

SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE		
Report Title	Decision by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority to save £6.4m for 2016-17 & Sixth London Safety Plan (INFORMATION ITEM)	
Key Decision	Yes	Item No. 6
Ward	All	
Contributors	Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney – Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People	
Class		Date: 4 July 2016

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on which decision was taken by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority to save £6.4m for 2016-17, the Council's submitted response to the consultation around the two options for this budget saving, and any available information about drafting of the Sixth London Safety Plan.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Fifth London Safety Plan was drafted in October 2012 where various options for cuts were put forward including reductions to the number of stations, appliances and staff dependent on the reductions in funding. Further savings were required in 2016 and public consultation was undertaken in respect of removal of fire appliances across London. This concluded in February 2016 and Lewisham made formal representations to the consultation. Option B was agreed by the London Mayor.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the report as an update.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Mayor of London proposed to provide funding of £382.4m for the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority in 2016/17, subject to the grant provided by central government for the fire service for next year which is still unknown. £382.4m funding would require savings of £11.5m to be made. The consultation in 2016 sought views on two different options that were put forward to help inform the decision on how those budget savings would be made.
- 4.2 In 2013, London Fire Brigade consulted on the Draft Fifth London Safety Plan (LSP5) which set out how the fire and rescue service in London could be delivered. Following the consultation, changes were made to the draft plan and the Fifth London Safety Plan, as amended, was approved by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority in September 2013. While the Brigade has not previously consulted on meeting the budget, it did so in 2016 as the options proposed operational changes to the service.
- 4.3 Balancing the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority budget for 2016/17
- 4.3.1 There was a requirement for savings of £11.5m to be made to the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority budget in 2016/17.

4.3.2 Over a third of the savings required (£5.1m) would come through departmental and efficiency savings. There were five voluntary redundancies from non-uniformed staff arising from these savings and four operational posts would be replaced with four new non-operational posts, although no operational staff would be made redundant. For the remaining £6.4m, there were two options set out in the consultation document on which views were sought.

4.4 Fire and other incidents in London

4.4.1 Although the number of fires is at its lowest level since records began.

4.4.2 The number of fire deaths in London has been falling steadily since the late 1980s. In 1987, there were 28.5 fire deaths per million of the resident population compared to just 3.4 per million in 2014. In 2014/15, the number of calls received by the Brigade and incidents attended has continued to fall. Comparing 2011/12 and 2014/15:

- emergency calls received – down by 18 per cent or 38,300 fewer
- all incidents attended – down by 18 per cent or 20,800 fewer
- primary (more serious) fires – down by 15 per cent or 2,000 fewer
- secondary (smaller) fires – down by 37 per cent or 5,300 fewer
- shut in lift releases – down by 37 per cent or 2,800 fewer
- false alarms due to automatic fire alarm – down by 15 per cent or 6,100 fewer

4.5 The 13 fire engines

4.5.1 In February 2016 there were 13 fire engines which had been held back from day-to-day deployment since August 2013. They were part of a contingency service of 27 fire engines ready in the event of strike action arising from the FBU's national dispute on fire service pensions. All 27 were removed from stations that had two fire engines, so no fire stations were closed as a result.

4.5.2 As a result of changes made in 2015, there were 13 fire stations that continued to have one of their two fire engines removed. They are: Chelsea, Ealing, Erith, Forest Hill, Holloway, Old Kent Road, Plaistow, Poplar, Romford, Shoreditch, Stratford, Wandsworth and Willesden.

4.5.3 The main difference between the two options put forward in the consultation was around these engines. For both options, it is noted that no borough where average fire engine attendance performance is currently within the London-wide target would go out of target and no borough where performance is currently outside of the London-wide target would get worse.

4.6 Option A (as outlined in the consultation)

4.6.1 Option A recommended putting the 13 fire engines back into service but making savings by establishing alternate crewing at stations with some special appliances. Alternate crewing means that in stations where there is a fire engine and a special appliance there would be one crew for both appliances. This option would see two fire rescue units (FRUs), five aerial appliances and two operational support units (OSUs) being alternate crewed.

