



**Wednesday,
27 September 2023
10.30 am**

**Meeting of
Cheshire Fire Authority
Sadler Road
Winsford
CW7 2FQ**

Contact Officer:
Donna Linton
Democratic Services

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA

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Cheshire Fire Authority

Notes for Members of the Public

Attendance at Meetings

The Cheshire Fire Authority welcomes and encourages members of the public to be at its meetings and Committees. You are requested to remain quiet whilst the meeting is taking place and to enter and leave the meeting room as quickly and quietly as possible.

All meetings of the Authority are held at the Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford. If you plan to attend please report first to the Reception Desk where you will be asked to sign in and will be given a visitors pass. You should return your pass to the Reception Desk when you leave the building. There are some car parking spaces available on site for visitors at the front of the building. Please do not park in spaces reserved for Fire Service personnel.

If you feel there might be particular problems with access to the building or car parking please contact the Reception Desk at Sadler Road Winsford Tel (01606) 868700.

Questions by Electors

An elector in the Fire Service area can ask the Chair of the Authority a question if it is sent to the Monitoring Officer at Fire Service HQ to arrive at least five clear working days before the meeting. The contact officer named on the front of the Agenda will be happy to advise you on this procedure.

Access to Information

Copies of the Agenda will be available at the meeting. A copy can also be obtained from the contact officer named on the front of the Agenda. Alternatively, the Agenda and individual reports are available on the Authority's website (www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)

The Agenda is usually divided into two parts. Most business is dealt with in the first part which is open to the public. On some occasions some business may need to be considered in the second part of the agenda, in private session. There are limited reasons which allow this to take place, e.g. as confidential information is being considered about an individual, or commercial information is being discussed.

This agenda is available in large print, Braille, audio CD or in community languages upon request by contacting; Telephone: 01606868414 or email: equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Recording of Meetings

The Authority audio records its meetings. Please contact Democratic Services for a copy of the recording via DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk. The recordings are not kept indefinitely.

Fire Evacuation

If the Fire Alarm sounds you should make your way to the nearest exit as quickly as possible and leave the building. Please follow any instructions from staff about evacuation routes.



**MEETING OF THE CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Time: 10.30 am

**Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7
2FQ**

AGENDA

PART 1 - BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1A Recording of Meeting

Members are reminded that this meeting will be audio-recorded.

1B Apologies for Absence

1C Chair's Announcements

To receive any announcements that the Chair wishes to make prior to the commencement of the formal business of the meeting.

1D Declaration of Members' Interests

Members are reminded to disclose any interests that are relevant to any item on the Agenda.

1E Questions from Members of the Public

To receive any questions submitted, in accordance with procedure rules 4.47 to 4.54 by members of the public within the area covered by the Fire Authority.

1F Minutes of Fire Authority

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the Fire Authority Meeting held on 28th June 2023.

(Pages 5 - 20)

1G Minutes of Governance and Constitution Committee

To receive, for information, the minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee meeting held on 5th July 2023.

(Pages 21 - 24)

1H Minutes of Performance and Overview Committee

To receive, for information, the minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee meeting held on 12th July 2023.

(Pages 25 - 30)

1I Minutes of Audit Committee

To receive, for information, the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 12th July 2023.

(Pages 31 - 36)

- 1J Minutes of Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee** (Pages 37 - 38)
To receive, for information, the minutes of the Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee meeting held on 10th July 2023.
- 1K Minutes of Staffing Committee** (Pages 39 - 42)
To receive, for information, the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 13th July and 10th August 2023.
- 1L Notes of Member Training and Development Group** (Pages 43 - 46)
To receive, for information, the notes of the Member Training and Development Group meeting held on 4th July 2023.
- 1M Notes of Local Pension Board - Firefighters Pension Scheme** (Pages 47 - 50)
To receive, for information, the notes of the Local Pension Board – Firefighters Pension Scheme meeting held on 15th August 2023.

ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION / DECISION

- 2 Annual Report 2022-23** (Pages 51 - 52)
- 3 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024-28** (Pages 53 - 190)
- 4 Exclusion of Press and Public** (Pages 191 - 192)

PART 2 - BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

- 5 Year Three Fire Station Modernisation Programme Update** (Pages 193 - 200)



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY held on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 at Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ at 10.30 am

PRESENT: Councillors Stef Nelson (Chair), Gina Lewis, David Brown, John Bird, Kath Buckley, Steve Collings, Peter Coan, Razia Daniels, Felicity Davies, Brian Gallagher, Phil Harris, Marilyn Houston, Nick Mannion, Rob Moreton, Karen Mundry, Stuart Parker, Rob Polhill, Margaret Simon, Laura Smith, Peter Walker, Peter Wheeler and Norman Wright

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

B Fire Authority Membership 2023-24

Members were asked to note the Fire Authority Membership for 2023-24. The new Members and returning Members were welcomed.

C Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rachel Bailey.

D Election of Chair

The Director of Governance asked for nominations from Members for the position of Chair.

Councillor Stef Nelson was nominated and seconded. As there were no other nominations he was duly appointed Chair of the Fire Authority.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Stef Nelson be appointed as Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority until the Annual Meeting in June 2024.

On taking the Chair Councillor Stef Nelson thanked Members for their support.

E Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Chair.

Councillors Gina Lewis and Stuart Parker MBE were nominated. A secret ballot was conducted and Councillor Gina Lewis was duly elected Deputy Chair.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Gina Lewis be appointed as Deputy Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority until the Annual Meeting in June 2024.

F Appointment of Group Spokespersons

A political group may appoint a Group Spokesperson. Three political groups exist for 2023-24, Labour (12 members); Conservative (8 members), and Independent (2 members).

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments of Group Spokespersons be noted:

**Labour: Councillor Stef Nelson
Conservative: Councillor Stuart Parker
Independent: Councillor Robert Moreton**

G Appointment of Lead Members

Each constituent authority may appoint a Lead Member.

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments of Lead Members be noted:

**Cheshire East: Councillor Nick Mannion
Cheshire West and Chester: Councillor Gina Lewis
Halton: Councillor Stef Nelson
Warrington: Councillor Brian Gallagher**

H Chair's Announcements

The Chair asked Members to note the content of the Chair's announcements which included details of Authority achievements and events Members had attended since the last meeting of the Fire Authority.

The Chair, on behalf of the Authority thanked former Members of the Fire Authority, Councillors Bob Rudd and Nathan Pardoe from Cheshire West and Chester and Councillors Michael Beanland, James Nicholas, Denis Murphy and Jonathan Parry from Cheshire East for their commitment and support to the Fire Authority over the years and wished them all the best for the future.

The Chair on behalf of the Authority took the opportunity to welcome new Members, Councillors Steve Collings and Felicity Davies appointed by Cheshire West and Chester Council and John Bird, Peter Coan, Margaret Simon and Laura Smith appointed by Cheshire East Council.

I Declaration of Members' Interests

The Chair informed Members that Item 1N included a recommendation concerned with possible changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme.

Whilst he reminded Members that a dispensation was in place, they were still required to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. All Members did so.

J Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions submitted.

K Minutes of the Fire Authority

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 26th April 2023 be approved as a correct record.

L Minutes of Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Brigade Manager's Pay and Performance Committee held on 21st April 2023 be noted.

M Grant of Dispensation to New Members

The Director of Governance introduced the report which asked Members to extend the benefit of the existing dispensations to the new Members of the Fire Authority. This would allow them to take part in debates and votes on the approval of the Members' Allowances Scheme (and any changes and/or additions to it).

The Director advised that Councillors John Bird, Peter Coan, Steve Collings, Felicity Davies, Margaret Simon and Laura Smith had requested that the dispensation be extended so they could benefit from it.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the dispensation granted to Fire Authority Members on 29th January 2020 be extended to benefit Councillors John Bird, Peter Coan, Steve Collings, Felicity Davies, Margaret Simon and Laura Smith, thereby allowing them to take part in debates and votes on the approval of the Members' Allowances Scheme (and any changes and/or additions to it).

N Appointments of Committees etc., Outside Bodies and Member Roles 2023-24

The Director of Governance introduced the report that covered the following items:

- a) Responsibilities of the Fire Authority and its committees, boards etc.;
- b) Political proportions on the Fire Authority;
- c) Political proportionality rules (where they apply and where they do not and their affect upon the allocation of seats on committees etc.);
- d) Appointment of Members to available seats on committees etc.;
- e) Involvement of independent (non-elected) member;
- f) Appointments to outside bodies;
- g) Appointment of Member Champions; and
- h) Continuation of Member/officer buddy arrangements.

Completed versions of Appendices 2B, 3 and 4 were provided to all Members during the meeting in order for them to check the documents for accuracy prior to approval.

A complete list of the appointments made at the Fire Authority meeting (Appendices 2B, 3 and 4) are attached as an Annex to these minutes.

NOTE: These have been updated to reflect a change in the appointments to the Fire Authority by Cheshire West and Chester Council since the meeting took place. Councillor Felicity Davies was replaced by Councillor Sherin Akhtar on 11th July 2023.

Councillor Sherin Akhtar took the place of Councillor Davies on the following:-

Governance and Constitution Committee
Member Champion Role for Young People
Member Champion Role for Mental Health

RESOLVED That:

- [1] the responsibilities of the Fire Authority set out in Appendix 1A be confirmed;**
- [2] the responsibilities of Committees, Boards and Groups set out in Appendix 1B be agreed;**
- [3] the political proportions on the Fire Authority set out in paragraph 4 be agreed;**
- [4] the approach to the allocation of seats explained in paragraphs 5 to 8 and the revised copy of Appendix 2A be agreed;**
- [5] the appointments required as set out in Appendix 2B be agreed (see Annex);**
- [6] the involvement of independent (non-elected) member (to act in an advisory capacity) as set out in paragraph 10 of the report and reflected in Appendix 2B be agreed (see Annex);**

- [7] the appointments to outside bodies set out in Appendix 3 be agreed (see Annex);**
- [8] the appointments of Member Champions set out in Appendix 4 be agreed (see Annex);**
- [9] the continuation of the Member/officer buddy arrangements be agreed; and**
- [10] a Members' allowance of £1,733.85 be introduced for the respective roles of Chair of Audit Committee and Chair of Local Pension Board – Firefighters Pension Scheme be agreed.**

O Programme of Member Meetings 2023-24

RESOLVED:

That the Programme of Member Meetings for 2023-24 be noted.

P Constitution

The Director of Governance advised that the Constitution required some updating and would be reviewed by the Governance and Constitution Committee during the 2023-24 Municipal Year. In the meantime, Members were asked to agree changes to the officer responsibilities what were contained in the existing Scheme of Delegation (Powers of Officers).

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Fire Authority's Constitution be adopted subject to the following amendments:**
 - i) the Deputy Chief Fire Officer will become the Senior Information Risk Owner (with the Director of Governance deputising for the Senior Information Risk Owner);**
 - ii) the Head of People and Organisational Development (in place of the Director of Transformation) be responsible for the following:-**
 - a) leading, developing, implementing and reviewing strategies, policies and procedures relating to human resources and workforce transformation;**
 - b) ensuring that individual and organisational development needs are established and met as far as reasonably practicable;**
 - c) securing and managing payroll, pension and occupational health requirements;**

- d) **maintaining a suitable policy and effective procedures intended to secure appropriate checks on potential (and current) employees and volunteers (e.g. DBS);**
- e) **fulfilling the role of lead officer for dignity at work issues;**
- f) **managing and chairing the JCNP and leading on trade union relations;**
- g) **acting as panel member in consideration and determination of applications for voluntary redundancy;**
- h) **fulfilling the role of Scheme Manager responsible for the management and administration of the firefighters' pension schemes;**
- i) **leading upon, developing, implementing and reviewing the Service's equality policies and procedures.**

2 FINANCE REPORT END OF YEAR 2022-23

The Treasurer introduced the report which provided a review of the Service's revenue outturn financial position and reported on progress against the capital programme at the end of the 2022-23 financial year.

The Treasurer referred Members to the summary of the estimated revenue outturn for 2022-23 shown in Table 1 of the report. There was an overspend against the revenue budget of £282k. Appendix 2 of the report showed the estimated capital outturn against the capital programme. There was an estimated underspend of £983k.

The audit of the Authority's accounts was planned to commence in July and should be completed in time for the accounts to be approved at the Authority meeting on 27th September 2023. Any changes to the outturn position as a result of the audit would be reported to that meeting.

The Treasurer referred Members to the section of the report containing information on the Authority's reserves and explained that the General Reserve would be maintained at a level of approximately £2.2m, which was broadly equivalent to 5% of the net revenue budget and in line with the generally accepted level.

The Treasurer drew Members' attention to the section of the report containing information on the Authority's Capital Programme. At the end of 2022-23, the Authority's capital programme was £26.83m, with a forecast outturn spend of £25.84m, an underspend of £0.98m.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the outturn position (subject to audit and the finalisation of the local authorities non-domestic rates collection fund/Section 31 grant) be noted; and**
- [2] the movement in reserves as set out in Table 1 be approved.**

3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Treasurer presented a report which provided a review of the Authority's treasury management activities during the 2022-23 financial year. The report also provided information about compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices during the year.

The Treasurer highlighted the key areas of the report which provided details on the following:

- a) the Authority's loans portfolio position at 31st March 2023;
- b) the Authority's investment portfolio position at 31st March 2023;
- c) a summary of performance for the year 2022-23; and
- d) the Authority's performance in 2022-23 against the key Prudential Indicators.

Members were reminded that all of the 2022-23 figures in the report remained subject to audit.

A Member asked a question in respect of the ethical, social and environmental policies of those organisations in which the Authority invested surplus funds. In response, the Treasurer advised that investments were only made in line with the Authority's Investment Strategy, which formed part of the Treasury Management Strategy. The key priority of the Investment Strategy was to ensure that invested funds were secure. The types of organisations that the Authority invested in therefore generally had in place ethical, social and environmental policies. Whilst the Authority was unable to entirely control the investments which make up Money Market funds they do, by their nature, tend to be investments in well-known and organisations that were considered to be respectable.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the report on treasury management activity for 2022-23 be noted; and**
- [2] the performance against the prudential and treasury management indicators be noted.**

4 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 5 – Blue Light Collaboration

Paragraph

(3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Item 6 – Fire Station Modernisation Programme – Year Three

Paragraph

(3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

5 BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a report which provided information about the Blue Light Collaboration arrangements involving Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and Cheshire Constabulary.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the content of the report be noted;

[2] the actions outlined in the report be noted; and

[3] the delegation in respect of the legal documentation be confirmed.

6 FIRE STATION MODERNISATION PROGRAMME - YEAR THREE

The Head of Service Improvement presented a report that provided an update in relation to the Fire Station Modernisation Programme and sought authorisation to proceed with the works at Congleton Fire Station.

RESOLVED: That

[1] authorisation be given to proceed to arrange the works to modernise Congleton Fire Station.

FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP 2023-2024

GROUPS - LAB 12, CON 8, IND 2 (PLUS 1 LIB DEM)

APPOINTMENTS BY CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES

Appointed by Cheshire East Borough Council (3 Lab, 4 Con, 2 Ind)

Labour	Conservative	Independent
Cllr Marilyn Houston	Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cllr John Bird
Cllr Nick Mannion	Cllr David Brown	Cllr Rob Moreton
Cllr Laura Smith	Cllr Peter Coan	
	Cllr Margaret Simon	

Appointed by Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (4 Lab, 3 Con)

Labour	Conservative
Cllr Sherin Akhtar	Cllr Razia Daniels
Cllr Steve Collings	Cllr Stuart Parker
Cllr Gina Lewis	Cllr Norman Wright
Cllr Peter Wheeler	

Appointed by Halton Borough Council (3 Lab)

Labour

Cllr Phil Harris
Cllr Stef Nelson
Cllr Rob Polhill

Appointed by Warrington Borough Council (2 Lab, 1 Con, 1 Lib Dem)

Labour	Conservative	Liberal Democrat
Cllr Brian Gallagher	Cllr Kath Buckley	Cllr Peter Walker
Cllr Karen Mundry		

APPOINTMENTS

Chair: Cllr Stef Nelson

Deputy Chair: Cllr Gina Lewis

Group	Labour	Conservative	Independent
Spokespersons:	Cllr Stef Nelson	Cllr Stuart Parker	Cllr Rob Moreton

Lead Members:	Cheshire East Borough Council Cllr Nick Mannion	Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council Cllr Gina Lewis	Halton Borough Council Cllr Stef Nelson	Warrington Borough Council Cllr Brian Gallagher
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APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND GROUPS 2023-24

BODIES COVERED BY POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY RULES

PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE – 8 Members and 1 independent (non-elected) member

Chair: Cllr Phil Harris

Deputy Chair: Cllr Peter Wheeler

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Razia Daniels	Cllr Steve Collings	Cllr John Bird
Cllr Margaret Simon	Cllr Phil Harris	
Cllr Norman Wright	Cllr Nick Mannion	
	Cllr Peter Wheeler	

Independent (non-elected) Member
Derek Barnett

Substitute Members for Performance and Overview Committee

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Peter Coan	Cllr Rob Polhill	Cllr Rob Moreton

GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE – 7 Members and 1 independent (non-elected) member

Chair: Cllr Rob Polhill

Deputy Chair: Cllr Peter Wheeler

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cllr Sherin Akhtar	Cllr Peter Walker
Cllr David Brown	Cllr Brian Gallagher	
	Cllr Rob Polhill	
	Cllr Peter Wheeler	

Independent (non-elected) Member
Derek Barnett

Substitute Members for Governance and Constitution Committee

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR
Cllr Razia Daniels	Cllr Laura Smith

BRIGADE MANAGERS' PAY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 7 Members

It is the usual convention that the Committee includes the Fire Authority Chair, Deputy Chair, and Group Spokesperson(s).

