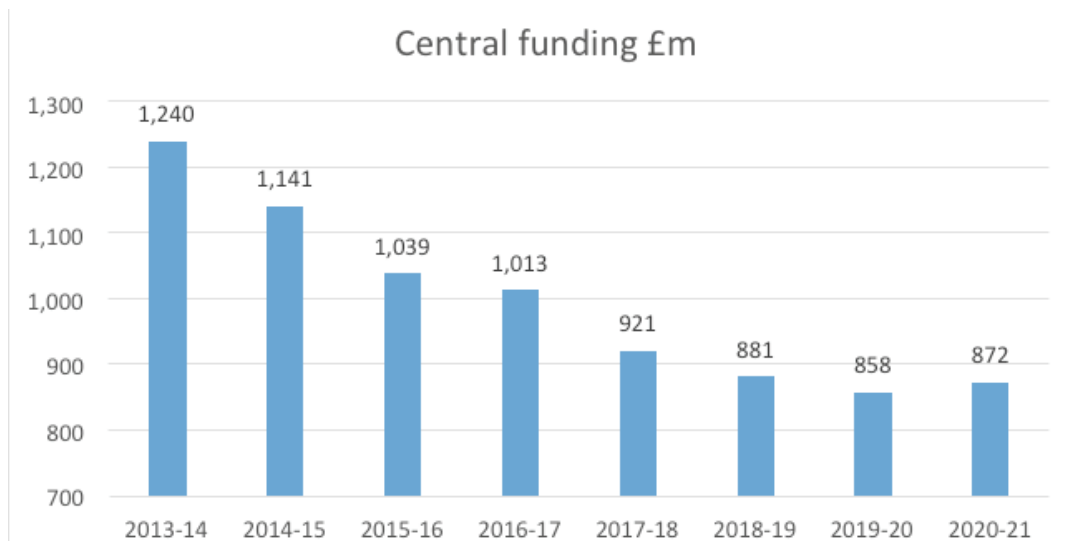


FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE MATTERS

A PARLIAMENTARY BULLETIN FOR MPS FROM THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION | FEBRUARY 2020

AUSTERITY CONTINUES FOR THE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



OVERVIEW

On 6 February 2020 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) announced their final local government finance settlement for 2020-21.

The settlement funding assessment determines the amount of central government funding that will be allocated to local fire authorities in the coming year.

MORE CUTS

In 2013-14, central funding was £1,240m. By the settlement for 2020-21, this had decreased by 30%. This year there has been a small increase to £872m compared to last year. This does little to repair the overall picture.

Since 2016-17, fire and rescue services as a whole have seen a cut of 14%, as the table overleaf shows. In 2020-21, in the first reversal to the trend, local authorities nationwide are to receive a 1.6% increase. But this barely keeps pace with inflation. Currently, the consumer prices index (CPIH) is 1.4%. The retail price index (RPI) is currently 2.2%.

LOCAL CUTS

The worst hit areas are West Sussex, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and Hertfordshire, which are all county councils. They are allowed to increase the level of business rates retained locally (retention rates) to assist with their funding of services like fire, but now get less from central funds.

The government's plan is to increase retention rates from the current 50% to 75% during this coming year.

What this government and its predecessors have done to the fire and rescue service is a travesty. They have axed over **11,000 firefighter jobs** across the UK during the last seven years - around **one-fifth** of the workforce. At a time of increasing risks from an ageing population, from flooding and various other emergencies, they are tearing up the fabric of our communities. It's about time all politicians raised their voices in protest.

The figures are published via a spreadsheet on the GOV.UK website. Note MHCLG omitted Greater Manchester for 2019-20. This has been restored.

Central funding	2016-17 to 2020-21	2016-17 to 2020-21	2019-20 to 2020-21	2019-20 to 2020-21
Fire Authority	Cuts (£m)	Cuts (%)	Change (£m)	Change (%)
Cleveland	-1.6	-9.8%	0.2	1.6%
Durham	-1.7	-14.0%	0.2	1.6%
Northumberland	-0.9	-14.5%	0.1	1.6%
Tyne and Wear	-2.9	-10.7%	0.4	1.6%
Humberside	-2.6	-11.4%	0.3	1.6%
North Yorkshire	-1.8	-17.4%	0.1	1.6%
South Yorkshire	-3.0	-11.2%	0.4	1.6%
West Yorkshire	-4.8	-11.2%	0.6	1.6%
Cheshire	-2.6	-16.1%	0.2	1.6%
Cumbria	-1.5	-15.3%	0.1	1.6%
Greater Manchester	-5.9%	-10.4%	0.8	1.6%
Lancashire	-3.4	-12.2%	0.4	1.6%
Merseyside	-3.6	-10.4%	0.5	1.6%
Derbyshire	-2.3	-14.8%	0.2	1.6%
Leicestershire	-2.1	-13.5%	0.2	1.6%
Lincolnshire	-1.6	-14.2%	0.2	1.6%
Northamptonshire	-2.5	-13.4%	0.1	1.6%
Nottinghamshire	-2.5	-13.4%	0.3	1.6%
Hereford and Worcester	-1.9	-19.8%	0.1	1.6%
Shropshire	-1.3	-19.9%	0.1	1.6%
Staffordshire	-2.5	-14.7%	0.2	1.6%
Warwickshire	-2.9	-40.8%	0.1	1.6%
West Midlands	-5.8	-9.8%	0.8	1.6%
Bedfordshire	-1.9	-19.1%	0.1	1.6%
Cambridgeshire	-1.8	-16.5%	0.1	1.6%
Essex	-4.4	-14.9%	0.8	1.6%
Hertfordshire	-4.2	-25.3%	0.2	1.6%
Norfolk	-2.1	-14.7%	0.2	1.6%
Suffolk	-1.6	-16.6%	0.1	1.6%
London	-22.5	-9.7%	3.4	1.6%
Berkshire	-2.0	-16.4%	0.2	1.6%
Buckinghamshire	-1.7	-18.2%	0.1	1.6%
East Sussex	-2.3	-17.5%	0.2	1.6%
Hampshire	-4.0	-15.3%	0.4	1.6%
Isle of Wight	-0.5	-14.2%	0.1	1.6%
Kent	-4.3	-16.6%	0.3	1.6%
Oxfordshire	-3.2	-38.2%	0.1	1.6%
Surrey	-6.1	-34.3%	0.2	1.6%
West Sussex	-4.3	-43.9%	0.1	1.6%
Avon	-2.6	-14.0%	0.3	1.6%
Cornwall	-1.9	-14.4%	0.2	1.6%
Devon and Somerset	-4.6	-16.9%	0.4	1.6%
Dorset and Wiltshire	-3.3	-18.9%	0.2	1.6%
Gloucestershire	-1.3	-18.7%	0.1	1.6%
England	-141.5	-14.0%	14.0	1.6%