

Councillor Tony Newman
Chair to the Authority
Merseyside Fire Service
Service Head quarters
Bridle Road
Bootle
Merseyside
L30 4YD

Date: 14th February 2008

Reference: Downgrading of Allerton Fire Station Fire Cover

Dear Councillor Newman,

Thank you for your swift response with regards to my initial correspondence on this extremely important matter, unfortunately your response singularly fails to address any of the questions that I have raised in my first letter, in fact your rather curt response seems to be deliberately dismissive of my letter, a style of response that I would not automatically associate with you or any of your previous personal correspondence.

I will, attempt to explain for complete clarity, the issues of concern that I have previously raised in my correspondence therefore enabling yourself, as Chair of both the Labour Group and the Fire Authority to respond fully as I know that as a “lifelong trade unionist” you will afford me and my members the courtesy of a detailed reply.

As I have already stated I am a resident within the S1 Allerton fire station area and my family and many of my friends also reside within those boundaries, these and thousands more council tax payers are being denied an immediate emergency fire response from their nearest fire station between the hours of 10pm and 10am every night of the year due to the decisions taken by the Labour and Tory groups on the fire authority.

Again I ask the question as to why these council tax payers are not being refunded for a lesser fire service than what they have all paid for in previous years and also why members of the public who reside within the S1 Allerton station area are being used as some sort of political “collateral” by the Labour and Tory groups on the fire authority by providing these residents with delayed emergency fire response at the time of day when most fatal fires are likely to occur?

I again ask the question why the elected Tory and Labour members have decided that any members of the public that require immediate emergency fire response, which would have come from S1 Allerton fire station, will now have to wait a minimum of two minutes longer for that response between the hours of 10pm and 10am. The issue being raised as to why are the particular residents in the S1 Allerton area are being considered not as important as other areas within Merseyside- will their houses burn less? Will the smoke from house fires be less toxic? Will the fires between 10pm and 10am not be as hot?

I did ask previously if there had been any consultation with all the residents within the S1 Allerton area with regards to this downgrading of fire cover at night time, the time recognised nationally and by central government of when most fire deaths do occur? I do again ask if there has been any local media or press campaigns using the Service's corporate communications team? Have any advocates or friends of the fire service been engaged to take the downgrading message to all the council tax payers within the area?

I do look forward to sharing your detailed response to these issues with an increasing number of interested parties and the logic behind a downgrading of fire cover for the Allerton area, leading to twelve job losses and firefighters working 96 hour shifts being compatible with your belief that this will lead to a safer, stronger and healthier community in Allerton.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Dunne,
Brigade Chair

Cc Louise Ellman MP
Elected members