

# Sayfor Surrey

Fire Brigades Union, Surrey



## Overwhelming support for challenge to service

Following the recent consultation process and the results of the support for resolutions put forward from branches, members of the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service Fire Brigades' Union overwhelmingly supported a mandate to oppose further reductions and if necessary ballot for industrial action.

**81% of staff members would support industrial action – short of strikes – in the furtherance for security of safe working practices and maintaining suitable and sufficient resources to serve the communities we live in.**

The Service management have been imposed with a reducing budget for the term of office of the current County Council leaders. This is despite the legal obligation of the service to produce and source a public safety plan (PSP) in full consultation with the communities we serve.

Reduction that will have a detrimental affect on the quality of a risk based service (PSP) putting safety of staff and public in unnecessary jeopardy.

Members demand to be assured that any changes to service delivery or conditions of service must be reached as a result of a detailed risk analysis and consulted on rather than based on political financial constraints. Therefore members expect to be fully involved in consultation processes through their elected representatives and where service and council representatives cooperatively and wholeheartedly commit to partnership working to achieve a fully resourced fire service at an acceptable cost to the public.

Below are some of the existing proposals for the implementation of the imposed budget cuts where members of the fire brigades union consider there is scope for further discussion and consultation. FBU EC comments are in **RED**.

**Members are urged to make comments and give feedback through their branch reps to the next area committee meeting (see [www.fbusurrey.co.uk](http://www.fbusurrey.co.uk) Area Meeting Diary).**

**In the latest Audit Commission report into SF&RS; Organisational Assessment December 2009, are the following statements;**

***“While the Service has the vision and capability to further improve, its budget limitations will reduce its capacity to deliver.”***

To read full report CTR + Click [Full Report](#)

For more details on any of the issues contained in Sayfor Surrey, see your Branch Rep.

**Surrey Fire & Rescue Service  
Linked PVR Nov - March**

- **Senior Managers**
  - Reduce one senior manager through restructure

**Reduction of 1 ACO post but introduction of 1 Deputy ACO**

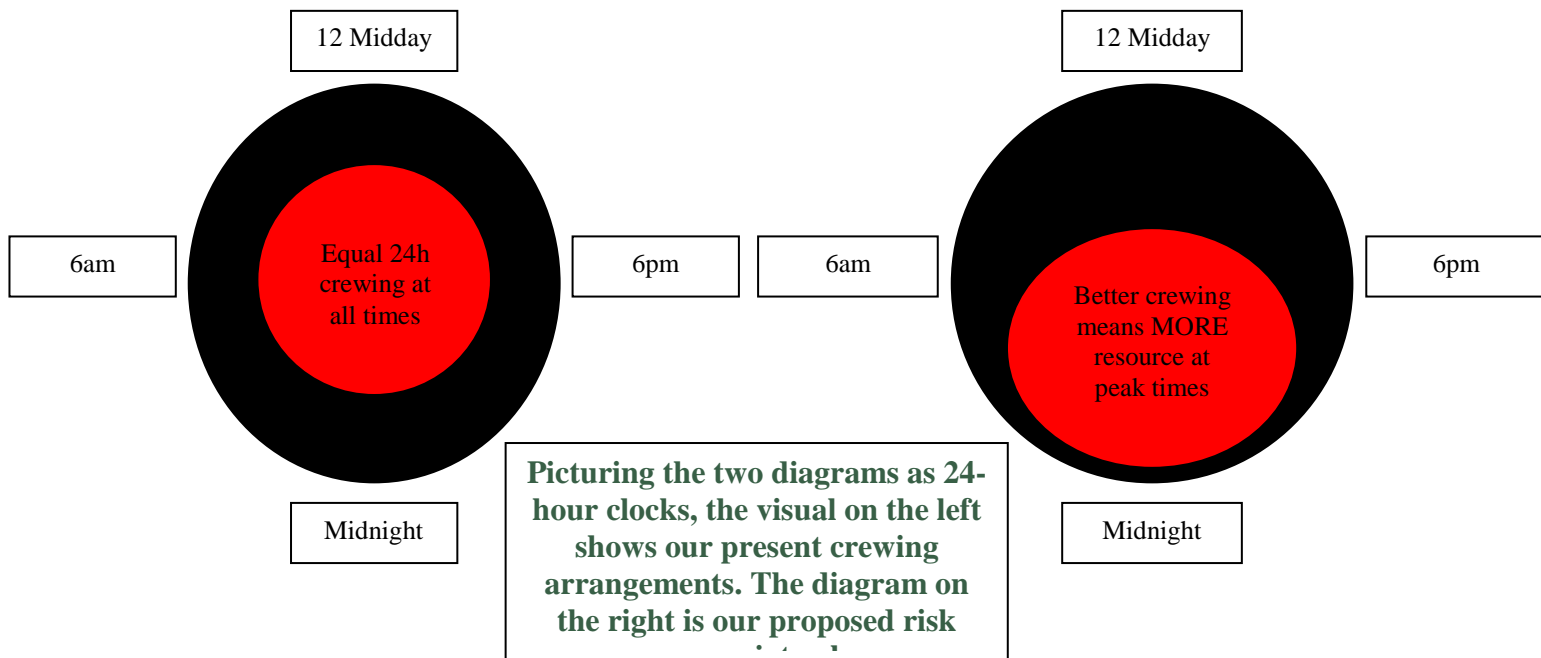
  - Saving £70k from year 2

**Introduction of Deputy ACO post's salary will wipe most of this saving out**
  
- **Middle Managers**
  - Rationalisation of operational rota cover from 5 rota groups to 4.

