



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

**Service Headquarters
The Knowle
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Exeter
Devon
EX3 0NW**

Sent via Email

Website: www.dsfire.gov.uk Email: safertogetherprogramme@dsfire.gov.uk Direct telephone : 01392 872347

Dear Sir/Madam,

Service Delivery Operating Model Proposal

I am contacting you following the announcement of proposed changes to Service Delivery within Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service.

Under the new proposals, the Service would seek to move underused resources from low risk areas and invest more into work to reach the most vulnerable members of society to help keep them safe.

The proposal includes the closure of a number of low risk/low activity fire stations, the removal of fire engines that are underused and making some other changes to the way in which some fire engines are crewed.

We would look to reinvest some of the financial savings into prevention work in the community. There are several reasons why change is needed. Lifestyles and geographical profiles of both Devon and Somerset have changed dramatically since many of our fire stations were built. Supported by the prevention work that has been carried out locally and nationally and by the Service, the number of fires attended by crews has fallen by a third in the last 10 years.

We are also the largest employer of on call firefighters in the country. The Service needs to improve the reliability of its 'on-call' model which last year saw 20% of its on-call fire engines not available due to lack of crew.

There are six proposed options for changing the way we operate our fire service that will be presented to the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority for consideration on 28 June. The Authority will decide on this date which of these options should form part of the public consultation.

We appreciate that any suggestion of closing stations or removing fire engines can be unsettling for residents and we want to ensure that you feel informed and supported as a community. We also want to ensure you have the opportunity to have your say through the consultation period that will run for 12 weeks starting from 1 July.

We will be holding public drop-in exhibitions in the localities that are affected by the proposals throughout July and August. This is so that we can engage with local residents to explain the changes and reasons for change as part of the consultation process.

It is important to stress that no decisions have been made about the final outcome, so providing your thoughts and opinions is key to helping Fire Authority members make an informed decision based on community and staff feedback.

In addition to the public events, we would like to offer the opportunity for our staff to attend one of your Parish Council meetings to discuss the proposed options. Please note that if we receive a high level of demand for attendance at Parish Council meetings we will need to prioritise our attendance in locations where stations are most affected by the proposed options.

If this is something you would be interested in, please contact the Consultation and Engagement Team using the details in the header of this letter.

If we can be of any further assistance or you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Howell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Lee Howell
Chief Fire Officer