



## **Proposed Allerton Station Closure Results from Feedback Surveys**

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### **STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE**

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## Document Control

### Amendment History

Version / Issue No.	Date	Author	Remarks / Reason for Change
1.0	28/01/2015	J Fielding	
1.1	29/01/2015	J Fielding	As per comments from D Appleton
1.2	30/01/2015	J Fielding	As per comments from K Mansfield

### Sign-Off List

Name	Position
Deb Appleton	Director of Strategy & Performance
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Name	Position	I / R

### Related Documents

Reference No.	Title	Author	Version & Date
1.0	Allerton Consultation Document	MFRA	V2 Dec 14
2.0	Knowsley Consultation concerning Station Mergers – results from Feedback Surveys	J Fielding	V1.1 Aug 14
3.0	Wirral Consultation concerning Station Mergers – results from Feedback Surveys	J Fielding	V1.1 Jan 15

### Ownership

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If No please state reason why:

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## **1. Agreement**

For the purpose of this report the following agreement was made between the client and the Strategy & Performance Function.

This work was requested by Deb Appleton; Director of Strategy & Performance and received on 21/01/2015.

The Manager<sup>1</sup> has approved this report/ piece of work can be undertaken by the Strategy & Performance Function.

If the scope of the work changes, authorisation must be again obtained and would be noted within the version control document sheet.

It was agreed that this report would be produced in draft format by 28/01/2015, and would be sent electronically to the Director of Strategy & Performance and Client for comment.

The Manager / Client agreed that their comments would be received back by 28/01/2015.

The final report, which will always be in PDF format, would be produced by February 2015, subject to receiving comments.

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<sup>1</sup> Deb Appleton

## 2. Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide high level analysis of feedback following community consultation regarding the potential closure of the Allerton station. In summary the report presents the following high level findings:

- In total there were 65 responses to the survey
- The majority of respondents (61.5%, 40 from 65) felt that the proposal to close Allerton station was unreasonable, 36.9% (24 from 65) felt proposals were reasonable.
- When feedback from solely members of the public (rather than MF&RS staff or partners) is taken into account the proportions change to 58.2% (32 from 55) of respondents stating the proposed closure was unreasonable and 40% (22 from 55) feeling the proposal was reasonable.
- Based on the postcode submitted by only 45 respondents, the majority of respondents (20) lived within the L18 postcode area which is where the station is sited. Following this with 7 responses each were the L25 and L19 postcodes. The L17 postcode area which makes up a large part of the western fringe of the Allerton station area received zero responses.
- Concerning **age** and **gender**, 61 valid responses were analysed with 37 (60.7%) male respondents and 24 female (39.3%). There was a wide distribution of ages to have responded to the survey with the 40-49 being the most common group with 16 responses, followed by the 50-59 and 60-69 groups. There were zero responses from the below 19 group.
- Of the 60 valid responses to the question concerning **disability**, 7 of the 60 (11.7%) declared they were disabled.
- Concerning ethnicity, 95.2% (60 from 63) of respondents were from a White background, with 4.8% (3 from 63) preferring not to say.
- It is worth noting that over 51,384 people live in the Allerton station area, so the response rate to the questionnaire is a little over 0.1% of the overall population.

## 3. Introduction

### **Background<sup>2</sup>**

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) are responsible for providing fire and rescue services for Merseyside's 1.4 million people at 26 fire stations across the five districts. This currently includes delivering fire and rescue services in Liverpool from ten stations; Kirkdale, Liverpool City, Kensington, Allerton, Speke & Garston, Toxteth, Old Swan, Belle Vale, Aintree and Croxteth.

Over the last four years MFRA has had to make savings of £20 million as a result of Government cuts. MFRA is required to make a further £6.3 million savings in 2015/16. It is possible that future savings required as a result of ongoing Government cuts might reach £9.1 million in 2016/17 and up to £20 million in total by 2020. We now need to make more changes to meet this new

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from the MF&RS website:

[http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/opsResponse/pdf/Allerton\\_consultation\\_Document2\\_02122014.pdf](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk/asp/opsResponse/pdf/Allerton_consultation_Document2_02122014.pdf)

financial challenge.

