

Correspondence from Organisations



Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service
Brigade Headquarters
St Michael's Street
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY1 2HJ

Your ref:
Our ref:
Email: Helen.cork@nfu.org.uk
Direct line: 01952 409238
Date: 16 December 2013

Dear Sir

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service - Budget Reductions Consultation

I am writing on behalf of the National Farmers' Union, West Midlands Region about the current consultation on Budget Reductions. The NFU is a professional body which represents the interests of 75% of all farmers and growers. In Shropshire we represent a wide range of farmers, growers and rural businesses. The future provision of Fire and Rescue services in the county is a key concern for our members as the majority of them are located within rural areas.

Our members are particularly concerned about the proposal to close four Fire Stations; at Baschurch, Clun, Hodnet and Prees. We note that your consultation paper indicates that closure would result in a number of negative impacts. The farming community is extremely concerned that these closures will inevitably result in dramatically increased response times in rural areas and the loss of valuable local knowledge. Therefore we urge you to look again at the impact of these closures on rural communities, farms and businesses.

Your firefighters (whole-time and retained) who are based in rural stations are highly valued by our members. They have excellent local knowledge, this includes knowing the land and often who to contact when rural incidents occur. This has proved invaluable when tackling isolated field fires.

Many rural incidents, for example a fire in an isolated stack of straw, occur very rapidly. Unless a crew can attend quickly it will often be too late to take action. We have consulted with our members on this issue and they have told us that when fires occur on farms it is often the local crew who attend first, even where full time crews are close by. This could be a reflection of the rural knowledge of retained firefighters. Shropshire already has the second slowest response time (nine minutes) for firefighters attending an incident; this will be slowed by a further nine-12 minutes with the budget cut proposals. Response times in urban areas are within three minutes. With funding for rural services at £17.52/head compared to £28.89/head in urban areas, the cuts in Shropshire will reduce this figure in rural areas even more. We appreciate that SF&R has taken measures to reduce the impacts of the budget cuts, but do not think that closing stations will be a suitable way forward.

It is also important to add that retained firefighters tend to live and work in the countryside and often have a good understanding of farming. When tackling a farm fire it is important that crews know how to assess farm fires and what actions are safe on a farm. For example this could include livestock management skills (assessing whether a field of cattle is safe to enter, people

who are not familiar with farm animals may be over cautious), knowledge of fertilisers and agro-chemicals.

I hope that you find our contribution to the consultation useful. If you require further information or clarification of any of the points raised in the response please do not hesitate to contact me at the West Midlands Regional Office.

Yours sincerely



Helen Cork
Shropshire County Adviser

Monday, December 16th, 2013



John Redmond
The Chief Fire Officer
Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service
St Michael Street
Shrewsbury SY1 2HJ

Subject: Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service Budget Options

Dear Mr Redmond

I am strongly opposed to the proposed closure of Clun Fire Station.

The geographical area covered by Clun Fire Station is unique in Shropshire, covering almost 100 square miles, with the area to the west and south of Clun rising to 1600 ft. The only road to the west of Clun is a 'B' road with lanes leading off it.

The time taken to reach an incident in these areas would be greatly increased for fire engines from Bishop's Castle and/or Craven Arms.

Water supplies west of Newcastle-on-Clun are very poor with no hydrants available. Therefore if there was say, a farm fire west of Clun and either Craven Arms or Bishop's Castle were unavailable, where would the second or third fire engine come from and what time would it take to reach the incident?

I own and run the newsagent shop in Clun. The 14th Century building is one of the oldest in the town and graded a two star building so if a fire occurred, time would be of the essence.

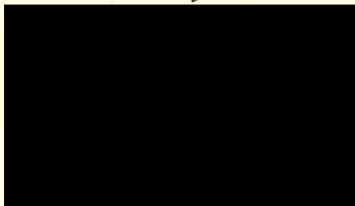
Clun is a growing town with a planning application for 50 houses opposite the Fire Station. Also, only 100 yards away from the Fire Station is the Clun Garage with all its fuel and vehicle repairs.

