

Key Decision Required	No	In the Forward Plan	No
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CABINET

13 MAY 2016

REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE

A.1 PRESENTATION BY THE ESSEX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
(Report prepared by Karen Neath)

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on 6 April 2016, Paul Bowers (Senior Divisional Officer) and Mike Clayton (Finance Director and Treasurer) attended to present the Consultation Document for Essex Fire Authority. This is the second of two consultations and sets out three options for change.

Mr Clayton presented some background information including data on the number and types of incidents over the last 5 years, the availability of appliances and the average and peak demand. Mr Clayton advised that the Fire Service now has a greater focus on preventative work and has invested £3m per annum in this. The first consultation set the following new attendance standards of attending 90% of incidents in 15 minutes and an average time of 10 minutes to attend potentially life threatening incidents. Mr Clayton also gave some background on the financial position of the Fire Authority and savings required of £9.9m up to 2020 and the relative council tax implications for each option.

Mr Bowers set out the options being consulted on which include moving a number of stations from two to one appliances, changing from whole time to on-call crewing at some stations and replacement of Pinzgauers with fire engines at some stations.

The Chair took questions both from the Committee and from the audience. Discussion was had on the following points:-

- Where in the press the consultation was advertised;
- Whether additional roadshows could be added;
- With particular reference to Dovercourt Fire Station, the arrangements for on-call fire fighters and the impact on the availability of both fire engines;
- Whether savings had also been considered from support staff and assets;
- Access to schools to undertake engagement with young children;
- The impact on the consultation options of new house building;
- What particular consideration has been given to emergency fire coverage in rural areas;
- Cross working with other emergency services.

Everyone was united in recognising the valuable work the Fire Service does.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET

The Committee **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that:

- (a) The Council work with Essex Fire Service to facilitate access to a small number of local schools the Fire Service have not currently accessed to allow them to undertake preventative work with school children.
- (a) The Committee is not convinced that sufficient evidence has been provided that any of the three options would provide adequate cover in some parts of Tendring and that none of the options could be supported until it can be proven that the necessary recruitment for on-call coverage can take place
- (b) The Council embrace and support the ethos of all emergency services exploring working together.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

It is recommended that:-

- a) It be noted that responses to the consultation, including the comments from the Committee above, were announced at the meeting of Cabinet on 15th April and submitted to the Fire Service by the closing date of their consultation of 25th April.