

## **EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne at 10.30 hours on Thursday 5 June 2014.**

**Present:** Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Carden, Earl, Galley, Hawtree, Howson, Lambert, MacCafferty, Peltzer Dunn, Pragnell, Powell, Scott, Sheppard, Taylor, Theobald and Wincott.

**Also present:**

Mr. D. Prichard (Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Mr. G. Walsh (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Mr. G. Ferrand (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Mrs. C. Rolph (Assistant Chief Officer), Mr. D. Savage (Treasurer), Mr. A. Ghebre-Ghiorghis (Monitoring Officer), Miss. E. Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Mr. W. Tricker (Head of Finance & Procurement), and Mrs. K. Ward (Clerk).

The Chairman welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for their interest in the meeting. It was requested that mobile phones be switched off. Members of the public in attendance were advised of fire procedures.

**779.        DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

779.1        It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, no participating Member had any disclosable pecuniary interest under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.

**780.        ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

780.1        The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that set out the procedures governing the election of Chairman and invited the Fire Authority to appoint a Chairman for the ensuing year. (Copy in Minute Book).

780.2        **RESOLVED** – That Councillor Howson be appointed Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

**781.        ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

781.1        The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that set out the procedures governing the election of Vice-Chairman and invited the Fire Authority to consider whether it wished to appoint a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year. (Copy in Minute Book).

781.2        **RESOLVED** That Councillor Lambert be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year and titled Vice-Chair.

**782.        APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

782.1        There were none.

783. **URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

783.1 The Chairman welcomed back Councillor MaCafferty to the Fire Authority from Brighton & Hove City Council. Councillor MacCafferty had been appointed following Councillor Rufus's resignation from the Fire Authority.

784. **TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS, IF ANY**

784.1 The following question was received, to which the Chairman replied as indicated in Appendix A to the minutes.

784.2 Question from Patrick Olszowski

On the Equality Impact Assessment, you say that impact of cutting staff/engines has shown to be NEUTRAL – based on “predictive modelling”. Given that predictive modelling is based on past trends, they may not represent future demand. With a rapidly growing ageing population (that will place extra demands on the Service) how can you be sure that Brighton residents will not be at higher risk of death and injury?

785. **TO CONSIDER PUBLIC PETITIONS, IF ANY**

The Chairman accepted three petitions.

785.1 The first was presented by Councillor Carol Theobald on behalf of Simon Herbert on behalf of Brighton & Hove City firefighters. The petition's prayer, which contained 9,567 signatures read:

785.2 “Instruct East Sussex Chief Fire Officer to make necessary budgetary savings without cutting fire fighter numbers, closing fire stations and cutting fire engines.

Instruct Chief Fire Officer to make savings by sharing services and back office staff, improving procurement, sharing of principle management and staff. Also look to voluntary amalgamations between services.

Instruct Chief Fire Officer to utilise reserves to offset savings.

Instruct Chief Fire Officer NOT to remove a fire engine from the City of Brighton & Hove.

Why is this important? East Sussex Chief Fire Officer has agreed to make £7.1million savings. These savings are being achieved by cutting front-line emergency services, fire fighters, numbers of fire engines and closing fire stations.

785.3 The second petition was from Nancy Platts who presented a petition on behalf of residents and visitors to Brighton & Hove. The petition's prayer, which contained approximately 2,500 signatures read:

785.4 “The signatories of this petition insist that you instruct the East Sussex Chief Fire Officer not to remove a fire engine from the City of Brighton & Hove and instruct him to make budgetary savings without cutting fire cover within the City. Reducing the number of fire engines within the City from five to four will lead to slower response times, less personnel, less equipment and fewer home and school fire safety visits. These proposed cuts will cost lives. Savings must not be made by putting the public and fire fighters lives at risk. We ask that you put public safety ahead of these proposed cuts to front-line emergency services.

785.5 The third petition was from Councillor Phil Scott who presented a petition on behalf of residents and visitors to Hastings and its surrounding areas. The petition’s prayer, which contained approximately 1,000 signatures read:

785.6 “Instruct East Sussex Chief Fire Officer to make necessary budgetary savings without cutting fire fighter numbers, closing fire stations and cutting fire engines.

Instruct Chief Fire Officer to make savings by sharing services and back office staff, improving procurement, sharing of principle management and staff. Also look to voluntary amalgamations between services.

Instruct Chief Fire Officer to utilise reserves to offset savings.”

It was agreed that the petitions be taken into consideration as part of item no.791 ‘Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) Review of Prevention, Protection and Response – Consultation and Way Forward’.

786. **NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2014**

786.1 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman. (Copy in Minute Book).

