

Collation of the Results from the Online Feedback Tools

This documents summarises the responses received from the public and the Service's staff via the two online Feedback Tools that were available between October and 31 December 2013. The tools outlined the various proposals being explored at this time and then provided the people with the opportunity to tell the Fire Authority:

1. What level of support they would have, if such an idea were implemented; and
2. What the issues are that they believe the Fire Authority should consider when making its decision on each individual proposal.

The five options being explored as part of this Phase of the process were:

1. The closure of up to four of the 'Low Risk' fire stations
2. The removal of one of our fulltime fire engines
3. The merging of Shropshire's Fire Control with Hereford and Worcester's Fire Control
4. Changes to the current Wholetime shift systems
5. Changes to the current Fire Control shift systems

In addition to the high-level summary figures being provided for each option, information has also been provided that attempts to quantify the results from particular sub-groups of either the public or staff, who may have a specific interest in that particular proposal. An example would be where a particular station is being considered for closure, as well as summarising the overall responses received from all members of the public, officers have also included a summary of the results from the people, who live in that particular area – the people most likely to be impacted.

Whilst this document does include a list of the most common areas of concern that respondents feel should be considered when making a decision on each matter, a full list of those issues, and the evidence available to quantify those issues, is provided in the Impact Assessment documents for each option.

The table below shows the total number of people that responded to the Online Tool.

Nearest fire station	Number of responses
Albrighton	9
Baschurch	216
Bishops Castle	36
Bridgnorth	10
Church Stretton	6
Cleobury Mortimer	4
Clun	506
Craven Arms	6
Ellesmere	37
Hodnet	293
Ludlow	7
Market Drayton	39
Minsterley	13
Much Wenlock	2

Nearest fire station	Number of responses
Newport	24
Oswestry	23
Prees	824
Shrewsbury	125
Telford Central , Stafford Park	27
Tweedale, Cuckoo Oak	10
Wellington	34
Wem	83
Whitchurch	81
Total	2415

The Fire Authority has had cause to consult on many occasions since Integrated Risk Management Planning was introduced in 2003. The number of responses received during this process is, by far, the most significant number during any of these consultations. This demonstrates the level of feeling the public has on the matters being explored, especially the potential closure of the four On-call fire stations.

The following table shows the number of responses received from the Service's own staff, through the internal version of the Online Feedback Tool. This is approximately 31% of all staff in the Service, which would normally be considered a fairly high rate of return for an online survey. However, with a total of only 102 responses coming from our 'operational' or station based personnel (approximately 21% of the total), this limited response is a little surprising and somewhat disappointing in view of the significance of the matters under consideration.

Department	Number of responses
Area Command - Officers	9
Area Command - RDS	30
Area Command - WT	35
Control	12
Corporate Support	5
Development	5
Executive Officers	1
Finance	1
Fire Safety - Business	10
Fire Safety - Community	7
Health and Safety	1
Human Resources	3
ICT	3
Operational Response	37
Other	7
Performance Information Office	5
Resources	2
Training	14
Workshops	2
Total	189

Option 1 – The closure of up to four of the ‘Low Risk’ fire stations

The four stations under consideration are:

- Baschurch
- Clun
- Hodnet
- Prees

The tables on the following pages summarise the feedback received from the online feedback tool. Separate feedback is summarised for each of the four stations being considered, as part of this proposal. The sub-groups for which summary information has been provided, for this option, are:

- Those members of the public, who live inside and outside of the affected station area; and
- Those staff, who are directly involved in responding to incidents (i.e. operational staff) and those who are not.

Of the three options being explored with the public, this proposal has been the most contentious and has drawn a significant number of responses, especially from those people living near to the stations under threat.

As can be seen from the separate results for each of the four stations, the levels of support for keeping these stations open is significant. Although the feelings against closing each of these four stations is not as pronounced amongst the Service’s own staff, in no case is the average response, from any group of staff, a positive one.

The main issues that the public think Members should consider, in making their decision on this matter are:

- The Increase in response times, to all emergencies, and the potentially increased risk to the public and firefighters
- That there is life risk in these areas - schools, nursing homes , elderly population etc.
- The loss of local/diverse knowledge, including road network and how to deal with rural incidents
- The knock-on impact on support to neighbouring station areas

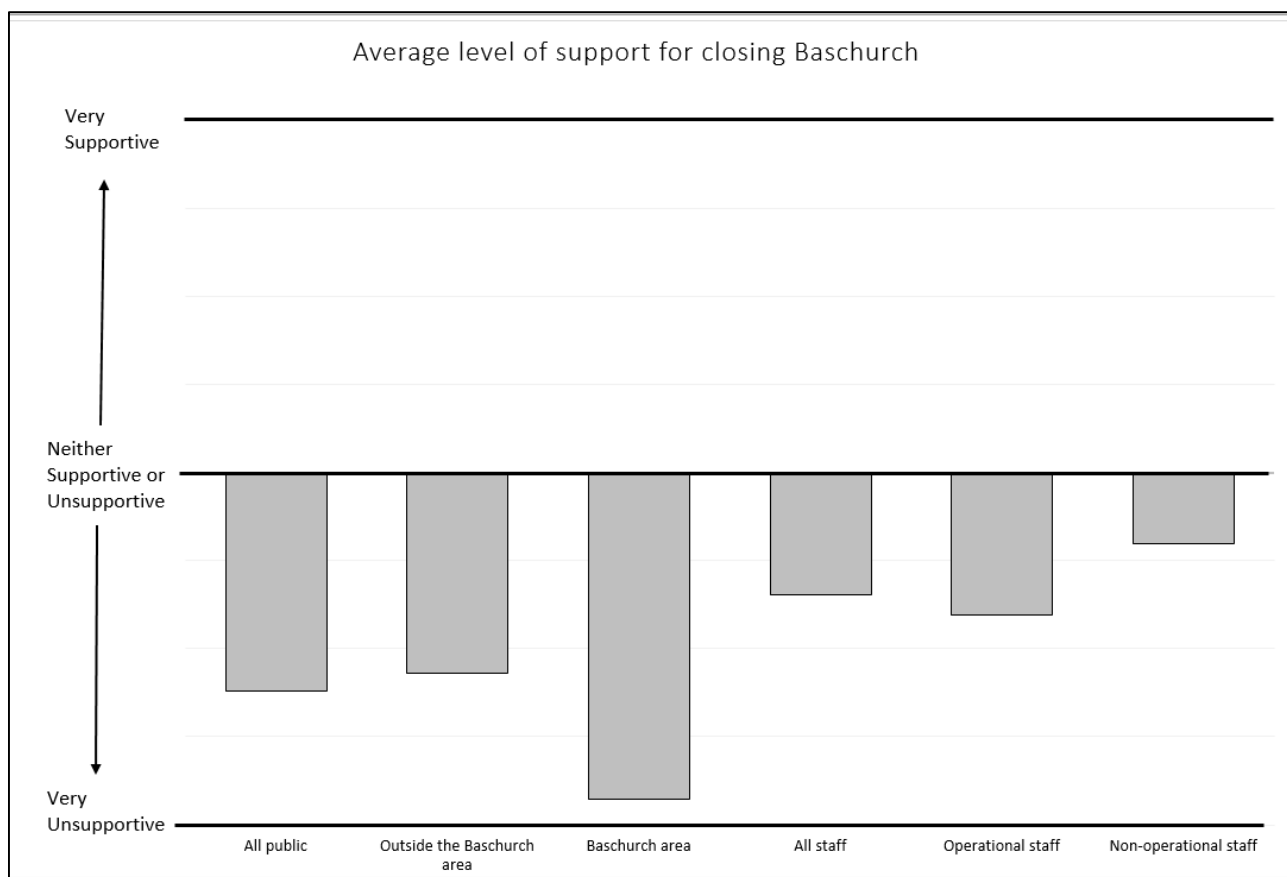
Similarly, the main issues that our staff think members should focus on, are:

- The increase in response times for the initial and supporting appliances - increased risk to public and firefighters
- The impact on the community and economy in each station area
- The impact on the remaining crews' primary employment due to more incidents and longer without reliefs
- The loss/reduction in resilience locally and nationally

Evidence relating to these matters and all other areas of concern, raised by the public and staff, are provided in the impact assessment document relating to this proposal.

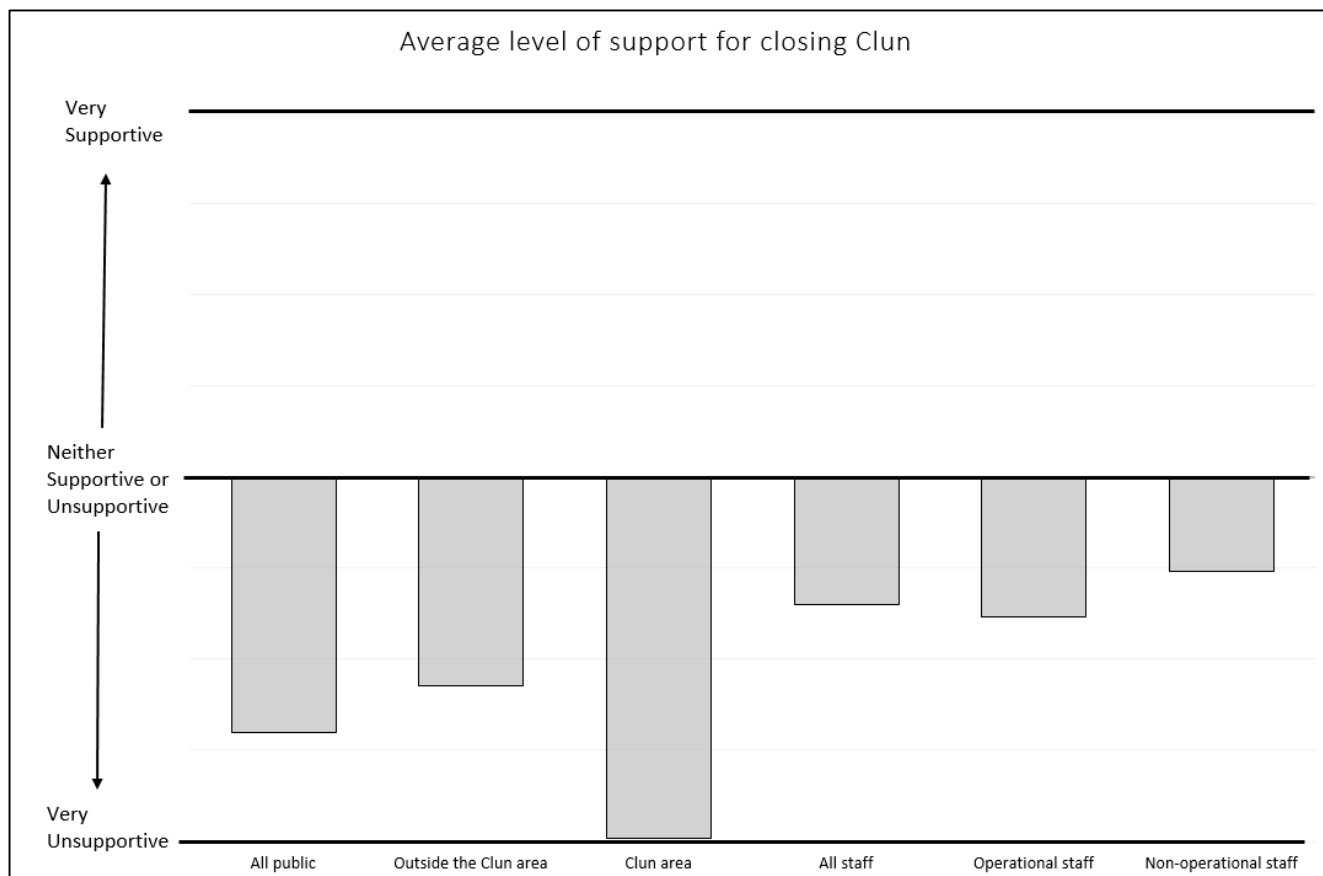
Feedback received on the potential closure of Baschurch fire station

Support for closing Baschurch	All public responses	Responses from outside the Baschurch area	Responses from the Baschurch area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	692	513	179	34	29	5
Unsupportive	380	374	6	23	15	8
Undecided	145	144	1	15	9	6
Supportive	53	53	0	13	9	4
Very Supportive	42	37	5	7	5	2
Total responses	1312	1121	191	92	67	25