MFRA has already had to make significant reductions in its support services and back office staff and the number of firefighters it employs has reduced from 1,400 to 764 with fire appliances reducing from 42 to 28. What has not changed in more than 20 years is the number of community fire stations (26) and this cannot continue in the future.

To save £6.3 million, the Authority has assumed it will be able to deliver £2.9 million from support services such as Finance, Human Resources and Estates management as well as technical areas such as debt financing. The remaining £3.4 million will have to come from our emergency response and this will require at least four station mergers or outright closures.

As part of this consideration a twelve week public consultation on the proposed closure of Allerton fire station took place between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015; with an online survey also being available on the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service website ([www.merseyfire.gov.uk](http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk)) as well as being available in paper format at consultation events<sup>3</sup>. This report analyses feedback from completed surveys to provide an understanding of any issues identified by members of the public as well as a demographical analysis of who responded as a means of diversity monitoring.

The survey closed with a total of 65 responses.

## **4. Methodology**

For the purpose of analysing the public's feedback and opinions on the proposed closure of the Allerton station; the following method was applied:

- An electronic survey was created using Snap 10 Survey Software which can be viewed in Appendix A.
- The online survey was live: between the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015.
- Microsoft Excel 2010 was used to interpret the results.
- MapInfo 10.5 was used to provide an understanding of where respondents reside – based on postcodes submitted when the survey was completed.
- Concerning comments, minor changes to spelling and grammar have been used for the sake of legibility. Otherwise comments are verbatim.
- Only valid (complete) responses are analysed within this report.
- Population data is based on Census 2011 data, broken down to Lower Layer Super Output Area geography. Data available from Office for National Statistics affiliate: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

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<sup>3</sup> <http://surveys.merseyfire.gov.uk/surveys/allerton/allerton.htm>

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Responding to the Survey

**Question 1: Do you think the proposed closure of Allerton Fire Station is reasonable, given the financial challenges faced by the Authority?**

Table 1: Response to whether the proposed closure is reasonable or not

Response	Count	Proportion
Yes	24	36.9%
No	40	61.5%
Don't Know	1	1.5%
Total	65	

Table 1 identifies that the majority of respondents (61.5% or 40 from 65) felt that given the financial challenges to the authority the proposed closure was not reasonable. Of the 65 respondents to the questionnaire, 36.9% (24) felt it was reasonable.

Table 2: Response to whether the proposed closure is reasonable or not by status

Response	Public	MF&RS Staff	Partner Organisation	No Response	Total
Yes	22 (40%)	2 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	24 (36.9%)
No	32 (58.2%)	5 (71.4%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)	40 (61.5%)
Don't Know	1 (1.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.5%)
Total	55 (100%)	7 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)	65 (100%)

Table 2 breaks down the results of table 1 according to whether a respondent was a member of the public, MF&RS staff or Partner Organisation. Taking responses from the Public into account, the majority of respondents 58.2% (32 from 55 respondents) do not feel that the proposed closure is reasonable, which is less than that of the Total figure of 61.5% (40 from 65 respondents). The table also identifies that members of the public on the whole find the closure more reasonable with 40% (22 from 55 respondents), this is greater than the Total figure of 36.9% (24 from 65 respondents).

**Question 2: If you answered "No", please use the box below to explain why you do not think the proposal is reasonable:**

The following comments have been submitted by respondents who stated "No" in the previous question. The comments have been grouped by organisation i.e.: members of the public, MFRA staff, and external partners. In total there were 37 responses.

Table 3: Comments submitted by respondents

Comments from Members of the Public
It's simple really closure of fire stations will increase attendance times and cost lives. We need to stand up to this government.
It is not reasonable as there is an overlap of stations in city centre, Toxteth, Kensington and Old Swan. The area left uncovered by shutting Allerton station is enormous especially considering that Belle Vale is not whole time staffed. The area has already suffered the loss of a station when Banks Road was shut now another station could be going. Manage the situation rather than the politics!!!!!!
There will be no cover for Mossley Hill too. Time to attend a fire is important, speed essential. Certain aspects should not be affected by finance - hospitals, schools, fire stations. Maybe reducing Authority pats would help.