Chair: Cllr Stef Nelson

Deputy Chair: Cllr Gina Lewis

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Stuart Parker MBE	Cllr Gina Lewis	Cllr Rob Moreton
Cllr Margaret Simon	Cllr Karen Mundry	
	Cllr Stef Nelson	
	Cllr Peter Wheeler	

Substitute Members for Brigade Managers' Pay & Performance Committee

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Kath Buckley	Cllr Laura Smith	Cllr John Bird

ESTATES AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE – 8 Members and 1 independent (non-elected) member

Chair: Cllr Karen Mundry

Deputy Chair: Cllr Marilyn Houston

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Peter Coan	Cllr Marilyn Houston	Cllr Rob Moreton
Cllr Stuart Parker MBE	Cllr Karen Mundry	
Cllr Norman Wright	Cllr Stef Nelson	
	Cllr Peter Wheeler	

Independent (non-elected) Member

Derek Barnett

Substitute Members for Estates and Property Committee

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Cllr Margaret Simon	Cllr Phil Harris	Cllr John Bird

Note: It may be helpful for appointments to this body to include the four Lead Members and the Procurement and Environment Member Champions

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – 4 Members

Chair: Cllr Peter Wheeler **Deputy Chair: Cllr Phil Harris**

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR
Cllr Rachel Bailey	Cllr Phil Harris
Cllr Kath Buckley	Cllr Peter Wheeler

Substitute Members for Joint Consultative Committee

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR
Cllr Stuart Parker MBE	Cllr Rob Polhill

BODIES NOT COVERED BY POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY RULES

MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP – 5 Members and 1 Independent (non-elected) Member

Chair: Cllr Laura Smith

Cllr Kath Buckley	Cllr Peter Coan	Cllr Rob Moreton
Cllr Karen Mundry	Cllr Laura Smith	

Independent (non-elected) Member
Derek Barnett

PHOENIX BOXING CLUB BOARD – 2 Members (Warrington Members only)

Members		Substitutes	
Cllr Brian Gallagher	Cllr Karen Mundry	Cllr Kath Buckley	Cllr Peter Walker

HEALTHY HEART RUNCORN TRAINING GYM BOARD – 1 Member (Halton Members only)

Member	Cllr Stef Nelson
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PENSION BOARD – 1 Member

Member	Cllr David Brown
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SPRINKLER GROUP – 4 Members (one from each constituent authority)

Members	
Cllr Brian Gallagher	Cllr Gina Lewis
Cllr Stef Nelson	Cllr Rachel Bailey

EQUALITY STEERING GROUP – 2 Members

Member	
Cllr Marilyn Houston	Cllr Razia Daniels

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE – 1 Member

Member	Cllr Rob Moreton
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BODIES WHERE NO APPOINTMENTS ARE REQUIRED

CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee fulfils this role.

STAFFING COMMITTEE – 7 Members

The Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee sits as the Staffing Committee.

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 4 Members

The Audit Committee is comprised of 4 Members appointed from and by the Governance and Constitution Committee (plus an independent audit committee member).

BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE

The membership of the Business Continuity Committee comprises the Chair, Deputy Chair, Group Spokesperson(s) and Lead Member(s). The Committee meets on an ad-hoc basis, as required.

UNITARY PERFORMANCE GROUPS

The Unitary Performance Groups are the performance delivery groups in each of the unitary authorities and are chaired by the local Unitary Performance Manager, and attended by the local Members for that area.

OUTSIDE BODIES – INFORMATION

REGIONAL APPOINTMENTS – NORTH WEST

(A) NORTH WEST FIRE FORUM

This forum oversees collaborative work being undertaken by the fire and rescue services in the North West.

NB: 3 representatives only - Chair, Deputy Chair and Leader of Main Opposition

Members
Chair of Fire Authority – Cllr Stef Nelson
Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Gina Lewis
Leader of Main Opposition – Cllr Stuart Parker MBE

(B) NW FIRE CONTROL LTD – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This Company is jointly owned by the Authority and Cumbria County Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. It is responsible for the provision of call handling and mobilising services to the Authorities. It has a Board of Directors and each Authority is able to appoint two of its Members to the Board.

NB: 2 representatives only - Chair + 1

Members
Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Stef Nelson
Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Gina Lewis

REGIONAL APPOINTMENTS – OTHER

(C) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) - FIRE COMMISSION

The Fire Commission provides a focus for the needs and concerns of fire authorities. All Fire and Rescue Services with full or corporate membership have the right to nominate a representative to this forum. At Cheshire this is usually the Chair of the Authority. Additional Members from Fire Authorities are appointed as necessary by the political groups to ensure political balance. The Commission meets quarterly and is an opportunity for Members to network and share information and ideas. The Commission is subject to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Local Government Association.

Member
Chair of Fire Authority – Cllr Stef Nelson

(D) SAFER CHESHIRE EAST PARTNERSHIP

Safer Cheshire East Partnership is a statutory requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Cheshire Fire Authority is a statutory partner. The Fire Authority is represented by a Senior Officer and a (Cheshire East) Fire Authority Member is also appointed by the Fire Authority. The partnership meets on a 6-monthly basis and its key priorities include crime prevention, anti-social behaviour, preventing offending, road safety and domestic abuse.

NOTE: Cheshire East is reviewing the arrangements for the Safer Cheshire East Partnership.

Member
Cllr Nick Mannion

(E) SUB-REGIONAL PUBLIC LEADERSHIP BOARD

The Board provides strategic direction and focus on sub-regional matters for any sub-regional commissions, working groups, sub-committees, project steering groups or task and finish groups established to develop and implement sub-regional strategy. The Board comprises of elected Leaders of Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Warrington Borough Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, the Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority, the Chair of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership and the Chair of the Cheshire, Warrington & Wirral PCT Cluster. In addition the Leader of Halton Borough Council has membership of the Board in an Associate Capacity.

Member
Chair of the Fire Authority – Cllr Stef Nelson

MEMBER CHAMPION ROLES

Equality and Diversity (2 Members) Sits on Equality Steering Group	Cllr Marilyn Houston Cllr Razia Daniels
Health and Safety Sits on Health and Safety Committee	Cllr Rob Moreton
Information and ICT	Cllr Rob Polhill
Environment	Cllr Karen Mundry
Procurement	Cllr Laura Smith
Finance (2 Members)	Cllr Stef Nelson Cllr Kath Buckley
Older People	Cllr Peter Walker
Young People	Cllr Sherin Akhtar
Performance Management	Cllr Phil Harris
Commercial/Business Risk Reduction	Cllr Stuart Parker MBE
Industrial Relations (JCC Chair)	Cllr Peter Wheeler
Road Safety	Cllr Nick Mannion
Pensions (Local Pension Board Chair)	Cllr David Brown
Sprinklers	Cllr Brian Gallagher
Rural	Cllr Rachel Bailey
Mental Health	Cllr Sherin Akhtar



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE held on Wednesday, 5 July 2023 at Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors Rob Polhill (Chair), Rachel Bailey, David Brown, Brian Gallagher, Derek Barnett and Peter Wheeler

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Felicity Davies.

C Membership of Committee

Members noted the membership of the Governance and Constitution Committee for 2023-24, as agreed by the Fire Authority on 28th June 2023.

D Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

E Minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee held on Wednesday 19th April 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

F Appointment of Members to Audit Committee for 2023-24

Members agreed the membership of the Audit Committee for 2023-24 as follows:

Councillors:	Peter Wheeler (Chair) Rachel Bailey Felicity Davies Brian Gallagher
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Independent Audit Committee Member:	Suzanne Horrill
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NOTE: Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council replaced Councillor Felicity Davies with Councillor Sherin Akhtar on 11th July 2023. The Labour Group confirmed that Councillor Akhtar replaces Councillor Davies on the Audit Committee.

2 WHISTLEBLOWING ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Director of Governance introduced the report which provided information about whistleblowing for 2022-23. He referred to the Policy and Procedure on Whistleblowing that was attached to the report for the benefit of new Members of the committee.

Members were advised that the Authority had not been contacted by Safecall during 2022-23. An internal audit was due to be conducted in Quarter 2, 2023-24 concerned with Whistleblowing which was, in part, prompted by His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report entitled Values and Culture in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Members noted the importance of whistleblowing and reporting malpractice or wrongdoing. It was requested that an item about the HMICFRS report be considered at the next Member Planning Day.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the content of the report be noted; and**
- [2] the Values and Culture in the Fire and Rescue Service report from His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services be considered at the next Member Planning Day.**

3 SUMMARY OF MEMBER ATTENDANCE 2022-23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Director of Governance introduced the report which provided information about Member attendance for the last Municipal Year. Appendix 1 to the report summarised Member attendance at meetings of the Fire Authority, Member Planning Day and main committees: Audit; Brigade Manager's Pay and Performance; Estates and Property; Governance and Constitution; Performance and Overview; and Staffing. Appendix 2 to the report contained details of the additional meetings attended, as well as events, conferences and training and development session attendance.

Members noted the attendance figures did not determine that any action was necessary.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the summary of Member attendance for 2022-23 Municipal Year be noted.**

4 COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Director of Governance introduced the report which provided information regarding compliments and complaints received about the Service during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

He provided an overview of the figures for the past five reporting periods which were presented within a table in the report. He explained some of the informal complaints which were attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Members commented on the compliments received which demonstrated the diverse services a firefighter delivers and the professionalism of staff in the Service.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the information regarding compliments and complaints made during the period 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023 be noted.

5 REVIEW OF CORPORATE COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Director of Governance introduced the report which enabled Members to review the Corporate Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure. He advised that officers had conducted the review and believed that the current Procedure was fit for purpose and that no amendments were necessary. He advised that officers would continue to work to ensure that all staff handling complaints were aware of the process and timescales.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Corporate Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure be approved.

6 PROCEDURE - SECTIONS 114 TO 116 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1988

The Treasurer introduced the report which enabled Members to consider the procedure in relation to Sections 114 to 116 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (the Act). He advised that it was identified in the Annual Governance Statement's review of effectiveness, that the Authority did not have a process to respond to actions required of the Authority under Section 114 of the Act.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Procedure – Sections 114 to 116 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

7 FIRE AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION - REVIEW (PART ONE)

The Director of Governance introduced the report which enabled Members to consider changes to the Fire Authority's Constitution for recommendation to the Fire Authority. He advised that since the current version of the Constitution was adopted on 18th June 2014, there had only been minor changes to it, and he felt that it was appropriate to conduct a full review during the Municipal Year 2023-24.

He explained that Part One of the Review covered Sections 1, 2, 5 and 6 of the Constitution. Sections 1 and 5, attached to the report as Appendices 1 and 3 respectively, featured minor changes to simplify text and update arrangements for outside bodies.

Members agreed that Section 2 of the Constitution should be removed due to the key documents referred within the section already being available on the Service's website.

It was also agreed that Section 6 provided an adequate description of a Members' role. However, Members suggested that there should be reference to unitary performance group meetings and budgets within the Section.

RECOMMENDED: That

- [1] Section 1 of the Fire Authority's Constitution, as contained in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;**
- [2] Section 2 of the Fire Authority's Constitution be removed;**
- [3] Section 5 of the Fire Authority's Constitution, as contained in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved;**
- [4] subject to minor changes, Section 6 of the Fire Authority's Constitution be approved.**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
held on Wednesday, 12 July 2023 at Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road,
Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: Councillors Phil Harris (Chair), Steve Collings, Razia Daniels, Nick Mannion, Margaret Simon, Peter Wheeler and Norman Wright.

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Recording of Meeting

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

B Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Bird and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett.

C Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

D Minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Performance and Overview Committee held on Wednesday 1st March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 4, 2022-23

The Group Manager for Organisational Performance and Planning introduced the report, which provided an update on the performance for each of the Service's Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for Quarter 4, 2022-23.

The Group Manager referred Members to the KPI relating to the number of deaths in primary fires. One fire fatality occurred in Quarter 4 taking the total for the year to six. The age profile of the casualties reaffirms the broader approach taken to delivering the Safe and Well visits, with 3 fatalities in the under 65 years age group and 3 fatalities over 65 years old.

The Group Manager drew Members' attention to the Number of Deliberate Fires. 174 deliberate primary fires were recorded at the end of Quarter 4, against a target of 250. The station areas with the highest number of incidents were Runcorn, Warrington and Widnes. The number of deliberate secondary fires recorded at the

end of Quarter 4 was 907, against a target of 741. The highest number of incidents were recorded in the Runcorn, Winsford, and Widnes station areas, accounting for 46% of all incidents.

The Group Manager referred Members to the Number of Safe and Well visits delivered to people of Heightened Risk. The cumulative total for the year was 19,105 against a target of 20,000. He asked Members to note that if all Safe and Well visits were included the total for the year was 21,861.

The Group Manager drew Members' attention to the Risk Based Inspection Programme. The total number of inspections completed for the year was 1004 against a target of 1240. This was due to the shortage of qualified staff able to complete the inspections. This was year one in the two-year programme and the Protection department had a plan in place to meet the two-yearly target of 2480 Risk Based Inspections.

A Member queried how proactive the Service was in targeting nuisance fires. The Group Manager advised that the Service works with a single point of contact within the Police for a specific area to drive down nuisance fires. The Service also engages with young people through youth programmes and open days.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Performance Report – Quarter 4, 2022-23 be noted.

3 PROGRAMME REPORT - QUARTER 4, 2022-23

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an update on the Service's programmes and projects, including those contained within the Authority's annual Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer referred Members to the Station Modernisation Programme, the status had changed from red to amber reflecting the progress made over the last quarter. The construction contract had been signed for the fire station at Congleton and work was due to commence in September 2023. The costs for the build contract at Macclesfield and Wilmslow were expected by the end of July 2023.

He provided an update on the Road Safety Strategy Plan Cheshire. An agreement was now in place with an external company to develop the road safety strategy.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the Prevention Department Review was on schedule and that staff engagement had been completed.

A Member requested to be kept informed in relation to the Road Safety Strategy Plan for Cheshire. The Chief Fire Officer gave reassurance to the Members that the project had not held up the Service's road safety projects.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Programme Report – Quarter 4, 2022-23 be noted.

4 UNITARY PERFORMANCE GROUPS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Head of Service Delivery introduced the report, which provided an update on the initiatives supported and funded by the Unitary Performance Groups (UPGs) during 2022-23.

He outlined that the UPG meetings provided an opportunity for Members to engage with the Service to develop initiatives that assisted with improving performance and outcomes for the communities within each unitary area. The UPGs had a budget of £10,000 per year allocated to enable them to fund a range of activities to help drive down nuisance fire setting and enhance community engagement.

The Head of Service Delivery explained that some initiatives were low cost in monetary terms but of high value to the community, this included Walking With Heros which provided high visibility jackets to children when on a walk, and the annual Macmillan coffee morning.

A Member asked if future reports could explain why the projects were undertaken and highlight the benefit to the community.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Unitary Performance Groups Annual Report 2022-23 be noted.

5 ANNUAL TRAINING PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022-23

The Group Manager, Operational Training and Assurance provided Members with an update on the training arrangements and performance throughout the training year 2022-23.

He drew Members' attention to the BA Day 2 Refresher course, current status red. Six courses had been postponed due to training conducted in preparation for potential industrial action. He assured Members that since the report was produced the training was now up to date.

The Group Manager referenced the Hazardous Materials Training course that had a red status. 43 out of 57 firefighters attended during the year. The 14 staff that missed the training during the year had since completed the training.

The Group Manager highlighted the Emergency Fire Appliance Drivers Training. He explained the status remained red. He outlined the reasons and assured Members that the training team were working hard to rectify the situation including performing a driving instructor review to recruit and retain more staff.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Annual Training Performance Report 2022-23 be noted.

6 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (CYP) AND ADULTS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Group Manager for Prevention introduced the report detailing the safeguarding referrals and improvements that had been made to the safeguarding process.

The Group Manager advised Members that the statistics show that the number of Children and Young People referrals had decreased during 2022-23 when compared with the previous year and this was more in line with the figures from before the Covid Pandemic.

He highlighted that during the reporting period there had been several concerns raised relating to young people which ultimately did not meet the threshold for Children's Social Care intervention. In these instances, support was identified for the individuals and referrals were made to external services such as mental health, drug and alcohol teams.

The Group Manager advised Members that there had been 30 adult safeguarding referrals in 2022-23. Information from Prevention teams had highlighted that post lockdown they were seeing an increase in vulnerabilities identified, including some caused by the cost-of-living crisis.

When the adult safeguarding thresholds were not met, but further intervention or case management work by the Service was required, a Vulnerable Person folder was opened. During 2022-23, there had been 218 Vulnerable Person folders created. This was an increase from 157 folders in the previous year. The most common cause was high risk smoking, low-level hoarding issues and lower-level self-neglect.

A Member questioned who referred a case if multiple agencies attend an incident. The Group Manager advised that our team would report their concerns to social care, because it was preferable for an issue to be reported multiple times than not reported at all.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Safeguarding Children and Young People (CYP) and Adults Annual Report 2022-23 be noted.

7 PROSECUTIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

The Group Manager for Protection introduced the report which presented an update on Cheshire Fire Authority's prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 during the financial year 2022-23. During the reporting period there have been three successful prosecutions.

He summarised the successful prosecution cases and advised there were currently seven cases in various stages of the prosecution process. These include three cases going to trial in the Crown Court and four cases with suspects under investigation.

The Group Manager drew Members' attention to the cost implications of prosecuting cases. The Service may be awarded costs to cover its solicitor's fees and staff time, however this was not guaranteed. The Service maintains a prosecution reserve of circa £300k. The Beechmere Retirement Village prosecution was expected to be the most expensive prosecution to date, due to the complexity of the case and the need for significant legal support.