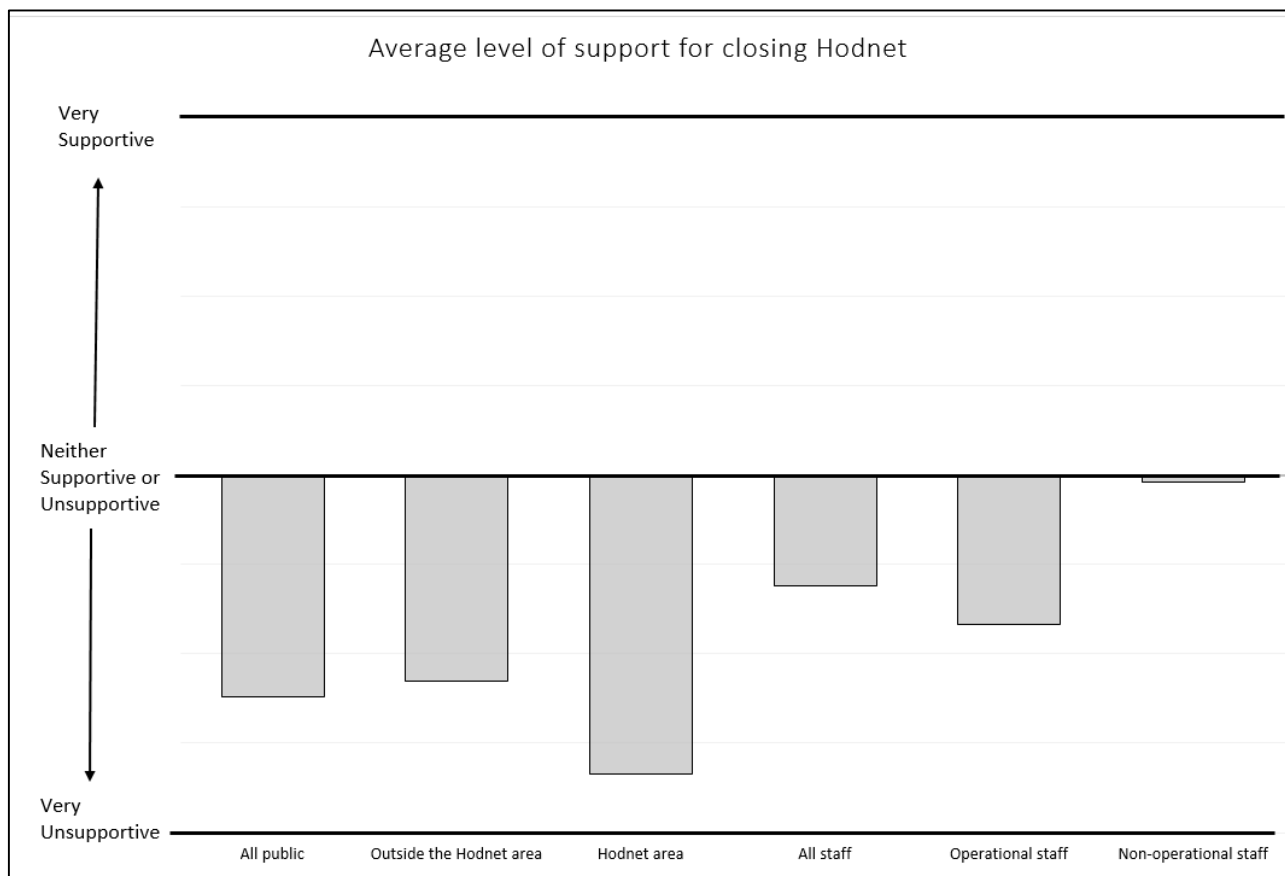
Feedback received on the potential closure of Clun fire station

Support for closing Clun	All public responses	Responses from outside the Clun area	Responses from the Clun area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	955	486	469	34	28	6
Unsupportive	358	356	2	24	15	9
Undecided	160	159	1	10	6	4
Supportive	36	36	0	15	11	4
Very Supportive	34	33	1	7	5	2
Total responses	1543	1070	473	90	65	25



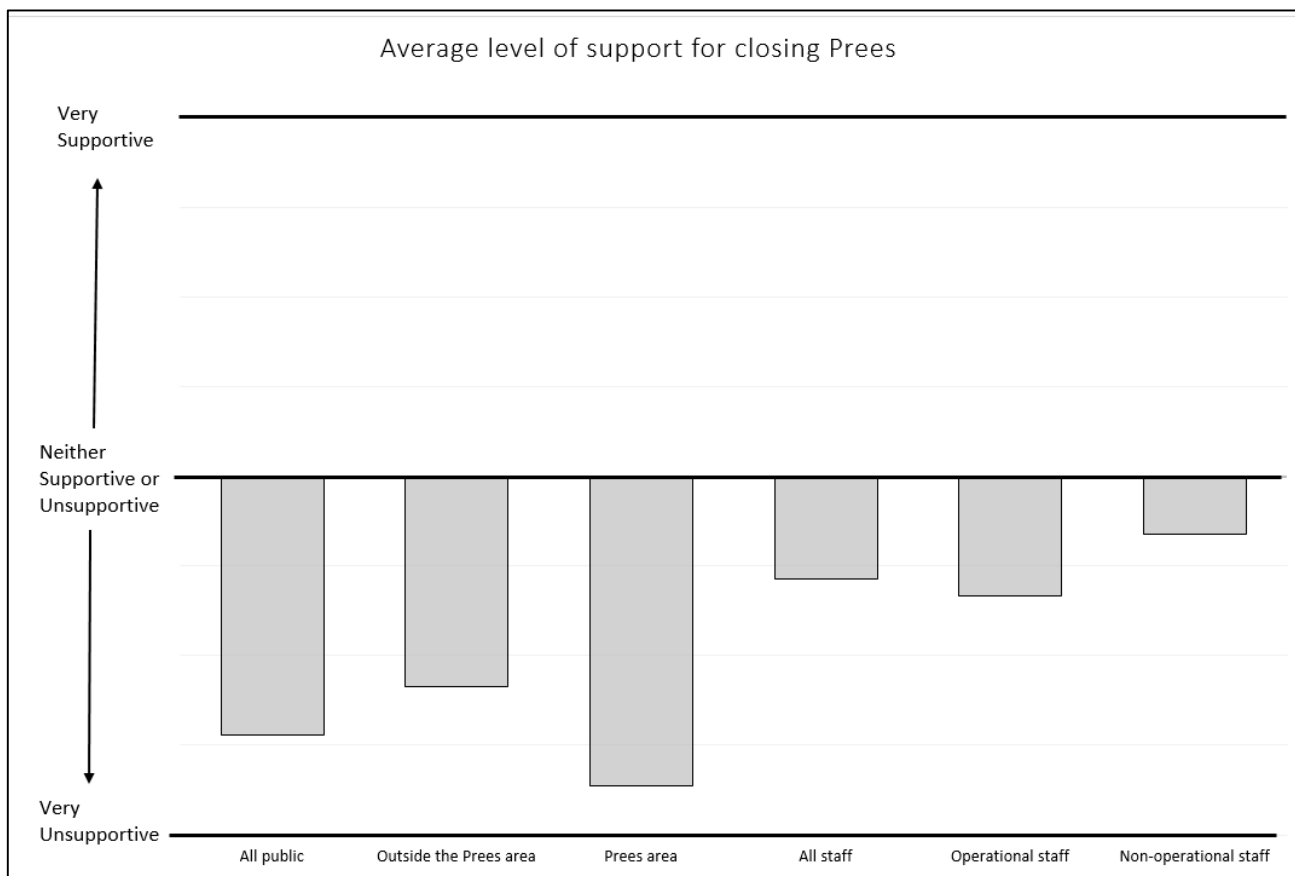
Feedback received on the potential closure of Hodnet fire station

