



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

OPERATIONAL COVER PROPOSALS – CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 26 September 2014

Purpose of Report:

To present the outcomes of the consultation on the proposals to reduce the operational fleet.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) is facing significant financial pressures due to on-going reductions in Government grant. Having already responded to reductions of £5m since 2009, a further £2.4m of savings needs to be secured by 2017.
- 1.2 At the meeting of the Fire Authority on 28 February 2014, the Chief Fire Officer presented a report, 'Balancing the Budget in Future Years', identifying a range of proposals that could achieve the required £2.4m of savings (see Appendix A). Members will recall that all areas of the organisation will be revisited to identify possible efficiencies and that there is a realistic expectation of achieving savings in the region of £1m from operational fire stations.
- 1.3 In response to that report the Authority agreed to consult on proposals affecting six stations, namely Central, Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill, and Warsop. The Authority also agreed that the Policy and Strategy Committee should consider and approve the consultation documentation and process.
- 1.4 At the meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee on 25 April 2014, the Chief Fire Officer presented a report 'Consultation on the Reductions in the Operational Fleet' (see Appendix B). In response to the report the Committee agreed the consultation approach and tasked the Chief Fire Officer with presenting a report to this meeting identifying options for reductions in operational resources.

2. REPORT

FINANCIAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 In 2009/10 the budget of the Authority was £48m, by 2014/15 this had fallen to £42.9m, with inflation applied this has required savings in the region of £8m. The predicted funding available for 2016/17 is estimated at £41.5m, but the budget requirement, taking inflation in to account is £43.9m. This leaves a shortfall of £2.4m. It should be noted that this shortfall has been calculated after assuming £800k will be raised from 1.9% increases in Council Tax in each of the years 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 2.2 To meet the demands of the previous £8m efficiency savings, Members will be aware that the Chief Fire Officer has already implemented a number of cost saving strategies, including a significant organisational restructure of support functions, reduced the numbers of managers by 25%, removing four fire appliances, renegotiating contracts and reviewing revenue and capital budgets.
- 2.3 Members may also be aware that over £34m of the budget is directly attributed to employee costs, of which approximately 80% is allocated to uniformed roles. Therefore savings in the order of £2.4m can only be achieved by further reducing staff numbers.

2.4 This report aims to secure savings in the region of £1m to contribute towards the £2.4m deficit. In real terms this means that one whole time appliance from Central, Highfields or Stockhill, and one or two retained appliances from Collingham, Mansfield or Warsop must be removed.

SERVICE DELIVERY CONTEXT

2.5 The fundamental review of fire cover in 2010 (FCR 2010) identified a sustained and significant reduction in operational activity from a peak in 2003. This trend has continued and in 2013 the Service responded to less than 10,000 incidents.

2.6 The table below shows that the number of incidents attended in 2013 has reduced to less than 41% of the total in 2003. Numbers for the first half of 2014 are also 3.5% lower than at the same period last year.

Total Number of Incidents in Nottinghamshire										
2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
23,949	18,910	18,128	18,110	17,502	15,808	15,199	13,132	13,112	10,323	9,765

2.7 The sustained reduction in the number of incidents is in part due to the risk reduction activities undertaken by the Service in conjunction with its partners. This important 'front line' work focuses on those most at risk of death and injury from fire, and is a key area of work which will be maintained going forward.

2.8 False alarms continue to account for over 43% of all incidents. Approximately 38% are reported as fires and the remaining 19% categorised as Special Service Calls. See table below for the full break down.

Total Number of Incidents by Type						
Incident Summary		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
False Alarm	Malicious	407	305	262	226	143
	Good Intent	1,798	1,601	1,485	1,302	1,225
	Apparatus	4,110	3,339	3,239	3,016	2,798
	Total	6,315	5,245	4,986	4,544	4,166
Fire	Primary	2,452	2,133	1,965	1,661	1,622
	Secondary	3,882	3,440	4,073	1,963	1,978
	Chimney	87	92	57	79	76
	Total	6,421	5,665	6,095	3,703	3,676
Special Service	RTC	745	611	489	485	478
	Others	1,718	1,611	1,542	1,591	1,445
	Total	2,463	2,222	2,031	2,076	1,923
Total Incidents		15,199	13,132	13,112	10,323	9,765

2.9 The demand on resources to deal with incidents is also relatively low, with 9150 incidents being resolved by the attendance of one, two or three appliances. The remaining 615 incidents required four or more appliances, with just five incidents in 2013 requiring ten or more appliances.

- 2.10 Members should also note that local and national mutual aid agreements exist across the fire and rescue service community which enable the mobilisation of assets to deal with major incidents. These agreements were utilised earlier this year to respond to the Thames Valley and Somerset flooding incidents, and led to the mobilisation of resources from twenty-five fire and rescue authorities.
- 2.11 The on-going industrial action has also demonstrated that for the majority of times the Service is able to deal with normal levels of operational activity with a reduced number of strategically deployed resources. This gives the Chief Fire Officer confidence that removing the number of appliances required to make the savings will not significantly affect overall operational effectiveness.

WORKFORCE CONTEXT

- 2.12 The current establishment levels and projected retirement profile provides an opportunity for the Authority to make the reductions in the operational fleet, whilst at the same time mitigating the impact on employees.
- 2.13 If the recommendations of this report are accepted there will be no requirement to consider redundancy for wholetime firefighters, as post deletions will be managed through normal turnover.
- 2.14 All affected retained employees will be offered the option of being re-deployed to wholetime firefighter roles (salary £29k), relocating to another retained area where vacancies exist through the provision of up to £8k relocation assistance or accessing a redundancy package.
- 2.15 Any affected dual contract employees will maintain their wholetime role and offered the opportunity of relocating to another retained area where vacancies exist through the provision of up to £8k relocation assistance or accessing a redundancy package appropriate to their retained employment.
- 2.16 In the event that no wholetime posts are removed, a recruitment process will be required that will demand significant resource in both human and financial terms. This could also lead to the requirement for compulsory redundancies in the future if there is the financial imperative to quickly reduce expenditure.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.17 The Authority agreed to consult on the proposals in line with their own consultation strategy which had been developed and agreed by the Policy and Strategy Committee and had been formally adopted in February 2013.
- 2.18 The Service is a member of the Fire Services Consultation Association and Opinion Research Services (ORS) is the sole provider of consultation services under a national framework contract. ORS have undertaken all previous consultation in relation to the FCR 2010 outcomes and has a sound understanding of the Service.

2.19 On advice from ORS the consultation has been wide ranging and used multiple opportunities for engagement. This has included printed and social media campaigns, communications with our partners, direct correspondence with councillors and MPs, an online questionnaire, public meetings, targeted forums and street clinics.

CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

2.20 The consultation process has resulted in 4663 questionnaires completed, 86 attendance at forums, 69 individual responses being received and petitions totalling 7964 signatures. In terms of engagement with members of the public this has been the most effective consultation process to date.

2.21 The report on the consultation outcomes which has been produced by ORS is appended to this report in full (see Appendix C). In summary, it details the dates and activities undertaken and presents the sentiments and judgements of respondents and forum/focus group participants. It does include some verbatim comments in an attempt to capture the view of everyone concerned.

2.22 A general observation is that the public, as could be anticipated, are against the reduction in resources, however, within the focus groups where more information is put forward and a greater understanding of the issues is developed, there is more acceptance of the proposals given the efficiency savings that are required.

2.23 The outcomes also reflect that the Service is recognised to be more than just an operational response service. Clear messages are evident that the presence of resources and in particular stations, provide a sense of public value. This reflects the ethos of the Authority, and the significant effort by the Service to have a broader impact within communities with regard to risk reduction and social value activities.

WHOLETIME DUTY APPLIANCES

2.24 The consultation sought views on removing an appliance from one of the three two-pump wholetime stations within the Service. This would create savings of £780k and lead to the reduction of 20 firefighter posts.

2.25 These options were proposed due to the significant number of wholetime resources that cover the City/conurbation area of Nottingham, the close proximity of other resources, and that the attendance of the first appliance would only be marginally affected. This was recognised by those who took part in the consultation forums with a preference for savings to be made in this way.

2.26 With regards to the second appliances, Highfields station is positioned in the lowest risk area and responds to the least number of working incidents per year (263). Stockhill is positioned in the highest risk area and responds to the highest number of working incidents (483). Central is in a relatively high risk area and responds to a high number of working incidents (456)

- 2.27 It must also be noted that plans have now been approved for the relocation of Central to the London Road area of the City which will position resources closer to the risk areas, and potentially increase the number of calls.
- 2.28 The overall consultation metrics demonstrate strongest resistance to the removal of appliances from Stockhill in comparison to Highfields and Central.

RETAINED DUTY APPLIANCES

- 2.29 The consultation sought views on removing retained appliances from three locations, namely Collingham, Mansfield and Warsop. The rationale for inclusion in the consultation and potential savings vary dependant on local circumstances.
- 2.30 Collingham
Collingham was selected as this is located in a low area of risk and is the appliance that responds to the lowest number of incidents in the county. Should this appliance be removed it would lead to the closure of the station, create savings of £135k per annum and affect 13 employees.
- 2.31 Collingham responded to 40 working incidents in their area during 2013, 19 of which were in support of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service. This very small number of incidents reflects the relative low level of risk. However, the impact of removing the appliance would see initial attendance times to some remote rural areas increasing by up to eight minutes.
- 2.32 Responses to the consultation questionnaire showed the least resistance to this station being closed, however, the focus groups and qualitative responses reflected significant resistance to the proposals with great emphasis being made on the social value of the station in such a remote location.
- 2.33 Arguments were also made on the relative isolation of the area and the impact on response times. This is compounded by the River Trent to the west, and the railway level crossings along the main arterial routes. Recent announcements by Government have confirmed the likely increase in rail traffic in this area.
- 2.34 Mansfield
Mansfield currently has one wholtime and one retained crewed appliance. The retained appliance was selected as this resource responds to the lowest number of incidents as a second appliance, and will have negligible impact on initial attendance times. Its removal would leave one wholtime appliance at the station, create savings of £125k per annum and affect 12 employees.
- 2.35 Mansfield retained appliance responded to 52 working incidents during 2013, the majority of these were in support of the wholtime crewed appliance from the station. This small number of incidents reflects the location of other resources that are able to respond to parts of Mansfield, and also in part due to the lack of day-time availability of the retained section.
- 2.36 Questionnaire responses were very similar to Collingham regarding the level of resistant to the removal of the appliance. The forums showed a preference

to the removal of this resource compared to the closure of Warsop or Collingham.

2.37 Members should also note that due to operational imperatives the Chief Fire Officer temporarily removed the Mansfield appliance in November 2013 to be used for contingency training and provide cover during periods of strike action undertaken by the Fire Brigades' Union. As the dispute is still unresolved this appliance has not yet been returned.

2.38 Warsop

Warsop was selected due to the close proximity of a number of wholetime resources and the minimal impact on initial attendance times. Should this appliance be removed it would lead to the closure of the station, create savings of £175k per annum and affect 17 employees.

2.39 The recent upgrading of Edwinstowe to wholetime crewing has seen call numbers for Warsop reduce by 50%. In 2013 they responded to 99 working incidents. If the appliance was removed, initial attendance times could increase by up to three minutes to parts of the Warsop area.

2.40 Within the focus groups and qualitative responses there was significant resistance to removing the appliance with recognition that the station provides a broader value than just responding to incidents.

2.41 There were also observations that if Mansfield's appliance was removed, then Warsop must remain in place due to the relative proximity.

SUMMARY

2.42 The savings suggested within this report will be contributing towards the £2.4m of savings required for 2017. The remaining efficiencies will be sought from all other areas of the Service as suggested within the 'Balancing the Budget in Future Years' report of 28 February 2014.

2.43 Members will not be surprised that the responses to questionnaires have shown communities are concerned about any reductions within the operational fleet, with two-thirds of respondents disagreeing with the proposals. However, the sustained budgetary pressures upon the Authority, and in recognition that a significant amount of finances are committed to operational resources, means that reductions are inevitable.

2.44 The FCR 2010 provided a robust assessment of risk and relative disposition of resources within the county. This independently verified assessment, together with the collation and analysis of the most up to date data demonstrates that the processes in place to reduce risk are effective.

2.45 This is reinforced by the downward trend in incidents despite previous reductions being made within the operational fleet. Furthermore, any changes to the operational resourcing model will be the subject of continual review and monitoring to ensure that changes were appropriate.

- 2.46 The educational and social value activities undertaken by the Authority have a significant impact as communities consider the Service to be much more than just an operational response organisation. These critical activities will continue despite the overall reductions in the capacity of the Service.
- 2.47 It is clear that for robust judgements to be made, consideration must be given to the operational activity of resources, the potential savings available, the consultation metrics and public value of the assets.
- 2.48 With regards to the wholetime appliances, there is a broad correlation amongst the factors that would suggest the removal of Highfields second appliance will have the least impact. Operationally it responds to the least number of incidents and would not affect initial attendance times. This outcome would contribute £780k towards the £2.4m savings target.
- 2.49 In terms of the retained resources, there is correlation that supports the removal of Mansfield's second appliance. There is limited impact on initial attendance, and its removal over the last ten months has not generated any operational concerns. Consultation outcomes were the least resistant to this proposal when consideration is given to the social impact issues associated with the closure of a fire station. This outcome would contribute £125k towards the £2.4m savings target.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The main financial implications are identified within the body of the report. However in summary, the Service has to meet a budget deficit of circa £2.4m by 2016/17. The options available within this report enable savings of £905k to be achieved by 2015/16 with some in-year savings for 2014/15 which will help with transitional costs.
- 3.2 It has been previously suggested that savings of approximately £1m could be achieved through removing operational resources, however the recommendations of this report can only realise £905k. The shortfall of £95k will therefore be considered within the broader areas of the 'Balancing the Budget in Future Years' report of February 2014.
- 3.3 The costs associated with the consultation have been met from within the existing budget for consultation.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are significant human resources implications arising from any decision to remove appliances from service. The potential impact on employees is identified within the main body of the report.
- 4.2 All Service policies will be followed to implement any agreed outcomes, which will include thorough consultation with individual employees and their representatives.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As the Service is a public sector body, it is subject to the public sector equality duty and, as it is proposing significant amendments to the establishment or to the service delivery model, it must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Service has fulfilled this requirement by undertaking an equality impact assessment.

5.2 The equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix D and it has identified that, although the proposals do not provide any discernible positive impact for protected groups, nor do they have any disproportionate negative impact either.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that “it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area”. This report does not contain any implications which would affect that duty.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority has a statutory duty to maintain, train, equip and mobilise a Fire Service as well as provide appropriate fire safety advice to the community. These duties are contained in Section 2 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

7.2 Part 3, Section 21, of the same Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a Framework and it is this Framework that places a duty on Fire and Rescue Authorities to produce a plan which identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect its community. This plan is known as the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

7.3 The reviewing and updating of operational cover is conducive with those legal duties and does not place the Authority at any risk of breaking those duties.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The update and analysis of the risk profile and the operational activity levels are part of the Service's risk management process. The reduction in response is based on a clear evidential framework and in line with an externally accredited methodology.
- 8.2 Failure to appropriately resource the organisation in response to community risk and requirements puts a financial risk on the Fire Authority, in that the budget deficit will not be met. The actions proposed in this report mitigate this risk.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Agree to remove from operational service the second appliance from Highfields and delete 20 wholetime posts from the establishment.
- 9.2 Agree to remove from operational service the second appliance from Mansfield and delete 12 Retained posts from the establishment.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
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Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority

BALANCING THE BUDGET IN FUTURE YEARS

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 28 February 2014

Purpose of Report:

To present proposals, highlight strategies and seek approval for actions to ensure Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority is in the best position possible to set a balanced budget in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The proposals for budget for the forthcoming financial year 2014/15 will see the costs required by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) to administer the services set at circa £43 million. Over the following two years up to March 2017, if no adjustments to establishment and service delivery are made, the required budget will increase to just under £44 million, leaving a shortfall of circa £2.4 million (subject to approval of Council Tax increases). These figures show that NFRS will have to make considerable savings on top of those already made, to continue to deliver the service it presently does, to the communities of Nottinghamshire.
- 1.2 This report serves to outline the initial decisions that the Fire Authority may need to make in terms of addressing this financial shortfall, along with making recommendations regarding future strategies which should be considered, in order to maintain an acceptable level of service delivery.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Since 2010 the budget requirement for NFRS has decreased from just over £48 million to the outline requirement predicted in 2016/17 of circa £44 million. This has been due to a number of cost reduction strategies which have been employed, including reducing the number of operational appliances, voluntary redundancy processes, contract negotiations and Service restructures. With the expected budget available due to only reach just over £41 million in 2016/17 the Service will have to find another round of savings equivalent to £2.4 million (subject to the approval of the proposed Council Tax increases elsewhere on this agenda) over the next three years.
- 2.2 It is also important to note that recent statements by the Chancellor in relation to the deficit have identified further cuts in public sector spending. With major departments such as health being 'ring-fenced' it is likely that local government, including fire and rescue, are unlikely to experience any unexpected windfall, and therefore working towards the identified target savings would not only be prudent, but also essential.
- 2.3 Prudent levels of balances have been utilised to manage through the transition to date and it is proposed that this strategy continues. By starting to look at options early during 2014/15, decisions made will have the opportunity to be fully implemented or have commenced by February 2016 when the third year budget has to be set.
- 2.4 The Fire Authority can take comfort from some very positive outcomes. As reports elsewhere on this agenda show, the number of incidents attended has dropped below 10,000 for the first time, and actions taken to reduce resources which were identified in the 2010 Fire Cover Review (FCR) have had no discernible impact on the communities.

- 2.5 However, the ability to continue to reduce capacity is not unlimited and recommendations within this report will seek to guide the Fire Authority over how the budget requirements should be met, but also future strategies on utilising and deploying future resources.

OPERATIONAL FIRE STATIONS

- 2.6 As previously demonstrated to the Fire Authority in reports around the outcomes of the FCR, the Service has the benefit of a limited amount of over-capacity in its front-line operational resources. Since 2010 some resources have been reduced to assist with the budgetary challenges the Service has faced.
- 2.7 A separate report at this meeting highlights the continuing trend of reducing incidents and operational responses. This has been the outcome of excellent work to drive down risk within the community, carried out by all staff within the organisation and through partnership with public, private and third sector organisations.
- 2.8 This trend demonstrates confidence in the FCR outcomes and the Fire Authority should consider consulting on further reductions in the operational fleet to contribute to budgetary pressures. A realistic saving of circa £1 million could be achievable.
- 2.9 Therefore, giving due consideration to operational activity and risk outcomes, and the need to reduce expenditure, it is proposed that the level of operational cover at the following stations be subject to thorough consultation in line with the Fire Authority agreed framework:
- Central;
 - Collingham;
 - Highfields;
 - Mansfield;
 - Stockhill;
 - Warsop.
- 2.10 If approved, this consultation process will provide the opportunity for the Chief Fire Officer to provide an options report to a future Fire Authority meeting to enable robust and informed decisions to be made regarding any reductions within the operational fleet.

CONTROL SERVICES

- 2.11 The current project with Derbyshire and Leicestershire to deliver a single system across three locations is in an advanced stage. Once fully implemented (during 2014), the opportunity for one facility, in one location, servicing three Services is a reality.
- 2.12 Whilst no firm decision is sought on location, senior officers request the approval of the Fire Authority to enter into formal negotiation with Leicestershire and Derbyshire regarding this option.

- 2.13 If a single location provision could be established by 2017, it is anticipated that this could contribute a minimum £300-400k of revenue savings to each Service individually, along with reducing capital and maintenance costs associated with maintaining three separate locations.

MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION

- 2.14 The number and role of uniformed Managers within NFRS is determined by a variety of factors including operational supervision, operational incident profiles, incident command structures, activity levels, staffing numbers and managerial requirements.
- 2.15 As incidents have continued to decline, and with staffing levels predicted to fall below 1000, management will review and revise current structures and arrangements with a view to implementing a revised command and management structure for operational staff. This review will also look to see what efficiencies can be made. A target saving of circa £700-800k will be set to be achieved by March 2017.

SUPPORT SERVICES

- 2.16 Currently NFRS spends approximately 16% of its revenue budget on salaries of non-uniformed staff. Whilst not an exact and defined target, it would be appropriate to at least seek an equitable saving from this area to contribute to the overall requirements. The approach thus far to reducing non-uniformed posts has involved a combination of vacancy deletions, voluntary redundancies and post conversions. Officers now seek the approval of the Fire Authority to extend this to include a compulsory redundancy process with an annual target saving of between £300-350k to be achieved by the end of the 2016/17 financial year.

INITIAL SUMMARY

- 2.17 All of the above proposals for consideration have a combined return that would meet the requirements of £2.4 million as per current financial predictions contained within the budget report presented elsewhere on this agenda. It may not be possible to achieve all of these savings by the end of 2016/17 financial year but it is important that strategies and an approach is agreed so that the appropriate processes can be put in place.

FUTURE OPTIONS

- 2.18 Looking forward beyond 2016/17 it is also recommended that the following approach is considered by the Fire Authority with a view to assisting and developing its service delivery model in future years.
- 2.19 The current risk model that the Service manages its resources by is developed on a high, medium and low risk approach. Despite this development the current standard of attendance employed by the Service is to respond to all incidents within 10 minutes on over 90% of occasions. This was set in 2004 following the adoption of the inaugural Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

- 2.20 On the basis that the Service is now more developed with its operational intelligence and statistical analysis than in 2004, it is proposed that during 2015 a full update is undertaken in relation to the 2010 FCR. Part of this review should look at the standard attendance time, with a view to addressing high, medium and low risk areas accordingly.
- 2.21 For example, the Fire Authority could adopt an approach of attending different risk areas in different ways as opposed to a standard response across the county. The benefits to such an approach would be that the Service would look to staff its resources in future based upon the risk criteria which would give necessary flexibilities within constrained budget parameters.
- 2.22 Presently the Service only employs two duty systems for operational staff, wholtime and retained. The Fire Authority has given approval for managers to look at other options such as enhanced crewing, and this will dovetail nicely into this work around appliance availability, risk and the community's needs.
- 2.23 If the work is undertaken during 2015, outcomes can be delivered to the Fire Authority by budget setting in February 2016. This would allow for decisions to be considered beyond the current proposals which take the Service up to the 2016/17 financial year.
- 2.24 In addition to the above proposals and recommendations, a number of other work streams will be looked at by Officers to establish what further savings can be achieved. These include joint back-office functions with other Services, sharing of specialist operational advice, reviewing the property strategy for rationalisation, re-build or disposal, and reviewing current contracts and arrangements for further efficiencies.
- 2.25 There is no doubt that given the reductions already made by the Service, the challenge to make further savings could appear daunting. However, the community is as safe from fire today as any other period in the history of NFRS. By taking a measured approach, over a three year period, the transition can be managed through with as minimal impact on staff and the community as is possible. The implementation can also be safely monitored.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications of this report are the need to find approximately £2.4 million in further savings by the end of the 2016/17 financial year, and to develop a strategy to address potential reductions beyond this point

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 There are significant human resources implications arising from this report from redundancy to contract negotiations with the representative bodies. The Service has a number of procedures in place which it has already used to good effect to minimise the impact upon staff. All of this will be managed by the internal human resources department to reduce any external costs.

- 4.2 In terms of learning and development implications, the Service will need to ensure its staff are appropriately trained and equipped with the requisite skills to perform their role.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There will be a likelihood of some equalities implications arising from such a period of change. These will be managed by the Service to ensure that no particular sector of the organisation or community is disadvantaged by any decisions made.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

Fire and rescue authorities have a duty to exercise their functions in a way that prevents crime and disorder in their area.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Fire Authority has to satisfy its legal obligations under various legislation, but primarily the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Any proposals to meet the budget constraints will be assessed to ensure the Fire Authority will not be in breach of these legal duties.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The primary risk to the Fire Authority arising from this report is one of finance and being able to balance a diminishing budget. The proposals and recommendations contained within this report are part of a short, medium and long term strategy that will keep the Service viable and continue to meet public expectations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Fire Authority consider the contents of this report and agree to the following:

- 9.1 That Officers be tasked with consulting on the potential of reducing operational resources from within the locations identified at 2.9 and providing an options report to a future Fire Authority meeting on the outcomes;
- 9.2 To task Officers with approaching partner Services with a view to implementing a single Control facility;
- 9.3 To task Officers with reviewing the operational management structure;
- 9.4 Approve Officers to use compulsory redundancy processes, where appropriate; in conjunction with voluntary redundancy, post conversions, and vacancy deletions.

- 9.5 Task Officers to undertake an updated Fire Cover Review during 2015 with a view to considering a risk based attendance standard based upon high, medium and low risk outcomes.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



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Fire & Rescue Service
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Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee

CONSULTATION ON REDUCTIONS IN THE OPERATIONAL FLEET

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 25 April 2014

Purpose of Report:

To present to Members the draft consultation document for consideration and agreement.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the Fire Authority meeting of 28 February 2014, the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) was tasked with developing a consultation document on budget proposals which require public consultation.
- 1.2 Integrated risk management planning (IRMP) had initially been supported with guidance notes on what Fire and Rescue Services should be expected to reasonably consult upon with communities. This included proposed changes to the delivery or number of response appliances and locations. The Fire Authority has maintained the application of that initial good practice.
- 1.3 The Fire Authority previously agreed and implemented a consultation framework following extensive work between elected Members and Officers. The Framework provides a range of approaches for inclusion in any future consultation activity.
- 1.4 To ensure the Authority delivers a robust consultation process it has and continues to work in partnership with Opinion Research Services (ORS) who have extensive experience of consultation across the public sector.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has engaged in regular public consultation for some years and with the adoption of the consultation framework provides a clear structure for Officers to apply.
- 2.2 The attached appendix is a draft consultation document which will be the visible element in public circulation. As always this is only one aspect of consultation and it is proposed that the activities below will also be part of the wider consultation process:
 - Media awareness and engagement
 - Deliberative focus groups – directly affected stakeholders
 - On street/market place public engagement
 - Visits to business
 - Meetings and briefings with staff and their representatives.
- 2.3 ORS has been commissioned to facilitate the deliberative sessions (focus groups/forums) and will be closely supported by NFRS Officers. All other events will be Officer led and any information collated will be passed to ORS for their inclusion in the final report to Members.
- 2.4 Consultation processes would normally run for a twelve week period and the start date for this will be dependent upon the agreement of Policy and Strategy Committee on the attached draft document. Results of the consultation process will be reported back to the Fire Authority meeting in September and

allow Members to consider any outcomes and influence future decision making within the budget setting process.

- 2.5 Targeted consultation events will take account of those areas directly affected by the budget proposal report and indirect activity will seek to publicise and communicate proposals to the wider community.
- 2.6 Corporate Services will be maintaining a single consultation register of all activity that will be presented in the Fire Authority update report, highlighting the level of engagement that has been achieved throughout the process.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Corporate Services are working with ORS in the development of key consultation events and these will be reported back to Authority, however, ORS continue to offer preferential rates via the long standing arrangement from the Fire Services Consultation Association (FSCA).
- 3.2 Consultation budgets have been agreed and these are considered to be proportionate to the scale of consultation required on the external budget proposals. At this stage the cost of external support is estimated to be circa £20-25k, though this will be clarified by ORS once agreed and Members will be updated within a later report.
- 3.3 The 'Balancing the Budget in Future Years' report presented to the Fire Authority on 28 February 2014 identified the need to save £2.4 million over the next three years. Future decisions around operational resources are key to addressing those issues.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report highlights the proposed consultation approach for elected Members' consideration and does not in itself present any additional human resources and learning and development implications at this stage.
- 4.2 Following completion of the consultation process, implications will be identified and NFRS has a suite of agreed policies and procedures that it will apply as appropriate – this will also include ensuring Members are updated of implications.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because this report seeks to provide a recommended approach to consultation. Officers are developing a consultation approach to ensure that all communities and stakeholders are part of an inclusive process.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

By applying the principles of the CFA Consultation Framework to this next phase of public consultation the Authority will adhere to existing good practice and reduce the risk of wider challenge over its approach to community inclusion, for example judicial review over future decisions made regarding response resources.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 By continuing to apply the established approach through the consultation framework, the Authority will be best placed to manage any potential challenge to the actual consultation process when making future decisions based upon its results.
- 8.2 NFRS has been recognised for consultation good practice nationally and the proposed draft will continue to hold the image and reputation of the organisation in good light with those affected communities in which services are delivered.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 9.1 Consider the draft consultation approach and document, and support the Chief Fire Officer to implement the consultation process.
- 9.2 Task the Chief Fire Officer with presenting a report to the Fire Authority meeting in September 2014 identifying options for reductions in operational resources.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Balancing the budget

2014



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Background

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service protects and serves the communities of the county 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

The ways in which we do that have changed over the years and it may surprise some to find that the majority of our time is taken up by helping to prevent fires and other incidents, and educate people at home and work about fire safety.

This work has led to a dramatic fall in emergency call outs and our firefighters now attend 35 per cent fewer incidents than they did 10 years ago.

We are very proud of our successes during these challenging times.

However, when people need us

most, we continue to provide a first class emergency response and do our best to protect people's lives and properties.