You will be aware of all the schools, bus depots, pubs, holiday complexes etc. in the Clun area so I would ask those who are going to make the decision on Clun's Fire Station to come to Clun and then travel the hills and lanes and see how long it takes and what it might be like in winter to travel in the area. I reckon it would be quite an eye opener to them.

I urge you all not to waste the money spent on the training of Clun fire-fighters and not to put on extra time to reach incidents.

Please do not close Clun Fire Stations.

Yours sincerely



cc. Philip Dunne
Nigel Hartin
Shropshire Council

HODNET PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk : Mrs Maryjayne Rees

Tel : 01630 685745
email : clerk@hodnet.org.uk

Rhagfyr
35 Peplow
Market Drayton
Shropshire
TF9 3JY

Shropshire Fire Authority
Brigade Headquarters
St Michaels Street
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY12HJ



18 December 2013

Dear Sirs

Chief Fire Officer John Redmond
Assistant Chief Fire Officer Andy Johnson
Councillor D Minnery
Councillor M Price

Meeting at Hodnet Lyon Hall 6th December 2013

The Parish Council wishes to thank you for the meeting on the financial issues facing the Fire Service Authority and the various operational decisions which may have to be taken as a result, including the potential closure of the Hodnet Fire Station. We in turn wanted to express our support for our retained fire crew and the valuable local service they provide.

There were a number of concerns expressed which followed the comprehensive presentation by the Fire Authority. The "Low Risk" categorisation for our area which, while linked to a population base, raised the question as to the importance or not of the rural community. This categorisation needs some further clarification on the website. The population base of course does not address our mobile population with the major trunk roads in the Hodnet area e.g. A49, A53, A41 and A442. You will be well aware of the incidents on those roads. The other major concern was the delay of the second engine in the event of a fire which required rescue e.g. two nursing homes in the absence of the Hodnet engine as the first responder.

We are encouraging our parishioners and those of adjoining parishes to respond to your website. We believe firmly that the Hodnet fire crew provide both a professional and cost-effective service to our community.

Yours faithfully

Mrs M Rees
Hodnet Parish Clerk



Whitchurch Business Park
Shakespeare Way
Whitchurch
Shropshire
SY13 1LJ
Telephone 01948 668219
Facsimile 01948 664246

CLLr Stuart West
The Chairman Shropshire Fire & Rescue Authority
St Michaels Street
Shrewsbury
SY1 2HJ

23rd December 2013

Dear *Stuart*.

I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Company by Ray, David and Linda Grocott to the Fire Authority's current consultation on the closure of Prees Fire Station.

Our first concern is around the increase in attendance times for fire appliances, at our Prees sites (Higher Heath, Brades Road, Brookdale) and our Whitchurch site at Shakespeare Way. While we are aware that the primary cover for Whitchurch is not directly affected, it is evident that this has the potential to have a significant impact on our business. Any reduction of fire cover in the area will have consequences especially in the event of busy periods or a major incident. There will inevitably be greater travelling and attendance times for supporting appliances, and consequently a corresponding increase the severity of any fire before significant and appropriate resources can be brought to bear. This will additionally significantly increase the potential fire loss of any incident, a point of which I am sure you are aware, as the Association of British Insurers are also concerned with, and raising the issue on a National scale.

This takes me too my second point, the lack resilience that the closure of Prees Fire Station (and others in the area) will have for the North East of the County.

Grocontinental are one of the significant employers in the area and make significant contributions both to the Local and National economy. In 2013 alone the Company has invested over £18 million and provided additional employment opportunities for the local community in these hard economic times. We do not see the reduction in our local emergency services as being sympathetic with this and future investment plans.

In closing, Ray Grocott the Company Chairman who incidentally is also a resident of Prees would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person and discuss the matter further. He would also like to offer you and other members of the Fire Authority an opportunity to visit the premises at a mutually convenient date and time.

Best Regards and have a wonderful Christmas,



Joe Whelan

Grocontinental Limited
Temperature Controlled Storage & Distribution

Shakespeare Way, Whitchurch Business Park
Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 1LJ

Tel: 01948 666600
Email: info@grocontinental.co.uk www.grocontinental.co.uk
CFA 26:02:14 No. 01550927



Fire Brigades Union Shropshire



The Fire Brigades Union Office, Telford Central Fire Station,
Stafford Park 1, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 3BW.

