



# No Resolutions So Far

**Unite members are of course keen for updates about a variety of issues relating to the sale of AXA Sun Life Services that will impact on both transferring and retained employees. We must report that so far company resources appear to have been focused on the financial and regulatory side of the deal and the consultation process has unfortunately got off to a slow start. Unite were obliged to escalate our concerns that considering the tight timescale suitable progress was not being made in resolving key matters.**

Unite have received commitments from AXA senior management that this is being taken seriously and we welcome the resulting news that David Hynam (pictured right) has now become involved and is taking a lead role in driving this process forward. David is known to support consultation and employee engagement and as a board member of the new company he will provide continuity with the management of the business.

Unite look forward to not only resolving the immediate issues with AXA and Friends Provident, but also to engaging with both companies about their longer term plans for their businesses.



## Pension Update

Unite and Friends Provident have met for some initial discussions about the future pension provision for transferring AXA employees. There are still a number of fundamental issues to resolve and a formal proposal has not yet been put on the table. It is therefore clear that in the time remaining before the sale it will not be possible carry out adequate consultation. It is also apparent that it is unlikely that any new pension scheme will be set up in time for the intended sale/transfer date.

Unite have taken further legal advice on this situation and have formally requested that the date of the transaction should be delayed, or if this is not realistic that FP and AXA agree transitional pension arrangements to be put in place for a suitable period following the sale. This will allow meaningful consultation to take place to seek to achieve satisfactory pension provisions for the future.

## Q&A Documents

Unite have received a lot of feedback about the Q&A information on the Intranet. There has been a particular problem with answers appearing that have not been agreed with Unite and a number of these have had to subsequently be corrected. Unite can confirm that in respect of some recent examples we had previously given feedback to Friends Provident on the proposals in respect of the AXA Centre Nursery and the Bristol employee bus and AXA Centre car park, which all impact on AXA retained employees.

Although the answers that appeared in the Q&A were unchanged, Unite are pleased that the company has now taken on board feedback received and will be communicating revised decisions that Unite believe will be more acceptable for retained employees. Discussions continue in respect of a disturbance allowance for employees relocating to Marlborough House.

There is also confusion as to why a new pension Q&A stated that Friends Provident "is not able to provide a DB scheme". Unite understand that there is no legal or technical reason to stop the setting up of a Defined Benefit scheme for transferring employees - it is fundamentally a matter of cost.