

**To: All Members of the Authority**



The Protocol and Procedure for visitors attending meetings of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority can be found by clicking [here](#) or on the Authority's website: <http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk> - About Us > Fire Authority.

**J. Henshaw  
LLB (Hons)  
Clerk to the Authority**

Tel: 0151 296 4000  
Extn: 4113 Kelly Kellaway

Your ref:

Our ref HP/NP

Date: 22 June 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **AUTHORITY** to be held at **1.00 pm** on **TUESDAY, 30TH JUNE, 2015** in the Liverpool Suite at Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bridle Road, Bootle.

Yours faithfully,

Clerk to the Authority

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**MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**AUTHORITY**

**30 JUNE 2015**

**AGENDA**

**1. Preliminary Matters**

The Authority is requested to consider the identification of:

- a) declarations of interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) any additional items of business which the Chair has determined should be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) items of business which may require the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 20)**

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015, are submitted for approval as a correct record and for signature by the Chair.

**3. Petition concerning the merger of Upton and West Kirby Fire Stations (Pages 21 - 30)**

To consider a petition received by the Authority entitled: *Stop the building of the Fire Station in Saughall Massie and the destruction of precious green belt land.*

**4. Deputation in relation to the merger of Upton and West Kirby Fire Stations**

To consider a deputation of Wirral residents and Councillors concerning the proposed merger of Upton and West Kirby Fire Stations at the site identified in Saughall Massie.

**5. REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15 (Pages 31 - 62)**

To consider Report CFO/061/15 of the Deputy Chief Executive, concerning the Authority's year-end financial position for 2014/15.

**6. Proposals For Eccleston and St. Helens Fire Stations (Pages 63 - 134)**

To consider Report CFO/060/15 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the

proposal to merge Eccleston and St.Helens fire stations at a new station on Canal Street, St.Helens; and the re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as “wholetime retained” (with a 30 minute recall), subject to a 12 week period of public consultation, to commence with effect from 3rd August 2015.

***Appendix M to this Report contains EXEMPT information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.***

**7. WIRRAL FIRE COVER CONSULTATION 2 OUTCOMES** (Pages 135 - 370)

To consider Report CFO/059/15 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the outcomes of the 12 week public consultation regarding the draft proposal to merge Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie, as an alternative to an outright closure of West Kirby fire station; and the re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as “wholetime retained”.

**8. Operational Response Savings Options For West Wirral** (Pages 371 - 382)

To consider Report CFO/058/15 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the merger of Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, subject to agreement from Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) to transfer ownership of the land to the Authority and the granting of planning permission.

***Appendix B to this Report contains EXEMPT information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.***

**9. Freedom of Information Requests - 2014/15 update** (Pages 383 - 388)

To consider report CFO/062/15 of the Deputy Chief Executive concerning the number and type of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Authority between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and 1<sup>st</sup> April to date.

**10. MFRA Engagement Principles and Commitments** (Pages 389 - 402)

To consider report CFO/057/15 of the Deputy Chief Executive concerning the progress made in relation to staff engagement following the outcomes of the 2014 Staff Survey and to introduce Members to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Engagement Principles.

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If any Members have queries, comments or require additional information relating to any item on the agenda please contact Committee Services and we will endeavour to provide the information you require for the meeting. Of course this does not affect the right of any Member to raise questions in the meeting itself but it may assist Members in their consideration of an item if additional information is available.

### Refreshments

Any Members attending on Authority business straight from work or for long periods of time, and require a sandwich, please contact Democratic Services, prior to your arrival, for arrangements to be made.

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## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

11 JUNE 2015

### MINUTES

**Present:** Cllr Dave Hanratty (Chair) Councillors Les Byrom, Linda Maloney, Robbie Ayres, Peter Brennan, Roy Gladden, Ray Halpin, Steve Niblock, Lesley Rennie, Denise Roberts, James Roberts, Jean Stapleton, Sharon Sullivan, Paul Tweed and Marianne Welsh

**Also Present:**

**Apologies of absence were received from:** Cllr Mike Kearns, Cllr Jimmy Mahon and Cllr Barbara Murray

### **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Prior to the start of the meeting, information regarding general housekeeping was provided by the Chair to all in attendance.

The Chair requested that any members of the press or public present, with the intention of recording proceedings of the meeting, make themselves known to the Chair.

The Chair confirmed to all present that Mr and Mrs Brace would be filming the proceedings.

The Chair of the Authority then declared the meeting open.

### Ex Members

On behalf of the Authority, the Chair conveyed thanks and best wishes to the three Members leaving the Authority as a result of the local elections and Council Appointments.

Cllr Ted Grannell, who was not re-appointed to the Authority by Knowsley Council, was in attendance to receive a small gift in recognition of his service to the Authority.

Cllr John Joseph Kelly, who was not re-appointed to the Authority by Sefton Council, due to obtaining a Cabinet position, had sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting; and requested that Cllr Byrom pass his gift on to him.

Tony Robertson, who lost his seat in the local elections, had also submitted his apologies for the meeting.

The Chair of the Authority presented Cllr Ted Grannell with his gift - acknowledging that Cllr Grannell had been the longest serving Member on the

Authority and thanking him for being such a fantastic advocate of the Fire & Rescue Authority over the years. He also acknowledged the fantastic work undertaken by Cllr Grannell during his appointment to the Authority, particularly around emergency planning and the introduction of Home Fire Safety Checks.

Cllr Grannell accepted his award and thanked the Authority and Officers for their support. He expressed his satisfaction at being involved in ground breaking initiatives over the years; and expressed his support for the current Chair and Senior Officers.

### New Members

The Chair then welcomed the three new Members appointed to the Authority for 2015/16 – Councillors Paul Tweed and Marianne Welsh, appointed by Sefton Borough Council; and Councillor Mike Kearns appointed by Knowsley Borough Council.

Cllrs Tweed and Welsh were in attendance at the meeting, Cllr Kearns was not present, due to the late notification of appointments by Knowsley Borough Council.

## **1. Preliminary Matters**

The Authority considered the identification of any declarations of interest, matters of urgency or items that would require the exclusion of the press and public due to the disclosure of exempt information.

### Resolved that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the Agenda
- b) no additional items of business were determined by the Chair to be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

## **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

## **3. Election of Chairman**

Nominations for the position of Chair of the Authority were requested.



Nominee

Cllr Dave Hanratty – Moved by Cllr Linda Maloney  
Seconded by Cllr Les Byrom

A vote then took place as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
15	Nil	Nil

Resolved that:

Cllr Dave Hanratty be appointed as Chair of the Authority for 2015/16; and preside over the remainder of the meeting.

**4. Election of Vice-Chairman**

Nominations for Vice Chair position/s of the Authority were requested.

Nominees

Councillor Linda Maloney - moved by Councillor Dave Hanratty,  
seconded by Councillor Sharon Sullivan

Councillor Les Byrom - moved by Councillor Dave Hanratty,  
seconded by Councillor Sharon Sullivan

A vote then took place as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
15	Nil	Nil

Resolved that:

Both Councillor Linda Maloney and Councillor Les Byrom be re-appointed as Vice Chairs of the Authority for 2015/16.

**5. Membership of the Authority 2015/16**

Members considered Report CFO/043/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning changes to the Membership of the Authority for 2015/16, noting the replacement of Tony Robertson (Sefton, Lib Dem), Cllr John Joseph Kelly (Sefton, Labour) and Cllr Ted Grannell (Knowsley, Labour) with Cllr Marianne Welsh (Sefton, Lib Dem), Cllr Paul Tweed (Sefton, Labour) and Cllr Mike Kearns (Knowsley, Labour).

The Authority for 2015/16 will comprise of 18 Elected Members, with the political makeup being; 16 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat Member, appointed from the 5 District Councils as follows:

Liverpool Councillors  
Councillors

Barbara Murray  
(Labour)

Dave Hanratty  
(Labour)

James Roberts  
(Labour)

Peter Brennan  
(Labour)

Roy Gladden  
(Labour)

Sharon Sullivan  
(Labour)

Wirral Councillors

Denise Roberts  
(Labour)

Jean Stapleton  
(Labour)

Lesley Rennie  
(Conservative)

Steve Niblock  
(Labour)

Knowsley

Ray Halpin  
(Labour)

Mike Kearns  
(Labour)

Sefton Councillors

Les Byrom  
(Labour)

Jimmy Mahon  
(Labour)

Paul Tweed  
(Labour)

Marianne Welsh  
(Liberal Democrat)

St Helens Councillors

Linda Maloney  
(Labour)

Robbie Ayres  
(Labour)

The Authority will also continue with the Appointment of Independent Person Anthony Boyle.

**Resolved that:**

The content of the report be noted.

**6. Structure of the Authority**

Members considered report CFO/044/15 of the Monitoring Officer, regarding the minimum legal structure of the Authority, the decision making structure to be set for 2015/16, the appointment of Members to Committees, nomination of Chairs and determination of powers and duties of Committees; and the appointment of Members to Lead Member Roles.

**Resolved that:**

- a) That the following Appointments, Committees and decision making structure of the Authority for 2015/16 be approved:

**Chair of the Authority: Cllr Dave Hanratty**  
**Vice-Chair of Authority: Cllr Les Byrom**  
**Vice-Chair of Authority: Cllr Linda Maloney.**

Labour: Group Leader: Cllr Dave Hanratty (Chair).  
 Opposition Spokesperson: Cllr. Marianne Welsh

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Members</b>
Community Safety & Protection Committee  8 Members (7 Labour, 1 Opposition)	<b>1 Linda Maloney(Chair)</b> 2 Barbara Murray 3 Jimmy Mahon 4 James Roberts 5 Steve Niblock 6 Paul Tweed 7 Mike Kearns 8 Marianne Welsh
<b>Policy &amp; Resources            Committee</b>  8 Members (7 Labour, 1 Opposition)	<b>1 Les Byrom (Chair)</b> 2 Peter Brennan 3 Roy Gladden 4 Ray Halpin 5 Denise Roberts 6 Jean Stapleton 7 Sharon Sullivan 8 Lesley Rennie
Audit Sub Committee  <b>Sub Committee to Policy            &amp; Resources Committee</b>  5 Members (4 Labour, 1 Opposition)	<b>1 Denise Roberts (Chair)</b> 2 Paul Tweed 3 Mike Kearns 4 James Roberts 5 Lesley Rennie

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>Performance &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>  7 Members (6 Labour, 1 Opposition) Plus <b>1 Independent Person</b>	<b>1 Robbie Ayres (Chair)</b> 2 Ray Halpin (Ops. Response) 3 Barbara Murray (Strat. & Perform.) 4 Jimmy Mahon (Prevent. & Protect.) 5 Jean Stapleton (Fin. Asset. & Effic.) 6 Sharon Sullivan (People & Org.) 7 Lesley Rennie (Ops. Preparedness)
<b>Appointments Committee</b> (3 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Lib Dem) Made up of the Chair, Vice Chairs, and Opposition Members	<b>1 Dave Hanratty (Chair)</b> 2 Les Byrom 3 Linda Maloney 4 Lesley Rennie 5 Marianne Welsh
<b>Appeals Committee</b> (3 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Lib Dem) Made up of the Chair, Vice Chairs, and Opposition Members	<b>1 Dave Hanratty (Chair)</b> 2 Les Byrom 3 Linda Maloney 4 Lesley Rennie 5 Marianne Welsh
<b>Member Development Group</b> (2 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Lib Dem)	<b>1 Jimmy Mahon (Chair)</b> 2 Steve Niblock 3. Lesley Rennie 4. Marianne Welsh

Lead Members:

(Special Responsibility Roles, who have a seat on Performance & Scrutiny Committee).

<b>Lead Role</b>	<b>Lead Member</b>
Finance, Assets & Efficiency	Cllr Jean Stapleton
Operational Preparedness	Cllr Lesley Rennie
Operational Response	Cllr Ray Halpin
People & Organisational Development	Cllr Sharon Sullivan
Prevention & Protection	Cllr Jimmy Mahon
Strategy & Performance	Cllr Barbara Murray

- b) Should Members be unable to attend a meeting they are appointed to, they are to arrange for an appropriate Alternate Member to attend on their behalf, to ensure correct political balance; and inform Democratic Services of such representatives prior to the start of the relevant meeting.
- c) The deletion of the Consultation & Negotiation Sub-Committee from the Authority's decision making structure for 2015/16, be noted.

- d) The creation of 2 new “Member Ambassador” Roles for 2015/16; and appointments to those roles, be approved as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Ambassador Role</b>
Cllr Roy Gladden	Health & Wellbeing
Cllr Peter Brennan	Youth Engagement

## **7. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Constitution**

Members considered Report CFO/045/15 of the Clerk to the Authority, concerning the draft amended Constitution for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority (the Authority) for 2015/16.

Members were provided with an overview of the significant changes made to the Constitution for 2015/16.

In relation to Part 3, which relates to the roles of Chairs and Members rights and duties, the functions of each Committee, the Scheme of Delegation; and the Terms of Reference for the proposed Committee Structure being brought into force, amendments were highlighted as follows:

- The removal of the Consultation & Negotiation Sub-Committee, due to the significant improvements in Industrial Relations. Quarterly reports will be submitted to the full Authority to ensure that Members are kept abreast of such matters.
- The addition of two new Member Ambassador Roles, to take responsibility, with the relevant officer, for the promotion of Health & Wellbeing and Youth Engagement respectively.
- Amendments made to the Scheme of Delegation to reflect the provisions of the Openness of Public Bodies Regulations 2014, in terms of recording of Authority Meetings and of publishing delegations from the Fire & Rescue Authority.

In addition, amendments to Contract Standing Orders have been made to reflect new procedures and European thresholds, as contained within the new Public Contracts Regulations 2014.

Members were also informed that the Member Officer Protocol had recently been reviewed by the Member Development Group, at their request; and Members were requested to familiarise themselves with the provisions within that document.

### **Resolved that:**

- a) The draft amended Constitution for 2015/16, be approved.

- b) The Monitoring Officer to the Authority, be instructed to review the Constitution in the light of any changes in legislation; and to bring a further report to the Authority in these circumstances.

**8. Authority Meeting Dates for 2015/16; And Draft Dates For 2016/17**

Members considered Report CFO/046/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning the draft dates for Authority Committee Meetings and events for 2015/16; and draft dates for Authority Committee Meetings for 2016/17.

The Chair of the Authority requested that the Station Visits day scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015, be changed to 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015, due to a clash with a meeting of the North West Fire & Rescue Forum.

The Chair also highlighted an additional Authority Meeting, called at his request, to follow the Strategy Day on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The purpose of this meeting is to enable the Authority to consider the implications of the Emergency Budget.

In addition, the Chair stated that Learning Lunches will start at 12:15 and finish at 13:00, to enable Group Meetings to take place prior to the main Committees 11:45 to 12:15. He re-iterated that all Committee meetings will commence at 13:00 unless specified otherwise.

**Resolved that:**

- a) With the inclusion of the amendments above, the Authority confirm approval of the schedule of meeting dates and events for 2015/16 (as attached at Appendix A and provisionally agreed at the AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014).
- b) The schedule of meeting dates for 2016/17 (as attached at Appendix B), be approved as draft dates, to be ratified at the 2016 Annual General Meeting.

**9. Members Allowance Payments 2014/15**

Members considered Report CFO/049/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning payments made to Members in the form of allowances during the financial year 2014/15.

Cllr Rennie informed the Authority of a letter she had just received from Mr Brace concerning payments made to Members; and requested that Officers look into the points raised by Mr Brace and respond appropriately.

**Resolved that:**

- a) The information contained within the report and at Appendix 1, be noted.

- b) Officers be instructed to consider the points raised by Mr Brace in his correspondence; and respond appropriately in due course.

## **10. Scheme Of Members Allowances 2015/16**

Members considered Report CFO/050/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning a review of the current Scheme of Members Allowances; and the recommendation of any changes the Authority wish to make to the Scheme.

### **Resolved that**

- a) The Authority continues with its current Members' Allowances Scheme for 2015/16.
- b) The Authority's intention to reject any pay increase, in line with Firefighters Pay award for 2014/15, which would have applied to the 2015/16 Allowances, as confirmed at the Authority's AGM on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014, be noted.
- c) The Authority's intention to reject any pay increase in line with Firefighters Pay award for 2015/16 (subject to National agreement), which would apply to the 2016/17 Allowances, be confirmed.
- d) Continuation of the combined roles of Co-opted Member (appointed to Performance and Scrutiny Committee as a none voting Member), and Independent Person (to consider any complaints against Members, alleged to have breached the Members Code of Conduct), be approved.
- e) The combined role above, continue to be undertaken by Mr Anthony Boyle as 'Independent Person', and payment for conducting such roles be paid following submission and verification of invoices, at a daily attendance rate of £50 (as and when required);
- f) Given the current political balance of the Authority and in line with the Authority's decision to reduce its Members Allowances Budget by 10% over four years from 2013/14, the payment of the Opposition Spokesperson Special Responsibility Allowance payment to only one Opposition Member, be approved.
- g) the deletion of the Deputy Group Leaders Allowance from the Scheme of Members Allowances for 2015/16, be approved.

## **11. Questions on the Discharge of Functions**

Members considered Report CFO/051/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning nominations of a Member from each of the five constituent District Councils, as the Member responsible for answering questions in their Council on the discharge of functions of the Fire & Rescue Authority.

**Resolved that:**

The following Members be appointed by the Authority as the Members responsible for answering questions within their Council on the discharge of the functions of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority:

<b><u>Councillor</u></b>	-	<b><u>Council</u></b>
Councillor Ray Halpin	-	Knowsley
Councillor Dave Hanratty	-	Liverpool
Councillor Les Byrom	-	Sefton
Councillor Linda Maloney	-	St Helens
Councillor Denise Roberts	-	Wirral

**12. Appointment of authority members to outside organisations**

Members considered Report CFO/052/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning the Outside Organisations to which the Authority is currently affiliated; and to request where appropriate, confirmation of continued affiliation for 2015/16 and the appointment of representatives to those organisations.

Cllr Rennie requested it be noted that she is appointed as a Trustee and Member of the Fire Support Network by private invitation; and is not appointed by the Authority.

**Resolved that:**

- a) Continuation of affiliation with the following organisations; and the appointment of the following Members to those organisations, be approved:

<b><u>Organisation</u></b>	<b><u>Representative Member</u></b>
Local Government Association Fire Services Commission	Cllrs Dave Hanratty, & Les Byrom
North West Employers' Organisation	T.B.C
National Joint Council	Cllr Dave Hanratty – Spokesperson on Employers Side of NJC for Local Authority Fire Brigades
North West Fire and Rescue Forum	Cllrs Dave Hanratty, Linda Maloney, Les Byrom (observer) and Lesley Rennie
Fire Support Network	Cllr Jean Stapleton



Toxteth FireFit Hub

Cllr Jean Stapleton

Association of Metropolitan  
Fire & Rescue Authorities

Cllrs Dave Hanratty & Linda  
Maloney

Merseyside Brussels Office

Cllr Linda Maloney

- b) The Authority cease its affiliation with Local Authorities Confronting Disaster and Emergencies (LACDE), as the Authority has had no involvement with this organisation for several years.

### **13. Approved Conferences And Outside Meetings**

Members considered Report CFO/053/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning the list of approved conferences and outside meetings and any revisions to the list that the Authority wish to make.

The Authority considered the list attached at Appendix A, noting that several of the conferences and outside meetings contained within it are no longer in existence.

#### **Resolved that:**

- a) The list of approved conferences and outside meetings, attached at Appendix A, be removed.
- b) Conferences and outside meetings be attended by representatives of Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority, as approved by the Chair of the Authority.

### **14. Meetings with national politicians at party political conferences**

Members considered Report CFO/054/15 of the Monitoring Officer, concerning the possible attendance of Members at meetings held at the location of party political conferences, in order to make Authority related representation in line with the Members Allowance Scheme.

#### **Resolved that:**

- a) appropriate representatives of the political groups of the Authority be authorised to attend meetings with Ministers, Opposition Spokespersons and other relevant national politicians to be held at the location of their own party political conferences to discuss issues relating to the business of the Authority.

- b) appropriate travel and subsistence expenses for such meetings be met but no payment of conference fees be made.
- c) Members be requested to report back to the Authority regarding issues raised and responses; and progress on information received.

**15. Updated Parental leave Service Instructions**

Members considered Report CFO/055/15 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning changes to the service instructions pertaining to Parental Leave, which have been altered to reflect amendments to Regulations in relation to the sharing of maternity and paternity leave.

**Resolved that:**

The amendments made to the Service Instructions, attached to the report at Appendices A-D, be approved.

**16. Management Review Outcomes**

Ian Cummins – Deputy Treasurer left the meeting during consideration of this item, due to being directly involved with the restructure.

Members considered Report CFO/056/15 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the outcomes of the Management Review undertaken by the Chief Fire Officer following on from the Authority budget resolution for 2015/16 and the request for voluntary severance from the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE).

Members were provided with an overview of the report and the rationale behind the significant changes proposed, highlighting the savings anticipated as a result of implementing the review.

In terms of resourcing partnerships, Members suggested that they could take up roles within some of the partnerships, to ensure that the Authority continues to be represented.

Members were informed that any additional support they are prepared to provide would be welcomed; and it is the intention that the newly created Ambassador Roles be involved in some of this work. Members were also reassured that District contacts will continue to be maintained.

Members acknowledged that the changes proposed will increase the demand on officers' time; and suggested monitoring the implementation of the review.

They also suggested that partnerships be prioritised in terms of the value they add to the Authority.

**Resolved that**

- a) the management restructure proposed by the CFO and detailed within this report and specifically the assigning of the current Deputy Treasurer to the role of Treasurer (Section 151 Officer), be noted and approved.
- b) Further reports be submitted to the Performance & Scrutiny Committee to monitor the implementation of the review to identify any shortfalls and issues with regards to officer capacity.

Close

Date of next meeting Tuesday, 30 June 2015

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Recipient: Wirral Borough Council and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Letter: Greetings,

Stop the building of the Fire Station in Saughall Massie and the destruction of precious green belt land

# Comments

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Andy Corbett	wirral, ENG	2015-03-26	It is ridiculous to remove green belt land and build a fire station in the heart of a community. This will destroy wildlife that lives there and cause even more traffic problems.
Hayley Brunson	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	i live not far from the area that they are thinking of building on it is a lovely area full of greenery and wildlife please don't ruin it!
johanna martin	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	I am deeply concerned about many aspects of this.
Helen Paterson	West Kirby, ENG	2015-03-26	I think the response times to West Kirby will be drastically increases - the road the fire engine will have to come along is very narrow in places with a few sharp bends - there will be accidents, or burnt houses - it can't end well
Frances Tildsley	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-26	We lose too much green belt land on the wirral and this will affect existing house prices in the area
Jo roberts	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	live close by. The traffic is already pretty horrific on that road. Trying to get out of kingfisher way at any time is bad enough. Lovely place for dog walkers. Walk there often .
Emma Heaton	Wallasey, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	we don't have much green belt land left on Wirral , and we don't want to live in a concrete village with no wildlife to show our children
vicky Roberts	Wirral, ENG	2015-03-26	Please don't take more of our beautiful green space away. This wonderful green space has already been ruined with a bypass running through it. Which has added to traffic congestion. Green space and countryside is already so limited. Don't make us have to get in our cars to drive to see green space or walk our dogs.
Cllr Steve Williams	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	As one of the local Councillors, and having instigated surveys regarding this, currently about 85% of residents are against the proposal
Gail Casey	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-26	This is wrong on so many counts!
dylan harris	Moreton, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	Don't want green belt to be depleted and it will cripple house prices
Nicky williams	Moreton, United Kingdom	2015-03-26	to save the train stations
John Gann	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-27	Mr J. W.Gann
Bruce Councillor Bruce Berry	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-27	I support the constituents of Moreton West & Saughall Massie
kathryn merrett	Bradford, United Kingdom	2015-03-27	I come from Chester When I move home it would be nice to see the wildlife not. More buildings where they used to be
Mark roberts	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-27	this is area in which I grew up and the area I still live in. I want my children to be able to enjoy what I enjoyed as a child. The new road has already taken a lump of the land, don't take any more!!!
Debi Clarke	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-27	This road is busy enough without adding more chaos to it. In addition to this the amazing wild life here will be destroyed completely, why would anyone want to do that. This proposed fire station cannot and must not be built on this land.
COUNCILLOR CHRIS BLAKELEY	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-27	This is a totally inappropriate proposal in Green Belt being orchestrated by the MFRS and Wirral Council

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Val Frost	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-27	The lanes are true country lanes and should be left so. They have been virtually untouched for centuries. This is not the place for such a venture, A fire engine coming out of the station anywhere along there would be an accident waiting to happen
sophie larkin	Moreton Morrell, ENG	2015-03-28	People need to save our land and keep the greenery around and stop building on and leave nature alone the wildlife will be affected and possibly killed! !
Kirsty Montgomery	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	We live opposite
Lucy Bedson	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	We should be keeping what land we have left and not building on it when our fire stations do a great job where they are already situated. Building in the proposed building site will have an enormous negative impact on the local residents, nature and local farms livelihood. Keep the stations open where they already exist. Use the money you have to build a new building with a bonus for the firefighters who do an incredible job for us all.
Chris Brennan	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	I am appalled at the need to build on unspoilt green fields. When there is a perfectly good fire station already in Upton village. Or available land on for example the old Champs Sparks site
Katharine Boot	Wirral, ENG	2015-03-28	I don't want to see precious green belt land destroyed!
Andy murphy	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	we need to protect our green belt land and surrounding wildlife areas
john morgan	Pontypool, WLS	2015-03-28	I know the area and what is being called for. Wirral is a small area in total with heavy conurbation on both north and south regions, the centre and north needs to be kept as it is.
David Taylor	Upton, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	I live locally and have enough trouble keeping my children asleep - I do not want even more sirens. Plus it will devalue my property.
Kate Evans	West Kirby, United Kingdom	2015-03-28	We are out on a limb here, on busy days, with heavy traffic the fire engine could take ages to get here and they are the first line of defence since policing and ambulance cuts! Spend money on services not new buildings and wrecking green belt! The buttercups don't need firemen!!!! But we do!!!!
Marjorie Lancaster-Smith	Moreton, Wirral, ENG	2015-03-29	Don't want to see a Fire Station built on green Belt Land.
Evie Aspinall-Martin	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-03-29	It is right across from my house and bedroom window, there isn't much green land left in the Wirral anymore.
linda clough	birkenhead, ENG	2015-03-31	This is ridiculous why do they need to use green belt land. Engage brain planners.
Ann Marie Lloyd	Methley, United Kingdom	2015-04-01	I have spent many years visiting my children and grandchildren on Saughall Massie Road. The road outside has always been busy and dangerous, a fire station will only increase traffic in an already congested area. This is merely a cost cutting exercise. Green belt it seems is Green Belt only if the Council don't want it!
Clare Wilson	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-02	Not in favour of proposal for Fire Station
Poppy Wilson	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-03	Not in favour of proposal for Fire Station

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Ethan Boyd	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	All 3 residents of 7 Woodpecker Close. The area is a peaceful community providing a quiet retirement area for the elderly. The building of this monstrosity upon this Green Belt land would be an insult to the area and what it means. The 'Fire Station' plans, of which there is already an ample sized building within Upton not one mile away has already quadrupled in size with not only areas for ambulances now but also the indication of a youth area. Having moved here for the peaceful sanctuary it provides, this building will destroy this otherwise quiet community. The already busy road will become a 'super highway' for emergency vehicles, sirens, gangs of 'youths' so blatantly advertised as a positive within the proposal, leading to the ruination of our home. Find another way, as this is not necessary, financially practical, destroying a community whilst decimating the preserved green belt we as a caring community do so enjoy.
hugh williams	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	Completely inappropriate proposal, greenbelt land and adjacent to elderly/vulnerable housing!
Patricia Burgess	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	This proposal is unnecessary. How many house fires have there been in Upton, West Kirby in past 5 years? Not enough to warrant a new fire station or the closing of 2 perfectly viable existing stations.
jeff hutcheon	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	MY parents live opposite, it is a beautiful part of Saughall massie and needs to be protected
Sandra Lakin	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	I live fairly near the site in question and think it is a lovely area and should not be built on.
George Evans	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	I'm opposed to the building of such a large fire station on green belt land.
Colin Ratcliffe	Wirral, ENG	2015-04-12	As a local resident in the Village, we need to retain our green belt land and character, as well as the conservation area. Talk out blot on the landscape. Where will this end .... Shops and house next?
Lisa Yeadsley	Fordham, ENG	2015-04-12	I care about the Wirral land
Catherine Naylor	Wirral, ENG	2015-04-12	This is beautiful green belt land, once the fire service get their building in it, it may offer opportunities for other building works such as more housing etc and lose important wildlife habitat.
Jayne Boddy	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	of my address !
Stephen Mountford	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	The fire stations need to stay where they are and not used as a cost cutting tool
Russell Ford	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-12	We just don't need it there. It will destroy green belt that is home to a wide variety of wildlife. It will be a disturbance to local residents and a blot on our landscape.
Frances Westwood-Ford	Hednesford, ENG	2015-04-12	I regually walk these beautiful nature parks when I visit my grandchildren you have many beauty spots please don't spoil the area
michael mumford	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	With a small baby in the house it would be awful to think that fire engines may not be available if we needed one. We have also recently moved to the area and this would destroy the wildlife and massively reduce our house price on what we have just paid leaving us in negative equity for a 1st time buyer!
rebecca williams	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	We moved here so our daughter could grow up learning about wildlife this would destroy the wildlife and massively reduce our house prices,
billy axworthy	liverpool, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	i don't want it
Gail Rivington-Edwards	Flint, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	such beauty and please do not put a fire station especially next to pensioners bungalows ,come on now !!!!!



Name	Location	Date	Comment
Graham Morris	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-12	It will be the start of the erosion of our precious green belt
David morris	Saint Helens, ENG	2015-04-12	to prevent the disruption to my family in saughall massie
Lynda McGarrigle	Liverpool, United Kingdom	2015-04-12	I have lived in Saughall Massie for 35 years. They say the idea behind this new fire station is to save money, the building of such a large facility is hardly likely to do that. Obviously the main concern should be getting to the site of a fire with the minimum of delay. The road to West Kirby from Three Lanes End (just after the roundabout) is very narrow with ditches along the side in some parts. It is also extremely busy during the morning and late afternoon rush hours being the main route to and from the motorway for residents of West Kirby and Hoylake. Obviously the all important response times would not be met as vehicles attempt to pass each other safely or worse still there is a collision. Also there is a primary school at the West Kirby end and the road is often blocked as children arrive and leave. I dread to think of such a large vehicle trying to rush through there. As many others have mentioned the area is a haven for many species of birds and other wildlife and we would see the destruction of their habitat. There are many good reasons why this plan should be rejected and I sincerely hope that common sense will prevail.
Rod Callister	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	There is already too much traffic using Saughall Massie
Gillian Bolt	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	An inappropriate place to build a Firestation and because of green belt restrictions and the problem of location could be addressed with Fast response units garaged separately within the area.
Neil Hughes	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	Concerned resident
sue and bob bell	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-13	erosion of green belt area. loss of natural land used regularly by horse riders and walkers, destruction of wildlife habitats birds and animals
jean frost	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	We need to make a stand and save the green belt for the future for people to enjoy and nature which we all need also upton has more incidents than west kirby
Andy Hough	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	I am completely opposed to this development, this is a precious space enjoyed by the community especially horse riders, people exercising their dogs and walkers it is also of historical importance as it is a second world war aircraft crash site.
Pamela Hough	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	I am vehemently opposed to the planned Fire Station at Saughall Massie as the proposed site will completely decimate the view from the window of my lounge and destroy what is currently a peaceful and tranquil environment. I would also like to add there is a colony of bats resident on the land, which I believe are an endangered species. I believe that if a new fire station is to be built it should be on a commercial site, not on valuable green belt land.
Matthew Williams	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	i agree that this should not be allowed to happen.
Tracy Kennedy	Wirral, ENG	2015-04-13	This is our only green space for public use, it's greenbelt and should be protected, it also is not the best location for a large fire station and will cause traffic issues, delay response times to hoylake and destroy animal habitats
Vicky swanick	West Kirby, United Kingdom	2015-04-13	We will lose our lovely green fields and the wildlife will be disturbed!
Janet Sampson	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	This is a very unsuitable choice of a site; green belt land too close to residents (many elderly) and is only the start of development in this farmland area.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
jo Henshaw	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	Because I walk my dog with my children on that land! And if I have a fire I don't want the fire service to be too busy in west Kirby and can't get to me in time. The council have made enough cuts and taken too much of our green land. Why don't we have a say on how our money is spent.
George Hough	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	Because I live right by the proposed site & I think it's unnecessary to use up more green belt area with such buildings as those intended to be built there. The majority of people living in Woodpecker Close are elderly and/or are disabled & deserve peace & quiet, like we have now & we do not relish the prospect of having our lives disturbed morning, noon & night with sirens wailing & who knows what we'll be facing with youngsters gathering/hanging about with a community centre in the area.
Sharon Barnes	Upton, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	The traffic in saughall massie is already bad, I struggle to get out road in mornings to go to work. Also we need to keep Greenland, I walk around proposed site regularly and so do many residents
Jenny Rombach	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	The fire station would reduce house prices, erode green belt land , wake up residents with sirens, destroy wildlife habitats, leave no open space for horses and dogs and congest Saughall Massie Road even more, stopping fire engines access, therefore delaying fire rescue services to needed situations.
Michelle Flanagan	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-14	I walk my dogs there every day. I don't want the roads to become any busier. I don't want to hear sirens all the time. It will take over what little greenery we have left in the area and also spoil many peoples views. It will devalue house prices.
Lee Flanagan	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	We walk our dogs on the field every day. There is hardly anywhere left that hasn't been built on. It will devalue house prices. The roads will be more gridlocked at peak times. Why can't the Upton station just be updated?
Olivia Flanagan	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-14	As I've grown up more and more land around our home has been built on. All the local dog walkers use that field including my family. The Horse Sense charity is based on the surrounding field too and the sirens will be very loud. It will spoil a lovely area. It will also be very busy with more traffic.
Georgia Flanagan	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-14	So many of the fields are disappearing. We don't want a big, noisy fire station opposite our homes where there are currently green fields where all the dog walkers go. Also it will destroy the wildlife. The noise is another issue.
LINDA EVANS	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-14	I VEHEMENTLY OBJECT TO MORE GREEN BELT BEING DESTROYED AND I WISH TO PROTECT THE WILDLIFE HERE. WE ALSO DON'T WANT ANY FURTHER CONGESTION. I WOULD ALSO BE SEEKING COMPENSATION AS IT WILL IMPACT ON PROPERTY PRICES.
Zoë Turner	Wirral, ENG	2015-04-14	It is unreasonable to build on this land, much of the green in the Saughall Massie area has already been lost to make way for bypass.
Denise Kennedy- Scott	Blackburn Lancashire, ENG	2015-04-15	We already have a fire station in West Kirby and can suggest many other brown sites for development. Stop being greedy and taking away the natural Habitat of our Wildlife and lovely walks from People and there dogs. Many children have and still play there along with families who use the area for a picnic on a sunny day. THINK AGAIN COUNCILS REMEMBER WHO VOTES YOU IN AND WHO YOU ARE ACTUALLY WORKING FOR!!
TERRY CRAWFORD	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-15	IT WOULD BE AN EYESORE ON THIS LOVELY GREEN LAND AND WE WANT TO PROTECT THE MANY WILDLIFE THERE. ALSO SAUGHALL MASSIE ROAD IS ALREADY HEAVILY CONGESTED. IT WOULD BE NEAR PENSIONERS HOMES. IF COUNCIL WANTS TO SAVE MONEY THEN UPDATE AN EXISTING FIRE STATION.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
Kristy Hollis	Merseyside, United Kingdom	2015-04-15	I live in saughall road the value of my house will be effected and the noise and traffic will impact on our life. We bought our house because it is a quiet peaceful road. And we want it to stay that way.
ryan baughan	wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-15	The location is terrible as the road is heavy with traffic. How can a fire engine get past gridlocked traffic? There are disabled and elderly people living right from the proposed site, who want to live in peace, there has been no consideration for these people. How can the Fire station be saving money when its's going to cost millions to build? Why don't they just revamp the Upton Station? Not to mention more erosion of green belt land and threat to the wildlife. Such a ridiculous idea, whoever came up with it should be sacked.
Tony Brassey	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-15	Green belt should stay as green belt. Why waste money building something you already have in West Kirby!
neville hughes	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-16	There is enough traffic on saughall massie road since bypass .getting out of side roads is horrendous .
sue pickering	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-16	Neither my husband or myself agree with the building of a new fire station & the closing of 3 others as this could ultimately mean saving less lives. There would be less areas for wildlife and this may cause certain species to become extinct. Saughall Massie Road would probably be busier & noisier making it a lot harder to get out of the side roads.
Brenda Rowe	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-17	I do not agree with the use of green belt land for any building project. The surrounding area is a wildlife habitat for not only foxes and hedgehogs but also water voles in one of the small ponds. Current traffic congestion will be made even worse.
Jacqueline McLannahan	Ellesmere Port, United Kingdom	2015-04-17	Too much green belt land is being built on!
Jane Casey	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-18	It will affect the outlook of It will affect the outlook from my house. It will affect my enjoyment of walking on the green belt land. It will disturb the peace of the area for wildlife and human residents
Sharon Weston	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	Green belt should not be used and the wildlife and biodiversity needs to be maintained
leslee malloy	wirral merseyside, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	Greenbelt land should NOT be used it affects so much wildlife and residents nearby.
jacqueline spencer	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	what is wrong with rebuilding this fire station on its original site, all the services are their with a much better road system, We have very narrow lanes after the bypass which will cause accidents also the elderly and disabled people living next door to this daft idea will be greatly inconvenienced due to noise and dirt pollution.
brenda kennedy	Hoylake, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	it should not be built on green land
Josh Nowell	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	It's green belt land.
tony hughes	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-19	redevelope upton station and purchase smaller appliances which can respond quicker to the narrow streets of hoylake etc this is a much cheaper option
David Saul	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-19	This is a truly awful idea. Ruining more and more of the countryside. I can't see how in a time of austerity building new stations is a good idea.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
susanne cunliffe	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	Please don't spoil such a beautiful piece of green belt land. The people who have made this decision have never walked on this land ,to share its wildlife.
Seline Wakerley	Merseyside, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	Waste of money
Gillian Hughes	Meols, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	It's beautiful greenbelt land full of birds and rowntreesite land should be found. It's semi rural area and should be left that way.
alex kerr	merseyside, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	Original plan for this hub was River Streets North End Birkenhead.(funds unavailable)????
Ian Pickavance	Wirral, ENG	2015-04-20	I am signing because I don't think we need to protect green belt land for nature.
David cooke	Chester, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	david Cooke
Terrol Lanceley	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	I don't want our green belt land to be built on. This area has had enough impact when the new road was built, which causes a dirtier home, more polluted environment, increased noise. The addition of a fire station will only worsen this.
Cath Crompton	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	We live directly opposite the proposed site we highly object as it would destroy the habitat of various bird and wild life also because of the increased noise of fire engines and increase the traffic as if it's not busy enough at the moment!!!!!! Plus it is green belt land DO NOT DESTROY THIS WONDERFUL LAND WITH A HUGE DEVELOPMENT OF A FIRE STATION!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Iorraine lloyd	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	This is greenbelt and why build another large fire station when the Upton fire station is so near.
Glynis Murphy	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-20	This is green belt land,always has been and always should be.Convient how rules can be bent so easily when it suits.New fire station could be built on the Champions site by Arrowepark,plenty of concrete already on ground there.
dave harris	liverpool, ENG	2015-04-21	the road is too busy anyway! stop eroding our green belt!
Samantha Harris	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-04-21	I spent a lot of time here when I was younger with my friends, it kept me off the streets and bothering residents, I also use this site a lot for dog walking as its a very peaceful area, I don't want the noise and congestion that will come with the fire station.
john winstanley	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-21	I totally disagree with this proposal when there is already a fire station in Upton
Fred Roberts	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-21	The presented proposal is obscenely inappropriate and unnecessary .
Claire Jardine	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-21	It's a disgrace that this is even being considered to go ahead! Cuts a budgets to line someone's pocket with a bonus, with no consideration to the land, traffic, neighbours or wildlife! That land is green belt- I wouldn't be allowed to build on it an neither should they!
Dorothy Robinson	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-21	To save our green belt land which is very precious both to humans and wild life which there is in abundance in our fields. Also the roads are far too narrow to cope with these engines and would seriously disrupt life for the elderly residents and disabled who live so close to t his site.
david whitby	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-22	Whats the piont on green belt And whats the piont in that position grrr
Gavin Liddiard	Wallasey, United Kingdom	2015-04-22	It's a stupid plan.

Name	Location	Date	Comment
chris dobbing	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-24	This station will take away greenbelt areas from Saughall massie and disrupt the quiet nature of the village.
Ruth Eddowes	Bern, United Kingdom	2015-04-26	It will destroy local wildlife and will cost far to much money when we already have local fire stations which have always worked in the past.
Corinne McGinty	wirral, ENG	2015-04-26	The natural drainage of the area was affected when the bypass itself was built, on littlemore close a sink hole effect is visible, our fences and lampposts are being pulled backwards. Building more in that area which will make drainage even worse is an absolute JOKE!
GISELLE LAWLEY	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-26	Apart from the wildlife issue this will be a job reducing tactic
Sarah Owen	Wirral, United Kingdom	2015-04-27	I'm sign because the noise and waste of money. They try to build this in greasby and we stopped this.
Linda Jones	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-04-27	Will cause traffic conjection
David Cutts	West Kirby, United Kingdom	2015-04-29	There are better alternatives with access routes to Heswall and West Kirby namely the industrial estate where Champion Sparkplugs was located.
Ann Priestner	Stockport, United Kingdom	2015-05-02	I know this land I don't want wild life disturbed and it will affect the quality of life of the local people who enjoy the health benefits of living near green open space.
Neil Mason	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-05-03	This land is green belt land with wildlife habitats at risk and it is the start of a slippery slope to the erosion of the country side in our area.
Danielle Wynn	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-04	I do nit believe a fire station in Saughall Massie is appropriate or necessary.
David Thomas	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-06	There are other sites near by that can be used for building a fire station green belt land is not for building on!
Nigel Thomas	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-07	A disgrace to use greenbelt land when there is other useable land is available - what about it being in a Conservation area ! I bet if I'd have asked the council to build some houses on that land they would have refused it point blank ! But industrial high density build is ok? I think not !! Seems to me there is a subliminal intention underlying this proposal - what is the council's next move with the rest of the land if this is approved? Housing association properties? A supermarket ??
Berni Nolan	Meols, ENG	2015-05-07	It's green belt land and should be kept as such
PETER johnson	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-07	it shouldn't be built on green belt land and ruin our countryside
Sylvia Thomas	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-08	Why build on green belt land when there is plenty of land that is not green belt available.
Olivia Mason	Birkenhead, United Kingdom	2015-05-09	We don't want the fire station on the green belt!!!!
kim Nowell	Birkenhead, ENG	2015-05-13	Did this yesterday with a plea to Phil Davies to telll MFRS tat this land WILL NOT be made available, but don't think the figures have changed??
katie turnbull	birkenhead, ENG	2015-05-14	This is unbelievable!!
Tiffany rushall	Blackburn, United Kingdom	2015-05-18	Because of the devastation to the green belt land and wildlife and total disruption to this quiet area and residential homes next to the site, existing fire stations serve the community better, I have family that live in this area

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	AUTHORITY		
<b>DATE:</b>	30 JUNE 2015	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	CFO/061/15
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	KIERAN TIMMINS		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	KIERAN TIMMINS	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	IAN CUMMINS
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN 2014/15		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A1- A4:</b>	<b>REVENUE BUDGET TO ACTUAL</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B:</b>	<b>2014/15 CAPITAL BUDGET TO ACTUAL</b>
	<b>APPENDIX C:</b>	<b>2015/16 – 2019/20 CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>

## **Purpose of Report**

1. To report upon the Authority's year-end financial position for 2014/15.

## **Recommendation**

2. That Members;
  - a. note the actual financial performance against the approved budget and the achievement of a net revenue saving in 2014/15 of £1.187m, and
  - b. approve the proposal to utilise the one-off saving of £1.187m to fund an increase in the Capital Investment Reserve in light of the planned station merger and investment strategy.

## **Executive Summary**

The Authority faced a potential £10m budget deficit over the period 2013/14 – 2014/15, mainly due to a 16% cut in Government Grant. The Authority approved a robust financial plan to meet the deficit.

The approved revenue budget in 2014/15 was £64.356m. Having recognised the likely future financial challenges facing the public sector Members instructed Officers to try to further maximise savings in the year and deliver efficiencies as early as possible.

The final accounts of the Authority have now been completed prior to audit and a £1.187m saving has been delivered. This report proposes that this additional revenue saving be allocated to the capital investment reserve in light of the anticipated funding requirement for the station merger projects.

The Authority has an approved strategy of building up reserves in order to provide a short-term buffer while it re-engineers the service and hopefully the avoidance of any compulsory redundancies if possible.

Year-end earmarked reserves of £1.511m have been created to carry forward funds to cover initiatives or projects planned for 2014/15 which are now expected to occur in 2015/16. The General Fund balance remains as anticipated at £2.000m.

Capital spending was £7.850m resulting in a variance of £3.912m against the £11.762m budget for 2014/15. The variance can be broken down into:

- A £3.836m re-phasing of planned spend from 2014/15 into 2015/16, requiring the carry forward of capital budget. £2.157m of the rephrasing relates to the SHQ JCC project and other building works.
- A net underspend and saving on capital projects of £0.076m.

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## **Introduction and Background**

3. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 give the responsibility for signing off the unaudited statement of accounts to the responsible finance officer, who in MFRA is the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE). The DCE must sign the statement no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June immediately following the year-end. The DCE has now signed the 2014/15 statement of accounts (prior to audit) and certified that they represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority. The Authority is still required to consider, approve and sign the audited statement of accounts for publication by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The benefit of the change in procedure is that it allows Members to take into account any comments from the Auditor following the completion of their audit before considering the statement of accounts.
4. This report sets out the actual financial performance of the Authority compared to the approved 2014/15 revenue and capital budgets. Although Members are not required to consider or sign the unaudited statement of accounts at this time, copies of the statement can be made available for Members' inspection.

### **2014/15 Budget – Background**

5. The Authority faced a £10m budget deficit over the 2013/14 – 2014/15 period mainly due to a 16% cut in Government grant (which makes up about two thirds of the Authority's revenue funding). This followed on from severe cuts from 2011/12 to 2012/13.
6. The Authority's medium term financial plan had assumed council tax increases of no more than 2%. The Authority increased its council tax by 2% or £1.37 to £70.07 for a band D property for 2014/15.



7. To deliver the savings needed because of the funding reductions the Authority recognised that as staff costs make up nearly 80% of its revenue budget it would have to reduce the number of staff. The Authority is committed to attempting to avoid compulsory redundancies (if possible) and also to minimise the impact of cuts on service levels to the communities of Merseyside.
8. The Authority adopted a medium term financial plan which included:-
  - An assumption that there would be pay-bill restraint for all staff.
  - An assumption that the Authority would generate savings of £4.010m by 2014/15 from other technical savings such as non-employee inflation and revenue costs associated with borrowing.
  - An assumption that additional income could be generated from shared use of current assets and sales of £0.500m.
  - An assumption that the Authority would generate efficiencies from management and back office costs of £2.397m by 2014/15. The savings resulted in a 15% reduction in managerial and back office roles – a reduction of 57 posts.
  - A reduction of 90 front line Firefighter posts equal to a 10% reduction in wholetime Firefighter roles.
  - A further reduction in the number of appliances (5 had previously been removed from the front line) from 37 to 28.
  - Use of reserves of £0.543m to smooth out budget cuts
  - An assumed Council tax increase from 2013/14 to 2018/19 of 2%.
9. The delivery of the approved financial plan was monitored closely and the vast majority have been implemented in full (the formal implementation of some £0.078m of minor staffing savings will be finalised in 2015/16).

#### **How the 2014/15 Budget changed during the year**

10. The Authority Revenue Budget for 2014/15 was set at £64.356m.
11. The Authority also set a five year capital investment programme, (2014/15 – 2018/19), of £26.102m, with a planned expenditure in 2014/15 of £10.038m.
12. The Authority adopted a reserves strategy, which maintains a general reserve of £2.894m and had anticipated £21.354m of earmarked reserves to cater for specific risks and to fund specific projects.
13. Throughout the year Members received regular financial review reports detailing the Service's progress in implementing the approved saving options, any additional budget amendments required, plus the movements from and to reserves.
14. Further minor budget amendments have been made since the last financial review report, CFO/010/14, was approved by the Authority on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014, that reflect already approved policy decisions. These were;

#### **Revenue:**

- The use of £0.348m from reserves to the revenue budget, (of which £0.248m was use of the pension reserve to reflect the cost of ill health retirements);
- A number of self-balancing virements within the revenue account including the movement of £0.158m from the inflation provision to service budgets.

**Capital:**

- A small increase of £0.103m in the Building and ICT capital budgets to reflect the latest project costs and to purchase some IT equipment. The anticipated capital receipt for the Formby LLAR house (£0.350m) and Derby Road (£0.500m) has been rescheduled from 2014/15 to 2015/16. This has resulted in an increase in anticipated budgeted borrowing in 2014/15 that is offset by an equal reduction in borrowing in 2015/16.
- The capital programme has also been amended to re-phase and allocate provision for the improvements at the Museum which formed part of the overall HQ improvements. Members will recall that this was in part funded by the Ambulance service and a contribution from Telent.

The following tables show how the **overall** budget has changed across the year:

<b>REVENUE BUDGET MOVEMENTS IN 2014/15</b>					
	Original Budget	Approved Qtr 3 Budget	Further Budget Amendments	Final Budget	Original to Final Budget Movement
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
<b>Net Expenditure</b>					
Fire Service	66.374	66.153	0.507	66.660	0.286
Corporate	0.591	0.553	-0.001	0.552	-0.039
	66.965	66.706	0.506	67.212	0.247
Interest on Balances	-0.372	-0.097	0.000	-0.097	0.275
Inflation Provision	0.843	0.324	-0.158	0.166	-0.677
Contribution (from) to Reserves	-3.080	-2.577	-0.348	-2.925	0.155
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>64.356</b>	<b>64.356</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>64.356</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Funded By</b>					
Government Grant	-40.519	-40.519	0.000	-40.519	0.000
Precept	-23.837	-23.837	0.000	-23.837	0.000
	-64.356	-64.356	0.000	-64.356	0.000

<b>CAPITAL BUDGET MOVEMENTS IN 2014/15</b>					
	Original Budget	Approved Qtr 3 Budget	Further Budget Amendments	Final Budget	Original to Final Budget Movement
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Total	10.038	11.659	0.103	11.762	1.724
Funding:					
Specific	5.856	7.405	-0.881	6.524	0.668
Borrowing	4.732	4.254	0.984	5.238	0.506
	10.588	11.659	0.103	11.762	1.174

**Financial Performance in the Year****2014/15 Revenue Outturn Position:**

15. The table below summarises the actual revenue position for 2014/15 compared to that final budget, (**Appendix A** provides a more detailed analysis):

**2014/15 REVENUE OUTTURN SUMMARY**

SPEND ANALYSIS	Budget	Actual	Variance	Adjustment for Year-end Reserves	Adjusted Variance
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
Fire & Corporate Services					
Employee	52.091	51.422	-0.669	1.151	0.482
Premises	3.333	3.054	-0.279	0.000	-0.279
Transport	1.635	1.484	-0.151	0.000	-0.151
Supplies & Services	4.158	3.426	-0.732	0.206	-0.526
Agency	4.883	4.735	-0.148	0.000	-0.148
Central Expenses / Capital	8.078	7.964	-0.114	0.000	-0.114
	74.178	72.085	-2.093	1.357	-0.736
Income	-6.966	-7.249	-0.283	0.154	-0.129
	67.212	64.836	-2.376	1.511	-0.865
Contingency for Pay & Prices	0.166	0.000	-0.166	0.000	-0.166
Interest Receivable	-0.097	-0.253	-0.156	0.000	-0.156
Net Cost of Services	67.281	64.583	-2.698	1.511	-1.187
Movement to/from Reserves	-2.925	-1.414	1.511	-1.511	0.000
Total Net Operating Spend	64.356	63.169	-1.187	0.000	-1.187

16. Overall the Authority underspent on its revenue services budget by £2.698m. However, £1.511m was as a result of timing issues for projects and grant funded schemes. Specific earmarked reserves have been created to cover the phasing of this expenditure. The net underspending of £1.187m is less than a 2% variance on the budget and reflects the continuing drive to maximise savings in the year in light of the financial challenge ahead.

17. The main variations were :

**Employee Costs, £0.482m (0.9%) adverse variance. This was made up of a number of different variations –**

Variation £'m	Explanation
-1.045	Effective Vacancy Management
0.413	Employee Insurance costs
-0.037	Other minor variances
	Year-end specific reserves;
0.340	Cost of Ill Health retirements (charged in year rather than spread over a longer period)
0.500	Employee Insurance costs – MMI levy
0.311	Various project reserves
<b><u>0.482</u></b>	

Overall main direct employee costs underspent by approximately £1.045m. A prudent additional provision was made for increased firefighters' pension costs arising from

future ill health retirement penalty charges and the reserve was increased by £0.340m. Details for the other major variances are provided below: –

- **Vacancy Management -£1.045m;** in light of the overall financial position vacant green book posts have not been actively filled resulting in a £0.178m saving. The FBU dispute over changes to the pension scheme resulted in a number of strike periods and a work to rule policy which meant a lack of take-up on the offer of additional hours. In addition Firefighter retirements are slightly ahead of target. After taking account of payments made to cover strike periods the overall saving on the firefighter employee costs was £0.867m.
- **Training Costs -£0.139m;** officers have been reviewing the training needs of staff throughout the year and the revised phasing of the training programme has resulted in a £0.059m saving. In addition £0.080m of USAR training, funded by grant income, needs to be carried forward into future years as the training will take place in 2015/16.
- **Employee Insurance, £0.413m;** an assessment of the potential liability of the Service's current outstanding claims indicated that if the service was deemed negligent it would require an increase in the existing provision of £0.413m. The Authority's claims section and insurers continue to challenge any claims received where appropriate.
- **Other minor variances, £0.033m,** as part of the voluntary staff reduction scheme some staff have been able to access their pension early resulting in a pension strain charge and a £0.076m overspend on pension costs. Although the Authority has established a severance reserve to meet such costs as the cost could be prudently contained within the overall revenue budget no draw down on the reserve has been made to meet this net overspend. Other minor variances make up the balance.
- **Year-end reserves - Employee Insurance costs, £0.500m;** Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority was insured by Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) from 1974 until 1992. In September 1992 MMI ceased to write new, or to renew, general insurance business and a Scheme of Arrangement was put in place to achieve an orderly run-off of claims. Although it was anticipated that all claims would be concluded and the Scheme closed in 2003, this has not proved to be the case due to continuing claims being made for mesothelioma and abuse. It is now anticipated that the Scheme will close in 2050. Under the Scheme of Arrangement any potential deficit on the MMI accounts will be recovered on the basis of a "levy" based on the value of claims paid out for each authority who participated in the MMI initiative. Previously the levy had been set a 15% and the Authority has created a reserve to cover this, however guidance received at the end of 2014/15 indicates this levy could rise to 50%. To increase the MMI reserve to provide a 50% levy has required a £0.500m increase in the reserve.

**Premises Costs, £0.279m (8.4%) favourable variance –**

- Following successful business rating valuation appeals the service received one-off refunds on a number of historic business rate payments. This contributed to a £0.213m saving on the rates budget.
- Small underspends on other premises costs made up the balance.

**Transport Costs, £0.151m (09.2%) favourable variance –**

- A saving on diesel, £0.063m and £0.24m for a reduction in the cost of excess insurance payments for vehicles.
- The balance is made up from small savings on lease car rentals and vehicle replacement parts.

**Supplies and Services, £0.526m (12.6% of budget) favourable variance–**

Variation £'m	Explanation
-0.082	ICT and Computing supplies
-0.095	Operational, Fire Prevention and Training Supplies
-0.220	Professional fees / support
-0.335	Other minor variances
0.206	Year-end project reserves
<b>-0.526</b>	

- **ICT, Computing, Operational, Prevention and Training supplies, -£0.177m;** officers are continuing to strictly manage controllable expenditure lines in light of the financial challenge resulting in an overall underspend of £0.177m.
- **Professional fees, - £0.220m;** budget has been identified for specific projects that have now been re-phased into 2015/16 requiring £0.183m of this underspend to be carried forward as specific reserves. For example £0.100m has been earmarked to fund a joint initiative with the CFOA Road Safety Group and Highways England particularly around improving road safety for Light Goods Vehicles.
- **Other minor variances -£0.282m;** reflect a large number of small underspends in controllable budget lines such as administrative costs; travel & subsistence; subscriptions; and printing and stationery.

**Agency Services, £0.148m (3.0%) favourable variance.** deductions from the contractor for adverse performance responses at the PFI stations have resulted in a saving on the unitary charge payments of £0.143m.

**Central Expenses £0.023m (6.0%) favourable variance;** this is due to a saving on the financial systems contract.

**Capital Financing, £0.091m (1.6%) favourable variance;** robust management of the Authority's cashflow combined with the re-phasing of some capital schemes into future years meant that new borrowing was not required and resulted in a one-off saving on interest payments of £0.084m.

**Income, £0.129m (1.9%) additional income above budget-**  
Secondment income was higher than budgeted

**Inflation Provision, £0.166m favourable variance.** In the first instance any inflationary increase in non-employee costs is expected to be contained within the relevant department's controllable budget before any request is made to cover rising costs from the inflation provision. This approach has delivered a saving on the inflation provision of £0.166m.

**Interest and Investment Income, £0.156 favourable variance.** Although global interest rates and hence the interest rate paid on investments has remained low (average rate of return achieved on average principal available in 2014/15 was 0.76%) the overall level of investments throughout the year was such that the service's investment income exceeded the budget by £0.156m.

### Use of Underspending

It is proposed that the Authority should add the net £1.187m underspending to its capital investment reserve. The Authority has recognised that it has relatively high debt levels and that if possible it should seek to avoid borrowing for the station mergers project. It has therefore created a substantial capital investment reserve to support that aim.

### 2014/15 Movement on Reserves

18. The Authority receives grants and external funding during the year to deliver specific projects. Because these sometimes span more than one financial year, this necessitates the carrying forward of the funding through creation of earmarked reserves. Any potential liabilities arising in the year or previous years for which the Authority is required to set aside a contingency will also require the creation of a reserve. This report identifies a net increase in earmarked reserves (opening balance £23.317m to closing balance £23.984m) of £0.667m. Appendix A4 outlines the movement on reserves throughout the year, (*more details are available in the unaudited statement of accounts*). The table below sets out the specific year-end earmarked reserves created totalling £1.511m, this is in addition to the £1.187m increase in the capital investment reserve. .
19. In particular members will recall that they have previously noted the ongoing increase in road traffic accidents attended by the service. A specific provision is proposed to support improvements in prevention and response work in that area of £100k.

<b>Year-End Requests for Earmarked Reserves</b>		
	<b>Year-End Request</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<u>Earmarked Reserves</u>	<b>£'000</b>	
Insurance Reserve	500	To cover potential MMI levy increase from 15% to 50%
Pension Reserve	340	Provide contribution to FPS commutation review for 2001 - 2006
Equipment Reserve	133	Rephased SHQ JCC refurbishment from 14/15 and other items
CFOA Road Safety Reserve	100	Partnership working with CFOA and Highways England
Healthy Living / Olympic Legacy	73	Firefit initiatives carried over from 14/15
Other	80	Various small initiatives carried over from 14/15
<u>Ringfenced Reserves</u>		
F.R.E.E. Reserve	12	Externally Funded schemes - Grant carryforward into 2015/16
Princes Trust Reserve	89	
Community Youth Team Reserve	4	
Beacon Peer Project Reserve	11	
Innovation Fund Reserve	12	
St Helens District Reserve	4	
New Dimensions Reserve	153	
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>1,511</b>	

20. The General Fund reserve balance remains at £2.000m.

#### Qtr 4 Bad Debt Write-Offs:

21. Debtor accounts under £5,000 may be written off by the DCE. Three accounts have been approved for write-off during the final quarter of the year under delegated powers totalling £1,032 (excl. VAT) following advice from the litigation service. Details of these accounts can be found in the table below;

Invoice Date	Invoice Number	Provision Bad Debt	Line Description	Write Off Reason	Amount To Be Written Off		
					VAT		
18/07/12	I0014373	YES	LIFT RELEASE	LITIGATION ADVICE	340.00	68.00	408.00
10/12/13	I0016085	NO	RELEASE FROM FLAT	LITIGATION ADVICE	344.00	68.80	412.80
20/10/14	I006970	NO	ENTRY TO FLAT	LITIGATION ADVICE	348.00	69.60	417.60
					1,032.00	206.40	1,238.40

#### 2014/2015 Capital Expenditure

22. The Authority current capital budget for 2014/15 was £11.762m. Actual spending in the year was £7.850m, a net variation of £3.912m. The variance can be broken down into:
- A £3.836m re-phasing of planned spend from 2014/15 into 2015/16, requiring the carry forward of capital budget into 2015/16.
  - A net saving on capital projects of £0.076m

A summarised capital programme outturn position statement is outlined below:

Programme	Original Budget	Final Budget	Actual Expenditure	Year-end Re-phasing from 2013/14 into 2014/15	Variance after Re-Phasing Adjustment
	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m	£'m
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Building/Land	4.585	5.681	3.486	2.187	-0.008
Fire Safety	1.481	0.991	0.791	0.200	0.000
ICT	0.656	2.397	1.928	0.435	-0.034
Operational Equip & Hydrants	0.844	1.306	0.738	0.533	-0.035
Vehicles	2.472	1.387	0.907	0.481	0.001
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10.038</b>	<b>11.762</b>	<b>7.850</b>	<b>3.836</b>	<b>-0.076</b>
<b>FINANCING</b>					
Capital Receipts	1.300	0.250	0.244	0.000	-0.006
Revenue Contribution	0.780	1.097	1.097	0.000	0.000
Reserves	0.725	1.266	1.267	0.000	0.001
Grants	1.377	2.077	2.036	0.000	-0.041
External Contributions	0.000	1.833	1.333	0.500	0.000
Unsupported Borrowing	5.856	5.239	1.873	3.336	-0.030
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10.038</b>	<b>11.762</b>	<b>7.850</b>	<b>3.836</b>	<b>-0.076</b>

23. The year-end re-phasing of schemes into 2014/15 is outlined in the table below:

Re-phasing £'m	Scheme	Explanation
1.111	Joint Command AAND Control Project(JCC)	Work on the last phase of the project, Stage C works, went out to tender in 2014/15 and was awarded late in the year. The project was weeks behind schedule due to the delayed start and drainage problems encountered on site, a percentage of the contract value will also be kept for retention payments. Also £0.200m retention monies have been held back for the main scheme which is kept for 12 months after completion of works, until October 2015.
0.186	Vehicle Workshop enhancement works	Work on enhancing the Workshop and developing the SHQ Museum is currently being redesigned to ensure it reflects the current demands of the service which has delayed the start of the project.
0.790	Building enhancement and refurbishment work	This reflects a number of smaller value building scheme re-phasing that have arisen as staff have prioritised work on the station merger schemes development and the major building schemes.
0.200	Risk Management Residential Blocks	An agreement with Liverpool Mutual Homes to fit sprinklers into Marwood Towers has been agreed. Work has commenced on this development but works will not be concluded until mid-2016. This is the point at which funds will be released to part finance the install.
0.164	JCC / Airwave Solution	The scheme is in the final stages but some smaller elements of the project such as the specification for the Training Development Academy DA Vision Boss and Data Mobilisation modules was only recently finalised. This will be completed early in 2015/16 and the remaining stage payments will be made.
0.109	Financial Systems Replacement & TRM System	The replacement finance system has been delivered within the required timeframe. The implementation of the HR and TRM systems are now entering the final phase and are due for completion by early 2015/16.
0.163	ICT Schemes	Delay in the procurement of Hardware/Software as the Service seeks to gain savings by packaging the tender document in a way to deliver best VFM.
0.217	Breathing Apparatus (BA)	New BA sets have been purchased in 2014/15, but the new communication equipment compatible with the new BA sets will not be available until 2015/16.
0.069	Equipment	An order has been raised in 2014/15 for the equipment but delivery and payment will be in early 2015/16.



0.203	Appliances	4 Chassis have been purchased in 2014/15, the re-phasing is to cover the build of the appliances.
0.255	Ancillary Vehicles	Orders have been raised in late 2014/15 for vans and delivery is expected early in 2015/16. The purchase of 12 cars has been re-phased as the "pool car" requirement is being assessed.
0.369	Other	A number of small re-phasings on a variety of schemes.
<b>3.836</b>		

24. A full detailed breakdown of the 2014/15 capital budget movements, year-end variances and proposed slippage can be found attached to this report as Appendix B. A revised 2015/16 – 2019/20 capital programme to reflect the £3.736m re-phasing into 2015/16 can be found attached to this report as Appendix C.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

25. Resources are invested to support equality and diversity.

### Staff Implications

26. Approximately 80% of expenditure is directly staff related.

### Legal Implications

27. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 give the responsibility for signing off the unaudited statement of accounts to the responsible finance officer, who in MFRA is the DCE. The DCE has signed the 2014/15 statement before the required deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and certified that they represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority. A copy of the 2014/15 unaudited Statement of Accounts will be made available to members at today's Authority meeting. The Authority is still required to consider, approve and sign the statement of accounts for publication by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

### Financial Implications & Value for Money

28. Subject to members approving the proposed use of the £1.187m underspend on the revenue account to increase the capital investment reserve the final revenue position can be summarised as:

2014/15 Revenue Year-End Position			
	Budget	Actual	Variance
	£'m	£'m	£'m
Net Expenditure	64.356	61.658	-2.698
Year-end request for Earmarked Reserves		1.511	1.511
Utilisation of Year-end variance to increase the capital investment reserve		1.187	1.187
	64.356	64.356	0.000

29. The Authority has an approved strategy of building up reserves in anticipation of future funding cuts and the creation of year-end reserves is consistent with this strategy.

30. Capital spending was £7.850m resulting in a variance of £3.912m against the £11.762m budget for 2014/15. The variance can be broken down into:

- A £3.836m re-phasing of planned spend from 2014/15 into 2015/16, requiring the carry forward of capital budget into 2015/16.
- A net underspend and saving on capital projects of £0.076m.

31. The General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2015 was as anticipated, £2.000m.

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### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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32. None arising from this report.

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Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

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33. The achievement of actual expenditure within the approved financial plan and delivery of the expected service outcomes is essential if the Service is to achieve the Authority's mission.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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<b>CFO/011/14</b>	"MFRA Budget and Financial Plan 2014/2015-2018/2019" Authority 27th February 2014.
<b>CFO/097/14</b>	"Financial Review 2014/15 April to June" Policy & Resources Committee 2nd September 2014.
<b>CFO/113/14</b>	"Financial Review 2014/15 April to September" " Policy & Resources Committee 27th November 2014.
<b>CFO/005/15</b>	"Financial Review 2014/15 – April to December Review" Authority 26th February 2015.

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### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**CAPITAL EXPENDITURE** Section 40 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 defines 'expenditure for capital purposes'. This includes spending on the acquisition of assets either directly by the Authority or indirectly in the form of grants to other persons or bodies. Expenditure that does not fall within this definition must be charged to a revenue account.

**RESERVES** Amounts set aside to meet future contingencies but whose use does not affect the Authority's net expenditure in a given year. Appropriations to and from reserves may not be made directly from the revenue account.

**REVENUE EXPENDITURE** This is money spent on the day-to-day running costs of providing services. It is usually of a constantly recurring nature and produces no permanent asset.

**SHQ** Service Headquarters

**JCC** Joint Control Room development with Merseyside Police at the SHQ

<b>MFRA</b>	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
<b>DCE</b>	Deputy Chief Executive
<b>FBU</b>	Fire Brigades Union
<b>FPS</b>	Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s)

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## 2014/15 REVENUE OUTTURN SUMMARY

Actual 2013/14	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Base Budget 2014/15	Qtr 3 Budget 2014/15	Reserve Draw- down	Vire- ments	Final Budget 2014/15	Actual	Variance	Funding of Year End ER	Adjusted Variance
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
66,051	Fire Service	66,374	66,153	348	159	66,660	64,351	-2,309	1,511	-798
523	Corporate Management	591	553	0	-1	552	485	-67	0	-67
66,574		66,965	66,706	348	158	67,212	64,836	-2,376	1,511	-865
0	Contingency for Pay/Price Changes	843	324	0	-158	166	0	-166	0	-166
66,574	<b>TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE</b>	67,808	67,030	348	0	67,378	64,836	-2,542	1,511	-1,031
-86	Interest on Balances	-372	-97	0	0	-97	-253	-156	0	-156
66,488	<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>	67,436	66,933	348	0	67,281	64,583	-2,698	1,511	-1,187
	Contribution to /(from) reserves									
233	Earmarked Reserves	-3,080	-1,683	-348	0	-2,031	-520	1,511	-1,511	0
0	General Fund Appropriation	0	-894	0	0	-894	-894	0	0	0
66,721	Revenue Year End Variance:	64,356	64,356	0	0	64,356	63,169	-1,187	0	-1,187
0	Increase Capital Investment Res	0	0	0	0	0	1,187	1,187	0	1,187
66,721	<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	64,356	64,356	0	0	64,356	64,356	0	0	0
-39,963	Government Funding/NNDR Top Up	-36,545	-36,545	0	0	-36,545	-36,545	0	0	0
0	Local NNDR Forecast	-3,974	-3,974	0	0	-3,974	-3,974	0	0	0
-55	Collection Fund Deficit	-407	-407	0	0	-407	-407	0	0	0
-26,703	Precept Income	-23,430	-23,430	0	0	-23,430	-23,430	0	0	0
-66,721	Budget Funding	-64,356	-64,356	0	0	-64,356	-64,356	0	0	0
0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 2014/15 FIRE SERVICE REVENUE OUTTURN SUMMARY

Actual 2013/14 £'000	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Base Budget 2014/15 £'000	Qtr 3 Budget 2014/15 £'000	Reserve Draw- down £'000	Vire- ments £'000	Final Budget 2014/15 £'000	Actual £'000	Variance	Funding of Year End ER £'000	Adjusted Variance £'000
	<b>EMPLOYEES</b>									
	<b>Uniformed</b>									
34,077	Firefighters	33,844	33,731	0	162	33,893	32,304	-1,589	78	-1,511
1,263	Control	1,259	1,296			1,296	1,304	8		8
2,253	Additional Hours	1,285	1,362			1,360	2,074	714		714
37,593	<b>TOTAL UNIFORMED</b>	36,388	36,389	0	160	36,549	35,682	-867	78	-789
	<b>APT&amp;C and Manual</b>									
8,163	APT&C	8,074	8,609	0	62	8,671	8,488	-183	101	-82
259	Handymen/Cleaning	288	288		7	295	260	-35		-35
93	Catering	106	106		2	108	114	6		6
540	Transport Maintenance	568	568		4	572	561	-11		-11
59	Other Manual	95	95		1	96	55	-41		-41
186	Casuals	0	9		10	19	105	86		86
9,300	<b>TOTAL APT&amp;C/MANUAL</b>	9,131	9,675	0	86	9,761	9,583	-178	101	-77
	<b>Other Employee Expenses</b>									
0	Rent & Lodging	1	0			0	0	0		0
149	Allowances	68	110		3	113	121	8	23	31
5	Removal Expenses	5	5			5	2	-3		-3
376	Training Expenses	585	536		-10	526	387	-139	101	-38
0	Interview Expenses	0	0			0	0	0		0
217	Other Expenses	36	65	64	1	130	143	13		13
15	Staff Advertising	22	14			14	13	-1		-1
37	Development Expenses	97	77			77	55	-22		-22
946	Employee Insurance	128	149			149	562	413	500	913
832	MPF Pen Fixed Rate	2,818	2,538			2,538	2,538	0		0
168	Enhanced pensions	46	52			52	128	76		76
8	SSP & SMP Reimbursements	-16	-16			-16	4	20		20
109	Catering Expenditure	113	121		7	128	117	-11	8	-3
-358	HFRA Capitalisation Payroll	0	-490		2	-488	-488	0		0
0	Compensated Absences Movement	0	0			0	0	0		0
2,504	<b>TOTAL OTHER EMPLOYEE EXPEND</b>	3,903	3,161	64	3	3,228	3,582	354	632	986
	<b>Pensions</b>									
1,700	Injury Pension	1,694	1,694		46	1,740	1,777	37		37
0	Transfer Values	0	0			0	0	0		0
351	Ill Health Ret charges	174	174	248		422	411	-11	340	329
0	Injury Gratuity	0	0			0	0	0		0
2,051	<b>TOTAL PENSIONS</b>	1,868	1,868	248	46	2,162	2,188	26	340	366
51,448	<b>TOTAL EMPLOYEES</b>	51,290	51,093	312	295	51,700	51,035	-665	1,151	486
	<b>PREMISES</b>									
352	Building Maintenance Repairs	368	317		62	379	313	-66		-66
203	Site Maintenance Costs	172	200		9	209	258	49		49
732	Energy	759	767		73	840	868	28		28
108	Rent	76	80		25	105	90	-15		-15
1,061	Rates	1,195	1,167		96	1,263	1,050	-213		-213
232	Water	264	243		1	244	247	3		3
58	Fixtures	66	89		-12	77	53	-24		-24
152	Contract Cleaning	157	154		8	162	128	-34		-34
0	Recharges	0	0			0	0	0		0
47	Insurance	61	49		5	54	47	-7		-7
2,945	<b>TOTAL PREMISES</b>	3,118	3,066	0	267	3,333	3,054	-279	0	-279
	<b>TRANSPORT</b>									
400	Direct Transport	330	385		34	419	403	-16		-16
26	Tunnel Fees	29	29			29	25	-4		-4
168	Operating Lease	198	207		1	208	165	-43		-43
493	Other Transport Costs	584	503			503	437	-66		-66
154	Car Allowances	133	112		11	123	140	17		17
365	Insurance	344	353			353	314	-39		-39
0	Driving Licences	0	0			0	0	0		0
1,606	<b>TOTAL TRANSPORT</b>	1,618	1,589	0	46	1,635	1,484	-151	0	-151

## 2014/15 FIRE SERVICE REVENUE OUTTURN SUMMARY (continued)

Actual 2013/14	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Base Budget 2014/15	Qtr 3 Budget 2014/15	Reserve Draw- down	Vire- ments	Final Budget 2014/15	Actual	Variance	Funding of Year End ER	Adjusted Variance
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	<b>SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>									
43	Administrative Supplies	42	60			60	43	-17		-17
274	Operational Supplies	292	363		11	374	343	-31		-31
6	Hydrants	20	20			20	2	-18		-18
65	Consumables	74	70		11	81	73	-8		-8
103	Training Supplies	154	141		18	159	121	-38		-38
119	Fire Prevention Supplies	138	120		0	120	93	-27	1	-26
43	Catering Supplies	31	52			52	48	-4		-4
0	Radiation Monitoring	0	0			0	0	0		0
316	Uniforms	358	352		-4	348	306	-42	22	-20
113	Printing & Stationery	170	144		3	147	125	-22		-22
14	Operating Leases	2	3			3	1	-2		-2
729	Professional Fees/Service	883	758	4	0	762	542	-220	183	-37
660	Communications	664	708		3	711	681	-30		-30
25	Postage	35	31		-1	30	22	-8		-8
8	Command/Control	4	8			8	6	-2		-2
305	Computing	387	358		-3	355	303	-52		-52
251	Medicals	306	317	22	0	339	294	-45		-45
90	Travel & Subsistence	84	116		0	116	103	-13		-13
74	Grants/Subscriptions	110	102		0	102	83	-19		-19
23	Advertising	15	18	10		28	14	-14		-14
45	Furniture	44	123		2	125	63	-62		-62
81	Laundry	81	81			81	80	-1		-1
0	Civil Defence Training	0	0			0	0	0		0
32	Insurances	46	34		2	36	33	-3		-3
27	Hospitality	16	4		1	5	4	-1		-1
0	Alternative Fire Cover (Strike)	0	0			0	0	0		0
<b>3,446</b>	<b>TOTAL SUPPLIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	<b>3,956</b>	<b>3,983</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>4,062</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>-679</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>-473</b>
	<b>AGENCY SERVICES</b>									
75	Super Fund Admin	73	73		50	123	144	21		21
1,453	ICT Service Provider	1,466	1,538		-92	1,446	1,442	-4		-4
203	Third Party Payments (FSN)	197	195			195	195	0		0
455	ICT Managed Suppliers	544	501	0	-47	454	442	-12		-12
2276	PFI Unitary Charges ((Int/Principal/C	2633	2,600		0	2,600	2457	-143		-143
<b>4,462</b>	<b>TOTAL AGENCY SERVICES</b>	<b>4,913</b>	<b>4,907</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-89</b>	<b>4,818</b>	<b>4,680</b>	<b>-138</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-138</b>
	<b>CENTRAL EXPENSES</b>									
317	Finance & Computing	278	382		-14	368	345	-23		-23
0	Legal & Member Services	0	0			0	0	0		0
0	Property Management	0	0			0	0	0		0
0	Central Expenses	0	0			0	0	0		0
<b>317</b>	<b>TOTAL CENTRAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-14</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-23</b>
	<b>CAPITAL FINANCING</b>									
5,197	PWLB Debt Charges	5,895	5,270			5,270	5,186	-84		-84
75	MRB Debt Charges	76	76			76	69	-7		-7
23	Finance Lease Debt Charges	0	0			0	0	0		0
0	Debt Management	0	0			0	0	0		0
3,327	Revenue Contribution to Capital	775	2,395		-31	2,364	2,364	0		0
<b>8,622</b>	<b>TOTAL CAPITAL FINANCING</b>	<b>6,746</b>	<b>7,741</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-31</b>	<b>7,710</b>	<b>7,619</b>	<b>-91</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-91</b>
<b>72,846</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>71,919</b>	<b>72,761</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>73,626</b>	<b>71,600</b>	<b>-2,026</b>	<b>1,357</b>	<b>-669</b>
	<b>INCOME</b>									
-3,759	Specific Grants	-3,585	-3,833		-19	-3,852	-3,813	39		39
-16	Sales	0	0		-4	-4	-9	-5		-5
-1,581	Fees & Charges	-832	-1,342		-9	-1,351	-1,524	-173	143	-30
-16	Reinforcing moves	-5	-5			-5	-9	-4		-4
-281	Rents etc	-448	-448		-322	-770	-681	89		89
-754	Recharges Secondments	-456	-559		-8	-567	-741	-174		-174
-218	Contributions	-100	-302		-2	-304	-349	-45	11	-34
-107	Recharges Internal	-114	-114		6	-108	-108	0		0
-27	Other Income	-5	-5			-5	-15	-10		-10
-36	UKRO Income	0	0			0	0	0		0
<b>-6,795</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>-5,545</b>	<b>-6,608</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-358</b>	<b>-6,966</b>	<b>-7,249</b>	<b>-283</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>-129</b>
<b>66,051</b>	<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>66,374</b>	<b>66,153</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>66,660</b>	<b>64,351</b>	<b>-2,309</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>-798</b>

**2014/15 CORPORATE SERVICES REVENUE OUTTURN SUMMARY**

Actual 2013/14	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS	Base Budget 2014/15	Qtr 3 Budget 2014/15	Reserve Draw- down	Vire- ments	Final Budget 2014/15	Actual	Variance	Funding of Year End ER	Adjusted Variance
£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>									
	<b>Finance &amp; Legal costs</b>									
79	Finance Officer	79	79			79	79	0		0
93	Legal Officer	84	84			84	83	-1		-1
	<b>Democratic Rep</b>									
19	- Travel & Subsistence	48	47		-1	46	13	-33		-33
4	- Conference fees	15	15			15	2	-13		-13
239	- Members Allowances	230	228			228	225	-3		-3
1	- Telephones	2	2			2	0	-2		-2
0	- Training	1	1			1	0	-1		-1
0	- Hospitality	3	3			3	0	-3		-3
	<b>Central Expenses</b>									
16	Bank charges	18	17			17	16	-1		-1
38	District Audit Fees	68	48			48	39	-9		-9
34	Subscriptions	43	29			29	28	-1		-1
<b>523</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>-67</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-67</b>



**Movement on Reserves 2014/15**

	Opening Balance	Original Budget Planned Use	Qtr 1 Draw-down & changes	Qtr 2 Draw-down	Qtr 3 Draw-down	Qtr 4 Draw-down	Year-End Request	Closing Balance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>								
<b>Emergency Related Reserves</b>								
Bellwin Reserve	147	0						147
Insurance Reserve	370	0					500	870
Emergency planning Reserve	75	0						75
Catastrophe Reserve	1,000	0	-500					500
<b>Specific Projects</b>								
Smoothing Reserve	6,750	-2,396	-2,659					1,695
Severance Reserve	721	0		-15	-21	-64		621
Pension Reserve	908	0				-248	340	1,000
Recruitment Reserve	1,000	0						1,000
SMG Reserve	100	0	-100					0
Capital Investment Reserve	4,277	-539	5,670	988	390		66	10,852
PFI Annuity Reserve	2,251	-19	-7		1			2,226
Equality / DDA Investment Reserve	510	0	-225					285
Firefighter Safety Investment Reserve	1,000	-200						800
Facing the Future Challenge Reserve	800	0	-800					0
Community Sponsorship Reserve	13	0		-7	-2	-4	4	4
Equipment Reserve	191	0		-80		-22	133	222
Clothing Reserve							16	16
CFOA Road Safety Reserve							100	100
Contestable Research Fund Reseve	25	0						25
FSD Reserve	6	0					-6	0
Healthy Living / Olympic Legacy	80	0		-45			73	108
Water Rescue Reserve	5	0	-4		-1		0	0
Inflation Reserve	1,500	0	-1,000					500
<b>Ringfenced Reserves</b>								
F.R.E.E. Reserve	44	0		-3	-1		12	52
Princes Trust Reserve	343	0	-64				89	368
Community Youth Team Reserve	58	0		-5			4	57
Beacon Peer Project Reserve	62	0		-12	1		11	62
Innovation Fund Reserve	170	0			-1	-10	12	171
Regional Control Reserve	18	0	-18					0
Energy Reseve	85	74		-75				84
St Helens District Reserve	15	0		-9			4	10
New Dimensions Reserve	793	0			1		153	947
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>23,317</b>	<b>-3,080</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>-348</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>22,797</b>
<b>General revenue Reserve</b>	<b>2,894</b>	<b>-894</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>26,211</b>	<b>-3,974</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>-348</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>24,797</b>
<b>Increase funded from 2014/15 GF Outturn Position</b>								
<b>Capital Investment Reserve</b>							1,187	1,187
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>23,317</b>	<b>-3,080</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>-348</b>	<b>2,698</b>	<b>23,984</b>
<b>General revenue Reserve</b>	<b>2,894</b>	<b>-894</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,000</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>26,211</b>	<b>-3,974</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>-348</b>	<b>2,698</b>	<b>25,984</b>