787. **CALLOVER**

787.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

791. IRMP Review of Prevention, Protection and Response – Consultation outcomes and way forward

787.2 **RESOLVED** – That all other reports be resolved in accordance with the recommendations as detailed below.

788 **POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON THE PANELS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

788.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer to secure political balance on Panels in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and agree the resultant membership to the Panels of the Fire Authority. (Copy in Minute Book).

788.2

**RESOLVED -**

- (i) the Panel arrangements and political representation, as set out below, be confirmed;
- (ii) the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Panels be appointed by the Panels in accordance with Standing Order 41.14; and
- (iii) it be noted that a report will be submitted to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel on 11 July 2014, following a request to each Political Group to make any changes to current nominations to these posts; and

<b>Based upon political proportions for 2014/15</b>		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	
Appointments	6	2 Cons, 1 LDem, 1 Green, 1Lab, 1 UKIP
Scrutiny & Audit *	8	3 Cons, 1 LDem, 1 Green, 2 Lab, 1 UKIP
Policy & Resources	8	3 Cons, 1 LDem, 2 Green, 1 Lab, 1 UKIP
Human Resources	6	3 Cons, 1 Lab, 1 Green, 1 LDem
Urgency	6	3 Cons, 1 UKIP, 1 Green, 1Lab
* informal protocol – up to 3 P&R Members to serve on S&A Panel		

(The total number of seats = 34, divided 14:6:6:4:4 on the basis of the 2014/15 political balance).

789.

**FIRE AUTHORITY AND PANEL MEETINGS 2014/15**

789.1

The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer that suggested a timetable of meetings for the Fire Authority and its Panels for the next 12 months. (Copy in Minute Book).

789.2

**RESOLVED** that the following timetable of meetings be noted:

Date:	Meeting:
11 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	Scrutiny & Audit and Policy & Resources Panels
11 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Fire Authority
18 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Scrutiny & Audit Panel
13 <sup>th</sup> November 2014	Scrutiny & Audit and Policy & Resources Panels
11 <sup>th</sup> December 2014	Fire Authority
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	Scrutiny & Audit and Policy & Resources Panels
12 <sup>th</sup> February 2015	Fire Authority
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Scrutiny & Audit and Policy & Resources Panels
4 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	Fire Authority
Meetings of the Fire Authority to commence at 10.30 hours Meetings of the Panels to commence at 10.00 hours	
All meetings to take place at Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne BN21 1EU	

790. **FIRE AUTHORITY TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2014/15**

790.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Treasurer. The annual treasury management stewardship report was a requirement of the Fire Authority's reporting procedures and covered the treasury activity for 2013/14. The report also included the Prudential Indicators which related to the treasury activity. (Copy in Minute Book).

790.2 **RESOLVED** – That the treasury management performance for 2013/14 be noted.

791. **INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) REVIEW OF PREVENTION, PROTECTION AND RESPONSE – CONSULTATION OUTCOMES AND WAY FORWARD**

791.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that informed the Fire Authority of the consultation responses to the proposals following the review of Prevention, Protection and Response and sought determination on the proposals. (Copy in Minute Book).

791.2 At a previous meeting, the Fire Authority had approved operational savings proposals in Phase 1 of the IRMP process along with a range of non-operational savings to ensure that savings targets in 2014/15 and 2015/16 could be met.

791.3 At its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014, the Fire Authority agreed to commence a 10 week public consultation on Phase 2 of the outcomes of the Review of Prevention, Protection and Response, which were proposals developed in order to meet the funding gap and consequential savings target of £7.1m, as identified within the Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2014/15 – 2018/19.

791.4 The approach to consultation and communications were:

- Will the Authority maintain its statutory duties?
- What is the current performance and trend for improved performance based on the last ten years?
- What will be the impact of the changes on service delivery?
- What will be the impact on public and firefighter safety as a result of the options being implemented?
- Will performance to the public of East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove be maintained and in certain areas, improved as a result of the proposals?
- Will the Fire Authority continue to commit to a vision of 'Achieving safer and more sustainable communities' and deliver to its agreed aims?

791.5 Officers advised Members that the combination of consultation and engagement methods used, each providing early opportunities to provide information to all audiences, using multiple channels and various communication styles had provided stakeholders with sufficient time to provide a considered response within a 10 week consultation period.