Support for closing Hodnet	All public responses	Responses from outside the Hodnet area	Responses from the Hodnet area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	717	519	198	33	29	4
Unsupportive	344	338	6	21	15	6
Undecided	121	120	1	12	8	4
Supportive	51	51	0	17	10	7
Very Supportive	60	44	16	7	4	3
Total responses	1293	1072	221	90	66	24



Feedback received on the potential closure of Prees fire station

Support for closing Prees	All public responses	Responses from outside the Prees area	Responses from the Prees area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	1046	411	635	30	25	5
Unsupportive	168	156	12	23	15	8
Undecided	103	103	0	14	10	4
Supportive	38	37	1	17	11	6
Very Supportive	78	35	43	7	5	2
Total responses	1433	742	691	91	66	25



Option 2 – The removal of one of our fulltime fire engines

The two areas of the county under consideration are:

- Shrewsbury
- Telford

The tables on the following pages summarise the feedback received from the online feedback tool. Separate feedback is summarised for each of the two station areas being considered, as part of this proposal. The sub-groups for which summary information has been provided, for this option, are:

- Those members of the public, who live inside and outside of the affected station area; and
- Those staff, who are directly involved in responding to incidents (i.e. operational staff) and those who are not.

Although the overall strength of feelings against the loss of a fire engine from either Shrewsbury or Telford is not as strong as it is for the previous proposal, the average response from the public is still a negative one. As would be expected, the greatest levels of concern about each of the fire engines in the two areas, comes from each respective area. It is evident, however, that there is more positive support for losing a fire engine from the Telford area, especially amongst the Service's staff, than there is for losing one from Shrewsbury.

The main issues that the public think Members should consider, in making their decision on this matter are:

- Reduction in the resilience of the service
- Lives more important than money
- Higher risk levels in these areas, e.g. buildings, population, risk profile types, environmental
- Increase in response times to all emergency incidents

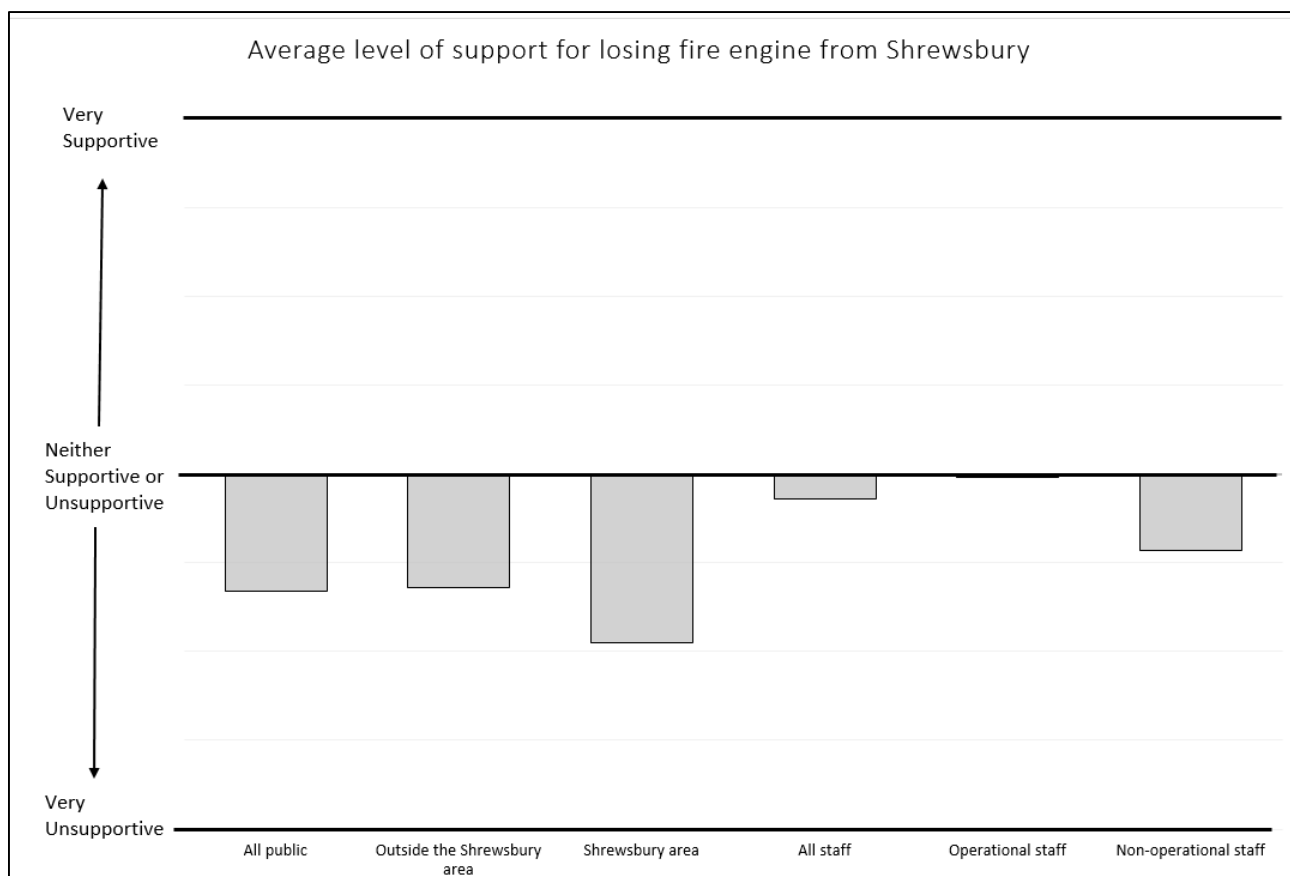
Similarly, the main issues that staff think Members should focus on, are:

- Increase in response times leading to increased risk to the public and firefighters
- Reduction in the overall resilience of the service
- Increasing risk profiles due to increase in housing, businesses and population in these urban areas
- Impact on remaining RDS stations due to additional turnouts

Evidence relating to these matters and all other areas of concern (as appropriate), raised by the public and staff, is provided in the impact assessment document relating to this proposal.

