

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE**  
**RESEARCH REPORT FOR THE EIA ON THE REVIEW OF SERVICE DELIVERY**  
**WITHIN SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE (AS PART OF THE CHANGE PROGRAMME 2011 -2014)**

## **Introduction**

The objective of the Business Case is to provide the Change Programme Board (CMB) with sufficient information to make informed decisions about the future of Service Delivery within South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue (SYFR). The proposal is focused on the organisational restructure in line with the Service Plan 2011 – 2013.

The business case focuses upon the Sheffield Emergency Cover Review, roving pumps, retained duty staff (RDS) cover and wholtime crewing arrangements.

It needs to be stressed that the findings within the research, which has been carried out to date, have not given rise to any evidence that any of the protected characteristics will be disproportionately affected, either negatively or positively, through the implementation of any of the business case recommendations.

It is accepted within the EIA that as a result of consultation, specific issues may become apparent and these will need to be looked at, at that time.

**The review of Sheffield Emergency Cover** will recommend the merger of Mansfield Road and Darnall Road Fire Stations to a new sites near the Sheffield Parkway. The existing stations are geographically approximately 2½ miles apart and share area boundaries. The demographic profile of the areas is also broadly similar. Both stations are amongst our older premises, which engender associated maintenance costs.

The projected developments in the Catcliffe area over the next few years will need to be served by SYFR and our current stations are not best placed to serve this potential new community of up to 4,000 additional new homes and 6000 new employment opportunities.

The proposal is to relocate both stations to new sites which will more adequately serve the Catcliffe area, and also the extreme south-east area of Sheffield.

Additionally, fire cover in the south-east of the city will be improved by the opening of a new full-time fire station at Birley, to enable the closure of the part-time Mosborough fire station.

**Roving pumps** provide strategic cover to allow fire crews, using their normal fire appliance, to attend at the SYFR Training Centre to undertake operational training or to attend at community events. The three roving pumps are currently situated at Mansfield Road, Elm Lane and Darnall Road Fire Stations.

Recent changes to working practices now mean that the 2<sup>nd</sup> pumps at Doncaster, Barnsley, Rotherham and Sheffield Central, are being utilised to cover training and community events within their own districts.

SYFR currently use an automatic vehicle location system (AVLS) which indicates the nearest available appliance to be able to attend an incident. This enables a better response to be achieved from the whole service.

The aim of the proposal is to remove the roving pumps from use, thereby releasing operational posts through natural wastage, realising savings on the costs and maintenance of the three fire appliances.

**The Retained Duty System** was introduced to provide extra fire cover in areas where incidents were increasing, particularly anti - social fires. Over a number of years targeted robust community fire safety initiatives have assisted to substantially reduce these incidents, greatly reducing the number of times that some of these appliances are required.

Analysis has shown that the current retained provision at Royston and Edlington is no longer beneficial to the overall service provision provided to the communities of South Yorkshire.

The aim of the proposal is to produce savings on staff costs and appliance running and maintenance costs. It will also make way for the closure and subsequent sale of Royston fire station.

**Crewing Arrangements** throughout the county have been considered and it is noted that a number of single pump stations are no longer benefitting from permanent whole time staff.

An alternative crewing system would enable the station to be staffed 24/7, with no impact on emergency response times, for a significantly reduced cost.

The aim of the proposal is to introduce alternative crewing to reduce staffing and appliance running costs.

### **POSITIVE IMPACTS FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMENDATIONS**

- Opportunities to maintain or enhance service provision
- Opportunities to enhance community activities through the consultation period and beyond
- Opportunities to expand community involvement through the opening of a new community fire station
- Opportunities to share more widely local knowledge
- Opportunities for staff to gain better knowledge of wider areas.
- Opportunities for staff to move between stations
- Opportunities for staff to opt for more flexible work patterns
- Opportunities to consult with staff regarding enhanced service provision
- Opportunities for SYFR to consider all aspects of diversity and encourage equitable distribution.
- Opportunities for working parents to be offered additional flexible working options
- Savings on maintenance and running costs of older fire stations
- Savings on CO2 emissions from older fire stations
- Savings on appliance running and maintenance costs
- Savings on lease vehicle costs
- Savings on staff costs through reduction of establishment by natural wastage.