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**APPENDIX B**

**Capital Programme 2014/15**

	Approved Budget	Qtr 1 Budget	Qtr 2 Current Budget	Qtr 3 Current Budget	Qtr 4 Amendment	Qtr 4 Virements	Qtr 4 Budget	2014/15 Actual	Year-End Re-Phasing into Future Years	Year-End Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>BUILDING &amp; LAND PROGRAMME</b>										
BLD001 Roofs & Canopy Replacements	50,000	65,000	55,000	55,000		-15,000	40,000	720	39,000	-280
BLD004 Concrete Yard Repairs	20,000	28,000	38,000	38,000			38,000	28,558	9,000	-442
BLD005 Tower Improvements	0	9,900	9,900	9,900			9,900	0	10,000	100
BLD007 L.E.V. Sys In App Rooms	0	6,700	6,700	6,700			6,700	5,523	1,100	-77
BLD011 Capital Refurbishment	57,000	57,000	57,000	57,000			57,000	0	57,000	0
BLD013 Appliance Room Floors	46,500	51,500	51,500	51,500			51,500	0	51,500	0
BLD014 Boiler Replacements	0	49,500	49,500	49,500		-15,000	34,500	0	34,500	0
BLD016 Community Station Investment	35,500	38,500	38,500	38,500		-200	38,300	1,469	36,500	-331
BLD018 Conference Facilities H/Q	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500		36,500	41,000	0	41,000	0
BLD020 5 Year Electrical Test	38,000	150,000	150,000	50,000		-6,500	43,500	38,097	5,000	-403
BLD026 Corporate Signage	0	3,000	3,000	3,000			3,000	2,653		-347
BLD031 Diesel Tanks	150,000	150,000	150,000	0			0	0		0
BLD033 Sanitary Accommodation Refurb	50,000	56,000	56,000	56,000			56,000	6,943	49,000	-57
BLD034 Office Accommodation	0	16,000	16,000	16,000			16,000	13,345	2,000	-655
BLD036 L.L.A.R. Accommodation Formby	300,000	313,500	313,500	13,500			13,500	3,085	10,000	-415
BLD040 F.S. Refurbishment Whiston	152,500	152,500	0	0			0	0		0
BLD041 F.S. Refurbishment Aintree	277,000	280,000	0	0			0	0		0
BLD042 St Helens Conversion	507,000	511,000	111,000	111,000			111,000	39,785	71,000	-215
BLD044 Asbestos Surveys	0	15,500	15,500	15,500			15,500	5,491	10,000	-9
BLD045 City Centre Community Facility	70,000	79,500	79,500	9,500			9,500	0	9,500	0
BLD055 F.S. Refurbishment Bromborough	310,000	322,500	12,500	12,500			12,500	9,570	3,000	70
BLD056 F.S. Refurbishment Ecclestone	338,000	338,000	0	0			0	0		0
BLD057 F.S. Refurbishment Crosby	375,000	375,000	0	0			0	0		0
BLD058 H.V.A.C. Heating, Vent & Air Con	92,000	92,000	92,000	42,000			42,000	0	42,000	0
BLD059 Llar Accomodation Ecclestone	237,500	237,500	0	0			0	0		0
BLD060 D.D.A. Compliance Work	0	307,000	307,000	57,000		200	57,200	29,887	27,300	-13
BLD061 Lighting Conductors Surge Protectors	50,000	55,000	55,000	0			0	0		0
BLD062 Emergency Lighting	0	26,400	26,400	26,400			26,400	0	26,000	-400
BLD063 F.S. Refurbishment Kirby	326,000	326,000	0	0			0	0		0
BLD065 MACC Server Room Extension	0	4,000	4,000	4,000			4,000	0	4,000	0
BLD067 Gym Equipment Replacement	25,000	76,500	76,500	76,500			76,500	20,568	56,000	68
BLD068 SHQ Joint Control Room	0	3,514,300	3,936,300	3,936,300	0	0	3,936,300	2,826,034	1,110,500	234
BLD069 F.S. Refurbishment Allerton	341,000	341,000	0	0			0	0		0
BLD070 Workshop Enhancement	0	350,000	350,000	119,500			119,500	0	120,000	500
BLD071 Station Refresh	450,000	486,000	186,000	111,000			111,000	80,142	31,000	142
BLD072 SHQ Tower	75,000	249,000	249,000	249,000			249,000	234,050	14,500	-450
BLD073 SHQ Museum	75,000	150,000	150,000	55,500	100,000		155,500	4,673	151,000	173
BLD075 Llar Accomodation Newton Le Willows	0	65,000	65,000	65,000			65,000	65,000		0
CON001 Energy Conservation Non-Salix	25,000	33,500	33,500	33,500			33,500	0	33,500	0
CON002 Energy Conservation Salix	0	0	75,000	75,000			75,000	0	75,000	0
DSO001 D.S.O. Cleaning Equipment	6,000	8,500	8,500	8,500		-1,500	7,000	2,804		-4,196
TDA001 Fire House Refurbishment	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000			80,000	50,000	30,000	0
EQU002 Fridge/Freezer Rep Prog	10,500	22,000	22,000	22,000		1,500	23,500	15,764	7,000	-736
EQU003 Furniture Replacement Prog	10,500	22,500	22,500	22,500			22,500	1,995	20,000	-505

**APPENDIX B**

**Capital Programme 2014/15**

	Approved Budget	Qtr 1 Budget	Qtr 2 Current Budget	Qtr 3 Current Budget	Qtr 4 Amendment	Qtr 4 Virements	Qtr 4 Budget	2014/15 Actual	Year-End Re-Phasing into Future Years	Year-End Variance
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,584,500</b>	<b>9,519,300</b>	<b>6,956,300</b>	<b>5,581,300</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,681,300</b>	<b>3,486,156</b>	<b>2,186,900</b>	<b>-8,244</b>
<b>FIRE SAFETY</b>										
FIR002 Smoke Alarms (H.F.R.A.)	500,000	500,000	500,000	250,000		0	250,000	276,457		26,457
FIR005 Installation Costs (H.F.R.A.)	730,000	730,000	730,000	490,000			490,000	488,000		-2,000
FIR006 Deaf Alarms (H.F.R.A.)	49,000	49,000	49,000	49,000			49,000	25,080		-23,920
FIR007 Replacement Batteries (H.F.R.A.)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000			2,000	1,694		-306
FIR009 Risk Management Residential Blocks	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000			200,000	0	200,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,481,000</b>	<b>1,481,000</b>	<b>1,481,000</b>	<b>991,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>991,000</b>	<b>791,231</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>ICT</b>										
FIN001 F.M.I.S. Replacement	0	233,000	230,300	230,300			230,300	121,683	108,500	-117
IT002 I.C.T. Software	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000		8,500	10,500	10,100		-400
IT003 I.C.T. Hardware	91,000	106,800	106,800	121,600		-900	120,700	120,377		-323
IT005 I.C.T. Servers	205,000	303,500	303,500	303,500		-38,000	265,500	239,720		-25,780
IT018 I.C.T. Network	54,000	71,500	71,500	71,500		-34,600	36,900	36,828		-72
IT026 I.C.T. Operational Equipment	12,000	14,000	14,000	14,000		-7,000	7,000	6,475		-525
IT027 I.C.T. Security	2,000	6,000	6,000	6,000		-6,000	0	0		0
IT028 System Development Portal	112,000	129,900	129,900	129,900			129,900	53,691	76,000	-209
IT030 I.C.T. Projects / Upgrades	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000			5,000	4,060		-940
IT036 Portable Storage Media	0	27,000	27,000	27,000		19,100	46,100	46,032		-68
IT039 Estates Management System	20,000	20,000	20,000	0			0	0		0
IT040 Analytical Tool CFS Work	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000		4,400	94,400	79,930	14,000	-470
IT043 E Recruitment System	0	700	700	700			700	0		-700
IT046 TRM System	0	200,000	252,700	252,700			252,700	251,715		-985
IT047 Legl Case Management system	0	4,500	4,500	4,500			4,500	0		-4,500
IT049 Wireless Rollout	0	9,000	9,000	9,000			9,000	0	9,000	0
IT050 Community Protection System	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000			30,000	0	30,000	0
JCC	0	928,000	957,000	957,000	0	60,000	1,017,000	854,025	164,000	1,025
IT055 C3i C&C Comms and Info system	15,000	25,000	25,000	25,000			25,000	21,074	4,000	74
IT056 PFI Access Door System	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000			18,000	0	18,000	0
IT057 Fleet Management System	0	0	87,500	87,500		1,500	89,000	77,368	12,000	368
RC003 Corporate Gazateeer	0	9,500	9,500	9,500		-4,400	5,100	5,100		0
<b>Total</b>	<b>656,000</b>	<b>2,233,400</b>	<b>2,399,900</b>	<b>2,394,700</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>2,397,300</b>	<b>1,928,178</b>	<b>435,500</b>	<b>-33,622</b>

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**Capital Programme 2014/15**

	Approved Budget	Qtr 1 Budget	Qtr 2 Current Budget	Qtr 3 Current Budget	Qtr 4 Amendment	Qtr 4 Virements	Qtr 4 Budget	2014/15 Actual	Year-End Re-Phasing into Future Years	Year-End Variance
<b>OPERATIONAL EQUIP. &amp; HYDRANTS</b>										
OPS001 Gas Tight Suits Other Ppe	40,000	50,000	50,000	50,000			50,000	26,235	23,500	-265
OPS003 Hydraulic Rescue Equipment	65,000	93,000	93,000	93,000		5,000	98,000	88,761	9,000	-239
OPS005 Resuscitation Equipment	0	27,500	27,500	20,000			20,000	0	20,000	0
OPS009 Pod Equipment	50,000	119,000	119,000	69,000			69,000	0	69,000	0
OPS011 Thermal Imaging Cameras	10,000	11,500	11,500	11,500			11,500	0	11,500	0
OPS022 Improvements To Fleet	20,000	36,000	36,000	36,000			36,000	35,532		-468
OPS023 Water Rescue Equipment	0	0	0	24,000			24,000	10,560	13,000	-440
OPS024 BA equipment / Comms	502,000	723,500	723,500	723,500			723,500	506,813	217,000	313
OPS026 Rope Replacement	20,000	35,000	35,000	35,000			35,000	4,793	30,000	-207
OPS027 Light Portable Pumps	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000			20,000	0	20,000	0
OPS031 Cctv Equipment/Drone	32,000	32,000	32,000	8,000			8,000	0	8,000	0
OPS033 Marine Rescue Launch	0	5,000	5,000	5,000		-5,000	0	0		0
OPS034 Operational Ladders	0	0	0	14,000			14,000	11,690		-2,310
OPS038 Water Delivery System	0	62,000	62,000	52,000			52,000	0	52,000	0
OPS039 Water Delivery Hoses	0	49,000	49,000	29,000			29,000	24,716	4,000	-284
OPS041 Satellite Navigation	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0
OPS049 Bulk Foam Attack Equipment	48,000	48,000	48,000	0			0	0		0
OPS052 DEFRA FRNE Water Rescue Grant	0	20,000	20,000	20,000			20,000	2,079	18,000	79
OPS053 Methods of Entry	0	0	0	24,000			24,000	19,250	4,500	-250
OPS054 Electrical Equipment	0	0	0	33,500			33,500	0	33,500	0
HYD001 Hydrants (New Installations)	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500			18,500	7,265		-11,235
HYD002 Hydrants (Rep Installations)	18,500	20,100	20,100	20,100			20,100	0		-20,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>844,000</b>	<b>1,370,100</b>	<b>1,370,100</b>	<b>1,306,100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,306,100</b>	<b>737,694</b>	<b>533,000</b>	<b>-35,406</b>
<b>VEHICLES</b>										
VEH001 Wtl'S Purchased	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000		-5,000	745,000	542,865	203,000	865
VEH002 Ancilliary Vehicles	677,200	876,200	876,200	604,500		5,000	609,500	354,930	255,000	430
VEH004 Special Vehicles	1,001,000	1,012,500	1,012,500	0			0	0		0
VEH005 Vehicles water Strategy	0	29,000	29,000	0			0	0		0
VEH006 Motorcycle Response	44,000	44,000	44,000	0			0	0		0
WOR001 Workshop Equipment	0	32,000	32,000	32,000			32,000	8,685	23,000	-315
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,472,200</b>	<b>2,743,700</b>	<b>2,743,700</b>	<b>1,386,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,386,500</b>	<b>906,480</b>	<b>481,000</b>	<b>980</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,037,700</b>	<b>17,347,500</b>	<b>14,951,000</b>	<b>11,659,600</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>11,762,200</b>	<b>7,849,739</b>	<b>3,836,400</b>	<b>-76,061</b>

## Capital Programme 2014/15

	Approved Budget	Qtr 1 Budget	Qtr 2 Current Budget	Qtr 3 Current Budget	Qtr 4 Amendment	Qtr 4 Virements	Qtr 4 Budget	2014/15 Actual	Year-End Re-Phasing into Future Years	Year-End Variance
<b>Financing Available:</b>										
<b>Capital Receipts</b>										
Sale of Toxteth FS	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	0	0	250,000	243,956		-6,044
Sale of Formby LLAR House	350,000	350,000	350,000	350,000	-350,000	0	0	0		0
Sale of Derby Road	700,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	-500,000	0	0	0		0
<b>R.C.C.O. / Reserves</b>										
Capitalisation of Sals HFRA	730,000	730,000	730,000	490,000	-2,000	0	488,000	488,000		0
It Equipment (IT003)	0	2,300	2,300	8,600	0	2,600	11,200	11,200		0
Joint Control Room (BLD068)	0	177,300	177,300	177,300	0	0	177,300	177,300		0
SHQ Stage C Works (BLD081)	0	0	340,000	340,000	0	0	340,000	340,000		0
Two Storey Refresh (BLD074)	0	0	1,000	1,000	0	0	1,000	1,000		0
Salix Energy Conservation (CON002)	0	0	75,000	75,000	0	0	75,000	75,000		0
JCC IT Works (IT053) Cap Inv Res	0	60,000	60,000	60,000	0	0	60,000	60,000		0
FSN Charge for Alarms (FIR002)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-32,000		18,000	18,000		0
Fleet Mgmt System (IT057) Cap Inv Res	0	0	78,000	78,000	0	0	78,000	78,000		0
Station Refresh (BLD071) Cap Inv Res	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	0	0	400,000	400,000		0
SHQ Museum (BLD073) Cap Inv Res Year2	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000	0	0	75,000	75,000		0
Fire Risk Mgmt (FIR009) Fire Safety Res	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	0	0	200,000	200,000		0
Planning Performance Mgmt (IT040) Cap Inv Res	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	50,000		0
DDA Compliance works (BLD068) Cap Inv Reserve	0	225,000	225,000	225,000	0	0	225,000	225,000		0
Training Tower HQ (BLD072) Cap Inv Reserve	0	64,000	64,000	64,000	0	0	64,000	64,000		0
Fleet Mgmt System (IT057) Cap Inv Res	0	0	9,500	9,500	0	0	9,500	9,500		0
TRM System (IT046)	0	0	50,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	50,000		0
JCC IT Works (IT052) Cap Inv Res	0	0	29,000	29,000	0	0	29,000	29,000		0
Tablets / Ipads (IT003) Cap Inv Res	0	0	0	8,500	0	0	8,500	8,500		0
Methods of Entry (OPS053)	0	0	0	4,000	0	0	4,000	4,000		0
<b>Grants</b>										
(Capital Grant) Fire Control Grant	0	700,000	700,000	700,000	0	0	700,000	700,000		0
(Capital Grant) DCMS	133,000	133,000	133,000	133,000	0	0	133,000	92,400		-40,600
(Capital Grant) Police Grant	0	1,752,000	1,833,000	1,833,000	0	0	1,833,000	1,332,939	500,000	-61
Capital Grant CSR07 (1,728,900) (BLD067)	1,243,966	1,243,966	1,243,966	1,243,966	0		1,243,966	1,243,966		0
<b>Total Non Borrowing</b>	<b>4,181,966</b>	<b>6,962,566</b>	<b>7,626,066</b>	<b>7,404,866</b>	<b>-884,000</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>6,523,466</b>	<b>5,976,761</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>-46,705</b>
<b>Borrowing Requirement</b>										
Unsupported Borrowing	5,855,734	10,384,934	7,324,934	4,254,734	984,000	0	5,238,734	1,872,978	3,336,400	-29,356
<b>Borrowing</b>	<b>5,855,734</b>	<b>10,384,934</b>	<b>7,324,934</b>	<b>4,254,734</b>	<b>984,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,238,734</b>	<b>1,872,978</b>	<b>3,336,400</b>	<b>-29,356</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>10,037,700</b>	<b>17,347,500</b>	<b>14,951,000</b>	<b>11,659,600</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>11,762,200</b>	<b>7,849,739</b>	<b>3,836,400</b>	<b>-76,061</b>

**APPENDIX C**

**Approved Authority Capital Programme for 2015/2016 - 2019/2020**

Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Building/Land	13,133,400	11,552,900	455,500	352,000	396,500	376,500
Fire Safety	4,077,000	977,000	775,000	775,000	775,000	775,000
ICT	3,506,500	1,172,500	531,000	556,000	816,000	431,000
Operational Equipment & Hydrants	2,370,000	758,000	168,000	525,000	484,000	435,000
Vehicles	8,017,100	3,156,100	1,526,000	1,228,000	858,000	1,249,000
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>31,104,000</b>	<b>17,616,500</b>	<b>3,455,500</b>	<b>3,436,000</b>	<b>3,329,500</b>	<b>3,266,500</b>
2015/16 - 2019/20 Original Approved Programme	27,267,600	13,780,100	3,455,500	3,436,000	3,329,500	3,266,500
Current to Original Change	3,836,400	3,836,400				
<b>TOTAL Movements Explained by:</b>						
2014/15 slippage	3,836,400	3,836,400				
Movement to date	3,836,400	3,836,400				
<b>Financing Available</b>						
	<b>Total £</b>	<b>2015/16 £</b>	<b>2016/17 £</b>	<b>2017/18 £</b>	<b>2018/19 £</b>	<b>2019/20 £</b>
<b>Capital Receipts</b>						
Sale of 2 existing N-le-W LLAR properties	275,000	275,000				
Sale of LLAR house Cable Street, Formby	350,000	350,000				
Sale of Derby Road	440,000	440,000				
Sale of Huyton FS (CFO/095/14)	250,000		250,000			
Sale of Whiston FS (CFO/095/14)	250,000		250,000			
	<b>1,565,000</b>	<b>1,065,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>			
<b>RCCO / Reserves</b>						
CFS Alarm Installation (Salaries)	2,250,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
CFS Alarm Installation (FSD)	200,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	
Prescot FS New Build (CFO/095/14)	830,000	830,000				
	<b>3,280,000</b>	<b>1,330,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>
<b>Grants</b>						
(Capital Grant) Police Grant	500,000	500,000				
BLD080 Prescot FS New Build (CFO/095/14)	1,770,000	1,770,000				
	<b>2,270,000</b>	<b>2,270,000</b>				
<b>Total Non Borrowing</b>	<b>7,115,000</b>	<b>4,665,000</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>450,000</b>
<b>Unsupported Borrowing</b>	<b>23,989,000</b>	<b>12,951,500</b>	<b>2,455,500</b>	<b>2,936,000</b>	<b>2,829,500</b>	<b>2,816,500</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>31,104,000</b>	<b>17,616,500</b>	<b>3,455,500</b>	<b>3,436,000</b>	<b>3,329,500</b>	<b>3,266,500</b>
2015/16 - 2019/20 Original Approved Programme	27,267,600	13,780,100	3,455,500	3,436,000	3,329,500	3,266,500
Current to Original Change	3,836,400	3,836,400				
<b>Explained by:</b>						
2014/15 year-end re-phasing funded through:						
Borrowing	2,546,400	2,546,400				
(Capital Grant) Police Grant	500,000	500,000				
Capital receipts Formby LLAR hse & Derby Rd	790,000	790,000				
	<b>3,836,400</b>	<b>3,836,400</b>				

## Building / Land - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
<b>Major Site Refurbishments</b>						
BLD039 FS Refurbishment Heswall	150,000	150,000				
BLD055 FS Refurbishment Bromborough	3,000	3,000				
BLD077 FS Refurbishment Upton	275,000	275,000				
BLD078 FS Refurbishment West Kirby	400,000	400,000				
BLD042 St Helens Conversion	71,000	71,000				
BLD070 Workshop Enhancement	370,000	370,000				
BLD071 Station Refresh	106,000	106,000				
BLD079 Station Refurbishments	3,410,000	3,410,000				
	<b>4,785,000</b>	<b>4,785,000</b>				
<b>Station Mergers</b>						
BLD080 Prescot FS New Build (CFO/095/14)	3,100,000	3,100,000				
<b>SHQ/JCC Major Refurbishment</b>						
JCC SHQ Main Building	1,110,500	1,110,500				
<b>Other</b>						
BLD072 SHQ Tower	14,500	14,500				
BLD073 SHQ Museum	226,000	226,000				
	<b>240,500</b>	<b>240,500</b>				
<b>LLAR Accomodation Works</b>						
BLD016 Community Station Investment	167,500	36,500	36,000	25,000	45,000	25,000
BLD036 LLAR Accomodation Formby	310,000	310,000				
BLD045 City Centre Community Facility	79,500	79,500				
BLD075 LLAR Accomodation Newton-le-Willows	310,000	310,000				
	<b>867,000</b>	<b>736,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>
<b>General Station Upgrade Works</b>						
BLD001 Roofs & Canopy Replacements	259,000	89,000	50,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
BLD004 Concrete Yard Repairs	109,000	29,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
BLD005 Tower Improvements	58,000	10,000	18,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
BLD011 Capital Refurbishment	57,000	57,000				
BLD013 Non Slip Coating to Appliance Room Floors	264,500	98,000	46,500	40,000	40,000	40,000
BLD014 Boiler Replacements	74,500	34,500			20,000	20,000
BLD020 Electrical Testing	251,000	143,000	38,000	30,000	20,000	20,000
BLD031 Diesel Tanks	150,000	150,000				
BLD033 Sanitary Accomodation Refurbishment	199,000	79,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
BLD044 Asbestos Surveys	155,000	60,000	50,000	25,000	10,000	10,000
BLD060 DDA Compliance	367,300	277,300	30,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
	<b>1,944,300</b>	<b>1,026,800</b>	<b>282,500</b>	<b>215,000</b>	<b>210,000</b>	<b>210,000</b>
<b>Other Works</b>						
BLD007 L.E.V. System in Appliance Rooms	1,100	1,100				
BLD018 Conference Facilities SHQ	70,500	45,500	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD026 Corporate Signage	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
BLD032 Power Strategy	50,000		20,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
BLD034 Office Accomodation	97,000	27,000	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
BLD058 HVAC - Heating, Ventalation & Air Con	152,000	92,000			30,000	30,000
BLD061 Lightening Conductors & Surge Protection	55,000	55,000				
BLD062 Emergency Lighting	26,000	26,000				
BLD065 MACC Server Room Extension	4,000	4,000				
BLD067 Gym Equipment Replacement	181,000	81,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
CON001 Energy Conservation Non-Salix	158,500	58,500	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
CON002 Energy Conservation Salix	75,000	75,000				
DSO001 Cleaning Equipment	30,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
EQU002 Replacement programme for Fridge Freezers	58,500	17,500	10,500	10,500	10,000	10,000
EQU003 Furniture Replacement Programme	72,500	30,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500
	<b>1,056,100</b>	<b>524,100</b>	<b>137,000</b>	<b>112,000</b>	<b>141,500</b>	<b>141,500</b>
TDA001 Fire house refurbishment	30,000	30,000				
	<b>13,133,400</b>	<b>11,552,900</b>	<b>455,500</b>	<b>352,000</b>	<b>396,500</b>	<b>376,500</b>
<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>10,946,500</b>	<b>9,366,000</b>	<b>455,500</b>	<b>352,000</b>	<b>396,500</b>	<b>376,500</b>
<b>Current Programme</b>	<b>13,133,400</b>	<b>11,552,900</b>	<b>455,500</b>	<b>352,000</b>	<b>396,500</b>	<b>376,500</b>
<b>Changes</b>	<b>2,186,900</b>	<b>2,186,900</b>				



## Building / Land - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
<b>Q1 Movements/Adjustments</b>	<b>2,086,900</b>	<b>2,086,900</b>				
<u>Year end Slippage b/f from 2014/15</u>						
BLD055 FS Refurbishment Bromborough		3,000				
BLD042 St Helens Conversion		71,000				
BLD070 Workshop Enhancement		120,000				
BLD071 Station Refresh		31,000				
BLD068 SHQ Joint Control Room		395,000				
BLD081 SHQ Stage C Works		715,500				
BLD072 SHQ Tower		14,500				
BLD073 SHQ Museum		51,000				
BLD016 Community Station Investment		36,500				
BLD036 LLAR Accomodation Formby		10,000				
BLD045 City Centre Community Facility		9,500				
BLD001 Roofs & Canopy Replacements		39,000				
BLD004 Concrete Yard Repairs		9,000				
BLD005 Tower Improvements		10,000				
BLD011 Capital Refurbishment		57,000				
BLD013 Non Slip Coating to Appliance Room Floors		51,500				
BLD014 Boiler Replacements		34,500				
BLD020 Electrical Testing		5,000				
BLD033 Sanitary Accomodation Refurbishment		49,000				
BLD044 Asbestos Surveys		10,000				
BLD060 DDA Compliance		27,300				
BLD007 L.E.V. System in Appliance Rooms		1,100				
BLD018 Conference Facilities SHQ		41,000				
BLD034 Office Accomodation		2,000				
BLD058 HVAC - Heating, Ventalation & Air Con		42,000				
BLD062 Emergency Lighting		26,000				
BLD065 MACC Server Room Extension		4,000				
BLD067 Gym Equipment Replacement		56,000				
CON001 Energy Conservation Non-Salix		33,500				
CON002 Energy Conservation Salix		75,000				
EQU002 Replacement programme for Fridge Freezers		7,000				
EQU003 Furniture Replacement Programme		20,000				
TDA001 Fire house refurbishment		30,000				
	<b>2,086,900</b>	<b>2,086,900</b>				

## Fire Safety - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
FIR002 Smoke Alarms (100,000 HFRA target)	1,500,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
FIR005 Installation costs (HFRA)	2,250,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000	450,000
FIR006 Deaf Alarms (HFRA)	125,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
FIR007 Replacement Batteries (12,000)	2,000	2,000				
FIR009 Fire Risk Management in Residential Blocks (CFO/135/13)	200,000	200,000				
	<b>4,077,000</b>	<b>977,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>
<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>3,877,000</b>	<b>777,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>
<b>Current Programme Changes</b>	<b>4,077,000</b>	<b>977,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>	<b>775,000</b>
	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>				
<b>Q1 Movements/Adjustments</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>				
<u>Year end Slippage b/f from 2014/15</u>						
FIR009 Fire Risk Management in Residential Blocks		200,000				
	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>				

## ICT - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
<b>IT002 ICT Software</b>						
Software Licences	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
New Visualistaion Infrastructure	75,000				75,000	
3 Year Licences for Ipads						
3 Year Licences Antivirus & Filtering	155,000			155,000		
Microsoft EA Agreement (Servers & Security)	300,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Microsoft EA Agreement (Windows Desktop)	65,000	65,000				
Microsoft EA Agreement (Office Desktop)	200,000				200,000	
Microsoft SQL Upgrade	50,000	50,000				
	<b>855,000</b>	<b>177,000</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>217,000</b>	<b>337,000</b>	<b>62,000</b>
<b>IT003 ICT Hardware</b>						
PC, monitor and laptop replacement (target 20%)	390,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	70,000
PC, monitor and laptop growth	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Periherals replacement (target 20%)	30,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Tablets (Ipads)	60,000				30,000	30,000
Appliance Toughbook Replacement	110,000	110,000				
LFS Laptops	40,000		40,000			
IP TV Asset Refresh	50,000					50,000
	<b>705,000</b>	<b>201,000</b>	<b>131,000</b>	<b>91,000</b>	<b>121,000</b>	<b>161,000</b>
<b>IT005 ICT Servers</b>						
Server/storage replacement (target 20%)	325,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
Server/storage growth	85,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	25,000
New SAN Solution	100,000				100,000	
	<b>510,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>
<b>IT018 ICT Network</b>						
Local Area Network replacement (discrete)	20,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Network Switches/Routers replacement	351,000	141,000		100,000	110,000	
Network Switches/Router growth	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Network Switches/Router - Additional for JCC/TDA Resilience	10,000					10,000
Vesty Road Network Link Refresh	40,000					40,000
IP Telephony	150,000	50,000	100,000			
Wireless Network	40,000		40,000			
	<b>636,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>149,000</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>119,000</b>	<b>59,000</b>
<b>IT026 ICT Operational Equipment</b>						
Pagers/Alerters	35,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Station End Kit	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Incident Ground Management System	50,000		50,000			
	<b>110,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>SHQ/JCC Major Refurbishment</b>						
IT051 JCC Airwave Solution	100,000	100,000				
IT052 JCC Specialist IT	7,000	7,000				
IT053 JCC Backup MACC/Secondary Control Resilience	57,000	57,000				
	<b>164,000</b>	<b>164,000</b>				
<b>Other IT Schemes</b>						
IT027 ICT Security - Remote Access Security FOBS	10,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
IT028 System Development (Portal)	201,000	101,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
IT030 ICT Projects/Upgrades	25,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
IT039 Estates Management System	20,000	20,000				
IT040 Integrated Planning & Performance M.S.	14,000	14,000				
IT049 Wireless Rollout	9,000	9,000				
IT050 Community Protection IMS System	30,000	30,000				
IT055 C.3.I. C.&C Communication & Information System	79,000	19,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
IT056 P.F.I. Door Access System	18,000	18,000				
IT057 Fleet Management System	12,000	12,000				
FIN001 FMIS/Eproc/Payroll/HR Replacement	108,500	108,500				
	<b>526,500</b>	<b>338,500</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>47,000</b>	<b>47,000</b>
	<b>3,506,500</b>	<b>1,172,500</b>	<b>531,000</b>	<b>556,000</b>	<b>816,000</b>	<b>431,000</b>

<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>3,071,000</b>	<b>737,000</b>	<b>531,000</b>	<b>556,000</b>	<b>816,000</b>	<b>431,000</b>
<b>Current Programme</b>	<b>3,506,500</b>	<b>1,172,500</b>	<b>531,000</b>	<b>556,000</b>	<b>816,000</b>	<b>431,000</b>
<b>Changes</b>	<b>435,500</b>	<b>435,500</b>				
<b>Q1 Movements/Adjustments</b>	<b>435,500</b>	<b>435,500</b>				
<b>Year end Slippage b/f from 2014/15</b>						
IT028 System Development (Portal)		76,000				
IT040 Integrated Planning & Performance M.S.		14,000				
IT049 Wireless Rollout		9,000				
IT050 Community Protection IMS System		30,000				
IT051 JCC Airwave Solution		100,000				
IT052 JCC Specialist IT		7,000				
IT053 JCC Backup MACC/Secondary Control Resilience		57,000				
IT055 C.3.I. C.&C Communication & Information System		4,000				
IT056 P.F.I. Door Access System		18,000				
IT057 Fleet Management System		12,000				
FIN001 FMIS/Eproc/Payroll/HR Replacement		108,500				
	<b>435,500</b>	<b>435,500</b>				

**Operational Equipment - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20**

Type of Capital Expenditure	Total Cost £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
<b>OPS003 Hydraulic Rescue Equipment</b>						
Hydraulic Rescue Equipment - Replacement Programme	400,000			160,000	160,000	80,000
Pneumatic Rescue Equipment - Air Bags	9,000	9,000				
	<b>409,000</b>	<b>9,000</b>		<b>160,000</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>OPS005 Resuscitation Equipment</b>						
Resuscitation Rescue Equipment	50,000	20,000				30,000
Defibrillator Batteries	12,000				12,000	
Appliance Resuscitation Equipment & Cylinders	30,000					30,000
	<b>92,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>			<b>12,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>
<b>OPS024 BA Equipment/Communications</b>						
BA Cylinder Replacement	50,000	50,000				
BA Sets (back pack/face mask/tubes/equip) Replacement	27,000	27,000				
Replacement of hand held communication radios	140,000	140,000				
BA Telemetry Breathing Units	45,000			45,000		
Replacement of hand held communication radios	15,000			15,000		
BA Test Rig	12,000				12,000	
Oxygen Booster Pumps	12,000				12,000	
ESAS, Badoliers & Air Line Reducers	45,000				45,000	
	<b>346,000</b>	<b>217,000</b>		<b>60,000</b>	<b>69,000</b>	
<b>OPS049 Bulk Foam Equipment</b>						
Bulk Foam Attack Equipment	73,000	48,000		25,000		
Bulk Foam Stock	70,000				70,000	
	<b>143,000</b>	<b>48,000</b>		<b>25,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>	
<b>Other Operational Equipment</b>						
OPS001 Gas Tight Suits Other PPE	173,500	23,500		150,000		
OPS009 POD Equipment (Demountable Unit Refurb 2013/14)	119,000	119,000				
OPS011 Thermal imaging cameras	176,500	11,500				165,000
OPS022 Improvements to Fleet	130,000	20,000	20,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
OPS023 Water Rescue Equipment	213,000	63,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	
OPS026 Rope Replacement	65,000	30,000				35,000
OPS027 Light portable Pumps	20,000	20,000				
OPS031 CCTV Equipment (IRMP2 CCTV Drone)	8,000	8,000				
OPS033 Marine Rescue Launch						
OPS034 Operational Ladders	58,000		16,000	13,000	16,000	13,000
OPS036 Radiation Detection Equipment	45,000		45,000			
OPS038 Water Delivery System	52,000	52,000				
OPS039 Water Delivery Hoses	44,000	24,000			10,000	10,000
OPS052 DEFRA FRNE	18,000	18,000				
OPS053 Methods of Entry	4,500	4,500				
OPS054 Electrical Equipment	68,500	33,500			30,000	5,000
	<b>1,195,000</b>	<b>427,000</b>	<b>131,000</b>	<b>243,000</b>	<b>136,000</b>	<b>258,000</b>
<b>Hydrants</b>						
HYD001 Hydrants (New Installations)	92,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500
HYD002 Hydrants (Replacements)	92,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500
	<b>185,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>	<b>37,000</b>
	<b>2,370,000</b>	<b>758,000</b>	<b>168,000</b>	<b>525,000</b>	<b>484,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>

<b>Original Budget</b>	<b>1,837,000</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>168,000</b>	<b>525,000</b>	<b>484,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>
<b>Current Programme</b>	<b>2,370,000</b>	<b>758,000</b>	<b>168,000</b>	<b>525,000</b>	<b>484,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>
<b>Changes</b>	<b>533,000</b>	<b>533,000</b>				

**Q1 Movements/Adjustments**

<b>Year end Slippage b/f from 2014/15</b>						
OPS001 Gas Tight Suits Other PPE		23,500				
OPS003 Hydraulic Rescue Equipment		9,000				
OPS005 Resuscitation Equipment		20,000				
OPS009 POD Equipment (Demountable Unit Refurb 2013/14) IRMF		69,000				
OPS011 Thermal imaging cameras		11,500				
OPS023 Water Rescue Equipment		13,000				
OPS024 BA Equipment/Communications		217,000				
OPS026 Rope Replacement		30,000				
OPS027 Light portable Pumps		20,000				
OPS031 CCTV Equipment (IRMP2 CCTV Drone)		8,000				
OPS038 Water Delivery System		52,000				
OPS039 Water Delivery Hoses		4,000				
OPS052 DEFRA FRNE		18,000				
OPS053 Methods of Entry		4,500				
OPS054 Electrical Equipment		33,500				

533,000     533,000

## Vehicles - Approved Budget 2015/16 to 2019/20

Type of Capital Expenditure	Price Per Unit	Total		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
		Units	Cost £	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£	Units	£
<b>VEH002 Ancillary Vehicles</b>													
Cars													
Car 1 (5 door - Fiesta/Corsa)	9,500	41	389,500	25	237,500	#	152,000						
Car 2 (5 door - Fiesta/Corsa)	12,000	3	36,000									3	36,000
Officer Response Car 1	22,000	2	44,000			2	44,000						
Officer Response Car 2	26,000	2	52,000					2	52,000				
Officer Response Car 3	20,000	2	40,000							2	40,000		
7 Seater Galaxy	23,000	2	46,000							2	46,000		
Car - Automatc	25,000	1	25,000					1	25,000				
4x4s													
4x4 (Isuzu/Hilux)	27,000	4	108,000					2	54,000			2	54,000
4x4 SMAs	23,000	2	46,000					2	46,000				
4x4 IITs	23,000												
4x4 (Climbing Wall Vehicle)	22,000	1	22,000							1	22,000		
Vans													
Small Vans (Fiesta/Corsa)	9,510	5	47,550	5	47,550								
Panel Van Renault Master 1	19,400	6	116,400	6	116,400								
Panel Van Renault Master 2	18,650	9	167,850	9	167,850								
Panel Van 2 Jumbo Van	25,000	2	50,000					2	50,000				
Ford Connect Van	10,500	8	84,000	6	63,000			2	21,000				
Dog Van Mercedes Vito	43,000												
Other													
Water Training Vehicle (Mercedes 4x4 Sprinter)	41,800												
PCVs (Ford Transit 17 Seater)	23,200	4	92,800	4	92,800								
PCVs (Ford Transit 17 Seater)	24,000	3	72,000									3	72,000
			<b>1,439,100</b>		<b>725,100</b>		<b>196,000</b>		<b>248,000</b>		<b>108,000</b>		<b>162,000</b>
<b>VEH004 Special Vehicles</b>													
CPLs													
Vehicle 2 (refurbished)	300,000	1	300,000	1	300,000								
Vehicle 3 (refurbished)	300,000	1	300,000	1	300,000								
Vehicle 4 (New)	600,000	1	600,000			1	600,000						
Other													
IMU - Prime Movers	98,000	4	392,000	4	392,000								
BA Support Unit (POD)	75,000	1	75,000	1	75,000								
Water Rescue Unit	45,000	1	45,000	1	45,000								
			<b>1,712,000</b>		<b>1,112,000</b>		<b>600,000</b>						
<b>VEH006 Motorcycle Response</b>													
AFA/RTC Bikes	6,000	2	12,000	2	12,000								
Firefighting bikes	16,000	2	32,000	2	32,000								
VEH006 Motor Cycle Response Quad Bikes	11,000	2	22,000									2	22,000
			<b>66,000</b>		<b>44,000</b>								<b>22,000</b>
<b>Other Vehicles</b>													
VEH001 Appliances - Part Build (Chasis Delivered 14/15)	50,750	4	203,000	4	203,000								
VEH001 Appliances - New £245,000 to £260,000		18	4,480,000	4	980,000	3	730,000	4	980,000	3	750,000	4	1,040,000
VEH005 Water Strategy			29,000		29,000								
			<b>4,712,000</b>		<b>1,212,000</b>		<b>730,000</b>		<b>980,000</b>		<b>750,000</b>		<b>1,040,000</b>
<b>WOR001 Workshop Equipment</b>													
Equipment			23,000		23,000								
Replace steam clean lift			40,000		40,000								
Workshop Equipment Cable free Somers vehicle Lift.	19,000	1	19,000									1	19,000
Two Post Light Vehicle Lift.	6,000	1	6,000									1	6,000
			<b>88,000</b>		<b>63,000</b>								<b>25,000</b>

<b>Original Budget</b>			<b>8,017,100</b>		<b>3,156,100</b>		<b>1,526,000</b>		<b>1,228,000</b>		<b>858,000</b>		<b>1,249,000</b>
<b>Current Programme</b>			7,536,100		2,675,100		1,526,000		1,228,000		858,000		1,249,000
<b>Changes</b>			<b>481,000</b>		<b>481,000</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>

### Q1 Movements/Adjustments

Year end Slippage b/f from 2014/15

VEH002 Ancillary Vehicles

Car 1 (5 door - Fiesta/Corsa)	9,500	12	114,000	12	114,000								
Panel Van Renault Master 1 (CAP1339 C: 6 x £1	19,400	6	116,400	6	116,400								
Panel Van Renault Master 2	1,400		1,400		1,400								
PCVs (Ford Transit 17 Seater) (CAP1277 C: 1 @	23,200	1	23,200	1	23,200								
FIR001 Fire Appliances - Part Build (Chasis Deliv.	50,750	4	203,000	4	203,000								
WOR001 Workshop Equipment			23,000		23,000								
			<b>481,000</b>		<b>481,000</b>								

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/060/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>KIERAN TIMMINS</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>COLIN SCHOFIELD</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>PROPOSALS FOR ECCLESTON AND ST. HELENS FIRE STATIONS</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<p><b>APPENDIX A: OPTIONS TO STATION MERGERS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT OF SITE OPTIONS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX C: OPERATIONAL RESPONSE CHANGE METHODOLOGY</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX D: PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF POTENTIAL SITE FOR NEW FIRE STATION IN ST. HELENS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX E: 10 MINUTE ISOCHRONES FROM CURRENT ECCLESTON &amp; ST. HELENS STATIONS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX F: 10 MINUTE ISOCHRONES FROM NEW ST. HELENS STATION</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX G: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 &amp; 10 MINUTE ISOCHRONES FROM CURRENT ECCLESTON &amp; ST. HELENS STATIONS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX H: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 &amp; 10 MINUTE ISOCHRONES FROM POTENTIAL NEW ST. HELENS STATION</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX I: RISK MAP OF MERSEYSIDE</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX J: CONSULTATION PLAN</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX K: 10 MINUTE ISOCHRONES FROM PRESCOT, NEWTON LE WILLOWS &amp; CURRENT ST. HELENS STATIONS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX L: REVENUE COSTS</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX M: CAPITAL COSTS – EXEMPT BY VIRTUE OF PARA 3 OF PART 1 OF SCH 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972</b></p> <p><b>APPENDIX N: EIA</b></p>
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## **Purpose of Report**

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1. To request that Members consider the draft proposal to merge Eccleston and St. Helens fire stations at a new station on Canal Street, St. Helens and the re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime fire engines as “wholetime retained” (with a 30 minute recall).
  2. Alternatively, Members consider the outright closure of Eccleston fire station.
  3. Both draft proposals are subject to a 12 week period of public consultation to commence with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015.
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## **Recommendation**

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4. That Members approve a 12 week period of public consultation (to commence with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015) over the proposal to merge Eccleston and St. Helens fire stations at a new station on Canal Street, St. Helens and re-designate one of the two wholetime fire engines from these stations as “wholetime retained”, or for the outright closure of Eccleston fire station.
  5. Following the conclusion of the consultation a further report will be submitted to the Authority detailing the outcomes of the consultation and any operational implications.
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## **Introduction and Background**

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6. At the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 the Authority considered report CFO/136/13 and resolved that:

*“in order to meet the budget cuts faced by the Authority as a result of Government announcements which will impact on the financial plan for 2014- 16, approval be given in principle, subject to public consultation;*

- a) *The options presented for the merger of two stations on Wirral (West Kirby to merge with Upton at within Greasby), two stations in St Helens (Eccleston to merge with St Helens at a site in the St Helens town centre ward) and two stations in Knowsley (the merger of Huyton and Whiston at Prescott which already has Authority approval). These mergers, if approved, will deliver a reduction of 66 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts, reduce the Authority asset base down from 26 stations to 23 and deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads.*
- b) *The incremental move from wholetime crewing to day crewing to wholetime retained crewing of at least one appliance in Liverpool and/or Sefton, resulting in the closure of one or more station. This change in crewing and station closure, if approved, will deliver a*



*saving of 22 WTE posts and deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads*

*Members resolved to give delegated authority to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) in consultation with the Chair and Party Spokespersons to:*

*Identify the most suitable merger sites from which to operate whilst ensuring response standards are maintained*

*Identify potential partners for joint working*

*Undertake the necessary preparatory work around the procurement of appropriate sites in order to expedite the mergers option in the event that Authority approval is confirmed after the public consultation process is concluded*

*Submit a bid for resources to support any scheme as appropriate to any available funding sources*

*Members approve the associated consultation process*

*Reports be brought back on each of the individual mergers as soon as practicable.”*

7. At the Budget Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2014 the Authority considered report CFO/020/14 and noted that all who had attended the stakeholder/public engagement events relating to station mergers and other operational response options, came away fully informed and understood the position that the Authority is faced with. Attendees also felt that the station merger option was the “*least worst*” to adopt in the current circumstances. At this meeting the Authority resolved to:

*... consider the outcomes of the stakeholder/public engagement as they make any decisions on proposals relating to their financial plans including station mergers and the other operational response options taking account of the position advanced within paragraph 17 of this report.”*

8. Paragraph 17 of the same report stated, “*The outcomes from the engagement that has taken place indicate that there is general understanding amongst stakeholders of the Authority’s position regarding the challenges it faces and the options it is considering and an agreement that to do nothing is not an option. When discussed, the option for mergers was presented by the public as their preferred choice, a sentiment largely echoed by politicians*”.
9. Alternative options that were considered during that process are set out in Appendix A together with an explanation of why the Chief Fire Officer does not consider those options as suitable at this time.
10. Consequently it is apparent that, following the consultation processes undertaken to date, station mergers are the option that should now be

pursued. This report deals with the proposed merger of Eccleston and St. Helens fire stations at a potential new site in St. Helens.

11. At the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 the Authority considered report CFO/102/13 "A Strategic Overview of Estates – Identification of Key Priorities". Whilst the report, and associated recommendations, covered the whole portfolio of building assets, the following parts of the Authority resolution are relevant to this report:-

*Members resolved that:*

*The Authority identify strategic mergers that allow operational response to be maintained, whilst improving community and firefighter facilities and reducing costs.*

*... key geographic options where strategic mergers should be considered following consultation are (Wirral and) St. Helens and Knowsley. Members have already approved in principle the working up of a feasibility study for the mergers of Huyton and Whiston fire stations at Prescot. There are a number of merger options to be considered across St. Helens and Knowsley, including Huyton/Whiston, St. Helens/Eccleston or Whiston/Eccleston.*

*The Chief Fire Officer report back with detailed proposals on how to take the above recommendations forward.*

*For all stations, the aim should be to encourage partners to create community hubs and to share costs, reduce wasted space and provide better facilities. Reserves should be used for invest to save schemes which deliver long term revenue streams from partners.*

### Merger Option

12. Officers have spent considerable time assessing a number of different site options within the locality, supported by officers from St. Helens MBC. However nearly all have been unacceptable because:-
  - They are not in an optimum response location
  - There are planning issues
  - Owners were unwilling to sell the land
  - The plot layout was unsuitable
13. Appendix B shows the location of sites considered whilst Appendix C sets out the operational response change methodology used to identify alternative sites.
14. One viable site has been identified which is located on Canal Street in the centre of St. Helens (see Appendix D). This site is currently in the ownership of Pilkington United Kingdom Ltd. and is part of a much larger operational site called Watson Street works. The site is exactly equidistant between the two

existing stations. Following initial discussions, it has been established that part of this site could be made available, if the merger option was to be pursued.

15. If, following consultation, Members decide to pursue the merger option, officers will negotiate with various parties involved, in order to buy or lease an appropriate area within this site.
16. The table below details the reduction in incidents in both station grounds over a 10 year period.

Station Ground	2005/06	2014/15	Difference	% Difference
50 - St Helens	1888	911	-977	-51.75%
52 - Eccleston	841	444	-397	-47.21%
Grand Total	2729	1355	-1374	-50.35%

17. The table below shows the average attendance times to all life risk incidents in the St. Helens and Eccleston station areas. Members will note that attendance in the St. Helens station area has remained largely unchanged over the past five years, whereas Eccleston attendance times have increased over the period. The reason for this is that due to the challenges faced by the Service in staffing all fire engines for the reasons set out elsewhere in this report, the Eccleston fire engine has been off the run more times in 2014/15 than in previous years. In practice this has meant that the station ground was covered by neighbouring fire engines with slightly longer attendance times, thus increasing the average attendance time. St. Helens, as a key station, is always covered either by the St Helens fire engine or through a standby move.

Actual Averages	St Helens	Eccleston
2008/09	00:05:57	00:05:04
2014/15	00:05:51	00:05:40

18. If St. Helens and Eccleston both closed and a new station was built on Canal Street then the mean average run time to life risk incidents on the St Helens station area would be **5 minutes 26 seconds**. The mean average run time to incidents in the Eccleston station area from Canal Street would be **4 minutes 47 seconds, 1 minute 57 seconds** quicker than the alternative outright closure of Eccleston Station. Overall, mean average response times to incidents for the combined station area of St Helens and Eccleston would be **5 minutes 12 seconds**.
19. As the Chief Fire Officer has made clear in his reports and presentations to District Councils, the merger of two stations into one new station will generally not improve operational performance. However, in this instance, it does. The plan attached at Appendix E shows the 10 minute isochrones (the distance an fire engine can cover in ten minutes) from the existing Eccleston and St.

Helens stations. The plan attached at Appendix F shows the response isochrones should a fire station be located at Canal Street, St. Helens. As Members will note, there is minimal effect on the overall coverage from the new location.

20. Both Appendices show the overall operational cover in the area, including by neighbouring stations at Prescot, Kirkby and Newton le Willows. Members will note that the vast majority of the area would still be covered by a new St. Helens station and surrounding stations.
21. To provide further clarity, Appendices G and H provide the same information as Appendices E and F but with 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 minute isochrones shown.
22. Also attached as Appendix I is the Risk Map of Merseyside. Members will note from comparing Appendices E and F that the minimal area not covered by the 10 minute isochrones from the new St. Helens site are low or medium risk. If following consultation the Authority support this proposal, the Chief Fire Officer will implement additional preventative measures in those areas to ensure that any impact is mitigated.
23. A new station would have one fire engine staffed on a wholetime basis and a second staffed on a whole time retained basis (recall to duty within 30 minutes).
24. Converting an fire engine to a wholetime retained duty system will have an impact on the way in which the District Community Safety Plan is delivered. However, residents and other stakeholders within the station area can be reassured that the overall Service Risk Based Strategies for delivering Preparedness activity such as Site Specific Risk Inspections and Prevention, (which include Home Fire Safety Checks), Protection and Road Safety activity are flexible enough to deal with changes to the way the fire engine is staffed. As a result, steps will be taken to ensure that services continue to target premises, people and places that present the greatest risk to our communities and our firefighters.
25. As instructed, the Chief Fire Officer has sought to identify potential partners to share the new building and therefore the costs. There is some possibility that North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) may also be interested in sharing the site. Merseyside Police are unlikely to share the site due to their current custody suite arrangements, however they would be keen to utilise any training facilities at the new station. Further discussions will take place with both emergency services to determine any future requirements and the extent of such requirements.
26. If Members approve the recommendation to proceed with the merger, a 12 week public consultation process will take place in Eccleston and St. Helens. This consultation will also incorporate staff, representative bodies and station users. A copy of the proposed consultation plan is attached as Appendix J. The consultation plan is very similar to that used recently in the Knowsley and Wirral consultations and ensures compliance with legislation and good practice. As part of the consultation a consultation document will be produced which will be

distributed in existing station areas to explain what is proposed and encourage people to participate in the consultation process.

27. The Chief Fire Officer will report back to the Authority later in the year on the outcome of the consultation process to allow any final decision to be made on the proposed merger.
28. As detailed in report CFO/111/14, considered by Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014, officers have conducted a procurement process via the North West Construction Hub to appoint a main contractor (Wates Construction Ltd) to design and build the new stations. If, as a result of considering the outcome of the consultation process, the Authority agrees to proceed with a new St. Helens station, it is anticipated the contractor will immediately start work to design the new building and submit the appropriate planning applications to allow a start on site in mid-2016.
29. It is anticipated that the build process should take about 12 months from start to finish.

#### Alternative to merger

30. Merger is the preferred “least worst” option for the local community with regards to operational response. However, if following consultation, the Authority determined that the merger was not suitable, the alternative option to deliver the required savings to ensure a balanced budget would be the outright closure of Eccleston fire station while maintaining the station at Parr Stocks Road in St. Helens
31. The isochrone map at Appendix K shows that the neighbouring stations can achieve the 10 minute attendance standard in the majority of the Eccleston station area. However, those areas that could not be reached within ten minutes residents and businesses in the areas concerned would be subject to additional preventative measures to mitigate additional risk.
32. The mean average response time to a life risk incident in the Eccleston station area from St Helens station, following the outright closure, would be **6 minutes 44 seconds**.
33. If this proposal was preferred following consultation, the fire engine at Eccleston would be converted to Wholetime Retained and relocated to St. Helens at the most appropriate time from an operational perspective to provide cover. If the merger proposal was preferred then the fire engine at Eccleston would convert to Wholetime Retained crewing status and be relocated to the new station at Canal Street, St. Helens once operational.
34. Members should be aware that due to the necessity to deliver the required savings may be necessary to relocate the Eccleston fire engine before the new station is built – given the timescales involved.

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## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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35. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the overall approach to station mergers and closure is being approached in stages, with the current version attached at Appendix N. In relation to St. Helens, stages one and two have been completed and the EIA will be developed further during once the outcomes of consultation are known, as has been the case with Knowsley and Wirral.

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## **Staff Implications**

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36. A staff saving of 22 WTE firefighter posts in merging Eccleston and St. Helens stations is anticipated. This equates to some £864,000 inclusive of employer's National Insurance and pension contributions. This saving is required to deliver one quarter of the operational savings of £3.4m assumed in the current financial plan. These savings are included in the table of revenue expenditure attached as Appendix L to this report. Firefighter posts are being lost by using natural turnover rates – reserves are being used to avoid compulsory redundancy amongst this part of the workforce. Staff will have the opportunity to earn extra money by taking secondary retained contracts.
37. If Members agree the proposal today and following considering the outcomes of public consultation the Chief Fire Officer will move to the new staffing arrangement of one Wholetime fire engine at St. Helens and one Wholetime Retained fire engine at Eccleston. At the point at which the new station became operational both fire engines would be moved to the new St. Helens site.
38. Formal consultation with Representative Bodies has commenced and will continue throughout the process. In particular, representatives from each station are to be appointed to work with the project team to ensure that the new St. Helens station is suitable for a modern Fire & Rescue Service. This mirrors the process undertaken on the recent PFI Project with the aim of achieving a similar standard to that provided on the new PFI stations.

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## **Legal Implications**

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39. The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 places a statutory duty on Fire Authorities to:
- Section 7 – respond to fires.
  - Section 8 –respond to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's).
  - Section 9 –respond to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Conventional Explosive (CBRNE), Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Serious Transport incidents.
  - Section 11 – (power to) respond to any incident where a person or animal may die, be injured or become ill.
40. Any land purchase or lease will be subject to title investigation and satisfactory terms being agreed between the third party and the Authority.

The purchase or lease terms will not be agreed so as to be contractually binding until public consultation has been concluded and the Authority has considered the outcomes of this consultation.

41. Potential partners are aware that all negotiations with regards to the site are subject to public consultation and Authority consideration of the outcomes of this consultation.
42. It is considered that in carrying out the extensive twelve week consultation that is proposed, the Authority will be fully complying with legal requirements and best practice guidelines. The outcomes of this twelve week public consultation process will be fully reported to and considered by the Authority prior to a decision being made on either outcome. No binding agreements or commitments in relation to land or services in respect of either proposal outlined in this report will be made on behalf of the Authority until such time as the Authority has considered the public consultation.

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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43. The estimated operating costs, including staffing, of the current St. Helens and Eccleston stations currently total £2.1m. The forecast running costs of a new St. Helens station are £1.2m, a saving of £0.9m. Details are included in Appendix L.  
  
43. Members are asked to note that the current St. Helens (opened in 1959) and Eccleston (opened in 1970) fire stations are in need of significant refurbishment to bring them up to a reasonable standard for a modern Fire & Rescue Service so the provision of a new building to replace the stations will negate the need for such refurbishment.
44. The estimated build costs of the proposed new station are included in Appendix M, together with an estimate of the potential income from the sale of the buildings and land at Eccleston and St. Helens.
45. Overall the forecast capital cost of a new fire station is £4.8m. This does not include capital receipts from sale of the old sites or the costs and contributions of any partners.
46. Members will recall that the Authority has been successful with its bid into the DCLG Transformation and Efficiency fund to support the mergers programme – this totals £4.5m of which £1.5m was for this project. It is anticipated that any net cost will be met from reserves so as to avoid borrowing. A fully costed development plan will be worked up during the consultation period and reported back with the consultation results.

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### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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47. A Risk Register has been created for the Station Mergers project and this will be regularly monitored by the Strategic Management Group. The most significant risk is that delays to the project, particularly building the new stations, will lead to there being insufficient firefighting resources to staff the available fire engines. This was highlighted in report CFO/038/14 to Community Safety and Protection Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
48. All Health & Safety implications of the new station build will be fully risk assessed and mitigated by the responsible contractors.
49. Any new building will be built to achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating as the absolute minimum.

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Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

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50. As stated above, the proposed station merger does improve operational cover in St. Helens and it is the most appropriate option to adopt in the circumstances.
51. A new fire station will also provide an improved working environment for firefighters, including enhanced training facilities. It will also provide much improved community facilities compared to those available at the current Eccleston and St. Helens stations, which in turn will lead to greater interaction between firefighters and community groups and hence assist in creating safer communities.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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BREEAM	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology
DCLG	Department for Communities & Local Government
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
MBC	Metropolitan Borough Council
NWAS	North West Ambulance Service
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
WTE	Wholetime Equivalent



## OPTIONS TO STATION MERGERS

1. The information below is a detailed explanation of the alternative options to achieve the required levels of savings, and whether they are considered feasible options at this time.
2. Of the 25 current stations in Merseyside, 10 are designated as key stations. From these 10 key stations the Authority can provide a 10 minute response to all areas of Merseyside on 90% of occasions (our response standard).
3. The number of wholetime Firefighters employed directly equates to the numbers of fire appliances that can be staffed for an immediate response by fully trained Firefighters and therefore the numbers of fire appliances the Authority can operate on a wholetime basis.
4. The removal of 90 Firefighter posts required to deliver savings of £3.4m will result in the loss of 4 wholetime fire appliances. It is the view of the Chief Fire Officer that the Authority should maintain 2 appliances at Kirkdale and Southport, because of the location of Southport and the fact that Kirkdale is the Operational Resource Centre for Merseyside.
5. In maintaining 2 appliances at Kirkdale and Southport the Authority can only staff enough appliances to maintain 22 fire stations on a wholetime basis. The Authority could as an alternative maintain 26 stations through altering the crewing arrangements on specific stations or across the Service.

### Low Level of Activity and Risk

6. The Low Level of Activity and Risk (LLAR) duty system is currently in operation at 4 of the Authority's 26 stations. The system consists of a 12 hour wholetime day shift followed immediately by a 12 hour retained night shift (spent off the station) where the crew must respond to an incident within 1minute 54 seconds of an alert thus maintaining a comparable alert to mobile time as achieved by other wholetime staff during their night-time rest period.
7. Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to LLAR would deliver a saving of 8 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the same savings as for a station merger 3 wholetime stations would need to convert to LLAR. Whilst this option would maintain an immediate emergency response (assuming it was possible to secure accommodation for the night time retained period separate from the station but within a 1 minute 54 seconds alert to mobile time) it is less resilient than wholetime crewing as the same staff cover the 12-hour wholetime period and the 12-hour retained period. For example, if a crew attends incidents during the night-time period they will then require a period of stand down time to recover during the day shift, meaning they are either not available to provide operational response or unable to

undertake prevention work or normal scheduled duties. As the number of appliances reduces the ability for Fire Control to not mobilise LLAR appliances during the retained period is also reduced meaning they will attend more incidents and potentially no longer meet the Low Level of Activity and Risk threshold. To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert 12 wholetime appliances to LLAR in addition to the existing 4 LLAR appliances.

8. This would result in 16 of the Authority's 28 appliances being crewed in this way. In order to comply with working time regulations the Authority would be required to provide separate accommodation for the retained duty period that is within a 1 minute 54 second response from the stations in question. The cost of building accommodation at existing LLAR stations has been around £300k. Converting 12 appliances to LLAR would therefore require a capital spend of around £3.6m for accommodation. Of the 10 key stations only one, Formby, is currently crewed LLAR which is as a result of its geographic location and the very low numbers of incidents on the station ground and number of appliance mobilisations. In any other circumstances a key station would not be crewed on the LLAR duty system. Of the stations not designated as 'key' a number have appliance mobilisation numbers which exceed the LLAR threshold of 825 incidents to the station area agreed in 2006 (Kirkdale, Kensington, City Centre and Birkenhead).
9. A number also do not have sufficient space within the curtilage of the station to build separate accommodation necessary to make the 1 minute 54 seconds alert to mobile time during the retained period (for example Kensington and Aintree). There is a very low likelihood indeed that the Authority could attract and indeed retain sufficient volunteers from existing staff to crew an additional 12 LLAR appliances. Whilst the Authority could recruit Firefighters directly on to the LLAR system this would result in crews on LLAR stations with a disproportionately high number of inexperienced Firefighters until such time as they were able to demonstrate competence in role. It would also invariably result in existing wholetime firefighters who did not wish to volunteer for the LLAR duty system being placed at risk of compulsory redundancy. It is for these reasons that LLAR has not been proposed by the Chief Fire Officer as an option to maintain operational effectiveness at this time.

### Day Crewing

10. The Authority does not currently operate the Day Crewing duty system at any station on Merseyside. This system consists of a wholetime day shift (typically 10 hours duration) immediately followed by a 14 hour retained night shift where a response is made by a Firefighter from home within 5 minutes of an alert. Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to Day Crewing would deliver a saving of 10.8 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts (assuming a 10% retaining fee). In order to deliver the same savings as a station merger would, 2 wholetime stations would need to convert to Day Crewing.

11. To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert 8 wholetime appliances to Day Crewing in addition to the existing 4 LLAR appliances. This would result in 12 of the Authority's 28 appliances either on Day Crewing or LLAR crewing. Day Crewing is less resilient than wholetime crewing for similar reasons as for LLAR as the same staff cover the 10 hour wholetime period and the 14 hour retained period. As the number of appliances reduces the ability for Fire Control to not mobilise LLAR or Day Crewing appliances during the retained period is also reduced. This option would introduce a 5-minute delay in responding from 8 appliances for 14 hours each day. Assuming the 5-minute delay in responding in to the station and given the geography of Merseyside, it is likely that the nearest wholetime appliances would be able to attend an incident in at least the same time as the Day Crewing appliance if not quicker during the retained period. There is a very low likelihood indeed that the Authority could attract and indeed retain sufficient volunteers from existing staff to crew 8 Day Crewing appliances.
12. Whilst the Authority could recruit Firefighters directly on to the Day Crewing system this would result in crews on Day Crewing stations with a disproportionately high number of inexperienced Firefighters until such time as they were able to demonstrate competence in role.
13. It would also invariably result in existing wholetime firefighters who did not wish to volunteer for the Day Crewing duty system being placed at risk of compulsory redundancy. It is for these reasons that Day Crewing has not been proposed by the Chief Fire Officer as an option to maintain operational effectiveness. If as expected the Authority faces further cuts beyond 2015/16 this option may have to be reconsidered as a means of maintaining capacity during the daytime period.

#### Day only crewing

14. The Authority does not currently operate day only crewing at any station on Merseyside. This system involves Firefighters crewing the station for a 12-hour wholetime day shift only in order to maintain capacity to undertake training and community safety activities. Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to day only crewing would deliver a saving of 12 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the same savings as the station merger option 2 wholetime stations would need to convert to day only crewing.
15. To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert 8 wholetime appliances to day only crewing in addition to the existing 4 LLAR appliances. This would result in 12 of the Authority's 28 appliances either on day only crewing or LLAR crewing. Whilst an immediate response to incidents would be achieved during the 12- hour day shift there

would be no response at all during the 12-hour night-time period from day only crewed stations.

16. There is a very low likelihood indeed that the Authority could attract and indeed retain sufficient volunteers from existing staff to crew 8 days only appliances. Whilst the Authority could recruit Firefighters directly to day only crewing this would result in crews on day only stations with a disproportionately high number of inexperienced Firefighters until such time as they were able to demonstrate competence in role. It would also invariably result in existing wholetime firefighters who did not wish to volunteer for day only crewing being placed at risk of compulsory redundancy. It is for these reasons that day only crewing has not been proposed by the Chief Fire Officer as an option to maintain operational effectiveness at this time. If as expected the Authority faces further cuts beyond 2015/16 this option may have to be reconsidered as a means of maintaining capacity during the day time period.
17. It should be noted that these appliances would in all likelihood be used as a pan Merseyside resource to for example stand in at key stations to facilitate the key appliance crew attending the Training and Development Academy for crew-based training. It would make more financial sense therefore to relocate the day crewed only appliance permanently to a key station thus allowing the Authority to make permanent savings on premises overheads (on average around £100k per year) through closing the non key station.

#### Retained

18. The Authority does not currently operate retained only crewing at any station on Merseyside. This system involves members of the community who live or work within 5 minutes of a fire station volunteering to be available for up to 120 hours per week for a retaining fee equivalent to 10% of a wholetime Firefighter's salary. Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to retained would deliver a saving of 22 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the same savings as for a station merger 1 wholetime station would need to convert to retained crewing. To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert 4 wholetime appliances to retained in addition to the existing 4 LLAR appliances. This would result in 8 of the Authority's 28 appliances either on retained or LLAR crewing.
19. Pursuing this option would require the Authority to either seek volunteers from existing Firefighters who would be required to live within a 5-minute response time of the station (wholetime retained) or for the Authority to recruit members of the public who live or work within 5 minutes of the station. There is a very low likelihood indeed that the Authority could attract and indeed retain sufficient volunteers from existing staff to crew 4 wholetime retained appliances on a 5 minute recall. That being so, the Authority would need to recruit almost a full crew of retained Firefighters. It is the view of the Chief Fire

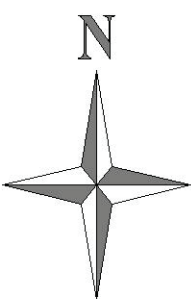
Officer that a retained Firefighter does not have sufficient contact (training) time within the Grey Book (Firefighters' nationally agreed conditions of service) retained contract to acquire and maintain the skills of an existing Merseyside wholetime Firefighter.

20. Also, the Merseyside Trainee Firefighter course is currently 40 weeks long and the wholetime work routine allocates in excess of 20 hours per week to on station training. A retained firefighter has approximately 2/3 hours per week contact time at station for training, development and maintenance duties). If the Authority were minded to still pursue this option they would have to accept that the retained Firefighters would not be trained to the same level as their wholetime counterparts and it would take a long period of time to train the crew to a position whereby they were deemed fit to ride. Additionally to maintain retained appliance availability a minimum of 4 members of the crew including a driver and an officer in charge would have to be permanently available within 5 minutes of the station. With 3 hours contact time each week retained Firefighters would not be able to undertake any amount of community safety work.
21. Assuming the 5-minute delay in responding in to the station and given the geography of Merseyside, it is likely that the nearest wholetime appliances would attend an incident in at least the same time as the retained crew if not quicker. It is for these reasons that retained crewing has not been proposed by the Chief Fire Officer as an option to maintain operational effectiveness at this time.

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- (a) Rainford Road
- (b) Washway Lane
- (c) City Road
- (d) North Road
- (e) College Street
- (f) Atlas Street
- (g) Linkway West
- (h) St Thomas' Square
- (i) Borough Road
- (j) Canal Street
- (k) Chalon Way
- (l) Burtonhead Road
- (m) St Helens Linkway
- (n) Milverny Way
- (o) Mere Grange



Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 15.5.2015  
 Produced Using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
 Map Reference:  
 KIM:\Work Requests\Data and Systems\  
 St Helens Merger\NC\  
 All\_potential\_sites\_considered.png

## All potential Community Fire Station sites considered

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**Operational Response Change  
Methodology Policy**  
VERSION 1

**Service Policy RESPOL07**

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**Document Control**

Active date	Review date	Author	Editor	Publisher
01/06/15	April 2016	GM Hitchen	AM Mottram	Jackie Sutton

**Amendment History**

Version	Date	Author	Reasons for Change
001			

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
x			Wendy Kenyon	Portal: Approved EIA Forms

**Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment**

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

**Related Documents**

Doc. Type	Ref No.	Title	Location
			Portal: Service Policies
			Portal: Service Instructions

**Distribution List**

Name	Position	I/R
All MFRS		

**Sign-Off List**

Name	Position
SMG	

**Target audience**

All MFRS	Ops Crews	Fire safety	Community FS	Support Staff
X		etc	etc	etc
Principal off.	Senior off.			

**Ownership**

FOI exemption required?	Yes	URL
	No	X Reason

**Legislation**

Title	Year
Fire and Rescue Service Act	2004
Fire and Rescue Service National Framework	2012
Civil Contingencies Act	2004

**Contact**

Department	Email	Telephone ext.
Operational Response	<a href="mailto:@merseyfire.gov.uk">@merseyfire.gov.uk</a>	4339

## Operational Response Change Methodology Policy

### 1. Policy Introduction and Background

The Authority continues to face significant grant reductions from central government as part of measures to reduce public spending. It is anticipated that these financial cuts will continue necessitating further changes to the way in which Operational Response is provided up to and possibly beyond 2020. In particular we predict that these changes will impact upon the numbers of fire appliances we have available, the number of fire stations we have and how we use these assets to provide the best possible service to our communities.

The Fire & Rescue National Framework set out priorities for all fire and rescue authorities to:

- identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face, make provision for prevention and protection activities and respond to incidents appropriately
- work in partnership with their communities and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver their service
- be accountable to communities for the service they provide

MFRA believes that a fire or other emergency is no less hazardous to those involved no matter where it may occur and for this reason the Authority aspires to provide a consistent emergency response to all areas of the County. The Authority implemented changes to its response standard in 2013 by introducing a single response standard for Merseyside this being an attendance by MFRS within 10 minutes to all life risk incidents.

This document provides details of processes and risk factors that will be considered by the Authority to ensure that when changes have to be made to our infrastructure or ways of working, that we ensure optimal locations for our resources/assets are identified. By adhering to a defined methodology we will ensure that any changes considered will safeguard the commitment to our response standard.

This methodology provides a consistent approach that Officers will utilise to underpin proposals made to our communities for changes which are required in support of either maintaining or improving our service delivery. This methodology will provide evidence and clarity to our communities that any changes proposed are appropriate and are in accordance with the priorities of the national framework.

### 2. Policy Explanation

#### Risk modelling methodology

Extensive research underpins all proposed station changes and information comes from various sources which includes the use of specialist software applications to assist in the analysis of the following information:

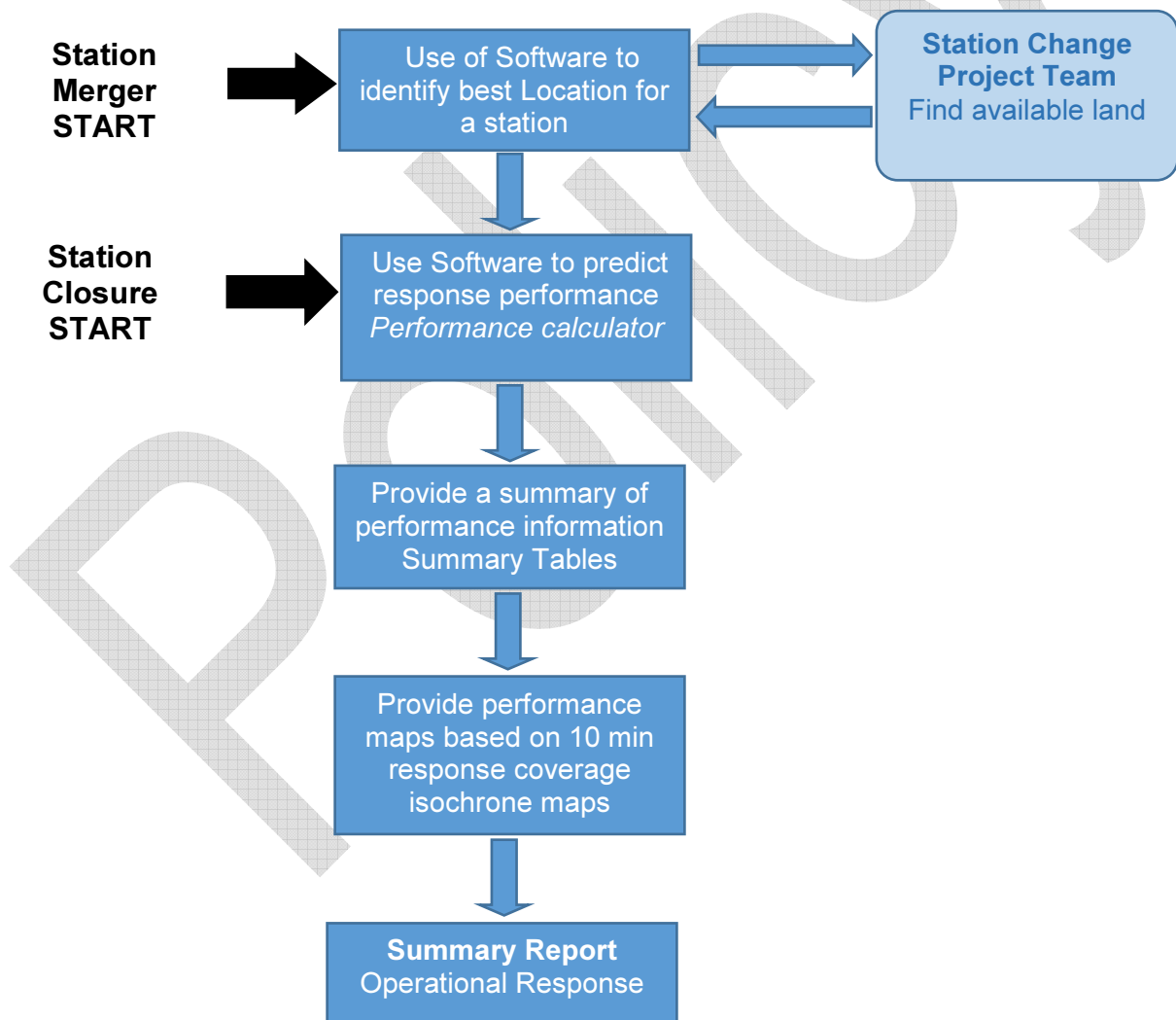
- Operational incident data (empirical evidence)
- Predictions of future demand and risk

- Appliance turnout data (activity and demand at certain times of the day, week, year and seasonal variations)
- Changes in profiles of communities (new houses, commercial buildings etc.)

The methodology contains several distinct stages, all of which require detailed analysis in order to produce a final report in which confidence for strategic decision making can be placed.

MFRA endeavours to continually improve its approach to its response change methodology by incorporating lessons it learns from each adopted change. MFRA accepts that numerous external factors need to be considered before a final decision can be advanced, not least the opinions and views of the public, MFRA endeavours to take a pragmatic approach to any recommendations for change, all information is used in conjunction with professional judgement, by working in partnership with other agencies and by working with the public through numerous public consultation forums and events. MFRA strives to ensure that all proposed changes are fully considered and have the least detrimental impact upon local communities' possible.

**Operational Response Change Methodology**



**Details on the application of this flow chart are contained in Appendix A**

**Additional Considerations**

- The data sets utilised will be aligned to the dates recognised as being a financial year (31<sup>st</sup> March to 1st April)

- We will consider modifications to this date range when significant changes to Operational Response arrangements have been implemented mid-year for example a change of duty system.
- For station closures/mergers data sets include attendances to all life risk incidents within a stations area, regardless of the attending pump.
- Data sets utilised will be the attendance of the first rescue appliance to "life Risk" incidents
- Demographics of areas under consideration (households housing & lifestyles)
- Levels of deprivation (income, health, education, overcrowding, remoteness, crime environment)
- Emergencies and Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)
- Proximity to other stations
- Areas containing high risk properties and individuals that can be categorised as high risk
- Volume of incidents and level of activity
- Proximity of other Fire Stations to the location where change is being considered.

## Appendix A

1. **FLP (Facility Location Planner) software** – making use of this software to establish an optimum location for the proposed fire station. This could be in the form of an SOA (Super Output Area) or Ward.
2. **FIRS (Fire Incident Response Simulator) software** – once the station change project team have identified possible location(s) for the proposed station, the FIRS software is used to assess the impact of performance as well as any additional workload placed on surrounding stations.

This stage is also used to produce a future station location profile which contributes towards the decision making process for station closures.

3. **Station Performance Summary Tables** – tables providing counts by incident type, for the last 3 years of attendances for appliance(s) directly affected by the station closure or merger.

### *On the Run Analysis:*

Breakdown of proportion of time that appliances within the station closure or merger area(s) are actually available "On the Run", compared to surrounding pumps.

Based on data provided by Time & Resource Management.

### *Demographics:*

Population of station area by age grouping. This is based on LSOA (Lower Super Output Area) data based on mid-year estimates for station area(s) affected by station closure or merger. Response standard isochrones will be overlaid to establish what types of people/protected groups are impacted by changes. This information is included in an equality impact report which forms part of the wider considerations for station changes.

4. **Performance Summary** – a combination of 10 minute response coverage isochrones will be produced comparing the current coverage with the proposed future coverage. This is produced using MapInfo Route Finder software.
5. **Summary Report** – Operational Response to collate the output of all stages and produce a summary report outlining recommendations.

