

Thank you for your email on behalf of Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Chair of Corsham Area Board, requesting DWFRS attendance at the Area Board meeting in October.

As you will be aware with many public sector organisations, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service are facing significant financial challenges, and we have a programme of work in place to make sure we are sustainable for the future. There is a requirement for all fire and rescue services to review their community risk profile to provide value for money services to our communities.

Following a comprehensive fire cover review, we are looking at the position, the number and type of our resources to make sure these meet the changing risk profile across our Service area – we need to make sure our resources are in the right place based on community need. Fundamental to the fire cover review is maintaining, and where we can, improving our response to emergency incidents, continuing to be there when our communities need us.

Whilst the data suggests that the removal of some fire engines is the right thing to do, and this presents essential savings (£110K plus for each station) to help our financial challenges, this is also a programme of work that includes some reinvestment and will enable us to improve fire cover in other areas as needed.

The detailed data analysis of seven on-call stations, informed the decision to remove the second fire engine at Corsham, Marlborough, Sturminster Newton and Wareham fire stations. The first fire engine will remain at these stations to ensure we can be there when our communities need us. These changes have now taken place at the four fire stations.

These decisions are made under the delegation of the Chief Fire Officer and as such are not a matter for public consultation, however, you can be assured that Members of our fire authority are being kept informed. The Service has engaged with the Leader of Wiltshire Council and the CEO of Wiltshire Council to discuss the decision to remove the second fire engines.

With regards to Corsham, the station still has a fire engine, we have removed the second fire engine which has very little use. For a fire engine to be available to respond to incidents it requires a minimum crew. The second fire engine at Corsham is only 'available' with this minimum crew for 15% of the time (on average). The first fire engine is 'available' much more, meaning there is at least one engine available to respond to incidents for the majority of the time. The changes we have made will not impact on this.

Our data highlights that if the second fire engine was available at Corsham it would only be needed 27 times per year (on average over the last 4 years) In reality, the second fire engine only responded to 16% of the incidents (average of 4 per year) requiring 2 fire engines in Corsham over the last 4 years. A fire engine from elsewhere (such as Chippenham, Calne etc) supports the first fire engine from Corsham on the rare occasion that more than one is needed.

I hope this information provides some context to the decision to remove a fire engine and I would encourage Cllr Hopkinson to speak to the Wiltshire Councillors who are Fire Authority Members if any further information regarding our financial challenges and decision-making process is required, these councillors are:

Cllr Paul Oatway (Chair of the Authority)

Cllr Daniel Cave

Cllr Brian Dalton

Cllr Kelvin Nash

Cllr Pip Ridout

Cllr Paul Sample

These Councillors are available to support with any further queries you may have and therefore we do not intend to send a representative from DWFRS to the Corsham Area Board Meeting on 10 October.

Please do let me know if I can support with anything further.

Kind Regards,

**Greg Izon**

Group Manager, Resourcing and Savings Programme

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