



# DRAFT

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WHEN  
COMPLETE**

*Responses will be  
independently  
processed by  
ORS (Opinion  
Research Services)*

## Resource Review Consultation

This is an opportunity to give your views on Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service's (HWFRS) proposed changes to resourcing. HWFRS has carried out a Resource Review as part of its duty to ensure it is making best use of its available resources and funding to provide the most effective service possible.

There are several challenges that HWFRS aimed to address through its Resource Review and HWFRS believes that its resources could be rebalanced to improve resilience, crewing levels and availability on some of the busier fire engines and enhance its prevention activity in the community. Under the proposals, HWFRS would remove eight On-Call fire engines from multi-pump fire stations; change the third (On-Call) fire engine at Wyre Forest to night only-cover and allow firefighters up to eight minutes to get to the station; and reinvest all the savings into supporting some the busiest fire engines by providing more Wholetime firefighters on some wholetime and On-Call stations, who are immediately available and on duty during the day and night. **Please note the review does not propose closing any fire stations, removing or reducing any first responding fire engines. All the resources realised from the removal of the eight fire engines will be fully reinvested in other fire engines, this is not a budgetary cut or efficiency review.**

**There is an online version of this questionnaire which we encourage you to complete. Please visit [www.opinionresearch.co.uk/HWFire](http://www.opinionresearch.co.uk/HWFire) by 4th March 2024 [from 08.01.24];** or you can complete this paper questionnaire and return it FREEPOST to arrive by the same date. It should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete.

This survey is being carried out on behalf of HWFRS, by Opinion Research Services (ORS), an independent specialist research practice. All the questions are optional and any information you provide will be processed by ORS in accordance with the latest Data Protection regulations; any personally identifiable information will be kept for no more than 3 months after any decisions have been finalised. ORS will produce an independent consultation report in which feedback from individual members of the public will be anonymous, but views from organisations or someone acting in their official capacity may be attributed in full. For further information, please see [www.ors.org.uk/privacy](http://www.ors.org.uk/privacy).

If you have any queries about the consultation, you can email HWFRS on [consultation@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:consultation@hwfire.org.uk) or Catherine Wall at ORS on [catherine.wall@ors.org.uk](mailto:catherine.wall@ors.org.uk).

You can contact the Market Research Society on 0800 975 9596 to confirm that ORS are a genuine research practice.

# Resource Review Consultation Document

We have summarised the main issues in the consultation plan to help you answer our questions. However, you can access the full consultation document by going to: <https://www.hwfire.org.uk/your-right-to-know/consultation/> or you can request a paper copy by emailing [consultation@hwfire.org.uk](mailto:consultation@hwfire.org.uk) [from 08.01.24]

## Background information

Wholetime firefighters are those whose main employment is with the Service - They are considered immediately available to respond to an emergency and work on-duty shifts. On-Call firefighters are those who live or work within five minutes of their fire station and usually have alternative employment away from the Service – there is an allowance of 6 minutes from the time they are alerted to when the fire engine is deployed.

The Service currently has 41 fire engines across 25 strategically located fire stations, with 11 of those fire stations having more than one fire engine located there: 17 of these fire stations are solely crewed by On-Call firefighters and the other eight fire stations (in the cities and larger towns) have a mix of fire engines crewed by both Wholetime and On-Call firefighters (either two, three or four fire engines). The first fire engine at each location is the busiest and most used fire engine ensuring that virtually all parts of the two counties can receive a fire engine within around twenty minutes, even in the most rural areas, with most built up areas receiving a fire engine much more quickly. Wholetime staffed fire engines in the most built-up areas are the most used fire engines in the Service.

All 25 fire stations have at least one fire engine that is crewed by On-Call firefighters. A total of 31 fire engines are crewed solely by On-Call firefighters across the 25 locations, with five other fire engines crewed by Wholetime firefighters during the day and crewed at night by On-Call staff.

### Q1. Which of the following best describes the capacity within which you are responding to this questionnaire?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

Member of the public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Representative of a local organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff member at HWRFS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are a HWRFS staff member, or you are representing an organisation, please provide your name/organisation name below.

