

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING: 17th FEBRURY 2014

**SUBJECT: IRMP REVIEW OF THE OPERATIONAL RESPONSE MODEL – MOTION BY
NORTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL AND PETITION SUBMITTED TO SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform members of a motion approved by North Tyneside Council and a petition presented to Sunderland City Council regarding proposals approved by the Authority at its meeting on 20 January and to request the Authority to determine its response.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 20 January, the Authority considered a report on the IRMP review of the operational response model and the outcome of public, partner and staff consultation on the options set out in the report for changes to the Authority's operational response. Three options were presented to members as follows:

Option 1

- Crew appliances at stations with 1 fire appliance with 4 staff
- Remove 6 main fire appliances across the service (a reduction from 30 to 24)
- Introduce 2 Targeted Response Vehicles (TRVs) for lower risk incidents 24/7
- Introduce 2 additional TRVs to be Dual Staffed at night and as required
- Remove 2 fire appliances for up to 12 hours at night
- Reduce Aerial Ladder Platforms from 3 to 2
- Invest in new firefighting technologies to enhance performance and firefighter safety

Option 2

- Implement Option 1 plus:
- Close 2 stations (Gosforth & Wallsend) and replace with one more centrally placed, based on risk and incident intelligence (Benton Area)

Option 3

- Implement Option 1 and 2 plus:
- Close Sunderland Central station

- 2.2 Members agreed to pursue Option 3.

3 NOTICE OF MOTION AND PETITION

- 3.1 By letter dated 30 January, the Clerk to the Authority received notification from North Tyneside Council that the following motion was considered and approved at an Extraordinary meeting of the Council on 23 January.

“This Council registers its opposition to any proposals which include the closure of Wallsend Fire Station

1. We call upon the Fire Authority to go back to the drawing board and reconsider options available, if necessary using part of their substantial reserves to allow time to complete this process.
2. We further request the Elected Mayor to launch an all party campaign to protect Wallsend Fire Station, especially in its strategic position to serve the whole borough and beyond.
3. We further request that the Mayor, in liaison with the Group Leaders of the Council, contacts the Conservative and Liberal coalition government and Eric Pickles in particular and registers our disgust at the public sector spending cuts and in particular the cuts being forced upon the Tyne and Wear Fire Authority.”

- 3.2 At a meeting of Sunderland City Council on 29 January, a petition with 47 signatories, all but one of which were elected members from the majority party represented on the Council, submitted a petition in the following terms:

“We the undersigned petition the Mayor to convene an extraordinary meeting as soon as is practicable to discuss the following Notice of Motion:
This Council requests that the Tyne and Wear Fire Authority revisits its decision and consultation process that determined the future closure of Sunderland Central Fire Station.”

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Authority is recommended to consider the motion and petition and determine the Authority's response.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Fire Authority: 20 January 2014: IRMP Review of the Operational Response Model

Letter from North Tyneside Council dated 30 January 2014

Petition submitted to Sunderland City Council on 29 January 2014