

ALPA SCHEME PENSION DATE POSTPONED

The deadline for CNC (and all public bodies) to enter the Alpha scheme has been postponed by Government from 1st April 2017 to 1st April 2018. We have been notified of this welcome move by Corporate Communications which comes as a direct result of a decision by HM Treasury taken on the back of legal advice that they require all affected public bodies to delay work on entering the alpha scheme because of conflicting decisions by two Employment tribunals both of which are being appealed. Since the appeals are likely to take several months the Government has been obliged to postpone the implementation of Alpha.

'Chapter and verse' on the background to the postponement are contained below in the attached memo dated 7th March from CNC People Programme Director T/ACC Joyce Robinson and the letter dated 6th March from HM Treasury.

So what does this mean for our membership?

First, we must continue to put the time afforded by the postponement to good use. We have a year's further grace in which we will campaign to get the Government, specifically HM Treasury and the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy to accept the case for our members to have a normal retirement age of 60 in common with the rest of the U.K. Police service. It is astonishing that despite months of engagement with Ministers, MPs and the media no single government representative has denied, publicly or privately to us, the validity of our argument. They have kept their heads down, presumably in embarrassment.

We have no doubt the combined and sustained pressure of the Federation, our Police Authority and our Chief Constable has challenged the Government's naive thinking that the one-size-fits-all approach to public pensions was appropriate to this police service. It is too simplistic at best and at worst a recipe for endless litigation. The Government must concede that a customised pension arrangement is needed for the CNC.

Secondly, we are required to enter with our employers into consultation on terms and conditions of service in late April. We will carefully reflect on how we will take this formal stage of negotiations forward in a way which recognises the dominating issue of the still to be agreed retirement age. We will keep members informed of progress as and when can.

Nigel Dennis & Mark Nelson