Brigade Secretary: **Matt Lamb**
Office: 01952 201135
Mobile: 07919 327690
E-Mail: Matt.Lamb@fbu.org.uk

30th December 2013

To ACFO Johnson

cc CFO Redmond

Dear Andy,

20:20 Phase 2 consultation

Since the inception of IRMP and repeal of National Standards of Fire Cover, the FBU across the country has fully engaged in consultations and negotiations arising from changes brought to the Fire Service through Risk Management Planning. As you know, on each occasion in Shropshire this has started with our comprehensive response to the Service's IRMP, both strategic and action plan and in the case of "Public Value" we provided an interim report also.

Our intention is of course to fully respond to 20:20 when it reaches its final draft in the spring of 2014. The 20:20 process is designed as a three part process, the second of which ends on 31st December 2013. We had not intended to make a response to this part of the process, but now feel it is worth outlining some initial thoughts here.

Ironically, as SFRS has moved from annual IRMP to longer term plans and now with "Public Value" and "20:20" to 5 year plans, funding to the Fire Service has changed from 3 year settlements to annual cuts. How any Service is able to make long term plans based on Risk Management whilst swathes of funding is cut on an annual basis without any indication of the long term forecast is preposterous.

We set out in both our responses to Public Value, that the cuts that it brought to the Service by 2015 would leave SFRS at a level below a minimum rescue service. Any further cut, which includes 20:20, will further erode SFRS below that minimum standard.

We appreciate that if the funding is not available then resources are unaffordable. This is contrary to Risk Management Planning where the risk or need should generate the funding and not vice versa. However it is clear to us that alternate crewing of specialist appliances brought about by Public Value has detrimentally compromised the level of fire cover in Shropshire to a substandard level.

Indeed, many of the changes made by Public value were not efficiencies but cuts to Service. If Shropshire is to be afforded a properly funded fire and rescue service many of those changes implemented by Public Value will need to be reversed.

The FBU in Shropshire has used simple risk assessment tools to evaluate the minimum levels of resources required for the risk in Shropshire. In our Interim review of Public Value, we have demonstrated how those tools work and how we applied them to Shropshire. Our point of view has not changed and will not until the risks faced by our members or the method by which we deal with those risks change.

Therefore as the proposals contained within 20:20 are undoubtedly further cuts rather than efficiencies we have to oppose these proposals. This is because these proposals represent a fundamental and pernicious cut to Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service that will ultimately lead to more severe injuries both to the public and Firefighters, greater damage to property and businesses and at some point avoidable deaths.

Before making any comment on the actual proposals, we believe that it is the duty of SFRS in its IRMP to present the proposals in realistic terms. The Service is beyond “doing more with less.” Any such attempt to dress these cuts as ways of working more effectively must be removed from the IRMP.

Interestingly other Services are not backward in publicising the effect cuts will have on their service. Chief Constables are often blunt about the effects of cuts to Police, and Britain’s most senior military officer General Sir Nick Houghton has described cuts to the defence budget leaving a “hollow force” and the Royal Navy reaching “critical mass.” It is incumbent on the 20:20 IRMP to be blunt to the people of Shropshire that their fire and rescue service will be inadequate in comparison to the risk.

This will be difficult to achieve in the case of the proposals to cut Fire Control as these will not be fully understood by the general public. Headlines of shared resources and mergers sound common sense to the general public and so it will be more important to demonstrate the folly of reducing levels of staff and resources in Fire Control. Ultimately, Fire Control is the hub of the Service. Without it nothing works. Ceding Fire Control to another Service will undoubtedly lead to the rest of the Service being controlled by that outside body whoever it may be.

Closing RDS stations will be higher profile and more controversial. The public will understand fire engines responding from further away will affect their safety. However it is important also to stress that surrounding areas as well as the rest of Shropshire will be impacted by these closures. All fire stations and their appliances are part of a network that supports each other. Removal of any of these appliances will affect the network and its ability to deal with incidents.

