

## Responses to Questions Arising from the Proposals

- What are the full year savings as a result of these changes for 2021/22?

*Savings figures quoted are not a half year representation as this two month period reflects potential contractual changes. Savings totals if proposals are taken forward are £600k for Fire and Rescue and £100,000 for the Resilience and Emergencies Team.*

- What is the cost of that resources required to implement the proposals and from where this resource will be found?

*Resources used to deliver savings are directed from within teams across FRS, WSCC HR and finance and form part of business as usual.*

- Regarding the resilience and emergencies team, what is the current staff complement?

*8 full time equivalents.*

- What does the Duke of Cornwall course do? How many people have benefitted from it to date/annually? What are the implications of the withdrawal of this facility?

*The course works with the four key educational stages in educating young people to be safe and to be able to assist before, during and after a crisis. The Awards were developed to give young people in the UK the first opportunity to learn what to do in an emergency situation. As well as teaching them to protect themselves, the process makes them think about how to prepare their families and vulnerable people in their local community. Awards delivered directly by RET are approx. 500 over the last three years. We are aware that a number of scout groups and schools have Awards programmed for 2019/20 and we will deliver these.*

- How many Parishes have benefitted/taken advantage of support to deliver the 'What if' community resilience training? Has there been an assessment of the additional costs to the County Council in the event of an emergency in a Parish has not adopted community resilience plans?

*To date 17 parishes have completed the training and received their community resilience equipment. 3 Parishes are partway through their training, a further 7 Parishes have booked training and we are awaiting confirmation from a further 17 Parishes. It is difficult to ascribe a quantifiable cost. However, experience in other parts of the country has shown a reduced demand for Local Authority support, both during and in the recovery phase of emergency situation.*

- Has any equipment that forms part of the 'What if' campaign offer already been purchased, but will not now be used?

*There will be no surplus equipment from the previous funding from Defra as community tools have already been distributed to those Parishes with confirmed and awaited training delivery dates.*

- Will the 'Identifying and supporting the vulnerable members of the community to ensure they are prepared for emergencies such as power failure, loss of communications and reduced mobility, reducing the impacts of severe weather albeit hot or cold' aspect of the "What If" campaign cease?

*This support will continue but without the support of the parishes already engaged and the planned support in the future, we will be reliant on data from other forms of local authority and utility providers regarding vulnerable people. This is not always easy to access or as readily available, especially out of hours, but we will work with partners to improve this wherever possible.*

- What is the likely cost implication to other areas of the County Council in preparing business continuity plans?

*There are no expenditure costs associated with this proposal. Indirect costs will be items such as receiving suitable training, the production, promotion and implementation of plans and the continuing review and maintenance staff skills monitoring and adapting Business Continuity plans in changing circumstances.*

- How will assistance to the Sussex Resilience Forum be reduced (and the associated officer resource)? Are any other partners planning to reduce their support?

*WSFRS through RET support the collaborative working of the SRF corporately and collaboratively on a number of capability work streams, e.g. Sussex Community Resilience Partnership, training and exercising, mass fatalities, public welfare. RET also contribute to all remaining capability work streams. A reduction in RET resources would require an assessment of the key work streams directly or indirectly supported in the future. RET also endeavour to support training and exercising events to ensure current planning and training requirements remain relevant. This greatly assists in the review of WSCC internal resilience plans as part of the corporate response and recovery planning arrangements and to meet National Occupational Resilience standards. We are not in a position to comment on the continuing resource commitments of partner agencies to the SRF. It is worth noting that an additional capability work stream has been added to the SRF to prepare for the impacts of an "agreement or No Deal" Brexit.*

- Given savings for this team total £100,000, is it the case that that any cut over £70,000 would mean that the Council would not be able to fulfil all of its statutory functions under the Civil Contingencies Act?

*This is not the case. The council will remain able to deliver its statutory functions.*

- Regarding the proposed reduction of Intervention and Prevention activities in order to achieve a saving of £400k, can information be provided regarding the current staff complement, and a breakdown of the proposed staffing implications and more details about the aspects of service delivery that will be affected?

*This will be made available following staff consultation*

- How many people have benefitted from Firebreak courses annually over the past 10 years? Has a risk assessment been conducted in relation to those young people who will no longer be able to benefit from the courses in future?

*1299 young people have attended Firebreak courses over the last ten years. There is no specific risk assessment regarding those who do not attend the course. The courses are oversubscribed and there are always young people who have been identified as likely to benefit attending who are unable to attend due to capacity.*

- How many people have benefitted from Safe Drive to Stay Alive courses annually over the past 10 years? Has a risk assessment been undertaken in relation to those young people who will no longer be able to benefit from the courses in future, and an assessment of the number of potential accidents avoided as a result of the thousands of young people who have previously attended the courses?

*101,200 young people have been Safe Drive Stay Alive in the last 10 years. Whilst this is an impressive number there are always numbers of college age young people who do not see the show as their school/college does not send students. It is not possible to predict or establish the impact in specifics; There is no evidence or proven data. However, we have academic evaluations that indicate the positive impact that SDSA has on some attendees.*

- How many people have benefitted from school education visits annually over the past 10 years? How it is proposed these will be reduced?