### 3. Policy Implementation

The Service Instructions used to underpin this Policy are:

Staff should familiarise themselves with these Service Instructions:

SI 0

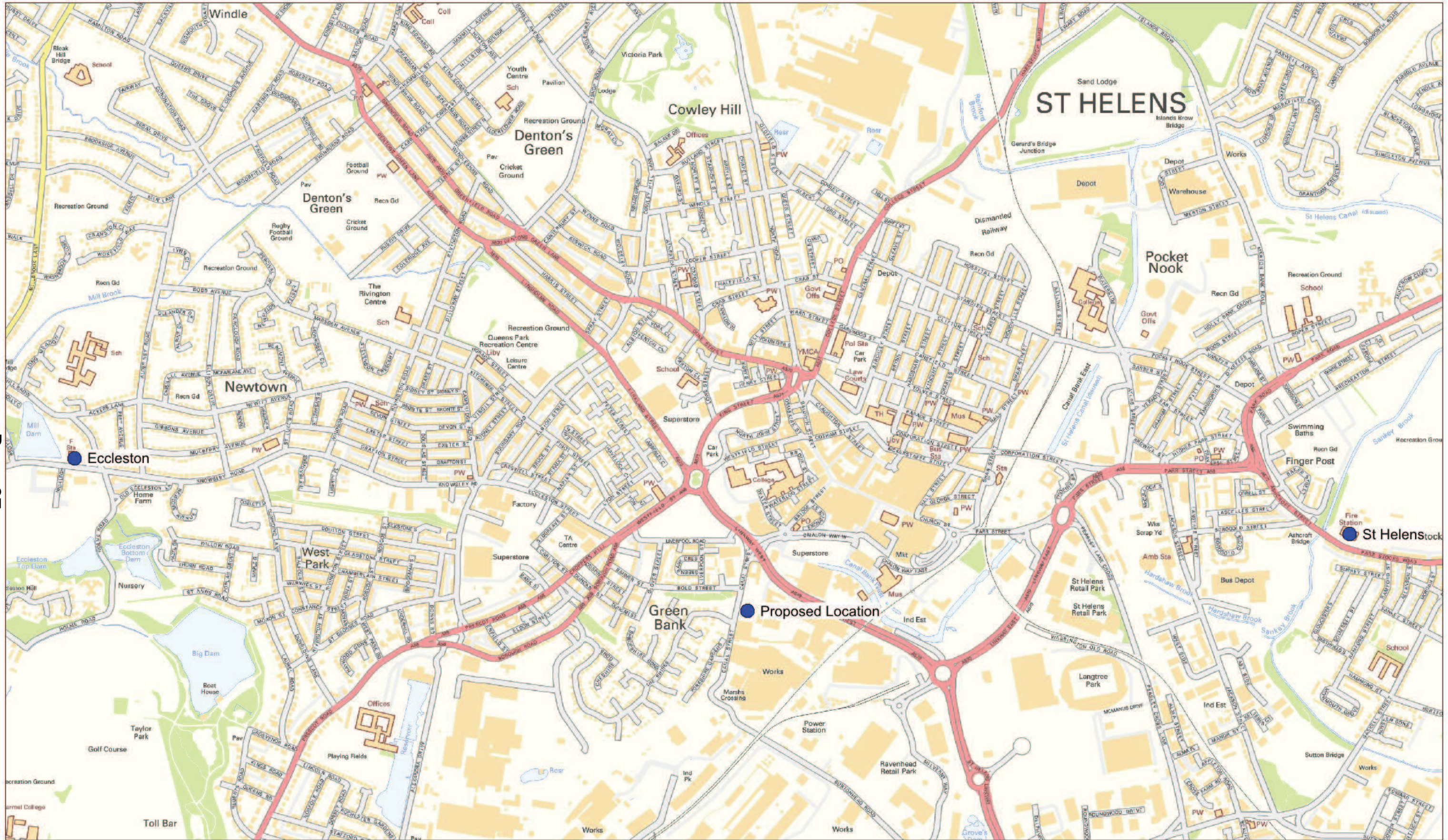
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Policy

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Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 9.6.2015  
 Produced using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
 Map Reference:  
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 NC\Canal\_Street\_Location\_Map\  
 Proposed Canal Street Location\_50\_52.png

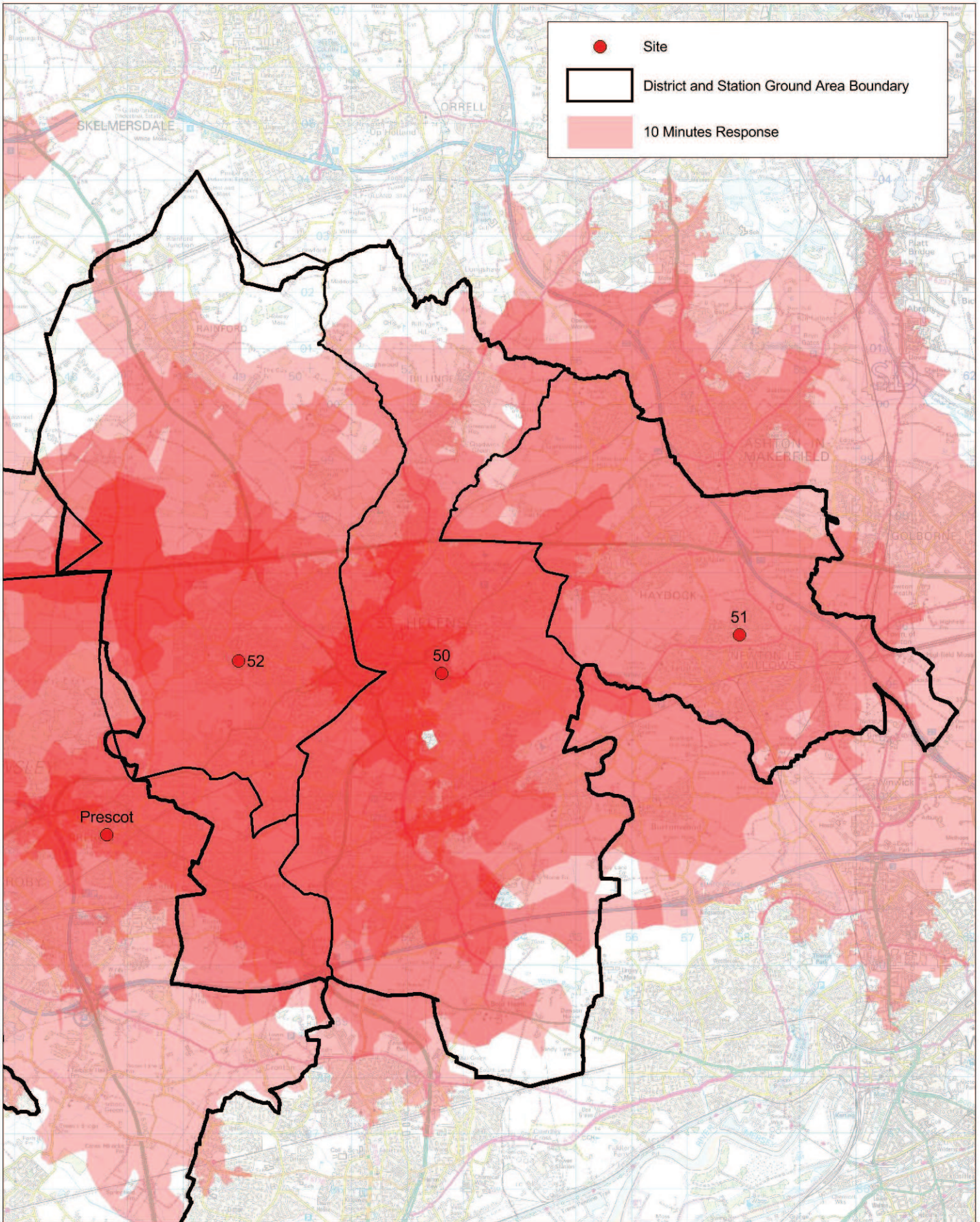
## Proposed Community Fire Station Location on Canal Street

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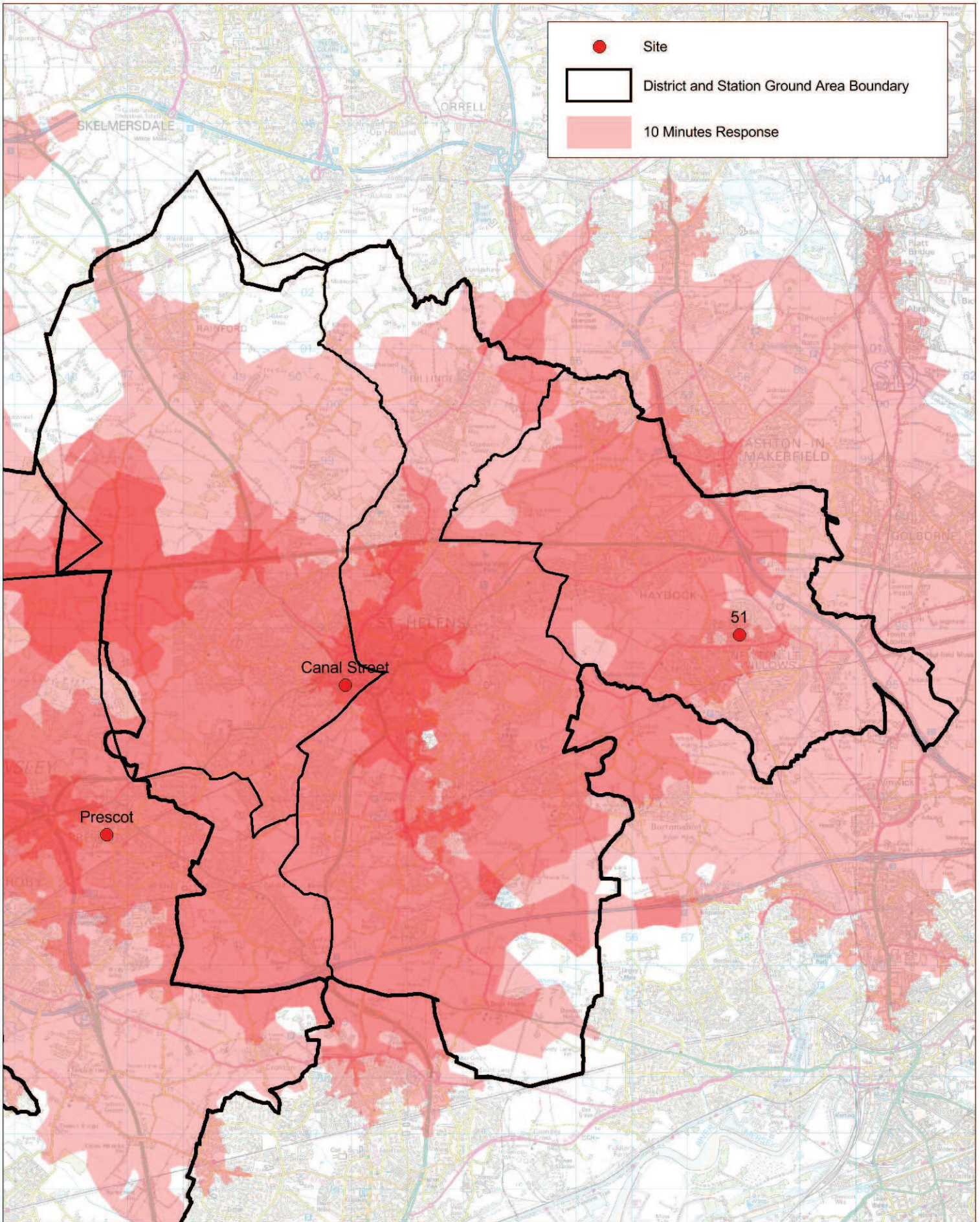


Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 20.5.2015  
 Produced Using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
 Map Reference:  
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 St Helens Merger\NC\isochrones\  
 10\_Mins\_All\_Except\_Canal\_Street.png

**10 Minute Response Coverage Time  
 from Prescott, Kirkby (42), St Helens (50),  
 Newton-le-Willows (51) and Eccleston (52)  
 Community Fire Stations**

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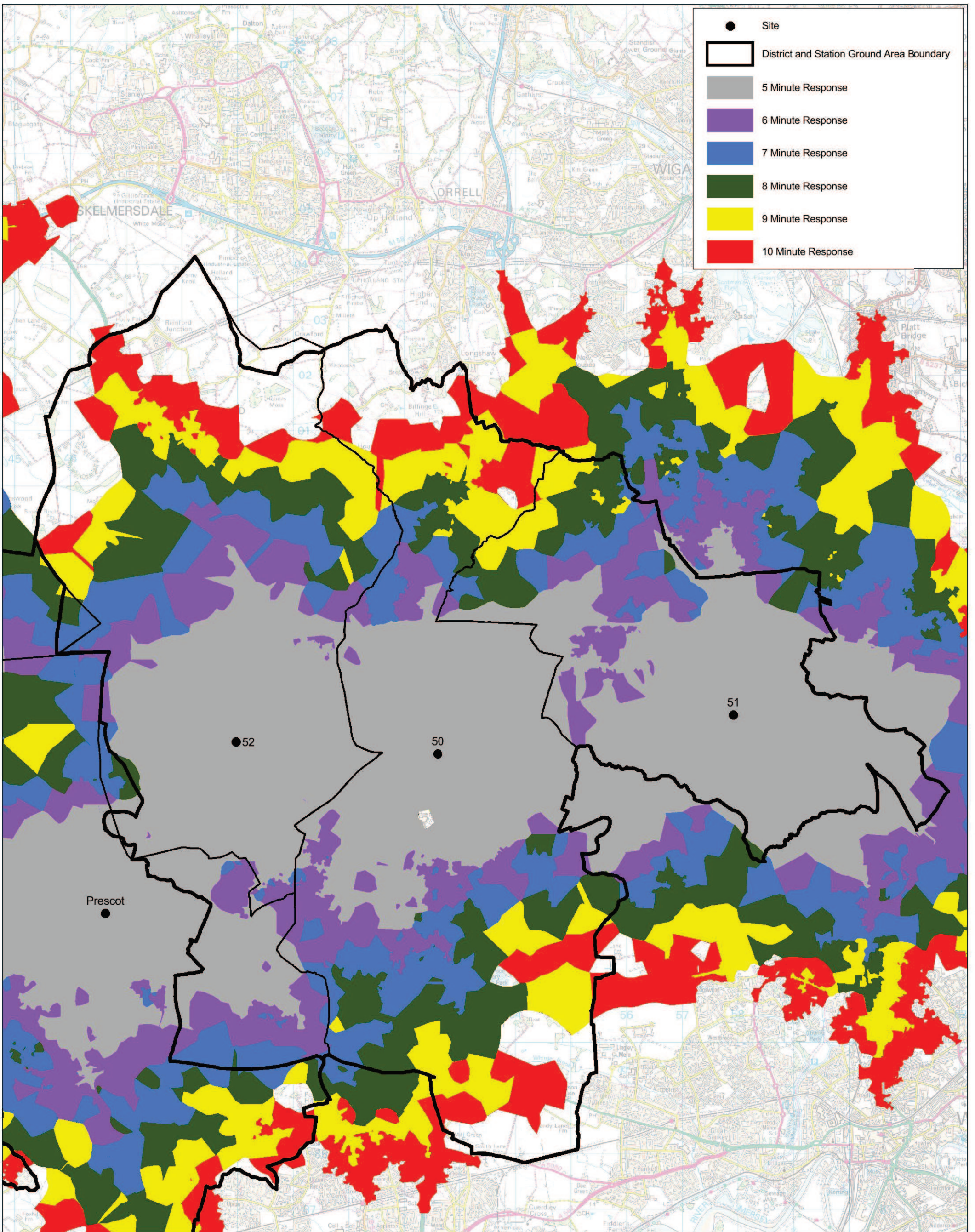


Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 20.5.2015  
 Produced Using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
 Map Reference:  
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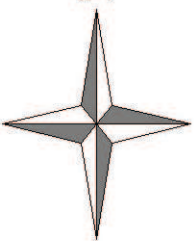
**10 Minute Response Coverage Time  
 from Proposed Canal Street Location, Prescot,  
 Kirkby (42) and Newton-le-Willows (51)  
 Community Fire Stations**

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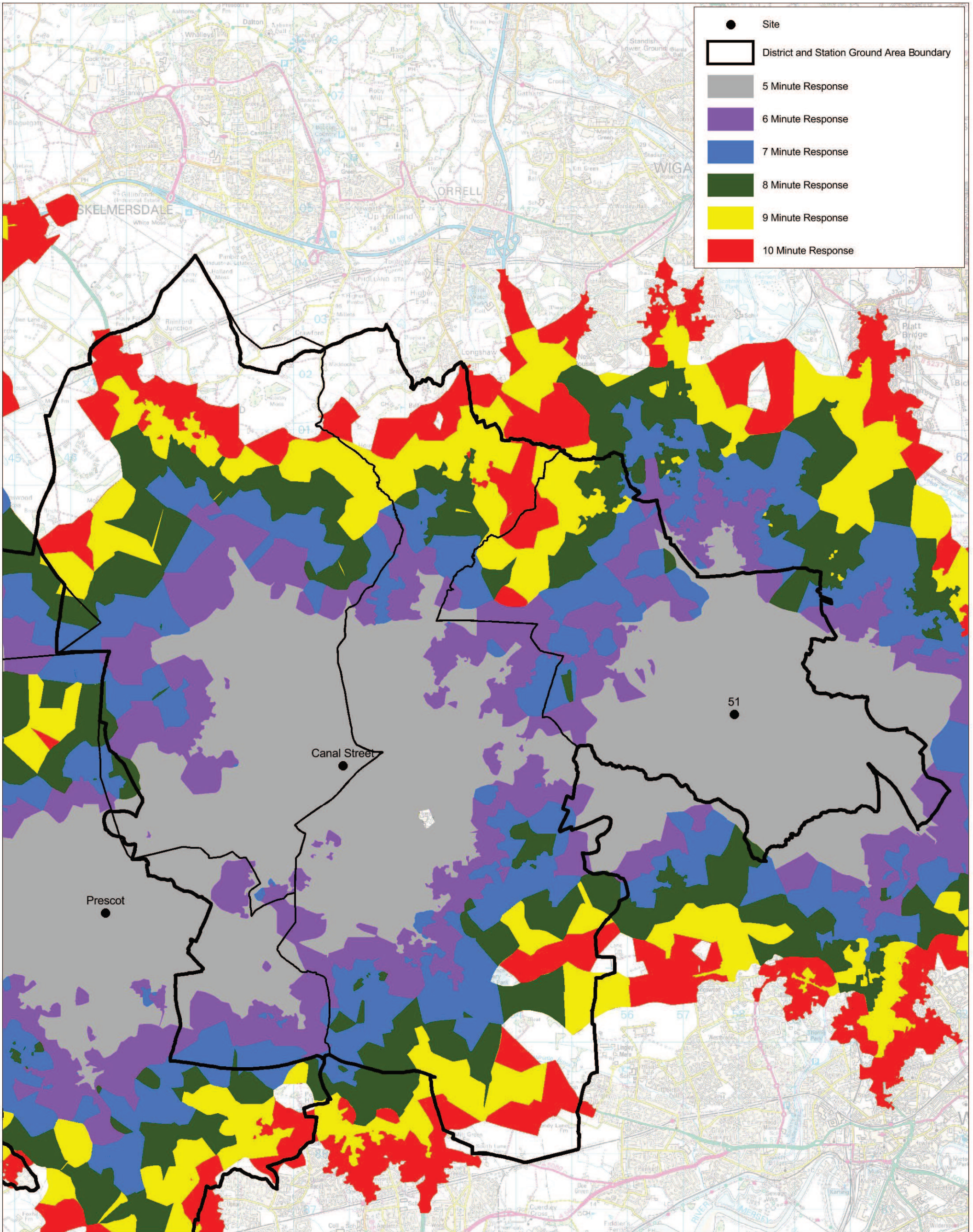


Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 20.5.2015  
 Produced Using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
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 5\_6\_7\_8\_9\_10\_Mins\_All\_Except\_Canal\_Street.png

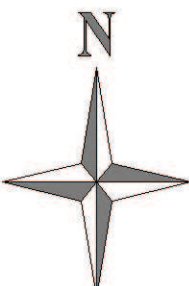
**5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Minute Response Coverage Time  
 from Prescott, Kirkby (42), St Helens (50),  
 Newton-le-Willows (51) and Ecclestone (52)  
 Community Fire Stations**

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- Site
- District and Station Ground Area Boundary
- 5 Minute Response
- 6 Minute Response
- 7 Minute Response
- 8 Minute Response
- 9 Minute Response
- 10 Minute Response



Author: Nicholas Cowley  
 Date: 20.5.2015  
 Produced Using MapInfo  
 Strategy & Performance  
 Map Reference:  
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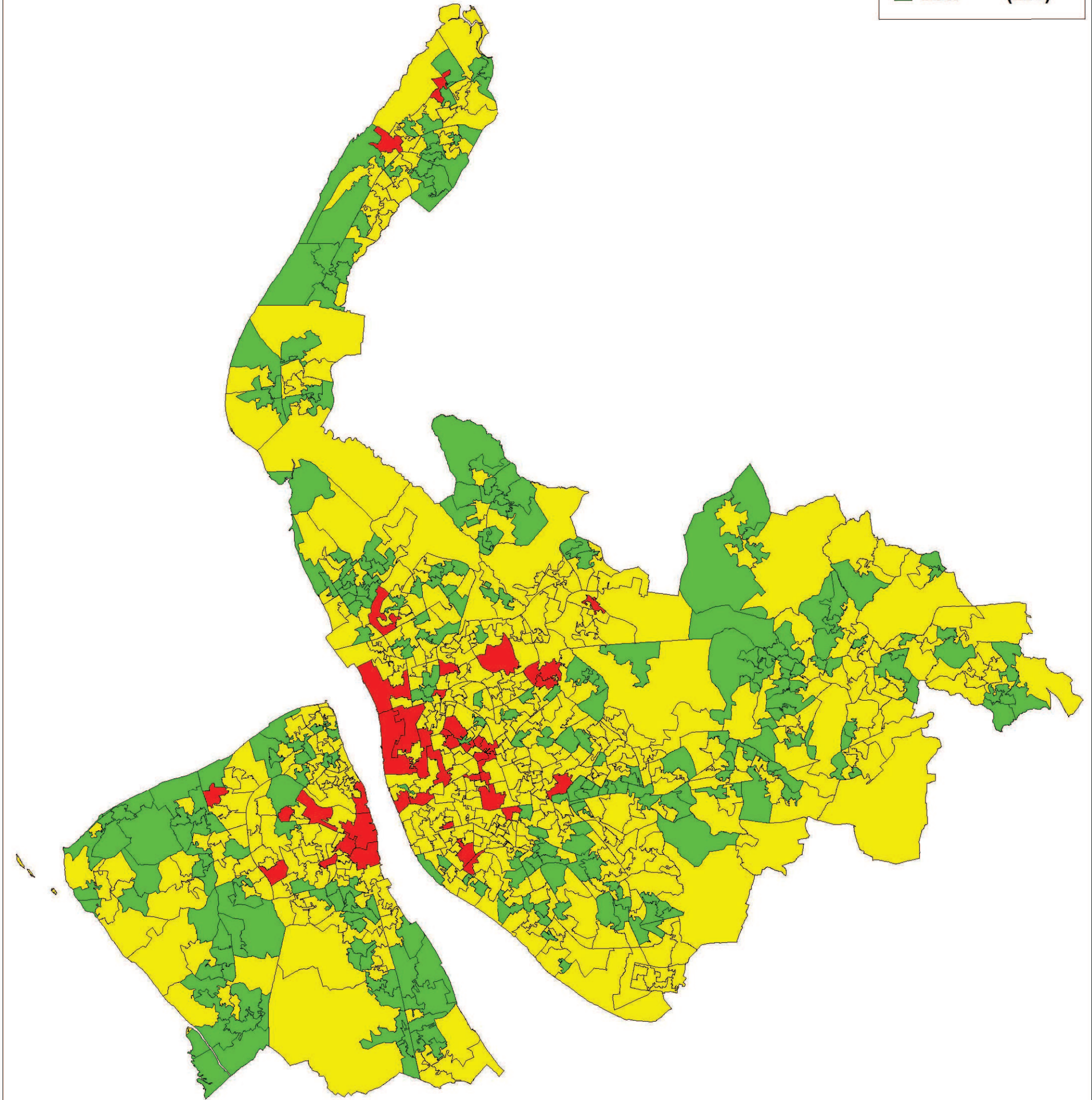
**5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Minute Response Coverage Time  
 from Proposed Canal Street Location, Prescott,  
 Kirkby (42) and Newton-le-Willows (51)  
 Community Fire Stations**

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Risk	
<span style="color: red;">■</span> High	(41)
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Medium	(571)
<span style="color: green;">■</span> Low	(298)



Author: Gary Crosbie  
 Date: 26.05.2015  
 Produced Using: MapInfo v11.5  
 Strategy and Performance

# Risk Map 2016

File Reference: KIM:\Systems Support\  
 IRMP Risk Methodology Data\  
 Risk Map Data 01042012\_31032015\MapInfo\  
 RiskMap 2016\_NoMapbase\_Port.png



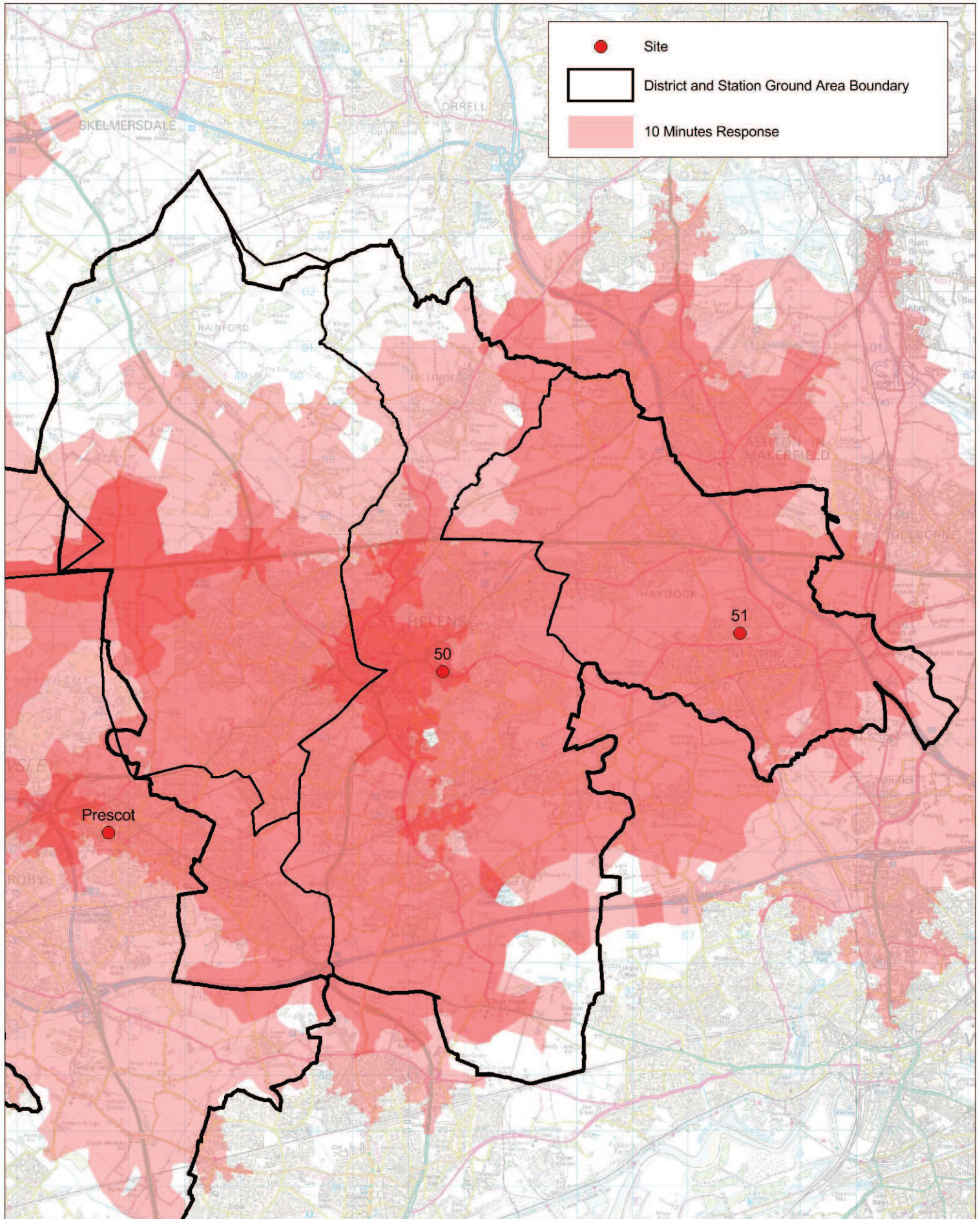
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**Standard consultation programme - 12 weeks**

**note: Programme will be coordinated by Strategy and Performance**

	Preparation & Marketing	Consultation	Communication																	
Type	Produce documentation	Present to Council	Marketing of consultation events	Staff communication Station 1	Staff communication Station 2	PO consultation with politicians	Staff communication - other stations in the council areas	Online survey	Rep body consultation	Station users consultation	Public Focus Group Station Area 1	Public Meeting Station Area 1	Public Focus Group Station Area 2	Public Meeting Station Area 2	Public Focus Group NEW Station Area	Public Meeting NEW Station Area	Joint Stakeholder Business Breakfast	Joint Forum (using members of the existing IRMP forums)	Staff meeting - Station 1 and Station 2	Staff Meeting - other stations in the council areas
Date	4 weeks prior to start of consult'n	Wk 1	Weeks 1-5	Week 1	Week 1	Week 1 and 2	Week 2-4	Week 1 - 12	Week 1 - 12	Week 1 - 12	Week 4	Week 4	Week 5	Week 5	Week 6	Week 6	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	week 9-11
Officer representing MFRS		Principal Officer	NA	District Staff	District staff	Principal Officer	District Staff	NA	NA	District Manager	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	Principal Officer	District Staff	District Staff
External Facilitator (where applicable)											Yes		Yes		Yes					

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ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS OF ST HELENS (CURRENT), ECCLESTON & ST HELENS (NEW) (ESTIMATED)

	CURRENT COSTS		ESTIMATED COSTS	VARIATION	NOTES
	ST HELENS (CURRENT) £000	ECCLESTON £000	ST HELENS (NEW) £000	£000	
Employees	957	923	1016	-864	
Other employee costs	3	3	2	-4	
Premises*					
Maintenance	9	7	50 *	34	
Utilities	38	15	30	-23	
Rates	35	16	60	9	
Other	1	1	inc above	-2	
Cleaning	17	9	inc above	-26	
Transport -					
Fuel	29	9	30	-8	
Supplies & Services	3	6	6	-3	
Income					
General	-1	-1	-1	1	
NWAS			???	???	
Police			???	???	
Total	1091	988	1193	-886	
		2079	1193	-886	

\* From 1 July 2015, all premises maintenance & cleaning will be undertaken by the new outsourced FM contractor

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**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**  
**Equality Impact Assessment Form**

<b>Title of policy/report/project:</b>	<b>Station Mergers , Closures and other Operational Response Options</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Strategy and Performance</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<p><b>EIA Stage 1 - 19.11.13</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 2 – 31.1.14</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3 – 20.8.14 – <u>Knowsley Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3A – From 3.10.14 to 5.12.15 <u>Wirral Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3B – From 1.11.14 to 25.1.15 <u>Liverpool Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3C – From 2.3.15 to 24.5.15 - <u>Wirral Consultation Phase 2</u> (Two options to be considered - merger at Saughall Massie or closure of West Kirby).</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3 D – From 3.8.15 to 25.10.15 – <u>St Helens Consultation</u></b></p>
<p><b><u>Scope of EIA</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this EIA is to review information and intelligence available at an early stage in the development of options for station mergers and closures. It is intended that the EIA can be used to help inform decisions as the options progress and will help Principal Officers and Authority Members to understand equality related impacts on the decisions being made in relation to local diverse communities</p> <p>The EIA will be a living document which will developed further during the life cycle of the consultation stages. This initial EIA will provide be an opportunity to plan ahead for various activities such as community and staff consultation and equality data gathering</p> <p>The EIA will be conducted in a number of stages :</p> <p><b>Stage 1 – Desk Top Assessment by 3/12/13</b> :To provide Principal Officers with</p>	

some initial thoughts on equality impacts arising from the Mergers and Closures Authority Report and provide an outline of what further data, research and consultation may be needed to inform the EIA fully in preparation for Community Engagement and Consultation Exercises in the new year (by 19/11/13)

**Stage 2 – Consultation External and Internal:** to gain feedback from those communities and MF&RS Staff groups affected by the mergers and closures options to ensure equality impacts are considered throughout the process and included in the final version of the EIA for review by final decision makers (Dec 2013 onwards)

**Stage 3 – More detailed assessment on the local areas affected by options:** for Authority members to take into account at their meeting when they review the EIA in full. (from April 2014)

### **1: What is the aim or purpose of the policy/report/project**

*This should identify “the legitimate aim” of the policy/report/project (there may be more than one)*

The reports purpose is to provide Authority Members a number of recommendations for approval, subject to public consultation, around station mergers and closures as follows:

#### Options for mergers

- Two stations on Wirral (West Kirby to merge with Upton at Saughall Massie). New option agreed by the Authority on 29<sup>th</sup> January following withdrawal of Greasby site by WBC.
  - Consultation on a possible site at Saughall Massie
  - Close West Kirby station
- *Two stations on Wirral (West Kirby to merge with Upton at Greasby). The location was withdrawn by Wirral BC*
- Two stations in St Helens (Eccleston to merge with St Helens at a site in the St Helens town centre ward)
- Two stations in Knowsley (the merger of Huyton and Whiston which already has Authority approval)

In order to meet the budget cuts faced by the Authority as a result of Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 13. These merger options, if approved, will deliver a reduction of 66 whole time equivalent (WTE) posts, reduce the Authority asset base down from 26 stations to 23 and deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads

### Options for closures

The incremental move from whole time crewing to whole time retained crewing of at least one appliance in Liverpool and/or Sefton, resulting in the closure of one or more station. This change in crewing and station closure, if approved, will deliver a saving of 22 WTE posts deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads

**The options for mergers and closures would not affect the local communities which live in and around the closure areas in relation to fire response times, they would remain within a 10 minute response time, and therefore this EIA will not focus on response times but around the following:**

- **The impact of the options and any changes (positive and negative) in relation to any particular equality groups of the local communities' use of MF&RS services and stations**
- **The impact of options and any changes on staff affected by closures**

### **2: Who will be affected by the policy/report/project?**

*This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy /report/project and its outcomes (There may be more than one)*

Communities of Wirral , St Helens, Liverpool, Sefton and Knowsley  
MF&RS staff affected by the mergers and closures

### **3. Monitoring**

*Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.*

#### **What monitoring data have you considered?**

3.1 Profile of Merseyside and Demographics 2012 report -

[http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Profile%20of%20Merseyside%20\(Demography,%20Equality%20and%20Diversity\).pdf](http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Profile%20of%20Merseyside%20(Demography,%20Equality%20and%20Diversity).pdf)

3.2 Ward Demographics from Census 2011 - **Appendix A**

### 3.3 Profile of MF&RS staff -

<http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20Report%20-%20Published%20version.pdf>

#### **What did it show?**

3.1 and 3.2 - The demographics in each of the districts is broadly similar with no significant differences to consider (Significant being + or- 5% difference). To gain a greater understanding of the make-up of the local communities affected by the impact of the closures and mergers, demographics for the local wards broadly covered by each station have been produced in **Appendix A**

Notable highlights showing differences in relation to the average for each district area are as follows:

#### **Huyton**

Age Structure: The Huyton Station ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward; the wards of Longview and Page Moss have younger populations whilst the wards of Prescott West, Roby and Stockbridge in particular have older populations.

Socio Economic (including Disability): In Page Moss, Longview and Stockbridge wards in particular there are well above average levels of people with disability or long term health problems. Within these same wards there are proportionally high levels of adult unemployment.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". Within the Huyton Station Area, the ward of Longview has above district average counts of BME population particularly "Asian/British Asian" persons.

#### **Whiston**

Age Structure: The Whiston Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of Rainhill and Whiston North primarily have older populations whilst the wards of Prescott East and Whiston South have younger populations.

Socio Economic: There are no negative Socio Economic factors in the Whiston station ground.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". However BME populations are more diverse within this station ground with above average populations of "Asian/British Asian" in each ward and above average populations of "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" within Prescott East.

#### **St Helens**

Age Structure: The St Helens Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of: Parr, Bold, Sutton, Thatto Heath, Town Centre tends to have younger populations - particularly Parr and Thatto Heath. By contrast the wards of: Billinge & Seneley Green and Blackbrook have older populations

Socio Economic: The wards of: Parr, Thatto Heath, Sutton and Moss Bank have higher than average levels of adult unemployment as well as having above average levels of disability / long-term illness in these wards.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". The wards of Town Centre and Thatto Heath (in particular) are the most

culturally diverse with well above average counts particularly of "Asian/British Asian" residents. Both Wards also have above average counts of "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" people, though this is to a lesser extent to "Asian/British Asian" residents. St Helens has a significant Gypsy and Traveller community.

### **Eccleston**

Age Structure: The Eccleston Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of Eccleston and Rainford (Rainford has one of the highest average population ages in Merseyside) have older populations whilst the wards of West Park and Windle have younger populations.

Socio Economic: The wards of Eccleston and West Park have slightly above average levels of unemployment within the Eccleston station ground. West Park also has slightly above average levels of long term sickness / disability.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White", Rainford and West Park have particularly low levels of BME residents. Within the Station Area the Ward of Eccleston has slightly above average BME population "Asian/British Asian" for and West Park has slightly above average counts "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" residents.

### **Upton**

Age Structure: The Upton Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. Pensby & Thingwall, Greasby, Frankby - Irby and Claughton have older than average populations.

Socio Economic: Generally within the Upton Station there are no particularly significant Socio Economic issues, with the Exception of the Bidston & St James ward which primarily rests within the Upton Station Ground. Bidston and St James have well above average adult unemployment and levels of long term health problems / disability.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". Claughton and Bidston & St James have the most diverse populations with above average counts of "Asian/British Asian" residents.

### **West Kirby**

Age Structure: The West Kirby Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The demographic for the wards of Hoylake & Meols and West Kirby & Thurstaston is much older than the Wirral average.

Socio Economic: There are no negative Socio Economic factors in the West Kirby station ground.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White".

### **Allerton**

Age Structure: The Allerton Station Ground has a mix of age groups across different wards, 45-59 age group is the most populous age range. Greenbank has a large population of 20-24 year olds inferring a high population of students. Woolton has particularly high level of population above the age of 65 with 26% of ward population, however the majority of this ward is covered by the Belle Vale station area.

Socio Economic: Majority of area is affluent with small pockets of deprivation (based on IMD 2010) The majority of wards are below the Liverpool average for

unemployment and long term health and disabilities.

Racial Profile: Predominantly “White” (at least 90% white). Greenbank however has a more diverse population including above counts of BME populations, BME groups equate to 17% of overall population compared to 5.5% Merseyside population as a whole.

### 3.3- Staff Demographics for Operational Staff

95% of operational uniformed staff are Male and 5% are Female  
 65% of operational uniformed staff are aged 41 to 50  
 5% of Operational staff have declared a Disability or Long term health condition  
 3% of MF&RS staff are Black Minority Ethnic the remainder are classed as White

### 4: Research

*Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFOA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc.*

#### What research have you considered?

4.1 A review of the Access Audit report - results for the stations affected by options

4.2 Review of MF&RS Community Profiles for station areas affected by proposals to help understand the type of communities who may be affected by the options and consider

#### What did it show?

The Equality Act 2010 replaced and enhanced the Disability Discrimination Acts (DDA) 1995 & 2005. It sets out the legislation for Public Bodies to make reasonable adjustments to premises to enable disabled people to access all services and fully participate in public life. MF&RS has conducted access audits for all its stations (except new builds) and is in the process of reporting on the results and recommendations to the Authority in December 2013.

The Audits have highlighted significant access issues for the stations identified in the mergers and closures options with a total of **£ 267,875** cost for making them more accessible Community Fire Stations. It has been an important factor when considering the options and proposals for station mergers and closures and the building of new stations.

Results show no specific Equality and Diversity implications for any of the areas affected as the Ten Minute response times will be still valid for the station areas affected by the merger/closure proposals



their needs.

4.3 A review of current Partnership agreements for stations affected by proposals to help understand the impact of station closures /mergers on those service users

4.4 **Appendix B** sets out the impact of a potential merger of West Kirby and Upton at a site in Saughall Massie. All areas would be attended well within the 10 minute response time from a new station or other Wirral stations. It has been made clear throughout that there is no option that will improve attendance. The proposals are the least worst option.

4.5 The report **“Proposals for Eccleston and St. Helens Fire stations 30th June 2015** “of which this EIA is Appendix M , contains a number of further appendices ( C, D, E ,F,G,H and J) showing 5,6,7,8,9 and 10 minute isochrones showing the impact of a potential merger of St. Helens and Eccleston and the option to close Eccleston . These show the impact of the response times and also show the Risk map of Merseyside to highlight the risk areas outside the 10 minute response times.

There appears to be no detrimental impact on any of the partnership arrangements for the Knowsley fire stations currently being affected by station merger proposals , the development of a new station with advanced community facilities will strengthen the opportunities for Knowsley communities to access the station for better community engagement activities

The document highlights the impact of adopting either of the proposals on the achievement of the standard 10 minute standard response time. The results show that there are no areas outside the 10 minute response time for the proposals to merge stations at Saughall Massie. In relation to the maps for proposals to close West Kirby, there is a very small area of the West Wirral outside the 10 minute response area with a few dwellings in that area where attendance is 4 seconds outside of the 10 minute response time. It is recommended that HFSC campaigns take place to ensure those living in that area receive prevention advice and support.

The documents highlight the impact of adopting either of the proposals based on information contained in Appendix C, the merger at Canal St, St Helens has the least number of areas outside the 10 minute response time, and the majority are low and medium risk and are similar to the current arrangements. If the option was not taken to merge and close Eccleston and keep the current St Helens station the maps show that there is larger area of Rainford which remains outside of the 10 minute response time. The profile of this area shows a slightly higher proportion of older residents and our risk map of Merseyside shows the additional areas as Low risk, however further additional preventative measures will be recommended in those areas to ensure any increased risk is mitigated.

Further consultation should be targeted around those areas during the forthcoming 12 week consultation process to establish any

further equality impacts for any of the 9 protected groups at most risk of fire or in need of rescue.

## 5. Consultation

*Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)  
Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation*

### What Consultation have you undertaken?

No Consultation took place at Stage 1 of this EIA, however consultation will be carried out in two stages to scrutinise the OPTIONS and consider others for all mergers/closures. As such consultation comprises a) a more open-ended listening and engagement phase on the OPTIONS and b) a Formal consultation process on the eventual PROPOSALS. Part of the consultation process will take into account the needs and experiences of those equality protected groups who have been deemed to be affected by the mergers and closures.

Consultation specifically with Protected Groups (as required by the Equality Act 2010) in relation to this EIA and its assessment of the mergers and closures report /options is currently being planned by the Diversity and Consultation Manager. A number of cost effective options are being considered within the time frame available including :

- The development of a new MF&RS Diversity Consultation Forum; a public voice for diverse groups across each district
- Using the 2 stage consultation process mentioned above to consult on the EIA with representative groups from those protected groups affected by the Options and subsequent proposals (where representation is available )
- Consultation with Community Groups currently using the Stations identified as potentially being closed and merged – Impact on equality
- Making the EIA accessible via the Staff Portal and MF&RS Webpage to enable staff , stakeholders and the public to make comments and provide feedback easily

### What did it say?

#### **Stage 3 D – St Helens – Starts 3rd August 2015**

#### **Stage 3C – Second Wirral Consultation**

A 12 week consultation process took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2015. This included:

- Online questionnaire for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups ( one in each station area)
- One Public Forum
- Three Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting
- Postal Survey of 10,000 households in station areas affected

- Several staff consultation meetings
- Several further local Council and stakeholder consultation meetings

As in the previous consultation processes, there was an opportunity to randomly select and invite participants to three deliberative focus groups and the forum from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and equality groups. The aim is to be as fully representative as possible.

Equality Monitoring data shows a breakdown in attendees at these meetings as follows :

49% Female and 51% Male attendees- this closely reflects the Gender breakdown for the Wirral as a whole

18.4% Under 34's , 36.7% 35-54 and 44.9% over 55+ - this reflected the broad range of age groups across the area

20% of attendees had a limiting long term illness /disability – this is slightly lower than the average for Wirral being 22.6%

4.1% of Attendees at the event were from Non White backgrounds which reflects the ethnicity breakdown of the Wirral

The figures above reflect the average profile of residents across Wirral and this allows us to feel comfortable that the views of different groups of people have been considered when using the consultation for decision making purposes.

While considering the draft proposals, participants in all the meetings were encouraged to consider whether proposals have any adverse implications for any vulnerable people and in particular groups with “protected characteristics”: in other words, this question was not just a ‘footnote’ to the main discussion but an intrinsic part of the scrutiny of the proposals

Comments of concern around equality groups were raised from the 49 people who attended the focus groups and forum :

- Saughall Massie Road is not a suitable site for a fire station as it is very near to housing for elderly and disabled people.
- There are many old person’s homes in West Kirby so it is undesirable to lengthen response times there\*
- There are a lot of elderly people in West Kirby and they are higher risk residents\*\*
- The aged and disabled people will have some impact from these changes

*\*It should be noted that data shows that Upton has more properties that cater for elderly than Hoylake and Meols (5.5%) and West Kirby and Thurstaston (3.3%)*

*\*\* It should be noted that West Kirby & Thurstaston and Hoylake & Meols show a slightly increased number of residents over the age of 65 with a variance of +/-0. 6% when compared to the Wirral proportion. In Upton, there are proportionally fewer people over 65 when compared to the Wirral proportion for that age range*

The **questionnaires** received (129) were treated as an information gathering exercise, in the same way as the views expressed at the public meetings, the questionnaires have been analysed in terms of Equality Monitoring (123 completed)

and shows:

- 48.8% were Male and 51.2% Female respondents which closely reflects the gender breakdowns for Wirral as a whole
- There were a wide range of ages responding to the survey, the largest group of respondents - 21%, were from the 60 to 69 age group 18.1% identified themselves as disabled, which is lower than the average for Wirral at 22.6%
- 99.2% identified their ethnicity as white, 5.5% preferred not to say and 0.8 % were from a BME background. This is similar to the average Ethnicity breakdowns for those areas.

Views were polarised with 59.1% of respondents opposed to the merged station at Saughall Massie, 40.2% were broadly in favour of the new station. There were no obvious comments made in relation to Equality and Diversity in the free text comments made.

For the first time a **postal survey** was undertaken with 5000 homes in the Upton station area and 5000 in West Kirby being randomly selected to take part. 1351 completed questionnaires were returned. 577 from Upton and 774 West Kirby station areas. Overall response rate 12% Upton and 16% of West Kirby residents. 11% of initial contacts were in Saughall Massie but accounted for 17% of returns.

- Responses received were from 51% female and 49% male residents
- Responses were from all ages 20 to over 80 but the majority were in the 40-49 (19%), 60-69 (18%) and 50-59 (18%).
- 26% of respondents identified themselves as disabled either limited a little (12%) or a lot (14%).
- 98% were identified as of white background.

The returned sample for each fire station area were compared with census data and then weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and whether people were suffering long term illness/disability.

There were no comments referring to specific equality impacts or issues for protected groups.

This EIA has been consulted on with the Community Forum Group at a meeting on the 10th December 2014, where members were presented with the EIA and asked for any notable feedback in relation to the approach we take to the EIA and any outcomes of the proposals for particular Protected groups (specifically Elderly and Disabled). The group were happy with the EIA and its findings and no further suggestions made.

### **Stage 3 A and B – First Wirral Consultation**

A 12 week consultation process took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 to 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 which followed a similar pattern to the events that took place for the previous consultation at Knowsley (See stage 3 Knowsley below). This included:

- Online questionnaire for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups ( one in each station area)
- One Public Forum

- Four Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting
- Several staff consultation meetings
- Several further local Council and stakeholder consultation meetings

As in the Knowsley consultation process, there was an opportunity to invite participants to three deliberative focus groups and the forum from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and equality groups. The aim is to be as fully representative as possible.

Equality Monitoring data shows a breakdown in attendees at these meetings as follows :

44% Female and 56% Male attendees- this closely reflects the gender breakdown for the Wirral as a whole

16% Under 34's , 35.5% 35-54 and 51.5% over 55+ - this reflected the broad range of age groups across the area

16% of attendees had a limiting long term illness /disability – this is slightly lower than the average for Wirral being 22.6%

10% of Attendees at the event were from Non White backgrounds which closely reflects the ethnicity breakdown of the Wirral

The figures above reflect the average profile of residents across Wirral and this allows us to feel comfortable that the views of different groups of people have been considered when using the consultation for decision making purposes.

While considering the draft proposals, participants in all the meetings were encouraged to consider whether proposals have any adverse implications for any vulnerable people and in particular groups with “protected characteristics”: in other words, this question was not just a ‘footnote’ to the main discussion but an intrinsic part of the scrutiny of the proposals

Four comments of concern around equality groups were raised from the 32 people who attended the focus groups and forum :

- Frankby Road (Greasby) is not a suitable site for a fire station in the village; children, elderly and disabled use the road near the site
- The elderly, nursing and residential homes have to be taken into consideration and that does not seem to be a primary focus and yet we have a lot of elderly people in our area
- We have a lot of elderly
- West Kirby has elderly people and there are some flats with social disadvantage
- The aged and disabled people will have some impact from these changes

Two comments were raised in support of the changes :

- The Council and FRS are aware of the needs of the elderly and the vulnerable
- The FRS links up with other agencies – it has to be a multi- agency approach

The questionnaires received ( 984) were treated as an information gathering exercise, in the same way as the views expressed at the public meetings, the questionnaires have been analysed in terms of Equality Monitoring and shows:

- 46.3% were Male and 53.7% Female respondents which closely reflects the

gender breakdowns for Wirral as a whole

- There were a wide range of ages responding to the survey, the largest group of respondents - 50%, were from the 50 to 69 age group - this was slightly higher than the local ward age population profiles for that age group (41.6%) but may be due to a higher proportion of older residents using the Greasby community centre attending the consultation events.
- 7.2% identified themselves as disabled ,which is lower than the average for Wirral at 22.6%
- 91.1% identified their ethnicity as white, 7.3% preferred not to say and 1.3 % (15) were from a BME background. This is a similar to the average Ethnicity breakdowns for those areas.

The majority of surveys completed were not in favour of the station being placed in Greasby village. There were no obvious comments made in relation to Equality and Diversity in the free text comments made.

This EIA has been consulted on with the Community Forum Group at a meeting on the 10th December 2014, where members were presented with the EIA and asked for any notable feedback in relation to the approach we take to the EIA and any outcomes of the proposals for particular Protected groups (specifically Elderly and Disabled). The group were happy with the EIA and its findings and no further suggestions made.

### **Stage 3 – Knowsley Consultation May to July 2014**

A 12 week Consultation process on Fire Station merger proposals took place in Knowsley district between the 6<sup>th</sup> May and 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The consultation included :

- Online survey for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups ( one in each station area)
- One Public Forum
- Three Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting
- Several staff consultation meetings

All consultation events provided the opportunity for staff and public to provide feedback and views on the merger proposals and the impact they may have, positive or negative, in relation to different equality groups and the impact on any of their service needs/outcomes as a result of the proposals. None of the focus groups or forums raised any specific concerns relating to vulnerable people or equality groups, but some observed that it is important to ensure the elderly get appropriate prevention work in the form of Home Fire safety checks and other precautions in those areas where the mergers may have a bigger impact.

The consultation events were well publicised in many different forums from local council promotion, health and wellbeing boards, posters at local supermarkets, Local radio stations and a variety of Websites,

The only opportunity for MFRA to ensure a representative group of people were consulted with was in relation to the invited participants at the deliberative forums.

Efforts are always made to recruit a representative sample of Merseyside residents for each meeting, but as not everyone who is recruited actually attends the meeting this can have an effect.

The breakdown of consultees were as follows:

60% (29) of the 48 attendees were male and 40% (19) were female, 31% (15) were aged 16 -35 and 33.5 % ( 16) were aged 35 to 55 and 35.5% (17) were aged over 55. These figures are similar to the age profile of Merseyside population.

The majority of attendees were white , however 16% were of Non-white British origin , this compares favourably when compared to the Merseyside population figures of 7%

All events were fully inclusive with British Sign Language Interpreters at each open public meeting (they were not required at any of the deliberative forums), the use of a hearing loop was available for all meetings and information was also available in large print. The venues were sourced taking careful consideration of access from car parking for disabled and mobility impaired to easy access to public transport close by and access in and out of the rooms and seating.

The results from the on line survey have been summarised in a report;

Knowsley Consultation concerning Station Mergers – results from Feedback Surveys. This can be accessed on our Website. The results showed :

- No specific issues raised in relation to any negative or positive impacts of the proposals on any particular protected groups.
- No specific detrimental impact in relation to Equality and Diversity issues for staff raised at this stage of the proposals (staff consultation will continue )
- Of the 93 respondents to the Survey, a vast majority were from the areas affected by the proposals, the split was almost 50/50 male to female, and 11.8 % declared a disability and 2.4% were from non- white British origin.
- The survey was entirely voluntary for anyone to access and complete and there was very little opportunity to encourage responses from minority groups in any reasonable way.

## **Stage 2 - Engagement and Consultation January 2014**

Stage two of the EIA involved engaging members of the public on the current EIA findings in relation to the Mergers and Closures options ,specifically the 5 options provided to the Public Engagement Forums held in January 2014.The possible options discussed at the for further financial savings :

1. Additional “Low Level Activity and Risk Stations ( LLAR)
2. Introduction of “Day Crewing” at some whole time stations
3. Introduction of “Community Retained “ (RDS) stations
4. Merger of pairs of older stations and their replacement by modern community fire stations
5. Closure of some stations without replacement

Five forums were held across each of MFRS District :

- Wirral - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 10.00am -1.30pm
- St Helens - Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm -20.45pm
- Liverpool – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm- 20.45pm
- Knowsley – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 - 18.00pm – 20.45pm
- Sefton – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm – 20.45pm

Part of the engagement presentation included canvassing views from the forum on the impact of each of the 5 options in relation to protected equality groups. The forums were broadly representative of the current demographic profiles for each district when compared to the demographic reports for each district, with the exception of Ethnicity for Wirral, St Helens and Sefton.

**Table 1 – Equality Monitoring breakdown for each District engagement forums**

	<b>WIRRAL</b>	<b>ST Helens</b>	<b>LIVERPOOL</b>	<b>KNOWSLEY</b>	<b>SEFTON</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male: 12</b>	<b>Male: 10</b>	<b>Male: 13</b>	<b>Male: 10</b>	<b>Male: 13</b>
	<b>Female: 11</b>	<b>Female: 11</b>	<b>Female: 12</b>	<b>Female: 6</b>	<b>Female: 9</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-34: 5</b>	<b>18-34: 3</b>	<b>18-34: 7</b>	<b>18-34: 3</b>	<b>18-34: 4</b>
	<b>35-54: 7</b>	<b>35-54: 9</b>	<b>35-54: 10</b>	<b>35-54: 7</b>	<b>35-54: 8</b>
	<b>55+: 11</b>	<b>55+: 9</b>	<b>55+: 8</b>	<b>55+: 6</b>	<b>55+: 10</b>
<b>Social Grade</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>	<b>AB: 4</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>	<b>AB: 2</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>
	<b>C1: 8</b>	<b>C1: 7</b>	<b>C1: 9</b>	<b>C1: 3</b>	<b>C1: 5</b>
	<b>C2: 4</b>	<b>C2: 3</b>	<b>C2: 4</b>	<b>C2: 6</b>	<b>C2: 3</b>
	<b>DE: 5</b>	<b>DE: 7</b>	<b>DE: 6</b>	<b>DE: 5</b>	<b>DE: 8</b>
<b>BME</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

Members of the Forum were given a summary of the outcomes from the EIA stage one, and asked if there were any specific concerns about those outcomes and indeed any of the 5 options. No concerns about the options were raised in any of the Forums, the general view was that the favoured option chosen by the members; mergers and closures, would provide a positive opportunity for members of the Disabled community and those elderly residents with limited mobility to access new station for community events and activities more easily than some of the current stations. The building of new stations would benefit many minority community groups who may have limited access to community spaces.

Stage 3 of the EIA will now involve consulting with the Public Proposals which will include consultation with specific organisations who support specific Protected Groups through various consultation methods.

**Stage 1 – no public consultation at this stage**



## **6. Conclusions**

*Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy/report/project impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)*

### **(a) Age**

The needs of different Age groups, especially those minority age groups, in relation to station mergers and closures options and proposals are difficult to fully assess at this early stage of the EIA. Section 3 and 4 sets out the current age profiles which should be considered when taking into account possible options for closures and mergers. Engagement and consultation will provide more opportunities to assess negative and positive impacts and results will be used to inform Stage 2 and 3 of this EIA.

### **(b) Disability including mental, physical and sensory conditions)**

The building of new stations will be positive for the disabled communities affected by the station mergers as the development of new high functioning stations will enable disabled people to access community services delivered from Fire Stations.

### **(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)**

*As a) above but in relation to Race and Minority ethnic groups*

### **(d) Religion or Belief**

*As a) above but in relation to Religion and Belief and minority faith groups*

### **(e) Sex (include gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity)**

*As a) above but in relation to Gender and Gender Reassignment*

### **(f) Sexual Orientation**

*As a) above but in relation to the needs of minority sexual orientation groups*

### **(g) Socio-economic disadvantage**

*As a) above but in relation to the needs of those most affected financially (if at all) by any mergers and closures.*

## **7. Decisions**

*If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same*

way.

*If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.*

#### **24.5.15 – EIA Stage 3C Wirral Consultation**

The recent Wirral consultation did highlight some feedback and concerns which were specifically mentioned around older people and the proximity of sheltered accommodation to the proposed fire station (this is a planning issue and therefore not covered by this EIA) A review of current demographics shows no significant equality issues in relation to negative impacts on proposed station mergers and closures for any protected group at higher risk of Fire and Rescue as the response times to attend any call will be within the standards set.

#### **13.1.15- EIA stage 3 a Wirral Consultation**

The recent Wirral Consultation and this EIA did not highlight any particular negative impacts in relation to different equality groups. It should be noted that the Frankby road, Greasby site was withdrawn by Wirral Borough Council part way through the consultation period as a result of the opposition from residents and local politicians. Proposals are being considered in relation to further options that the Fire and Rescue Authority will consider: to consult on merging at a site in Saughall Massie or to close West Kirby.

#### **17.9.14- EIA stage 3a and 3 b – Wirral and Liverpool (Allerton)**

No consultation has taken place at this stage of the EIA for Wirral and Allerton proposals. A review of current demographics shows no significant equality issues in relation to negative impacts on proposed station mergers and closures for both Wirral and Liverpool (Allerton) for any protected group at higher risk of Fire and Rescue as the response times to attend any call will be within the standards set. Consultation at the next stage will review the impact in more detail with different groups of public and will focus also on any equality issues.

#### **EIA Stage 3 – Decisions (Knowsley)**

On reviewing the data, research and consultation at stage 3 of this EIA there are no significant disproportionate impacts on any of the protected groups. As response times will be maintained within the 10 minute response standard, no particular group will receive a significantly changed service to Fire and Rescue and there will be no major impact on current partnership arrangements at stations, as these can be transferred to the new station at Prescott with newer and more accessible facilities.

#### **EIA Stage 2 – Decisions**

The outcomes of the Engagement forums across the 5 Districts has identified no particular negative impacts that need to be considered in any of the 5 Options. The Merger and Closure option appears to be the most positive for a number of minority equality groups in terms of accessibility to community spaces.

#### **EIA Stage 1 – Decisions**

On reviewing the research and data available for stage 1 of this EIA, there are no significant equality Impacts established so far with the exception of Disability, where

current stations earmarked for mergers are currently not fully accessible for disabled community groups.

It is important to note that the impact of the Mergers and Station Closure Options and subsequent Proposals will not impact on any members of the public disproportionately in relation to the current level of service received by these groups e.g. response times and fire safety , prevention and protection services

### 8. Equality Improvement Plan

*List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.*

### 9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

*The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.*

Signed off

Wendy Kenyon

Date:

19.11.13- EIA Stage 1  
 31.1.14 – EIA stage 2  
 20.8.14 – EIA stage 3  
 19.9.14 – EIA stage 3a and 3b  
 15.1.15 EIA stage 3 a  
 updated and introduction of  
 3c  
 2.6.15 EIA stage 3c  
 Completed for Wirral and  
 Stage 3D started for St  
 Helens

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by
<p><b>Actions Identified during EIA stage 1</b></p> <p>9.1 Consultation with Staff , Stakeholders and Communities , in relation to the EIA and its assessment of the Mergers and Closures Options and subsequent Proposals ; specifically those Protected groups and the potential impact ( both negative and positive )</p> <p>9.2 Analysis of Community Profiles for station areas affected to understand the types of communities affected by the Mergers and Closures Options and subsequent Proposals <b>(completed)</b></p> <p>9.3 Equality analysis of those staff affected</p>	<p>Diversity and Consultation Manager (DCM) with Support from IRMP Officer</p> <p>Business Intelligence Manager and DCM</p> <p>DCM with support</p>	<p>Jan-April14</p> <p>Completed</p>

by the Options and subsequent Proposals to see if any particular protected group are affected disproportionately.	from POD	Completed
<b>Actions Identified during EIA stage 2</b> Consider ways to engage further with members of different Ethnic communities (in those station areas which are most affected) when proposals are identified for consultation in the future <b>(Completed)</b>	WK	Completed
<b>Actions Identified during EIA Stage 3</b> Target HFSC for those Vulnerable older people most affected by the future station merger and closures ( Knowsley and Wirral and St Helens – See Appendix Band C )	District Managers	Completed for Knowsley

## Appendix A – ONS Demographic Equality Data by Station Ward

Please note that Station Areas are not based on the shape of wards, as such for the purposes of this section a ward has been identified to belong to a specific location if more than 50% of that ward rests within the station area.

District	Station Affected	2011 ward	Population	Mean Age	District Mean
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8,726	36	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7,076	38	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6,535	44	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7,254	44	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	6,565	41	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6,565	39	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	6,920	39	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6,018	40	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6,519	42	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7,604	38	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6,908	41	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7,355	39	39
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10,853	46	41
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11,080	44	41
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10,639	41	41
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9,759	38	41
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10,682	42	41
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12,199	37	41
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12,003	41	41
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12,280	38	41
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10,978	39	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7,779	47	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11,525	45	41
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11,392	40	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10,690	41	41
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15,216	36	41
Wirral	Upton	Cloughton	14,705	42	41
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13,991	45	41
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13,988	42	41
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13,007	46	41
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16,130	42	41
Wirral	West Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12,733	45	41
Wirral	West Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13,348	44	41
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13,974	41	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16,132	32	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13,816	40	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14,772	39	38

Ethnicity Table:

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian/Asian British: Total	Asian/Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8,726	8,414	96.4%	140	1.6%	112	1.3%	54	0.6%	6	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7,076	6,947	98.2%	75	1.1%	36	0.5%	12	0.2%	6	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6,535	6,388	97.8%	58	0.9%	61	0.9%	17	0.3%	11	0.2%
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7,254	7,148	98.5%	50	0.7%	30	0.4%	16	0.2%	10	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	7,143	6,972	97.6%	101	1.4%	32	0.4%	19	0.3%	19	0.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6,565	6,434	98.0%	49	0.7%	49	0.7%	25	0.4%	8	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	6,920	6,768	97.8%	82	1.2%	55	0.8%	7	0.1%	8	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6,018	5,843	97.1%	90	1.5%	33	0.5%	36	0.6%	16	0.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6,519	6,347	97.4%	94	1.4%	52	0.8%	16	0.2%	10	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7,604	7,300	96.0%	109	1.4%	160	2.1%	25	0.3%	10	0.1%
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10,853	10,498	96.7%	83	0.8%	240	2.2%	7	0.1%	25	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6,908	6,604	95.6%	60	0.9%	203	2.9%	24	0.3%	17	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7,355	7,144	97.1%	113	1.5%	73	1.0%	20	0.3%	5	0.1%
Knowsley Average					97.2%		1.3%		1.0%		0.3%		0.1%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian/Asian British: Total	Asian/Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11,080	10,948	98.8%	67	0.6%	46	0.4%	9	0.1%	10	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10,639	10,474	98.4%	49	0.5%	90	0.8%	4	0.0%	22	0.2%
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9,759	9,618	98.6%	65	0.7%	50	0.5%	18	0.2%	8	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10,682	10,568	98.9%	46	0.4%	50	0.5%	5	0.0%	13	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12,199	11,972	98.1%	97	0.8%	97	0.8%	22	0.2%	11	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12,003	11,837	98.6%	87	0.7%	63	0.5%	11	0.1%	5	0.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12,280	11,829	96.3%	120	1.0%	270	2.2%	31	0.3%	30	0.2%
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10,978	10,684	97.3%	69	0.6%	191	1.7%	18	0.2%	16	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11,525	11,302	98.1%	76	0.7%	121	1.0%	15	0.1%	11	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7,779	7,682	98.8%	34	0.4%	43	0.6%	8	0.1%	12	0.2%
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11,392	11,183	98.2%	79	0.7%	88	0.8%	25	0.2%	17	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10,690	10,564	98.8%	50	0.5%	58	0.5%	8	0.1%	10	0.1%
St Helens Average					98.0%		0.7%		1.0%		0.1%		0.1%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian / Asian British: Total	Asian / Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15,216	14,659	96.3%	238	1.6%	270	1.8%	37	0.2%	12	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Claughton	14,705	14,147	96.2%	163	1.1%	344	2.3%	21	0.1%	30	0.2%
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13,991	13,685	97.8%	112	0.8%	146	1.0%	21	0.2%	27	0.2%
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13,988	13,722	98.1%	87	0.6%	134	1.0%	25	0.2%	20	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13,007	12,744	98.0%	109	0.8%	132	1.0%	13	0.1%	9	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16,130	15,587	96.6%	123	0.8%	352	2.2%	36	0.2%	32	0.2%
Wirral	W Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13,348	13,019	97.5%	139	1.0%	139	1.0%	19	0.1%	32	0.2%
Wirral	W Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12,733	12,326	96.8%	170	1.3%	168	1.3%	16	0.1%	53	0.4%
Wirral Average					97.0%		1.0%		1.6%		0.2%		0.2%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian / Asian British: Total	Asian / Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13,974	12,858	92.0%	367	2.6%	472	3.4%	160	1.1%	117	0.8%
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16,132	13,400	83.1%	736	4.6%	949	5.9%	630	3.9%	417	2.6%
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13,816	12,889	93.3%	293	2.1%	399	2.9%	130	0.9%	105	0.8%
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14,772	13,288	90.0%	526	3.6%	552	3.7%	245	1.7%	161	1.1%
Liverpool Average					88.9%		2.5%		4.2%		2.6%		1.8%



## Disability Tables

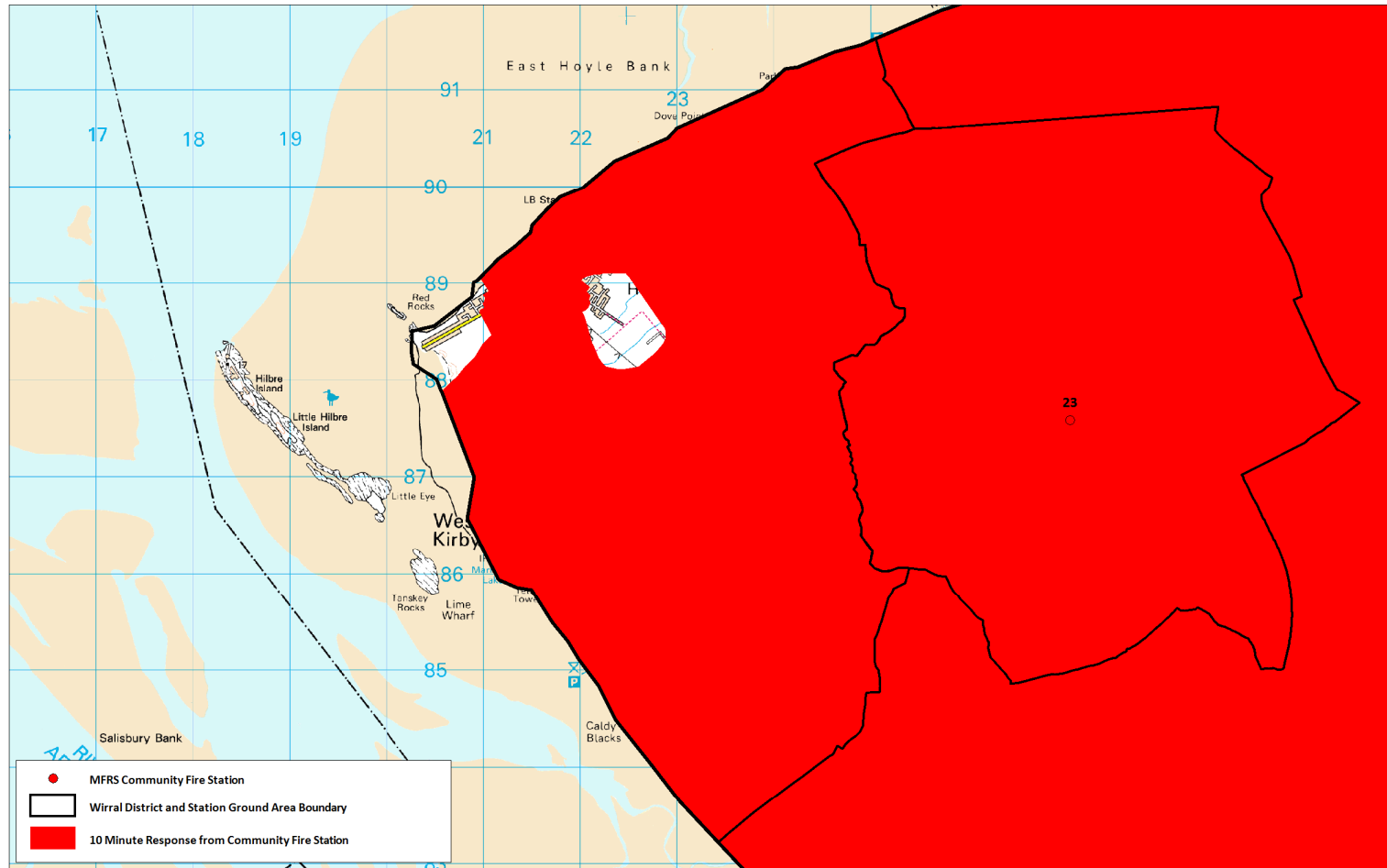
District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8726	1367	15.7%	904	10.4%	6455	74.0%
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7076	1239	17.5%	802	11.3%	5035	71.2%
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6535	1007	15.4%	828	12.7%	4700	71.9%
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7254	829	11.4%	722	10.0%	5703	78.6%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	6565	893	13.6%	666	10.1%	5006	76.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6920	1042	15.1%	692	10.0%	5186	74.9%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	7114	642	9.0%	528	7.4%	5944	83.6%
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6018	1206	20.0%	730	12.1%	4082	67.8%
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6519	722	11.1%	675	10.4%	5122	78.6%
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7604	1025	13.5%	817	10.7%	5762	75.8%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6908	890	12.9%	701	10.1%	5317	77.0%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7355	893	12.1%	739	10.0%	5723	77.8%
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10853	1312	12.1%	1212	11.2%	8329	76.7%
Knowsley Average					14.2%		10.3%		75.5%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11080	1192	10.8%	1243	11.2%	8645	78.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10639	1298	12.2%	1146	10.8%	8195	77.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9759	1176	12.1%	976	10.0%	7607	77.9%
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10682	1433	13.4%	1235	11.6%	8014	75.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12199	1864	15.3%	1319	10.8%	9016	73.9%
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12003	1569	13.1%	1253	10.4%	9181	76.5%
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12280	1658	13.5%	1250	10.2%	9372	76.3%
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10978	1656	15.1%	1252	11.4%	8070	73.5%
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11525	1201	10.4%	1233	10.7%	9091	78.9%
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7779	850	10.9%	907	11.7%	6022	77.4%
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11392	1362	12.0%	1209	10.6%	8821	77.4%
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10690	1140	10.7%	1082	10.1%	8468	79.2%
St Helens Average					12.4%		10.6%		77.0%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15216	2441	16.0%	1748	11.5%	11027	72.5%
Wirral	Upton	Claughton	14705	1940	13.2%	1556	10.6%	11209	76.2%
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13991	1233	8.8%	1536	11.0%	11222	80.2%
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13988	1782	12.7%	1413	10.1%	10793	77.2%
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13007	1528	11.7%	1539	11.8%	9940	76.4%
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16130	2408	14.9%	1778	11.0%	11944	74.0%
Wirral	W Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13348	1296	9.7%	1337	10.0%	10715	80.3%
Wirral	W Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12733	1187	9.3%	1361	10.7%	10185	80.0%
Wirral Average					11.9%		10.7%		77.4%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13974	1120	8.0%	1241	8.9%	11613	83.1%
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16132	1277	7.9%	1047	6.5%	13808	85.6%
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13816	1301	9.4%	1136	8.2%	11379	82.4%
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14772	1588	10.8%	1336	9.0%	11848	80.2%
Liverpool Average					12.8%		9.7%		77.6%

**Appendix B 10 minute response coverage time from Upton Station and surrounding stations (excluding West Kirby and Wallasey)**



**10 Minute Response Coverage Time from Community Fire Stations 20, 21, 22 and 23**

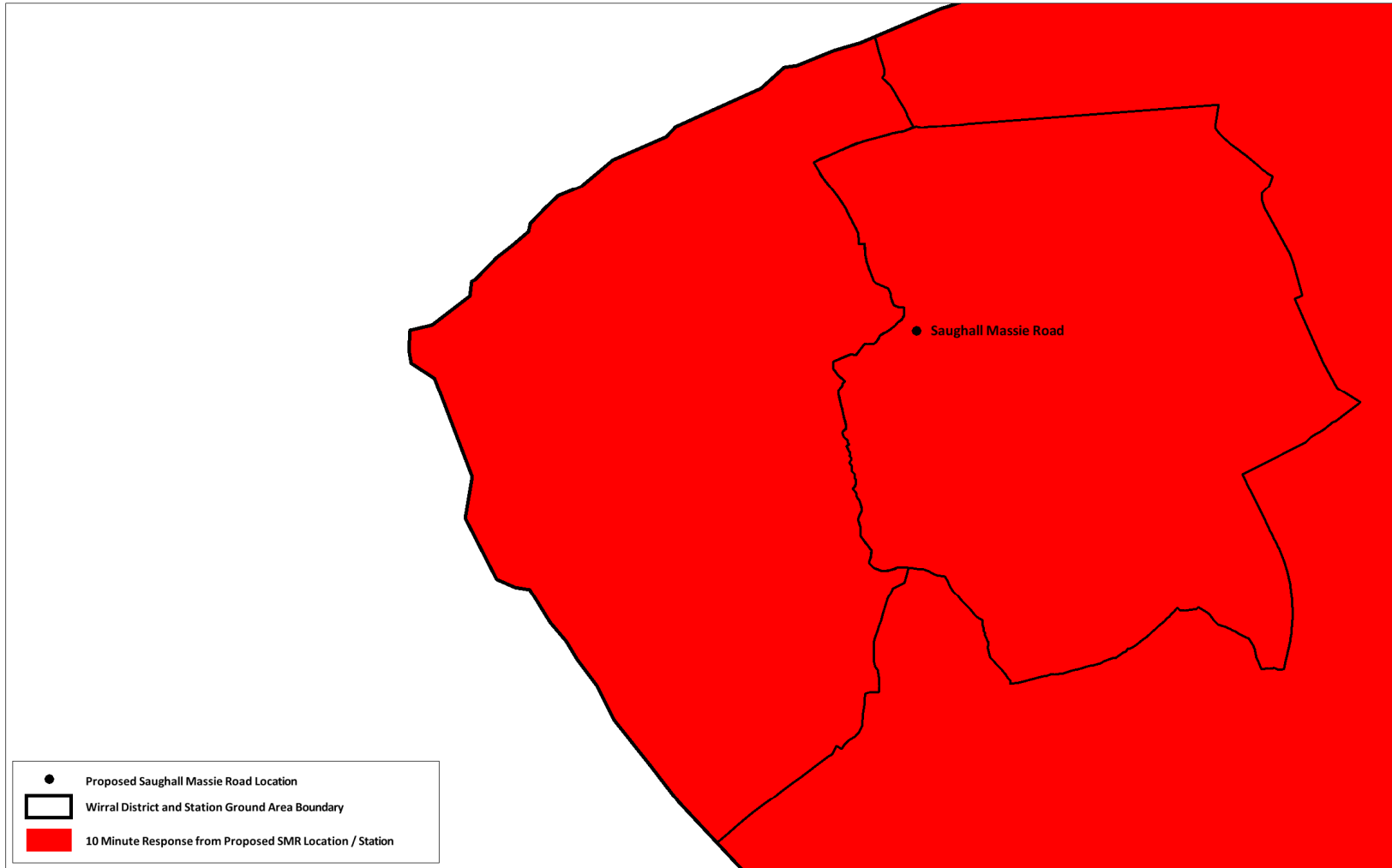
© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100026956.

Author: Gary Crosbie  
 Produced Using: MapInfo Professional v11.0  
 Date: 15.01.2015  
 Strategy and Performance

Map Reference:  
 KIM:\Work Requests\Data and Systems\Wirral Merger\  
 Greasby\Maps\  
 20\_21\_22\_23\_10 Minutes\_23\_24\_SGA\_Zoom.png



**Appendix B Continued – 10 minute response time from proposed Saughall Massie Road location and surrounding stations (Excluding Upton West Kirby and Wallasey)**



**10 Minute Response Coverage Time from Proposed Saughall Massie Road Location and Community Fire Stations 20, 21 and 22**

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Author: Gary Crosbie  
Produced Using: MapInfo Professional v11.0  
Date: 16.01.2015  
Strategy and Performance

Map Reference:  
KIM:\Work Requests\Data and Systems\Wirral Merger\  
Greasby\Maps\  
20\_21\_22\_SM\_10 Minutes\_23\_24\_SGA\_Zoom.png



**Appendix C: St Helens isochrones and Risk Maps**

**SEE ST HELENS PROPOSALS FOR ECCELSTON AND ST HELENS FIRE STATION REPORT APPENDIX C, D, E,F,G,and H**



<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30 JUNE 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/059/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DCFO PHIL GARRIGAN</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>WIRRAL FIRE COVER CONSULTATION 2 OUTCOMES</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION DOCUMENT</b> <b>APPENDIX 2: CORRESPONDENCE – PUBLIC</b> <b>APPENDIX 3: CORRESPONDENCE –COUNCILLORS</b> <b>APPENDIX 4: PUBLIC MEETING OUTCOMES</b> <b>APPENDIX 5: FOCUS GROUPS/FORUM &amp; POSTAL SURVEY OUTCOMES</b> <b>APPENDIX 6: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE OUTCOMES</b> <b>APPENDIX 7: PUBLICITY POSTER</b> <b>APPENDIX 8: PRESS ARTICLES</b> <b>APPENDIX 9: EIA FOR MERGERS AND CLOSURES</b>
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## Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcomes of the twelve week public consultation regarding the draft proposal to merge Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie as an alternative to an outright closure of West Kirby fire station and re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained".

## Recommendation

2. That Members;
  - a) note the outcomes of the comprehensive and informative Wirral public consultation
  - b) take full and carefully considered account of those outcomes when considering report CFO/058/15 relating to the possible future options for fire cover in West Wirral

## Introduction and Background

3. In January a 12 week consultation process regarding a proposal to merge West

Kirby and Upton fire stations at a new station on Frankby Road, Greasby, as an alternative to the outright closure of West Kirby fire station, concluded with Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council withdrawing the offer of the land. The Fire and Rescue Authority then approved a further 12 week consultation on two options:

A)

- 1. The closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations (each of which houses one wholetime appliance) and the building of a new station at Saughall Massie Road to cover both station areas.*
- 2. The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained" (with a 30-minute recall), whilst;*
- 3. Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the Authority budget.*

OR:

B)

- 1. The outright closure of West Kirby and the relocation of the West Kirby wholetime appliance to Upton as the alternative to merger.*
- 2. The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained" (with a 30-minute recall), whilst;*
- 3. Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the Authority budget.*

4. The Authority also approved a detailed consultation plan. The plan included an online questionnaire, three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups (Saughall Massie and the Upton and West Kirby station areas) and one forum (all-Wirral), three open public meetings (Saughall Massie and the Upton and West Kirby station areas), a stakeholder meeting and several staff consultation meetings. A summary of the outcomes of the consultation are set out at paragraphs 6 – 14 below.
5. The Authority also commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to conduct a postal survey of 10,000 addresses in the areas covered by Upton and West Kirby fire stations. Outcomes are set out at paragraph 44 below.

#### **Summary of outcomes**

- 6. The majority of participants at the deliberative focus groups and forum agreed that the principle of merger was reasonable given the financial challenges facing the Authority. However, the Saughall Massie focus group opposed the specific location. The other focus groups and forum supported the Saughall Massie Road location although there were some concerns about the use of Green Belt land.**
- 7. The Stakeholder (public/private sector) meeting was supportive of the merger proposal.**



8. There was considerable opposition to the merger, particularly the proposed Saughall Massie Road site, at the public meeting in Saughall Massie and in responses to the online questionnaire, the majority again from the residents of Saughall Massie. The majority of those objecting wanted the Authority to close West Kirby fire station and maintain the station at Upton or select another non Green Belt site as an alternative to building a new station on Saughall Massie Road. Some respondents could see the benefits of a new station, but not at that location, citing volume of traffic and use of Green Belt land as objections.
9. The majority of Saughall Massie residents attending meetings and those responding to the questionnaire focussed their comments principally on the proposed site for the new fire station and consequently few objective comments were received on the principle of merging two stations as a way of making necessary savings, whilst maintaining the best operational response provision in the circumstances.
10. There was no significant opposition at the public meeting in Hoylake to the closure of West Kirby fire station. It should be noted that the majority of attendees were not from West Kirby or Hoylake.
11. There was no significant opposition at the public meeting in Woodchurch/Upton to the closure of Upton fire station, which would be required in order to facilitate the proposed merger.
12. There were 129 responses to the online questionnaire. The questionnaire showed 59% disagreed with the proposal to close West Kirby and Upton, building a new station at Saughall Massie. The majority of respondents were from the Saughall Massie area.
13. There were 1351 responses to the postal survey. The respondents to the postal survey showed an absolute majority supported the proposal to close West Kirby and Upton, building a new station at Saughall Massie (51% of Upton station area residents and 70% of West Kirby). Overall 57%.
14. Opinions at the public focus groups and forum varied sharply depending on their place of residence with strong opposition to the Saughall Massie site only in that area. Support for the Saughall Massie site was overwhelming in the other two focus groups and in the all-Wirral forum. Centralising emergency cover in Upton was unanimously opposed in West Kirby and a majority opposed this option in Upton and at the all-Wirral forum.

### **Promoting and marketing the consultation**

15. On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 an initial consultation document and on-line survey were published on the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service website (Appendix 1). Facebook, Twitter and a press release were used to launch the consultation. The

consultation launch was reported by the Wirral Globe and Liverpool Echo.

16. Consultation documentation was printed and distributed widely across West Wirral and at all consultation events, published on the Authority website and promoted via social media and the press. This included delivery, by hand, to over 900 households in the Saughall Massie area. Consultation documents were placed in public buildings, local shops and businesses across West Wirral, (approx. 125).
17. Social media was frequently used by the Authority during the consultation period to direct people to information and encourage participation in the consultation. The public meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup> saw the Wirral Globe sending numerous tweets to their 11,800 followers. The Liverpool Echo tweeted about the second public meeting to their 205,000 followers. MFRS Twitter and Facebook were extensively used.
18. Advertisements and articles (appendix 7&8) promoting the consultation process were published in local district newsletters and Wirral Older People's Parliament March newsletter. Leaflets and posters, created by the MFRS Corporate Communications team, highlighting the public meeting dates were printed and distributed across the station areas affected.
19. Opinion Research Services (ORS) carried out a postal survey of 10,000 homes in the affected areas. These addresses were randomly selected.
20. The Wirral District Manager and the Wirral District Management Team consulted with uniformed and non-uniformed staff in the Wirral District to explain the proposals within the Chief Fire Officer's consultation presentation and to seek their views. The consultation was highlighted in the staff magazine Hot News.
21. The Wirral District Manager and Wirral District Management Team also distributed information to their respective partnerships, including the Wirral Public Service Board, Local Public Service Boards, Health & Wellbeing Board, Community Safety Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce, encouraging attendance at the stakeholder meeting.

### **Media Interest**

22. The consultation process attracted media interest with the Wirral Globe and Liverpool Echo reporting on developments and carrying readers' letters on the subject. The Chief Fire Officer was interviewed on Radio Merseyside to promote the consultation process and the public meetings in particular. Examples of press articles can be found at Appendix 8.

### **The consultation events**

23. The consultation events that took place are detailed below. The focus groups and public meetings took place in the evening.
    - 13<sup>th</sup> April – Focus Group (Saughall Massie) – St Mary's Centre.
    - 15<sup>th</sup> April – Focus Group (West Kirby) – Westbourne Hall.
-

- 16<sup>th</sup> April – Focus Group (Upton) – Holy Cross Church Hall.
  - 20<sup>th</sup> April – Public Meeting (Saughall Massie) – St Mary’s Centre
  - 27<sup>th</sup> April – Stakeholders Meeting – Holiday Inn, Hoylake
  - 28<sup>th</sup> April – Public Meeting (Upton) – Holy Cross Church Hall
  - 5<sup>th</sup> May – Public Meeting (West Kirby) – The Parade, Hoylake
  - 13<sup>th</sup> May – Joint Forum (All West Wirral) – Birkenhead fire station
24. The focus groups and forum were deliberative meetings, facilitated by Opinion Research Services (ORS), the contractor for the Authority’s Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Forums. Participants were randomly selected from the relevant West Wirral area and invited to attend.
  25. The stakeholders’ breakfast meeting was promoted amongst public and private sector partners in Wirral.
  26. The public meetings were open meetings which anyone could attend. No one was recruited or specifically invited. They were however widely publicised as detailed above. The public meetings were listening events where people could offer their views. No vote was taken on whether or not people agreed with the proposals, because public meetings cannot be guaranteed as statistically representative of the population. Questionnaires were available for completion at the meetings.
  27. The breakfast meeting and open public meetings were organised, promoted and delivered by Authority staff. Authority staff were also heavily involved in the organisation of the ORS facilitated focus groups and several uniformed and non-uniformed staff attended each meeting to provide advice and organisational support.
  28. In addition, the Chief Fire Officer and other officers met with the local MPs and councillors during the consultation period.
  29. The Chief Fire Officer also met with the Wirral Older People’s Parliament and the Saughall Massie Village Conservation Area Society.

## **Outcomes from the consultation**

### **On line questionnaire**

30. Full analysis of the online questionnaire results can be found at Appendix 6. The following paragraphs provide an overview:
31. There were 129 responses to the online survey.

32. Most respondents 59.1% (75 from 129) strongly disagreed with closing West Kirby and Upton fire stations and building a new station at Saughall Massie Road. However if those respondents who strongly agreed and tended to agree with the proposal are combined 40.2% (51) are broadly in favour of the development.
33. When asked if the outright closure of West Kirby fire station, as an alternative to the merger at Saughall Massie Road, was preferable the majority 52% (64), of respondents disagreed with this proposal. 38.5% (47) agreed this was their preferred option.
34. Post code analysis shows that the vast majority of respondents (75 of 127) live in the CH46 and CH49 post code area (which includes Saughall Massie and Greasby). Of those responses 54 (76.1%) strongly disagreed with the proposal to close West Kirby and Upton and build a new station at Saughall Massie.

### **Focus groups and forum**

35. Full information about the focus groups and forums can be found at Appendix 7. The following paragraphs provide an overview:
36. As Members will recall, the three public consultation meetings reported here followed an earlier all-Merseyside 'listening and engagement' process held in January 2014 that considered a wide range of options for the Authority in the context of significant cuts to its budget over the course of the last Parliament. This was followed by a full 12 week consultation from January to March 2015 on the site in Greasby (which resulted in Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council withdrawing the site). Having taken account of those earlier meetings and all the other available evidence, the Authority formulated the current draft proposals for Wirral.
37. The four meetings (three focus groups and one forum) used a 'deliberative' approach to encourage members of the public to reflect in depth about the Fire and Rescue Service, while receiving and questioning background information and discussing the proposals in detail. Each of the meetings lasted for at least two-and-a-half hours and in total there were 49 diverse participants.
38. As usual, the participants were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from the ORS Social Research Call Centre. Having been initially contacted by phone, they were written to – to confirm the arrangements; and those who agreed to come then received telephone or written reminders shortly before each meeting. Such recruitment by telephone is normally the most effective way of ensuring that all the participants are independently recruited.
39. There was a diverse range of participants from the local areas.

<b>Location (station area)</b>	<b>Type of meeting and number attending</b>
Upton	Focus Group - 8
Saughall Massie	Focus Group - 10
West Kirby	Focus Group - 9
All Wirral	Forum - 22

40. Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, deliberative forums cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the four meetings that took place gave diverse groups of people from Wirral, the opportunity to comment in detail on the Authority's proposals for the District's fire stations. As a result, ORS are satisfied that the outcomes of the meeting (as summarised below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.
41. A significant part of the meetings explored any proposals that the participants might have for alternative ways of making the savings.
42. The key overall findings regarding the draft proposals (a) to close two fire stations and to consolidate the emergency cover at one new station (the merger) and (b) to close West Kirby fire station outright as an alternative to the merger at Saughall Massie were as follows:

### **In Saughall Massie**

Seven out of nine people in the group opposed a new station in Saughall Massie: only one person found it acceptable and there was one 'don't know'.

