

NOTICE OF MOTION

Proposed by Councillor MD Lloyd-Hayes and seconded by Councillor RI Matthews.

Potential Combination of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service/Resource at Hereford Fire Station

On 3 October 2013 the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority considered a report that sought approval for the Chief Fire Officer to progress discussions with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding future options for combination. The Authority resolved that the matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

This motion proposes that this Council does not support a merger of the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service. A combined organisation would stretch from the Welsh Borders to Northamptonshire, resulting in Herefordshire having even less influence than it does at present – an unwelcome democratic deficit.

This Council therefore resolves to inform Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority that, whilst we would welcome closer collaboration with any neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service, we totally oppose any merger because of the obvious deleterious impact on the people we represent.

Also on 3 October 2013 the Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority agreed that the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020 be approved for consultation.

This motion proposes that this Council does not support the proposed reduction of staff or vehicles at the Hereford Fire Station for the following reasons: Hereford City is the only 24 hour station in the County; as a standalone station it is isolated from any other 24 hour support. Herefordshire covers an area larger than Worcestershire but relies on part time or retained fire fighters.

Worcester Fire Station, however, is supported by Kidderminster, Redditch, Bromsgrove whole time cover with additional back up from Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern.

Herefordshire is further disadvantaged by the poor road infrastructure and lack of motorways. Any reduction in personnel would seriously affect the response times to the life threatening road traffic accidents and call outs to flooding incidents in this County.

This Council therefore resolves to inform Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority that it opposes the reduction in staff, pumps or equipment at Hereford Fire Station.