



SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE!

Special Edition: FBU fighting frontline cuts in Gloucestershire Fire Service!



Firefighters tackle huge blaze at Gloucester docks - only days after cuts to frontline are announced!

“Dangerous” plans to cut frontline fire services condemned by Gloucestershire firefighters.

Firefighters in Gloucestershire have reacted with anger at the announcement of “dangerous” plans to close Painswick Fire Station and cut frontline services at Cirencester Fire Station.

The plans to cut budgets by £2M over three years were published by Gloucestershire County Council in their consultation document **“Fire and Rescue: Future Service Provision”**.

Tam McFarlane, Fire Brigades Union rep for the South West, said: “These proposals would compromise the safety of the public and firefighters in Gloucestershire. They are short sighted, dangerous and put budget cuts in front of public safety.

“If the cuts go ahead they would compromise the safety of people not just in Painswick and Cirencester but also in the surrounding areas where fire engines would be required to answer emergency calls. The FBU will be campaigning vigorously against these proposals and will be holding local politicians to account with a clear message - **“cuts cost lives”**”.



Fighting for the Fire & Rescue Service

Protecting Firefighters & Control Staff

FBU fight dangerous cuts to Gloucestershire Fire Service - cont from page 1

Plans to cut frontline Fire Cover in Gloucestershire were announced just days before a massive blaze in the County was witnessed by hundreds of members of the public. The blaze, at Bakers Quay in Gloucester docks, took hold just as hundreds of fans were gathering at a nearby “fanzone” to watch the Rugby World Cup on a big screen in the City. Scott Turner, local FBU rep for Gloucestershire, said: “The enormous fire at Bakers Quay needed Fire Crews from across our County to bring it under control and brought home the need for proper resilience within our Service. The blaze occurred just days after the County Council announced plans to cut our frontline service and should be a stark warning to every politician in the Council why these cuts are so dangerous”.

“Politicians now need to rethink their plans. This fire has shown the real dangers of closing Fire Stations and downgrading cover. At incidents such as this we need every resource possible - its called resilience, and the County Council has now had a very real example of the consequences of the cuts they are proposing. “



FBU on the streets in campaign against cuts!

The FBU has been mounting a vigorous campaign of opposition to the cuts and has been engaging with the public, press and politicians to bring our message home. The Union has launched an online petition, which attracted hundreds of signatures in the first few weeks of opening, and has been handing out and posting hundreds of leaflets against the cuts in local communities. The Union has also published adverts in local papers to raise awareness of the cuts and has taken to the streets in “campaign days” in order to discuss our concerns face to face with the public.

FBU Regional Secretary Trevor French said “Our campaign days have proved to Firefighters that there is virtually no support for the County Council proposals to cut our fire service. We have taken to the streets in Gloucestershire and explained to the public why we feel these proposals would compromise our ability to provide them with a safe and effective Fire & Rescue Service.”



FBU campaign leaflet in Glos

“The response from the public has been tremendous and we have received overwhelming support in our campaign against these cuts. During just one 2 hour period we collected almost 300 signatures from people in the street who wanted to put their name to our petition against these cuts. - and this is in addition to our online petition which has hundreds more signatures.”



FBU fire helmets were popular on campaign days!

SAVE OUR FIRE SERVICE **SAY NO** TO DANGEROUS CUTS!



Gloucestershire County Council wants to close Painswick Fire Station and remove all full-time cover from Cirencester Fire Station.

Your local Firefighters believe that these plans are dangerous. We understand that times are difficult and money is tight, but we believe these cuts go too far and would risk the long term safety of the public. The cuts would lead to slower response times, with fire engines taking longer to reach you in times of need. They would lead to a significantly increased risk to both the public and firefighters alike.

Please contact Gloucestershire County Council and tell them to rethink these cuts! Please phone, email or write to your local Councillor and tell them you do not support these dangerous cuts. You can also sign our online petition at www.southwestfbu.com

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS **SAY NO TO DANGEROUS CUTS**

Newspaper advert being run by FBU in local papers.

The campaign days on the streets of Gloucestershire gave Firefighters the opportunity to talk through our concern with members of the public and answer any questions which they cared to put. On every occasion where we took to the streets, members of the public willingly queued to sign a petition against the cuts. In addition, Firefighters were also approached by people who had received help from the local Fire Station in the past and wanted to offer their thanks and support for the Service we provide.

