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GRAHAME MORRIS MP
Easington Constituency

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Glebe Centre Annex
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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

21 January 2019

Stuart Errington
Chief Fire Officer
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Belmont Business Park
Durham, DH1 1TW

Dear Stuart,

Please find enclosed a copy of my correspondence to The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, Police and Fire Minister in relation to funding cuts and the ongoing County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service consultation.

I am concerned about any funding cuts that will lead to the reduction of local service, and I am particularly concerned at the option that would result in an appliance being moved from Peterlee to Seaham to provide cover at night.

In view of the high number of incidents in Peterlee and the surrounding, there are no circumstances in which I could support an appliance being moved from Peterlee. This option has caused widespread concern in the local area and I hope it can be confirmed at the earliest opportunity that such a proposal will not proceed.

I would greatly appreciate if you consider my views in relation to the ongoing consultation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. Morris'.

Grahame Morris, M.P.

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21 January 2019

The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP
Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service
Home Office
Direct Communications Unit
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

Dear The Rt Hon Hurd,

Fire & Rescue Service

I am writing to raise my concerns about government spending cuts to the County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service and the threat to this vital public service in East Durham.

County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service need to cut almost £450,000 from next year's budget, and due to government austerity, they will need to bridge a £735,000 by 2021/22. I believe there is no clearer example of the austerity threat than the downgrading of a frontline life-saving service.

There is no justification for the downgrading of Fire & Rescue Services in East Durham at a time when they are dealing with more Accidental, Primary and Secondary Fires than at any point in the last five years.

In the Peterlee area, there has been a 12% increase in accidental dwelling fires, a 98% increase in primary fires and 55% increase in secondary fires. I am therefore shocked that an option being considered could see an appliance moved from Peterlee to Seaham to provide cover at night. This option defies all reason in view of the number of incidents in the Peterlee area compared to Seaham. It should not have been suggested and should be rejected by County Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue Service immediately.

I will be raising my concerns directly with the Fire & Rescue Service, however, they are only in this situation due to the government cuts and the decisions made by your department. I hope you will make a commitment to safeguard Fire & Rescue Services and ensure that areas where incidents are increasing will not face service downgrades.



Thank you in advance for your kind attention to this enquiry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. Morris'.

Grahame Morris, M.P.

cc: Stuart Errington, Chief Fire Officer, Durham and Darlington Fire & Rescue