SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Meeting	**FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**
Meeting Date	**25 NOVEMBER 2013**
Report of	**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
Report Sponsor(s)	**DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**
Subject	**STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANS 2013-17**

SUMMARY

On 2 September 2013 the Authority decided to reopen formal consultation on its draft Strategic and Operational Plans. This report presents Members with feedback from the second phase of the consultation process and seeks Authority approval for the Plans.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended to:

a) Approve the Strategic and Operational Plans 2013-17.

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

1. The context behind the development of the Strategic and Operational Plans was summarised in a report to the Authority on 2 September 2013. The Operational Plan (or Integrated Risk Management Plan, or IRMP) is a statutory document which all Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to have in place. It should describe how the Authority will plan to have the right resources in the right place at the right time, to effectively resolve all the community risks it may be required to respond to. The current South Yorkshire IRMP expires at the end of 2013.

2. In March 2013, the Authority initiated a 13-week consultation period on the broad topics to be considered in these plans. Following receipt of that feedback, draft Plans were submitted to the Authority on 2 September. Members decided to hold an additional six-week consultation on the draft Plans. Subsequent to that decision, the consultation period was extended by a further three weeks to allow additional time for consultation in the Mosborough/Birley Moor area, due to proposed changes to the crewing system for the new Birley Moor fire station. Therefore, in total, 22 weeks' consultation has taken place in 2013 on the development of these Plans.

3. The main elements of the proposals put forward by the Service can be found in paragraph 12 of the 2 September report. Despite expected funding cuts of at least £13 million from 2010-17, these proposals stated an intention to make no further reductions to the number of fire stations or fire rescue pumps through the lifetime of these plans, to protect the initial response to emergency incidents.

4. Should these proposals not be adopted, alternative ways of reducing the Service's operational budget would need to be implemented instead. Due to the scale of the cuts in Government grant, these alternatives would undoubtedly involve closing fire stations, or removing fire appliances, or downgrading crewing arrangements.

CONSULTATION SECOND PHASE

5. During the second phase of consultation, from 2 September to 4 November, a number of different consultation methods were used:

- Letters were posted to:
  - All South Yorkshire MPs and MEPs.
  - The Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable.
  - Chief Fire Officers of neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services.
  - Yorkshire Ambulance Service.
  - South Yorkshire Local Authority Chief Executives.
  - South Yorkshire Chambers of Commerce.
  - All accredited South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) trade union representatives.

- All elected officials and bodies in South Yorkshire, including Town and Parish Councils, were invited to feedback via the Section 41 Briefing.

- Member Briefing sessions were offered to all four South Yorkshire Local Authorities. These took place as follows:
  - 30 September, Sheffield City Council, attended by the Chief Fire Officer.
  - 2 October, Barnsley Council, attended by the Chief Fire Officer.
  - 23 October, Rotherham Council, attended by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

- The Doncaster meeting was cancelled but Members received information in their October Section 41 Briefing, and an additional summary sheet later in October.

- Information was sent to community organisations in South Yorkshire, and 120,000 recipients of the South Yorkshire Pensions Authority newsletter, with opportunities to provide feedback.

- Additional consultation took place with one BEM group and two Parish Councils in rural areas, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2 September report.

- Regular media and social media content, and the SYFR website – the relevant website stories were viewed 1,242 times. A selection of the published articles can be viewed in Appendix A.

6. During the second phase of consultation, the following feedback was received:

   - Letters from Clive Betts MP, Police and Crime Commissioner, the Mayor of Doncaster and the Fire Brigades Union, and an e-mail from Unison. These can be found in Appendix B.

   - Written feedback from the additional BEM and rural community consultation. This can be found in Appendix C.

   - Responses from 31 people who used our online feedback form and one person who printed off the online form and posted it. These 31 people left 17 comments, which can be found in Appendix D.

7. The feedback received in the second phase of consultation has largely reflected concerns about the Government funding cuts being received by SYFR, and the level to which SYFR would be able to provide emergency cover in the future. However, in line with views previously expressed by Members, the feedback also indicated reluctant acceptance of the proposals being consulted upon, as being better than alternative means of making the necessary savings, such as downgrading fire station crewing, or removing fire appliances.

8. Given the feedback received through the two consultation periods, the need to make a decision before the Authority's existing IRMP expires in December 2013, and the more negative implications of alternative ways to reduce the operational budget, it is recommended that Members approve the Strategic and Operational Plans 2013-17.

CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE PRIORITIES

☒ Community - Making people safer – working to prevent emergencies.
☒ Operations - Responding to emergencies – effectively and safely.
☒ People - Valuing people – those we serve and employ.
☒ Finance and Resources - Maximising efficiency – making our resources go further.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT & BUSINESS CONTINUITY IMPLICATIONS

9. The IRMP is the key document which shows how the Authority will manage, and mitigate community risk. It is a statutory document, and the Authority's existing IRMP expires at the end of December 2013. As this is the last Authority meeting before that expiry date, failure to adopt a new IRMP at this meeting will leave the Authority at risk of not having a current IRMP in place.

10. Additionally, the failure to adopt and begin swift implementation of the Strategic Plan would be likely to have a negative effect on the Authority's ability to keep within the budgets laid out in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

11. There is a risk of judicial review against any changes made by public sector bodies if due process has not been satisfactorily followed. The risks presented by judicial review are financial:

- Additional costs of defending the case, and
- Costs of repeating the consultation if the judicial review is lost

12. The risks outlined in paragraph 11 have been mitigated by the fact that the Authority's consultation processes in relation to these Plans satisfy all relevant IRMP guidance, The Gunning Principles, and The Consultation Institute Charter. The processes have also been given positive assurances by internal audit.

EQUALITY ANALYSIS COMPLETED

☒ Yes
☐ No
☐ N/A

If you have ticked 'No' or 'N/A' please complete the comments box below providing details of why an EA is not required/is outstanding:

An initial equality assessment was consulted upon simultaneously, and provided the drivers for the additional consultation undertaken with BEM and rural communities in the second phase.

IMPLICATIONS

13. Consider whether this report has any of the following implications and, if so, address them below: Industrial Relations, Financial, Legal, Asset Management, Environmental and Sustainability, Diversity, and Communications implications have been considered in compiling this report.

14. Industrial relations, financial, legal, diversity and communications implications have been addressed elsewhere in the report.

List of background documents		
Reports to the Fire and Rescue Authority as follows: 25 March 2013: "IRMP/Service Plan Consultation 2013/15" 29 July 2013: "IRMP Consultation Process" 2 September 2013: "Strategic Plan, Operational Plan (IRMP) and Risk Model"		
Report Author:	Name:	Steve Chu
	e-mail:	schu@syfire.gov.uk
	Tel no:	0114 253 2410

South Yorkshire Times, 29 August 2013

Fire crews are facing cuts

£17 million savings to be found

Fire service facing cuts

S.Y. Times - 29/8/13

FIRE SERVICE

[redacted]
[redacted]@sytimes.co.uk
@[redacted]

Fire crews could go part time and controversial fire engines replaced under plans for the future of South Yorkshire Fire Service.

Proposals put forward by fire chiefs would see the second fire engines at Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley fire stations manned at night by firefighters working on an on-call basis.

And plans have also been revealed to get rid of so-called CARP - combined aerial rescue pump - fire engines which have been unpopular with crews and originally had to be returned to their manufacturers after they were brought in by fire chiefs, because they were too heavy for the roads.

