

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 25 FEBRUARY 2014****REPORT OF: MRS HELYN CLACK, CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES****LEAD OFFICER: DAVID SARGEANT, INTERIM STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SURREY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE****SUBJECT: CHANGES TO FIRE ENGINE DEPLOYMENT IN THE NORTH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

In March 2013, Surrey County Council Cabinet approved Surrey Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) proposal to operate a chain of single fire engine stations running through the boroughs of Epsom and Ewell (E&E) and Reigate and Banstead (R&B). With this move, SFRS proposed to rebalance its resources in the area to ensure their efficient use and continuity of fire cover for local communities and county wide against the Surrey Response Standard.

Part of the plan was to create a new fire station within the Burgh Heath area; however no site could be secured in this area. SFRS are therefore asking Cabinet to approve the provision of a new fire station within a wider area (a three mile radius) around Burgh Heath. Until this permanent site is identified SFRS intend to relocate to a temporary location within the same area, which will still deliver an improvement in the response standard as defined by the supporting map in Annex 1. This is in order to enable SFRS to meet its response targets, which has become an operational imperative due to a reduction in the reliability of the fire cover in that part of the County due in part to London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority closing Purley Fire Station for a period of 18-24 months from summer 2014.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the following proposals:

- Officers should identify and deliver a permanent site for a single fire engine station within a three miles radius of Burgh Heath, to serve the north of Reigate and Banstead.
- Until such time as a permanent site is available to relocate the second fire engine from Epsom to a temporary fire station within the same geographical area, to deliver improvements against the Surrey Response Standard.
- Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Adult Social Care to assess the options to relocate the second fire engine from Epsom and to identify an available location which meets the requirements identified in this report.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The relocation of a fire engine into the proposed area will secure improvements against the county wide Surrey response standard. Whilst it may not be the optimal location this still delivers improvements against the response standard to meet the operational imperative that is compounded by the reduction in the provision of fire cover due to the temporary removal by London Fire Brigade of Purley’s fire appliance. The fire station is being refurbished from summer 2014 and the fire engine is being moved further away to Mitcham which will have a detrimental impact on response times when requests are made by SFRS under section 13 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The number of times that London Fire Brigade (LFB) were requested by SFRS can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1: The number of times that a request by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service was made to London Fire Brigade to attend incidents in Surrey

	Requests by SFRS for assistance by LFB/Purley	Requests by SFRS for assistance by LFB/Croydon/Sutton
2011-12	239	53
2012-13	122	18
2013-14	137	27

- The ambition to relocate one fire engine to the new area and secure an improvement in performance is now compounded by LFB decision to refurbish Purley and close for 18-24 months as of summer 2014, which will affect the level of performance.
- The current provision of fire cover into Reigate and Banstead is on average 8:16secs for the first fire engine, 48 seconds above the Surrey average and 8% below the Surrey Standard of 80%. The overall desired effect is to obtain improvements in the Surrey Standard across the county by providing a more equitable balance of service provision.

By relocating a fire engine from Epsom to the wider area, there is an improvement in the first attendance time of 1:09secs to 7:07secs and predicted performance against the Response Standard improves to 86.7%, up by 14% points. Diagrams 1 and 2 in Annex 5 provide a visual representation of the improvements gained.

- The net effect is that each fire engine’s “circle of influence”, that is, the 10 minute first response footprint, is extended by virtue of two fire engines being located at two separate points rather than both being at the same location.
- This provides a more agile and flexible disposition of resources and greater “reach” into the community thereby improving response times when the geographical area is greater. It will allow the Service to continue to deliver community fire prevention work to the communities of Reigate and Banstead, focusing on working with partners to support at risk groups and vulnerable adults. This will see a shift from high cost responsive intervention work to lower cost prevention and early intervention through education programmes and focused activity supported by a network of partners to address the needs of at risk groups and vulnerable adults.

