

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

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DIRECTORATE
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31 JUL 2008

28 July 2008

Dear *Andrew,*

Sedgley Fire Station

Ref to

At the Executive Committee of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority, held on Monday, 28th July 2008, the Committee decided to enter a 12 week period of consultation about proposals to change the way that fire services are provided in the Sedgley area of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council.

These changes are, as always, based on our Integrated Risk Management approach to reducing risk in the community and attached to this letter is an explanatory leaflet that sets out the reasons for the changes.

The 12 weeks consultation period will focus on the Sedgley area and amongst other consultation methods, will include one or more open days at the Station to invite members of the public and other interested parties in for an explanation of the reasons for the decision of the Executive Committee.

If you have any particular queries about the content of the attached, the overall proposal or the period of consultation, I would be pleased to try and answer them for you.

Yours sincerely,



F. J. E. Sheehan, CBE, QFSM
Chief Fire Officer

Mr. Andrew Sparke,
Chief Executive,
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council,
The Council House,
DUDLEY DY1 1HF



WEST MIDLANDS FIRE SERVICE

**Annual Service Plan Public Consultation:
28th July 2008 – 20th October 2008**

Proposal concerning Sedgley Fire Station

Welcome to our consultation process

This leaflet gives details of a proposed change to your Fire and Rescue Service.

It gives us an opportunity to ask both our local communities and our staff for their views on our proposal in order to continue to improve our service.

Please take the time to read this leaflet. Your comments and views about how we can improve our service to you are important to us.

You can comment via any of the methods stated on the back page.

Introduction

West Midlands Fire Service continues to improve its service to meet the ever-changing demands in line with our vision of "Making West Midlands Safer".

We remain focused on reducing risk to the community by preventing fires and other emergencies through education.

We will also provide you with information to make you more aware of safety issues.

We enforce fire safety legislation to protect you where you work and in places where you socialise.

We will answer your calls for help by responding to emergencies when you need us.

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Our Proposal

Sedgley Fire Station is the only station in the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) that has part time operational (Retained) staff.

There are 12 posts including one watch commander, two crew commanders and nine firefighters. These posts are filled by people who live and work in the area, and who respond when they are alerted by a pager alarm.

In order for the fire engine to answer an emergency call there must be a minimum of four members of staff available at the station. Only then can the crew confirm to our Fire Control that they are on their way to the incident (this is also known as booking mobile).

The national standard time allowed for a part time operational crew receiving notification of a call and booking mobile to an incident is 5 minutes. The average time for a whole time crew employed by the WMFS is 1 minute, 50 seconds from receipt of the call to booking mobile.

Sedgley Fire Station is located less than two miles from Dudley Fire Station. A fire engine from Dudley Fire Station can reach Sedgley Fire Station within 3 minutes. The time it takes fire engines from Dudley to reach Sedgley's station area is, in all cases potentially better than the time it takes for the fire engine based at Sedgley.

The fire engines from Dudley can reach most of the area currently covered by Sedgley Fire Station within 5-7 minutes. There are other fire stations, which can cover the Sedgley area including Tipton, Bilston and Wolverhampton. Fire engines from these stations are available for immediate response, 24 hours per day.

In September 2008 the WMFS will change over to a new command and control system, which will have an impact on how fire engines are mobilised to incidents. It will no longer be the case that fire engines attend based on station area location. Instead the fire engine that is sent to an emergency will be based on the

Current status of the West Midlands Fire Service Fire Stations surrounding and including Sedgley Fire Station

Station	Number of Fire Engines	Hours available	Status
Wolverhampton	2	2 x 24 hour	Wholetime
Dudley	2	1 x 24 hour 1 x 11:00 - 23:00 hours	Wholetime
Bilston	1	1 x 24 hour	Wholetime
Tipton	1	1 x 24 hour	Wholetime
Sedgley	1	1 x 24 hour	Retained

What next?

time it takes to reach the incident from the time the call has been received. It will also be dependent upon the travel time it takes a fire engine to reach the incident. Because it can take 5 minutes for a part time operational crew to arrive at the station before responding, fire engines based at Dudley, or another wholetime station will be chosen. This is because a fire engine from a wholetime station can respond more quickly to the incident.

Between 11:00 and 23:00 hours there are two fire engines based at Dudley (see table below left for further details on fire engine availability). Later in 2008 there will also be a Targeted Response Vehicle (TRV). The TRV is an additional vehicle that will respond to fires of a low risk such as those involving grass or rubbish.

Over recent years the WMFS has been unable to recruit adequate numbers of people to crew the fire engine at Sedgley, especially during the day. This has resulted in the fire engine not being available to respond to emergency calls. Analysis has also shown that we do not need 62 fire engines. The removal of the fire engine based at Sedgley would reduce the total number down to 61 available between the hours of 11:00 and 23:00 hours and 48 between 23:00 and 11:00 hours. There still would be sufficient fire engines to provide emergency cover.

Based on analysis we recommend that the number of fire engines be reduced from 62 to 61 by removing the fire engine currently based at Sedgley Fire Station.

This is your opportunity to comment on this proposal.

This consultation will close on 20th October 2008. At the end of this consultation period all responses will be collated and presented to the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority in November 2008. The Fire and Rescue Authority will then decide the next course of action taking your comments into consideration.

The decision agreed in November 2008, resulting from this consultation will be included in our Annual Service Plan, which will be published in spring 2009.

Additionally, in spring 2009, we will publish our three year Corporate Strategy (2009-2012), which will outline our vision for the future.

These documents will be made available via the contact methods detailed below and on our website **www.wmfs.net** together with a summary of your comments.

Changes are continually reviewed. Progress and achievement are recorded and published within our Annual Report.

Annual Service Plan Public Consultation: 28th July 2008 – 20th October 2008

Contact us

Contact us with any comments in relation to this consultation by:

Letter: **Sedgley – Consultation Issues**
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters, Lancaster Circus Queensway,
Birmingham, B4 7DE

Phone: **0121 380 6116 (24 hour answerphone)**

Fax: **0121 380 7007**

E-mail: **consultation@wmfs.net**

If you have access to the internet www.wmfs.net gives everything you need to know about the service we provide including our performance, fire safety advice and recruitment.

Keep yourself safe from fire:
Book a Free Home Fire Safety Check
Freephone **0800 389 5525**
or register via www.wmfs.net

The information contained in this document can also be provided in other formats including other languages, Braille, audiotape and large print. Please call 0845 800 9000.

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