Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Proposed changes to our operational response

Consultation
5 November 2018 - 14 January 2019

***V2 - This is an updated version of the consultation paper to include the position of special appliances on each of the maps. No other amendments have been made. Original copies (V1) of this document are available on request.**

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Creating the Safest Community
www.twfire.gov.uk

Your Views, Your Service

Foreword

Chief Fire Officer and Chair of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Thank you for taking the time to look at this document. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) is operating within a challenging financial context, having experienced some of the poorest funding settlements across fire and rescue in England since austerity began in 2010. As a result, we need to look at how we resource our operational response services, such as our fire stations and control room, to ensure we can meet these financial demands while continuing our vision of creating the safest community across Tyne and Wear.

Every three years, we produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan that sets out how we will respond to local needs based on a detailed assessment of risk and demand. This is a public document that is required by law.

Over the last year we have carried out extensive reviews as part of our IRMP 2017-20. Based on the evidence we have gathered, we have created three proposals for change that will ensure that the Service can continue to be one of the fastest fire and rescues services in England when responding to life threating incidents.

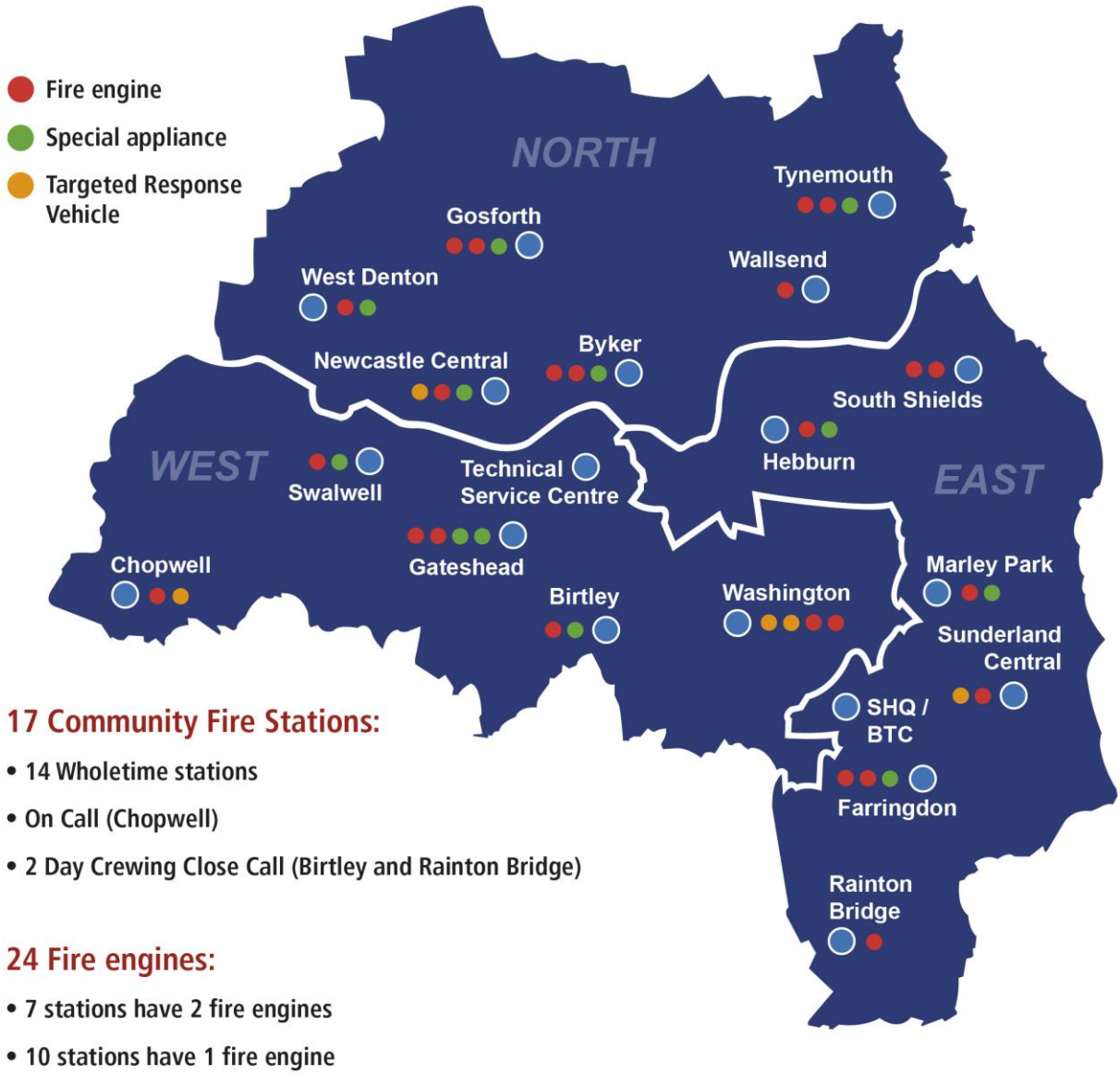
We encourage you to share your views. This is **your** Fire and Rescue Service and **your views count.**