Above all, most of the group wanted to protect the Green Belt area from development of all kinds.

They were unanimously opposed to the inclusion of a large tower on any fire station in Saughall Massie (on the grounds that it would be visually very intrusive).

Seven out of nine did not want the fire station (if developed) to include an ambulance base (on the grounds that this would increase the scale of the development).

The group was broadly divided on the question of whether some community facilities should be included.

By a ratio of two-to-one the participants also rejected the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine. The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues.

If a station were to be built there, the Saughall Massie residents wanted it to be as small and unobtrusive as possible.

### **In Upton**

Slightly more than half of the eight participants accepted that, in principle, the closure of two fire stations and their replacement with a new station would be reasonable, but the others were 'don't know's'.

Five of the eight thought it reasonable to site the proposed new station in Saughall Massie, but two were opposed and there was one 'don't know'.

Most of the group opposed the use of a Green Belt site: no one specifically

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supported it, but there were three 'don't knows'.

The group was equally divided on whether a fire station in Saughall Massie should include a tower; but all agreed that alternative training facilities would be reasonable.

The group also unanimously supported the inclusion of an ambulance base and community facilities, if the station were built there.

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable.

The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues.

### **In West Kirby**

The participants all accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle.

They were also unanimous that the Saughall Massie site was a suitable location for the new station.

Nine of the ten participants felt it was reasonable to site a fire station in the Green Belt (in this case).

The option of providing cover from Upton fire station only was opposed by everyone.

The group was concerned that centralising cover at Upton would disproportionately jeopardise the elderly and socially deprived in West Kirby.

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable.

Four out of ten participants thought that the introduction of some community retained firefighters is an option that should at least be explored by the Authority, as an alternative way of saving money; but six were opposed to this idea.

### **In the all-Wirral Forum**

All except one of the 22 participants readily accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle.

The same majority supported using the Saughall Massie site rather than centralising services at Upton.

The forum was unanimous that in this case it was reasonable to develop a Green Belt site.

The option of providing emergency cover from Upton fire station only was supported by only one person.

However, by a ratio of ten-to-one the forum felt that, if the Saughall Massie site became unavailable for any reason, it would be acceptable then to base local emergency services at Upton.

One member of the forum was concerned that basing cover at Upton would jeopardise young people in a special needs school in West Kirby.

With only one opposed, the participants thought it was reasonable to include a tower on the Saughall Massie site in order to facilitate training – but they thought its visual impact should be minimised.

All the participants thought that the inclusion of some community facilities was reasonable.

There was a broad division of opinion in respect of whether ambulance facilities should be co-located at the site – and those against were concerned that ambulance mobilisations would cause more disturbance than the less frequent fire engine movements.

A large absolute majority of participants (19) accepted that it was reasonable to change the status of the second fire engine: there were only three ‘don’t knows’.

### **Overall assessment**

The Saughall Massie site was strongly opposed *only in* the Saughall Massie focus group, and then not by all participants.

The majority at West Kirby and the all Wirral forum agreed that it was reasonable to site a fire station on Green Belt but most participants at Saughall Massie and Upton opposed the use of Green Belt with a number of ‘don’t knows’ at both meetings.

The groups were divided on the inclusion of a training tower at the new station. Saughall Massie unanimously opposed this proposal while the other groups were divided but agreed some sort of training facility would be reasonable.

The majority of participants agreed it was reasonable to change the status of the second fire engine apart from the Saughall Massie group with a ratio of two-to-one opposing the proposal.

A limited number of equality and diversity issues were raised, relating to centralising at Upton and the impact on the elderly, socially deprived and a special needs school all in West Kirby.

### **Postal Survey**

43. For the first time during a public consultation ORS were engaged to carry out a postal survey of 10,000 homes, 5000 in Upton fire station areas (including Saughall Massie) and 5000 in West Kirby station area. The survey was sent out in week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> April with the cut-off date for return by 15<sup>th</sup> May. The addresses were selected at random.

A total of 1351 completed questionnaires were returned (577 from Upton station areas and 774 from West Kirby) yielding an overall response rate of 14% (11% Upton, 16% West Kirby). Saughall Massie residents accounted for 11% of the initial contact sample, but accounted for 17% of the survey respondents.

The survey questionnaire covered the same two options as the deliberative meetings including the additional draft proposal for a second appliance.

An absolute majority of residents in both fire station areas preferred Option 1 (the proposal to close West Kirby and Upton, building a new station at Saughall Massie) (51% in Upton and 70% in West Kirby). In Upton 41% preferred Option 2 (outright closure of West Kirby and moving fire cover to Upton fire station) but in West Kirby just 21% preferred closing West Kirby and using Upton fire station.

Overall the responses from both areas yielded a majority of 57% in favour of Option , merging Upton and West Kirby fire stations at Saughall Massie.

The full report can be found at Appendix 7.

### **Stakeholder meeting and open public meetings**

44. The format for the public meetings and stakeholder meetings was a formal presentation by the Chief Fire Officer giving the reasons for the changes being proposed and details of the actual merger process and its likely impact on Authority operational activities.
  45. A Wirral Council Officer attended each of the public meetings but they were limited in their responses to questions due the purdah period prior to a general election. They did however explain planning policy and process when relevant.
  46. This was followed by an invitation for people to ask questions of the Authority managers who attended the event. Appendix 4 details the questions raised at the meetings and the responses given.
  47. The stakeholders meeting was attended by 3 people and generated a significant number of questions (see Appendix 4 for details).
  48. The public meetings were well attended and in the case of Saughall Massie, oversubscribed. 17 people attended the West Kirby meeting, 21 attended Upton and in the region of 120 attended the Saughall Massie meeting with around the same number unable to get into the venue (those unable to attend the meeting were redirected to the Upton and Hoylake public meetings . The questions and answers are captured in Appendix 4.
  49. There was significant opposition expressed at the Saughall Massie meeting to the proposal to build on the Saughall Massie Road site. At each public meeting, the Chief Fire Officer explained the financial challenges, the operational basis for the proposed fire station (including possible alternatives) and that the proposed site was being considered as it was the only site offered by Wirral Council in the area. The Chief Fire Officer also made it clear that a number of other sites had been considered but only Saughall Massie Road met the required conditions for mobilising to both West Kirby and Upton in under 10 minutes, aside from one site (also Green Belt) which was in private ownership, and despite approaches with regards to purchasing land, no response had been received. The Chief Fire Officer emphasised his priority is public safety and that the issues around Green Belt were a planning matter to be addressed if the proposal reached the planning stage with Wirral MBC.
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50. At the meetings the Chief Fire Officer established that the audience understood the importance of attendance times, but when the proposed location was discussed, several of those opposing the site made it clear that they had little concern for attendance times to West Kirby, preferring to retain the station at Upton to ensure that a new station wasn't built in Saughall Massie. It is very clear that, as in the Greasby consultation, some people were unable to distinguish between the Authority's duty to provide emergency response cover and Wirral Council's duties in relation to planning and land use. However, the presence of a senior Council officer was useful in helping to explain the difference. Other attendees understood the logic of building a new station in a central location to equalise attendance times between Upton and West Kirby, but objected to the use of the Saughall Massie Road site.
51. There were several requests at the Saughall Massie meeting for a second meeting to be held to accommodate the people who were unable to get into the meeting due to the size of the venue (which was recommended by a local councillor as being the most suitable). Following consideration by the Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the Authority it was decided not to hold a second meeting in Saughall Massie for the following reasons:
- There was clearly very strong opposition to the proposal to merge at Saughall Massie and it was expected that those people unable to attend the meeting would hold a similar view at any second meeting. As a result, no value would be added by holding a second meeting.
  - Officers from the Service, including the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, stayed outside the meeting with those people who could not get in and provided information and answered questions. It can therefore be assumed with some confidence that upwards of 200 people opposed the merger at the Saughall Massie meeting
  - There were still two other public meetings scheduled, at Hoylake and Upton (the latter was a short distance from Saughall Massie and both are in the same station area). Neither meeting was well attended.
52. In West Kirby, there was some concern about the possible closure of the fire station but also concern about the Saughall Massie site which was expressed by Saughall Massie residents that had attended the meeting, accounting for approximately half of the attendees.
53. As in West Kirby, the Upton meeting had a large proportion of Saughall Massie residents present who were concerned about the site, increased traffic and loss of Green Belt. There were also a number of questions about the construction of a 40ft training tower to which the Chief Fire Officer assured people this was not the only option, a training house could be built, but that crews must have somewhere to train.
54. One suggestion advanced within the consultation questionnaire responses and at the public consultation meetings has been the use of Rapid Response Vehicles (RRV) or Brigade Response Vehicles (BRV) as used by other Fire and Rescue
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Services. A full response to this suggestion is included in CFO/058/15, which is elsewhere on this agenda.

55. Another concern among attendees at forum/public meetings and in correspondence was the potential danger of fire appliances on the roads in the area of Saughall Massie. A full response to this suggestion is included in CFO/058/15, which is elsewhere on this agenda.

### **Other meetings with interested groups and individuals**

56. The Chief Fire Officer and other officers held a significant number of meetings with the local MP's and councillors before and during the consultation period to ensure they were fully sighted on the proposals and the financial reasons as to why they were necessary. Meetings were also held with the Wirral Older People's Parliament and the Saughall Massie Village Conservation Area Society. Other stakeholders understood the need for change, although not welcoming it and specifically in the latter case, objecting to the location.

### **Correspondence and requests for information**

57. The Service received far fewer individual requests for information and/or objections and complaints during this consultation than during the previous consultation relating to the Greasby site. These requests were each responded to personally in detail by the Chief Fire Officer or other senior officers, or were handled as Freedom of Information (Fol) requests. The correspondence dealt with such matters as response times, why the Saughall Massie location had been proposed, why use Green Belt land, concerns about wildlife, traffic concerns, etc. Each request was different, even when the subject areas were similar and responses were thoroughly researched and considered. The vast majority of correspondence was from people who expressed that they were opposed to the Saughall Massie site.

58. There were:

- 20 enquiries from members of the public (some included a number of emails)
- 4 extended email enquiries from local Councillors

Emails and correspondence can be found at Appendix 2 and 3.

59. There were 8 Freedom of Information requests (6 from the same person) dealing with:

- Correspondence between private landowners and MFRA
  - Copies of correspondence between MFRA and Wirral MBC.
  - Location and response times to emergency calls in both station areas during 2013/14 and 2014/15.
  - Estimated costs of merging Upton and West Kirby fire stations at Saughall Massie.
-

- Correspondence from WBC confirming the Greasby site 'would not be made available'.
- Topographical survey of Saughall Massie
- Typical sound levels in decibels of all emergency alarms including combined engine noise generated during a call out, measured from the front of a facility of this type.
- Approximate dimensions of a typical fire station perimeter wall and tower height, which must be fairly standard for facilities of this type, so a proper and informed assessment can be made of its impact.
- The FOI responses are available on request.

### **Staff consultation**

60. The Wirral District Management Team consulted with staff in the District during the consultation period. This was in addition to earlier consultation regarding the proposal during the first public consultation and included setting up a section of the Intranet Portal where relevant documents and information was posted for staff to access. Meetings took place between managers on the District and each watch where the Chief Fire Officer's public meeting presentation was utilised.
61. This resulted in crews building on their previous knowledge of the operational response options for West Wirral and having a full understanding of the proposals when they engaged with the public during the period (they also distributed consultation documentation). In general the staff, although not supportive of station closures themselves, understood the reasons behind the merger proposals. Some staff also attended the public meetings.

### **Petition**

62. A petition with 129 signatures was received at the end of the consultation period. This is a separate item on this agenda.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

63. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 9.
  64. The EIA has found that the attendees at the focus groups and forums were broadly representative of the residents of the areas affected, as were the respondents to the postal survey and questionnaire.
  65. Some concerns were expressed in the focus groups and forums regarding the potential for negative impact on older and disabled people in West Kirby's station area. The merger proposal is designed to mitigate this impact, but the Service would endeavour to ensure that targeted prevention work takes place to reduce
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risk, regardless of which option is approved by the Authority.

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### **Staff Implications**

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66. Wirral and Headquarters staff have been engaged in the process, as they were during the previous consultation. They contributed to the planning and delivery of the consultation process and were instrumental in engaging with the public, distributing information, attending public meetings and answering questions.

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### **Legal Implications**

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67. It is considered that in carrying out the extensive twelve week consultation in the manner that it has, MFRA has fully complied with legal requirements and best practice guidelines.

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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68. The total costs associated with the consultation were as follows:

Room hire and refreshments - £548.00

British Sign Language interpreters - £375.00

Focus group and forum facilitation – £10,870.00

Architectural feasibility study for two different options & producing plans for the public meetings - £15,000

Contribution to publication of Wirral Older Persons Parliament newsletter - £100.00

Print of newsletters & postage for postal survey, preparation of survey and reporting - £19,195.00

Article in Messenger magazine - £255.00

Total - £46,343.00

69. All costs were met from existing budgets and there was no additional (direct) cost arising from staff attendance at evening meetings.
70. As detailed above, it is considered that the deliberative forums and survey offer value for money as it is considered that relying solely on open public meetings would not have provided Members with sufficient information about the views of the public of Wirral to enable them to make an informed decision about how to proceed.
71. For the first time, the Authority invested in a postal survey in order to gauge the views of a broad range and larger number of local residents on its operational response proposals. Public meetings are very useful for gathering feedback from local people, but by their very nature attract people who already hold strong views for or against a proposal. Following the consultation in Greasby, the Authority felt it was essential to establish whether or not local people generally supported its proposal to mitigate the impact of budget cuts on operational response in addition to the views expressed by a relatively small but vocal group of people who objected to the proposals for reasons related to planning, not operational response.
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**Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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72. It is considered that MFRA has reduced corporate risk by carrying out extensive meaningful consultation and considering the outcomes of that consultation before making any final decisions on the merger proposals. There are no health and safety or environmental implications arising from this report.

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**Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters***

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73. Entering into a period of twelve weeks meaningful consultation in Wirral has allowed the public and other stakeholders to carefully consider the implications of budget cuts on the Authority and contribute valuable opinions that will be considered by the Authority when it makes its final decision.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**CFO/111/11** If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>MFRA</b>	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority
<b>MFRS</b>	Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
<b>TRV</b>	Targeted Response Vehicle
<b>ORS</b>	Opinion Research Services
<b>LLAR</b>	Low Level of Activity and Risk

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Merseyside  
**FIRE & RESCUE  
SERVICE**

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# **Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority**

## **WEST WIRRAL FIRE COVER CONSULTATION**

**March 2015**

## **Introduction**

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) has begun a 12-week consultation on proposed changes to its emergency response cover in West Wirral. The consultation runs from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The decision to enter into a second round of consultation regarding proposals to merge West Kirby and Upton fire stations was taken by the Authority after considering the comments and responses made to the initial consultation, which ran from October 2014 to January 2015.

The second public consultation will consider two options that were agreed by the Fire and Rescue Authority on January 29, 2015:

- A)
  1. The closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations, the building of a new station at Saughall Massie Road.
  2. The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained" (with a 30-minute recall), whilst;
  3. Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the Authority budget.
  
- B)
  1. The outright closure of West Kirby as the alternative to merger.
  2. The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained" (with a 30-minute recall), whilst;
  3. Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the Authority budget.





The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to the Fire and Rescue Authority in June 2015.

The consultation process will involve public meetings at locations in Saughall Massie, Upton and West Kirby, a stakeholders' meeting at Hoylake, three focus groups and a joint forum.

**The public meetings will be held for this consultation on the following dates:**

- **Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> April, starting at 6.30pm at the St Mary's Centre, 127 Saughall Massie Road, CH49 4LA.**
- **Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, at Holy Cross Church community rooms, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS, starting at 6.30pm.**
- **Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> May, at Hoylake Parade Community Centre, Hoyle Lane, Hoylake, CH47 3AG, starting at 6.30pm.**

This consultation document is being distributed in public buildings, local stores and businesses across West Wirral. It is available on our website [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk) along with an online survey at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall\\_massie](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall_massie) You can email us at [consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk) or write to us at Wirral Consultation, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Bridle Road, Bootle, L30 4YD.

## **Why is Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service having to change?**

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) is responsible for providing fire and rescue services for Merseyside's 1.4 million people at 26 stations across the five districts. This currently includes six Wirral stations: Birkenhead, Bromborough, Heswall, Upton, Wallasey and West Kirby.

Over the last four years, MFRA has had to make savings of £20 million as a result of Government spending cuts and now the Authority is required to make a further £6.3 million savings in 2015/16. It is also possible that future savings will be required – whichever political party is in power – possibly up to £9.1 million in 2016/17 and potentially up to £20 million in total by 2020.

MFRA has already made significant reductions in its support services and staffing. The number of firefighters MFRA employs has reduced from 1,400 to 764 over the period, with fire appliances reduced from 42 to 28 across the county. All but two stations now have only one appliance.

What has not changed is the number of community fire stations (26) and the Authority will not be able to afford to maintain all of them in the future.

To save the £6.3 million in 2015/16 the Authority has identified £2.9 million from support services (such as finance, human resources and estates management) and technical areas such as debt financing. The remaining £3.4 million, therefore, has to come from our emergency response and this will require the equivalent of at least four station mergers or outright closures.

The Authority is making these changes reluctantly, but the situation is such that the existing number of fire stations cannot be maintained in the future.

### **The options considered**

Before producing proposals to change fire cover across Merseyside, the Authority considered a number of options and consulted the public about them.

The options were:

- Some outright station closures.
- Increasing the number of “Low Level of Activity and Risk” (LLAR) stations.
- Some station mergers.
- Crewing some stations only during the day.
- Using community retained firefighters to crew some stations.

**(Full details of these options are provided from Page 13)**

The merger of stations was recognised by the public as the best option given the circumstances; having the least impact on operational response. The closure of stations was preferred over changes to the way fire stations and fire engines are crewed (because they understood that it is firefighters and fire engines that save lives, not the fire stations).

Following this consultation, three possible mergers were identified as offering opportunities to replace old buildings with new facilities in locations which offer the best incident response coverage possible in the circumstances. The draft proposals were to:

1. Close the stations at Huyton and Whiston while building a new station at Prescott;
2. Close the stations at Upton and West Kirby while providing a new station at a central location (initially the Frankby Road, Greasby, site);
3. Close the stations at Eccleston and St Helens while providing a new station in the proximity of St Helens Town Centre.

Each of these merged stations would have two fire engines. In each case, one fire engine would be crewed 24/7 (as now) while the other would be a reserve, or back-up vehicle to be crewed by “wholetime retained” firefighters on a 30-minute recall basis for periods of exceptionally high demand.

A fourth merger in Liverpool has also been considered but given the age and proximity of stations it was proposed that outright closure of a station would be the most sensible option. Following consultation, MFRA has confirmed the closure of Allerton Fire Station.

The Fire and Rescue Authority believes that each of these changes results in the least impact on operational performance and will provide significant savings.

## **Incident Reductions**

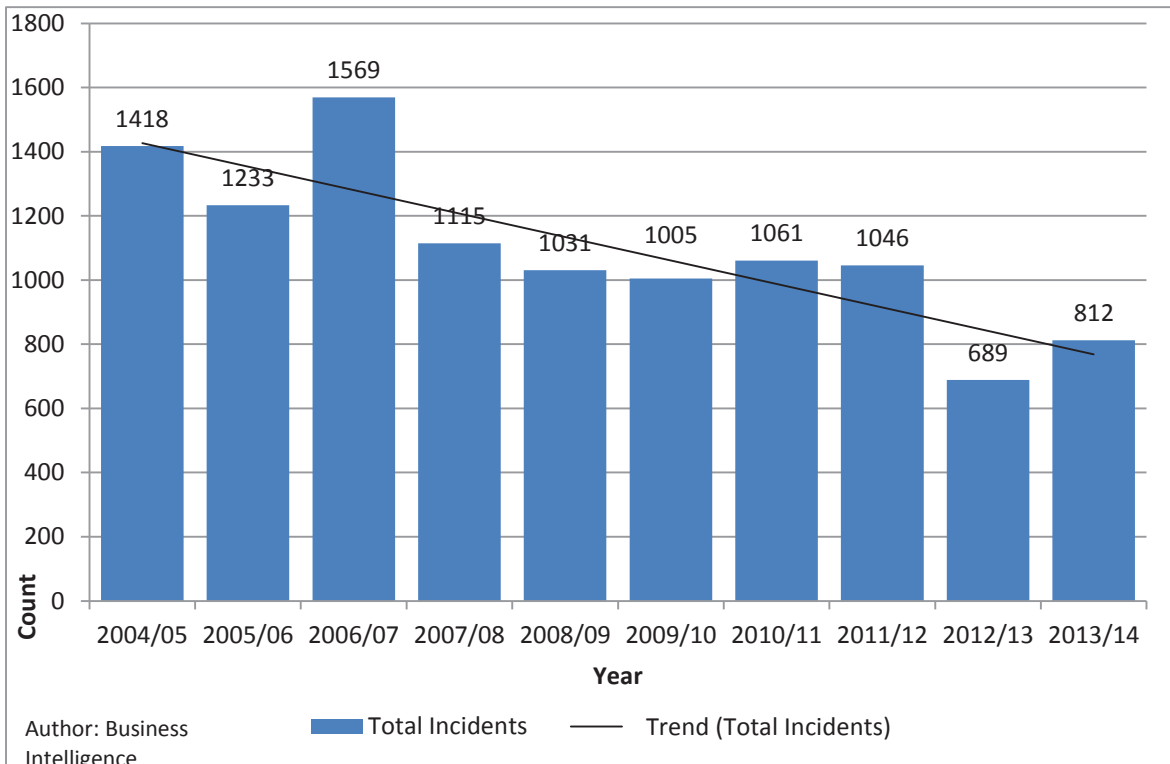
Over the last 10 years, incidents across Merseyside have reduced by 55%.

Upton has seen a fall of 47.5% (1,128 incidents attended during 2004/5 to 592 during 2013/14). West Kirby has seen a reduction in incidents of 24.1% (from 290 incidents attended during 2004/5 to 220 during 2013/14).

Over the last five years there have been two accidental fire deaths and one road traffic collision (RTC) fatality in the Upton station area. One accidental fire death and 1 RTC fatality have occurred in the West Kirby station area over the last five years.

While the number of fatalities is low, the level of risk is still high as the worst outcome from a fire or RTC is a fatality.

## **Total Incidents Attended within Upton and West Kirby between 2004/05 and 2013/14.**



## **Response implications of the merger option or outright closure of West Kirby**

### **Introduction**

How quickly a fire appliance is able to respond when a fire or other life risk incident occurs remains a top priority for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MF&RS). Cuts to budgets and subsequent changes to emergency response will always have an impact on response times. The

Authority's proposal is designed to minimise the impact of the cuts and maintain as fast a response as possible to all parts of West Wirral.

## **Current response times**

The current mean average response time to a life risk incident on the West Kirby station area is **5 minutes 24 seconds**. The current mean average response time to a life risk incident on the Upton station area is **4 minutes 34 seconds**.

This is significantly quicker than the MFRA **10-minute response standard** and the national mean average response time of **7 minutes 24 seconds** which is only for dwelling fires and does not include road traffic collision.

## **Predicted response times**

### **West Kirby closure**

The mean average response time to a life risk incident in the West Kirby station area from Upton, following outright closure, would be **8 minutes 43 seconds** – with longer actual run times to Hoylake. Parts of Hoylake would not be reachable within the MFRA 10-minute response standard.

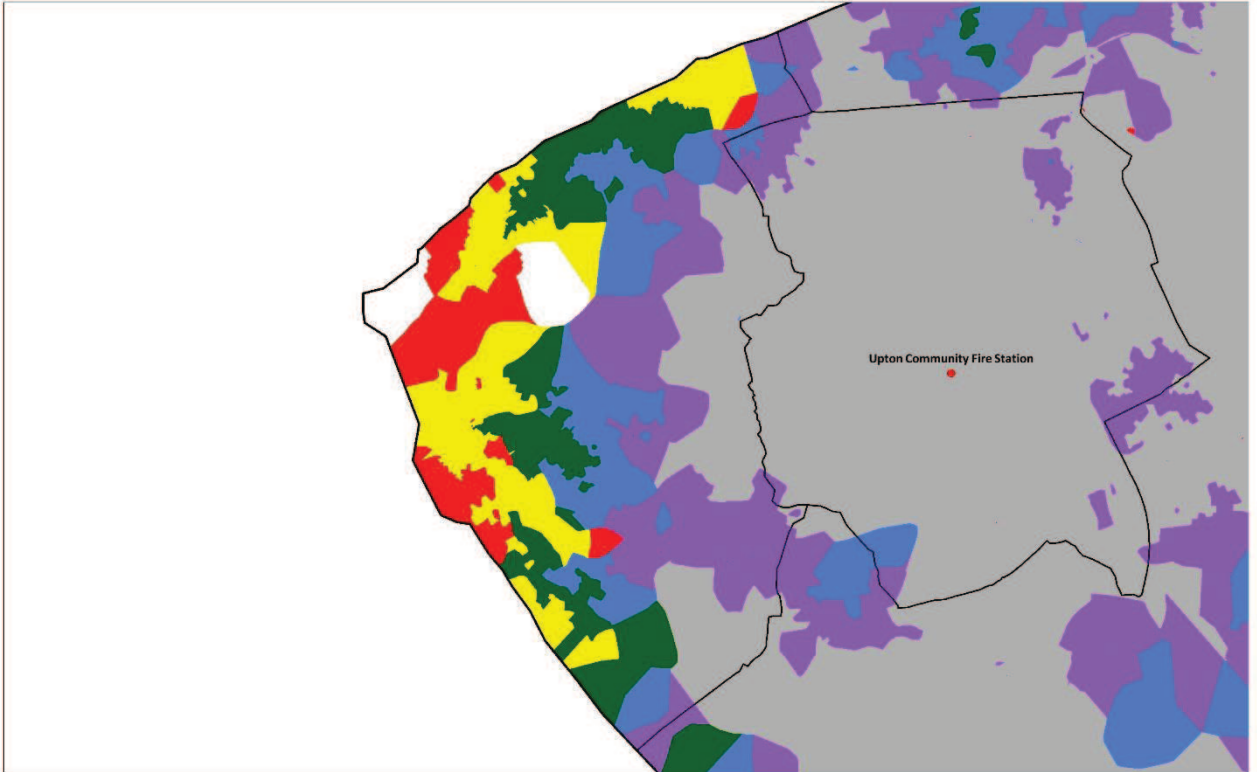
### **Merger option**

If West Kirby and Upton closed and a new station was built in Saughall Massie then the mean average run time to life risk incidents on the Upton station area would be **5 minutes 3 seconds**. The mean average run time to incidents in the West Kirby area from Saughall Massie would be **6 minutes 38 seconds, 2 minutes 5 seconds** quicker than the alternative outright closure of West Kirby Station.

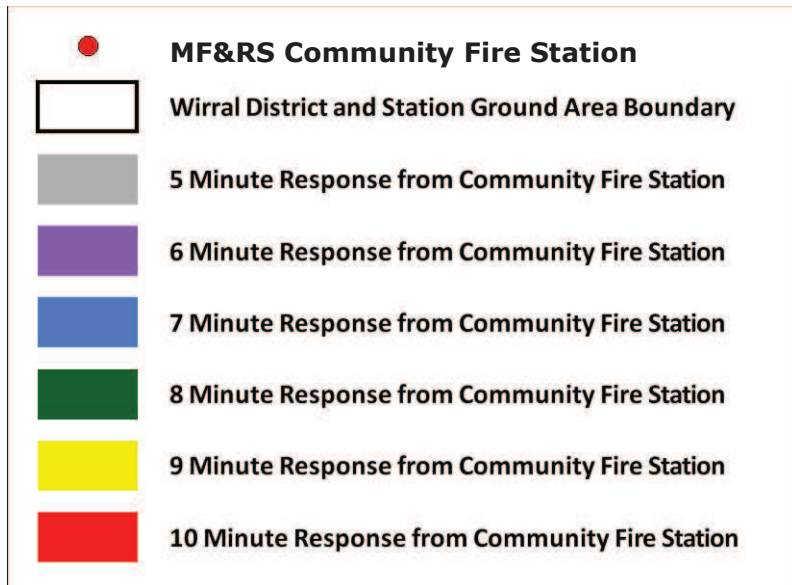
Overall, mean average response times to incidents for the combined station area of Upton and West Kirby would be **5 minutes 41 seconds**.

All the predicted response times, following a merger, remain faster than the national average.

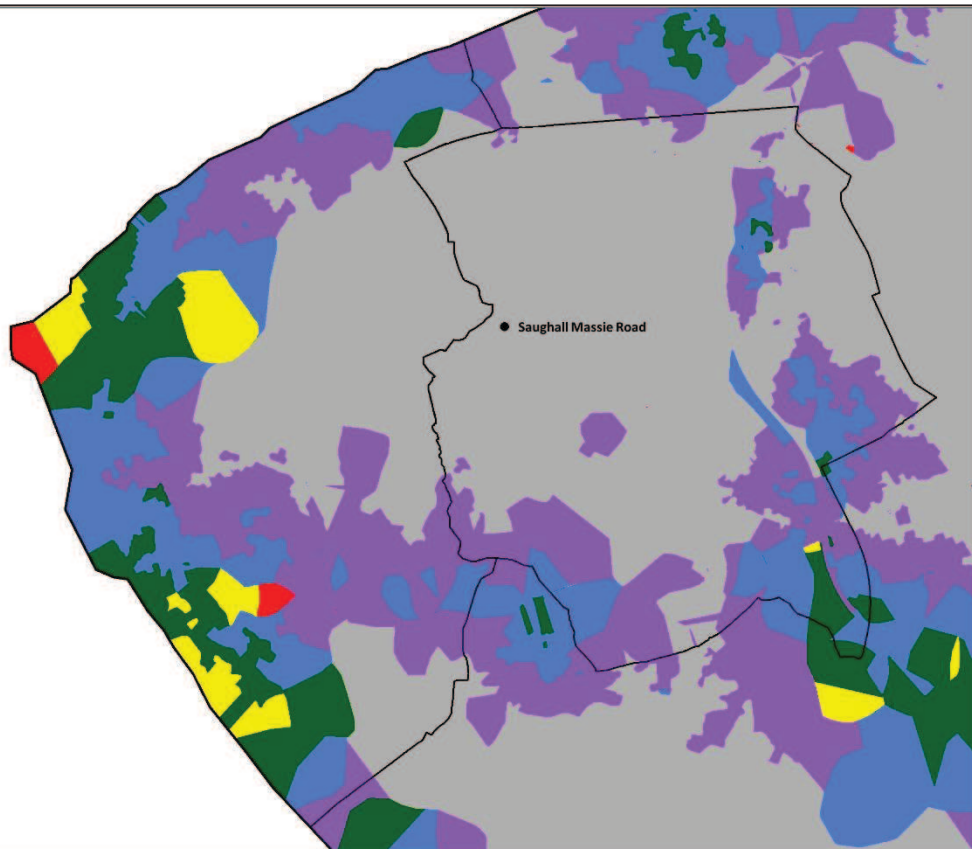
The map below, shows the current response times on West Wirral from Upton Community Fire Station.



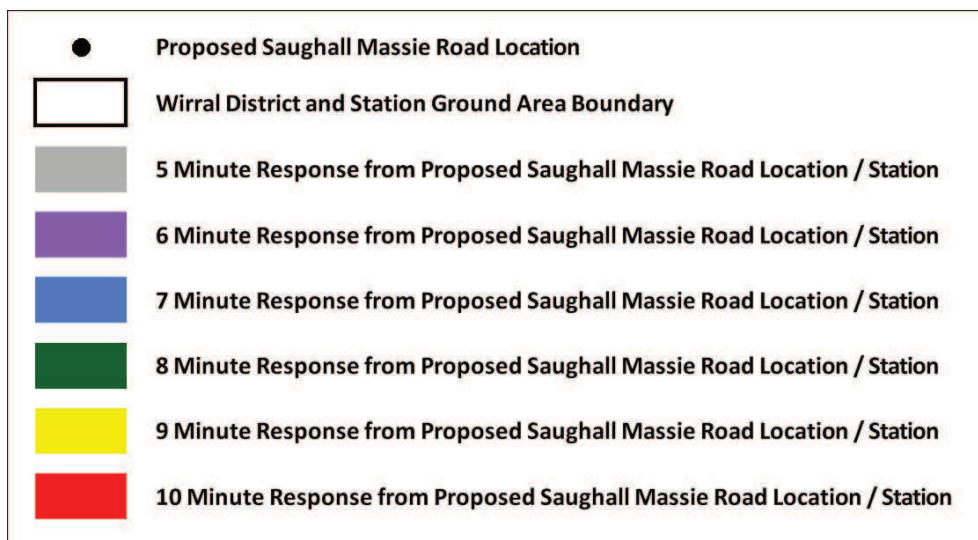
© Crown copyright and database rights 2015 Ordnance Survey 100026956.



The map below, shows the response times to the West Kirby and Upton station areas from the proposed new station site at Saughall Massie Road.



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## **Saughall Massie Road proposed station location**

The Fire and Rescue Authority proposal involves building a new fire station as close to the mid-point between West Kirby and Upton station areas as possible. The actual mid-point is the Three Lanes End roundabout. All the land in that area is Green Belt and with the exception of the proposed site, is in private ownership. The only land that is both close to the mid-point and available to the LB Fire and Rescue Authority is the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road.



## **Sketch Proposal of how the station could look**

On Pages 12 and 13 are sketch proposals to give an initial indication of how both the site and the building could look as a two-storey and single storey development.

These proposals are a work in progress and would need to be developed further so that any new community fire station would be an effective, fully



functioning operational and community facility and to ensure that its design would be sympathetic to its location.

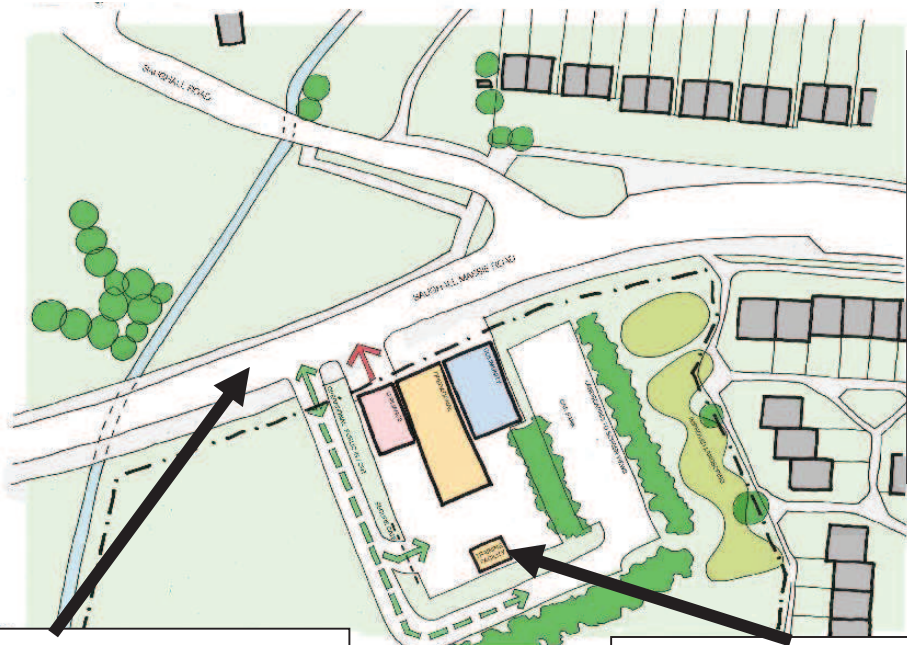
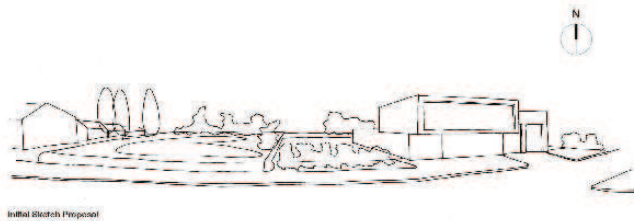
Using materials that are appropriate to the building's semi-rural location and to its proximity to the Saughall Massie Conservation area, a new fire station could be designed to integrate it into the local traditional building style in the area, while at the same time lessening its visual impact, so that it would maintain the character of its surroundings.

During this consultation, MFRA will be reviewing the developing design with the local planning authority and statutory consultees, prior to any final decision being made and to assist with this we would welcome comments from the local community.

The Service is also in discussions with the North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (NWAS) regarding the housing of one or two ambulances and staff on the site. This would add an additional appliance bay, but no decision has yet been taken on this.

**The following facilities could be included in a fire station on Saughall Massie Road:** Three appliance engine bays, training facilities for firefighters including a training tower, staff accommodation, lecture room, gymnasium, community and youth team rooms.

**Two-storey sketch proposal.**

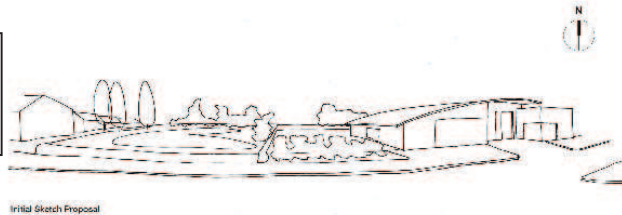


**The red arrow shows where the fire engine would exit the engine bays.**

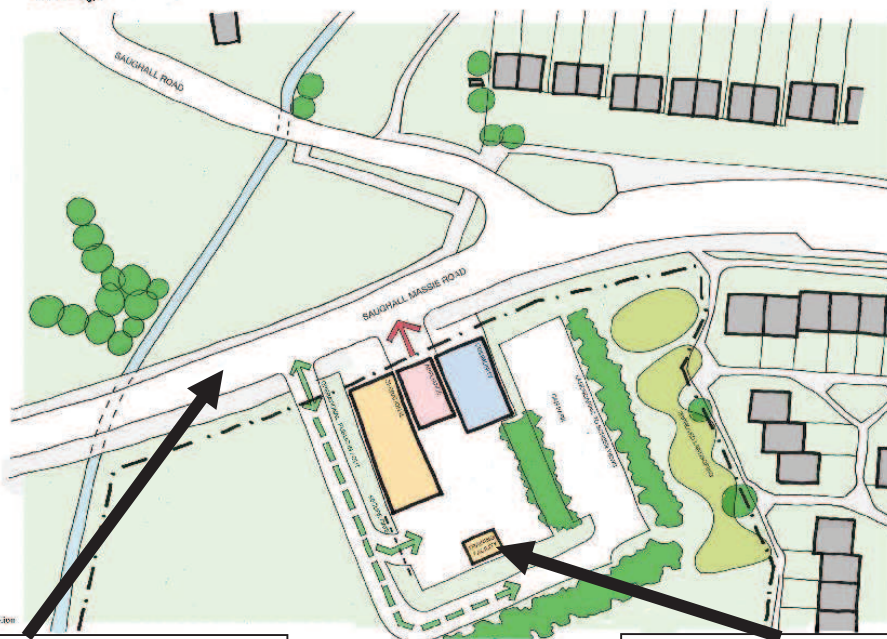
**Saughall Massie Road.**

**Training facility.**

## Single-storey sketch proposal.



Adjacency Diagram



The red arrow shows where the fire engine would exit the engine bays.

Saughall Massie Road.

Training facility.

## Summary

For the reasons given in this document, the proposal to close both West Kirby and Upton fire stations and build a new station in Saughall Massie provide a better response to people living in the combined station areas than simply closing West Kirby.

The Authority is committed to minimising the impact of cuts and welcomes alternative suggestions about how the savings could be made. The Authority will take full account of your views before making a final decision.

## Alternative Options Considered

The information below gives more detail about why the Authority has approved the draft proposal for Wirral, a detailed explanation of the alternative options to closing stations and the operational rationale as to why the Chief Fire Officer has discounted them at this time.

## **Operational Context**

Paragraph 3.2 of the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority scheme of delegation places the following responsibilities on the Chief Fire Officer;

To control all matters of the day to day administration of the Fire & Rescue Service which shall include taking and implementing decisions that are:-

- (a) Concerned with maintaining the operational effectiveness of the Service,
- (b) Matters incidental to the discharge of the Authority's functions which fall within a policy decision taken by the Authority.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England directs that "The fire and rescue authority must hold their Chief Fire Officer to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service".

The Chief Fire Officer is therefore responsible for all operational matters and is held to account by the Authority for decisions taken in this regard.

The financial challenges faced by MFRA and why the changes need to be made are detailed earlier in this document.

The Authority currently has 26 fire stations and 28 fire appliances. Of the 26 fire stations, 24 have one fire appliance and two, Kirkdale and Southport, have two fire appliances. Kirkdale is the Operational Resource Centre for the Authority housing all of the non-Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) special appliances (which are located at Croxteth with the USAR team). The second appliance at Kirkdale operates as a support appliance to the special appliances. Southport has two fire appliances because of its geographic location and the travel distances involved for additional appliances responding from elsewhere on Merseyside.

Of our 26 stations, 10 are designated as Key Stations. From these stations we can provide a 10-minute response to all areas of Merseyside on 90% of occasions.

The number of wholetime firefighters employed directly equates to the numbers of fire appliances that can be staffed for an immediate response by fully trained firefighters and therefore the numbers of fire stations the Authority can operate.

The proposed changes across Merseyside will result in the loss of 90 firefighter posts and four wholetime fire appliances. By maintaining two

appliances at Kirkdale and Southport, the Authority can only staff enough appliances to maintain 22 fire stations on a wholetime basis. The Authority could, as an alternative, maintain 26 stations through altering the crewing arrangements on specific stations or across the Service. The reasons why these options have not been recommended at this time by the Chief Fire Officer in favour of station mergers or outright closures are detailed in paragraphs below.

## **Station Mergers**

The operational logic for station mergers is to close two adjacent stations (which each currently house one appliance on a wholetime basis) and build a new station (that would house one wholetime appliance and one appliance staffed on a wholetime retained basis). Building the new station at a location in between the two existing stations would deliver the best response times achievable in the circumstances from the one remaining wholetime appliance.

In each of the merged stations, the second appliance would be crewed on a "wholetime retained" basis. "Wholetime retained" crewing in this instance means wholetime firefighters having a second retained contract to provide cover on their days off to respond and crew the second appliance within 30 minutes of an alert. A 30-minute response time delay would attract sufficient numbers of existing staff to make the system viable. The retained (second) appliances would only be called in during periods of high operational demand and they would not be used for immediate response to incidents in the station area.

## **Low Level of Activity and Risk**

The Low Level of Activity and Risk (LLAR) duty system is currently in operation at four of the Authority's 26 stations. The system consists of a 12-hour wholetime day shift followed immediately by a 12-hour retained night shift (spent in accommodation off the station) where the crew must respond to an incident within 1minute 54 seconds of an alert, thus maintaining a comparable alert to mobile time as achieved by other wholetime staff during their night-time rest period.

Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to LLAR would deliver a saving of eight wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the same savings as a station merger, three wholetime stations would need to

convert to LLAR. Whilst this option would maintain an immediate emergency response, it is dependent on securing accommodation for the night-time retained period that is separate from the station but within a 1 minute 54 seconds alert to mobile time. It is less resilient than wholetime crewing as the same staff cover the 12-hour wholetime period and the 12-hour retained period. For example, if a crew attends incidents during the night-time period they will then require a period of stand down time to recover during the day shift, meaning they are either not available to provide operational response or unable to undertake prevention work or normal scheduled duties. As the number of appliances reduces, the ability to not mobilise LLAR appliances during the retained period is also reduced meaning they will attend more incidents and potentially no longer meet the Low Level of Activity and Risk threshold.

16 of the Authority's 28 appliances would need to be crewed in this way to deliver the £3.4 million saving.

Creating 12 more LLAR stations would require significant investment in accommodation close to the stations and would create considerable difficulties in staffing the appliances. Many existing staff would not want to work LLAR and recruiting new staff would leave LLAR with inexperienced crews.

## **Day Crewing**

This system consists of a wholetime day shift (typically 10 hours duration) immediately followed by a 14-hour retained night shift where a response is made by a firefighter from home within 5 minutes of an alert.

Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to Day Crewing would deliver a saving of 10.8 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts (assuming a 10% retaining fee). In order to deliver the same savings as a station merger, two wholetime stations would need to convert to Day Crewing.

To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response, the Authority would need to convert eight wholetime appliances to Day Crewing in addition to the existing four LLAR, appliances. This would result in 12 of the Authority's 28 appliances being either Day Crewed or LLAR crewed. Day Crewing is less resilient than wholetime crewing for similar reasons to LLAR as the same staff cover the 10-hour wholetime period and the 14-hour retained period. As the number of appliances reduces, the ability to not mobilise LLAR or Day Crewing appliances during the retained period is also reduced.

This option would introduce a 5-minute delay in responding from eight appliances for 14 hours each day. Assuming the 5-minute delay in responding in to the station and given the geography of Merseyside, it is likely that the nearest wholetime appliances would be able to attend an incident in at least the same time as the Day Crewed appliance if not quicker during the retained period.

Recruiting staff to day crewing would have similar issues to LLAR. This option may have to be reconsidered if there are further cuts after 2015/16.

## **Day only crewing**

This system involves firefighters crewing the station for a 12-hour wholetime day shift only in order to maintain capacity to undertake training and community safety activities.

Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to day only crewing would deliver a saving of 12 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the same savings as the station merger option two wholetime stations would need to convert to day only crewing.

To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert eight wholetime appliances to day only crewing in addition to the existing four LLAR appliances. This would result in 12 of the Authority's 28 appliances either on day only crewing or LLAR crewing.

Whilst an immediate response to incidents would be achieved during the 12-hour day shift, there would be no response at all during the 12-hour night-time period from day only crewed stations.

Recruiting staff to this system would have similar issues to day crewing and LLAR. This may be reconsidered if there are further cuts in 2015.

## **Retained**

This system involves members of the community who live or work within 5 minutes of a fire station volunteering to be available for up to 120 hours per week for a retaining fee equivalent to 10% of a wholetime firefighter's salary.

Changing the crewing at a station from wholetime to retained would deliver a saving of 22 wholetime equivalent (WTE) posts. In order to deliver the

same savings as for a station merger one wholetime station would need to convert to retained crewing.

To make the £3.4m savings required from operational response the Authority would need to convert four wholetime appliances to retained in addition to the existing four LLAR appliances. This would result in eight of the Authority's 28 appliances either on retained or LLAR crewing.

Pursuing this option would require the Authority to either seek volunteers from existing firefighters who would be required to live within a 5-minute response time of the station (wholetime retained), or for the Authority to recruit members of the public who live or work within 5 minutes of the station.

Recruiting staff to this system would have similar issues to day crewing, day only and LLAR. No community safety work would be possible and, assuming a 5-minute delay to responding, a wholetime pump from the nearest station would probably get to the incident quicker. With far less contact with community retained staff compared to wholetime staff, training time and maintaining skills would be an issue for community retained staff.

**Thank you for taking time to read this document and for taking part in our consultation.**

This document is also available on our website [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk) along with an online survey at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall\\_massie](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall_massie) You can email us at [consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk) or write to us at Wirral Consultation, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Bridle Road, Bootle, L30 4YD.

**MF&RS urges people to have working smoke alarms on each level of your home. For free fire safety advice, including questions about smoke alarms, or to request a Home Fire Safety Check, call 0800 731 5958 or go to [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk)**





## **CORRESPONDENCE WIRRAL 2 CONSULTATION**

### **23 – emails/email threads and letters**

Phone Call received by Professional Standards:

A Resident from Upton has recently received a 'cover consultation' document. She called to offer her congratulations on producing such an understandable and accessible document on the subject. She stated that 'even she could understand it'. She feels that there were some concerns in the community, regarding certain issues, but the document has gone a long way to allay these fears.

She said that she will try to attend the next consultation meeting to pass on her thanks in person.

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#### Comment

As a resident of West Kirby and a mother of three young children I object to the proposals to close West Kirby fire station.

This is a ridiculous and dangerous proposal and directly increases the risk of death, from a house fire, to my family.

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#### Question

Consultation re proposed fire station on Green Belt land at Saughall Massie.

Response, the Wirral Group of Cheshire Wildlife Trust, on behalf of Wirral Wildlife committee

1) The Fire and Rescue Service, as a public body, is bound by the "Biodiversity Duty":  
Section 40, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:

" Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity"

2) Barn Owl are nesting north of Saughall Massie Road, and may use the proposed site for foraging, as the rough grassland is suitable habitat for the small mammals on which they feed. Barn Owl are a Local Biodiversity Action Plan species and their nest sites are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended. Please contact the Wirral Barn Owl Trust, whom I have informed about this - [wirralbarnowltrust@sky.com](mailto:wirralbarnowltrust@sky.com) . A barn owl survey must be done before any planning application is submitted. If development was permitted, then mitigation for loss of foraging habitat should be provided in the vicinity.

External lighting would also have to be kept to a minimum (see below re bats).

3) Bats are reported feeding along the Arrowe Brook by local residents. Bats are European protected species under the Habitats Regulations 2010. They are also UK protected species under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended. A bat activity survey done by a suitably licensed and experienced surveyor would be required before a planning application was submitted. In my view a corridor at least 15m wide should be left between the Arrowe Brook and the edge of the development, and managed to benefit invertebrates, as food for bats. To minimise disturbance, external lighting would have to be kept to a minimum and be bat and invertebrate-friendly; suitable guidelines are available from Bat Conservation Trust, [www.bats.org.uk](http://www.bats.org.uk) Such lighting would also minimise disturbance to owls and other nocturnal wildlife.

4) Kingfishers are reported in the area. Kingfishers are a UK protected species under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 as amended. However, this only protects the birds themselves and the nest sites. I do not think the brook banks at this point are suitable for kingfishers to nest, but a breeding bird survey should be carried out prior to any planning application.

5) Since some green land would be lost to this development, affecting the above and a range of commoner wildlife, mitigation should be provided so that the proposed development would lead to "no net loss" of biodiversity.

This could take the form of:-

- \* Wildlife-friendly planting as landscaping to screen the development, including native tree and shrubs.
- \* Funding much-needed management to Jenny's Wood (the small wood nearby), which has not been managed since planting and needs attention. This should include opening up the pond to more light.
- \* Clearance of invasive Himalayan balsam from the Arrowe Brook, including funds for clearing for some distance upstream to lessen the risk of re-infestation.
- \* Activities with local people to foster respect for the brook and the local wildlife.

6) Since this is Green Belt land, it will be necessary to prove "very special circumstances" to allow development, including lack of any alternative sites. Protecting the Green Belt is very important in Wirral, to encourage re-development in the older urban areas as well as the usual Green Belt reasons. There will therefore have to be very good reasons to allow development on this site, and it must not be a precedent for other developments.

## Answer

Thank you for taking the time to share your findings with the Fire and Rescue Service. Although the current consultation is concerned with the operational response options available to the Authority to deal with the cuts to its funding and not planning matters, should (following the consideration of the consultation outcomes) the Authority decide to pursue the proposal to build on the site, a planning process will be entered into where matters such as this will be considered.

## Question

We write to you concerning the suggestion of building a new Fire Station on “Green Belt” land on Saughall Massie Road.

A consultation document we recently received there were two options stated.

- 1 Merge the two present sites (Close both) by building a new one on Saughall Massie Road
- 2 Close West Kirby site and maintain a service from Upton, which we are told would be inadequate.

We write out of our concern that only these two options were suggested and not the possibility of searching for a Brown land site. We know that there is a brown land site available locally though there is much local opposition to this.

Also we are concerned regarding that site because:-

- 1 It is designated as “Green Belt”. I believe that once building starts on this green belt there will be a domino effect and soon there will be no green land at the northern end of the Wirral.
- 2 Safety Hazard. There are two roads from Saughall Massie village to the north of the potential site and the western one is at the top of a rise with restricted views for traffic from Saughall Massie turning right to West Kirby. The speed limit on this section is 50mph.
- 3 The government is constantly trying to save money by spending money, in this case by building and reducing staffing levels. We have friends running small businesses and for them making people redundant is a costly nightmare with redundancy payments. Consequently the costs of this plan include building, redundancy and potential long term unemployment benefits, and the human cost of families with no bread winner. This is of course hidden as it would come out of different departments budgets.

## Answer

In response to your query, the Authority is required to make significant changes to the way in which it delivers its services to achieve £6.3m of savings in 2015/16. This is due to cuts in Government Grant to the Authority. The Authority will take £2.9m from support/back office costs, which leaves £3.4 to come from operational response. This requires the closure of a number of stations and in some cases we are proposing to build a new station in a central location between two closed stations to help maintain reasonable attendance times to emergency incidents.

The closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations and the building of a new station in Saughall Massie would save in the region of £850,000 every year. The cost of building a new station would be met by a combination of Government capital (one off) grant, sale of the current sites and Authority reserves (again this would be a one off use). This would leave the Authority effectively mortgage free, but with an ongoing saving of approximately £850,000 year on year from this proposal. I hope this explains how the proposal would provide

savings rather than increase costs, whilst still providing the best possible response to both Upton and West Kirby station areas.

Closing West Kirby and responding only from Upton would create the same level of saving, but provide a poorer emergency response service to West Kirby's station area, particularly Hoylake and Meols. The Authority is keen to avoid this and to ensure that all areas receive the best response possible in an emergency.

With regards to your comments about the site, I can appreciate your concerns and they will be reported to the Authority. However, matters such as this would be fully considered during the planning process should the Authority decide to proceed with this proposal following consideration of the outcomes of consultation.

I hope this helps with regards to your queries, if you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

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#### Question

[To an MP] You called at my house recently and posted one of your leaflets and I'm very sorry that I wasn't at home due to work commitments and missed the opportunity to meet and talk with you at that time.

I've copied my recent emailed message to Councillor ..... regarding the Fire Station Cover Consultation and his response below and can inform you that to date I've still not received the information I've requested even though I'd requested it in good time and in advance of the second public meeting regarding this proposal in Woodchurch on the 28th of April.

I've been a loyal Labour supporter and trade union member for 38 years but I'm afraid you won't get my vote this time or for the foreseeable future as the local Labour Council is backing the proposed building of the new fire station on Saughall Massie Road while the Conservative Councillors are supporting the vast majority of locals who are against the proposal.

You are no doubt aware that many people, and many would say the majority, vote more for the political party that looks after the interests and supports the feelings of local residents rather than on national issues and the importance of preventing this proposal getting the go-ahead is unprecedented as far as I'm aware in the 22 years I've lived in this area.

The questions I've asked but not received answers to are listed below.

1/ Closeness of proximity to private houses the closest being in Woodpecker Close.

How would you feel if this new fire station got the go-ahead to be built 25 metres from your front gate!!

In the absence of a response I've estimated (using the accurate house width of properties on Woodpecker Close as a proportional scale) that the minimum distance the perimeter wall will be from the nearest residential dwellings front door in Woodpecker Close is between 27 and 30 metres which is 6.3 times the length of an average family car and between 22.5 and 25 metres from this properties front gate which is just over five times the length of an average family car.

The typical perimeter wall height for a facility of this type is approximately 5 metres and the drill tower can be expected to be around 18 metres (over 54 foot) in height.

I requested accurate measurements if my dimensional calculations were disputed but otherwise, asked it to be noted how unacceptably close to current residential properties this new proposed fire station will be if it goes ahead.

2/ Proposed site is on green belt which it will be degraded and it will remove a valuable asset to the local community.

3/ The proposed site is west facing to the front of houses in Woodpecker Close which will block sunlight to varying degrees during the day depending on time of year.

4/ Increased noise and air pollution during emergency responses and training.

5/ Reduction in emergency response time during morning and afternoon periods when Saughall Massie Road is heavily congested with commuter traffic.

If response times are to be truly and realistically considered then this site is unsuitable because response times will be greatly increased during the morning and early evening "rush hours" due to heavy road congestion along this arterial commuter route.

6/ Although the cost of build is coming directly from the treasury (the taxpayer) the cost of this will be far more than if built on a brown field site as the proposed site is sloping and will need considerable infill to level it and create foundations which will cost more time and money. A projection of extra cost will be provided once scales have been provided.

Please don't point out to me that it's the Conservatives who're driving this reduction in fire station numbers and funding in general because Labour would have done the same given the current situation and I feel they helped create this mess by overspending when they were in power.

Please understand I'm not against a new fire station per se I'm just against it being built on Saughall Massie Road for the reasons I've listed.

If we do get to talk I'd be delighted to express my experiences of working in both the public sector and in the private sector.

I have considerable experience of interfacing with the NHS and have many friends who currently work within it.

In my experience situations are not always what they seem to be when viewed through the media.

If this goes ahead with Labour backing you'll understandably lose a great number of supporters.

Response from Councillor

Subject: RE: VITAL POINTS & INFO. REQ REGDS WIRRAL WEST FIRE STATION PROPOSAL

Thank you for your email and for sharing your earlier email of 19 April 2015 with me, which you sent directly to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service consultation email address. It is for the Fire Service to respond to the questions you ask about the sketch design, operational matters including response times and station location criteria.

The council was approached some time ago by the Fire Service and asked to identify land owned by the council in the Greasby area, initially in the existing residential area and subsequently a wider search to include land around Greasby, particularly in the Pump Lane area. The council has duties in respect of public safety and I hope you will agree that as the Fire Service consultation relates to the safety of 26000 residents that it would have been wrong for the council not to engage with the Fire Service.

From the sites identified by the council, the initial proposal was for the central Greasby site. As the scheme developed and following the consultation, this scheme became more problematic as the size of the proposal grew, the proposed replacement of the community centre did not find favour, nor the replacement of the library. There were also potential grant claw back issues in relation to works carried out to extend the library building.

The proposal put forward by the Fire Service is currently out for consultation. When that is complete, the Chief Fire Officer will report to the Fire Authority and a decision taken on whether to take the proposal further. This process is entirely outside the council. Should the Fire Authority decide to proceed, the council will have to consider any approach to acquire sufficient land for the proposal. Should that be agreed, then the Fire Authority would need to apply for planning permission, which given the Greenbelt status of land would require national as well as local consideration.

The scheme outline proposal produced by the Fire Authority was, as I understand, to provide some ideas for discussion. To have said nothing would have led to criticism. The drawings were presented to facilitate responses along the lines you are doing.

I will ask that the matters you raise are re-stated to the Fire Service and appreciate you sharing your thoughts and feelings with me.

In conclusion, I must stress that the decision about any site for a new fire station is the responsibility of the Merseyside Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer and their principal

concern is response times to save lives. Sadly, this issue has only come on to the agenda as a result of government cuts to the Fire Authority's budget. I recognise the strength of your views about the green belt, however, there is a formal legal process which this must go through.

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### Original Question

Please provide the following information regarding the proposal for the new fire station to be located on Saughall Massie Road.

1/ Your Cover Consultation Document shows illustrations of the two proposed fire stations options, one and two storey, without scale measurements. Please provide footprint and height dimensions for both proposals including height of perimeter wall and training tower.

2/ Provide minimum distance from the nearest residential dwelling.

3/ Provide typical sound level in decibels of all emergency alarms, including combined engine noise, generated during a call out measured from the front of a facility of this type.

Bases upon current information my objections are primarily based upon the following;

1/ Proposed site is on green belt which it will be degraded and it will remove a valuable asset to the local community.

2/ Closeness of proximity to private houses the closest being in Woodpecker Close.

3/ The proposed site is west facing to the front of houses in Woodpecker Close which will block sunlight to varying degrees during the day depending on time of year.

4/ Increased noise and air pollution during emergency responses and training.

5/ Reduction in emergency response time during morning and afternoon periods when Saughall Massie Road is heavily congested with commuter traffic.

6/ Although the cost of build is coming directly from the treasury (the taxpayer) the cost of this will be far more than if built on a brown field site as the proposed site is sloping and will need considerable infill to level it and create foundations which will cost more time and money. A projection of extra cost will be provided once scales have been provided.

This proposed facility was originally going to be located in Greasby so why do you think you can now relocate it in Saughall Massie.

Are the considerations of resident in Greasby any different to and more important than those in Saughall Massie?

I understand you have to build it somewhere but brown field sites both private and council owned are available on the old Champion Spark Plugs site and the Premier Foods/Cadbury Factory site. Any extra cost of acquisition could be partly or wholly offset by the reduction in build cost.

Question – Sent again

Please read the emailed message below very carefully.

I can guarantee you 100% that if this proposal goes ahead I will never vote Labour both nationally or locally again.

Dear Sir/Madam,

In order to raise credible and accurate questions regarding the proposed building of a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road, in a democratic society I'm entitled to receive accurate information as requested from you over a week ago in my emailed message copied and provided again below.

Your West Wirral Fire Cover Consultation document shows diagrammatic representations of both one and two storey proposals without a distance scale to allow gauging of dimensions which I would have thought is an essential requirement to enable the assessment of its impact on Saughall Massie residence.

In the absence of your response I've estimated (using the accurate house width of properties on Woodpecker Close as a proportional scale) that the minimum distance the perimeter wall will be from the nearest residential dwellings front door in Woodpecker Close is between 27 and 30 metres which is 6.3 times the length of an average family car and between 22.5 and 25 metres from this properties front gate which is just over five times the length of an average family car.

The typical perimeter wall height for a facility of this type is approximately 5 metres and the drill tower can be expected to be around 18 metres (over 54 foot) in height.

Please provide accurate measurements if you dispute my dimensional calculations but otherwise, note how unacceptably close to current residential properties this new proposed fire station will be if it goes ahead.

Also please provide a credible reason as to why, in a democratic and fair society, the residents of Saughall Massie's overwhelming feelings of resistance to this proposed fire station are being overridden by the local Labour Council when equal or lesser feelings of resistance by those in Greasby were considered in full and their request to reject the proposed building of this facility (on a brown field site) was granted.

My objections as previously provided are outlined below.

1/ Proposed site is on green belt which it will be degraded and it will remove a valuable asset to the local community.



2/ Closeness of proximity to private houses the closest being in Woodpecker Close.

3/ The proposed site is west facing to the front of houses in Woodpecker Close which will block sunlight to varying degrees during the day depending on time of year.

4/ Increased noise and air pollution during emergency responses and training.

5/ Reduction in emergency response time during morning and afternoon periods when Saughall Massie Road is heavily congested with commuter traffic.

6/ Although the cost of build is coming directly from the treasury (the taxpayer) the cost of this will be far more than if built on a brown field site as the proposed site is sloping and will need considerable infill to level it and create foundations which will cost more time and money. A projection of extra cost will be provided once scales have been provided.

This proposed facility was originally going to be located in Greasby so why do you think you can now relocate it in Saughall Massie and why can't the residence of Saughall Massie have another public meeting in Saughall Massie on the basis that approximately 220 people plus (not 180 as reported) were locked out of the meeting on the 20th of April which proved the level of emotive feeling concerning this proposal.

Why are the considerations of resident in Greasby any different to and considered more important than those in Saughall Massie?

Please have the decency to reply to me with the requested information in addition to a credible answer to the above question and don't just send me another questionnaire, thanks.

Please note that I need this information before the next public meetings on the 28th of April and the 5th of May which I will be attending very early due to being locked out of the previous one at St Mary's Church Centre on the 20th of April.

Thanks for your reply and my comments regarding the answers you've given are as follows;

The drawings produced so far have been created to provide an indication of what a fire station could look like etc .....

What you've demonstrated is the reverse logic that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority have demonstrated so far as this consultation should not have even started without first considering the obvious and serious impact of the proposed fire station's location on local residents and particularly those living in Woodpecker Close.

Due to the closeness of the houses on Woodpecker Close it should have been a non-starter from the onset so all the time and effort spent so far is a complete waste of time unless this consultation is a "smoke screen" and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority intend to go to planning and final

implementation stages regardless of local opposition. With the strength of opposition already expressed why hasn't the idea to build it at this location been cancelled already?

What the new station would look like is irrelevant as its not going to add to the scenery and it's the size of it, wall and tower height etc, that are relevant and these haven't been detailed so far (I suspect on purpose) and allowed local people to understand accurately what the full impact will be.

The area is no more heavily congested with traffic than any other area of Merseyside and fire appliances and other emergency vehicles already travel by that route etc .....

I totally disagree with this answer. I live next to Saughall Massie Road and during the morning and evening "rush hours"

it's very heavily congested to a far greater extent than other local roads at these times. I travel 25 thousand miles a year with my job and use the local roads extensively at all times of the year so I have a great deal of experience regarding local traffic congestion hotspots and this is one of the worst at these times.

Your expert drivers cant drive through or over other vehicles and would be hindered dramatically during these periods.

My instinct is that this is a "done deal" so to speak and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority are just going through the legal process otherwise this plan would have been rejected already.

If it goes ahead to the planning stage there will be even more resistance and if the Labour Council back its implementation they will pay a very heavy price politically.

Think how you'd feel if a new fire station of this scale was being built 25 yards away from your front door!

Apologies for the delay in response to your original email. I have added answers and comments to your email using a blue font. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Questions – sent again – Responses in Blue

Dear Sir/Madam,

>

> In order to raise credible and accurate questions regarding the proposed building of a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road, in a democratic society I'm entitled to receive accurate information as requested from you over a week ago in my emailed message copied and provided again below.

>

> Your West Wirral Fire Cover Consultation document shows diagrammatic representations of both one and two storey proposals without a distance scale to allow gauging of dimensions which I would have thought is an essential requirement to enable the assessment of its impact on local residence.

>

- > In the absence of your response I've estimated (using the accurate house width of properties on Woodpecker Close as a proportional scale) that the minimum distance the perimeter wall will be from the nearest residential dwellings front door in Woodpecker Close is between 27 and
- > 30 metres which is 6.3 times the length of an average family car and between 22.5 and 25 metres from this properties front gate which is just over five times the length of an average family car.
- >
- > The typical perimeter wall height for a facility of this type is approximately 5 metres and the drill tower can be expected to be around
- > 18 metres (over 54 foot) in height.
- >
- > Please provide accurate measurements if you dispute my dimensional calculations but otherwise, note how unacceptably close to current residential properties this new proposed fire station will be if it goes ahead.

**The drawings produced so far have been created to provide an indication of what a fire station could look like on the site and are not intended to be a representation of any actual plan or design. There are intended to assist the consultation but are not part of any planning process. The consultation currently underway is considering the operational response options for the West Wirral area; i.e the principle of closing two stations and building a new station at an optimum location between the two sites as an alternative to the outright closure of West Kirby. If, following the outcomes of consultation, the Authority decided to pursue the building of a new station it would then enter into the planning process, when matters such as those to which you refer would be fully considered.**

- >
- > Also please provide a credible reason as to why, in a democratic and fair society, the residents of Saughall Massie's overwhelming feelings of resistance to this proposed fire station are being overridden by the local Labour Council when equal or lesser feelings of resistance by those in Greasby were considered in full and their request to reject the proposed building of this facility (on a brown field site) was granted.

**I am not sure why you think that the views of residents are being overridden. The consultation process is still on-going, with a final public meeting at Hoylake tonight and several other consultation events having also taken place. Our on line questionnaire is still available until 18<sup>th</sup> May, when the consultation closes. Following the closure of the consultation process a full report on all the outcomes will be presented to the Fire and Rescue Authority for them to make a final decision on the proposals, as is always the case. The Chief Fire Officer is on record as acknowledging that the people from Saughall Massie (at the public meeting) were opposed to the proposal and this will be reported back to the Authority.**

**The decision about Greasby to which you refer was made by the Council and not the Fire and Rescue Authority, which is a separate local authority, so we are unable to comment on the thinking behind that decision.**

>

- > My objections as previously provided are outlined below.
- >
- > 1/ Proposed site is on green belt which it will be degraded and it will remove a valuable asset to the local community.
- >
- > 2/ Closeness of proximity to private houses the closest being in Woodpecker Close.
- >
- > 3/ The proposed site is west facing to the front of houses in Woodpecker Close which will block sunlight to varying degrees during the day depending on time of year.
- >
- > 4/ Increased noise and air pollution during emergency responses and training.
- >

**All the above matters would be considered during any planning process and are not the subject of the current consultation, which is concerned with the operational response implications.**

- > 5/ Reduction in emergency response time during morning and afternoon periods when Saughall Massie Road is heavily congested with commuter traffic.

**The area is no more heavily congested with traffic than any other area of Merseyside and fire appliances and other emergency vehicles already travel by that route. Drivers are highly trained for driving safely in all conditions. Importantly, the Saughall Massie location would result in better attendance times than the outright closure of West Kirby. Hence why it is the Authority's preferred option.**

- >
- > 6/ Although the cost of build is coming directly from the treasury (the taxpayer) the cost of this will be far more than if built on a brown field site as the proposed site is sloping and will need considerable infill to level it and create foundations which will cost more time and money. A projection of extra cost will be provided once scales have been provided.

**Unfortunately, the Greasby library site is no longer available to the us, so any speculation on this matter is no longer relevant.**

- >
- > This proposed facility was originally going to be located in Greasby so why do you think you can now relocate it in Saughall Massie and why can't the residence of Saughall Massie have another public meeting in Saughall Massie on the basis that approximately 220 people plus (not 180 as reported) were locked out of the meeting on the 20th of April which proved the level of emotive feeling concerning this proposal.

**The Chief Fire Officer is of the view that as the vast majority of people at the Saughall Massie meeting were opposed to the proposal, it is considered that the attendees at any subsequent meeting would also be opposed. This will be reported back to the Authority. As we already know that people are opposed (and why) it is not considered that a second meeting would have added any value to the consultation process. The meeting held in Upton a week later was only attended by 20 people, several of whom were from Saughall Massie.**

>

> Why are the considerations of resident in Greasby any different to and considered more important than those in Saughall Massie?

**They are not. The Council chose to withdraw the land that had been identified and as such the Fire and Rescue Authority's original proposals could not proceed.**

>

> Please have the decency to reply to me with the requested information in addition to a credible answer to the above question and don't just send me another questionnaire, thanks.

>

> Please note that I need this information before the next public meetings on the 28th of April and the 5th of May which I will be attending very early due to being locked out of the previous one at St Mary's Church Centre on the 20th of April.

>

**Apologies for the delay in response to your original email and I hope that this response answers your questions. I will be at the Hoylake meeting tonight and would be happy to discuss this with you further if you require.**

Questions – further from same source

Thanks for your reply and my comments regarding the answers you've given are as follows;

The drawings produced so far have been created to provide an indication of what a fire station could look like etc .....

What you've demonstrated is the reverse logic that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority have demonstrated so far as this consultation should not have even started without first considering the obvious and serious impact of the proposed fire station's location on local residents and particularly those living in Woodpecker Close.

Due to the closeness of the houses on Woodpecker Close it should have been a non-starter from the onset so all the time and effort spent so far is a complete waste of time unless this consultation is a "smoke screen" and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority intend to go to planning and final implementation stages regardless of local opposition. With the strength of opposition already expressed why hasn't the idea to build it at this location been cancelled already?

What the new station would look like is irrelevant as its not going to add to the scenery and it's the size of it, wall and tower height etc, that are relevant and these haven't been detailed so far (I suspect on purpose) and allowed local people to understand accurately what the full impact will be.

The area is no more heavily congested with traffic than any other area of Merseyside and fire appliances and other emergency vehicles already travel by that route etc .....

I totally disagree with this answer. I live next to Saughall Massie Road and during the morning and evening "rush hours" it's very heavily congested to a far greater extent than other local roads at these times. I travel 25 thousand miles a year with my job and use the local roads extensively at all times of the year so I have a great deal of experience regarding local traffic congestion hotspots and this is one of the worst at these times. Your expert drivers cant drive through or over other vehicles and would be hindered dramatically during these periods.

My instinct is that this is a "done deal" so to speak and the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority are just going through the legal process otherwise this plan would have been rejected already.

If it goes ahead to the planning stage there will be even more resistance and if the Labour Council back its implementation they will pay a very heavy price politically.

Think how you'd feel if a new fire station of this scale was being built 25 yards away from your front door!

Further information was provided to this correspondent as a Freedom of Information request.

#### Answer

Thank you for your comments. I hope the following will assist:

As I'm sure you are aware, the primary concern of the Fire and Rescue Authority is the provision of emergency response cover and locating a fire station as close as possible to the mid-point between the existing Upton and West Kirby station areas delivers the least impact on emergency response. That has to be our starting point when faced with cuts.

>

> Regarding response times; the average response times we have quoted in our consultation publications are based on actual run times (for attendance at emergency incidents), along the roads you refer to when the location of the incident necessitates traveling via those routes.

>

> I can assure you that the outcome is not a "done deal" and the Authority will give full consideration to the consultation outcomes when considering their final position. If they then decided to pursue the Saughall Massie option, the planning process would deal with the concerns you raise

In response to a request to consider a new location in Moreton:

Thank you for your suggestion. My department has now considered the training centre location in Moreton. We have looked at the distance (by road) from the mid point between Upton and West Kirby fire stations (the Three Lane Ends roundabout), the travel time to West Kirby fire station from the location and we have illustrated on a map the time it would take to respond to incidents in both station areas in 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 minute intervals. We have also done the same for the Saughall Massie road site.

- The Moreton site is 1.924 miles from the mid point and the Saughall Massie Road site is 0.601 miles from the mid point.
- From Saughall Massie Road it would take 5 minutes 58 seconds to get to West Kirby fire station and it would take 8 minutes 27 seconds from the Moreton Training Centre.
- As you can see from the maps it would take longer to reach large parts of the West Kirby station area from the Moreton location, with much of the more populated area of West Kirby seeing a 9 or 10 minute response.

For all these reasons, the suggested site would not meet the Authority's requirements, as any new station would need to be as close to the mid point as possible to ensure we equalise response times into both the current station areas; but thank you again for taking the time to make the suggestion.

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## **M.F. & R.A West Wirral Fire Cover Consultation**

### **My response - From a member of the public**

I hope to be at the meeting in Saughall Massie if I am able but in case I can't make I wanted to put some of my concerns and questions in writing so that my views could be aired.

Firstly I want to know why the Greasby Road option was dropped. It seems to me from comments in the document that it was never a realistic proposition.

After an initial assessment of the sites available, planning constraints and in particular the impact on response times the only viable option at that time that was identified was the Library and Children's Centre site on Frankby Road, Greasby. The site was considered a

viable option because it was within an area where development was permitted (not green belt) and because it gave the opportunity for developing a joint service hub with Wirral, containing a new build Library, Children's Centre and Fire Station. The option was a realistic proposition for the Fire and Rescue Authority, but Wirral Council withdrew the land following objections from local people and their representatives.

I'm not sure how we are supposed to consider viable alternatives to your proposals when we aren't being made aware of all the alternatives or the costs of change.

Details of the alternatives already considered are included at the end of the consultation document along with the reasons why they have not been put forward as options. The alternatives either would not save the required amount of money or would deliver a reduced level of operational response than the options out to consultation; or in some cases both of these reasons.

You say significant future savings will probably be required irrespective of which political party is in power. Where is your evidence based analysis of this and why doesn't your report contain any comment from the main political parties? Have you even elicited the views of our local MP's?

The Authority's budgetary forecasts are based on the government's budget, widely available independent assessments of the public finances by organisations such as the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the Office of Budget Responsibility and guidance from the Local Government Association. All the main political parties remain committed to eliminating the deficit in public finances and whilst they each wish to protect different sectors of public investment, no party has committed to protecting local government (including Fire and Rescue Authorities). This will probably mean that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority will face further large spending cuts since it is heavily reliant on grant funding.

Of course this cannot be confirmed until after the general election and a spending review. If in the unlikely event there is unexpected growth in future budgets the Authority is likely to seek to increase the number of immediately available wholtime appliances to improve the service across Merseyside.

All the local MPs in the station areas concerned have been consulted in relation to these proposals and the previous consultation. Extensive lobbying at Parliamentary level has also previously taken place in an attempt to minimise the effects of the cuts to grant funding. The decision on which options to pursue to achieve the required savings is one the Fire and Rescue Authority must make having considered the views on the public and other interested parties (hence the current consultation).

Have other Wirral station mergers been considered and if so why were they discounted in favour of of Upton/West Kirby? What would be the operational impact of say Bromborough and Heswall merging?



All other options for merging stations in Wirral have been considered (as they have been elsewhere in Merseyside). The proposal to merge Upton and West Kirby, is considered the option that will have the least operational impact, based upon an analysis of response times across Merseyside.

As an alternative have you considered achieving the cost savings by sharing facilities with other authorities which border Merseyside and which presumably are under the same pressures as you to reduce costs?

The Authority already shares several of its premises with the Police and Ambulance Services including the Joint Control Centre in Bootle and has agreements with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service whereby Heswall provides the first response into Neston and Cheshire provides the first response into Cronton in Knowsley. Other “mutual aid” arrangements ensure that all the surrounding Fire and Rescue Services (Cheshire, Lancashire and Greater Manchester) support Merseyside when required and vice versa.

Fire stations in Cheshire are remote from the Wirral and providing services from there to Merseyside would result in a much longer delay in operational response, which would be unacceptable in terms of public safety.

The reduction in the number of incidents is impressive and is a credit to the force. Without their education and hands on approach many people wouldn't be aware of their responsibilities as citizens. What you don't say however is what the figures are for the other stations in Wirral-without these I find it difficult to consider alternatives.

Thank you for your comments. I have attached details of the performance of each of the Wirral stations, but the most important factor in determining where to locate fire stations is the extent to which we can avoid large increases in response times and particularly whether we can achieve our 10 minute response standard. In an emergency fire or rescue situation a couple more minutes can make a significant difference. Closing West Kirby and responding from Upton would mean some people in the current West Kirby station area waiting more than 10 minutes for an emergency response.

From a non-operational perspective what facilities could be shared that aren't currently. Isn't it also possible to look at a combination of the options you have discounted such as LLAR stations and crewing during the day. I don't know is viable because you haven't provided the data necessary.

The Fire and Rescue Authority has already taken all the possible non-operational savings available to it (totalling £2.9m) and increased council tax by 2% per annum, but to set a balanced and therefore legal budget it still has to find £3.4m savings from operational response. The numbers of support staff employed by the Authority are at the lowest level achievable now. We believe it is a myth that services could be shared whilst delivering significant savings from the position we are at now.

The information at the end of the consultation document provides examples of how many stations would need to be converted to LLAR for example, to achieve the required savings. An explanation is also offered as to what the operational impact of that amount of LLAR stations would be (e.g. reduced resilience). The other significant point to note is that the Authority could not secure sufficient numbers of volunteers from existing staff to crew the number of LLAR stations required to deliver the necessary savings. Nor are the existing stations suitable for the development required to provide firefighter accommodation (which is a necessary part of the LLAR model). This is explained within the consultation document.

The MF&RA are to be congratulated on the response times achieved and nobody wants this to change materially but inevitably closures and mergers will impact. I'm not sure however that you haven't over egged the pudding somewhat on response times which is tantamount to scaremongering. Why is it predicted for instance that the response time will increase by over 3 minutes on average or by approx. 64% by closing West Kirby when that station is only responsible for 27% of the incidences of the joint command? You also say that parts of Hoylake can't be reached in 10 minutes from Upton but you don't say what the areas are, what the current response time is and when the last reported incidence was. It would be stretching the facts somewhat if it is one or two houses and the last reported incident was over 30 years ago! Please give us some valid statistical data to support your contentions.

Although the document contains incident details as an indication of how the demand on the service has reduced over the years due to preventative work carried out by the Service, the model on which all Fire and Rescue Services operate is one of risk; i.e that although there are some people and places that are more likely than others to experience an incident. Experience shows us that incidents can and do happen anywhere and to anyone and it is vital to respond as quickly as possible when they do. For example, a house fire may be less likely to occur in Hoylake than in central Birkenhead, but the consequences can be just as devastating when it does.

Closing West Kirby will still mean that the response times will continue to be faster than the national average and won't have a major impact on the Saughall Massie community which has been affected considerably by road changes in recent years and the loss of bus services. I would like some additional evidence to support your response times from Saughall Massie as my experience is that the proposed station will be situated at one of the busiest junctions in Wirral and will create chaos at peak times.

The Fire and Rescue Authority has to consider the overall impact of the cuts on all the residents of West Wirral and although we fully understand that some people will have concerns about the proposal it is important that the Authority tries its best to deliver the fairest outcomes for all those residents. We believe that far from being a burden, a fire station could bring useful community facilities to the area, as well as reassurance for Saughall Massie residents that the fire and rescue service is on their door step should they need them.

Fire crews are engaged for much of the operational day in undertaking Home Fire Safety checks, supporting fire safety in businesses and are out and about in the community. They mobilise to operational incidents from where they are at the time. That combined with the (thankfully) relatively low numbers of calls means that direct responses from the station are unlikely to be more than 3 per day.

The Fire and Rescue Authority would work with highways staff at Wirral council to ensure that egress on to Saughall Massie Road is safe. MFRA has an excellent record in road safety. The site at Saughall Massie Road is far more favourable for response than many other stations on Merseyside.

Although maintaining operational effectiveness must be your prime consideration you can't ignore the impact a new fire station will have on the Saughall Massie community no matter what you say about it blending in. Green belt land is there for a reason a building a fire station on it isn't it!

Overall although I still require some answers and more information I can't see based on what you have said building a new station is the best option.

If Saughall Massie is the only site close to the mid-point and available why was Greasby Rd. ever a consideration. What other alternatives to Saughall Massie have been considered and why were they rejected?

The Frankby road, Greasby site was the best option at the time as the land was not greenbelt and was in council ownership (so was available to the Authority). The Saughall Massie road site is in fact operationally better for the fire and rescue service, but wasn't available whilst the brownfield site at Frankby Road was. Once Frankby road was withdrawn by the council, the only remaining available land was in the greenbelt. Several options have been considered, all in the greenbelt and either not currently available, or not as suitable operationally (i.e. emergency response times are not as good).

What really concerns me is the lack of information on the cost of closing 2 stations and building a new one. Then there is the throw away comments at the end of the report about consultation with NWAS. It occurs to me and no doubt other people that a joint venture is the only way you can secure the savings you see as inevitable through joint training facilities shared IT, admin, HR etc. Without NHS funding to support this venture the cost of a stand alone fire station would be prohibitive. Can I have some information on this please.

In the longer term the capital and revenue cost of one fire station is cheaper than two. Compared to every other Fire and Rescue Authority Merseyside has more buildings per area and head of population. With the budgetary cuts that has to be addressed.

There is a short term capital investment required to build the new fire station of about £3m. This is offset by a grant (£1.5M) that has been received from the government to support the

station mergers and the sale value of the two old fire station sites with the remainder of any cost to the Fire Authority being met by reserves. This capital investment allows staffing savings of nearly £1m every year to be realised so clearly the business case is strong for a merger with or without partners. In addition one station would not have the associated overheads and running costs as two on an ongoing basis.

If the Ambulance Service were to be included in a new station at Saughall Massie Road it is expected they would pay their own costs in full. The business case for the merger is not reliant on NHS funding - although their contribution would help make the case even more powerful.

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Question:

Hi, I noticed that you're looking at options to build a new fire station between West Kirby and Upton and that consultation has been started on using council land in Saughall Massie. I wondered whether using the former RAF West Kirby site, also on Saughall Massie Road had been considered since this is more accurately brown-field than green-field, would be a fitting tribute to a site which served the nation during and after WW2 and is not adjacent to any other property, therefore limiting the objections of residents. Kind Regards

Answer

Thank you very much for your suggestion. The Service has previously considered this site, which I am informed is in the Green Belt. However, I will ensure that your email is passed onto the officers dealing with this matter and it will be considered alongside the other comments we receive during the consultation process.

