APPENDIX 2

Helen Quinn
Police Strategy & Reform Unit
Home Office
6th Floor Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London,
SW1P 4DF

9 January 2018

Dear Helen,

Thank you for bringing to our attention the Government consultation currently being undertaken on enabling Police and Crime Commissioners to sit and vote on Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Cleveland Fire Authority considered the Government Consultation document at a formal Authority meeting with the Elected Members fully discussing the issues to inform this response. We have structured our response according to the consultation questions below.

Q1 *Do you agree with the proposed amendments to the combination schemes of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) established or continued in existence under sections 2 and 4 of the 2004 Fire and Rescue Services Act as stated in the proposal above to implement the 'representation model' of the 2017 Act?'*

NO

Q2 *If you disagree with proposal at Q1, please give your reasons*

In regard to Cleveland Fire Authority's rationale for disagreeing with the proposed amendments to the combination schemes of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) established under section 2 or continued in existence under section 4 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) to implement the 'representation model' of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 (the 2017 Act) the following points are made:

1. The Authority would wish to make it clear that their disagreement is not simply a politically motivated ideological objection;

2. The strength of the existing relationship and the achievement, in practice, of effective collaboration and integrated working between the emergency services on Teesside has achieved tangible improvements in:

    a. public safety and the management of community risk (effectiveness);

    b. connected and co-ordinated front-line services;

    c. improvements in the performance of the emergency services, individually and collectively;

d. the maximisation of cost efficiency, economies of scale and value for money (efficiency);

e. improvements to the resilience, responsiveness and sustainability of local emergency services (resilience); and

f. ensuring an integrated emergency services response to major or complex incidents (interoperability).

Consequently, CFA position is simple: ***"if it isn't broke don't fix it"***

3. The Authority's elected Members are concerned about how political proportionality would be balanced and managed. As a combined fire authority representing four constituent authorities, not only is the political proportionality affected but the representation from those constituent authorities. For example, the Authority has a single 'Independent' Member and the PCC has no political affiliation, therefore it potentially means that to maintain political balance the Independent Member would lose their seat on the Authority.

4. The matter raised in (3) above equally would have implications for the constituent authorities and may affect the political balance of the appointments they make; and the geographic proportionality of the seats on the Authority.

5. In the face of austerity, the Authority has, in recent years, reduced the membership to make saving and are therefore reluctant to increase the number of Members of the Authority again.

6. In addition to (5), if the number of Members does not increase, there is no provision in the combination scheme to terminate the appointment of an existing member, so as to make way for the PCC.

7. The Authority's Members raised concerns about the ability of the PCC to nominate a non-democratically elected deputy to attend and speak. Presently, the constituent authorities are not permitted to substitute non-elected attendees to speak therefore Members oppose the suggestion of allowing an unelected person the automatic right to address the Authority.

Q3 *Please state below if you have any other comments*

No further comments.

Kind regards

Ian Hayton
Chief Fire Officer