Chris Lowther (Chief Fire Officer)

Barry Curran (Chair of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority)

1. Our service to you

The Authority operates through 17 community fire stations (CFS). Fourteen of these are full-time stations, two are day-crewing close-call (DCCC, an arrangement in which firefighters are based on site for longer periods of time) and one is on-call. Seven CFS have two fire engines, 10 have one engine. Two CFS have a full use of a targeted response vehicle (TRV) used for lower risk incidents, whilst two further stations have a TRV for use between 18:00 and 00:00 on a risk basis. A further TRV is located at Chopwell CFS and is crewed as required by on-call firefighters. The figure below illustrates the position of our resources. The current cost of crewing our operations, including firefighters, flexible duty officers and control staff is approximately £24.5m.



2. Our priorities and core activities

2.1 TWFRS' overall vision is "creating the safest community", and our mission is **"to save life, reduce risk, provide humanitarian services and protect the environment".** This mission is clearly linked to community safety, but the preventative focus means that the service is targeting vulnerable individuals and thus contributing to wider community outcomes.

2.2 TWFRS relate to the statutory duties placed on the Authority under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Fire Service National Framework 2018.

2.3 Our five priorities are to:

- reduce the occurrence of all incidents attended and their consequences
- proactively collaborate with partners to promote community safety, health and wellbeing, social responsibility and inclusion
- use our resources economically, efficiently and effectively by focusing on areas of greatest risk and minimising impact on the environment
- collaborate with partner agencies to develop and resource effective emergency plans, inform response arrangements and ensure we are a resilient Service
- provide a highly skilled, healthy, motivated workforce, embracing equality, diversity and inclusion to best serve our communities.

3. A risk-based Service

3.1 Our Community Risk Profile is an assessment and analysis of risk across the communities of Tyne and Wear. It is derived from detailed incident, census, geographical and environmental datasets, including information from our partners. This information is analysed to create a picture of risk in Tyne and Wear, enabling us to target our resources effectively.

4. Our options for change

4.1 Our options for consultation are about changing how we work in the light of funding challenges, whilst still seeking to minimise the impact on community and firefighter risk. These options have been developed through a formal review process which carried out detailed analysis of the varying levels of risk and demand in Tyne and Wear. All proposals have been assessed for their potential impact.