A Member questioned how the Service decides which non-domestic premises they inspect. The Protection Group Manager advised that there were approximately 37,000 premises across Cheshire and each was given a risk score based on certain attributes such as type of business activity and occupancy. Hotels and hospitals were regularly inspected because they were deemed as high risk due to people sleeping in them that were not familiar with the premises.

A Member asked if the sister properties of Beechmere, located in Ellesmere Port, Middlewich, Wilmslow and Winsford were now compliant with fire regulations. The Group Manager advised that remediation work had been carried out at all the sites and they were now compliant.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the contents of the Prosecutions Annual Report 2022-23 be noted.

8 HMICFRS 2021 INSPECTION ACTION PLAN CLOSEDOWN

The Group Manager for Organisational Performance and Planning introduced the report which presented Members with an update in relation to the action plan created in response to the identified 'Areas for Improvement' from the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report relating to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Group Manager advised that two actions were still outstanding:-

- Responding to Fires and other Emergencies: The service should ensure it had an effective system for learning from operational incidents; and
- Suggestion: Responding to Fires and other Emergencies.

The Group Manager informed Members that a new HMICFRS inspection was completed in March. The Service received its 'Hot Debrief' and early indications were that inspectors were pleased with the progress made in most areas with the exception of the Areas For Improvement covering operational learning and debriefing.

The 2023 HMICFRS' inspection report would be published in August 2023 and a new action plan relating to any Areas For Improvement would be produced following publication. The outstanding actions from Round 2 would be added into the new action plan.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the contents of the action plan were noted; and

- [2] Members agree the closedown of the action plan with the two open items to be monitored alongside the action plan that would be developed in response to the report issued following the 2023 inspection.**

9 ANNUAL ROAD SAFETY REPORT 2022-23

The Road Safety Officer introduced the report which provided an update on the targeted road safety activities 2022-23. Activities were delivered in support of the multi-agency road safety plans of the local authorities and Cheshire Police and were designed to reduce road traffic collisions, deaths and injuries. He highlighted the achievements of the Service at events throughout the year.

The data showed that the four main road users risk groups in Cheshire were, car occupants 35%, motorcyclist 26%, cyclist 16% and pedestrians 15%. During 2022-23 a total of 390 road traffic collisions required the attendance of the Service. This was a 3.6% increase on the 2021/22 totals. Over the previous four years 2019-22, data indicates that fatal incidents had reduced by 40% but serious injuries had increased by 14%.

The Road Safety Officer highlighted the achievements of the targeted road safety activities throughout the year, including TyreSafe Winter Driving campaign, Brake Road Safety Week and Operation Close Pass. He advised Members that they were more than welcome to attend these events.

A Member asked if 20 mph zones had reduced the fatality figures. The Road Safety Officer advised that the Service did not have data on 20 mph zones. He also noted that not every Local Authority utilise them and the Service had minimal influence with partner organisations on speed restrictions.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Annual Road Safety Report 2022-23 be noted.**

10 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The table included those items that had been identified/agreed to date. It was agreed to add the Fire Standards Implementation Review to the September Performance and Overview Committee Meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Fire Standards Implementation Review to be added to the forward plan for September's Performance and Overview Committee Meeting; and**

- [2] the Forward Work Plan 2022-23 be noted.**



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE held on Wednesday, 12 July 2023 at Lecture Theatre - Training Centre, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ at 1.00 pm

PRESENT:

Members:

Councillor Peter Wheeler (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Bailey
Suzanne Horrill, Independent Audit Committee Member

Auditors:

Charles Black, Merseyside Internal Audit Agency
Anne-Marie Harrop, Merseyside Internal Audit Agency

Officers:

Lee Shears, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Andrew Leadbetter, Director of Governance
Paul Vaughan, Treasurer
Chris Astall, Project and Risk Officer
Emilie Salkeld, Governance Officer

1 RECORDING OF MEETING

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded.

2 CONFIRMATION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE FOR 2022-23

Members confirmed that the Chair of the Audit Committee was Councillor Peter Wheeler and the Deputy Chair was Councillor Brian Gallagher.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sherin Akhtar and Brian Gallagher.

4 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

5 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Audit Committee held on Wednesday 19th April 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

6 ACTION TRACKER OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Director of Governance provided an update against each action. The updates were to be included in the tracker for the next Audit Committee meeting, unless the actions had been closed.

It was noted that the following actions could be closed:

16th November 2022:

Item 2 – Purpose of Committee

Item 5 – Future Work programme of the Committee

25th January 2023:

Item 2 – Internal Audit – Progress Report Quarter 3 2022-23

19th April 2023:

Item 7 – Responsibilities of Audit Committee (and Ancillary Matters)

7 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022-23

The Treasurer introduced the draft Statement of Accounts for Members consideration in advance of the auditors commencing their work. He explained that usually the unaudited annual accounts would need to be approved by the end of May. However, for the past few years, the statutory deadlines had been extended.

A Member raised concerns about the impact of firefighter pension on the balance sheet contained in the document. The Treasurer advised that the cost of pension is a national issue within the sector and the Government have provided adequate funding to meet pension costs. However, the Service recognises the present risks associated with firefighter pensions and there is an entry on the strategic risk register.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the draft Statement of Accounts 2022-23 be noted and the audited Statement of Accounts be submitted to the next meeting of the Audit Committee on 26th September 2023 for final consideration.

8 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022-23

The Director of Governance introduced the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2022-23, required to accompany the draft Statement of Accounts. The production of the AGS was a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 and helped to ensure that a reliable system of internal controls could be demonstrated.

He advised that the document complied with the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accounting's best practice guidance on Delivering Good Governance. An update was given on each of the recommendations contained within Section 12 Review of Effectiveness.

A Member requested that a more recent quote from His Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire & Rescue Services be included within Section 3.5 of the document.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the draft Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 be noted and be submitted to the next Audit Committee meeting on 26th September 2023 for final consideration.

9 STATION MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK REVIEW

Charles Black, a representative from Merseyside Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), was in attendance to present the Station Management Framework Review. He explained that the review sought to check that fire stations complied with the Station Management Framework and referred to the findings on page 136 of the report. The review confirmed that there was substantial assurance.

It was noted that the sampled stations complied with the Framework. However, the report included a recommendation to ensure that all stations were using the same template and was consistently signed off.

Members noted that the report was positive and that the internal audit follow up report would monitor progress with the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Station Management Framework Review be noted.

10 MICROSOFT 365 (M365) PROJECT ROLLOUT REVIEW

Charles Black, a representative from Merseyside Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), was in attendance to present the Microsoft 365 (M365) Project Rollout Review. He explained the review's objective was to provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the control framework being exercised by management over M365 implementation, systems, data flows and associated external processes. The review determined that there was limited assurance.

A Member queried the timeframes for complying with the recommendations noting that they were some distance in the future and whether the work would be done in house. The Internal Auditor confirmed that the key issues were addressed immediately, and it was important to ensure that timescales were realistic. The Director of Governance echoed this and explained that due to the complexity of the project some external consultants were brought in to help with technical elements of the project.

Members noted the risks and recommendations raised within the report and requested an update on the follow up of actions be submitted to the Audit

Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Microsoft 365 (M365) Project Rollout Review be noted; and**
- [2] an update on the recommendations included in the report be submitted to the Audit Committee.**

11 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT OPINION 2022-23

Anne-Marie Harrop, a representative from Merseyside Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), was in attendance to present the Internal Audit Annual Report and Head of Internal Audit Opinion 2022-23.

Members were advised that the overall opinion for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 has “substantial assurance”. This meant that there was a good system of internal control designed to meet the system objectives and that controls were generally being applied consistently throughout the organisation, and that controls were generally applied consistently.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Internal Audit Annual Report and Head of Internal Audit Opinion 2022-23 be noted.**

12 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Anne-Marie Harrop, from Merseyside Internal Audit Agency (MIAA), was in attendance to present the Internal Audit progress Report.

She drew Members’ Attention to the key messages:-

- The Internal Audit Plan for 2022-23 had concluded following the reviews of the Microsoft 365 Project Rollout and the Station Management Framework.
- A Follow Up report on auditor recommendations will be submitted to the next meeting of the Audit Committee.
- Members of the Audit Committee were invited to attend webinars hosted by MIAA

She advised that the plan was on track and no concerns were brought to the attention of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That

**13 [1] the Internal Audit Progress Report be noted.
ANNUAL RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT 2022 - 2023**

The Project and Risk Officer introduced the report which provided Members with an

update about risk management throughout 2022-23.

Scrutiny of risk was initially undertaken by the Risk Management Board. However, since the Audit Committee had expended its responsibilities to include risk, internal risk management arrangements had been revised and the Risk Management Board was removed. Further discussion on the new risk management arrangement was discussed during Item 9 of the agenda pack.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Annual Risk Management Report 2022-23 be noted.

14 NEW RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of Governance introduced the report which informed Members about the risk management arrangements. He explained how the work of the Risk Management Board, which included two elected Members, was now split between the Audit Committee and the recently established Risk Management Group (RMG). RMG was made up of senior officers which met quarterly, and its Terms of Reference were attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Members were asked whether they would be content with sight of the minutes of the RMG. The Committee agreed that the minutes of RMG should provide adequate assurance about the arrangements for considering corporate risks.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the New Risk Management Arrangements report be noted; and

[2] the minutes of the Risk Management Group be submitted to Audit Committee meetings as a standing item.

15 REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Project and Risk Officer introduced the document which summarised the Service's Strategic Risk Register. She provided an updated of each risk included within the table which had previously been reported to the Risk Management Group for evaluation. She also explained the risks that were below the threshold that were not considered strategic risks.

Members discussed the Fire in Iconic Heritage Building risk and noted the importance of protecting heritage buildings across Cheshire. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Heritage Officer had worked with partners to provide effective mitigation which reduced the score of the risk.

The Committee discussed how they would like the report to be presented going forward. It was suggested that the strategic objectives be incorporated into the strategic risk register to align risks with the organisational objectives they could affect. It also agreed that the minutes from the Risk Management Group be submitted to the Audit Committee for assurance.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the Summary of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's Strategic Risk Register and Risks below the threshold table be noted; and**
- [2] the Summary of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's Strategic Risk Register be revised to include organisational objectives and submitted as a standing item for Audit Committee meetings.**



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BRIGADE MANAGERS' PAY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE held on Monday, 10 July 2023 at Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors Stef Nelson (Chair), Gina Lewis, Rob Moreton, Karen Mundry, Stuart Parker, Margaret Simon and Peter Wheeler

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

B Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

C Minutes of the Brigades Managers' Pay and Performance Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee held on 21st April 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 3 – Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive: Performance Appraisal and Development Scheme

Paragraph 1 - Information relating to an individual

3 CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report of the Independent HR Consultant which outlined the Performance Appraisal and Development Scheme [PADS] that enabled CFRS to review an employee's performance against delivery of agreed

priorities/objectives, grade the contribution and performance, identify individual and organisational development needs, and support succession planning.

The PADS scheme operated from top to bottom across the whole of the Service is particularly important at the top of the organisation, as Members seek to monitor progress against the key objectives with the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, which ensure delivery of the Service's Community Risk Management Plan [CRMP].

Members were asked to review the performance of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive against the objectives set in 2022-23 and agree key objectives for 2023-24.

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive's interim appraisal was scheduled to take place on 20th November 2023.

RESOLVED That:

- [1] the key objectives for 2023-24 be noted; and**
- [2] Members agree to carry out the interim appraisal on 20th November 2023.**



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE held on Thursday, 13 July 2023 at Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA at 9.15 am

PRESENT: Councillors Stef Nelson (Chair), Rob Moreton, Stuart Parker and Peter Wheeler

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence. The attendees formed the interview panel.

B Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

C Minutes of the Staffing Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 9th November 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 3 – Appointment of Area Managers

Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual

3 APPOINTMENT OF AREA MANAGERS

The Committee conducted interviews for the Area Manager positions with a view to agreeing appointments to the posts of Head of Prevention and Protection and Head of Operational Policy and Assurance. The Committee was provided with a debrief about other elements of the assessment process.

RESOLVED: That:

- [1] Mr Stephen McCormick be appointed as Head of Prevention and Protection; and**
- [2] Mr Tony O'Dwyer be appointed as Head of Operational Policy and Assurance.**



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE held on Thursday, 10 August 2023 at Leadership Team Conference Room - Fire Service, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, CW7 2UA at 9.30 am

PRESENT: Councillors Stef Nelson (Chair), Gina Lewis, Rob Moreton and Stuart Parker

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

B Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence. The attendees formed the interview panel.

C Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

D Minutes of the Staffing Committee

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Staffing Committee held on 13th July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

2 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 3 – Appointment of Head of Finance

Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual

3 APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF FINANCE

The Committee conducted the interview for the Head of Finance. The Committee was provided with a debrief about other elements of the assessment process.

RESOLVED: That

[1] Mr James Cunningham be appointed Head of Finance.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP held on Tuesday, 4 July 2023 at Remote Meeting via Teams at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillors Laura Smith (Chair), Kath Buckley, Rob Moreton and Karen Mundry

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Peter Coan and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett.

2 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That

[1] the notes for the meeting on Tuesday 4th April 2023 be approved as a correct record.

3 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-24 IMPLEMENTATION - QUARTERLY MONITORING

The Governance Officer presented the report on the Member Development Strategy 2022-24 Quarterly Monitoring, updating Members on progress made against the Implementation Plan for the quarter. She provided an update in each of the objectives included in the Strategy.

Objective 1 – Identify and prioritise Member training and development needs

The Democratic Services team were in the process of scheduling the Member Personal Development Reviews with the Leadership Development Advisor. The meetings would take place between July – September 2023 and an update would be provided to the Group in October 2023.

Objective 3 – Provision of an Annual Member Development Programme

Further discussion was held during Item 4 – Member Development Programme 2023-24 – Quarterly Monitoring.

Objective 4 – Delivery of a comprehensive and effective Induction process for new Members

It was reported that six new Members were joining the Fire Authority for 2023-24. All new Members had met with the Chief Fire Officer and were due to undertake a half day induction on 5th July. Once the Member/officer buddies were finalised, all Members would be contacted to schedule a meeting.

A copy of the Member induction Handbook 2023-24 had been circulated at the Fire Authority meeting on 28th June 2023.

Objective 5 – Member Champions

The Democratic Services team were in the process of scheduling the Member Champions meetings with their lead officers.

Objective 6 – Continuous Improvement

Further discussion was held during Item 5 – Outcomes of the Member Satisfaction Survey 2022-23.

A Member queried whether there was any guidance available relating to Member Champion roles. The Governance Officer advised that role profiles for each Member Champion were created as part of the review of the Member Champion arrangements last year.

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2023-24 - QUARTERLY MONITORING

The Governance Officer presented a quarterly update on the Member Development Programme 2023-24. She referred to the training sessions covered in Appendix 1 to the report and advised that the Programme was approved by the Fire Authority on 26th April 2023.

A Member queried whether attendance at training sessions was monitored. The Governance Officer advised that although there is no minimum requirement to attend training sessions, attendance is recorded to supplement the Member Attendance Summary report which is submitted to the Governance and Constitution Committee annually. Further discussion surrounding Member attendance at training events took place during Item 6 of the agenda pack.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the progress on the delivery of the Member Development Programme 2023-24 be noted.

5 OUTCOMES OF THE MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY 2022-23

The Governance Officer introduced the report which provided the feedback from the Member Satisfaction Survey 2022-23. She advised that the survey was split into three sections: feedback on individual training and development; feedback on the training and development opportunities provided to the Fire Authority; and feedback on the Member/officer buddy system.

The Governance Officer advised that there were 16 responses in total and summarised the feedback contained in Appendix 1 to the report. Members noted the positive feedback throughout the survey.

A Member queried the difference between the Member/officer buddy system and the lead officer roles assigned to Member Champions. The Governance Officer advised that buddies were aligned as much as possible to the champion role they were lead officer for. Buddies support Members during their time on the Fire Authority and act as a point of contact. Lead officers help Members to fulfil their champion roles

RESOLVED: That

[1] the outcomes of the Member Satisfaction Survey 2022-23 be noted.

6 MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT EVENTS AND TRAINING SESSIONS

The Governance Officer introduced the discussion item to advise that Member attendance at events and training sessions had declined during 2022-23. She advised of the current attendance monitoring and requirements in place and provided attendance figures for Member Planning Days and training sessions during 2022-23. She asked Members for their suggestions on ways to improve attendance for the year ahead.

A Member commented on the convenience of virtual meetings and training sessions where possible due to time constraints during the day. The group agreed that a virtual approach was also more inclusive.

Members agreed that guidelines on attendance at events and training sessions, similar to those issued for meeting attendance, were not required. However, they welcomed testimonials from those who attended previous sessions/events to encourage attendance.

Members said that they prefer events and training sessions invites to be in electronic diaries well in advance to aid their time management.

The Governance Officer referred to attendance at events and queried whether Members would be interested in a rota to ensure the Fire Authority was represented at each Prince's Trust Graduation. The Chair advised that further information about the impact Member attendance had on Prince's Trust graduates should be highlighted to the Fire Authority Members.

Members queried why there was not a Prince's Trust cohort in Warrington. The Governance Officer advised that she would forward the query onto the Prevention team responsible for coordinating Prince's Trust Programmes and provide a response in due course.

Members also asked how information about Fire Authority activities was fed back to the constituent councils. The Governance Officer explained there was no formal process by the Service but suggested that this could form part of the role of the Lead Members.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the update on Member attendance at events and training sessions be noted and to be monitored by the Group going forward.

7 REVIEW OF THE PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The Governance Officer introduced the item which sought feedback on the current arrangements for the Member Personal Development Review Process. She highlighted the Personal Development Plan attached to the agenda pack which was used during the Personal Development Reviews with the Leadership Development Advisor.