This is clearly the same with a wholetime appliance but without the headline of a fire station closure. Again this obviously represents a critical cut to Shropshire’s emergency response. However, when there is not the funding to afford a proper operational response, the public of Shropshire need to be made aware of what those consequences will be.

Changing shift patterns is included as an alternative to removing a wholetime pump, but this is not a credible alternative. Day Crewing Plus has been introduced in other counties where the number of staff is much higher and the number of calls at some of their stations is much

lower. This is not a viable option in Shropshire where the nucleus of staff we will end up with in 2014 is already too small to accommodate an alternative shift system.

Clearly we will respond more fully during the final IRMP stage as we always have, but I hope it is helpful to the Service to give the outline as we have above at this stage of the process.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Lamb

Brigade Secretary
FBU Shropshire

Lynn Ince

To: rosemarie@rourke.org.uk
Subject: FW: Fire and Rescue contact us form from the public site
Attachments: Covering letter to go out with IRMP 2020 website info and survey.pdf; IRMP 2020 Fire Service public survey v2.pdf; Budget reductions written website copy.pdf

From: web.manager@shropshire.gov.uk
Sent: 12 December 2013 12:26:06 (UTC) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London
To: IRMP TEAM
Subject: Fire and Rescue contact us form from the public site

Contents of the form:

Name:

[REDACTED]

Email address:

[REDACTED]

Organisation:

Hazelhurst Close Tenants Association

Are you...:

Public

Message:

Hazelhurst Close Tenants Association

We submit this letter in full support of maintaining the fire station in Clun town. Its closure means lives at risk and that is an unacceptable hazard to expect Clun residents to agree to.

With the ambulance services already cut back in our area, our first line of defence is our Fire brigade and while we fully accept that this situation is not the fault of or the problem for our Shropshire Fire services, we ask that this is taken into account. We have a healthy tourist industry which means more traffic on the roads in summer months. Our fire station in Clun has consistently been there to deal with RTA's, without them the extra time it would take to arrive is unthinkable.

As the fire service itself is at pain to remind us, fire can spread in a household in minutes. The roads leading to Clun are narrow and bending and often to overtake farm or heavy machinery we have to rely on those drivers to find a safe place to pull over. The minutes wasted will mean the difference between life and death for anyone trapped in their homes, or even someone trapped in a RTA. That anyone considers this to be 'acceptable risk' is beyond comprehension.

We understand from our Chairperson who attended the meeting held in Clun by the Shropshire Fire services (in her role of Town Councillor for Clun) that other neighbouring brigades are also facing cuts; Powys which shares our boards to have to consider their own funding policy with possible cuts. This could well mean fire services at Knighton might be disrupted. This would be catastrophic for residents on both areas and we believe that future consultation with Powys is needed before any considered closures.

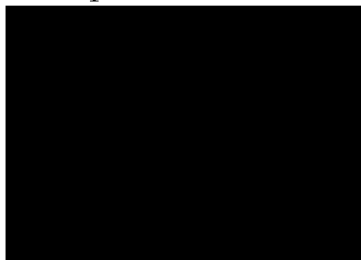
With this in mind we as a tenants association will further our concerns to the MP for South Shropshire in the hope that he can at least voice our concerns regarding the new funding system's that have caused these cuts in the first place.

On a more emotive note, the fire station here at Clun is an intricate part of the town's make up and infrastructure. Their services are called upon in emergency situations but also to support the town

during festivals and celebrations. They have given us their time, free of charge, for many charitable works and we are all eternally grateful to them.

n.b Many of the residents of Hazelhurst Close are elderly or disabled. It has come to light that they are all very concerned that without having access to the internet their views cannot be aired. This is an issue we suspect is happening country wide. While we are in firm favour of modern technology we must remain very aware that for now there is at least 50% of the population that do not. Many of these live in rural areas and do not have library or public space access. Survey Monkey is a very good and useful tool to collect information cheaply, but it sadly will not reflect at present the views of the majority of people.

