

Rt Hon John Healey MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

15 April 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dear Chancellor".

I write – as other MPs of all parties are doing – to urge you to launch a formal review of the surplus sharing arrangements for the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme. I want to see a fairer deal for aging former mineworkers.

As you will be aware, the 1994 arrangement saw the UK Government agree to guarantee the scheme and all pensions in cash terms in return for a 50% share of any subsequent surpluses. Since then, although it has not made direct payments into the scheme itself, the Government has received a total of around £4.1 billion from the Scheme.

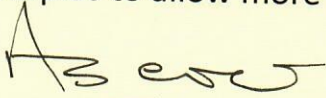
The Government guarantee has always been an essential feature of the settlement and should certainly continue. However, there is a strong case for revisiting the sharing arrangements.

The Government has had to make no direct payments in 25 years, yet it has continued to take a 50% share of the surplus. You'll recall as the last Labour Government that we set up large-scale and well-funded health compensation schemes for ex-miners, dealing with chest disease, knee injury and vibration white finger.

More than 20,000 ex-miners and their families in Rotherham received over £120m in compensation for respiratory disease and vibration white finger. In Barnsley over £250m went to more than 40,000 claimants. Mineworkers and their families felt during this period that they were at least getting something

back from government but since 2010 their sense of injustice has grown, especially as the scheme's investment returns have been strong.

It must be time for the Government to consider taking a reduced share of the surplus to allow more pension support for the mineworkers.

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John Healey MP

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