Proposal 1 - Dynamically adjust the distribution and availability of appliances [fire engines] based on risk and demand

Proposal 2 – Introduce a range of duty systems based on risk and demand

Proposal 3 – Adjust the staffing model to deliver a more effective and efficient use of resources

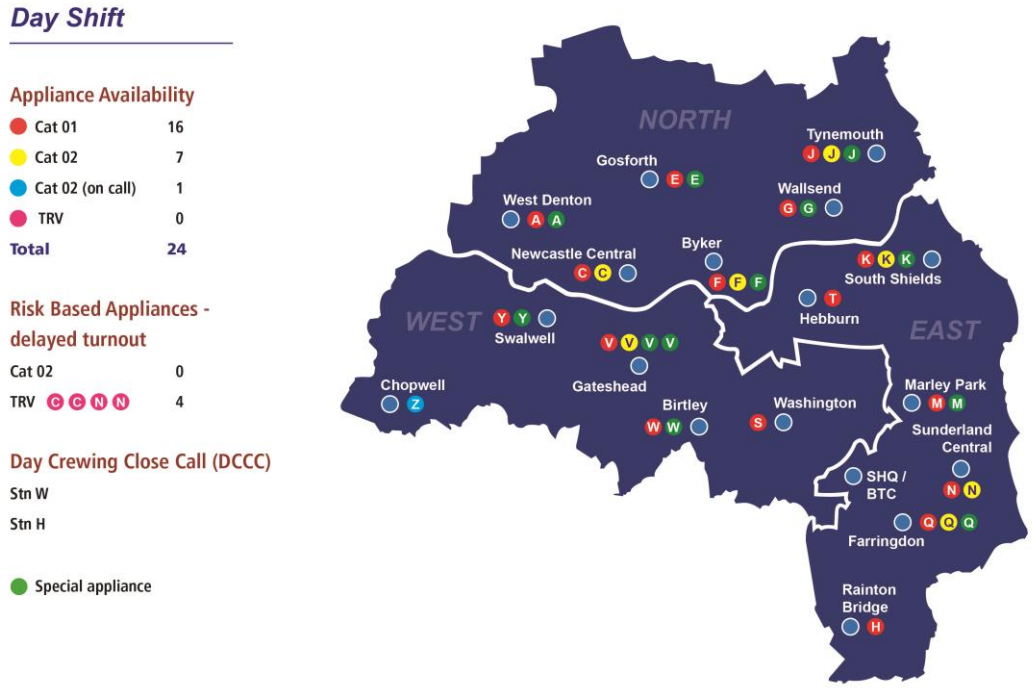
4.2 TWFRS recommends a staged implementation of **all three** proposals over the next three years. This would enable clear monitoring to occur, and thus ensuring the controlled management of community and firefighter risk.

4.3 Proposal 1 - Dynamically adjust the distribution and availability of fire engines based on risk and demand

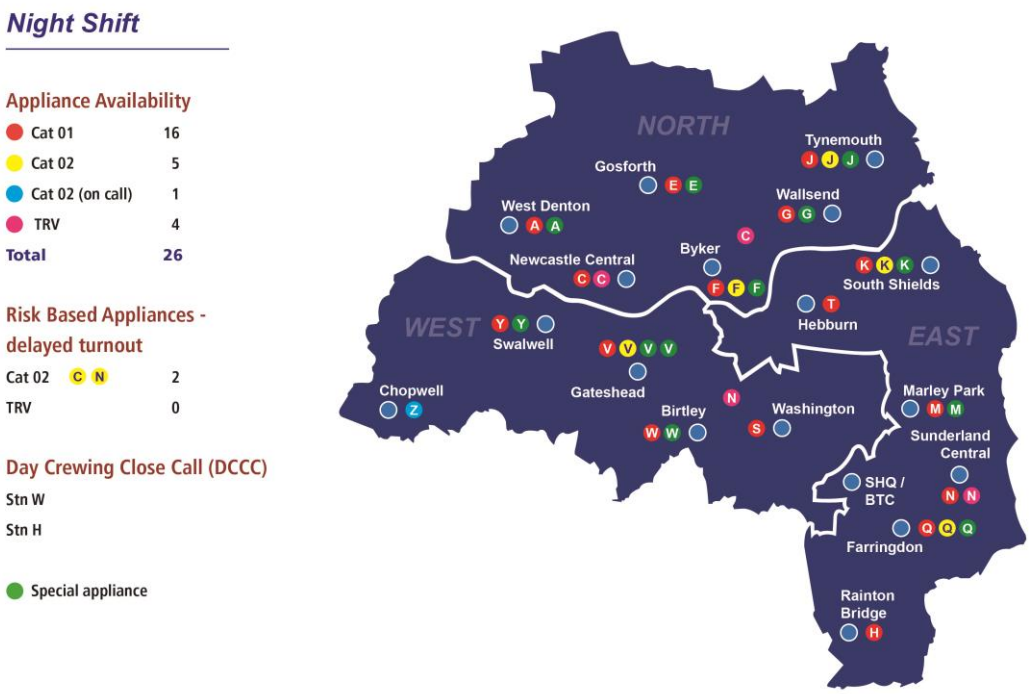
Under this proposal, resources including fire engines, special appliances and Targeted Response Vehicles (TRVs) would be re-positioned based on community risk and expected demand. This would mean:

- one fire engine from Gosforth Community Fire Station will be relocated to Newcastle Central Community Fire Station alongside a TRV from Washington Community Fire Station
- a further fire engine and TRV from Washington Community Fire Station will be relocated to Sunderland Central Community Fire Station
- TRVs will be sent in support of larger lifesaving fire engines at incidents such as dwelling fires
- Heavy Rescue appliances at Newcastle Central and Hebburn Community Fire Stations, that are crewed when needed, will be relocated to Wallsend and South Shields Community Fire Stations.

The proposed fire engine positioning for Day and Night Shifts are set out in the diagrams below.



Proposed fire engine position during dayshift (Proposal 1) **** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***



Proposed fire engine position during nightshift (Proposal 1) **** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***

Impact on incident response times: The introduction of Proposal 1 would marginally increase average response times. The time to risk level 1 incidents (the highest risk) would increase by two seconds for the first fire engine and one second for the second engine. The time for risk level two incidents would increase by one second for the first fire engine and five seconds for the second engine.

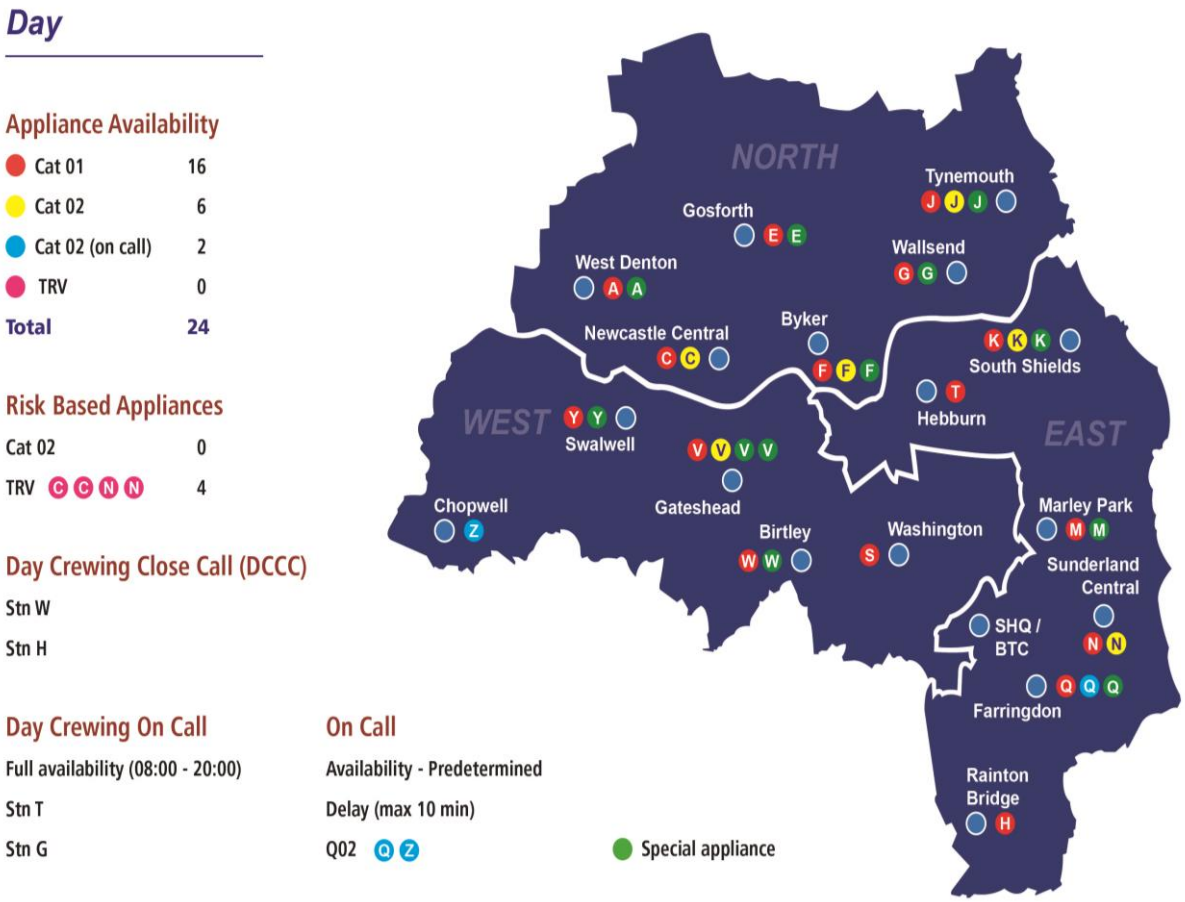
Impact on the workforce: This proposal would involve reducing the operational establishment by 16 posts. This is not expected to result in any redundancies.