Reply

Thanks for your response. I'd be grateful if the potential for considering the site be fully investigated, especially with potential as a multi-agency base and possibly by including facilities for youth organisations such as cadet forces, which would fit well with the history of the site. Similarly, if the site is potentially useful then I'd be keen to ensure you consider adopting landscaping, layout and construction styles which are in keeping with the heritage of the site. Finally, I'd suggest that the potential for road-safety improvements along that stretch of the road could also be incorporated into consideration of using that site, I guess this may open up opportunities for joint funding with other agencies.

It seems to me that the use of this site has many benefits as well as a good story behind it.

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## Question

I have received the 2015 residents' survey and booklet giving the options for fire cover in our area. However the questionnaire does not answer a number of important questions. From reading the correspondence the fire service prefers a new station on Saughall Massie Road. Would you confirm which route the Fire Engine would take to West Kirby. The shortest route would be down Saughall Massie Road which for most of the time is narrow country lanes. A large heavy vehicle travelling at speed down these narrow lanes would be a hazard for traffic travelling in both directions. There is no space to pull over to let the appliance through or any safe stretches of road for over taking. The speed limit on the country lanes is 50 mph, but due to the bends many cars travel at 30 / 40 mph and slower at night, hindering the passage of an appliance on an emergency call. Taking the alternative route would go through Frankby village again a narrow road with few places to overtake. Also when a appliance on an emergency call bursts out of Saughall Massie Road on a blind bend, straight ahead is West Kirby Children Centre, with the road being very congested with parents delivering and collecting children.

Would you confirm if a risk assessment has been carried out for an appliance travelling this route at speed.

## Answer

A fire appliance could indeed use the routes you describe when travelling towards West Kirby, but it is important to note that they already do so from the fire station in Upton, depending on the location of the incident and the number of appliances required to deal with it. For example, a minimum of two appliances are sent to a house fire. As it stands one would be sent from West Kirby and the other would be sent from Upton). All of our drivers are highly trained to arrive safely at an incident and would not drive at speeds higher than were appropriate for the road conditions. The roads in West Wirral present no greater challenges to our drivers than do the roads in other parts of Merseyside, all of which requires them to drive safely in the proximity of schools, homes and all other types of building to reach an emergency incident in the quickest time possible.

I hope that this satisfies your enquiry and thank you for taking the time to respond to our survey. You can be assured that all views will be taken into account by the Authority.

## Question:

Please find attached our response to the West Wirral Fire Cover Consultation particularly with regard to the proposal to site the new fire station next to green belt land at Saughall Massie. As you will appreciate there is a lot of strong local feeling in the village against the new station at Saughall Massie Road (Option A).

## Attachment

Firstly let us thank Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) for coming to a meeting in Saughall Massie on Monday 9 February to explain to the residents the operational need for change. We accept that £20 million revenue savings have to be made in the Merseyside fire service by 2020 - as they have in all other public service finances if the budget deficit is to be reduced. However we cannot see how that will logically lead to the decision to build a new community fire station on green belt land on the edge of the Saughall Massie Conservation area.

At the meeting in February MFRA clearly explained that operational priority is about minimising response times to the best their ability. The conclusion from that would be that the ideal site would be at Three Lane Ends, noting that was in private ownership and not owned by the council. If response times are as important as implied then we can only conclude that more effort should be put into purchasing that land and siting the fire station as equidistant from West Kirby and Upton as possible, despite the extra effort involved. However if optimising response times are not worth that additional time and expense then we can only conclude that closing West Kirby and running the operation out of Upton would be the next best solution, both in terms of finances and planning issues.

Whilst we recognise the need to separate the operational reasons for change away from the planning issues, we cannot ignore how difficult and time-consuming these issues will be if for some reason MFRA were to continue to pursue the Saughall Massie option in the face of strong and vocal local opposition. Although much time and effort was wasted in eliminating the option of siting the station at Greasby, due to public pressure, we cannot see how that would be any less in Saughall Massie.

## Answer

Thank you for your letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> March regarding the proposed merger of the fire stations at West Kirby and Upton on Saughall Massie Road.

Prior to responding to the substantive issue you raise within your letter I need to correct a point of accuracy. The Fire and Rescue Authority has had to make savings of £20m between 2011/12 and 2014/15. The Authority must make further savings of £6.3m in 2015/16 hence the merger proposals on Wirral and in Knowsley and St Helens and the outright closure of Allerton fire station in Liverpool as of today.

The Authority has approached the owner of the land in the vicinity of Three Lanes End over purchasing a plot of sufficient size on which to locate a fire station but have received no response. As the Authority has no powers to compulsory purchase land then the only available option at this time is the land in Council ownership on Saughall Massie Road.

As I explained at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February the Saughall Massie Road site is sufficiently close to the mid-point (around 600m away) to deliver reasonable response times to both station areas. The outright closure of West Kirby would significantly increase response times to the West Kirby station area. Locating a new station on Saughall Massie Road is therefore the best option available to the Authority to limit the overall impact on response times.

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#### Question

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**The Chief Fire Officer** 1/5/ 2015

I was unable to attend the meeting held by you at St Marys meeting rooms on the Monday so i feel its my duty to give you my view on the position that was suggested for the new Fire Station ,i totally disagree with the site chosen as the traffic at morning and evening times is nose to tail and busy most of the day. I am forwarding you these prints of, in my opinion a much better site it would be on the waste land in Pump Lane the bend in the road wold give you good views both ways(see prints) as it would give you good access to Greasby ,Hoylake and West Kirby my family and i have lived here for 30 years and all this land in this area has been used for is the dumping of rubbish.

#### Answer

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposal to build a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road.

The Fire and Rescue Authority has already considered the land on Pump Lane that you identify which is in the ownership of Wirral Council.

Unfortunately the size and the shape of the land is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the Authority for a new fire station.

I am however very grateful to you for taking the time to write with your suggestion which is much appreciated.

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I object to the proposed fire station in Saughall Massie because:-

- lives could be lost as Saughall Massie Road is already congested. Between 8am and 9.30am Mon-Fri - severe congestion

- no open space for dogs & horses to run free

- our properties will de-value

- damage to wildlife habitats.

Thank you for your letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> April regarding the proposal to build a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road.

For ease of response I will address the points you raise within your letter in chronological order.

The traffic conditions in the immediate vicinity of the proposed fire station site are no more challenging than anywhere else across Merseyside. The fire appliance from Upton already responds as part of the pre-determined attendance to life risk incidents occurring within the West Kirby station area on many occasions using Saughall Massie Road. No issues have ever been raised by any of our drivers over response conditions in this area.



I acknowledge the points you raise over open spaces for dogs and horses and any damage to wildlife however as I explained at the consultation meeting these are issues to be considered by the Wirral Council Planning Committee in the event that the Fire and Rescue Authority submitted a planning application.

In response to your final point I am not aware of any evidence from anywhere across the Country where the building of a fire station has had any negative impact on house prices.

I recognise that this response is unlikely to change your position but you can be assured however that your views will be faithfully represented to the Fire and Rescue Authority when I report on the consultation outcomes.

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Good afternoon, further to my previous emails I can confirm that the Fire Authority, at their meeting today, approved the 12 week consultation over the proposal to build a fire station on the Saughall Massie site.

I look forward to hearing from you as to whether you wish to meet with the Chief Fire Officer on the suggested date of 9<sup>th</sup> February.

Thank you very much.

## Response

Hi. All ok our end. We would like to meet at 7 pm 09/02/15 at The Saughall Hotel in Saughall Massie Village. You will be presenting to the members of the Saughall Massie Village Conservation Area Society. A projector is available for you to show us the footprint of the proposed development and any other detail.

We look forward to meeting you on Monday evening - though its fair to say that there is a groundswell of opposition building within both the Conservation Area and the wider area.

I appreciate that you have chosen our village area for its mid proximity to the area you need to provide cover for but does that correlate with the known call outs that involved life threatening incidents?

I presume many call outs are routine fire checks, installing fire alarms, checking water supplies etc etc. Probably the number of actual fires and road crash attendances is more modest? Can you inform us of exactly how many serious life endangering calls were made in 2013 and 2014 in each of the seperate post codes covered by Upton and West Kirby fire

stations and also adjacent post codes in other fire areas or on the motorway that were attended to by our fire stations.. Please confine the stats to life threatening call outs where time is of the essence.

Also how many such serious incidents and the post codes, have had to be attended by either Heswall or Wallasey or Birkenhead appliances into our area. Additionally how many serious call outs have occurred in the West Kirby area on the days that West Kirby Fire Station has been closed and from what fire station.

It's not essential we have this information for Monday but we would like it as soon as possible to best inform our members.

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We write to you concerning the suggestion of building a new Fire Station on "Green Belt" land on Saughall Massie Road.

A consultation document we recently received there were two options stated.

- 1 Merge the two present sites (Close both) by building a new one on Saughall Massie Road
- 2 Close West Kirby site and maintain a service from Upton, which we are told would be inadequate.

We write out of our concern that only these two options were suggested and not the possibility of searching for a Brown land site. We know that there is a brown land site available locally though there is much local opposition to this.

Also we are concerned regarding that site because:-

- 1 It is designated as "Green Belt". I believe that once building starts on this green belt there will be a domino effect and soon there will be no green land at the northern end of the Wirral.
- 2 Safety Hazard. There are two roads from Saughall Massie village to the north of the potential site and the western one is at the top of a rise with restricted views for traffic from Saughall Massie turning right to West Kirby. The speed limit on this section is 50mph.
- 3 The government is constantly trying to save money by spending money, in this case by building and reducing staffing levels. We have friends running small businesses and for them making people redundant is a costly nightmare with redundancy payments. Consequently the costs of this plan include building, redundancy and potential long term unemployment benefits, and the human cost of families with no bread winner. This is of course hidden as it would come out of different departments budgets.

## Reply

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposal to build a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road.

For ease of response I will address the points you raise within your letter in chronological order.

The only suitable non green belt site available to the Fire and Rescue Authority was the Greasby Library. As you may be aware this site was withdrawn by Wirral Council. The only other suitable sites from an operational response perspective are all in the green belt (in the vicinity of the Three Lanes End roundabout).

In response to point 1 within your letter I acknowledge the points you raise however as I have explained at the consultation meetings held to date these are issues to be considered by the Wirral Council Planning Committee in the event that the Fire and Rescue Authority submitted a planning application.

In response to point 2 the traffic conditions in the immediate vicinity of the proposed fire station site are no more hazardous than anywhere else across Merseyside. The fire appliance from Upton already responds as part of the pre-determined attendance to life risk incidents occurring within the West Kirby station area on many occasion using Saughall Massie Road. No issues have ever been raised by any of our drivers over response conditions in this area.

In response to point 3 the Fire and rescue Authority has determined that the reductions in Firefighter posts will be achieved through retirement rather than compulsory redundancy therefore there are no redundancy costs associated with the proposal.

I recognise that this response is unlikely to change your position but you can be assured however that your views will be faithfully represented to the Fire and Rescue Authority when I report on the consultation outcomes.

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Question

Re Fire Station Saughall Massie Rd.

I would like to register my disapproval of the above, Building on Greenbelt land is out of order.

Your bombastic, patronising, bullying behaviour towards residents in the area did not help your cause.

U.

## Answer

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposal to build a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road.

I note your disapproval of the proposal and I am sorry that you consider my behavior to be bombastic, patronizing and bullying. I can assure you it is not my intention to display any of those behaviours and having viewed a recording of the Saughall Massie public meeting I don't honestly believe that I have.

I will however ensure that your views are faithfully represented to the Fire and Rescue Authority when I report on the consultation outcomes.

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I am a resident of Saughall Massie and I understand that the consultation period for the above project is soon closing.

I trust that the public outcry from all affected communities is to be fully considered in the decision making; I and many residents are of the opinion that the decision has already been made.

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I have been passed your email to Councillor ..... by our Chief Fire Officer, who has asked me to reply to you. It would not have been appropriate for Councillor ..... to respond to you directly or for her to have attended any of the public meetings as she, along with the rest of the Fire and Rescue Authority is required to impartially consider the outcomes of the public consultation process.

I have provided a response to each of your comments, as hopefully this will be more straightforward.

Question with responses in Blue- (other colours from original document)

I was one of the two hundred or so people locked out of the Saughall Massie public meeting, so I have not had the benefit of the facts first hand nor the opportunity to question or clarify certain issues. However I did remain and viewed what I could of the visual presentation from outside the meeting.

**A number of Officers including the Deputy Chief remained outside the venue for the duration of the meeting to answer any questions the people who were unable to attend had. The Chief Fire Officer would be happy to meet with you in person or talk to you on the telephone if this response does not answer all of your questions.**

Many statistics were thrown at the audience but at no time was the current staffing/performance data of the relevant two fire stations (West Kirby and Upton) displayed for comparison. Time is valuable and not to be wasted; seconds count and can make the difference in saving lives. Right away precedence was given to projected savings, funding, finances, grants and restructuring *alleged* benefits. At no time was there mention of the impact on the neighbourhoods, the environment and the social wellbeing of affected individuals. No assurances were given in response to the concerns of the 120+ audience.

**A considerable amount of time was given over at each public meeting to the concerns of local residents about the matters you raise. However, as the Chief Fire Officer pointed out, this consultation is solely about the operational response considerations for West Wirral in the context of a reducing budget as a direct result of cuts to government grant. The Authority will have to either build a new station at Saughall Massie or close West Kirby and respond from Upton to make the necessary savings. The cuts also affect other areas of Merseyside and the Authority has already closed Allerton fire station and approved the closure of Huyton and Whiston fire stations and the building of a new station at Prescott. A merger of two stations in St Helens is also being considered.**

**The Chief Fire Officer made it clear that should the Authority agree the proposal to build a new station (following consideration of the consultation outcomes), the matters you raise would be subject to the usual planning process.**

**The Chief Fire Officer talked in some detail about staffing, attendance times and the numbers of incidents occurring in both station areas at each of the public meetings, as these matters are all key to operational response and as such form the basis of the Authority's proposal. The proposal to build a new fire station at Saughall Massie has been advanced because it offers the "least worst" option. That is, it allows the Authority to equalise attendance times into the West Kirby and Upton station areas. If West Kirby closes and Upton remains open this will compromise attendance into West Kirby and in particular lengthen attendance times into Hoylake and Meols.**

### **The proposed site**

This is a wonderful semi-rural area, and I have taken exception to the proposed site being described as "A SCRAPPY PIECE OF LAND". I recall several years ago when representation was made to the council for the building of a playground and the applicants were advised, quite firmly by the planning department that the land was "GREEN BELT" and also unsuitable because of its susceptibility to flooding. I can quite concur with the latter

statement, as after a heavy bout of rain the land becomes very muddy and I have slipped and slithered my way whilst walking my dogs. To both improve drainage and attract wild life, 'Jenny's Wood' was planted to the upper reaches of the land, however it has never fully resolved the problem of flooding. What will it be like if further buildings are constructed on the site?

**It has been said that this land was donated by a private land owner for the benefit of the people of the area**, and it now serves a large community covering residents of Saughall Massie, Moreton, Upton and Greasby/Frankby. It is well used for dog walking, general walking, and horse riding (safely off road), all activities which benefit the health and well being of all concerned. In this day and age it is an invaluable opportunity for all age groups to interact, socialise and to communicate in a friendly environment. It must be said there are no other facilities within walking distance that can rival a leisure pursuit which allows daily contact, and relieves any feelings of isolation in this day and age.

**The Chief Fire Office has never referred to the site as a “scrappy piece of land” and fully understands that many people in the area do not want a station built there. These views will be reported back the Fire and Rescue Authority to enable them to make their decision following the close of consultation. However, these are all planning matters that would be considered by the Council if the Authority decided to pursue this option.**

**Factors that need considering.**

**Road congestion/ excess speeds** – Since the by-pass was opened 10 years ago, we have seen a dramatic increase in traffic especially during the school runs and rush hours. Commercial traffic to/from Hoylake and West Kirby is non- stop throughout other times of the day. The lack of traffic lights or roundabouts mean that residents take their life in their hands when accessing Saughall Massie road (SMR); turning left is bad enough but turning right is a nightmare; because vehicles constantly exceed the speed limits little time is available to ingress/egress from residential roads. Also, there have been occasions when driving within the limits both on the bypass and SMR, that I have been overtaken by speeding vehicles. Even the pedestrian lights are ignored, particularly by drivers racing towards the Upton by-pass.

**It is considered that the driving conditions in Saughall Massie at busy times are very similar to many other areas of Merseyside and it should be noted that fire appliances already use these routes to respond to incidents on the West Kirby station area. All fire**

appliance drivers are fully trained in emergency response driving, as you would expect, and they always “drive to arrive”. That is, they do not take risks with their own or anyone else’s safety when driving. Our analysis suggests that the response times from Saughall Massie to the West Kirby station area would be over two minutes (on average) faster than if responding from Upton. This difference can significantly affect the outcome of a fire, road traffic collision or other emergency.

### **Location 1 - Neighbourhood**

The proposed site is located on a bend in the road and adjacent to domestic properties occupied by elderly or vulnerable persons. The site boundary will be very close to the properties and the occupants will have the permanent joy of overlooking a car park, a training tower, brickwork and security fencing. They will also have to endure the respective sounds and petrol fumes of cars arriving/leaving 24 hours a day and the necessary activities of the fire personnel when training or maintaining their vehicles. This is certainly not conducive to their health and well being when their current neighbourhood has been quiet, sociable and safe. Who knows what negative effects will arise from (or be attracted by) the proposal of community use – suggested use outlined as being for youths, alcoholics and other communal needs.

**Much of what you describe relates to planning matters and would be dealt with as I have explained previously. However, it is worth considering the potential advantages to elderly residents who would have first aid-trained emergency personnel on hand if a fire station was built. In addition, elderly people are at the greatest risk of dying in a fire in the home, so a fire station in close proximity, could save lives amongst this group of residents.**

**Although community facilities are an option in any new fire station, their exact use has not been determined and the intention would always be to provide a benefit to the local community through the use of such rooms, not a disadvantage.**

### **Location 2 - Access**

As said the site is on a bend of a road that can become rather chaotic certain times of the day, and may become exacerbated if they should ever improve the roads from Three Lanes End to Hoylake and West Kirby. A concern is that the public and the employees of the fire/ambulance services using private cars will enter and exit on a dangerous bend with no

sight of oncoming traffic from the right; the fire engines will have the benefit of controlled lights.

**As explained above, these would be planning matters for the Council to determine if the proposal was agreed.**

### **Location 3 – Roads to other areas**

It has been 10 years since the Saughall Massie/Moreton Bypass was opened and it has had the detrimental effect of increased levels of traffic passing through to the coastal areas of West Kirby, Meols, Hoylake, Caldby and Heswall. In all that time, nothing has been done to improve the access roads from Three Lanes End. During the Open golf event at Hoylake, I often saw the double decker buses carefully making their way to and from the venue, and the speed limit was justifiably reduced to accommodate them. How on earth are the fire engines going to negotiate those same narrow lanes at speed during daylight, never mind in the dark on unlit roads – and meet the expected response times. Furthermore, the surrounding area of the Three Lanes End roundabout is working farmland and I have had to wait whilst cattle cross over to other pasture, and had to slow down for tractors. Also, during the winter the roads to both black Horse Hill and Meols were untreated, resulting in treacherous conditions and hazards arising from abandoned vehicles.

**As mentioned above Fire and Rescue Service drivers already negotiate these types of road conditions throughout Merseyside as well as in these specific locations**

### **Other concerns**

1. Allegedly, the project/site is being extended for 2 ambulance bays, community accommodation and potentially an armed response unit. These may be only rumours but sometimes there is no smoke without fire. I say this because at a focus meeting when people were paid £30 to attend, a speaker let slip the community room would be made available to communal groups e.g. substance abuse (mentioning alcoholics).

**I was present at that meeting and the reference to Alcoholics Anonymous was made in relation to a support group that meets at an existing fire station, by way of an example of how the Fire and Rescue Service can help vulnerable groups of people when that help is requested. There are many types of meetings taking place in fire stations, community**



rooms, church halls and other buildings all over the country that benefit and support local communities.

Should the fire station be built, there would not be a Police armed response unit and although the Ambulance Service might wish to use any facilities, this has not been determined. This would be the subject of the planning process.

2. What else are we not being told? The authority (and council) are not being transparent, nor open and honest in providing all the necessary information to allow us the residents to make informed decisions and give our views on such proposals.

Please let me know what additional information you require and I will do my best to provide it.

3. What other locations have been considered? Brown sites are everywhere – what about the former Champions site? It is reasonable that any money raised from the sale of the two current fire stations be used to finance alternative solutions.

The Authority has considered several other potential sites. The best location between the two existing stations is the three Lanes End roundabout on Pump Lane. All land in the vicinity is greenbelt and in private ownership with the exception of a site that was too small for the Authority's purposes and the Saughall Massie Road site. Both of these are in Wirral Council ownership and therefore potentially available. Other land owners have not shown any interest in selling their land to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

The only suitable brownfield site was the Greasby library site, which as you may know, was withdrawn by the council following public opposition.

All other sites are too far away from the Pump Lane mid point to offer any benefits with regards to response to West Kirby, including the Champion Business Park.

To conclude: Every consideration should be given to the negative impact that this project is going to have on the **PEOPLE** of all the affected areas. I can only speak on behalf of my neighbourhood but I do care about the feelings of my neighbours in

Upton, Woodchurch, Noctorum, Greasby, West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols. I trust that you do as well.

**The Authority's purpose in this consultation is to ensure that the safety of all West Wirral residents is given equal priority. Unfortunately, closing West Kirby and responding only from Upton would not ensure this. However, you can be assured that your views will be faithfully represented to the Authority when it meets to consider the outcomes of the public consultation.**

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## Response

I am contacting you after Monday night's farcical attempt at a public consultation undertaken by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority at St Mary's Centre. As two of an estimated 150 local residents left outside the venue with no voice and no opportunity to hear the proposals or express an opinion. I understand that you have refused to commit to a further consultation meeting for those residents who took the time and trouble to attend on Monday, but due to the poor planning and management of the event, were unable to gain access to the venue. I am disgusted at the arrogance of the Fire Authority in their handling of this matter and you should not be allowed to rely on the flawed consultation exercise, to demonstrate that you have sought the views of local residents. I urge you as the Chief Fire Officer, to make suitable arrangements for as many meetings as it may take to fully enable the residents to have their views considered.

The meeting venue was chosen on the insistence of a local councillor due to its proximity to the land in question. There are no other venues in the immediate vicinity that have the capacity to host a larger attendance.

Two further public meetings will be held. The first is on Tuesday evening (28<sup>th</sup> April) at Holy Cross Church, Church Lane. Like the meeting held last week this venue is on the Upton fire station area. A third public meeting will be held a week on Tuesday (5<sup>th</sup> May) at the Hoylake Community Centre, 31 Hoyle Lane. This venue is on the West Kirby station area.

As you are aware the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) has already held a 12 week consultation over the operational principle of station mergers. The FRA need not have held another 12 week consultation over the same operational principle but did so in the interests of openness and transparency. In an operational response context the exact location of the

proposed station is academic. The location specific issues are a matter for the Local Authority Planning Committee not the FRA.

I would hope that you agree that Monday night's fiasco did not satisfy the criteria as a meaningful consultation exercise. Having said that, you must be aware that the overwhelming views of the residents, both inside and on the pavement outside, was that this development does not take place at all within our precious 'Green Belt'.

See my response above. I am fully aware and fully expected the residents of Saughall Massie to be opposed to building a new station. It was the same in Greasby and has been the experience of a number of FRA's around the Country that have for the same operational reasons as Merseyside pursued this option to deliver financial savings whilst maintaining the greatest speed and weight of operational response achievable in the circumstances. Our experience from Greasby is that the outcomes of the second meeting were no different than the first. Indeed many of the same people who attended the first meeting attended again. On that basis I cannot see any benefit in another meeting at the same venue, not least because we are holding additional meetings in any event, one of which is also on the Upton station area. Our survey is open for anyone to respond irrespective of whether they attended a public meeting or not.

You may be able to assist me in further understanding some of the issues in this matter. I understand that, even though the land is designated 'Green Belt', the Labour Council have offered this land as a possible site for the new fire station. How is this possible? Does the Labour Council not have a responsibility to protect the 'Green Belt' within it's ownership, as indeed it would expect other land owners within the 'Green Belt' to be equally responsible. Who at the Council has identified this land as a suitable site and what steps have they taken to arrive at this decision. When, where and by whom was this decision taken and where can I view the report? As a local resident, I do not recall being asked by the Labour Council for my views on the future or disposal of this 'Green Belt' land.

Wirral Council is required to consider the safety of its residents and has responded to a request from the FRA for assistance in this regard. For anything further you would need to direct your questions to Wirral Council.

I am advised, that when this issue arose regarding a 'brownfield' site in Greasby, the Council Leader intervened personally to withdraw the site from consideration, in the light of

opposition from the local residents. I have now urged him to show the residents of Saughall Massie a similar courtesy, in what is a far worse scenario.

An additional issue arising as a result of this matter and causing us grave concern, are the comments of Conservative Councillor..... stated at the meeting on 29 January 2015, that although the site is within the 'Green Belt' it is not a green pasture it is just 'a piece of scrappy land'. This is a disgusting attitude, how can we rely on the support of our local Councillors if they harbour views such as this. This piece of land is used and enjoyed daily by many residents who exercise themselves and their dogs whilst getting close to nature. If it can be described as scrappy in any way, then this is entirely due to the Council's neglect. The other opinions expressed at this meeting clearly give the impression that the siting of this new fire station is almost a done deal and that the 'consultation' exercise is just a box to be ticked to protect the MFRA from a judicial review, rather than a genuine attempt to obtain and abide by the views of residents. Subsequent events (ie Monday!!!) would appear to support this conclusion.

Please see my response above regarding this second consultation process.

In exactly the same way as for the first public consultation process the outcomes of this process will be reported to the FRA for them to consider. This will be followed by a report advising the FRA of their options as to how to deliver the required savings for 2015/16 to its budget through operational responses changes on West Wirral. The decision will be made then and only then.

The MFRA meeting also indicated that you are aware that you will need to demonstrate 'special circumstances', in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework if you are to be permitted to develop within the 'Green Belt'. It is your opinion that you will rely upon the public safety argument to justify your case. I would argue that, how can that be the case? The only reason a public safety issue arises is by virtue of MFRA decision to close fire stations elsewhere. You cannot manufacture the circumstances by your own actions, trying to promote criteria to satisfy NPPF requirements. NPPF also requires that where special circumstances are shown to exist, any development subsequently permitted must be as unobtrusive as possible. What could be more obtrusive than a Fire/Ambulance station, training/community centre and multi storey tower on Green Belt adjacent to a conservation area. Also, it is necessary to prove that the proposed development cannot be accommodated outside the 'Green Belt', and in this case that is not true as operating the service from Upton testifies. Then there are also the traffic issues to be considered. How inappropriate and downright dangerous would it be to have emergency vehicles exiting at speed onto Saughall Massie Road, the bypass at both ends and the country lanes. In my

opinion, the response times would not be significantly worse from Upton, with a better and safer road system already in place.

I am not manufacturing any argument. The FRA has had to make savings of £26m between 2011/12 and 2015/16. In simple terms the Authority budget in 2015/16 supports 24 immediate response appliances. It is incumbent upon me as the Chief Fire Officer to do all I can to ensure that the stations within which these appliances are located give, as fixed points of reference, the quickest run times possible to all areas of the County. The Saughall Massie Road site reduces the average run times to the West Kirby station area (which stretches from Thurstaston to Meols) by over 2 minutes when compared to the response times from Upton. I can very graphically demonstrate to you and a Planning Committee if necessary why response times matter.

Furthermore, it is not uncommon for Fire Authority vehicles to attend incidents outside of their base station area, as we have just seen at the Tesco roundabout traffic accident, where fire service vehicles from both Wallasey and Birkenhead were in attendance. Clearly, this practice would already impact on, and increase, any response times to incidents back in their home patch.

You are absolutely correct that for any like risk incident the FRA mobilises more than one appliance. This is required to achieve a safe system of work for the Firefighters and an effective response for the persons involved. I am unsure however of the point you are raising?

As a result of significant financial challenges faced by the FRA over the last decade each of the existing 6 stations on Wirral only houses one appliance. Of the existing 25 stations across Merseyside only 2 house 2 appliances (Southport for self-evident geographic reasons and Kirkdale because it is the Operational Resource Centre and the support pump is used to supplement staffing on special appliances such as the Hazardous Materials Unit). When we have incidents that require the attendance of more than one appliance this invariably results in a situation where station areas are left uncovered. In these circumstances the Fire Control mobilising officer orders cover moves to ensure that the 'key' stations are covered. There are 10 key stations across Merseyside of which Saughall Massie would be one (it is Upton currently). From these 10 locations the majority of the County can be covered within a 10 minute run time. The location of these stations is of strategic importance to the FRA, hence the merger proposal for West Wirral.

To be very clear, I am not in any way advocating 10 minutes to respond to an incident. By having our stations in the best locations on average we respond in just over half this time.

This whole situation is due to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's decision to close fire stations and therefore it is up to you to manage the subsequent consequences. It is completely unacceptable for you to think that you can just interfere with Wirral residents enjoyment of this open space and utilise an area of the 'Green Belt' to solve your problems.

The situation is as a direct result of the cuts to the Authority budget over the last decade. Put simply the number of wholtime Firefighters the FRA can afford to employ directly relates to the number of appliances that can be staffed and therefore the number of stations that can remain open. I am managing the consequences and trying to do so in such a way as to maintain the speed and weight of attack to incidents in order to make effective lifesaving interventions.

I urge you to discontinue with the plans to build a new fire station at Saughall Massie and if it is your intention to close the West Kirby station, then this should be managed by merging and operating the service from the existing Upton station.

Please see my responses above. To close West Kirby and not relocate to Saughall Massie Road who increase response times on the West Kirby station area by over 2 minutes. I am assuming you have read the West Wirral merger proposal consultation document but if not I have attached a copy to this reply.

I hope that you will withdraw from your proposals for this totally inappropriate development, but if not, we will rely on Wirral Council planning committee to do the right thing. Failing that we will be seeking grounds for a judicial review of the entire process based upon the handling of the Greasby matter in comparison to the treatment of Saughall Massie. The issues regarding the 'Green Belt' will be the subject of a referral to the Secretary of State.

You are free to seek a judicial review over the FRA consultation process at any point. As you would expect we have taken legal advice throughout, have adopted best practice

consultation guidance and have drawn heavily on the experiences of the not inconsequential number of FRA's around the Country who have had to do the very same as we are over every aspect of the process.

If I haven't answered any of your questions to your satisfaction please let me know. I would be more than happy to discuss any aspects of my response with you in person or over the telephone as I recognise the limitations of corresponding via e-mail.

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**Proposal for a fire station, Saughall Massie, Wirral**

I am writing to express my concerns over the proposal to build a fire station on the greenbelt land at Saughall Massie. I live directly opposite the suggested site and am disappointed to learn of this proposal which I personally use at least twice a day to both exercise my dog and meet up with other local residents. There is also a great deal of wildlife and the beautiful Jenny's Wood. There are water voles, bats, owls to name a few and I am sure that many of these beautiful creatures will be affected by this build if it goes ahead.

I wish to register that I am totally opposed to the build and wish my feelings to be noted.

Yours faithfully,

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Document below handed out by member of the public at Saughall Massie meeting

## **RE: Proposed Saughall Massey Fire Station.**

**As a former Paramedic** working on The Wirral peninsula I have significant experience and knowledge of the roads and idiosyncrasies' of the traffic at various times of day. I know most of the quickest, safest and shortest routes to any point in Wirral and I can give a reasonably accurate assessment of 'emergency travel time' to an incident.

**It has always** been the case that access to and from West Kirby and to some degree, Hoylake, can be problematic. Quite simply there are only two ways in to the area, and both routes are on narrow and busy roads. One being the very narrow and busy Market Street Hoylake. The other route being down a very steep and narrow road from Black Horse Hill into West Kirby town centre. On either of these routes there is very little room for a fire engine to safely overtake other vehicles.

Some years ago I was in a supermarket in Banks Road West Kirby, during the lunchtime when a serious fire broke out at the rear of the store. The first fire engines arrived from West Kirby station within a couple minutes. That prompt response and efforts of the firemen saved the store and the flats above from becoming consumed by the flames.

In my estimation it would take a fire engine traveling from the proposed site at Saughall Massey at least an **extra six minutes** to reach a similar incident. That's a long time if you are trapped in a fire.

Add to that scenario, the time of day and the effect on traffic, also any bad weather such as fog, snow or heavy rain. From Saughall Massey road and up through the narrow country lanes (up towards Black Horse Hill) the road often floods when it rains. This is just yards from **a well-known accident blackspot.**

Also, there is a dairy farm at the junction of Heron Road and West Kirby road. Twice a day the traffic has to be stopped so that a large herd of cattle can cross the road from the farm into the fields opposite.

A fire engine answering a call at that time could not barge its way through the herd so would be delayed for several minutes.

From Saughall Massey the emergency response time to the West Kirby area would be even longer as well as increasing risk to the health and safety of the crew in the fire engine.



## EMAILS FROM COUNCILLORS

I am writing to let you know that the Authority this afternoon approved the recommendation to commence a 12 week public consultation process over the proposal to merge the Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road as an alternative to the outright closure of West Kirby.

The consultation process will commence on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and will consist of public meetings, deliberative forums and other stakeholder engagement events. As soon as the dates and venues are confirmed I will send them over to you. The outcomes of the consultation process will be reported back to the Authority for a definitive decision in June.

Many thanks for your continued support in this matter on behalf of me and the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Sadly I think the last line of your email to ..... and ..... speaks volumes and tells me this has been nothing more than a set up by the LABOUR controlled Fire Authority and the LABOUR controlled Council. Done Deal? very much looks like it to me.....

To reassure you there is no done deal.

Without the support of the Council in allowing the Authority to consider the land at Saughall Massie Road the merger option would not be possible and West Kirby would have to close outright, hence me offering my thanks as that is something I want to avoid as I would hope so do you?

Not wishing to Labour this, (excuse the pun) but your thanks to the interim Chief Exec and the LABOUR Leader of Wirral Council says more than I could ever of wished for...

So thanks for that. See you on the battlefield

You shouldn't confuse good manners and being polite for anything other than what it is.

In that vein thank you for your suggestion over St Mary's Church Centre for a public meeting. I will pass that on to a colleague who will arrange the public meetings now that the Authority has approved my recommendation to engage in another 12 week consultation which without equally wishing to labour the point (no pun intended) might suggest to the neutral observer that this is anything but a done deal.

No need to thank me for anything. it's not about manners it's about protecting Green Belt and speaking up for residents I represent

There will be no neutral observers involved. People will either support or oppose.

Now while I welcome the 12 week consultation it is clearly only paying lip service, because as you recognise and acknowledge you have the support of the Council leader and the interim CX to progress the option to develop on Green Belt.

Nothing personal I am sure you know, but I will do all I can to stop Saughall Massie Green Belt being used as a dumping ground for Greasby's cast offs.

.....

Just a note I am sure you know but for clarity you are aware that all your consultation meetings are scheduled to take place in the election purdah period, with the last one in Hoylake only two days before the elections.

Officers of services such as yours are we are told are supposed to steer clear of political matters during purdah, clearly this topic is a political one by its very nature and it will be my intention to invite the Wallasey Parliamentary candidate to these meetings.

Personally I am happy to leave the dates as they are but given purdah you may wish to reconsider pushing the dates back to beyond 7<sup>th</sup> May. Entirely your choice.

Look forward to your response

As you would expect we are well aware of the election purdah period.

Prior to arranging the consultation meetings we sought a legal view as to whether there was any reason why we should avoid the period. I will ask .... to share that with you rather than try to repeat it now in an e-mail.

As far as I am concerned this consultation process is concerned only with emergency response cover on West Wirral. I will present at all of the meetings and as you know from attending the Greasby events I am steadfast in ensuring they are in no way politicised.

I will ensure that remains the case during this process.

To answer your question, as far as I am concerned the meetings will go ahead. The only way that will change is if I am directed to reschedule them by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

You will of course understand that I will do my absolute utmost to politicise all the consultation meetings and get the very best outcomes politically for the local government candidate in MW&SM ward and the Conservative Parliamentary candidate for Wallasey.

No need to share the legal view with me, your word is good enough for me.

.....

On Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> & Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015, surveyors will be visiting the Saughall Massie Road site to carry out a topographical survey. This is required in order for the architects to ensure the site is suitable for any potential development & to prepare initial designs of a potential new fire station for display & discussion at the forthcoming public meetings.

Please be assured that no decision has been taken by Wirral Borough Council to release this land to Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority and no planning application has been, or will be, submitted for any works at this site until the outcome of the public consultation process has been reported to the Authority for their consideration. The work is solely for the purpose of preparing initial design proposals for consideration at the public meetings.

The merseyfire website will carry a similar message & a Tweet will be issued explaining the purpose of the works on site.

Thanks for this but you don't convince me. Two words spring to mind are DONE DEAL

.....

I understand from my colleague, Cllr ..... that while your presentation at Upton was much the same some of the issues relating to the Ambulance Service, Police and training building/tower were completely different to those expressed by you at the meeting at St Mary's Church Centre.

>

> I find this changing evolving consultation therefore to be absolutely flawed with different groups of people being told different things therefore skewing the feedback you are receiving.

>

> Given this along with the lockout of some 200 people I really do believe it is incumbent of you to hold a second meeting in Moreton and Saughall Massie in order that the people I represent are given the correct information, and more importantly be given enough time to ask questions and make their views known, unlike the previous meeting where the questions and debate were stifled by the the chairman in his efforts to protect you and the fire service.

Thank you for your e-mail.

While there was slightly more discussion over the extent of the inclusion of our partners from Merseyside Police and NWAS at the Upton meeting my position was constant which is that this consultation process is concerned only with the operational response implications of the proposal and that any matter relating to design is a planning issue. If following the consultation process the Authority take the decision to pursue the merger option they will submit a planning application. It will be at that point that our partners from Merseyside Police and NWAS will determine their exact requirements, none of which have any implications in terms of our operational response offer to West Wirral.

The substantive concerns raised thus far all relate to planning matters which as you are aware are the subject of a separate consultation process if any application is made. The residents you represent will therefore have ample opportunity to have their concerns considered in the appropriate forum if the decision is taken by the Authority to pursue the merger option.

There is a further public meeting in Hoylake next Tuesday following on from the meeting this Tuesday which was only attended by a small number of people. The Authority has already gone beyond what is reasonably required over public consultation. We do not therefore intend to hold a further meeting over the proposal for all of the reasons I have previously stated.

Clearly as I stated at the outset this flawed consultation is just giving lip service and it's clear a deal has been done between the Labour controlled fire authority and the Labour controlled council

The fact that you won't listen to local residents is really a disgraceful response and demonstrates yours, the fire authorities and the Councils contempt for local residents that I represent.

I appreciate that the consultation has closed, but I would appreciate if it was possible the points below could be added to the consultation or addressed at the Fire Authority meeting where the consultation is to be discussed.

Whilst as an Upton Councillor, I have an interest in the fate of Upton Fire Station and in my view the least worst option would be to close West Kirby and develop Upton. My concerns in this email however are with the people in the North Birkenhead area, an area in the main served by Upton Fire Station.

Most of North Birkenhead is covered from Birkenhead fire station with the next nearest response from Wallasey. There is a fairly significant area of Birkenhead where Wallasey makes the first response as the run times are quicker. The run times from the proposed Saughall Massie site to North Birkenhead are slightly slower than from the existing Upton station, but this station would not provide the first or second responses to incidents in the area. As was explained, the option to merge Upton and West Kirby at Saughall Massie was always the "least worst option" and effectively closing a station will always have an impact on response times. However, that option has always been the preferred one because it goes some way to equalising attendance times for both station areas. This would not be the case if West Kirby was to close and Upton was to be retained, as response times to West Kirby's station area would be two minutes longer on average, with some areas receiving a response in excess of 10 minutes.

If Upton was to close it is clear that response times to these areas is going to be much worse, especially during peak times where traffic coming off the M53 at junction 2 is especially heavy. I feel that to assist the Fire Authority in making a safe decision the following questions should be considered.

Does the density and construction of the housing stock in North Birkenhead lead to an increased risk of fire?

No. It is the occupant of the property and their behaviours rather than the property itself that determines the fire risk.

What is the geographical breakdown of incidents attended to by Upton crews? If a large proportion of incidents are to the east of Upton, then where is the sense in moving the fire cover further away.

The number of life risk incidents occurring on the Upton station area is thankfully low and are not any significant clusters in any area. The same can be said for anywhere on Merseyside largely as a result of our very successful community safety interventions. Because of the significant impact of the cuts to the Authority budget we can no longer afford to keep all 26 stations open. Allerton was closed on 1<sup>st</sup> April and the Authority have previously approved the merger of Huyton and Whiston fire stations at a new station in Prescot. The merger of Eccleston and St Helens fire stations at a new station in St Helens town centre will be considered on 30<sup>th</sup> June along with the West Wirral proposal. The Authority budget for 2015/16 only supports operating 24 appliances from 22 stations (Southport and Kirkdale are the only stations to have 2 appliances for geographic and operational reasons). The stations that remain need to be in locations that afford the best run times to the largest geographic area. That is the rationale underpinning the merger proposal which is an option widely accepted and adopted by Fire and Rescue Authorities around the Country as delivering the least worst outcome.

Is Heswall not better placed to provide fire cover to West Wirral?

No. The West Kirby station area extends from Thurstaston to Meols. The run times from Heswall to large parts of the West Kirby station area are in excess of 10 minutes.

Considering the people of North Birkenhead are potential going to be adversely effected by the proposal as it stands, why have there not been any consultation events or has any effort made to consult with people of North Birkenhead?

For the reasons stated previously North Birkenhead isn't materially affected by the proposals.

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**Questions and answers from the Stakeholders' breakfast meeting at Hoylake**  
**27/5/2015**

Three people attended the breakfast consultation event.

**Q:** When the Chief was going through the presentation and was talking about average response times, he was asked whether that was responding to road traffic collisions (RTCs)?

**A:** The average response times, and the increase in response times from Upton fire station to the West Kirby area, if West Kirby were to close, included all life risk incidents including RTCs.

**Q:** When the video of the fire development on the presentation had finished playing, a person asked whether there was a reason why the video was not played to members of the public at the meeting at the St Mary's Centre near Saughall Massie on April 20.

**A:** The Chief answered that people at the meeting stated that they understood the importance of response times and he had asked whether people at the meeting wanted to see the video or if they agreed that response times were important. The Chief also explained, as the video was playing, that the time of the video (around 2 and a half minutes) was about the time that response times would increase by to the West Kirby area from Upton if no other station was built and West Kirby was closed.

**Q:** A person talked briefly about the new station in Birkenhead and how it fitted into the community. He then asked the Chief what he saw the "life span" of the new fire station buildings to be? He asked, is it "20 years"?

**A:** The Chief explained that stations like the one in Birkenhead were part of a Private Finance Initiative scheme and after 25 years it was handed over to the Fire and Rescue Authority. The Chief explained he did not really see the demographics of Wirral changing dramatically and he doubted that the population of Wirral would shift massively from the

locations where they were currently and so the location of stations now, including proposed locations in the merger, would cover the population in the future.

**Q:** A person talked briefly about the ageing population and how he had heard a group mention that a retirement village should be set-up in Wirral which had provisions for the community like a GP centre and shops and would assist with independent living.

**A:** The Chief talked about working closer with partners to address the risk posed by ageing populations and how there was still a risk, including fire risks, from people living longer independently. The Chief also said there would be some 'community' support if there were retirement villages as those living in it would provide some support for each other.

**Q:** A person spoke about the library site at the former site proposed in Greasby in the last consultation and mentioned the issue of the Green Belt with the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road but that that would be a matter for planning. She said she was surprised by the feeling, particularly in the consultation that looked at the Greasby proposed site, of people not wanting a fire station in their "back" yard/near their homes.

**A:** The Chief explained that there was a population on Greasby of 9,000 and it had been a vocal minority who made their views heard during that consultation as tended to be the way with issues such as this.

**Q:** A person asked a Wirral Officer, who was present at the meeting, whether the new proposed site near Saughall Massie Road had been welcomed?

**A:** A Wirral Officer explained that the proposal had come at a key time for politics and how the aim was to positively engage with the community and this positive engagement had taken place but the Wirral Officer admitted they had underestimated the response and depth of feeling on the proposed site including Greasby.



**Q:** A person asked in terms of the West Kirby site – that in terms of the merger that it would not be sold until the new station was built?

**A:** The Chief answered that the site would not be disposed of until firstly the Fire and Rescue Authority had approved its closure and then not until a new station was built. But the Chief also explained that due to staff numbers decreasing that the appliance at the station would not be available for some of the time leading up to the new station due to the time it takes for a new building project and the level of retirement rates.

**Saughall Massie public consultation meeting, April 20, 2015**

venue had capacity for 120 but as many people outside.

**Q:** A Councillor asked for “an assurance” a second meeting would be held in Saughall Massie due to the number of people outside the St Mary’s Centre, as one was organised in Greasby when people were locked out at the first one there.

**A:** The Chief explained the venue was the most appropriate, including its accessibility for people who lived in the area. He said the request for a second meeting in the location would be considered. The Chief also explained there were two other public meetings due to be held.

**Q:** The Councillor said the people of Greasby were given a second meeting, and he wanted the “same commitment” for Saughall Massie residents. He also asked whether the plans would be withdrawn if people in the area did not want it.

**Q:** There should have been speakers put outside (the venue) for the people outside to listen.

**Q:** What about the views of the people outside the venue who could not get in.

**A:** The Chief explained the decision about the proposal was for the Fire Authority. The Chief said the views of the people would be represented to the Fire Authority.

**A:** MFRS deputy chief executive, explained it was a consultation and that there were a number of forums for people to give their views.

**Q:** They wanted an assurance the views would be taken back to the Fire Authority.

**Q:** What about using the "Overchurch Community Centre" nearby as it was larger and could contain more people for a public meeting.

**Q:** The Councillor asked whether a report would be going to the Fire Authority or whether the "crazy plans" would be withdrawn now?

**A:** The Chief said the views from the public would be faithfully represented to the Fire Authority. The Chief also explained that a number of options would be outlined.

**A:** The Chief explained the presentation was focused on operational matters only in relation to the proposals. The Chief said there were "substantial public safety implications" from the options which would be outlined.

He added it was also important people understood what the fire and rescue authority was here to do and what it was not here to do. He said it (The Fire Authority) was not Wirral Council and the fire and rescue authority does not deal with planning. He said the fire and rescue authority did not make any decision over planning and had no regard to issues concerning that and the Fire Authority had no powers in relation to that (planning).

**Q:** We don't believe what was being said.

**A:** The Chief said the Authority makes decisions solely in relation to operational response - public safety.

**Q:** There were more questions asking if Wirral Council offered the fire authority the green belt land and a question asking why there was a proposal to build the fire station.

**Q:** Why are you proposing the construction of new buildings on Green Belt land and in a "preservation area".

**A:** The Chief said there would be time for questions at the end and if he was given the opportunity to present he could answer some of the questions people had.

**A:** The Chief said again that the meeting was concerning operational matters for the Fire and Rescue Authority and asked to be allowed to present. The Chief said that he would be able to address some of the questions people had in his presentation.

**Q:** The Chief was asked whether the other station mergers in St Helens and Knowsley were taking place on green belt land.

**A:** The Chief said he would come to that and address that question.

When the Chief was talking about in his presentation about the fire stations currently in existence in certain areas were not in the "right place".

**Q:** Was "Greasby was the right place" or was "not the right place" for a fire station.

**A:** The Chief said he would come to that during his presentation.

**When the Chief was talking about the merger option in West Wirral and said that there are two fire stations Upton and West Kirby.**

**Q:** West Kirby is closed isn't it?"

**A:** The Chief said West Kirby was not closed. He said it was "on the run" (with a crewed fire engine at the station) about 70% of occasions.

**When the Chief was talking about the previous site that was available in Greasby (but which was withdrawn) and then explaining that Wirral Council offered for consideration the site on Saughall Massie Road, a member of the public asked:**

**Q:** Who offered it? Was it the council?

**A:** The Chief explained Wirral Council had a duty around community safety.

**A:** The Chief explained that the only land available as a proposed site was on Saughall Massie Road and the alternative to the merger was the closure of West Kirby as it was not a key station.

**Q:** They had children and the person said they did care and “everyone” cared but the Chief needed to understand where people were coming from and why they were at the meeting.

**A:** The Chief said he understood that but there was some views expressed in the Greasby consultation that some members of the public did not care about response times.

**Q:** It was stated that this was a “terrible thing” for someone to say that response times did not matter.

**Q:** Would keeping Upton open keep the fire and rescue service within response times anyway.

**A:** The Chief explained that, as the presentation slides showed, the number of incidents had been reduced through work by the fire and rescue service, but that he was concerned about life risk incidents and what would happen in the future.

**Q:** He was asked if the video (showing how quickly a fire develops in a room) in the presentation could be “skipped”.

**A:** The Chief said that if people already felt that they understood and agreed that response times were important he did not need to show the video.

**When the Chief was talking about if West Kirby were to close and that the West Kirby response from Upton would take over 8 minutes 43 seconds, a member of the public asked –**

**Q:** It would be quicker from Heswall though, wouldn't it? It's a straight run through.

**A:** The Chief said it would not be quicker from Heswall to get to Hoylake. He said he would show where the West Kirby station area covers. Heswall would only be quicker to Station Road but Upton would be quicker to respond into the West Kirby area.

**Q:** What's the national average response times?

**A:** The Chief explained it was 7 minutes 24 seconds to a dwelling fires but the Merseyside average response times, which are quicker than the national average, included all "life risk" incidents.

**Q:** People in the room asked about the designs on stands at the front of the room.

**A:** The Chief said the designs were for "indicative purposes only" it shows in relative scale how the station could be placed and what it could look like.

The consultation was only to do with response times and it appeared people in the room and himself were saying the same thing.

**Q:** A number of people said no.

**Q:** The Chief then asked the room, on the response times are we not saying the same thing?

**Q:** A number of members of the public said "no".

**A:** The Chief clarified and said the consultation "was only concerned with operational response".

**Q:** We're not only concerned with that (operational response).

**A:** The Chief said he understood that. He then said anything else is a planning issue.

There were a number of people saying "no it isn't" at this point.

**A:** The Chief said that any planning issue would be subject to a separate consultation, at this point, a member of the public asked:

**Q:** Is there anybody here from the Council planning?

A Wirral Council Officer explained why he was at the meeting and explained to the public at the meeting before the question section that due to Purdah he would be restricted on what he could talk about at the meeting.

**Q:** Why have you picked this place (for a fire station) because we've got two by-passes. We've also got traffic.

**Q:** There are a number reasons why building a fire station on the site was not a good idea. They said the location would affect response times if a fire station were put there. At 9am in the morning most local people knew you could not get through Pump Lane so a fire engine could not too. Also the lanes in the area were too narrow for a fire engine to pass any other vehicles. The proposed site was a bad place to put a station as at 3pm a fire engine would face a lot of traffic from the school at the end of Saughall Massie Road. There may be other sites and he knew sites were being developed down by Carr Farm and there was "brickworks" and "brownfields".

**A:** The Chief explained fire crews currently used roads in the Saughall Massie area to respond to incidents and they were no more challenging than other roads in Merseyside. The Chief also said if West Kirby closed the fire engine would need to come from Upton using the same roads.

**Q:** Incidents were continuing to reduce and whether because of this could Upton not manage.

**A:** The Chief explained that it was about getting quickly to life risk incidents and the fire and rescue service needed to be in a position to respond to the people of West Kirby from a fixed position.

**Q:** It was stated that the largest part of red on one of the maps displayed was actually all fields and golf course and the majority of the area responded from the Upton side was still within acceptable response times.

**A:** The Chief explained it depended where the incident was.

**Q:** The member of the public said they understood that but it (the red area) was mainly over the fields and golf course.

**A:** The Chief said that the figures were based on actual incidents. He said there was still a good portion of populace that's covered by 8 to 9 minute response when the response time could be 6 minutes or 7 minutes.

**Q:** A Saughall Massie resident for a number of years said they had seen the issues the fire engines had getting through some roads in Wirral. They had lived near a fire station in Wirral before coming to Saughall Massie. If the Chief felt that was the best place for the station the Chief would need to prove it to everybody.

**A:** The Chief explained that if, for example, you had two shops but could only have one, then you would put one in the middle to maximise its reach and make the best of the situation.

**Q:** Another FRS had approached the financial situation by using BRVs (Brigade Response Vehicles) and how they had increased the number of BRVs. The member of the public said they wanted the Chief to consider the option of BRVs.

**A:** The Chief explained that the other FRS had an opportunity to raise council tax by £5 and they had more council taxpayers in their area which meant they had money to keep their stations and have BRVs which had a crew of three. But a crew of three would be only of use

tackling small fires and would not be much use responding to a house fire and life risk incident in Merseyside. The Chief explained Merseyside was not in such a financial position to do this.

**Q:** Just raise council tax.

**A:** The Chief explained that in order to raise more money from council tax that a referendum would need to be held.

**Q:** Will the Chief would consider the BRV option and the solution needed to be a "compromise".

**A:** The Chief explained the BRV would give him nothing and that he would have to make two stations BRV stations and he would be paying for assets he could not use.

**Q:** there is a petition to save the fire station in West Kirby as the council had plans to build a supermarket and multi-storey car park.

**A:** The Chief explained there had been no decision regarding the disposal of the West Kirby site.

**A:** The Council Officer at the meeting said there were no plans for the West Kirby site.

**Q:** There is nothing coming out of West Kirby (fire appliance-wise), so they had been led to believe.

**A:** The Chief explained the availability of the West Kirby appliance was about 70%.

**Q:** Why not expand Upton then?

**A:** The Chief explained that that would increase response times to the West Kirby area.

**Q:** Has there had been a risk assessment for traffic management for the area of the proposed site.



**A:** The Chief said any of the issues on roads and traffic management would be picked up as part of processes. He said there were no more challenging conditions in the area than anywhere else in Merseyside.

**Q:** A member of the public said that all they were thinking was if a fire engine wanted people to move aside, where can they go as there would not be space on roads in the local area.

**A:** The Chief said that situation could happen now. And if West Kirby closed then it could happen when the fire appliance was coming from Upton.

**Q:** The proposed site is a heritage site and there were cottages that have been there for 500 years” The person said people want to move but had been told there would be 10% knocked off the value of their home if a fire station was built near them. The person also said people could not afford to move and some had used their savings to buy a place in the area. The person said that they wanted to know how this proposal for a new station would affect the member of the public as they lived locally.

**A:** The Chief explained that these were issues a planning committee would need to consider.

**Q:** A person asked who legitimately thought about those issues in Greasby when it got thrown out of Greasby, was that planning?

**A:** The Chief explained it did not reach the planning stage as the land was withdrawn in Greasby. He said the fire and rescue authority did not own the land.

**Q:** Is it even going to be Wirral Planning department because I heard that these things sometimes go to Bristol for planning?

**A:** The Wirral Council officer explained about the council’s legal duties and the fire authority coming to the council as well as identifying possible sites for a fire station. He said there were a number of reasons the Greasby site was withdrawn.

**Q:** What were the reasons?

**A:** The Wirral Council officer explained there were a number of reasons. He said as the idea developed feedback had come in. He also explained the council looked at three sites which were not green belt but a triangular grassed area was not suitable for fire appliances to get in and out of the station and so the central Greasby site was left. But it appeared that would not work. He said the Fire Authority would need to make the decision about the current proposed land.

**Q:** A person said that it appeared that the proposed land may have been of interest due to the money the council could get from the fire service to help the council.

**A:** The Deputy Chief Executive explained the decisions about fire stations were taken in regards to operational matters not due to financial motivation on things such as the price of certain land.

**Q:** A person talked about the environmental issues and stated the proposed site was "a very important piece of land". The member of the public also said that they did not think it was being taken into account how narrow lanes are in the area (so fire appliances would not be able to get through if there were other vehicles).

**A:** The Chief explained if West Kirby closed Upton would need to use the roads in the area anyway to respond to emergencies and that situation would increase response times to West Kirby.

**Q:** A person said their concern was not about roads but about sheltered accommodation.

**A:** The Chief said that protecting the vulnerable was what the best operational location for a station was about.

**Q:** I'm concerned about the safety of the people on the Wirral, but I'm concerned about the people in sheltered accommodation. The person explained they had a grandfather and was concerned sirens would be going "day and night" causing them disruption.

**A:** The Chief explained that if a person was to look at the number of incidents there was less than three calls a day. He said the idea that fire appliances would be “flying all over” the place was not accurate.

**Q:** A person said the location of the new station may mean it was further away it was from Arrowe Park Hospital. The member of the public said there were a lot of vulnerable people there.

**A:** The Chief explained that Arrowe Park hospital was responsible for managing fire safety and a fire risk assessment at their site and there was fire management at Arrowe Park and fire detection systems, but the bigger risk was people who lived in private dwellings.

**Q:** I used to play on the fields (location of the proposed site). The person said since the bridge had been built the land was “very unstable” and the field flooded every winter and there was a “massive” pond that had not been there 10 years ago. The person said if a station were to be built there the fire and rescue authority/service should “check the land out”.

**Q:** If you had all the money in the world would you want to keep Upton and West Kirby open? Yes? The person also said the economy would get better and said “we can have both” (West Kirby and Upton fire stations). The person asked “Why this knee jerk reaction?” and also asked if merger of two stations into one was a fiscal thing.

**A:** The Chief explained he would not recommend the closure of any fire station. But he said the fact was the budget now does not sustain 28 fire appliances and the number of firefighters needed and it would not in the future either.

**Q:** Say if it were to go ahead. Any new station, how long would it take (to build)? Will it take years? It’s going to be a new Government (by then).

**A:** The Chief explained that there was a planning process and a build would be at least a year. He also explained the challenge he had was here and now and needed to be addressed now. He explained the firefighters were retiring and could not be replaced.

**Q:** Most of us would love to give you more money. It's a green belt issue.

**Q:** What had not been talked about was the impact and benefits of health to those who live near green belt spaces and land. The person said they felt that people in the area feel that these things were "special circumstances" that should be taken into account. The person said there were not just physical benefits of the green belt land in the proposed area for a fire station but also "psychological and spiritual" benefits. The person said studies showed people living near green open spaces suffer less incidents of depression and recover sooner after hospital treatment and coming home. The member of the public referred a University of Exeter medical school study that showed people moving from living near green space areas who move to built up areas suffered a decline in mental health. The person also referred to a BBC report in 2009 which had reported that levels of physical disease were lower for populations living near green spaces (compared to more built up areas).

**Q:** This is what we need to take up at planning not with the fire (people).

**A:** The Chief said it appeared to him that there were issues people in the room recognised such as the value of fast response times. But he said to the room it appeared there was universal opposition to a station being built on the land at Saughall Massie – there were responses of "yes" from members of the public at this point along with some clapping. The Chief said the views of the people would be faithfully represented.

**Q:** We expect you to have a concern for (our) health and welfare.

**A:** The Chief said that the fire and rescue service does but it also is concerned about the health and welfare of the people of West Kirby.

**Q:** A person asked whether there be a public meeting for planning?

**A:** The Council Officer present said planning meetings were held in public.

**Q:** A Councillor asked the Chief – will you hold another meeting?

**A:** The Chief explained that he would raise it with the Fire Authority but the second Greasby meeting heard similar views to the first public meeting. He said he was not convinced if a second meeting was held in Saughall Massie that the views would be different to those expressed in this meeting of April 20.

**Q:** Councillor, (regarding request for second public Saughall Massie residents meeting) said we are only asking for parity. We are not asking for special treatment.

**A:** The Chief said that he would consider a second meeting but there some issues that needed to be considered including whether the venue could be secured. The Chief said if he felt the second public meeting would not result in any different outcome.

**Q:** A person said did he know that in Greasby (that the outcome/feeling at the second meeting would be the same as at the first)?

**A:** The Chief said he did not know that would be the case at that second meeting but now that those meetings had taken place and this one on April 20 he thought a second Saughall Massie meeting would have the same outcome/feelings aired.

**Q:** Councillor said people (including those who were outside the venue and could not get in) may have some "superb ideas". The councillor asked again whether the Chief would consider holding a second meeting at the St Mary's Centre/in Saughall Massie/for Saughall Massie residents.

**A:** The Chief said he would consider whether or not to hold another public meeting.

**The Public Meeting held at Woodchurch on the 28<sup>th</sup> April with 21 members of the public attending.**

**Q:** A person in the audience said they were from Saughall Massie and said the Chief had been talking about retained firefighters and asked what was wrong with them (retained firefighters)?” and that there was the TA which fought in wars and were volunteers.

**A:** The Chief explained that he would not choose to employ retained firefighters as full-time firefighters had more training time to develop and maintain their skills.

**Q:** A person said other options were not being recommended by the Chief because: “It does not suit you. You don’t listen to people”.

**A:** The Chief explained that he would take and answer questions at the end of the presentation.

**Q:** A person said that the site is Green Belt land?”

**A:** The Chief explained the land was all Green Belt in the area including the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road.

**Q:** A person asked the Chief to go through the process again? You were saying about closing West Kirby and Upton. Could you go through that again?

**A:** The Chief set out and explained the background including the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for Merseyside and national standards of fire cover. The Chief said the Fire Authority had no powers of enforcement for anyone in single private dwellings. The Chief said although any response standard could be set in Merseyside the firefighters would get there as quickly as they could to an incident. He also explained that firefighters needed a fixed point to be located (a fire station) as they spent around 70% of their time at the station.

**Q:** A person said again at this point, what I was asking about was you were talking about shutting West Kirby and Upton.

**A:** The Chief explained that the members of the public in the audience needed to understand the background and explained about the 10-minute response standard in Merseyside. He also described how incidents could reduce the numbers of fire appliances which were available at a particular time and that to ensure a 10 minute response standard there needed to be a fire appliance at 10 key stations.

**Q:** At this point, a person asked if Birkenhead was a key station.

**A:** The Chief explained that Birkenhead was not a key station because it was too near the River Mersey (in regards to a 10 minute response area drawn around the station). The Chief said the average response time in Merseyside was currently 5 minutes 24 seconds. The Chief explained about the proportion of incidents that occurred in Wirral (10% of those for all of Merseyside) and also said that Upton and West Kirby could "in theory" both be shut.

**Q:** A person said fires "can happen anywhere".

**A:** The Chief explained that the number of incidents was academic as it was about life risk and the possibility of someone being in a position where they could die in a fire.

**Q:** A person said that there were "set standards" (for response) but the Chief had said that the standards "don't make sense".

**A:** The Chief said the 10-minute response standard made sense for the mobilising officer in Fire Control.

**Q:** A person said the response standards are operational standards to "manage risk" and "they are not performance" (standards)?

**A:** The Chief explained the average response time in Merseyside was currently 5 minutes 24 seconds. He also said 10 minutes would be longer

than a person would want to wait if there was a fire. The Chief said the point was that there had to be a response standard that could be used as a target.

**Q:** A person said the Chief had said response standards “did not make sense”.

**A:** The Chief explained that setting a response standard in some ways did not make sense as the fire appliances got to the incident as quickly as they could.

**Q:** A member of the public said if 10 key stations were needed why not “just keep” the fire station open?

**A:** The Chief said that the aim was to keep a station open that could cover the 10 minute response standard and provide fire cover for the area.

**Q:** A member of the audience asked if the Chief lived in Saughall Massie.

**A:** The Chief explained that he did live in Wirral and was familiar with the area which would be affected by the proposal and then he invited a Station Manager, who was also present at the meeting in uniform, to explain how long he had lived in the area and been a firefighter in the area. The Station Manager explained how he lived in an area not far from the proposed site.

**Q:** A member of the audience spoke about their concern that lanes in the Saughall Massie area, near to the proposed site, would be too narrow for a fire appliance to use if there was traffic on the lanes already.

**A:** The Chief said he wanted to reassure the public that the traffic conditions in West Wirral were no worse than any other areas of Merseyside.

**Q:** A person said the Chief was not correct and they were concerned about “wagons” using lanes in the area.



**Q:** Another person talked about a site which used to operate in the area and there were “wagons all the time” using roads in the area and he said he did “not know what the worry” was.

**Q:** A person responded saying “because we live there”. The person said that they “don’t want extra traffic and noise” and the worry regarding fire appliances going through the narrow lanes.

**Q:** A person said “for the sake of progress, could I ask you to say how long this presentation going to be?”

**A:** The Chief answered that it would take around another 10 minutes.

**Q:** Another person public said that the Chief said he would take 20 minutes at the start of the presentation to complete the presentation.

**Q:** The Chief explained that he had been asked questions and then asked if he had answered the question posed by a member of the audience before continuing.

**Q:** A member of the public asked whether West Kirby fire station was closed “most of the time”

**A:** The Chief explained that the number of firefighters retiring could not be replaced at the rate they were retiring. He said due to the decreasing numbers of firefighters, that some stations such as West Kirby, were not available at some points.

**Q:** A member of the public said that 24 posts were not being saved by the proposed merger.

**A:** The Chief explained that 24 posts were being saved.

**Q:** A member of the public said it “does not make sense” and that 24 posts were not being saved by the proposed changes.

**A:** The Chief explained that due to the reduction in the number of firefighters at locations including West Kirby and Whiston “pumps were going off the run”. He explained reserves were being used to avoid compulsory redundancies. The Chief said what he could do was make the 88 firefighters compulsory redundant “tomorrow” which would make the cash saving. He said reserves were being used to avoid compulsory redundancies but in the meanwhile there were not enough firefighters to maintain 28 fire appliances. He said the number of fire appliances would, over time, it would move to 24.

**Q:** A person said it didn’t really make sense.

**A:** The Chief said he wanted to make sure people understood the issues he was explaining.

**A:** The Chief explained that the importance of an increase in response times of 2 and a-half minutes would be demonstrated by a film he was about to show in the presentation. The Chief also said what he was trying to do was explain some points to the audience.

**Q:** A person said the Chief had told them he would only take “20 minutes” but he had taken “over an hour”

**A:** The Chief said if he was allowed to continue the presentation with no further questions for now, he could take questions later.

**Q:** A person said to please let the Chief finish his presentation so people can ask questions

**Q:** A member of the public asked how much there was in reserves.

**A:** The Chief answered that there was around £23 million in reserves but once the reserve money was spent it was gone and there would be no more reserves left.

**A:** The Chief explained the average response times were based on real incident call-out details and he knew the roads or lanes were not an issue as the figures were from actual response times across these area.

When the Chief was about to show the video showing fire development in a room as part of the presentation, a member of the public said that the presentation was taking even longer now due to the video and that the video was blackmail. Another person urged the person to “give” the Chief Fire Officer “a chance” to explain the situation.

**Q:** A person whether the video was showing a real fire or whether it was computer graphics.

**A:** The Chief said it was a real fire provided by a research establishment.

**A:** The Chief explained the call to the fire and rescue service could be later than when the smoke alarm first sounded. He also explained that the video was being provided as there had been lots of comments during the consultation surrounding the proposed site in Greasby that response times did not matter.

**Q:** A member of the audience said they could understand some people’s comments because people in Greasby “did not want a fire station there”.

**Q:** A person asked what would happen if the fire shown in the video occurred in Arrowe Park Hospital? They said with the proposed changes, it would take firefighters “longer to get there”.

**A:** The Chief explained the site had fire doors, alarms would activate and fire doors would lock shut containing the fire in a compartment.

**Q:** A person said “It would still take you 2 minutes longer to get there.”(the hospital)

**A:** The Chief said “potentially yes” it would take that amount of time. He explained that he had no ways of influencing through any fire safety enforcement what people do in their own homes, “which is where people die” in house fires in their own homes.

**Q:** A member of the public asked what area was needed for the new fire station?

**A:** The Chief said he could show the person on the next slide in the presentation. The Chief explained designs on view in the room were for indicative purposes to give people an idea of what it could look like. The Chief said there was a seven acres site but not all would be needed for a fire station.

**Q:** A member of the audience asked the Chief why he did not just explain to people what was proposed to be “put” on the site.

**A:** The Chief explained that in the proposal as it stands – the police did not require a presence. He also explained there was a possibility the North West Ambulance Service may also use the site but he could not say for definite that would be the case.

**Q:** A person asked whether PCSOs would still be at the site?

**A:** The Chief said the latest from the Police is that they would not require that (PCSOs).

**Q:** A person then asked - “Will there be a young people’s club in that building?”

**A:** The Chief explained that all fire stations had community rooms open for use by the community and that on some stations Fire Cadets scheme were held if there was demand in the area.

**Q:** Another person asked if the community rooms were like a specific community centre

**A:** The Chief said the community room was a room.

**Q:** A person asked if the room was used by firefighters for such things as training?

**A:** The Chief said training did take place in the community rooms too.

**Q:** A person asked if things like "birthday parties" could be held in the community room.

**A:** The Chief said he was not aware that a birthday party had been held in community rooms. He said people with cardiac-related issues referred by their GPs, used the station gyms on Wirral.

**Q:** A person asked the rest of the public at the meeting if people could put their hands up if they did not want a fire station where they live - around five people put their hands up

**A:** A person from the audience said: You don't want a fire station, but you want a fire engine to come to your house when it is on fire?"

**Q:** Another person said it was about "loss of green belt".

**Q:** A person asked the rest of the public at the meeting: "Is there anyone here who is concerned about the standard of fire cover" and attendance if their house was to go on fire?"

**A:** A number of people said "yes" and "of course".

**A:** The person who asked the question then said "then can we hear some more from you people" and less from others at the meeting.

**Q:** A member of the public talked about the 50% reduction in the number of incidents and said that "there was every reason to suspect" that a similar reduction would take place in the coming years.

**A:** The Chief explained the reduction was unlikely to continue and the trend was "reversing".

**Q:** Why is that?

**A:** The Chief explained the trend was reversing because of the “capacity to intervene” by the fire and rescue service had been “significantly reduced” and the population was getting older.

**A:** The Chief said that there had been 10 fire deaths in the last year. The Chief explained that the number of incidents referred to were “life risk” incidents and there were still over 1,000 dwelling fires a year in Merseyside.

**Q:** A person said the Chief kept “referring to Merseyside” but should be talking about Wirral not the Merseyside area.

**A:** The Chief explained that Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service was a pan-Merseyside organisation, and had to respond to incidents across Merseyside. The Chief said even if incidents were reduced again by 50%, there was still a likelihood of a life-risk incident occurring and a severe incident/life-risk incident (where someone could die in a house fire).

**Q:** A person said that if the demand on the service continued to decrease, would the Service not be “too overmanned in the future?”

**A:** The Chief said no this would not be the case for the Service (that it would be too over staffed).

**Q:** A person said people were entitled to their opinion but it should be “based on fact”.

**A:** The Chief added that there needed to be fixed locations to make a response to an incident. The Chief explained that there would only need to be two key stations in Wirral if the fire and rescue service/firefighters wanted to take 10 minutes to get to an incident on 90% of occasions, but he said that is not what the aim was it was to get there as soon as possible. He explained the two key stations were Bromborough and Upton.

**Q:** A member of the public asked the Chief if he wanted a station in the Wirral with the best response time, where would he put it?

**A:** The Chief said the best location, in terms of West Wirral now, was a location around "Three Lanes End" near Saughall Massie Road.

**Q:** The person who asked the question responded – "I tell you where I would put it. I would put it on junction 3 of the M53."

**A:** The Chief explained about that there was a PFI station in Birkenhead Community Fire Station, but he could not do anything about the location of that new station.

**Comment** – a member of the public said Birkenhead Community Fire Station was "PFI".

**A:** The Chief also explained there were PFI stations, at this point a member of the public said this **Comment:** "That's your issue".

**A:** The Chief explained the background of the PFI scheme, which was created around 12 years ago and the Fire and Rescue Authority had approved moving forward with PFI around 10 years ago after it was decided some of the older stations needed replacing. The Chief explained the decisions to go ahead with PFI were taken by the Fire and Rescue Authority and five or six years ago the Fire Authority was basing decisions on the number of fire appliances and stations they had then. The Chief said the decisions on PFI had been taken place before the "significant austerity".

**Q:** They put it in the wrong place?

**A:** The Chief explained that the Fire and Rescue Authority based their decisions on what they had at the time – including 42 fire appliances, but this had reduced to 24. He said the Fire and Rescue Authority could not have been foreseen then what was going to happen with the reductions in grant. The Chief said he had lobbied against the reductions in funding and he had spoken at a Commons Select Committee about the funding reductions and the impact the reductions were having. The Chief said that he would not shut West Kirby if he "had a choice".

**Q:** A member of the public said "You said PFI 'proved to be a mistake' - do you think Saughall Massie will prove to be a mistake?"

**A:** The Chief said that he was not saying PFI "proved to be a mistake" but if he had been the Chief Fire Officer at the time he would have done things differently. The Chief explained about the location of the proposed site for a new station and mentioned Three Lanes End he ended his explanation by stating -

**A:** The Chief said he did think Saughall Massie was the right place for building a station.

**Q:** A person said the land in the area of the proposed site had been green belt 40 years ago but then houses were built on it; "why not a fire station?".

**Q:** A person asked how much of the land would the fire station be taking up and what was going to be done with the rest of the land alongside Saughall Massie Road?

**Q:** Another member of the public asked whether all of the land was going to be used (alongside Saughall Massie Road)?

**A:** The Chief said not all the land which was green belt would be used by the new proposed fire station but he explained that in regards to the rest of the land that question should be directed to those who owned the land, which was Wirral Council.

**Q:** A person said that they were asking the council what they were considering to do with the land.

**A:** A Council Officer who was attending the public meeting confirmed it was the council's land and it would be up to the council what they did with the land in the area.



**Q:** A person also asked about what would happen to the land where the West Kirby station was and they were “concerned” about this.

**A:** The Council Officer who was attending the public meeting explained that the fire and rescue service had approached the council about the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road but there were “no plans” regarding the remaining land in the area of the proposed station site that the council owned.

**Q:** A person said they had been in West Kirby “years ago” and land at the time was being looked at to build a hotel.

**A:** The Council Officer who was attending explained that people looked at land the council owned all the time but there were no current plans for the site in West Kirby.

**Q:** A member of the public said if it was to go ahead to build a fire station on the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road, whether it had been “realised” how building a fire station would “impact” on people “over 70” particularly in regards to building work.

**A:** The Council Officer said this was a question for the Fire Authority but the council would not be making a decision on the land until after the consultation and the go ahead of any station would be subject to a submission to the council’s planning department.

**Q:** A person said the proposed plans for a new fire station would “affect people” in Woodchurch and asked if people from Woodchurch had been invited to the meeting.

**A:** Two people in the audience said they were from Woodchurch and had been invited to take part in the consultation.

**Q:** A member of the public asked if a second meeting was going to be held in Saughall Massie.

**A:** The Chief Fire Officer explained that this consultation process was more than what was required and explained about the difficulty of suitable venues in the area in the vicinity of Saughall Massie Road and that there was criticism of what had been done during this consultation. The Chief Fire Officer said he did not think the views from a second public meeting at a similar location would lead to different views being expressed to those expressed at the first meeting in the area on April 20.

**Q:** A Councillor at the meeting said the first public meeting on April 20 at St Mary's centre on Saughall Massie Road was a "public meeting" but 150 people had been locked out of the venue.

**A:** The Chief explained that the venue was put forward by a councillor as the one that should be used to allow good access for local people.

**Q:** A person said people in Greasby had been allowed a second meeting. Another person said there were a lot of elderly people who live near the St Mary's Centre on Saughall Massie Road who could not go to a venue that was further away than that for a public meeting on the proposals on this consultation.

**A:** The Chief explained that what had been done in this consultation was "above and beyond" what was needed for such a consultation.

**Q:** A member of the public asked how long response times would be if West Kirby was not closed.

**A:** The Chief said it would be 2 minutes longer to respond.

**Q:** The person asked whether the extra 2 minutes would mean it would be "12 minutes" in total for a response time?

**A:** The Chief said it was not 12 minutes and explained it was a mean average response time. The Chief explained that response times were worked out from a fixed location for a potential new site and the speed of the appliance was speed limit in the area plus 20%.

**Comment** – A member of the public said the Chief had said at the public meeting on April 20 that firefighters could get from Saughall Massie Road to Upton would takes “30 seconds”.

**A:** The Chief said he had not said that if the station was built on the proposed site in Saughall Massie, Upton response times would change. An MFRS Officer, who was at the meeting, stated the Chief had been talking about the difference in the average response time in the Upton area, of 4 minutes 34 seconds, increasing, if Upton were to close and response to the Upton area was from the proposed site on Saughall Massie Road. Response to life risk incidents in the Upton station area would increase to 5 minutes 3 seconds (an increase of 30 seconds).

**A:** The Chief clarified it was in regards to the overall average response time into the Upton area would increase by about 30 seconds for life-risk incidents from the proposed site in Saughall Massie Road.

**Q:** A person said the Chief had spoken during his presentation about the only “non-green belt site” that was “viable” at Greasby. The person said that piece of land was rescinded and asked what was the reason for that?

**A:** The Council Officer who was attending the public meeting explained there were a number of reasons why the non-green belt site had been withdrawn and that three sites had been identified originally. He explained that as the fire and rescue authority consultation on the Greasby site progressed there was “outright opposition” and they had been asked by the fire and rescue authority to “broaden” the search for sites. He explained that there was one “little piece of land” near Pump Lane but it was the wrong shape for a fire station and too small.

**Q:** A person said objections were made (in Greasby) because it was not a “small fire station” but a “large facility” with youth and ambulance facilities and people were objecting to the size of what was proposed. The member of the public said: “I don’t want it (a station) built on the green belt” but if “push came to shove” and if “we had a small facility at one top end of the field” it “might be more acceptable”.

**A:** The Chief said if he could show some examples of what a fire station could look like, which were included in the presentation, it may help this person's comment. (The Chief then showed a photo of Birkenhead Fire Station and a fire station in Patterdale in Cumbria to the audience).

**Q:** A member of the public asked if the proposed fire station would have a "40-foot" training tower.

**A:** The Chief explained that there needed to be training facilities for firefighters but the training facilities could be achieved in other ways. He explained a training house could be used at the site rather than a training tower for confined space and safe working at height but he said that huge amounts of space were not needed for this but there had not been as much space at Greasby which is where people may have heard about a potential training tower.

**Q:** A person said that it would still be three-storeys.

**A:** The Chief explained there was due to be a large training facility in Prescott.

**Q:** A person said they thought the fire and rescue service was cutting back on spending and building things.

**A:** The Chief explained that training facilities were needed but it did not need to be a 40-foot tower.

**Q:** A person said that they wanted to be "clear" and that the Chief was saying a 40-foot training tower would not be built.

**A:** The Chief answered that there was no plan to put a training tower in.

**Q:** A person said what the Chief was talking about (using a house for training) would be "more intrusive" and that there was a tower at Upton fire station but a two-storey building (for training) would be "more intrusive".

**A:** The Chief said these sorts of discussions were to do with planning issues.

**Q:** A member of the public said they thought people had been "very rude" and that they thought the Chief had done a "brilliant job".

**Q:** A person talked about the two different design of stations (PFI at Birkenhead and one at Patterdale in the Lake District which were shown during the presentation) and asked whether there was much difference in cost for something which was more in keeping with the area?

**A:** The Chief said there would not be much difference in cost for the two different designs. He explained a station would cost around £3 million in terms of design but he was not "aware of any reason" why it would cost more to design a station more "sympathetically".

**Q:** A person asked if anyone had done a "back of an envelope calculation" on what the cost might be.

**A:** The Chief explained that the cost of a station for such a proposed site would be around £3.5 million with one fire appliance and one retained fire appliance at the station. The Chief explained there was a grant from DCLG.

**Q:** A person asked if Wallasey Fire Station was "going to close". The member of the public said if Wallasey was to close would it affect response times from Upton?

**A:** The Chief said if further closures were needed then these would be in Liverpool next but at some point, if funding continued to decrease, the attention on looking at stations would return to Wirral. Before that point was reached the Chief said he would have recommended that the fire and rescue authority hold a referendum on increasing council tax to raise more funds.

**Q:** A person said the Chief had been talking about what station could look like and that most of the barns in the area near the proposed site were "40-foot high" and suggested the training facilities were created to look like a barn to fit in with the surroundings.

**A:** The Chief explained that suggestions could be made as part of the consultation as to the situation.

**Q:** A person spoke about smaller fast response units and how they were used across the country. The person said they were not only used for "speed" but also because they are "cost saving". The person said "You said last week you would have to employ three extra firefighters "but other fire authorities are not doing that, there are other ways of doing it."

**A:** The Chief explained about the small response units being used in other parts of the country and how the vehicles would need to be crewed. The Chief said if you take .... Fire and Rescue Service, who used Brigade Response Vehicles for small fires, as an example, Merseyside had got rid of small fires units, which were effectively the same, after using them a number of years ago. He said the small units had been "wonderful" when there were 42 appliances but now, with less fire appliances available, fire appliances that could be sent to any incident were better than a smaller unit that could not be sent to life-risk incidents.

**Q:** The person who asked the above question, then said "I'm not saying completely turn it (West Kirby) into" just a small fire unit.

**A:** The Chief explained that it would need more people to crew the small response vehicles. The Chief said West Kirby could be turned into a small fires unit but this would add to response times for incidents that were life-risk as a fire appliance would need to come from another station further away.

He said he would have to pay for 16 people to man the small response vehicle he did not have a budget for.

**Q:** A person said they had seen small fires units going to a house fire.

**A:** The Chief said that more than 3 people were needed to set up a safe system of work to respond safely to a life risk incident – and this was achieved by using the current fire appliances with the crew numbers on those. The Chief said although some may want a Brigade Response Vehicle (BRV) it had little use at life-risk calls including house fires.

**Q:** A member of the public asked doesn't the fire and rescue service know whether they are going to a house fire, or something else.

**A:** The Chief explained how a call was taken and how fire appliances were sent to house fire. The Chief said it was about prioritising resources to life-risk incidents.

**Q:** A person asked why a small fires unit could not just be used for smaller fires, mentioning it had a pump on it and could deal with fires.

**A:** The Chief explained that in order to put a small fires unit or BRV on (to respond to calls involving small fires), it would be at the expense of a "rescue pump".

**Q:** A person said that it could be done because most of the fires were small fires.

**A:** The Chief explained about needing to have a fire appliance to respond to rescue people. He also spoke about firefighters carrying out community safety work, including Home Fire Safety Checks, but also being ready to respond to an incident. The Chief said the fire and rescue service had a "finite resource" and people must see that.

**Q:** A person said the issue with all this is the funding. The person said the Chief was making the best decisions he could with the experience he had and the Chief had a lot of experience. The person said they thought the answer, as money was not coming back to the fire and rescue authority, was to "take £4 out of each insurance policy on homes and cars" and put

that straight into the fire and rescue service. The person said that through that approach tens of millions of pounds could be raised.

**A:** The Chief explained funding for the fire and rescue authority came from business rates that are paid in centrally are then re-distributed as grants funding.

**Q:** A person asked exactly where the station was going to be built and asked whether it could not be built "further down the field, towards the bridge" at the proposed site.

**A:** The Wirral Council Officer at the meeting explained that what a building looked like, its height and so on would form part of a planning application and discussions.

**Q:** A person said: "We don't want a fire station there."

**Q:** A person said "what about the conservation area that's connected to it"?

**A:** The Wirral Council Officer said elements and concerns such as conservation would form part of the planning process.

**Q:** A person said they did not know if it was true but they had been told there were bats on the field.

**A:** The Chief explained about the consultation process was around the principle of the fire station and said all of these other issues being raised were planning issues.