4.6.2 Decisions about which special appliances to alternate crew have been based on those which deliver the greatest volume of alternate crewing possible in the shortest period of time. There would be some differences in the vehicles chosen, depending on whether the aim were to optimise the attendance times of fire engines or optimise the attendance times of the special appliances. The difference in the impact on fire engine response times is minimal – no more than a one second increase on London-wide average first and second fire engine attendance times. The differences in the impacts on the London-wide attendance times of the special appliances is no more than 41 seconds in each case.

Optimisation of alternate crewing could be considered in 2016 as part of the Sixth London Safety Plan. The detail can be seen at [Appendix 3 of the Supplementary report to the Budget Update for Authority \(FEP2520A\)](#).

- 4.6.3 The Brigade has continued to meet its London-wide average attendance time target of six minutes for a first fire engine and eight minutes for a second while the 13 fire engines have been out of service. If the 13 fire engines were returned to service, it is believed (based on modeled results) that this would improve average London-wide attendance times by around four seconds for the first fire engine (from 5mins 27secs to 5min 23secs) and by around 18 seconds for the second fire engine (from 6mins 45secs to 6mins 27secs).
- 4.6.4 By its nature, alternate crewing can impact attendance times for fire engines and for special appliances. Officers have used modeling to look at those impacts. This showed that:
- There are minimal impacts on London-wide average first and second fire engine attendance times – no more than a one second increase in any case. The detail can be seen at [appendix 2 of the Appointments and Urgency Committee report on budget consultation \(FEP2548\)](#).
 - There are more significant impacts on the attendance times of the special appliances – with London-wide average increases of between five seconds and one minute ten seconds for the different sorts of special appliances. The detail can be seen at [appendix 2 of the Appointments and Urgency Committee report on budget consultation \(FEP2548\)](#).
- 4.7 Option B (as outlined in the consultation)
- 4.7.1 Option B recommended the permanent removal of the 13 fire engines and reinvesting some of the savings from that into increasing the number of staff available to crew fire rescue units by adding a Watch Manager (A) role on each watch at each station with a fire rescue unit. The detail can be seen at [paragraph 45 - 47 of Budget Update for the Resources Committee \(FEP2520\)](#).
- 4.7.2 Decisions about which fire stations the 13 fire engines came from were based on modelling carried out in 2013 which showed where their removal would have the least impact on emergency response targets. Current incident distribution and demand means the modelling would now give a different list of fire engines which could be removed. The difference in the impact on response times between the two lists is minimal – no more than a one second increase on London-wide average first and second fire engine attendance times. Optimisation of the distribution of all the fire engines in London will be considered in 2016 as part of the Sixth London Safety Plan. The detail can be seen at [Appendix 9 of Budget Update for the Resources Committee \(FEP2520\)](#).
- 4.7.3 The Brigade has continued to meet its London-wide average attendance time target of six minutes for a first fire engine and eight minutes for a second while the 13 fire engines have been out of service. If the 13 fire engines were returned to service, it is believed (based on modelled results) that this would improve average London-wide attendance times by around four seconds for the first fire engine (from 5mins 27secs to 5min 23secs) and by around 18 seconds for the second fire engine (from 6mins 45secs to 6mins 27secs).
- 4.7.4 There would be no impact on attendance times of special appliances.
- 4.7.5 The detailed impacts can be seen at [Annex 3A, 3B and Annex 5 to Appendix 9 of the Resources Committee report \(FEP2520\)](#).

4.8 Summary of Options

- 4.8.1 Option A would return the appliance to Forest Hill, have minimal impact on response times, but may have an impact on response times of specialists units.
- 4.8.2 Option B would result in the loss of the appliance from Forest Hill, improved response times, and have no impact on the response times of specialist units.