Anticipated savings: Proposal 1 is estimated to achieve full year savings of approximately £717,000.

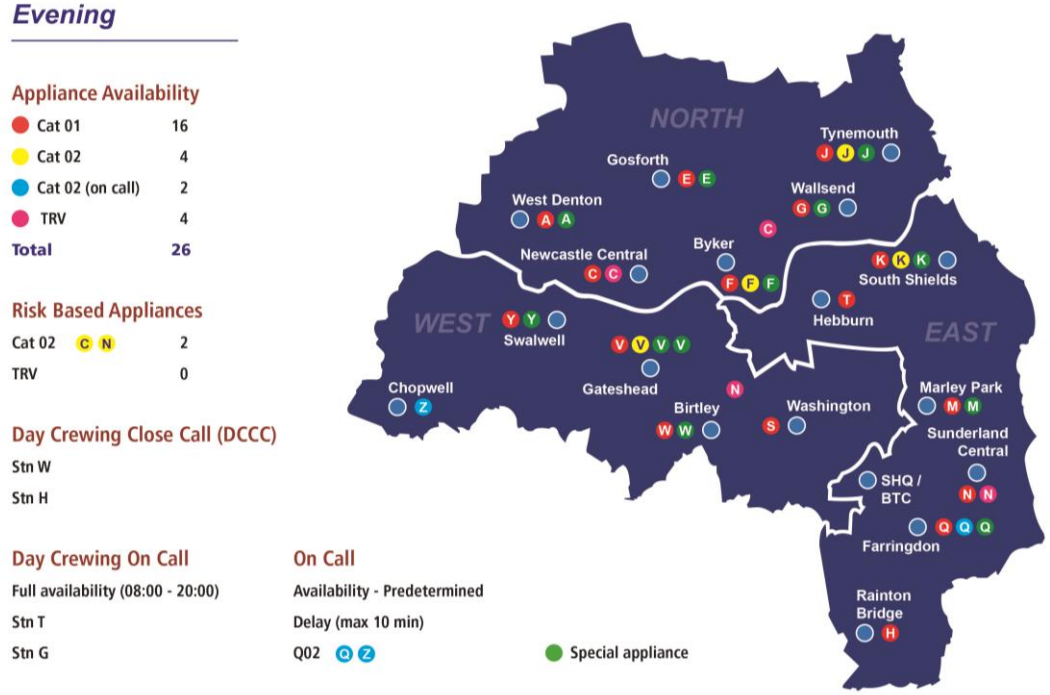
4.4 Proposal 2 – Introduce a range of duty systems based on risk and demand