Members commented that the current process aids their understanding of the Service and helped identify areas of improvement. It was agreed that the Personal Development Plan was fit for purpose subject to minor updates.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Review of the Personal Development Review Process be noted and an update on the outcomes of the Personal Development Reviews be submitted to the next meeting.

8 WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

The Governance Officer provided a copy of the Member Training and Development Group Work programme 2023-24. Members noted the content for the meetings and advised they would contact Democratic Services to request any additional items.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Work Programme for the Member Training and Development Group be approved.



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD - FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEME held on Tuesday, 15 August 2023 at Fire Conference Room - Fire Service HQ, Clemonds Hey, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2UA at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor David Brown (Chair), Lee Shears (Employer) and George Peers (Employee – FBU)

OFFICERS: Carmine Rabhani (Pension Scheme Manager), Graeme Hall (Head of Public Sector Relations – XPS Administration), Amy Caves (Solicitor) and Donna Linton (Governance and Corporate Planning Manager)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Neil McElroy (FOA).

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest received.

3 NOTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That

[1] the minutes of the meeting of the Local Pension Board – Firefighter Pension Scheme held on 29th March 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

4 XPS ADMINISTRATION CHESHIRE FIRE PENSION BOARD REPORT QUARTER 4 2022-23 QUARTER 1 2023-24

Graeme Hall, Head of Public Sector Relations from XPA Administration, was in attendance and presented the Cheshire Fire Pension Board Report Quarter 4 2022-23 and Quarter 1 2023-24 which contained the following information:-

- Overview
- Member Self Service
- Common Data
- Membership
- Completed Cases Overview
- Completed Cases by Month
- Complaints
- Telephony

Graeme Hall provided an update on the Completed Cases Overview. He advised that in 2022-23 the total percentage of cases within target was 90%. This would

improve in 2023-24 due to a period of recruitment and training which XPS Administration had undertaken. This would continue to be monitored.

Graeme Hall provided an update on Telephony which related to the fire specific telephone line that had been introduced. When making the call five options were given to the customer which included Option 1 Bereavement (5%), Option 2 Personal Details (5%), Option 3 Request an Estimate or Update on a Retirement Quote (3%), Option 4 Changes to Remedy (0%) and Option 5 all other queries (87%). Graeme Hall advised that moving forward Option 5 would be looked at to see what most of these calls related to and if a further option could be included to assist the users further.

The Pensions and Payroll Manager reported that she had seen an improvement since the new telephone system had been introduced.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the XPS Administration Cheshire Fire Pension Board Report Quarter 4 2022-23 Quarter 1 2023-24 be noted.

5 FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEME UPDATE

The Pay and Pensions Manager presented a report that provided an overview of the current issues relating to Firefighters' Pension Schemes, including updates on the following:-

- Membership Statistics
- FPS Bulletin Actions Arising
- McCloud – Retrospective Remedy Consultation Response
- McCloud – Project Update
- Matthews Remedy
- SCAPE Discount Rate Changes
- Pensions Dashboard Programme
- Revaluation Rate Correction
- Pension Tax Updates
- General Updates

The Board was advised that the Local Government Association (LGA) communications team had provided a template poster for services to use to publicise the Matthews remedy options exercise for on-call firefighters. Work was underway in the communications team to personalise the poster for CFRS that would then be sent to all fire stations to be placed on the notice boards.

It was reported that although the options exercise process would be like 2014, the 2023 options exercise was likely to be made more difficult due to the timeframes involved. Some members had service going back as far as 1964. Therefore, services were unlikely to hold pay, tax or rank information for this period, therefore several assumptions would have to be used to complete the calculations. An added complication was that some members would be in scope for both the Matthews and

McCloud remedies. The proposal was that the Matthews remedy would need to be actioned before McCloud, and these cases should be prioritised for the purposes of the Matthews options exercise. A Board Member asked how many members were likely to be in scope for both the Matthews and McCloud remedies. In response, the Pay and Pensions Managers advised that this was approx. 40 members.

The Board was advised that the Government had announced that from 6th April 2023 the lifetime allowance charge would be removed. The lifetime allowance would be fully abolished from the 2024 to 2025 tax year, through a future Finance Bill. The lifetime allowance framework therefore remained in place from 6th April 2023, and it was just the lifetime allowance charge that had been removed at this stage. The Board had a discussion on what the change would mean for members going forward.

Graeme Hall advised that XPS Administration would be updating their options pack to ensure that the changes to the current payment process for lump sums was clear for members and they would provide estimated lump sum figures based on the assumption that the member would pay 45% income tax on the excess lump sum.

The Board discussed the status of the Injury to Feeling Claims. The Solicitor advised that she was working through files manually to get approx. numbers so costs could be estimated.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Firefighter Pension Scheme Update be noted.

6 MCCLOUD/SERGEANT JUDGEMENT UPDATE

Amy Caves, Solicitor provided an update on the McCloud/Sargeant Remedy and Immediate Detriment. The Board were advised that all services must complete several key tasks in readiness for the retrospective remedy in October 2023. XPS Pensions had also provided information about the project plan to implement Heywoods software solution for remedy calculations, and a proposed order of prioritisation for retirement cases post October 2023.

Board Members was advised that whilst it was appreciated that immediate choice members would hope to receive any options and backpay as soon as possible after October 2023, the remedying regulations allow administrators up to 18 months to complete this work. Whilst XPS had a dedicated project team for the McCloud remedy, immediate choice cases would have to be calculated manually which therefore meant cases would take some time to work through.

Priority would be given to those cases involving deaths, ill health retirement or where members have tapered or no protection.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the update and comments raised be noted.

7 FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEME RISK REGISTER

The Pensions Manager presented the Firefighter Scheme Risk Register that had been reviewed and updated in August 2023. Updates since the last meeting were highlighted in blue in the document.

The Pensions Manager provided an update on each of the updated risks.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Firefighter Pension Scheme Risk Register be noted.

8 JCNP PENSIONS UPDATE

The Pension Scheme Manager advised that at the meeting of the JCNP (FBU) on 22nd June 2023 there were no issues raised relating to pensions.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the update be noted.

9 PENSION BOARD TRAINING UPDATE

The Pensions Manager advised that the LGA Firefighters' Pensions Annual Conference was taking place on 19th and 20th September 2023 that would be attended by Officers.

The Governance and Corporate Planning Manager advised that the LGA annual training session to the Board had been arranged to take place in September, however, some Board Members were not available to attend. Therefore, the training has now been arranged to take place prior to the next meeting of the Local Pensions Board on 17th November at 10.00am there would be an option to attend the training and meeting after via Teams.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the update be noted; and

[2] the LGA Pension Board Training Session take place on 17th November 2023 and that all Board Members attend.

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 27 SEPTEMBER 2023
REPORT OF: HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT
AUTHOR: SARAH DORNFORD-MAY

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Member approval for the release of the Annual Report 2022-23 in video format.

Recommended: that

- [1] Members approve the release of the Annual Report 2022-23 in video format.

Background

2. The Authority must publish certain information about its accounts and governance arrangements. The Authority is also required to comply with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework concerned with the provision of information to communities about its performance. The publication of the Annual Report helps the Authority to meet these obligations and promotes the availability of the Annual Statement of Accounts on the Service's website.

Information

3. The Authority is committed to keeping its residents, businesses and key stakeholders informed about the development of its services and policies and its performance against its published plans.
4. The last printed version annual report was produced in 2018. Since then it has been produced as a digital-only document, for download from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's website.
5. Analysis of visits to the website shows that in spite of promoting the Annual Report internally and externally, the page including the link to the Annual Report 2021-22 has received approximately 200 visits.
6. For this reason, the Communications and Engagement Team consulted with some Members, reviewed what other some other fire and rescue authorities are now doing and suggested the Annual Report 2022-23 is produced as a

short video. Video is proven to drive greater engagement through social media and provides a highly impactful way of presenting the Service's performance. It will also serve to direct people from social media to the Annual Statement of Accounts on the website. The video will be played at the meeting so that Members can decide whether they are satisfied with the format and content.

7. If Members are satisfied with the Annual Report video it will be published on the Service's website on, or before 30th September – the statutory deadline for publication of the Statement of Accounts. Publication will be announced through the Service's social media channels and via mainstream local media.

Financial Implications

8. There are no financial implications as the Annual Report 2022-23 has been produced in-house and will be published online.

Legal Implications

9. The Service has a statutory requirement to publish its statement of accounts. The website and annual report will ensure that this is publicised. There is no legal requirement to print and distribute an annual report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

10. The video is a highly visual way of presenting numerical and textual information in a simple and innovative way. A brief transcript will be provided on the website to aid those with a visual impairment.

Environmental Implications

11. There are no environmental implications associated with the publication of the annual report.

**CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING
MANAGER
TEL [01606] 868804**

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 27TH SEPTEMBER 2022
REPORT OF: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE
AUTHOR: MARK SHONE

SUBJECT: DRAFT COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN
2024-28

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out information about the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-28, which Members are asked to approve before it is published for formal consultation with the public, staff and stakeholders. The proposed consultation process is also described.

Recommended:

- [1] That, subject to Members' comments, the draft CRMP 2024-28 be approved for formal consultation, with the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive authorised to make any final amendments prior to publication.

Background

2. The Authority is required to produce a CRMP (formerly called an Integrated Risk Management Plan or IRMP) at least every three years. This is required to identify risks facing the community and describe how the Authority intends to address those risks.
3. The CRMP must satisfy a number of requirements laid out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for England. The draft CRMP 2024-2028 has been produced, for consultation, in accordance with those requirements.

Information

Development and pre-consultation

4. The draft CRMP 2024-28, which is attached to this report as Appendix 1, is a consultation document that sets out a proposed strategy for the development of the Authority's prevention and protection activity and emergency response capability over the next four years. It has been developed using the Authority's longstanding Community Risk Management model, which involves assessing risk data from a wide range of sources and applying professional judgement to develop plans and strategies.

5. The proposals set out in the draft CRMP have also been informed by feedback from Members at a workshop on 7 July 2023 and at subsequent Member Planning Days in August and early September. In addition, the public and staff have been engaged through online surveys, and sessions run with the Staff Engagement Forum and two focus groups of operational staff. The views gathered are set out in detail in two documents: firstly, the Pre-Consultation Summary, which is attached to this report as Appendix 2; and secondly, the Free Text Comments, which will be sent to Members separately, published on the website and also available in Group Rooms on the day of the Fire Authority meeting.
6. Members agreed some guiding principles for the development of the draft CRMP. These were broadly endorsed by the public and staff during the pre-consultation. The principles are set out below:
 - Giving our colleagues and communities a meaningful say in the development of our Service.
 - Continuing to respond to incidents as quickly as we do now and where possible even quicker in the future.
 - Increasing the availability of fire engines, especially during daytime hours.
 - Enabling our staff to be more productive and effective, keeping our communities safe.
 - Strengthening our prevention and protection programmes to meet the needs of those most at risk.
 - Providing high quality, sustainable workplaces for our colleagues by continuing to modernise our buildings and facilities.
 - Continuing to promote our Service's safe, supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

Content

7. The format of the draft CRMP is similar to that of the current IRMP 2020-24. On pages 6 to 12 it provides an overview of Cheshire by local authority area and describes how Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is structured. This includes an overview of each department and a map showing how emergency response is provided across the county.
8. Pages 15 to 27 describe a range of community risks categorised under the three broad themes of prevention, protection and response. Elements of road and water safety are also considered under the prevention section. Information is provided about how each risk is currently addressed and future activity that is proposed.

9. The principal risk relating to response (i.e. attending incidents, like fires and road traffic collisions) is concerned with maintaining sufficient fire cover (enough fire engines and firefighters). As part of the overall CRMP development, a fire cover review has been undertaken to look at ways of strengthening operational cover and resilience. The process for this review is explained on pages 28 to 30 before five response proposals are set out in detail.
10. The final sections of the draft CRMP describe how the Service proposes to develop the organisation over the next four years. This includes work around culture, people and continuous improvement. An overview of the Authority's funding arrangements and commentary about the overall affordability of the CRMP proposals is also provided.
11. The final published version of the CRMP in 2024 will not need to include as much information about how proposals were developed or details of how to take part in the public consultation.

Response proposals

12. The five proposals set out on pages 32 to 43 aim to provide more resilient fire cover, enable the Authority to undertake even more risk-reducing prevention and protection work in the community, and speed up response times to emergencies. They are as follows:
 - **Proposal 1: change the way we measure response times**, to better monitor the impact of proposals 2 to 4 and improvement in response times.
 - **Proposal 2: convert four on-call fire engines (Runcorn, Winsford, Northwich and Macclesfield) to full-time crewing during weekdays**, with the aim of improving resilience, response times and delivery of prevention and protection activity.
 - **Proposal 3: convert Knutsford's fire engine from on-call to day-crewing**, guaranteeing the availability of a fire engine 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
 - **Proposal 4: reorganise daytime fire cover in Warrington**, improving the spread of fire cover and prevention and protection activity across Birchwood and Stockton Heath.
 - **Proposal 5: strengthen the on-call system**, to make it more effective, rewarding for staff and more sustainable.

Consultation

13. It is proposed to continue the Authority's tried and tested approach of undertaking comprehensive consultation to ensure that the public, staff and

stakeholders are able to contribute their views and help to shape future plans. This also enables the organisation to promote key safety messages and raise general awareness of the Service's work.

14. It is proposed to run a 13-week consultation from 2 October 2023 until 2 January 2024, to take into account bank holidays around the Christmas period. As in previous years, a series of consultation roadshows will take place across all four local authority areas. Details of these events will be published on the Service's website once arrangements are confirmed. In addition, residents will be consulted at a range of other events across Cheshire, such as community group meetings.
15. Underpinning the consultation process will be an electronic survey, which will be used to gauge views on the risks and proposals set out in the draft CRMP. The main consultation document, a public summary and short videos will be available on a dedicated area of the Service's website. There will also be extensive use of the Service's social media channels, to encourage online feedback.
16. The approach to staff consultation will include face-to-face dialogue, with visits to individual watches and teams planned throughout the consultation period. This will be supported by online content available on the Service's intranet, including a staff survey.
17. Key external partners will be contacted directly and encouraged to provide comments. In addition, contact will be made with a range of community networks to encourage responses from under-represented groups.
18. Initial feedback from the consultation will be reported to Members at their meeting on 6 December 2023. A formal report on the outcomes of the consultation will be presented to the Authority at its meeting on 14 February 2024. At that meeting the Authority will be asked to finalise and approve the CRMP for 2024-28. It will also consider the budget for 2024-25.

Financial Implications

19. The package of proposals in the CRMP 2024-2028 will be essentially cost neutral. The small additional cost will be covered by savings from existing budgets.
20. The consultation and communications costs associated with the development of the CRMP will be met from one-off growth of £30,000, approved as part of the 2023/24 budget process.

Legal Implications

21. Publication of the CRMP 2024-28 in February 2024 will fulfil the Authority's statutory responsibility.
22. The Consultation Institute has been engaged to provide external assurance that the draft CRMP has been developed and consulted on in line with best

practice. The Institute will continue to monitor the consultation activities and provide feedback which should be reflected in the report to the Authority about the CRMP.

Equality and Diversity Implications

23. Equality impact assessments (EIAs) have been carried out on proposals 2 to 4; those with the greatest impact on staff. The EIAs are included as Appendix 3 to this report.

Environmental Implications

24. Opportunities to respond online will reduce the need for printed materials. Where they are required to support the consultation, they will be printed on recycled paper where possible.

**CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING
MANAGER
TEL [01606] 868804**

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

Appendix 1: Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2024-28

Appendix 2: Draft 2024-2018 Community Risk Management Plan Pre-Consultation Summary

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessments

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Cheshire
Fire Authority

Community Risk Management Plan

2024-2028

Draft for consultation
Autumn 2023

MORE PREVENTION

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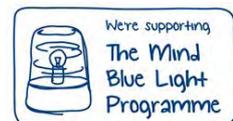
...we are pleased to be able to present a package of proposals which address our challenges and deliver more risk-reducing prevention and protection activity, and better response, for no additional cost.

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If you require this or any other document in a different format, please contact us by emailing consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk, calling **01606 868700** or contacting us via our social media channels.

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Foreword



Councillor Stef Nelson
Chair, Cheshire Fire Authority

Fire and rescue authorities, the democratically accountable bodies that provide local fire and rescue services, must produce a Community Risk Management Plan, or CRMP.

In Cheshire we face a variety of different risks, from an ageing population to our extensive transport networks and industrial sites, to name but a few. We are also confronted with new risks, such as the growth of electric vehicles and battery technologies and impacts of climate change. Throughout this draft CRMP, we will explain our proposals to continue addressing existing risks and deal with new ones, so we can move towards our vision of “a Cheshire where there are no deaths, injuries or damage from fires and other emergencies.”



Alex Waller
Chief Fire Officer
and Chief Executive,
Cheshire Fire and
Rescue Service

To mitigate risks and prevent fires and other emergencies, we carry out a range of fire prevention and protection activity, focusing on the people in local communities who are most at risk.

Of course, through our fire stations, fire engines and dedicated firefighters we also respond to emergencies, providing a high quality, timely, safe and effective response. Maintaining this response, or ‘fire cover’, requires a range of different staffing models or ‘duty systems’. These are explained in more detail on page 10. The changing nature of society means it is becoming more difficult for us to operate particular duty systems effectively at certain times of the day. Therefore, we have carefully reviewed the way we provide fire cover, to improve our response capacity and capability during our busiest periods. These proposals are outlined in detail on pages 28 to 43.

We know that many people are facing significant financial pressures and the country is facing considerable financial uncertainty. So, we are pleased to be able to present a package of proposals which address our challenges and delivers more risk-reducing prevention and protection activity, and better response, for no additional cost.

Our future success depends primarily on our people and we will continue to support them to thrive and work hard to create a diverse and inclusive workplace, founded on our values and principles of dignity, respect and fairness.

