

## ***Statement of Eli Uggerloese, Clark to Bidford on Avon PC***

### ***Vulnerability of South:***

*Good afternoon*

*The maps in Appendix 6 demonstrate how vulnerable the south of the county will be if most of their stations are relegated to surge stations with a 30min-2 hour call out target.*

*How can you ensure that villages in the south of the county will be safe after 10.00 pm - when the only cover for the whole of the district will be one appliance based in Stratford?*

*With this in mind, have you considered the current relative response times of existing on call stations? Bidford's turnout was 69.3% for October – and, specifically 88.5% from 19.00 – 07.00 hours. How can WCC consider relegating thriving stations like this to unused buildings, resulting in the loss of effective stations fulfilling an important service to their local community.*

*An example of the potential fatal cost of these closures in the south of the county, is a domestic fire incident which occurred this summer in Bidford in the early hours of the morning. Due to existing cover, the fire was put out with no loss of life – if these proposals are approved, it would not be one, but 3 to 4 dwellings on fire and potential loss of life.*

*Please think carefully of the safety of Warwickshire residents when considering the proposal in front of you which, in effect, will result in the closure of the majority of on call Fire Stations with potentially serious safety results*

## Statement of Cllr Penny Taylor Chairman of Bidford on Avon Parish Council

Thank you – following on from what Elisabeth has just said,

**We understand that the Fire Service needs to regularly review its ways of working and its performance targets. But you won't be surprised to learn that the people of Bidford have VERY serious concerns about the proposals being put forward.**

### **Firstly: Averages don't work:**

The statistics in the proposal all refer to averages. Average response times take **no** account of the time it will take to reach the edges of the county from Stratford overnight.

You'll always achieve better AVERAGE response times if you put your focus on built up areas. (and I'm sure averages will improve). It's the **distribution** curve that matters --- How long will it take for Appliances 1 and 2 to reach say, Shipston or Henley or Bidford in the middle of the night?

Better averages are no good to you when you're dying in a road traffic accident at 11pm south of Bidford. Or trapped in a flood or housefire in a rural area.

### **Turnout:**

One of the key issues mentioned in the proposal is turnout. It's clear that some fire stations have poor turnout percentages, and of course this needs to be addressed. But is the solution really to take them **ALL out** rather than finding ways to improve things?

As you've heard, Bidford has one of the best turnout responses in South Warwickshire, averaging **70%**.

But that 70% hides what's happening between **7pm – 7am with a turnout response of 88.5%** when Bidford firefighters are at home on call.

### **Number of Fire Engines:**

I was unable to be clear from the proposals but it appears that 7 or 8 fire engines (or vehicles of some sort) depending on the option model will be surge vehicles. Will they be placed at the surge stations? Will they be fire engines?

If they're fire engines, if a vehicle is placed at Bidford fire station in preparation for a surge call out **surely** it makes sense to carry on covering routine callouts at peak evening time and overnight when firefighters are at home and available. Why stand them down?

If this goes wrong and we need on-call stations again it would take years to get them back up to speed, including getting enough qualified watch commanders.

### **In Summary:**

**Changes are no doubt needed, but surely we need to retain what we've got in stations where it's working.**

**Otherwise the message is: don't be involved in a serious incident after 10pm unless you happen to be near Stratford or Leamington.**

**Good average figures don't save lives.**