

## **Spelthorne – Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Where is the location of the proposed fire station?**

We have identified the optimal location for the new fire station and have commenced initial discussions regarding the feasibility of obtaining the site and the necessary permissions to build. We will not proceed with the purchase of a site until the consultation is complete and the Fire Authority makes their decision as to how to proceed. If the proposal is supported we will communicate again with the residents of Spelthorne and you would have a further opportunity to make your views known during the planning process.

### **What is the benefit for Spelthorne?**

While the reduction of a fire engine from Spelthorne would increase the average attendance times within the borough slightly, these remain well within the Surrey emergency response standard (under 7 minutes for the average first attendance and under 11 minutes for the average second attendance).

This proposal is part of a transformation programme for Surrey Fire & Rescue Service that allows us to make the savings we require without having to reduce the standard of emergency cover for the county.

### **What effect does this have on Runnymede and Elmbridge?**

There is an increase of less than 5 seconds for the average first attendance in both Runnymede and Elmbridge.

### **Won't one fire engine be excessively busy in the borough?**

Currently both Staines and Sunbury respond to approximately 530 calls a year each. We predict that one fire engine based at the optimal location would respond to approximately 800 calls a year. The fire engines at Chertsey and Egham would see an increase in their response activity but not in excess of our busiest fire engines, which respond to well over a thousand incidents in a year.

### **Why not implement the proposal from the Public Safety Plan (PSP) to leave Sunbury as a 24/7 station and operate Staines on a 12 hour basis between 0700 hours and 1900 hours?**

The PSP proposal was part of what we called 'Phase 1' and was based upon the existing fire stations. We now have the opportunity to build a new fire station in an improved location, which will provide a far more effective use of resources.

## What other options did you consider?

We considered 4 options:

- 1) Do nothing:  
This isn't an option due to the requirement for financial savings to be made.
- 2) Implement the PSP Phase 1 (Sunbury 24/7, Staines day cover only):  
As already indicated, this option was based upon the existing fire station locations, neither of which can be considered to be in the optimal position. The existing buildings also require investment to make them suitable for continued operational use. The predicted response times that this model would provide are not as quick as the proposed model.
- 3) Close either Sunbury or Staines and operate from the remaining location:  
This option would yield the reduction in posts required but does not provide as effective emergency response cover as the proposed model.

The modelled responses for each option are listed in the table below. This indicates that the proposal provides the quickest average response times for all of the options considered.

	1 <sup>st</sup> fire engine attendance (average)	% attended in 10 mins	2 <sup>nd</sup> fire engine attendance (average)	% attended in 15 mins
<b>Current</b>	5 min 44 secs	97.0	9 min 13 secs	98.2
<b>Proposal</b>	6 min 42 secs	91.4	10 min 24 secs	94.5
<b>PSP Phase 1</b>	7 min 04 secs	84.1	10 min 30 secs	96.8
<b>Sunbury only</b>	7 min 05 secs	88.3	11 min 03 secs	93.9
<b>Staines only</b>	7 min 32 secs	80.5	10 min 48 secs	93.0
<b>Surrey Average</b>	7 min 28 secs	80.8	10 min 27 secs	86.7

## Have you included London Fire Brigade resources in the emergency cover model?

No. The times given are for Surrey fire engines only, as these are the ones we have direct control over. Therefore the predicted response standard may be considered to be the 'worst case' as in reality there will be occasions when London are able to provide a quicker response and when this is the case it is our policy to request their attendance.

## What about the boat based at Sunbury?

It is the intention that the boat and associated equipment would be redeployed to the new station. This is because the risk that the boat is provided for is in Spelthorne and the neighbouring boroughs.

**Why not use the two fire engines at the new station?**

This proposal is about making part of the savings we need to meet the requirements of the medium term financial plan and this requires a reduction in the number of firefighter posts in the county.

**So will any firefighters be made redundant?**

No. Firefighters at Sunbury and Staines will be asked if they wish to work at the new station or transfer to another Surrey station. The reduction of posts is being achieved through not replacing firefighters who leave the Service.

**If this proposal is about saving money why are you spending money on building a new station?**

The money that we are required to save is from our 'revenue' budget, meaning the money we have to spend year on year. For Fire & Rescue the biggest element of our revenue budget is staff wages and therefore requires a reduction in firefighter posts. The cost of the building is from a 'capital' budget. It is also important to recognise that both Sunbury and Staines are older buildings that require modernisation to meet the needs of a modern fire service and to be efficient in terms of energy use. A new fire station would be built to the latest standards and would be more efficient.

**Increasing second response time will put lives at risk**

Approximately two thirds of all incidents attended by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service are resolved with only one fire engine in attendance. Prevention and protection activity are likely to have a greater impact on life safety than the attendance time of a second fire engine and as a result we will continue to invest in these areas. However attendance times are predicted to remain within the Surrey emergency response standard.

**Spelthorne is a built up environment and will be developed further**

This is correct, as are many other parts of the County and this has been considered during the development of the proposals.

**In a house fire, two engines need to be present for the crews to start their operations**

This is not correct. The Incident Commander will assess the situation and formulate a plan based on risk versus gain, taking into account the resources on scene and those on the way. This is based upon national guidance for dealing with operational incidents.

**What about removing resources from near to Heathrow Airport?**

As with all major airports, part of the licensing requirement is the provision of appropriate fire cover. The local authority fire and rescue service for the area in which the airport is situated will form part of the response to incidents at the airport, and in Heathrow's case this is the London Fire Brigade. We will continue to attend incidents at Heathrow airport if requested by London.