

## **APPENDIX A**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017 QUESTIONS TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

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

At the recent members seminar it was outlined that the options for staffing changes and reductions would take place at two out of three stations.

Retford, Worksop and Ashfield will all be consulted on to change from full time cover, to full time cover only during the day with retained cover from 18:00 until 08:00.

The chief fire officer said during the briefing that it would be unlikely to make the change to both stations in the north, meaning the changes at Ashfield would be a "fait accompli".

Would you take this opportunity to reassure members and the public that the consultation will be meaningful and genuine, and that all reasoned arguments will be properly considered prior to you and the ruling Labour group making their decision?

#### **Response from Councillor Michael Payne, Vice-Chairman of the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Fire Authority**

Unfortunately the Chair of the Fire Authority Councillor Brian Grocock sends his apologies today. He is unable to attend the meeting as he has a prior City Council engagement, therefore as the Vice Chair of the Fire Authority I will provide a response on his behalf.

It is extremely important to the Fire and Rescue Authority that full and meaningful consultation takes place with the public about the proposed changes. In fact, a lengthy discussion took place at the meeting Councillor Zadrozny refers to on this very subject. The Chief Fire Officer and his senior team gave reassurance to members that this would be the case.

As part of a broader sustainability strategy to increase the resilience of the fire service, as well as meet the significant financial challenges it faces, the chief fire officers developed plans on behalf of the Authority to consider a change in a model of response at the three fire stations mentioned, namely Worksop, Retford and Ashfield.

At the recent Fire Authority member seminar and in direct response to a question asked by Councillor Zadrozny, the Chief Fire Officer made it clear that on the basis of the low level of demand on the operational resources at those stations, the proposed model could be implemented at any or indeed all three locations. However, it was also stated that to meet the financial pressures by the Authority from now to 2020, the changes would ideally be implemented at two of these locations.

The consultation framework adopted by the Fire Authority is considered as best practice and utilises a number of methods to engage with the community. I should say at this point, that Councillor Zadrozny knows, he and I and a number of other members, cross party members, at the seminar made suggestions about additional ways in which the Fire Authority could consult on these issues and it is fair to say they were taken on board.

The Authority has engaged the services of a company who have extensive experience in undertaking this type of consultation, has worked with many fire and rescue services and fully understands fire risk and appropriate resourcing. Therefore, if the Fire Authority supports the proposals being presented at the meeting on Friday for consultation, I can give assurance to Members and to the public that proposals are not fait accompli and that full and meaningful consultation will take place. And, that all, not just the ruling Labour group, all members of the Fire and Rescue Authority will have the ability to scrutinise the outcomes and make informed decisions on the best way forward for the Authority and our communities of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. I hope that answers Councillor Zadrozny's concerns.