### **POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACTS FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMENDATIONS**

Any process of restructure could raise the possibility of an increase in the number of Equality Act 2010 related claims for organisations undertaking the change. HR will implement existing robust policies in the restructuring process and ensure managers have appropriate and sufficient training to both mitigate the possibility of unequal treatment and reduce the risk of Equality Act related claims.

Adverse impacts could arise from:

- Public perception regarding reduction in emergency cover/ local knowledge
- Public perception that Community Safety activities will be reduced
- Increased operational and community workload
- Loss of local knowledge
- Perceived unfair processes in the movement of personnel between stations to address staffing changes caused by the implementation of the recommendations
- Staff perception of unfairness i.e. why specific stations?
- Some retained staff will have their contracts terminated
- Staff may be forced to transfer
- Possible impact on staff diversity
- Disproportionate affect on working parents
- Perceived loss of training opportunities

**RESTRUCTURING PROCESS**

The merger of stations, removal of roving pumps and introduction of an alternative crewing system will all involve the redeployment of staff.

There would need to be a fair system of selection for redeployment to other stations/ posts which will all require EIA's. We will continue with our existing approach whereby both domestic and medical issues are taken into account before considering redeployment.

There will need to be evidence of non-discrimination on any protected characteristic grounds which will be carefully managed through existing, robust recruitment and selection policies.

The removal of retained pumps would entail the removal of retained posts from the establishment levels. This would mean that there will be the termination of some retained and dual (wholetime/ retained) contracts.

**IMPACT OF RESTRUCTURING ON THE HEALTH OF THE WORKFORCE**

A Health and Wellbeing plan is being implemented – to limit the amount of anxiety/stress amongst staff with comprehensive training for managers by a team of trainers.

Workplace Health Champions have been appointed and are in receipt of ongoing training to support the workforce (as of January 2011).

Peer mentors are in place to support staff going through change

**SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND ACTIONS REQUIRED**

Whilst further work may be required to identify the full impacts of the recommendations, this initial EIA has identified some potential adverse impacts and some positive equality impacts which are summarised in the table below.

<b>COMMUNITY RELATED ADVERSE/POSITIVE IMPACT</b>	<b>MITIGATING ACTION.</b>
Adverse - Public perception regarding loss of fire cover	Positive communications plan Increased Community Safety activity
Adverse - Perception that Community Safety activities will be reduced	Positive communications plan – initial assistance from CFS centre to boost CFS activities in affected areas
Positive – Opportunities will be provided for more comprehensive community involvement.	
Positive – Opportunities will be provided for members of the local communities to be recruited as Retained Duty Staff, enhancing local knowledge.	

<b>WORKFORCE RELATED ADVERSE/POSITIVE IMPACT</b>	<b>MITIGATING ACTION.</b>
Adverse - Perceived unfair processes in the targeting of specific stations to merge over other stations.	Production of quality statistical evidence. Communications plan.
Adverse - Perceived unfair processes in the movement of personnel between stations to address staffing changes caused by the implementation of all recommendations.	Process is applied equally to all staff, domestic/ medical issues will be taken into account as they are currently. Opportunities to be given to staff to enable them to request moves where appropriate. Production of quality statistical evidence. Communications plan.
Adverse - Higher levels of anxiety and stress amongst certain members of staff	Occupational health and welfare plan. Peer mentors are in place to support staff going through change
Adverse – Equality & Diversity issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff may be forced to transfer</li> <li>• Some retained staff will have their contracts terminated</li> <li>• Increased operational and CFS workload</li> <li>• Ability to practice religion?</li> <li>• Disproportionate affect on working parents</li> </ul>	Robust and visible policies such as the existing flexible working policy, religious observance. Domestic and medical circumstances will be fully taken into account, as they are currently. Communication Plan Peer mentors are in place to support staff going through change
Adverse – Workforce diversity issues If any RDS staff are made redundant, this may impact upon the profile of the workforce e.g. if we lose female FFs	The process for redundancy will be applied equally across all affected staff.
Positive – Potential recruitment of further Retained Duty Staff from within local communities will enhance community involvement and local knowledge.	
Positive – The addition of an alternative duty system will offer further flexibility to operational members of SYFR	
Positive – The transfer of staff around the county will enable better sharing of local knowledge throughout a greater area.	
Positive – There will be opportunities for some staff to transfer between stations which will enable them to gain further experience of service delivery in diverse locations.	