

## County Council

19 October 2018

### Agenda Item 7(e) - Notice of Motion by Mr Jones

#### Fire and Rescue Service Funding – Briefing Note

#### Central Government Funding

The funding from central government that is allocated to the Fire & Rescue Service is represented correctly in the notice of motion.

The following table shows the amounts for Surrey, Hampshire and East Sussex.

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Surrey</b>	<b>East Sussex</b>	<b>Hants</b>	<b>West Sussex</b>
<b>£000s (note 1)</b>	21,598	11,128	22,130	7,414
<b>Population (note 2)</b>	1,176,500	837,000	1,829,500	843,800
<b>£ Per head</b>	9.31	13.30	12.10	8.79

Note 1: Local Government Finance Settlement 2018/19 allocations

Note 2: 2016 Office for National Statistics 2016 estimate

Between 2016/17 and 2019/20, the settlement funding assessment for Fire & Rescue authorities (FRAs) or the Fire & Rescue function within a county council is reducing by on average by 15%. Again it should be noted that West Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority is not the same as a 'stand-alone' FRA. Therefore, even though the figures provided within the settlement for West Sussex County Council show Fire separately, as a 'note' item, and are worse than neighbours, the authority does not 'ring-fence' that funding and the total spend on Fire & Rescue is significantly more than the notional settlement. The context is that the resourcing for the FRS is managed within the County Council's overall resources, including the settlement to West Sussex County Council as a whole, and overall budget pressures.

#### Fire & Rescue Performance

The Fire & Rescue Service has recently consulted on and published a revised Integrated Risk Management Plan that has clearly articulated the challenges presented by the on-call duty system with regards to ensuring that fire engines are available. The availability of fire engines does fluctuate and is often at its lowest point during the daytime, reflecting the challenge for on-call firefighters to be available during the time that the majority will be in their primary employment. Availability is constantly monitored and action taken whenever that is required to ensure suitable and sufficient cover across the county. The performance against the response standard is testimony to this work. In 2017/18 the achievement of the standard for first response to critical incidents was 88.5% of occasions (0.5% below target) and for second response to critical incidents was 82% of occasions (1% below target).

There is no doubt that the Service works hard as a team to maintain availability,

including those who support the frontline crews from departments such as training, fleet and people support.

### **Fire & Rescue establishment and planning**

The Service has reviewed the figures published by the Fire Brigades Union and can confirm that there has been a reduction in both wholetime and on-call firefighter posts as part of the rationalisation of the Service and management of a reduction in resources.

Wholetime agreed establishment has decreased by 80 positions (full-time equivalent) between 2010 and 2018, a reduction of 20%.

On-call agreed establishment has decreased by 85 positions (full-time equivalent) between 2010 and 2018, a reduction of 27%.

All changes to Fire & Rescue have managed through a risk assessment process, with public consultation where appropriate.

Work is ongoing to assess where and whether it may be possible to make further reductions within Fire & Rescue as part of the County Council's budget planning process. These require further development prior to any required consultation with staff.

The County Council will be fully responsible for the management of the Service, the assessment of service need and for risk management. This will be informed by the inspection process being undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and any proposals arising will be subject to member engagement and scrutiny.

### **Gavin Watts**

Director of Fire Service Operations and Chief Fire Officer