**Q:** A person said "There's supposed to be an American pilot who went down near the bridge" and they had been told it was an "historic safe site".

**A:** The Wirral Council Officer explained that the body of an American pilot who had been on a test flight had been recovered along with parts of a plane and were on display and there was a plaque marking the site.



**Q:** A person said the Chief had said that by 2020 the funding issues may have changed and asked does that not mean that the Saughall Massie site was a "temporary solution to a temporary issue?"

**A:** The Chief said that he did not think the financial position is going to change. He also said he did not see "any prospect" of moving back to where financially the fire and rescue service had been.

**Q:** A Councillor said West Kirby was thought to be "closed most of the time". The councillor said that closing the station had been "risk assessed

**A:** The Chief said that was "not true".

**Q:** The Councillor replied "what I am saying is you have risk assessed it."

**A:** The Chief explained that on any given shifts there were appliances not available. He also explained that "cash savings" were made when people leave. The Chief explained that reserves were being used to avoid compulsory redundancy as firefighters were not leaving at the rate required for the savings.

**Q:** A person asked how long that would take to reach the required number of firefighters?

**A:** The Chief said it would take probably take until "some point" next year but reserves were being used to avoid compulsory redundancies. The Chief also explained as people leave that was one less person to be on a fire engine and also there were a number of staff on other duties who may be recovering from illness or injury and were not "fit enough" to be on a fire engine. He explained as a result of this West Kirby may not be available on some shifts, along with Whiston, Aintree and Kensington.

**Q:** A member of the audience then asked whether Upton is not available at any time?

**A:** The Chief explained that it was always available because it was a key station and there were 10 key stations. The Chief explained West Kirby would be made not available before Upton because ten key stations, including Upton, were needed for response. The Chief said the longer this situation went on the more fire appliances at stations would not be available.

**Q:** A person said the proposals “proved” Upton is “far more busy” and “more essential” than West Kirby.

**A:** The Chief said it was not to do with how busy a station was as, for example, Formby was a key station, but it was the quietest in terms of the number of incidents in Merseyside. But he said it was a “key station” because of its location. The Chief said it was about having a fixed location to cover an area and get there within 10 minutes.

**Q:** A person said in regards to the Chief’s explanation, that West Kirby was still closed “50% of the time”.

**A:** The Chief said the station was “not closed” but its fire appliance may not be available.

**Q:** A person asked what were the figures the fire appliance at West Kirby was available for?

**A:** The Chief said the fire appliance at West Kirby was available around 75% of the time but that the fire appliance would be available less and less.

**Q:** A person said that was a “relentless reduction”.

**A:** The Chief explained that as people retired there would be less people. The Chief said there was not the budget to have the staff needed to keep West Kirby and Upton open.

**Q:** A person said: “Surely there must be a point” where “West Kirby will shut”?

**A:** The Chief said yes. The Chief also explained what he was trying to do was deliver the “best possible outcome”.

**Q:** A person said there were more “incidents this side” (Wirral).

**A:** The Chief explained about the numbers of life-risk incidents and that there had been fatalities in house fires in Wirral, but the main difference in figures was around secondary fires.

**Q:** A person asked how many fire engines there were at Upton?

**A:** The Chief said there was one.

**Q:** The person asked how many crew members were there?

**A:** The Chief said it was a crew of five.

**Q:** A person asked if the stations were merged how many firefighters would there be?

**A:** The Chief said there would be half as many needed.

**Q:** A person asked how many fire engines there would be at the merged station

**A:** The Chief said there would be two fire engines.

**Q:** A person asked if there was any other way funds could be raised by the fire and rescue service.

**A:** The Chief explained that a referendum could be held to try and win support to raise the council tax precept more. He explained that a referendum would cost around £1 million and a 10%/15% or even 20% council tax increase would be needed to make any difference. The Chief also explained that he did not believe there would be the support on a referendum to raise council tax by this amount and others, such as the

police, may also want to take this option if the fire and rescue authority went for that approach.

**Q:** A person asked whether we could get any lottery funding.

**A:** The Chief explained that if that was an approach to be taken then the fire and rescue service would be in direct competition with others who raise money through fundraising like the RNLi and Claire House.

**Q:** A person said that they just wanted to “thank” the Chief Fire Officer for his time and that the questioning and meeting had been “pretty tough”. The person said they felt as though they had had more consultation at this meeting than at the one on April 20. (Around eight people in the audience then clapped.)

### **Question and answers from the public consultation meeting in West Kirby 05/05/2015**

Approx 15-20 people attended

**Q:** It seemed very easy for them (The Council) to get the parking for the Golf Open. They managed to make the approach to make a deal there.

**A:** The Chief said it was his belief that it was probably the landowner doing that.

**Q:** There is obviously a route to the landowner.

**A:** The Chief said that agents working with the Fire and Rescue Authority made repeated approaches. That is a matter for the individuals concerned.

**Q:** Is it more than one landowner you have approached then about other land?

**A:** The Chief said he couldn't comment because there are commercial issues around that. There have been approaches to landowners but we have had no response.

**Q:** Most people have got a price and it's a balance between the merger you have planned and how that would affect the people living there.

**A:** The Chief said if people are not willing to engage with us, we haven't got compulsory purchase powers and we can't compulsory purchase the land.

**Q:** On the video you showed is that fire retardant furniture?

**A:** The Chief Yes, it is, to British Standard. He added that even if the proposal was approved by the Authority it would still go to planning, then because it is greenbelt, it would go to the Secretary of State.

**Q:** (Councillor on a planning committee): But if you get refused at planning you could still appeal it couldn't you?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** We only get the opportunity locally today to really speak from the heart about how we feel. Whether you say "we're not interested, it will go to planning and then you can have your say", people want to have their say before it goes to planning.

**A:** The Chief said he does care what people think. But his primary concern is about the safety of people. He will then feed back people's views to the Fire and Rescue Authority as with Greasby.

**Q:** People were locked out at the meeting (Saughall Massie).

**A:** The Chief said we were asked by elected representatives in the area to use that location. We were aware that wasn't suitable.

**Q:** You're paid to do this.

**A:** The Chief said he thought people over estimate the impact of a fire station. It's not anything like as disruptive as people think. I would be made up if my parents in law could go to the fire station. I would know there would be people close by who are there to assist in case of an incident.

**Q:** Can you tell us how high the external walls are going to be?

**A:** The Chief said it doesn't have to have walls. Bootle and Netherton station is open. There's a car park. It's all about design. Would it be one storey or two storey? It depends on what the view was of the local people.

**Q:** It's very close to people's properties. The design issues are a long way down the line.

**Q:** You mentioned it was the elected members who initiated using the building in Saughall Massie for the meeting. The reason was people who are affected are people nearby and they are mostly elderly and infirm and can't travel.

**A:** The Chief said he didn't need to have a second meeting to know that people in the vicinity are against it.

**Q:** Yes but rather than you say it, you will be able to count heads at the meeting.

**Q:** The Saughall Massie Conservation Trust have done some research and other fire services have covered areas that are hard to reach by using quick response vehicles. Why can't you revamp Upton and a single quick response vehicle be used to ensure people in West Kirby are getting a proper response time? You said the fire authority has been running inefficiently for a number of years.

**A:** I never said it was inefficient.

**Q:** It's one of the most expensive in the country.

**A:** That is a legacy issue.

**Q:** If you build in Saughall Massie you get a grant. From a business point of view you need this. Your option B is a quick response vehicle.

**A:** The Chief asked what was proposed for Upton?

**Q:** Is it not possible to invest the money in a quick response vehicle in this part of the area?

**A:** The Chief said a rapid response vehicle is used to deal with anti-social behaviour fires and we've managed a lot of those out. To crew a rapid

response vehicle 12 hours a day it would need 12 people, which I haven't got. I can't deploy a small fires unit to anything other than small fires.

**Q:** You said the vast majority of fires are small fires and getting cats out of a tree.

**A:** The Chief said that we have got 24 rescue pumps for RTCs, water rescue, house fires, all the things retained firefighters around the country aren't trained to do. Toxteth crews in Liverpool City Centre were on the scene within two or three minutes when the Duck boat sank. They rescued three people who would have drowned if we didn't have water rescue training. You wouldn't get that with the retained because it would take another five minutes to get there. A small fires unit gives me nothing. Where they are used around the country is in place of support pumps. They are used in places where you have two fire appliances.

Firefighters do carry out HFSCs in the afternoon but they can deploy to any incident. This is about protecting the resources we have. Small Fire Units are a gimmick. They use them in place of support pumps. We haven't got any support pumps left.

**Q:** The crews in West Kirby, they will go?

**A:** Yes they will go through natural wastage.

**Q:** A member of the public made a comment about how long it takes to travel from Upton to West Kirby.

**A:** A Station Manager said blue lights don't get you through traffic at 60MPH. There are other people and other road users. We have to be ready to stop at red lights.

**Q:** During the rush hour it you have to use Saughall Massie Road, it's packed with traffic.

**A:** Station Manager said if the fire appliance is at Upton, it's going to be worse. The response time from Upton will be a lot longer.

**Q:** So there's no legal response times? You've made them up yourselves? If anyone had a problem, 15 seconds is a bit too slow. Most of West Kirby can be covered in 10 minutes from Upton.

**A:** The Chief said that accepting 10 minutes response times would be at odds with the rest of Merseyside.

**Q:** Of course you're biased, you want it at Saughall Massie.

**A:** The Chief said he was trying to achieve the fastest response times as I can across Merseyside. If I set a precedent here then than I would have to do that for the rest of Merseyside.

**Q:** You're always going to have a strong argument.

**A:** The Chief said that was because I have got a strong argument.

**Q:** It's what price you are willing to pay. The people who live nearby might die because of the stress caused by this. I could play on that. It could see two or three people die early.

**Q:** How long has West Kirby been closed? (Meaning not manning the station all of the time)

**A:** About a year.

**Q:** So you've made a risk assessment about the safety of people in West Kirby.

**A:** The Chief said it was far from ideal. He doesn't like having any pumps off the run but we can only staff with the people we've got.

**Q:** You said you've got engines out doing community work and fire alarms. Why do you have to operate them from a fire station? Ambulances park in places, they don't have to have a station. If the firefighters are out on patrol why can't they be permanently out?

**A:** The Chief said he could use strategic standby. Unlike the ambulance service we require an operating base, for things such as training. When they do 42 hours at work, firefighters undertake 20 hours of training to maintain technical competence, which is a very broad skill set now. A lot of time is spent on training and standard testing of equipment. We have a highly professional fire and rescue service on Merseyside which is the envy of the rest of the country. He wants to keep it that way. We could lower standards to the lowest denominator but he doesn't want that. Whatever we do, we're going to upset somebody.



He understood people don't want a fire station where they live. But ultimately he wanted the option that is best of operational response, not necessarily on that site. It could be Three Lanes End but we don't have a compulsory purchase order.

**Q:** So because you have things like training and equipment you need somewhere rather than being able to operate out and about?

**A:** The Chief said 30% of the time they are out and about but 70% they are in a fixed location. They've got to maintain core competencies to achieve safe systems of working because it is a dangerous occupation.

**Q:** If the questionnaires come back mostly against the proposal does that mean democracy prevails and it will be ditched?

**A:** The Chief said the Fire Authority would consider whether a viable alternative had been identified. My professional advice will be based on response times. You are as likely to have a life risk incident in West Kirby as you are in Upton.

**Q:** I live in West Kirby and I'd rather have a fire engine come from nearby than from Upton. People are saying it might only be an extra minute, you tell that to the person whose house is on fire. Those minutes make a difference. Would you want it there quick? This is a common sense approach. They've got to save money and they can't have two fire stations and does it make common sense to put it there (Saughall Massie), I think it does.

**A:** The Chief said he is a professional advisor, but the Authority makes the decision, but if they do decide to go for the merger then there would be the planning process, where it is considered again by elected members. They will look at the response from the public, myself and the FRA. If that prevails you have an appeals process.

**Q:** I'm an elected councillor for Hoylake and Meols. I'm horrified about the thought of West Kirby and leaving us with a ten minute response. I'm desperate that you do not close West Kirby. As a member of the council I'm disappointed with our senior officers because firstly there was a crazy idea of giving the land at Greasby and then this crazy idea of putting it

next to people at Saughall Massie. If the council can find land for a golf resort I'm sure they can find a site somewhere along that stretch. Don't go for this site because it is going to upset those people but do keep chipping away at Wirral Council.

**A:** The Chief said in defence of Wirral Council, they have tried to help us as much as they can. The Greasby site is a community hub and children's centre. It would be wonderful if Wirral owned land in Three Lanes End but the fact is they don't.

**Q:** How hard have you tried to get in touch with the people who own the land?

**A:** The Chief said you don't want to harass people. If they don't want to sell, they won't.

**Q:** Why would you send the letter to Wirral Council about the site now?

**A:** The Chief said that if the land is withdrawn, then the station build would not happen and then the process would be academic.

**A:** A Wirral Council Officer said they were in purdah so he was limited in what he could say. Wirral has legal duties around public safety and you would expect us to cooperate with our partners. We have three sites around Greasby, one was too small, one was leased to the Woodland Trust for 100 years and the other was Greasby. The proposal was the fire service would provide us with brand new facilities. The community centre however is leased to a trust and the library service didn't see any major use of having a new building. A grant was used to build the children's centre and there was a chance that would be withdrawn.

The fire service came back to us and said could we extend our search area. The preferred position was close to Pump Lane. The council only owns one site there but the site is not big enough. The next piece of land is here (Saughall Massie).

He said he fully understood the points made. The Chief does have to go back to the Fire Authority and he will advise them. They don't always take that advice. The second bit of democracy is if the outcome of the

FRA is that they want to use this site is it will go to Cabinet about the possibility of releasing this site. The third is the planning process.

**Q:** I've got a big question around impartiality around this.

**A:** The Wirral Council Officer said the planning committee shows no favouritism with schemes.

**A:** A Councillor who is on a planning committee said they were not influenced by the Council.

**Q:** It would be interesting to know the criteria. If 95% say they don't want it will the Chief still say he wants it?

**A:** The Chief said the people of Saughall Massie are against the proposal but the people of West Kirby and Upton may not be.

**A:** The Councillor who is on a planning committee said the planning process doesn't look at an alternative site. We don't debate whether two alternative sites are up for grabs.

**Q:** We're talking about Greenbelt policy. Someone would have to come in and say there is no alternative.

**A:** The Councillor who is on a planning committee said the Chief would have to come and say there is exceptional circumstances to use greenbelt.

**A:** The Wirral Council Officer said that should the planning committee give approval his understanding is it has to then be signed off nationally because it's greenbelt.

**A:** The Chief said he would know he had done his utmost to protect the people of Wirral.

**Q:** You had a topographical study done. Do you have a copy that we can see?

**A:** the project manager said he did and made them available.

**A:** The Wirral Council officer said that they had allowed them to go on to the land, not to prejudice anything but to know as much about the site as they can if decisions are going to be made.

**Q:** Are you going to carry out any habitat surveys?

**A:** The Wirral Council officer said that would be done during planning.

**Final comment** The Chief said the minimum number of firefighters for an appliance is four people to achieve a safe system of work. When they are called to a fire they will look at what is in there, are there any people etc. That all happens on route as soon as the appliance gets there we can make an intervention. When you only have 24 appliances you've got to put them in the right locations. I would love to have 42 fire engines but unfortunately I don't.

We understand people in Saughall Massie don't want a station and that will be considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority, who will also consider fire response and the views of people in West Kirby and Upton.

It would then go to planning. If it doesn't go ahead then I will have done all I can to maintain the response times. If it is approved all I can do is say I advised this based on my professional opinion around response times.



## **Draft Fire Station Options for West Wirral**

### **Report of Deliberative Consultation with Members of the Public and a Residents' Survey**

**June 2015**

**Opinion Research Services**  
Spin-out company of Swansea University



As with all our studies, findings from this research are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract.

Any press release or publication of the findings of this research requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

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# Acknowledgements

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is pleased to have worked with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) on the public consultation programme reported here. In the deliberative consultation (through focus groups and a forum) the participants engaged with the issues under consideration and discussed their ideas readily; and a total of 1351 responded to postal residents surveys (577 from Upton and 774 from West Kirby); so we trust that this report of findings will contribute to service planning by MFRA at a time of serious financial constraints.

We thank MFRA for commissioning the project as part of its on-going programme of public and stakeholder engagement and consultation about its risk management and budget planning. We particularly thank the senior officers and staff who attended the sessions to listen to the public's views and answer questions. Such meetings benefit considerably from the readiness to answer participants' questions fully and frankly, as in this case.

We are grateful to all the members of the public who took part in the four meetings and residents' survey to share their views with us. Those in the deliberative forums were patient in listening to background information before entering positively into the spirit of open discussions about challenging topics, with some controversial aspects.

At all stages of the project, ORS's status as an independent organisation consulting the public as objectively as possible was recognised and respected. We are grateful for the trust, and we hope this report will contribute usefully to thinking about MFRA's development in difficult times. We hope also that ORS has been instrumental in continuing to strengthen MFRA's public engagement.



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# Executive Summary

## Commission and Background

1. ORS was commissioned by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to conduct deliberative consultation and a residents' survey about draft options for the west Wirral fire stations. The main consultation issues were two draft options and a further draft proposal regarding the number of fire engines deployed full-time in the area:

### MFRA's Draft Fire Station Options

Whether to close the West Kirby and Upton fire stations while building a new one in Saughall Massie **or** whether to locate west Wirral emergency cover at Upton while closing the West Kirby station. The former option may fairly be called a 'merger' while the latter option would simply be a closure of the West Kirby fire station.

### MFRA's Draft Fire Engine Proposal

To reduce the wholetime fire engines by making one of the current two pumps a reserve or resilience back-up vehicle for periods of exceptional demand.

2. Because centralising emergency cover at Upton would lengthen response times to West Kirby significantly, compared with providing a new station at Saughall Massie, MFRA prefers the 'merger' option – even while recognising the sensitivities of developing a green belt site.

## Deliberative Research

3. The four consultation meetings reported here all lasted for at least two-and-a-half hours and in total there were 49 diverse participants. The participants were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from the ORS Social Research Call Centre. Care was taken to ensure that no potential participants were disqualified or disadvantaged by disabilities or any other factors, and the venues at which the forums met were readily accessible. People's special needs were all taken into account in the recruitment and at the venues.
4. Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, deliberative forums cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the four meetings reported here gave diverse groups of Wirral residents the opportunity to comment in detail on MFRA's draft options. Because the participants were diverse, the outcomes of the meeting (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.

5. The meetings began with a short review of the background issues and the range of options considered by MFRA in order to reduce its expenditure. The introduction also showed how risk, measured in terms of the number of critical and other incidents, has reduced by more than half in nine years. Based on its population of about 1.4 million people, MFRA has more wholtime fire stations than any other area of the country, including London, and so each of its 25 stations (following the closure of Allerton station on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015) covers a relatively small area.
6. The participants were also told that both draft options, when combined with the proposed crewing changes would save at least £863,000 per annum by allowing up to 22 fire-fighter posts to be phased out, probably without the need for compulsory redundancies.
7. The meetings were informed explicitly about the impact on response times of closing two stations and covering their areas primarily with one full-time engine from Saughall Massie *and also* closing West Kirby and providing the same cover from Upton.

## Deliberative Findings

8. The focus groups' conclusions regarding the two draft options and draft proposal to reduce the number of fully-crewed wholtime engines from two to one were as follows:

### Saughall Massie

Seven out of nine people in the group opposed a new station in Saughall Massie: only one person found it acceptable and there was one 'don't know'

Above all, most of the group wanted to protect the green belt area from development of all kinds

They were unanimously opposed to the inclusion of a large tower on any fire station in Saughall Massie (on the grounds that it would be visually very intrusive)

Seven out of nine did not want the fire station (if developed) to include an ambulance base (on the grounds that this would increase the scale of the development)

The group was broadly divided on the question of whether some community facilities should be included

By a ratio of two-to-one the participants also rejected the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine

The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues

If a station were to be built there, the Saughall Massie residents wanted it to be as small and unobtrusive as possible.

### West Kirby

The participants all accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle

They were also unanimous that the Saughall Massie site was a suitable location for the new station

Nine of the ten participants felt it was reasonable to site a fire station in the green belt (in this case)

The option of centralising cover at Upton fire station was opposed by everyone

The group was concerned that centralising cover at Upton would disproportionately jeopardise the elderly and socially deprived in West Kirby

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable

Four out of ten participants thought that the introduction of some community retained firefighters is an option that should at least be explored by MFRA, as an alternative way of saving money; but six were opposed to this idea.

### **Upton**

Half or slightly more of the eight participants accepted that, in principle, the closure of two fire stations and their replacement with a new station would be reasonable, but the others were 'don't knows'

Five of the eight thought it reasonable to site the proposed new station in Saughall Massie, but two were opposed and there was one 'don't know'

Most of the group opposed the use of a green belt site: no one specifically supported it, but there were three 'don't knows'

The group was equally divided on whether a fire station in Saughall Massie should include a tower; but all agreed that alternative training facilities would be reasonable

The group also unanimously supported the inclusion of an ambulance base and community facilities, if the station were built there

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable

The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues.

### **All-Wirral Forum**

All except one of the 22 participants readily accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle

The same majority supported using the Saughall Massie site rather than centralising services at Upton

The forum was unanimous that in this case it was reasonable to develop a green belt site

The option of locating emergency cover at Upton fire station was supported by only one person

One member of the forum was concerned that basing emergency cover at Upton would jeopardise young people in a special needs school in West Kirby. However, by a ratio of ten-to-one the forum felt that, if the Saughall Massie site became unavailable for any reason, it would be acceptable then to base local emergency services at Upton.

With only one dissenter, the participants thought it was reasonable to include a tower on the Saughall Massie site in order to facilitate training – but they thought its visual impact should be minimised.

All the participants thought that the inclusion of some community facilities was reasonable.

There was a broad division of opinion in respect of whether ambulance facilities should be co-located at the site – and those against were concerned that ambulance mobilisations would cause more disturbance than the less frequent fire engine movements.

A large absolute majority of participants (19) accepted that it was reasonable to change the status of the second fire engine: there were only three ‘don’t knows’.

## Quantitative Research

9. MFRA also commissioned ORS to undertake a conscientious and ambitious residents’ survey, using a postal questionnaire which was sent to a large random sample of 10,000 households. The random sample was stratified to include 5,000 to addresses in the Upton fire station area (including Saughall Massie) and 5,000 to addresses in the West Kirby fire station area. Questionnaires were sent out in the week commencing 13th April 2015 and the cut-off date for their return was 15th May 2015.
10. A total of 1,351 completed questionnaires were returned – with 577 from the Upton station area and 774 from the west Kirby area, an overall response rate of 14% (12% for Upton and 16% for West Kirby). Saughall Massie residents amounted to 11% of the initial contact sample, but accounted for 17% of the survey respondents – so the village was certainly not under-represented.
11. The returned sample for each fire station area was compared with census data and then weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and whether people were suffering long term illness/disability.
12. The survey questionnaire covered the same issues as the deliberative meetings – namely, MFRA’s two options and further draft proposal for the second fire engine. As well as the questionnaire, the 10,000 randomly selected households received a copy of MFRA’s Consultation Newsletter.

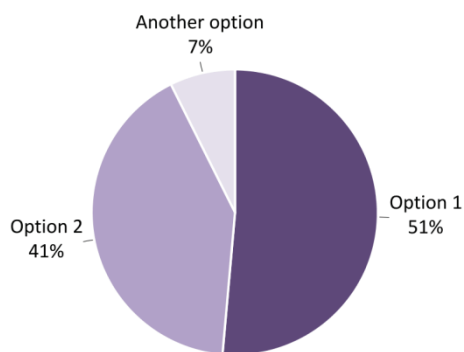
## Residents' Survey Findings

13. As Figure 1 shows, an absolute majority of residents in both fire station areas preferred option 1 – 51% in Upton and 70% in West Kirby. In Upton, just over two-fifths (41%) preferred option 2, but in West Kirby only a just over a fifth (21%) preferred that option.

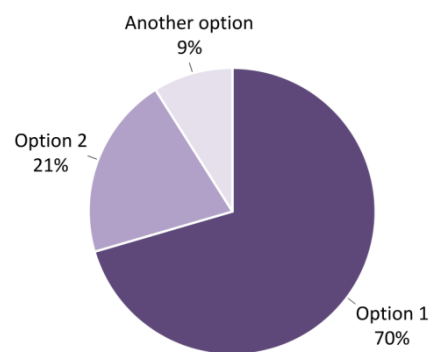
**Figure 1: Residents survey responses to whether they prefer option 1, 2 or another option**

*Do you prefer option 1 (merging Upton and West Kirby fire stations by building a new fire station in Saughall Massie), option 2 (closing West Kirby fire station and using Upton fire station to cover both areas) or another option?*

### Upton



### West Kirby

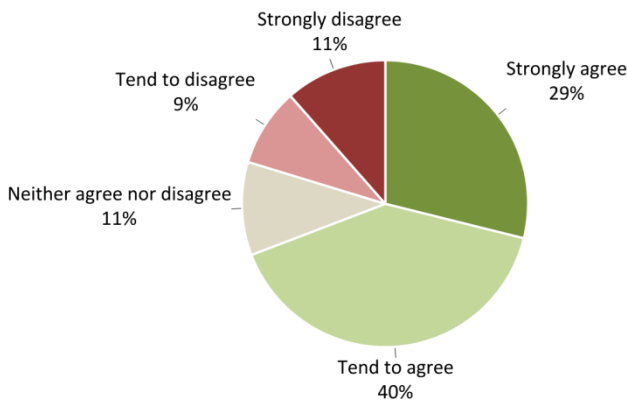


14. When responses for the two areas are combined to yield 'overall results' the absolute majority for option 1 is 57%.
15. Very large absolute majorities in both Upton (69%) and West Kirby (70%) also agreed with MFRA's additional draft proposal to keep one immediate response (24/7) fire engine at the proposed station while making the second fire engine a reserve or back-up vehicle with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions. The findings are shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

**Figure 2: Agreement with the additional proposal**

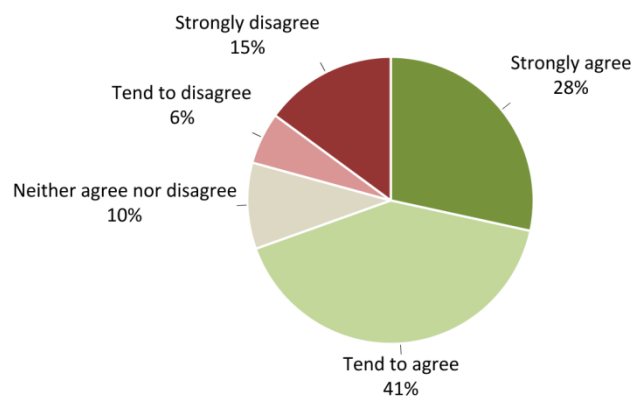
*Do you agree or disagree with the additional proposal to keep one immediate response (24/7) fire engine at the proposed station while making the second fire engine a reserve or back-up vehicle with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions?*

**Upton**



Base: All Respondents (563)

**West Kirby**



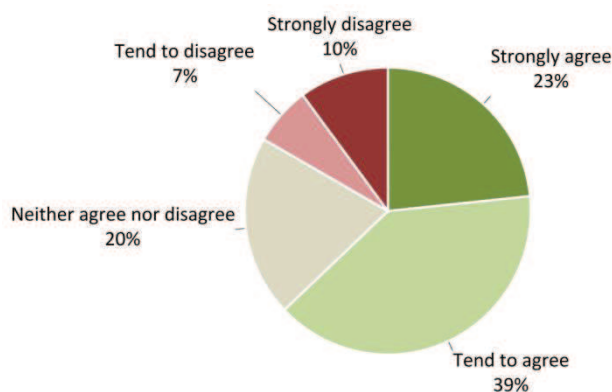
Base: All respondents (754)

16. Absolute majorities in both Upton (63%) and West Kirby (59%) agreed with including community facilities at the proposed station, as Figure 3 shows.

**Figure 3: Agreement with including community facilities at the proposed station**

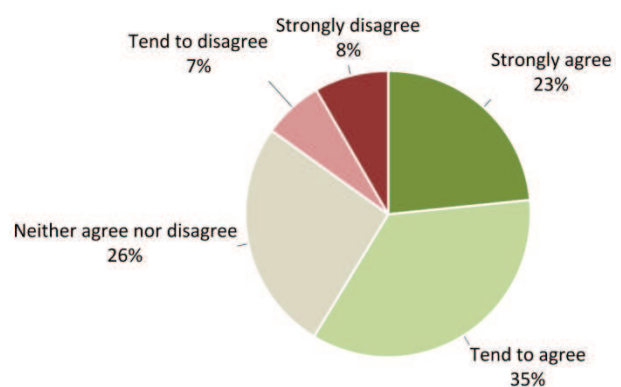
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with including community facilities at the proposed station?*

**Upton**



Base: All Respondents (559)

**West Kirby**



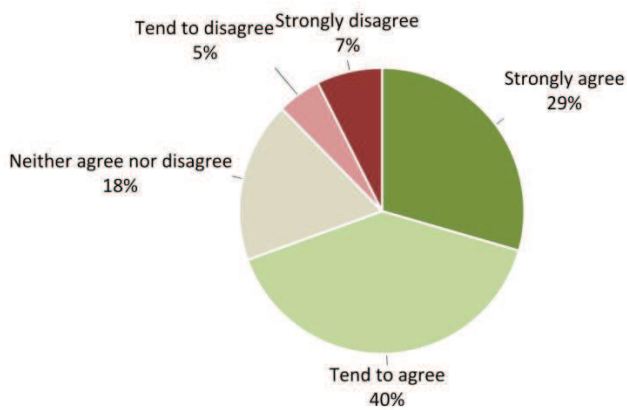
Base: All respondents (747)

17. Even larger absolute majorities (69% in Upton and 76% in West Kirby) agreed with sharing the proposed station with other blue light emergency services, as Figure 4 shows.

**Figure 4: Agreement with including community facilities at the proposed station**

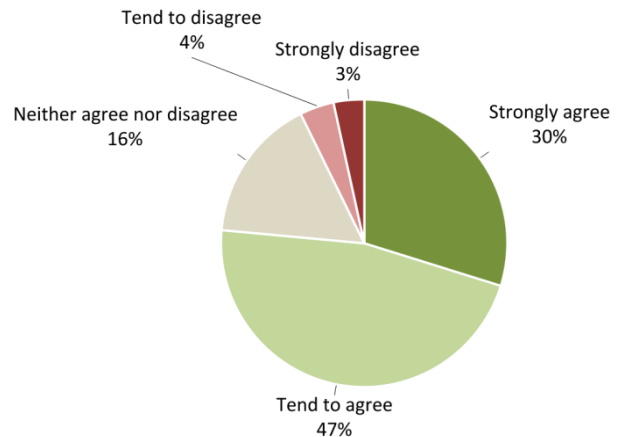
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with sharing the proposed station with other blue light emergency services?*

### Upton



Base: All Respondents (562)

### West Kirby



Base: All respondents (745)

18. Some residents in the Upton station area were concerned that the proposed new fire station would adversely affect people living in supported accommodation and retirement bungalows in Saughall Massie. In West Kirby, the concerns were about the impact of possible longer response times on elderly and/or disabled residents there.

## Overall Conclusions

### Four Deliberative Meetings

People's opinions about the location of the fire station varied sharply depending on their place of residence

The Saughall Massie site was strongly opposed *only in* the Saughall Massie focus group (though small minorities had some reservations in the other meetings)

Overall, support for the fire station to be located at Saughall Massie was overwhelming in the two other focus groups and in the all-Wirral forum

Centralising emergency cover in Upton was unanimously opposed in West Kirby; there was majority opposition in Upton; and in the all-Wirral forum opposition to Upton was almost unanimous

However, the Upton focus group also has a majority opposed to the development of a green belt site, whereas the West Kirby focus group was



almost unanimous, and the all-Wirral forum was unanimous, that this green belt development would be satisfactory

Overall, the Saughall Massie group wanted to minimise the scale and visual impact of any station (if built there); but most members of the other groups had fewer reservations

Outside of Saughall Massie, the meetings supported the provision of community facilities; but there were reservations about a tower and ambulance facilities (though alternative training facilities were more acceptable).

19. The Saughall Massie residents had three main concerns about locating the fire station in their village:

The local road infrastructure is unsuitable for fire engines attending incidents in West Kirby from Saughall Massie

A fire station would intrude on the green belt

It would also adversely affect residents' amenity/environment and lower their property values.

### **Residents' Survey**

20. MFRA's draft proposals were widely supported in the residents' survey:

Absolute majorities in both Upton (51%) and West Kirby (70%) supported option 1 – and when the responses for the two areas are combined to yield 'overall results' the absolute majority for option 1 is 57%.

Very large absolute majorities in both Upton (69%) and West Kirby (70%) agreed with MFRA's additional draft proposal to keep one immediate response (24/7) fire engine at the proposed station while making the second fire engine a reserve or back-up vehicle with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions.

Absolute majorities in both Upton (63%) and West Kirby (59%) agreed with including community facilities at the proposed station.

Even larger absolute majorities (69% in Upton and 76% in West Kirby) agreed with sharing the proposed station with other blue light emergency services.

Some residents in the Upton station area were concerned that proposals would adversely affect people living in supported accommodation and retirement bungalows in Saughall Massie. In West Kirby, there were concerns were about the impact of possible longer response times on elderly and/or disabled residents there.

## Overall Conclusions

21. Both the deliberative meetings and the residents' survey show that opposition to the Saughall Massie site (option 1) is largely confined to the village itself, with intense opposition there.
22. In general, though, there is considerable support for the Fire Authority's preferred merger option and also for its draft proposal to designate one of the two fire engines as a reserve or back-up resilience vehicle.
23. In fact, the levels of support manifest in the residents' survey and deliberative meetings might fairly be described as 'emphatic'; so MFRA may proceed on the basis that it has considerable community support for its draft proposals.
24. However, consultation is not a numbers game, in which the majority view necessarily prevails (like in a referendum), so the Fire Authority will wish to consider carefully all the arguments, evidence and considerations relevant to this case before taking its decision based upon its assessment of the public good.

## Important Note

25. This executive summary cannot do justice to the arguments and reasons of the participants in the deliberative forum and focus groups, so readers are encouraged to refer to the full report (in the following chapters) for further important information about people's opinions.

# Introduction

## Commission and background

26. ORS was commissioned by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to conduct deliberative consultation and a residents' survey about draft options for the west Wirral fire stations. ORS's role was to recruit and facilitate the deliberative meetings and to design and conduct an appropriate residents' survey before reporting the findings to MFRA.
27. The main consultation issues were two draft options for the north-west Wirral fire stations and a further draft proposal regarding the number of fire engines deployed full-time in the area. In summary, the issues were:

### MFRA's Draft Fire Station Options

Whether to close the West Kirby and Upton fire stations while building a new one in Saughall Massie or whether to locate west Wirral emergency cover at Upton while closing the West Kirby station. The former option may fairly be called a 'merger' while the latter option would simply be a closure of the West Kirby fire station.

### MFRA's Draft Fire Engine Proposal

To reduce the wholetime fire engines by making one of the current two pumps a reserve or resilience back-up vehicle for periods of exceptional demand.

28. MFRA has conducted extensive engagement and consultation with residents for a number of years and, in this context, ORS has facilitated both district-based and all-Merseyside forums regularly. Within this on-going framework, MFRA has conducted both 'listening and engagement' and 'formal consultation' meetings on a regular cycle. Hence, the consultation programme reported here followed an earlier all-Merseyside 'listening and engagement' process that considered hypothetically a wide range of policies and options for MFRA in the context of its reduced budget due to public expenditure reductions.
29. The current programme also followed closely on a previous consultation in respect of the proposed merger of the same stations based upon a new fire station to be built in Greasby. Following local protests, the local authority withdrew the Greasby site from consideration. Having taken account of all those earlier consultations and meetings, and all the other available evidence, the MFRA has formulated the draft options and proposal for the west Wirral outlined above.

## MFRA's preferred option

30. Because option 2 (not developing a new station at Saughall Massie and locating emergency cover at Upton) would lengthen response times to West Kirby significantly, MFRA prefers option 1. In other words, the Fire Authority's preferred option is a 'merger' of two fire stations rather than just the closure of the West Kirby station. On the other hand, MFRA recognises that the Saughall Massie option is sensitive and controversial since the site lies in a Green Belt area and is unpopular with local residents.

## Deliberative Research

### Methodology

31. The four consultation meetings reported here all used a 'deliberative' approach to encourage members of the public to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing the draft options in detail. The meetings lasted for at least two-and-a-half hours and in total there were 49 diverse participants. The dates of the meetings and attendance levels by members of the public at each forum were as shown in the table immediately below.

AREA OF WIRRAL	TIME AND DATE (2015)	TYPE OF MEETING AND NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
Saughall Massie	18.00 – 20.45 Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	Focus Group 10
West Kirby	18:00 – 20.45 Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> April	Focus Group 9
Upton	18.00 – 20.45 Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Focus Group 8
All-Wirral	18.00 – 20.45 Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Forum 22

32. The attendance target for each of the focus group meeting was between 7 and 10 people, and for the forums it was at least 15 – so the total of 49 participants was better than anticipated.
33. As usual, the participants were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from the ORS Social Research Call Centre. Having been initially contacted by phone, they were written to – to confirm the arrangements; and those who agreed to come then received telephone or written reminders shortly before each meeting. Such recruitment by telephone is normally the most effective way of ensuring that all the participants are independently recruited.

34. In recruitment, care was taken to ensure that no potential participants were disqualified or disadvantaged by disabilities or any other factors, and the venues at which the forums met were readily accessible. People's special needs were all taken into account in the recruitment and at the venues. The random telephone recruitment process was monitored to ensure social diversity in terms of a wide range of criteria – including, for example: local authority area of residence; gender; age; ethnicity; social grade; and disability/long-term limiting illness (LLTI).
35. Consequently, there was a diverse range of participants from the local areas and, as standard good practice, they were recompensed for their time and efforts in travelling and taking part.

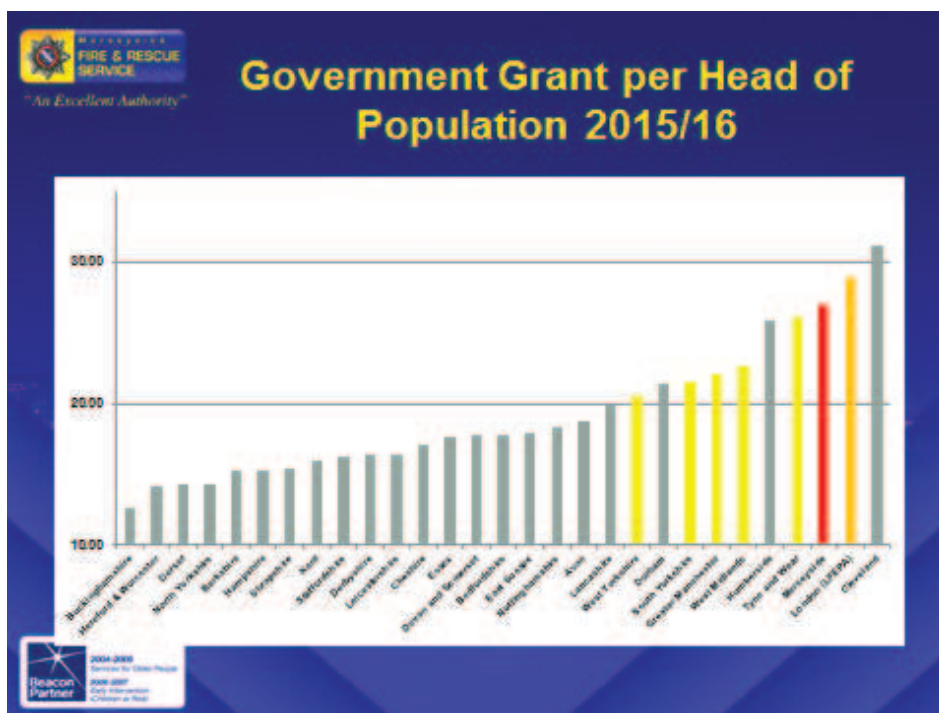
<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>SAUGHALL MASSIE FG</b>	<b>WEST KIRBY FG</b>	<b>UPTON FG</b>	<b>ALL- WIRRAL FORUM</b>	<b>OVERALL</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male: 4 Female: 5</b>	<b>Male: 6 Female: 4</b>	<b>Male: 3 Female: 5</b>	<b>Male: 11 Female: 11</b>	<b>Male: 24 Female: 25</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>16-34: 2 35-54: 4 55+: 3</b>	<b>16-34: 1 35-54: 4 55+: 5</b>	<b>16-34: 1 35-54: 3 55+: 4</b>	<b>16-34: 5 35-54: 7 55+: 10</b>	<b>16-34: 9 35-54: 18 55+: 22</b>
<b>Social Grade</b>	<b>AB: 2 C1: 3 C2: 2 DE: 2</b>	<b>AB: 3 C1: 3 C2: 1 DE: 3</b>	<b>AB: 4 C1: 2 C2: 1 DE: 1</b>	<b>AB: 4 C1: 10 C2: 4 DE: 4</b>	<b>AB: 13 C1: 18 C2: 8 DE: 10</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>0 Non- White British</b>	<b>1 Non- White British</b>	<b>0 Non- White British</b>	<b>1 Non- White British</b>	<b>2 Non- White British</b>
<b>Limiting Long-term Illness</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

36. To conduct the deliberative meetings based on the fullest possible information for participants, ORS worked with MFRA to prepare informative stimulus material for the meetings before facilitating the discussions and preparing this independent report of findings.
37. Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, deliberative forums cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the four meetings reported here gave diverse groups of Wirral residents the opportunity to comment in detail on MFRA's draft options. Because the participants were diverse, the outcomes of the meeting (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how informed opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions.

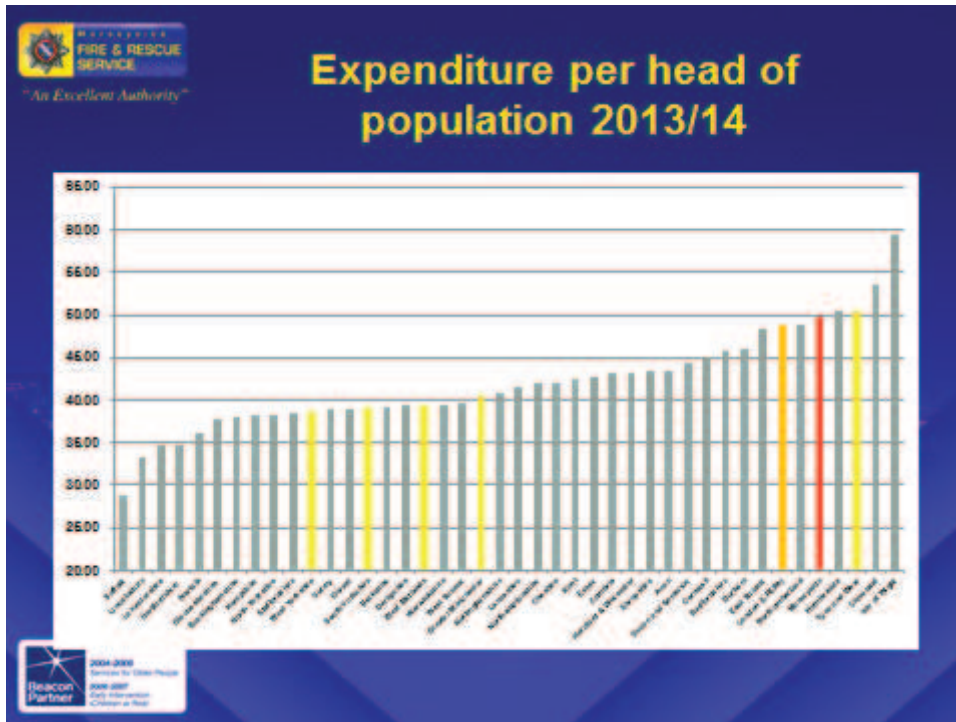
## Conduct of the discussions

38. The first part of each meeting began, for the sake of context, with a short review of the background issues, including the:
- Importance of prevention and risk-management policies – particularly via home fire safety checks
  - Established trends showing a reduction in risk when measured in terms of the number of critical and other incidents per year
  - Sources of funding for MFRA – from the government and from council tax
  - Impact of public spending reductions on MFRA – including the previous reduction of fire engines from 42 to 28, and the corresponding reduction of 180 fire fighter and 90 support staff posts
  - MFRA's current financial constraints in the context of public spending reductions.
39. The four meetings were also informed of the wide range of options considered by MFRA in order to reduce its expenditure, including:
- More low-level-activity-and-risk (LLAR) fire stations
  - Some day-crewed fire stations
  - Some community retained (RDS) fire stations
  - Closing some fire stations
  - Merging some fire stations.
40. In passing, it is worth noting that earlier (January 2014) wide-ranging 'listening and engagement' meetings had demonstrated that, when faced with a broad choice between *either* keeping all stations and changing to cheaper duty systems *or* reducing stations while protecting current wholetime duty systems, the participants clearly favoured the latter option. That is, they made at least an implicit choice in favour of reducing stations rather than changing the way Merseyside is crewed. These 'conclusions' of the earlier meetings were not repeated to participants in the meetings reported here, but it is interesting to note them as general background.
41. Following the short review of the wider general range of options considered, the second part of each meeting briefly reviewed the implications of funding reductions that MFRA faces, including the:
- Projected budget deficit of £6.3 million by the end of 2015/16, based on projections of current expenditure levels and known financial information
  - Projected deficit of £9.1 million by the end of 2017/18, based on projections of current expenditure levels and plausible financial assumptions.

- 42. These financial challenges were explained neutrally as constraints requiring substantial reductions in spending to be made on a progressive basis. In order to encourage free discussion, the financial position was not used as a repeated justification of the draft proposed options: participants were invited to assess the options on their general merits, albeit within a generally constrained position.
- 43. In fact, in order to present a balanced picture, the ORS introduction to each meeting tried to 'take stock' of MFRA in terms of its much reduced risk levels (reduced by 53% over the last nine years) when measured in terms of the number of critical and other incidents, strategic roles and allocation of resources. Participants were shown comparative data on the (still relatively high) levels of government funding and the emergency cover resources that MFRA (and the other metropolitan fire and rescue services) continue to enjoy relative to other combined fire authorities.
- 44. For example, the following graphics were explained briefly – with Merseyside highlighted in red and the other big metropolitan authorities in yellow. The chart below shows that, relative to most other fire authorities, Merseyside still receives a high proportion of its total funding from the government and raises a relatively small proportion through council tax.



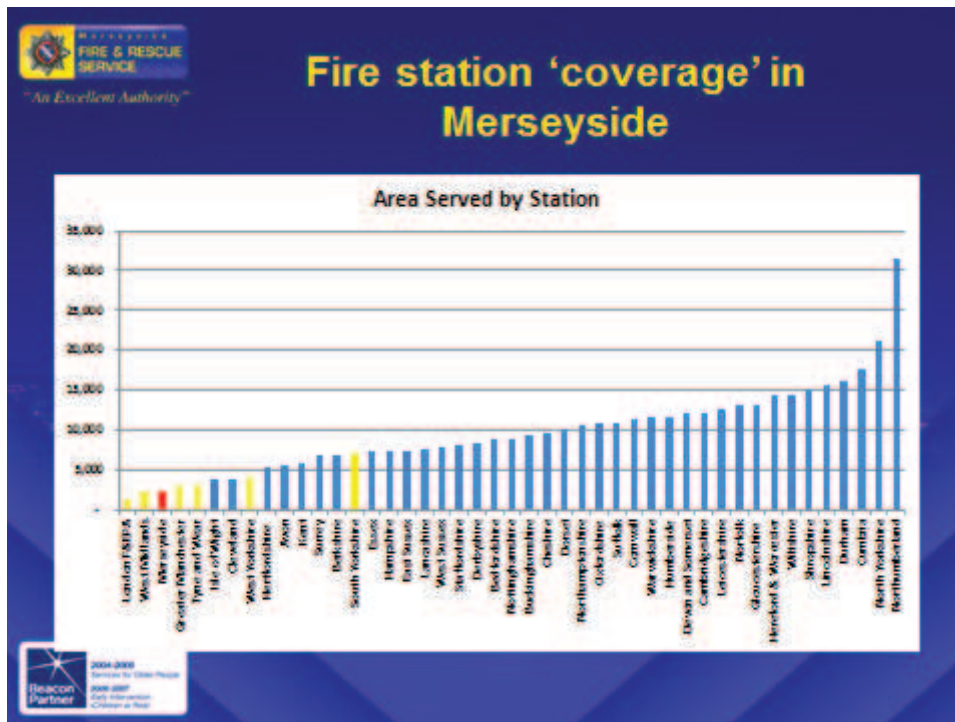
- 45. Therefore, even in recent years, MFRA has been able to maintain a relatively high level of expenditure per head of population – as the chart on the next page shows.



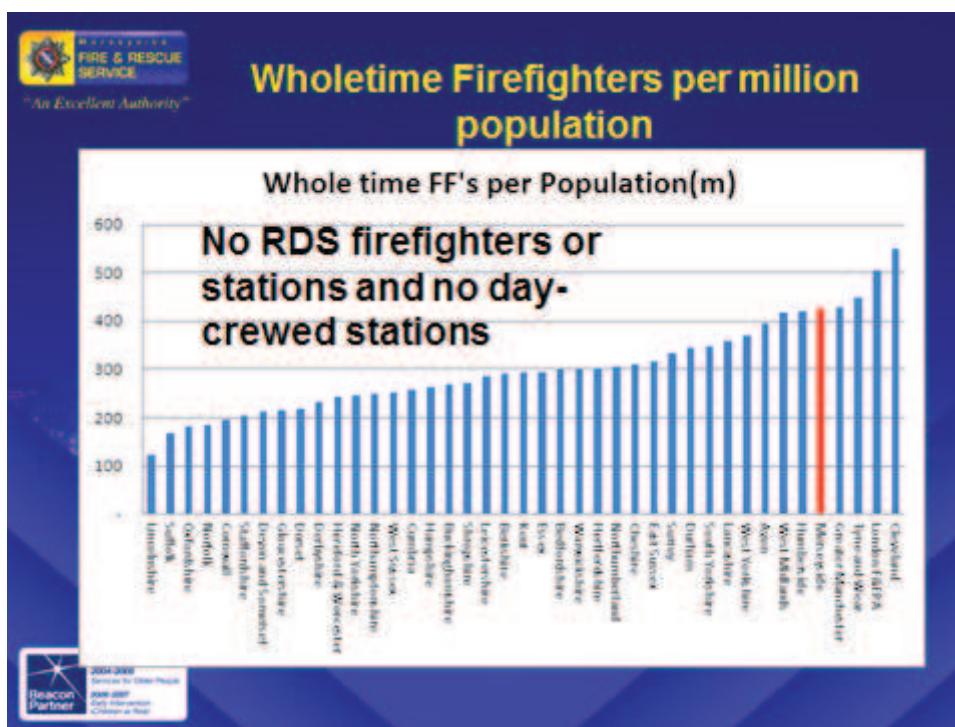
- 46. Due to its funding, and due to historical assessments of risk deriving from intensive bombing in World War 2, Merseyside has had a large number of closely located fire stations (especially in Liverpool and the Wirral) in order to meet the statutory response time standards that prevailed from the 1950s to 2004 – as the two charts below illustrate.



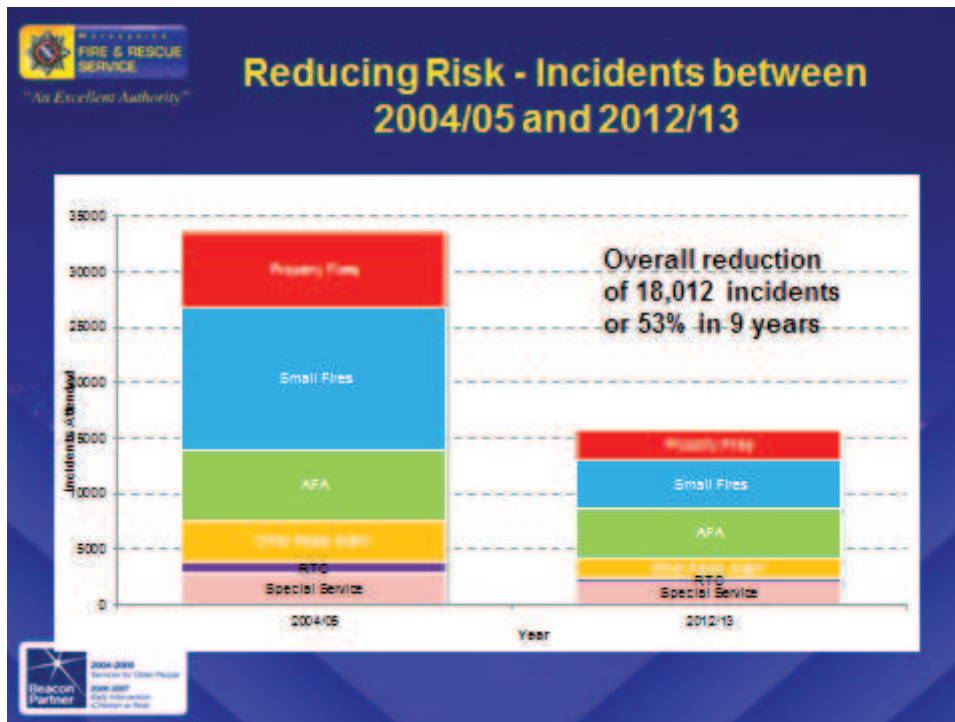




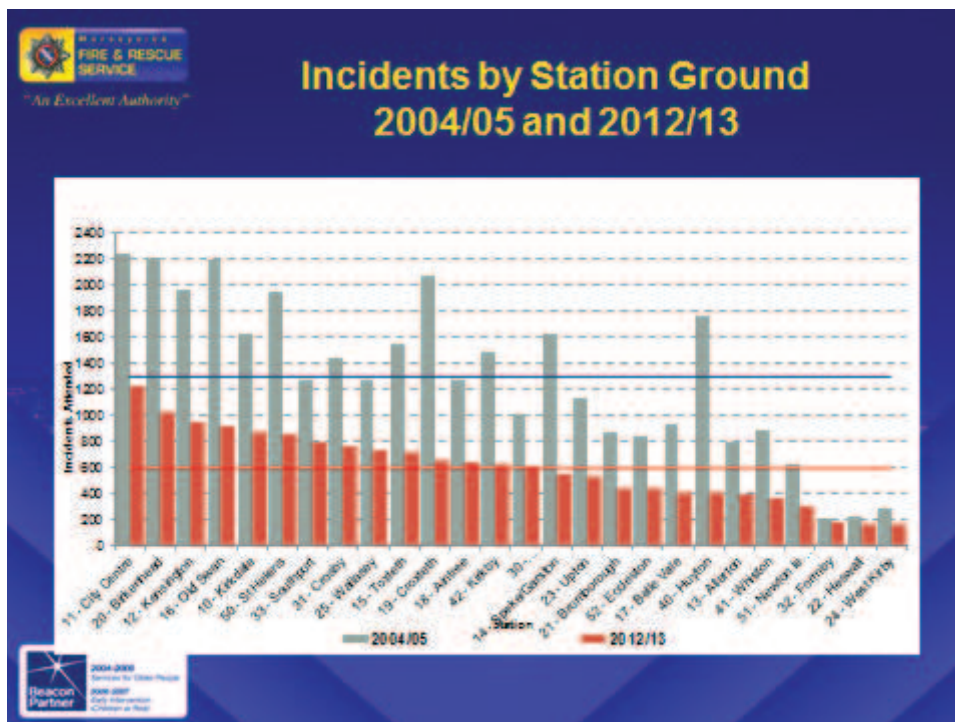
- 47. Indeed, on the basis of its population of about 1.4 million people, MFRA has more wholtime fire stations than any other area of the country, including London – and so, as the chart above shows, each of its 26 current stations covers a relatively small area.
- 48. Given its high levels of fire stations and fire engines, MFRA has managed to maintain a relatively large number of wholtime firefighters compared with most other combined fire authorities – as the chart below shows.



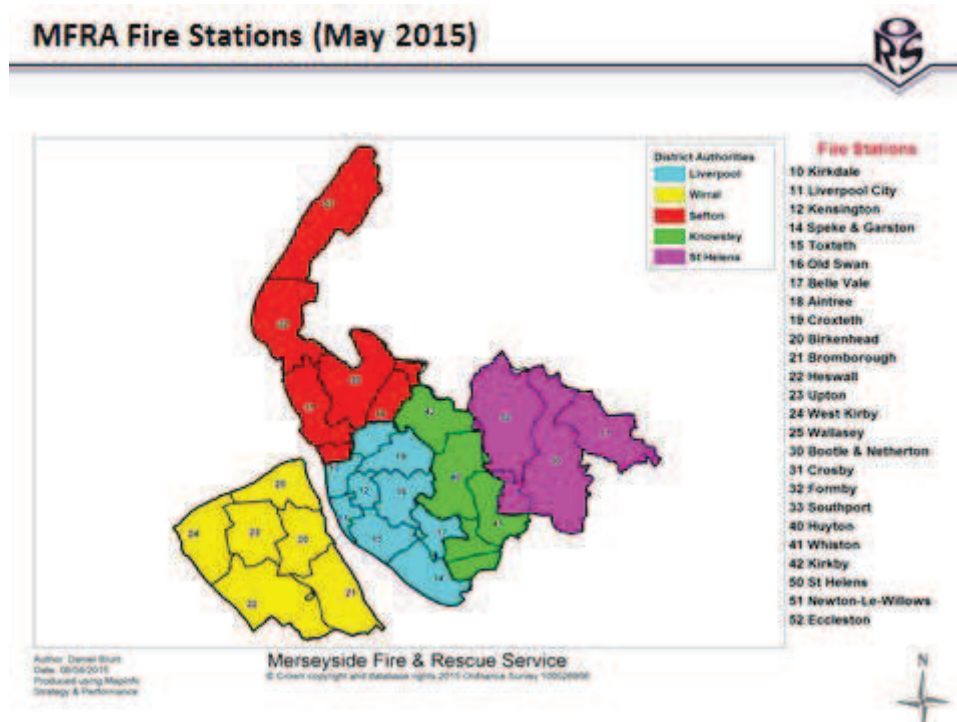
49. Partly as a result of MFRA’s very active preventative and educational work, all categories of incidents have reduced very significantly in Merseyside over the last nine years, as the chart below shows.



50. Not surprisingly, then, all of MFRA’s fire stations deal with many fewer incidents each year than they used recently to do – as chart below shows.



51. In the context of all the above data, the forums were shown the current distribution of MFRA's fire stations (following the closure of Allerton in Liverpool) with the following map.



52. The final and longest part of each meeting was devoted to detailed discussion of the draft options for the west Wirral fire stations, which were explained as follows:

### Option 1

Building a new community fire station at Saughall Massie

Closing the one-pump stations at Upton and West Kirby

Saughall Massie fire station then to have a single 24/7 pump, with another to be a reserve or back-up resilience vehicle and not normally crewed – but with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions

The back-up crew for the reserve second pump would be wholetime firefighters with supplementary retained contracts to provide the support cover duties when required.

### Option 2

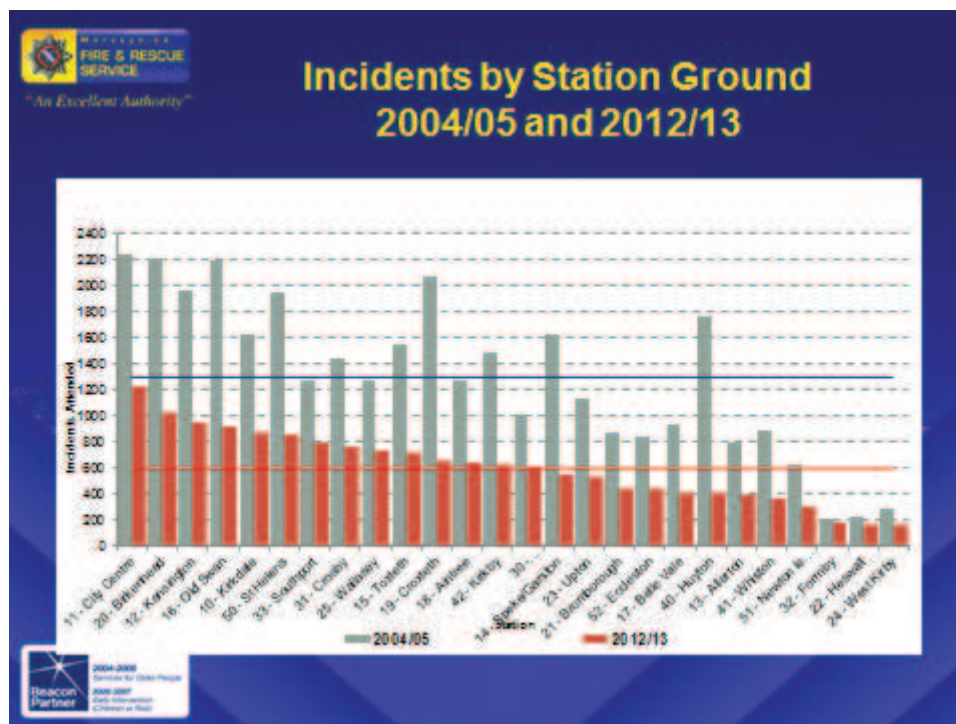
Closing the one-pump station at West Kirby

Providing emergency cover for west Wirral from Upton fire station

Upton fire station to have a single 24/7 pump, with another to be a reserve or back-up resilience vehicle – not normally crewed, but with a crew subject to recall within 30 minutes for exceptional incidents or spate conditions

As with Option 1, the back-up crew for the reserve second pump would be wholetime firefighters with supplementary retained contracts to provide the support cover duties when required.

53. In other words, there were two draft options and a further draft proposal regarding the number of fire engines deployed full-time. The *draft fire station options* were: to close two fire stations while building a new one in Saughall Massie or to locate west Wirral emergency cover at Upton while closing the West Kirby station. The former option may be called a 'merger' while the latter would simply be a closure of the West Kirby fire station.
54. The further *draft proposal* for consultation was to reduce the wholetime fire engines by making one of the current two engines a reserve or resilience back-up vehicle for periods of exceptional demand. In each meeting great care was taken to ensure that participants understood the two fire station options as well as how the second (reserve) fire engine would be crewed and used.
55. The participants were also told that the merger and proposed crewing arrangements would save at least £863,000 per annum by allowing up to 22 fire-fighter posts to be phased out, probably without the need for compulsory redundancies.
56. As well as the financial context, the four meetings considered the relevant evidence about reducing risk levels and current response times in the three areas under consideration. For example, they reviewed the reduction in risk measured by the number of incidents – down over just five years by 48% in Upton and 24% in West Kirby – resulting in far fewer incidents for all fire stations (and with West Kirby as the quietest of all), as shown in the chart below.



57. In addition, the meetings considered MFRA's response time target (to attend critical incidents within 10 minutes on at least 90% of occasions) and they also compared the national average response time for domestic fires (7 minutes 24 seconds) with MFRA's average time for life-risk incidents (5 minutes 24 seconds).
58. Finally, but very importantly, the meetings were informed explicitly about the impact on response times of closing two stations and covering their areas primarily with one full-time engine from Saughall Massie *and also* closing West Kirby and providing the same cover from Upton. The significance of the Saughall Massie option was explained in all four meetings because locating the relevant fire cover resources at Upton station would lengthen emergency response times into West Kirby.
59. From the two current stations, the average response times in the Upton and West Kirby areas are 4 minutes 34 seconds and 5 minutes 24 seconds respectively. From the Saughall Massie base, these average times would increase to 5 minutes 3 seconds and 6 minutes 38 seconds respectively. The average over the whole area would be 5 minutes 41 seconds.
60. However, if services were located at Upton (rather than Saughall Massie), then the average response to West Kirby would lengthen to 8 minutes 43 seconds (and would be more than 10 minutes in some parts). In other words, the average time to West Kirby would be more than two minutes longer from Upton than from Saughall Massie.
61. It was made clear throughout the discussions that MFRA would not bring forward such options if it was not facing an urgent need to reduce expenditure in the context of reduced central government grant funding and restrictions on council tax increases. In response to questions, the options were described by senior MFRA officers as the '*least worst options*' in the current situation. Nonetheless, the facilitator encouraged participants to consider the options *in principle* – on their merits in terms of suitability, sustainability, resilience and acceptability for the Wirral and Merseyside – rather than to just accept them without scrutiny as inevitable. In other words, financial issues were not the primary focus of the discussion: the options were examined carefully and at length. Participants were given extensive time for questions and discussion prior to being invited to make up their minds on each discussion topic.
62. Finally, while considering the draft options, participants in all the meetings were encouraged to consider whether they have any adverse implications for any vulnerable people and in particular groups with 'protected characteristics': in other words, this question was not just a 'footnote' to the main discussion but an intrinsic part of the scrutiny of the draft options.

## Residents' Survey

63. MFRA's consultation programme also included a conscientious and ambitious residents' survey, which ORS was commissioned to design and implement.
64. To achieve the best combination of economy and inclusiveness a postal questionnaire was sent to a large random sample of 10,000 households – stratified to include 5,000 addresses in the Upton fire station area (including Saughall Massie) and 5,000 addresses in the West Kirby fire station area. Questionnaires were sent out in the week commencing 13th April 2015 and the cut-off date for their return was 15th May 2015. Of the questionnaires despatched, a total of only 161 were returned as 'failed mail.'
65. A total of 1,351 completed questionnaires were returned – with 577 from the Upton station area and 774 from the west Kirby area, yielding an overall response rate of 14% (12% for Upton and 16% for West Kirby). Saughall Massie residents amounted to 11% of the initial contact sample, but accounted for 17% of the survey respondents – so the village was certainly not under-represented.
66. The returned sample for each fire station area was compared with census data and then weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and whether people were suffering long term illness/disability.
67. The survey questionnaire covered the same issues as the deliberative meetings – namely, MFRA's two options and further draft proposal for the second fire engine. As well as the questionnaire, the 10,000 randomly selected households received a copy of MFRA's Consultation Newsletter.

## Report

68. This report covers both the deliberative and quantitative consultation. The next chapter concisely reviews the sentiments and judgements of participants about MFRA's draft options for the two Wirral fire stations and the draft proposal for changes to one of the fire engines. Verbatim quotations are used, in indented italics, not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of views. ORS does not endorse the opinions in question, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly. While quotations are used, the report is obviously not a verbatim transcript of the sessions, but an interpretative summary of the issues raised by participants in free-ranging discussions.

# Deliberative Findings

## Summary by Area

69. The focus groups' conclusions regarding the two draft options and draft proposal to reduce the number of fully-crewed wholetime engines from two to one were as follows:

### Saughall Massie

Seven out of nine people in the group opposed a new station in Saughall Massie: only one person found it acceptable and there was one 'don't know'

Above all, most of the group wanted to protect the green belt area from development of all kinds

They were unanimously opposed to the inclusion of a large tower on any fire station in Saughall Massie (on the grounds that it would be visually very intrusive)

Seven out of nine did not want the fire station (if developed) to include an ambulance base (on the grounds that this would increase the scale of the development)

The group was broadly divided on the question of whether some community facilities should be included

By a ratio of two-to-one the participants also rejected the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine

The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues

If a station were to be built there, the Saughall Massie residents wanted it to be as small and unobtrusive as possible.

### West Kirby

The participants all accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle

They were also unanimous that the Saughall Massie site was a suitable location for the new station

Nine of the ten participants felt it was reasonable to site a fire station in the green belt (in this case)

The option of centralising cover at Upton fire station was opposed by everyone

The group was concerned that centralising cover at Upton would disproportionately jeopardise the elderly and socially deprived in West Kirby

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable

Four out of ten participants thought that the introduction of some community retained firefighters is an option that should at least be explored by MFRA, as an alternative way of saving money; but six were opposed to this idea.

## Upton

Half or slightly more of the eight participants accepted that, in principle, the closure of two fire stations and their replacement with a new station would be reasonable, but the others were 'don't knows'

Five of the eight thought it reasonable to site the proposed new station in Saughall Massie, but two were opposed and there was one 'don't know'

Most of the group opposed the use of a green belt site: no one specifically supported it, but there were three 'don't knows'

The group was equally divided on whether a fire station in Saughall Massie should include a tower; but all agreed that alternative training facilities would be reasonable

The group also unanimously supported the inclusion of an ambulance base and community facilities, if the station were built there

Everyone agreed that the proposed changes to the crewing of the second fire engine would be reasonable

The group raised no specific equality and diversity issues.

## All-Wirral Forum

All except one of the 22 participants readily accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle

The same majority supported using the Saughall Massie site rather than centralising services at Upton

The forum was unanimous that in this case it was reasonable to develop a green belt site

The option of locating emergency cover at Upton fire station was supported by only one person

However, by a ratio of ten-to-one the forum felt that, if the Saughall Massie site became unavailable for any reason, it would be acceptable then to base local emergency services at Upton

One member of the forum was concerned that basing cover at Upton would jeopardise young people in a special needs school in West Kirby



With only one dissenter, the participants thought it was reasonable to include a tower on the Saughall Massie site in order to facilitate training – but they thought its visual impact should be minimised

All the participants thought that the inclusion of some community facilities was reasonable

There was a broad division of opinion in respect of whether ambulance facilities should be co-located at the site – and those against were concerned that ambulance mobilisations would cause more disturbance than the less frequent fire engine movements.

A large absolute majority of participants (19) accepted that it was reasonable to change the status of the second fire engine: there were only three ‘don’t knows’.

## Reasoning about the Draft Options

### Introduction

70. People’s reasons for their views are obviously important – particularly because consultation is not just a ‘numbers game’ in which majority support or opposition counts for everything: the key issue is not numbers but the cogency of the arguments for or against the various options. Therefore, this section concisely reviews the various opinions, reasons, considerations and attitudes of the participants.

### General awareness and strategic issues

71. All the early discussions showed that, not surprisingly, many people were unaware of how the fire and rescue service is run in detail. For example, there were many factual questions about:
- How dynamic emergency cover is managed when there are big or multiple incidents
  - How fire engines are crewed?
  - How LLAR stations work compared with other wholetime fire stations
  - How community retained fire stations operate
72. However, as the discussions continued, there was also considerable interest in the policy and more strategic context, with some participants asking, for example:
- Is this all about money and reductions?
  - Has the preventive role of MFRA made a significant reduction to the number of emergency incidents?
  - Can MFRA maintain its prevention work with less resources and fire engines on the run?
  - Has the likely increase in the number of deaths as a result of less prevention and resources been taken into account?

How critical are response times in general?

Is there data about how longer response times affect the fatality rates?

Have there been times when there were too few fire engines to cope with the level of demand?

How does MFRA monitor and assess relative risk across Merseyside?

The MFRS does well, but what will be the consequences of having less resources – will it increase risk? When will incident rates start to increase?

Will station mergers lead to changes in MFRA's attendance and operational procedures? Will households continue to get the same level of attendance, with the same number of fire engines?

What is a strategic station – does it cover a radius to achieve the 10-minute response time?

Would a Saughall Massie Road station become the key station instead of Upton?

Could MFRA use some community retained firefighters?

What kind of training do community retained firefighters get?

How will MFRA manage potential redundancies?

Has MFRA ceased its government lobbying?

Was MFRA always over-resourced if it has been able to make such big reductions in operational resources without adverse effect.

### Saughall Massie Focus Group

73. Almost all of the Saughall Massie group **strongly opposed a fire station in their village**, mainly on the grounds that:

The local road infrastructure is unsuitable for emergency vehicles travelling to incidents in West Kirby from the Saughall Massie site

It is inappropriate to develop a green belt site in the village

A fire station would spoil residents' amenity and lower property values

A station tower would be unsightly

Local residents would be disturbed by mobilisations and other noise from the site

The development would be a precedent for the Police and Ambulance services on the same site

A rapid response vehicle could be used to help cover West Kirby, and could be based there at busier times

It would be preferable to base local emergency services at Upton, for West Kirby's response times (from there) would still be generally within MFRA's 10-minute target

74. In this context, some typical comments in the Saughall Massie group were:

*How would the fire engine get down the back lanes? It's ridiculous to consider that happening!*

*I'm worried about fire engines following my car down the back lanes when I'm doing 40 mph – it would panic me if I had nowhere to pull over!*

*We have a lot of country lanes here on the route to West Kirby!*

*Saughall Massie Road is a very dangerous route – and it will get worse! It's better to keep the fire engine where it is in Upton!*

*It's a foregone conclusion that West Kirby will be closed given the data on its use – but Saughall Massie is not better than Upton for the road infrastructure*

*You could have a Rapid Response Vehicle based in West Kirby to deal with incidents until a fire engine gets there!*

*The station would be right next to my home! I don't want a 48 foot tower – the whole thing is absolutely abhorrent so I am going to lose a proportion of my house value! It will hit me in the face when I get out of bed in the morning and look out the window – it will adversely affect my well-being every single day!*

*There is even a possibility that you could have ambulances based there and community facilities – which would be awful!*

*Is this going to be a general emergency centre?*

*It's devastating for people to lose their views from their properties*

*I'm worried about my children sleeping when disturbed by emergency sirens*

*There will be an impact on property prices – so will there be any proposals for compensation by the MFRA or the council?*

*You will have a massive impact on those who work nights – they don't want sirens going off all the time!*

*As an alternative, have you considered knocking Upton down and building something new?*

*Where would you look for a site if this one was rejected?*

*Option 2 (with a response of 8 minutes 43 seconds to West Kirby) is still compatible with the 10-minute response standard for MFRS*

*You should not reject a Rapid Response Vehicle based in West Kirby to avoid so many mobilisations from Saughall Massie and/or Upton – that seems a perfectly safe option to me*

*We're also going to have half the current fire engines*

*Did the local authority offer this land or did you choose it freely? Have you sought for other sites? Your hands seem to be tied in terms of sites*

*Could you increase the resources at Heswall rather than have them here? Is that feasible and safe?*

75. There were, though, also some more supportive voices, even if they were a small minority:

*You need a fire engine that can deal with all the incidents not just a RRV that deals with 40% of in the incidents It makes more sense to have a good new fire station for the firefighters and the public!*

*A new station could be built very sympathetically to fit in as much as possible*

*There are many old people's homes in West Kirby – so it's undesirable to lengthen the response times there*

*The main problem that worries me is the possible response times to parts of West Kirby from Upton – two or three minutes is a significant difference for parts like Moreton*

*The lanes allow more passing vehicles than most people think!*

*There is a possibility that risk will increase – and the fire service has a duty to keep that to a minimum – and also to balance the actual risk levels against the views of local residents.*

76. The draft proposal to change the status of the current **second wholetime fire engine** to a reserve support vehicle (subject to 30 minutes mobilising time when required in exceptional circumstances) was also explained clearly and discussed. Some participants found this to be relatively uncontroversial, but by a majority of two-to-one the Saughall Massie group opposed to 'downgrading' the fire engine.
77. Overall, while clearly opposing the green field station, the focus group stressed that the design of any station built at Saughall Massie should be carefully managed: they were unanimous that it should not have a tower and in general should be as small and 'discreet' as possible.
78. There was also a big majority against the inclusion of an ambulance base on such a station; but opinion was divided on whether community facilities should be included. The overall judgement was that any station should be:

*As small, low key and discreet as possible – but the current plan makes it look looming large! The diagram is not to scale!*

## West Kirby Focus Group

79. The West Kirby focus group **strongly supported Option 1** (a new fire station in Saughall Massie) given that the Greasby site was unavailable and the only other option would be to locate emergency resources at Upton. They were unanimous that a station merger was a good idea in principle and that a green belt site was appropriate and reasonable in practice. Some typical comments and questions raised by the group were:

Is the status quo possible?

Why not close Upton and keep West Kirby?

Is Saughall Massie the only available site now?

What do Saughall residents think about this?

Is the effect on property prices as great as the Saughall Massie residents fear?

Is the road infrastructure suitable for emergency vehicles travelling from Upton or Saughall Massie?

How often do both fire engines go out together? How often is the Upton engine already deployed at a time West Kirby has an incident to deal with?

How will the firefighters be affected – will there be cuts?

How do the staff in the two stations feel about these proposals?

Have you considered population trends and the possible impact on risks?

Can the staff reductions be achieved through natural wastage?

80. The following quotations indicate that the group's main reasons for strongly supporting option 1 were the increased response time from Upton compared with Saughall Massie – and the fact that alternative options (such as an retained service in West Kirby) would not be feasible either.

*Option 1 sounds the best generally. Option 2 would really hit us in Hoylake and West Kirby!*

*Hoylake would have longer response times from Upton*

*There cannot be many people living near the proposed site*

*You could use retained firefighters to save money instead – but an RDS service in West Kirby would add 5 minutes to all the attendance times for West Kirby*

*Why is 10 minutes the target response time? How significant would the 2 minute difference be in practice?*

81. Some other pertinent comments about the proposed new station were:

*You don't use the fire station really, but the nearest fire engine*

*Are you looking at this holistically – by considering combined bases with the Police and Ambulance?*

82. The West Kirby group felt that Option 2 would be inferior to Option 1 in terms of **equality and diversity issues** – by disproportionately disadvantaging elderly and socially disadvantaged residents in West Kirby.
83. In terms of **alternative options**, some members of the group thought that various forms of RDS cover might be considered in order to maintain local stations at a reduced cost – though others pointed out that this would lengthen current response times.
84. There was also a suggestion about developing a charitable arm:
- I have always had an excellent service from the MFRS – with smoke detectors and inspections – so I think you could develop a charity arm for the public to donate to by gift aid*
85. In contrast to the Saughall Massie group, the West Kirby focus group unanimously accepted that the draft proposal to change the **status of the current second wholetime fire engine** to a reserve support vehicle (subject to 30 minutes mobilising time when required in exceptional circumstances) was feasible and reasonable – as the main way to save money in the merger of two stations.
86. Questions were asked about where the reserve/resilience vehicle would be based and whether it would be dispensed with automatically in future; but the group readily accepted MFRA assurances that the new status would be safe.

### Upton Focus Group

87. There were broad **divisions of opinion** in the Upton focus group. A wide range of questions were raised and comments were made – including all the following issues:
- MFRA has kept an excellent level of resources despite financial reductions
  - Is the primary reason for making these changes purely financial?
  - How much does LLAR save per fire engine?
  - How does the LLAR shift system work? How many days do they work?
  - Could West Kirby station be made LLAR – is that another option?
  - How concerned should we be about response times?
  - How much would the new station cost to build?
  - What money would be gained from the two sites released?
  - What would be the running costs of the new station?
  - Would the new station be smaller than say Birkenhead?
  - Could just use one of the existing stations be used satisfactorily?
  - Could you work more closely and combine resources with the ambulance service?

88. There was also a diverse range of other comments and questions:

*We want an excellent service to continue*

*Could the Wirral not retain the status quo – is that an option for here?*

*Greasby would have been a good site!*

*I don't understand why they don't want a fire station in Saughall Massie*

*There are houses for sale there [Saughall Massie] already!*

*Why is the site near bungalows? Is that necessary?*

*West Kirby does not seem to be very active in protesting about the possible relocation to Upton*

*Have you concentrated on council-owned land?*

*Do you know what the council will charge for the land?*

*Does the land have planning permission?*

*Have you seriously approached the farmer about selling his plot?*

*The longer time to West Kirby would be dangerous – the FRS says “you can lose a life in 3 minutes” – and here you are talking about lengthening the response time*

*[But] the response time there would be within the target*

*Upton has longer response times to West Kirby*

*Upton alone is a non-starter because it means much longer response times to some parts of West Kirby – some times will be well outside the target for 10 minutes*

*A so-called merger is really two closures – even if you do have a new station! And Option 2 is an outright closure!*

*The decision has to be made on response times!*

*You should be guided by efficiency but not to the detriment of social factors*

*What's the total number of incidents per year for both stations?*

*What happens in the Wirral if there's a major incident – what would happen if the tender from the new station went out to a long and serious incident? How would you manage the risk then?*

*Could Heswall cover West Kirby more quickly?*

*The Wirral is distinctive in being a peninsula with a lot of coast*

*Public meetings are concerned with local issues mainly, rather than strategic ones.*

89. A recurring theme of the Upton discussions was the importance of rapid response times, but in the final assessment of the options that factor was clearly counter-balanced by sympathy with Saughall Massie residents and an inclination to protect the green belt.
90. For example, in the final assessment, half the group favoured a merger in principle, but half were undecided – though no one definitely opposed the principle of merging suitable stations.
91. A majority of the group opposed developing a green field site in principle, but three were ‘don’t knows.’ However, despite opposing a green field site in principle, a clear majority in the group supported a Saughall Massie fire station (option 1) and only two supported locating services at Upton (option 2).
92. In terms of **alternative options** the Upton focus group was interested in the wider use of LLAR stations as a way of reducing costs, but there were also some reservations about the system at Upton:

*That’s a good idea if people can be flexible, but not every station has this system...*

*The system is not practical in, say, Upton, where risks are higher*

*The LLAR system is more stressful in being called out at nights over longer periods of working.*

93. In relation to **design issues** for the proposed new station, the Upton group was exactly divided on whether there should be a tower on the site; but they accepted unanimously that there should be alternative training facilities if not a tower. And the group unanimously supported locating community and ambulance facilities on site.
94. In contrast to the Saughall Massie group, but like the West Kirby focus group, the Upton group unanimously accepted that the draft proposal to change the **status of the current second wholetime fire engine** to a reserve support vehicle (subject to 30 minutes mobilising time when required in exceptional circumstances) was feasible and reasonable – as the main way to save money in the merger of two stations. On the basis of the evidence, the group did not find this proposal controversial or doubtful. In particular, they accepted that the Wirral as a whole would have sufficient emergency resources.

### All-Wirral Forum

95. The all-Wirral forum had 22 diverse participants, but there was a high degree of **consensus – in favour of the merger in principle, the Saughall Massie site in particular, and also the re-designation of the second fire engine**. A wide range of questions and comments were made – including all the following issues:

Why does MFRA not penalise false AFAs by charging/fining the commercial premises for the calls-out?

Public bodies should also be accountable for their false AFAs

Do accidental fire death levels reflect differences in response time standards in different FRs?



How do the staff feel about the implications of the risk and financial data?

Are the unions on board with the possible changes?

MFRA should limit expenditure – and service reductions – by having a pay freeze in place. Other industries have had to face pay restraint!

Are there any wider initiatives to make the savings?

What proportion of fires are caused by irresponsible actions?

The education and prevention budget should be protected or even increased – it is short-sighted not to do so!

96. Some of the typical specific questions and comments about the options were:

*What's the response from Heswall to West Kirby? Could the Heswall fire engine sometimes get to West Kirby more quickly than one from Saughall Massie?*

*How much would the new station cost in practice?*

*How expensive and suitable is the Upton station?*

*Where would the fire engine be located in Saughall Massie and will you face the same objections there as in Greasby?*

*What is the timescale for this proposal? How long will it take to develop the new site?*

*Would you close West Kirby while Saughall Massie is being built?*

*What happens if West Kirby and Upton don't close and the new station is not built – is there a third option?*

*There are a lot of elderly people in West Kirby – and they are higher risk residents.*

97. The overall tone of the meeting was very positive and two notable statements in support of the Fire Authority's preferred option were:

*You would cover Upton or Saughall Massie with covering fire engines if the engine from there was called out – because it is a strategic station*

*I supported the Greasby site for a fire station – but there was a big lack of understanding – so will the same thing happen in Saughall Massie? You need to convince them!*

98. On the basis of the evidence and answers to questions, all except one of the 22 forum participants readily accepted that the proposed merger of two fire stations was reasonable in principle. The same majority supported using the Saughall Massie site rather than locating services at Upton (and basing cover at Upton fire station supported by only one person). The forum was unanimous that in this case it was reasonable to develop a green belt site.

