



COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2019

INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION FEEDBACK 2019-2020

REPORT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To update members with details of the consultation feedback in response to the 2019 – 2020 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan.

BACKGROUND

2. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework sets out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities who must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their duties.
3. The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework document places a responsibility on all fire and rescue authorities to produce and consult on their IRMP which in this Service is incorporated into the Three-Year Strategic Plan. These documents direct fire and rescue authorities to:
 - Identify and assess the full range of fire and rescue related risks our area faces, make provision for prevention and protection activities and to respond to incidents appropriately;
 - Work in partnership with our community to deliver our Service; and
 - Be accountable to communities for the service we provide.
4. The Authority must have in place and maintain an IRMP which reflects local needs and sets out how existing and foreseeable risks will be tackled in local communities. The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually to assess the effectiveness of existing arrangements and following this an annual IRMP action plan is developed.
5. The plan on which we consulted this year was the second-year action plan of the current Three-Year Strategic Plan (incorporating the IRMP) which spans from 2018/19 – 2020/21.
6. The action plan has had to be amended significantly this year due to a legal ruling in South Yorkshire which outlined that a crewing system, similar to that in place in the Service, does not comply with elements of the Working Time Regulations 1998. The system called Day Crewing Plus (DCP) is currently in place at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe Fire Stations. The system was introduced in 2013 at these stations and has operated successfully since that time. Although ultimately it would be for the courts to decide if the system operated in County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS) complies with the regulations it is prudent to assume the court would make a similar judgment to that made in South Yorkshire.

7. Nationally the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) have made it clear they expect fire and rescue services operating these types of crewing systems to remove them or potentially face a local legal challenge. We have been working closely with the FBU locally to try and negotiate an alternative system that complies with the regulations and also meets the needs of staff at those stations.
8. Whilst examining the options to remove the two DCP stations, the Service have updated and re-examined the data that was collated for the Emergency Response Review in 2017. The data covered:
 - Past and future demand from each station including types of demand and high demand times.
 - Current and future risk data including: population, dwellings, deprivation, high risk people, high risk locations, business premises, operational risk information, national and local risk registers.
9. Given the predicted deficit that the Service is facing in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), understanding the financial implications of any option is vital. The options are also modelled against the impact they will have on our response standards. The response standards are the Authority's service delivery standard to the public for emergency response.

CONSULTATION FOR 2019/20

10. A copy of the consultation document is attached at Appendix A.
11. The consultation considered three high level questions:

Bishop Auckland crewing arrangements

If the trial currently being undertaken at Bishop Auckland fire station (crewing the first appliance with 4 firefighters and the Special Rescue Unit with 2 firefighters) is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently?

Collaboration opportunities

Do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and (NFRS) to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety?

Revised crewing options

We must make changes to crewing at our stations at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe and possibly others (Durham and Spennymoor), please tick your preferred option below or alternatively please tell us in the free text box your ideas.

12. The three options presented for consideration under revised crewing options were:

Option 1

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe for 12 hours during the day. At night time only the existing on call firefighters will be called into work within 5 minutes of being alerted to the incident.

Option 2

Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, to cover 12 hours over night, move the second fire engine and crew from Durham to Newton Aycliffe and the second fire engine and crew from Peterlee to Seaham, this will maintain staffing that can respond immediately at these stations.