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service needs to save £12 million by 2017. The moves could spell the loss of firefighters' jobs - but it is hoped most job losses would be through staff taking retirement before axes rather than redundancies.

Chief fire officer James Courtney said proposed cuts protect the frontline. He said: "Losing a third of our 80 per cent of our funding has forced us to reconsider our entire frontline provision, but we feel we can make now that we do not have to remove any further fire stations or rescue pumps at the time of this plan, subject to the further cuts being on the level we expect.

"We are committed to keeping as many stations open as possible, to protect the speed of our initial response to incidents."

But Graham Wilkinson, chairman of the Fire Brigades Union in South Yorkshire, said: "Taxpayers are going to be paying more council tax for a poorer service. My biggest concern is about the safety of the public."

It also proposed to replace South Yorkshire's CARP - combined aerial rescue pump - appliances with separate rescue pumps and dedicated aerial appliances.

Mr Courtney said the brigade will continue reporting performance against its response time target of six minutes, despite previously suggesting it could be scrapped or provide clear indicators to how crews and fire kits are allocated to incidents.

Fire station night staff set for cuts

B. Chronicle - 30/8/13

By Lynsey Bradford

THE number of staff working overnight at Barnsley fire station could be cut under proposals by the fire service.

The second fire engine at Barnsley could be manned part time at night to help reduce costs as an alternative to closing fire stations or removing engines altogether.

The plans, by South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue service, will go before the Fire Authority on Monday.

There are also proposals to scrap the controversial combined aerial rescue pump (CARP) appliances, whose introduction were heavily criticised by the Fire Brigades Union.

The vehicles, which the service said saved £1.25m, were only introduced as an alternative to traditional fire engines in 2011.

The move comes as fire chiefs face the likelihood of a further £5m in cuts by 2017 based on the government's Comprehensive Spending Review, on top of the £8m reduction in budget up to 2015.

James Courtney, chief fire officer, said that a loss in funding had left them with little choice, although he reiterated there were no plans to close any more fire stations.

He said: "Losing £12m, or 20 per cent of our funding, has forced us to reconsider our entire frontline provision, but we feel we can state now that we do not plan to remove any further fire stations or rescue pumps in the lifetime of this plan, subject to the further cuts being of the levels we expect.

"We are committed to keeping as many fire stations open as possible, to protect the speed of our initial response to emergency incidents.

"To be able to achieve this, we are recommending changes to the way we crew the second pump at most of our two-pump stations.

"This reduces our costs without having to remove fire stations or fire engines."

Another proposal is to scrap the response time of six minutes.

The fire service has not come close to meeting this target since it was introduced in 2006.

But fire deaths and injuries have fallen in the last seven years – from 161 in 2006/07 to 48 in 2012/13.

The number of accidental house fires is also down – from the 2006/07 figure of 290 to 194 as reported last year.

James added: "The clear feedback from the public was that response time targets are irrelevant. People were clear they trust firefighters always to respond to emergencies as quickly as possible."

The Star, 4 September 2013

CUTS: COST-CUTTING PLANS GO OUT FOR FURTHER PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Fire crews feel the heat

S. Star 4/9/13.

re chiefs have given
embers of the pub-
another six weeks to
ve their say on plans
reduce the number of
ll-time firefighters in the
unty and to scrap re-
onse time targets.

outh Yorkshire Fire Author-
y members discussed the
st-cutting plans yesterday
d extended the period of
blic consultation before
ding whether to impose
e proposed changes.

The money-saving mea-
es put forward by fire
ers' bosses include not re-
placing retiring firefighters,

and replacing some full-time
evening crew with part-time
firefighters.

A decision not to respond to emergency calls would also be scrapped.

Chief Fire Officer James Courtney said: "Losing £12 million - or 20 per cent of our funding - has forced us to reconsider our entire frontline provision, but we feel we can state now that we do not plan to remove any further fire stations or rescue pumps in the lifetime of this plan, subject to the further cuts being of the levels we expect.

"We are committed to keeping as many fire stations open as possible, to protect the speed of our initial response to emergency incidents. To be able to achieve this, we are recommending changes to the way we crew the second pump at most of our two-pump stations. This reduces our costs without having to remove fire stations or fire engines.

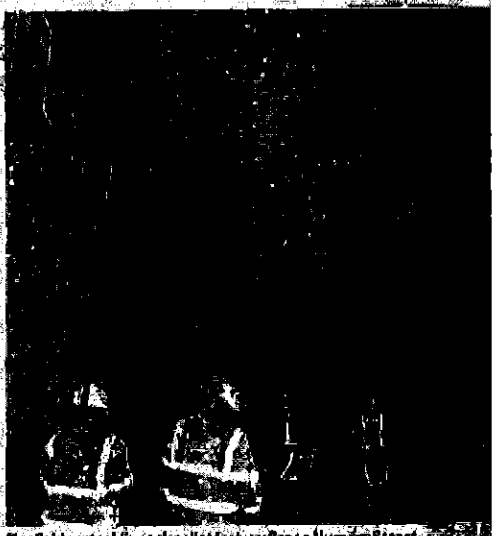
"These plans have been developed following a 13-week public consultation period earlier this year. The Authority has decided to put these specific proposals out for a further six-week consultation before making final decisions in November."

The Fire Brigades Union said: "Firefighters are not happy."

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

"SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT PROVIDE MORE FUNDING FOR THE FIRE SERVICE?

www.thestar.co.uk
petitions.thestar
facebook.com/sheffieldstar



Firefighters tackling a derelict factory fire on Nursery Street

The Star, 17 October 2013

EMERGENCY: MORE VIEWS SOUGHT ON FIRE SERVICE BUDGET CUT PROPOSALS

Fire deadline extended

S Star 17/10/13

A public consultation over plans to scrap current 999 response times and staff some fire stations part time has been extended by the fire service.

South Yorkshire residents are being asked to have their say on plans drawn up by fire chiefs in response to government budget cuts.

The proposals include

staffing the county's main fire stations in Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster part time at night.

They also include staffing the new station at Birley Moor part-time and replacing Combined Aerial Rescue Pumps with separate rescue pumps and dedicated aerial appliances.

The service is also suggesting scrapping its current 999 response time of six minutes after it revealed it had never met its target of reaching 80 per cent of life-threatening incidents within six minutes.

Chief fire officer James Courtney said: "We want to give people even longer to tell us what they think of the draft proposals their opinions have helped shape.

"People's clear initial feedback has been that we must protect the frontline as far as possible and, despite losing £12 million, that's what these plans seek to do."

See www.syfire.gov.uk or write to South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, 197 Eyre Street, S1 3FG, by November 4.

Chief fire officer James Courtney of South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue

Twitter posts, various 3 September – 4 November (12,000+ followers)

South Yorkshire Fire @SYFR 3 Oct

You have until October 14 to have your say on proposals for how we are going to do things 2013-17. Read more here syfire.gov.uk/2992.asp

Expand

South Yorkshire Fire @SYFR now

We've extended the consultation period for our operational plan by 3 weeks. Find out how to have your say here syfire.gov.uk/2992.asp

Expand

Website story, 2 September 2013

Operational plan consultation

02 September 2013

Operational Plan Consultation

South Yorkshire's Fire and Rescue Authority has re-opened public consultation on service managers' proposals for a new strategic plan for 2013-17.