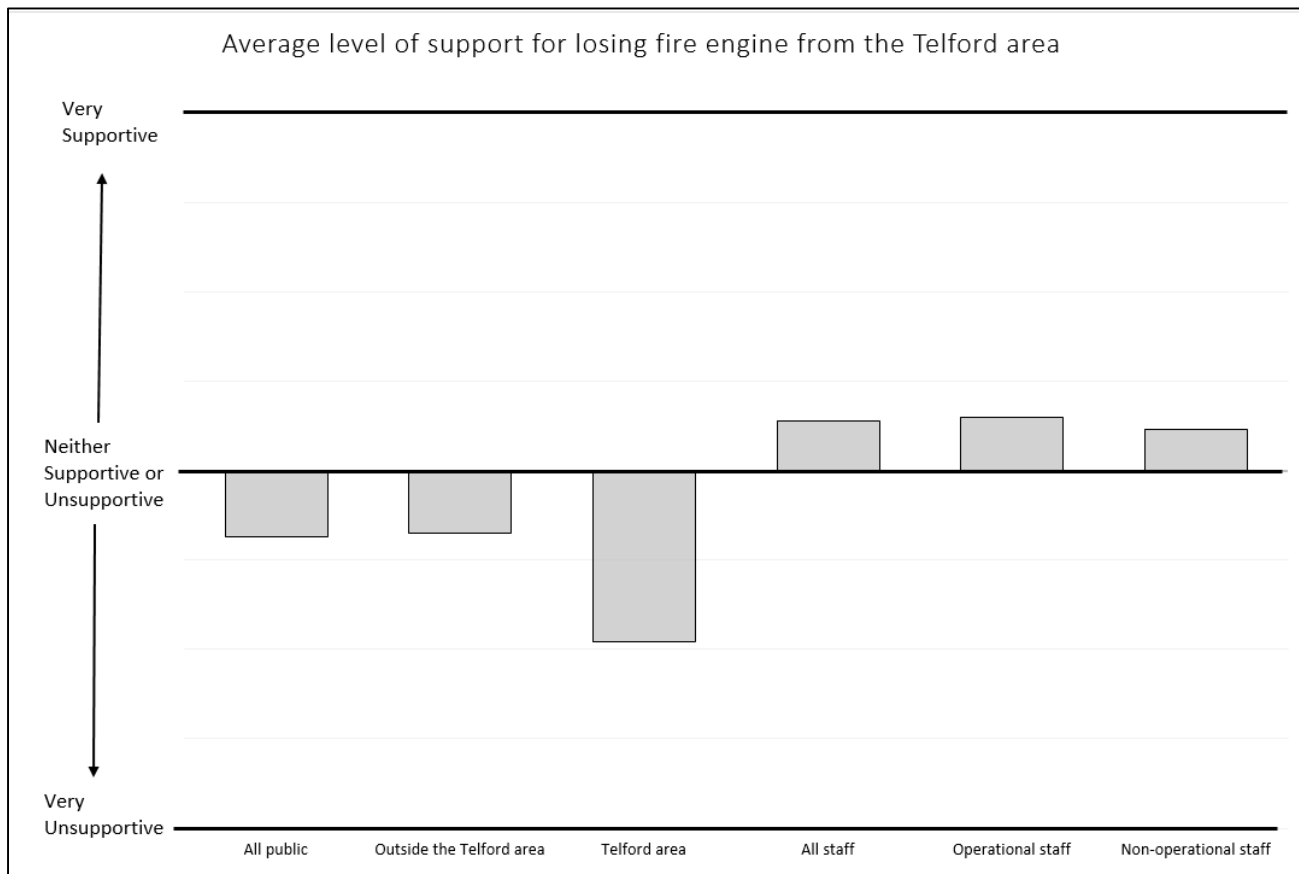
Feedback received on the potential loss of a fulltime fire engine from Shrewsbury

Support for losing a fulltime fire engine from Shrewsbury	All public responses	Responses from outside the Shrewsbury area	Responses from the Shrewsbury area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	365	331	34	21	15	6
Unsupportive	100	95	5	23	11	12
Undecided	117	110	7	10	8	2
Supportive	149	143	6	26	22	4
Very Supportive	74	68	6	13	9	4
Total responses	805	747	58	93	65	28



Feedback received on the potential loss of a fulltime fire engine from the Telford area

Support for losing a fulltime fire engine from Telford	All public responses	Responses from outside the Telford area	Responses from the Telford area	All staff responses	Responses from operational staff	Responses from non-operational staff
Very Unsupportive	293	265	28	14	11	3
Unsupportive	80	75	5	13	9	4
Undecided	125	123	2	12	7	5
Supportive	174	169	5	34	22	12
Very Supportive	98	92	6	16	14	2
Total responses	770	724	46	89	63	26



Option 3 – The merging of Shropshire’s Fire Control with Hereford and Worcester’s Fire Control

The tables on the following pages summarise the feedback received from the online feedback tool. With this potentially impacting across all station areas similarly, there is no sub-grouping of the public responses. However, the staff responses have also been broken down into responses from:

- Control staff
- Operational staff
- All other staff

The general feeling amongst members of the public towards this proposal is fairly well balanced, with the overall average being neither supportive nor unsupportive.

Apart from the Service’s Fire Control staff, who would obviously be directly impacted by any such move towards this proposal and are, therefore, relatively unsupportive, there is also a relatively balanced level of opinion amongst other members of staff.

The main issues that the public think Members should consider, in making their decision on this matter, are:

- Loss of local knowledge, which could lead to increased response times
- Too large and rural an area to cover
- Other services have tried it and had issues
- Increased Risk level

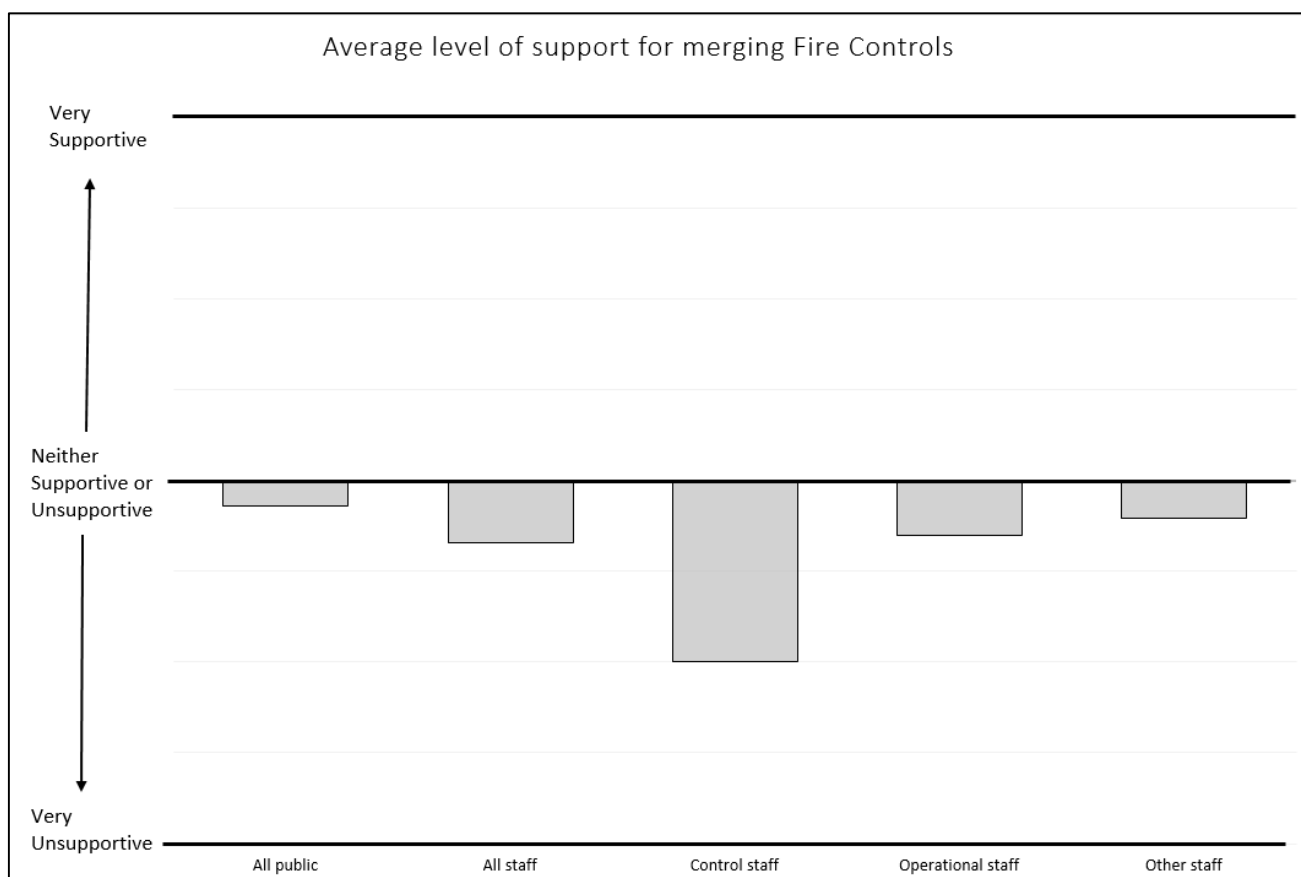
Similarly, the main issues that our staff think Members should focus on, are:

- Loss of local knowledge could impact on response times and, therefore, increase risk to the public and firefighters
- Reduced resilience, especially when technology fails
- Impact on remaining staff in terms of morale, health, well-being and family life
- Technical issues already exist with MoU project and would be increased

Evidence relating to these matters and all other areas of concern (as appropriate), raised by the public and staff, is provided in the impact assessment document relating to this proposal.

Feedback received on the potential merging of Fire Controls

Support for merging the of Fire Controls	All public responses	All staff responses	Responses from Control staff	Responses from Operational staff	Responses from other staff
Very Unsupportive	253	21	4	12	5
Unsupportive	94	20	2	12	6
Undecided	98	16	1	10	5
Supportive	185	16	0	11	5
Very Supportive	153	9	1	5	3
Total responses	783	82	8	50	24



Option 4 – Changes to the current Wholetime shift systems

Feedback was only sought from our own staff on this proposal.

Three outline shift systems were explored as part of this proposal:

- “Full pump” shift system – Staff work 24 hour shifts, including some periods where they are on-call from a facility located adjacent to the station.
- “Resilience pump” shift system – Staff work 12 hour shifts and are also on-call, from any location within an agreed return time, to staff the fire engine, if the Service is busy.
- “Half pump” shift system – Staff work 12 hour shifts with no on-call requirement, resulting in the fire engine only being available for half of each day.

The tables on the following pages summarise the feedback received from the online feedback tool. With this potentially impacting on the wholetime staff more than others, staff responses have also been broken down into responses from:

- Wholetime staff
- All other staff

The contrast between the responses from those staff who would be affected (Wholetime) and those that would not (all other) results in the overall staff result being a balanced one. It may be worthy of note, however, that of the 48 Wholetime staff, who did respond to the survey, 11 of them (approximately 23%) do appear to support the suggestion.

This is echoed in the responses to the three ‘example’ shift systems that were discussed during this process. With only approximately 14 staff being required to convert across to any possible new shift system, it is possible that there would be sufficient volunteers to make such a change, if it were to be explored further.

