



Retained Duty System Survey

Suffolk County Council has set up a panel of councillors – known as a Policy Development Panel – to look at the effectiveness of the retained service, and to identify how its long-term future can be secured.

The Policy Development Panel is meeting on a regular basis now to collect evidence on the service, before making a number of recommendations for future improvements to the county council's Cabinet in April 2009

As part of this process, we would like to hear your views on the retained service. Please take some time to complete this questionnaire, and tell us what you think. All responses need to be returned to Ian Bowell, Fire HQ, Endeavour House, Ipswich, by **Friday 30 January 2009**.

Andy Fry
Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

1. The role of a retained firefighter

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.1) Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service has six objectives to prioritise its work. Do you think that these objectives are relevant to your role as a retained firefighter? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2) Do you understand your role and what you are expected to achieve? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3) Should the role of a retained firefighter include prevention work (community safety and risk reduction) as well as emergency response? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.4) Which risk reduction or community safety activities do you take part in (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home fire safety checks | <input type="checkbox"/> Talks/lectures to the community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Station open days | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education visits to schools about arson and the dangers of fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local community events | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RTC reduction work | |

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.5) Is there effective support to help stations that don't have enough people to respond to incidents? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6) Should firefighters carry out co-responding, where crews may be sent to deal with a medical emergency rather than an ambulance, as they are the nearest emergency response vehicle? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.7) Some services make it possible for retained firefighters to use electronic methods (such as sending a text message or email) to update whether they are available to work. Should we introduce this in Suffolk? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.8) Which would be your preferred method of electronic communication? (tick one)

- Mobile phone – text message Computer – email None of these

2. Recruitment of retained firefighters

2.1) How did you find out about the possibility of becoming a retained firefighter? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I knew someone who was a retained firefighter | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising outside a fire station |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I knew someone who was a wholetime firefighter | <input type="checkbox"/> National advertising campaign |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Station open day | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local advertising in a publication | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |

2.3) Which of these methods could improve the recruitment of retained firefighters? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment packs held on station | <input type="checkbox"/> Improving existing conditions of service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment advertising at stations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The introduction of recruitment liaison officers | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising in local press | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising nationally | |

2.4) Would more information about the service have helped you to understand the role of a retained firefighter during your recruitment process? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Selection and progression of retained firefighters

3.1) Should all firefighters, whether they are retained or wholetime, be selected using the same selection tests? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2) Should retained firefighters be expected to achieve competence in all nine areas of the firefighter role map? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3) Would you consider becoming a wholetime firefighter? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Retention of retained firefighters

4.1) Do you think that you will be a retained firefighter in 12 months time? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2) Do you feel valued by:
 a) Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service?
 b) your community?
 (tick one box for each question)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.4) Do you receive enough support from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to carry out your role? (tick one)

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.5) How could the support offered by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service be improved? (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Station administrators | <input type="checkbox"/> Introducing dedicated support officers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved IT | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More contact with FDS officers | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More contact with training support staff | |

4.6) How could Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service improve its communication with retained firefighters? (tick all that apply)

- Specific retained service update
- Retained service information evenings
- Increased contact with Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service officers

Other (please state)

4.7) Does your work as a retained firefighter have a positive effect on:

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

a) your family life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) your other employment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) your social life? (tick one box for each question)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.10) Would any of the following improve your work/life balance? (tick all that apply)

- More flexibility for drill attendance
- More flexibility in varying availability
- More flexibility arrangements for attending courses

Other (please state)

4.11) Are you currently actively employed apart from working as a retained firefighter? (tick one)

- No
- By a private company
- By Suffolk County Council
- By a public sector organisation
- Self employed
- By Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

4.12) Does your employer actively support your role as a retained firefighter? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.13) Would you like Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to liaise more closely with your employer during your retained service? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.14) Do you think Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service should do more to engage with or reward your employer for allowing you to work as a retained firefighter? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Training and development of retained firefighters

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

5.1) Is your two-hour weekly drill enough training for your role? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2) Is the current competency based training system effective? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.3) Which of the following options do you think would help training to be more effective? (tick all that apply)

- Better training aids for core training
- Modular training courses delivered locally
- Modular training courses delivered centrally
- More training sessions delivered by Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service training instructors

Other (please state)

5.4) When would you prefer to train? (tick one)

- Weekday evenings
- Weekday daytime
- Weekend daytime

6. Pay for retained firefighters

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
6.1) Do you think the present system that separates payment for cover and payment for hours worked is fair? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Demographic Questions

7.1) How many hours of availability do you provide? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> 70-99	<input type="checkbox"/> 100-119	<input type="checkbox"/> 120-139	<input type="checkbox"/> 140-168		
7.2) Ideally how many how many hours would you like to provide? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> 70-99	<input type="checkbox"/> 100-119	<input type="checkbox"/> 120-139	<input type="checkbox"/> 140-168		
7.3) What is your current role in Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Firefighter	<input type="checkbox"/> Leading firefighter	<input type="checkbox"/> Sub Officer			
7.4) Are you male or female? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female				
7.5) What was your age last birthday? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64	<input type="checkbox"/> 65+

7.6) How long have you worked as a retained firefighter in Suffolk? (tick one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 15 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 to 20 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 to 30 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 years+
---	--	---------------------------------------	--	---	---	---	------------------------------------

7.7) Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? (Long standing illness means anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.8) If Yes, does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

7.9) To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and Black African
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and Asian
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed background - please specify in the box below.
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background - please specify in the box below.	<input type="checkbox"/> White: British
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> White: Irish
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: African	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background - please specify in the box below.
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black background - please specify in the box below.	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to say
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	<input type="text"/>

7.10) Which fire station are you based at?	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------

Comments If you would like to add any comments please do so in the space below. Please also tell us if there is anything else that the Policy Development Panel should look at.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return this completed questionnaire to Ian Bowell, Fire HQ, Endeavour House, Ipswich, by **Friday 30 January 2009**.