## A need for change

*HWRFS has a number of challenges that it aimed to address through its Resource Review, namely:*

- *To improve resilience in the busiest Wholetime fire engines and increase crewing levels,*
- *To improve the availability of all the remaining fire engines,*
- *To ensure that the On-Call firefighter duty system is more sustainable and affordable,*
- *To increase community engagement and capacity to deliver more Prevention activities,*

- To explore new ways of working with On-Call staff,
- To further improve the operational support for On-Call fire stations,
- To reduce the need for excessive overtime shifts to be worked on Wholetime fire stations.

HWFRS believes that its resources could be rebalanced to provide improved resilience and crewing levels on busier fire engines, improve support for On-Call fire engines, develop new more sustainable ways of On-Call working, and undertake prevention (home and community safety) activity in the community.

**Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that HWFRS should develop or alter the current On-Call staffing model in HWFRS and rebalance how the Service allocates its resources and improve availability?**

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Removal of On-Call fire engines

Outline: The Review, which considered the 11 fire stations with more than one fire engine, identified that up to eight On-Call fire engines could be safely removed from some fire stations with two or more fire engines, and that the way On-Call cover at another station could be changed without adversely affecting the ability to respond effectively to incidents across the two counties. These proposals provide savings which will **all** be used as reinvestment in other busier fire engines to improve resilience, crewing levels, and support more prevention work across communities.

The Review found that these eight fire engines per year on average:

- attend only 29 emergency response incidents or 0.38% of all incidents each year as the first or only fire engine when there is no other fire engine available. Across the 8 fire engines this is an average of less than 4 emergencies per fire engine per year where they go as the first fire engine in attendance in these circumstances.
- attend just 325 incidents or 4.41% of all incidents each year in their own station area.
- attend only a total of 410 incidents each year across the Service, most often as a supporting fire engine. This equates to just 5.57% of all incidents attended by HWFRS. This ranges from 0.31% to 1.14% across the eight fire engines and these are the lowest number of incidents attended by any fire engine. When they are not available (on average 68% of the time) this role is being filled by another nearby fire engine.
- are deemed to be not used at 47.59% of the incidents they attend.
- have an overall availability of just 31.99% as they often do not have suitably qualified, skilled or enough available On-Call firefighters to crew the fire engine at the time required.

Proposal: HWFRS is proposing to remove the following eight On-Call fire engines from multi-pump fire stations, reducing overall staffing levels to meet the needs of the fire stations and to allow reallocation of savings:

- Fourth fire engine at Wyre Forest Station (reduced On-Call unit to remain)
- Third fire engine at Redditch Station (reduced On-Call unit to remain)
- Third fire engine at Hereford (night cover On-Call unit only to remain)



## Reinvesting savings to support the busiest fire engines

**Outline:** By reinvesting savings into supporting the busiest fire engines there would be additional resilience for the most used 25 fire engines. This will normally provide the availability of over 50 wholetime firefighters on duty in the day (from around 43) and 23 firefighters immediately available on duty at night (from 20) to respond to incidents, alongside additional firefighters available On-Call at night on the new day crewing model.

**Proposal:** HWFRS is proposing to reinvest all the savings into supporting the busiest fire engines by providing more Wholetime firefighters, who are immediately available and on duty during the day and night. By improving Wholetime resilience this will release some resources currently used to underpin Wholetime shortfalls to be able to support other On Call fire engines across the Service area.

The table below summarises the proposed reinvestment:

Station	Proposal
Wyre Forest	First crewed fire engine will increase Wholetime crewing from four to five firefighters on most occasions providing the public with more firefighters as quickly as possible when they most need them, On-Call units will crew one fire engine at night and crew special appliances (as required at those locations) and use a dedicated 4-wheel drive vehicle to mobilise any available On-Call Firefighters to incidents as required.
Worcester	
Hereford	
Malvern	On-Call units will crew one fire engine and where applicable crew some special appliances (appliances used for specific types of incidents, provided as required for local need) and/or be able to use a dedicated separate vehicle to transport any available additional On-Call Firefighters to some incidents, as required.
Redditch	
Leominster	On-Call units will crew one fire engine and any special appliances (as required at those locations), use a dedicated 4-wheel drive vehicle (as above), and will receive an establishment of Wholetime staff to improve the level of fire cover for the first fire engine during the daytime, reduce response times and increase the available resources to significantly improve the prevention work undertaken in these communities.
Bromyard	

