

Appendix – Allerton Responses:

I am the person requesting assistance from the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service website. Here are my details as entered on the form.

Response –

Dear

Thanks for your comments, which will be considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority when they meet in February to discuss the outcomes of the consultation. You might not be aware that there will be another public meeting held at the Blue Coat School (clock tower entrance) on 15th January at 7pm should you wish to attend. The consultation itself closes on 26th January.

We have further information and a questionnaire on our website and I've included a link below if you would like to look at that.

<http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/pages/LatestNews/NewsDetail.aspx?id=680>

Question: please can you step in to STOP THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF ALLERTON RD FIRE STATION. In my opinion some statistics are being made to place this Key site at the top of the list for closing. Old swan station has been put forward as the best place to keep open while our station which is the more central in fact and at the same time a KEY HERITAGE PLACE for BEATLE TOURISM IE it's on the map and visited every day by the tourists who bring MILLIONS OF pounds into this city. It has been suggested that the land is of more value to develop and therefore number one to be sold. We are being told it does not matter and that it is of no great importance if the Allerton rd station closes. We the residents totally DISAGREE. The so called essential cuts being made by that tory lib dem lot to the fire services , road traffic accident emergencies and the ambulance service call out times to gravely ill people is an outrage and pure evil in my opinion. Please can you step in and prevent the closing of our fire station. It seems the fire service chief in Liverpool is not doing enough to stand up and speak out and REFUSE TO MAKE ANY FURTHER LIFE THREATENING CUTS. In fact he is happy to recommend the closure. The firemen's union has stated that and i quote there will be fatalities due to closing the fire station. PLEASE STOP HIM AND THOSE WHO MAY BE CONTENT TO CONTINUE BEING DICTATED TO AND BRAINWASHED BY THE IDEAS THAT THESE CUTS MUST FALL ON THE PEOPLE AND THE RESIDENTS OF OUR AREA AND IN FACT ANY AREA IN THE CITY OR COUNTRY WHEN NONE OF THE SO CALLED FINANCIAL STATE THE COUNTRY MAY OR MAY NOT BE IN IS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY. You have done great good since you became mayor and we thank you sincerely. PLEASE stop the evil actions of that government and refuse to allow any more cuts to the fire service of this city and in particular ALLERTON RD FIRE STATION. The PENNY LANE station. Thank you for all your help. If am confident YOU can do something to stop this manipulation. Please excuse typing.

Response:

Many thanks for your email regarding the closure of Allerton Road Fire Station.

Whilst we appreciate your concerns, I'm afraid the Council has no jurisdiction over Merseyside Fire & Rescue Services.

I have spoken to their office today and they have said if you wish to contact their office and they will endeavour to answer your concerns.

Best Wishes

I am concerned about your proposed closure of Allerton Fire Station. I live in Garston, which has, over the years seen the closure of Speke Road Fire Station which was bad enough, but now to hear you are closing another station

is just too much. You say removing this will only add 49 seconds to the time of callouts, I find this hard to believe in today's traffic and state of roads.

Have the government thought about the firemen and associated staff that will be made unemployed and the money this will cost the welfare system. I suppose it is not a concern now that there is a general election within site as long as they show a saving.

£6.3 million is "loose change" to the bankers that helped caused the austerity measures we now face, they could help pay this out of their bonuses alone. If we got out of other peoples wars, there would be billions available. Stop sending aid to nations that do not need it etc etc.

I know all this is probably out of your hands but I hope you can realise the frustration felt by most people to know that the funds are available if only the government could be bothered to try to recover it, but then why should they when cutting services to the ordinary "man/woman in the street" is preferred to targeting getting a fair tax from big companies who keep well in with the government.

I know this has been a futile process for me and that the safety of the public comes secondary to saving money, but I believe that if I don't make my feeling known, then I cannot complain later when Allerton Fire Station and staff are put out to waste.

Response:

Thank you for your questions about the proposal to close Allerton Fire Station. I hope the response below will explain the reasons behind the proposal and the comments we receive will be considered by the Authority when they meet to discuss the outcomes of the consultation..

On 2nd October the Fire and Rescue Authority approved a proposal to close Allerton Fire Station subject to the outcomes of twelve weeks public consultation. The full report and its appendices can be found on the link below. The report is item 11. Also on that agenda were reports recommending the closure of Huyton and Whiston fire stations and the building of a new station to replace them in Prescot and a proposal to close West Kirby and Upton Fire stations, with a new build in Greasby. The Knowsley recommendation has already been out to public consultation and the Authority is currently consulting on the Wirral proposal. Knowledge of these other reports might help set the Allerton proposal in a Merseyside wide context and explain the challenges faced by the Authority.

