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Local Government Finance Settlement Team
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
2nd Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

6th February 2026

Dear Minister,

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service | Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2026-27

We write collectively as Surrey Members of Parliament regarding the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2026-27 and the serious implications it presents for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS).

We are grateful for the opportunity to consider the detailed submission you will have received from SFRS on 14 January, submitted by the Chief Fire Officer, Dan Quin. We share the concerns outlined in that response and are writing to urge you to ensure that the final settlement delivers a fair and sustainable funding outcome for fire and rescue services in Surrey and nationally.

SFRS faces a uniquely challenging position. As part of Surrey County Council (SCC), its Core Spending Power is expected to be frozen for the next three years. In the absence of funding that reflects real inflationary pressures, SFRS will face growing difficulty in maintaining operational resilience, investing in essential capital programmes and sustaining the support services required to protect public safety.

We are particularly concerned that, even with the current funding floor proposals, many Fire and Rescue Authorities are forecasting service reductions simply to balance their budgets. For Surrey, the longer-term impact of the funding floor remains unclear, creating significant uncertainty at a time when stability is essential.

We strongly support the call for the funding floor to be set at a level that genuinely reflects inflationary pressures, ideally linked to a combination of average earnings growth and CPI, or at minimum CPI alone. As highlighted by SFRS, an increase of 3.8% in 2026/27 would result in only a marginal change to the overall Fair Funding allocation for standalone Fire and Rescue Authorities, yet would play a crucial role in preventing damaging service reductions.

While we welcome the proposed £5 precept flexibility, we share concerns that this is increasingly being used to offset reductions in central government grant and cannot be relied upon as a sustainable or universally acceptable solution. We therefore urge the Government to provide consistent and full council tax flexibility across all fire governance models, enabling services to respond effectively to local risk and to invest in continuous improvement. We ask that the final settlement recognises the specific pressures facing SFRS, particularly in the context of Local Government Reorganisation, and provides the resources necessary to maintain a robust, financially resilient service.

SFRS plays a vital role in keeping our constituents safe. That mission can only be fulfilled with fair funding arrangements, reflective of real-world costs.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Maguire MP **Al Pinkerton MP**
Zoe Franklin MP **Chris Coghlan MP**
Will Forster MP **Monica Harding MP**