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to reinvest all the savings into supporting other fire engines by providing more Wholetime firefighters, who are immediately available and on duty during the day and night, and to provide improved daytime support for other On-Call fire engines?**

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Using alternative, more flexible modes of transport

***Outline:** There will be instances where the first On-Call fire engine at a station is mobilised to an incident with a crew of four, five or six, and there may be additional firefighters available and respond into that station. If the incident requires it these firefighters could travel to that incident in the four-wheel drive vehicle to supplement and support the crew on the first fire engine. The full normal attendance of fire engines will still be sent (termed a Pre-Determined Attendance), and these vehicles will be for transporting additional staff only and will not be a 'response' vehicle with equipment or deployed as such.*

***Proposal:** HWFRS is proposing to provide alternative, more flexible modes of transport (i.e. smaller compact fire engines, four-wheel drive vehicles), to fully utilise available firefighters, at locations where a fire engine has been removed.*

**Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to provide alternative, more flexible modes of transport (i.e. four-wheel drive vehicles) for any available additional On-Call Firefighters?**

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Implementing a more sustainable On-Call staffing model

***Outline:** The review shows the current large establishment of On-Call fire engines is not sustainable within the current budget and crewing model, and not required based on the data on usage and availability. It may not actually be possible to sustainably recruit the numbers of On-Call Firefighters required in some multi-appliance fire station areas. The review also shows the challenges of recruiting and retaining On-Call staff is continuous and there are more sustainable and feasible options available to maintain a high level of operational cover. The proposal aims to reallocate savings made to provide more Wholetime firefighters, alternative vehicles, and staffing models which will increase the available resources and improve prevention work in our communities.*

***Proposal:** HWFRS is proposing to use the savings generated to provide a more sustainable staffing model, and explore some new ways of working with some of the existing On-Call staffing models.*

**Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to use the savings generated to provide a more sustainable staffing model?**

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE** BOX ONLY

<b>Strongly agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to agree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Tend to disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Strongly disagree</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Any further comments?

**Q8. Do you have any OTHER COMMENTS about the proposed changes to Resourcing?**

PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## Further Research

ORS may wish to contact you to invite you to take part in a small focus group or forum, prior to reporting the findings of this consultation. You would need to provide your name and contact details but there is no obligation to take part at any stage. Personal information provided will be held securely by ORS, will not be passed on to any other party, and kept for no more than 3 months after any decisions have been finalised.

Are you happy for ORS to contact you to invite you to take part in a focus group or forum, and if so, to provide contact details to enable them to do so?

PLEASE TICK ✓ **ONE BOX ONLY**

Yes - I am happy to be contacted by ORS and invited to take part in further research relating to this consultation on the Resource Review Consultation.

No - I would rather not be contacted by ORS about research relating to this consultation on the Resource Review Consultation.

If you happy to be contacted by ORS to invite you to take part in further research, please provide your name and preferred contact details below.

Name

Telephone number

Email address



## Profiling information

If you are responding *on behalf of* an ORGANISATION, which organisation do you represent?

Please name the organisation and any specific group or department. Please also say who the organisation represents, what area it covers, and how you gathered the views of members.

PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

If you are providing your own PERSONAL RESPONSE, please answer the questions below

HWFRS has a duty to promote equality and ensure all parts of the community are included in this consultation, but the following questions are optional. All consultation responses will be taken into account regardless of whether you provide your details below.

What is your full postcode?

This will help HWFRS understand views in different areas

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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PLEASE TICK ✓ ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

What was your age on your last birthday?

- |                                            |                                     |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 25          | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 34          | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 to 74   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44          | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 to 84   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54          | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 or over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |                                     |

What is your ethnic group?

- White British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Do you work for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

Please return the questionnaire to arrive by **4<sup>th</sup> March 2024** to:  
Opinion Research Services · FREEPOST SS1018 · PO Box 530 · Swansea · SA1 1ZL