**Workgroup being drawn together; waiting for terms of reference**

  - Saving £380k phased in from year 1

**This saving represents a 20% reduction in resources**
  
- **Front line Service Delivery**
  - More efficient delivery of fire cover to match required fire cover and risk - as published in the Public Safety Plan
  - Saving £700k phased in from year 4 (linked to capital asset strategy)



**This is basing emergency response purely on Likelihood without considering Severity. Although the Likelihood of calls is higher during the day, the Severity of calls is far higher at night when most lives are lost.**

**The FBU EC believe this will result in 6 WT pumps being removed from night cover and placed on days cover at RDS stations**

#### Comments:

- Changes recommended by CFO – evidenced based to reflect current usage patterns / statistics.
- Changes will impact on the number of operational personnel.

**The FBU EC are already seeing a move to crews of 4 becoming the norm as crewing targets are no longer complied with. This is likely to result in forced maximum of standard crewing with 4's being end goal leading to watch strength reductions.**

- No change to the current fire cover target as set out in the Public Safety Plan (PSP).

**The FBU EC believes this statement is now out of date and there are currently discussions on a new emergency cover response standard.**

- Requirement to ensure staff receive training & development to maintain high levels of competence, with appropriate vehicles and equipment.

Dependent on Capital strategy to maximise potential savings.

#### Risks:

- Require continued support for this element of the PSP
- Dependent on successful negotiation with Representative Bodies
- There is an ultimate associated risk of industrial action.

#### Business Support, HR, Stores & OH (£167k phased in from year 2)

- Link to Directorate efficiencies
- Reduce duplication
- **Publicity / Communications** (£125k phased in from year 1)
  - use SCC communication team.
- **Project and Policy Team** (£170k from year 4)
  - Reduce posts in year 4 following completion of projects and regional work.
- **Supplies and Services** (£270k from year 1)
- **Managed reduction of long term contingency cover** (£90k phased in from year 1)

#### Risks / Comments

- Risks associated with these savings are low.
- Proposals will require staff & union consultation
- Projected savings take account of HR processes & estimated potential redundancy costs.
- **Radio System Maintenance (50k in year 4)**
  - Efficiencies linked to new mobilising arrangements
- **Transport and Technical Services (TTS) (£40k in year 3)**
  - Re provision of service
- **Business Support, HR, Stores & OH** (£167k phased in from year 2)
  - Link to Directorate efficiencies
  - Reduce duplication

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- **Managed reduction of long term contingency cover** (£90k phased in from year 1)

#### **Risks**

- **Risks associated with these savings are low.**
- **Service may need short-term maintenance arrangements if TTS staff retention becomes an issue.**

- **Youth Engagement Scheme, Youth Justice Seconded & Firewise:** (£85k saving phased in from year 2)

- **Seek alternative funding.**

**If alternative funding cannot be found, savings will be made elsewhere within service**

- **School Education Team:** (£225k savings from year 2)  
Develop charging mechanism to self fund the team

**Aspirational saving without the detail.**

- **Mainstream prevention activity into general business as usual:** (saving £130k phased in from year 2)
  - Remove dedicated prevention team (one non uniformed co-ordinator remaining)
- **Arson Task Force:** (£80k from year 2)
  - Seek alternative funding or provision e.g. share cross border arrangements

**If alternative funding cannot be found, savings will be made elsewhere within service**

#### **Comments:**

- **The schemes discharge actions in the current PSP - in accordance with best practice.**
- **The schemes are very effective**
- **Prevention activity is a statutory requirement - current level of activity may be considered to be above the statutory minimum.**
- **Savings are dependent upon vacancy management, redeployment or redundancy.**

#### **Risk:**

**If alternative funding cannot be identified/agreed:**

- **Risk of death or injury increased.**
- **Increase in deliberate fires e.g. property, bins and common fires, car and school fires.**
- **Increase in accidental fires and hoax calls with associated risk to life and property.**
- **Disaffected youths are more likely to underachieve / offend.**
- **Potential reduction in access to wider Surrey Community through children to promote fire safety.**

#### **FBU EC Summary**

**Our membership is concerned about the continued budget reductions which are resulting in inadequate resources to enable them to deliver an effective emergency response without putting both our staff and communities at risk.**

**Following recent consultation and communication with our membership, we are mandated to challenge Surrey County Council's 4 year budget plan designed to produce 0% residential council tax inflation prior to their next election.**

**This financial plan is based on political ambition rather than quality of service without any consultation with Surrey residents.**

For more details on any of the issues contained in Sayfor Surrey see your FBU Branch Rep.

Between 2000 and 2008, SF&RS has suffered massive reductions on frontline crewing, far in excess of national reductions. Below are these reductions;

<b>Surrey Whole-time Fire-fighter posts</b>	<b>16.35%</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>7.76%</b>
<b>Surrey Retained Duty System crewing posts</b>	<b>19.25%</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>9.26%</b>

SF&RS has already been cut beyond the level necessary to deliver an effective and safe emergency response. Investment into the service is essential; further cuts will have catastrophic results.

In the latest Audit Commission report into SF&RS; Organisational Assessment December 2009, are the following statements;

***“While the Service has the vision and capability to further improve, its budget limitations will reduce its capacity to deliver.”***

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*“Value for money is being improved and the Service has reported £4.6million efficiency savings to date. Its financial management and reporting are good and the Service has a good understanding of the majority of its costs and how this links with performance.”*

*“The Service is working to its agreed plans but its financial capacity is limited. It is a service within the County Council and has not been a high priority for additional finance. In 2009/10 it had the second lowest budgetary increase in the country compared with other Fire Authorities and Services. This has meant that it has trimmed its targets to ensure the Service remains within budget.”*

**SF&RS is currently at a critical funding level with no further capacity to reduce cost without detrimentally affecting the quality of service it delivers.**