- Creation of new single fire engine station in an area within a 'good area of performance' (ORH modelling). This will improve the response times in the north of Reigate & Banstead therefore helping to reduce the impact of the refurbishment work at Purley Fire Station for the next 18-24 months. It will also deliver sustainable improvements in that part of the county against the response standard providing a more equitable level of service.
- It provides an opportunity to work with Blue light partners and other agencies to collocate to further integrate service provision and share information to generate efficiencies through shared spaces and networking.

DETAILS:

Introduction and Background

1. The Public Safety Plan (PSP) outlined twelve outcomes to be achieved by 2020. This included improving the balance of service provision across Surrey and improving the provision and use of property.
2. The PSP established a potential model for emergency response cover in Surrey based upon existing fire station locations. Phase two of the PSP sought to establish new locations for a number of fire stations to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency response across the county.
3. In order to create a more balanced service provision across Epsom & Ewell (E&E) and Reigate & Banstead (R&B) areas, Surrey County Council (SCC) Cabinet approved "the proposals for the improved deployment of single fire engine stations running through the boroughs of Epsom & Ewell and Reigate & Banstead, including the delivery of two new fire stations in Salfords and the Burgh Heath area" on 26 March 2013.
4. Factors that shaped the recommendations to create a chain of single fire engine stations in E&E and R&B including a new fire station in the Burgh Heath area were as follows:
 - SFRS provides emergency response cover across the whole of the county and currently has up to 35 fire engines based at 25 fire stations. Two 24 hour fire engines are based at Epsom fire station and one at Reigate and Horley fire stations (Horley's proposed new location is Salfords) which provide most of the initial response cover for E&E and R&B areas.
 - Currently the emergency response performance in E&E is, on average, the quickest when compared to the remainder of Surrey and well within the Surrey Response Standard. This is primarily due to the relatively small geographic area and presence of a centrally located 24/7 two fire engine fire station.
 - There are areas of R&B where it has historically been difficult to achieve the Surrey Response Standard, such as Chipstead, Coulsdon, Kingswood, and fire engines from Epsom often provide the first response to this area.
 - This move would provide a more balanced service provision across the E&E and R&B Borough areas, in order to be better positioned to achieve the Surrey Response standard.

- ORH's (a company with over 20 years experience in emergency services optimisation and operational research) modelling shows that, under this plan, the first fire engine located in this area would reduce response times (see Annex 5) and would reach emergencies more quickly on average than they do now thereby generating improvements in service delivery performance (see Annex 2).
 - The removal of Purley's fire engine during the refurbishment of Purley fire station will affect the level of service into the north of Reigate and Banstead. This is due to commence in summer 2014 for a period of at least 18-24 months. During that time Purley's fire engine will be relocated to Mitcham.
5. SFRS has had long-standing mutual assistance arrangements with London Fire Brigade. Since the publication of London's fifth Safety Plan they have notified SFRS that they intend to charge for services that they provide over the border from 1 April 2014.

Location of new fire station in north Reigate and Banstead

6. In order to evaluate and demonstrate the impact of moving to a new location on the emergency response times, the modelling established a fixed geographic point in the Burgh Heath area. This point is also known as the 'optimal location' because the modelling evidence shows that fire engines from this point achieve the best response times. However, any location within the orange area of the map can still produce improvements to emergency response times. This is why the plan presented to the public, other stakeholders and SCC Cabinet in 2013 did not specify a particular site but referred more widely to the Burgh Heath area.
7. Since the Cabinet's decision in March 2013, SFRS and County Property Services have been unable to find a suitable location in the Burgh Heath area but options may be available in the nearby wider area. Modelling has confirmed that the area within a three mile radius of the optimal Burgh Heath location is still considered a "very good performance area" (see Annex 1 for Map). This will be referred to in the report as the 'wider identified area' and includes Banstead.
8. Once a permanent site/premises have been found, securing it will be subject to a separate Business Case and Cabinet decision.
9. The change in location of the new fire station might result in slight changes to the predicted impact on emergency response times (see table in Annex 2 for an example of re-modelled response times).