791.6 The consultation process was carried out by both the Service's Communications Team and an independent company, Opinion Research Services (ORS), to seek to get statistically representative, informed and independently verified outcomes to aid the Fire Authority's deliberations. The following methods were used:

- Publication of the review and all supporting documents on the Service web site.
- Online questionnaire
- Various Service Brief publications inviting staff to consult on the review
- Presentations to watches by the Corporate Management Team
- Emails/letters to over 500 local Councillors, businesses, stakeholders and community groups inviting them to view and consult on the review online and/or to attend the stakeholder forums, including a reminder one month before the end of the consultation
- A follow up e-mail/letter to parish and town councils reminding them of the stakeholder forum arrangements
- 2 staff forums conducted by ORS
- 3 Public forums conducted by ORS
- 2 stakeholder forums conducted by ORS
- 5 public roadshows conducted by the ESFRS Communications Team and supported by the Corporate Management Team.
- Extensive media campaign throughout the consultation period which included radio, TV and press coverage.
- Social media, e.g. Facebook and Twitter.

791.7 The 10 week consultation programme had now ended and a full representation of responses received was presented to members for their consideration.

791.8 There had been a considerable response to the public consultation, with direct and clear views on the proposals contained within Phase 2 of the Medium Term Financial Plan and a small number of alternative proposals received during the course of the consultation to be considered by Members. Three petitions had been presented to the Fire Authority at the start of the meeting and Members took into account the prayer of these petitions during their deliberations. Members considered Officers' commentary on the specific alternative proposals which were included within the body of the report.

791.9 Councillor MacCafferty made reference to the level of responses received in comparison to the total population of Brighton & Hove and East Sussex and concluded that only 0.08% had been consulted with. He felt this was not good enough and asked Officers why there was such a low return rate. He also expressed concern that should the cuts be agreed the Service would in his view, not be able to comply with its duties under the Civil Contingencies Act.

791.10 Councillor Scott added that thousands of signatures had been collected for the petitions against any cuts in service and that if Councillors and Representative bodies could get that level of response, why couldn't the consultation process.

- 791.11 Councillor Butler noted that the Brighton & Hove Council Tax Leaflet contained information about the consultation which was distributed to every residence within Brighton & Hove. She reminded Members that at the Fire Authority meeting in February, the Monitoring Officer had advised Members that the proposed consultation document was comprehensive and would withstand a challenge. Councillor Butler reminded Members of their discussion held at the last Fire Authority and of their responsibility to promote the consultation, inform their local groups and hard to reach audiences. Members were also asked to inform the Community Risk Management team of any groups they felt should be contacted.
- 791.12 Councillor Barnes noted that the overall response was disappointing although individual Members had received a large amount of emails and the volume of signatures on the petitions showed that Members of the public were made aware of the issues. Councillor Barnes added that in his area, the Battle Observer, the main paper for that area, had the story as their headline news week in, week out. He suggested that as much as Councillors don't like the fact that there was a limited response towards the proposals, if the public decided not to formally respond due to apathy, that was their choice.
- 791.13 Councillor Pragnell added that he felt the public did know as thousands of responses had been received via the petitions and there had been visible campaigns across both the County and City of Brighton & Hove.
- 791.14 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive reminded Members that they had agreed the consultation process. Brighton and Hove City Council had confirmed that every residence had been sent a leaflet which advised of the consultation with their Council Tax leaflet. Various local papers, including the Brighton and Hove Argus, local Observer Newspapers together with radio stations such as BBC Radio Sussex, Heart FM had carried the story as well as an array of other outlets. Opinion Research Services (ORS) were also used to carry out an impartial consultation. He reminded Members that they agreed they would go to their constituent Authorities to inform and advise. Members were also advised that the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive visited around 50 parish councils around the County and that offers were extended to various groups in Brighton & Hove.
- 791.15 Councillor Wincott proposed, and Councillor Scott seconded, that a full and thorough review into the consultation process should be undertaken. Members agreed that it was good practice to carry out a review after every consultation exercise. Member voted on the proposal and on the Chairman's casting vote, the proposal was lost.
- 791.16 It was agreed by Members that each proposal would be discussed and voted on separately.

