

CABINET RESPONSE TO COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY OF CONSULTATION FOR EPSOM & EWELL AND REIGATE & BANSTEAD – EMERGENCY RESPONSE COVER LOCATIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Communities Select Committee recommends that Cabinet approves the proposed changes to the emergency response cover in the boroughs of Epsom & Ewell and Reigate & Banstead.

RESPONSE

I am pleased to note that the Communities Select Committee recommends that Cabinet approves the proposed changes to the emergency response cover in the boroughs of Epsom & Ewell and Reigate & Banstead.

I was at the Select Committee with officers and responded to the issues raised during the meeting. In respect of the four specific points that have been raised, I will provide a further summary response.

(1) Clarity, information and justifications around the selection of new locations being Considered SCC Property Services are responsible for identifying and securing appropriate sites for the location of the new fire stations. Fire Officers are working with officers from Property Services on this matter and support has been offered by Reigate and Banstead Borough Council. When suitable sites have been identified and we are able, the necessary clarity and information will be provided. Any change of use will of course be subject to the usual planning permission process.

(2) Public and member engagement during the consultation process
As a result of the initial feedback received I agreed to extend the consultation to 12 weeks to ensure that there was sufficient opportunity for interested parties to have their say. The full consultation plan is available as an appendix to the consultation report but I can assure you it was thorough and every reasonable effort was taken to encourage participation.

(3) Impact of the changes on areas of deprivation and vulnerable residents. A significant amount of modelling and research has been undertaken in developing these proposals and the impact on vulnerable residents has been assessed through the EIA. This shows that, in Surrey, vulnerability from fire is not linked to deprivation but there appears to be a link with age, mobility and mental health issues. The Service are working closely with Adult Social Care colleagues to target those most at risk and provide them with the prevention and protection measures that can make a real difference to them. Indeed fire and rescue critical incidents can and do occur anywhere in the county and that is why we are making these changes to improve the balance of service provision across Surrey, which is an agreed outcome of the Public Safety Plan.

(4) Impact of the changes on first and second fire engine response times. The Cabinet report and appendices provides more detail on the modelled impact of the changes on fire engine response times. Across Surrey, and specifically within Reigate & Banstead, the modelled average response time for the first fire engine improves and two-thirds of all incidents are resolved with only one fire engine in attendance. However, the biggest impact on life safety can be made through effective prevention and protection work, which supports our emergency response arrangements. The work with Adult Social Care to target

vulnerable people to support them in their homes and the award winning *safe drive, stay alive* programme for young drivers 22 are good examples of where we can make a positive difference.

Mrs Kay Hammond

Cabinet Member for Community Safety

26 March 2013