Hazelhurst close Tenants Association
Chairperson and contact



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Lynn Ince

To: Sandra Trevor
Subject: RE: Reference - IMPORTANT: Fire Service Response Times Could Increase in Your Area

From: Sandra Trevor [mailto:s.trevor@oswestry-tc.gov.uk]
Sent: 17 December 2013 17:05
To: Andy Johnson
Subject: Reference - IMPORTANT: Fire Service Response Times Could Increase in Your Area

Dear Mr Johnson

I write further to your email dated the 22nd November 2013 and also the meeting held on the 11th December 2013 attended by certain Councillors from this Authority.

The Town Council is against the closure of any local fire stations.

We have particular concerns over the implications for Oswestry if Baschurch fire station should close. This on the basis that Oswestry will have no cover for any major incident (currently provided by Baschurch) and will have to rely on Shrewsbury. Equally, if there are any incidents in Baschurch then Oswestry will have to attend, leaving Oswestry itself vulnerable should anything happen in the town in the meantime.

We also note that Ryton XI Towns, Molverley, Kinnerley and Nescliffe are currently covered by Baschurch and in the absence of that station, coverage will have to be provided by Oswestry.

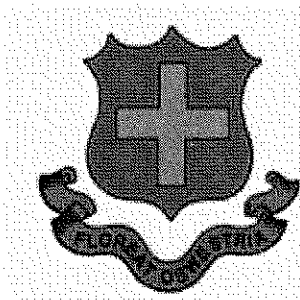
You will of course be aware that Oswestry is the busiest station in this area with retained firefighters. If that personnel is required to take on Baschurch work and cover approximately 100 incidents a year then this will have an implication as staff will have to ask their employers for considerably more time off than they do now which would then put the staffing service at risk.

It is hoped that these comments will be taken into consideration in your decision making.

Kind Regards

David J Preston
Town Clerk

 01691 680222
www.oswestry-tc.gov.uk
Follow us on Twitter @OswestryTC



The views expressed in this email are personal and may not necessarily reflect those of Oswestry Town Council, unless explicitly stated otherwise

Lynn Ince

To: townclerk@bishopscastle.co.uk
Subject: Fire and Rescue contact us form from the public site

From: web.manager@shropshire.gov.uk
Sent: 19 December 2013 14:30:41 (UTC) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London
To: IRMP TEAM
Subject: Fire and Rescue contact us form from the public site

Contents of the form:

Name:
Diane Malley
Email address:
townclerk@bishopscastle.co.uk
Organisation:
Bishop's Castle Town Council
Are you...:
Business

Message:
Bishop's Castle Town Council wish to register opposition to any proposal to close Clun Fire Station. This part of Shropshire is very rural and therefore these smaller fire-stations have to cover a larger geographical area. This will often mean response times can be longer. If Clun Fire Station were to close then this will put added pressure on the remaining stations such as Bishop's Castle, that will then need to cover larger areas; response times will suffer.

In addition previously in the case of large incidences units from both Bishop's Castle and Clun have attended. With one of the stations being removed then there will be additional risk put on members of the public and fire officers.

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For more information, please refer to <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/privacy.nsf>

From Commander Phil Morris Royal Navy Retired
Clerk to Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council

To: Nigel Hartin - nigel.hartin@shropshire.gov.uk

Copied:

John Redmond - John.redmond@shropshirefire.gov.uk

Trevor Williams - Trevor.williams@shropshirefire.gov.uk

Andy Johnson - Andy.Johnson@shropshirefire.gov.uk

29 December 2013

Dear Cllr Harting,

This letter is sent on behalf of the Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council following the reports received from Trevor Williams via the LJC and also in conjunction with fallout from the recent meeting at Clun Memorial Hall.

The Parish Council is very concerned about the threat of closure to Clun Fire Station.

Our Parish is right at the edge of Shropshire, and the Parish Council believes that response times will increase way beyond the set targets if this station is closed. We have a large amount of unclassified roads providing access the remote dwellings, farms and businesses in our Parish. Many dwellings are heated with wood fires and the Council also believes that good local knowledge is paramount in locating incidents, especially during winter months when the roads can be hazardous and satellite navigation often causes problems.