99. With only one dissenter, the participants thought it was reasonable to include a tower on the Saughall Massie site in order to facilitate training – but they thought its visual impact should be minimised. All the participants thought that the inclusion of some community facilities was reasonable, but there was a broad division of opinion about whether ambulance facilities should be co-located at the site (those against were concerned that ambulance mobilisations would cause more disturbance than the less frequent fire engine movements).
100. While preferring option 1, by a ratio of ten-to-one the forum felt that, if the Saughall Massie site became unavailable for any reason, it would then be acceptable to base local emergency services at Upton.
101. A large absolute majority of participants (19) accepted that it was reasonable to change the status of the second fire engine: there were only three 'don't knows'.

# Quantitative Findings

## Introduction

102. MFRA's consultation programme also included a conscientious and ambitious residents' survey, which ORS was commissioned to design and implement. To achieve the best combination of economy and inclusiveness a postal questionnaire was sent to a large random sample of 10,000 households – stratified to include 5,000 addresses in the Upton fire station area (including Saughall Massie) and 5,000 addresses in the West Kirby fire station area. Questionnaires were sent out in the week commencing 13th April 2015 and the cut-off date for their return was 15th May 2015. Of the questionnaires despatched, a total of only 161 were returned as 'failed mail.'
103. A total of 1,351 completed questionnaires were returned – with 577 from the Upton station area and 774 from the west Kirby area, yielding an overall response rate of 14% (12% for Upton and 16% for West Kirby). Saughall Massie residents amounted to 11% of the initial contact sample, but accounted for 17% of the survey respondents – so the village was certainly not under-represented.
104. The returned sample for each fire station area was compared with census data and then weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and whether people were suffering a long term illness/disability.
105. The survey questionnaire covered the same issues as the deliberative meetings – namely, MFRA's two options and further draft proposal for the second fire engine. As well as the questionnaire, the 10,000 randomly selected households received a copy of MFRA's Consultation Newsletter.
106. Where appropriate and possible in the following report, many of the following charts use a standardised colour-coding or 'traffic light' system in which:
  - Green shades represent positive responses
  - Beige and purple/blue shades represent neither positive nor negative responses
  - Red shades represent negative responses
  - The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the 'extremes', for example, very satisfied or very dissatisfied.
107. Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" responses or to multiple-response questions.

108. Some of the charts shown below were also included in the executive summary, with the same numbering.

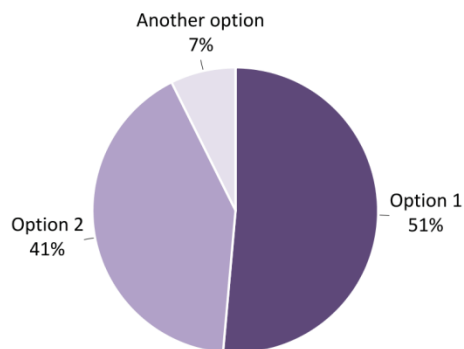
## The Options

109. Residents in both Upton and West Kirby were asked whether they preferred option 1 (merging Upton and West Kirby fire stations by building a new fire station in Saughall Massie), option 2 (closing West Kirby fire station and using Upton fire station to cover both areas) or another option.
110. As Figure 1 shows, an absolute majority of residents in both fire station areas preferred option 1 – 51% in Upton and 70% in West Kirby. In Upton, just over two-fifths (41%) preferred option 2, but in West Kirby only a just over a fifth (21%) preferred that option.

**Figure 1: Residents survey responses to whether they prefer option 1, 2 or another option**

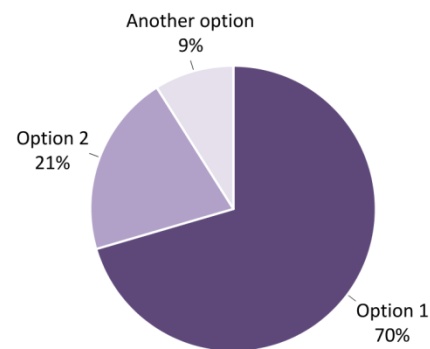
*Do you prefer option 1 (merging Upton and West Kirby fire stations by building a new fire station in Saughall Massie), option 2 (closing West Kirby fire station and using Upton fire station to cover both areas) or another option?*

### Upton



Base: All Respondents (558)

### West Kirby



Base: All respondents (746)

111. When responses for the two areas are combined to yield 'overall results' the absolute majority for option 1 is 57%.
112. In Upton and West Kirby respectively, only 7% and 9% of residents would prefer another option. In Upton, the main alternative option that residents gave was to find another location for building a new station. Others were also supportive of option 1 but thought that a new station should be built at a Brownfield site. Some typical comments were:

*A better alternative would be to situate the fire station at the roundabout between Sainsbury's and Greasby. There is an exit which was never used. This would be a better position because the road through Greasby is wider for the engine to travel through rather than the narrow lanes from Saughall Massie through to West Kirby, which would be dangerous and would slow the engine, also tractors use this route.*

*The old adult training centre, Pasture Road Moreton; in-between the library and the ambulance station.*

*Building on a green field site down a country lane isn't a good idea. Merging both stations at a brownfield site would be better. Two possible sites: one opposite Upton station behind Champion Spark Plugs site which is currently for sale or use the Old Moreton brick works site on the Meols Stretch.*

*Build a new fire station in a central location as per option 1 but on a brown field site rather than use green belt lands.*

113. The main alternative options suggested by West Kirby residents were: to close Upton station while keeping West Kirby station open or to find another location for a new station or to keeping both stations open but with retained firefighters. Some example comments included:

*Close both and rebuild at: a) land near old 'Champion Spark Plugs' land. b) stretch between Meols and Moreton*

*Merging makes economic sense, building on the green belt does not. What about siting on or near the business parks on Saughall Road and Arrowe Brook Road?*

*Close Upton and keep Kirby open to serve both areas and save money by using existing facility.*

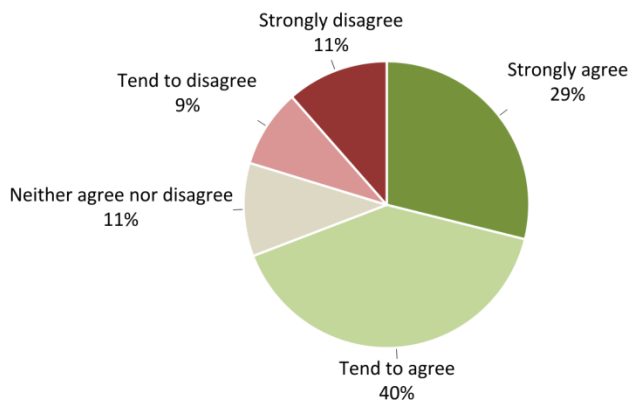
*Keep both existing stations on a retained basis.*

## **Status of second fire engine**

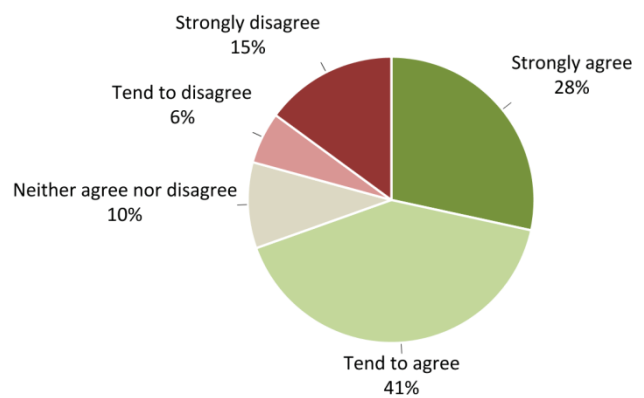
114. Very large absolute majorities in both Upton (69%) and West Kirby (70%) agreed with MFRA's additional draft proposal to keep one immediate response (24/7) fire engine at the proposed station while making the second fire engine a reserve or back-up vehicle with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions. The findings are shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

**Figure 2: Agreement with the additional proposal**

*Do you agree or disagree with the additional proposal to keep one immediate response (24/7) fire engine at the proposed station while making the second fire engine a reserve or back-up vehicle with its crew subject to recall within 30 minutes in the event of exceptional incidents or spate conditions?*

**Upton**

Base: All Respondents (563)

**West Kirby**

Base: All respondents (754)

115. A fifth of Upton residents disagreed with the proposal – their main reasons being that:

*The 30 minute response time is too long.*

*For the area the station has to cover there should be a minimum of two immediate response 24/7 fire engines available.*

*If there were 2 incidents at the same time which one would they go to?*

*In the event of an emergency I feel it would put too much pressure on one machine and small number of men / women.*

*Reduced cover will put lives at risk.*

*One immediate response fire engine is not sufficient engines to cover the stated area and be adequate to cope with the level / amount of fire and rescue incidents.*

*This feels like a third party, fire and theft option. When fully comp is required, the only gamble is lives, not the value of a car.*

116. Just over a fifth (21%) of Upton residents disagreed with the proposal – mainly because:

*The thirty minute seems very long in the event of a spate of calls or exceptional incident. Both areas deserve a further response than this would give.*

*Because of the increase in distance for one station to get to West Kirby area as many roads are narrow.*

*For the size of the area there should be two immediate response fire engines at all times.*

*I don't think amalgamating into one operational fire station covering what is in effect a combined larger area, that one operational fire engine can be regarded as effective and efficient equipment. It really would be selling the public short and putting lives and livelihoods at unacceptable risk.*

*I live in West Kirby and have been aware over many years that particularly during the spring, summer season the fire engines are kept busy with gorse fires along Caldys Ridge. I really am not convinced it is a safe option to have just one 24/7 engine.*

*The reduction of service to what amounts to one fire engine to cover a large geographical area must be unsafe.*

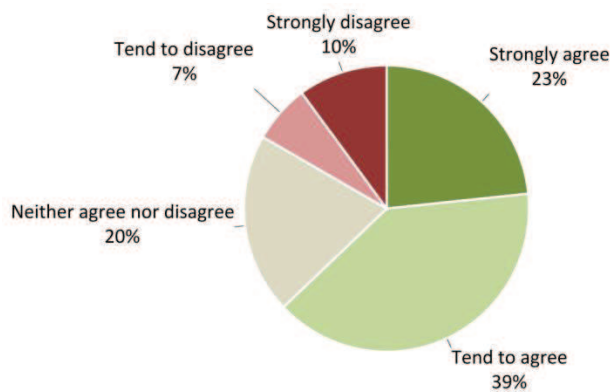
## Other issues

- 117. Absolute majorities in both Upton (63%) and West Kirby (59%) agreed with including community facilities at the proposed station, as Figure 3 shows.

Figure 3: Agreement with including community facilities at the proposed station

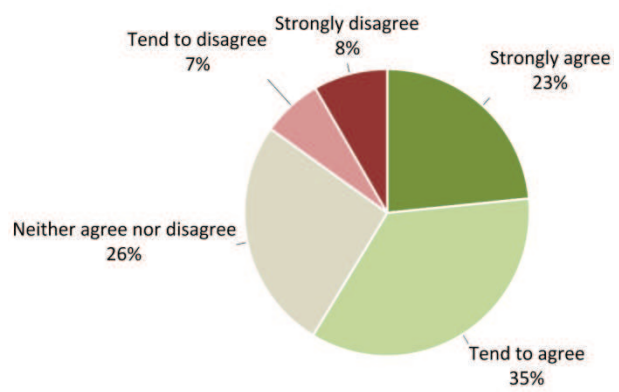
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with including community facilities at the proposed station?*

### Upton



Base: All Respondents (559)

### West Kirby



Base: All respondents (747)

118. Some typical comments about facilities for the community were:

*I think a community gym facility and youth facility, but I have concerns with the lack of public transport access.*

*Community building with wheelchair access.*

*Community rooms are a good idea, as I have viewed a number of them and been impressed. Think they should be advertised as I'm sure a number of community groups would welcome usage in return MFRS also gets to know the community they serve.*

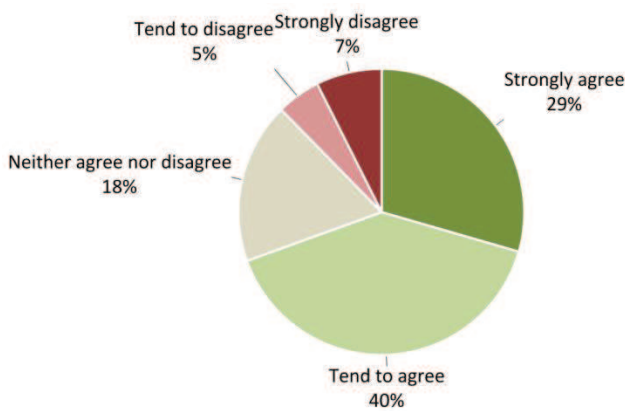
*Community usage is essential. Clinic/health centre facilities?*

119. Even larger absolute majorities (69% in Upton and 76% in West Kirby) agreed with sharing the proposed station with other blue light emergency services, as Figure 4 shows.

Figure 4: Agreement with including community facilities at the proposed station

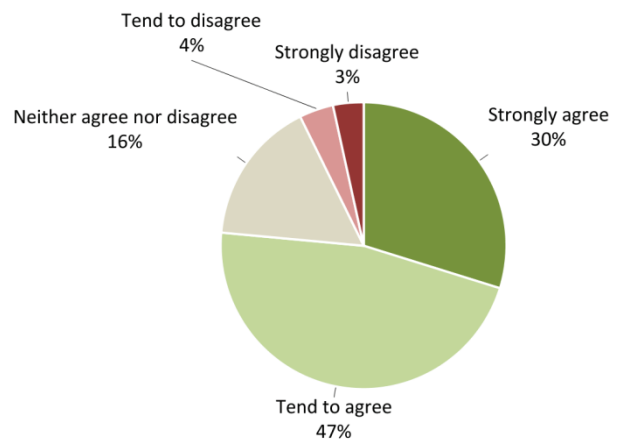
*To what extent do you agree or disagree with sharing the proposed station with other blue light emergency services?*

**Upton**



Base: All Respondents (562)

**West Kirby**



Base: All respondents (745)

120. Residents were also asked whether they had any suggestions about its appearance, design features or facilities that should be included if a fire station was to be built on Saughall Massie Road. A large number of residents thought that if a new station was built it should be in keeping with the surrounding area/environment:

*I would like the building to blend in as much as possible with the environment.*

*If it was to be built on Saughall Massie Road, it should have an appearance that totally blends in with surroundings and not stand out in the green belt area!*



121. Some residents suggested specific design features:

*Cottage style. See Sainsbury's at Upton*

*Design to blend in with surroundings. Area - single storey design. - brick construction. - pitched roof design, tiled. - landscaped garden area.*

*The tower should be a colour, which blends into the countryside, as so should be the rest of the building.*

*It should be built in colours that blend in with the countryside as well as possible e.g. green/brown, rather than black/red.*

*Possibly a smart tower that can be adapted so it's not as high when not in use.*

122. Several residents also suggested landscaping and trees:

*Masked by trees to keep the appearance of greenbelt.*

*Back a little from the road with trees in front as much as possible to provide sympathetic natural camouflage.*

*The design of the building should be sympathetic to its location. Landscaping and tree planting should be an integral part of the plan.*

123. Others noted that a new building should be eco-friendly and energy efficient:

*Solar panels across the entire roof for energy efficiency or plant a green roof for ecological reasons.*

*Have it green friendly. Possible solar panels at ground level and living green roof to merge with areas greenbelt.*

*Consider ecological impact e.g. if roof and orientation make solar panels sensible then include these, maximise insulation etc.*

124. There were mixed views on whether, if a station is built, it should have a modern look or not:

*Should look like a shining beacon of modernity, technology and community. Shouldn't be afraid to look contemporary, though should still be functional and appropriate.*

*A strong design statement as it's a new build.*

*Not too modern looking; country natural look would fit in with surroundings.*

*The outer shell should be rural in its appearance while the business part of station should be modern and able to accommodate all interests relevant to the community.*

*For the appearance to be modern but in keeping with the local area and accessible.*

125. There were also mixed views on whether the building should be single or double storey – though more residents said they would prefer a single storey building:

*A two storey would give more facilities for leisure and training of staff.*

*Double storey building, saving on land that can be used for other things.*

*I would prefer the single storey option, this would cause less visual impact.*

*I prefer the single storey proposal as this would be less obtrusive.*

*It should be as environmentally neutral as possible, and built 'low level' wherever possible, so as to minimise the 'eye-sore' effect for local residents. It should also have some green space/trees.*

## Equalities

126. Residents were asked if MFRA's proposals would have any positive or negative impacts on people with protected characteristics – and how any adverse effects could be mitigated. The following possible negative impacts were mentioned in relation to the proposed Saughall Massie site:

*The proposed site is near a 'supported living' accommodation area. The noise may disrupt these individuals, who are elderly and/or disabled.'*

*Proposed development would be immediately adjacent to bungalows occupied by elderly and some disabled people...The addition of a fire station with associated sirens and traffic would have...negative impacts.'*

*I think there is sheltered housing for elderly residents near the proposed fire station. The noise and disruption to residents should be avoided.*

*Next to the Saughall Massie site are a large number of specialist housing units for people with a wide range of disability. I believe the additional noise etc. from an operational training facility could impact significantly on their wellbeing.'*

*Adjacent to proposed site in Saughall Massie are for elderly/ disabled residents. Continuous call out noise [is] not acceptable.'*

*Yes, the area on Saughall Massie road has many retirement bungalows which will have noise disturbance, extra traffic, pollution and reduce the tranquillity of their residence.'*

127. In West Kirby, the concerns were about the impact of possible longer response times on elderly and/or disabled residents:

*Increased likelihood of older or disabled residents living in West Kirby area being disadvantaged by response times in emergencies. These groups are more likely to have longer reaction times to emergencies when they occur in the first place and this would further compound this issue.*

*Largely elderly population may be more vulnerable in West Kirby if response times are reduced.*

*The proposal has a negative impact. West Kirby has a particularly strong ageing demographic. It has more old people than average. They are more likely to need support quickest.*

## Other suggestions

128. Residents were asked whether they had any other suggestions on how MFRA can make the required savings. Some of the varied suggestions made were as follows:

*Adopt retained status for all smaller stations*

*Centralise all training facilities and structures as have many other brigades.*

*Merge Wirral stations with Cheshire FRS*

*Community facilities to be combined with local authorities and other services*

*Adopt retained status for all smaller stations. 2. Centralise all training facilities and structures as have many other brigades. 3. Merge Wirral stations with Cheshire FRS. 4. Community facilities to be combined with la and other services*

*A reduction in salaries at higher level CFO, DCFO and higher paid civilian staff.*

*Lesser pension scheme for those who retire at 50. 50 year olds can still drive engines and work machinery. More economic shift patterns in relation to mean number of call outs. I thank our wonderful firefighters for their amazing work but think these are things that can be done.*

*A small charge for non-emergencies and severe penalties for false alarms.*

*Rather than making savings, why can't an increase in council tax help to contribute to a leaner, more modern service?*

*Continue to consult with all parties: staff, neighbours, local communities, local charities, schools and businesses. Public safety is of vital importance to all of us.*

*Prevention is better than cure. Keep trying to raise the culture regarding safety.*

*Reduce cost of senior management and administration by merging with another fire and rescue authority. Reduce your support service costs further, by having them done by the council.*

*Look at the management, administration and other ancillary services connected to front line service.*

## Respondent profile

Figure 5: Are you...?

Base: All Respondents (1,286)

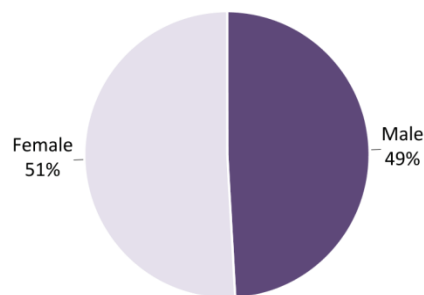
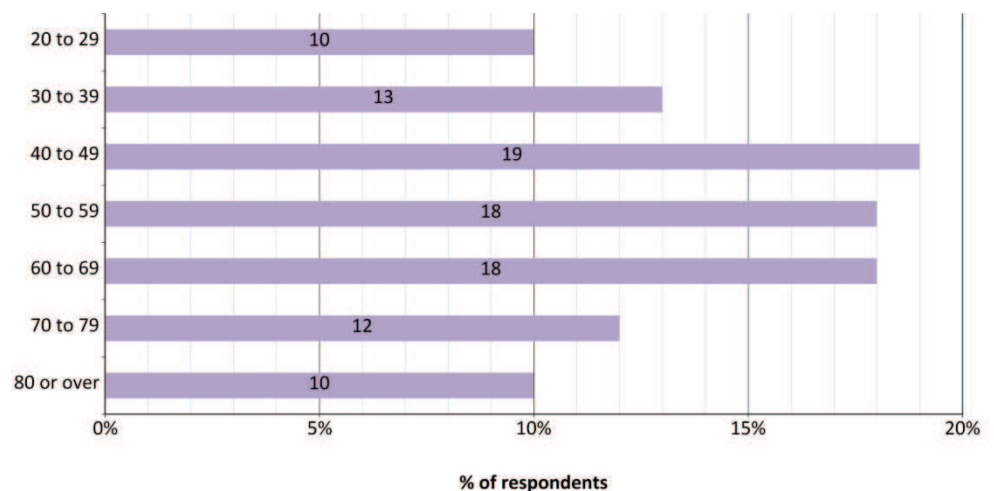
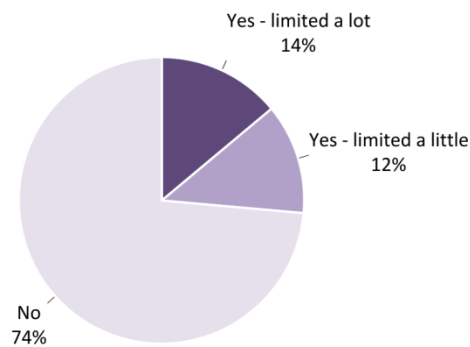


Figure 6: What was your age on your last birthday?

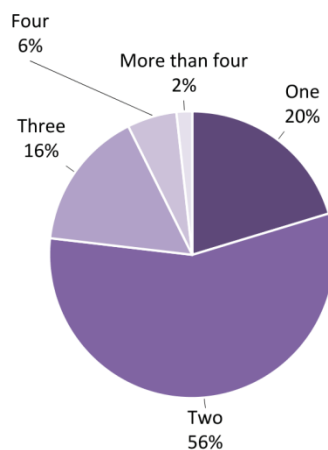
Base: All Respondents (1,281)



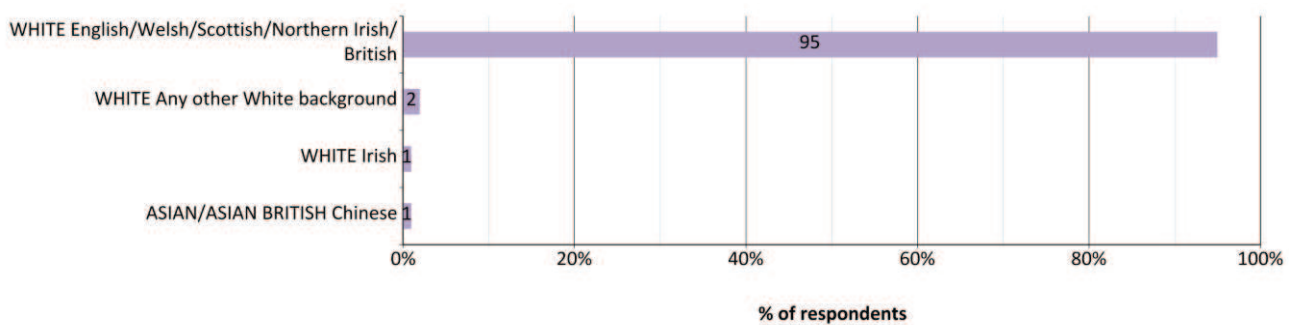
**Figure 7: Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?**  
**Base: All Respondents (1,268)**



**Figure 8: Including you, how many adults in total aged 16 or over are living here?**  
**Base: All Respondents (1,298)**



**Figure 91: What is your ethnic group?**  
**Base: All Respondents (1267)**



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# Report Analysing Feedback to Upton and West Kirby Station Merger Proposals at Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie

**VERSION 1.0**

## STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE

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Please note that the data in this document is based on the live Incident Recording System. As this is a live system, the data contained within this document is subject to review and can be changed without announcement.

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Author: J Fielding  
Work For: W Kenyon, D Appleton, J Sutton  
Date Assigned: 21/05/2015  
Date Data Extracted: 26/05/2015  
Work Completed:

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Document Type:       Statistics / Maps                       Survey                       Report

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System(s) Used:       Incident Recording System  
                              FSEC / Vision BOSS  
                              Survey Monkey  
                              Oshens  
                              Other:

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### Related Documents

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Document: \_\_\_\_\_

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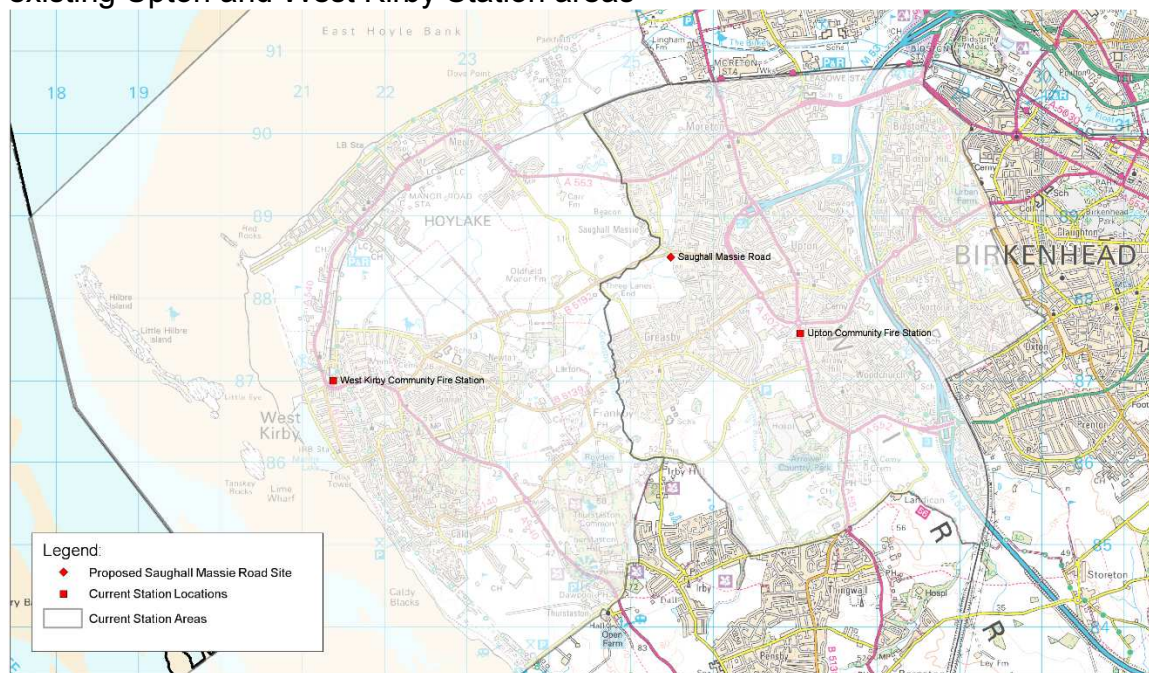
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## 1. Introduction

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015; Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service began a twelve week consultation with residents of West Wirral regarding the potential merger of the Upton and West Kirby station areas at a site on Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie.

The purpose of this report is to provide analysis of the feedback received concerning the proposed merger. A copy of the questions used in the consultation questionnaire are found within the Appendices of this report.

Map 1: Location of the proposed Saughall Massie Road site in relation to the existing Upton and West Kirby Station areas



Author: Business Intelligence  
Date: 03/02/2015  
Produced using MapInfo  
Strategy & Performance

Map Reference:

Map of Upton and West Kirby Station Areas  
with Proposed Saughall Massie Road Site

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In total there were 129 responses to the survey.

## 2. Methodology

For the purpose of producing the feedback, an online survey was created using SurveyMonkey - which also collected responses from members of the public. Though the Survey is now closed it was originally published at the following URL: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall\\_massie](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall_massie) Feedback data was downloaded from SurveyMonkey and analysed using Microsoft Excel 2013. The report only uses **valid** responses to each question - this is why counts can differ between questions.

MapInfo Professional 11.0 was used to map location based data.

Comments published within this document are based on a selection received, the only adjustments to commentaries are corrections to misspelled words.

Otherwise comments are verbatim.



### 3. Findings

**Q1) Having read the newsletter, do you agree that it is reasonable for the Fire and Rescue Authority to make the necessary savings by:**

**Table 1: A) Closing West Kirby and Upton fire stations; building a new station at Saughall Massie road**

Agreement	Count	%
Strongly Agree	32	25.2%
Tend to Agree	19	15.0%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	0.8%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly Disagree	75	59.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>127</b>	

Table 1 identifies that views were polarised concerning the potential development at Saughall Massie Road with 75 (59.1%) respondents being strongly against the building of a new merged station. However in combination 51 (40.2%) respondents were broadly in favour of the proposed development of which 32 (25.2%) respondents were strongly in favour of the development.

**Table 2: B) Closing West Kirby fire station outright, as the alternative to merger at Saughall Massie road**

Agreement	Count	%
Strongly Agree	18	14.8%
Tend to Agree	29	23.8%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	9.0%
Tend to Disagree	20	16.4%
Strongly Disagree	44	36.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>122</b>	

Like table 1, views are polarised concerning whether instead of building a new merged station – West Kirby should be just closed. In general the majority of respondents (64 or 52%) disagreed with this proposed to some extent, with 47 or 38.5% of respondents agreeing with the proposal to close.

**Table 3: C) For both A and B above, one of the two 24/7 (wholetime) fire appliances would still provide an immediate response to incidents, but we propose that the second appliance would be crewed by on-call wholetime firefighters to provide a response within 30 minutes in exceptional circumstances only (eg periods of high demand).**

Agreement	Count	%
Strongly Agree	26	21.0%
Tend to Agree	37	29.8%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	27	21.8%
Tend to Disagree	12	9.7%
Strongly Disagree	22	17.7%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>124</b>	

Concerning whether a retained appliance being available regardless of whether a new fire station is built on Saughall Massie Road or not, the majority of respondents 63 (50.8%) broadly agreed with the proposal, 27 (21.8%) were undecided and a combined 34 (27.4%) disagreed with the proposal.

**Table 4: Q2) Do you support including community facilities at the proposed station?**

Agreement	Count	%
Strongly Agree	28	21.9%
Tend to Agree	17	13.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	18	14.1%
Tend to Disagree	12	9.4%
Strongly Disagree	53	41.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>128</b>	

Table 4 identifies that a sizeable proportion of respondents (53 or 41.4%) strongly disagreed with the concept of including community facilities at the proposed station. In combination 65 (50.8%) of respondents disagreed with the provision of community facilities at the proposed fire station. By contrast 45 (35.2%) respondents supported community facilities at the proposed station and 18 (14.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

**Table 5: Q3) Do you support the possibility of sharing the proposed station with other blue light services?**

Agreement	Count	%
Strongly Agree	36	28.1%
Tend to Agree	16	12.5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	10.2%
Tend to Disagree	12	9.4%
Strongly Disagree	51	39.8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>128</b>	

Table 5 identifies that 36 (28.1%) respondents strongly agree with the concept of sharing the proposed station with other blue light services. In combination 52 (40.6%) agree to some extent with the concept of sharing the proposed fire station site with other blue light services. However 63 (49.2%) respondents disagreed with the concept of sharing the site with other blue light services.

**Q4) If a station was to be built at the site on Saughall Massie Road, please let us have your view on what you would like the station to look like, including any particular design features or facilities you would like included**

The following comments are structured according to what respondents suggested as valid design features<sup>1</sup>.

**Comments related to the scale of building:**

- As there are concerns over greenbelt loss, I think a single storey facility would fit in better and not be as big a "blot on the landscape".
- Given that Saughall Massie village is a conservation area, I would have had no objections to a small development such as the one Dan Stephens showed in the Lake District, i.e. a single storey stone building, as I understand the need for the residents of West Kirby to have access to rapid response.
- As low key as possible - and more like the Heswall station
- A low level building that could not be seen above the tree line.
- As small as possible
- Modern. Low key (trees?). Preferably away from houses
- Just a small single story down the bottom end of the field away from the sheltered housing bungalow all in keep with the green belt
- Low key to fit in with surroundings with additional community facilities i.e. youth club. Public meeting rooms
- Single storey unit with Landscaped grounds, set back from road, no tower
- It has to be functional first and foremost, whilst considering the surrounding rural area. Possibly only one storey.

**Comments related to using a "traditional / rural" design**

- Clear access and a building which is appropriate to the semi-rural area
- Something that blends in with the area
- Blend in with local environment as best as possible - use of landscaping
- Green & Organic in appearance to keep in with the existing aesthetics in Saughall Massie. Plant trees around the building
- Design to be kept in keeping with local area
- I think the fire service should design a station which suits their needs.
- I would like it to be sympathetic to the area
- Appearance to be in keeping with area - either in sandstone or old brick. Low lying building, eco-friendly. Planting trees and scrubs to block from road side (similar to the Warrens building at Arrowe Park). Facilities to include: library, computer access with support and learning facility, coffee shop, citizens advice bureau
- As it's in a village-like area something in keeping with the farming heritage of the village across the road would be preferable.
- As suggested, fits in with local architecture. Consider local environment impact too - e.g. include a community garden, new hives, bird boxes, etc.
- For me the building does not need to be disguised as anything other than a fire station. Realistically everyone needs Fire & Rescue Services and occasionally sacrifices have to be made. We can't always have the choice of being a NIMBY.
- I think it should be in line with the surroundings and fit in with the green belt
- In offensive - most importantly cost effective. Fire service saves lives - building should be able to do the job not to look pretty
- Is there any way of using any natural features in Saughall Massie as the tower or part of training facility?
- It should be as cost effective as possible. Wasting money on expensive design features or architecture is contrary to the purpose of this exercise.
- It should be in fitting with surroundings

<sup>1</sup> Please note this section only includes responses which were relevant to the question. There were comments detailing why individuals were against the development however as this question corresponds to design details of the potential build, these have been discounted.

Sympathetic Design - Consult Saughall Massie residents. Community Rooms - education facilities to educate children

I would like it to look like a piece of un-interfered with greenbelt land

I would like it to only include the facilities for housing fire pumps and crew. I would not like training towers etc.

Trees in front of fire station - lining the road from Saughall Massie to Three Lanes End

### Comments related to using a “modern” design

I like the 2 storey design as proposed in the document

Modern, something for kids nearby

Similar to Birkenhead and Mill Lane, Wallasey

I have seen the new Birkenhead fire station and feel that it looks modern and functional but not too austere.

### Q5) Please provide any further comments in support of your responses:

The majority of responses to this question are critical in nature reflecting the sceptical view of the proposal to build a new fire at Saughall Massie.

Following are a *selection* of responses to this question gauging different opinions and views.<sup>2</sup>

#### Selected comments in favour of the development (total of 10 comments)

By building a new station in Saughall Massie means that reasonable response times can still be met, and would also mean that ambulances can get to west Kirby quicker than currently from Arrowe Park. I understand the concerns about loss of greenbelt and if this was for a shopping centre then I would be wholeheartedly against it. However, this is an important service so some compromises must be made.

I am fully supportive of making the fire service efficient and to cut its cloth according to the funds available but extremely disappointed that the only option that is apparently available is to build the station on green belt land.....

I am keenly aware of the sacrifices Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have had to make due to government cuts. I live in West Kirby, and although I'm concerned about the closure of the station, I know you have no choice but to make reductions and close sites, and I fully support your judgement, as professionals, in doing so. I think the intervention of councillors with political interests in blocking any form of change to their area has been shameful, if predictable. I also think local opinion has largely been swayed by a small number of very vocal NIMBYs who hate any idea of change, regardless of the necessity of it taking place. Good luck and thank you for what you do for the community.

I think ideally I wouldn't want to lose any emergency services but if it's inevitable then I suppose Saughall Massie is the best option although I don't live there

#### Selected neutral comments – neither favourable nor unfavourable (total of 8 comments)

I don't understand why using on-call fire-fighters who live within 5 minutes of West Kirby or Upton hasn't been considered? They are both reasonably populated areas and I think it would be easy to keep the pumps on the run, significantly reduce costs and provide a 10 minute response into both towns. The idea of having whole-time fire-fighters, on-call to provide a 30 minute response seems like a waste of resources - why keep a fire-station open only for resilience purposes? Upton and West Kirby aren't even that far from each-other, you could quite easily provide 30 minute cover from Birkenhead if needs be!

No youth club facilities as it is in close proximity to vulnerable adults and elderly people. There is a new youth facility, being provided in Birkenhead. The council has been closing youth clubs, because of this one

<sup>2</sup> Please note that comments not detailing any reasoning or vexatious have not been included in the above comments and total counts

### Selected comments in favour of developing Upton (total of 3 comments)

Close West Kirby, if you must, but retain and redevelop Upton (if needed). The comment "I am of the view that a merger in West Wirral would deliver a less impactful operational outcome than the outright closure of West Kirby or any other option open to the Authority." is meaningless as both options involve closure of West Kirby.

The most economical solution: - 1. Upton fire station is in the best position to cover the area. It can be refurbished and if necessary be provided with a second fire engine. The police station opposite is very large indeed and well situated to make co-operation convenient - if it is not so already, they also have space in their car park if required e.g. rapid response vehicles. Although there is space at present at the fire station. 2. I understand that West Kirby fire station is seldom in use. So what is all the fuss about retaining it? Apparently the present situation covers West Kirby already. Rapid response vehicles could cover Hoylake and west Kirby with back up from a fire engine

### Selected comments against the development due to various reasons (total of 11 comments)

A fire station should not be built in Saughall Massie and there are many good reasons why. It is green belt and home to a wide variety of birds and animals. It provides a valuable space for dog walkers, horse riders, Families enjoying time together and taking exercise. We are all aware of the need for people to be more active and that space provides an excellent opportunity for local residents thus improving physical and mental health. Consideration should also be given to the fact that a large number of elderly/vulnerable people right next to the proposed site and it would be extremely unfair on them. I was at the meeting on Monday 20th April at the Centre in Saughall Massie. Dan Stephens had no interest whatsoever in any of the above, wanting to focus only on "response times" In actual fact they are the very thing that would most certainly not be met. The lanes which would be used to get to West Kirby are very narrow with ditches along the side in some places and very many bends. Traffic is very heavy during peak times in those lanes, they are already a no go area for walkers and cyclists. Even in a car, the possibility of coming face to face with such a large vehicle would be extremely dangerous, an accident just waiting to happen. It would be a case of when, not if. Any accident, apart from the obvious risk to life and limb would block the lanes completely raising the need for a further vehicle to be called out and take a different route. The lanes in question (from Three Lanes End roundabout to the foot of Black Horse Hill) are not just a few hundred yards long, they stretch for over a mile and a half and another thing to bear in mind is the fact that there is a primary school at the end. Dan said conditions like these are found anywhere else in the country, refusing to listen to the fact that this is the route to the motorway for residents of West Kirby and Hoylake. To build a fire station on this proposed site would be sheer madness, not to mention totally unnecessary, I strongly urge you to reconsider.

Having lived in Saughall Massie for over 26 years I can see how the village has been already ruined by the new road, Traffic congestion and a 15 minute wait to get out of Girtrell Road onto Saughall Massie to go to work and the same at night. The road cannot sustain the extra traffic, noise and feel that the fire station together with other plans i.e. gym, accommodation, training centre and accommodation for youths has no place in our village. This also causes stress to the vulnerable people in our sheltered accommodation and there is also a drainage problem after the building of the road with the pond (now lake) getting closer to private property (this did not happen before the building of the road). I feel that the Fire Service together with the Council should listen to residents who actually live in the village and have done so for many years.

It's about time the fire service accepted there is no longer the demand for mass 24/7 fire crew coverage. There should be a move to a more specialised service with 24/7 crews that specifically cover industrial areas such as the docks and Stanlow, serious road traffic collisions and fires which endanger life. The remaining coverage should be met by part time crews similar to the lifeboat service where for all non life threatening jobs are dealt with by on call trained firemen from the local community. Unlike the over worked police and specifically ambulance service, fire crews can relax and sleep during their shift so instead of paying them to sit around just have the necessary crews either that or crews should undergo greater medical training and support the ambulance service.

Whilst the fire engines use this road if they need to go West Kirby way, we do not see them when they attend other areas, but this would change as they would then be travelling up and down the road to attend incidents every day. The traffic on the road is already heavy and speed limits are already ignored causing a hazard to children, the elderly and disabled in the area. Additionally, open green space is being taken away from the community and views obliterated. Not content with a fire station the proposal also includes a gym and youth facilities increasing people and vehicular traffic. The fire authority has been banging on about response times but the ambulances manage to get to people all over the Wirral from further along the road from the Upton Fire Station.

### Selected comments against the development due to green belt concerns (total of 21 comments)

I strongly disagree with the proposed use of green belt land at Saughall Massie. This land has been protected for

many years and should remain so. It is an important ecosystem and nature area. Also, placement of a station here would mean the appliances relying heavily on the lanes between Saughall Massie; and west Kirby, Hoylake and Greasby. These roads are not suitable for regular blue light appliances, there are many blind bends and few overtaking opportunities. There would be a raised risk of accidents and a slower response time as a result.

The proposed new fire station would be built on green belt land. This should not be allowed due to the impact on the wildlife, the environment and the living standards for local residents. There is housing for the elderly and vulnerable people next to the proposed site which would have an adverse effect on their wellbeing due to noise pollution at any time of day or night. I have concerns about the increase in traffic and the likelihood of further building being erected on green belt land near the site. I think the little money that the fire service has would be best spent on improving Upton fire station.

There is very little Green space in Saughall Massie and it is unacceptable to build on the small amount there when there is an existing fire station so nearby in Upton. Traffic is already very bad in this area and as a local resident I would be very concerned by the impact of siting the fire station here.

when you build on the greenbelt you are taking away open spaces that people enjoy nature (peace) enjoying the walks also Upton fire station is in the perfect spot for accidents on M53 and also Arrowe Park Hospital

### Selected comments against the development due to traffic (total of 8 comments)

If the fire engines travel out towards the Upton by Pass they will encounter heavy traffic in the morning and evening plus children going to and from school. I appreciate the need for cost cutting but there are many alternative sites which could be utilised for the necessary merger

This is a conservation area and is Green Belt. The road is also extremely busy with two roads of OAP residences. We also every 8 years have the Open Golf at Royal Liverpool and the traffic crawls along Saughall Massie Road during the five days of the Open.

When the new Saughall Massive Road bypass was constructed the residents were given assurances that no increased traffic would result. This was a complete falsehood. Traffic has significantly increased and now the proposal is to add one or more emergency services. Traffic is already regularly backed up in both directions. It can be extremely difficult to turn out of and into side roads and adding emergency vehicles will make turning on to and off Saughall Massive Road far more dangerous. Not to mention the potential delays to the response of vehicles. I will vehemently oppose this proposal at every stage. I also cannot see any logic in moving the fire station further away from the bulk of the population it serves (Upton & Woodchurch). I cannot see any good reason why constructing a new centre on Saughall Massie Road is a good option - it is environmentally unsound, it is less efficient for virtually the entire population it serves in that it is further away from them, it will increase traffic and danger on an already extremely busy road and it cannot be cheaper to construct a new centre than use the existing ones more effectively. The plan is a D minus. Must do better.

### Selected comments against the development due to funding (total of 2 comments)

If the number of call outs have dropped significantly since 2004, why or how does this justify the building of a new fire station? It would seem your own information would support the closing of west Kirby and keeping Upton fire station not building a white elephant of a fire station which you seem to be dangling the fake pointless carrot of community facilities, which on the new proposed site would not have the required space for people to visit etc. This is pointless capital expenditure programme with zero benefit to the community.

### Selected comments against the development due to local concerns (total of 3 comments)

I strongly disagree with the new station at Saughall Massie Road. It would ruin the peaceful landscape and therefore decrease the values of the properties in that area so I think it would be better for everyone if the station were in an existing site instead of an open field.

Are you aware that the majority of houses adjacent to the proposed development are for elderly or disabled residents? In the event of an emergency call out, there is a risk to residents from traffic blocking driveways or emergency vehicles travelling along the main Saughall Massie Road. There are no such dangers if the existing stations are kept.

**Q6) Having read the newsletter, do you have any other suggestions on how the Authority can make the required savings?**

The following selected comments relate to respondents who have suggested ideas on where the Authority could make financial savings / recover costs. Though not detailed in the following list, many respondents favoured keeping Upton open with the closure of West Kirby and therefore no development within Saughall Massie.

As backup the Heswall Fire Station can provide alternative fire engines, the road to West Kirby is much more straight forward and does not suffer from narrow lanes, being a good road all the way. Why is there seldom a fire engine at Heswall, when I understand they can provide backup from Neston? Upgrading Upton station will be much less expensive than building A new fire station on virgin, greenbelt land (which is also a site of archaeological finds) is wrong. Upton Fire Station is centrally placed to cover a wide area, including Hoylake, Woodchurch estate, Arrowe Park & M53 for motor accidents

Consider Merging Blue Light Sites

Cut the bosses!

Develop a charity arm

Go with option C as outlined above. Charge companies and organisations money for unnecessary calls or automated calls.

Have a low pressure option to donate especially when someone receives free services such as smoke alarms, perhaps this could take the form of a card with details of how to donate? Guided tours and/or demonstrations again with donation or even a charge? Fire engine sponsorship, individual and corporate? I'd pay to have my name on an engine to indicate my support for this essential service.

Increase council taxes, as suggested at the meeting on 20th Apr, in order to properly fund an effective fire service.

Merge the 2 fire stations at the cheaper location of Upton Sell the west Kirby site for re-development Apply for an increase to the local c/tax to fill the gap in your funding, as local resident feel strongly about your proposals Could the fire service not apply the similar approach that the fast response ambulance uses

Merging Birkenhead / Wallasey on Dockland

More cross-border collaboration. You should consider building a joint fire station with Cheshire on the Chester High Road. Heswall cannot provide an adequate response into Neston and Cheshire currently have no plans to build a station in Neston. The current location of Heswall fire station is ripe for development and could make the Service some money - sharing the costs of building and staff with Cheshire is likely to provide a more cost effective way of keeping a station and will benefit both areas. Why not have a joint Merseyside and Cheshire, Fire, Police and Ambulance station on this site?

My only concern is that building a new station is going to cost. If Upton Fire station closed instead, what would the response times be coming from Birkenhead? Could this be an alternative to spending some money on a new building? I apologise if this was mentioned but there was a lot to take in even though I read this a few times.

You are spending not saving, the cost of building a new site is going to cost a fortune. Invest that money more effectively into the existing stations

## 4. Further Analysis

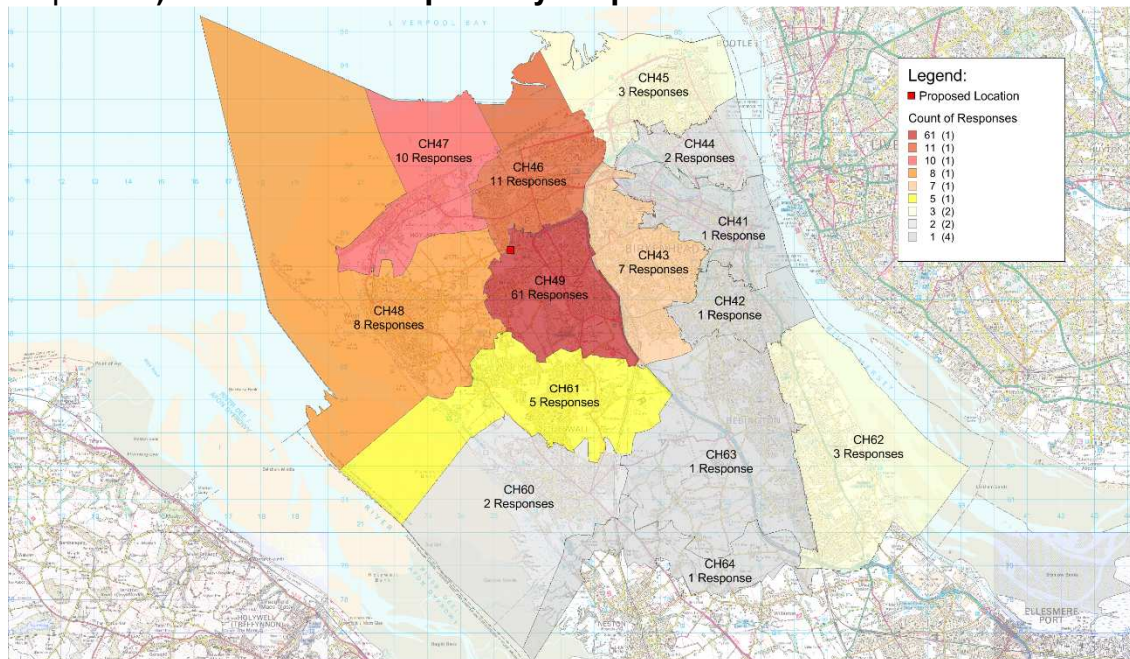
The following section provides an overview monitoring information submitted by respondents, this includes: Age, Gender, Ethnicity and Location.

**Table 6: D1) Are you a member of: Please tick the appropriate box**

Organisation	Count	%
Partner Organisation	5	4.2%
Public	115	95.8%
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Staff	0	0.0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>120</b>	

Question D1 asks respondents whether they are members of the Public, Partner Organisations or internal members of staff. The table clearly identifies that the vast majority (95.8% or 115 respondents) were members of the public.

**Map 2: D2) What is the first part of your post code:**



Author: J Fielding  
Date: 26/05/2015  
Produced using MapInfo  
Strategy & Performance  
Map Reference:

**Thematic Map Identifying Density of Survey Respondents by Postcode**

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Map 2 provides an overview of the density of respondents by postcode. The map clearly identifies that of the valid responses to the questionnaire the CH49 post code had the greatest volume of respondents with 61. This was then followed by the CH46 post code with 11 responses, the CH47 post code with 10 responses and CH48 post code with 8 responses.



Chart 1: Comparison of Age and Gender (D3 and D4)  
 Respondents by Age and Gender

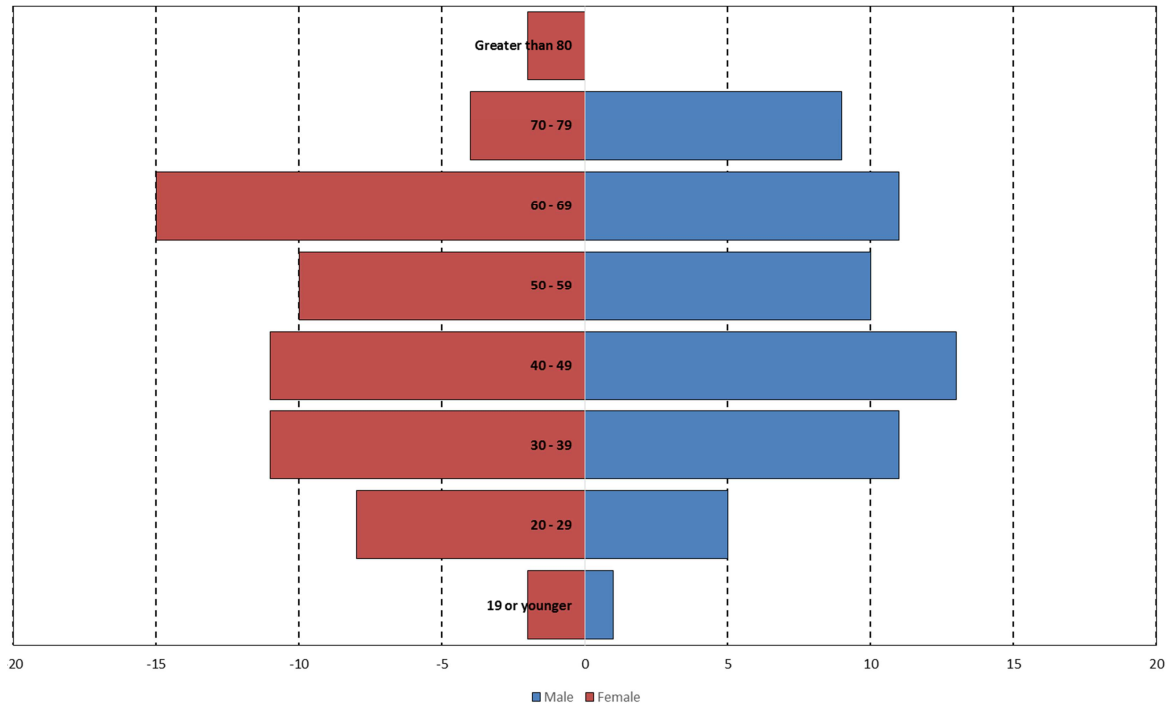


Chart 1 provides a population pyramid graphically representing the ages and genders of respondents to the consultation questionnaire. The age group with the greatest number of responses is the 60-69 group with 26 responses in total, this is then followed by the 40-49 group with 24 responses and 30-39 group with 22 responses. The age groups to submit the fewest questionnaires are at the extremes of the age spectrum with the 19 or younger group having 3 respondents and the Greater than 80 group with 2 respondents.<sup>3</sup>

The overall count of female respondents was 63, with the 60-69 age range being most common and the overall count of males being 60, with the 40-49 age range being most common.

Table 6: D5) Do you consider yourself to have disability?

Age Group	Yes	No	Grand Total	% Disabled
19 or younger	0	3	3	0.0%
20 - 29	2	9	11	18.2%
30 - 39	2	17	19	10.5%
40 - 49	3	19	22	13.6%
50 - 59	5	16	21	23.8%
60 - 69	2	23	25	8.0%
70 - 79	6	6	12	50.0%
Greater than 80	1	2	3	33.3%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>18.1%</b>

Table 6 provides a breakdown of respondents by age and whether they considered themselves to have a disability. The majority of respondents, 95

<sup>3</sup> For additional benchmarking information please refer to Appendix B at the rear of this document

or 81.9% did not consider themselves to be disabled with 18.1% considering themselves to have a disability.

When benchmarked against Census 2011 figures the Wirral has a proportion of 21.9% of the population who have long term health problem or disability; where day-to-day activities are limited a lot 11.3% or a little 10.6%. In combination the 18.1% of respondents to have reported themselves to have a disability is very close to that of Wirral as a whole

**Table 7: D6) How would you describe your ethnic origin?**

Ethnicity	Count	%
White: English	111	87.4%
White: Other White Background	3	2.4%
White: Scottish	3	2.4%
White: Northern Irish	1	0.8%
White: Irish	1	0.8%
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background: White & Asian	1	0.8%
Prefer not to say	7	5.5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>127</b>	

Table 7 identifies that the majority of respondents 111 or 87.4% were recorded as White: English. The next largest recorded ethnicity was the “Prefer not to say” group with 7 of 5.5% of respondents. Should this group be omitted then in combination the White ethnicities equate to 99.2% of respondents, which is slightly higher than the White ratio for the Wirral of 97.0%.

## 5. Corporate Communications

**Table 8: C1) How did you find out about this consultation?**

Communication Type	Count
Newsletter from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service/Authority	48
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service website <a href="http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk">www.merseyfire.gov.uk</a>	10
Newspaper	27
Online news website	20
Radio	4
TV	0
Word of Mouth / Telephone	62
Social Media	10

Table 8 identifies that respondents primarily became aware of the consultation and associated events via Newsletters and Word of Mouth which includes direct telephone calls (on behalf of Opinion Research Services).

More people were made aware of the consultation and associated events via the Internet and Social Media than the Radio or Television. Concerning Social Media; 6 respondents were made aware of the consultation and associated events via the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Facebook account and 1 individual via Twitter. Therefore 3 respondents did not state which form of social media they used.

## 6. Appendices

### Appendix A: Electronic version of the consultation questionnaire

#### Proposed Upton and West Kirby Merger - Consultation Questionnaire

Our consultation document outlines Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's proposal to merge Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie as an alternative to an outright closure of West Kirby Fire Station. The newsletter explains why we are proposing this change and how we would do it.

We are planning public meetings and other events during the twelve week consultation beginning on 2nd March 2015 in order to fully understand the views of the public, stakeholders and other interested parties.

There is an opportunity for you to comment on the proposed changes online.

The Fire and Rescue Authority will consider all the comments it receives before it makes any final decisions.

Please note this survey should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete

Q1) Having read the newsletter, do you agree that it is reasonable for the Fire and Rescue Authority to make the necessary savings by:

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree
A) Closing West Kirby and Upton fire stations; building a new station at Saughall Massie road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) Closing West Kirby fire station outright, as the alternative to merger at Saughall Massie road	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C) For both A and B above, one of the two 24/7 (wholtime) fire appliances would still provide an immediate response to incidents, but we propose that the second appliance would be crewed by on-call wholtime firefighters to provide a response within 30 minutes in exceptional circumstances only (e.g. periods of high demand).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q2) Do you support including community facilities at the proposed station?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q3) Do you support the possibility of sharing the proposed station with other blue light services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q4) If a station was to be built at the site on Saughall Massie Road, please let us have your view on what you would like the station to look like, including any particular design features or facilities you would like included:

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Q5) Please provide any further comments in support of your responses:

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Q6: Having read the newsletter, do you have any other suggestions on how the Authority can make the required savings?

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**Monitoring Information**

Please note that information collected within this section is for monitoring purposes no personal identifiable information will be collated.

D1) Are you a member of:

Please tick the appropriate box

- Public
- Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Staff
- Partner Organisation

D2) what is the first part of your post code: (for example CH49) \_\_\_\_\_

D3) Your Gender: Please tick the appropriate box

- Male
- Female

D4) Your Age: - Please tick the appropriate box

- 19 or younger
- 20 29
- 30 39
- 40 49
- 50 59
- 60 69
- 70 79
- Greater than 80

D5) Do you consider yourself to have disability? - Please tick the appropriate box

- Yes
- No

D6) How would you describe your ethnic origin?- Please tick the appropriate box

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> English	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background:</b> Other Mixed / multiple background
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Asian or Asian British:</b> Indian
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Asian or Asian British:</b> Pakistani
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Asian or Asian British:</b> Bangladeshi
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Asian or Asian British:</b> Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Gypsy or Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Asian or Asian British:</b> Other Asian Background
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>White:</b> Other White Background	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Black or Black British:</b> Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background:</b> White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Black or Black British:</b> African
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background:</b> White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Black or Black British:</b> Other Black Background
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background:</b> White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

Other ethnic group (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

C1) How did you find out about this consultation?

(Please select all that apply)

- Newsletter from Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service/Authority
- Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service website www.merseyfire.gov.uk
- Newspaper
- Online news website
- Radio
- TV
- Word of Mouth
- Social Media

C2) If you responded "Social Media" in the previous question, please indicate if this social media was:

- @MerseyFire Twitter
- Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service Facebook page

## Appendix B: Age Structure Benchmark

Table 9: Benchmark<sup>4</sup> of Response Proportions by age against Wirral and neighbouring wards to proposed Saughall Massie development

Age	Responses	Wirral	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	Greasby, Frankby & Irby
20 - 29	10.8%	14.7%	13.9%	10.5%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>
30 - 39	18.3%	14.3%	14.4%	10.6%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>-3.9%</b>	<b>-7.8%</b>
40 - 49	20.0%	18.5%	18.0%	17.1%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>
50 - 59	16.7%	17.9%	18.3%	19.5%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
60 - 69	21.7%	16.3%	18.2%	20.2%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>-5.4%</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	<b>-1.4%</b>
70 - 79	10.8%	10.9%	10.7%	12.6%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
>= 80	1.7%	7.4%	6.4%	9.4%
	<b>+/-</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>4.8%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>

Using the proportion of population by age group, table 9 compares responses to the survey against the Wirral, "Moreton West & Saughall Massie" and "Greasby, Frankby & Irby" age structures. The table identifies that when compared against the Wirral population structure, the 20-29 and 80 and above age groups are underrepresented within the Survey data. The 30-39 and 60-69 age groups are overrepresented.

The wards of "Moreton West & Saughall Massie" and "Greasby, Frankby & Irby" are also benchmarked against as these wards had the greatest counts of respondents. The figures however still identify that the same trends as that of the Wirral as a whole.

<sup>4</sup> This table omits the 19 and below age group in all calculations. This was done as this age group would heavily skew the analysis. %'s have been used to allow direct comparison

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# **PUBLIC MEETINGS ON WIRRAL FIRE COVER CONSULTATION**

## **Monday, 20th April.**

**WHERE:** St Mary's Centre, 127 Saughall Massie Road, CH49 4LA.

**Meeting starts at 6.30pm.**

## **Tuesday, 28th April.**

**WHERE:** Holy Cross Church community rooms, by Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS.

**Meeting starts at 6.30pm.**

## **Tuesday, 5th May.**

**WHERE:** The Hoylake Community Centre, The Parade, Hoyle Road, Hoylake, CH47 3AG.

**Meeting starts at 6.30pm.**

More information on the proposals, options and why changes are required can be found at [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk) or by writing to us at Wirral Consultation, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service,

Bridle Road, Bootle, L30 4YD. Please quote in correspondence  
Poster2015.

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**For free fire safety advice go to [www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk) or  
call 0800 7315958. Test your smoke alarms each week.**



## Liverpool Echo – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015

A public meeting will be held to discuss the proposed closure of Wirral fire stations.

The meeting, to be held in the St Mary's Centre on Saughall Massie Road at 6.30pm on Monday, is part of a 12 week consultation to discuss Merseyside fire service's plans for a station merger for West Wirral.

The consultation will consider the option of closing stations in West Kirby and Upton and building a new facility on Saughall Massie Road in Upton, or closing the West Kirby station and relocating crews to the station in Upton.

Chief Fire Officer Dan Stephens said: "We have to make structural changes to emergency response cover across Merseyside in order to deliver the savings required following grant cuts.

"I am of the professional view that a merger in West Wirral would deliver a less impactful operational outcome than the outright closure of West Kirby or any other option open to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

"I encourage people to take part in our consultation, attend the public meetings, read the information about the proposals on our Service website and fill in our questionnaire. We want to hear your views."

The fire service had held a 12-week consultation on proposals to close West Kirby and Upton stations and build a new station in Greasby - but the site was withdrawn after residents objected because it was on greenbelt land.

Meetings will also be held at the Holy Cross Church community rooms in Woodchurch at 6.30pm on April 28 and at Hoylake Community Centre at 6.30pm on May 5.

.....  
Letter to Wirral Globe 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015



Wirral Globe 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015

A FACT-finding exercise is to take place to ensure land in Upton is suitable for development as part of a consultation on fire cover in west Wirral.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue service is currently carrying out a 12-week consultation on the future of the area's fire stations.

The exercise, which ends on May 18, will consider two options.

On the table is a proposal to close West Kirby and Upton fire stations and merge them at a new station in Saughall Massie Road, Upton.

The other option is the outright closure of West Kirby.

As part of the consultation, a topographical study will be carried out on land on Saughall Massie Road.

The survey – which will take place on Wednesday and Thursday – is required in order for architects to ensure the site is suitable for any development and to prepare initial designs of a potential new fire station for display or discussion at upcoming public meetings.

Fire chiefs say the survey does not mean a decision has already been made.

Throughout the consultation, the public will be invited to suggest suitable alternative options for fire authority budget savings.

The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to the Authority for a definitive decision in June.

A spokesman for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service said: “We would like to reassure the public that no decision has been taken regarding the proposal for a new fire station on this site and no planning application has been submitted.

“The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority for their consideration before a decision on the proposal is made.

“The topographical survey work is solely for the purpose of preparing initial design proposals as part of the consultation process to allow the public to discuss what a fire station could look like at that location.”

Over the last four years the Authority has had to make savings of £20 million as a result of Government Grant cuts. A further saving of £6.3 million is needed by the end of 2015/16.

The consultation process will involve public meetings at locations in Saughall Massie, Upton and West Kirby, a stakeholders' meeting at Hoylake, three focus groups and a joint forum.

A consultation document has been distributed in public buildings, local stores and businesses across West Wirral.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority held a 12-week consultation on the proposed closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations and the building of a new station in Greasby but, following opposition from residents, the site was withdrawn by Wirral Council.

**The public meetings will be held for this consultation on the following dates:**

- Monday, April 20, starting at 6.30pm at the St Mary’s Centre, 127 Saughall Massie Road, CH49 4LA.
- Tuesday, April 28, at Holy Cross Church community rooms, by Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS, starting at 6.30pm.
- Tuesday, May 5, at Hoylake Community Centre, The Parade, Hoyle Road, Hoylake, CH47 3AG, starting at 6.30pm.

**The public consultation will consider two options:**

- The closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations, the building of a new station at Saughall Massie Road.
- The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as “wholetime retained” (with a 30-minute recall), whilst;
- Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the authority budget.

**OR:**

- The outright closure of West Kirby as the alternative to merger.
- The re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as “wholetime retained” (with a 30-minute recall) whilst;
- Inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options to deliver the savings required as a result of further cuts to the authority budget.

Comments

Let us see which supermarket group bids for the West Kirby and Upton existing fire station sites. Something serious is being hidden here. Also the Heswall fire station site, another M&S as the existing one in Heswall is too small. Saughall Massie is a nightmare to drive through in a car. Imagine responding to a persons reported trapped, on those roads, especially at school times.

.....

Tonight, the first of three public meetings will be held (starting at 6.30pm at the St Mary's Centre, 127 Saughall Massie Road, CH49 4LA) to consult with the public on options which include building a new fire station in Saughall Massie (if Upton Fire Station & West Kirby Fire Station close). Another option being consulted on is the closure of West Kirby Fire Station and keeping Upton Fire Station open.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have produced an [eighteen page consultation document](#) which details their reasons for the consultation. There is also an [online questionnaire](#) as part of the consultation and you can email [consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk) with your views or write to Wirral Consultation, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Bridle Road, Bootle, L30 4YD.

The twelve week consultation ends on the 18th May 2015 and there will be two further public meetings in addition to the one tonight in Saughall Massie.

**Tuesday, 28th April**, at Holy Cross Church community rooms, by Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS, starting at **6.30pm**.

**Tuesday, 5th May**, at Hoyle Community Centre, The Parade, Hoyle Road, Hoyle, CH47 3AG, starting at **6.30pm**.

A transcript of the reasons given by the Chief Fire Officer for the consultation [at the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on the 29th January can be read here](#).

You may also be interested in [Saughall Massie residents express their opposition to fire station plans at first consultation meeting](#) which includes video of the meeting.

1. Is this another PFI boondoggle ?
2. Haven't they built it yet!
  
3. Please listen to people who want Upton Fire Station open you want to build next to sheltered housing the noise and busy road while you are building is going to upset a lot of people some in there 90 also people in the Saughall Massie do not want the fire station for a number of reasons also we want the greenbelt saved a lot of people walk and enjoy the nature and feel at peace just relaxing watching the birds ducks swans also I have been told bats can be seen there

.....

# Fire station debate

■ Consultation on the closure or merging on ends March 18

By Emma Rigby  
emma.rigby@newsquest.co.uk

A FACT-finding exercise has taken place to ensure land in Upton is suitable for development as part of a consultation on fire cover in west Wirral.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue service is currently carrying out a 12-week consultation on the future of the area's fire stations.

The exercise, which ends on May 18, will consider two options.

On the table is a proposal to close West Kirby and Upton fire stations and merge them at a new station in Saughall Massie Road, Upton.

The other option is the outright closure of West Kirby.

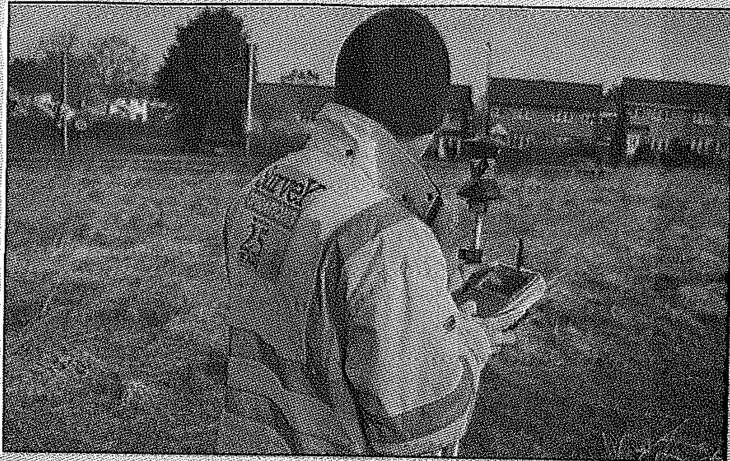
As part of the consultation, a topographical study has been carried out on land on Saughall Massie Road.

The survey - which took place on Wednesday and Thursday - was required in order for architects to ensure the site is suitable for any development and to prepare initial designs of a potential new fire station for display or discussion at upcoming public meetings.

Fire chiefs say the survey does not mean a decision has already been made.

Throughout the consultation, the public will be invited to suggest suitable alternative options for fire authority budget savings.

The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to the authority for a definitive decision in June.



A surveyor at the proposed site of the new fire station at Saughall Massie Road

A spokesman for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service said: "We would like to reassure the public that no decision has been taken regarding the proposal for a new fire station on this site and no planning application has been submitted."

"The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority for their consideration before a decision on the proposal is made."

"The topographical survey work is solely for the purpose of preparing initial design proposals as part of the consultation process to allow the public to discuss what a fire station could look like at that location."

Over the last four years the authority has had to make savings of £20 million

as a result of government grant cuts. A further saving of £6.3 million is needed by the end of 2015/16.

The consultation will involve public meetings at locations in Saughall Massie, Upton and West Kirby, a meeting at Hoylake, three focus groups and a joint forum.

A consultation document has been distributed in public buildings, local stores and businesses across West Wirral.

The meetings all start at 6.30pm and will be held on:

- Monday, April 20, at St Mary's Centre, Saughall Massie Road.
- Tuesday, April 28, Holy Cross Church community rooms, Woodchurch.
- Tuesday, May 5, Hoylake Community Centre, Hoylake.

Wirral Globe – 15<sup>th</sup> April

SCHEME offering householders cash to attend crucial consultation meetings on the future of fire service cover has been blasted by Wirral councillors.

Labour council leader Phil Davies said he had "never heard anything like it" and Tory group veteran Chris Blakeley branded the move as "outrageous."

A 12-week public consultation began on March 2 and runs until May 18 over highly-controversial proposals to close West Kirby and Upton fire stations and merge them at a new facility in Saughall Massie.

The results of the meetings and forums will be reported to Merseyside Fire Authority and used as a basis for making a final decision.

But the *Globe* can reveal that residents have been telephoned by a marketing company and offered up to £30 to attend forum meetings.

The firm has been hired by the cash-strapped fire authority to offer payment - "to cover expenses" - as a means of ensuring the events are "fully representative."

Councillor Davies said: "It's the first I've heard about this and it is certainly an unusual idea.

"I've organised and attended a great many meetings over the years and never have I heard anything like the public being offered money to go."

Saughall Massie ward councillor Chris Blakeley said: "It's an outrageous idea.

"It puts the validity of the meetings into question.

"If you pay someone £30 to attend, it could be argued they'll say whatever you want them to say.

"I think it's all part of the fire authority's mission to get its plan for a new station in Saughall Massie.

"They'll use these people to put forward the pretence that it's what the public wants.

"It's very strange when the fire authority always says it needs to save money but is prepared to pay people to attend public meetings."

*Globe* reader Frank Palin, who lives near the proposed site of the new fire station, said: "I think it's disgraceful. This is public money they're using.

"We should not be giving people out-of-pocket expenses to attend a public meeting."

Last year a meeting held in Greasby Methodist Church Centre, called to discuss the future of fire cover in the area, was so massively over-attended that hundreds of concerned householders were forced to stand outside.

A spokesman for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service said: "We pay expenses, for example for travelling expenses or child care, to those attending the forum meetings, which last between two and two and a-half hours.

"This ensures that a fully representative group of people from the area which would be affected by the proposals can afford to attend and give their views.

"We are also holding open public meetings for anyone who wants to attend those."

.....

Wirral Globe 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015

MORE than 150 people were unable to get into a public meeting on the proposed merger of Wirral fire stations tonight as there was not enough room at the venue.

Taking place at St Mary's Centre on Saughall Massie Road, Upton, it was the first of three to be held as part of a 12-week consultation on the plans.

The 120 who made it in, before health and safety regulations prohibited allowing any more, heard Merseyside's chief fire officer Dan Stephens outline proposals which include merging West Kirby and Upton fire stations at a site in Saughall Massie Road.

Another option is the outright closure of West Kirby station and relocating crews to Upton.

As the meeting went on, there were shouts of "this venue is unsuitable."

Conservative councillor for Moreton West and Saughall Chris Blakeley urged Mr Stephens to organise a second meeting for people unable to get in



Cllr Blakeley said "Clearly, more than 150 people lost out on the opportunity to make their views known, which was a disappointment.

"The fact that the chief fire officer won't make a commitment to hold another meeting in Saughall Massie, as he did in Greasby, and he won't make that commitment.

"It says it all about the fire authority. They're not interested in the views of local people. They just want to build a new fire station, ride roughshod over everybody and get over it.

"We will fight the authority. We will fight the planning department and we will fight the Labour Council to ensure our greenbelt is not desecrated."

Mr Stephens told the *Globe*: "We have to make structural changes to emergency response cover across Merseyside in order to deliver the savings required following grant cuts.

"I will take a view based on whether I think there would be a different outcome from that which we've see tonight, because there are difficulties in us securing a venue that's big enough to accommodate all the interest.

"We recognise that we get criticised what ever we do.



"But that said, I will discuss it with the chair of the Fire & Rescue Authority and we'll take a view based on that."

Among concerns raised by residents were the proposed fire station's impact on house prices.

One resident said the fire station plan was "an accident waiting to happen".

Mr Stephens continued: "I think the people of Saughall Massie, as we fully expected they would, have made their position clear.

The other public meetings being held as part of this consultation will be held on the following dates:

- Tuesday, April 28, at Holy Cross Church community rooms, by Holy Cross Church, Woodchurch, CH49 7LS, starting at 6.30pm.
- Tuesday, May 5, at Hoylake Community Centre, The Parade, Hoyle Road, Hoylake, CH47 3AG, starting at 6.30pm.

The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to the Authority for a definitive decision in June.

## COMMENTS

Why don't they modernise the station in Upton as they did with Birkenhead with some of the 3.5 million that it would cost to build a new station in Saughall Massie.

I am a resident of Saughall Massie and after having a new road built for the open golf tournament which has created a congested cut through to the m53 and a night time race track at weekends.

What we definitely don't need is more traffic and noise and have the fire authority really looked at the proposed site adjacent to elderly people's bungalows.

Where are our local Labour councillors absolutely nowhere that's were, which seems it to be one of their stitched up public consultations they role out when the decision and plans have long since been made and agreed.

Lyndale certainly springs to mind when parents, teachers and local public disagreed after consultation.

After this meeting the Fire brigade and council can clearly see Saughall Massie as Greasby residents don't want this built.

Let's see if they listen to the public, didn't Councillor Phil Davies veto the Greasby idea let's see what he does now.

Stephens is handing you all death sentences. Where are the doctored risk assessments=nowhere. Land at west Kirby and Upton will be sold for nothing to supermarket chains. Next step he will close Heswall for a shopping mall.

...

arrived 15 minutes before the advertised start of the meeting to find a large crowd on the pavement unable to get in. I understand from a neighbour who did get in that the Chief Fire Officer spent most of the meeting talking about response times. As the proposed site in Saughall Massie is approximately 2 minutes drive from the existing Upton station, how can this make any difference to response times, especially as

the back lanes to Hoylake and West Kirby are narrow and often congested? And the response time to an emergency at Arrowe Park Hospital would of course be 2 minutes longer! Ditch this proposal now!

.....

The frustration and anger of residents whose views and fears of being ignored are well founded in such exercises of 'consultation'. Similar expressions of protest have been disregarded in connection with Lyndale, libraries, nursery provision and the notorious Rock Ferry High School site where the MP referred to residents and their concerns as "a little group" (3,000 + petitioners!) and "mean spirited" - to be ignored! Politicians are elected and take an oath to "represent" their electors not a party whip.

Whilst the Fire Authority seeks to change station arrangements - while the Council will decide the planning application (including highway affects) each subject to 'public consultation' - what value is such consultation if their electors are to be ignored? Of course the 'merger' as with other 'cost cutting' measures are caused by the decisions of the ConDem coalition government which has slashed funding in our area to enable tax benefits to the very rich e.g. bankers on huge bonuses.

...

It says on the fire brigades site that the proposal/consultation for a new station in Greasby was halted by Wirral Council after protests from local residents.

Wirral council's new Chief exec or Cllr Davies need to explain why the protests of residents of Saughall Massie are any different to those residents in Greasby and why they haven't halted this consultation?

Received a pamphlet from local Labour councillor which he is quoted as saying " All plans for the new station will be made with the local residents views listened too".

Sounds like a done deal to me and one Labour councillor in a fire brigades meeting described the green belt land as "Just a bit of scruffy ground".

The fact no Labour councillor has spoken against this proposal as with Lyndale and every other council consultation implies Saughall Massie will be getting a new fire station and West Kirby a new KFC and Upton a Tesco's express.

.....

The only sensible answer is to combine all the emergency services, Fire, Police , Ambulances and sell off the surplus property they all have this would reduce the Administration, Supplies, Maintenance, and running costs by millions every year for generations. Plus training pensions and far too many high earners who actually do not do a scrap of good to any of the emergency services, except eat up the budget.

.....

Hilary Jones, UKIP, standing in Wirral West, believes "austerity has gone too far when we see things like West Kirkby fire station being closed. The alternative options aren't good enough".

.....

Wirral Globe 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015

A THIRD public meeting will be held tonight to discuss the proposed merger of Wirral fire stations.

Merseyside's chief fire officer Dan Stephens will outline proposals, which include merging West Kirby and Upton fire stations at a site in Saughall Massie Road, during the meeting at Hoylake Community Centre in Hoyle Road, Hoylake.

Another option is the outright closure of West Kirby station and relocating crews to Upton.

Tonight's meeting, which starts at 6.30pm, is part of a 12-week consultation on the plans.

Mr Stephens said: "We have to make structural changes to emergency response cover across Merseyside in order to deliver the savings required following grant cuts.

"I am of the professional view that a merger in West Wirral would deliver a less impactful operational outcome than the outright closure of West Kirby or any other option open to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

"I encourage people to take part in our consultation, attend the public meetings, read the information about the proposals on our Service website and fill in our questionnaire. We want to hear your views."

The outcomes of the consultation will be reported back to Merseyside Fire Authority for a definitive decision in June.

A public consultation document can be downloaded from [www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/opsResponse/pdf/WIRRAL\\_CONSULTATION\\_DOCUMENT\\_2015.pdf](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/opsResponse/pdf/WIRRAL_CONSULTATION_DOCUMENT_2015.pdf) along with an online survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall\\_massie](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/saughall_massie) You can email the fire authority at [consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk) or write to: Wirral Consultation, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Bridle Road, Bootle, L30 4YD.

Comments

- Signed,sealed and delivered..
- Already sorted with the Upton and West Kirby site sold to supermarket chains, look at the present locations.

.....

Wirral Globe 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015

AS the *Wirral Globe* pointed out in a recent issue, it was a public shame that people were locked out of the meeting called to discuss the new site for the proposed merger of fire stations on the green belt area in Saughall Massie.

Chief Fire Officer Dan Stephens refused to listen to public concerns regarding the suitability of the proposed site.

If he had done his homework properly he would realise that 'The Four Lanes' leading to West Kirby and beyond are narrow, winding lanes with high hedgerows on either side.

The lanes are used by commuters and traffic is bumper-to-bumper at rush hour.

They are also used by farmers to move live stock, farming equipment etc.

A fire engine hurtling along answering a 999 call would be a disaster waiting to happen and eventually end in carnage.

It would behove politicians and public servants alike to remember that public opinion matters, local democracy matters and social inclusion matters.

.....  
**Letter to Wirral Globe 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015**

GREASBY residents are justly delighted that because of a united display of rejection, the threat of moving West Kirby fire station will not be placed on the area.

Alas! The rejection has meant that the village of Saughall Massie is now under consideration.

Hundreds of Saughall Massie residents attended a meeting in the village centre.

Unfortunately, the chosen venue was unable to accommodate all the residents who had to wait outside.

So what is being discussed for Saughall Massie now?

In effect, the same proposals which were rejected by Greasby.

Perhaps, if some of us wrote to our MPs, they might be persuaded to intervene?

We cannot let our village be changed forever.

.....  
**Letter to Wirral Globe 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015**

I SEE yet again that some people would rather the people of West Kirby, Hoylake and Meols wait longer for a fire engine than have a new station built on land that most people use to let their dogs foul on.

The letter last week in Globe Mailbox was wrong saying West Kirby fire station is "moving" - it is being closed down for good.

This means people in the area it covers would have to wait a lot longer for a fire engine to arrive from Upton.

Saughall Massie was identified as a place to locate a new station to cover both West Kirby and Upton equally.

As a resident of Hoylake I'm getting fed up of hearing people complaining about how the new station would look and their vastly exaggerated lies about noise and traffic as if they outweigh my concerns of whether I would still be alive by the time a fire engine arrived from Upton if I needed it.