Our proposals very much reflect the future direction of the fire and rescue service nationally. The Home Office, His Majesty’s Inspectorate for Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and the Local Government Association all expect us to deliver a modern, effective, efficient and inclusive service to the public. These expectations are set out in numerous inspection reports, Fit for the Future and in the white paper on reforming the fire and rescue sector.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is YOUR fire and rescue service. Therefore, between now and the end of the year we want to hear your views on our proposals. Further details on our public, staff and stakeholder consultation programme and the ways in which you can take part, are detailed at the end of this draft CRMP.



What is a CRMP?



Under the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, a CRMP should identify risks facing the community and describe how a fire and rescue authority will address those risks, and prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies. In short, it serves as our organisational plan for the future. A CRMP should have a lifespan of at least three years and be produced in consultation with the public, fire and rescue staff, local partners and representative bodies.



Details of our consultation are set out the end of this document, which once approved will cover the four years between 2024 and 2028. We will produce annual action plans during this period to show the progress we are making.



The first sections of this draft CRMP provide an overview of Cheshire and explain the way our fire and rescue service is organised to deliver prevention, protection and response activities.

Between pages 12 and 27 we describe the demands on our Service, and outline the key fire and rescue risks facing Cheshire and how we propose to address them over the next four years.



Between pages 28 and 43 we explain in more detail the proposals to change and improve the way we respond to emergencies, following a comprehensive review of our fire cover. Further information is available on our website.



The final sections outline further plans to improve other important aspects of our organisation and provide an overview of our funding arrangements. A summary of our proposals and the way in which you can get involved in the consultation is then provided from page 51.

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The county of Cheshire

Cheshire covers some 905 square miles and has a population of almost 1.1 million people. The county is largely rural, with urban populations and major industry concentrated mostly in its north west. Major conurbations include the city of Chester and the towns of Warrington, Crewe, Macclesfield, Ellesmere Port, Runcorn and Widnes.

- [Cheshire West and Chester](#) as a unitary authority includes the historic city of Chester, the industrial towns of Ellesmere Port and Winsford, and market towns and villages. It is largely rural, with the main centres of population in the north and west of the borough. The area benefits from strong tourism and retail sectors, alongside established agricultural, automotive and manufacturing industries. There are nationally important petrochemical and nuclear fuel industries in the north of the authority area and a historic link to salt mining. Cheshire West and Cheshire has pockets of affluence alongside communities that are relatively disadvantaged.



- [Cheshire East](#) is a large unitary authority containing the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield, as well as market towns and the commuter belt south of Manchester. It is home to internationally renowned vehicle manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies, while rail, agriculture and financial services are also key industries. It is an area of contrasting features, combining urban centres with rural villages and containing areas of significant affluence but also pockets of social deprivation. The borough is served by the M6 motorway, a network of urban and rural 'A' roads and the west coast rail line, while Manchester Airport lies on its northern border. It is home to several heritage buildings and the north east of the authority area sits at the gateway to the Peak District National Park.





- [Halton](#) incorporates the industrial towns of Runcorn and Widnes, connected by two major bridges across the River Mersey. The area is home to various chemical and science industries, as well as distribution and logistics companies. Aside from the Mersey crossings, key infrastructure includes docks and ports and a gas-fired power station at Rocksavage, south of Runcorn. The Manchester Ship Canal also runs across the borough, while Liverpool John Lennon International Airport lies just over the border in Merseyside. Some of Halton's communities are among the most disadvantaged in the country.



Photo courtesy of Merseylink

- [Warrington](#) is located in between Liverpool and Manchester and is the largest conurbation in Cheshire. Warrington is traversed by the River Mersey, Manchester Ship Canal, three motorways and the west coast rail line. Due to its location it has developed into an important transport and logistics hub. It also maintains strong retail, energy and night-time economies. There are several minority ethnic communities that call the borough home, making it one of the most diverse areas of Cheshire. Some areas, mostly in the centre of the town, fall within the 20% most deprived in the country, while other areas on the edge of the borough are within the 30% most affluent.



Cheshire is bordered by the Liverpool City Region and Greater Manchester in the north, Derbyshire and Staffordshire to the east, Shropshire to the south and North Wales lies to the west of the county.



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Your Fire and Rescue Service

Overview

Cheshire Fire Authority comprises 23 elected councillors or ‘members’ appointed by Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Halton Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council. The Authority oversees the fire and rescue service on behalf of the communities of Cheshire. You can find more information about the Authority and its members on our [website](#).

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is led by a Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and a Service Leadership Team. This comprises senior officers who are responsible for departments looking after our Service’s key operational and corporate functions.

Service Delivery

This looks after our firefighters, fire engines and 28 fire stations, ensuring they respond 24/7 to emergencies. Details of how we provide this cover is set out on pages 10 to 11.

Operational Policy and Assurance

The department provides operational and incident command training to our firefighters from our state of the art training centre at Sadler Road, Winsford. It also develops operational policies, plans and procedures, manages and maintains our vehicles, tests and develops new equipment, and oversees health, safety and wellbeing. The department also works closely with North West Fire Control in Warrington, our 999 control room shared with Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Lancashire fire and rescue services.

Prevention

The department oversees much of our community work. This includes delivering fire safety and health and wellbeing advice to households, road and water safety education, reducing deliberate fires, engaging with schools and young people and managing our volunteers. The department also runs Safety Central, our interactive life skills education centre at Lymm.





Protection

This department ensures non-residential premises meet their obligations around fire safety. It engages with businesses and where necessary enforces compliance with legislation. Protection officers also work with local authorities and others regarding building regulations and the highest risk premises including industrial facilities, heritage sites and care settings.



Service Improvement

The department monitors our performance, and leads our corporate planning and our work with HMICFRS. The team also co-ordinates our work to modernise our facilities and manages our relationship with the joint corporate services we share with Cheshire Constabulary (see below).



Communications and Engagement

The department leads all aspects of internal and external communications including media relations, our website and social media and our graphic design function. The team also coordinates consultation and engagement with staff and the community, our programme of events and our work to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.



Finance

Our finance team ensures we operate under sound financial principles, within legislation, and achieves a balanced budget each year by supporting departments with their financial management and planning.



Governance

This small team looks after our corporate planning, the Fire Authority, executive support and information management.



People and Organisational Development

The department provides human resources services including payroll and pensions, recruitment, HR business partnership and the provision of leadership and development training.

Joint Corporate Services

Information Technology (IT), Facilities and Estates, Procurement and Contracts, Legal Services and Stores functions are shared with Cheshire Constabulary through an arrangement called Blue Light Collaboration.



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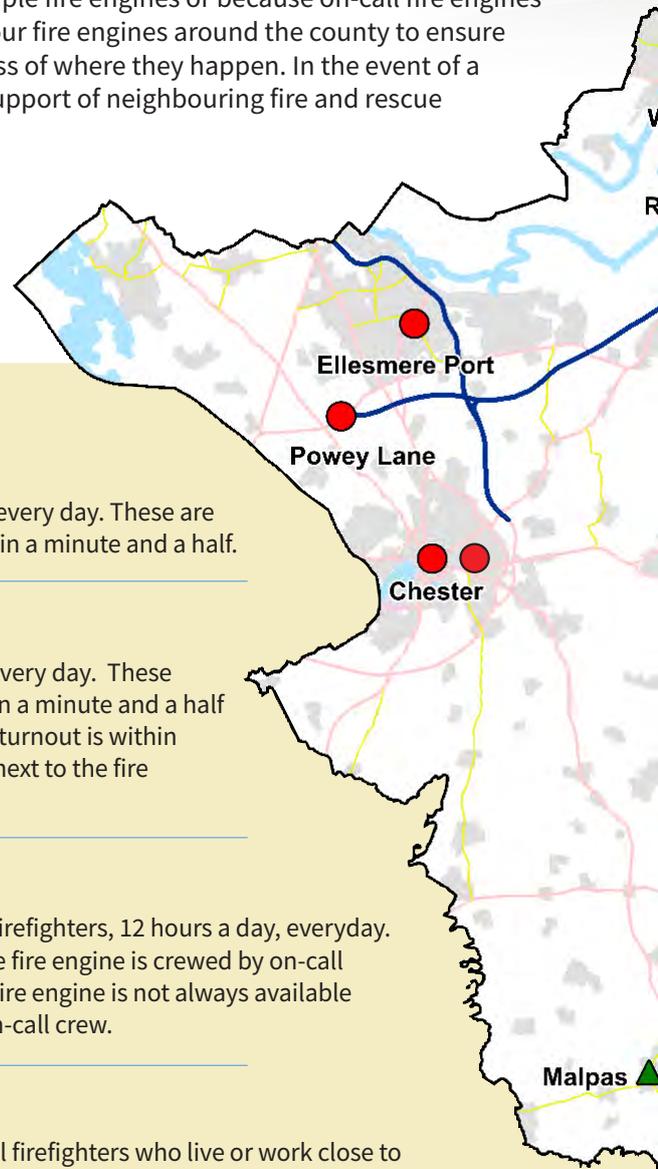
Your Fire and Rescue Service

Our firefighters respond to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies from 28 fire stations across Cheshire. These are shown on this map.

Some fire stations have one fire engine and some have two. Other stations have specialist vehicles like aerial ladder platforms, rapid response rescue units (RRRUs) or boats, depending on the risks in their areas.

In total we have 35 fire engines, but not all of these are available at the same time. This can be because of crews undertaking training, large incidents that require multiple fire engines or because on-call fire engines have insufficient crew. For that reason, we constantly move our fire engines around the county to ensure that we can get to most incidents within 10 minutes regardless of where they happen. In the event of a significant or long-running incident we can also call on the support of neighbouring fire and rescue services if we need to.

We have four duty systems so we can crew our fire engines based on local risks and needs. We tend to use full-time firefighters when it is busy and part-time firefighters when it is quieter with fewer incidents.



● **Wholetime fire engine**

Eleven wholetime fire engines, available 24 hours a day, every day. These are crewed by full-time firefighters and crew turnout* is within a minute and a half.

■ **Day crewing fire engine**

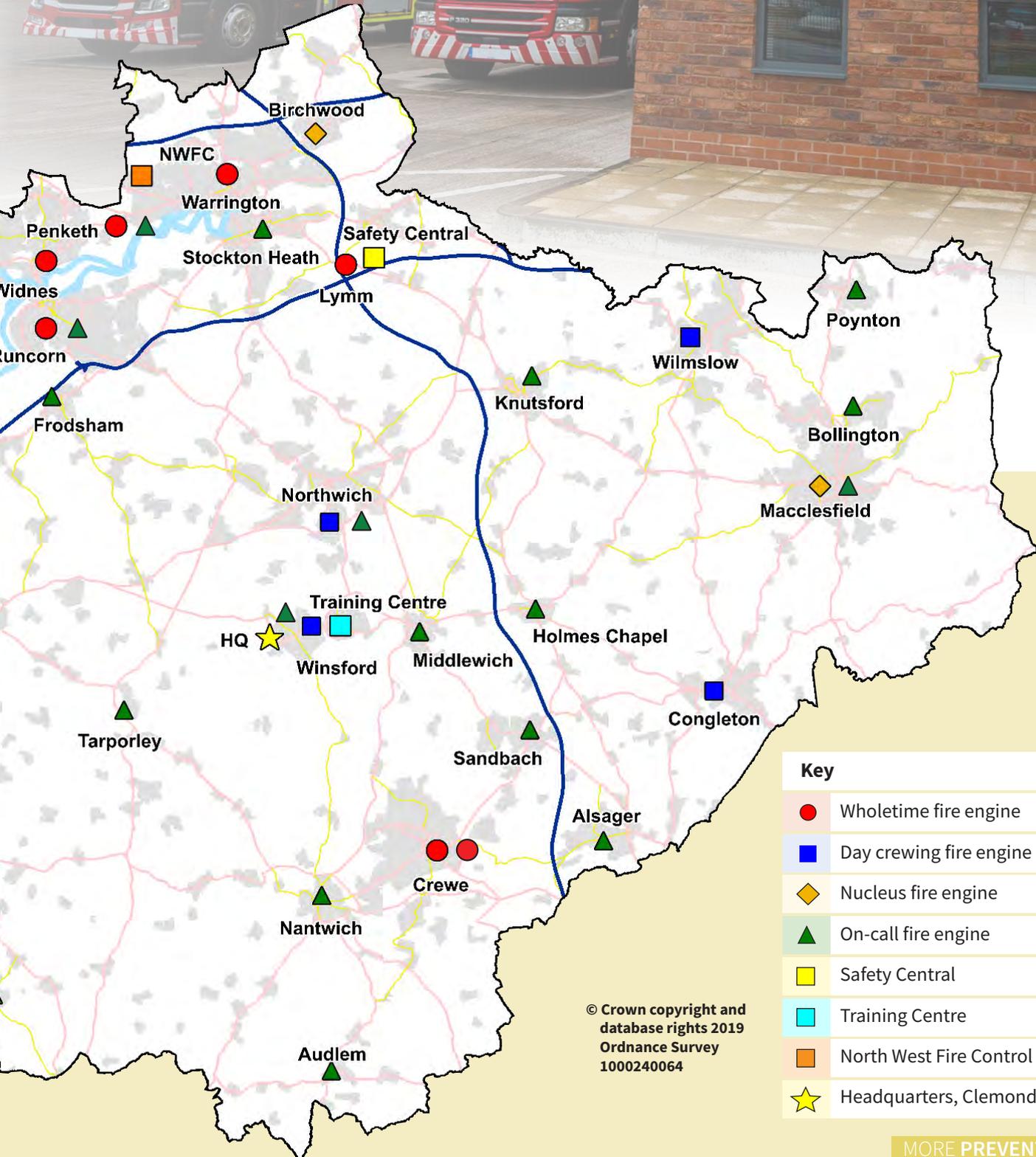
Four day crewing fire engines, available 24 hours a day, every day. These are crewed by full-time firefighters. Crew turnout is within a minute and a half during weekday daytimes. At nights and weekends crew turnout is within five minutes. The full-time firefighters live in our houses next to the fire station so they can turnout within five minutes.

◆ **Nucleus fire engine**

Two nucleus fire engines. These are crewed by full-time firefighters, 12 hours a day, everyday. Crew turnout is within a minute and a half. Overnight the fire engine is crewed by on-call firefighters and crew turnout is within five minutes. The fire engine is not always available overnight and depends on the availability of sufficient on-call crew.

▲ **On-call fire engine**

Eighteen on-call fire engines. These are crewed by on-call firefighters who live or work close to the fire station. Crew turnout is within five minutes. The fire engine is not always available and depends on the availability of sufficient on-call crew.



Key	
●	Wholetime fire engine
■	Day crewing fire engine
◆	Nucleus fire engine
▲	On-call fire engine
■	Safety Central
■	Training Centre
■	North West Fire Control
★	Headquarters, Clemonds Hey

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Our operational demands

Current Operational Demand

*based on average yearly demand between 2020/21 and 2023/24

	8,274	Incidents attended
	2,432	Fires
	3,198	False alarms
	2,031	Other special service incidents
	372	Road traffic collisions
	318	Accidental dwelling fires
	917	Deliberate fires
	139	Fires in non domestic premises
	65	Injuries in accidental dwelling fires
	19	of these attended hospital

Predicted Annual Future Operational Demand

*based on average demand between 2024/25 and 2027/28

	8,289	Incidents likely to be attended
	2,126	Fires
	2,989	False alarms
	2,273	Other special service incidents
	353	Road traffic collisions
	296	Accidental dwelling fires
	809	Deliberate fires
	124	Fires in non domestic premises
	50	Injuries in accidental dwelling fires
	13	of these who may attend hospital



How we assess and mitigate risk and demand

We use our Community Risk Management (CRM) model to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect our communities. We then put in place arrangements to mitigate these risks, by refining or changing the way we do things, investing in equipment or facilities, or developing our partnerships.

The first step in the CRM process is to look at information from a wide range of sources. This includes data about incidents, including who they affect, when and where they happen and how long it takes us to reach them. Risks in specific buildings or locations are considered, as well as the wider social needs of our local areas. We also consult with staff, partners and our communities.

After this information has been collated and analysed using sophisticated computer software, officers carefully examine the evidence and consider risks to people, places and firefighters before deciding on what activities need to be done to reduce or mitigate risks.

These activities are delivered through our prevention, protection and response teams against targets and standards agreed with members. Performance is regularly monitored and published.

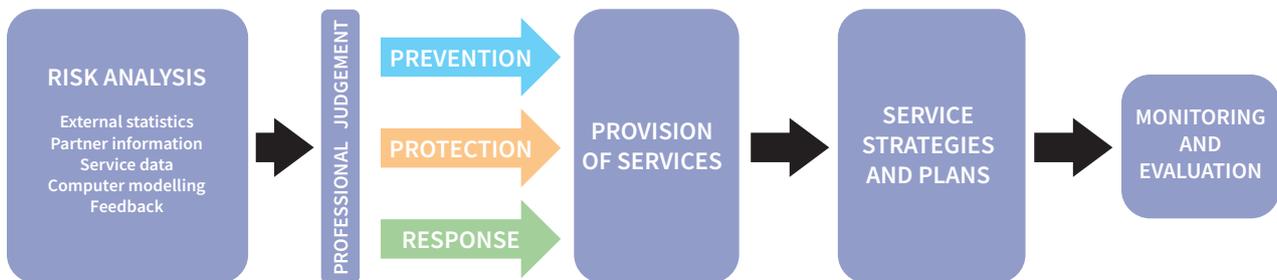
Effective response to some of the risks means working in partnership with other emergency services, local authorities, health providers and partner agencies. These partners are brought together through the [Cheshire Resilience Forum](#) (CRF) to prepare and plan for a range of emergencies. We regularly test these plans in joint training exercises.