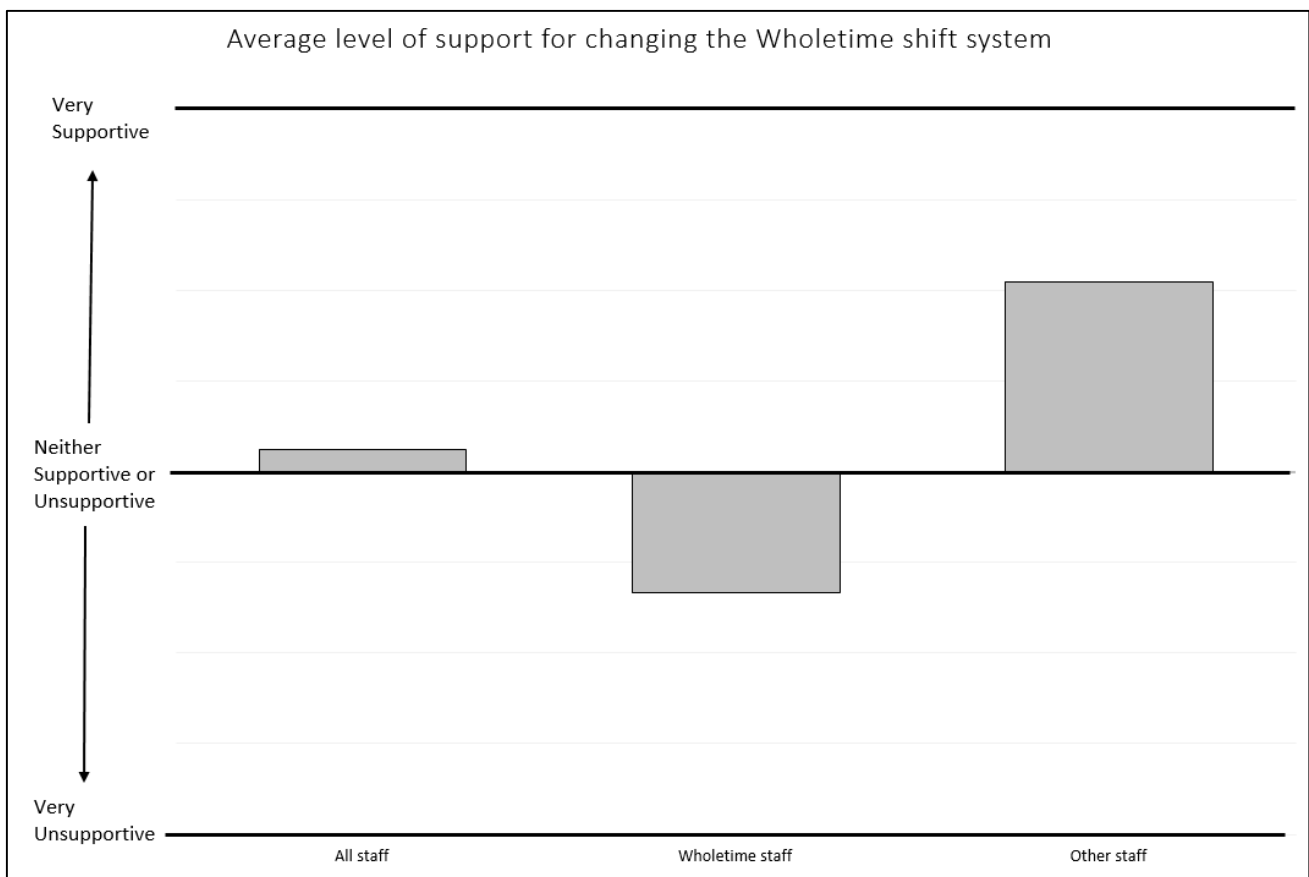
The main issues that our staff think Members should consider, in making their decision on this matter are:

- Impacts on family due to non-family friendly shifts, e.g. additional childcare costs etc.
- Impact on response times of the initial and supporting appliances
- Negative impacts and stress on remaining staff and morale
- The Fire Authority should not be asking firefighters to do more work for less money, to cover the funding gap

Evidence relating to these matters and all other areas of concern (as appropriate), raised by the public and staff, is provided in the impact assessment document relating to this proposal.

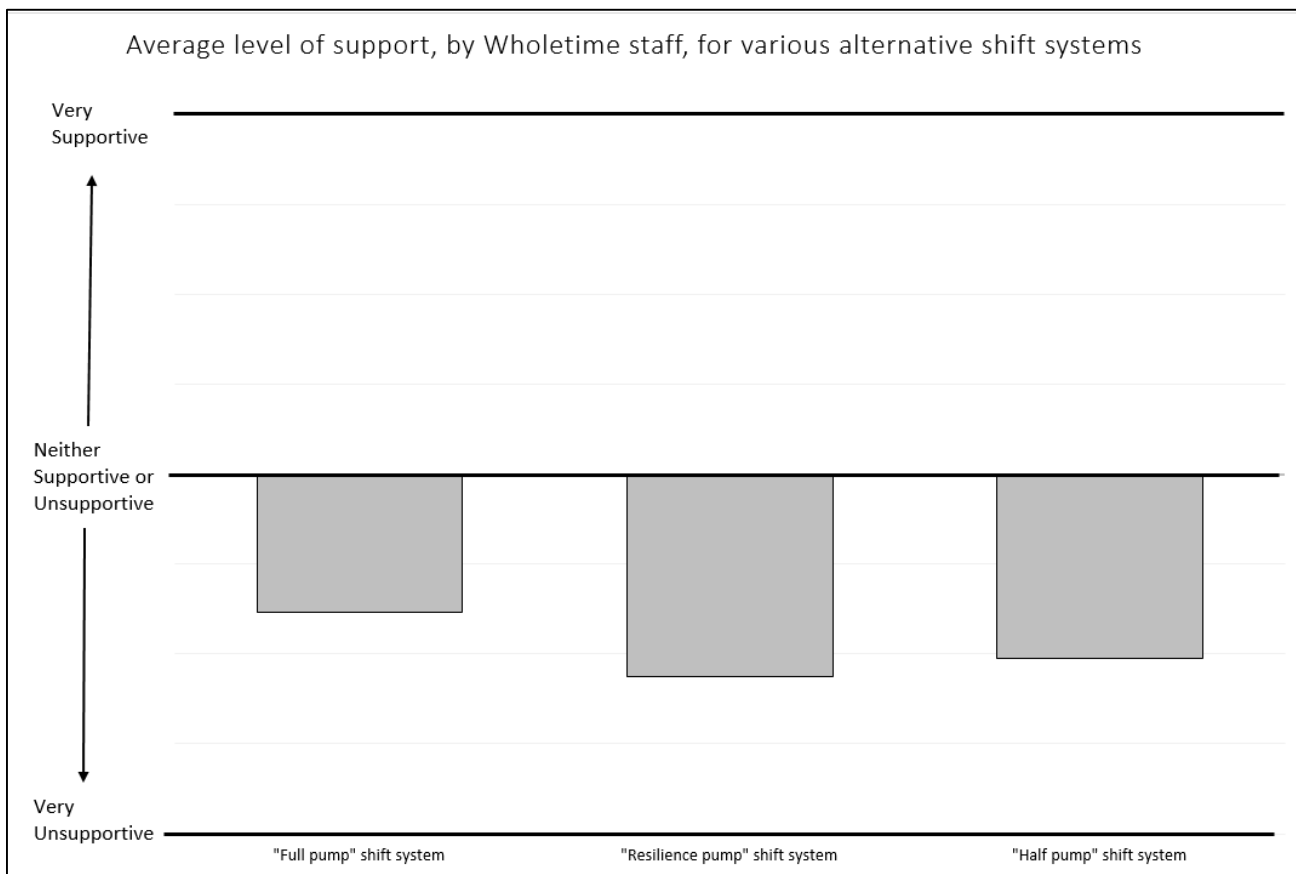
Feedback received on changes to the current Wholetime shift system

Support for changes to the current Wholetime shift system	All staff responses	Responses from Wholetime staff	Responses from other staff
Very Unsupportive	18	17	1
Unsupportive	16	11	5
Undecided	11	9	2
Supportive	25	9	16
Very Supportive	19	2	17
Total responses	89	48	41



Feedback received, from Wholetime staff, on the outline shift systems

Support for various shift systems, by Wholetime staff	"Full pump" shift system	"Resilience pump" shift system	"Half pump" shift system
Very Unsupportive	24	27	25
Unsupportive	7	8	8
Undecided	5	6	8
Supportive	6	6	5
Very Supportive	6	1	2
Total responses	48	48	48



Option 5 – Changes to the current Fire Control shift systems

Feedback was only sought from our own staff on this proposal.

Two types of shift systems were explored as part of this proposal:

- “4/3” shift system – Where the number of staff on each of the four watches is reduced to 3 (currently 4 per watch).
- “Self-roster” shift system – Where all staff are in a single pool (rather than on fixed Watches) and they work a more flexible rota.

The tables on the following pages summarise the feedback received from the online feedback tool. With this potentially impacting on the Fire Control staff more than others, staff responses have also been broken down into responses from:

- Control staff
- All other staff

Although only seven of a total of 17 Fire Control staff responded to this proposal (a notably higher response rate than was achieved from station based personnel), the response was largely negative.

In considering the two ‘example’ shift systems explored during this phase, again the response was largely negative with only one response supportive of the ‘self-roster’ system. It should be noted that, unlike the systems explored with the Wholetime staff, the ‘self-roster’ system would require all Control staff to convert from their current shift system.

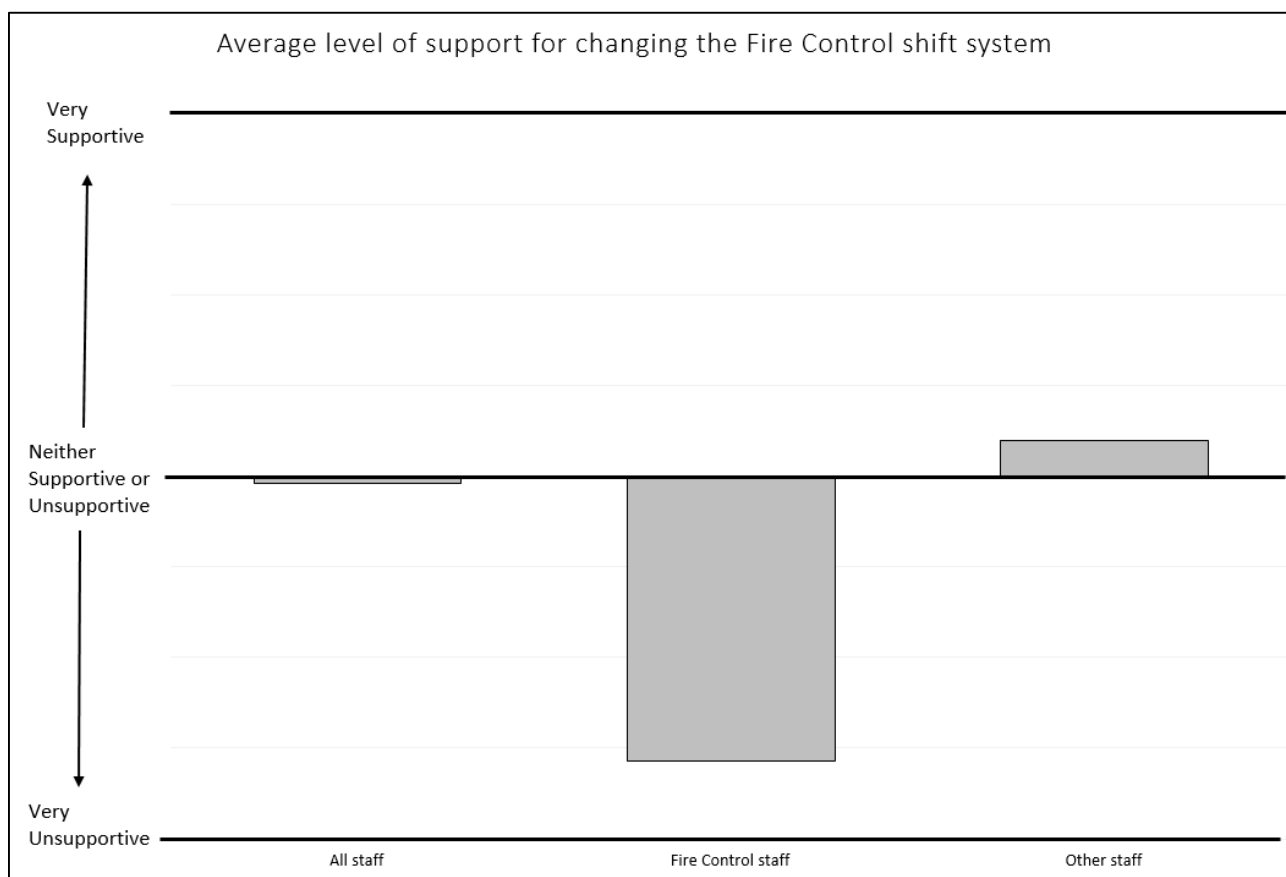
The main issues that our staff think Members should consider, in making their decision on this matter are:

- 4/3 shift system - difficulties include problems with maintaining JO cover, staffing numbers insufficient and increased O/T costs
- Self-roster shift system - difficulties include that it is open to abuse, not family friendly, lack of team cohesion, development and needs full support of all
- Control carry out lots of additional work, which somebody else will need to do
- Impact on staff, e.g. stress and increased sickness, family life etc.

Evidence relating to these matters and all other areas of concern (as appropriate), raised by the public and staff, is provided in the impact assessment document relating to this proposal.

Feedback received on changes to the current Fire Control shift system

Support for changes to the current Fire Control shift system	All staff responses	Responses from Fire Control staff	Responses from other staff
Very Unsupportive	10	5	5
Unsupportive	8	1	7
Undecided	13	1	12
Supportive	16	0	16
Very Supportive	5	0	5
Total responses	52	7	45



Feedback received, from Fire Control staff, on the outline shift systems

Support for various shift systems, by Fire Control staff	"4/3" shift system	"Self-roster" shift system
Very Unsupportive	6	6
Unsupportive	1	0
Undecided	0	0
Supportive	0	0
Very Supportive	0	1
Total responses	7	7