Despite this success, there is still more we need to do. In 2010, we reviewed where and how we use our crews and equipment to see how we could best serve the community through a Fire Cover Review – we recognised in our Service Plan for 2010 to 2013 the need to target resources appropriately to the changing environment.

We continue to face financial challenges of a £2.4million shortfall between 2015 and 2017 and this means we must review services and make savings while continuing to keep people safe.

Changes have already been

made to achieve savings in recent years – the numbers of managers has been reduced by 25 per cent and changes have been made to the way we crew some stations with fire engines being reduced from 36 to 32.

We have been able to do this and will be able to do more because our staff, crews and equipment are there to serve the whole county, not just one small area and can be moved around to make sure our resources are in the right place at the right time.

On average, we have six crews responding to emergency calls at any one time and this leaves more than 20 crews around the rest of the county to respond to incidents.

At a meeting in February 2014, the Fire Authority committed

to finding some of the £2.4m deficit by looking once more at the Fire Cover Review and at the areas where we can further streamline.

These are challenging times and there are difficult decisions to make, but we are confident that the proposals we put before you represent a positive way forward in responding to changes in the environment we work in and the financial pressure we continue to face.

This is your service and you have a voice. The Fire Authority is seeking your views – whether as an individual resident, a business or as part of one of our partner organisations through this consultation.

Please read through the document and let us know what you think.

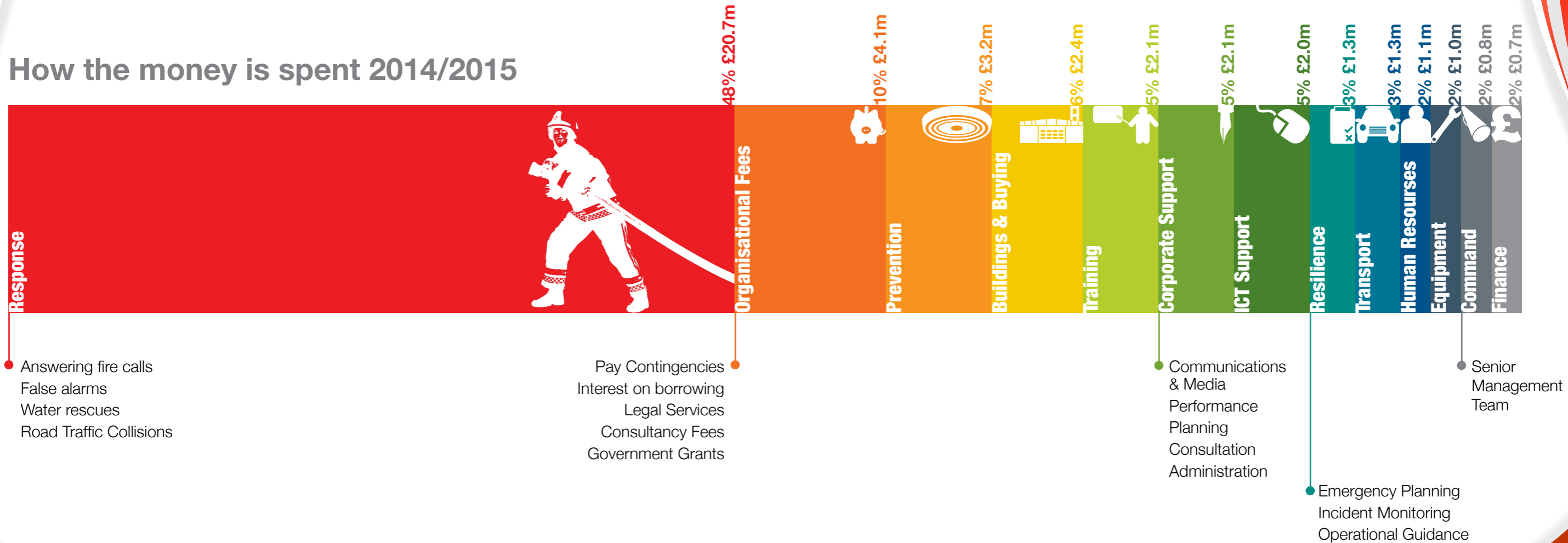


John Buckley
Chief Fire Officer



Cllr Darrell Pulk
Chair of Nottinghamshire and City
of Nottingham Fire Authority

How the money is spent 2014/2015





Proposals

A number of proposals are made in this document – please be clear that the Fire Authority is not suggesting that all engines should be removed but that a £1million saving could be made from this area.

Wholetime Duty System – Fire engines crewed by wholetime firefighters who respond immediately to incidents. Wholetime firefighters are available 24 hours day, 365 days a year.

Retained Duty System – Fire engines crewed by on-call firefighters, who respond to fire calls as and when required. On call firefighters are summoned to their local fire station by radio pager, and then proceed to the incident.

Proposal A - Central

Two Fire Engines - wholtime duty system

What:

Remove Fire Engine Two from Central Fire Station.

How:

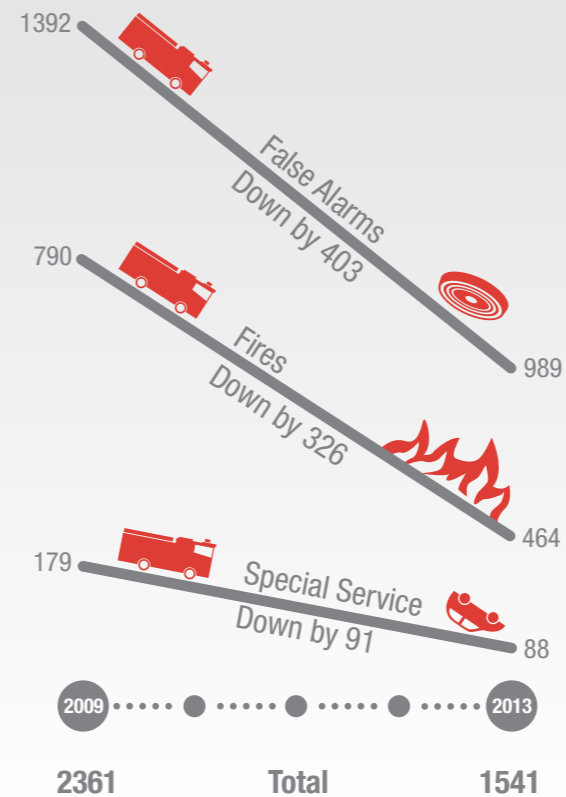
Remove Fire Engine Two leaving one existing wholtime fire engine crewed 24 hours a day, every day. This would continue to be supported by other wholtime fire engines from the surrounding areas with an immediate response.

Saving:

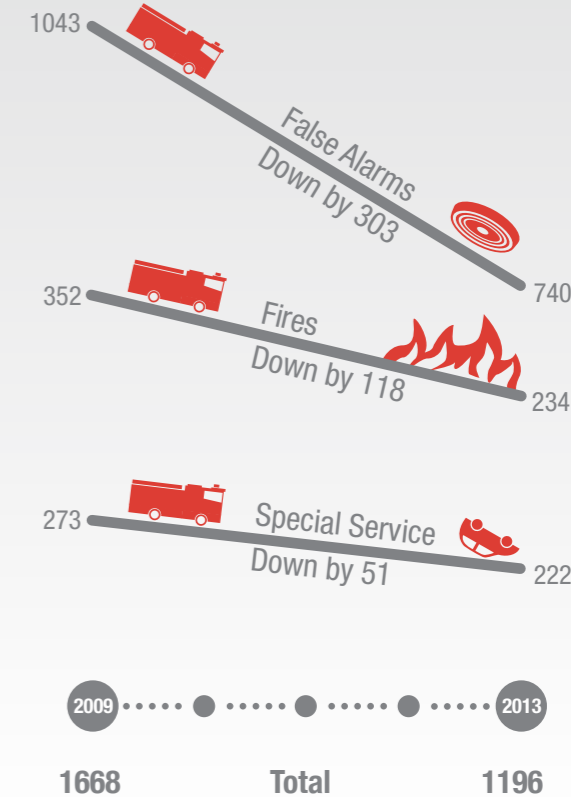
£780k - this is an estimated saving based on salary and fire engine costs.



Fire Engine One



Fire Engine Two



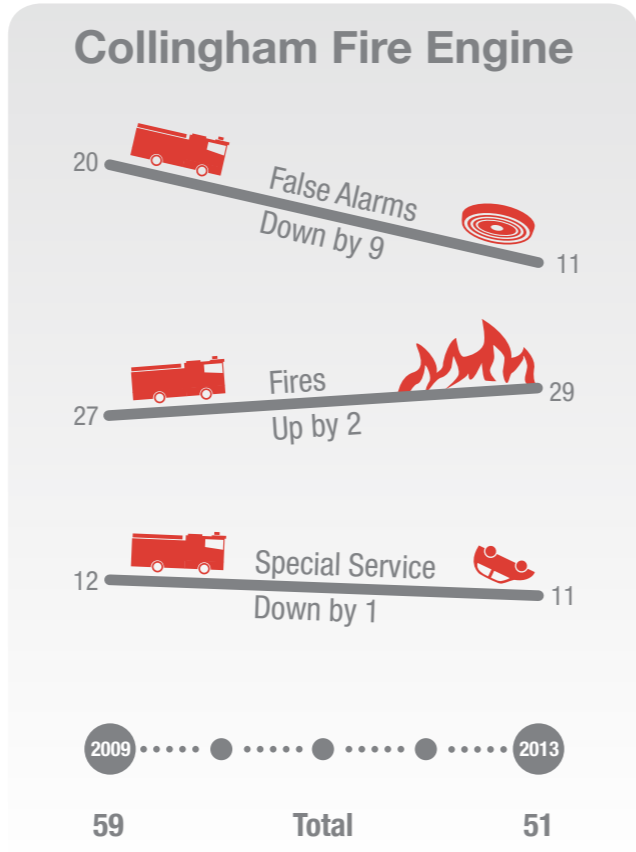
Proposal B - Collingham

One Fire Engine - retained duty system

What:
Close Collingham retained Fire Station, which is currently crewed by on call firefighters.

How:
The station will be closed and incidents in the Collingham area will be attended by fire engines from the surrounding areas.

Saving:
£135k - this is an estimated saving based on salary, fire engine and fire station running costs.



Proposal C - Highfields

Two Fire Engines - wholtime duty system

What:

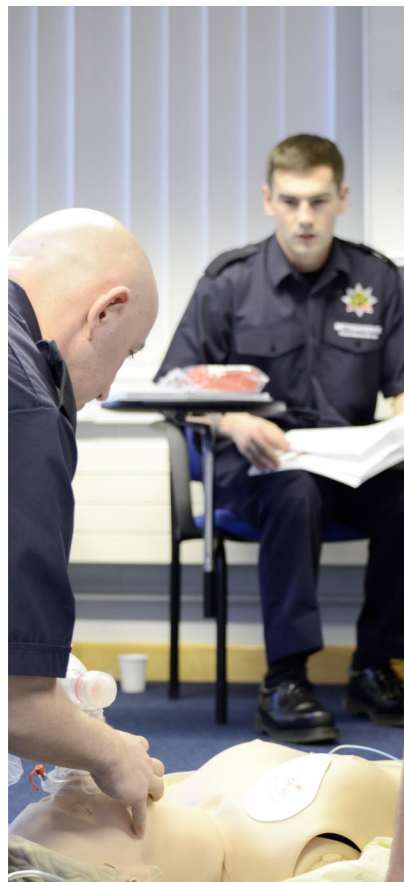
Remove Fire Engine Two from Highfields Fire Station.

How:

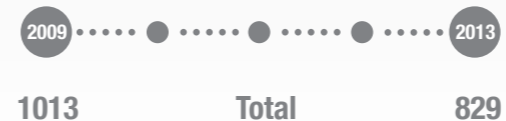
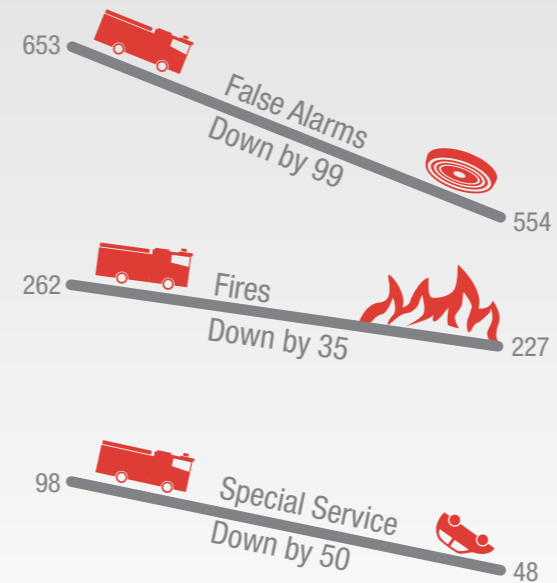
Remove Fire Engine Two leaving one existing wholtime fire engine crewed 24 hours a day, every day. This would continue to be supported by other fire engines from the surrounding areas.

Saving:

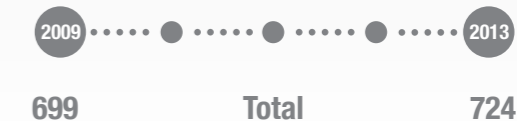
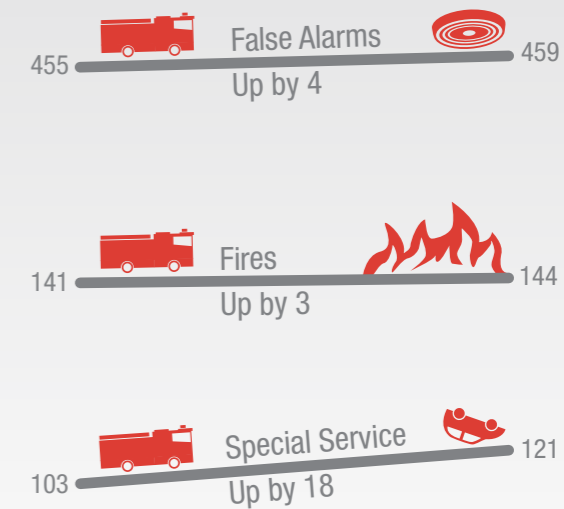
£780k - this is an estimated saving based on salary and fire engine costs.



Fire Engine One



Fire Engine Two



Proposal D - Mansfield

Two Fire Engines – One wholtime duty system / one retained duty system

What:

Remove the retained fire engine crewed by on call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station, leaving the existing wholtime fire engine crewed 24 hours a day, every day.

How:

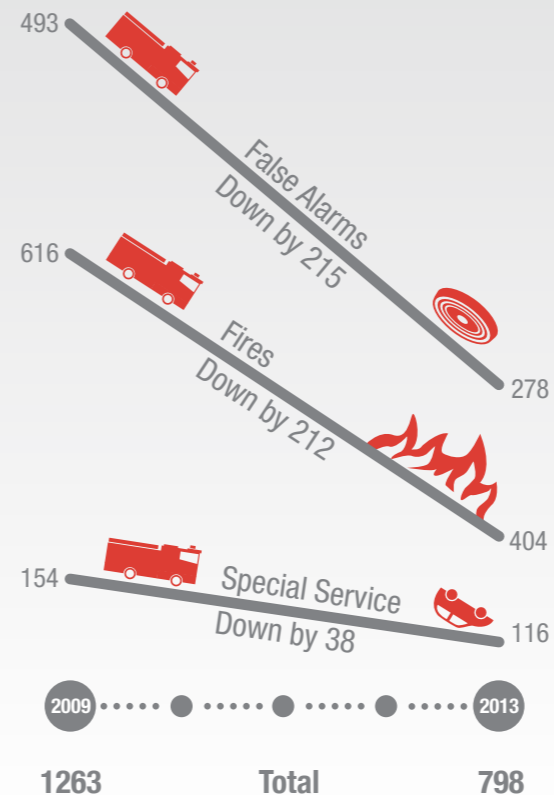
The retained fire engine at Mansfield would be removed, and the area served by one wholtime fire engine. This would be supported by other fire engines from the surrounding areas with an immediate response.

Saving:

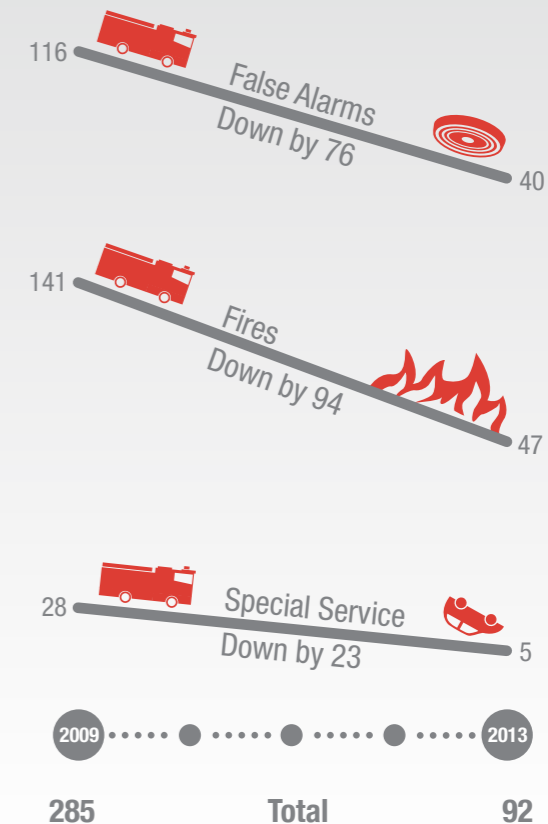
£125k - this is an estimated saving based on salary and fire engine costs.



Fire Engine One



Fire Engine Two



Proposal E - Stockhill

Two Fire Engines - wholetime duty system

What:

Remove Fire Engine Two from Stockhill Fire Station.

How:

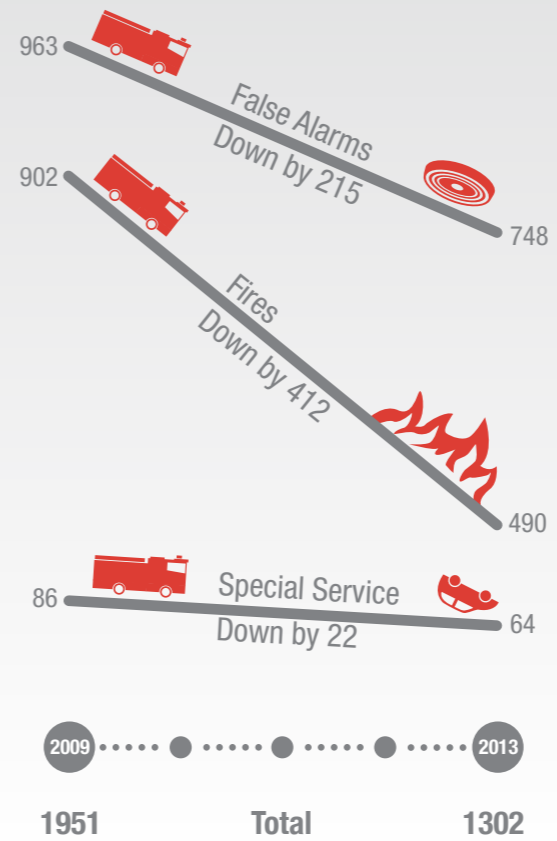
Remove Fire Engine Two leaving one existing whole-time fire engine crewed 24 hours a day, every day. This would continue to be supported by other fire engines from the surrounding areas.

Saving:

£780k - this is an estimated saving based on salary and fire engine costs.



Fire Engine One



Fire Engine Two



Proposal F - Warsop

One Fire Engine - retained duty system

What:

Close Warsop retained Fire Station, which is currently crewed by on call firefighters.

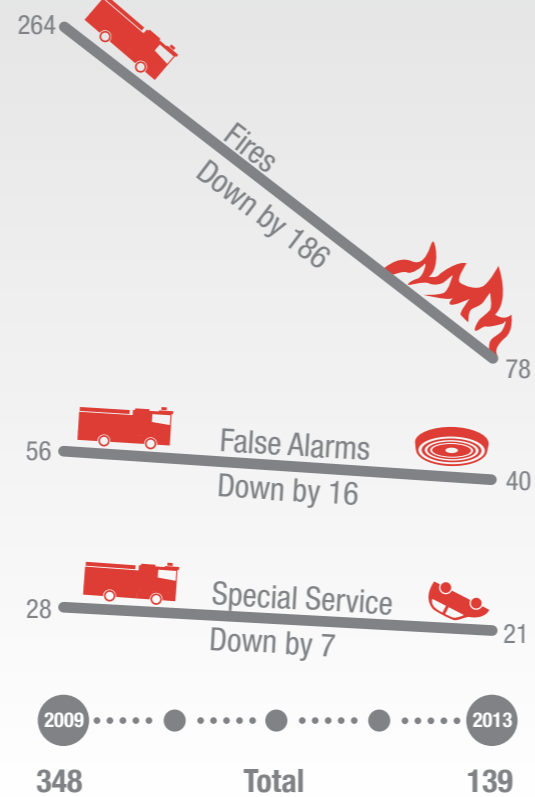
How:

The station will be closed and incidents in the Warsop area will be attended by the fire engines from the surrounding areas.

Saving:

£175 - this is an estimated saving based on salary, fire engine and fire station running costs.

Warsop Fire Engine





Summary

The budget deficit we face is a daunting prospect and these are challenging times. We are confident that what's outlined in this consultation document, represents a positive way in which we can continue keeping you safe while reducing our costs.

We find ourselves in a situation where there is not enough funding to provide the service in the same way we currently do. This has led us to look again at reducing resources in areas of lowest risk while ensuring we still provide a first class emergency response for everyone in the county.

With numbers of incidents reducing significantly in the last 10 years your community is safer than ever and we're proud of that success.

Community safety activities and work with businesses has contributed to this, we will continue our efforts to reduce incident numbers even further to create a safer Nottinghamshire for all who live, work and travel through our county.

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is keen to make sure that the decisions it takes do not have an adverse impact on different groups of people within our communities. In order to do this we will be carrying out an equality impact assessment (EIA) of these proposals and we will use the results of this consultation to inform the EIA, which will be used as part of the decision-making process.

By positioning our resources relevant to risk, we will be able to continue providing a professional and effective response to incidents, while working within the financial constraints imposed upon us.

By responding to our consultation you will be helping decide on the future of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service for the benefit of the whole county.

Please either complete the back page of this document, detach and return it in the FREEPOST envelope or complete it online at <http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/nfrs>

Contact Us



Telephone

0115 967 0880



Website

www.notts-fire.gov.uk



Write a letter

Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD.



E-mail

enquiries@notts-fire.gov.uk



Minicom

0115 967 5951.
(Standard charges apply)



Fax

0115 926 1081.
(Standard charges apply)

Talk2us, We're Listening...

Please complete the questionnaire opposite and detach and return it in the FREEPOST envelope provided or complete online at <http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/nfrs>

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) has appointed Opinion Research Services (ORS), an independent social research organisation, to survey your opinions about its draft proposals for the way its services are developed in the future.

This is an important survey that concerns local residents, the business community, public and voluntary agencies, and NFRS staff – so we welcome your views on the proposals, even if they do not specifically affect areas in which you live or work. Everyone aged 16 or over may take part.

Your responses will be processed confidentially by ORS and no-one will be identified in ORS' independent report to Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire Authority. (Where a response is given on behalf of an organisation it will be attributed to the organisation, but not to the individual respondent.)

If you have any questions about the survey in general or require further copies of the Consultation Document, please telephone 0115 967 0880 or email talk2us@notts-fire.gov.uk

Our consultation runs from XXXXXX to XXXXXX 2014. Please return the questionnaire or complete it online by the same date at <http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/nfrs>





Our Proposals

Proposal A – Central

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal of removing the second wholetime fire engine from Central Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Proposal B – Collingham

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Proposal C – Highfields

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal of removing the second wholetime fire engine from Highfields Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Proposal D – Mansfield

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal of the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Proposal E – Stockhill

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal of removing the second wholetime fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Proposal F - Warsop

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to close Warsop Fire Station?

Strongly Agree Tend to Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Tend to Disagree Strongly Disagree

Profiling Questions

We are keen to provide a fair service to all members of society. We ask the following questions for monitoring purposes only. Your details will be treated confidentially and will not be used for any other purpose.

Are you...?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- Male Female

What was your age on your last birthday?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- 16 to 24 25 to 34
 35 to 44 45 to 54
 55 or over

Do you have any long-standing illness or disability? Long-standing means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- Yes No
 Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- White British
 White Irish
 Other White background
 White & Black Caribbean
 White & Black African
 White & Asian
 Other Mixed
 Indian
 Pakistani
 Bangladeshi
 Other Asian
 Black or Black British Caribbean
 African
 Other Black
 Chinese
 Other ethnic group

What is your religion/belief?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)
 Jewish Sikh
 Buddhist Muslim
 Hindu No religion/belief
 Any other religion/belief
 Prefer not to say

Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

*Please cross **one** box only*

- Heterosexual/Straight
 Bisexual Gay/Lesbian
 Other Prefer not to say

Can you please provide us with the first five characters of your postcode? This is very helpful as it allows us to analyse responses at an appropriate geographic level to help us deliver better and more cost-effective services for the future. You cannot be identified from this level of postcode.

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Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please return the questionnaire to ORS in the FREEPOST envelope provided to: Opinion Research Services, FREEPOST (SS1018), PO BOX 530, Swansea, SA1 1ZL





NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Balancing the Budget 2014 Report of Consultation Outcomes

Opinion Research Services
September 2014





As with all our studies, findings from this research are subject to Opinion Research Services' Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract

Any press release or publication of the findings of this research requires the advance approval of ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation

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Acknowledgements

Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned to conduct public consultation, and also to review all the outcomes from the wider consultation programme conducted by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) in connection with its *Balancing the Budget 2014* consultation. We hope our report will inform the future planning of the service.

We thank NFRS for the commission and we confirm that at all stages of the project ORS' status as an independent organisation was recognised and respected.

In addition to the open questionnaire and deliberative forums conducted and reported by ORS, NFRS undertook a considerable programme of consultation itself. ORS was given full access to its material, including all the consultation data, records and documents.

This independent report reviews both our own consultation programme and that undertaken by NFRS in order to provide an independent summary and commentary on the overall outcomes. Our assessment of those outcomes is our own and has not been influenced or in any way shaped by NFRS.

The ORS Project Team

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Report Authors

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Rhys Elliott

Executive Summary

The Commission

1. On the basis of its experience of numerous IRMP consultations, ORS was commissioned by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) to undertake a consultation process consisting of:
 - Providing advice on the nature and scope of the consultation – particularly in the context of previous engagement and consultation exercises undertaken by NFRS
 - Designing, implementing, analysing and reporting an online and paper questionnaire
 - Recruiting, facilitating and reporting six deliberative forums with randomly selected members of the public – in the Central, Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill and Warsop Fire Station areas
 - Facilitating and reporting a public meeting in Collingham
 - Facilitating and reporting two deliberative forums with NFRS staff – wholetime firefighters and Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters
 - Analysing and summarising written submissions and petitions received by NFRS during the consultation period – as well as other NFRS consultation activity.
2. As well as giving general advice, ORS's primary role was to design, implement/facilitate, analyse and report both the open questionnaire and the various deliberative forums held in June and July 2014. We worked in collaboration with NFRS to design the questionnaire and prepare informative stimulus material for the meetings before facilitating the discussions and preparing this independent report of findings. We have also analysed and summarised the submissions (including those made via social media) and petitions commenting on NFRS's draft proposals. Our full report also summarises other consultations activities undertaken by NFRS in order to provide an independent commentary on the overall consultation outcomes.

Consultation Programme

3. NFRS' consultation ran from May 19th to August 10th 2014 and included all the following elements:
 - Independent Research (conducted by ORS)
 - Consultation questionnaire (online and on paper)
 - Six deliberative Forums with members of the public (in the Central, Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill and Warsop Fire Station areas)
 - A public meeting in Collingham
 - Two staff Forums (one with Wholetime Firefighters and one with RDS firefighters)

Analysis of written submissions and petitions received by NFRS – as well as other NFRS consultation activity

NFRS Consultation

Printed copies of the consultation document (with questionnaire) were handed out at Street Clinics across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and were delivered to businesses, partners, libraries and fire stations. Electronic copies were available on the NFRS website

Meetings at Highfields Fire Station and with Warsop Parish Council

The consultation was publicised in the local media (broadcast and print) and promoted via social media – and people were able to respond via email, telephone and in writing.

4. ORS was involved in the consultation programme throughout and, as well as conducting its own research and analysis, has been given access to the meeting outcomes and submissions received during the consultations.

Consultation Programme Proportional and Fair

5. NFRS's consultation programme was conscientious, in the sense of being open, accessible and fair to members of the public and stakeholders across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire: the consultation was proportional to the importance of the issues and conforms with good practice – both in its scale and the balance of elements included, and also in the way in which it built upon earlier engagement and consultation exercises undertaken by NFRS across the city and county.
6. The key good practice requirements for proper consultation programmes are that they should:
 - Be conducted at a formative stage, before decisions are taken
 - Allow sufficient time for people to participate and respond
 - Provide the public and stakeholders with sufficient background information to allow them intelligently to consider the issues and any proposals intelligently and critically
 - Be properly taken into consideration before decisions are finally taken.
7. Taken together, these four elements do much to ensure the 'accountability' of public authorities, particularly the fourth; but this does not mean that consultations are referenda.
8. Properly understood, accountability means that public authorities should give an account of their plans and take into account public views: they should conduct fair and accessible consultation while reporting the outcomes openly and considering them fully. This does not mean that the majority views expressed in consultations should automatically decide public policy, for consultations are not referenda, and the popularity or unpopularity of draft proposals should not displace professional and political judgement about what is the right or best decision in the circumstances. The levels of, and reasons for, public support or opposition are very important, but as considerations to be taken into account, not as decisive factors that necessarily determine authorities' decisions.