## **Phase 2 Proposals**

### **Proposal 1**

- 791.17 Councillor Barnes wished to inform people attending the meeting the context in which the discussion they were about to hear was based on. He advised that the Service received two incomes, one of which was being substantially reduced. The Authority had taken the decision to raise council tax and could start charging for certain services, but this would not meet the shortfall. The Authority could either delay making a decision until the last minute and then have to make rash, unplanned decisions or be responsible and plan a moderate approach to the issues. He felt that if Members disagreed with the proposals before them, they should propose an alternative plan as it was their duty to provide a sustainable budget for the fire and rescue service to operate.
- 791.18 Councillor Wincott felt that the Government could change its position but had to be faced with a unified opposition, which they were not. He felt a merger should be forced and asked to see the correspondence between the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Chairman to the Fire Minister, Brandon Lewis regarding the current funding crisis. He felt Members should instruct the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive to compel the Government to intervene.
- 791.19 Councillor Scott informed the Fire Authority that the Labour Group was against the proposals and that Officers should go back to the drawing board. He felt the savings could be made through merger and closer collaboration across the board and that immediate discussions should start with other Fire Services to complete a merger. Councillor Scott highlighted the building of a new station at Fort Road, Newhaven as one way the Service could have saved money.
- 791.20 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive reminded Members of the discussions and subsequent decisions he had been involved with, and informed of in the past. Members were reminded of the submissions made for grant funding for the proposed day crewed plus system and the Newhaven project. As well as the grant submission, the site of the current Newhaven Station was to be sold and the Newhaven project was a joint venture with partners who were contributing towards the project. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive reminded Members that he was in agreement and supportive of a merger.
- 791.21 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive added that he did not want to see reductions, but that it was necessary. He had sought to put in place measures on Councillors behalf that were palatable but that no matter what, significant change would be required.
- 791.22 Members were reminded that any proposals to make changes would be met with opposition, but reiterated that the public would see no reduction in Service attendance times and no stations would close.



- 791.23 Councillor Galley felt the Service had no option and that to some extent, the Service was a victim of its own success as there had been a 37% reduction in calls but only a 4% reduction in funding for operational service delivery. He noted the cuts already made to support staff and felt there could be more done in this area, but that it would be nowhere near enough to meet the cuts required and that the decisions before them needed to be evidence based rather than emotional.
- 791.24 Councillor Theobald noted the extent to which Brighton & Hove's population would be increasing and that cuts to the Fire & Rescue Service did not make sense. She felt that the Service should utilise the resources it currently had to reduce costs, i.e. move Headquarters to Preston Circus and sell the current Headquarters building as a priority.
- 791.25 It was moved by Councillor Lambert, and seconded by Councillor Pragnell that recommendation ii. a) Phase 2, Proposal 1, be amended to read: Remove one firefighting appliance from the City, leaving 4 wholetime pumps, crewed 24 hours a day and provide additional Community Safety Officers in the City of Brighton & Hove to help reduce incidents through prevention and therefore offset the loss of the firefighting appliance.
- 791.26 The amendment was put to the vote and was CARRIED.
- 791.27 The substantive motion was put to the vote and in accordance with Standing Order 22.1, four Members having requested it, a recorded vote was taken.

For (10): Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Earl, Galley, Howson, Lambert, Pragnell, Sheppard and Taylor.

Against (8): Carden, Hawtree, MacCafferty, Peltzer Dunn, Powell, Scott, Theobald and Wincott.

Abstention (0)

The Motion was carried.

## **Phase 2 Proposals**

### **Proposal 2A or Proposal 2B**

- 791.28 Councillor Earl informed Members that he had attended the public meeting held in Battle and reiterated some of the comments made by the public and firefighters that were in attendance. He felt one of the main areas for concern was the road network and noted that not only could it be very difficult to get to Battle, the A21 was a busy trunk road and an area for concern.
- 791.29 Councillor Barnes also expressed his concerns about the A21. He also noted that although the bulk of the population lived on the coast, Battle had 360° coverage and any reduction in Service would be particularly uncomfortable for people living in rural areas. He highlighted a proposal contained within the report from firefighters based at Battle which Councillor Barnes felt would be worthy of consideration.

- 791.30 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised the Fire Authority that staff at Battle had submitted a counter proposal and advised Members that they could consider it at the meeting as Officers had received it in sufficient time to consider the proposal.
- 791.31 The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that proposed revision to proposal 2a suggested keeping the current duty system, but in order to maintain cover over weekends when there was a staffing shortfall, a limited number of Retained Duty System staff could be used. He informed Members that proposal 2a had originally estimated savings of £14,000 per annum, however proposal 2a revised, as suggested by staff, would generate savings estimated at £85,000 per annum.
- 791.32 Councillor Scott suggested that he felt that Battle and Hastings were being unfairly pitted against each other. He informed the meeting that he was not happy about the Retained Duty System being removed from the Ridge and that he felt it would leave large areas of the County exposed to risk. Councillor Scott did not consider it appropriate for Members to consider proposal 2a revised as it had not been consulted on.
- 791.33 It was proposed by Councillor Galley and seconded by Councillor Barnes that that the Service accept the proposals as put forward by staff based at Battle and as noted within the detail of the report
- 791.34 In accordance with Standing Order 22.1, four Members having requested it, a recorded vote was taken, the result was as follows:
- For (11): Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Earl, Galley, Howson, Lambert, Peltzer Dunn, Sheppard, Taylor and Theobald.
- Against (7): Carden, Hawtree, MacCafferty, Powell, Pragnell, Scott, and Wincott.
- Abstention (0)
- The Motion was carried.
- 791.35 The substantive motion was put to the vote and in accordance with Standing Order 22.1, four Members having requested it, a recorded vote was taken, the result was as follows:
- For (11): Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Earl, Galley, Howson, Lambert, Peltzer Dunn, Sheppard, Taylor and Theobald.
- Against (7): Carden, Hawtree, MacCafferty, Powell, Pragnell, Scott, and Wincott.
- Abstention (0)
- The Motion was carried.