I have answered NO because the information on the newsletter or website does not give any information on other options. I also object to the appliance being moved to Old Swan as it further depletes cover to Allerton's neighbouring stations for a 2nd appliance.
I cannot believe that a response time from Old Swan would only increase by 49 seconds.
The nearest station would take extra time to attend an emergency that could result in the loss of life.
L18 needs a fire station, it has had a fire station for a very long time and the council only want to shut it because the police station is no longer open to the public and eventually the police will be moved so the whole site can be sold, they are not thinking of the residents who pay a premium to live in a nice area and they will be penalised by not having emergency services on their doorstep. Talking about the costs of repairs to the building what about the costs that have occurred by building accommodation for the fireman who are no longer on the shift pattern the properties have been modernised for, isn't that a waste of tax payers money! We already have a shortage of fireman so surely this will mean more pressures on the men who put their lives at risk on every shift they work, by reaching targets yet having to travel further. This council is a joke!
The Fire station is in an area of a lot of Restaurants, busy roads and by and large an ageing population, we have no Police Station that has been taken from us, so we do need the reassurance of our Fire Station.
I live in the area and feel secure with the proximity of the fire station
There is a big student population in Allerton area; also the building is very popular with tourists which bring a lot of money to this city. The increased time a fire appliance would get to a fire is dangerous for the public and the firefighters trying to fight the fire .disaster waiting to happen.
Although I am incredibly sympathetic with the financial constraints forced on the fire service by this shambolic government I am also dead against the proposed closure of Allerton fire station. I understand that Liverpool is fairly well covered with fire stations, however, in real terms, closing Allerton would at least double the response time for an emergency in my area. The station is also of huge historical and cultural interest.
Cuts have already been made in the south of Liverpool
Takes longer to respond if I need service in an emergency. Will my taxes be reduced as a result of having poorer fire cover? Utterly disgraceful! Cut back management before the front line staff who are actually needed
Prepared to risk people's lives to save some money.
I understand that cuts need to be made, but to entirely close this station is the wrong decision.' Maybe reduce staff or make it a part time station. The area the open stations need to cover will be increased leading to longer wait times in an emergency
It will increase the response time to any incident in Mossley Hill and will endanger lives.
Will put people's lives at risk
Because it serves the local community and who are old.
I think the closure of any fire station is an absolute disgrace. This is life today, always moving or closing premises nothing stays the same. You call it progress, I don't but then again what do I know. I am well retired now. This is a very dangerous and hazardous job as 9/11 showed. No other profession is like this, maybe the Police and RNL! Cutbacks and redundancies are the name of the game, people don't enter into it!
Opposed to any closure
Because it is a matter of people's lives. In the next 5 years, at least 1 person will die if it shuts
Increasing population Large student population Increasing pressure on adjacent fire stations Loss of local knowledge Loss of community activities Loss of being part of the community
This will directly affect response times to areas within the South Liverpool area
Has the proximity of accidents been considered (not just fires) e.g. at Rose Lane, Allerton Road/Queens Drive, Aigburth Road
Cannot put a price on human life. This station has served the community for many years and cannot be considered surplus because of financial constraints. A life lost because of a delay in a response from a station further away is one life to many.
I think other avenues should be explored before closing this station. It is essential for many residents & businesses in the area & crucial in the community. Can other stations (maybe where council taxes aren't as high) be looked at to be closed? Don't think it's fair to be closing in an affluent area where working people pay their taxes.
Not reasonable as will take longer for fire engines to attend fires in Allerton Road area.
It is only fire station left for the area since closure of Garston Fire Station
It will take longer to attend fires in the local area if close station at Allerton.
If Allerton Road Station closed it will put local resident's lives at risk as coverage diluted and take longer to attend fires. Even if a few minutes longer it may/will cost lives.
Cut backs to essential services can never be deemed reasonable, particularly when it involves saving lives.
<b>Comments from Partner Organisations</b>
No matter what the public say, the authority will still close stations to save a bit of cash, I will however give my opinion on it. I know that the authority is going through an exceptionally tough financial time, however you have already removed the 2nd pumps from most stations, you haven't recruited new firefighters to replace the ones retiring so there is more money saved, you won't however do anything to the wages of top senior officers, you have already stopped attending the vast majority of AFA'S so again there is money saved on a daily basis. You bought new appliances that have barely been used, by this I am referring to the MAN and the Mercedes Vario didn't last very long either and the CPP was another flop, so all this Un needed spending is now going to cost the closure of a station and put more pressure on surrounding stations because they have extra ground to cover. You have also just built a bunch of new stations across the county when it would have been cheaper to refurbish them, what you fail to mention in the newsletter is although it would cost over £340,000 to bring it up to modern day standards, how much are you going to spend on building new stations on the Wirral and in St Helens for your ridiculous merger plans, I'm pretty sure a new fire station costs more than £340,000.