*Schools Visits, including Junior Citizens 190,710: Operational crews will continue with school visits subject to the caveat that this will not cover areas where the fire cover is provided by On-call firefighters. Where*

*possible and where capacity allows, some of these visits will be picked up by the Prevention team.*

- How many people have benefitted from the Cadet programme over the past 10 years? Given the current recruitment drive, what is the rationale for withdrawing support in preparing young students for a role in the Fire Service.

*334 young people have attended a WSFRS cadet scheme in the last ten years. WSFRS have not run a cadet corps for a number of years due to resourcing issues but last year started a new scheme in conjunction with the MET college in Worthing. As part of the Uniformed Services Diploma, the MET college is the first FE college to offer a Fire & Rescue cadetship. Whilst this has produced prospective firefighter recruits, this is not the primary reason for the delivery of the course. The course prepares students for a career in the armed forces or emergency services whilst also equipping them with a wide range of life skills.*

- How many people have benefitted from the National Citizen Service arrangements run by West Sussex since the scheme began? To what extent will there be equitable opportunities for young people across the County given that Arun and Chichester in particular will be affected by these proposals?

*900 young people have attended the National Citizen Service programme.*

- What was the number of electric blankets tested on an annual basis for the last 10 years, the number of faulty blankets identified and taken out of circulation as a result of the testing, the number of lives known to have been lost due to a faulty electric blanket in (a) West Sussex and (b) England over the past 10 years?

*Blankets tested 1786, failed 603.*

*The last national survey on fire deaths linked to electric blankets was undertaken in 1999 and suggested that fire blankets were the cause of 19 deaths in 1996. In West Sussex there has been one incident within the last ten years where a fire blanket was part of the cause of a fire fatality which had other contributory behavioural factors.*

- Will the Firewise initiative continue (whereby fire advisors visit schools, homes or other establishments to address fire-setting behaviour amongst children and young people given that without help and guidance such behaviour can escalate and lead to more serious consequences).

*I confirm FireWise will continue and is not subject to these proposals.*

- Regarding the proposed reduction of the Technical and Rescue Unit in order to achieve a saving of £200k, what is the current staff complement? Do the members of the TRU form part of the wider whole time fire service complement? What are the implications for the emergency response as a result of these proposals? Furthermore please provide full details about the specialist capability that will be lost as a result of this proposal along with details of the risk analysis conducted to enable you to be satisfied that WSFRS remains able to deliver its statutory duties given the loss of this capability.

*Current FTE = 12: The TRU are part of the Fire Service, however, they are specialists in technical rescue and do not undertake a firefighting role. The review of TRU is ongoing and is focussing on the working practices of the team, including the allowances provided. The intention of the review is to maintain the capabilities as they currently are, i.e. providing a 24 hour technical response, potentially with fewer staff. The work to understand the impacts of reducing staff numbers and the effect on capabilities is ongoing and is being done in consultation with the team.*

- With reference to consultation with staff and representative bodies, could a summary of the initial responses received in respect of the proposal be provided (including any representations by the FBU)? Was any consultation with those in receipt of the current services undertaken, such as: Schools (Firebreak, safe drive to stay alive, educational visits, NCS) and Northbrook College (Cadet course) and previous customers of the electric blanket testing and other elderly groups and forums, voluntary groups participating in the Duke of Cornwall courses, Parish Councils (What if campaign), Sussex Police and other partners of the Sussex Resilience Forum, partners and organisations that currently work alongside the types of emergencies that would benefit from the specialist support delivered by the TRU?

*The only consultation that has currently been undertaken has been with the teams affected and the representative bodies as we develop the proposals. As there is a genuine intent to work with those who deliver these services it would not be appropriate to determine the final outcome before and without carefully considering the consultation results from the teams.*

- Are you satisfied you can deliver your statutory duties to a reasonable and safe level – can you provide full details of this analysis in relation to each of the savings proposals?.

*The services under consideration are discretionary. The removal or reduction of these services does not impact on the delivery of the statutory services.*

- If the equality impact risk assessment identifies no negative impacts identified, can this be demonstrated?

*These assessments have been provided and have not identified any negative impacts with relation to protected characteristics.*

- A number of fire stations have recently had new noticeboards put in place (presumably ahead of the HMI inspection). Please confirm how many stations have had these installed, the cost of purchasing and installing them and which budget that came out of.

*All stations have been provided with new notice boards as part of the plan to improve communications. Whilst the Service uses electronic communications for most issues there is value in providing hard copy information for staff, notably at the On-call stations where the time staff are present at the station is limited. This has been in place since the Summer of 2017 and was not linked to the HMI inspection. The costs per board were £500 including fitting.*

- Do the proposals weaken the “strength in depth” of our reserve capacity for frontline services?

A number of the posts being removed are uniformed firefighter posts. When possible, these individuals support crewing on fire engines.