

**Date:** 8 January 2026

Cllr Jenny Hannaby,
Cabinet Member for Community
Wellbeing and Safety

Rob MacDougall,
Director of Community Safety & Chief
Fire Officer

Dear Cllr Hannaby and Mr MacDougall,

West Oxfordshire District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 7 January 2026 to consider Oxfordshire County Council's consultation proposals titled "Improving our fire and rescue service". This followed a motion at the 3 December 2025 full Council meeting titled "Protecting Fire Services in West Oxfordshire", which was referred to the Committee by Council.

The meeting was attended by Mr Macdougall as the Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer, who introduced the proposals and answered questions. The Committee then considered and debated its response to the proposals on behalf of the Council.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved that West Oxfordshire District Council;

1. Formally wishes to thank the Community Safety and Chief Fire Officer for his attendance and time spent answering the Committee's questions.
2. Opposes the implementation of the proposal being consulted on as it currently stands due to the loss of the fire stations in Eynsham and Woodstock and the concerns detailed below.
3. Has the following concerns over the proposal being consulted on:
 - a. Disproportionate adverse impacts on West Oxfordshire, which stands to potentially lose two fire stations.
 - b. A lack of detail on real response time impacts and worst-case response time impacts (rather than average response times) of the proposed closures of Woodstock and Eynsham fire stations on rural communities in West Oxfordshire. Decision makers and residents require more detailed information.
 - c. Recruitment opportunities not being fully explored as an alternative to closures e.g. more outreach to employers.
 - d. A lack of information for decision makers on the impact of higher station availability on response times, if stations were to kept open and on-call staffing enhanced.
 - e. Housing growth not being fully considered in the report, which will increase the local demand for services and the pool of potential fire fighters over time.
 - f. A lack of assurance that a new facility in North Oxford will come forwards.
 - g. The need for greater transparency on how proposed changes to staffing patterns (i.e. more full-time fire fighters) will be funded.
 - h. Impacts of proposed closures on lives, residents, firefighters, climate change, flood risk, protection of the Blenheim World Heritage site.
 - i. Staff morale for on-call firefighters in particular, and potential job losses if closures go ahead.
 - j. The overall level of data provided in the consultation and the fact that the investment proposals (E and F) don't have free text boxes unlike the other consultation questions.

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**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

4. Requests that the implementation of the proposals is deferred until the concerns have been addressed and enough time has been given to exploring the alternatives.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Andrew Beaney

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Genny Early

Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee