

Cyngor Tref Aberystwyth Town Council

Neuadd y Dref
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 2EB
Maer / Cllr / Cyng John T James



Town Hall
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 2EB
Clerc/Clerk J O Griffiths

Tel/Fax 01970 624761
Email: council@aberystwyth.gov.uk
www.aberystwyth.gov.uk

10th December 2004

Mr Doug Mackay
Chief Fire Officer
Mid and West Wales Fire Service
Service Headquarters,
Lime Grove Avenue,
Carmarthen,
SA31 1SN

Dear Mr Mackay

Re: Equipment Cutbacks in Aberystwyth

It has apparently been decided that the high reach capability in the form of an Ariel Ladder Platform (ALP) is to be removed from Aberystwyth Fire Station and relocated in either Morryston or Haverfordwest. This is the only appliance in the whole of Mid Wales which can provide high reach rescue and fire fighting capability.

Aberystwyth is a rapidly growing town with more high-rise buildings than any town in the whole of mid Wales and has certain buildings which are unique, such as the National Library of Wales, Government Buildings, University of Wales and a General Hospital. There are many other buildings that only the ALP can access such as the halls of residence and private dwellings along the promenade. The decision to remove the high rise capability from the Fire brigade here would without doubt put lives in danger.#

The town has a static population of some 25,000 + people and a travel to work population of between 17 and 22,000. If you think that such a population can be served by two appliances based in Aberystwyth, I feel that I must question the morality of such a decision, although I am least qualified to make such an assessment.

It might be argued that fire precautions in such buildings provide alternative escape routes. Such routes work on paper, but not always in practice and the need for a high rise capability was seen as a fundamental requirement in 1999 when the ALP was brought to Aberystwyth to answer an operational need. Nothing has changed



Kronberg

Gallwch ysgrifennu yn y naill iaith neu'r llall.
You may write in either language

It has also been decided not to replace the dedicated Emergency Tender (ET) based in Aberystwyth. Again it is the only dedicated appliance within 1.5hrs travelling time able to deal with serious road traffic accidents and other special service calls involving a range of non fire related incidents. Its non replacement with a similar vehicle again will put lives and property at risk.

It has been suggested that the existing tenders will carry the equipment currently carried by the ET, and these will then attend such incidents as required. This however removes a fire fighting resource from the established equipment every time these *ersatz* machines are deployed. The need for a dedicated appliance has been established and to replace it with an inferior substitute would be sheer folly. It is well known that Aberystwyth is at the end of one of the most dangerous roads in the UK (AA/RAC Survey August 2004) and the removal of a dedicated ET from the area is poor management of resources.

Both these issues are exasperated by the fact that Aberystwyth is unique within the Brigade area of responsibility in being geographically disadvantaged by lines of communication and transportation. It can justify these specialised appliances purely by the fact that should these appliances be needed (and they have been on many occasions in the past) the placement of the appliances in Aberystwyth is essential.

I look forward to your response as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely



J O Griffiths
Town Clerk

Copy:
Simon Thomas MP
Elin Jones AM
Lisa Francis AM
Nick Bourne AM
Cllr P James, Ceredigion County Council