<u>CONSULTATION:</u>

10. An initial consultation had taken place in early 2013 in relation to redeploying one fire engine into the Burgh Heath area. The advice of Surrey County Council's Legal Team was to repeat the consultation to widen the area under consideration. Consultation ran from 16 December 2013 to 27 January 2014 and involved all stakeholders that had previously been consulted with. It was made clear in our communications with stakeholders that this consultation

focused on the change of location and not on the original decision to relocate Epsom’s second fire engine.

11. Consultation activities included a widely publicised on-line survey, postal questionnaires, presentations at a public meeting, neighbourhood panel meeting and library event, letters and emails to stakeholders from the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector and partner agencies, as well as staff and union consultation. The consultation was publicised in schools, churches, post offices, libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, community centres, through local media, SCC media and social media. See Annex 3 for the consultation report.
12. Feedback was received from over 310 individual respondents and groups using a range of consultation channels and methods. The overall feedback was generally positive. The survey produced a support level of 61%, with more support coming from Reigate and Banstead respondents, as illustrated in table 2 below:

Table 2: Survey agreement levels for / against the proposal

	SFRS staff		Residents, community representatives and councillors						Others		TOTAL	
			R&B		E&E		Other					
Yes	5	45.5%	109	69.4%	10	32.3%	2	22.2%	5	62.5%	131	60.6%
Not sure	5	45.5%	29	18.5%	7	22.6%	4	44.4%	2	25.0%	47	21.8%
No	1	9.1%	15	9.6%	13	41.9%	2	22.2%	0	0.0%	31	14.4%
No opinion	0	0.0%	4	2.5%	1	3.2%	1	11.1%	1	12.5%	7	3.2%

13. Respondents that completed the survey as supporters of the proposal mentioned fairer and more balanced response times and a preference for a station close by as reasons for their support. Some R&B Residents Associations and the R&B Local Committee supported the proposal, however with the caveat that a more suitable long-term location is to be found, because they shared similar concerns to those that opposed the proposal (see paragraph 14).
14. Residents and community representatives used the opportunity to voice their opposition to the proposed widening of the search area and raised concerns, which included:
 - Banstead High Street would not be a suitable location for a potential fire station, due to heavy traffic and congestion and disruption and possible danger to residents in the area. (main concern for stakeholders in Banstead)
 - Increase in response times for residents in Epsom and Ewell puts lives at risk (refers to original decision to move Epsom fire engine) (main concern for stakeholders in E&E)
 - Concerns that the potential use of Banstead High Street for a short-term solution would not be temporary, because a permanent solution would not be found.

15. Other concerns included the financial and operational justification of moving an engine out of Epsom, the impact on staff and resilience as well as town planning and development considerations for Banstead.
16. The most common suggestions submitted by respondents focused on extending the time-scales to find a site in the more suitable area of Burgh Heath with quick access to the A217, and keeping two fire engines in Epsom.
17. There were concerns about the six-week consultation period limiting meaningful engagement and informed decision-making, as well as insufficient publicity. The main criticism was that no specific location was included in the consultation material, which SFRS and Property Services were not in a position to share, as no definite site/premises had been secured and for standard commercial reasons.
18. So while there were objections from Epsom & Ewell mainly on the grounds of increased incident response times in their borough, and objections from Banstead Village RA particularly around traffic congestion and disruption of a potential fire station in Banstead High Street, we conclude that the proposal received on balance slightly more support than opposition, albeit with the strong preference that a potential fire station in Banstead High Street would be a temporary solution.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