**Phase 2 Proposals**  
**Proposal 3**

791.36 Councillor Barnes noted that the proposals had been tried elsewhere but he felt Day Crewed Plus was controversial and warranted caution in its implementation.

791.37 Councillor Wincott noted the reduction in firefighter posts.

791.38 Councillor Hawtree asked Officers what had been the outcomes from other Services that had implemented the system.

791.39 Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that some Services had reported family friendly issues, but that these had been addressed.

791.40 In accordance with Standing Order 22.1, four Members having requested it, a recorded vote was taken, the result was as follows:

For (12): Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Earl, Galley, Howson, Lambert, Peltzer Dunn, Pragnell, Sheppard, Taylor and Theobald.

Against (6): Carden, Hawtree, MacCafferty, Powell, Scott, and Wincott.

Abstention (0)

The Motion was carried.

791. **RESOLVED** – That

- (i) Having fully considered the outcomes of the consultation and engagement process, including three petitions presented to the Fire Authority, they be noted and taken into consideration in determining the proposals;
- (ii) The following proposals for future service provision within East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove, be approved:
  - (a) The removal of one firefighting appliance from the City, leaving 4 wholtime pumps, crewed 24 hours a day and provide additional community safety officers in the City of Brighton & Hove to help offset the loss of the firefighting appliance.
  - (b) The removal of the retained appliance at The Ridge and the associated establishment, the savings from which to be used to support the provision of sufficient crewing of the wholtime appliance at Battle on weekends utilising Retained Duty System staff.
  - (c) The introduction of Day Crewed Plus at Roedean and The Ridge Fire Station.
  - (d) The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive be authorised to take all steps necessary or incidental to the implementation of the proposals.

792. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

792.1 **RESOLVED** – That the following items be exempt under the paragraphs indicated of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 and accordingly are not open for public inspection on the grounds that they include information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority:

Item 793            Paragraphs 3 & 4

**PART 2**

793. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2014 (EXEMPT CATEGORIES 3 & 4)**

793.1 **RESOLVED** – That the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 13:45 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this 11<sup>th</sup> day of September 2014.

## **EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY – 5 JUNE 2014**

Public question received from Patrick Olszowski

### **Question:**

On the Equality Impact Assessment, you say that impact of cutting staff/engines has shown to be NEUTRAL - based on "predictive modelling". Given that predictive modelling is based on past trends, they may not represent future demand. With a rapidly growing ageing population (that will place extra demands on the service) how can you be sure that Brighton residents will not be at higher risk of death and injury?

### **Answer:**

Thank you for your question.

Firstly, I would like to clarify the seemingly contradictory terms "neutral impact" and "higher risk of death and injury" mentioned in your question to avoid any confusion.

An Equality Impact Assessment seeks to understand and identify the impact on individuals and groups of people, particularly those with protected characteristics. In our assessment, the removal of a pumping appliance from the City does not adversely impact on a particular group of people i.e. it affects the general population equally and therefore has an overall neutral impact. This 'neutral impact' is different to the predicted impact on deaths and injuries in the overall population. In our main consultation document (page 33) we state that "removing 1 pump from Preston Circus or Hove would have no significant impact on life risk", and this is quantified on page 52 of the report which, for example, indicates that the removal of a pump from Hove would result in one additional **fire** fatality across the whole Service in 74.8 years.

Whilst some of the predictive modelling is, indeed, based on past trends, the modelling also takes into account the socio-demographic profile of the population as derived from the recent Census and, in particular, considers age as a contributing fire risk factor by identifying lone pensioners and individuals with a long-term limiting illness, so the age of the population is accounted for as part of the overall analysis.

Naturally, as we are becoming an increasingly ageing population, there will undoubtedly be pressures on all public sector organisations in the future, but I would like to assure you that East Sussex Fire Authority is committed to ensuring that East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove are safe places to visit, and live and work in, both now and in the future.