As a Council we are very firmly of the opinion that the essential support, local knowledge and fast response times provided by Clun Fire Station are something we simply cannot afford to lose.

In our Parish we have already seen and experienced problems caused by the centralisation of the Ambulance Service.

We understand and appreciate the dilemma for the Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service with regard to budgetary reductions but as a Council we would vigorously implore that Shropshire Council in conjunction with the Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service to find a way to keep this vital local service in place.

Yours sincerely

Phil Morris

PHILIP DUNNE MP
(LUDLOW)



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Stuart West
Chairman
Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service HQ
St. Michaels Street
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY1 2HJ

22nd January 2014
Our ref: JB/22.01.2014/

Dear Stuart

Further to my letter last week, I enclose a copy of the results from the survey I have undertaken this month of those likely to be affected by the closure of Clun Fire Station.

You will see from the enclosed that within a short time 829 people have already responded to the survey, totalling 27% of those contacted, and I am receiving more responses each day. This level of feedback is clearly indicative of the strength of feeling local people have on this issue. You will not be surprised to learn that 98% of those who have responded do not want Clun Fire Station to close, with two thirds advocating the use of Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service's reserves to maintain the retained station in Clun.

As I expressed in my earlier letter, the potential loss of the station is of particular concern to local residents due to the remote rural nature of the area served by Clun Fire Station, and its distance from other stations within Shropshire and neighbouring counties. You will see that more than half of the respondents fear that should Clun Fire Station be closed, the nearest alternative appliance would take more than 20 minutes to arrive.

A large proportion (85%) of those who responded to my survey have had some experience of the fire service operated from Clun in one way or another, whether in responding to an incident or the exemplary charitable work done by your officers in the local community. Many people also took the time to write additional notes extolling the service of the fire-fighters based in Clun and their importance to the local community, not only in fighting fires but in providing fire safety advice, helping fit alarms and their considerable charity work.

I hope you will consider carefully the feedback from those who have responded to this survey, and make use of the information to inform your Board's discussions about the future of Clun Fire Station. It would clearly be reassuring to the local community if you were able to rule out closure of the retained stations, including Clun, as part of your further deliberations on achieving the savings you are seeking.

Yours sincerely

Philip Dunne
MP for Ludlow

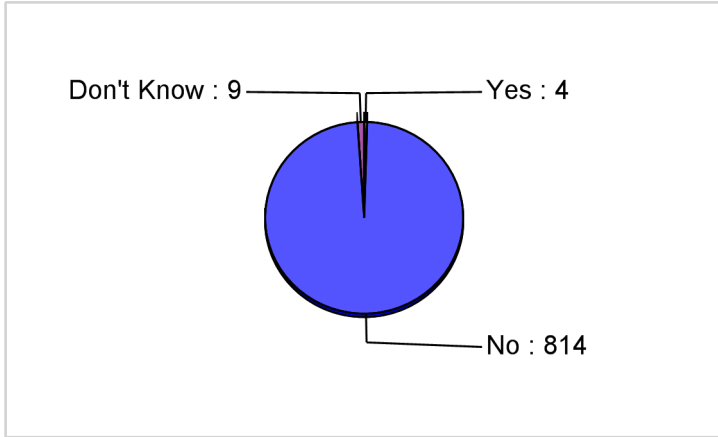
From the Constituency Office at:
54 Broad Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1GP
Tel: 01584 872187 Fax: 01584 876345
Email: gibsonja@parliament.uk Website: www.philipdunne.com

Clun Fire Survey [LUDL]