This proposal involves redefining the duty system operated on certain community fire stations to better accommodate relatively lower levels of community risk and incident demand whilst minimising the impact on the speed of response. This would mean:

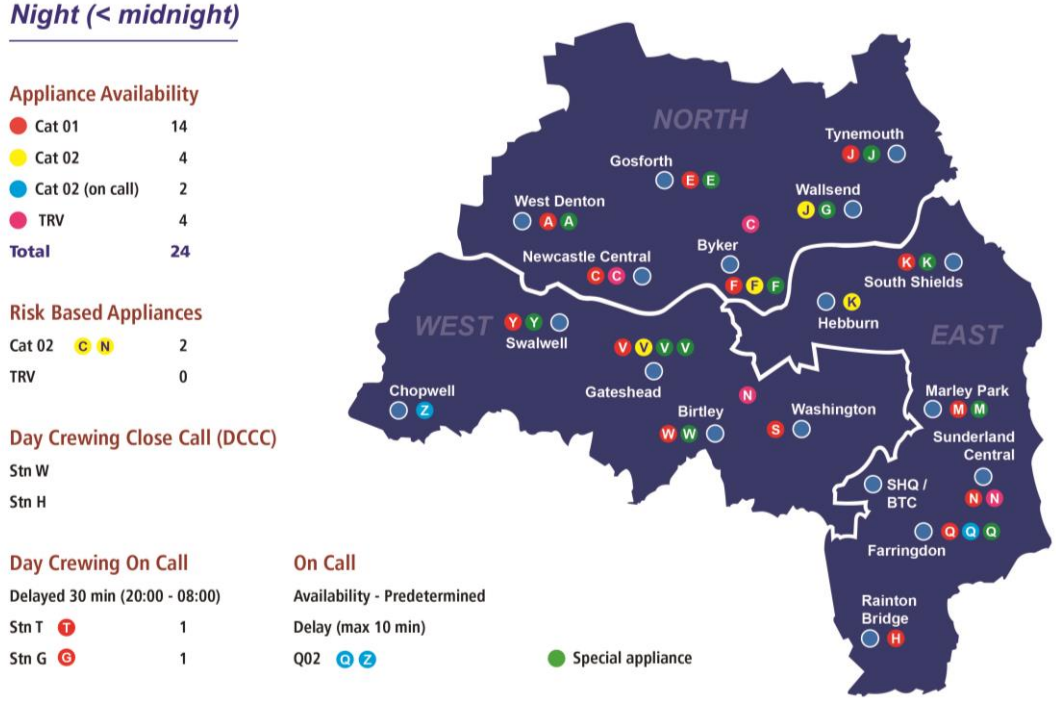
- the fire engines at Wallsend and Hebburn Community Fire Stations become Day Crewing (On-Call)
- supporting cover will be provided during the night by fire engines from Tynemouth and South Shields Community Fire Stations
- one fire engine at Farringdon Community Fire Station would become On-Call
- attendance times will see a small increase, with average response across Tyne and Wear for high-risk incidents, those involving people and property, slowing by up to 17 seconds. Even with these changes Tyne and Wear would continue to remain one of the fastest responding fire and rescue services in England.