The documents pledge not to remove any further fire stations or rescue pumps (fire engines), despite further Government funding cuts which are planned for the Service, up to 2017. Instead, senior officers are recommending an alternative way to reduce costs, by making changes to crewing arrangements instead of removing stations or pumps.

The further six-week consultation period runs from Monday 2nd September to Monday 14th October, with the officers' proposals having already been shaped by feedback from the initial 13-week consultation period earlier in 2013.

Click here to read a 4-page 'at-a-glance' summary of the proposals

Click here to submit consultation feedback before Monday 14 October

Click here to view the full draft strategic plan

Click here to view the full draft operational plan

Click here to view the full draft Community Fire Risk Model

Click here to view the original consultation document

Website story, 16 October 2013

Operational Plan - changes to Birley Moor crewing

16 October 2013

The new station at Birley Moor, which was going to be crewed 24/7, will now be staffed by part-time firefighters.

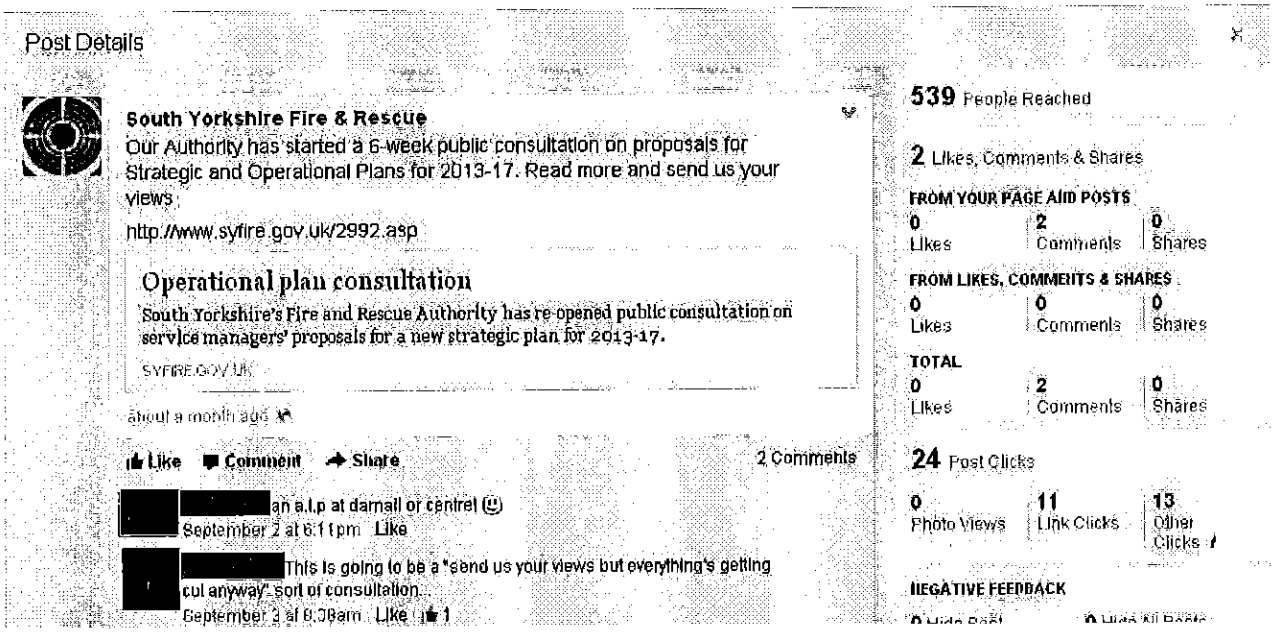
We had originally planned for this station to be staffed using a system called 'Close Proximity Crewing', which would have enabled us to provide 24/7 cover at a much reduced cost, and increase our fire cover in this area of Sheffield above what is currently provided by the retained station at Mosborough. Unfortunately we have been unable to progress with CPC, and cover in this area will be maintained as retained, or 'part-time', from the new Birley Moor station as a result.

Even accounting for this change, the new fire station at the junction of Moor Valley and Birley Lane will provide emergency cover to many more homes than the existing part-time fire station at Mosborough, which will close.

The table below shows how many homes will be covered by the new Birley station, versus the existing Mosborough fire station, for retained response times of six, eight and 10 minutes. It shows the new station will provide cover for more than double the number of homes.

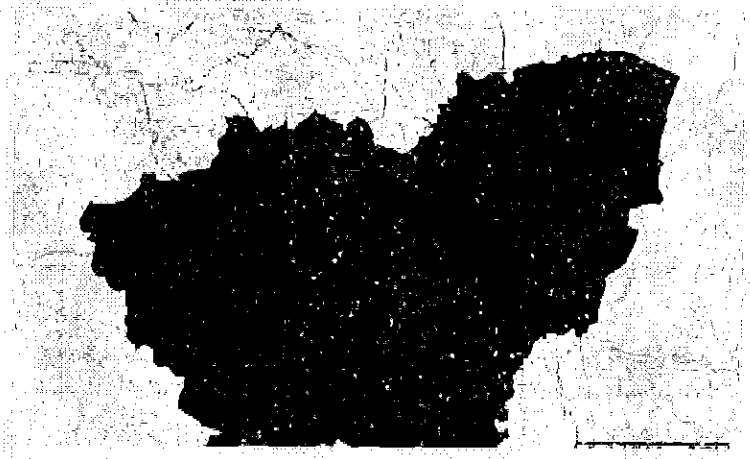
Dwellings covered		
Retained response time	**Birley**	**Mosborough**
6 minutes	2637	1241
8 minutes	11965	5144
10 minutes	29386	13057

Facebook thread, 3 September 2013 (539 reached, 2 comments)



Facebook thread, 3 October 2013 (602 reached, 3 comments)

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue
You have until October 14 to have your say on our proposals for how we are going to do things over the next few years. Read more about the changes and have your say on our website here http://www.syfire.gov.uk/2992.asp



Operational plan consultation
South Yorkshire's Fire and Rescue Authority has re-opened public consultation on service managers' proposals for a new strategic plan for 2013-17.
SYFIRE.GOV.UK

about 2 weeks ago

Like · Comment · Share 1 Like 3 Comments

[redacted] likes this.

[redacted] Well I can guess it's not going to be including the words "increase", "expand" or possibly even "pension" in a good way... Not your fault I know...
October 3 at 4:28pm via mobile · Like · 1

[redacted] The goverment need to live in the real world. Why take money off services when theres people out there robbing the system like people on the doll that doesn't even want to work yea I can understand some people can't but you get idiots who will get paid there doll then go blow it on booze or drugs. Think about it!
October 3 at 5:17pm · Edited · Like · 1

[redacted] easy ... put out fires and rescue people just as you always have. WELL DONE...
October 3 at 8:31pm via mobile · Like

602 People Reached

7 Likes, Comments & Shares

FROM YOUR PAGE AND POSTS

1 Likes	3 Comments	0 Shares

FROM LIKES, COMMENTS & SHARES

0 Likes	1 Comments	2 Shares

TOTAL

1 Likes	4 Comments	2 Shares

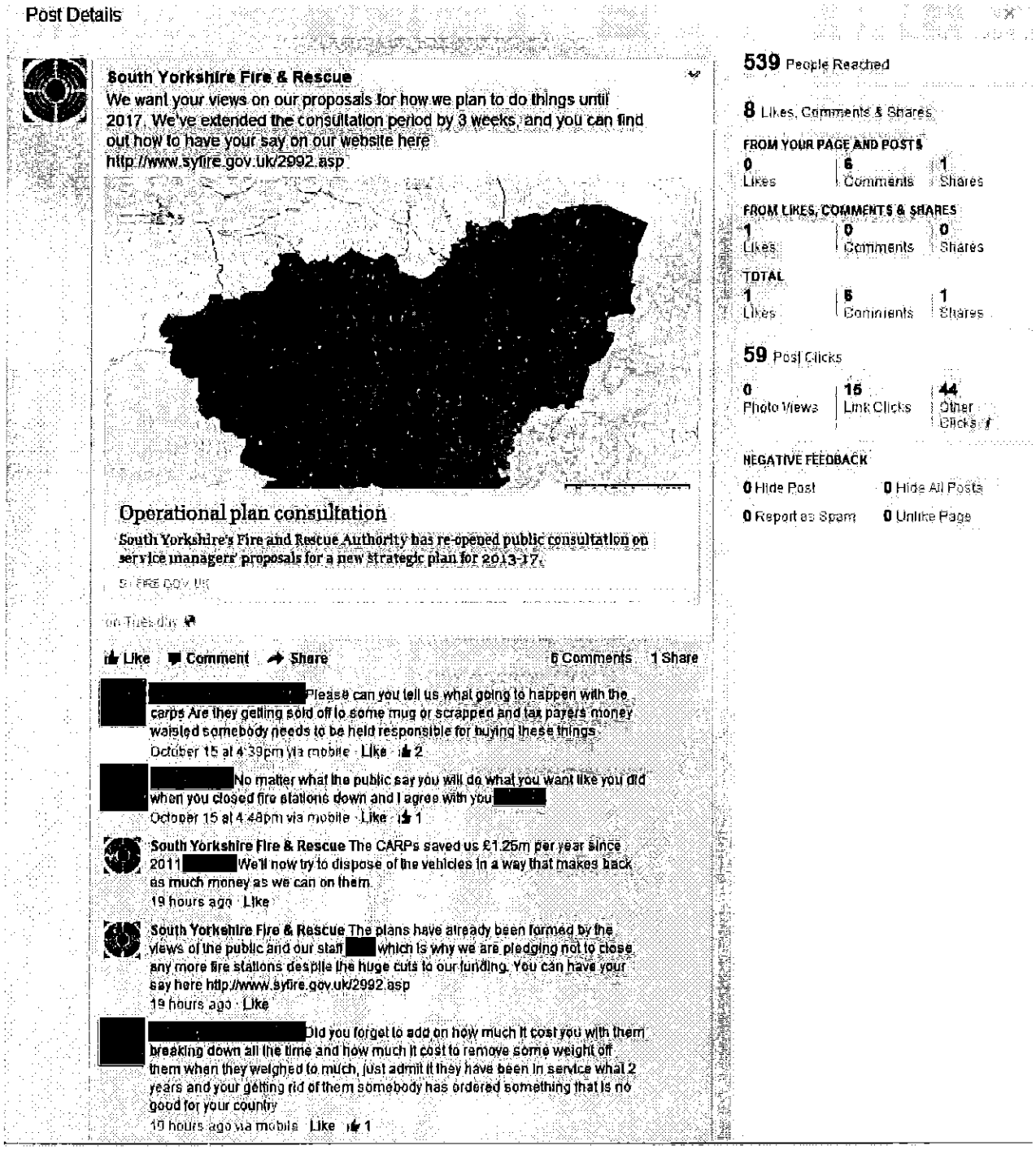
50 Post Clicks

0 Photo Views	22 Link Clicks	28 Other Clicks

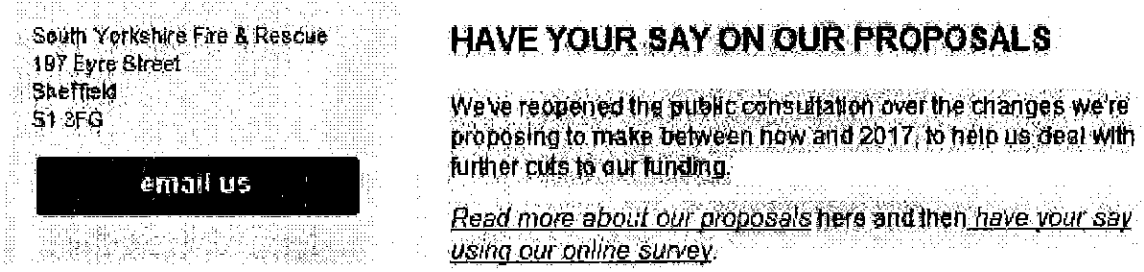
NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post	0 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

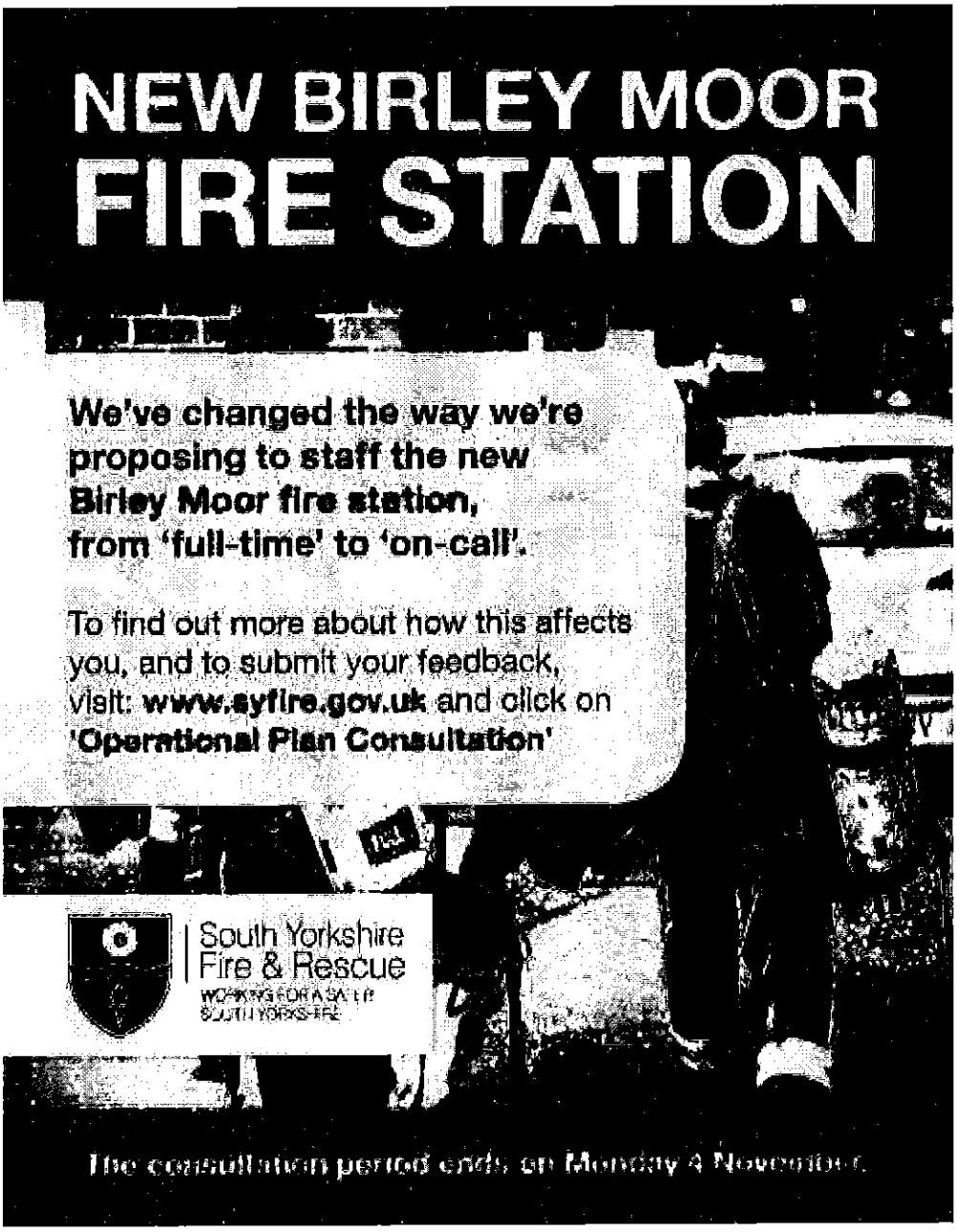
Facebook thread, 14 October 2013 (539 reached, 3 comments)



E-newsletter, 24 September 2013 (3,982 recipients, 10 story clicks)



Eckington Leader full page advert, 17 October 2013



E-newsletter, 23 October 2013 (3,999 recipients, 9 story clicks)

MORE TIME TO HAVE YOUR SAY

We want your views on our proposals for how we plan to do things until 2017. We've extended the consultation period until Monday 4 November, and you can find out how to *have your say on our website*

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rotherhamadvertiser.co.uk, 17 October 2013

Residents urged to have their say on fire cuts

PUBLISHED DATE: 17 OCTOBER 2013 | PUBLISHED BY: ADMIN

FIRE chiefs are giving people more time to have their say on cuts to fire services which could see Rotherham's main fire station becoming part-time at night.

A consultation on fire service proposals for how it will do things until 2017 has been extended until November 4.

The plans pledge not to remove any more fire stations and fire engines in spite of further Government funding cuts.

The draft documents include changing crewing arrangements and replacing CARP vehicles with rescue pumps and dedicated aerial appliances.

Among the key frontline changes being proposed are for the main fire stations in Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster to revert to a part-time staffing arrangement at night.

The Bulletin (staff newsletter), 18 October (879 views)

Staff News

Consultation period extended

Suggestion scheme Awards made

Library Services in Sheffield

Ops Updates

Well Done

People

Diary Dates

South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue

Staff News

Consultation period extended

There are three more weeks for you to have your say on IRMP 2013/17 proposals, after the original consultation period had been due to end this week.

The plans pledge not to remove any more fire stations and appliances in spite of further Government funding cuts, but the consultation period has been extended to give you more time to give your views.

The draft documents, already shaped by a 13-week consultation period earlier this year, include changing crewing arrangements and replacing CARP vehicles with rescue pumps and dedicated aerial appliances.

The first round of Government cuts will have reduced the Service's budget from £60m in 2011 to under £51m in 2015. These cuts led to the Fire Authority deciding last year to remove five pumps and close stations at Royston, Darnall, Mansfield Road and Mosborough, whilst opening new stations at the Parkway and Birley Moor.

But despite the likelihood of a further £3m in cuts by 2017, senior officers are recommending that the Authority makes no further removals of stations or pumps, in the draft plan for 2013-17.

Chief Fire Officer James Courtney said, "We have consulted extensively with staff and the public in the development of this plan, but we want to give people even longer to tell us what they think of the draft proposals their opinions have helped shape.

"People's clear initial feedback has been that we must protect the frontline as far as possible and, despite losing £12 million from our budget, that's what these plans seek to do."

The key frontline changes being proposed to the Authority are:

- The second rescue pumps based at Parkway, and the main fire stations in Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster, will at night-time revert to a part-time

PRIDE
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue

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Print Issue

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Appendix B

James Courtney
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
197 Eyre Street
Sheffield S1 3FG

Ref: CJCB/DMP/Fire Station Relocation
30 September 2013

Dear Jamie

I am following up the report which you have recently produced on the review of Sheffield's emergency cover and in particular changes that are now proposed which make the report different from the original which you consulted on.

The fundamental change affecting my Constituency is that the new Birley station will now be a retained station not a station with close proximity crewing. I think that is a significant change and I would be grateful if you could spell out the implications for my constituents arising from that.

My understanding was, when I previously wrote to you, that with the amalgamation of Darnall and Mansfield Road for a new station on the Parkway and the move of the Mosborough station to a new station at Birley the response times to my constituents would be either the same or in different locations marginally better or marginally worse. In essence the arguments of your proposals was that you could continue to deliver appropriate response times with two stations rather than the current three.

Looking now, however, at your latest proposals and the intention that Birley should be a retained station that must have an impact on the previous information you gave me about response times. I simply do not believe now that the previous commitment to broadly maintaining existing response times can be achieved with only one full time station on the Parkway and a retained station at Birley. Could you therefore area by area provide for me now a break-down of the changes in response times that are likely as a result of the new proposed arrangements compared with the existing station arrangements.

The second point I want to make is that given that this is now a significant change from the original proposals in terms of the Birley station, could you advise me firstly why that has come about and secondly what arrangements have been made to consult the local community about it. My understanding is that the consultation will only last for six weeks and there are no proposals at all to have public meetings or an exhibition or display anywhere in the Mosborough and surrounding areas which now must be affected in a different way by these altered proposals. Given there was a public meeting and other attempts at public consultation on the original set of proposals, surely there should be more than a six week window where anyone can comment who might happen to become aware of the difference in the new proposed arrangements.

I look forward to an indication that the consultation window can be expanded and specifically what you intend to do to directly consult with people who are affected by the changes in arrangements for the new Birley station.

One further point that has been drawn to my attention is that given that there will be two pumps on the new station on the Parkway but at night only one of them will have a crew at the station and the others will have a crew that will be called in if the first pump is used, could you confirm that the pump that will be there with a crew at the station will be one of the new vehicles which are designed to tackle particularly onerous jobs and if that vehicle is called away to a specific incident requiring it outside the area will there be a formal backup arrangement to ensure that the very large area which the new station will cover will be properly provided for.

I look forward to your comments on these points as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Clive Betts
MP for Sheffield South East

Dictated by Mr Betts and signed in his absence

Cc Mosborough, Birley and Beighton Cllrs

11206

Doncaster
Metropolitan Borough Council

FAO: S. Clu

RECEIVED
09 OCT 2013
SYF&R
COMMAND HQ

Ros Jones
Mayor of Doncaster

Mr J Courtney
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue
197 Eyre Street
Sheffield
S1 3FG

Tel: 01302 862225
E-Mail: ros.jones@doncaster.gov.uk

30th September 2013

Dear Mr Courtney

Thank you for your letter dated 3rd September 2013, and for giving me the opportunity to comment on the strategic and operational plan out to consultation.

Given the substantial reductions required of the South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, I believe the plans being put forward propose a reasonable cover, with the exception of Birley, which is now to be staffed by part-time firefighters.

Yours sincerely

Ros Jones

Ros Jones
Mayor of Doncaster

11213

South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Your Voice

RECEIVED
15 OCT 2013
SYF&R
COMMAND HQ

Our Ref: ID1598 /SP

11 October 2013

Tel: 01226 772925

This matter is being dealt with by: Sally Parkin
Email: sparkin@syjs.gov.uk

Direct Line: 01226 772925

Mr James Courtney & Mr Jim Andrews
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue
197 Eyre Street
Sheffield
S1 3FG

Dear Mr Courtney and Mr Andrews

Thank you for your letter to Commissioner Wright inviting him to comment on your draft strategic and operational plan.

The Commissioner has spoken to the Force about this and he is aware that South Yorkshire Police responded to your original consultation and have had sight of the draft proposals.

There is nothing further the Commissioner would like to comment on or raise.

Yours sincerely

Sally Parkin
Interim Assistant Chief Executive

South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner Shaun Wright
18 Regent Street Barnsley S70 2HG
Tel: 01226 774600
Email: thepcc@southyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk
Web: www.southyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk

Email:

From:
Sent: 15 October 2013 10:01
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE: Strategic and Operational Plan Consultation

Apologies, we do have some additional comments from our members on the draft plans in relation to the Stronger Safer Communities Reserve.

We would like clarity within the plan on how the fund will operate, and the rationale for investing £2 million into a fund for community groups to access at a time when we need to save money, and when support services are under review, which could result in posts being removed. This money could alternatively be used over the 2 year period to invest in our own community safety work, working alongside volunteers and other agencies to identify and target our most vulnerable groups.

Thanks & Regards,

South Yorkshire Fire Brigades Union
Campaigning for Firefighters and Emergency Fire Control Staff

South Yorkshire Fire Brigades Union, 197 Eyre Street, Sheffield, S1 3FG. Office 0114 2532242

Mr J Gratton	Brigade Secretary	john.gratton@fbu.org.uk	Mobile: 07974083381
Mr G Wilkinson	Brigade Chair	graham.wilkinson@fbu.org.uk	Mobile: 07977931225
Mr M Winslow	Brigade Organiser	matt.winslow@fbu.org.uk	Mobile: 07966053184

Mr J Courtney
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue
197 Eyre Street
Sheffield
S1 3FG

15 October 2013

SYFBU response to SYFR IRMP

Dear James,

We wholeheartedly agree with your view that South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue has already made drastic cuts that other Fire and Rescue Services have not. It is the opinion of the SYFBU we are now at that tipping point where we either need to attempt to secure additional funding or the service will be cut to a point that is beyond what is required to provide a safe service to the public of South Yorkshire.

With regard to SYFR's latest IRMP documents SYFBU have several concerns relating to all aspects, these are listed below.

IRMP Consultation

We believe this has not been carried out to a satisfactory standard and needs to be immediately addressed. A full and proper consultation period must be started with public forums before any decisions are implemented. All stakeholders should have the chance to feedback on these proposals.

Our concerns are as follows:

Public Forums

- None of the attendees at any of these meetings were aware of the intention of SYFR to remove wholetime second pump cover from Doncaster (Population 302,739), Rotherham (Population 258,352), Sheffield (Population 557,382) and Barnsley (Population 233,671) as well as the loss of aerial attributes and the downgrading of one of the remaining wholetime duty system aerials to retained status. They were therefore in no way consulted adequately on the most contentious IRMP proposals.

- Out of the four public meetings there are no records for any meetings at Rotherham, so Rotherham was not represented.
- Of the three remaining forums at Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield, only 39 actually attended out of a desired total of 67.

- There was poor representation of the under 35 group.
- There was poor representation of the Disabled Persons group.
- There was poor representation of the Black and Ethnic Minorities group.
- There was poor representation of the over 55 group.
- Evidence of 3 individuals being counted at least twice going to different forums. (This could be because some individuals chose to turn up just for the payment offered.)

Stakeholder Consultation

Below are three statements from an internal audit which reinforce our belief that consultation has not been adequate:

1. *The documentary evidence retained by the Head of Corporate communications & Administration and the Principal policy & External Relations Officer confirmed that* ***in the main*** *the stakeholder groups that the IRMP guidance would expect SYFR to have consulted have indeed been consulted as part of the process.* ***However, no documentary evidence exists to support the individuals that attended and/or the feedback received (if any) during the open public meetings.***

2. *There was no evidence of any other method of consultation being monitored to identify its effectiveness. For example, the numerous communication methods used to generate interest in the consultation which included press/media coverage, e newsletters, internet/intranet, e mail, social media sites, letters to partner organizations/community groups and up to 4000 A5 flyers and 400 A4 posters being distributed, only resulted in* ***11 postal feedback forms*** *being received from members of the public.*

3. *Despite the Equality Impact assessment (EIA) recording that the purpose of the consultation was for SYFR to get representative views from all sections of the local community in the development of the IRMP plans, SYFR could have been more pro active in the use of Community Safety Advocates (CSAs).* ***Indeed, the evidence was available to suggest that the consultation leaflets were not provided to the CSAs until 10th may 2013, some six weeks into the 13 week process. This is not in line with the Consultation Startegy 2013-2018 which records that, Corporate Communications and the Joint Secretariat will provide the resources and coordination to ensure that frontline operational and non operational staff undertake consultation as part of their day to day activities.***

SYFBU is not aware of ANY operational crews being involved in the consultation process which contravenes SYFRA's own Consultation Strategy.

We also believe SYFR has not looked at the Gunning Principles in relation to consultation, brief explanations of these principles are below:-

Gunning Principles

The decision maker's discretion is not unbounded, however, as it is commonly accepted that certain fundamental propositions must be adhered to. These propositions are known as the Gunning (or Sedley) principles, having been propounded by Mr. Stephen Sedley QC and adopted by Mr. Justice Hodgson in Regina v Brent London Borough Council ex parte Gunning 1985. Subsequently approved by Simon Brown LJ in Regina v Devon County Council ex parte Baker 1995 and by the court of appeal in Regina v North and East Devon Health Authority ex parte Coughlan 2001.

The Gunning Principles state that consultation must:

- *be undertaken before a decision has been made;*
- *include enough information to allow any person to consider the proposal and potentially offer an alternative option;*
- *allow adequate time (usually 12 weeks) for responses;*
- *ensure that any consultation findings are reflected within the final proposals.*

Any consultation exercise needs to be clear about the impact of its proposals. A number of local authorities have been taken to Judicial Review in the recent past and deemed to have acted unlawfully in their Public Sector Equality Duty – usually because of a failure to undertake a sufficiently thorough information gathering exercise and analysis in their decision making process, or because there was insufficient information to enable those consulted to give intelligent consideration and a response to the proposals.

We believe that SYFRA consultation does not conform to the Gunning Principles in that people have not been given sufficient information and time to consider the issues in an informed manner, because the proposal with the most impact on the public was not even known during the consultation. (The downgrading of night cover and the downgrading/reduction of aerial attributes, as well as changing the whole time staffing of Birley to RDS)

This raises the question how could their views be conscientiously taken into account by the FRA.

There seems little point in consulting at a formative stage if the full proposals for consultation are not known beforehand.

Closures of Mosborough Fire station, Mansfield Road Fire Station and Darnall Road Fire Station.

If we look at SYFR Community Fire Risk Model it is plain to see that Mansfield Road and Darnall are at the heart of high risk, deprived communities which have already seen the removal of two fire appliances. It is therefore highly undesirable to then close these stations in favour of a new build (Parkway) away from such areas in favour of covering new build housing which will have far more robust fire precautions built in, and the occupiers will most likely not be in the "at risk" group. Darnall Road Station is in fact in the heart of a community which according to SYFR own Community Risk Model is over 6 times more likely to have an accidental dwelling fire (N63 Group) and although fires may be low, fire risk may be high.
The whole dynamics of fire cover in Sheffield was dependant on the new Birley Station being full time (Staffed 24/7 by wholetime crews), below is a section taken from SYFR Review of Sheffield Emergency Cover which the public were consulted on:

Review of Sheffield Emergency Cover

Section: - Why are these changes being proposed?

1.8 (page 5) - *A new full-time station in the Birley area would:*

1. *Provide an improved service to communities in the Mosborough and Crystal Peaks areas, through being better located, and being full-time. The current retained provision at Mosborough is subject to a five-minute delay whilst retained firefighters travel to the station*

2. *Cover the communities in the current Mansfield Road station area which may otherwise have experienced a negative impact as a result of the Darnall/Mansfield Road merger*

Yet again we can see that SYFR promises of a better service to the public are not being fulfilled.

Point 1 reveals that Mosborough and Crystal Peaks will in no way receive a better service, as the Birley Station is not being staffed full time and as such will still be subject to at least a 5 minute delay by any Retained Duty System (RDS) crew. We have a ludicrous situation where potentially Mosborough RDS staff will travel past a boarded up Mosborough Station if it does close, to get to Birley, collect a fire appliance and then travel back to Mosborough to attend any incidents. How is this an improved service?

Point 2 acknowledges the negative impact to the public in the Mansfield Road station area as a result of the Parkway station being built. However this was deemed acceptable as the Birley Station was to be staffed wholetime and so not subject to a five minute delay.

Our calculations from past incident data supports the opinion that Mansfield Road and Darnall could reach the new development at Waverley, Orgeave in just over six minutes and just over 7 minutes respectively, whilst still maintaining good coverage of the areas that would suffer under the new proposals.

Now we know that the latest IRMP supports the downgrading of Birley to RDS, the Review of Sheffield Emergency Cover is no longer relevant, viable nor acceptable.

Alternative

The new builds at Parkway and Birley have a cost of £6.5 million, a significant increase from the original budget of £4.2 million and will be yet another reduction over a very short period in emergency cover around Sheffield.
SYFBU would propose the retention of Mansfield Road, Darnall Road and Mosborough in their current staffing models to keep emergency cover in Sheffield at an adequate level. This will result in a saving of £6.5 million of which part should be used to re furbish the existing stations, using local contractors, to a basic standard.

We would like to draw your attention to a failed merger within the Dearne Valley when Mexborough and Brampton Fire Stations were closed and merged at Dearne with the loss of one wholetime fire appliance. The very area this was supposed to provide an "*improved service*" for, according to SYFR's plan namely Thurnscoe and Goldthorpe, have seen a considerable increase in the response time of two fire appliances (9 firefighters) to attend life threatening incidents as follows;

	Time taken for 2 pumps to attend prior to merger	Time taken for 2 pumps to attend after merger
Thurnscoe	12 minutes 56 secs	16 minutes 27 secs
Goldthorpe	10 minutes 15 secs	16 minutes 43 secs

(Taken from FOIA number 464)

We also note that in SYFR Community Risk Model that Thurnscoe, Goldthorpe and now Mexborough are classed as High Risk despite the significant cost and level of CFS activities in these areas over several years.

We are keen to ensure that the same mistakes are not made again.

Funding is of course the main issue to which we are all focused on. The Government does not wish to fund the Fire Service adequately from central funds but also put restrictions on raising money by council tax because of the referendum needed if rises are over 2%. The cost of a referendum closes this avenue of increasing funding and so we are left with an ever contracting service that has now reached breaking point.
We are also faced with the view that the Fire Service must take on extra roles such as flood response to which no funding is given, complex rescues such as from height and now co-responding seems to be on the agenda. SYFBU are of the opinion firefighters are "up for this challenge" but we need sufficient funding for our existing responsibilities first and then further funding for an expanding role including procurement of equipment and training. If we don't fight these drastic cuts together now, we risk a slow reversal of all the fantastic work that has been done in making South Yorkshire a safer place.

Summary

SYFBU strongly object to the proposals presented in the latest IRMP. We request that a new 13 week consultation period commences to enable the public of South Yorkshire to be fully consulted on the new aspects of the IRMP which were not explained in the first consultation.

We request regular meetings with SYFR and SYFA during this period to enable us to present our concerns and work on potential solutions.

The whole IRMP planning process was completed without SYFBU ever being involved. The National Framework document states that representative bodies should be involved at the development stage. We request that SYFBU are involved at the development stage of future IRMP's to ensure as much as possible that all aspects are considered and all national guidance is followed.

Finally, we would like to offer the assistance of SYFBU officials to SYFR management in lobbying government to provide proper funding for South Yorkshire in light of the fact that SYFR have already proved to be running at a level beyond which a safe and effective emergency response can be provided.

Should you have any questions on any of the points raised in this letter we would be happy to meet with you to discuss them.

Yours sincerely

Graham Wilkinson
Brigade Chair
South Yorkshire FBU

copies to:- All South Yorkshire Fire Authority Members

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Appendix C – feedback from BEM and rural communities during the second phase of consultation

Stocksbridge Town Council (meeting of 2nd October 2013)

From: Chu Steve
Sent: 03 October 2013 11:52
To: 'admin@stocksbridge-council.co.uk'
Subject: RE: Operational Plan

Hi [name redacted],

Thank you so much for arranging for our fire service discussion at Tuesday's meeting. Please pass my thanks on to Jack and the other members.

I will be reporting the key points of the discussion back to our Fire Authority, which I have noted as:

- Members emphasised we should be focused on outcomes, not targets, and that deaths and injuries are more important than response times – they support the proposal not to have a response time target
- There are specific rural area risks around farming and grassland fires, and remote properties, which we must consider
- The Council is pleased that its station will be kept open, and is keen to ensure the appliances and equipment used by their firefighters are of the same standard as used elsewhere in the county

I hope I've got that right – if you need me to make any changes, or want to add anything I've missed out, please could you let me know by Friday 25th October?

Thanks,

Steve

That's fine Steve. Thanks for your attendance it was a very informative presentation.

Kind Regards,

Clerk to the Council

Stocksbridge Town Council

Barnburgh and Harlington Parish Council (meeting of 9th October 2013)

Hello Steve

Firstly many thanks for attending last night's PC meeting I hope you received a positive response that will assist you.

On the question of postcards re parking restricting access for emergency vehicles please forward to me at the following address and I will distribute at the next PC meeting (13th November).

[name and address redacted]

Below are the respective draft minutes from last night's meeting concerning your attendance and the PC response to consultation exercise. Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

185/10/13 - SY Fire and Rescue Service – Consultation – Mr Steve Chu, Head of Strategy and Engagement, attended to 'explore the impact any changes to frontline services may have on rural communities'. He gave an overview of the background:- consultation exercise; current targets; response time performances; fire deaths and injuries; risk based model for fire protection; draft response time option 'remove the response time target, but will publish how quickly we are responding'. Mr Chu stressed 'they would carry on getting to emergencies as quickly as possible'. Members raised concerns - car parking blocking access for emergency vehicles – Mr Chu advised he would provide cards for placing on such parked vehicles; changes to procedures for fire service attendance at road traffic accidents. Mr Chu was thanked for his attendance.

198/10/13 – Consultation SY Fire – 'Integrated Risk Management and Service Plan'
Further to previously circulated information and the attendance of Mr Chu (min no 185/10/13) concerning the next stage of consultation which concludes on the 14th October 2013. **It was agreed that the Parish Council would advise that it understands the reasons why the draft plan has opted for no response time targets, but would hope that the option of a risk based target option would be kept under review as appropriate, being linked to continued fire prevention initiatives.**

Regards

[name redacted]
Clerk to Barnburgh and Harlington Parish Council

BEM Consultation – notes recorded by Rhona Bywater, Joint Secretariat

Thurs 26 September

SYAC Centre Sheffield

8 Attendees

The following comments were received after the presentation:

1. There should be no actual response time target, provided that the preventative work carries on.
2. Instead of measuring response time targets, put more resources into community safety work to prevent fires happening.
3. Targets can miss the point – get there as quickly as possible is more sensible.
4. Focus on high risk areas for prevention and education.
5. Work with private landlords to tackle overcrowding and unsafe properties, and look to charge landlords to issue safety certificates.
6. Use of SIU's – one member of the group said that they are not seen very often – could they be used more often in fire safety work rather than large pumps?
7. Consider a non- life threatening number for Fire as with Police 101 for anti-social behaviour.
8. Comment from a member of the Somali community about increased risk from use of incense and removal of smoke alarm batteries – further targeting to fit anti-tamper alarms?

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Appendix D – feedback received from staff and members of the public during the second phase of consultation

I would prefer immediate fire cover during the night period as this is the period when most of the public are asleep and are most likely to need assistance in the event of a fire. As you continually tell the public, 'seconds are vital', so why make people in need of help wait while the 'part time' crews travel to the fire station, dress, get to the fire and then if necessary rescue the occupants.
10/27/2013 6:27 PMView Responses

Definately a step backwards.Why build new fire stations and then staff them on a part time basis?People will be more at risk.
10/25/2013 4:22 PMView Responses

A simple question with a yes or no answer, can you guarantee retained cover 24 hours a day 365 days a year at the proposed station at Birley? [Name redacted]
10/18/2013 2:12 PMView Responses

How can you reduce stations that have have two appliances? we may be keeping stations and fire appliances but we are reducing fire cover at night when more serious incidents occur
10/18/2013 2:07 PMView Responses

You state in the plan that whole time stations were not anywhere near meeting their response times of 6 mins, 80% of the time but you expect Birley, a part time station to meet response times of between 6 mins to 10 minutes when all the part time firefighters have to travel to the station first. I think it is very unrealistic to get these response times from a part time station and also as both Mosborough and Mansfield Road are closing the area to be covered by Birley is much larger which makes these presumptions even harder to be met.
10/17/2013 11:13 PMView Responses

The plans are both too long- most of the content is gobbledygook,, wordy and with no real insight into what these changes actually mean to ordinary people
10/16/2013 2:31 PMView Responses

I think the plans are a sensible solution to draconian cuts in budget. We'd all love all fire stations to be fully staffed 24 hours a day AND for the community safety work to be done. However, that won't happen so your recommendations make sense to me.
10/15/2013 9:19 PMView Responses

I am concerned by some elements of the plan. Particularly night cover, Night time is one of the most dangerous times for fires because people are asleep and it takes longer to raise the alarm, reducing cover at night based on statistical anomolies will result in people dieing. Fire coverage should not be about actual statistical occurances, it should be about calculation of risk. There being a reduction in the quantity of fires does not ever equate to a reduction of risk, the fact is that reducing night time cover at stations covering residential areas increases risk because of the impact upon response times. It does I agree make sense to reduce night time cover in areas of industrial risk where there is genuinely less risk to life outside normal working hours. A logical risk approach may even mean some stations having lower cover during the day because its area of coverage has a higher risk to life overnight. I like the idea of 2nd crews not being on station during periods of low demand providing that adequate resourcing remains available for all first pumps across the county, however in reality, where that is combined with night time losses of first pumps elsewhere in the area this dramatically increases risk to life due to inability to mobilise resources quickly enough in the event of major OR multiple incidents.

10/15/2013 5:00 PMView Responses

I am opposed to replacing night-time permanent staff on the second rescue pump at Barnsley station with retained staff. This is bound to reduce service quality.
10/13/2013 6:37 PMView Responses

These plans clearly hit the front-line services currently provided in Barnsley, Sheffield, Doncaster & Rotherham. Despite keeping pumps & stations in city centres their attendance times at night are extremely eroded with this plan. In turn making it more dangerous for the public and fire-fighters. There are over 100 job cuts in this plan, none of which relate to the top heavy mangement roles within SYFR. There are no justifications to have such a large HR function & Communications function, with their Heads of Department being on twice the Firefighters salary? Are you really keeping SY Safer?
10/5/2013 10:44 PMView Responses

I think it wriong to cut rescue pumps at night cover from wholetime to retained it will take lo min of 10 mins more for them to turn out to a job
10/3/2013 6:21 PMView Responses

It is sad that you are having to make cuts. Our fire service should be given more support not less. The government should look to cut money that is spent on staff and subsidies in the House of Commons!
10/3/2013 3:57 PMView Responses

I think you do a wonder full job and you deserve to be paid at the heighest leval.what would we do with out you in the event of a fire .Also your benifets should protection for your families and yourselves if you are injured .I wish you every luck and support you allthe yay .[Name redacted]
9/23/2013 12:22 AMView Responses

This plan would reduce the fire cover all over South Yorkshire, we have already cut posts jobs and we are unable to meet demand at times now. The second appliance and aerial should not be down graded.
9/17/2013 11:01 PMView Responses

could there be no more merger of fire stations to enable the same amount of fire appliances yet less cost on building maintenance, such as edlington and maltby or doncaster. tankersley and elm lane. rotherham and maltby. Grants can be provided from the government to build new modern stations and the sales of previous station sites would further income to the savings made. (this has been proven especially with the number of merges west yorkshire are making and other brigades). Would also saves a lot of money with the cost of repairs to stations.
9/16/2013 8:31 PMView Responses

As shown in the plans, Tankersley station would be reduced from 10 to 7 personal. Would this mean a removal of special appliance(all or a few)? Or could they be crewed the same as the boat at Edlington. I also believe these plans are very good and would rather see them sooner rather than later. Also is there a need for the number of trainers are tdc, other brigades don't run the same number of courses/ refreshers as our. Ba and efad are the only ones required in most brigades.
9/10/2013 12:23 AMView Responses

seems to be a logical approach to the situation.local mps should take the problem of money cuts to the house and push for funding levels to be on a level playing field.

My chief response about the Draft Strategic & Operational Plans is: - the part-time retained staffing arrangements for Doncaster (my pastoral responsibility) are not well received in this area, and, what will be the arrangements for Thorne Station?

(Hard copy print out of online form)