Local resilience forums such as the CRF have to produce a Community Risk Register (CRR), which highlights potential risks facing the area. The risks outlined in this draft CRMP include some of those identified in the CRR and the government’s updated National Risk Register, as well as some more specific fire and rescue risks.

We undertake to analyse risks in Cheshire using many data sources and use our professional judgement

To determine the optimum provision of services to address risk across Cheshire, according to our resources available

This provision is outlined in the Service’s plans, such as the CRMP. Changes to our service provision will also be informed by feedback from public consultation



We monitor and evaluate our performance to inform any changes we may need to make to address and mitigate risks in the community

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Developing our **draft CRMP**

To help shape this draft CRMP, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of fire cover across Cheshire. We do this every few years to ensure the Authority continues to provide its emergency response in the most effective and efficient way. The review of fire cover is part of our CRM process, explained on the previous page.

In early summer 2023, members agreed some guiding principles for the way we should review fire cover and develop proposals for the future. These are set out below.

- Giving our colleagues and communities a genuine say in the development of our Service.
- Continuing to respond to incidents as quickly as we do now and where possible, even quicker in the future.
- Increasing the availability of fire engines, especially during daytime hours.
- Enabling our staff to be more productive and effective, keeping our communities safe.
- Strengthening our prevention and protection programmes to meet the needs of those most at risk.
- Providing high quality, sustainable workplaces for our colleagues by continuing to modernise our buildings and facilities.
- Continuing to promote our Service's safe, supportive and inclusive workplace culture.

This draft CRMP has also been shaped by the views of the public, staff and partners. We have already undertaken pre-consultation to seek feedback on our guiding principles, explore options for the future in more detail, understand impacts on minority groups and ask for views on new and emerging risks. A summary of feedback from the pre-consultation can be found on our website.

Throughout the pre-consultation, and to inform our formal consultation, we have sought guidance from the Consultation Institute. They are independent experts in consultation and engagement, who are helping us talk and listen to our communities in line with best practice.



The
Consultation
Institute

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Risks Prevention

Changing population



Fire and other accidents are more likely to affect the oldest and youngest people in our communities. Cheshire's population is getting older, meaning we could see more incidents unless we invest in our prevention work. At the same time, younger people continue to need our support to stay safe.

What are the risks?

National and local data consistently shows that the older you get, the more likely you are to suffer a serious injury or die if you have a fire in your home. This risk increases even more if you live alone or are over 65.

Older people are also more likely to live with conditions like dementia, have poor mobility or experience health problems which put them at risk of having a fire or accident.

We are becoming an older county, with our average age increasing faster than the national average. This increase is more pronounced in Cheshire East, and Cheshire West and Chester.

There are other risk factors that impact people under the age of 65 that put them at higher risk of injury or death, such as lifestyle and living conditions.

At the other end of the age spectrum, we are seeing an increase in the number of young people living with mental health issues. Young people are often responsible for deliberately setting fires, wasting firefighters' time and putting property and lives at risk. We are called to almost 1,000 incidents like this every year.

What do we currently do?

- Our prevention team and firefighters visit more than 20,000 households at most risk of fire each year to fit smoke alarms, offer safety advice and provide health information. These are known as 'Safe and Well' visits.
- Where we find people who are most at risk of fire and other harm, we work closely with our partners in health and social care to keep them safe.



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Risks Prevention



- Our Fire Cadet scheme, run at many of our fire stations, gives young people aged 12-17 a worthwhile pastime outside school and builds their confidence and skills.
- We engage children and young people at risk of being excluded from school through our RESPECT programme, which aims to instil positive behaviours and good citizenship.
- We deliver the Prince's Trust Team Programme on behalf of local colleges to help 16-25 year olds into education, training or employment.
- Our firefighters and prevention teams visit every primary school in Cheshire to deliver fire safety education, and thousands of children visit Safety Central each year to learn how to avoid a wide range of accidents.
- We deliver targeted advice and support on key safety themes throughout the year in collaboration with the NFCC.

What do we plan to do?

- Implement the recommendations from a review of our Prevention Department in 2023, ensuring all our community safety programmes continue to have the greatest possible impact in reducing harm, injuries and deaths.
- Continue to improve the way we target our Safe and Well visits, ensuring we see the people who are most at risk of fire.
- Gradually increase the number of Safe and Visits we carry out year on year during the lifespan of this CRMP, so that as many people as possible benefit from this life-saving scheme.
- Improve the way we work with our partners in health, social care, housing and the police so that people are safeguarded and get the support they need.
- Train our prevention teams and firefighters in motivational interviewing techniques, which should help to increase the number of homes we get into and deliver safety messages effectively.
- Include safety information about new and emerging technologies, such as lithium-ion batteries and battery energy storage systems (BESS), in our Safe and Well visits.



Road and water safety



We attend more road traffic collisions than fires in the home and more people are killed or seriously injured each year on the roads than in fires. In 2022, almost twice as many people drowned in the UK than died in fires.

What are the risks?

Cheshire is served by an extensive network of roads and waterways. Alongside four busy motorways (M6, M62, M53 and M56), there are a series of trunk 'A' roads and smaller roads in urban and rural areas.

The rivers Mersey, Dee, Weaver and Bollin, a canal network and the Manchester Ship Canal run through areas of population. There are also many lakes and meres in more rural areas. These attract swimmers and bathers, particularly in warmer weather.

What are we currently doing?

- We have a dedicated Road Safety Team that runs a range of education programmes aimed at young people, drivers, cyclists and motorcyclists, and supports fire crews to engage with their communities on all aspects of road safety.
- We are one of the only fire and rescue services in the country to be commissioned by a local authority to deliver road safety education. This sees us deliver sessions to thousands of children and young people in Cheshire East each year.
- We are an active partner in the Cheshire Road Safety Group, alongside Cheshire Constabulary and the four local authorities, which is currently developing a strategic plan to direct the work of all partners.
- We support campaigns led by the NFCC to promote staying safe in and around water and established the North West Water Safety Group.
- We are supporting fire stations to deliver proactive water safety activities in their areas.

What do we plan to do?

- Implement the new Road Safety Strategic Plan with our partners and increase the number of road safety events we deliver.
- Expand our water safety programme to reduce the occurrence of accidental drowning.

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Risks Protection

Non-domestic premises



A fire in any type of business premises can have a devastating impact on lives and livelihoods. We have a duty to help those responsible for these premises to understand and comply with fire safety laws or potentially face criminal action.



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What are the risks?

Cheshire's rich industrial and social heritage, and its unique geographical position, means it has vibrant and diverse economy. Across our county there are small, medium and large commercial premises used for retail, hospitality, healthcare, financial services, petrochemicals and nuclear processing, manufacturing, life science, agriculture and logistics.

Fire safety laws also apply to shared spaces, such as hallways and stairwells, in blocks of flats or housing complexes. The Grenfell Tower tragedy of 2017 and, more locally, the fire at the Beechmere retirement complex in Crewe in 2019, underline the importance of having strong relationships with housing providers.

What are we currently doing?

- When inspecting non-domestic premises, we prioritise those where a fire is more likely or would pose the greatest danger to life. This is called our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) and it is carried out by highly-qualified staff, trained to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (2005).
- Firefighters are trained to carry out inspections in lower-risk premises, providing advice and identifying any areas of concern.
- We have a Business Safety Team that engages people responsible for premises, to provide advice, guidance and support around fire protection.
- We have campaigned tirelessly for sprinkler systems to be designed into new buildings or fitted in existing ones. This includes part-funding sprinklers in most of Cheshire's high rise blocks of flats.

What do we plan to do?

- Review our Protection Department to ensure it remains efficient and effective.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our RBIP to ensure we target inspection activity at the right premises.
- Provide accredited training for operational managers, to improve their knowledge and understanding when inspecting premises.
- Continue to campaign for the installation of sprinklers in new and existing commercial premises.
- Work in collaboration with the NFCC to become a statutory consultee where BESS facilities are to be developed. This will include the appointment of a specialist officer in Protection.



Heritage



A fire in a heritage building not only poses a risk to occupiers, staff and visitors, but also threatens irreplaceable and priceless architecture and artifacts.

What are the risks?

The history of Britain is reflected in the wide range of historic buildings and sites across Cheshire. From the remains of a Roman fortress, medieval cathedral and the unique Victorian Rows in Chester, to Tudor, Jacobean and Edwardian country houses elsewhere, the county's heritage is a significant part of the local economy.

These sites were not built to modern standards, so fire safety legislation must be applied carefully and sensitively. Consideration must also be given to how a fire might be tackled safely in buildings where it might spread differently.

What are we currently doing?

- We employ a dedicated heritage officer to work with those responsible for heritage sites to promote and improve fire safety.
- We undertake fire safety audits at heritage sites and work with owners and occupiers to ensure they comply with fire safety regulations.
- We hold heritage impact days in areas with significant numbers of historic buildings.
- We develop operational plans and conduct operational training exercises specific to heritage sites, which include the salvage and recovery of historic items such as artwork.

What do we plan to do?

- Continue to develop our work with local partners and those responsible for heritage buildings to keep these premises safe from fire.



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Risks Protection

Modern methods of construction



If built outside recognised standards, or subsequently modified after construction, timber framed buildings can suffer rapid and major failings of their protection measures in the event of a fire. This can present significant risk to occupants of the building as well as to firefighters.

What is the risk?

The construction of properties using timber frames rather than brick, block and steel is increasingly being seen as a preferred method by developers due to the potential savings in time, materials and labour. It is also regarded as a more sustainable method of construction.

What are we currently doing?

- Our inspection programme is focused on buildings where a fire would pose greatest risk to life. We pay particular attention to care homes, sheltered accommodation and extra care villages with timber framed construction.
- We advise all timber framed property owners to review their fire safety policies and procedures regularly.
- We advise residents to raise concerns about fire safety procedures with property owners.
- We recommend the fitting of sprinklers in domestic and commercial buildings.
- We are reviewing and learning from the outcomes of the Hackitt Review and Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

What do we plan to do?

- Ensure our protection activities align with the outcomes of the Building Safety Review and recent changes to the Building Safety Act 2022.
- Continue to campaign for the installation of sprinklers, especially in timber framed buildings.

Risks Response

Climate change



Climate change is already causing severe weather events that require a fire and rescue response. Several services reported their busiest day since World War II during the record-breaking heatwave of 2022. The number of people living in areas at significant risk of flooding in the UK could double by the 2050s.

What are the risks?

Cheshire's blend of rural landscape and urban conurbation means that the principal risks to life and property in Cheshire relate to flooding and wildfires.

Parts of the county around the River Mersey in Warrington, River Dee in Chester and River Weaver in Northwich are at a higher risk of flooding. However, any built-up area may be at risk of surface flooding in the event of heavy rainfall.

Wildfires can happen in any open space, but firefighting in the forests of Delamere and Macclesfield, on the high ridges of the sandstone trail or the hills of Cheshire East would be particularly challenging.

What did our pre-consultation tell us?

Feedback received from our pre-consultation highlighted climate change as a key concern, particularly the impact of prolonged or extreme weather events.

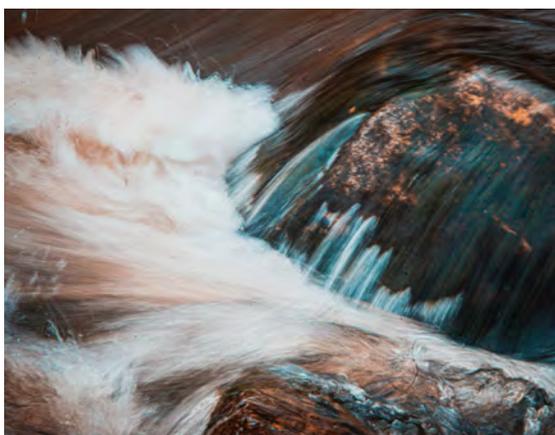
What are we currently doing?

- All fire engines carry pumps of differing sizes which enables us to respond effectively to life-risk flooding events. Our high volume water pump provides firefighters with the capability to pump large amounts of flood water during these climate related emergencies.
- All our firefighters are trained to rescue people from flood water with support provided by our two rescue boats. We have reviewed our water capability and invested in additional training and kit to enable us to respond more effectively when rescuing people from water.



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Risks **Response**



- We are a member of the Fire Operations Group, which brings together six fire and rescue services, the Peak District National Park, National Trust, water companies, landowners and gamekeepers to draw up fire plans, train and raise awareness of ways to prevent moorland fires.
- We have invested in an off-road all-terrain vehicle, specialist equipment and protective kit to enable firefighters to respond to wildfires more effectively. This project was led by firefighters themselves.

What do we plan to do?

- Our emergency response proposals are outlined later in this draft CRMP. If implemented, these would help us provide a more resilient response in times of high demand, such as extreme weather events. We will continue to explore other options to scale up resources during peak demands
- We will continue to review our flood and water response provision across Cheshire to ensure that it meets emerging needs.
- We will support national and local campaigns to raise awareness of staying safe outdoors and during periods of extreme weather.



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Emerging technologies



The number of fires in the caused by exploding lithium-ion batteries in e-scooters and e-bikes rose by 150% in 2021. As of 2022, there are more than a million solar panel installations in the UK.



What are the risks?

To date we have seen only a very small number of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries in Cheshire. However, when they do occur we have seen how they develop very rapidly and are challenging to extinguish. They also produce particularly harmful smoke.

As well as powering electric cars, bikes and scooters, smaller batteries are now used in an array of products like laptop computers, mobile phones and disposable vaping products. There is a particular risk of fire when these are charging or if they are disposed of incorrectly with normal household waste.

In addition to small scale batteries, grid scale battery energy storage systems (BESS) are being installed at an exponential rate across the UK. Fires at BESS sites can be extremely hazardous and could impact on the safety of the public and responders.

Fires involving solar panels need to be tackled carefully owing to the risk to firefighters from the electricity they generate.

What did our pre-consultation tell us?

Many people who responded to our pre-consultation said that our CRMP should take into account increasing levels of electric car ownership and the risk of fires caused by their batteries.

What are we currently doing?

- We have adapted our operational policies and procedures to include fighting fires involving solar panels, including the investment of specialist equipment to render them electrically inactive when fighting a fire, reducing the risk to firefighters.
- Along with other fire and rescue services, we are conducting research into how we can most effectively fight fires in electric vehicles. This includes examining new equipment, policies and procedures to deal with these fires and keep our firefighters safe.

What do we plan to do?

- Continue to develop our understanding of the fire risks presented by lithium-ion batteries and working with others to research ways to effectively deal with such fires.
- We will build links with partners and work closely with them to identify BESS sites, so we can reduce risks and prepare our site-specific emergency response plans.

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Risks Response

Firefighter safety



The nature of firefighting means there are risks and hazards that need to be carefully managed to avoid the risk of death, serious injury or illness in the longer-term.



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What are the risks?

Firefighting is dangerous work and our firefighters face risks every day. For that reason, firefighter safety will always be a major priority within our CRMP.

What are we currently doing?

- We have invested almost £12m in an operational training centre, to enable personnel to practise the skills of safe and effective firefighting and rescue in the safest and most realistic environment possible.
- Learning from incidents is a key part of how we develop our procedures and keep our firefighters safe. We regularly hold structured debriefs and collate information from crews and share best practice both locally and nationally.
- Officers, members and representative bodies work together closely to monitor and review matters relating to the physical and mental health, safety and wellbeing of our staff.
- We constantly invest in new kit and technology to improve our operational effectiveness and to keep our firefighters safe. Over recent years this has seen the introduction of new road traffic collision cutting gear, wildfire equipment, new aerial appliances, a 'Scorpion' high reach extendable turret and new personal protective equipment.
- We are reviewing fireground welfare facilities for our firefighters, to improve privacy and provide a place to rest and remove contaminants.

What do we plan to do?

- We will undertake a major programme to replace and upgrade breathing apparatus.
- We will continue to review our operational kit and equipment to ensure our staff have the appropriate resources to carry out their roles safely and effectively.
- We will review our procedures for learning from operational incidents and ensure that it maximises the safety of our firefighters.
- We will continue to work with representative bodies, partners such as the NFCC and others on any developments affecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce.



Maintaining sufficient fire cover



In spite of significant investment in the on-call duty system, we have not been able to improve the availability of on-call fire engines.

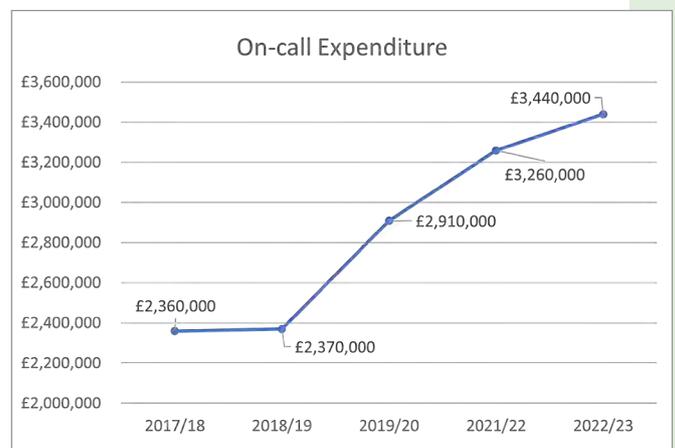
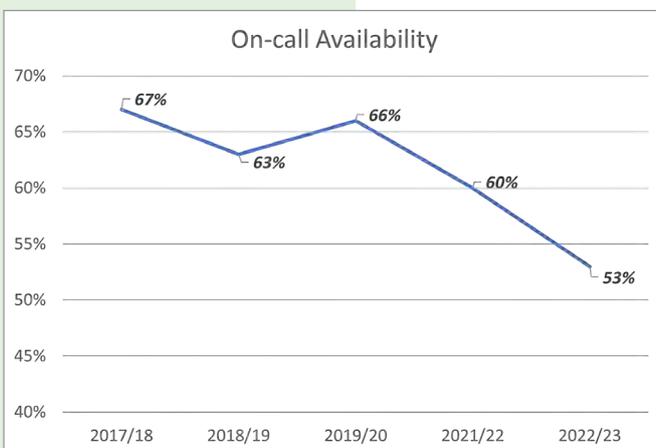
What is the risk?