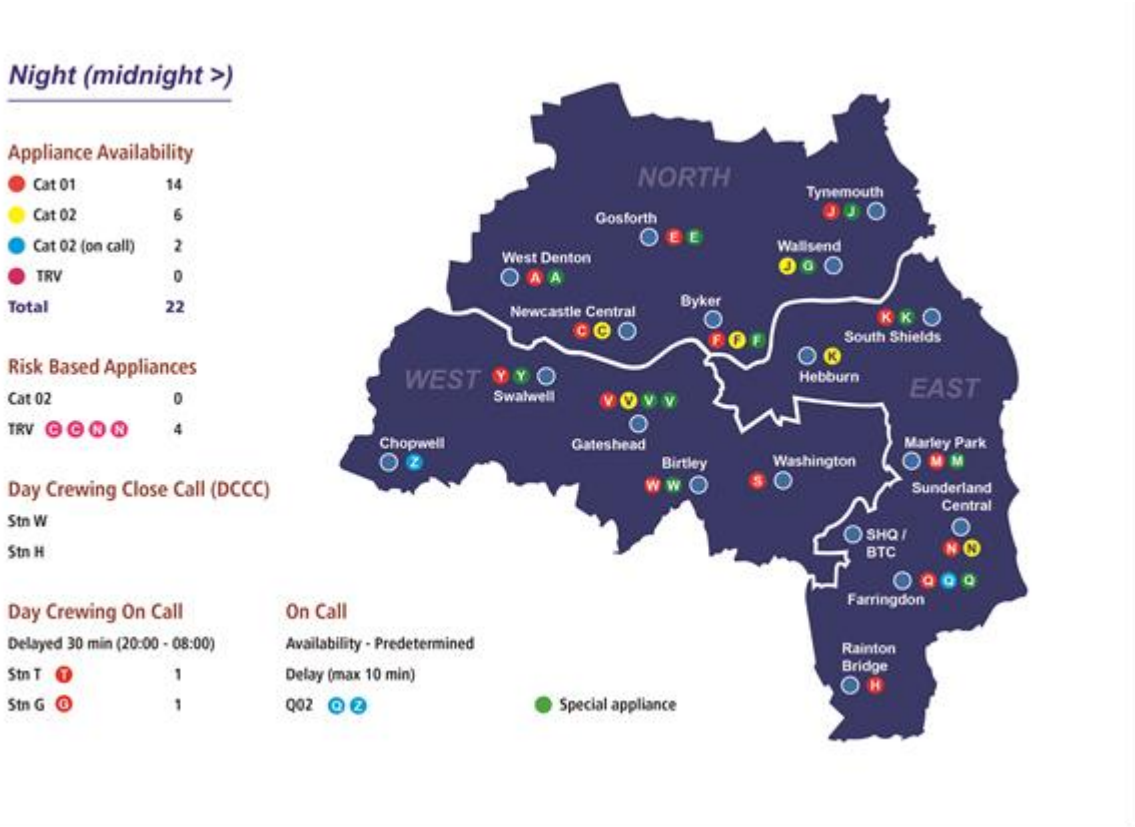
Proposed fire engine position during dayshift (Proposals 1 & 2)
**** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***



Proposed fire engine position during the evening (up to 20:00hrs) (Proposals 1 & 2)
**** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***



Proposed fire engine position during at night (20:00 to 00.00hrs) (Proposals 1 & 2) **** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***



Proposed fire engine position during at night (00.00 until dayshift) (Proposals 1 & 2)
**** Map updated 21.11.2018 to include special appliances (green dots), no further changes have been made.***

Impact on incident response times: The implementation of proposal 1 and 2 simultaneously would increase response times to all incidents. The time taken to reach risk level one incidents would increase by 17 seconds for the first fire engine and 35 seconds for the second engine. Average attendance time for risk level two incidents would also increase by 20 seconds for the first fire engine and 34 seconds for the engine.

Impact on the workforce: The introduction of proposal 1 and 2 would involve a reduction in whole time operational establishment of 58 posts and increase on-call (retained) establishment by 12 posts. This is not expected to result in any redundancies.

Anticipated savings: Proposals 1 and 2 are estimated to achieve full year savings of £1.62m.

4.5 Proposal 3 – Adjust the staffing model to deliver a more effective and efficient use of resources

The third proposal is to adjust the way firefighters and control room staff work. This includes a slight reduction in some posts to improve efficiency and the introduction of more flexibility in existing shift patterns based on emergency call demand. This would mean:

- adjusting start and finish times of shifts
- moderating staffing levels at all stations
- amending staffing levels in mobilising control.

