



**Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government**

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**Brandon Lewis MP**  
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25/10/2013

Dear Matt

The last two weeks have brought intensive discussions with you, your colleagues and the employers with a view to reaching a settlement to prevent further strike action in the fire and rescue service. I wrote to you offering the Government's full commitment on matters of fitness and capability, and the employers wrote today asking to meet you as soon as possible, to reach agreement on a set of principles that can work for you all. Given this, your response to call further strikes after just four working days to resolve these differences since you cancelled the last one, is deeply saddening.

You appear to have walked away from the negotiating table, undermining all the hard work done by those seeking to find a resolution to this dispute. To add to this, you have called strike action at the start of Diwali and the Bonfire season. This is unworthy of a major emergency service union.

Your press statement attempts to blame the Government for your strike action and totally ignores the fact that the firefighter pension remains one of the most generous in the public sector. Further, you fail to highlight the fact that the employers have given you their written assurance that they would not wish to put anyone in a position of having no job and a reduced pension. They are willing to enter urgent talks with a view to reaching agreement on a set of principles that can work for all.

You should call off these further strikes now, and accept the invitation from the employers to resolve this unnecessary and damaging dispute.

**BRANDON LEWIS MP**