19. The possibly lengthy process of finding, securing and approving a suitable site in the wider identified area could impact upon the delivery timescale, with an associated delay in any predicted MTFP cost savings.
20. A delay in establishing a new fire station in the desired area will affect the emergency response cover, as London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority intend to move the Purley fire engine for redevelopment off their site on 23 September 2014.
21. The development will build on the current framework and encompass the Medium Term Financial Plan and enable the Service to provide direction on the challenges and opportunities it faces.
22. Response is one component of how the fire service supports the management and reduction of community risk. The Service will continue to deliver community fire prevention to at risk groups in order to provide education and early intervention to offset high cost reactive response.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

23. The estimated capital costs of acquiring and converting a site within the wider identified area to provide a permanent fire station has been allowed for within an overall Fire station reconfiguration budget of £10.5m within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The final purchase, design and contract awards for which would be subject to a separate Business Case and Cabinet paper.
24. The provision of a fire station at Banstead is part of a larger reconfiguration programme as laid out within the Surrey Fire and Rescue Service plan. The new station facilitates both the operational and financial efficiencies of the

plan through the withdrawal and relocation of a fire engine from both Epsom and Reigate Fire Stations.

- 25. The Fire Service revenue impacts of the reconfiguration programme have been factored into the MTFP.
- 26. The relocation of a fire engine from Epsom to Banstead increases the Fire Service’s revenue costs. However, when taken in conjunction with the reduction of a fire engine at Reigate (to be relocated to a new Station at Salfords), the overall reconfiguration generates revenue efficiencies of £708,000. This saving has been used towards the cost pressure of providing the new station at Salfords.
- 27. The recommendation to provide a temporary station in the wider area, before a permanent solution is found, to meet the timescales desired by SFRS, will incur additional revenue and capital costs that have not been factored into the MTFP.
- 28. The revenue costs of renting a location within the area identified are estimated at £100,000 per annum.
- 29. In addition, due to the requirements of the electronic equipment on board, fire engines require garage facilities to store them above 4 degrees Celsius. Provision of a temporary ‘inflatable’ type of shelter is estimated at a capital cost of up to £300k.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

- 30. The pursuit of a permanent site within the wider identified area is part of the programme envisaged within the MTFP, and is consistent with its capital programme and revenue savings projections. The potential temporary relocation of one fire engine from Epsom is not yet factored in to plans, but the financial consequences of any decisions in that respect will be agreed as part of the Strategic Director’s approval of the detailed proposals. Therefore, all financial and Value for Money matters relevant to this decision have been addressed.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

- 31. SFRS must comply with the core functions identified in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. These include extinguishing fires in its area and protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area. In order to do so Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) must “secure the provision of the personnel, services and equipment necessary to efficiently meet all normal requirements”, each of which must be taken into account. As a result Cabinet must take into account whether the change in location of the new fire station will result in SFRS continuing to exercise its functions as a FRA to a satisfactory standard.
- 32. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 places a duty on FRAs to put in place business continuity management arrangements to ensure that they can continue to exercise their functions in the event of an emergency so far as reasonably practicable.

33. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires FRAs to comply with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (FRNF) (revised by the DCLG in July 2012) The FRNF provides an overall strategic direction for fire and rescue authorities) which must be complied with by SFRS. Key priorities for FRAs in the new framework include:
- identifying and assessing the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their area faces;
 - making provision for prevention and protection activities and responding to incidents appropriately;
 - working in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service; and
 - being accountable to communities for the service they provide.
34. Therefore the exact location of a new fire station requires careful consideration to ensure that that SFRS continues to meet the FRNF's objectives. Whilst there are no specific references in the FRNF to actual timing within which the FRA must respond to a call, reference is made to the need to "have the necessary capability in place to manage the majority of risks that may face their areas" (1.21) and "to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process" (1.30). In addition FRAs are specifically stated as being "accountable to their communities for their actions and decision making. They need to have transparent processes in place to deliver this and engage with their communities to provide them with the opportunity to influence their local service. Local accountability is a vital check on the services provided by fire and rescue authorities" (2.1). Therefore continued engagement with the relevant communities in Epsom & Ewell and Reigate and Banstead will be necessary.
35. The development of the Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority Public Safety Plan 2011-2020 (the "PSP") referred to in paragraph 1 of this Report and subsequent consultation has met the requirements of the FRNF (SFRS's commitment to the delivery of its duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as a Category 1 responder are also referred to in the PSP.)
36. In considering this report, the Cabinet must give due regard to the results of the consultation report attached in Annex 3 and take these into account when making its final decision.
37. In making their decision Members should also have due regard to the public sector equalities duty and Cabinet's attention is drawn to the Equalities Impact Assessment and to the paragraph below relating to Equalities and Diversity.

