

## Council – 19 July 2023

### Green Group Amendment to motion 8a – To Oppose Day Crewing Plans at Sale Fire Station

- Following over a decade of austerity introduced by the Conservative government which has resulted in cuts in front line services, the Fire Service is having to redistribute its current funding to meet the future needs of Greater Manchester. This has resulted in proposed cuts to staffing in Trafford and a day-crew model being established in Sale. The government needs to fund the service properly and not force the service into cuts in some areas.
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) is proposing to move Sale fire station from a wholetime model to a day crewing model, which means that crews would provide an immediate response during station hours (8.30am to 6pm) and up to a four-minute delayed response during on-call hours (6pm to 8.30am).
- GMFRS claims that this proposal would save £340,000 per year and allow them to invest in other priority areas.
- Sale fire station has low incident levels, with the third-lowest number of night-time life risk incidents and the third-lowest total of life risk incidents at night-time in the last three years.
- However, Sale fire station is strategically placed to cover a central area of the Trafford borough and extending to Urmston, Flixton and Partington.
- Sale fire station also serves as a backup for other fire stations in Trafford and neighbouring boroughs in case of emergencies or major incidents.
- The average response time in Sale would increase by 1 minute 10 seconds (from 7 minutes 45 seconds to 8 minutes 55 seconds) and the overall response time across Trafford borough would increase by 20 seconds (from 7 minutes 43 seconds to 8 minutes 3 seconds) if the proposal is implemented. **As an average this does not take into account the impact on more distant communities such as Partington. It also does not take into account the impact of large events such as football matches on travel times.**
- ~~- The ongoing changes to highways to reduce speed limits and accommodate cyclists will add to response times which have not been factored in.~~
- These increased response times could have serious consequences for public safety, especially for vulnerable group such as elderly people, children, people with disabilities, or people living in high-rise buildings.

We believe:

- ~~The proposal to move Sale fire station to a day crewing model is a biased preferred option consultation, that~~ has failed to take into consideration the residents of Partington **and the high risk industries based in Carrington. Conservatives see this as unacceptable.** Basing the proposal on data from the past three Covid years is incomparable with any other years. **Calculations need to be based on current risk levels, including traffic**

levels related to the significant return to car usage and accompanying collision risk and more outdoor activities which may present increased risk.

- The proposal offers little or no data on the assumption of being able to attend the station from the fire fighters' home within 4 minutes or how this will be monitored. All fire fighters would need to live in Sale to be able to meet this requirement which is not a practical option.
- The consultation does not do enough to ensure those most affected have their say, Sale's Trafford's residents and businesses deserve better.
- The proposal flies in the face of the promise made by Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham to avoid cuts to frontline services in Greater Manchester despite raising the precept tax on residents.

Resolve:

Trafford councillors support the response sent by Trafford Scrutiny Committee to the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service consultation. The response makes clear that we reject the proposals and would like time to consider alternative proposals that might maintain the current service and meet the future needs too. We request that further investigation is carried out to review the safety implications of moving to a day crewing service model at Sale fire Station which takes into account future building plans and changes in Trafford. This should give particular focus to the more distant areas of Trafford including Partington, Warburton, Carrington and Dunham. It should also consider the practicalities of fire fighters being available within a 4 minute radius.

- ~~— We the Conservative group of Trafford Council, therefore, ask the Labour administration to write to the Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham to uphold his commitment not to cut services and leave residents of Sale at risk from delays to response times, making it clear we reject in full GMFRS's proposal to move Sale fire station to a day crewing model.~~