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29 July 2014

Dear Sir

**London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority - Proposed reform of fire service decision making in London – Consultation Response**

I write on behalf of the London Borough of Enfield to express serious concerns in respect of the proposals to change the governance arrangements of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) set out by the Mayor of London. As a result we would request the Secretary of State not to proceed with the proposals of the Mayor of London.

The proposal, to change the make-up of the LFEPA by reducing the London Assembly Members from eight to six, the London Councillors allocation from seven to five, and to increase the Mayoral appointees from two to six will be extremely detrimental to good governance.

We are not persuaded that the changes requested by the Mayor of London to the composition of the membership of LFEPA are justified by the business case. Indeed we take the view that the proposals present significant dangers, in particular:

- A diminution of democratic local influence on decisions about the budget and operating plans of the fire service in London. LFEPA currently raises some £138 million pounds p.a. from its share of the precept.

**Doug Taylor**  
**Leader of the Council**  
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- An erosion of an important principle that the fire service and LFEPA are seen as part of the local government family in London as well as being part of the GLA group. The initial GLA settlement was consciously constructed using this model and it is not simply an accident that the governance arrangements are not the same as for other functional bodies, or for policing and crime.
- An erosion of constructive joint working on safety and resilience issues in localities.
- Reduced transparency of decision-making as a result of substituting elected members with unelected Mayoral appointees.
- The loss of built-in local authority expertise, talent and local knowledge.

We suggest that this approach will not most effectively achieve the key overall aims, as outlined and that the opportunity for proper scrutiny of the proposals, as required for the introduction of new primary legislation should be undertaken. We are strongly opposed to the hurried approach suggested for implementing these changes, which we believe will be detrimental to local people and for London as a whole. We are not opposed to regular reviews of governance, nor consideration of issues of accountability, good decision making, achieving efficiencies or role clarity. However we do not believe that these are being effectively dealt with by this proposition.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Taylor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Doug Taylor**  
**Leader of the Council**