9. For the public bodies considering the outcomes of consultation, the key question is not *Which proposal has most support?* but, *Are the reasons for the popularity or unpopularity of the proposals cogent?*
10. In this context, both NFRS and ORS were clear that this important consultation programme should include both quantitative and deliberative elements in order to both:
 - Provide many people with the opportunity to take part via the open questionnaire routes
 - Promote informed engagement via the deliberative forums with members of the public and staff.
11. Given people's general unawareness of how their fire and rescue services operate and manage their resources and costs, consultation with informed audiences – who have the opportunity to question and test the evidence for particular proposals – is especially valuable. All elements of the consultation are important and none should be disregarded, but the deliberative forums, and also the detailed and considered submissions, are particularly worthy of consideration because they explore the arguments and the reasons for people's opinions. There is no doubt that NFRS' consultation programme conforms to good practice by including a range of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, through which people could participate and as a means for the Authority to understand the reasons for people's opinions.
12. As well as providing the public and stakeholders with sufficient information to consider the proposals intelligently, NFRS has also conducted its consultation in a timely manner and is taking account of the outcomes before making a decision. Both the scale and nature of the programme compare well with consultations undertaken by other fire and rescue services and public bodies.

Executive Summary

13. While this Executive Summary seeks to give a balanced assessment of the discussion outcomes, readers are referred to the detail of the full report for a more comprehensive account of the views expressed – in particular, for an account of people's priorities, assumptions and reasons for these views.

Main Findings

Questionnaire and Deliberative Public Forums

14. The online and paper survey was available to complete from the 19th May 2014 until the 10th August 2014. The survey was available to residents, representatives from business, public and voluntary organisations and NFRS employees. 4,663 surveys were completed during this time - 1,303 online responses, 310 postal (not photocopied) responses and 3,050 photocopied responses. The photocopied forms were all received from the Highfields area, where the FBU and firefighters spent numerous hours in the local community explaining NFRS's proposals and asking members of the public to complete a questionnaire.
15. The six public deliberative forums were recruited and facilitated by ORS. Participants were randomly recruited from across the respective areas and there were 86 diverse attendees across the six

meetings. In general, the forums were much more understanding (and in some cases supportive) of the proposals than the respondents to the consultation questionnaire.

16. Attendance numbers were lower than hoped for at the staff forums (with only two attending that for Wholetime staff and five that for RDS staff) – though NFRS had undertaken a conscientious programme of invitations. Nonetheless, full and frank discussions took place at both sessions.

Proposal A – Central Fire Station (Remove Second WDS Fire Engine)

Questionnaire

17. The majority of respondents (68%) disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Central Fire Station. Only one tenth (10%) agreed, whilst just over a fifth (22%) said they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Central Fire Station

18. Participants at most of the forums (including that in the Central Fire Station area) recognised that the station's location is such that its incidents could be adequately covered by neighbouring facilities. For this reason, some people at the Central Forum advocated not only removing the second WDS fire engine, but closing the station altogether.
19. Participants at the Highfields Forum also highlighted the potential financial gain from the outright closure of Central Station.
20. Though (as seen below) there was some concern about removing Central Fire Station's second WDS appliance due to the high number of incidents attended by the station, one Highfields participant suggested that this may not translate into life (or indeed property) risk insofar as *the stats are skewed due to the higher number of false alarms*. Further, it was argued that the Central area may be more 'protected' against fire risk than others given the high number of businesses and other 'commercial' premises there.

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Central Fire Station

21. A smaller number of participants were opposed to reductions at Central Fire Station, primarily due to the highly-populated nature of its station ground and the unpredictability of large, 'what if?' incidents.
22. Similarly, some participants expressed reservations about the proposal on the basis of the high number of incidents attended by Central Fire Station.
23. As well as the busy-ness of the station and the area itself, concern was expressed about removing an emergency resource from a metropolitan area with many risks and potential terrorist targets.

Proposal B – Collingham Fire Station (Close Fire Station)

Questionnaire

24. Over three fifths (61%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station. Just over one tenth (13%) agreed, whilst around a quarter (26%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Closure of Collingham Fire Station

25. Some participants (outside Collingham) accepted that Collingham Fire Station could reasonably be closed due to its low incident levels and the lack of contribution it makes to NFRS's overall performance and resilience.
26. That a significant proportion of Collingham Fire Station's time is spent responding to incidents in Lincolnshire was also seen as reason to support its closure.
27. Indeed, Collingham's close ties with Lincolnshire were further used by participants to rationalise the closure of the Fire Station there: many were convinced that the area's 'small number' of incidents could be adequately covered by utilising cross-border resources from Lincolnshire (and of course those within Nottinghamshire itself).

Arguments AGAINST the Closure of Collingham Fire Station

28. Collingham Forum participants were very sceptical that their area could be adequately covered by neighbouring fire stations – particularly in terms of attending within a reasonable time. Indeed, there was a definite sense (and a great deal of unease) across several of the six forums that the closure of their local fire station would mean lengthier response times for the residents of Collingham given its rurality and geographical isolation – and it was also said that bordering areas of Lincolnshire would be negatively affected by Collingham's closure.
29. In terms of what may delay response from other areas, participants at Collingham highlighted a number of 'obstacles' such as: level crossings; river bridges; congestion in the village itself and on surrounding roads (particularly during events at the County Showground).
30. There was definitely a sense that *it's peace of mind for local people with Collingham Fire Station open, especially the villages further north from Newark like Harby.* (Collingham)
31. The Collingham Forum was also concerned that the closure of their local station would also lead to the loss of invaluable local knowledge on the part of firefighters – as well as the loss of a well-regarded and well-supported local resource.
32. One participant suggested that the area's growing population should be factored into the decision-making process.
33. Given the concerns outlined above, participants (especially those at the Collingham Forum itself) were not convinced by the justification for closure, especially given the comparatively small saving it would yield – and there was a great deal of concern that once lost, the station would not be reinstated even in the event of rising risk.

Proposal C – Highfields Fire Station (Remove Second WDS Fire Engine)

Questionnaire

34. Almost nine tenths (87%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Highfields Fire Station, whilst only 8% agreed. This higher figure is reflective of the 'campaign' noted in paragraph 14 above.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Highfields Fire Station

35. Many participants considered this to be the most 'efficient' proposal insofar as it generates the largest saving while having the least impact on NFRS and the people it serves.
36. The fact that Highfields attends fewer incidents than the other two City stations was also considered a justification for reducing resources there (given that most participants agreed that some of NFRS's savings should be made through changes centrally).
37. Many people also suggested that, as Highfields Fire Station is in close proximity to other stations (and will of course retain one WDS appliance), reductions could reasonably be made there to yield large financial savings.

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Highfields Fire Station

38. Even though the majority of participants recognised that Highfields Station is the least busy of the three City stations, participants at Warsop placed caveats on their acceptance insofar as though demand at the station is decreasing, *there are still a large number of incidents (Warsop)*. Moreover, some participants at other forums felt that the removal of the second engine from Highfields would not be wise due to the high level of demand in the City area generally – and because the fire station is a modern facility that should be utilised as much as possible.
39. The high student population in the Highfields station ground was noted by some participants – and at Stockhill there was some concern about addressing certain risks such as the large number of businesses in the area and the new tram system.
40. Finally, some of the participants who opposed this proposal had some alternative suggestions – namely splitting shifts between Highfields and Stockhill Fire Stations and replacing the Highfields WDS engine with an RDS one.

Proposal D – Mansfield Fire Station (Remove Second (RDS) Fire Engine)

Questionnaire

41. Around two thirds (63%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station. Over one tenth (14%) said that they agreed with the proposal, whilst a further 24% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second (RDS) Fire Engine from Mansfield Fire Station

42. Those who supported the removal of the RDS engine from Mansfield Fire Station did so primarily on the grounds of low demand and unavailability. It was generally agreed that as said engine is called out infrequently and is often 'off the run', it could reasonably be dispensed with.
43. It was also largely agreed that the second fire engine's call-outs could be appropriately and adequately covered by both the Mansfield WDS appliance and surrounding stations.

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second (RDS) Fire Engine from Mansfield Fire Station

44. Participants at Mansfield considered the proposed removal of their second (RDS) appliance to be unwise due to the lack of surrounding support and because the engine provides important assistance to other areas.
45. Another cause for concern was the large and expanding population of the Mansfield area – as was the potential difficulties that may be experienced in reinstating the engine should risks rise in future.

Proposal E – Stockhill Fire Station (Remove Second WDS Fire Engine)

Questionnaire

46. Over two thirds (67%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station. Only 8% agreed, whilst a quarter (25%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second Fire Engine from Stockhill Fire Station

47. Those who endorsed this proposal did so chiefly on the grounds that the second Stockhill fire engine's incidents could be appropriately and adequately covered by the remaining WDS engine and neighbouring stations – and that the saving generated by the change would be a significant one.
48. At Highfields, it was suggested that the 'aging' station could be removed completely due to its high running costs.

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second Fire Engine from Stockhill Fire Station

49. Some of the Stockhill and Highfields Forum participants spoke of local risks (such as roadworks, traffic congestion, older housing and proximity to a motorway) that they felt should prohibit the removal of the second WDS fire engine from Stockhill.
50. Participants also noted the higher incidence of fires in the Stockhill area and the need for sufficient resources to deal with these.
51. As with Highfields, some of the participants who opposed this proposal had some alternative suggestions – namely splitting shifts between Highfields and Stockhill Fire Stations and replacing the Stockhill WDS engine with an RDS one (though others did not consider the latter to be particularly viable).

Proposal F – Warsop Fire Station (Close Fire Station)

Questionnaire

52. Over three fifths (63%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to close Warsop Fire Station. Around one tenth (13%) agreed, whilst almost a quarter (24%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Deliberative Public Forums

Arguments FOR the Closure of Warsop Fire Station

53. Some participants in all six forums supported the closure of Warsop Fire Station on the grounds that the area can be adequately covered by other stations in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Further, the reduction in incident demand was also considered a justification for closing the station.

Arguments AGAINST the Closure of Warsop Fire Station

54. As might be expected, participants at the Warsop Forum were against the closure of Warsop Fire Station – mainly because of the potential for lengthier response times from other stations, especially when NFRS is experiencing simultaneous incidents.
55. Warsop Forum participants also felt that the closure of their station would negatively affect the provision of prevention and education in the community – and there was a sadness that such a move would strip Warsop of its last remaining emergency service base.
56. Other issues raised were that: Warsop Fire Station is perfectly placed to support other areas, has good links to facilities such as Clumber, Rufford Park and Centerparcs, is cheap to run and offers ‘peace of mind’.
57. Finally, it was said that if the decision is taken to close Warsop Fire Station, Mansfield’s second fire engine should be retained.

Overall Balance of Opinion

58. With respect to the open questionnaire, majorities of around two-thirds opposed all proposals – except that for Highfields which was opposed by almost nine in ten respondents. Again, this reflects the ‘campaign’ undertaken by local firefighters as highlighted in paragraph 14.
59. All of the deliberative forums agreed that reductions could and should be made at City stations: most felt resources could reasonably be reduced at Highfields or Central Fire Stations for the reasons outlined above, with fewer suggesting Stockhill given the relatively deprived area it serves. Some suggested reductions at two stations (typically Central and Stockhill) and a couple were more radical still in terms of the overall package of options:

Remove Central Fire Station totally... Keep both engines at Stockhill [but] remove one from Highfields. Remove the RDS engine from Mansfield [and] close Warsop and Collingham stations (Central)

Most...of these options make sense in the face of even more budget cuts...Maintain one City station with two engines; close the two RDS stations, and do the Mansfield option. I would also look at whether we even need Central, especially with having to move. (Central)

60. There were mixed views on the other three (RDS) options:

At Central, Collingham and Warsop, the preference was to remove the second Mansfield fire engine over the closure of Warsop and Collingham Fire Stations

Highfields participants preferred to remove the second Mansfield fire engine and/or the closure of Warsop Fire Station over the closure of Collingham Fire Station

At Mansfield a minority accepted the removal of their second fire engine whereas the majority would prefer to see the closure of Warsop and/or Collingham Fire Stations

Stockhill participants considered it better to close Collingham and/or Warsop Fire Stations than to remove the second Mansfield fire engine.

61. It should also be noted that there was reluctance to make a judgement on the six options at Collingham, Mansfield and Warsop. Indeed, some refused to do so on 'no cuts' grounds – especially if the reductions are proposed for financial rather than operational reasons.
62. Finally, participants at Warsop spontaneously suggested that NFRS should consider demand-led resourcing at at least two of the City Stations:

If the majority of callouts for the second appliance are in the day...you could take away the second appliances at night [making] approximately half of the £780k saving at each station. (Warsop)

Forums with Staff

Wholetime Staff (2) and RDS Staff (5 [all from Collingham])

63. As only two people attended the wholetime staff forum, it is inappropriate to report their views in detail as representatives of NFRS's wholetime firefighters. However, they took part in the discussions readily and gave full and fair consideration to all six options.
64. Care must be also be taken in extrapolating out the views of five RDS firefighters (all of whom came from Collingham) to the entire of NFRS's retained workforce. Nevertheless, it is worth summarising that all five participants considered it safe and reasonable to remove one wholetime appliance from the city (though there was some concern about the knock-on effect of doing so on other stations).
65. When asked if it may be appropriate to remove two fire engines from the City, three agreed that it was (and that the reductions should be made at Stockhill and Central) and two felt that the Service should *see what happens...there's no need to do it until it's necessary and you need to consider the safety of the firefighters*. One, however, went as far as to ask:

Can we justify a second fire engine in any station nowadays?!

66. The five RDS firefighters also reluctantly endorsed the removal of the second fire engine at Mansfield, given that it has been off the run so often and that the Service *has to make rational decisions*. It was also said that it could be *reinstated in future*.
67. It is perhaps to be expected that all five firefighters were firmly opposed to the closure of Warsop and especially Collingham Fire Station on the following grounds:

Just one house fire in Collingham could cause a death with little immediately local resources

We do a lot of stand-bys which aren't in your figures

It is a loss of local rural service and like a loss of insurance

This would be a removal of service from Collingham and it could involve redundancy for us

It saves very little if this is closed

There seems to be an increase in jams on the main roads near Collingham and this will slow response times to the area from other fire stations if ours is closed – and we have a popular county showground

The Collingham area has far fewer fire cover resources than Warsop

Warsop RDS has a lot of commitment.

Written Submissions

Introduction

68. Detailed written submissions do not lend themselves to easy summary and so readers are encouraged to consult ORS's full report for a more detailed account of the views expressed. However, this summary would be incomplete without reporting at least an overview.

Written Submissions

69. 42 bespoke submissions were received in total – 26 from residents; eight from MPs and Councillors; four from Town and Parish Councils; two from special interest, voluntary and local groups; one from a representative organisation (the FBU); and one from an academic institution (the University of Nottingham).

70. 27 identical 'standardised submissions' were also received from residents and businesses in the Collingham area.

71. In terms of content:

Most of the submissions (22 bespoke and all 27 standardised) objected to the closure of Collingham Fire Station

Six objected to the removal of the second fire engine from Highfields Fire Station (and a further one to the removal of the second engines from Highfields and Central Fire Stations) - five of these were from MPs and Councillors replying to communication from a Highfields firefighter

Five - including that from the FBU - objected to NFRS reductions generally

Four objected to the proposed closure of Warsop Fire Station and two each to the proposed removal of the second fire engines from Mansfield and Stockhill Fire Stations.

72. A wide range of specific views were expressed in the written submissions and readers are referred to the detailed full report by ORS.

Social Media

73. NFRS (and others) publicised the consultation on Twitter and received several tweets in response, mainly around:

The impossibility of predicting the unexpected and the need for sufficient resources to cope with 'what if?' incidents

The need to reject further cuts and demand a fairer settlement from Government

The fact that levels of cover should be dictated by risk not incidents, which will in any case plateau and possibly rise

The need to reduce managers and the back-office

The possibility of considering crewing changes and sharing premises with EMAS

The need to retain as many FRS resources as possible as an 'insurance policy'

The consultation as a fait accompli.

Petitions

74. Several petitions objecting to the proposals were organised during the consultation. The total number of signatures, across all 10 petitions we know about, is 7,964 – and they can be broken down as follows:

One 'general' petition against cuts to NFRS (762 signatures)

Three petitions objecting to removal of the second Stockhill WDS fire engine (2,318 signatures in total)

Two petitions objecting to the removal of the second Highfields WDS fire engine (2,070 signatures in total)

One petition objecting to the closure of Collingham Fire Station (953 signatures)

Two petitions objecting to the closure of Warsop Fire Station (918 signatures) and one objecting to changes at Warsop and Mansfield Fire Stations (925 signatures).

75. The petitions summarised above are clearly important in indicating public anxiety about important aspects of NFRS's proposed changes – and the Service will wish to treat them seriously. Nonetheless, it should also note that petitions can exaggerate general public sentiments if organised by motivated opponents; and in this case there has been considerable local campaigning about changes to services. Petitions should never be disregarded or discredited, for they show local feelings; but they should be interpreted in context.

Overall Balance of Opinion

76. As might be expected, the open questionnaire, petitions and most of the written submissions received were very critical of NFRS's proposals, which reflects clear local opposition to change and in some cases 'campaigns' by motivated opponents.
77. The deliberative forums were more accepting and supportive of NFRS's options for change. People typically accepted the need for change in general and because of funding reductions – and they certainly did not reject all proposals, though their preferences varied according to residence and awareness. Most, however, recognised that withdrawing WDS fire engines does save a considerable sum of money.
78. There was unfortunately little staff involvement in the process, but it should be noted that the five RDS staff broadly accepted the proposals, excepting the closures of Collingham and Warsop Fire Stations.

Project Overview

Opinion Research Services

79. Opinion Research Services (ORS) is a generic social research company that works mainly for the public sector to conduct important applied research in health, housing, local government, police and fire and rescue services across the UK. The company was established in 1988 and has worked extensively with fire and rescue services (FRSs) across the UK since 1998. In 2004 it was appointed by the Fire Services Consultation Association (FSCA) as the sole approved provider of research and consultation services, under the terms of a National Framework Agreement. The same framework contract was retendered in 2009 and ORS was reappointed once more as the sole approved provider.
80. While working with FRSs across the UK, ORS has specialised in designing, implementing and reporting employee, stakeholder and public consultation programmes for a wide range of integrated risk management plans (IRMPs) – in many cases covering controversial and sensitive issues. In addition, ORS has extensive experience of statutory consultations about education, health and housing, and many other issues, including budgetary consultations.

The Commission

81. On the basis of its experience of many IRMP consultations, ORS was commissioned by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) to undertake a consultation process consisting of:
- Providing advice on the nature and scope of the consultation – particularly in the context of previous engagement and consultation exercises undertaken by NFRS
 - Designing, implementing, analysing and reporting an online and paper questionnaire
 - Recruiting, facilitating and reporting six deliberative forums with randomly selected members of the public – in the Central, Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill and Warsop Fire Station areas
 - Facilitating and reporting a public meeting in Collingham
 - Facilitating and reporting two deliberative forums with NFRS staff – wholetime firefighters and Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters
 - Analysing and summarising written submissions and petitions received by NFRS during the consultation period – as well as other NFRS consultation activity.
82. As well as giving general advice, ORS's primary role was to design, implement/facilitate, analyse and report both the open questionnaire and the various deliberative forums held in June and July 2014. We worked in collaboration with NFRS to design the questionnaire and prepare informative stimulus material for the meetings before facilitating the discussions and preparing this independent report

of findings. We have also analysed and summarised the submissions (including those made via social media) and petitions commenting on NFRS's draft proposals. Our full report also summarises other consultation activities undertaken by NFRS in order to provide an independent commentary on the overall consultation outcomes.

83. This document also reports the consultation undertaken by NFRS itself in order to provide an independent commentary on the overall consultation outcomes.

Nottinghamshire FRS Consultation: Listening & Engagement

84. In late 2013, NFRS and ORS undertook a 'pre-consultation' or 'listening and engagement' process to understand people's opinions and also 'test' some general principles before bringing forward its draft proposals for formal statutory consultation.
85. This two-stage approach to consultation conforms to the Gunning Principles (1985), which require that meaningful consultation should be at a 'formative stage', before authorities make decisions. The same principles also require that people should be given sufficient information and time to consider the issues in an informed manner, and also that their views should be taken conscientiously into account by the authority – in this case even before draft proposals are formulated for formal consultation.

Nottinghamshire FRS Consultation: Independent Research (ORS)

Open Questionnaire

86. The online and paper survey was available to complete from the 19th May 2014 until 10th August 2014. The survey was available to residents, representatives from business, public and voluntary organisations and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) employees. 4,663 surveys were completed during this time - 1,303 online responses, 310 postal (not photocopied) responses and 3,050 photocopied responses. The photocopied forms were all received from the Highfields area, where the FBU and firefighters spent numerous hours in the local community explaining NFRS's proposals and asking members of the public to complete a questionnaire.

Deliberative Forums

Forums with Members of the Public

87. The consultation forums reported here took place in June and July 2014 and were intended to provide insights into public views about the aforementioned draft proposals – all of which are included in NFRS's *Balancing the Budget 2014* consultation document. The point of these deliberative sessions was to allow NFRS to engage with, and listen to, members of the public, business people and its own staff about some very important issues – so that the participants would become more informed about the fire and rescue service and the current constraints upon it; but also so that the discussions around people's views could inform NFRS's planning for the future.
88. ORS's role was to recruit, design, facilitate and report the forums. We worked in collaboration with NFRS to prepare informative stimulus material for the meetings before facilitating the discussions and preparing this independent report of findings.

89. 86 diverse members of the public attended the six sessions and the programme of meetings was as follows:

Meeting	Time and Date	Number of Attendees
Mansfield Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Tuesday 3rd June 2014	17
Warsop Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Wednesday 4th June 2014	12
Collingham Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Thursday 5th June 2014	14
Stockhill Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Monday 9th June 2014	18
Highfields Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Wednesday 11th June 2014	16
Central Members of the Public	6.30pm – 9.00pm Tuesday 1st July 2014	11

90. The forums were designed to inform and ‘engage’ the participants with the issues, with NFRS and with each other – by using a ‘deliberative’ approach to encourage participants to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing important issues in detail. The meetings lasted two-and-a-half hours.
91. Some participants had attended previous NFRS consultation sessions and had been re-invited by ORS, and the remainder were new attendees. Those who had not attended previously were recruited by random-digit telephone dialling from ORS’s Social Research Call Centre. Having been initially contacted by phone, all participants were then written to - to confirm the invitation and the arrangements; and those who agreed to come then received telephone or written reminders shortly before each meeting. Such recruitment by telephone is an effective way of ensuring that the participants are independent and broadly representative of the wider community.
92. As standard good practice, and to ensure a representative cross-section they were recompensed for their time and efforts in travelling and taking part. In recruitment, care was taken to ensure that no potential participants were disqualified or disadvantaged by disabilities or any other factors, and the venues at which the focus groups met were readily accessible. People’s special needs were taken into account in the recruitment and venues.

Forums with NFRS Staff

93. Attendance numbers were a little lower than desired at the staff forums (only two wholetime and five RDS staff attended) – though NFRS undertook a conscientious programme of invitations. Full and frank discussions were had at both sessions.

Qualitative Research

94. Although, like all other forms of qualitative consultation, forums cannot be certified as statistically representative samples of public opinion, the meetings gave diverse members of the public and some NFRS staff the opportunity to participate. For the forums with members of the public especially, because the recruitment was inclusive and participants were diverse, we are satisfied that the outcomes of the meetings (as reported below) are broadly indicative of how public opinion would incline on the basis of similar discussions. In summary, the outcomes reported here are reliable as examples of people's opinions and attitudes about NFRS'S proposals.

Discussion Agenda

95. ORS worked in collaboration with NFRS to agree a suitable agenda and informative stimulus material for the meetings, which covered all of the following topics:

Staff and financial resources

Distribution of emergency cover resources

Incident profile and numbers

Reality of reducing risk

Role of prevention, protection and response

Budget reductions

Attendance standards and performance

Balancing the Budget 2014 proposals.

96. The discussions were prompted by a presentation devised by ORS and NFRS to inform and encourage debate and participants were encouraged to ask any questions they wished throughout the discussions. Not all the proposals were discussed in equal detail in each of the groups and the budgetary issues were explained, but not treated as a primary issue for discussion. Overall, the forums were used to 'test' people's reactions to the Service's proposals.

Nottinghamshire FRS Consultation: NFRS Activity

97. NFRS undertook the following consultation activity:

Printed copies of the consultation document (with questionnaire) were handed out at Street Clinics across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and were delivered to businesses, partners, libraries and fire stations. Electronic copies were available on the NFRS website

Meetings at Highfields Fire Station and with Warsop Parish Council

The consultation was publicised in the local media (broadcast and print) and promoted via social media – and people were able to respond via email, telephone and in writing.

98. ORS was involved in the consultation programme throughout and, as well as conducting its own research and analysis, has been given access to the meeting outcomes and submissions received during the consultations.

Consultation Programme Proportional and Fair

99. NFRS's consultation programme was conscientious, in the sense of being open, accessible and fair to members of the public and stakeholders across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire: the consultation was proportional to the importance of the issues and conforms with good practice – both in its scale and the balance of elements included, and also in the way in which it built upon earlier engagement and consultation exercises undertaken by NFRS across the city and county.
100. The key good practice requirements for proper consultation programmes are that they should:
- Be conducted at a formative stage, before decisions are taken
 - Allow sufficient time for people to participate and respond
 - Provide the public and stakeholders with sufficient background information to allow them intelligently to consider the issues and any proposals intelligently and critically
 - Be properly taken into consideration before decisions are finally taken.
101. Taken together, these four elements do much to ensure the 'accountability' of public authorities, particularly the fourth; but this does not mean that consultations are referenda.
102. Properly understood, accountability means that public authorities should give an account of their plans and take into account public views: they should conduct fair and accessible consultation while reporting the outcomes openly and considering them fully. This does not mean that the majority views expressed in consultations should automatically decide public policy, for consultations are not referenda, and the popularity or unpopularity of draft proposals should not displace professional and political judgement about what is the right or best decision in the circumstances. The levels of, and reasons for, public support or opposition are very important, but as considerations to be taken into account, not as decisive factors that necessarily determine authorities' decisions.
103. For the public bodies considering the outcomes of consultation, the key question is not *Which proposal has most support?* but, *Are the reasons for the popularity or unpopularity of the proposals cogent?*
104. In this context, both NFRS and ORS were clear that this important consultation programme should include both quantitative and deliberative elements in order to both:
- Provide many people with the opportunity to take part via the open questionnaire routes
 - Promote informed engagement via the deliberative forums with members of the public and staff.
105. Given people's general unawareness of how their fire and rescue services operate and manage their resources and costs, consultation with informed audiences – who have the opportunity to question and test the evidence for particular proposals – is especially valuable. All elements of the

consultation are important and none should be disregarded, but the deliberative forums, and also the detailed and considered submissions, are particularly worthy of consideration because they explore the arguments and the reasons for people's opinions. There is no doubt that NFRS' consultation programme conforms to good practice by including a range of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, through which people could participate and as a means for the authority to understand the reasons for people's opinions.

- ^{106.} As well as providing the public and stakeholders with sufficient information to consider the proposals intelligently, NFRS has also conducted its consultation in a timely manner and is taking account of the outcomes before making a decision. Both the scale and nature of the programme compare well with consultations undertaken by other fire and rescue services and public bodies.

The Report

- ^{107.} This report concisely reviews the sentiments and judgements of participants about NFRS's *Balancing the Budget 2014* proposals. Verbatim quotations are often used, in indented italics, not because we agree or disagree with them – but for their vividness in capturing recurrent points of view. ORS does not endorse the opinions in question, but seeks only to portray them accurately and clearly. The report is an interpretative summary of the issues raised by participants.

Open Questionnaire

Introduction

108. Opinion Research Services was commissioned by NFRS to undertake an online survey as part of its 'Balancing the Budget' consultation.
109. The online and paper surveys supplement the qualitative part of this consultation which involved six area-based forums (in Mansfield, Warsop, Collingham, Stockhill, Highfields and the Central area); and two forums with NFRS staff.
110. The online survey was available to complete from 19th May 2014 until 10th August 2014. The survey was available to residents, representatives from business, public and voluntary organisations and NFRS employees. 4,663 surveys were completed during this time - 1,303 online responses, 310 postal (not photocopied) responses and 3,050 photocopied responses. The photocopied forms were all received from the Highfields area, where the FBU and firefighters spent numerous hours in the local community explaining NFRS's proposals and asking members of the public to complete a questionnaire.

Respondent Profiles

111. The gender split was slightly uneven, with 56% male and 44% female respondents. Generally, there was more of a balanced split between the age groups (16 to 24 (8%), 25 to 34 (24%), 35 to 44 (23%), 45 to 54 (27%) and 55 and over (18%)). The tables below show the overall profile characteristics of respondents to the survey.

Figure 1: Gender - All Respondents

Gender	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
Male	2,538	56
Female	1,999	44
Not Known	126	-
Total	4,663	100

Figure 2: Age - All Respondents

Age	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
16-24	355	8
25-34	1,080	24
35-44	1,049	23
45-54	1,232	27
55+	825	18
Not Known	122	-
Total	4,663	100

Figure 3: Disability - All Respondents

Disability	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
Yes	542	13
No	3,594	87
Not Known	527	-
Total	4,663	100

Figure 4: Ethnicity (Broad) - All Respondents

Ethnicity	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
White	4,152	92
Non-White	356	8
Not Known	155	-
Total	4,663	100

Figure 5: Religion/Belief - All Respondents

Religion/Belief	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
Christian	2,598	65
Non-Christian	193	5
No religion/belief	1,187	30
Not Known	685	-
Total	4,663	100

Figure 6: Sexual Orientation - All Respondents

Sexual Orientation	Number of respondents (unweighted count)	% of respondents (unweighted valid)
Heterosexual	3,868	96
Non-heterosexual	176	4
Not Known	619	-
Total	4,663	100

Responses from organisations

112. Of those who were asked, most responses to the consultation questionnaire were from residents of Nottinghamshire (71%; 877 respondents) and members of NFRS (25%; 311 respondents), but there were also responses from local organisations and businesses.
113. Of the 1,241 responses to the 'Are you completing this form as...?' question, 37 respondents said they were representing the views of organisations. Figure 4 details those organisations that submitted responses.

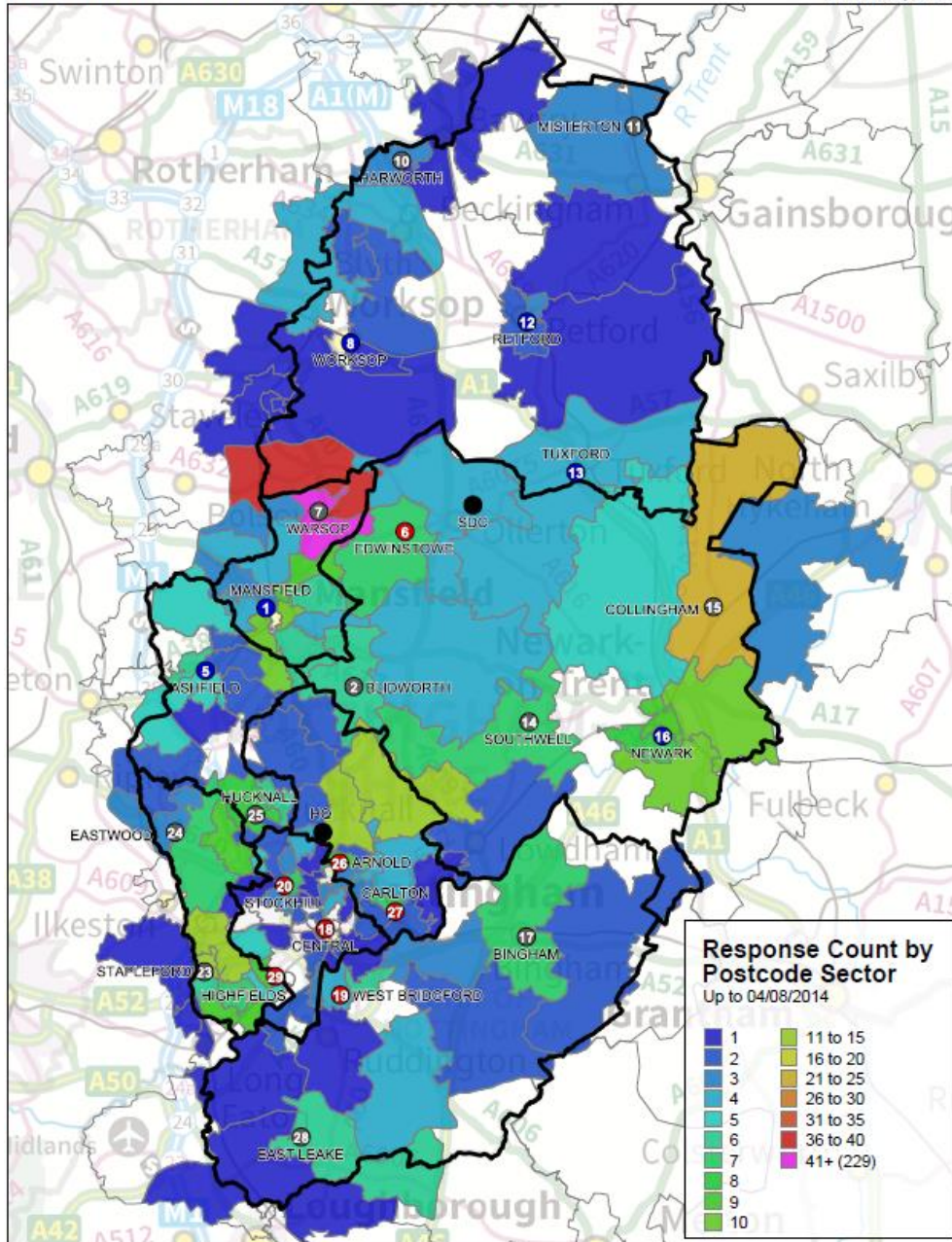
Figure 7: Summary of organisations responding to the questionnaire (who gave their details) – 37 responses

Ampton
Beeston Roundtable
Brownies and Guides
Chairman of a Parish Council
Collingham & District Local History Society
Council
Emblem Pet Services
EMWA
First Responders
Framework
GBCars.
GH Chennells Farms Ltd
Granby Sutton Parish Council
Harby Parish Council
Independent School
LFR
Lord Nelson Public House
NHS
Non-Uniformed Nottinghamshire Police
Nottinghamshire Police
Pete Wilson Auto Electrics Ltd
Royal Mail.
Social Services
South Scarle Parish Council
Swinderby Parish Council
The Fashion Shop
The John Fretwell Sporting Complex
The Parish Council of Warsop
Warsop Footpaths and Countryside Group

Response Count By Postcode Sector

114. Below is a map outlining the questionnaire responses by postcode sector. As might be expected, the highest proportion of responses came from the places potentially affected by the proposals – most notably the Warsop and Collingham areas.

Consultation Response Count by Postcode Sector
 Nottinghamshire and the City of Nottingham
 with Districts and NFRS Stations and Premises



Duplicate and Co-ordinated Responses

- 115. Online questionnaires have to be open and accessible to all while minimising the possibility of multiple completions (by the same people) that distort the analysis. Therefore, while making it easy to complete the survey online, ORS monitors the IP addresses through which surveys are completed. On this occasion, the monitoring showed that there were 106 IPs that each generated more than one response.

116. A total of 489 completed questionnaires were submitted from IP addresses registered to NFRS (249 from one and 240 from another). These responses provided a range of different views and ORS therefore considers it appropriate that all of the submissions are individually counted in our analysis.
117. The remaining 104 IPs generated a total of 268 completed questionnaires. After careful study of these responses, during which we looked at cookies and date stamps, as well as the nature of the answers; none were considered to be identical responses or appeared to be attempting to skew the results. So (given that more than one person at an IP address might want to complete the questionnaire) we have not excluded any online submissions.

Interpretation of the Data

118. Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers.
119. Graphics are used extensively in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of residents making relevant responses. Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with a ‘traffic light’ system in which:
- Green shades represent positive responses
 - Beige and purple/blue shades represent neither positive nor negative responses
 - Red shades represent negative responses
 - The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the ‘extremes’, for example, very satisfied or very dissatisfied

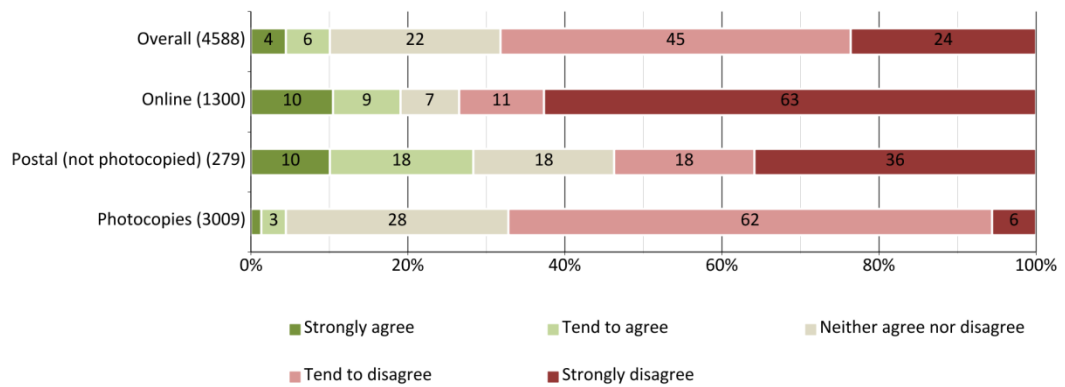
Proposal A – Central Fire Station

- 120. The majority of respondents (68%) disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Central Fire Station. Only one tenth (10%) agreed, whilst just over a fifth (22%) said they neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 121. Non-White and non-heterosexual respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal - but female, White and 25 to 34 year old respondents are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 8: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Central Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Central Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,588)



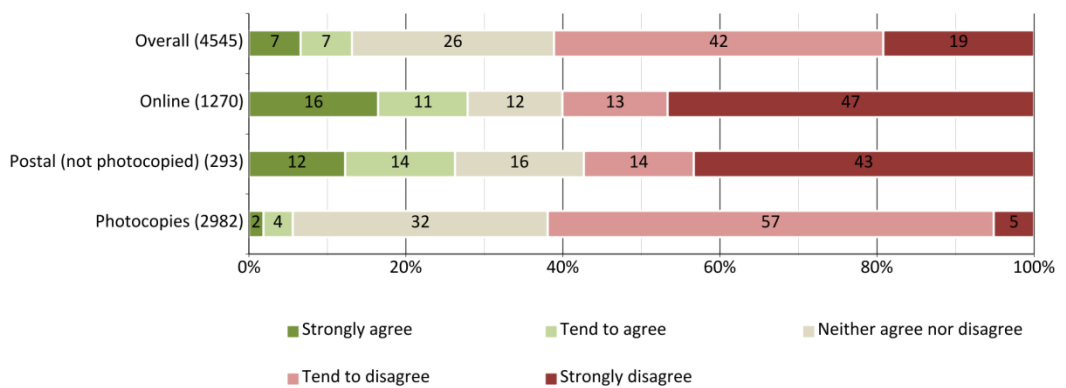
Proposal B - Collingham

- 122. Over three fifths (61%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station. Just over one tenth (13%) agreed, while around a quarter (26%) neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 123. Male, non-White and non-heterosexual respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but females, those who are disabled and aged 16 to 24 and 55+ are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 9: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,545)



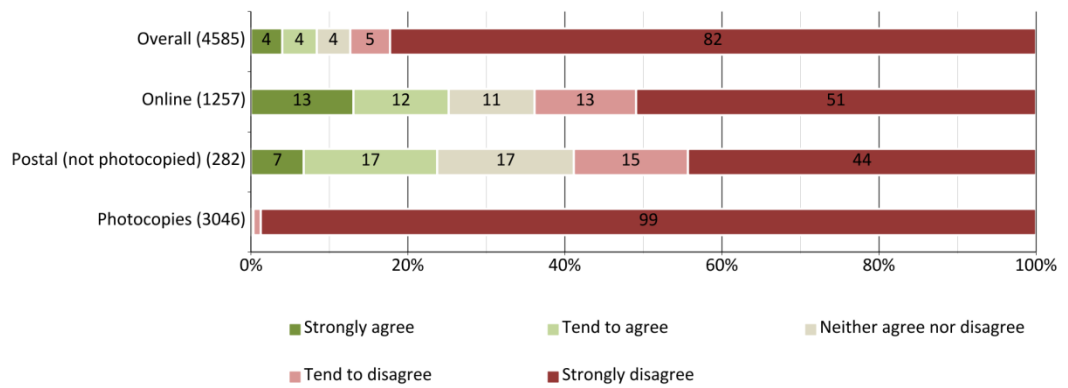
Proposal C - Highfields

- 124. Almost nine tenths (87%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Highfields Fire Station, whilst only 8% agreed.
- 125. Male respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal - but females, those who are disabled and aged 16 to 24 are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 10: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Highfields Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Highfields Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,585)



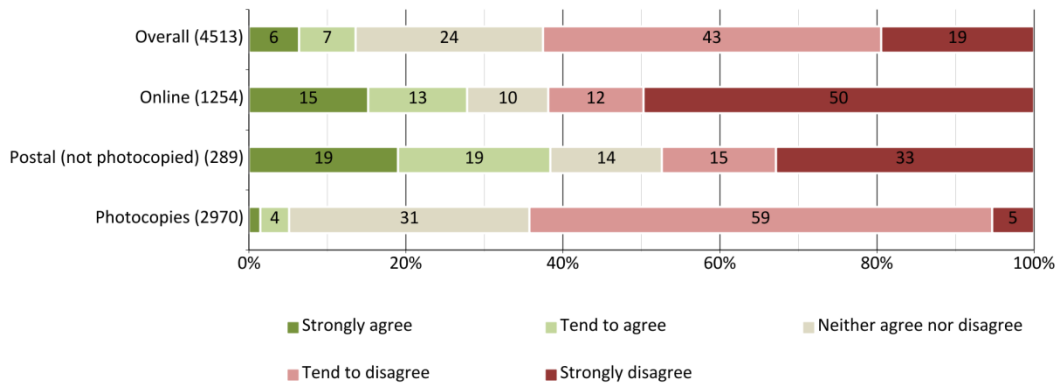
Proposal D - Mansfield

- 126. Around two thirds (63%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station. Over one tenth (14%) said that they agreed with the proposal, while a further 24% neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 127. Male and non-White respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but females, those who are disabled and aged 55+ are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 11: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,513)



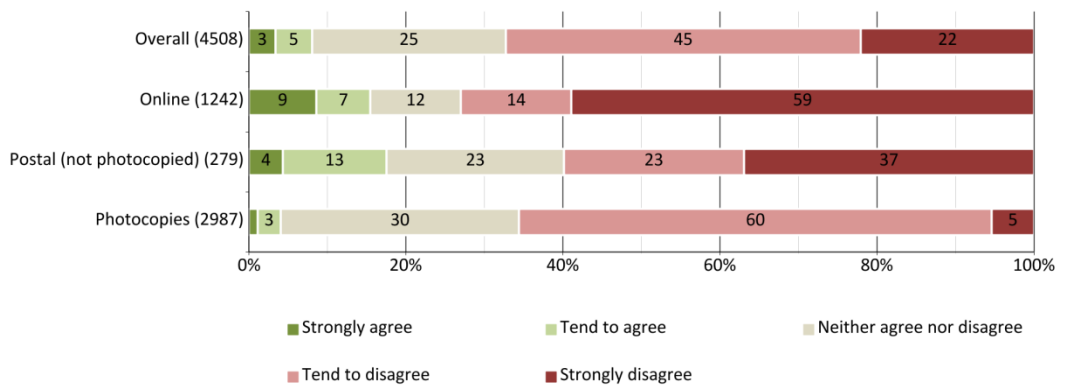
Proposal E - Stockhill

- 128. Over two thirds (67%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station. Only 8% agreed, whilst a quarter (25%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal.
- 129. Male, non-White, non-Christian and non-heterosexual respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but female respondents are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 12: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the second wholetime fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,508)



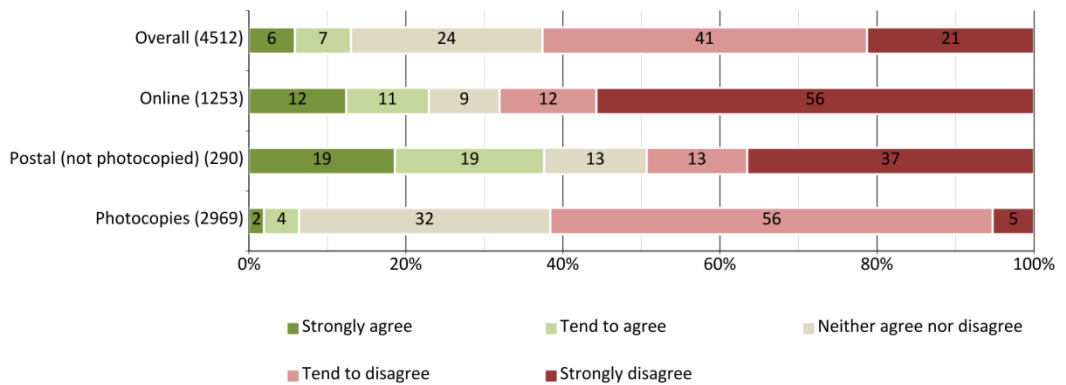
Proposal F - Warsop

- 130. Over three fifths (63%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal to close Warsop Fire Station. Around one tenth (13%) agreed, while almost a quarter (24%) neither agreed nor disagreed.
- 131. Male, non-White, non-Christian and non-heterosexual respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but female and disabled respondents are significantly less likely to agree.

Figure 13: Extent to which respondents agree or disagree with the proposal t to close Warsop Fire Station

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to close Warsop Fire Station?

Base: All Respondents (4,512)



Forums with Members of the Public and NFRS Staff

Introduction

Forums with Members of the Public

132. The public forums were designed to inform and engage the participants both with the issues and with NFRS – by using both a deliberative approach to encourage people to reflect in depth about the fire and rescue service, while both receiving and questioning background information and discussing NFRS' proposals in detail. The findings from these sessions are presented below.

Proposal A – Central Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Central Fire Station

133. Participants at most of the forums (including that in the Central Fire Station area) recognised that the station's location is such that its incidents could be adequately covered by neighbouring facilities:

Maybe lose one engine from Central if it's easier to come in from another area...it is difficult to get out of Central (Central)

It still has one full time fire engine if one WDS is removed. Other stations nearby could be on high alert if Central lost an engine... (Collingham)

There is a lot of support from surrounding areas (Mansfield)

I would remove engine two due to there being five full-time engines very close... (Highfields)

134. For this reason, some people at the Central Forum advocated not only removing the second WDS fire engine, but closing the station altogether:

Central can be better served by the five surrounding satellite stations (Central)

I think they should remove Central totally as other stations surrounding can cover it (Central)

It is easier covering the city from outside...it could be closed down totally (Central)

Close Central: it has poor access; it's in a poor location; and will move to London Road which is a poor location too. (Central)

135. Indeed, participants at the Highfields Forum also highlighted the potential financial gain from the outright closure of Central Station:

The cost of running Central is huge and the land and site might be of value. (Highfields)

136. Though it can be seen below that there was some concern about removing Central Fire Station's second WDS appliance due to the high number of incidents attended by the station, one Highfields participant suggested that this may not translate into life (or indeed property) risk insofar as:

The stats are skewed due to the higher number of false alarms. (Highfields)

137. Further, it was argued that the Central area may be more 'protected' against fire risk than others given the high number of businesses and other 'commercial' premises there:

There are greater precautions in the City Centre, meaning there is a low risk of fires (although there are a lot of false alarms). Also, incidents are reducing. (Central)

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Central Fire Station

138. A smaller number of participants were opposed to reductions at Central Fire Station, primarily due to the highly-populated nature of its station ground and the unpredictability of large, 'what if?' incidents:

Keep it as it is. The City Centre is too over-populated for this station to lose an engine (Stockhill)

I'm reluctant to lose a station in Central as it's a busy and densely populated area; you never know when a big fire could kick off. (Central)

139. Similarly, some participants expressed reservations about the proposal on the basis of the high number of incidents attended by Central Fire Station:

This option would have a bigger impact on the service, as Central would have to deal with 1196 incidents with less engines (Collingham)

Keep the two WDS fire engines as they are the most used out of the three stations (Central)

Due to the demand - illustrated by the number of callouts - this is not a feasible option (Warsop)

This is a busy station and support is required on a larger scale than the others. (Mansfield)

140. As well as the busy-ness of the station and the area itself, concern was expressed about removing an emergency resource from a metropolitan area with many risks and potential terrorist targets:

Central Station is too close to the shopping centre and the railway station; there would be an increased risk of damage from fires and terror attacks if it closed. (Warsop)

Proposal B – Collingham Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Closure of Collingham Fire Station

141. Some participants (outside Collingham) suggested that Collingham Fire Station could reasonably be closed due to its low incident levels and the lack of contribution it makes to NFRS's overall performance and resilience:

Due to low demand levels...this should be closed (Warsop)

There's a low response rate, and it's not offering a great deal of support (Mansfield)

Closing Collingham makes sense because of the number of incidents it attends... (Mansfield)

It is a very rural area, meaning there are not many fires. (Central)

142. That a significant proportion of Collingham Fire Station's time is spent responding to incidents in Lincolnshire was also seen as reason to support its closure:

Close it as it has low numbers and many of those are from Lincs (Central)

Nearly half of all calls and responses are from Lincolnshire (Central)

It's not doing much for Notts...50% of callouts are from Lincs (Highfields)

There's little benefit from the cost of running it plus most calls are from Lincs (and there are fewer of those). (Highfields)

143. Indeed, Collingham's close ties with Lincolnshire were further used by participants to rationalise the closure of the Fire Station there: many were convinced that the area's 'small number' of incidents could be adequately covered by utilising cross-border resources from Lincolnshire (and of course those within Nottinghamshire itself):

It borders Lincolnshire and can get support from there. You could close it to save money (Mansfield)

Close Collingham Fire Station due to it only being RDS and its location is near Lincolnshire (Stockhill)

Close it as it only attends a small number of incidents which could be covered by other nearby stations (Stockhill)

Due to the low amount of incidents, and that the surrounding stations that can cover these, this feels like a station that would have to go under the current financial circumstances. (Central)

Arguments AGAINST the Closure of Collingham Fire Station

144. Collingham Forum participants were very sceptical that their area could be adequately covered by neighbouring stations – particularly in terms of attending within a reasonable time:

The fire station from Lincolnshire can't be relied on to continue cover (Collingham)

Newark is busy covering stations with RDS and will they be fast enough? (Collingham)

If there were a major incident there would be trouble for other crews covering in from Newark or Hykeham (Collingham)

145. Indeed, there was a definite sense (and a great deal of unease) across several of the six forums that the closure of their local fire station would mean lengthier response times for the residents of Collingham, particularly given the village's rurality and geographical isolation:

Keep it as it is rural. The people of the community would feel vulnerable. Response time would suffer (Highfields)

It is isolated with little backup support (Highfields)

There will be poor response times from other stations as it is in the countryside, therefore there is an increased risk of delayed response times...so it's unsafe (Warsop)

I wouldn't close Collingham as it sits alone geographically (Stockhill)

This would be my least favoured to close due to the isolated location (Central)

This station is needed. The distance is too far to and from others to remove it. Leave Collingham open (Mansfield)

146. In terms of what may delay response from other areas, participants at Collingham highlighted a number of 'obstacles' such as: level crossings; river bridges; and congestion in the village itself and on surrounding roads (particularly during events at the County Showground):

Closure would cause difficulties for traffic to get from other stations to Collingham. There are many obstacles in the way: level crossings, congestion in the village and huge lorries. The main street can get gridlocked very easily (Collingham)

Four level crossings will cause delays. Any incident on surrounding main roads would cause major chaos to all roads into Collingham (Collingham)

There would be problems with crossing bridges - Dunham Bridge, Kelham Bridge etc. (Collingham)

Road congestion on the A1, A46, A1133 and Newark Showground would hinder fire engines getting through from Newark if Collingham was closed (Collingham)

There would be high traffic volume to get to Collingham from another station. It would be chaos if the showground was in use. (Collingham)

147. There was definitely a sense that *it's peace of mind for local people with Collingham Fire Station open, especially the villages further north from Newark like Harby. (Collingham)*

148. Further, it was said that bordering areas of Lincolnshire would be negatively affected by Collingham's closure:

How will Lincolnshire cope if Collingham is closed? (Stockhill)

If Collingham wasn't there, who would have gone to provide cover to Lincolnshire? (Collingham)

149. The Collingham Forum was also concerned that the closure of their local station would lead to the loss of invaluable local knowledge on the part of firefighters – as well as the loss of a well-regarded and well-supported local resource:

The local workforce has invaluable local knowledge (Collingham)

If Collingham Station shuts, surrounding areas will cover us but this means our service is reduced. There would be no local knowledge from surrounding areas (Collingham)

Collingham is well supported by community charity car washes - £600 events. They raised £970 at one event and won the East Midlands regional trophy. (Collingham)

150. One participant suggested that the area's growing population should be factored into the decision-making process:

The population of the village is expanding; this would cause problems if the station was closed. (Collingham)

151. Given the concerns outlined above, participants (especially those at the Collingham Forum itself) were not convinced by the justification for closure, especially given the comparatively small saving it would yield – and there was a great deal of concern that once lost, the station would not be reinstated even in the event of rising risk:

It would only save £135k, so they will need to close and/or remove engines from other stations (Central)

A very small amount would be saved compared to the £1 million they want to save... and the saving would be small compared to the closing of other stations (Collingham)

The saving is so small for the job they do...is it worthwhile? (Collingham)

If Collingham Fire Station closes and in the future they require a fire station in Collingham it is unlikely that it will be reopened. With the removal of a second fire engine subsequent reinstatement, if required, is more likely to happen. (Collingham)

Proposal C – Highfields Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Highfields Fire Station

152. Many participants considered this to be the most 'efficient' proposal insofar as it generates the largest saving while having the least impact on NFRS and the people it serves:

This offers the biggest saving with the least impact on responses (Collingham)

With adequate backup, this option could be a massive saving (Mansfield)

I feel that this is the best option for cuts, to make a saving. (Mansfield)

153. The fact that Highfields attends fewer incidents than the other two City stations was also considered a justification for reducing resources there (given that most participants agreed that some of NFRS's savings should be made through changes centrally). Some typical comments were:

It has fewer call-outs than the others (Highfields)

It makes sense to cut this service as there are lower callouts than in Stockhill and Central and it makes a big saving (Mansfield)

Looking at the statistics, I believe this option would be more beneficial as the incident rates are lower than at Central and Stockhill (Mansfield)

There is a lower amount of incidents out of the three proposed to lose the second engine (Stockhill)

Lose the second engine from Highfields as it is least used out of the six full-time City Centre engines at risk (Central)

One of the engines needs to go to make up the £1 million in cuts, and Highfield has the least incidents of the three. I would back this option. (Central)

154. Many people also suggested that, as Highfields Fire Station is in close proximity to other stations (and will of course retain one WDS appliance), reductions could reasonably be made there to yield large financial savings:

Stapleford, Bridgford, East Leake are close by. I think this proposal should happen; it would make a massive saving with adequate backup (Mansfield)

Highfields has other stations nearby that could help it with cover...lose one engine here as it is a viable option (Stockhill)

They would still have one WDS and also at surrounding stations (Collingham)

It's a big saving as it's a full-time engine. And there's cover from other areas (Stockhill)

Highfields can get support nearby and there would be big savings (Mansfield)

If they remove one engine from Highfields it still has many WDS fire engines in the surrounding area. (Collingham)

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second WDS Fire Engine from Highfields Fire Station

155. Even though the majority of participants recognised that Highfields Station is the least busy of the three City stations, participants at Warsop placed caveats on their acceptance insofar as though demand at the station is decreasing, *there are still a large number of incidents (Warsop)*. Moreover, some participants at other forums felt that the removal of the second engine from Highfields would not be wise due to the high level of demand in the City area generally – and because the fire station is a modern facility that should be utilised as much as possible:

Due to the high demand and callout in the City, we feel that a full reduction of the second engine would not be advisable (Warsop)

There are still a large number on incidents in Highfields, even though they are going down (Warsop)

I would not recommend removing the second engine, because it is a modern facility and fire incidents have increased. (Highfields)

156. The high student population in the Highfields station ground was noted by some participants – and at Stockhill there was some concern about addressing certain risks such as the large number of businesses in the area and the new tram system:

Highfields has a high population of students...I would not remove the second engine (Highfields)

With the new tram structure and businesses, I feel that the second engine is needed. (Stockhill)

157. Finally, some of the participants who opposed this proposal had some alternative suggestions – namely splitting shifts between Highfields and Stockhill Fire Stations and replacing the Highfields WDS engine with an RDS one:

I think they should maybe split shifts between Highfields Fire Station and Stockhill Fire Station (Warsop)

Could you remove the second WDS engine from Highfields and put a RDS there instead? (Stockhill)

Proposal D – Mansfield Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second (RDS) Fire Engine from Mansfield Fire Station

158. Those who supported the removal of the RDS engine from Mansfield Fire Station did so primarily on the grounds of low demand and unavailability. It was generally felt that as said engine is called out infrequently and is often ‘off the run’, it could reasonably be dispensed with:

Remove the RDS engine and leave the main engine. The retained engine incidents have reduced (Stockhill)

Remove the RDS as it's not being used as much, and not many people can get out of work during the day when most fires occur (Central)

Mansfield is well served, so can afford to lose the ill-used second engine (Central)

Only two calls per week and it is already served by Edwinstowe. The impact if cuts are made would be minimal (Highfields)

Removing the second engine saves £125k and it only goes to 92 incidents (incidents have decreased a lot). (Highfields)

159. It was also generally agreed that the second fire engine’s call-outs could be appropriately and adequately covered by both the Mansfield WDS appliance and surrounding stations. Some typical comments were:

We would still have one full time fire engine. We can get extra support from other close by areas (Mansfield)

We feel the second RDS could be removed, leaving just the WDS, due to its coverage from elsewhere (Stockhill)

Due to the low amount of incidents, and that the surrounding stations that can cover these, this feels like a station that would have to go under the current financial circumstances (Central)

All statistics point towards not needing engine two as there is good support from surrounding areas (Highfields)

It would seem right to remove the second fire engine from Mansfield as the yearly incidents are lower than Warsop. Most incidents are dealt with by the first fire engine, which will still be there, and there is support from local fire stations such as Warsop which can get to incidents within ten minutes (Warsop)

Mansfield would still retain the WDS and would/could be assisted by the second appliance from Warsop. A wider geographical area would be covered (Warsop)

They have still got a full time engine for cover, which will not be cut. Other areas can be called in to cover if worst comes to worst. If closed, Mansfield is closer to the next full-time station than Collingham/Newark. (Collingham)

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second (RDS) Fire Engine from Mansfield Fire Station

160. Participants at Mansfield considered the proposed removal of their second (RDS) appliance to be unwise due to the lack of surrounding support and because the engine provides important assistance to other areas:

This is a busy station and I feel that support is required on a larger scale than the others, which have more support closer by (Mansfield)

Taking away the second engine would leave the area quite thin and vulnerable (Mansfield)

It supports all local areas, which is good. (Mansfield)

161. Another cause for concern was the large and expanding population in the Mansfield area (especially when compared to Warsop) – as was the potential difficulties that may be experienced in reinstating the engine should risks rise in future:

Mansfield Fire Station should remain the same as it has more people than Warsop. Do not change it (Mansfield)

To remove a RDS from Mansfield at a time when the population is increasing does not make sense (Mansfield)

The fire engine and manpower would be lost and will not be easily or cheaply re-instated once gone. (Mansfield)

Proposal E – Stockhill Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Removal of the Second Fire Engine from Stockhill Fire Station

162. Those who endorsed this proposal did so chiefly on the grounds that the second Stockhill fire engine's incidents could be appropriately and adequately covered by the remaining WDS engine and neighbouring stations – and that the saving generated by the change would be significant:

They should remove one engine from Stockhill as there is still the WDS fire engine to cover and there are lots of other nearby Stations to cover (Collingham)

There is enough surrounding backup to allow this cut, and again it is a massive saving (Mansfield)

Stockhill could get a lot of support from other surrounding stations and they would save £780k. (Mansfield)

163. At Highfields, it was suggested that the ‘aging’ station could be removed to save on its high running costs:

Stockhill Station is an aging building, which means that running costs will increase if it stays open. (Highfields)

Arguments AGAINST the Removal of the Second Fire Engine from Stockhill Fire Station

164. Some of the Stockhill and Highfields Forum participants spoke of local risks (such as roadworks, traffic congestion, older housing and proximity to a motorway) that they felt should prohibit the removal of the second WDS fire engine from Stockhill :

Stockhill Station is in a built up area; there is also a lot of traffic and roadworks (Stockhill)

There is a higher proportion of older houses with less fire protection (Highfields)

Keep both as the station is close to the motorway, the City and a number of housing estates. (Stockhill)

165. Similarly, participants also noted the higher incidence of fires in the Stockhill area and the need for sufficient resources to deal with these:

There should be no action because there are more fires. (Highfields)

166. As with Highfields, some of the participants who opposed this proposal had some alternative suggestions – namely splitting shifts between Highfields and Stockhill Fire Stations and replacing the Stockhill WDS engine with an RDS one (though others did not consider the latter to be particularly viable):

I think they should maybe split shifts between Highfields Fire Station and Stockhill Fire Station (Warsop)

I would like to remove the second WDS engine from Stockhill, but put a RDS back instead as this will save money (Stockhill)

I don't think replacing the second WDS engine with an RDS is a viable option, but would prefer this to losing a WDS. (Stockhill)

Proposal F – Warsop Fire Station

Arguments FOR the Closure of Warsop Fire Station

167. Some participants in all six forums supported the closure of Warsop Fire Station on the grounds that the area can be adequately covered by other stations in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Some typical comments were:

The area is well served by other Nottingham and Derbyshire stations so it could close (Warsop)

Due to the low amount of incidents, and that the surrounding stations can cover these, this feels like a station that would have to go under the current financial circumstances (Central)

Covered by full-time Edwinstowe, which is closer than Collingham is to Newark (Collingham)

Close it; it's next to a newly-built facility and it only had 139 incidents (Highfields)

It is well surrounded, including by Edwinstowe and Derbyshire, and it saves a good amount of money (Highfields)

There is surrounding support and it makes sense to close Warsop (Mansfield)

Close the station...it seems it can be covered elsewhere (Stockhill)

Closing this station makes sense due to its size and locality; support from other stations appears to be adequate (Stockhill)

Warsop is near the Derbyshire border with a few nearby stations... (Stockhill)

168. Further, the reduction in incident demand was also considered a justification for closing Warsop Fire Station:

Close the station, because the total number of incidents has shot down by two-thirds (Highfields)

This option would also be beneficial, as the incidents have halved and the support fire engines are very close, saving a vast amount of money. (Mansfield)

Arguments AGAINST the Closure of Warsop Fire Station

169. As might be expected, participants at the Warsop Forum (as well as some at Mansfield) were against the closure of Warsop Fire Station – mainly because of the potential for lengthier response times from other stations, especially when NFRS is experiencing simultaneous incidents:

Response times would increase, putting lives in danger (Warsop)

I have no confidence that by closing this station it can be covered by a neighbouring station...for example during multiple callouts the response time would be much greater. (Warsop)

I feel that this should stay as it is; the other stations are too far away for a quick response and its costs are low in accordance with the need. (Mansfield)

170. Warsop Forum participants also felt that the closure of their station would negatively affect the provision of prevention and education in the community – and there was a sadness that such a move would strip Warsop of its last remaining emergency service base:

Education and visiting young people in schools...it would be difficult for the school to maintain their visits (Warsop)

If the station closed, there would be no emergency services left in Warsop. There would be no police station or fire station. (Warsop)

171. Other issues raised were that Warsop Fire Station is perfectly placed to support other areas, has good links to facilities such as Clumber, Rufford Park and Centerparcs, is cheap to run and offers 'peace of mind':

Warsop is in a good place to support other areas (Mansfield)

This should be kept open as it has close links to Clumber, Rufford Park and Centerparcs (Warsop)

Having the fire station kept at Warsop would create a safer atmosphere throughout the Meden Vale, Cuckney and Warsop communities. (Warsop)

172. Finally, it was said that if the decision is taken to close Warsop Fire Station, Mansfield's second fire engine should be retained:

Keep it open if you get rid of Mansfield's second engine (Stockhill)

I'm concerned about Mansfield losing its second engine and then closing Warsop; although Edwinstowe has been 'developed'. (Highfields)

Overall Balance of Opinion

173. All Forums agreed that reductions could and should be made at City stations: most felt resources could reasonably be reduced at Highfields or Central Fire Stations for the reasons outlined above, with fewer suggesting Stockhill given the relatively deprived area it serves. Some suggested reductions at two stations (typically Central and Stockhill) and a couple were more radical still in terms of the overall package of options:

Make savings as far as possible from centrally located fire stations as cover is available from surrounding fire stations (Collingham)

Remove Central Fire Station totally... Keep both engines at Stockhill [but] remove one from Highfields. Remove the RDS engine from Mansfield [and] close Warsop and Collingham stations (Central)

Most...of these options make sense in the face of even more budget cuts...Maintain one City station with two engines; close the two RDS stations, and do the Mansfield option. I would also look at whether we even need Central, especially with having to move. (Central)

174. There were mixed views on the other three (RDS) options:

At Central, Collingham and Warsop the preference was to remove the second Mansfield fire engine over the closure of Warsop and Collingham Fire Stations

Highfields participants preferred to remove the second Mansfield fire engine and/or the closure of Warsop Fire Station over the closure of Collingham Fire Station

At Mansfield a minority accepted the removal of their second fire engine whereas the majority would prefer to see the closure of Warsop and/or Collingham Fire Stations

Stockhill participants considered it better to close Collingham and/or Warsop Fire Stations than to remove the second Mansfield fire engine.

175. At Collingham, Mansfield and Warsop there was reluctance to make a judgement on the six options. Indeed, some refused to do so on 'no cuts' grounds – especially if the reductions are made for financial rather than operational reasons:

This is too valuable a service to reduce in any way. I can understand that fire incidents have reduced year on year, but this service is so versatile that it needs to be maintained in all areas. The risk of fire may be reducing through the good work the Service is doing and through new technology (i.e. smoke detectors, better furniture etc.) but the roads are busier and the specialist incidents are not reducing. I strongly believe that the Service should not be reduced...by reducing [it] you lose [its] maturity, which could be very dangerous. What price is a life? Yes, we have got to cut costs but one day we might need the fire crews we lose to respond (Warsop)

My concern is that we have a suitable response/safeguard. Cost reduction through removal of an unnecessary capacity is reasonable. Removal of a support purely on financial grounds is not. How do you come to a reasonable conclusion as to what is an adequate support? Removal of a service is not inevitable. At what point do we say "enough is enough" to cuts? (Warsop)

Fire Services should not be cut at all. The safety of lives is of more importance. Savings should be made in other areas. (Mansfield)

176. Finally, a spontaneous suggestion that NFRS should consider demand-led resourcing at at least two of the City Stations was made at Warsop:

If the majority of callouts for the second appliance are in the day...you could take away the second appliances at night [making] approximately half of the £780k saving at each station. (Warsop)

Other Issues Raised

177. Though there was understanding of the need to make reductions in the current financial climate and to better match resources to demand, this was tempered by concern about having sufficient resources to cope with large-scale, 'what if?' incidents:

Looking at the statistics, they are right to make cuts. However, all they need is one big incident and the Fire Service not to get there; the loss of lives due to response times would send the general public up in arms. (Highfields)

178. There was some concern at the Highfields and Mansfield Forums that the proposed reductions are the 'thin end of the wedge' and that there may be more to come in future:

I feel these proposals are an undercurrent of a 10 year plan for Nottinghamshire Fire Service and eventually all proposals mentioned will be worked towards and completed (Mansfield)

How many engines will be lost when more cuts come? (Highfields)

179. Participants at both Collingham and Warsop agreed that NFRS should make more use of RDS firefighters as a cost-effective means of providing more universal fire cover – and those at Central were keen to see the sharing of back-office functions with other FRSs:

Is it possible to have more retained firefighters instead of full salary at fire stations with two engines? (Collingham)

Could we change some full-timers to retained staff? This would mean we are still providing a service to everyone (Warsop)

I would look at more back office collaboration...for example integrate more services with the Police (control room, payroll and finance functions) as savings would be made without impacting frontline services (Central)

What about the Fire and Rescue Service sharing services with the Police? (Central)

180. Finally, more income generation on the part of NFRS was suggested by Warsop participants, who were also (along with those at Mansfield) keen to see the continuation of as much prevention and education work as possible:

Could more thought be given to income generation for the Fire and Rescue Service (to maintain provision) rather than cutting services due to reduced income....what about business inspections, assessment and monitoring? (Warsop)

I'm not sure how many engines are in the large hanger at Mansfield, but if there are free bays, why not use these to franchise out business i.e. motor maintenance to the Police, Ambulance Service and other sectors (Warsop)

Further investment in community and school education is needed to further reduce callouts. I see little evidence of education in my community among young kids. Five or six times a year the fire brigade have to attend opposite to where I live, where children set fires in land and abandoned housing. They then watch as crews attend. This is an unnecessary and unacceptable financial drain (Warsop)

Although there has been significantly lower callouts, this is not an average or pathway that can be relied on and increases are likely to show until more awareness and education regarding prevention happens. (Mansfield)

Forums with Staff

Wholetime Staff (2) and RDS Staff (5 [all from Collingham])

181. As only two people attended the wholetime staff forum, it is inappropriate to report their views in detail as representatives of NFRS's wholetime firefighters. However, they took part in the discussions readily and gave full and fair consideration to all six options.
182. Care must be also be taken in extrapolating out the views of five RDS firefighters (all of whom came from Collingham) to the entire of NFRS's Retained workforce. Nevertheless, it is worth summarising that all five participants considered it safe and reasonable to remove one wholetime appliance from the city (though there was some concern about the knock-on effect of doing so on other stations):

Given that many of the population moves out of the city at night it is safe to remove the second pump from Central

Stockhill and Highfields have Specials but I suppose they can be moved

You could have one pump at Central, which would make the others busier by picking up its second pump calls – and there could be a knock-on effect in terms of calling other pumps to support.

183. When asked if it may be appropriate to remove two City engines, three agreed that it would (and that the reductions should be made at Stockhill and Central) and two felt that the Service should see *what happens...there's no need to do it until it's necessary and you need to consider the safety of the firefighters*. One, however, went as far as to ask:

Can we justify a second fire engine in any station nowadays?!

184. The five RDS firefighters also reluctantly endorsed the removal of the second fire engine at Mansfield, given that it has been off the run so often and that the Service *has to make rational decisions*. It was also said that it could be *reinstated in future*.

185. It is perhaps to be expected that all five firefighters were firmly opposed to the closure of Warsop and especially Collingham Fire Station on the following grounds:

Just one house fire in Collingham could cause a death with little immediately local resources

We do a lot of stands-by which aren't in your figures

It is a loss of local rural service and like a loss of insurance

This would be a removal of service from Collingham and it could involve redundancy for us

It saves very little if this is closed

There seems to be an increase in jams on the main roads near Collingham and this will slow response times to the area from other fire stations if ours is closed – and we have a popular County Showground

The Collingham area has far fewer fire cover resources than Warsop

Warsop RDS has a lot of commitment.

186. The five Collingham RDS firefighters were essentially of the view that *it seems like you do not want to protect rural areas as much as urban; but a life is a life wherever it is – and that we need to go out and copy the best models of service delivery to improve rural services*.

187. Other issues raised at the staff forums were:

Why aren't we following Lincolnshire's example and collaborating to increase funding by working with the Ambulance and the Police more? We have asked to do co-responding for these reasons and we all know the Ambulance Service can be very unresponsive

We could make a valuable contribution via co-responding providing we get paid for it

The corporate support services could be outsourced to other organisations to save money; that's the kind of thing that happens in the private sector with outsourcing

There are many other changes that could save £135K – e.g. grass cutting and minor maintenance etc. It's a very small amount of money to close a station for!

Some FRSs reduce their lift rescues and special service calls – will we do that?

We miss a lot of calls because we're off the run due to lack of staff. We are recruiting staff at the moment and we try to be proactive in doing that

Wholetime pumps can be available 24/7 but we need to recruit; there are only 11 of us on the 'panel' for the fire engine.

Written Communications

Written Submissions

188. All written communication received by NFRS were sent directly to ORS. The table below summarises the different types and volumes of written communication received during the consultation.

Type of Correspondent	Number of respondents/signatories
Residents of Nottingham/Nottinghamshire	26
MPs/Councillors	8
Town/Parish Councils	4
Local Organisations	3
Representative Bodies	1
Total	42

189. In addition to the 42 submissions outlined above, NFRS also received 27 identical letters outlining people's concerns about the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station.
190. Most (22 bespoke and all 27 standardised submissions) objected to the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station; six objected to proposed removal of the second WDS fire engine from Highfields (and one to the proposed removal of the second fire engines from Highfields and Central), five of these from MPs and Councillors in response to communication from a Highfields firefighter; five (including the FBU) objected to FRS reductions generally; four objected to the proposed closure of Warsop Fire Station; and two each to the proposed removal of the second fire engines from Mansfield and Stockhill Fire Stations.
191. The issues raised in the submissions (both bespoke and standardised) are summarised below. It should also be noted the NFRS received some submissions in addition to those referenced here – but as these were simple requests for documents or information, they have not been summarised.

General Opposition to Reductions

Fire Brigades Union (FBU)

The FBU formally and vigorously opposes further cuts to the frontline service in Nottinghamshire. The Union says that, in recent years, the Service has seen a large cut to its budget, already resulting in the loss of four frontline fire appliances, which was justified by NFRS on the basis of a cut in funding from central Government and a fall in the number of incidents over recent years. However,

the FBU says that, in certain areas of the County, the number of incidents seems to be rising and that this, coupled with the amount of infrastructure planned for the City and County over the coming years, leaves it 'terrified' of further cuts.

The FBU says that reducing fire cover further will generally have an impact on the time it takes to attend an incident, resulting in increased risk to firefighter and public safety.

The FBU questions whether the Service has looked into the impact on attendance times for incidents of differing sizes? For example, a house fire with persons at risk requires at least three fire engines for safe systems of work to be implemented. The Union asks: how much longer would it take for the third fire engine to arrive at an incident if the proposed cuts are agreed?

It is said that Nottinghamshire is a developing community in terms of housing and stature, that HS2 and the Tram network bring not only growth but risks and that NFRS has a duty to be able to respond to these risks.

Southwell Town Council

Southwell Town Council is concerned about the scale of the proposed reductions to NFRS and considers a reduction of six fire engines to be too great. The Council proposes the following alternative to save in the region of £2 million (while reducing the number of engines by just one):

Proposal	Station	Present arrangements	Proposed arrangements	Estimated saving
A	Central	2 Wholetime duty engines ¹	1 Wholetime duty engine; 1 retained engine	£780k - £150k = £630
B	Collingham	1 retained duty engine ²	Retain present arrangements	£0
C	Highfield	2 Wholetime duty engines	1 Wholetime duty engine; 1 retained engine	£780k - £150k = £630
D	Mansfield	1 Wholetime duty engine; 1 retained duty engine	1 Wholetime duty engine	£125k
E	Stockhill	2 Wholetime duty engines	1 Wholetime duty engine; 1 retained engine	£780k - £150k = £630
F	Warsop	1 retained duty engine	Retain present arrangements	£0
Total estimated saving				£2.015m

Given that the Newark and Sherwood District Council Core Strategy highlights considerable development across the area, the Council considers this a more realistic and practical proposal.

Resident 1

The resident is concerned that the job of a firefighter is dangerous enough without them having to work 'at full stretch' because of staff reductions. They suggest the following option to 'provide an excellent service for the community while saving money': keep the firefighters and combine their service with first response ambulance services – both based at local fire stations.

Resident 2

The resident is concerned that the proposed reductions will seriously affect public and firefighter safety. They feel that the Service should be proud of these 'committed members of our public service' and not be looking to cut the services they provide.

Resident 3

The resident is opposed to any cuts to NFRS insofar as it carries out a very responsible and dangerous job, is on the front-line for most emergencies and turns out to a range of incidents.

Opposition to Proposed Closure of Collingham Fire Station

Collingham Parish Council

Collingham Parish Council is gravely concerned at the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station due to the isolation of the parish and villages along the A1133, with only two bridges to cross the river Trent. It also asks NFRS to take the following into consideration:

Newark has severe traffic problems on a regular basis

Dunham Bridge, at the northern end of the A1133, is prone to flooding

The River Trent follows the route of the A1133 and is used by tourists, anglers and walkers. Collingham is the last village on the tidal Trent and includes the 'notorious' Cromwell Weir

At the southern end of Collingham is the RSPB Reserve, one of the biggest in the East Midlands. To the northern end is the Trent Vale Wildlife Trust. These are attracting many visitors

The East Midland rail line (Lincoln to Derby) runs through the village, which has six level crossings. Goods trains passing these crossing ensure a delay of four minutes

To the south east is the A46, and the Collingham junction has seen five serious accidents including two deaths since opening. The A1 runs parallel with the river Trent. If there is a serious accident on either of these roads, traffic is diverted through Collingham on the A1133, causing gridlock

Collingham is designated a principal village by Newark and Sherwood District Council and the Parish Council has been told to expect a minimum increase of over 180 houses. This will increase traffic throughout the village and its surrounds

Newark and Sherwood has an aging and increasingly more vulnerable population

The EMAS service for this area is 'disastrous': recently a 97 year old fell over and had to wait two hours for an ambulance. The paramedic was supported by two off-duty Collingham firefighters, who recognised the distress of the lady and insisted the call out was a priority.

Girton & Meering Parish and Charitable Conservation Trust and Girton Conservation Trust

Though the Parish Council understands that all services are under budgetary pressure, it is not convinced that the 'bean counters' and 'desk top survey theorists' arrive at the best solutions as they have little or no contact with local recipients of those services.

The Council is concerned that, if Collingham Fire Station is closed, they are left with responses from Tuxford, Lincolnshire or Newark. Their reply to Tuxford being the first responder is that they would have to navigate narrow cross-country lanes before they get to the busy 'Dunham Toll Bridge' to cross the River Trent. Further, the River Trent itself is tidal to Cromwell Lock, and particularly through The Village of Girton. The major tides start in September through November, continuing to further major tides in February and March. Also, the village apparently extracts water through two other water courses coming directly into the village. As such, the Council says that, through seven months in every year when all of the four incidences of water can possibly come together, the village of Girton floods and so can parts of Collingham. The main A1133 is then cut off necessitating all vehicles to traverse unsuitable country lanes through Lincolnshire or alternatively across country to the A46. Further, the Dunham Toll Bridge would not only be the 'pinch point' but would be closed because of serious flooding at this time, negating any response from Tuxford.

The Council's reply to first responder from Lincoln would be that its interests are foremost within Lincolnshire, although they acknowledge that cross-county co-operation takes place in major incidences.

The Council's reply to first responder from Newark is that the fire station there is 10 miles from Girton. Newark has apparently always been the back up for Collingham in situations affecting Girton; Collingham RDS has always been the first on site.

With reference to Winter 2012, the Council argues that this could happen at any time of the year, such as a month's rainfall falling in four hours in Southwell in July 2013. It feels that decisions affecting whole communities cannot be made solely based on figures and that residents have a valuable input to make.

The Council says that the Parish of Girton has had two major fire incidents in the past 12 months, at which Collingham RDS were almost instantly on scene because of their proximity. The Council is concerned that response times will lengthen if the area is dependent upon Newark and is not convinced by the quoted extended time of six minutes due to the area's obstacles and traffic.

Given that the village of Collingham has over 7,000 residents (excepting its outlying villages) and that Tuxford is much smaller, the Council suggests that the latter's fire station should be considered for closure rather than Collingham. Further, the River Trent apparently determines access to this side of Nottinghamshire at any time day or night, whereas Tuxford is easily accessed from Ollerton and Mansfield, with Retford and Worksop to the North.

Harby Parish Council

Harby Parish Council vehemently opposes the closure of Collingham Fire Station as this would significantly compromise the capacity for fire and emergency cover for Harby and neighbouring villages. Indeed, it was claimed that response times would be approximately doubled by a first

response from Newark or Tuxford (Newark - 26 minutes, Tuxford - 21 minutes).

The Council also states that there are frequent events at Newark Showground causing significant traffic delays, and that Dunham Bridge is occasionally closed by floodwater from the River Trent.

Swinderby Parish Council

Swinderby Parish Council objects to the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station as the village of Swinderby, as well as IRC Morton Hall, will be left unprotected save for a call out to Fire Stations which are too far way to be immediate in their response.

Councillor Maureen Dobson

Councillor Dobson has identified the following range of problems with NFRS's proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station:

The area has the highest proportion of vulnerable and isolated single elderly residents in the county - who are at high risk of domestic fires due to lifestyle and behaviour

NFRS does not forecast how the changes could impact upon response times. It is already known that appliance travel times from time of mobilisation in the Collingham area are among the highest in the county and significantly increased between 2012 and 2013, which suggests that Collingham is already covering shortfalls elsewhere. A depletion of the service is likely to have major impacts on responsiveness in the surrounding areas

The A1, A46, A17 and A1133 converge in the area, which increases risk and demand for local response to serious RTAs

The main Lincoln to Derby railway line carries east/west commuter trains (including an increasing number of intercity trains from Lincoln to London) and an increasing number of long heavy goods trains (which take four minutes to traverse any major rail/road junctions)

There is regular flooding along the A1133 from the River Trent and River Fleet

There is a high volume of heavy vehicle traffic and high risk operational activities from farms and quarries in the area.

Councillor Dobson also feels that there are other techniques for cost saving which have not yet been thoroughly considered or evaluated (i.e. could the Service's property holdings be transferred to a charitable trust structure to enable rate relief?)

Councillor Marcia Parkin

Councillor Parkin describes the proposal to close Collingham Fire and Rescue Station as a 'diabolical measure' that will inevitably lead to severe delays in response times and to the possibility of serious loss of life and devastating fire damage. The Councillor's reasons for this view are that:

The Lincoln to Derby railway line which carries east/west commuter trains (including a growing number of intercity trains from Lincoln to London) runs through the village. An increasing number of long heavy freight and tanker trains also use this line 24 hours a day. These take up to four minutes to traverse any rail/road level crossing, thus presenting a major challenge to emergency services accessing the village from outside

If there is a power cut, all the barriers at all the crossings drop. Collingham is then cut off from access from Newark via the A46 and can only be reached via Swinderby/South Searle (providing that crossing is not also closed)

The population along the A1133 is more than 7,000, which is greater than Ollerton

As the A1133 follows the River Trent, many of the villages along its route are prone to flooding. Cromwell Weir is also a notorious accident spot

The Collingham station serves the whole of the population along the A1133 and is perfectly positioned to answer callouts along this corridor and respond to RTAs on the A46

Villages along the A1133 are isolated and if there is a blockage on the A46, traffic is diverted along the road causing gridlock in both directions between Collingham and the Winthorpe Island. The A1133 is also the bypass route for the A1 if there is a blockage between Newark and Tuxford

Dunham Bridge (nine miles north), is the only other crossing over the River Trent after Newark and is closed when the river floods during the winter months.

Councillor Parkin asks why NFRS is not looking at raising extra funds by marketing its services to other safety providers – and questions the cost of ORS's involvement in the consultation process.

Finally, Councillor Parkin believes that Nottinghamshire's Council Tax is one of the highest in the country and that the closure of Collingham Fire Station will 'put us further behind in value for money'. Further, the Councillor claims that Nottingham Council has money invested in stock and shares and asks why this money not being used to 'prop up services'.

Resident 1

The resident is surprised that NFRS does not require a fire crew 'on this side of' the river Trent, the A1 and the main East Coast Rail Line. They say this area, while being close to Newark and Lincoln, is increasingly being put at risk of major incidents and that access to routes around Newark are compromised on a daily basis – and that Ambulance Services are taking longer to arrive, leaving a local fire crew as the first responders in many cases. The area is apparently also at increasing risk of flooding due to upstream flood mitigation works.

Resident 2

The resident understands that, if Collingham Closes, coverage for Swinderby will come from a single appliance at South Hykeham and from Lincoln South station, which is over 10 miles away via some busy roads. With coverage from Collingham benefiting both Nottinghamshire and their area in West Lincolnshire, the resident feels that Collingham Fire Station is perfectly placed to keep the population safe.

Resident 3

The resident describes how they arrived home during an horrific thunderstorm to find their home on fire. Collingham Fire Appliance was at station and they arrived as quickly as they could – and 'after some considerable time' a back-up appliance arrived from Newark. The resident feels that if they had had to wait for the appliance from Newark their home would have been 'a shell'.

The resident goes on to say that, if Collingham Fire Station closes, the nearest appliance would be at Newark – which would have to come through the town centre and around the roundabout on the A1/A46/A17 junction, which is apparently often gridlocked. They would then have to cross the Lincoln/Nottingham railway line on the A113 and if there is a goods train approaching the wait is three or four minutes or longer. If the Newark appliance is on a call the next nearest is Tuxford, which would have the choice of Dunham Bridge (which is closed when the river is in flood), the A1 or the A1/A46/A17 roundabout. Further, they also note that Collingham currently offers back-up for incidents on the A1, A46, A17, the East Coast Rail Line, the Lincoln/Nottingham Rail Line and the River Trent.

Resident 4

The resident is opposed to the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station as it would undermine local capacity to deal urgently with emergencies – and they do not believe that the meagre amount of money the closure would save is justified.

The resident also says that Collingham is a growing village with an increasing number of older residents and commuters – and questions why, at a time of expansion, NFRS would consider closing a ‘vital and well organised resource’.

The resident’s parents were involved in a road accident some years ago and Collingham RDS were first on the scene. Their father sadly died but their mother was quickly and efficiently transferred to an Air Ambulance and on to Lincoln County Hospital. They feel that ‘without the speedy response and hands on experience of our local service...my mother would [not] have survived her injuries’.

Resident 5

The resident strongly objects to the proposal to close Collingham Fire Station as it would significantly increase NFRS’s response time to Harby and its surrounding area in the event of an emergency. They feel that the Service’s stated increased response time (from Newark) of eight minutes, while within the 10 minute response target, is unacceptable for three reasons:

Eight minutes is a significant under-estimation given the route is often heavily congested with traffic (especially at peak times and during events at the County Showground)

The railway crossing gates south of Collingham are often closed for several minutes at a time, particularly when large freight trains are passing through

Harby is located a further eight miles beyond Collingham.

Further, reaching Harby from Tuxford involves crossing the river at the Dunham-on-Trent toll bridge which is busy and can be closed due to severe flooding.

The respondent says that the current response time for the Collingham appliance to reach Harby (13 minutes) would almost double to at least 20 to 25 minutes should it have to rely on Newark or Tuxford. The ‘tiny’ saving made by the closure of Collingham is considered to be unjustifiable considering the potential impact this decision would have on public safety.

Resident 6

The resident lives in Lincolnshire but is only about five miles from Collingham and in the event of a fire would expect them to be the first to respond. Their next option would be Newark or Lincoln, which would result in lengthier response times and possibly extensive life and property damage.

Resident 7

The resident has grave concerns about the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station as the village has very little access to traffic and emergency services from the A46, and is bound to the West by the River Trent which can only be crossed at two bridges in the area that are 10 miles apart.

The resident says that Lincolnshire is a large county that is currently poorly served by satellite services and requires charity facilities such as the Air Ambulance to stand little chance of prompt access to emergency services. They would be interested to see the cost-benefit analysis for the closure of the station from a 'lives lost' perspective rather than a fiscal one.

Resident 8

The resident considers the 'Balancing the Budget 2014' consultation document and on-line response forms to be superficial considering the major changes being proposed by NFRS – and they feel the Service will not be able to make meaningful decisions on the basis of the answers to the specific questions on the form.

The resident feels that the case for closing Collingham Fire Station looks especially weak (particularly in relation to that for Warsop where a greater saving is made and the workload has reduced, whereas at Collingham the number of fires has increased). A far more robust case is thought to be needed, particularly in identifying the cost to people and property of the increased response times.

The resident is concerned about the stated increase in response times if Collingham should close – and suggests that at peak-times they would increase a great deal. They use the example of ambulance response times in the Collingham area being among some of the worst in the County and suggest that Collingham Fire Station goes some way towards mitigating that problem. Looking at the overall situation is seen as the solution, particularly in relation to discussing with EMAS whether Collingham could take over some of its duties in return for payment.

Resident 9

The resident is gravely concerned about the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station as it covers a large rural area between Newark and Lincoln. They mention major road and rail junctions on the Collingham side of Newark which apparently provide further justification for the station's retention. Of particular concern to the resident is the proximity of the A46 and A1 junction as well as the East Coast Main Line, all of which lie on the Collingham side of Newark.

The resident feels strongly that the closure of Collingham Fire Station would not save Nottinghamshire Fire Authority a meaningful amount of money and that it would put lives at risk.

Resident 10

The resident says that Collingham's position near the county boundary means that there is no other Nottinghamshire fire station between there and Lincolnshire. They are concerned that the residents

of villages near the Lincolnshire boundary will be very disadvantaged should Collingham Fire Station close.

The resident says that the situation is made worse for Collingham and its surrounding areas as they are bordered on one side by the River Trent and there is no road crossing other than at Newark on the A46 or A1 or the toll bridge on the A57 to the north of the village. It is apparently at least five miles from the A1/A46 crossings and eight miles from the toll bridge crossing to Collingham – which has the result of lengthening response times.

The resident is concerned that, whilst Fire and Rescue Services assist neighbouring counties, if there are two concurrent incidents priority is given to incidents within the ‘funding’ county.

The resident feels that Collingham Fire Station must be retained for road traffic collisions because the local area has several major roads with heavy usage (A1/A46/A57) and many country lanes – and because the crews are community minded in undertaking their duties in addition to their other occupations, and have acquired and perfected the skills required to provide their service.

Should cuts need to be made to the FRS, the resident suggests reductions to centrally-located fire engines, where cover can be provided from all directions. They urge the retention of Collingham Fire Station because if it is closed there is very little likelihood of it reopening if risk levels rise in future.

Resident 11

The resident is concerned that the main argument for the closure of Collingham Fire Station appears to centre on risk assessment, but seems to avoid the problem of location vulnerability. The area apparently has the following several unique problems:

Access in the north is gained only by using the narrow Dunham toll bridge which crosses into Lincolnshire and is often closed for maintenance or flooding

Southern access is gained via the congested confluence of the A1, A17 and A46 - and this traffic situation is exacerbated when events are held on the showground at Winthorpe

There are no bridges crossing the Trent between Dunham and Newark, so the area becomes a virtual island during one of the aforesaid events

The only arterial road through the district is the A1133 which is used as a diversionary route when a major road is blocked causing even more congestion

The Rivers Trent and Fleet have extensive flood plains covering a sizable area of the district

There is a risk of haystack fires in this almost entirely farming area.

Another concern is in relation to assistance from Lincolnshire FRS, and particularly that they must be under similar financial restrictions and unable to respond as effectively as desired.

Finally, the resident questions whether all avenues of cost-cutting have been investigated. For example, they ask: is there any redundant real estate that might be sold or used in a different way or can more be made of assets already held to raise money?

Resident 12

The resident expresses their absolute opposition to the closure of Collingham Fire Station as they consider its continuation as vital to their personal safety.

Resident 13

The resident says that Collingham and the villages beyond are ill-served for other emergency services and that a local fire service is essential as it takes a minimum of 15 minutes to reach Newark.

Resident 14

The resident is aware that the financial situation is difficult but is concerned that Collingham Fire Station is some distance from any other station and feels that it is needed to keep the village's growing population safe. They also praise the 'fabulous' local firefighters.

Resident 15

The resident describes the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station as a 'matter of grave concern' for the following reasons:

The population along the A1133 is more than 7,000, which is greater than Ollerton

The road follows the River Trent and many of the villages along its route are prone to flood

The station serves the whole of the population along the A1133 and is perfectly positioned to answer callouts along this corridor and respond to road traffic accidents on the A46

There is no access to the eastern side of the River Trent from its western side between Newark and Newton on Trent, which is nine miles north of Collingham - access to Collingham from Newark must be via the A46 (including two major trunk roads) or the A616 to the A1, south to the A46 junction

Accidents on both the A1 and the A46 impede road access

Newark Showground causes traffic congestion

The main Lincoln to Derby railway line carrying east/west commuter trains runs through the village. Long heavy goods trains also use this line and take four minutes to traverse rail/road level crossings

The stated increase in time to attend an incident is 'five to eight minutes, especially in the north' - which ignores extra delays caused by freight trains crossing the A1133 south of Collingham.

The resident also comments on the consultation, and particularly on the '*Gunning*' principles which state that a decision-maker cannot consult on a decision that it has already made and that if an alternative station closure is identified it must 'be conscientiously taken into account'. They have identified comparable stations that they feel should be considered for closure – namely Bingham, Bldworth, East Leake, Eastwood, Harworth, Misterton, Southwell and Warsop.

The resident also complains about the online questionnaire's tick-box approach, which offers no opportunity for comment – and suggests that the proposed closures shown on the website are pre-

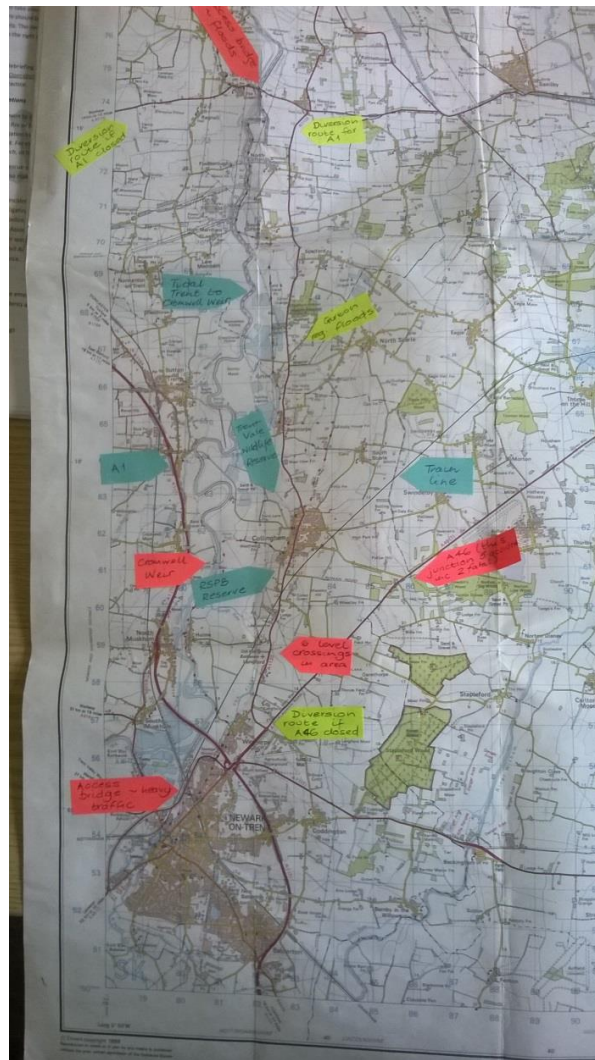
selected, with no explanation as to why other stations have not been considered for closure.

The resident feels that the stated saving of £135,000 from the closure of Collingham Fire Station is flawed in that it is based on salary, fire engine and fire station running costs - yet if the station is closed incidents in the Collingham area will be attended by fire engines from the surrounding areas. They say that the cost of using Lincolnshire FRS has not been taken into account, so the figure of £135,000 overstates savings.

Finally, the resident is concerned that there has been no consultation between NFRS and the Council's Planning department and that projected population increases have not been taken into account.

Resident 16

The resident submitted a map of what they considered to be the main hazards in the Collingham Fire Station area as below.



Standardised Submissions

27 identical letters were received from residents and small businesses in and around Collingham – all of which raised the same concerns as Councillor Marcia Parkin above.

Two additional concerns were raised – firstly that the ‘glossy brochures’ printed for the consultation seem an unnecessary expense and secondly that NFRS appears to be spending a great deal of money on ‘back office costs’.

Opposition to Proposed Removal of Second WDS Fire Engine from Highfields Fire Station

MPs and Councillors

A Highfields firefighter sent the following information to several of the area’s MPs and Councillors:

I'm a Fire Fighter at Highfields fire station, and I'm writing to you as councillors for [area] to ask you for your support in our fight to save the second fire appliance at Highfields. As I'm sure you are aware, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service have got to save an additional £2.6 Million from its budget, and one of the ways they are looking to do this is to remove the second fire appliance from Highfields Fire Station.

When Highfields opened in 2009, it had 3 fire appliances. If the Fire Authorities proposals pass through, then we could be left with one. If this were to happen, it could put your constituents at greater risk, as they will have to wait longer for assistance in their time of need!! As well as local residents, there are numerous schools and nurseries in the area, the University, residential homes, the QMC, and large business such as Boots.

All off these have large numbers of people on site in the day, and in the case of residential homes, QMC, and Boots, at night as well. With the QMC, there is also the fact that due to the varying needs of the patients, they will require additional help in evacuating them in the event of a fire etc. The same can also be said for the residential homes.

The nearest fire station to Highfields is Stapleford which is a retained station (part time). They carry an alerter which will sound if they are required, they then have 5 minutes to get to station to respond to the incident, from either home or work. Therefore, if we were to lose our second fire appliance, we would be waiting for a minimum of 5 minutes for a support appliance to arrive, instead of 2 arriving at the same time.

Highfields covers a number of large communities, including your, as well as Beeston, which is a busy shopping area/town. Potentially there will be a lot of lives put at risk if the Fire Authority are allowed to remove the second Fire Appliance. Therefore my colleagues, and myself, along with your constituents, would greatly appreciate your support in our fight to save our second fire appliance.

The replies to this are as follows:

Thank you for your email. I cannot believe that anyone would seriously consider leaving Highfields with just one fire appliance. Please be assured that I will give you my full backing and will use whatever influence I have to ensure that at last two units are there (David Watts)

I have been contacted by fire officers from Highfields Fire Station. As you will recall when the station opened it took appliances which used to be based at Beeston and at Dunkirk. Over time a decision was taken to reduce the number of units based there from three to two, but the fire officers tell me that proposals are now being discussed to reduce this to just one appliance. I fully appreciate the need to save money and that the fire service is no more exempt from this than the rest of us, but to reduce down to just one appliance would be wholly misguided in my view. In simple terms it would be putting lives at risk. I am utterly opposed to this proposal and would ask you to voice your opposition as well. It would carry a powerful message to the fire authority if the three political parties in Broxtowe could speak with one voice on this (David Watts to Anna Soubry, MP for Broxtowe)

As for Highfields I am more than happy to raise this directly with the Chief Fire Officer and report back... (Anna Soubry, MP for Broxtowe)

I have looked into these proposals and share your concerns regarding the second engine at Highfields...speaking to our MP's office she is more than happy to discuss Highfields with the Chief Fire Officer. I have responded to the consultation and registered that I strongly disagree with the proposal for Highfields and I will encourage others to do the same. Sadly it appears that the dice is cast for consultations are likely as not held after the decisions have been made and hardly ever result in a change of heart. Sadder still is that it may well be a decision with dire consequences (Councillor Graham Harvey)

Having been a member of the Fire Authority before the electorate decided to let me go, I fought to maintain fire cover. I still support that, particularly with the planned growth in housing and economic development around HS2... (Councillor Eric Kerry)

Opposition to Proposed Removal of Second WDS Fire Engine from Central and Highfields Fire Stations

University of Nottingham

The University of Nottingham expresses concern over the possible reduction in the capacity of the Highfields Fire Station to one fire appliance insofar as several thousand staff, students and visitors use its University campuses each day and for over 4,000 students in residential accommodation it is their home. Further, as well as residential buildings, the University campuses house many academic research establishments, some of which (such as the Chemistry and Biomolecular Sciences buildings) represent a more significant fire risk than others. In addition to the on-campus residences, approximately 2,200 students reside in Broadgate Park and many thousands of others live in houses of multiple occupation in Dunkirk, Beeston and Old Lenton.

Given the nature of the University community and its physical environment, the University feels it is essential that the Fire and Rescue Service is able to respond rapidly in an emergency. It operates an open campus and welcomes visitors – and activity on campus extends through the late evening and sometimes throughout the night, with attractions such as the Students' Union bar in the Portland Building, the Sports Centre, Swimming Pool, Hotel, Conference Centre and 24/7 access Libraries. The University therefore considers any proposed reduction in the fire appliances located in the immediate vicinity of the University campuses to represent a potentially serious risk to life.

Resident

The resident appreciates that with improvements to Risk Management and building materials/regulation the number of incidents has fallen and financially NFRS cannot staff up on a worst case basis when the statistics suggest that the need is not there. However, they are concerned about reducing cover at Central and Highfields Fire Stations with the significant increase in student accommodation in converted office blocks in the City Centre.

Opposition to Proposed Closure of Warsop Fire Station

Big Warsop

Big Warsop is an elected constituted partnership group of independent people that represents the communities of Warsop. It recognises that budgets are being squeezed and difficult decisions need to be taken – but has analysed data provided by NFRS to better understand the proposal, the risk faced by Warsop's communities and the viability of Warsop's Fire Station when compared with other stations and appliances across the county. Its findings showed that in 2013:

In terms of total running costs for each stand-alone retained station across Nottinghamshire, Warsop is the sixth cheapest to run out of the 12

Warsop was the next most available RDS Appliance to Harworth (representing a good investment of funds)

When comparing the running costs for each RDS station against the number of hours the respective appliance was available - Warsop is the third most cost-efficient station across the 12 solely RDS stations

Total number of mobilisations per RDS station show there was not much between the top seven stations; Warsop had the seventh highest number of the 12 RDS stations and the station ranked eighth saw a considerable drop in mobilisations

Looking at the average cost of an incident when comparing mobilisations against total running costs - Warsop was the fourth most efficient appliance out of the 12 RDS appliances

All stations, except Eastwood (high) and Collingham (low), vary little in terms of the number of incidents that have occurred in the station area. Warsop had the ninth highest number of incidents for its station area – which Big Warsop says proves the need for an appliance just as much as those ranked second to tenth

Of the mobilisations across the 12 RDS stations, Warsop had the third lowest response time, which Big Warsop feels proves this resource meets NFRS targets

In terms of Warsop vs Wholetime, Warsop operates at 11.6% of the cost of a comparable WDS Station, has a lower average response time and availability was only 2.7% less (assuming the WDS appliance was never off the run)

The majority of the station area is categorised as medium risk and if the Warsop Appliance was removed a proportion would not be within a 10 minute response time.

Big Warsop's conclusions are that:

Warsop Fire Station is not situated in a predominantly low risk area and based on mobilisations and incidents there is a proven need for the appliance to remain

The availability and reliability of the appliance is among the best in the county. At a time when most authorities are looking more to the RDS as a safe way to reduce costs it is not a station NFRS can afford to lose

Station costs are amongst the lowest in the county and the potential savings that can be realised would have a minimal impact

The retained station in Warsop operates at 11.6% of the total cost of a comparable station operating on the Wholetime Duty System

The recommendations for 'Balancing the Budget' have not changed since 2010, yet the number and geographical location of incidents, number of mobilisations and operating costs for each station have changed considerably

If a station is closed the reality is that it is gone for good and the service provision for that area will never return even if risks increase. The impacts of this would be far more severe than, say, removing a second retained pump from a wholetime station or moving a wholetime duty system station to day staffing or RDS

The strong opposition to the closure of Warsop Fire Station is justified as there is no credible evidence to support such a move.

Resident 1

The resident objects to the closure of Warsop Fire Station for the following reasons:

The A60 is a very dangerous road

It will take far too long for a merged fire service to respond to emergency calls

Firefighters will have to work with other stations and possibly have to choose between two types of emergencies

How can anyone be expected to put a cost against life?

It would be devastating to the community as more jobs would go

It would mean another empty building in the town.

Resident 2

The resident asks that NFRS retain Warsop Fire Station due to the amount of traffic on the A60, especially when there is an accident on the M1.

Resident 3

The resident is opposed to the proposed reduction of fire cover in the Warsop area. They are a small business owner who would be directly affected and asks that NFRS demand a fairer settlement from Government.

Opposition to Proposed Removal of Second (RDS) Fire Engine from Mansfield Fire Station

Resident 1

The resident opposes the proposal to remove the RDS fire engine from Mansfield Fire Station due to the station having special equipment bases there (e.g. CSU, foam pod, turntable ladder). They understand that, when called out, the CSU has to go with the full-time pump - and question what cover will be available if this is the case, particularly if Warsop Fire Station also closes. The resident asks: if Mansfield's and both of Ashfield's pumps are out, where would our cover/stand by pumps come from? Is it going to be a case of pay has you burn which was going around about 15 years ago?

Resident 2

The resident is of the view that as Mansfield is a large town, any fire must be responded to within a time frame of eight minutes...and that this time lengthens, lives are put at risk. They know cuts have to be made but feel these should be within limits.

Opposition to Proposed Removal of Second WDS Fire Engine from Stockhill Fire Station

Councillor Cat Arnold, Councillor Alex Norris, Councillor Bill Ottewell and Michael Savage

The Councillors are strongly opposed to the proposed removal of the second WDS fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station as having the full two engine service from there is important to the Basford community as well as the rest of north Nottingham.

The Councillors attached a petition (signed by nearly 600 local residents) asking the Fire Authority to re-consider this proposal. Indeed, although they recognise that even with increased local revenues the withdrawal of Government support means that cuts have to be made, the Councillors seek to persuade the Fire Authority that a reduction at Stockhill would be unwise because:

The station serves a wide community in Basford, north Nottingham and out to the M1

Fire Engine 1 is very busy and removing Fire Engine 2 would put even more pressure on it

The community is a difficult one to engage and it takes sustained effort over a long period of time to deliver change. NFRS has done this and the benefits can be seen through the considerable fall in fires – and having one very hard-worked engine would impact on the ability of local staff to maintain their community presence.

Resident 1

The resident strongly objects to the proposed removal of one fire engine from Stockhill Fire Station because the area is in very close proximity to the very busy junction 26 of the M1. In their view it will have potentially catastrophic results when there is an incident on the motorway and no backup at Stockhill to deal with the numerous serious call-outs that happen each day.

Social Media

192. NFRS publicised the consultation on Twitter as below:



193. Others also spoke of and encouraged participation in the consultation:



194. Several tweets in response to the consultation were received, mainly around:

The impossibility of predicting the unexpected and the need for sufficient resources to cope with 'what if?' incidents

The need to reject further cuts and demand a fairer settlement from Government

The fact that levels of cover should be dictated by risk not incidents, which will in any case plateau and possibly rise

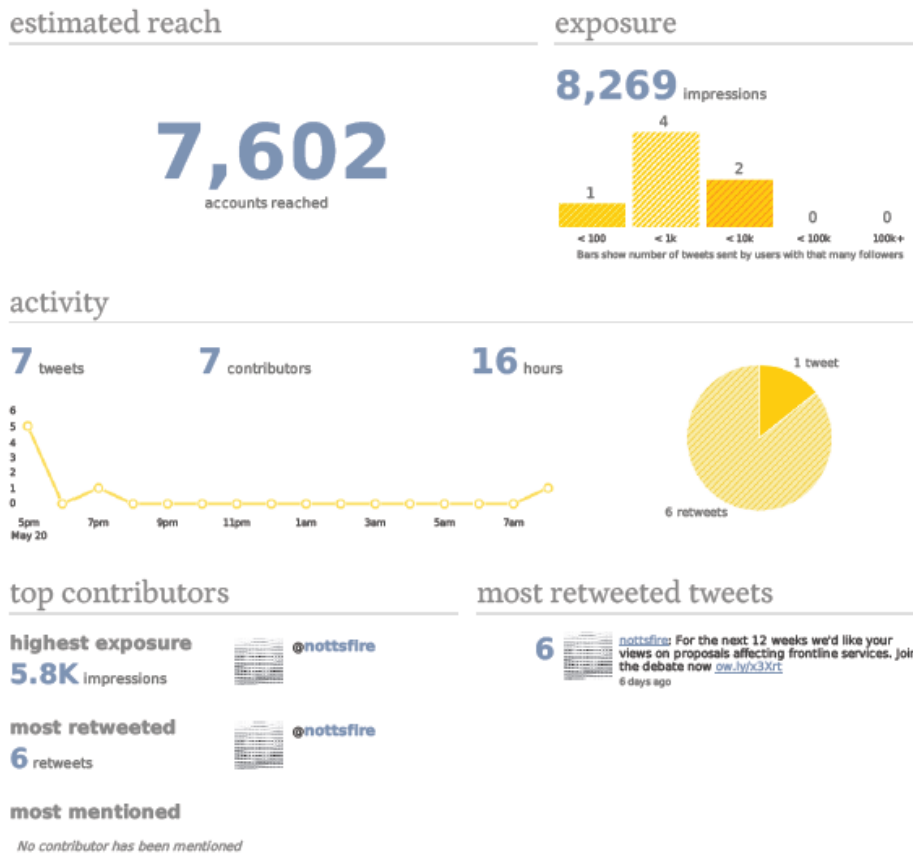
The need to reduce managers and the back-office

The possibility of considering crewing changes and sharing premises with EMAS

The need to retain as many FRS resources as possible as an 'insurance policy'

The consultation as a fait accompli.

195. Overall, the following ‘TweetReach’ report shows the impact of NFRS’s social media activity in terms of reach, activity and exposure.



196. Further information on NFRS’s Digital Communications Data can be found in Appendix 1.

Petitions

Overview of Petitions Objecting to the Proposals

197. Several petitions objecting to the proposals were organised during the consultation and this chapter reviews all those of which ORS is aware. We apologise if there have been other petitions of which we have no knowledge, but we have cross-checked our records with those of NFRS and the ones reviewed in the following paragraphs are all those known about.
198. The total number of signatures, across all 10 petitions we know about, is 7,964. These were important petitions about the ‘cuts’ generally and, more specifically, services at Collingham, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill and Warsop Fire Stations.

Summary of Petitions

General Petitions against ‘Cuts’ to NFRS

199. 556 people signed an online petition entitled ‘Stop the Cuts to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service’ and a further 206 people signed a paper-based petition entitled ‘Against Front-line Fire Service Cuts’. The petitions were worded as follows:

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is having to cut £2.4 from its budget due to a reduction in Government funding.

The service is consulting with the public over removing fire engines from Collingham, Central, Highfields, Mansfield, Stockhill and Warsop. This is in addition to the recent removal of fire engines from Arnold, Carlton, Highfields and West Bridgford.

Please sign this petition to SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE: DEMAND no cuts to frontline services and SUPPORT the Fire Brigades Union campaign to achieve proper funding for the Fire and Rescue.

200. The online petition also attracted 135 written responses, most of which were general statements objecting to FRS reductions and concerns about the potential increase in life risk should some or all of NFRS’s proposals be ratified. Some of the many typical comments were:

Stop the cuts now

Save our fire station!!

Fire & Rescue is one of the essential services that shouldn't be taken for granted

We need to stop these cuts, it is disgusting

Stop these insane attacks on essential frontline public services

Stop these cuts before we lose the best Fire Service in the world

It's ridiculous to make any more cuts in an essential service!

You should be ashamed of yourselves. Cut from the top of the tree not the bottom. It will all fall down!!

I am a small business owner who would be directly affected should I ever need to call upon this service and ask that the Government does not cut frontline services

We need to know that we can rely on such an important service as the Fire Service

We pay our rates to provide fire cover for our village. The fire service budget is obviously being spent on other things, rather than the firefighters that we require. Our safety should be of the uppermost importance

As a person who had a bad house fire in 2010, I cannot justify the closure of any fire station. It took 2 fire engines many hours to contain the fire whilst waiting many hours for the gas board to disconnect the gas. If it wasn't for them the whole house and next door would have been lost

Stop the cuts to our Fire Service. Cuts will only cost lives to civilians and firefighters

Are the cuts really worth the lives that will be lost and the firefighters that will be put at risk?

We need to be able to rely on such an important service. This service should not be subject to cost savings. How can anyone put a value on the cost of saving a life?

Stop playing with public safety

We have already undergone enough austerity measures. We have a fantastic service because we have the resources to provide such a service. Take away these resources and the service will become depleted. We will be too stretched and our safety will be compromised. Fact. The Government are out of touch

This is madness. How much is a life worth? Give managers the right to run the service as they need to

I simply have no words to express how foolish I find this course of action. Risking lives for the sake of saving a few pennies

Closing this station will kill people!

People are going to die. Every second counts...

Death and destruction will be the result of such a crass move to close these stations :-(

201. Other responses were about the proposed changes to particular stations (most notably Collingham, Warsop and to a lesser extent Stockhill) as the many following typical comments show:

Warsop needs a fire station. Where is the 10 minute call-out time coming from when Edwinstowe and Mansfield are out on a call?

Response time saves lives and to close our Fire Station is putting Warsop and surrounding villages at RISK. Warsop needs its brave firemen

So sickening to think we have petitioned once before recently to save Warsop fire station. Why are we to be left at risk? Are our lives not so important as those who reside in Mansfield? Keep our services open; we pay the same council tax and should be entitled to be safe

My main concern is the distance a fire engine would have to travel if there was no station in Warsop. Minutes are vital if your property is on fire

I do not understand the reasoning for removing Fire Engines from Warsop when there are so many new homes being built and a lot of vulnerable people living in the area

Our fire service at Warsop is essential to our community. Where I live in Church Warsop I regularly see fire engines responding to emergencies to put out fires and save lives, and feel safe in the knowledge that they are close by

The Warsop fire station provides an excellent service to our local community, and deals with emergencies swiftly...

I consider the plan to close Collingham Fire Station to be folly of the highest order, and to be resisted at all cost

PLEASE don't close our fire station, as we are so far from anywhere else and it is often used for accidents on A46

With increasing development and population growth in Collingham it seems extremely short-sighted to close our well-serviced, community-focused and supported fire station

Collingham is the only station on the East of the River Trent and covers all the way out to Broadholme. Closing Collingham would seriously impair the safety of people and property in this area. The A46 nearby is also a critical highway...

I fully support this petition to save the fire engine at Collingham. It covers the A52 to Lincoln, without it there would be no cover on that stretch of the roads that are quick there. Also the village needs a fire engine for its safety and safety of surrounding villages too

If you remove the local fire service the chances of getting the service quickly is almost NIL, especially if Newark services are busy with a very large fire or another incident. Therefore keep Collingham as if Newark is busy Collingham covers them

Collingham Fire Service is essential to ensuring the safety of residents in Collingham and the surrounding areas. Often first on the scene, the Collingham Fire brigade are renowned for their professionalism and dedication. The proposed cuts are dangerous and undermine the vital support they provide

People's lives could be lost because of the delay in firefighters reaching Collingham and surrounding villages if this service is removed

I think that to cut this service...all the people in Collingham [are] at danger of losing their lives as it would take a fire engine from Ollerton...far too long

People will BURN...IF these closures go ahead there is no way an engine can get to a serious incident with the ever-increasing traffic density in this area

Do not make any cuts to fire stations and crew in Nottinghamshire, especially Stockhill.

Stockhill Fire Station

202. 590 people signed a paper-based petition against the proposed removal of the second WDS fire engine at Stockhill Fire Station. The petition was organised by Councillors Cat Arnold, Alex Norris and Bill Ottewell and Michael Savage (Secretary, Old Highbury Vale TRA) and was worded as follows:

Due to Government cuts the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority are being forced to make difficult budget decisions. One of these could mean that Stockhill Fire Station loses one of its appliances. We the undersigned believe that this appliance plays an important role in preventing and tackling fires in our community and believe that this appliance should remain.

203. Stockhill firefighters also collected 1,356 signatures to a petition against the proposed removal of the second WDS appliance at their fire station. The petition was worded as follows:

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is having to cut £2.4 from its budget due to a reduction in Government funding.

The service is consulting with the public over the removal of a fire engine from STOCKHILL FIRE STATION. The consultation also proposes cutting a further 5 fire engines in Nottinghamshire.

Please sign this petition to SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE: DEMAND no cuts to frontline services and SUPPORT the Fire Brigades Union campaign to achieve proper funding for the Fire and Rescue.

204. A member of the public organised an online petition, which attracted 372 signatures. The petition was worded as follows:

Due to cuts in its budget for 2015-17 the fire service are NOW consulting the public on removing front line fire appliances in Nottinghamshire.

One of the proposals is to remove a front line appliance from Stockhill Fire Station, Basford, Nottingham.

These changes could put the safety of the public and that of firefighters at risk.

Please take two minutes to sign this e-petition and SAY NO to cuts at Stockhill.

Highfields Fire Station

205. 2,070 people signed petitions against the proposed removal of the second WDS fire engine at Highfields Fire Station – 1,861 on paper and 209 online. The petitions were worded as follows:

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is having to cut £2.4 from its budget due to a reduction in Government funding.

The service is consulting with the public over the removal of a fire engine from HIGHFIELDS FIRE STATION. The consultation also proposes cutting a further 5 fire engines in Nottinghamshire.

Please sign this petition to SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE: DEMAND no cuts to frontline services and SUPPORT the Fire Brigades Union campaign to achieve proper funding for the Fire and Rescue.

In 2009 Highfields fire station started with 3 fire engines to protect the communities of Broxtowe borough and The South West of Nottingham City. After the last round of cuts in 2012 we lost one of our engines and now in 2014 it has been proposed that we lose another. This is putting your lives at risk! Please help us by signing this petition to allow us to protect the future of your second fire engine.

If you have a house fire, under the proposals a second fire engine would be sent from west Bridgford, Nottingham city centre or Long Eaton, this could take a further 10 minutes and would leave one fire crew in a limited position to be able to help. We need your support so we can continue to support you.

At Highfields Fire Station we also provide water rescue response to the south of Nottinghamshire and are frequently called to Derbyshire also. This highly specialised role is vital to you, the members of public. We also operate an Aerial Ladder Platform which allows us to rescue people safely from height and tackle fires from above. If these savings are made at your expense these invaluable skills will be at best strained at worst lost altogether once again removing training and protection you have come to expect.

We will fight to protect what you are paying for and the service you expect needs to be ready to respond to incidents but behind the scenes we have worked hard to reduce incidents by working with you to make your lives safer. The harsh reality is that if we lose another fire engine from the station it will severely limit the work we can carry out with the local communities, affecting public safety and fire fighter safety.

Collingham Fire Station

206. 953 people signed a paper-based petition against the proposed closure of Collingham Fire Station. The petition was entitled 'Save our Fire Service' and was worded as follows:

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is having to cut £2.4m from its budget due to a reduction in Government funding.

The service is consulting with the public in Nottinghamshire over the removal of the Fire Engine and Fire Station from Collingham. The consultation also proposes cutting a further five fire engines in Nottinghamshire.

*Please sign this petition to **SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE: DEMAND** no cuts to frontline services and **SUPPORT** the Fire Brigades Union campaign to achieve proper funding for the Fire and Rescue Service.*

Mansfield and Warsop Fire Stations

207. 925 people signed a paper-based petition against the proposed removal of the second (RDS) fire engine at Mansfield Fire Station and the closure of Warsop Fire Station. The petition was organised by the Socialist Party and was worded as follows:

Fight all fire service cuts save Mansfield's second fire engine and Warsop fire station Nottinghamshire Fire Authority are proposing £2.4 million cuts – the same cuts that trade unions and Notts people rejected in 2010. MAKE BIG BUSINESS & THE RICH PAY

Warsop Fire Station

208. 584 people signed a paper-based petition against the proposed closure of Warsop Fire Station. The petition was organised by the FBU and was worded as follows:

Save Your Fire Station!

Warsop Fire Station is under threat of closure due to the latest round of government cuts. You must save it or lose it. Please sign our petition and show your support.

209. 334 people signed another paper-based petition against the proposed closure of Warsop Fire Station. The petition was organised by firefighters at the station itself.

Petitions: Need for Interpretation

210. The petitions summarised above are clearly important in indicating public anxiety about important aspects of NFRS's proposed changes – and the Service will wish to treat them seriously. Nonetheless, they should also note that petitions can exaggerate general public sentiments if organised by motivated opponents; and in this case there has been considerable local campaigning about changes to services.
211. For example, a few of the petitions make the following statement: *The service is consulting with the public over the removal of a fire engine from XXX FIRE STATION. The consultation also proposes cutting a further five fire engines in Nottinghamshire.* This could lead some people to consider that NFRS is proposing to remove six of its fire engines from service, which is of course not the case.
212. So petitions should never be disregarded or discredited, for they show local feelings; but they should be interpreted in context.

Meetings

NFRS Meetings

Collingham Public Meeting

213. On August 4th 2014, a public meeting was held in Collingham to discuss NFRS's proposal to close Collingham Fire Station: it was attended by approximately 130 members of the public. The meeting was chaired a local Councillor, and received a presentation on the proposal from ORS. All questions raised following the presentation were answered by NFRS Officers.

214. The following issues were raised and questions asked during the course of the meeting:

How NFRS's risk profile is generated and how often it is revisited - and the caution that must be taken in using statistics to produce it

The absence of fatalities from the statistics (and the potential for this figure to be affected in future)

Whether or not agricultural risks have been accounted for during the risk planning process

Whether Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had contributed to NFRS's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and, if not, whether it will take the closing of Collingham Fire Station into consideration when formulating its own plans

Concerns about fire station closures by LFRS and the impact this may have on its capacity to provide services to Nottinghamshire

Whether Lincolnshire-based resources would be available for the Collingham area (some felt they would not be able to adequately cover the area)

The reciprocal nature of the relationship between NFRS and LFRS – and that if Collingham Fire Station is to close, support costs may increase

Whether events at the County Showground (and the half a million people that visit the area to attend them) have been taken into account during the risk planning process

Whether NFRS has considered: the potential for serious road traffic collisions on the A46 and A1133; the number of visitors to the RSPB nature reserve locally; the six level crossings in the area; blocked roads in winter; and the area's propensity to flood

Whether the local planning authority has been consulted on the proposals to determine the level of future development in the area (which in turn could increase the demand for NFRS's services)

Why East Leake has not been considered for reductions – and why Newark and Retford are entitled to two engines (as they are apparently not particularly busy)

The population of Collingham exceeds that of Ollerton

The rural nature of Collingham and the implications this has on response times (and potential delays) if the Fire Station was to close. One attendee said they had a house fire eight years ago and it took a Newark fire engine 20 minutes to arrive at the incident

The potential inaccuracy of the suggested five to ten minutes response time (other emergency services were said to have taken *up to an hour* to respond)

Collingham firefighters provide support to paramedics in emergency situations

The future of the high volume pump (HVP) if the Collingham staff are made redundant

Whether non-uniformed staff will face redundancy as part of the process – and the potential for reducing staff directly costing NFRS money

The feasibility of reducing the number of under-used retained engines elsewhere in lieu of closing fire stations – or a reduction in the number of watches (from four to three) at stations

A perception that the decision has already been taken to close Collingham Fire Station and that the consultation is nothing but a *fait accompli*.

Warsop Parish Council

215. The following is a summary of the questions posed to CFO John Buckley and CFA Chair Councillor Pulk at a meeting of Warsop Parish Council on 21st July 2014 – as well as concerns raised by attendees about the proposed closure of Warsop Fire Station:

We don't want Warsop Fire Station to close, is it a done deal?

Warsop is at a disadvantage in the consultation process as its population size is smaller than the population that surrounds other stations being considered for closure/reduction in the number of appliances...support for Station 7 will be smaller in comparison

Who decides to mobilise T07P1? (the Parish councillor asking this question was suspicious that perhaps Warsop's reduction in fire calls over the last five years was due to alternative appliances being mobilised to lend weight to the case for closing the station)

There have been only 40 incidents in Warsop in 2014, are the reductions in calls being seen throughout the County or are stats being manipulated?

What are the financial savings should Warsop Fire Station Close?

What would the increase in attendance time be to an incident to the west of Warsop's Station Area?

What would happen to the RDS crew members at Station 7 and how many currently hold a Dual Contract?

Why have these proposals been put forward?

How easy is it to re-open a fire Station once closed?

When a family dies due to an appliance being 2.5 minutes later to attend will you then go to the Government and demand an increase in a budget?

Highfields Fire Station

- ²¹⁶. The following is a summary of the questions posed to CFA Chair Councillor Pulk at a meeting arranged by staff at Highfields Fire Station to raise concerns over the potential removal of the second WDS appliance there. 27 members of staff based at the station attended. A number of local councillors and MPs were invited but did not attend:

What has been done by the CFA and Senior Management to fight the budget cuts as NFRS is set to have lost seven or eight appliances in less than five years?

How up to date is the risk profiling? Has the impact on Station 29 of the recent removal of T19P2 been considered for example?

What alternatives are being considered (e.g. sale of HQ)?

If Station 29 loses its second appliance what will happen if Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service closes Long Eaton (as has been proposed)?

How will Station 29 crew the ALP and provide Swift Water rescue capability from one appliance?

5 years ago we spent over £8million in building Highfields to merge Station 21 and 22. A couple of years ago we lost our third appliance. Can we really justify Highfields becoming a one pump station?

Appendix 1: Digital communications Data

Consultation Week 1 - 19/5/14 - 25/5/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	Post announcing the launch of the consultation	Reach= 225 Interaction = 27 Percentage = 12%
Twitter	1 tweet announcing consultation	Impressions=2224 Engagements = 79 Percentage = 3.5%
Website	4 pages; consultation begins, balancing budget,	Page views = 336 +164 +17 +0 Total =517
Intranet	No useful information available for intranet	

Consultation Week 2 - 26/5/14 - 1/6/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No post	0 0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	No tweet	0 0 Percentage = 0%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 113 + 71 +7+0 Total = 191

Consultation Week 3 - 2/6/14 - 8/6/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No post	0 0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	1 tweet + 17 tweet about forum event	Impressions=33179 Engagements = 333 Percentage = 1%

Website 4 pages Page views = 98 + 59 +10+0 Total = 167

Consultation Week 4 - 9/6/14 - 15/6/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No post	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	No tweet	0 Percentage = 0%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 75 + 15+ 14+0 Total = 104

Consultation Week 5 - 16/6/14 - 22/6/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	Direct to consultation post and change to cover	Impressions = 253 Interaction = 22 Percentage = 8.7%
Twitter	No Tweet	0 Percentage = 0%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 53 + 10 +7+0 Total = 70

Consultation Week 6 - 23/6/14 - 29/6/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No posts	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	1 tweet publicising Retford visit +1	Impressions =2601 Engagements = 42 Percentage = 1.6%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 53 + 7 + 7 +0 Total = 67

Consultation Week 7 - 30/6/14 - 6/7/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No posts	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	1 tweet about forum - Nottingham	Impressions = 1585 Engagements = 60 Percentage = 3.8%

Website 4 pages Page views = 45 + 18 +3 +0 Total = 66

Consultation Week 8 - 7/7/14- 13/7/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No posts	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	No Tweet	0 Percentage = 0%

Website 4 pages Page views = 36 + 11 +13 +0 Total = 60

Consultation Week 9 - 14/7/14 - 20/7/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	No posts	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	Tweet about Newark visit - with pic	Impressions = 2467 Engagements = 81 Percentage = 3.2%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 24 + 6 +16 +0 Total = 46

Consultation Week 10 - 21/7/14 - 27/7/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	2x posts on team at Mansfield - pic gallery + video	Reach=567 Interaction=503 Percentage = 88.7%
Twitter	2x tweets about Mansfield visit with pics +1 tweet	Impressions = 5920 Engagements = 226 Percentage = 3.8%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 72 + 20 +28 +16 Total = 136

Consultation Week 11 - 28/7/14 - 3/8/14

Type	Description	Results
Facebook	1 video animation post of reduction in calls	Reach=169 Interaction=67 Percentage = 40%

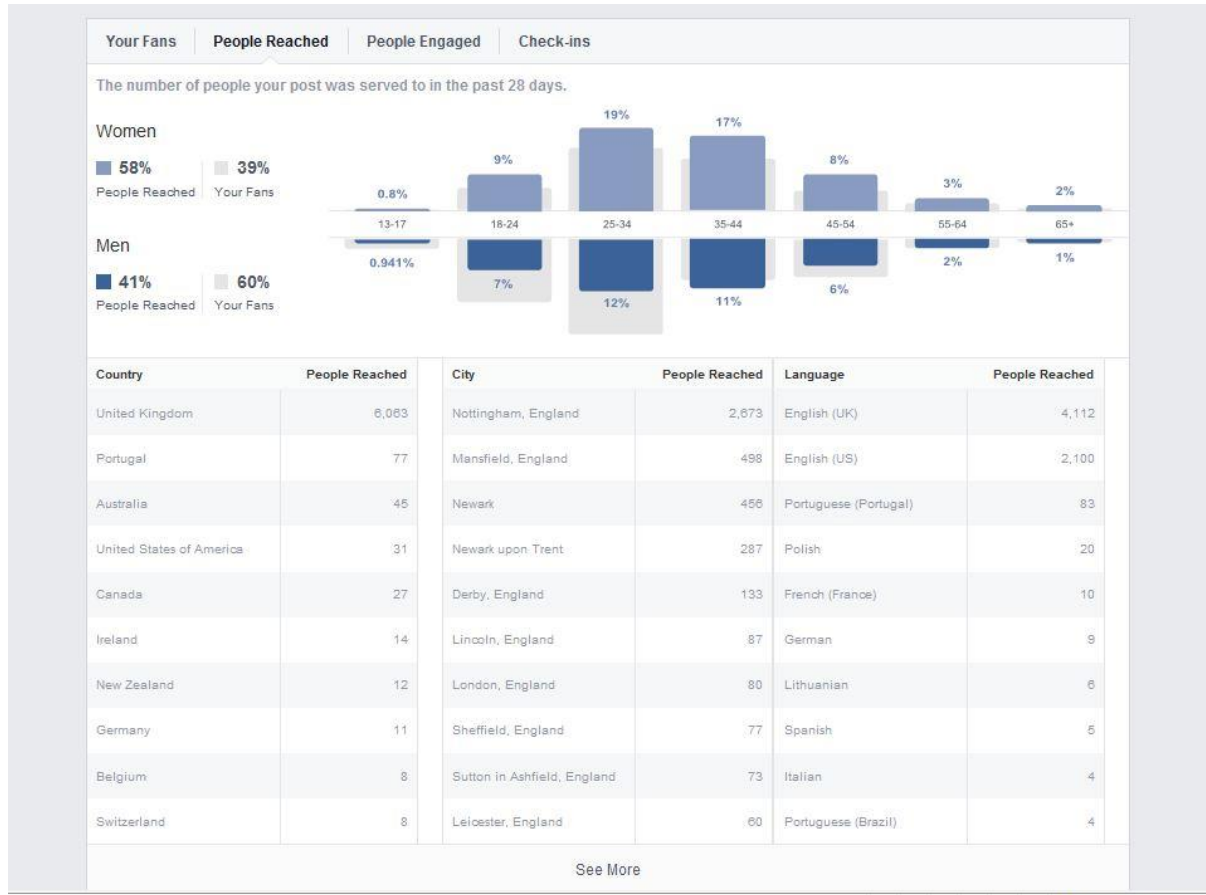
Twitter	1 tweet - saving 1million +1 balance budget	Impressions = 3396	Engagements = 51	Percentage = 1.5%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 49 + 23 +24 +75	Total = 171	

Consultation Week 12 - 4/8/14 - 10/8/14

Type	Description	Results		
Facebook	No post		0	0 Percentage = 0%
Twitter	1 tweet + analytic should we cut fire engines? +3 others	Impressions = 5679	Engagements = 436	Percentage = 7.7%
Website	4 pages	Page views = 97 +71+ 25 +36	Total = 229	

Explanatory Notes

Facebook – the results are divided into reach and interactions. Reach is a measure of unique visitors who have seen a post. Interactions are made up of likes, comments, clicks and shares the user has to interact with the post in some way for it to register. The percentage is number of interactions divided by the reach and indicates how engaging a post is. Below are general reach demographics showing age, gender and location.



Twitter - The twitter results are divided into impressions and engagements. Impressions are the number of times people have the tweet on Twitter, engagements are the total number of times users have interacted with a tweet including replies, retweets favourites etc. The rate is engagement divided by impressions and shows how interesting a tweet was.

The following graph shows the impressions for all tweets from @nottsfire over the last 28 days, the spike on the 31/7/14 was due to tweets about a large fire in Basford.

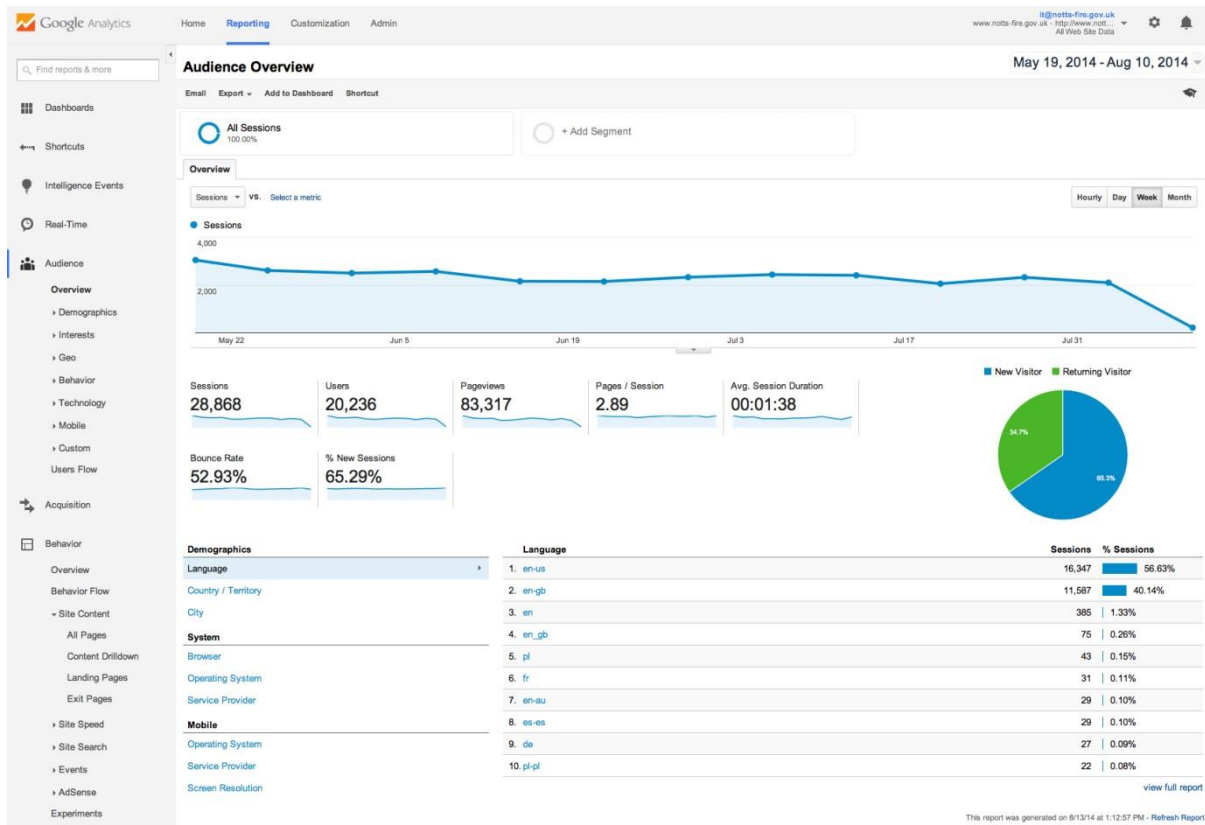
Tweet activity

Your Tweets earned **113.1K impressions** over the last 28 days

That's **20.6% more impressions** than the previous 28-day period



Website – The web results cover 4 pages that were in use throughout the consultation period, “12 week consultation begins”, “Consultation”, “Balancing the budget” and “Last 2 weeks of consultation”. The demographics for the whole website (www.notts-fire.gov.uk) are shown below.



Appendix 2: Media Coverage

Press Articles and Commentary

Below are the press articles and commentary relating to NFRS's 'Balancing the Budget' consultation.

20th May 2014



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Nottinghamshire fire service consulting over cuts

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is consulting on plans to change frontline services at six of its 24 fire stations.

These include cutting the number of engines at Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields, from two to one.

Warsop and Collingham would also lose their retained firefighters, with cover being provided by other stations.

The service needs to find savings of £2.4m to meet a shortfall in funding.

Chair of the Fire Authority, Darrell Pulk, said: "The service has already made some significant savings in recent years, but further cuts in government funding have resulted in £2.4m of additional savings being needed.

"This leaves the service with no option but to once again review how it delivers services to the people of Nottinghamshire."

He added: "The Fire Authority has asked the service to carry out this consultation on its behalf so it can gauge public opinion, and so it can reassure the public that these aren't decisions that are being taken lightly."

The Fire Brigades Union is yet to comment.

The **consultation launched on Monday** and will run for 12 weeks.

21st May 2014



PLANS to axe up to six county fire engines – potentially leaving Nottingham's main fire station with just one truck – will put "lives at risk", according to firefighters.

The fire service is looking at reducing the number of fire engines at four bases and closing two other stations completely in a bid to make up some of the £2.4 million shortfall it faces in its Government funding.

If all trucks are cut it would leave 26 fire engines working across the county – down from the current 32.

Under the proposals, Nottingham's central fire station, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields stations could each have their fire engines cut from two to one.

The retained fire engines at Warsop and Collingham could also be removed, meaning these two stations would close and other crews nearby would be sent to incidents in the Collingham/Warsop area.

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service said that fire trucks from nearby stations would be sent to 999 calls where more than one engine is needed, and has launched a 12-week consultation to see what people think of the plans.

It also said that depending on the results of the consultation, some engines may be kept running.

The aim is to save £1 million towards the shortfall – meaning not all of the six trucks will necessarily be scrapped.

The service would not say whether any of the county's 746 firefighters would lose their jobs.

A crew of five firefighters are needed to staff each fire engine.

But chairman of the Nottinghamshire Fire Brigades Union Sean McCallum said the cuts would "cost lives".

He said: "We certainly have great concerns and oppose all cuts to frontline operational services. We feel that the Government should be adequately funding our services and not cutting budgets."

"[If the plans go ahead] fire engines will have to travel further to get to incidents. For example, if you were to have a house fire in Mansfield, under the proposed cuts and someone is trapped, there will be three fire engines mobilised.

"One would get sent from Mansfield and the others would come from Edwinstowe and Ashfield which is a considerable distance away. Smaller fires can develop into larger fires very quickly and every minute is crucial if someone is trapped."

Chairman of the East Midlands Fire Brigades Union Phil Coates said he feared jobs would be lost as fewer crews would be needed to staff the vehicles.

He said: "We are very disappointed that the cuts are going to hit Notts; we have already had the second full-time pump at West Bridgford removed and lost retained fire personnel at Arnold, Carlton and Highfields over the past five years.

"Any cuts to frontline fire services will put lives at risk and we cannot afford to lose anymore firefighters.

"We are asking the chair of the fire authority and the chief fire officer to lobby for a fairer settlement for Notts so that we can have a fully funded fire service."

The fire service's total budget for the year is £42.9 million and the consultation document outlines aims to save £1 million towards a deficit of £2.4 million.

The organisation said "restructuring of the service" would account for the remaining £1.4 million shortfall – but would not say what this meant.

The consultation document suggests that not all cuts will necessarily be made – depending on how much each one combined saves.

Chief fire officer John Buckley explained: "In recent years the service has worked extremely hard to prevent incidents from occurring and to ensure that our communities are safer than they have ever been.

"Last year, for the first time, fire crews responded to fewer than 10,000 incidents and this contributes to a reduction of approximately 35 per cent in the number of incidents over the last 10 years.

"As part of this latest review, we have, once again, examined areas of risk and made proposals based on aligning our resources to where they are needed most.

"Keeping our communities safe remains our number one priority, and we will continue to do our best to provide a first class service to the public whilst making the necessary changes to meet the financial challenges ahead."

21st May 2014 (letter)

THE latest round of proposed cuts to Notts Fire and Rescue Service looks unreasonably savage.

Concerns were expressed following cuts affecting West Bridgford, Arnold, Carlton and Highfields fire stations.

Now, ordered to save a further £2.4m, fire chiefs are reluctantly proposing to cut the county's remaining fleet of 32 fire engines to 26 and to institute what they call a "restructuring".

The first question to be asked concerns public safety.

Will households and businesses be any more at risk because of the withdrawal of these units, reorganisation and the creation of a new system of cover?

One suspects the answer is yes. In which case two further questions apply. Is there a case for challenging the Government and fighting for a less damaging settlement? And if the answer to that is no, is there a better alternative to the one now being proposed?

Whatever the outcome, we hope for further progress on the cause of fire education prevention. The only good news to come out of these cuts is the knowledge that over the last decade there has been a 35 per cent reduction in the number of fire and rescue incidents.

That impressive performance must be maintained.

21st May 2014



A 12-week consultation by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service on proposals to change frontline services at six of its fire stations has begun this week.

The Service is seeking feedback from the public, staff, trade unions and partner organisations as part of a review into how it can continue to provide an effective and efficient fire and rescue service while achieving significant cost savings.

At a meeting in February, Members of the Fire Authority committed to finding some of the £2.4 million shortfall it faces by revisiting proposals first published in the Fire Cover Review of 2010/11, and looking at options for further streamlining services.

The current proposals include reducing the number of fire engines at four fire stations, Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields, from two to one. These would be supported by fire engines in the surrounding areas.

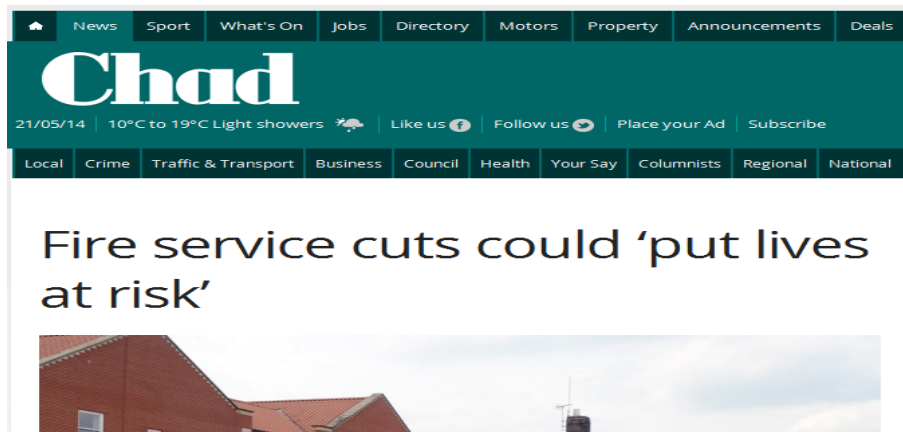
There are also proposals to remove retained fire engines in Warsop and Collingham, with fire engines from nearby locations able to respond to incidents.

Chair of the Fire Authority, Darrell Pulk, said: “The Service has already made some significant savings in recent years, by reducing the number of managers it has and realigning frontline resources to the meet the demands of a changing environment. But there is still work to be done and the £2.4million deficit it now faces leaves the Service with no option but to once again review how it delivers services to the people of Nottinghamshire.”

“The Fire Authority has asked the Service to carry out this consultation on its behalf so it can gauge public opinion, and also so it can reassure the public that these aren’t decisions that are being taken lightly.”

“Much thought and analysis has gone into the proposals so that they represent a positive and realistic way forward, and I hope that people will engage in the process and give us their views so that informed decisions can be made by the Fire Authority in September.”

21st May 2014



Fire chiefs and councillors are calling on the public to fight plans to dramatically cut services in Mansfield and Warsop.

Nottinghamshire Fire Service has put forward the controversial proposals, which were first launched in 2010, which could see Warsop Fire Station closed and Mansfield permanently reduced to just one pump.

The battle against the cuts four years ago was won following a lengthy consultation, but the fire service says it must now claw back a crippling £2.4m shortfall to balance their budget.

Sean McCallum, chairman of the Nottinghamshire Fire Brigade Union (FBU) and former Mansfield station firefighter, said: “Our position is quite straightforward, that we oppose any frontline cuts.

“If there was a serious house fire with people trapped inside, we would automatically mobilise three engines - but as things are you have the engine from Mansfield, then you would have to wait for two from Ashfield and Edwinstowe.

“It would obviously mean a longer travel time to get engines there and more risk. It’s not just putting the public’s life at risk, but firefighters as well.

“We have to question whether we are giving the public the service it demands and deserves.

“Nottinghamshire Fire Service will probably say it has trimmed away all the fat already, but I believe that everything should be looked at before cutting these services.”

Under the fresh proposals, Mansfield’s Rosemary Street station could lose its retained engine permanently, leaving just one full-time engine to be crewed 24-hours-a-day.

This would then be supported by other fire engines from the surrounding areas.

But it is estimated an even bigger saving will be made by closing Warsop Fire Station - approximately £175,000.

Crewed by a retained crew, incidents in that area will be attended by surrounding stations.

Coun John Kerr, who sits on Warsop Parish Council, as well as the district council, said: “We will fight this.

“Warsop has to cover a big area, and it’s the time it takes for service to get to a place, which is the same reason we gave last time this happened.

“We had a damn good response from the public last time and I’m hoping for that again.

“Warsop is ideally situated, not just for the parish but for outlining villages.

“I understand that we have to save money, it’s the Government that’s forcing these cuts and it’s getting to the stage whether you question if its workable, and are lives being put at risk? I’d say they are.”

The public is being urged to have their say during the 12-week consultation, which was launched this week.

Other stations which could also see a reduction in engines includes Central, Stockhill and Highfield, with Collingham earmarked for closure.

However, the service says it will not address the possibility of redundancies until a final decision is made on the engines and stations.

Darrell Pulk, chairman of the Fire Authority, said: “The Fire Authority has asked the service to carry out this consultation on its behalf so it can gauge public opinion, and also so it can reassure the public that these aren’t decisions that are being taken lightly.

“The service has already made some significant savings in recent years, by reducing the number of managers it has and realigning frontline resources to the meet the demands of a changing environment. But there is still work to be done and the £2.4million deficit it now faces leaves the service with no option but to once again review how it delivers services to the people of Nottinghamshire.”

21st May 2014



Nottinghamshire fire service consulting over cuts



Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is consulting on plans to change frontline services at six of its 24 fire stations.

These include cutting the number of engines at Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields, from two to one.

Warsop and Collingham would also lose their retained firefighters, with cover being provided by other stations.

The service needs to find savings of £2.4m to meet a shortfall in funding.

Chair of the Fire Authority, Darrell Pulk, said: "The service has already made some significant savings in recent years, but further cuts in government funding have resulted in £2.4m of additional savings being needed.

"This leaves the service with no option but to once again review how it delivers services to the people of Nottinghamshire."

Risk warning

He added: "The Fire Authority has asked the service to carry out this consultation on its behalf so it can gauge public opinion, and so it can reassure the public that these aren't decisions that are being taken lightly."

But Phil Coates, from the Fire Brigades Union, warned the cuts were dangerous.

"You might not need that fire engine today but tomorrow you might have a house fire with people and children inside and then you do need it. It's an insurance policy.

"We don't have a house fire every day and we wouldn't want that to happen. We have done a lot of work to cut that down but a fire engine there, in that vicinity, is an insurance policy for those people."

He added: "We are stretched as it is and this is pushing us to breaking point".

22nd May 2014 – 3rd June 2014

Loss of six fire engines would endanger lives

REGARDING your story that six fire engines could be axed in Notts (Post, Wednesday, May 21), in my opinion the removal of fire engines most certainly is a cut too far and will, if allowed to go ahead, cost lives.

We are told that if a fire broke out which required more than one engine, back-ups would be sent from other stations.

This sounds fine in theory except for two simple facts.

Firstly, there will be extra time travelling to reach the fire – and delays cost lives.

Secondly, this assumes that fires break out one at a time, but they do not.

What if an engine is sent to another area and there is a fire in its own area which is now without cover?

And what if there are two fires? Does someone make the decision that there are three people trapped in one burning house, so that gets the engine while the two people in another burning house are left to die as a lower priority?

Savings must not come with the risk of death to the very taxpayers who contribute so much money to coffers.

We pay for services and are entitled to those services, especially those which save lives.

Notts fire consultation under way

A 12-week consultation by Notts Fire and Rescue Service on proposals to change frontline services at six of its fire stations began this week.

The service is seeking feedback from the public, staff, trade unions and partner organisations as part of a review.

At a meeting in February, members of the Fire Authority committed to finding some of the £2.4 million shortfall it faces by revisiting proposals and looking at options for further streamlining services.

The current proposals include reducing the number of fire engines at four fire stations from two to one.

These are Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields.

These would be supported by fire engines in the surrounding areas.

Chair of the Fire Authority, Darrell Pulk, said: "The service has already made some significant savings in recent years, by reducing the number of managers it has and realigning frontline resources to the meet the demands of a changing environment. But there is still work to be done."

"The Fire Authority has asked the service to carry out this consultation on its behalf so it can gauge public opinion, and also so it can reassure the public that these aren't decisions that are being taken lightly."

"I hope that people will engage in the process and give us their views so that informed decisions can be made by the Fire Authority in September."

Copies of the document are available by emailing talk2us@notts-fire.gov.uk or calling 0115 967 0880. More info on the service website.

Village station faces closure threat again

A UNION leader claims lives will be put at risk if proposed cuts to the fire service in Nottinghamshire go ahead. The county fire and rescue service faces a £2.4m deficit in its budget due to cuts from central government.

To make savings, proposals include the closure of the retained station at Collingham.

Mr Sean McCallum, chairman of the Nottinghamshire branch of the Fire Brigades Union, said they were opposed to any cuts and would be supporting the Collingham crew.

He said: "Inevitably any cuts to frontline operational services will put lives at risk simply because the travel times of the engines left will be longer and in situations where minutes and seconds count in terms of people being trapped in fires or road traffic collisions."

"I think this is obviously a step backwards in terms of service provision."

By Dan Churcher
d.churcher@newarkadvertiser.co.uk

The service has launched a 12-week consultation on proposals to change frontline services at six stations, including the loss of the engine at Collingham.

The threat comes after a previous closure proposal. In 2011 the retained crew, villages they serve and the Advertiser successfully fought a campaign to save the station.

Collingham's former fire chief Wayne Shaw, a joiner, who was in charge at the time, said: "When I left it I thought I had left a station that would be open for a considerable time."

"We don't want to lose the facility in Collingham because whether it's a busy station or not it's in a large rural area."

"It's frustrating more than anything that we are going to have to go through

all this again. If it wasn't shut last time you have to question what has changed."

Mr Shaw thought it would make more sense to remove a retained crew from a full-time station.

The county councillor for the area, Mrs Maureen Dobson, said the fight was back on to save the station.

"The station is vital. We are a rural area in the middle of nowhere," she said.

"We have got a river, major roads and railways so we are very much in need of the service."

"I know the fire service has a huge problem with funding, but they have got to sit down and think about the communities they serve."

The service is seeking feedback from the public, staff, trade unions and partner organisations.

It is revisiting proposals in the Fire Cover Review of 2010/11 which initially included the closure of Collingham.

The latest plans include reducing the number of fire engines at Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields stations, from two to one.

The retained engines at Collingham and Warsop would go, with nearby stations responding to incidents.

Chief Fire Officer John Buckley said the service had worked hard on preventing incidents.

"Last year, for the first time, fire crews responded to fewer than 10,000 incidents and this contributes to a reduction of approximately 35% in the number of incidents over the last ten years," he said.

"Keeping our communities safe remains our number one priority."

The consultation document and response form is available at www.notts-fire.gov.uk by emailing talk2us@notts-fire.gov.uk or calling 0115 967 0880. A decision is expected in September.

Newark
22/

YOUR VIEWS ONLINE

Join the debate at www.nottinghampost.com



Concerns: Firefighters claim cuts will put lives at risk.

PLANS to axe up to six county fire engines – potentially leaving Nottingham's main fire station with just one truck – will put "lives at risk", according to firefighters.

The fire service is looking at reducing the number of fire engines at four bases and closing two other stations completely in a bid to make up some of the £2.4 million shortfall it faces in its Government funding.

If all trucks are cut it would leave 26 fire engines working across the county – down from the current 32. (Wednesday, May 21)

You never hear of them cutting the number of councillors and MPs with their nice, fat expense accounts.

oldavid

Madness. A government's first duty should be to protect its citizens, cutting back on our emergency services is simply wrong when we send billions abroad every year to corrupt nations in so-called foreign aid.

M Hunt

Once again the fire authority have lost their minds.

How can they effectively deal with a major incident in the city if there is only one appliance on duty in and around the city?

Take the Victoria Centre flats – more than 400 people live there.

The city needs two engines on duty at all times.

Central fire crews get called to incidents in other areas, either to assist or cover.

The fire chief should resign along with the fire authority chairman – both are a waste of time, in my opinion.

What will happen when one station's truck is out on

a shout and a major incident occurs at the same time?

How long before help arrives? How many lives will be lost?

grizzley1

I am baffled by this idea. Emergency services need more investment, not less.

Is it not a health and safety issue? It's not really a good idea to risk people's lives. People will not thank the government for making choices such as this.

maria_31

Chief fire officer John Buckley will, of course, be the first one to put his hand up and say: "It was my fault a person has died – I cut the nearest engine."

He won't hide behind the desk, saying it was the Government's fault and that he alone could not justify keeping the engine.

mist sauce

The fire service is already stretched. Closing Collingham Fire Station is crazy – it is 'out on a limb' as it is bordering rural Lincolnshire.

If there was a serious fire in the area, how long would it take the fire service to attend without putting people's lives at risk/in danger?

If they close Warsop Fire Station, does that mean that they are reliant on Mansfield/Edwinstowe and even Worksop? Or, dare I say it, Shirebrook from Derbyshire Fire Service (providing they don't shut that too)?

Phillip_Bored

So if the single fire engine had a mechanical fault and couldn't get to a fire, what then?

Everything's measured in money, nothing else seems to matter any more!

theresultoinickey



3rd June 2014

Political column: Lost time means lost lives



Mansfield Labour Leader Coun Martin Lee on why we need to fight planned cuts to the fire service to keep our communities safe...

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service are currently consulting on their proposals for making financial savings across the county.

The proposals are extremely worrying for our area. They include the closure of Warsop fire station and the removal of the retained fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters from Mansfield Fire Station.

The Nottinghamshire Fire Brigade Union quite rightly oppose these cuts explaining that if there was a serious house fire with people trapped inside, three fire engines would need to be mobilised.

With just one fire engine at Mansfield they would have to wait for an engine from Ashfield and Edwinstowe.

In emergencies like that, lost time means lost lives.

Warsop covers a large area and at present the fire engine in its own station is ideally placed to deal with emergencies the town itself and the outlying villages.

Labour Warsop councillors are leading a campaign to prevent the closure.

It was their work and the support of the people that kept the station open when closure was proposed in 2010.

The Fire Service has worked hard to reduce the risks of fires and accidents by focussing on preventative steps in homes and in business premises.

The number of emergency calls to the service has declined over the years.

But risks will never be eliminated. For the safety of our communities we must keep our services local.

Labour councillors will be fighting these cuts in frontline services but we need your help.

18th June 2014

the Socialist

Link to this page: <http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/issue/815/18784>

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Nottinghamshire fire cuts - "pushed to breaking point"

Nottinghamshire fire service proposes cuts of £2.4 million. Warsop and Collingham - small, isolated towns - would lose their retained firefighters, providing crucial cover for nearby villages.

Nottingham City Central, Mansfield, Stockhill and Highfields, would have their fire engines reduced from two to one.

The county would be exposed in serious accidents. Every second counts when an emergency strikes. Lives would be at risk. Phil Coates from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) said: "You might not need that fire engine today but tomorrow you might have a house fire with people and children inside and then you do need it. We are stretched as it is and this is pushing us to breaking point."

Labour

The Fire Authority has a Labour majority, ten out of eighteen councillors, but they are not prepared to fight to put people's lives ahead of monetary savings.

Even though Nottinghamshire county and city councils who control fire services have enough money in reserves to not make any cuts for eight years.

Socialist Party members are involved in building a campaign, which includes the FBU, to fight these cuts in their entirety.

The Fire Authority planned to make these cuts three years ago but was forced to back down by mass opposition. When people come together and organise, the inhumanity of austerity can be defeated.

So far we have had a tremendous response from people. This shows why we need a new workers' party which will help forge a world where firefighters don't have to make decisions such as which emergency is more important.

Related links:

Nottinghamshire:

- Nottingham: Fighting the Bedroom Tax
- The great miners' strike 1984-85
- Action against vicious council cuts
- Crown workers walk out at three sites
- Campaign to save Kirkby hospital

Fire:

- Escalation of FBU dispute begins
- After the Floods: Over 900 attend Spelthorne public meeting
- Firefighters call more strikes
- Them & Us

Cuts:

- Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition campaign reports
- Rhydyfelin library saved
- Kshama Sawant to speak at Socialism 2014

Firefighters:

- Firefighters to walk out for 24-hours
- Firefighters announce one-day strike

FBU:

- Workplace news in brief

23rd July 2014

Warsop Fire Station under threat ‘because of fewer call-outs’



Fire chiefs have admitted that Warsop’s station is under threat of closure because call-outs have tumbled in recent years.

As part of planned cuts across Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service, the future of Warsop’s Church Street station is in doubt.

Chief fire officer for Notts, John Buckley, said the number of shouts to the retained station has fallen dramatically.

He says in 2009 there had been over 321 incidents in the Warsop area, but across the last five years there had been just 103.

He puts this down to Edwinstowe Fire Station - the nearest to Warsop’s station - becoming a full-time station in recent years.

Speaking at a recent meeting with Warsop parish councillors on Monday, where he and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority chairman, Darrell Pulk, answered questions, he said: “Our stats have consistently fallen over the years, we had three times more (call-outs) than we do today, and that’s nationally.

Speaking at a recent meeting with Warsop parish councillors on Monday, where he and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority chairman, Darrell Pulk, answered questions, he said: “Our stats have consistently fallen over the years, we had three times more (call-outs) than we do today, and that’s nationally.

“Warsop has been particularly affected because Edwinstowe has taken over some of that area, which was to address a gap in the centre of the county at the time.

“That is why Warsop is on the radar (for potential closure).

Quizzed about how it would affect response times, he answered: “We always want to respond quickly but the reality is that there are some places in the county where a 15-minute response time is the norm.

“There would be an increase in response time, but it would be very, very small.

“This is the reality of where we are, we have to make reductions.

“It’s an unprecedented reduction in budget that we have never seen before.”

Notts fire service’s budget has been slashed £2.4 needs to be trimmed to balance the books - the equivalent to one full-time appliance and two retained stations being lost.

As part of the proposals, Mansfield could also lose its retained pump permanently, although both the fire service and fire authority insist no decision has been made and the consultation is still ongoing.

However, he said if the station was to close, no jobs are expected to be lost with firefighters being offered positions at other stations.

Warsop councillor, John Kerr still wants people to have their say, but still fears the station will close imminently.

He said: “The fight will continue, but quite frankly, it could be a waste of time, I still think the decision has been made.”

29th July 2014



Dispatch district residents are being urged to have their say on budget cuts by the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

There are only two weeks left of the 12 week consultation period for YOU to be heard about the proposals to cut £1m from the budget to help meet the £2.4m deficit for 2015-17.

Six proposals have been put forward. This includes reducing operational cover at some fire stations in the county, and the Service is looking at a combination other money saving measures.

Changes to the organisational structure is another option as well as looking at ways the Service can carry out its day-to-day business more efficiently.

Feedback has been sought from the public, staff, trade unions, business owners and partner organisations via a number of public forums, staff focus groups, visits to local businesses and at 'street clinics' held across the county.

So far over 1,000 people have completed the consultation questionnaire, with the majority of responses coming from the Warsop and Collingham areas.

"The number of incidents attended by our fire crews has fallen significantly in recent years," said Chief Fire Officer John Buckley. "The Service has worked extremely hard to ensure that our communities are safer now than they have ever been.

"Public safety is at the heart of all we do and, as part of this latest review, we have taken these figures into account in order to align our resources to where they are needed most.

"The current financial climate has left us with some difficult decisions, and the challenge for us is to continue providing an effective and efficient fire and rescue service whilst also making cost savings.

"Fire and rescue in Nottinghamshire affects us all and I urge everyone to have their say in shaping the future of the fire and rescue service in their area."

1st August 2014



Overall Table of Media Consultation Coverage

DATE	MEDIA	SUMMARY
May 16	Worksop Guardian	Outlines that John Mann MP has written to Brandon Lewis MP inviting him to meet firefighters in Bassetlaw at the earliest opportunity.
May 19	Press Release	NFRS Corporate Communications released press announcement about consultation launch.
May 21	Nottingham Post	Outlines savings needed to be made and includes quotes from Sean McCallum and CFO.
May 21	Chad	Details of the proposals in relation to Mansfield and Warsop include quotes from Cllr John Kerry, FBU and Darrell Pulk.
May 21	BBC Radio Nottingham Breakfast Show	Focus on Warsop Fire Station with reference to all six proposals and consultation, interviews with CFO John Buckley, Warsop Firefighter Nigel Gaughan, FBU spokesperson Phil Coates and local Warsop people.
May 22	Nottingham Post	'Your Views Online' section – comments from members of the public via www.nottinghampost.com debate website.
May 22	Newark Advertiser	Comments regarding proposed closure of Collingham requesting public support.
		Quotes from Sean McCallum Notts FBU Chairman and CFO and gives details of

DATE	MEDIA	SUMMARY
May 22	Newark Advertiser	where copies of the document can be obtained from
May 23	Worksop Guardian	Outlines details of the consultation and says where people can get copies of the document.
June 3	Nottingham Post	Letters page – Alan Riley gives his thoughts on the proposed cuts.
June 3	Chad	Mansfield Labour Leader Councillor Martin Lee on why we need to fight planned cuts to the fire service to keep our communities safe...
June 12	Newark Advertiser	Detailing NFRS payments to people to attend consultation forums.
July	Chad	Details of a public meeting that took place in Meden Vale to discuss possible closure of Warsop and gives quotes from Karen Seymour of TUSC.
July 17	Newark Advertiser	Two articles – Says that CFO and Chairman met Robert Jenrick MP for Newark to discuss proposed closure. Article two says that Besthorpe Village are fighting to keep Collingham appliance and gives quotes from Maureen Dobson councillor for Besthorpe.
July 23	Chad	Specifically about Warsop proposed closure. Quotes from CFO and Cllr John Kerr.
July 24	Newark Advertiser	Says that fears that fire service cuts will lead to more pressure on stations and crews that will have to provide the extra cover. Quotes from Southwell councillor Andy Gregory, Peter Harris, Kate Ashworth and Craig Parkin.

DATE	MEDIA	SUMMARY
July 24	Press Release	NFRS Corporate Communications released press announcement stating only two weeks left of consultation.
July 30	Nottingham Post	States over 1,000 people have had their say regarding the proposed cuts. Advises people to visit the NFRS website to give their view.
July 31	Newark Advertiser	Details of a public meeting being called by Maureen Dobson councillor for Collingham to take place on 4 August.
August 1	Worksop Guardian	Says NFRS are encouraging people to have their say and gives details of how to do so.
August 5	Nottingham Post	States people have until Sunday 10 August to have their say.
August 6	Chad	Relating to article dated July 23 – letter from J. Cocking Independent Ward member for Edwinstowe
August 7	Newark Advertiser	Residents are being urged by Robert Jenrick MP to write to NFRS calling for Collingham to remain open.
August 10	BBC Radio Nottingham Morning Show	Final day of consultation included in news bulletin.
August 11	Newark Advertiser	Article about Collingham possible closure specifically. Quotes from Warren Shaw and Keith Jones.



This project was carried out in compliance with ISO 20252:2012.

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX D

This questionnaire will enable you to decide whether or not the new or proposed policy or service needs to go through a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Title of policy, function, theme or service:		Operational Cover Proposals
Name of employee completing assessment:	CFO John Buckley Matt Sismey	Department and section: Senior Management Team HR/Equalities
1.	State the purpose and aims of the policy or service and who will be responsible for implementing it. Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is facing a deficit in its budget in 2015/16 of £2.4 million. In order to address this, the Service needs to make changes to the way in which it delivers its services in order to make efficiency savings. The Chief Fire Officer put forward a range of proposals for consultation which sought to achieve £1 million efficiency savings from the operational fleet of the £2.4million required. The proposals which went out to consultation are outlined in the following document: http://www.notts-fire.gov.uk/Consultation_2014_web.pdf The remaining £1.4 million in efficiency savings required is being sought from other areas of the organisation including: a review of support staff roles, a review of managerial positions, more efficient ways of working and more efficient management of contracts and estates. Taking in to account the results of the public consultation and the rigorous risk profiling (outlined below) which informed the formulation of these proposals, the Chief Fire Officer is recommending that members of the Fire Authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree to remove from operational service the second appliance from Highfields and delete 20 wholetime posts from the establishment.• Agree to remove from operational service the second appliance from Mansfield and delete 12 Retained posts from the establishment.	

Risk Profiling

As described above, these proposals are based upon extensive research and a robust risk model which takes in to account a range of factors.

A risk score for each LSOA (Lower Level Super Output Area - a geographical area that is a smaller subsection of a Ward) is calculated by combining six factors, each of which impact on Fire Service delivery. These factors include:

Incidents we have attended (data from the past five years):

- Dwelling Fires
- Property fires at which injuries to members of the public have occurred
- Deliberate non-domestic building fires
- Special services incidents at which there is a risk to life

Historic fatalities (data from the past five years):

- Deaths caused by property fires

Deprivation Indicators (Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2010)

- IMD Score

Seven distinct domains have been identified in the English Indices of Deprivation;

1. Health Deprivation and Disability
2. Income Deprivation
3. Employment Deprivation
4. Education Skills and Training Deprivation
5. Barriers to Housing and Services
6. Living Environment Deprivation
7. Crime

These factors are weighted according to their importance and combined to give an overall Risk Score for each LSOA.

The top 8.5% of LSOAs become "High Risk", the bottom 42.5% become "Low Risk" and those in between become "Medium Risk". Examination of these risk scores allows us to see the relative distribution of risk throughout the County and City.

The Risk Map is updated annually, to include the most recent five years of data and most up to date IMD figures, and allows us

to identify how the distribution of our highest risk areas may be changing.

Our aim is for the county risk map to inform strategic planning and decision making. It is to be considered when assessing station locations and scenario modelling, when examining attendance standards with respect to at-risk populations, when modelling population profiles and when determining operational and station turnout areas.

2. Please indicate below if the affect of the policy, function, theme or service will be positive, negative, neutral or unknown.

	Age	Disability	Family status	Gender	Race	Sexual Orientation	Religion and Belief	Vulnerability	Rurality
Employees	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Public	Neutral (please see 3a.)	Neutral (please see 3a.)	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral (Please see 3.)	Neutral

3. Please explain the impact you have identified.

We know that a combination of factors makes people more vulnerable to fire and that age and disability can be significant factors in this. However, there is no evidence to suggest that these proposals will have a negative, adverse impact on any of the protected groups outlined above.

3a) Please explain any steps you have taken or may take to address the impact you have identified.

Public / Service Delivery

The Service will **maintain** its prevention and education agenda across Nottinghamshire and it will **maintain** its commitment to respond to every incident within 10 minutes 90% of the time.

- It should be noted that during 2013-14, 41% of Home Fire Safety Checks delivered during 2013-14 were to disabled people. This is a 7% increase on the previous year.
- It should be noted that the disabled population of Nottinghamshire is approximately 20% demonstrating that the Service is delivering HSCs to a higher proportion than is in the population.
- Over half of these people were referred to NFRS by an agency due to effective targeting and partnership working.

The reduction in operational incidents has freed up the time of operational crews to undertake risk reduction work. Any risk reduction work currently undertaken by the affected appliances can be subsumed in to the work of other crews and the Risk Reduction Teams. This means that the prevention work that targets people who may be more at risk of having a fire in their home (disabled people and older people / people who misuse alcohol/drugs – and those with lifestyles which put them at greater risk), will continue.

Employees

32 employees are potentially affected by these proposals. The make-up of these people is predominantly male, non-disabled and White-British. The age range for the Mansfield RDS is from mid-20s to mid-50s with a mean age for the station of 34. The age range at Highfields (for both appliances) is early 20s to early 50s with an average of 39. The declaration rate of LGB employees at NFRS is approximately 2%. Due to these small numbers, there is no expectation that this will impact adversely upon employees affected. This, along with the diversity of those declaring religion/belief, is broadly reflective of the operational (firefighting) workforce and therefore there is no disproportionate adverse impact in terms of protected characteristics. This is why 'Neutral' has been chosen for all areas.

Support for those employees affected

It should be noted that the Service will do its utmost to support those employees that are affected by these proposals. For instance, the Retained Duty System (RDS) employees (who do not also hold a Wholetime Firefighter position) will be offered redeployment in to suitable positions. Relocation to other RDS stations will also be offered where reasonable and appropriate. Where these options are not taken up, redundancy packages will also be available.

There will be no compulsory redundancies for wholetime firefighters. Any wholetime firefighter affected by these recommendations will be moved to another wholetime work location.

4.	<p>Identify the individuals and organisations that are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy, function, theme or service. <i>This should identify the persons/organisations that may need to be consulted about the policy or service and its impact.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the public; these proposals potentially affect the service members of the public will receive • Employees; these proposals have a direct impact upon the employees working at the stations cited by these recommendations • Trade Unions; these proposals directly impact upon the members of the FBU and RFU • Combined Fire Authority (CFA) elected members; represent the interests of members of the public and want to ensure that communities continue to receive value for money from their fire and rescue service. It is also the responsibility of the CFA to deliver a budget for the effective delivery of services. 												
5.	<p>Has consultation (with the public, managers, employees, TUs etc) on the policy, function, theme or service been undertaken?</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Yes		No		X						
Yes		No											
X													
5a.	<p>Please provide details for your answer including information regarding when consultation will take place if you have ticked yes.</p> <p>Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) appointed Opinion Research Services (ORS), an independent social research organisation, to survey opinion about the Service’s proposals for the way its services are to be developed in the future.</p> <p>NFRS was responsible for undertaking ‘street clinics’ and drops of questionnaires at businesses, as well as informal and formal consultation with the Trade Unions. The ‘street clinics’ and business drops took place in the following areas:</p> <p>Street Clinics Retford Hucknall Ashfield Eastwood Mansfield East Leake</p>												

Edwinstowe
Blyth, Scrooby, Bircoates, Bawtry
Worksop/Warsop
Clifton/Radcliffe
Newark

Business Drops

Boots
Imperial Tobacco
City Hospital
Lenton businesses

The consultation process included the use of online questionnaires, public forums, paper surveys and staff surveys. The results of the consultation are detailed within the Chief Fire Officer's paper (**Appendix XXX**). It should be noted that a quota system was used to inform the membership of the public forums to try and ensure that the groups broadly represented (in terms of gender, disability and ethnic background) the make-up of the community the appliance/fire station serves.

The breakdown of the profile of questionnaire respondents can be found on page 24 at paragraph 111.

The following observations were made by ORS within their report of the respondents for the Highfields and Mansfield proposals:

Highfields:

Paragraph 125: Male respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but females, those who are disabled and aged 16 to 24 are significantly less likely to agree.

Mansfield RDS:

Paragraph 127: Male and non-White respondents are significantly more likely to agree with the proposal but females, those who are disabled and aged 55+ are significantly less likely to agree.

It should be noted that this did not mean that these groups were more likely to disagree with the proposals, just that they were less likely to agree.

It should also be noted that no equality issues were raised by consultees during the public forums.

6.	Has the Equality and Diversity Officer been contacted?	Yes	X	No	
6a.	<p>If Yes please outline below the outcomes/concerns highlighted in the discussion.</p> <p>Due to the fact that the risk model employed to inform these proposals uses NFRS's own data relating to incidents and also uses the multiple indices of deprivation (which includes Health Deprivation and Disability), the Equality and Diversity Officer felt that there was no evidence to suggest that these proposals could disproportionately adversely affect any particular group of people protected by the Equality Act.</p>				
<p>If No please ensure that the Equality and Diversity Officer is contacted.</p> <p>If Yes, Please record here the date the Equality and Diversity Officer was contacted regarding this initial equality impact assessment.</p>					
<p>Date: 27th June 2014</p>					

7.	Has monitoring been undertaken?	Yes	X	No	
8.	What does this monitoring show? Given the nature of the proposals, there is a large data set available on a number of areas (risk mapping, incident data, consultation data, workforce monitoring). The incident data, in particular, is updated and reviewed annually via the publication of Operational Activity which goes to the Combined Fire Authority and is published here http://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=216 . An updated Fire Cover Review will be completed in 2015. There is no data which suggests that these proposals will mean that protected groups will be adversely affected.				
9.	If you have answered no to question 7 can a monitoring system be established to check for impact on the protected characteristics? N/A	Yes		No	
10.	Please describe how monitoring can be undertaken and identify this monitoring system as an objective when completing the action plan below. N/A				
11.	If a monitoring system cannot be established please explain why this is. N/A				
12.	Did the Equality and Diversity Officer advise to proceed with a full EIA? Please provide full details of the decision. No. As impacts on protected groups are considered to be neutral, there is no requirement for a 'Full EIA'.				
13.	Proceed to full Equality Impact Assessment?	Yes		No	X