



Wootton Wawen Ward District & Arden Division County Cllr. Ian Shenton

Proud to represent Bearley, Claverdon, Earlswood, Henley in Arden, Langley, Mappleborough Green, Preston Bagot, Tanworth in Arden, Ullenhall, Wolverton, Wootton Wawen

Mob: 07971 343074 E Mail: ianshenton@warwickshire.gov.uk

County Councillors report as of 4th December 2023

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General –

I am investigating the use of herbicides on public footpaths and verges and have asked for a policy statement from the County on this. Whilst the operatives are all qualified and take as much care as possible the subject of weeds and glyphosphates is a divisive one, but weeds can damage paved surfaces and kerbstones if left untreated. If weeds grow in road gullies and channels they can slow down, and in the worst cases block drainage systems and therefore we try to control weeds to prevent this from occurring. The spraying works we undertake is a County wide operation and therefore it would not be feasible to remove weeds via manual means (for example hand pulling).

UBUS Services – This is jointly offered by the District and the County Council - The use of this service has now started to exceed pre pandemic levels, but the current contract is due to expire in March 2024. The service is being looked at closely to see what savings or extra value may be possible and given that the Wootton Wawen Ward is one of the biggest users of the service I am keen to ensure that there is no dilution of service to our rural areas. The service is for you if you cannot access public transport because of mobility issues or other health issues; or if you live in an isolated location with limited or no bus service at all.

To access the service all you need to do is to register by calling 01789 264491. The buses have ramps or tail lifts which means that wheelchair users can travel more easily. More details can be found on the Stratford District Council website by typing in UBUS in the search facility or by calling the telephone number above.

I am keen to hear from residents about their experiences with this service as the current contract ends in 2024.

AND don't forget that you can travel on any bus (except UBUS) within Warwickshire and the maximum fare is £2 each way. This is subsidised by the Government and runs until 31st December. As this has been extended several times now, I am hoping that we will hear news soon of it being extended into the New Year.

Planning matters in neighbouring areas

Ex. Countrywide Stores Site 21/00973/OUT - No Further update at present. On the 16/11/2023 the planner confirmed that she has heard nothing from the applicant since August and as a result the pre commencement conditions have not yet been agreed.

Bearley Scrap Yard - No Further update at present. Main objection from Highways on safety grounds.

Crabmill - Due to be auctioned as the current owners have confirmed that rebuilding this as a public house is not viable.

Henley in Arden Specific

Speed monitoring - Hopefully, the data will be made available to me before Christmas, and I will then share this with the various teams and Parish Councils so that they can analyse the data and bring recommendations forward.

I have received a request from a resident that we should monitor Brook End Drive and if you are agreeable to this, I will fund it and get it on the schedule.

Flooding issues

As you will know I asked for the drains/gullies to be jetted and whilst this has been done it has raised a whole host of issues of collapsed and blocked pipes etc and a further major scheme is being put together. In reality any work is unlikely to be carried out before the new financial year as there are other priorities and funding in this year may not be



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available. Hopefully what has been carried out will be enough to alleviate any issues during this winter. I will keep everyone updated on progress.

County Council Matters

- **Fire stations** – There is a public consultation due but, in the meantime, I am including all the relevant details I have which are in the form of Frequently Asked Questions. I am keen to get feedback from the JPC and residents on this so that I can represent your views and concerns.

What we are doing.

1. We are exploring changing the way we deploy our WFRS resources to match where the levels of risk are across the County.
2. We are looking at locating our resources more strategically to ensure we optimise the cover available to improve our response times.
3. We are seeking to achieve a model of resourcing which will see the Warwickshire Fire Service sustainable into the future.

The Drivers for Change

1. WFRS currently has a blend of wholtime and on-call firefighters. We cannot recruit sufficient on-call firefighters to maintain acceptable levels of cover.
2. Our resources and availability of cover do not align to risk and demand.
3. We have been unable to meet response standards for 4 years and this needs to improve.
4. On-call fire appliance availability due to crew availability is reducing and raises challenges around sustainability

Timescales

- No decisions have yet been taken.
- The recommendation to Cabinet is to agree to consult publicly on a resourcing model.
- The consultation will take place over three months (December to March) and will engage with public, WFRS staff and other stakeholders.
- This will allow us to take on board feedback and shape the delivery model.

Progress so far.

WFRS have worked with independent experts¹ to look at future resourcing models to enable us to mitigate current and future risks. This is an evidence-based approach including an independent evaluation of WFRS' risk analysis. The work has produced several resourcing models to align risk and activity levels with the effective deployment of resources (appliances and crews) Each of the proposals aligns the available resources to activity levels and risk. All models give greater cover and availability than is currently in place.

Changes to working patterns.

- Current working patterns are not providing the cover needed.
- The highest level of demand and risk is between 0800 and 2200. This time period is too long for one continuous shift.
- To ensure we cover the highest demand with the correct number of appliances and people, we are proposing different shifts and patterns:

The 24-hour model would comprise:

1. Day shift (0800 – 1800)
2. Night shift (1800 – 0800)
3. Evening shift (1800 - 2200) – part time positions.
4. Surge teams available for recall for major incidents, exceptional conditions e.g., flooding, or high demand

The working pattern proposed modernises the current on call model by introducing evening shifts and surge teams. Our existing on-call firefighters can be recruited onto these shift patterns.

Introducing evening shifts and surge teams means that we can guarantee the availability of crews, rather than relying on a system based upon the variable availability of individuals. Under these proposals, our current on-call firefighters will be offered the opportunity to take on roles within the new shift systems.

Shortcomings of the current model.

Currently we have:

- Highest fire appliance availability during lowest periods of risk and demand
- Lowest fire appliance availability during highest periods of risk and demand
- No guaranteed fire appliance availability other than wholtime appliances which makes managing fire cover difficult on a day to day, hour by hour basis. This is due to reliance on 'on call' availability which fluctuates and is reducing. This impacts attendance times.

¹ ORH are an evidence-based consultancy company specialising in emergency response cover based on risk and activity.



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- No guaranteed resilience for surge events (incidents requiring multiple fire appliances and many firefighters), extreme weather incidents e.g., widespread flooding.
- As of September 2023, availability stood at 34% but has been on a downward trend for years.

These issues affect our response times. We have not met our current response standard for 4 years. Our current target to attend the highest risk incidents i.e., immediate threat to human life or which pose a serious hazard and high-risk threat to life, is 1st pump attendance time of 10 mins 75% of the time. WFRS' current performance is 65% of the time.

Proposed Models.

Model 1

Delivery model 1 focuses on 1st appliance attendance times and ensures that:

13 fire appliances are available between 0800 and 2200hrs.

8 fire appliances are available between 2200 and 0800hrs.

7 additional fire appliances are available for surge events at any time.

Model 1a

This option is identical to option 1 except that it removes the Day Crew Plus (DCP) shift system from WFRS which increases the overall cost of the model.

Model 2

This model spreads focus to 2nd appliance attendance times.

Delivery model 2 ensures that:

12 fire appliances are available between 0800 and 2200hrs.

8 fire appliances are available between 2200 and 0800hrs.

7 additional fire appliances are available for surge events at any time.

Model 2a

This option is identical to option 2 but removes DCP shift system from Warwickshire which then increases the cost of the model. These proposals do not place any of our Fire Stations at risk of closure. All models guarantee availability of crews and mean that a guaranteed number of appliances are ready to deploy, the number and location of which are in the right place at the right time based on up-to-date evidence on where incidents are likely to occur.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

Will there be any closures of fire stations?

There will be no closures. These proposals are about deployment patterns, not buildings or fire stations.

Explain the new response target and how does it compare to ours now?

It is proposed as part of these changes that WFRS adopts an 'mean' average target in relation to response intervention times. This is in line with the approach taken by the Office of National Statistics and other Fire and Rescue Services.

Current response target

Our current target to P1s and P2s is 1st pump attendance time of 10 mins 75% of the time. WFRS' current performance is 65% of the time.

When worked out as an average the current average 1st appliance attendance time is 10 mins 37 seconds.

Proposed new response target.

Based on the modelling, we are proposing to adopt a mean average 1st appliance attendance time to P1 and P2s of 10 mins 30. This is a quicker average response than we currently have (currently = 10 mins 37). Moving to a mean average is in line with methods used by Office of National Statistics and other Fire and Rescue Services.

Both options meet this proposed target and improve 1st appliance attendance times.

It is worth noting that there is no national standard for response times.

How many incidents do the on-call stations attend?

On Call - Average Responses 2 year sample – 2021-2022			
	Average no. of incidents per week	Average no. of incidents per year	P1+P2 Incidents per year
Shipston	0.35	18	2
Fenny	0.35	18	2
Coleshill OC	0.56	29	3
Stratford OC	0.91	47	5
Bidford	0.91	47	5
Atherstone OC	1.19	62	7
Polesworth	1.47	76	9
Kenilworth	1.54	80	10
Henley	1.68	87	10
Wellesbourne	1.96	102	11
Southam	2.03	105	12
Bedworth	4.62	240	27



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What are P1 and P2 incidents?

P1 are incidents which pose an immediate threat to human life. Examples are persons reported building fires and road traffic collisions.

P2 are incidents which pose a serious hazard and high-risk threat to life. Examples are building fires or explosions.

What percentage of incidents are P1 and P2?

- 2022/2023 figures:
- In 2022/23, there were 534 P1/P2 incidents out of a total of 4540, meaning a rate of 11.8%.
- Of the 534 P1 and P2 incidents, 112 occurred between 10pm and 8am in 2022/23. This equates to 21.0%.

As a percentage of all incidents attended in 2022/2023, P1 and P2 incidents occurring between 10pm and 8am represented 2.5%.

How Many On-call firefighters do we currently have?

We have around 30 dual -contractors (people who are wholetime and on-call) and about 85 purely on-call members of staff.

How will modernising the on-call model improve WFRS?

We are looking at ways to modernise the on-call model, so we are not suggesting closing any stations.

Currently we cannot guarantee on-call availability which makes it hard to look forward and plan fire cover. The reality is that current on-call availability is low (e.g., Fenny Compton is at 4% and Stratford at 19%) so whilst there might be a perception that stations are ready to respond, the reality is that in September, for example, they were only ready to respond, on average 34% of the time.

The proposed models, suggest ways to guarantee the right level of cover for Warwickshire when and where it is needed. Evening shifts will provide part time contract opportunities and anyone working a full or part time contract will be able to form the surge teams.

Surge teams offer guaranteed resilience in times of high demand, major incidents, or spate conditions.

The increase in appliance availability throughout the periods of high activity and risk (0800-2200) also aligns to the periods of time available to deliver prevention and protection activities. Evening shifts will enable us to maximise opportunities to deliver these.

How do the current and proposed cover models compare across the County?

Stratford Area

Location	Current	Option 1 and 1a	Option 2 and 2a
Stratford	1 x 24/7 wholetime pump 1 x on call pump (19% availability)	1 x 24/7 wholetime pump	1 x 24/7 wholetime pump
Bidford	1 x on call pump (56% availability)	surge team	surge team
Alcester	1 x 24/7 wholetime pump	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump
Henley	1 x on call pump (43% availability)	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump	surge team
Wellesbourne	1 x on call pump (58% availability)	surge team	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump



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Gaydon	1 x wholetime day only pump	surge team	surge team
Fenny	1 x on call pump (4% availability)	surge team	surge team
Shipston	1 x on call pump (11% availability)	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump	surge team
Southam	1 x on call pump (56% availability)	1 x 24/7 wholetime pump	1 x day pump 1 x evening shift pump

Have you spoken to your people about it?

Yes. Every team, watch and station have received a presentation delivered by managers that go through the need for change and the proposed options.

We have followed this up with further team visits.

We have inserted a resourcing to risk page in Fire Matters (our fire magazine) with updates.

We have hosted a 'chat with chief' in which this was discussed.

We are meeting individuals who ask to speak to us.

We have engaged with all Representative Bodies.

We have developed an internal communication plan for resourcing to risk.

We will be writing to all our people with a further update and clarification of next steps.

What are the views?

There are mixed views. Some see the opportunities, and some are concerned about personal impact. However, consistently, everyone sees the need for a change.

Will there be any redundancies?

We cannot, and would not, promise that there will be no redundancies. It is hoped that current on call staff will transition over to the new part time evening shifts and surge teams. However, the part time contracts may not suit everyone. We have been open with our people that we cannot promise no redundancies.

Will there be any closures of fire stations?

There will be no closures. These proposals are about deployment patterns, not buildings or fire stations.

Please let me have your views on this as soon as you can so that I can ensure that County are aware and my voting on this will be influenced by these views.

Other County Council issues

WW Small works - Let me know if you have any small roadworks, white lining, or Rights of Way issues I will investigate these for you and get a quote for any works that need to be conducted. Potholes should be reported through the directly on the WCC website <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4085/warwickshire-county-council-encourages-residents-to-report-road-issues>

I have not included the table of outstanding's this month due to space limitations.

Rishi Sunak announced an **£8.3 billion boost for roads** – enough to **resurface over 5,000 miles of road** and the largest ever funding increase for the improvement of local roads. Well-maintained road surfaces save drivers up to **£440 each** in vehicle repairs. And for **Warwickshire County Council** this funding package includes **£2,056,000** in additional road repair funding next year and at least **£120 million** over the next decade.



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Budgets – I attended a meeting on Thursday 23rd November and it is clear that finances are under pressure. Whilst the Council's budget is around £560m, over £240m of this is used for Adult Social care, with significant overspends being forecast for this and Childrens & Young People care. Many savings have been made over the last year but now we are having to look at those we classed as "difficult" to see what savings we can realistically get from them, With the settlement from the Government not due to be announced until the end of December it is a cause for concern. We do have free reserves available, but these are diminishing at a rapid rate due to inflation (especially around the new schools and upgrade of existing schools' program plus adult social care and the National living wage being increased in the Autumn budget statement). We are solvent but difficult choices will have to be made as the budget covers the next 5 years and it gets harder to predict what will happen globally over the next 5 years. I think that it is safe to say that the County Council will increase council tax by 4.99% (2.99% plus 2% for adult social care) whilst the district will increase by 2.99%. At this stage I don't know what the Police & Crime Commissioner budget will be.

As always feel free to contact me at any time to discuss any issues that you feel I can help with, and I will do my absolute best to help.

Severn Trent Community Fund



- This support will be available to not-for-profit organisations that:
- run for the benefit of local residents within the Severn Trent region, **supporting those most vulnerable.**
- have been operating since **2018 or before.**
- have an annual income of **£250,000 or less** (averaged over the past 5 years).
- Statutory bodies, sports clubs, cadets, Girl Guides and Scouts are not eligible for this funding stream.

Other County wide news



New funding for tree planting

Warwickshire's environment is set to benefit from a series of successful tree planting bids by Warwickshire County Council.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4800/new-funding-for-tree-planting-is-announced-during-national-tree-week-2023>

Micro Woods and Community Orchards

Town and Parish Councils, Community and Voluntary Groups are encouraged to make expressions of interest to host either a Micro Wood or a Community Orchard are encouraged to email: naturalcapital@warwickshire.gov.uk



If you are struggling to pay utility bills the last day to apply to the Council's Local Welfare Scheme for support is 8 December.

Find out more information about the Household Support Fund: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4784/help-to-meet-household-utility-costs>



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New funding streams for business

More than 2,000 businesses will benefit from a new, multi-stranded support programme to be rolled out across the county.

Find out more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/4821/warwickshire-businesses-to-be-supported-to-growth-through-new-funding-streams>

Measles	<p>Did you know?</p> <p>🕒 15 mins with someone who had measles is enough time for the virus to be passed on.</p> <p>Here are some of the key things you need to know about #measles and what to do if you or a loved one needs to get up to date with their #MMR vaccinations. ↓</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">H6</p>
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Measles	<p>Did you know that Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms?</p> <p>Other symptoms can be:</p> <p>Spots in the mouth - Small white spots may appear inside the cheeks and on the back of the <u>lips</u></p> <p>The measles rash - The rash can start on the face and behind the ears before spreading to the rest of the body.</p> <p>For more information about #measles and what to do to get up to date with your MMR vaccinations: www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">H6</p>
Measles	<p>Two doses of the MMR vaccine offer protection for life against measles, <u>mumps</u> and rubella.</p> <p>Are you and your loved ones protected? If you're not sure, contact your GP about getting catch up jabs. More info: https://www.nhs.uk/MMR</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">H8</p>