Equalities and Diversity

38. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared for SFRS by the Customers & Communities Directorate Policy and Performance Team. It is contained within Annex 4 and should be considered by the Cabinet in making this decision.
39. The public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) applies to the Council's ongoing implementation of the SFRS Public Safety Plan, and in particular to decisions made by Cabinet in this report. There is a continuing

need in providing this service to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations for such groups, and eliminate any unlawful discrimination.

40. The Equality Impact Assessment that was created for the original proposal, which was presented to Cabinet on 26 March 2013, has been reviewed to consider the impact of a change in location for the new fire station in the north of Reigate and Banstead Borough.
41. At the start of the original project, an initial Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken to identify the potential impact on people who fall within one or more of the protected characteristics (as provided for by the Equality Act 2010) and high risk groups (i.e. age, mental health, disability) which also informed the consultation plan.
42. The full EIA has assessed the impact of the proposals on people with protected characteristics and the consultation assessed the concerns of the wider community. Modelling predicts slightly longer emergency response times for the first fire engine for all two fire engine incidents in Epsom and Ewell area and significantly longer response times for the second fire engine, but within the Surrey Emergency Response Standard.
43. Any potential increased risk through increased response time is mitigated by the response time remaining within the Surrey Response Standard, all first responses remain below the Surrey average, and the Surrey average is also expected to improve. Existing multi agency prevention and protection arrangements are in place to reduce the risk from fire incidents and other emergencies, and are targeted to vulnerable and high risk groups.

Other Implications:

44. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered.
 - Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children
 - Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults
 - Public Health
 - Climate change
 - Carbon emissions

There are no significant implications arising from this report for any of the assessed areas.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- If the new expanded search area is approved, SCC Property Services will search for and secure a suitable site in wider area for SFRS to deploy one fire engine in the area, with delivery during summer 2014.
- SFRS will continue to operate one fire engine in Epsom and Ewell Borough.
- SCC Property Services and SFRS will continue to search for a permanent site in the wider identified area (further Cabinet approval required as part of the acquisition process of new property / site)

- Communities Select Committee to continue to oversee the implementation of the PSP Action Plan 2.

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Consulted:

Leader, SCC Councillors

SCC Communities Select Committee and Fire and Rescue Advisory Group

Local Committees in Reigate & Banstead and Epsom & Ewell

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

Parish Council for Sidlow and Salfords, Horley Town Council

Neighbourhood Panel in Tadworth

Residents Associations in Epsom & Ewell and Reigate & Banstead

Local Residents and Care Providers

External Equality Advisory Group

Empowerment Boards East And Mid Surrey

Partners (including South East Coast Ambulance, Surrey Police, NHS, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, London Fire Brigade)

Staff, Representative Bodies and other internal stakeholders

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Map

Annex 2 – Emergency response times table

Annex 3 – Consultation report

Annex 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

Annex 5 – Comparison of modelled response times

Sources/background papers:

- Surrey Fire and Rescue Authority, Public Safety Plan 2011-20
 - Surrey County Council Cabinet Report (26 March 2013), “EMERGENCY RESPONSE COVER LOCATIONS - EPSOM & EWELL AND REIGATE & BANSTEAD” (Item 13)
 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2013-18
-