<http://mfra.merseyfire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=562&Ver=4>

Over the course of the current spending review and for the financial year 2015/16 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority has sustained a 35% cut to the grant it receives from Government. The Authority has also had its Council Tax precept limited to increases of no more than 2%. This has given rise to a requirement to make savings of over £26m. Despite our best efforts to protect front line services it simply isn't possible to make this level of saving and not substantially reduce the numbers of wholetime Firefighters employed by the Authority.

The numbers of wholetime Firefighters we can afford to employ directly correlates to the numbers of appliances we can staff and therefore the numbers of stations we can operate. We are now at the point where the numbers of wholetime Firefighters we can afford to employ is no longer sufficient to keep our existing 26 stations open.

As outlined above, the Authority has sought to minimise the impact of the cuts by seeking to replace two older stations that are close together with one new one. Unfortunately, this isn't possible in Liverpool for a number of reasons, such as the close proximity of the stations and how new some of them are. Despite full analysis, it is not possible to identify a merger in Liverpool that would not involve closing at least one new station to build another new station. As a result closure is the only option open to the Authority. Merseyside has a greater density of fire stations than any other Fire and Rescue Service in the country and this density is most evident in Liverpool which has 10 stations, (whether measured against area or population size). As a result any single emergency incident occurring in Liverpool can be attended within our 10 minute response standard by appliances from several stations

You will see from Appendix B in the report that full analysis of the options for Liverpool has been undertaken and the closure of Allerton has been identified as having the least impact on performance. It would also realise a larger saving in building running costs. Allerton is not a key station (one of ten stations from which we can reach all of

Merseyside in 10 minutes) therefore the fire appliance is on occasion unavailable for full shifts due to insufficient staffing caused by high numbers of personnel on other duties (in work but not fit enough to ride fire appliances). This situation will become more acute over time to the point where the appliance would never be crewed on a wholetime basis.

The Authority's intention is (as it has been for a number of years of cuts) to avoid compulsory redundancy for staff and as a result the savings will be made through natural wastage as people retire.

It is very important to point out that the proposal to close Allerton (or to make any other changes to emergency response) is in no way desirable and won't improve services to people in Liverpool. However, it is necessary for the Authority to make the savings detailed at the beginning of this response.

I hope this satisfies your enquiry.

What (if any) other options have been looked in to? What about closing Aintree and moving the appliance to either Croxteth, Netherton or Kirkby? It appears that North Liverpool has much more fire cover than South Liverpool.

Why is the appliance being moved to Old Swan? I know it has easy access down Queens Drive but it is further away from neighbouring grounds Speke and Toxteth, increasing response times for a second appliance.

Of the 280 incidents Allerton crews attended in 2014 there is no incident type breakdown, we are still in 2014 till which date were there 280 incidents? Does this figure include callouts to neighbouring stations as an additional pump? As I have heard from a number of people in the service that Allerton is "closed more than it's open" would it be fair to say the number of turnouts would be higher?

Has retained or day crewing been looked at?

Response:

Thank you for your questions about the proposal to close Allerton Fire Station. I hope the response below will provide you with the information you need, but please do not hesitate to ask if you need further information.

On 2nd October the Fire and Rescue Authority approved a proposal to close Allerton Fire Station subject to the outcomes of twelve weeks public consultation. The full report and its appendices can be found on the link below. The report is item 11. Also on that agenda were reports recommending the closure of Huyton and Whiston fire stations and the building of a new station to replace them in Prescott and a proposal to close West Kirby and Upton Fire stations, with a new build in Greasby. The Knowsley recommendation has already been out to public consultation and the Authority is currently consulting on the Wirral proposal. Knowledge of these other reports might help set the Allerton proposal in a Merseyside wide context and explain the challenges faced by the Authority.

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possible to identify a merger in Liverpool that would not involve closing at least one new station to build another new station. As a result closure is the only option open to the Authority. Merseyside has a greater density of fire stations than any other Fire and Rescue Service in the country and this density is most evident in Liverpool which has 10 stations, (whether measured against area or population size). As a result any single emergency incident occurring in Liverpool can be attended within our 10 minute response standard by appliances from several stations

In response to your specific questions;

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Retained and day crewing have both been considered. Both options would lead to a significant increase in response times to the Allerton area (retained at all times and day crewing during the night time retained period) to the point where the Allerton appliance would not be selected by the mobilising system for responses to its own area because several other appliances would be able to respond more quickly.

