

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting Policy and Resources

Date 19 January 2023

Title of Report Suspension of fire service attendance standards to emergency incidents during periods of strike action.

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Background Papers Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Review of Attendance Standards - Consultation Results – Fire Authority June 2018

Review of Attendance Standards Consultation – Fire Authority December 2017

Appendices None

Implications (please tick ✓ and attach to report)

CORPORATE RISK		LEGAL	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	X
FINANCIAL		POLITICAL	
HEALTH & SAFETY		OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES		CORE BRIEF	
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			

PURPOSE OF REPORT To ask the Panel to agree to suspending the attendance standards of fire appliances to emergency incidents during periods of strike action.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY The Fire Authority agreed its attendance standards at emergency incidents in June 2018.

During periods of Industrial Action there will be reduced appliance availability. This paper is seeking the Panel's agreement to suspend the Service's attendance standards during those times.

A public communications campaign will rolled out with important safety messages. It will be made clear that although there will be a reduced number of appliances available, we will still respond to 999 calls but the public may need to wait longer

for a response than at times when no industrial action is taking place.

RECOMMENDATION

To agree to suspend the Authority's attendance standards during periods of industrial action.

1. Main Issues

- 1.1 The Fire Authority agreed its attendance standards to all emergency incidents in June 2018.

The attendance standards are as follows:

- First arriving appliance at any incident from an 'On-Station response' will arrive within 10 Minutes on 70% of occasions
- First arriving appliance at any incident from an 'On-Call response' will arrive within 15 minutes on 70% of occasions

- 1.2 The Fire Authority has a statutory duty with under Section 2 of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that if an emergency occurs the person or body is able to continue to perform their functions. A full review of the Service's Business Continuity Plan and arrangements to provide a response to emergencies during strike action has been completed.

- 1.3 There will be a reduction in the number of appliances available to respond to emergency incidents which will result in longer response times as the appliances that we will have available will be covering a larger area. Therefore we are unable to guarantee that we will meet the attendance standards of our first arriving appliances. Any emergency calls received during periods of industrial action will be prioritised and we will focus the resources that are available to attend incidents where a life risk has been reported.

- 1.4 A public communications campaign will rolled out with important safety messages. It will be made clear that although there will be a reduced number of appliances available, we will still respond to 999 calls but the public may need to wait longer for a response than at times when no industrial action is taking place. We will ask people to only dial 999 in a genuine emergency. The Service's website will provide information for the public to help keep themselves safe.

- 1.5 We will continue to monitor attendance times to emergency calls during any strike periods and once the period of industrial action has ceased the Service's attendance standards will be immediately reinstated. Firefighters will return to work and the number of fire engines available to respond to emergencies will return to normal.