Survey Date: 16 Jan 2014

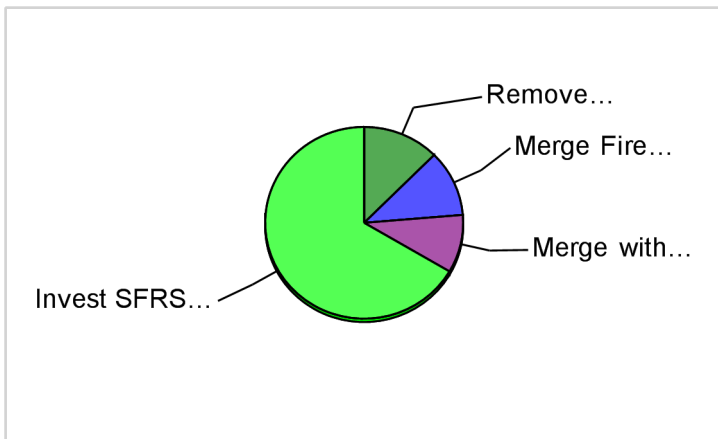
Audience Size: 3063 Respondents: 829 % Responded: 27%

1 Should SFR close Clun Fire Station [Question Analysis](#)



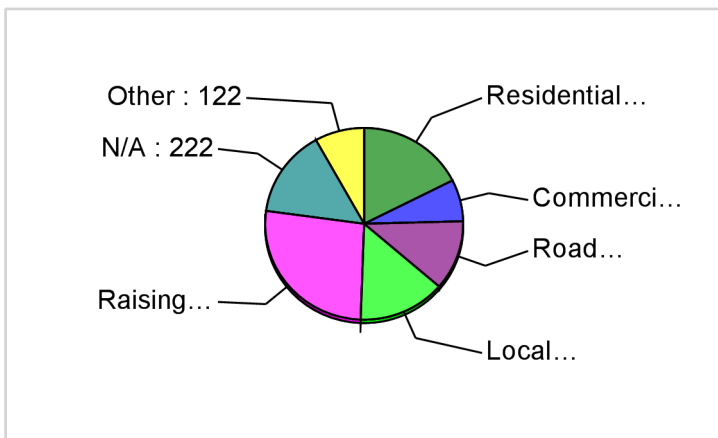
Option	Respondents	Linked VI	Linked Flags
Yes	4	0%	- 0
No	814	98%	- 0
Don't Know	9	1%	- 0
Total	827		

2 Which other option would you choose [Question Analysis](#)



Option	Responses	Linked VI	Linked Flags
Remove Engine from Sh	124	13%	- 0
Merge Fire Control with	111	11%	- 0
Merge with neighbourin	97	10%	- 0
Invest SFRS Reserves	660	67%	- 0
Total	992		

3 Have you experienced Fire Service from Clun [Question Analysis](#)

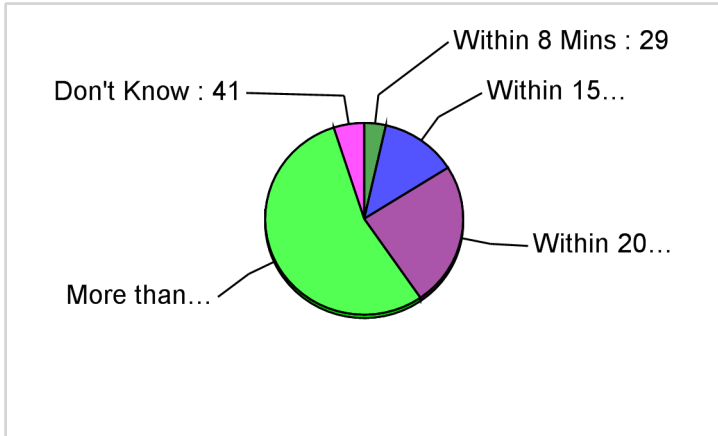


Option	Responses	Linked VI	Linked Flags
Residential Property Fire	264	18%	- 0
Commercial Property Fir	106	7%	- 0
Road Traffic Collision	177	12%	- 0
Local Flooding	214	14%	- 0
Raising funds for Charit	400	27%	- 0
N/A	222	15%	- 0
Other	122	8%	- 0
Total	1505		

Clun Fire Survey [LUDL]

4 Nearest alternative appliance to reach you?

[Question Analysis](#)



Option	Respondents	Linked VI	Linked Flags
Within 8 Mins	29 4%	-	0
Within 15 Mins	103 13%	-	0
Within 20 Mins	200 24%	-	0
More than 20 Mins	449 55%	-	0
Don't Know	41 5%	-	0
Total	822		