Female firefighter to give evidence of systemic failings to protect women in employment tribunal case against Avon Fire and Rescue Service

Tuesday 14 November, 2023

- Whistleblower Ms Alexandra (Sasha) Acheson is taking Avon Fire and Rescue Service to court for direct sex discrimination, sex and sexual orientation harassment, victimisation, discriminatory constructive unfair dismissal and constructive unfair dismissal.
- Up to 10 witnesses including current and ex-employees of Avon Fire and Rescue Service will take the stand in support of Ms Acheson's claim.
- Witnesses to give evidence relating to the mismanagement of concerns in relation to discriminatory conduct of male firefighters.
- Concerns raised by Ms Acheson and other whistleblowers that women were not safe, specifically because of former Crew Manager Dean Davies who has been arrested on multiple occasions and who is now being investigated for rape, were mismanaged.

The Employment Solicitor is representing female firefighter claimant Ms Alexandra (Sasha) Acheson in what is expected to be a high-value employment tribunal case brought against Avon Fire and Rescue Service. Ms Acheson, who will start to give evidence at The Bristol Civic Justice Centre, is taking Avon Fire and Rescue Service to court for direct sex discrimination, sex and sexual orientation harassment, victimisation and constructive unfair dismissal (including discriminatory dismissal). Ms Acheson asserts she raised grievances against Mr Dean Davies and Avon Fire and Rescue Service and was subject to victimisation. Ms Acheson was, as a result, forced to resign and leave the Fire Service having being diagnosed with PTSD.

Up until recently, Mr Dean Davies was a named Respondent in the case. Following his arrest, we understand he was dismissed due ongoing criminal investigations for alleged violent sexual acts including rape against multiple women.

Avon Fire and Rescue Service admit much of the treatment occurred but claim the reason for such treatment was alleged poor performance on the part of Ms Acheson. It has been alleged Ms Acheson was not a team player. Ms Acheson is a former England Rugby Player and previously enjoyed a successful career at the Gloucester Fire and Rescue Service having been nominated for Spirit of Fire Awards 2020 after raising money for Firefighters' Charity in 2019, walking from the most easterly to most westerly point in mainland Great Britain- being the first to do so. Ms Acheson also represented Team Gloucestershire in the British Firefighter Challenge in 2018.

Ms Acheson will start to give evidence at 10am on Wednesday 15th November. The hearing is expected to last 15 days and takes place at The Bristol Civil Justic Centre, 2 Redcliffe Street, BS6. Members of press and public can join this hearing.

About Bristol Civil Justice Centre:

Members of the public wishing to attend the hearings should aim to arrive before 10am 15th November at Bristol Civil Justice Centre, 2 Redcliffe Street, Redcliffe, BS1 6GR

About The Employment Solicitor:

At the Employment Solicitor we specialise in helping clients who are experiencing or have experienced problems in the workplace. In the modern world problems at work can be extremely complex and often difficult to resolve. Problems can arise from poor performance, illness, absence, conflict, mistakes and unfair or discriminatory treatment. Experience tells that a long-standing dispute, if not properly managed, may lead to affected employees leaving the workplace whether by way of resignation, dismissal, redundancy or settlement agreements. The likelihood of bringing or defending an Employment Tribunal is therefore ever present. With years of experience of conducting both complicated and high-profile Employment Tribunal claims, The Employment Solicitor team understands how far reaching the consequences of workplace disputes can be for all involved. With this in mind, we take each client's circumstance extremely seriously. In doing so, we promise to provide honest and straightforward advice.

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