



West Midlands Fire Service Branch
Lancaster Circus Queensway, Birmingham, B4 7DE

Chair Andy Leonard
Secretary Judy Foster
Treasurer Janet Matthews

Ref. UNI10111053

2nd November 2005

Dear Councillor Hinton,

For the Attention of the Fire Authority

I thought you might like to know about the progress UNISON has made in developing the West Midlands Fire Service branch of UNISON following your decision in 2003 to fund a full time post.

The additional resources that UNISON has received have been enormously helpful in building the capacity of the Branch in a number of areas which we would like to share with you briefly.

Working in partnership with management

- Contributing good HR practice in the development of policy routinely as part of the consultation process.
- Assisting management in prioritising policies in need of revision.
- Improving the job evaluation scheme for the benefit of all staff and the organisation.
- Participating in activities that will help to improve the organisation's capacity to deliver a better rating in the area of "people" in a future CPA.
- Engaging members in the opportunities that relocation of a new Headquarters will bring including championing flexible working arrangements such as home working and promoting modern work practices.

Delivering a better service to members

- Increasing the number of existing officials and recruitment of additional workplace representatives including in the area of health and safety.
- Increasing contact and consultation with members through newsletters, briefings, our branch website, workplace meetings, road shows and surveys.

Councillor D. Hinton,
Chair,
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority

- As a consequence improving attraction rates and increasing the level of membership to enhance resources available to deliver the service.

Raising the profile of the West Midlands Fire Service through regional and national activity

- Branch Secretary represents and is active on National Practitioners' Forum, contributing to numerous working parties including core values development. Her contribution has recently been commended by the Fire Minister, Jim Fitzpatrick.
- Participating in the Fireworks Project identifying good practice in the recruitment and retention of BME and female firefighters and improving the work experience of all staff.
- Playing a key role in engaging with the Regional Management Board to progress stakeholder liaison.

The progress the Branch has made in the last two years would not have been possible without the funding we receive from the Authority and, on behalf of our members, we thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Leonard', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Andy Leonard
Branch Chair
on behalf of UNISON

Councillor D. Hinton,
Chair,
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority