

On Call – A Timely Response



Report of the Fire Service Consultation Working Party in Response to Consultation Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Proposals 2009-2012

September 2009

Report, together with written evidence

The Fire Service Consultation Working Party



Cllr Bowley



***Cllr Howe
(Chairman)***



Cllr Gillard

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Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The Fire Service Consultation Working Party considered the Fire Service's proposals for the Fire Service in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

The working party had benefit of written evidence and oral evidence from a number of members.

We would like to thank Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Ian Scarrott and his colleagues, Tim Herbert and Richard Hall for all their help in this examination and for attending our meeting and responding to all questions in an open and helpful manner.

We would also like to thank all those who have helped us with our work, particularly Councillors J Coxon, A Bridges, J Bridges, J Hault, G Jones and J Summerfield who came and spoke with us. This enabled us to assess members' views more widely.

The public discussion at the meeting helped us to understand the local concerns. We are grateful that the Fire Service has provided the opportunity for the expression of these concerns through the consultation period.

Taking into account all the evidence before us we have responded to the questions posed in the consultation document.

- R1 This report, including the responses to the consultation questions forms the Council's formal response to the Fire Service consultation; Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Proposals 2009-2012.**
- R2 The Fire Service Consultation Working Party be dissolved.**

Background

1. In planning the fire service¹ for the next three years, the fire service produced a series of documents refining its proposals for providing the fire and rescue service across Leicestershire.
2. During this process, the service carried out a review of services in Northern Leicestershire.
3. This review added improved risk analysis/evidence base for decision-making to the earlier work but identified several options for further appraisal work and study.
4. This further work has led to a consultation document².
5. At a meeting on 24 June, the Combined Fire Authority³ set a twelve-week consultation period⁴.
6. Councillor John Bridges (Moira Ward) suggested that we should hold a scrutiny examination of the proposals.
7. This examination will inform the Council's formal response to the consultation.
8. We are grateful for the opportunity to comment upon the Fire Service's plan.
9. The Communities Scrutiny Committee established this working party at the meeting on 18 August 2009 to review the impact of the proposals in the consultation document on the people of North West Leicestershire.
10. The Working Party is comprised of Councillors C Bowley, D Howe and T Gillard.
11. Amongst the proposals included in the document is the closure of the Moira Fire Station.
12. This proposal had given rise to an amount of local objection, including the formation of an action group.
13. In view of the specific interest in this aspect of the proposals, we held our meeting in the Moira area in Moira Village Hall.
14. County, District and Parish Councillors attended the meeting as well as members of the public.
15. We are grateful to all those who submitted evidence and attended our meeting for their contributions to our work.
16. We are particularly grateful to the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Ian Scarrott and his colleagues, Tim Herbert and Richard Hall for their attendance and their open and informative response to questions and issues raised.

Areas of Work

17. The Working Party has;
 - a. Established the changes to the Fire Service proposed and assessed the net impact of these changes on the residents of North West Leicestershire.

¹ The Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service

² Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Proposals 2009-2012 (Aug '09)

³ The 'governing body' of the local Fire and Rescue Service across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

⁴ 1 August to 31 October 2009

- b. In view of the consultation period, drafted a response to the Fire Service’s consultation document on behalf of the Council
18. We shall
- a. Present this draft response to the Fire Service Consultation document to Cabinet at the Meeting scheduled for 20 October.
 - b. Report the outcome to Communities Scrutiny Committee at the Meeting scheduled for 24 November.

Evidence Gathering

19. The working party received an introductory report⁵ that set the scene for the examination. This gave a background against which the group based its examination.

Written Evidence

20. In advance of the meeting we invited written evidence from the following parties;
- a. The Chief Fire Officer
 - b. Fire Brigade Union
 - c. Moira Fire Station Action Group
 - d. Town and Parish Councils in the area
 - e. Ward members
 - f. Members of the public
21. The proposal to close the fire station at Moira had given rise to

⁵ Ev 1 Page 15

- considerable local opposition when first muted.
22. An action group had been set up between the parishes within the area served by the station.
23. The written submissions are attached as an appendix to this report.⁶
24. At the meeting, the Senior Scrutiny Officer circulated copies of written responses received after the publication of the agenda⁷.
25. For convenience, we have added these additional responses to the original appendix with this report.
26. We have also added a letter received after the meeting reiterating views expressed in an earlier submission⁸.
27. The written responses⁹ enable us to gauge the strong local feelings that exist.

Oral Evidence

28. During the meeting, Mr Scarrott and his colleagues responded to questions put by the working party and others present.
29. The responses to these questions helped to clarify the details and the status of the proposals
30. Mr Scarrott and his colleagues told us that;
31. He felt that the Fire Service had implemented a thorough

⁶ EV 2 Page 19

⁷ Ev 3 Page 25

⁸ Ev 4 Page 28

⁹ Written responses Page 19

- consultation over the twelve-week period.
32. Although it was not a legal requirement for the Fire Service, as insisted upon by a questioner, he had taken account of the developing Core Strategy and the options for future development for North West Leicestershire.
 33. New houses do not necessarily constitute as large a risk as older ones due to modern building techniques. He stressed that the type of occupancy really determines risk.
 34. Mr Scarrott stressed that the proposals were for redistribution of the operational budget to provide the most effective cover. It is not a cost-cutting exercise and the overall operational budget was likely to increase because of the IRMP proposals.
 35. He accepted that there would be a drop in the level of service offered in Moira if the fire station was to close. In some cases, attendance times would inevitably increase.
 36. In areas, like Moira, on the boundary of service boundaries, close co-operation ensured that service in the area was co-ordinated.
 37. In the event of an incident, the nearest available resource was sent to the incident regardless of boundaries.
 38. Mr Scarrott also undertook to respond to additional written questions in more detail than was possible at the meeting.
 39. Councillors and members of the public expressed views related to the proposals.
 40. Most concerns centred on a reliable service, attendance times and a feeling that the risks in the area had been under estimated.
 41. During the general discussion, some present questioned matters of procedure in the approval of the consultation document.
 42. Some present also expressed concern that the Fire Authority considered the proposals at a time when several newly elected members lacked experience.

Issues Considered

43. We considered the issues raised by the consultation questions in the consultation document.
44. We have taken into account all the written evidence that we received and all the oral evidence heard at our meeting.
45. We have not considered any procedural issues.
46. If there have been any serious procedural inadequacies they should be addressed in another forum.
47. We feel that the Fire Service has presented the proposals fairly with sufficient time for a fair response.

Conclusions

48. The consultation questions are set out with our responses following the content of this report¹⁰.
49. We do not feel confident or qualified to answer all the questions.

¹⁰ Response to Consultation Questions, Page 11

50. Some of the questions refer to localities out of our area and we are not aware of the local needs or issues.
51. Other questions relate to operational matters and we do not feel able to respond to these preferring to leave these matters to the experienced operational officers.
52. We feel that road traffic collisions should always be a priority for the fire and rescue service but particularly in the Moira area with the proximity of major roads.
53. The Castle Donington area has long sought improvement to the service. We are pleased that the proposals recognise this.
54. The consultation document seeks to justify the greater priority for Castle Donington over Moira on a greater assessed risk.
55. It is always more difficult to gain acceptance for the reduction of a level of service than for an improvement but the Fire Service do not seem to be aware of the extent of the reduction.
56. While accepting the inevitability of a reduced service if Moira station is closed, Mr Scarrott told us that he was unable to estimate resulting attendance times.
57. Without this information, it is difficult to expect local people to accept reassurances over a closure.
58. The Fire Service needs to consider and research alternative arrangements and present other options to enable people to assess them.
59. Without this, we feel it reasonable to seek to keep the Moira station open.
60. While accepting the data provided regarding the overlap of area between Shepshed and Loughborough and comparative incident data, we would not support the reduction of provision at Loughborough to two engines.
61. We recognise a trend away from the use of retained fire fighters in Moira and Loughborough but have concerns that in each case a reduction in resources is proposed with no clear assessment of the impact this would have.
62. We accept that a third full-time crew would not be justified to meet local needs but feel that there is a need for the retention of a retained crew.
63. While recognising that the proposals address the whole service area we do not feel able to comment in detail on the proposals relating to Birstall, Syston, Hinckley and Melton Mowbray, as we are not aware of the local needs.
64. While congratulating the Fire Service and those who work in it on the reductions in sickness absences, we do not feel that the proposed reduction in the 'Ridership factor' is justified by the data provided.
65. If the 'Ridership factor' is reduced prematurely, it could lead to engines not being available, a reduction in attendance at training and increased reliance upon the 'resilience team'.

66. In referring to the 'Ridership factor' the consultation document states that "the absolute minimum we allow to crew a fire engine is four personnel" yet it is proposed to "routinely" crew city station engines with four firefighters.
67. This appears to reflect a reduction of the service to the 'absolute minimum' but we do not feel confident in opposing what the document also describes as "an acknowledged safe number". We feel that this is a matter for professional operation officers.
68. The use of a 'resilience team' would appear to make sense but the proposal is a little unclear regarding how it would work in practice for example; its availability at short notice. We feel

that further detail would assist local people in assessing the proposal.

Recommendations

69. The Working Party recommends that;
 - a. This report, including the responses to the consultation questions forms the Council's formal response to the Fire Service consultation; Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Proposals 2009-2012.
 - b. The Fire Service Consultation Working Party be dissolved.

Fire Service Consultation Working Party

September 2009

Contact:
Keith Gordon
Senior Scrutiny Officer

Response to Consultation Questions

Questions reproduced from the consultation document

(Responses in *bold*)

- 1 Do you agree that road traffic collisions should be one of the priorities for the Fire and Rescue Service in North West Leicestershire?

Yes

- 2 Do you agree that emergency cover should be improved in the Castle Donington area?

Yes but not at the expense of Moira

- 3 Do you agree that Moira Retained Fire and Rescue Station can safely be closed in the context of alternative emergency cover in the area?

No, what is the alternative?

- 4 If not, what other options do you think we should consider?

What are the proposals for alternative cover?

- 5 Do you agree the retained fire cover at Loughborough Fire and Rescue Station may safely be discontinued?

No, disagree

- 6 If not what other options do you think we should consider?

Continue with retained cover

- 7 Do you agree that a new whole-time fire and rescue station at Birstall is desirable?

Do not feel able to comment as not aware of local needs not in our area

- 8 Do you agree that if a new whole-time fire and rescue station is provided at Birstall, then Syston Retained Fire and Rescue Station may be safely closed?

Do not feel able to comment as not aware of local needs not in our area

- 9 Do you agree with the proposal for Hinckley Fire and Rescue Station?

Do not feel able to comment as not aware of local needs not in our area

- 10 Do you agree with the proposals for Melton Mowbray Fire and Rescue Station?

Do not feel able to comment as not aware of local needs not in our area

11 Are there any other options we should consider?

Do not feel able to comment as not aware of local needs not in our area

12 Do you agree with the proposed reduction in the 'ridership factor'?

No

13 Do you agree with the proposed reduction from five to four crew members at city fire and rescue stations?

A matter for the professionals

14 Do you agree with the proposal to establish a resilience team of eight firefighters?

Need you to expand upon this.

Appendices - Evidence



NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

FIRE SERVICE CONSULTATION WORKING PARTY – 2 SEPTEMBER 2009



Fire Service Consultation – An Introduction

Background

- 1 The member suggesting the topic for examination did so in light of proposals for the fire service across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland¹¹.
- 2 These proposals include the building of a new station at Castle Donington and the closure of Moira Fire Station.
- 3 On 24 June, the Combined Fire Authority decided that a 12-week consultation upon the proposals would take place from 1 August to 31 October 2009.
- 4 A scrutiny examination would inform the Council's response to the Fire Service's Consultation.

Working party

- 5 The Communities Scrutiny Committee established a three-member working party and appointed Councillors D Howe (Chairman), C Bowley and T Gillard.
- 6 In view of the consultation period and the dates of scheduled Meetings, the working party has been delegated authority to present a draft response direct to Cabinet with a subsequent report to the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Terms of Reference

- 7 The Communities Scrutiny Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the Working Party.
- 8 The Working Party;
 - 8.1 Establish the changes to the Fire Service proposed and assess the net impact of these changes on the residents of North West Leicestershire.
 - 8.2 In view of the consultation period, draft a response to the Fire Service's consultation document on behalf of the Council.
 - 8.3 Present a draft response to the Fire Service Consultation document to Cabinet at the Meeting scheduled for 20 October.

¹¹ "Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Proposals 2009-2012 (Aug '09)" Copies available on Fire Service Website http://www.leicestershire-fire.gov.uk/fireservice/irmp_consultation.shtml or at local libraries

- 8.4 Report the outcome to Communities Scrutiny Committee at the Meeting scheduled for 24 November.

Issues

- 9 The following issues are suggested for the working party to address and no doubt, others will arise as the examination progresses;
 - 9.1 Rationale for proposed changes to service delivery
 - 9.2 Alternative service delivery in place of Moira Station, if closed, is adequate cover and attendance time achievable
 - 9.3 Will there be a loss of experienced retained officers in the transfer to full-time crews
 - 9.4 Possible increase in allocation of homes in Ashby area identified in the evolving Local Development Framework (LDF)
- 10 The Consultation document¹² includes fourteen questions relating to the draft proposals¹³. The Fire Service is seeking answers to these questions together with any further comments that members may care to make.
- 11 Naturally, some of the questions relate directly to areas within North West Leicestershire and others less so. These aspects will have indirect implications for the district as part of the overall proposals. The working party should consider, therefore, all aspects of the consultation document.
- 12 The responses to the questions and comments should be based on supportable evidence to justify the views of the Council in its formal response to the consultation.

Written evidence

- 13 In addition to the consultation document, the working group has invited relevant interested people to submit written evidence to this examination.
- 14 The following bodies have been approached;
 - 14.1 The Chief Fire Officer
 - 14.2 Fire Brigade Union
 - 14.3 Moira Fire Station Action Group
 - 14.4 Town and Parish Councils in the area

¹² Copies circulated to members of the working party

¹³ The questions are reproduced as an appendix to this report.

14.5 Ward members

14.6 Members of the public

Witnesses

15 The working group has also invited witnesses to attend the meeting to expand upon written submissions and answer members' questions.

Keith Gordon, Senior Scrutiny Officer
August 2009

Consultation Questions

Questions reproduced from the consultation document

- 15 Do you agree that road traffic collisions should be one of the priorities for the Fire and Rescue Service in North West Leicestershire?
- 16 Do you agree that emergency cover should be improved in the Castle Donington area?
- 17 Do you agree that Moira Retained Fire and Rescue Station can safely be closed in the context of alternative emergency cover in the area?
- 18 If not, what other options do you think we should consider?
- 19 Do you agree the retained fire cover at Loughborough Fire and Rescue Station may safely be discontinued?
- 20 If not what other options do you think we should consider?
- 21 Do you agree that a new whole-time fire and rescue station at Birstall is desirable?
- 22 Do you agree that if a new whole-time fire and rescue station is provided at Birstall, then Syston Retained Fire and Rescue Station may be safely closed?
- 23 Do you agree with the proposal for Hinckley Fire and Rescue Station?
- 24 Do you agree with the proposals for Melton Mowbray Fire and Rescue Station?
- 25 Are there any other options we should consider?
- 26 Do you agree with the proposed reduction in the 'ridership factor'?
- 27 Do you agree with the proposed reduction from five to four crew members at city fire and rescue stations?
- 28 Do you agree with the proposal to establish a resilience team of eight firefighters?

Written Submissions

Ashby Woulds Town Council

Thank you for your letter of 5th August 2009. Ashby Woulds Town Council is strongly opposing the Fire Service's proposals and is heavily involved with the Action Group fighting the proposed closure of Moira Fire Station.

The Action Group was formed at the start of the year and chaired by Tony Allan the then Mayor of the Town Council. Mr Allan remains chair of the group and the new Mayor Colin Wood and other Councillors are also on the Committee.

The group has been meeting regularly throughout the year and is running a high profile campaign including a lot of media coverage. The Council has also been in correspondence with the Fire Service direct. You may be aware that meetings have been held with the representatives of the fire service, District and County Councillors. Petitions have been signed, poster and leaflet drops have been undertaken all in conjunction with other parish councils. Representatives of the Council and the action group also attended County Hall in June to lobby against the proposals.

For your information I enclose a copy of the latest leaflet¹⁴ distributed to all households within the parishes named on the leaflet. The next meeting of the action group is on 26th August 2009 at 7pm Moira Village Hall and the Council's Communities Scrutiny Committee is most welcome to attend.

Clerk to the Council

Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe and Acresford Parish Council

I am speaking on behalf of both the Parish Council and most of the residents of the Parish in this response to you. There is no way that the Parish is prepared to accept closure of this vital facility. We have contacted the Peter Roffey and requested a public meeting to be held within the Parish so that we can give him feedback on a face to face basis. We do not accept that the fire service can respond in our area as efficiently from Ashby or Swadlincote in the absence of Moira. A recent fatal accident beneath junction 11 on the M42 where Moira was on scene 13 minutes before the next unit is a simple case in point. One bridge is partially closed due to fire damage to a bearing and in the absence of Moira unit the damage would undoubtedly have been more severe.

We are currently running a campaign, along with all other affected Parishes, to collect signatures on a petition against the closure and we fully expect to collect thousands of signatures. We will be holding public meetings and inviting the media to join us to maximise the focus on this totally unacceptable decision.

¹⁴ Not printed

I make no apology for the tone of this e-mail, our Parish is incensed and we are not going to simply lie down and accept this decision without a real fight.

Chris Keeley Chair of ODA PC

Overseal Parish Council

Thank you for your letter of 5 August. The Parish Council remain totally opposed to the proposed closure of Moira Fire Station and are concerned that it will lead to delays in responding to incidents in this part of Leicestershire and Derbyshire, possibly endangering life.

You will, no doubt, be aware that there was a serious road collision near Measham on the A42 recently and I am informed that the Fire Crews from Moira were first on the scene and were ahead of anybody else by some twelve minutes. Imagine being trapped in a vehicle or otherwise requiring urgent assistance and having to wait an additional twelve minutes beyond what is now possible.

I am writing direct to Leicestershire Fire Service, but would ask that the District Council lend its weight to opposing the closure of Moira Fire Station, which serves south Derbyshire as well as Leicestershire.

Clerk to the Council

Moira Fire Station Action Group

With ref your letter of the 5 August re Scrutiny Examination of Review of Fire Service Consultation.

Find enclosed relevant material in relation to the above and other correspondence.

One of the most important matters to consider is the A42 northbound from Jt 11 to Jt 12. If an incident was to arise as the recent fatal involving several vehicles. If Ashby were to attend they would have to travel southbound from Jt 11 to Jt 12 to come back northbound. Where Moira is strategically placed for both northbound and southbound for the A42.

Tony Allan, Chairman.

Attachments supplied

reference directly to the IRMP document here are a few points to consider;

P5. Community safety activities, the statistics are impressive and Moira Station is extremely active in this area with visits to schools, fetes and public events. Also a high number of home fire risk assessments are completed with an obvious advantage of the firefighters involved knowing the 'patch'

P6. States that the areas of Coalville, Ashby and Castle Donington as centres for growth. Moira area is also expanding rapidly, with more housing, industry, tourism and leisure. All this of course leads to increased traffic on the area's roads. The A42

is heavily used and do our rural routes have the capacity to cope with future traffic loads?

Also stated the 10 mm target time cannot be achieved reliably in the Castle Donington area. If Moira is removed then the 10 mm time will not be achieved in the Moira area

The callout figures are misleading — In the first instance it refers to a CURRENT figure of yearly calls, the figures over a number of years has been closer matched and Moira have had more calls in at least one year. The second statistic is an average one, with dwelling fires and RTC's quoted. The usual case is for Moira and Ashby to attend the same 'bigger' jobs anyway, so these figures are for the most part, irrelevant as a comparison between the two stations. Add to this Moira covers over in Swadlincote. WHY ARE THESE FIGURES GIVEN IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS?

If anything, fire cover in the area has to be increased, not lessened. It is accepted that Castle Donington is under provided but it is not reasonable to rob the rich to feed the poor. Moira has an established fire crew, is performing well and receives praise for its work, particularly in jobs like the recent A42 major incident. It is now widely known that Moira attended this job first and were alone in fighting a major fire without backup for 13 minutes, a long time in a risk area like that encountered on the day. If it wasn't for their swift and decisive actions the bridge may have sustained a lot more damage and resulted in closure and possible demolition. The financial saving there must be huge, perhaps enough to keep Moira open for ten years! Also Moira took a major part in what followed, namely the extrication of and care of casualties.

A few facts and figures;

I have met no-one who wants the station to close. This goes for neighbouring towns and villages such as Ashby and Swad where Moira is of course, the second appliance in larger incidents. Often Moira is the first appliance in these areas if the inherent appliance is off the run or busy already

Moira has more Cat 3 risk than Ashby

A new program, MOSAIC, which identifies households and families at greater risk due to their lifestyles, gives Moira over 300 addresses. Ashby has NONE

Ashby has a difficult area for staff to attend, traffic problems through town

Ashby is now off the run more due to crewing deficiencies. Take Moira away and cover immediately becomes extremely low. Ashby not available on the A42 incident as above. What if there had been no Moira that day?

Although it is claimed that it is not about money, Moira is a cheaply run station. Council tax contributions for domestic premises alone already rake in more than DOUBLE the yearly cost of Moira.

Peter Roffey, CFA chair, has stated that attendance times for the area will not be affected. This is clearly not true. They may come down in the Castle Donington area and affect the average but Moira and its surrounding area will not and cannot have

the same response times. Ashby and Sawd cannot effect the same times into the area and when they get there will not have the same resources at their disposal. If a house fire with persons reported automatically demands 3 appliances then resources will be stretched at best.

Members of the ambulance service, the police and the highways agency in the area have all expressed their disgust. Will they be contacted for their views?

One of the main concerns for people in the area seems to be what happens if Ashby are not available. A major incident may get out of hand quickly and lives and property at risk because of increased turn out times

In the statement by the Chairman of

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority, Peter Roffey, he states that; 'the cover that the new fire stations would provide would more than adequately compensate for any unavoidable closures'. How can a fire station at Castle Donington or Birstall provide better cover for our area? The taxpayers of Moira and the surrounding area covered by Moira Station are paying for the service that they are currently receiving — given that domestic property council tax contributions alone are raking in about £280,000 p/a and Moira Station costs less than half that amount — but will council tax contributions be lowered to take account for the reduction of emergency cover? Its your service, now's the time to act. Write to your local councillor, sign the petitions, write to the paper and vote to **keep Moira Station open**

Moira Fire Station is being considered for closure.

It is thought that adequate cover can be provided by neighbouring Ashby Station.

So why has Ashby Station never been considered for closure?

- Mon Station has had as many callouts in the last few years as Ashby - last year Moira had more.
- Moira can get into Ashby's patch quicker than vice versa — Moira's patch is 32 square miles. Areas like Snarestone are going to have to wait longer for emergency cover.
- Reaching the station is easier for Moira firefighters as they do not have to get through busy town traffic, therefore speeding up response times.
- According to MOSAIC, a recent study to identify those at risk by social habits or deprivation, Moira has over 300 of such properties. Ashby has none.
- Moira has more sites, industrial or life risk, of greater risk than Ashby.
- It is consider that it is easier and more efficient to turn out a fire engine into a town than to come out of a town.
- Moira regularly goes into Ashby to back them up. Also we cross the county boundary to back up appliances in Derbyshire, and Warwickshire.

- This is the Heart of the National Forest — Moira is at the centre — and tourism is increasing, bringing with it more people and traffic. There a hundreds of acres of woodland to protect

Its your Fire Station — its time to act before its too late

The vote has been taken by the Fire Services Authority rushed through as any other business and behind closed doors. The vote was 11 - 1 for the proposals as laid out by the fire service. This includes the plan to shut Moira. Now they have 12 weeks before it goes to a public consultation. It is up to all concerned to promote our side of things as noisily as possible. The members of the FSA have probably only followed the recommendations put before them, why would a councillor in say, Market Harborough, be concerned about Moira. Also, what right has such a councillor to vote on something that doesn't concern his electorate specifically?

It all goes under the guise of redeploying resources. So if our local station is closed and the emergency cover lessened, does that mean the locals can expect to pay less for their safety? Of course not and I think this point should be highlighted to the public. They are already being let down by councillors that have only just been elected!! I know of no-one around here that wants the station to close and most are dead against it.

Individual comments from the public

Graham Statham

Having attempted to fill in the questionnaire on the Fire Authorities proposals I found it very frustrating and bias, the map was of very poor quality and Fire Stations in adjoining areas not shown unless they helped the Authorities case, Swadlincote shown, Melborne and Long Eaton not shown.

Some of the questions could only be answered by working firemen ie. number of crew required per appliance. Other areas inferred that Castle Donington should go without to enable Moira to stay.

If a section was not answered the software would not let you continue, I can not pass an opinion on areas that I do not know, answering a question with a neutral answer gives an incorrect impression to that question.

Graham Statham

Written Submissions Received After Original Publication of the Agenda (circulated at the meeting)

Appleby Magna Parish Council

Appleby Magna Parish Council wishes to object in the strongest terms to the proposal to close Moira Fire Station.

The area covered by this station is expanding in housing, increasing tourism, both day visitors and accommodation, plus being in the National Forest where thousands of trees are being planted. Our own parish, Appleby Magna has increased considerably in business of various types such as hotels; motorway service area and as farms diversify over 30 business units have been created for example office accommodation, motor and HGV repairs, light engineering and additional housing. We are a small part of the area covered by Moira Fire, the rest of the area is experiencing similar or greater expansion both in business and housing.

The A42 linking to the M42 at Junction 11 Appleby Magna is a major dual carriageway with no hard shoulder. When breakdowns or accidents happen it results in difficult road communication with Ashby, as experienced many times but most recently during the 10 vehicle accident and fire at junction 11.

If Moira Fire Station is closed, it could add a further 12 minutes response time when an engine is despatched from Ashby de la Zouch! Many call outs require two or three engines, where will these have to travel from?

With regard to the consultation document written by Leicestershire & Rutland Fire and Rescue, it clearly states that Swadlincote Fire Station could cover our area in an emergency. This is a Derbyshire station **we pay our rates to Leicestershire and will not accept paying the same for less security**. The lack of any proposed changes to headquarter staff in the consultation document is also noted!

Finally, the boundary areas of Leicestershire, such as our own, have not been made aware of any changes which may have been made or proposed by adjacent counties, which could affect cover in the event of our need to require the services of Fire and Rescue. The proposal to close Moira Fire Station is a severe retrograde step. The Parish Council is fully aware of the current economic situation but if a couple of additional stations are required they should be implemented, after all we do not have an excess of fire stations compared with neighbouring counties.

Clerk to the Parish Council.

Paul Hemmerdinger

I wish to object in the strongest terms to the proposal to close Moira Fire Station.

As a resident and Parish Councillor of Appleby Magna I am concerned that the area covered by this station is expanding in many ways. Housing is increasing, tourism is on the rise in both day visitors and many staying in the area, visiting amongst others Twycross Zoo, Sibson Discovery Park, Conkers where not only families & children

come to have a good time but also occasionally concerts are performed & all in The National Forest where hundreds of thousands of trees have been planted & more are planned so over the coming years more tourists will come into the area!

Appleby Magna has like many other villages in the area increased considerably in size as businesses of various types move away from towns & cities. We have Hotels, a Motorway Service Area and as farms diversify well over 30 business units have been created, for example Office Accommodation, Motor and HGV Repairs, Light Engineering and additional housing. We are a small part of the area covered by Moira Fire, the rest of the area is experiencing similar or greater expansion both in business and housing.

The A42 linking to the M42 at Junction 11 Appleby Magna is a major dual Carriageway with no hard shoulder from the M1 all the way down to the M42 at junction 11 (15.5 miles). When breakdowns or accidents occur it is very difficult for the Emergency Services to get to the M42 junction & then use the hard shoulder, what would it be like if an Appliance needed to come from Castle Donington? This was highlighted recently during the 10 vehicle accident and fire at junction 11.

As far as I am aware the boundary areas of Leicestershire, such as our own, have not been made aware of any changes which may have been made or proposed by adjacent counties which could affect cover in the event of our need to require the services of Fire and Rescue, why?

The proposal to close Moira Fire Station is a severe retrograde step. I am fully aware of the current economic situation, but if a couple of additional stations are required they should be implemented, after all we do not have an excess of fire stations in Leicestershire compared with neighbouring counties.

Regards,

Paul Hemmerdinger

Margaret Pegg

Having just read the article about the Castle Donington Fire Station I would like to add my comments.

I have lived in Donington for 40 plus years & during that time we have been promised improved facilities with regard to Fire & Ambulance. This Village is expanding year by year through increased housing & warehousing etc. There will soon be more warehousing being built between this Village & Kegworth along with planning for more housing.

This does not bother me but the lack of the necessary facilities does!! Meaning an ambulance service & a fire service to cover this Village, Kegworth, & the villages surrounding us. Although I would rather the Moira fire station could be maintained I feel that this Village has been sorely neglected in this respect & I'm sure most of the villagers would agree.

Margaret Pegg (Mrs)

Measham Parish Council

Sorry for the late reply to this, below is our response:

I write on behalf of Parish Council and the people of Measham Parish to say that ‘We STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MOIRA FIRE STATION’.

In hearing of the proposed closure Councillors and volunteers immediately took action, contacting adjoining Parish Councils to highlight the situation and form a campaign, distributing flyers to every property in Measham, Chilcote and all adjoining Parishes along with posters and A boards which are erected around these Parishes. There are petitions in shops, businesses and public places to emphasise what plans the Combined Fire Authority has for the MOIRA FIRE STATION.

We as a Parish are due to meet with Peter Roffey and Dave Webb, Chief Fire Officer, on Friday 4th September to hopefully find answers to the many questions this Parish is asking. You only have to take the recent incident on the A42 where Moira was on the scene 11 minutes before any other unit arrived, and with having local knowledge of the area, was able to act quickly and efficiently thus bringing crucial assistance to those individuals involved in the incident and also preventing serious damage to one of the bridges which if not for their prompt action would have seen the A42 closed for a considerable time thus incurring substantial expense to all who use it on a daily basis. This is just one example of the many incidents that Moira deal with each week in our Parishes.

KEEP MOIRA FIRE STATION OPEN!!

Colin Manifold, Chair Measham PC

Supplementary Written Submission Received After the Meeting

Overseal Parish Council

Further to correspondence about the proposed closure of Moira Fire Station, Overseal parish Council has asked me to write to you again to reiterate their total opposition to the closure. As you know, Moira is in the heart of the National Forest and the surrounding areas include not only the many millions of trees planted in recent years but also an increasing number of wooden buildings, lodges and the like. These obviously present an increasing fire risk and the removal of local facilities for combating an outbreak could be very severe.

I know that your Council is opposed to the closure and ask that they continue to put pressure on the Fire Authority to reverse the likely decision.

Clerk to the Council