

Date: 01/10/2014 14:55

Subject: RE: Strengthening our Fire & Rescue Service - A Consultation by Dorset Fire Authority

Dear

Thank you. I have been asked to respond as follows for the Stours Parish Council

The Parish Council supports the general sentiments already expressed. However the Parish Council does express a concern about any withdrawal of local service; mention has been made of Shaftesbury and Gillingham fire stations, but some parts of the Stours parishes will probably be supported from Sturminster Newton. (The Stours covers East Stour, Stour Provost, Stour Row, Todber and West Stour).

In a rural area where there is heavy reliance on oil fired heating and real fires, there is always a risk of fire. The basic rule in how effective the fire brigade can be in responding to a fire is how quickly they can get there - it's all about how far away they are. Shaftesbury and Gillingham are

our nearest and is absolutely essential to the safety of our area. So the basic question is whether Scenario 3 will ensure a continued (albeit) on-call service to be maintained there without us having to worry whether the nearest fire station is further away with a longer response time and whether they commit to keeping it open long term.

It appears from the consultation papers that a decision has all but been made in favour of Scenario 3, despite what is actually stated. As this would allegedly yield the greatest saving, because of amalgamation of "back office" services, it ought to offer the best prospect of maintaining front-line services.

Kind regards