5. **Lewisham's Response to the Consultation**

- 5.1 Lewisham Council had undertaken a detailed review of emergency services and noted in the Public Spending report of 2015 that the absence of Forest Hill's second appliance has had a negative impact on the time taken for both the first and second fire crews to arrive across Lewisham.
- 5.2 Since the implementation of Fifth London Safety Plan in 2014 and the closure of Downham fire station the data showed:
- that on average the borough has seen an increase of over half a minute in the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident. This has gone up from 4 minutes 45 seconds in 2012/13 to 5 minutes 18 seconds in 2014/15 an increase of 33 seconds.
 - The borough has seen an increase of 41 seconds for the arrival of the second fire engine; this has gone up from 6 minutes 23 seconds in 2012/13 to 7 minutes 4 seconds in 2014/15.
 - Bellingham and Crofton Park wards have seen increases of over half a minute for the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident.
 - Crofton Park, Forest Hill, Perry Vale and Rushey Green wards have all seen increases of over 1 minute for the second crew to arrive, residents of Perry Vale ward are on average having to wait 2 minutes 48 seconds longer for back up crews to arrive.
 - The removal of the fire engine from Forest Hill would also impact on 3 wards in LB Southwark, East Dulwich and Village wards are having to wait over a minute longer for the second fire engine
- 5.3 Lewisham Council responded that the permanent removal of a fire appliance will only lead to further deterioration in arrival times. It is for this reason that the Council supported Option A.

6. **The Decision**

- 6.1 The London Mayor issued a direction to the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) to adopt Option B to balance the budget gap for 2016/17. Subsequently in March 2016, LFEPA members approved the final budget for 2016/17 which included adopting Option B to meet the budget gap. This option will see:
- The permanent removal of the 13 appliances which have been away from stations since August 2013.
 - Increasing the number of staff available to crew fire rescue units (FRUs).
 - Investing in fire safety equipment for the homes of the most vulnerable.
 - Making a one off payment into the Local Government Pension Scheme in order to reduce the amount that needs to be paid in by the Brigade each subsequent year, reducing future budget pressures.

6.2 The 13 appliances will be permanently removed from Chelsea, Ealing, Erith, Forest Hill, Holloway, Old Kent Road, Plaistow, Poplar, Romford, Shoreditch, Stratford, Wandsworth and Willesden fire stations.

7. The London Safety Plan 6

7.1 A decision has been made to extend the current London Safety Plan (LSP) until March 2017. LSP5 covers the period from April 2013 – March 2016 but due to the Mayoral elections in May 2016 and the possibility of a new Chair of LFEPA being appointed, LSP5 was extended. This allows the new Mayor of London and new Chair of LFEPA to have involvement in LSP6.

7.2 Additionally, the Home Office has announced that following a public consultation about closer working between the emergency services, the government will bring forward legislation to abolish the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and give the Mayor of London direct responsibility for the fire and rescue service in the capital. Members of LFEPA recommended this change during the consultation process, as did the Mayor of London, London Councils and the London Assembly.

7.3 Fire responsibilities will be incorporated within the existing Greater London Authority structures, including creating a Deputy Mayor for Fire, creating a statutory London Fire Commissioner and a new Committee of the London Assembly that will provide scrutiny and oversight.

7.4 London Safety Plan 6 will be structured around six paired aims:

- Prevention and Protection
- Response and Resilience
- People and Resources

7.5 The paired aims will be supported by principles covering Inclusion, Sustainability, Collaboration, Health & Safety and Accountability and will form the basis for the London Fire Brigade's approach to their work, both internally and externally.

7.6 The draft plan is scheduled to be reported to LFEPA in November 2016.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 This is managed and monitored by LFEPA.

9. Legal & Human Rights Implications

9.1 The Council is under a number of statutory obligations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to formulate and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder; the Anti Social Behaviour 2003 requires the Council as a local housing authority to have policies and procedures to deal with anti-social behaviour and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places the Council under a duty to have, when carrying out its functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

9.2 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

9.3 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the local authority to do anything that it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of all or any persons within the local authority's area.

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 Developing safe and secure communities is central to the work of the Council as a whole. Reducing and preventing crime, reducing fear of crime and supporting vulnerable communities is critical to the well-being of all our citizens.

11. Crime and Disorder Implication

11.1 Section 17 places a duty on partners to do all they can to reasonably prevent crime and disorder in their area. The level of crime and its impact is influenced by the decisions and activities taken in the day-to-day of local bodies and organisations. The responsible authorities are required to provide a range of services in their community from policing, fire protection, planning, consumer and environmental protection, transport and highways. They each have a key statutory role in providing these services and, in carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area.

12. Environmental Implications

12.1 Where appropriate, Key Decisions in relation to impact on environmental services, are consulted about and activity agreed before proceeding.

For further information on this report please contact Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney, Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People, on 020 8314 9569.