

## **APPENDIX A**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019 QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

#### **Question to the Chairman of the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority from Councillor Jason Zadrozny**

In 2018 there was an increase in fatal fire incidents across Nottinghamshire. In 2018 there were 10 people who died in fatal fires, in 2017 there were seven and in 2016 there were six.

Does the Chairman think that Government cuts to Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue have contributed to this increase? Could he further update this Council on cuts to Ashfield Fire Station including the recruitment of 'on call' firefighters?

#### **Response from Councillor Brian Grocock, Chairman of the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority**

Notwithstanding that each and every fire death is a tragedy to everyone, the number remains low in terms of the total population of the County. The recent increase locally is mirrored nationally and the Fire Authority is not complacent and is working very hard on its causation. Recent activity centred on identifying vulnerability, working with our partners, such as the County Council, Nottingham City Council and other Councils and organisations across the Country. Targeting activities to those who are most at risk. However what has emerged over the past year is that basic fire safety measures such as smoke alarm ownership and care in use of electrical appliances and equipment in the home has declined in domestic premises and strategies are being put in place to try and counteract this.

In terms of funding reductions, it is difficult to evidence a direct link between the very small number of incidents, however there are shared views across all parties in Nottinghamshire and probably across the Country that the work of the Authority and its staff should be recognised and I would like to put on record my thanks to the lead officers and spokesmen of the County Council for their support in this matter.

We collectively recognise locally that there is no magic money tree, however the Chief Fire Officer and I have put our case to all of the MPs in Nottinghamshire to gain their support as the Government prepares for its next Local Government Spending Review. Furthermore the Chief Fire Officer has also taken on the lead role, a national role within the Fire Chiefs Council as the Chair of their Finance Committee and he will be well placed to put forward evidence in support of the fair funding for Fire.

In reference to Councillor Zadrozny's second question, because I believe there are two questions there, not one. In terms of Ashfield, the Authority agreed, after public consultation, to implement changes to crewing levels at the fire station by moving to on-call arrangements during the quieter periods overnight. These changes will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 following a substantial recruitment campaign which has seen the staffing levels increase to 20 on-call firefighters with seven more in the recruitment process. The Chief Fire Officer is confident, and I am confident, that with

a little support through the early transition period Ashfield will continue to provide robust and professional operation response to all its local communities. As a part of ongoing monitoring, regular reports will be presented to the Fire Authority to enable members to have full oversight of the changes going forward.

In relation to the questions we have actually got before us today, if Councillor Zadrozny had actually taken the time to attend the meetings that he is actually on, he would have known the answers to these questions already.