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## Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

### Equality Impact Assessment Form

<b>Title of policy/report/project:</b>	<b>Station Mergers , Closures and other Operational Response Options</b>
<b>Department:</b>	<b>Strategy and Performance</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<p><b>EIA Stage 1 - 19.11.13</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 2 – 31.1.14</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3 – 20.8.14 – <u>Knowsley Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3A – From 3.10.14 to 5.12.15 <u>Wirral Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3B – From 1.11.14 to 25.1.15 <u>Liverpool Consultation</u></b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3C – From 2.3.15 to 24.5.15 - <u>Wirral Consultation Phase 2</u> (Two options to be considered - merger at Saughall Massie or closure of West Kirby).</b></p> <p><b>EIA Stage 3 D – From 3.8.15 to 25.10.15 – <u>St Helens Consultation</u></b></p>
<p><b><u>Scope of EIA</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this EIA is to review information and intelligence available at an early stage in the development of options for station mergers and closures. It is intended that the EIA can be used to help inform decisions as the options progress and will help Principal Officers and Authority Members to understand equality related impacts on the decisions being made in relation to local diverse communities</p> <p>The EIA will be a living document which will developed further during the life cycle of the consultation stages. This initial EIA will provide be an opportunity to plan ahead for various activities such as community and staff consultation and equality data gathering</p> <p>The EIA will be conducted in a number of stages :</p>	

**Stage 1 – Desk Top Assessment by 3/12/13** :To provide Principal Officers with some initial thoughts on equality impacts arising from the Mergers and Closures Authority Report and provide an outline of what further data, research and consultation may be needed to inform the EIA fully in preparation for Community Engagement and Consultation Exercises in the new year (by 19/11/13)

**Stage 2 – Consultation External and Internal:** to gain feedback from those communities and MF&RS Staff groups affected by the mergers and closures options to ensure equality impacts are considered throughout the process and included in the final version of the EIA for review by final decision makers (Dec 2013 onwards)

**Stage 3 – More detailed assessment on the local areas affected by options:** for Authority members to take into account at their meeting when they review the EIA in full. (from April 2014)

### **1: What is the aim or purpose of the policy/report/project**

*This should identify “the legitimate aim” of the policy/report/project (there may be more than one)*

The reports purpose is to provide Authority Members a number of recommendations for approval, subject to public consultation, around station mergers and closures as follows:

#### Options for mergers

- Two stations on Wirral (West Kirby to merge with Upton at Saughall Massie). New option agreed by the Authority on 29<sup>th</sup> January following withdrawal of Greasby site by WBC.
  - Consultation on a possible site at Saughall Massie
  - Close West Kirby station
- *Two stations on Wirral (West Kirby to merge with Upton at Greasby). The location was withdrawn by Wirral BC*
- Two stations in St Helens (Eccleston to merge with St Helens at a site in the St Helens town centre ward)
- Two stations in Knowsley (the merger of Huyton and Whiston which already has Authority approval)

In order to meet the budget cuts faced by the Authority as a result of Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 13. These merger options, if approved, will deliver a reduction of 66 whole time equivalent (WTE) posts, reduce the Authority asset base down from 26 stations to 23 and deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads



### Options for closures

The incremental move from whole time crewing to whole time retained crewing of at least one appliance in Liverpool and/or Sefton, resulting in the closure of one or more station. This change in crewing and station closure, if approved, will deliver a saving of 22 WTE posts deliver additional savings from a reduction in premises overheads

**The options for mergers and closures would not affect the local communities which live in and around the closure areas in relation to fire response times, they would remain within a 10 minute response time, and therefore this EIA will not focus on response times but around the following:**

- **The impact of the options and any changes (positive and negative) in relation to any particular equality groups of the local communities' use of MF&RS services and stations**
- **The impact of options and any changes on staff affected by closures**

### **2: Who will be affected by the policy/report/project?**

*This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy /report/project and its outcomes (There may be more than one)*

Communities of Wirral , St Helens, Liverpool, Sefton and Knowsley  
MF&RS staff affected by the mergers and closures

### **3. Monitoring**

*Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include data which shows whether it is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.*

#### **What monitoring data have you considered?**

3.1 Profile of Merseyside and Demographics 2012 report -  
[http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Profile%20of%20Merseyside%20\(Demography,%20Equality%20and%20Diversity\).pdf](http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Profile%20of%20Merseyside%20(Demography,%20Equality%20and%20Diversity).pdf)

3.2 Ward Demographics from Census 2011 - **Appendix A**

### 3.3 Profile of MF&RS staff -

<http://intranetportal/sites/smd/equalityanddiversity/Shared%20Documents/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20-%20Reports%20for%202012/Public%20Sector%20Equality%20Data%20Report%20-%20Published%20version.pdf>

### What did it show?

3.1 and 3.2 - The demographics in each of the districts is broadly similar with no significant differences to consider (Significant being + or- 5% difference). To gain a greater understanding of the make-up of the local communities affected by the impact of the closures and mergers, demographics for the local wards broadly covered by each station have been produced in **Appendix A**

Notable highlights showing differences in relation to the average for each district area are as follows:

#### **Huyton**

Age Structure: The Huyton Station ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward; the wards of Longview and Page Moss have younger populations whilst the wards of Prescott West, Roby and Stockbridge in particular have older populations.

Socio Economic (including Disability): In Page Moss, Longview and Stockbridge wards in particular there are well above average levels of people with disability or long term health problems. Within these same wards there are proportionally high levels of adult unemployment.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". Within the Huyton Station Area, the ward of Longview has above district average counts of BME population particularly "Asian/British Asian" persons.

#### **Whiston**

Age Structure: The Whiston Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of Rainhill and Whiston North primarily have older populations whilst the wards of Prescott East and Whiston South have younger populations.

Socio Economic: There are no negative Socio Economic factors in the Whiston station ground.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". However BME populations are more diverse within this station ground with above average populations of "Asian/British Asian" in each ward and above average populations of "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" within Prescott East.

#### **St Helens**

Age Structure: The St Helens Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of: Parr, Bold, Sutton, Thatto Heath, Town Centre tends to have younger populations - particularly Parr and Thatto Heath. By contrast the wards of: Billinge & Seneley Green and Blackbrook have older populations

Socio Economic: The wards of: Parr, Thatto Heath, Sutton and Moss Bank have higher than average levels of adult unemployment as well as having above average levels of disability / long-term illness in these wards.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is

"White". The wards of Town Centre and Thatto Heath (in particular) are the most culturally diverse with well above average counts particularly of "Asian/British Asian" residents. Both Wards also have above average counts of "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" people, though this is to a lesser extent to "Asian/British Asian" residents. St Helens has a significant Gypsy and Traveller community.

### **Eccleston**

Age Structure: The Eccleston Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The wards of Eccleston and Rainford (Rainford has one of the highest average population ages in Merseyside) have older populations whilst the wards of West Park and Windle have younger populations.

Socio Economic: The wards of Eccleston and West Park have slightly above average levels of unemployment within the Eccleston station ground. West Park also has slightly above average levels of long term sickness / disability.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White", Rainford and West Park have particularly low levels of BME residents. Within the Station Area the Ward of Eccleston has slightly above average BME population "Asian/British Asian" for and West Park has slightly above average counts "Black /African /Caribbean/ Black British" residents.

### **Upton**

Age Structure: The Upton Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. Pensby & Thingwall, Greasby, Frankby - Irby and Claughton have older than average populations.

Socio Economic: Generally within the Upton Station there are no particularly significant Socio Economic issues, with the Exception of the Bidston & St James ward which primarily rests within the Upton Station Ground. Bidston and St James have well above average adult unemployment and levels of long term health problems / disability.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White". Claughton and Bidston & St James have the most diverse populations with above average counts of "Asian/British Asian" residents.

### **West Kirby**

Age Structure: The West Kirby Station Ground has a mix of age groups depending on the ward. The demographic for the wards of Hoylake & Meols and West Kirby & Thurstaston is much older than the Wirral average.

Socio Economic: There are no negative Socio Economic factors in the West Kirby station ground.

Racial Profile: Within the Station Ground the predominant ethnicity grouping is "White".

### **Allerton**

Age Structure: The Allerton Station Ground has a mix of age groups across different wards, 45-59 age group is the most populous age range. Greenbank has a large population of 20-24 year olds inferring a high population of students. Woolton has particularly high level of population above the age of 65 with 26% of ward population, however the majority of this ward is covered by the Belle Vale station area.

Socio Economic: Majority of area is affluent with small pockets of deprivation (based

on IMD 2010) The majority of wards are below the Liverpool average for unemployment and long term health and disabilities.

Racial Profile: Predominantly “White” (at least 90% white). Greenbank however has a more diverse population including above counts of BME populations, BME groups equate to 17% of overall population compared to 5.5% Merseyside population as a whole.

### 3.3- Staff Demographics for Operational Staff

95% of operational uniformed staff are Male and 5% are Female  
 65% of operational uniformed staff are aged 41 to 50  
 5% of Operational staff have declared a Disability or Long term health condition  
 3% of MF&RS staff are Black Minority Ethnic the remainder are classed as White

## 4: Research

*Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy/report/project. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc.*

### What research have you considered?

4.1 A review of the Access Audit report - results for the stations affected by options

4.2 Review of MF&RS Community Profiles for station areas affected by proposals to help understand the type of communities who may be

### What did it show?

The Equality Act 2010 replaced and enhanced the Disability Discrimination Acts (DDA) 1995 & 2005. It sets out the legislation for Public Bodies to make reasonable adjustments to premises to enable disabled people to access all services and fully participate in public life. MF&RS has conducted access audits for all its stations (except new builds) and is in the process of reporting on the results and recommendations to the Authority in December 2013.

The Audits have highlighted significant access issues for the stations identified in the mergers and closures options with a total of **£ 267,875** cost for making them more accessible Community Fire Stations. It has been an important factor when considering the options and proposals for station mergers and closures and the building of new stations.

Results show no specific Equality and Diversity implications for any of the areas affected as the Ten Minute response times will be still valid for the station areas affected by

<p>affected by the options and consider their needs.</p> <p>4.3 A review of current Partnership agreements for stations affected by proposals to help understand the impact of station closures /mergers on those service users</p> <p>4.4 <b>Appendix B</b> sets out the impact of a potential merger of West Kirby and Upton at a site in Saughall Massie. All areas would be attended well within the 10 minute response time from a new station or other Wirral stations. It has been made clear throughout that there is no option that will improve attendance. The proposals are the least worst option.</p> <p>4.5 The report “<b>Proposals for Eccleston and St. Helens Fire stations 30th June 2015</b>” of which this EIA is Appendix M , contains a number of further appendices ( C, D, E ,F,G,H and J) showing 5,6,7,8,9 and 10 minute isochrones showing the impact of a potential merger of St. Helens and Eccleston and the option to close Eccleston . These show the impact of the response times and also show the Risk map of Merseyside to highlight the risk areas outside the 10 minute response times.</p>	<p>the merger/closure proposals</p> <p>There appears to be no detrimental impact on any of the partnership arrangements for the Knowsley fire stations currently being affected by station merger proposals , the development of a new station with advanced community facilities will strengthen the opportunities for Knowsley communities to access the station for better community engagement activities</p> <p>The document highlights the impact of adopting either of the proposals on the achievement of the standard 10 minute standard response time. The results show that there are no areas outside the 10 minute response time for the proposals to merge stations at Saughall Massie. In relation to the maps for proposals to close West Kirby, there is a very small area of the West Wirral outside the 10 minute response area with a few dwellings in that area where attendance is 4 seconds outside of the 10 minute response time. It is recommended that HFSC campaigns take place to ensure those living in that area receive prevention advice and support.</p> <p>The documents highlight the impact of adopting either of the proposals based on information contained in Appendix C, the merger at Canal St, St Helens has the least number of areas outside the 10 minute response time, and the majority are low and medium risk and are similar to the current arrangements. If the option was not taken to merge and close Eccleston and keep the current St Helens station the maps show that there is larger area of Rainford which remains outside of the 10 minute response time. The profile of this area shows a slightly higher proportion of older residents and our risk map of Merseyside shows the additional areas as Low risk, however further additional preventative measures will be recommended in those areas to ensure any increased risk is mitigated.</p> <p>Further consultation should be targeted around those areas during the forthcoming 12</p>
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week consultation process to establish any further equality impacts for any of the 9 protected groups at most risk of fire or in need of rescue.

## 5. Consultation

*Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)  
Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation*

### What Consultation have you undertaken?

No Consultation took place at Stage 1 of this EIA, however consultation will be carried out in two stages to scrutinise the OPTIONS and consider others for all mergers/closures. As such consultation comprises a) a more open-ended listening and engagement phase on the OPTIONS and b) a Formal consultation process on the eventual PROPOSALS. Part of the consultation process will take into account the needs and experiences of those equality protected groups who have been deemed to be affected by the mergers and closures.

Consultation specifically with Protected Groups (as required by the Equality Act 2010) in relation to this EIA and its assessment of the mergers and closures report /options is currently being planned by the Diversity and Consultation Manager. A number of cost effective options are being considered within the time frame available including :

- The development of a new MF&RS Diversity Consultation Forum; a public voice for diverse groups across each district
- Using the 2 stage consultation process mentioned above to consult on the EIA with representative groups from those protected groups affected by the Options and subsequent proposals (where representation is available )
- Consultation with Community Groups currently using the Stations identified as potentially being closed and merged – Impact on equality
- Making the EIA accessible via the Staff Portal and MF&RS Webpage to enable staff , stakeholders and the public to make comments and provide feedback easily

### What did it say?

#### **Stage 3 D – St Helens – Starts 3rd August 2015**

#### **Stage 3C – Second Wirral Consultation**

A 12 week consultation process took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2015. This included:

- Online questionnaire for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups ( one in each station area)
- One Public Forum
- Three Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting

- Postal Survey of 10,000 households in station areas affected
- Several staff consultation meetings
- Several further local Council and stakeholder consultation meetings

As in the previous consultation processes, there was an opportunity to randomly select and invite participants to three deliberative focus groups and the forum from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and equality groups. The aim is to be as fully representative as possible.

Equality Monitoring data shows a breakdown in attendees at these meetings as follows :

49% Female and 51% Male attendees- this closely reflects the Gender breakdown for the Wirral as a whole

18.4% Under 34's , 36.7% 35-54 and 44.9% over 55+ - this reflected the broad range of age groups across the area

20% of attendees had a limiting long term illness /disability – this is slightly lower than the average for Wirral being 22.6%

4.1% of Attendees at the event were from Non White backgrounds which reflects the ethnicity breakdown of the Wirral

The figures above reflect the average profile of residents across Wirral and this allows us to feel comfortable that the views of different groups of people have been considered when using the consultation for decision making purposes.

While considering the draft proposals, participants in all the meetings were encouraged to consider whether proposals have any adverse implications for any vulnerable people and in particular groups with “protected characteristics”: in other words, this question was not just a ‘footnote’ to the main discussion but an intrinsic part of the scrutiny of the proposals

Comments of concern around equality groups were raised from the 49 people who attended the focus groups and forum :

- Saughall Massie Road is not a suitable site for a fire station as it is very near to housing for elderly and disabled people.
- There are many old person's homes in West Kirby so it is undesirable to lengthen response times there\*
- There are a lot of elderly people in West Kirby and they are higher risk residents\*\*
- The aged and disabled people will have some impact from these changes

*\*It should be noted that data shows that Upton has more properties that cater for elderly than Hoylake and Meols (5.5%) and West Kirby and Thurstaston (3.3%)*

*\*\* It should be noted that West Kirby & Thurstaston and Hoylake & Meols show a slightly increased number of residents over the age of 65 with a variance of +/-0. 6% when compared to the Wirral proportion. In Upton, there are proportionally fewer people over 65 when compared to the Wirral proportion for that age range*

The **questionnaires** received (129) were treated as an information gathering exercise, in the same way as the views expressed at the public meetings, the

questionnaires have been analysed in terms of Equality Monitoring (123 completed) and shows:

- 48.8% were Male and 51.2% Female respondents which closely reflects the gender breakdowns for Wirral as a whole
- There were a wide range of ages responding to the survey, the largest group of respondents - 21%, were from the 60 to 69 age group 18.1% identified themselves as disabled, which is lower than the average for Wirral at 22.6%
- 99.2% identified their ethnicity as white, 5.5% preferred not to say and 0.8% were from a BME background. This is similar to the average Ethnicity breakdowns for those areas.

Views were polarised with 59.1% of respondents opposed to the merged station at Saughall Massie, 40.2% were broadly in favour of the new station. There were no obvious comments made in relation to Equality and Diversity in the free text comments made.

For the first time a **postal survey** was undertaken with 5000 homes in the Upton station area and 5000 in West Kirby being randomly selected to take part. 1351 completed questionnaires were returned. 577 from Upton and 774 West Kirby station areas. Overall response rate 12% Upton and 16% of West Kirby residents. 11% of initial contacts were in Saughall Massie but accounted for 17% of returns.

- Responses received were from 51% female and 49% male residents
- Responses were from all ages 20 to over 80 but the majority were in the 40-49 (19%), 60-69 (18%) and 50-59 (18%).
- 26% of respondents identified themselves as disabled either limited a little (12%) or a lot (14%).
- 98% were identified as of white background.

The returned sample for each fire station area were compared with census data and then weighted by age, gender, ethnicity and whether people were suffering long term illness/disability.

There were no comments referring to specific equality impacts or issues for protected groups.

This EIA has been consulted on with the Community Forum Group at a meeting on the 10th December 2014, where members were presented with the EIA and asked for any notable feedback in relation to the approach we take to the EIA and any outcomes of the proposals for particular Protected groups (specifically Elderly and Disabled). The group were happy with the EIA and its findings and no further suggestions made.

### **Stage 3 A and B – First Wirral Consultation**

A 12 week consultation process took place from 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 to 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 which followed a similar pattern to the events that took place for the previous consultation at Knowsley (See stage 3 Knowsley below). This included:

- Online questionnaire for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups (one in each station area)



- One Public Forum
- Four Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting
- Several staff consultation meetings
- Several further local Council and stakeholder consultation meetings

As in the Knowsley consultation process, there was an opportunity to invite participants to three deliberative focus groups and the forum from a broad spectrum of backgrounds and equality groups. The aim is to be as fully representative as possible.

Equality Monitoring data shows a breakdown in attendees at these meetings as follows :

44% Female and 56% Male attendees- this closely reflects the gender breakdown for the Wirral as a whole

16% Under 34's , 35.5% 35-54 and 51.5% over 55+ - this reflected the broad range of age groups across the area

16% of attendees had a limiting long term illness /disability – this is slightly lower than the average for Wirral being 22.6%

10% of Attendees at the event were from Non White backgrounds which closely reflects the ethnicity breakdown of the Wirral

The figures above reflect the average profile of residents across Wirral and this allows us to feel comfortable that the views of different groups of people have been considered when using the consultation for decision making purposes.

While considering the draft proposals, participants in all the meetings were encouraged to consider whether proposals have any adverse implications for any vulnerable people and in particular groups with “protected characteristics”: in other words, this question was not just a ‘footnote’ to the main discussion but an intrinsic part of the scrutiny of the proposals

Four comments of concern around equality groups were raised from the 32 people who attended the focus groups and forum :

- Frankby Road (Greasby) is not a suitable site for a fire station in the village; children, elderly and disabled use the road near the site
- The elderly, nursing and residential homes have to be taken into consideration and that does not seem to be a primary focus and yet we have a lot of elderly people in our area
- We have a lot of elderly
- West Kirby has elderly people and there are some flats with social disadvantage
- The aged and disabled people will have some impact from these changes

Two comments were raised in support of the changes :

- The Council and FRS are aware of the needs of the elderly and the vulnerable
- The FRS links up with other agencies – it has to be a multi- agency approach

The questionnaires received (984) were treated as an information gathering exercise, in the same way as the views expressed at the public meetings, the questionnaires have been analysed in terms of Equality Monitoring and shows:

- 46.3% were Male and 53.7% Female respondents which closely reflects the

gender breakdowns for Wirral as a whole

- There were a wide range of ages responding to the survey, the largest group of respondents - 50%, were from the 50 to 69 age group - this was slightly higher than the local ward age population profiles for that age group (41.6%) but may be due to a higher proportion of older residents using the Greasby community centre attending the consultation events.
- 7.2% identified themselves as disabled ,which is lower than the average for Wirral at 22.6%
- 91.1% identified their ethnicity as white, 7.3% preferred not to say and 1.3 % (15) were from a BME background. This is a similar to the average Ethnicity breakdowns for those areas.

The majority of surveys completed were not in favour of the station being placed in Greasby village. There were no obvious comments made in relation to Equality and Diversity in the free text comments made.

This EIA has been consulted on with the Community Forum Group at a meeting on the 10th December 2014, where members were presented with the EIA and asked for any notable feedback in relation to the approach we take to the EIA and any outcomes of the proposals for particular Protected groups (specifically Elderly and Disabled). The group were happy with the EIA and its findings and no further suggestions made.

### **Stage 3 – Knowsley Consultation May to July 2014**

A 12 week Consultation process on Fire Station merger proposals took place in Knowsley district between the 6<sup>th</sup> May and 28<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The consultation included :

- Online survey for staff and public to provide their views
- Three externally facilitated deliberative focus groups ( one in each station area)
- One Public Forum
- Three Open public meetings
- One stakeholder breakfast meeting
- Several staff consultation meetings

All consultation events provided the opportunity for staff and public to provide feedback and views on the merger proposals and the impact they may have, positive or negative, in relation to different equality groups and the impact on any of their service needs/outcomes as a result of the proposals. None of the focus groups or forums raised any specific concerns relating to vulnerable people or equality groups, but some observed that it is important to ensure the elderly get appropriate prevention work in the form of Home Fire safety checks and other precautions in those areas where the mergers may have a bigger impact.

The consultation events were well publicised in many different forums from local council promotion, health and wellbeing boards, posters at local supermarkets, Local radio stations and a variety of Websites,

The only opportunity for MFRA to ensure a representative group of people were consulted with was in relation to the invited participants at the deliberative forums.

Efforts are always made to recruit a representative sample of Merseyside residents for each meeting, but as not everyone who is recruited actually attends the meeting this can have an effect.

The breakdown of consultees were as follows:

60% (29) of the 48 attendees were male and 40% (19) were female, 31% (15) were aged 16 -35 and 33.5 % ( 16) were aged 35 to 55 and 35.5% (17) were aged over 55. These figures are similar to the age profile of Merseyside population.

The majority of attendees were white , however 16% were of Non-white British origin , this compares favourably when compared to the Merseyside population figures of 7%

All events were fully inclusive with British Sign Language Interpreters at each open public meeting (they were not required at any of the deliberative forums), the use of a hearing loop was available for all meetings and information was also available in large print. The venues were sourced taking careful consideration of access from car parking for disabled and mobility impaired to easy access to public transport close by and access in and out of the rooms and seating.

The results from the on line survey have been summarised in a report;

Knowsley Consultation concerning Station Mergers – results from Feedback Surveys. This can be accessed on our Website. The results showed :

- No specific issues raised in relation to any negative or positive impacts of the proposals on any particular protected groups.
- No specific detrimental impact in relation to Equality and Diversity issues for staff raised at this stage of the proposals (staff consultation will continue )
- Of the 93 respondents to the Survey, a vast majority were from the areas affected by the proposals, the split was almost 50/50 male to female, and 11.8 % declared a disability and 2.4% were from non- white British origin.
- The survey was entirely voluntary for anyone to access and complete and there was very little opportunity to encourage responses from minority groups in any reasonable way.

## **Stage 2 - Engagement and Consultation January 2014**

Stage two of the EIA involved engaging members of the public on the current EIA findings in relation to the Mergers and Closures options ,specifically the 5 options provided to the Public Engagement Forums held in January 2014.The possible options discussed at the for further financial savings :

1. Additional “Low Level Activity and Risk Stations ( LLAR)
2. Introduction of “Day Crewing” at some whole time stations
3. Introduction of “Community Retained “ (RDS) stations
4. Merger of pairs of older stations and their replacement by modern community fire stations
5. Closure of some stations without replacement

Five forums were held across each of MFRS District :

- Wirral - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 10.00am -1.30pm
- St Helens - Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm -20.45pm
- Liverpool – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm- 20.45pm
- Knowsley – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 - 18.00pm – 20.45pm
- Sefton – Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 – 18.00pm – 20.45pm

Part of the engagement presentation included canvassing views from the forum on the impact of each of the 5 options in relation to protected equality groups. The forums were broadly representative of the current demographic profiles for each district when compared to the demographic reports for each district, with the exception of Ethnicity for Wirral, St Helens and Sefton.

**Table 1 – Equality Monitoring breakdown for each District engagement forums**

	<b>WIRRAL</b>	<b>ST Helens</b>	<b>LIVERPOOL</b>	<b>KNOWSLEY</b>	<b>SEFTON</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male: 12</b>	<b>Male: 10</b>	<b>Male: 13</b>	<b>Male: 10</b>	<b>Male: 13</b>
	<b>Female: 11</b>	<b>Female: 11</b>	<b>Female: 12</b>	<b>Female: 6</b>	<b>Female: 9</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-34: 5</b>	<b>18-34: 3</b>	<b>18-34: 7</b>	<b>18-34: 3</b>	<b>18-34: 4</b>
	<b>35-54: 7</b>	<b>35-54: 9</b>	<b>35-54: 10</b>	<b>35-54: 7</b>	<b>35-54: 8</b>
	<b>55+: 11</b>	<b>55+: 9</b>	<b>55+: 8</b>	<b>55+: 6</b>	<b>55+: 10</b>
<b>Social Grade</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>	<b>AB: 4</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>	<b>AB: 2</b>	<b>AB: 6</b>
	<b>C1: 8</b>	<b>C1: 7</b>	<b>C1: 9</b>	<b>C1: 3</b>	<b>C1: 5</b>
	<b>C2: 4</b>	<b>C2: 3</b>	<b>C2: 4</b>	<b>C2: 6</b>	<b>C2: 3</b>
	<b>DE: 5</b>	<b>DE: 7</b>	<b>DE: 6</b>	<b>DE: 5</b>	<b>DE: 8</b>
<b>BME</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

Members of the Forum were given a summary of the outcomes from the EIA stage one, and asked if there were any specific concerns about those outcomes and indeed any of the 5 options. No concerns about the options were raised in any of the Forums, the general view was that the favoured option chosen by the members; mergers and closures, would provide a positive opportunity for members of the Disabled community and those elderly residents with limited mobility to access new station for community events and activities more easily than some of the current stations. The building of new stations would benefit many minority community groups who may have limited access to community spaces.

Stage 3 of the EIA will now involve consulting with the Public Proposals which will include consultation with specific organisations who support specific Protected Groups through various consultation methods.

**Stage 1 – no public consultation at this stage**

## **6. Conclusions**

*Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy/report/project impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)*

### **(a) Age**

The needs of different Age groups, especially those minority age groups, in relation to station mergers and closures options and proposals are difficult to fully assess at this early stage of the EIA. Section 3 and 4 sets out the current age profiles which should be considered when taking into account possible options for closures and mergers. Engagement and consultation will provide more opportunities to assess negative and positive impacts and results will be used to inform Stage 2 and 3 of this EIA.

### **(b) Disability including mental, physical and sensory conditions)**

The building of new stations will be positive for the disabled communities affected by the station mergers as the development of new high functioning stations will enable disabled people to access community services delivered from Fire Stations.

### **(c) Race (include: nationality, national or ethnic origin and/or colour)**

*As a) above but in relation to Race and Minority ethnic groups*

### **(d) Religion or Belief**

*As a) above but in relation to Religion and Belief and minority faith groups*

### **(e) Sex (include gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity)**

*As a) above but in relation to Gender and Gender Reassignment*

### **(f) Sexual Orientation**

*As a) above but in relation to the needs of minority sexual orientation groups*

### **(g) Socio-economic disadvantage**

*As a) above but in relation to the needs of those most affected financially (if at all) by any mergers and closures.*

## **7. Decisions**

*If the policy/report/project will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how it will change or why it is to continue in the same*

way.

*If no changes are proposed, the policy/report/project needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.*

#### **24.5.15 – EIA Stage 3C Wirral Consultation**

The recent Wirral consultation did highlight some feedback and concerns which were specifically mentioned around older people and the proximity of sheltered accommodation to the proposed fire station (this is a planning issue and therefore not covered by this EIA) A review of current demographics shows no significant equality issues in relation to negative impacts on proposed station mergers and closures for any protected group at higher risk of Fire and Rescue as the response times to attend any call will be within the standards set.

#### **13.1.15- EIA stage 3 a Wirral Consultation**

The recent Wirral Consultation and this EIA did not highlight any particular negative impacts in relation to different equality groups. It should be noted that the Frankby road, Greasby site was withdrawn by Wirral Borough Council part way through the consultation period as a result of the opposition from residents and local politicians. Proposals are being considered in relation to further options that the Fire and Rescue Authority will consider: to consult on merging at a site in Saughall Massie or to close West Kirby.

#### **17.9.14- EIA stage 3a and 3 b – Wirral and Liverpool (Allerton)**

No consultation has taken place at this stage of the EIA for Wirral and Allerton proposals. A review of current demographics shows no significant equality issues in relation to negative impacts on proposed station mergers and closures for both Wirral and Liverpool (Allerton) for any protected group at higher risk of Fire and Rescue as the response times to attend any call will be within the standards set. Consultation at the next stage will review the impact in more detail with different groups of public and will focus also on any equality issues.

#### **EIA Stage 3 – Decisions (Knowsley)**

On reviewing the data, research and consultation at stage 3 of this EIA there are no significant disproportionate impacts on any of the protected groups. As response times will be maintained within the 10 minute response standard, no particular group will receive a significantly changed service to Fire and Rescue and there will be no major impact on current partnership arrangements at stations, as these can be transferred to the new station at Prescott with newer and more accessible facilities.

#### **EIA Stage 2 – Decisions**

The outcomes of the Engagement forums across the 5 Districts has identified no particular negative impacts that need to be considered in any of the 5 Options. The Merger and Closure option appears to be the most positive for a number of minority equality groups in terms of accessibility to community spaces.

#### **EIA Stage 1 – Decisions**

On reviewing the research and data available for stage 1 of this EIA, there are no significant equality Impacts established so far with the exception of Disability, where

current stations earmarked for mergers are currently not fully accessible for disabled community groups.

It is important to note that the impact of the Mergers and Station Closure Options and subsequent Proposals will not impact on any members of the public disproportionately in relation to the current level of service received by these groups e.g. response times and fire safety , prevention and protection services

### 8. Equality Improvement Plan

*List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.*

### 9. Equality & Diversity Sign Off

*The completed EIA form must be signed off by the Diversity Manager before it is submitted to Strategic Management Group or Authority.*

Signed off

Wendy Kenyon

Date:

19.11.13- EIA Stage 1  
 31.1.14 – EIA stage 2  
 20.8.14 – EIA stage 3  
 19.9.14 – EIA stage 3a and 3b  
 15.1.15 EIA stage 3 a  
 updated and introduction of  
 3c  
 2.6.15 EIA stage 3c  
 Completed for Wirral and  
 Stage 3D started for St  
 Helens

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by
<p><b>Actions Identified during EIA stage 1</b></p> <p>9.1 Consultation with Staff , Stakeholders and Communities , in relation to the EIA and its assessment of the Mergers and Closures Options and subsequent Proposals ; specifically those Protected groups and the potential impact ( both negative and positive )</p> <p>9.2 Analysis of Community Profiles for station areas affected to understand the types of communities affected by the Mergers and Closures Options and subsequent Proposals <b>(completed)</b></p> <p>9.3 Equality analysis of those staff affected</p>	<p>Diversity and Consultation Manager (DCM) with Support from IRMP Officer</p> <p>Business Intelligence Manager and DCM</p> <p>DCM with support</p>	<p>Jan-April14</p> <p>Completed</p>

by the Options and subsequent Proposals to see if any particular protected group are affected disproportionately.	from POD	Completed
<b>Actions Identified during EIA stage 2</b> Consider ways to engage further with members of different Ethnic communities (in those station areas which are most affected) when proposals are identified for consultation in the future <b>(Completed)</b>	WK	Completed
<b>Actions Identified during EIA Stage 3</b> Target HFSC for those Vulnerable older people most affected by the future station merger and closures ( Knowsley and Wirral and St Helens – See Appendix Band C )	District Managers	Completed for Knowsley



## Appendix A – ONS Demographic Equality Data by Station Ward

Please note that Station Areas are not based on the shape of wards, as such for the purposes of this section a ward has been identified to belong to a specific location if more than 50% of that ward rests within the station area.

District	Station Affected	2011 ward	Population	Mean Age	District Mean
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8,726	36	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7,076	38	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6,535	44	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7,254	44	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	6,565	41	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6,565	39	39
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	6,920	39	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6,018	40	39
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6,519	42	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7,604	38	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6,908	41	39
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7,355	39	39
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10,853	46	41
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11,080	44	41
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10,639	41	41
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9,759	38	41
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10,682	42	41
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12,199	37	41
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12,003	41	41
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12,280	38	41
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10,978	39	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7,779	47	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11,525	45	41
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11,392	40	41
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10,690	41	41
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15,216	36	41
Wirral	Upton	Cloughton	14,705	42	41
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13,991	45	41
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13,988	42	41
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13,007	46	41
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16,130	42	41
Wirral	West Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12,733	45	41
Wirral	West Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13,348	44	41
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13,974	41	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16,132	32	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13,816	40	38
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14,772	39	38

Ethnicity Table:

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian/Asian British: Total	Asian/Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8,726	8,414	96.4%	140	1.6%	112	1.3%	54	0.6%	6	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7,076	6,947	98.2%	75	1.1%	36	0.5%	12	0.2%	6	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6,535	6,388	97.8%	58	0.9%	61	0.9%	17	0.3%	11	0.2%
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7,254	7,148	98.5%	50	0.7%	30	0.4%	16	0.2%	10	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	7,143	6,972	97.6%	101	1.4%	32	0.4%	19	0.3%	19	0.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6,565	6,434	98.0%	49	0.7%	49	0.7%	25	0.4%	8	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	6,920	6,768	97.8%	82	1.2%	55	0.8%	7	0.1%	8	0.1%
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6,018	5,843	97.1%	90	1.5%	33	0.5%	36	0.6%	16	0.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6,519	6,347	97.4%	94	1.4%	52	0.8%	16	0.2%	10	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7,604	7,300	96.0%	109	1.4%	160	2.1%	25	0.3%	10	0.1%
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10,853	10,498	96.7%	83	0.8%	240	2.2%	7	0.1%	25	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6,908	6,604	95.6%	60	0.9%	203	2.9%	24	0.3%	17	0.2%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7,355	7,144	97.1%	113	1.5%	73	1.0%	20	0.3%	5	0.1%
Knowsley Average					97.2%		1.3%		1.0%		0.3%		0.1%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian/Asian British: Total	Asian/Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11,080	10,948	98.8%	67	0.6%	46	0.4%	9	0.1%	10	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10,639	10,474	98.4%	49	0.5%	90	0.8%	4	0.0%	22	0.2%
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9,759	9,618	98.6%	65	0.7%	50	0.5%	18	0.2%	8	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10,682	10,568	98.9%	46	0.4%	50	0.5%	5	0.0%	13	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12,199	11,972	98.1%	97	0.8%	97	0.8%	22	0.2%	11	0.1%
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12,003	11,837	98.6%	87	0.7%	63	0.5%	11	0.1%	5	0.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12,280	11,829	96.3%	120	1.0%	270	2.2%	31	0.3%	30	0.2%
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10,978	10,684	97.3%	69	0.6%	191	1.7%	18	0.2%	16	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11,525	11,302	98.1%	76	0.7%	121	1.0%	15	0.1%	11	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7,779	7,682	98.8%	34	0.4%	43	0.6%	8	0.1%	12	0.2%
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11,392	11,183	98.2%	79	0.7%	88	0.8%	25	0.2%	17	0.1%
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10,690	10,564	98.8%	50	0.5%	58	0.5%	8	0.1%	10	0.1%
St Helens Average					98.0%		0.7%		1.0%		0.1%		0.1%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian / Asian British: Total	Asian / Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15,216	14,659	96.3%	238	1.6%	270	1.8%	37	0.2%	12	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Claughton	14,705	14,147	96.2%	163	1.1%	344	2.3%	21	0.1%	30	0.2%
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13,991	13,685	97.8%	112	0.8%	146	1.0%	21	0.2%	27	0.2%
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13,988	13,722	98.1%	87	0.6%	134	1.0%	25	0.2%	20	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13,007	12,744	98.0%	109	0.8%	132	1.0%	13	0.1%	9	0.1%
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16,130	15,587	96.6%	123	0.8%	352	2.2%	36	0.2%	32	0.2%
Wirral	W Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13,348	13,019	97.5%	139	1.0%	139	1.0%	19	0.1%	32	0.2%
Wirral	W Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12,733	12,326	96.8%	170	1.3%	168	1.3%	16	0.1%	53	0.4%
Wirral Average					97.0%		1.0%		1.6%		0.2%		0.2%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	White: Total	White: %	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: Total	Mixed / multiple ethnic group: %	Asian / Asian British: Total	Asian / Asian British: %	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: Total	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: %	Other ethnic group: Total	Other ethnic group: %
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13,974	12,858	92.0%	367	2.6%	472	3.4%	160	1.1%	117	0.8%
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16,132	13,400	83.1%	736	4.6%	949	5.9%	630	3.9%	417	2.6%
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13,816	12,889	93.3%	293	2.1%	399	2.9%	130	0.9%	105	0.8%
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14,772	13,288	90.0%	526	3.6%	552	3.7%	245	1.7%	161	1.1%
Liverpool Average					88.9%		2.5%		4.2%		2.6%		1.8%

## Disability Tables

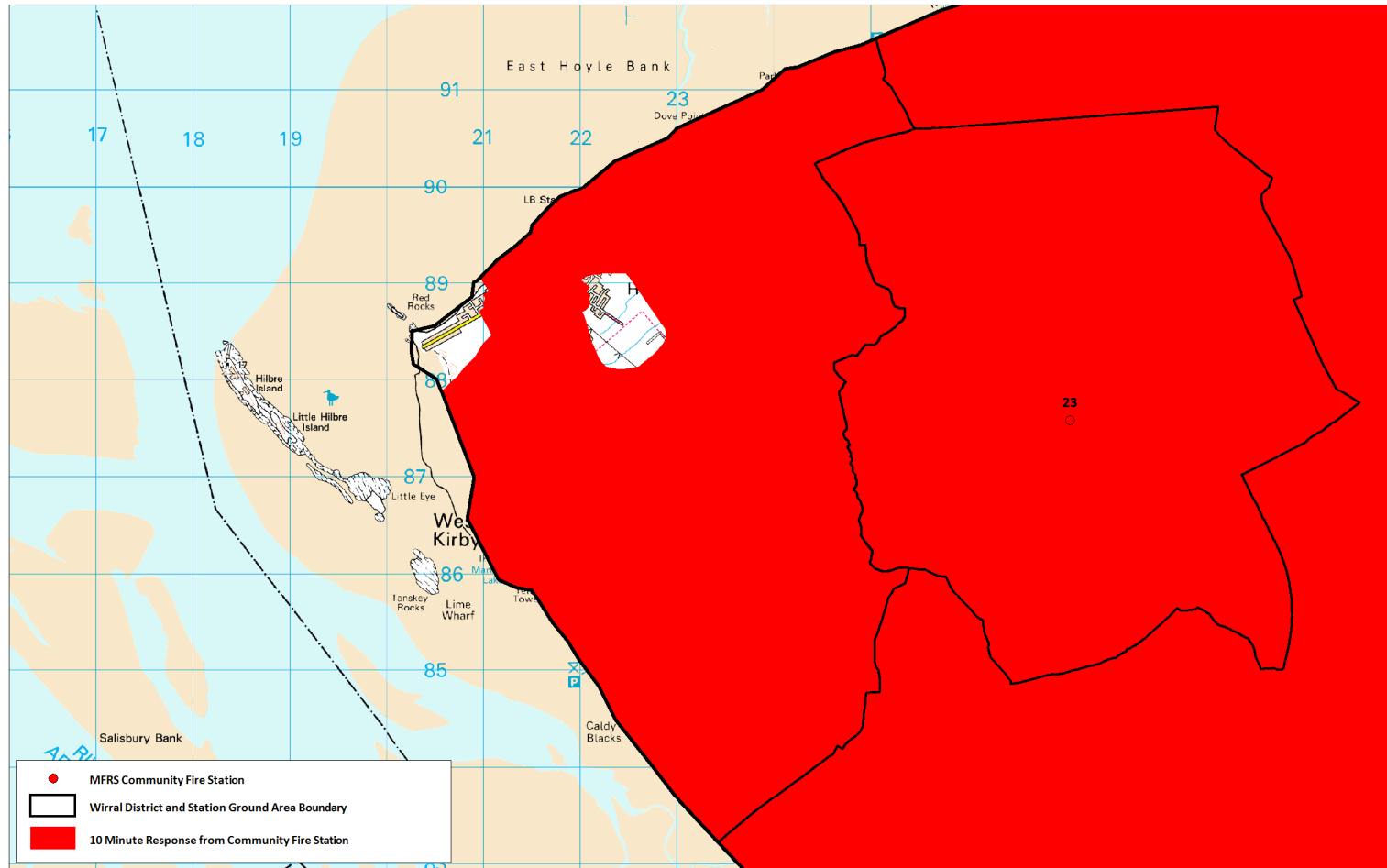
District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Knowsley	Huyton	Longview	8726	1367	15.7%	904	10.4%	6455	74.0%
Knowsley	Huyton	Page Moss	7076	1239	17.5%	802	11.3%	5035	71.2%
Knowsley	Huyton	Prescot West	6535	1007	15.4%	828	12.7%	4700	71.9%
Knowsley	Huyton	Roby	7254	829	11.4%	722	10.0%	5703	78.6%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Bartholomews	6565	893	13.6%	666	10.1%	5006	76.3%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Gabriels	6920	1042	15.1%	692	10.0%	5186	74.9%
Knowsley	Huyton	St Michaels	7114	642	9.0%	528	7.4%	5944	83.6%
Knowsley	Huyton	Stockbridge	6018	1206	20.0%	730	12.1%	4082	67.8%
Knowsley	Huyton	Swanside	6519	722	11.1%	675	10.4%	5122	78.6%
Knowsley	Whiston	Prescot East	7604	1025	13.5%	817	10.7%	5762	75.8%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston North	6908	890	12.9%	701	10.1%	5317	77.0%
Knowsley	Whiston	Whiston South	7355	893	12.1%	739	10.0%	5723	77.8%
St Helens	Whiston	Rainhill	10853	1312	12.1%	1212	11.2%	8329	76.7%
Knowsley Average					14.2%		10.3%		75.5%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
St Helens	St Helens	Billinge & Seneley Green	11080	1192	10.8%	1243	11.2%	8645	78.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Blackbrook	10639	1298	12.2%	1146	10.8%	8195	77.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Bold	9759	1176	12.1%	976	10.0%	7607	77.9%
St Helens	St Helens	Moss Bank	10682	1433	13.4%	1235	11.6%	8014	75.0%
St Helens	St Helens	Parr	12199	1864	15.3%	1319	10.8%	9016	73.9%
St Helens	St Helens	Sutton	12003	1569	13.1%	1253	10.4%	9181	76.5%
St Helens	St Helens	Thatto Heath	12280	1658	13.5%	1250	10.2%	9372	76.3%
St Helens	St Helens	Town Centre	10978	1656	15.1%	1252	11.4%	8070	73.5%
St Helens	Eccleston	Eccleston	11525	1201	10.4%	1233	10.7%	9091	78.9%
St Helens	Eccleston	Rainford	7779	850	10.9%	907	11.7%	6022	77.4%
St Helens	Eccleston	West Park	11392	1362	12.0%	1209	10.6%	8821	77.4%
St Helens	Eccleston	Windle	10690	1140	10.7%	1082	10.1%	8468	79.2%
St Helens Average					12.4%		10.6%		77.0%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Wirral	Upton	Bidston & St James	15216	2441	16.0%	1748	11.5%	11027	72.5%
Wirral	Upton	Claughton	14705	1940	13.2%	1556	10.6%	11209	76.2%
Wirral	Upton	Greasby, Frankby & Irby	13991	1233	8.8%	1536	11.0%	11222	80.2%
Wirral	Upton	Moreton West & Saughall Massie	13988	1782	12.7%	1413	10.1%	10793	77.2%
Wirral	Upton	Pensby & Thingwall	13007	1528	11.7%	1539	11.8%	9940	76.4%
Wirral	Upton	Upton	16130	2408	14.9%	1778	11.0%	11944	74.0%
Wirral	W Kirby	Hoylake & Meols	13348	1296	9.7%	1337	10.0%	10715	80.3%
Wirral	W Kirby	West Kirby & Thurstaston	12733	1187	9.3%	1361	10.7%	10185	80.0%
Wirral Average					11.9%		10.7%		77.4%

District	Station Affected	2011 Ward	Population	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Lot %	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little	Day-to-Day Activities Limited a Little %	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited	Day-to-Day Activities Not Limited %
Liverpool	Allerton	Church	13974	1120	8.0%	1241	8.9%	11613	83.1%
Liverpool	Allerton	Greenbank	16132	1277	7.9%	1047	6.5%	13808	85.6%
Liverpool	Allerton	Mossley Hill	13816	1301	9.4%	1136	8.2%	11379	82.4%
Liverpool	Allerton	Wavertree	14772	1588	10.8%	1336	9.0%	11848	80.2%
Liverpool Average					12.8%		9.7%		77.6%

**Appendix B 10 minute response coverage time from Upton Station and surrounding stations (excluding West Kirby and Wallasey)**



**10 Minute Response Coverage Time from Community Fire Stations 20, 21, 22 and 23**

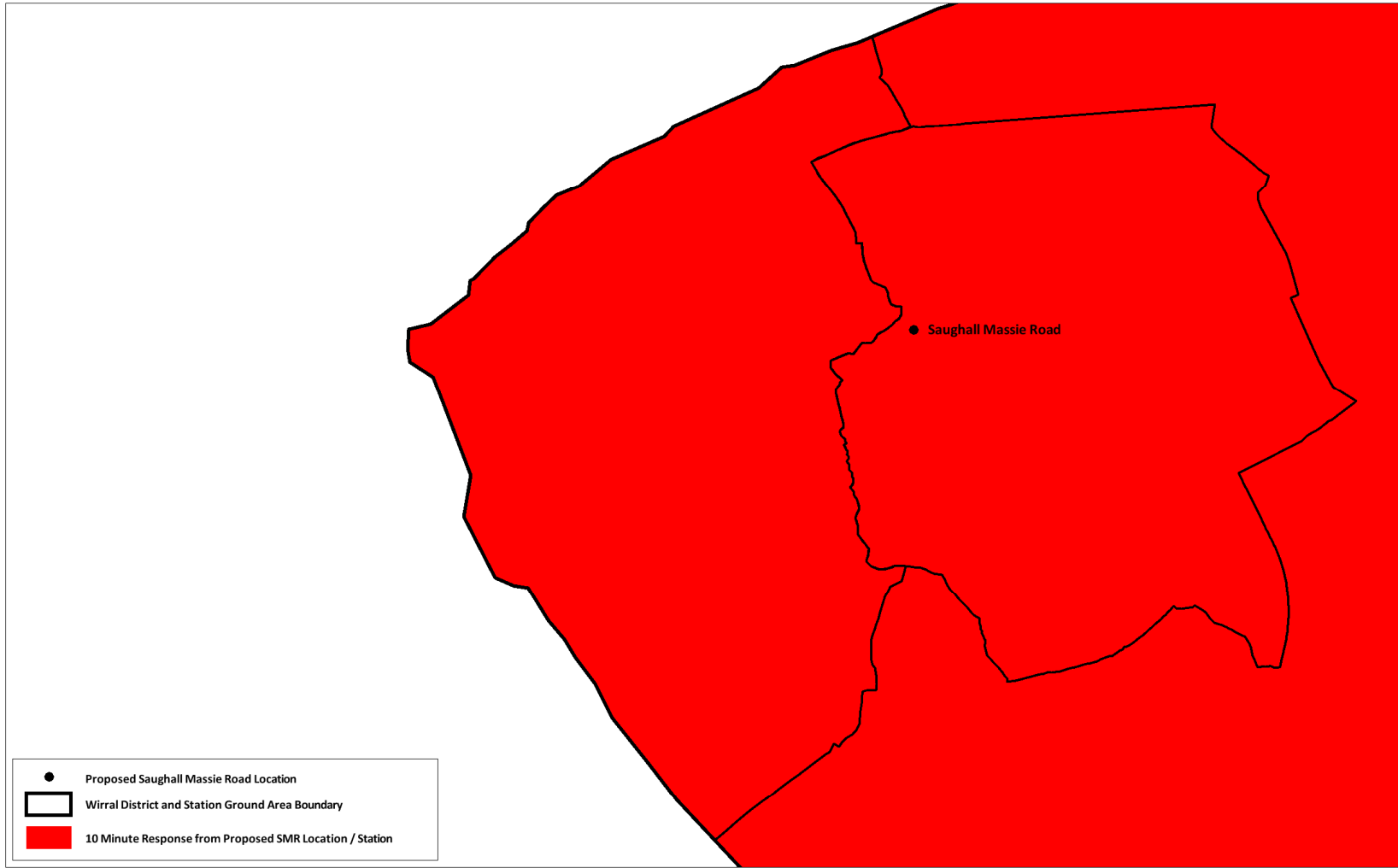
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Author: Gary Crosbie  
 Produced Using: MapInfo Professional v11.0  
 Date: 15.01.2015  
 Strategy and Performance

Map Reference:  
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 Greasby/Maps/  
 20\_21\_22\_23\_10 Minutes\_23\_24\_SGA\_Zoom.png



**Appendix B Continued – 10 minute response time from proposed Saughall Massie Road location and surrounding stations (Excluding Upton West Kirby and Wallasey)**



**10 Minute Response Coverage Time from Proposed Saughall Massie Road Location and Community Fire Stations 20, 21 and 22**

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Author: Gary Crosbie  
Produced Using: MapInfo Professional v11.0  
Date: 16.01.2015  
Strategy and Performance

Map Reference:  
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Greasby\Maps\  
20\_21\_22\_SM\_10 Minutes\_23\_24\_SGA\_Zoom.png





**Appendix C: St Helens isochrones and Risk Maps**

**SEE ST HELENS PROPOSALS FOR ECCELSTON AND ST HELENS FIRE STATION REPORT APPENDIX C, D, E,F,G,and H**



<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>FULL AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/058/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL RESPONSE SAVINGS OPTIONS FOR WEST WIRRAL – 2015/16</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>UPTON AND WEST KIRBY OPERATING COSTS</b>
	<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>CAPITAL COSTS</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To request that Members, having considered the outcomes of the public consultation as detailed in report number CFO/059/15, approve the merger of Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, subject to agreement from Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) to transfer ownership of the land to the Authority and the granting of planning permission.
2. To request that members having considered the outcomes of the public consultation approve the re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime fire appliances as "wholetime retained".

### **Recommendation**

3. That Members;
  - a. approve the merger of Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road, subject to agreement from Wirral MBC to transfer ownership of the land to the Authority and the granting of planning permission;
  - b. approve the relocation of the West Kirby fire appliance to Upton to be crewed wholetime retained as an interim measure prior to the construction of the new station
  - c. amend the capital programme to incorporate the Saughall Massie fire station scheme; and
  - d. give delegated authority to the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) to continue discussions with partners, including Merseyside Police and North West Ambulance Service, with a view to sharing the new building.

## Introduction and Background

4. At its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015 the Authority considered report CFO/003/15 which proposed the merger of Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road. The Authority resolved that:

*In respect of all the available options, due to the Authority seeking to avoid firefighter redundancy using natural turnover; and as a result of current absence and other duties rates, it be noted that there are insufficient available operational personnel to maintain all 28 fire appliances in advance of any structural changes through strategic mergers and station closures being implemented. This will mean that the West Kirby fire appliance will be only be available on a wholetime retained basis for significant periods during the consultation process and will only be staffed on a wholetime basis should sufficient personnel be available.*

*The Chief Fire Officer be instructed to provide a further report to the Authority dealing with the operational implications of recommendation 1 (above).*

*A decision on the closure of West Kirby Fire Station, be deferred and twelve weeks' public consultation (to commence on 2<sup>nd</sup> March) be approved, which will consider the alternative option of:*

*The closure of West Kirby and Upton fire stations, the building of a new station on Saughall Massie Road and the re-designation of one of the two existing wholetime appliances as "wholetime retained" (with a 30 minute recall), whilst also inviting suggestions for other suitable alternative options*

*The requirement for Wirral Borough Council (WMBC) to agree to transfer the land on Saughall Massie Road into Authority ownership, prior to any new build on the site, be noted.*

*In order to establish whether there is potential for the Saughall Massie Road site to be utilised as a location for a new fire station, it be noted that officers have already approached Wirral MBC to request a decision on land transfer. Officers will also need to engage with Wirral planning officers as the proposal relates to building a new community fire station on green belt land.*

*Should Wirral MBC agree to transfer the land, it be noted that this would allow the Authority to fully consider the feasibility of the proposal. It also be noted that the approach will ensure that Members are fully informed in relation to the views of the public and the feasibility of building a fire station at that location prior to making any decision.*

5. The operational rationale supporting the merger proposal is that closing the two existing stations to build a new station as close to the mid-point between the two station areas as possible will result in the least impact on response times when compared with any other option.

6. Report CFO/059/15, elsewhere on today's agenda, provides detailed feedback on the comprehensive 12 week public consultation process undertaken between 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 24<sup>th</sup> May. An overall majority of those participating in the consultation process thought that the proposal to close Upton and West Kirby fire stations and build a new fire station on Saughall Massie Road was reasonable given the circumstances.
7. There was however significant opposition to the proposal from Saughall Massie residents who raised a number of concerns. The majority of concerns raised related to planning rather than operational response issues. The issues that relate to operational response are addressed below.

#### Use of Brigade Response Vehicles as an alternative to closing West Kirby

8. The use of Rapid Response Vehicles or Brigade Response Vehicles (BRV) as an alternative to closing West Kirby was advanced within the consultation questionnaire responses and at the public consultation meetings.
9. Members may be aware that Merseyside was the first Authority to introduce what were known at the time as Targeted Response Vehicles (TRV's - later renamed Small Fires Units) over 10 years ago. The purpose of these vehicles was to respond to small, non-life risk incidents to ensure Rescue Pumps remained available to respond to life risk incidents. These vehicles were introduced as an additional resource or as an alternative to Support Pumps (which are the second appliance at two appliance stations) as they are smaller, carry less equipment and are typically crewed by 2-3 Firefighters (a Rescue Pump is crewed by 5 Firefighters and a Support Pump is crewed by 4 Firefighters).
10. Members will recall that as a direct result of cuts to the Authority budget during the last Spending Review all but two Support Pumps were lost when appliance numbers were reduced from 42 to 28 on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2013. The budgetary provision for the Small Fires Units was also utilised at this time to maintain as many Rescue Pumps as possible across the Service. All of the stations on the Wirral, including Upton and West Kirby are now single appliance (Rescue Pump) stations.
11. Nowhere across the Country has a TRV been introduced to replace a Rescue Pump at a single appliance station. A TRV cannot be deployed to a life risk incident as a first response as it carries insufficient equipment and crew to achieve a safe system of work required to make an effective intervention. It is not a credible option therefore for the Authority to replace the Rescue Pump at West Kirby with a TRV, notwithstanding the fact that to crew a TRV on a 24/7 basis would require at least 12 wholetime equivalent posts which would not deliver the savings necessary to meet the 2015/16 budget assumptions.

#### Traffic conditions in the area

12. A common concern among attendees at forum/public meetings and in correspondence was the potential danger of fire appliances using the roads in

the area of Saughall Massie. Whilst this is strictly speaking a planning issue the operational response aspect is addressed below.

13. All Authority drivers are highly trained to arrive safely at an incident and do not drive at speeds in excess of that than are appropriate for the road conditions. The roads in West Wirral present no greater challenges to Authority drivers than the roads in other parts of Merseyside, all of which require them to drive safely in the proximity of schools, homes and all other types of building to reach an emergency incident in the quickest time possible.
14. The fire appliance from Upton already responds as part of the pre-determined attendance to life risk incidents occurring within the West Kirby station area on many occasions using Saughall Massie Road and the roads in the vicinity.
15. There is also no evidence from analysis of response times around peak hours that there is any adverse impact, indeed response times are faster from the Upton to West Kirby station area between 0700hrs – 1000hrs and 1600hrs – 1900hrs.

#### Partners

16. As indicated in the last report, the CFO has sought to identify potential partners to share the new building and therefore costs. At this point in time neither Merseyside Police nor North West Ambulance Service have committed to having a presence in the station.

#### Interim crewing arrangements prior to the build completion

17. If Members were to approve the merger proposal a new station at Saughall Massie would not be operational until late 2016 early 2017 at the earliest. This is contingent on Wirral MBC agreeing to transfer the land and planning permission being granted.
18. The Authority has approved using natural turnover rates from Firefighter retirements to deliver the reduction in Firefighter numbers required to deliver a balanced budget. The Authority has committed to use reserves to avoid compulsory Firefighter redundancies as the rate of retirements is not as fast as is required to balance the financial plan in year 2015/16. The rate of retirements does however exceed the time frame anticipated to deliver all of the proposed mergers through to operational conclusion.
19. The impact on appliance availability has previously been highlighted to Members at the Community Safety and Protection Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 within report CFO/038/14. In simple terms as more Firefighters retire and are not replaced in order to meet the savings target for 2015/16 and the structural changes in terms of the conversion of wholtime appliances to wholtime retained are not made it is no longer possible to continue to crew 28 wholtime appliances.

20. The fire appliance at Upton is always maintained on wholetime availability as Upton is a key station. West Kirby is not a key station therefore the fire appliance is on occasion unavailable for full shifts due to insufficient staffing caused by high numbers of personnel on other duties (as explained within CFO/038/14). This situation will become more acute over time to the point where the appliance would never be crewed on a wholetime basis.
21. The CFO has previously detailed for Members the measures he is taking under delegated authority to maintain appliance availability (CFO/013/15) through the utilisation of wholetime retained crewing of non-key appliances at stations involved in the merger proposals. The appliance at West Kirby will therefore be crewed on a wholetime retained basis should members approve the merger proposal or the outright closure of West Kirby.

#### Other options

22. As Members are aware the consultation process also considered the option of the outright closure of West Kirby and the relocation of the West Kirby appliance to Upton be crewed on a wholetime retained basis. All of the other options open to the Authority and an explanation from the CFO as to why he would not recommend them at this time were contained within the West Wirral merger proposal consultation document which is attached to report CFO/059/15 as Appendix 1.
23. It remains the view of the CFO that the merger proposal will deliver the least overall impact on operational response when compared to the outright closure option, any of the other options contained within the West Wirral merger proposal consultation document or any other suggestion made during the consultation process.
24. It is the strong recommendation of the CFO therefore that Members approve the proposal to merge the existing Upton and West Kirby fire stations at a new station on Saughall Massie Road and crew the West Kirby fire appliance on a wholetime retained basis.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

25. The Equality and Diversity implications of the public consultation exercise are addressed in report CFO/059/15 and the Equality Impact Assessment has been updated to reflect the consultation outcomes.
26. Equality and Diversity considerations will be taken into account in the design of the layout of the new community fire station should that option be approved by Members.

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#### **Staff Implications**

27. A net saving of 22 WTE firefighter posts is anticipated from the merger of Upton and West Kirby and the conversion of the West Kirby appliance from wholetime crewing to wholetime retained. This equates to some £864,000 inclusive of

employer's National Insurance and pension contributions. This saving is required to deliver one quarter of the operational savings target of £3.4m assumed in the current financial plan. Firefighter posts are being lost by using natural turnover rates – reserves are being used to avoid compulsory Firefighter redundancy. Staff will have the opportunity to earn extra money by taking wholetime retained contracts.

28. Formal consultation with Representative Bodies has continued throughout the process. If the proposal is approved, staff representatives would be appointed to work on the project team to ensure that any new station is suitable for a modern Fire & Rescue Service. This mirrors the process undertaken on the recent PFI Project with the aim of achieving a similar standard to that provided on the new PFI stations.

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### **Legal Implications**

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29. Any building licence and eventual transfer of the land will be subject to title investigation and the outcome of appropriate searches and ground investigation. In addition satisfactory land transfer terms and an appropriate premium need to be negotiated and agreed between the parties and approved by Wirral MBC before a building licence or lease can be entered into.
30. Participation in the scheme by Merseyside Police or North West Ambulance Service will require negotiation and agreement of an appropriate lease arrangement.

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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31. The estimated combined operating costs of the current Upton and West Kirby stations total £2.034m. The forecast running costs of a new Saughall Massie station are £1.154m, a saving of £0.880m. As previously stated this is based on a reduction in WTE firefighter posts from 48 to 26, and similar building costs as those at new fire stations. This savings has been assumed in the 2015/16 operational staffing saving target. Details are included in Appendix A.
32. The predicted cost of building the new Saughall Massie fire station is £4.2m based on current estimated market rates. However, until any decision on land transfer and planning permission is made and detailed prices are calculated by the Authority chosen building company Wates to reflect not only the Authority's (and any partner's) requirements but also to fulfil any planning conditions, including any works required on the land, this can only be an estimate. Details of the potential capital costs and income are detailed in Appendix B to this report. This income includes assumed capital receipts from the sale of land at the current Upton and West Kirby sites, together with grant already approved by DCLG of £1.49m.
33. After allowing for capital receipts and the Government grant the net cost to the Authority is estimated to be £2.160m. Members have created a capital investment reserve to meet any funding shortfall in the capital build cost of the station mergers initiative and thereby avoid additional borrowing.



34. Members will be aware that the proposed site sits in the Green Belt. Building on Green Belt land is only allowed in very special circumstances. Officers believe they can demonstrate special circumstances effectively to the Planning Authority but it is highly likely that there will be public opposition to any planning application. The process is likely to take a significant period of time and any decision to grant planning permission may be called in by the Secretary of State.

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### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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35. A Risk Register has been created for the Station Mergers project and is regularly monitored by the Strategic Management Group. The most significant risk for the project as a whole is that delays to the project, particularly building the new stations, will lead to there being insufficient firefighting resources to staff the available appliances. This issue is covered in more detail elsewhere in this report.
36. All Health & Safety implications of the new station build will be fully risk assessed and mitigated by the responsible contractors.
37. Any new building will be designed and built to achieve a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating as the absolute minimum.
38. The proposed site is in the Green Belt as there are no operationally viable Brown Field sites available to the Authority. Planning permission will only be granted where special circumstances can be demonstrated. Any building design will endeavour to minimise the impact on the Green Belt.

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### **Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters***

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39. Whilst the proposed station merger will not improve operational cover in the West Wirral area, it is the least worst option to adopt in the circumstances and is seen as reasonable given the financial challenge faced by the Authority.
40. A new fire station will however provide an improved working environment for firefighters. It will also provide much improved community facilities compared to those available at the current Upton and West Kirby stations, which in turn will lead to greater interaction between firefighters and community groups and hence assist in creating safer communities.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**CFO/059/15** Wirral Fire Cover Consultation 2 Outcomes

**CFO/003/15** West Wirral Operational Response Considerations (Post Consultation)

**CFO/038/14** Budget Resolution Transitional Response Arrangements - Sequential Appliance Unavailability

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**CFO/013/15** Interim Measures to be Taken Under Delegated Authority to Ensure Appliance Availability

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**BREEAM** Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology

**MBC** Metropolitan Borough Council

**WTE** Wholetime Equivalent

APPENDIX A

FORECAST ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS

	<b>UPTON</b>	<b>WEST KIRBY</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>SAUGHALL MASSIE</b>	<b>Variance</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Employees	950	950	1,900	1,024	-876
Premises -					
Lease rental					0
Maintenance	10	10	20	16	-4
Utilities	24	21	45	34	-11
Rates	11	10	21	45	24
Other	1	1	2	3	1
Cleaning	9	10	19	12	-7
Transport -					
Fuel	10	11	21	18	-3
Supplies & Services	3	6	9	5	-4
	1,018	1,019	2,037	1,157	-880
Income					
General	-2	-1	-3	-3	0
Partners	0	0	0	tbc	tbc
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,016</b>	<b>1,018</b>	<b>2,034</b>	<b>1,154</b>	<b>-880</b>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

This report is Restricted

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30 JUNE 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/062/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>JULIE YARE</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS - 2014/15 UPDATE</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To inform Members of the number and type of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Authority between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and 1<sup>st</sup> April to date.

### **Recommendation**

2. That Members note the content of this report.

### **Introduction and Background**

3. At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 Members requested an update on the number and type of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Authority. That report was presented to Members in January 2014 and this report is a follow on report dealing with 2014/15.
4. Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005, all public authorities have had a legal obligation under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2005 to provide information through an approved publication scheme and in response to requests made by anyone regardless of age, location or nationally. Those requesting information do not need to mention the FOI Act 2000 in their request.
5. This obligation applies to all information held by the Authority but personal information will also be subject to compliance under the Data Protection Act 1998 and is generally exempt information under the FOI Act 2000. All staff have a responsibility to comply with the FOI Act 2000. Under the Act staff do not have the right to ask why the information is required, but they can ask for more details to assist in locating the information.

6. Requests must be received in a written format and from the moment a written request is received a 20 working day countdown begins. All written requests for information are subject to the FOI Act 2000 requirements whether or not they mention the Act, but all the requests detailed below have been specifically sent as FOI requests and dealt with by the Strategy and Performance Department in conjunction with the Department holding the information.
7. A number of exemptions exist which the Authority can apply in order to refuse a FOI request, but these are used infrequently, with the exception of Exemption 21 which allows the Authority not to provide the information requested if it already exists elsewhere. In these cases a link to the information is included in the refusal letter. In 2014-2015, 17 requests have been refused, of which 2 were only partly refused. The majority of these were citing exemption 21. The public interest test is applied to determine whether it would be in the public interest to release otherwise exempt information. There were no complaints to the Information Commissioners Office.

#### Freedom of Information requests received

8. The table below details the number of requests received from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and 1<sup>st</sup> April to date. It is important to note that each request could include many complex questions, so the time taken to deal with them can vary considerably. As can be seen from figures 1 and 3 below there is a predicated 14% increase in FOI requests in 2015-2016. In 2014 – 2015 there were 137 requests with 96% of requests being answered within the 20 working day deadline. The 4% of requests which were outside this timescale were as a result of a number of complex requests arising from the consultations on the Wirral. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to date all requests have been met within the 20 working day deadline.

Fig. 1

<b>The Number of requests received by financial year</b>		
<b>MONT</b>	<b>No. of FOI requests April 2014- March 2015</b>	<b>No. of requests from April 2015</b>
April	1	1
Ma	1	1
June	1	
Jul	1	
August	7	
September	1	
October	9	
November	1	
December	1	
Januar	1	
Februar	1	
March	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>26</b>



9. Examples of the types of information requested are set out in Fig. 3 below. There are a number of recurring themes and these often relate to what is topical in the media at the time. It is the case however, that although similar in theme each request is slightly different and almost invariably requires the information to be provided in a different format.
10. By way of comparison, the data previously presented to Authority Members is reproduced below:

Fig 2.

MONTH	Requests made in 2011	Requests made in 2012	Requests made in 2013 (to November)
January	7	4	5
February	8	10	7
March	7	10	5
April	8	5	15
May	3	12	4
June	7	7	9
July	7	7	9
August	6	1	9
September	4	4	10
October	7	7	11
November	9	9	8
December	3	3	7
Total	76	79	99

Fig 3

THE AMOUNT OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS IN FINANCIAL YEARS BY NO. OF REQUESTS FROM 1st APRIL 2014 - 31st MARCH 2015				
FOI Ref:	Exemption Applied	Type of Requester	Details of Information Requested	Fulfilled on time
<b>Requests from Commercial Company</b>				
FOI/42/2014	No	Commercial Company	Construction procurement Activities Information.	Yes
FOI/43/2014	No	Commercial Company	Directors information and Salary request	Yes
FOI/46/2014	Yes sec 43	Commercial Company	Security Services bid	Yes
FOI/52/2014	No	Commercial Company	ICT Contract Information	Yes
FOI/65/2014	No	Commercial Company	Information about conference calling	Yes
FOI/73/2014	No	Commercial Company	ICT Contract Information	Yes
FOI/76/2014	No	Commercial Company	Incidents to schools	Yes
FOI/82/2014	No	Commercial Company	Finance & Planning/Budgeting	Yes
FOI/93/2014	No	Commercial Company	Amount paid to the CBI	Yes
FOI/97/2014	No	Commercial Company	Contacts for FC, ICT and procurement.	Yes
FOI/120/2014	No	Commercial Company	Qualifying criteria for match funding grants available for installation of sprinkler systems	Yes
FOI/129/2014	No	Commercial Company	Total spend on temporary agency staff	Yes
FOI/136/2014	No	Commercial Company	Information on IT apprenticeship provision	Yes
FOI/09/2015	No	Commercial Company	Information for AFA	Yes
FOI/10/2015	No	Commercial Company	List of subcontractors, suppliers etc for JCC project and refurb at St Helen's FS and Heritage Museum	Yes
FOI/08/2015	No	Commercial Company	ICT Information	Yes
FOI/32/2015	No	Commercial Company	Procurement Information	Yes
FOI/20/2015	Yes Sec 21,31,38	Commercial Company	List of retailers licensed to supply fireworks to the public.	Yes
FOI/12/2015	Yes Sec 21	Commercial Company	Fire Safety Legislation information	Yes
FOI/37/2015	No	Commercial Company	False Alarms	Yes
FOI/33/2015	No	Commercial Company	Fire Safety Notices	Yes
FOI/57/2014	No	Commercial Company	Information about Fires of Special Interests FOSI	Yes
<b>Requests from other FRS</b>				
FOI/36/2015	No	FRS	Number of incidents involving e-cigarettes in the last 12 months	Yes
FOI/44/2014	No	FRS	Callout information student accommodation	Yes
FOI/51/2014	No	FRS	Health & Safety Data	Yes
FOI/77/2014	No	FRS	WSF&RS Staffing of appliances and justification.	Yes
FOI/130/2014	No	FRS (DCLG)	Firefighter's work related injury compensation payments	Yes
<b>Requests from other Local Authority's</b>				
FOI/94/2014	No	Local Authority	Incidents involving Sky Lanterns	Yes
FOI/112/2014	No	Local Authority (Manchester)	Response times 'average' for proposed station in Greasby (Wirral/Greasby)	Yes
<b>Requests from the Media</b>				
FOI/02/2015	No	Media	In the past 3 years how many service vehicles have been involved in a collision (What vehicles, cause etc)	Yes
FOI/06/2015	No	Media	Fire Crews taking patients to hospital	No
FOI/35/2015	No	Media	Suspensions	Yes
FOI/48/2014	No	Media	Request about E-cigarettes	Yes
FOI/54/2014	No	Media	Information about rescues of people(meaning adults and teenagers)	Yes
FOI/56/2014	No	Media	Information re: incidents at Muirhead Avenue between 2004-2007.	Yes
FOI/60/2014	No	Media	Fire incidents/fatalities at sheltered/Nursing Homes	Yes
FOI/62/2014	No	Media	Remuneration for CFO	Yes
FOI/66/2014	No	Media	Information on use of official car for private journeys	Yes
FOI/67/2014	No	Media	Number of incidents in 2013 and 2014 (first 6 months) to rescue obese people	Yes
FOI/71/2014	Yes partial exempt	Media	Number of compensation claims from staff and public in 2013	Yes
FOI/72/2014	No	Media	Name, job title and contact details who holds the role of Senior Information Risk Owner	Yes
FOI/78/2014	No	Media	Animal rescues in Calendar years March 2011- April 2014	Yes
FOI/79/2014	No	Media	Return to employment after retirement	Yes
FOI/81/2014	No	Media	ICT details	Yes
FOI/89/2014	No	Media	Information for incidents involving faulty mobile phone or other electrical chargers.	Yes
FOI/90/2014	No	Media	Fires caused by e-cigarettes	Yes
FOI/91/2014	No	Media	Bariatric incidents	Yes
FOI/96/2014	No	Media	Charge for non emergency call outs.	Yes
FOI/98/2014	No	Media	Incidents of fire at recycling plants	Yes
FOI/106/2014	No	Media	Information on Bariatric rescues.	Yes
FOI/27/2015	No	Media	999 hoax call information	Yes
FOI/115/2014	No	Media	Information on the number of animal rescues in the past 5 years and 2014 to date	Yes
FOI/127/2014	No	Media	Attempts of hacking into website, social media, IT systems or phone systems.	Yes
FOI/131/2014	No	Media	Number of hoax calls in 2014 to date	Yes

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**Equality and Diversity Implications**

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11. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the report. The EIA for the Information Security and Governance Policy (Agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013) has an equality impact assessment and this highlighted the need to ensure that assistance is provided to any person who wishes to submit a FOI request. This could for example mean waiving the requirement to apply in writing if this is not possible for the applicant.

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**Staff Implications**

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12. There are no implications for staff arising directly from this report however dealing with FOI requests takes up significant amounts of staff time.

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**Legal Implications**

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13. The Authority complies with the FOI Act 2000 when dealing with requests for information and also the changes made to that Act by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

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**Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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14. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report however there is an indirect cost to the Authority in staff time spent dealing with FOI requests.

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**Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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15. The Authority has in place processes that enable requests for information to be dealt with in accordance with the law, thus reducing risk to the Authority.

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**Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters***

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16. Unless an exemption applies, individuals are provided with the information they require about the Authority in an efficient manner

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**FOI**                      **Freedom of Information**

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<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>			
<b>MEETING OF THE:</b>	<b>AUTHORITY</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2015</b>	<b>REPORT NO:</b>	<b>CFO/057/15</b>
<b>PRESENTING OFFICER</b>	<b>DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER</b>		
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	<b>DEB APPLETON</b>	<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>WENDY KENYON</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP</b> <b>DEB APPLETON</b>  <b>LYNN HUGHES</b>		
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY (MFRA)</b> <b>ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS</b>		

<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<b>APPENDIX A:</b>	<b>A RESPONSE TO THE MFRA STAFF SURVEY; YOUR SERVICE YOUR VOICE. REPORT NUMBER 1: ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENTS-THINK PEOPLE</b>
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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To update Members on the progress made in relation to staff engagement following the outcomes of the 2014 Staff Survey.
2. To introduce Members to the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) Engagement Principles.

### **Recommendation**

3. That Members note and embrace the MFRA Engagement Principles as outlined in Appendix A and consider the next steps identified within the report.

### **Introduction and Background**

4. Following the results of the Staff Survey a number of meetings were held with staff, managers and Authority members (Cllr Barbra Murray – Lead Member).
5. The results of the staff survey focus group and stakeholder meetings were presented and discussed. The meetings were convened in order to fully understand the outcomes of the survey and provide an opportunity for staff to contribute to the development of a set of Engagement Principles based on the concept of “Think People”.

6. These principles will be applied to all Staff Engagement now and in the future, with managers encouraged to engage staff at the earliest opportunity.
7. It was agreed that the MFRA Engagement Commitments would be drawn up based on the discussions, ideas and suggestions and be presented to the Strategic Management Group for consideration in April 2015. The subsequent Engagement Principles and Commitments are contained in Appendix A. The report also provides members with a timeline outlining the key milestones for delivery over the coming months.
8. On 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Commitments were launched on the MF&RA Portal page with the “Think People” branding and all staff received an email from the Chief Fire Officer informing them of the work which has been carried out so far.
9. Work on the implementation of the commitments is continuing and progress will be reported back to Members.

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### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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10. Developing and delivering Engagement Principles and Commitments to respond to issues arising from the staff survey will help to enhance the Service’s commitment to its staff allowing them to fully understand any issues related to Equality and Diversity.

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### **Staff Implications**

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11. The development and delivery of Staff Engagement Principles and Commitments will impact positively on staff across the organisation. The introduction of the Think People principles are all focused around considering staff and implications for staff in relation to all decisions and strategies.
12. The ongoing commitment to the staff survey will impact on staff positively, as it is an opportunity for all staff across the organisation to provide their views and thoughts on the organisation.

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### **Legal Implications**

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13. The procurement process was followed to engage the external supplier to deliver the staff survey and no further legal implications have been identified in relation to the Engagement Principles and Commitments contained in Appendix A.

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### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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14. No specific financial costs have been identified, however officers will need to consider detailed costs for any additional work required to implement and support some of the Engagement Commitments.

15. Quotes have been sourced to support the implementation of the communication plan which underpins the Commitments and Principles, specifically designed posters and branding have been created for “Think People”.

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**Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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16. Knowing the workforce responses to the survey and what is causing them concern will enable the organisation to provide future support to enable an improved service delivery and will help to assure that any issues around health and safety are dealt with as part of the survey project.

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**Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters***

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17. This Survey has benefited staff with opportunities for them to give feedback about all aspects of the Authority and Service. The development and delivery of Engagement Principles and Commitments will contribute to ongoing whole organisational developments.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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**GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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**SMG –** Strategic Management Group

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**Your Service Your Voice;  
A Response to the MFRA Staff Survey**

**Report Number 1:  
Engagement Commitments-Think People**

**Staff Version April 2015**



## Introduction

1. Following the Staff Survey: ***Your Service Your Voice*** results, released in October 2014, 35 focus engagement groups and stakeholder meetings took place from November 2014 to January 2015. A total of 134 (59 Uniformed, 44 Support) members of staff volunteered to attend and discuss their views and ideas on the key areas of concern from the Survey. Those staff who attended the meetings represented many of the different staff groups across the organisation including different roles, different levels and different working patterns.
2. Strategic Management Group (SMG) members were also encouraged to meet with their teams to share the results of their survey for their own functions and with their managers to discuss any possible actions that may help to improve staff engagement.
3. The focus groups were delivered using appreciative enquiry methods. A standard set of questions were developed to help manage the meetings, to encourage open feedback and to help staff provide solutions and ideas to fix the big problems the survey raised.
4. SMG met to discuss the outcomes from these meetings and this report provides the staff with the Engagement Commitments and Principles that arose from the meetings.

## Positive Engagement for MFRA staff means .....

5. The MFRA staff survey and focus group discussions have helped to summarise what Engagement means to our staff, what matters to them and how they see Positive Engagement going forward, staff told us that :
- ✓ Employee engagement is a two way communication
  - ✓ Employee engagement is about open, honest, free flowing information
  - ✓ Engaged staff feel involved and contribute positively to all aspects of their working life
  - ✓ Engaged staff feel recognised, confident, worthwhile and valued
  - ✓ Engaged staff are interested and want to know what is going on in the organisation: they ask meaningful questions and provide opinions and solutions
  - ✓ Engaged staff are willing to put in extra effort without having to be asked to do so
  - ✓ Engaged staff show a willingness to be flexible
  - ✓ Engaged staff feel confident to offer suggestions and ideas
  - ✓ Engaged staff demonstrate positivity and focus on what's good about MFRA
  - ✓ Engaged staff want to do a good job and be the best they can be
  - ✓ Engaged staff feel enabled to influence the direction of the organisation on a day to day level; they feel they can get involved

## Engagement Principles

6. The Survey and focus groups and stakeholder meetings have helped to define some key principles that can explain what Positive Engagement looks like. These are expressed in the following seven statements, which we have now adopted as our Engagement Principles:

- **Staff feeling valued and recognised** – as individuals and for the job that they do
- **Great Management and Leadership** – leaders at all levels being visible, open and accountable with two way communication channels from PO's and Managers through to staff.
- **Innovation and Transformation** – having mechanisms for all staff to share, learn, put into action good ideas and make a real contribution to the way are services are delivered.
- **Involvement in decision making** – ensuring staff are properly engaged and consulted on the future direction of the organisation and the way things are done.
- **Development and Training for all** – providing opportunities for teams to grow and learn and achieve high quality outcomes and satisfaction levels.
- **A healthy and safe work environment** – where staff can deliver high quality and services safely and operate to the best of their ability.
- **Being positive about Diversity and Equality** – valuing people, differences and respecting each other. Understanding that difference is healthy and enables us to deliver services to our diverse communities.

## Think People.....

7. In its simplest form, employee engagement is about employees feeling that they belong to something they believe in, that they are valued for what they do and feel that what they do is of value.
8. Engaged employees are motivated and are able to give their best to help the organisation succeed. This process represents a cycle of benefit, where employee commitment delivers improved outcomes and services which assist the organisation in maintaining, demonstrating and improving its engagement with and commitment to staff
9. There is no one agreed definition of employee engagement – some say it's a more about attitude (e.g. staff want to do a good job): behaviours (staff putting in extra effort and care) or and outcome (innovation borne out of staff sharing suggestions and ideas). It is about the quality of working relationships at all levels across all departments and about the quality of relationship between employee and employer. Above all it's about **taking the time to think about people.**
10. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service will make the principles of good engagement work for our staff in the context of the staff survey outcomes. The Engagement Principles expressed in paragraph 6 introduce the concept of **“Think People”**; ensuring that considerations about people are at the heart of everything we do, are real and embedded in day to day management and business. The following sections explain how we will put “Think People” into practice.

## MFRA Engagement Commitments

11. The following Engagement commitments are introduced as a result of listening to the views of staff expressed in the Your Service Your Voice, staff engagement survey and the recent staff engagement focus groups. These commitments are designed to help develop better engagement across all areas of the Service and will embed staff engagement in to our everyday business.

**Commitment 1:** We will conduct a staff survey every two years to engage with staff on matters that are important to them and to the organisation. The survey will monitor progress with our Engagement Commitments and Principles.

**Commitment 2:** We will continue to use staff forums and stakeholder meetings (including the four representative bodies) to focus on areas for change and development between the surveys and to gather feedback and views (e.g. Watch Manager forums and Female FF forum)

**Commitment 3:** We will increase the visibility and accessibility of the Authority Members, Principal Officers and Strategic Management Group through extending some existing practices and the introduction of new engagement activities that could include:

1. Breakfast with the Chief
2. Joint staff involvement days working on specific operational activities, shared experience days (e.g. Older persons day HFSC's)
3. Inviting operational staff into SHQ and vice versa to see how the service works; to gain a better understanding of the work that's goes on behind the scenes and share experience.
4. Involve staff in the development of organisational plans.
5. Learning Exchanges - getting to know teams and their role at MFRA –including Learning Lunches
6. SMG surgery days (open door policy to access SMG members to chat)
7. SMG meeting staff to discuss important matters, changes or deliver briefings across different themes with smaller groups – allowing information to flow back up to SMG and inform decision making.
8. Authority members will continue to visit all stations and teams across MFRA, holding Q and A sessions on specific themes or areas of priority and providing more information about their roles

**Commitment 4:** We will value and recognise staff for the good work they do through non-financial recognition and reward which managers will be empowered to use. This could include

1. Celebratory Awards - Team/idea of the month year
2. Improvement Scheme - re launch
3. Recognition from P.O's and the Chair of Authority for outstanding work
4. Other approaches to thanking staff, showing we appreciate them going the extra mile
5. Developing other non-financial rewards strategies that all managers can utilise to demonstrate their recognition and value of the work their teams do
6. Consolidate and re communicate what we already have as benefits to working for MFRS

**Commitment 5:** Staff engagement will be an important part of the SMG agenda at every meeting; considerations for all proposals, policies, decisions and actions will involve thinking about the impact it has on our people and the engagement required before decisions are made.

**Commitment 6:** We will enable and support all managers across the organisation to engage effectively and confidently with their staff on a regular basis and to feed into decision making processes at all levels.

## Staff Engagement - Long Term Areas for Development

12. The Survey identified some complex cultural issues which are long term priorities for change, We are keen to explore these further as part of a series of separate dedicated SMG meetings:

1. **Build stronger management teams**, engaging with managers collectively to build a strong management teams at all levels to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities and importance of communicating positively with their teams on corporate messages/projects/themes.
2. **Improve communication** methods to reach all staff. We have complex structures and it is not easy to bring everyone together to receive a consistent message. So we will consider a number of communication approaches to reach all groups of staff.
3. **Improve working relationships** between different groups of staff and senior management to engender trust and transparency around areas including performance management and progression.
4. **Constructively challenge performance, attitudes and behaviours**, clearly and consistently at all levels, utilising the Conduct and Capability procedures.
5. **Develop a greater acceptance of change across the organisation, and improve how we manage change** - Change is going to be constant to meet the changing landscape of the FRS and the budget reductions. MFRA will look at ways to improve communication of change and how the organisation will manage people who won't engage with change?
6. **Agree what success will look like** – It is vital that SMG agree what success will look like at an early stage, to ensure the commitments achieve positive outcomes.



## **Next Steps .....**

### **By End of May 2015**

- Engagement portal to be developed to provide a central source of Information to keep Staff and Managers updated
- Engagement with the 4 Representative Bodies to communicate our commitments and discuss their ongoing support for the survey and its outcomes
- Launch the Principles and Commitments with staff by 31<sup>st</sup> May using a variety of communication methods (will continue on in to June and periodically throughout the project)

### **June 2015 onwards**

- Implementation of the short term commitments 1 to 6 commences
- Evaluate progress with the Engagement Principles and Commitments, regularly communicating with staff (Hot News, posters, briefings and Portal)
- SMG to review and develop strategies on longer term and complex issues and communicate with Staff
- Report on progress to Authority at the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and 6 monthly thereafter

### **2016**

- Staff Survey Number 2 is delivered in the Spring

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