Comments From MF&RS Staff
money could be saved elsewhere
Due to the logistical location of Station 14. If the appliance at Station 14 was in attendance at an incident and Allerton was closed although the attendance times would in theory be met due to the increase in the time it would still require an appliance from either Toxteth or Belle Vale to attend and both stations are some distance away. This would put excessive pressure on the drivers and appliance O.I.C's to meet the times of attendance. Also given that Allerton is the closest station to provide back up to Speke who have a lot of industry in their station area including chemical plants and comah sites it would benefit the community to have Allerton remain open.
I feel the knock on effects of attendance times will greatly impact on the service provided to the public, this not only relates to the first attendance but two and three pump incidents. Fire fighter safety will be compromised due to the delays in the arrival of the 2nd and 3rd pumps. Historical significance of the station.
longer attendance times firefighter safety compromised
Closing a fire station which is a community asset is not a good idea, we are heavily over managed and savings can be made by reducing the number of non productive, grossly over paid middle and senior managers, who do nothing to serve the local community of Allerton, unlike the station and station personnel who do.
Unattached Comments
I disagree with the cuts to our services because of elderly / vulnerable and children and would bring up times
We do not want any stations closed but feel that your hands are tied with the government cuts forcing the closures on you

### Question 3: If you would like to give us any more information:

The comments have been grouped by organisation i.e.: Members of the public, MF&RS staff, and external partners. In total there were 17 additional comments made by respondents.

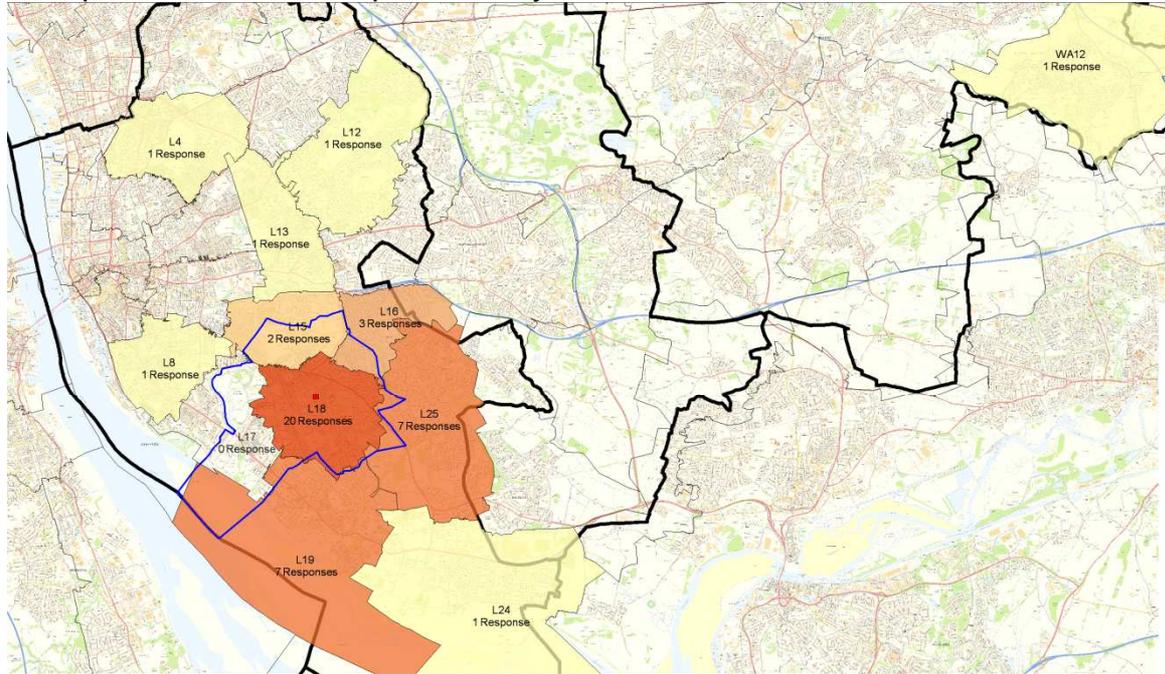
Table 4: Comments submitted by respondents

Comments from Members of the Public
AS per above: No Closures, No Mergers, No Redundancies! I know it's the name of the game, but this is just my opinion
Based on the evidence and queries I have found this to be the best option
Due to this government ruining our fire service then changes have to be made. Liverpool have a lot of fire stations where are very close to each other. Although I Don't agree that any stations should close there is obviously no other option. Allerton is a quiet station and is probably the best option as Old Swan and Speke are close by. At least keeping the pump and moving it to Old Swan will kind of soften the blow.
Fire service do a good job and we know stations have to close
Given the financial situation, the decision appears reasonable. However, I would continue to oppose the closure of Allerton
Given the numbers used in the consultation document, it would appear to be the logical, if somewhat unsavoury, choice to make.
Happy with the info given. This is a "worst case scenario" simply caused by reduced funding
I believe the authority should be looking further down the line and be making larger savings now to spend the money differently, e.g. more station closures / change of status of appliances to spend on alternative services
I have concerns about high risk religious sites e.g. Jewish school and synagogue in the Allerton area in current climate.
It's disappointing that Allerton station may be closed, but I guess the council is left with little choice
Moving the pump to Old Swan, would Speke/Garston station not be a better option?
The session was very well conducted with plenty of time for everyone to express their views
The stations listed are mainly wartime stations, With modern appliances today it makes sense to centralise stations.
What (if any) other options have been looked in to? What about closing Aintree and moving the appliance to either Croxteth or Netherton? 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? I shall also be sending these points to consultation2@merseyfire.gov.uk
While I have said yes to the above question. I am concerned at the safety levels especially during 'rush hour' time due to the lack of a station at Allerton. I would obviously prefer that there were no closures at all. If any other ways of saving money, this would be far more favourable than a closure
Whilst the building is old it is also beautiful and should be retained as a fire station. Is one of the motives for closing Allerton Station that value of the property.
Comments from MF&RS Staff
a merger between Speke and Allerton would be a better solution as Speke will now be isolated and in the wrong location

## 5.2 Monitoring Information

### Locality of Respondents

Map 1: Locations of respondents by Postcode area



Author: J Fielding  
Date: 27/01/2015  
Produced using MapInfo  
Strategy & Performance

Thematic Map Identifying Density of Respondents by Postcode

Map Reference:

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Map 1 identifies where respondents to the consultation survey live. The map identifies that, of the 45 valid responses, the majority live in the L18 postcode area (20 responses), which is the immediate area in and around the station. Following this are the L25 and L19 areas with 7 responses each, however though these areas neighbour L18 only small parts of these areas overlap into the Allerton station area. Of interest there were zero responses from the L17 postcode area which accounts for the western part of the Allerton station area.

### Age and Gender

Table 5: Breakdown of Age and Gender (based on valid data only)

Age Group	Female	Male	Total
19 or younger	0	0	0
20-29	2	7	9
30-39	2	3	5
40-49	6	10	16
50-59	3	9	12
60-69	7	5	12
70-79	3	2	5
Greater than 80	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>61</b>

Table 5 compares age against gender based on valid responses received. The table identifies that respondents were primarily male with 37 from 61 respondents (60.7%). The table identifies that the single most populous age

group is the 40-49 group accounting for 16 responses; this is then followed by the 50-59 and 60-69 age groups with 12 respondents each. Of note, there are no respondents belonging to the 19 or younger age range.

