be given to how to action the change.
4. Accordingly, the Fire Brigades Union have indicated that they will require time to consider the impact of the proposed new arrangements before committing to formal agreements on both the introduction of the Continual Professional Development scheme and a revised constitution of the National Joint Council.
5. Authorities will be advised as soon as formal agreement has been reached. Until then whilst authorities are encouraged to continue to plan for a positive outcome the transitional payments should not be actioned.
6. CLG has also confirmed that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland accept the position outlined in paragraph 3 above.

Yours faithfully,



**Gill Gittins**  
Principal Negotiating Officer

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## **FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES National Employers**

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**To: Chief Fire Officers  
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities  
Chairs of Fire Authorities  
Directors of Human Resources**

**Members of the Employers' Side of the NJC**

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30 April 2007

CIRCULAR EMP/7/07

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Continual Professional Development scheme**

1. Employers circular EMP/6/07 advised that the Communities and Local Government (CLG) had indicated that exceptionally on this occasion that Ministers would be prepared to agree that CPD payments should be pensionable under the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS), New Firefighters Pension Scheme (NFPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). However further consideration was needed to ascertain how to action the change.
2. Accordingly the Fire Brigades Union had indicated that they would require time to consider the impact of the proposed new arrangements before committing to formal agreements on the introduction of a CPD scheme and a revised constitution of the National Joint Council. Authorities were encouraged to continue to plan for a positive outcome, but until then the transitional payments detailed in NJC/10/06 should not be actioned.
3. This remains the position. The purpose of this circular is to provide, for information, copies of both the CLG letter and the Employers response. (**Appendices B & C.**)

Yours faithfully,



**Gill Gittins**  
Principal Negotiating Officer