



**DEVON &
SOMERSET**
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

**Mr Tam MacFarlane
Executive Council Member
South West Fire Brigades Union
158 Muller Road
Horfield
Bristol BS7 9RE**

**Service Headquarters
The Knowle
Clyst St George
Exeter
Devon
EX3 0NW**

Your ref :

Our ref : LH/ FR

Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 24 October 2017

Please ask for : Fiona Robertson

Email : frobertson@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200

Fax : 01392 872300

Direct telephone : 01392 872201

Dear *Tam*

Thank you for your letter dated 11th October 2017, concerning the crewing levels across the Networked Fire Services Partnership (NFSP).

The NFSP has delivered a resilient and effective fire control solution that enhances firefighter safety and reduces risk within the communities it serves. This has been achieved through the provision of three networked fire control rooms working on one combined system. This system will select and mobilise the quickest, closest and most appropriate attribute from across the partnership.

The Vision 4 system provides an integrated approach to mobilising with enhanced levels of call handling such that any emergency call to the NFSP, regardless of origin will be answered in a maximum time of under 10 seconds. This is a vast improvement on the previous arrangements.

Historically, the system experienced some early technical issues that led to unacceptable levels of system performance, but the NFSP is confident that those that would impact on our ability to handle emergency calls and dispatch the most appropriate attributes have now been resolved.

The NFSP partnership works with staff and all representative bodies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all staff working in the NFSP control rooms and has a range of occupational health and stress management arrangements in place and available to all.

All services across the partnership recognise the need for appropriate staffing levels in control rooms and have all recently recruited to cover establishment vacancies and long term secondments. Crewing levels are managed across the partnership to maintain safe working levels. Early technical issues that affected system stability have been resolved and the NFSP call handling and mobilising performance is better than the previous post partnership arrangements.

Tel. 01392 872200

Chief Fire Officer Lee Howell QFSM FIFireE

The partnership has now commenced a comprehensive review to ensure that the system and its associated operating model is providing the efficiency gains identified within the original business case and the most effective level of service to our communities. It will also consider any future opportunities that may be identified. Key stakeholders, including the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), will be consulted as part of this review.

The partnership recognises the excellent work and commitment given by our staff and we value their continued high level of professionalism and expertise they give each and every day. We will continue to work with all stakeholders, including the FBU, to ensure that a healthy and mutually beneficial working relationship is maintained.

Yours sincerely



Lee Howell
Chief Fire Officer