Table 6: Proportion of Respondents by age when compared to local population<sup>4</sup>

Age Range	Responses		Population	
	Total	%	Total Population	% total population
Below 19	0	0.0%	11,460	22.3%
20-29	9	14.8%	10,524	20.5%
30-39	5	8.2%	5,941	11.6%
40-49	16	26.2%	6,598	12.8%
50-59	12	19.7%	6,188	12.0%
60-69	12	19.7%	4,928	9.6%
70-79	5	8.2%	3,317	6.5%
Greater than 80	2	3.3%	2,428	4.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>		<b>51,384</b>	

Table 6 compares ages of the respondents along with the population that makes up the Allerton Station ground. The table identifies that the population of the Allerton Station area is predominantly young; this is inferred as there are large student populations throughout the area. When comparing the overall response data to the population data, there is skewing of the figures with disproportionately high responses within the 40-49, 50-59 and 60-69 age groups, though this could be due to the aforementioned student population. By contrast the Below 19 and 20-29 age groups are under-represented.

## Disability

Table 7: Comparison of age of respondents and whether they reported themselves as disabled

Age Range	Yes	Prefer not to Say	No	Total
Below 19	0	0	0	0
20-29	0	0	10	10
30-39	0	0	4	4
40-49	2	0	14	16
50-59	0	2	10	12
60-69	3	2	7	12
70-79	1	0	3	4
Greater than 80	1	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>60</b>

Table 7 identifies that based on valid data, 7 respondents stated that they were disabled. The table suggests that there are more people with disabilities as age increases, with the exception of 2 respondents within the 40-49 age groups. When analysed by postcode area, 4 respondents resided within the L18 postcode area, 1 resided in the neighbouring L25 postcode with the final 2 respondents failing to respond to the postcode question on the survey.

<sup>4</sup> Populations are based Census 2011 data with populations broken down to Lower Super Output Area geography. Should an SOA reside or is greater than 50% within the Allerton Station area then it is counted.

## **Ethnic Background**

Table 8: Ethnicity of respondents

Ethnicity	Count	%
White: English	54	85.7%
White: Scottish	3	4.8%
White: Northern Irish	1	1.6%
White: Gypsy or Traveller	1	1.6%
White: Other White Background	1	1.6%
Prefer not to Say	3	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	

Table 8 identifies that the majority of people who responded to the survey were from a white background with 95.2% or 60 from 63 valid responses, 3 respondents prefer not to say their ethnicity.

## **6. Appendices**

Appendix A: Copy of the Survey Published on the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service website

### **Allerton Station Closure Proposal Public Consultation Questions**

**Our consultation newsletter outlines Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority's proposal to close Allerton Fire Station. The newsletter explains why we are proposing this change and how we would do it.**

**We are planning a public meeting and other events during the twelve-week consultation beginning on 1st November 2014 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.**

- 1. Do you think the proposed closure of Allerton Fire Station is reasonable, given the financial challenges faced by the Authority?**  
 Yes  
 No  
 Don't Know
- 2. If you answered "No", please use the box below to explain why you do not think the proposal is reasonable:**  

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- 3. If you would like to give us any more information, please use the box below:**  

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## **Monitoring Information**

**Please note that information collected within this section is for monitoring purposes - no personal identifiable information will be collected.**

**Are you a member of: Please tick the appropriate box**

- Public  
 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service Staff  
 Partner Organisation

**What is the first part of your postcode: (for example L18)**  

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**Your Gender:**

- Male
- Female

**Your Age**

- 19 or younger
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- Greater than 80

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Please tick the appropriate box**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to Say

**How would you describe your ethnic origin?**

**Please tick the appropriate box**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: English  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background: Other Mixed / Multiple Background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Welsh  | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Indian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Scottish   | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Pakistani                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Northern Irish                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Irish  | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Chinese                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Gypsy or Traveller                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Other Asian Background                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: Other White Background                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: Caribbean                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Background: White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: African                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / Multiple ethnic Background: White & Black African   | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: Other Black Background                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed / Multiple Ethnic background: White & Asian           | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to Say   |

Other ethnic group (please state)

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**Thank you for your comments, please click submit to continue**