Option 3

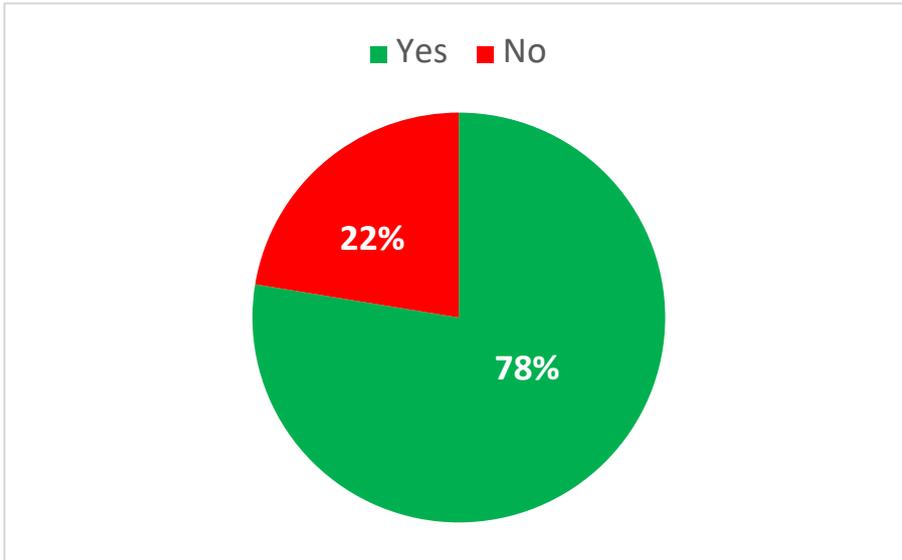
Have firefighters on duty at Seaham and Newton Aycliffe as described in option 1. In addition, move Durham's second fire engine and crew permanently to Spennymoor to replace the current arrangements. This means they would be there to offer an immediate response 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Both Durham and Spennymoor would then have identical resources when responding to incidents.

13. The consultation document outlined that the Service's preferred option was Option 3. This is the only option that has a positive impact on Service wide response standards, delivers the greatest savings and best matches our resources to the risk and demand data.
14. Various methods of communication have been used in the consultation process which included:
 - An on-line survey;
 - Station open night events at the stations impacted specifically by the options;
 - Durham County Council and Darlington Borough Council staff;
 - Messages about the survey and links to it from Twitter and Facebook via the Service accounts as well as the partner organisations (listed above);
 - Presentations to various strategic groups of Darlington Borough Council and Durham County Council including Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
 - Presentations at Resident Association meetings;
 - Presentations at Parish and Town Council meetings;
 - Presentations to Area Action Partnership meetings;
 - Briefings to all CDDFRS staff. Information also included in several staff bulletins and Communications Forums;
 - Information to neighbouring fire and rescue services.

CONSULTATION RESULTS

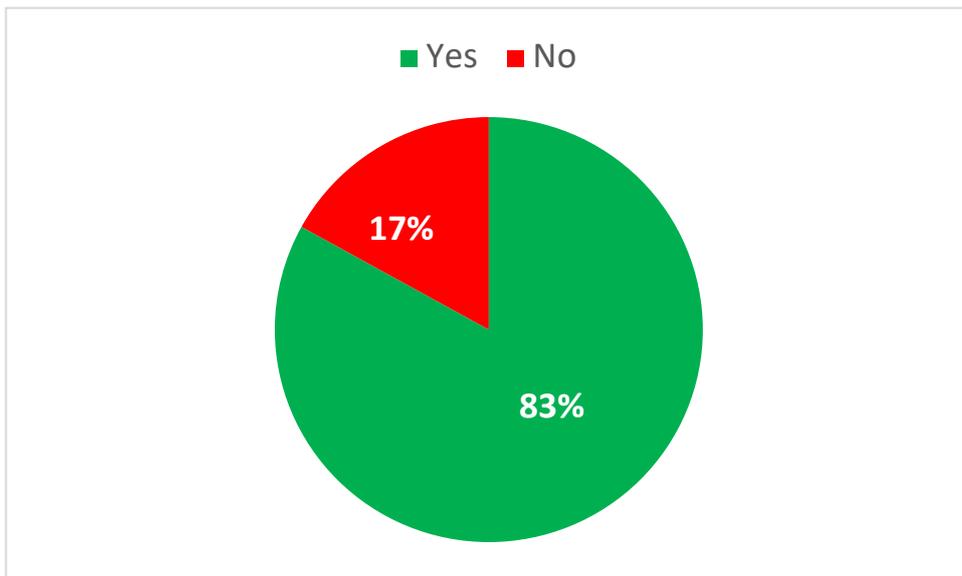
15. In total we received 790 valid, completed surveys. In order to present valid data a number of duplicate surveys that had been submitted from the same people, numerous times over a short period of time were removed from the final results. Details of the responses received against each of the questions are set out below. A copy of the free text responses is set out at Appendix B.