Cirencester resident Lucie Rowe, asked to be quoted saying ***“I am so grateful to Cirencester firefighters, who responded very quickly when a serious fire caught hold in my house. I have witnessed at first hand the terrifying consequences of fire and I cannot believe the Council is considering making these cuts. If full-time Firefighters are taken away from Cirencester then the public will have to wait longer in an emergency, and believe me, in a fire, time can cost lives. Please support our Firefighters and say no to these cuts.”***

All of the signatures will be handed in to the County Council at the end of the consultation (in Jan 16) and we will be demanding that they



FBU on the streets campaigning for the Fire Service



A young supporter in the campaign against cuts!

are given the proper priority by County Councillors when considering whether to accept these proposals or not. The Union is also preparing a full response to the consultation which will make a detailed technical and professional case, explaining how and why the cuts will denigrate resilience and compromise the safety of firefighters and the public.

Summing up, FBU rep Tam McFarlane said, “Politicians need to realise that they have no mandate from the public to cut the Fire Service. It is our clear view, having been on the streets of Gloucestershire, that the public overwhelmingly reject these proposals to cut our Fire & Rescue Service. We have made the professional case against cuts and the public have made their opposition clear as well. Quite simply, ***its time for Politicians to rethink and reject these dangerous plans!***”

Say NO to dangerous cuts - Have you signed the petition?

The FBU has heavily criticised the consultation being undertaken by Gloucestershire County Council into planned cuts in the Fire Service.

In a letter to all Councillors, the Union has criticised the consultation for “being written in jargon verging on the incomprehensible”. The letter, from Regional Secretary Trevor French, slams the consultation for being “overly one sided” and “clearly designed to obtain a pre-ordained outcome – namely cuts to frontline cover.”

The Union also believes that some of the claims in the consultation are misleading and over blown. Individual incidents are put in a setting which lack context, in a clear attempt to make readers look favourably on the cuts option.



Against this background, the Union has made the decision to run a separate petition and is engaging with the public with a clear opinion – that these cuts will undermine resilience and increase response times. The petition is being run independently by the campaign group 38 degrees and is available via this online link:

<http://bit.ly/1VX2EWO>

We are asking people to look at the petition, consider the issues that we are raising and sign it to show their support against the proposals. We are also asking people to share the petition amongst friends, family and contacts. The cuts will not just affect people who live and work in Gloucestershire but also anyone who travel through or visits the County. **In other words: all of us!**

TO: GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Gloucestershire County Council is considering plans to slash frontline fire cover in our County. They want to close Painswick Fire Station and remove all full-time Firefighters from Cirencester Fire Station. Your local Firefighters believe that these plans are dangerous. We believe they would severely compromise our ability to do our job safely and protect the public. Please add your name to our petition and tell Gloucestershire County Council to rethink these dangerous cuts!

<http://bit.ly/1VX2EWO>

Why is this important?

Firefighters understand that times are difficult and money is tight, but we believe these cuts go too far and would risk the long term safety of the public. The cuts would lead to slower response times, with fire engines taking longer to reach you in times of need. They would lead to a significantly increased risk to both the public and firefighters alike. Please add your name to our petition and tell Gloucestershire County Council to rethink these dangerous cuts!

FBU SOUTH WEST

The Fire Brigades Union is the premier Trade Union for professional Firefighters and Control Staff across the UK. The South West Region is the largest Region in England and we cover Avon, Cornwall, Dorset, Devon & Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire FRS's.

We represent over 85% of uniformed staff across the UK. Our members cover every role from Firefighter to Area Manager, including the retained duty system. We are committed to protecting our Members, their interests at work and to ensuring that the public receive an excellent and professional Fire & Rescue Service. Join the professionals, contact us at:

www.southwestfbu.com



The Fire Brigades Union

Can you afford not to be a member? - Join now!
www.southwestfbu.com

- Protecting Firefighters
- Defending your rights
- Fighting for our Service



Follow us on our own Facebook page: Go to *South West Region of the Fire Brigades Union* and hit the “like” button. You will receive updates on our work and links to how we are fighting for you locally.



Follow us on Twitter at @southwestfbu