Most incidents we attend (95%) require only one or two fire engines. However, larger incidents may require many more resources. Recent examples include the fire at Roberts Bakery in Northwich in June 2023 and at BIP Organics in Middlewich in July 2022. Some of our largest incidents, such as the fires at the Beechmere assisted living complex in Crewe in 2019 and Chester Zoo in 2018, needed more than 20 fire engines and specialist resources, which requires us to call on support from neighbouring fire and rescue services.

We have 35 fire engines and we constantly move these around to maintain the optimum response, aligned to risk and demand. Eighteen of the fire engines are on-call and they are crewed by part-time firefighters. On-call fire engines are not always available and mainly operate in the more rural and less populated areas of Cheshire, with fewer incidents.

The charts below show that on-call fire engines were available for 53% of the time on average and availability is on a downward trajectory despite increased financial investment.

If an incident occurs when the local on-call fire engine is not available, we send the nearest available fire engine. This works satisfactorily most of the time but during larger incidents or busy periods it can be a challenge. The lack of on-call fire engine availability also means we have fewer fire engines to move around to maintain response provision across Cheshire.



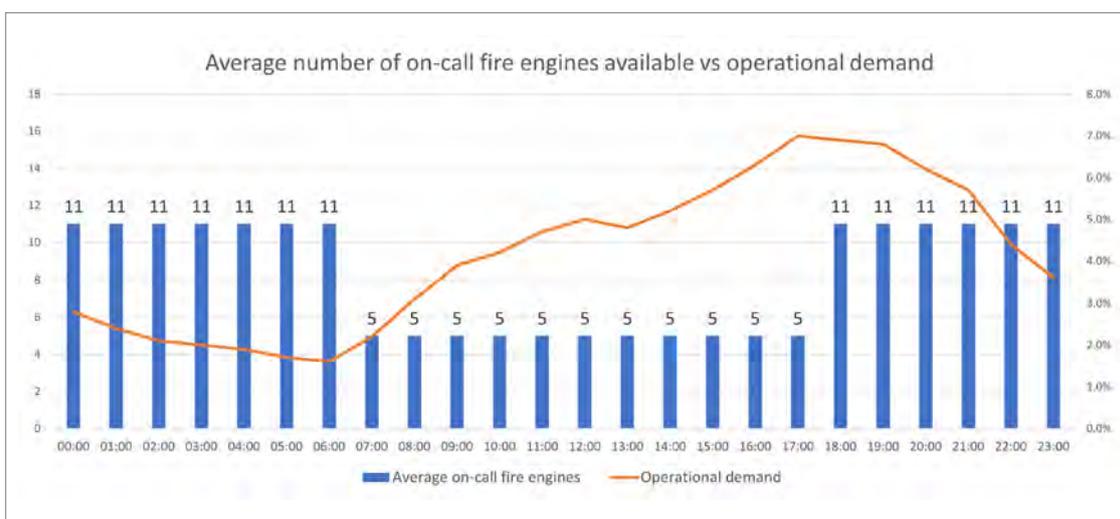
* Data from 2020/21 has been excluded owing to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on on-call availability and expenditure.

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Risks Response

On-call availability is lowest during the daytime when we are usually busiest. The blue bars on the chart below show how many on-call fire engines are typically available during each hour of the day, while the red line shows the level of demand (i.e. the number of calls we receive). This shows that we frequently have fewer on-call fire engines available during our busiest daytime hours.



What have we already done?

- We have introduced bold changes to improve the spread of fire cover across Cheshire. This included increasing the number of fire stations from 24 to 28 by building new fire stations at Alsager, Lymm, Penketh and Powey Lane.
- We introduced a fleet of 13 rapid response rescue units (RRRUs), mainly in rural parts of Cheshire where response times tend to be slower. An RRRU can be crewed by two firefighters who will respond to road traffic collisions to provide lifesaving trauma care. The RRRU can also be used to transport more firefighters to incidents.
- We reviewed the on-call system and implemented an extensive programme focusing on issues such as improving recruitment, retention and rewards and increasing managerial support and capacity.



Malpas Fire Station

What do we plan to do?

- Proposals 2, 3 and 4 (pages 34 to 41) set out what we intend to do. If all the proposals are implemented, we will increase the number of fire engines guaranteed to available during the weekday daytime by five, from 17 to 22. Like all our fire engines, these will move around to benefit the whole of Cheshire and will help improve response times.
- Proposal 1 changes the way we measure our performance so we can monitor the effectiveness of these proposals and our overall response model consistently.
- Proposal 5 aims to strengthen the on-call duty system to make it more effective, more rewarding for staff and more sustainable.



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Response proposals 2024-2028

Reviewing our fire cover arrangements

Fire cover review process

The following pages outline our proposed changes to the way we provide fire cover in Cheshire. We have developed these proposals following a detailed review of whether our firefighters, fire engines and fire stations operate in the right way, at the right time, in the right place. This process is called a fire cover review, which we carry out every time we produce a strategy like a CRMP.

To undertake a fire cover review, we carry out a range of activities including:

- analysing our historic incident data and performance against our targets
- carrying out a horizon scanning analysis to look for future risks and developments affecting fire and rescue service
- reviewing national reports and findings relating to the fire and rescue sector
- considering the response plans of our neighbouring fire and rescue services, and the plans of other agencies where appropriate
- using modelling software to predict the impact of any potential changes to the location or staffing of our resources on response times.

The fire cover review has considered things such as:

1. **Our emergency response standard.** Determining whether our target for the time it takes to get to incidents remains fit for purpose.
2. **Fire engine requirement and crewing models.** Determining the location and number of fire engines we need across Cheshire and the best way to crew these to meet risk, demand and targets.
3. **Special appliances.** Determining the type and capability requirements for specialist vehicles and resources, and the best location and crewing model for these.

Some of the outcomes from the fire cover review are included in this draft CRMP as proposals for consultation. If these proposals are taken forward, they may have implications for special appliances which might require further internal and/or external consultation.



Fire cover review guiding principles

In addition to a well-established process for reviewing our fire cover arrangements, we also adopted six guiding principles. These reflect our ambition to use the review as an opportunity to improve our service to the community and a clear view, expressed during pre-consultation, that there should be no reduction in the number of fire engines or fire stations.

- **Improving emergency response times by preventing any further increases and where possible making improvements.** This is because average fire and rescue response times have increased gradually over the last decade, nationally and locally.
- **Less reliance on the availability of on-call fire engines, particularly during the day, and;**
- **Increasing the number of wholetime fire engines in on-call station areas, resulting in increased capacity to deliver prevention and protection activity.** This is because we have challenges in maintaining the availability of many of our on-call fire engines during daytime hours.
- **Looking after our people and aiming to avoid compulsory redundancies.** This is because the changes will impact on part-time firefighters, those who have to relocate and those that rent houses from the Authority. We will offer other suitable employment including full-time firefighter jobs.
- **No closures of fire stations or construction of additional fire stations.** This is because we believe Cheshire has the right number of fire stations.
- **Maintaining the same cost base, with better outputs and value for money.** This is because we wish to be clear our review is about improving our efficiency and effectiveness, not about cutting our service.



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Response proposals 2024-2028

Options development

A suite of options was developed as part of the review, which involved a range of different crewing configurations and fire cover arrangements.

Both Authority members and officers were clear that any proposals which were to be put forward to full consultation must be in line with each of the guiding principles and other requirements outlined on the previous pages.

In addition, officers used their professional judgement to determine whether a particular package of options was operationally viable by being efficient, effective and sustainable to operate. They also considered whether an option provided appropriate levels of fire cover to meet the risks and demands of the specific locations concerned and ensured a balance of resources across the whole county of Cheshire.

The final package of proposals we are consulting on meets our guiding principles, is considered to be operationally viable and we believe is appropriate for the levels of risk and demand we face.

To help understand our response proposals, we have produced short animated videos, which can be viewed on our website.





Our five proposals in detail

PROPOSAL 1: change the way we measure response times

We want to improve the way we measure and report the time it takes our firefighters to get to incidents. This involves making some small but important changes that would enable us to better monitor the impact of the proposals set out on the following pages, all of which aim to improve our response times.

There is no national target for the time it should take a fire engine to get to an incident. Different fire and rescue services measure and report these times in different ways. In Cheshire, we currently meet our current 'response standard', agreed through previous risk management plans, which is to:

**Respond to life-risk incidents
within 10 minutes on 80% of occasions.**

We are proposing to change this to a commitment that:

**The average response time to primary fires in
Cheshire will not exceed 10 minutes.**

We would still aim to get the nearest fire engine to an incident within 10 minutes. However, behind the scenes there would be three changes to the way we measure and report our performance:

1. We want to start measuring our response time from the moment a 999 call is answered in our control room, not from the time the control operator alerts the fire station.
2. Instead of measuring the response times to life-risk incidents, we would measure the response times to fires involving homes, businesses and vehicles (known as 'primary fires').
3. We would report our average response time rather than the percentage of incidents we respond to in 10 minutes.

Rationale

The time it takes the fire and rescue service to get to incidents has gradually increased over the past 10 years in England. The reasons are varied and include things like increased traffic on the roads and the fact that staff who answer emergency calls ask more questions of the caller to understand the risk. Compared with the 16 other English fire and rescue services categorised as 'significantly rural', like Cheshire, we have limited the increase in our response times. We have achieved this by spreading the cover of our fire engines around the county.



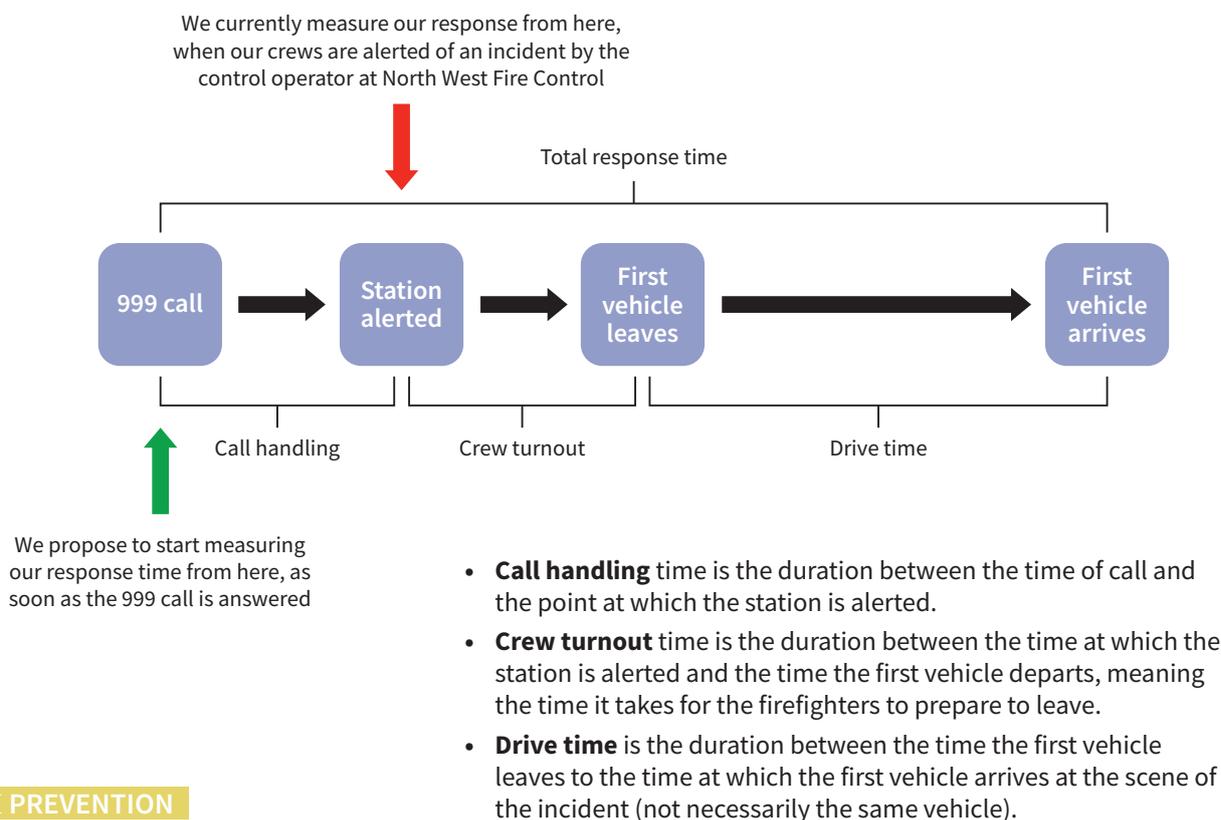
Response proposals 2024-2028

Average response times to primary fires only

	2012/13	2022/23	Increase over decade
Significantly rural areas	8min 45sec	10min 29sec	1min 44sec
Cheshire (also significantly rural)	9min 12sec	10min 02sec	0min 50sec

At the moment, we measure and report our response times differently to the way the Home Office collects and reports the performance of fire and rescue services. This actually masks the fact that our response times have increased. Our proposed changes would bring us in line with the Home Office’s very reliable approach, enabling us to benchmark our actual performance with similar-sized services, with similar risks. National performance data on response times is publicly available .

Starting the clock from the moment a 999 call is answered in our control room gives a truer picture of the caller’s experience than measuring it from the time the fire station is alerted. This was confirmed in feedback to our pre-consultation. It would also enable us to look at ways of speeding up call handling if necessary and the other steps in the process of deploying a fire engine including crew turnout and drive time.





Measuring response times to primary fires instead of life-risk incidents would not change the way we respond to incidents. However, by measuring response times to primary fires – those involving homes, businesses and vehicles – rather than just life-risk incidents, we will get a broader picture of the speed of our response, which we can benchmark against other fire and rescue services.

Finally, during our pre-consultation, the public and our staff told us that they would prefer us to report our response performance as an average time rather than percentage.

Impact

The changes to the way we measure and report response times could be easily introduced by our Service Improvement Team. Members would receive the new-look performance information from April 2024 onwards.

We acknowledge that our crews have no control over the call handling phase of deploying a fire engine, which is managed by North West Fire Control. We will continue to work closely with our colleagues there to ensure that they contribute to the overall achievement of the 10 minute standard.



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Response proposals 2024-2028

PROPOSAL 2: convert four on-call fire engines to full-time crewing during weekdays

Runcorn, Winsford, Northwich and Macclesfield currently have two fire engines each. One is crewed by full-time firefighters and the other is crewed by on-call firefighters. We want to convert these on-call fire engines, so they are crewed by full-time firefighters during the day, Monday to Friday. The full-time fire engines at these stations would continue to operate as they do now, 24/7.

Because these fire engines would be crewed full-time, they would be guaranteed to be available on weekday daytimes. The on-call fire engines at these four fire stations have, on average, only been available for 18% of the time during the day.

The daytime weekday fire engines would be able to mobilise to incidents three and a half minutes faster than an on-call fire engine and help improve response times during our busiest periods. Importantly, the full-time crews would also deliver additional community work and prevention and protection activities, focusing on the people who are most at risk.

The four full-time weekday daytime fire engines would operate in defined areas, set out on the following pages, but also move around, as needed, to benefit the whole of Cheshire. They would not replace the on-call fire engines at other fire stations across Cheshire; they would be in addition to them, therefore adding greater resilience and capacity.

Rationale

On average the on-call fire engines at Runcorn, Winsford, Northwich and Macclesfield were available for less than 18% of the time during weekdays and 33% overall during 2022/23.

By converting these on-call fire engines to full-time crewing, they will be guaranteed to be available on all weekday daytimes and would be used in areas where they are needed most, helping improve resilience, response times and delivery of community work and prevention and protection activities.

Impact

- a) Increase of 20 full-time firefighter posts.
- b) Reduction of 55 on-call (part-time) firefighter posts at these four fire stations. Of these, 17 posts are vacant, 17 people are already full-time firefighters, which leaves 14 people remaining. They would be supported and offered suitable employment with us. We will also work closely with our trade unions to minimise the impact of the changes on all staff affected.



- c) No change to the number of fire engines across Cheshire, which would remain at 35.
- d) More fire engines guaranteed to be available during the daytime on weekdays, increasing from 17 to 21, resulting in improved resilience and faster response.
- e) Runcorn, Winsford, Northwich and Macclesfield would no longer have an on-call fire engine, but there would be no change to the number of fire engines guaranteed to be available.
- f) Possible reduction in callouts for on-call crews available in areas where the weekday daytime fire engines operate. If the on-call fire engines are available, we will aim to use the weekday daytime fire engines elsewhere to improve resilience and response. We will also invest in the on-call duty system to improve rewards, increase on-call availability and utilisation of all on-call fire engines – see Proposal 5.
- g) Faster response times and increase in community work and risk-reducing prevention and protection activities, focused on the people most at risk.

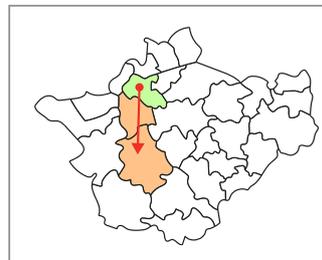


Northwich Fire Station

Response proposals 2024-2028

Weekday daytime fire engine 1

We are proposing to convert Runcorn's on-call fire engine to a weekday daytime fire engine, which would primarily provide flexible cover across the Frodsham and Tarporley areas.