The Authority carried out a series of public engagement forums in January 2014, including one in Liverpool. The attendees were asked to consider which were the "least worst" options for the Authority to adopt to meet the budget savings required. The outcome of that engagement was that community retained and day crewing were least the preferred options, as people would rather have us maintain as much of a whole time service as possible, hence the move towards proposing mergers and closures. The current proposal is to crew the appliance that would be moved from Allerton to Old Swan on a wholetime retained basis. The appliance from Allerton will be used as a strategic reserve on a 30 minute recall and not for immediate response. Firefighters would be called in to staff the appliance when appliance levels across Merseyside fell to a pre-determined level. The reason Old Swan has been chosen is because it is a central location with large numbers of firefighters living within its 30 minute catchment area.

Regards,

Sir, I wish to make known the feelings of my Father and I over the proposed closure of Allerton Fire Station. My father lives on xxx and I live on xxx. The increased time it may take for a response in the event of a fire concerns us both. We would wish to say that we share the concern of many that the station be closed, and hope a solution can be found to keep it open.

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

Response:

Thank you for taking the time to send us your views on the proposal to close Allerton fire station. I don't know if you are aware, but there will be a public meeting to discuss this on Tuesday 9th December at 7pm at the Bluecoat School (Clock Tower Entrance), Church Road, Allerton, L15 9EE.

At the meeting the Chief Fire Officer will present details on the reasons why the closure is being proposed and the other options that have been considered to enable the Authority to achieve the financial savings it is required to make. We are currently preparing a second public consultation document on this matter which will be on our

website (www.merseyfire.gov.uk) on Tuesday 2nd December, or I can email you a copy if you'd prefer. Please let me know.

The Fire and Rescue Authority will take all views into account when making a decision following the consultation period.

Regards

Hi, just thought I would let you know about Allerton fire station in Mossley Hill. This station is being shut and sold off. It is not being merged with another station or being replaced with a new station...it is just being shut down. This is due to happen early 2015. The nearest stations to this are a good distance away, Old Swan, Speke and City Centre. My point is if these stations are busy and you have a house fire in Mossley Hill and local area then God help you.

RESPONSE

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd December 2014 regarding the concerns expressed by your constituent over the proposed closure of Allerton fire station. Please accept my delay in responding to your letter; the Service Headquarters post room did not reopen until 2nd January.

I understand completely the concerns expressed by xxx over the proposed closure of Allerton fire station. As I have stated previously I will in no way attempt to justify the proposed closure of the station however I will attempt to offer xxx some reassurance over the impact on emergency response cover.

As you are aware, the latest round of cuts imposed on the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2015/16 was confirmed in December. The scale of the cut to the Authority budget is worse than expected and is the highest of any Fire and Rescue Authority in the Country. The impact of the cuts to date is such that the Authority can no longer afford to employ sufficient numbers of wholetime Firefighters to crew all of the existing 26 stations. The cuts for 2015/16 exacerbate the situation further. The simple fact is that the Authority now has to close stations across Merseyside and in Liverpool the station that could be closed with the least operational impact is Allerton.

I have enclosed a copy of the Appendix to report CFO/126/14 which was considered by the Authority at its most recent meeting on 16th December. The Appendix provides a concise summary of the rationale underpinning the proposal to close Allerton ahead of other stations in Liverpool and builds on the documentation considered by the Authority at the meeting on 2nd October 2014 when the decision to undertake a 12 week period of public consultation over the proposed closure was made.

I will be presenting at a public consultation event over the proposed closure of Allerton at 1900hrs 15th January at Bluecoat School, Church Road, Allerton L15 9EG should xxx wish to attend as I will be able to cover the substantive issues in detail and hopefully address any outstanding matters of concern.

I would be more than happy to meet with - to explain these issues in more detail if he is not able to attend the consultation meeting as I appreciate the process by which Allerton has been selected for closure is somewhat technical in parts and may be difficult to understand. I have made the same offer to other residents of the Allerton station area who have also expressed concerns.

I hope this response is of some assistance to you and I thank you for your continued support in lobbying against further cuts to the Authority budget.