

## Immediate Release

### News release

19.01.2016

# Residents urged to have their say over the potential removal of an engine at Erith fire station

**Bexley residents have been urged to have their say over the proposed removal of an engine at Erith fire station. Erith Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare attended the London Fire Brigade Consultation for the 2016/17 Budget for the South East Area, last night (18 January 2016). The consultation was launched over proposals to meet £6.4m of budget cuts demanded by the Mayor. Residents have been asked to choose from two options, one which will see the permanent removal of 13 fire engines, and the other which will focus on back office efficiencies, allowing the 13 engines to be returned.**

Residents and local Erith Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare questioned a panel made up of London Assembly Members, Area Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ian Hughes and the Fire Commissioner, Ron Dobson about the two options laid out in the consultation on the LFB's budget for 2016 and 2017 – one being the axing of 13 engines, which could potentially see the removal of an engine at Erith fire station. However, Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare along with her colleagues Councillor Edward Boateng and Councillor Joe Ferreira are concerned that fewer fire engines could exacerbate a recent rise in response times across the capital. 13 wards in Bexley saw a rise in response times in 2014/15, when compared with the previous year, before Boris Johnson's closure of 10 fire stations and scrapping of 14 engines.

Alternative proposals set out by Andrew Dismore AM, Chair of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority's Resource Committee, would meet the savings target through back office efficiencies and changing working patterns, enabling the 13 engines to be returned.

**Following, the public consultation meeting, Erith Ward Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare, said:**

"I am concerned about the removal of an engine at Erith fire station. Erith is undergoing many regeneration changes at a very fast pace. I am not convinced that a removal has taken into consideration the growing population in Erith.

I know that the Fire Commissioner mentioned in the public meeting that emergency calls received have dropped and that there has been lots of preventative work carried out to reduce fire deaths, but we currently have 12 wards in Bexley not meeting those 6 minute targets.

I urge all residents to respond to the consultation on the future of London's fire service."

**ENDS**

## Notes

- Average response times across the capital for the first appliance has gone up from 05.19 in 2012/13 to 05.32 in 2014/15, an increase of 13 secs. The second appliance has gone up from 06.29 in 2012/13 to 06.54 in 2014/15 an increase of 25 secs. A borough breakdown of the response times is available [here](#) whilst a full ward-level analysis of response times is available [here](#).
- The London Fire Brigade has launched a [consultation](#) to find £6.4m of savings for 2016/17. There are two options, Option A and Option B. Option A, put forward by Andrew Dismore AM, recommends the return of the 13 fire engines and making savings by establishing alternate crewing for some special appliances. Option B would see the permanent removal of the 13 fire engines.
- The two lists of options prepared by the LFB for Boris Johnson on removing 13 fire engines from London stations are [available here](#):

<b>13 fire stations with pumps currently withdrawn</b>	
Erith	LB Bexley
Willesden	LB Brent
Ealing	LB Ealing
Shoreditch	LB Hackney
Romford	LB Havering
Holloway	LB Islington
Chelsea	LB Kensington and Chelsea
Forest Hill	LB Lewisham
Plaistow	LB Newham
Stratford	LB Newham
Old Kent Road	LB Southwark
Poplar	LB Tower Hamlets
Wandsworth	LB Wandsworth

- In January 2014 the Mayor closed 10 fire stations and axed 14 fire engines
- Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare is the Deputy Leader of Bexley Labour Group and local councillor for Erith Ward with Councillor Edward Boateng & Councillor Joe Ferreira

Kind Regards

### **Councillor Abena Oppong-Asare**

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