

Freedom of Information request reference number: FOIA2688.1

Date of response: 6 July 2016

Request and response:

The council of Waltham Forest has recently closed of over 70 roads in Walthamstow by placing fixed permanent bollards in the middle of the road.

The council have published on their website that the emergency services were consulted before permanently closing the roads and that the emergency services did not raise any objections to the road closures.

The residents of Walthamstow have raised serious concerns that emergency services could be delayed as a result of the road closures. As an example last week there was an incident on Hoe Street which resulted in Hoe Street being closed in both directions. As most other access roads are now permanently closed this resulted in some traffic even though the incident was late in the night.

Under the freedom of information act please provide details of the consultation that London Fire Brigade had with Waltham Forest. Please include which prior example the brigade took into account where over 70 roads were closed off in a short time from which they could have made an assessment.

I would also like to know under the freedom of information if the London Fire Brigade envisage that the road closures could lead to any delays to response times due to the road closures.

In response, I have consulted with the local Borough Commander for Waltham Forest; Jamie Jenkins, who has provided the following details in regards to consultations that have taken place between the LFB and Waltham Forest Council:

Borough Management meetings (BMM) – Borough Commander and three Station Managers

Station and Borough attendance times were monitored and discussed during the following BMMs

- 22 Jan 2016
- 8 March 2016
- 13 April 2016
- 7 July 2016 (planned BMM)

No issues were highlighted as LFB is achieving the attendance target to get the first fire engine to an incident in an average of six minutes and, if needed, a second engine in an average of eight minutes.

Engagement with London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF)

LFB has provided advice throughout and has also supported partnership working within LBWF, including:

- An LFB representative has been part of the project team since July 2014, providing advice and commenting on proposals.
- LFB attended the formal project meetings, organised by LBWF and which were held in December 2015 and June 2016.
- A consultation response was submitted on 28 January 2016 (please see attached document: '*Leyton Mini Holland Project...*').
- In January 2016 the Traffic Liaison group for LBWF was established and this allows LFB to take any concerns to this forum. To date we have not raised any significant issues.

Additional engagement with public groups

- An LFB representative met a representative from the Streets For All campaign on 28 June 2016.
- LFB has responded to correspondence from individuals over the last six months asking for comment on the proposal.

With regards to response times, please see the tables below which show the monthly average for first and second pumping appliances within the Borough of Waltham Forest:

1 st Pump Average Attendance Time												
FinYear	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2014/15	05:04	05:08	05:09	05:04	05:02	05:11	05:04	05:04	05:01	05:21	05:14	05:17
2015/16	05:36	04:55	05:30	05:37	05:25	05:18	05:30	05:28	05:18	05:09	05:23	05:06

2 nd Pump Average Attendance Time												
FinYear	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2014/15	06:52	06:54	06:20	07:00	06:20	06:43	06:21	06:53	06:09	06:40	06:32	06:54
2015/16	06:27	06:22	06:14	06:57	06:39	06:53	07:02	06:17	06:20	06:01	06:41	06:51

Both tables show the Brigade has continued to meet its London-wide average attendance time target of six minutes for a first fire engine and eight minutes for a second.

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28th January 2016

Title of consultation

Leyton Town Centre - Mini Holland Project

Organisation

London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority – London Fire Brigade

Introduction

The London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) runs the London Fire Brigade (LFB). The 17 members of the Fire Authority are appointed by the Mayor of London. Eight are nominated from the London Assembly, seven are nominated from the London boroughs and two are Mayoral appointees. LFB is the busiest fire and rescue service in the country and one of the largest firefighting and rescue organisations in the world. We are here to make London a safer city and our vision is to be a world class fire and rescue service for London, Londoners and visitors. We will always respond to fires and other emergencies, but our work has changed over the years with a much stronger emphasis now on fire prevention and community safety.

Response

The Brigade is working with the Mini Holland project group and London Borough Waltham Forest (LBWF) on this area of work and we remain willing to provide support and guidance to the project through site visits and assist where it is practical and acceptable to do so. The Brigade's core principle will always be to provide the best possible service to the members of public we serve and to uphold the commitments made to the all of the communities that live and work in LBWF, a key area for us is to maintain and preserve our current attendance times for the Borough of 1st appliance in under six minutes and an 2nd appliance in under eight minutes.

Full details of our standards can be found in our current London Safety Plan 5. This can be accessed via our www.london-fire.gov.uk , I also can arrange for a hard copy to be provided if required.

An area where we have raised our concerns is the use of physical barriers to restrict access and could cause timely delays in our attendance. With this said we would like to continue to support the development of the project and provide specialist advice and where possible seek to have access restricted by monitoring and enforcement, rather than a physical barrier. If this is not possible and physical barriers are established a practical and reasonable access solution must be found so as not to impede the response of any fire appliance in an emergency.

Further considerations

The use of enforcement cameras, restricted lanes and general advise to residents and members of public would assist the project. With enforced a key area to keep primary routes clear for emergency vehicles and other essential services would be one we support first before permanent road closures.

Where access is restricted there should always be suitable access provided for LFB e.g. through LFB2 keys, access codes for bollards etc. LBWF will if concerns are raised by LFB as to access, review this and seek to establish a solution that will continue to support our London Safety Plan.

With the expansion of the scheme to further areas within LBWF the access for LFB can be maintained whilst delivering the core principles of "Mini Holland".

We remain committed to working jointly with all partnerships and residents groups of Waltham Forest and if I can be of further assistance please let me know.