Impact on incident response times: Proposal 3 is not expected to have an impact on incident attendance times.

Anticipated savings: Proposal 3 is estimated to achieve savings circa £165k in 2021/22.

4.6 Overall impact

If all proposals were implemented, in full 70 posts would be removed from the Service and it is expected that this would be achieved without the need for redundancies. The changes would result in savings of £3.3m and fully implemented by April 2021.

Let us know your views

The proposals set out in this document will change the way TWFRS responds to incidents over the coming years. We believe that although these proposals do reduce the speed of response to some lower risk incidents, they protect our response to higher risk and will still allow Tyne and Wear communities to have a high standard of fire cover.

None of these proposals have been agreed, and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority is seeking your views to inform their decisions.

We are carrying out this consultation through a number of channels including:

- discussions with employees
- seeking the written comments of partners and stakeholders, including members of the community
- public meetings
- seeking views via our website and social media.

Having considered this document, we would welcome your views on the following questions.

1. Have you attended a presentation regarding the TWFRS 2018 IRMP Response proposals? If so, which one?

2. TWFRS delivers its services based on the level of risk and operational demand within our communities - we have planned the changes we are required to make so that we can balance resource and community risks.

   How reasonable do you think our proposals are?

   □ Very reasonable □ Reasonable □ Unreasonable □ Very Unreasonable

   Please explain your answer.

3. We propose to change where we situate our fire engines based on risk and demand across Tyne and Wear, reducing costs whilst minimising the impact on our communities (This will include dynamically positioning Targeted Response vehicles (TRVs) and adjusting the distribution and availability of our fire engines).

   How reasonable do you think these proposals are?

   □ Very reasonable □ Reasonable □ Unreasonable □ Very Unreasonable

   Please explain your answer.

4. We propose to introduce a range of new duty systems for our employees, so that we can reduce costs and better meet risk and demand of our services (This will include introducing Day Crewing (On Call) / On Call duty systems).

   How reasonable do you think these proposals are?

   □ Very reasonable □ Reasonable □ Unreasonable □ Very Unreasonable

   Please explain your answer.

5. We propose to adjust our staffing models to deliver a more effective and efficient use of resources based on risk and demand (This will include changes to current operational shift times and durations, moderation of operational staffing and amending staffing levels in fire control).

   How reasonable do you think these proposals are?

   □ Very reasonable □ Reasonable □ Unreasonable □ Very Unreasonable

   Please explain your answer.

6. We currently aim to respond to emergency incidents as quickly as possible, prioritising our response to incidents where life risk is involved. (This response time is the time a fire engine takes to get to an incident, our current average response time to risk level 1 incidents e.g. house fire persons involved is 5 minutes and 12 seconds).

   How reasonable do you think it is that we use this information as the basis of setting a response standard?

   □ Very reasonable □ Reasonable □ Unreasonable □ Very Unreasonable

   Please explain your answer.

7. Do you have any further comments concerning our proposals?

Following the consultation period, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority will consider your views in detail before deciding whether the proposals should be implemented as they stand, or amended. As stated in our introduction, we do not believe it is possible to balance our budget in future without some form of change to the operational response.

The consultation period ends at **5pm on Monday, 14 January 2019.**

We want to hear what you think of our proposals. If you have any comments, responses to our questions or have you own questions you can contact us in the following ways:

By post:	Freepost RLZH-ZZYU-LJUJ Policy and Engagement Dept. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service Barmston Mere Nissan Way Sunderland SR5 3QY
By telephone	**0191 444 1333**
By email	consultation@twfire.gov.uk
On our website	www.twfire.gov.uk

Disclosure: Please note that we intend to publish a summary of the responses to this consultation document.

Alternative formats: If you require this document in another format, please use the contact details above.