Question 1: If the trial currently being undertaken at Bishop Auckland fire station is deemed successful, should we continue with this staffing arrangement permanently?



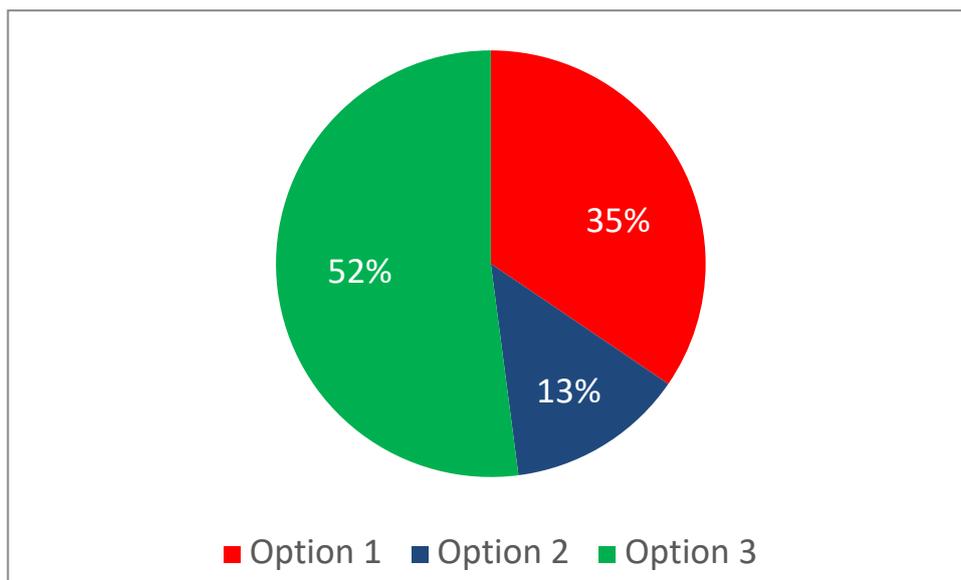
16. 78% of respondents supported this proposal.

Question 2: Do you support our intention to explore further collaboration opportunities with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) and (NFRS) to improve efficiency, effectiveness or increase public safety?



17. 83% of respondents supported this proposal.

Question 3: We must make changes to crewing at some of our stations, please tick your preferred option below or alternatively please tell us in the free text box your ideas.



18. 35% of respondents supported option 1, 13% supported option 2 and 52% supported option 3.
19. The Service received some specific feedback from Durham County Council's Safer Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the response is attached as Appendix C. The Committee unanimously supported Option 3. The Chief Fire Officer also received a letter from Grahame Morris MP, whose constituency covers Easington. Grahame expressed concern about the cuts to the fire and rescue service and wrote outlining this view to the Police and Fire Minister, Nick Hurd. Grahame had specific concerns about the option of moving the second appliance from Peterlee (Option 2). A copy of the correspondence from Grahame is attached as Appendix D.
20. The consultation results will be published on the Authority's website, via social media and made available in hard copy format if requested.
21. We are also aware that the options presented under Question 3 were, to some people, controversial and we received some passionate and emotive feedback to this particular question. A significant amount of the comments made referred to how unfair the current funding position was given the amount of grant cut that the Authority has received over the last eight years, the limitations around increases to the precept and the lack of capital funding.
22. We are also conscious of the views of staff who are impacted by the various options presented. We have tried to take account of all of these views when outlining the recommendations made in relation to the Emergency Response Review (ERR) which are covered in a separate paper on the agenda.
23. Members are reminded of the predicted deficit outlined in the MTFP. It is important that the Authority has robust plans to meet this deficit. The legal implications of the DCP mean it is vital that this shift system is ended as soon as is reasonably practicable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

24. Members are requested to:

- a) **Note** the 2019/20 IRMP consultation outcomes;
- b) **Consider** the feedback received when considering the options outlined in the ERR paper (item 9 on the agenda).

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