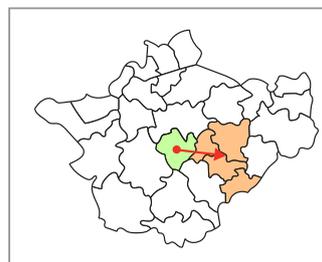
Rationale

We are proposing this change because the availability of the on-call fire engine at Runcorn in the day was on average 23% in 2022/23. In the first five months of 2023/24, it has averaged just 18%. At Frodsham, daytime availability averaged 13% and at Tarporley the on-call fire engine was available 27% of the time during the day.

Because there is already a full-time fire engine at Runcorn, there would be no change to the level of guaranteed fire cover in Runcorn and introducing the proposal would provide guaranteed cover available across Frodsham and Tarporley during weekday daytimes. If both fire engines at Frodsham and Tarporley were available to respond then we would use the weekday daytime fire engine in Runcorn or elsewhere in Cheshire.

Weekday daytime fire engine 2

We are proposing to convert Winsford's on-call fire engine to a weekday daytime fire engine, which would primarily provide flexible cover across Middlewich, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel and Alsager.



Rationale

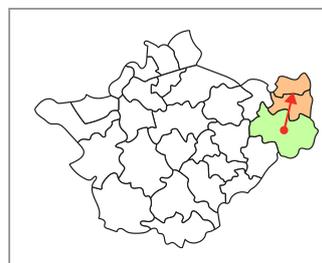
We are proposing this change because the availability of the on-call fire engine at Winsford in the day was on average 14% in 2022/23. In the first five months of this year, it has averaged 9%. At Middlewich, daytime availability averaged 64%, at Sandbach 44% and at Alsager it averaged 57%. At Holmes Chapel the on-call fire engine was available during the daytime only 16% of the time.

Because there is already a wholetime fire engine at Winsford, there would be no change to the level of guaranteed fire cover in Winsford. The proposal would provide guaranteed cover across the Middlewich, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel or Alsager areas during weekday daytimes. If one or more of these stations were available to respond then the resource would operate in one of the other areas in order to best maintain fire cover. As with the previous proposal, if fire engines at all four stations were available to respond then we would use the weekday daytime fire engine flexibly in Winsford or elsewhere in Cheshire to improve capacity.



Weekday daytime fire engine 3

We are proposing to convert Macclesfield's on-call fire engine to a weekday daytime fire engine, which would primarily provide flexible cover across Poynton and Bollington.



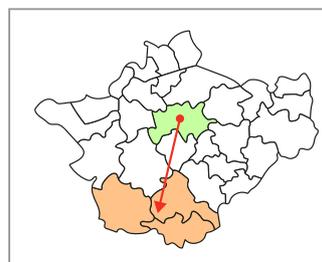
Rationale

We are proposing this change because the availability of the on-call fire engine at Macclesfield in the day was on average 24% in 2022/23. In the first five months of 2023/24, it has averaged just 6%. This does not include the on-call cover provided by crews at night. At Bollington, daytime availability averaged 76% and at Poynton this figure was 32%.

Because there is already a full-time fire engine at Macclesfield during the day, there would be no change to the level of guaranteed fire cover in Macclesfield. The proposal would provide guaranteed cover in Poynton and Bollington during weekday daytimes. If one of these stations were available to respond then the weekday daytime fire engine would operate in the other areas in order to best maintain fire cover. If fire engines at both stations were available to respond then we would use the weekday daytime fire engine flexibly elsewhere in Cheshire – in Macclesfield if required.

Weekday daytime fire engine 4

We are proposing to convert Northwich's on-call fire engine to a weekday daytime fire engine, which would primarily provide flexible cover across Nantwich, Audlem and Malpas.



Rationale

We are proposing this change because the availability of the on-call fire engine at Northwich in the day was on average 10% in 2022/23. In the first five months of 2023/24, it has averaged just 1%. At Nantwich, daytime availability averaged 64%, at Audlem it averaged 47% and at Malpas it was 13%.

Because there is already a full-time fire engine at Northwich, there would be no change to the level of guaranteed fire cover in the town. The proposal would provide a guaranteed fire engine available across Nantwich, Audlem or Malpas during weekday daytimes. If one of these stations is available to respond then it would operate across the other areas in order to best maintain fire cover. If fire engines at all three stations are available to respond then we would use the weekday daytime fire engine elsewhere in Cheshire as needed.

Note: we use all fire engines across all areas of Cheshire as required to meet risks and demands

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Response proposals 2024-2028

PROPOSAL 3: convert Knutsford's fire engine from on-call to day crewing

We want to improve response times and carry out more community work in and around Knutsford by reintroducing the day crewing duty system at the town's fire station. This would provide guaranteed availability of the fire engine 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Full-time firefighters would crew the fire engine from 9am to 7pm on weekdays. At all other times the fire engine would be crewed as if it were still on-call. However, this on-call cover would be guaranteed because it would be provided by the full-time firefighters who do so as part of their contract. The full-time firefighters would live in the houses we own next to the fire station and would receive an additional allowance for providing the guaranteed on-call cover.

Rationale

Currently the fire engine at Knutsford is crewed on-call and is therefore crewed by part-time firefighters who live or work within five minutes of the fire station and respond by pager when on call. The fire engine's availability varies throughout the week and in 2022/23 it was available during the daytime for 38% of the time and 49% overall.

Day crewing already operates successfully at four fire stations across Cheshire and operated at Knutsford until 2017. Until then the fire station was also the base for our technical rescue unit, specialising in rescues from height and confined space. We propose to return that capability to Knutsford through this change.

When the fire engine is crewed full-time it would be on average three and a half minutes faster than an on-call fire engine, helping to improve response times during daytimes, Monday to Friday. Importantly, the full-time crew would also deliver additional prevention and protection activities focusing on the people in local communities who are most at risk.

Impact

- a) No change to the number of fire engines across Cheshire, which would remain at 35.
- b) More fire engines guaranteed to be available during weekday daytimes, from 17 to 22 resulting in improved resilience, when combined with Proposal 2.
- c) Faster response times.
- d) More community work and prevention and protection activities in Knutsford.
- e) The technical rescue unit would move from Lymm to Knutsford.
- f) Increase of nine full-time firefighter posts at Knutsford.



- g) Reduction of eight full-time firefighter posts elsewhere in Cheshire.
- h) Fifteen on-call (part-time) firefighter posts would be removed from Knutsford. Only 12 of these posts are filled currently. Of these, nine are filled by people who are full-time firefighters. The remaining three on-call firefighters would be supported and offered suitable alternative employment with us. Firefighters currently renting the houses we own next to the station would move out if they were not appointed into the new roles. We will work closely with our trade unions to minimise the impact of the changes on all staff affected by this change.



Knutsford Fire Station



Response proposals 2024-2028

PROPOSAL 4: reorganise daytime fire cover in Warrington

We want to improve the spread of daytime fire cover and prevention and protection activity across Birchwood and Stockton Heath, two of our five fire stations in the borough of Warrington. This would mean changes to the way we operate both these fire stations.

Birchwood

This is currently a nucleus fire station, which means it is crewed by full-time firefighters between 7am and 7pm every day and at night by on-call firefighters who live or work within five minutes of the fire station and respond by pager when on-call.

We propose to crew the Birchwood fire engine with full-time firefighters between 7am and 7pm on 50% of days (four days in eight), then by on-call firefighters on the other 50% of days. There would be no change to the on-call cover overnight between 7pm and 7am.

Stockton Heath

This is currently an on-call fire station, which means the fire engine is crewed solely by on-call firefighters who live or work within five minutes of the fire station and respond by pager when on-call.

We propose to crew the Stockton Heath fire engine with full-time firefighters between 7am and 7pm on 50% of days (four days in eight). Outside of these times there would be no on-call cover in Stockton Heath. Instead, neighbouring fire stations such as Warrington and Lymm would respond to incidents within 10 minutes. This happens now when Stockton Heath's on-call fire engine is not available.

Rationale

This proposal would balance fire cover and ensure that response times in Stockton Heath and Birchwood would still be within 10 minutes on average.

The outputs of community work and risk-reducing prevention and protection activities would remain the same in Warrington borough but would be shared more evenly across Stockton Heath and Birchwood.

During 2022/23, Stockton Heath's on-call fire engine was available only 10% in the day and 67% at night. This has worsened to 4% in the day and 62% at night in the first five months of 2023/24. Replacing this on-call cover with full-time cover on 50% of days will be, on balance, more effective.

Ending the on-call cover at Stockton Heath means that we can sell the nine houses we own near to the fire station and use the proceeds to fund our capital programme including replacing the fire station in Warrington town centre.



Impact

- a) No change to the number of full-time fire engines during the day in Warrington borough, which would remain at four.
- b) Average response times in Stockton Heath may be up to one minute faster. Average response times in Birchwood may be up to one minute slower. Average response times in both areas would still be within 10 minutes.
- c) No change to community work and prevention and protection activities in Warrington borough, but activity would be spread more evenly across Birchwood and Stockton Heath.
- d) Six of the 12 full-time firefighter posts at Birchwood would move to Stockton Heath.
- e) No change to the number of on-call firefighter posts at Birchwood and the on-call crew would be able to cover on 50% of days instead of nights only.
- f) Fifteen on-call firefighter posts would be removed from Stockton Heath. Only 10 of these posts are filled currently. Of these, five are filled by people who are full-time firefighters. The remaining five on-call firefighters would be offered suitable alternative employment with us. In addition, those on-call firefighters currently renting the houses we own near to the fire station would move out. We would work closely with our trade unions to support staff and minimise the impact of the changes.
- g) When the full-time fire engine is not available at Stockton Heath there would be no on-call cover. Cover will be provided by Warrington and Lymm within 10 minutes.
- h) We would sell Authority houses at Stockton Heath to help fund our capital programme.



Birchwood Fire Station

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Response proposals 2024-2028

PROPOSAL 5: strengthen the on-call system

Fire engines that operate in the more rural and less populated areas of Cheshire are usually crewed by on-call firefighters. On-call firefighters live or work within five minutes of the fire station and are alerted by pager to respond to incidents. They have fewer incidents to deal with compared with full-time firefighters; fire engines operated by full-time firefighters are available 24/7.

Our on-call firefighters undertake their role as a part-time job, often in addition to demanding full-time employment and busy lives outside work. They are highly committed and work extremely hard to maintain the availability of the fire engine so they can respond to emergency incidents and support their communities.

Unfortunately, in recent years, the overall availability of on-call fire engines has declined; in some areas, quite significantly, especially during the day when we tend to be busiest. Despite the best efforts of our on-call firefighters and some initiatives that have been trialled, it has not been possible to reverse this decline.

If the on-call fire engine is not available, we send the nearest available fire engine to the incident. However, this may take longer to arrive than the on-call fire engine would have done. Proposal 2 would increase the number of fire engines guaranteed to be available on a weekday across Cheshire, but it would not provide additional fire engines overnight or at the weekend.

The decline in on-call availability is a major challenge across the country, not just in Cheshire. Some of the issues are explained on page 25.

Proposals within this CRMP would reduce the number of fire engines crewed by on-call firefighters by converting them to full-time crewing. Full-time crewing is expensive and cannot be justified for fire engines that respond to low numbers of incidents, so we need to get the balance right. Going forward we would still depend heavily on on-call firefighters. If the proposals are taken forward, they would continue to crew 13 of our 35 fire engines.

Therefore, through this CRMP, we reaffirm our commitment to the on-call duty system and our on-call firefighters. As a priority, in the first year of the CRMP, we would undertake a review with the intention of taking forward some of the learning from previous initiatives. Our aim would be to improve the pay and reward for on-call firefighters. We would also seek to strengthen the on-call duty system to make it more effective, more rewarding for staff and more sustainable. On-call staff and the trade unions that represent them would help to shape our efforts and be involved at every stage.

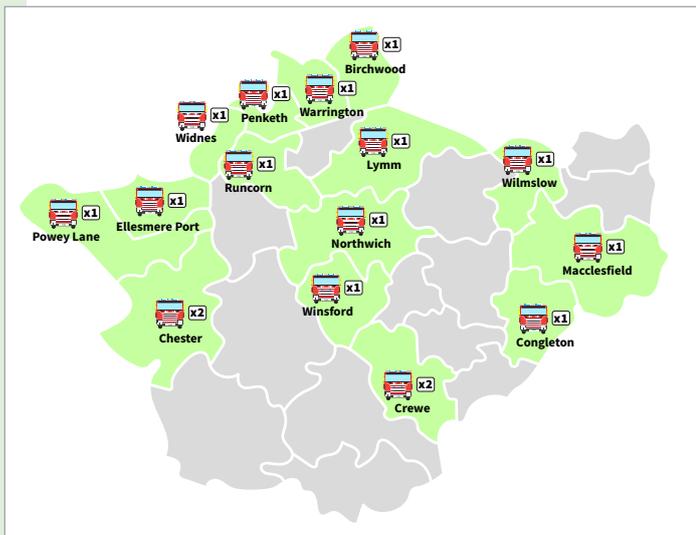


Tarporley Fire Station

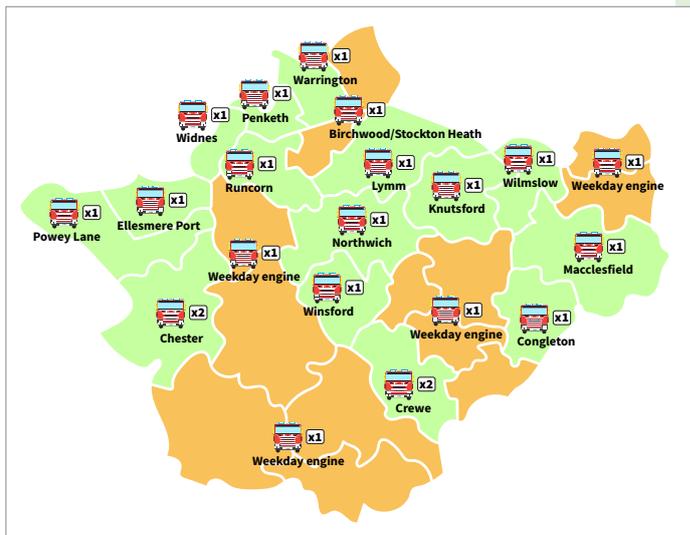


Impact of proposals at a glance

The two maps below show the impact on guaranteed cover on weekday daytimes if the proposals were implemented. The first map shows the current guaranteed weekday daytime provision, while the second shows the provision after the implementation of the proposals. The areas in green indicate guaranteed weekday daytime provision, while those in amber show the areas to be covered flexibly by the new daytime fire engines and the fire engines at Birchwood and Stockton Heath.



Current guaranteed weekday daytime provision



Proposed guaranteed weekday daytime provision (this will also include guaranteed overnight cover in Knutsford)

The table below shows how the proposals would guarantee additional fire cover and enable us to carry out more prevention and protection work, while retaining exactly the same number of fire engines and fire stations.

	Current arrangements	Proposed arrangements	Change
Fire stations	28	28	No change
Fire engines	35	35	No change
Guaranteed weekday daytime fire engines	17	22	+5
Guaranteed weekend daytime fire engines	17	18	+1
Guaranteed overnight fire engines	15	16	+1
Safe and Well visits to homes *	21,580	24,310	+2,730
Business safety inspections by firefighters *	6,896	7,156	+260
Assessment of premises presenting highest operational risks *	1,193	1,676	+483

* Minimum number of visits, inspections and assessments

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Developing our organisation

Promoting a positive and inclusive culture

The fire and rescue service nationally has been under scrutiny following the publication of an independent report into the culture of London Fire Brigade (LFB) and allegations of inappropriate conduct at several other services. This led to HMICFRS publishing in March 2023 a spotlight report on values and culture in the sector, and a series of far-reaching recommendations.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has been working hard for many years to create a workplace founded on the principles of dignity, respect and fairness. This is reflected in the results of our biannual staff surveys and the latest HMICFRS inspection, which concluded we are “good at ensuring fairness and promoting diversity”, have “well-defined values, which staff understand” and “a positive working culture” with “staff feeling empowered and willing to challenge poor behaviours”.

However, we are not complacent and recognise there are lessons to be learned from LFB, and that the HMICFRS’s important spotlight report recommendations will take some time to implement. During the lifespan of this CRMP, these culture-related actions will serve to strengthen our People Strategy, which is due to be refreshed in 2025.

In addition, we will:

- continue to emphasise the importance of our Core Values and the national Core Code of Ethics for the Fire and Rescue Service
- establish our new People Board as a strategic focal point for co-ordinating and monitoring our efforts to remain a safe and positive place to work, and an employer of choice
- develop and publish an updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, when the existing three-year strategy ends in March 2024. Its implementation will be overseen by our well-established EDI Steering Group
- produce a new Communications and Engagement Strategy, setting out a clear framework for the way in which we talk and listen to colleagues across the Service
- continue to work hard to attract, recruit and retain a diverse and empowered workforce that at all levels truly represents the communities we serve
- continue to play a role in regional and national networks for sharing and learning from good practice when it comes to workplace culture.





Meeting the challenges of the future

Our firefighters, fire officers and fire staff are our greatest asset and we will continue to invest in their development so that they can reach their full potential and keep providing a first-class service to the community.

Our priorities for the next four years include:

- aligning our learning and development activities to the NFCC Leadership Framework, enabling individuals to effectively lead the Service, their function, their team or themselves depending on their role
- being innovative in the way we develop staff by offering accelerated progression, access to apprenticeships and degree programmes
- carefully forecasting our workforce needs into the medium term, so that attraction, recruitment and training activity can be planned accordingly
- strengthening the way we support the health and wellbeing of our staff through occupational health, our mental health and fitness advisors, sports and social groups, and staff inclusion networks
- helping colleagues plan for full or flexible retirement and supporting them through this transition in their lives.



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Developing our **organisation**

HMICFRS

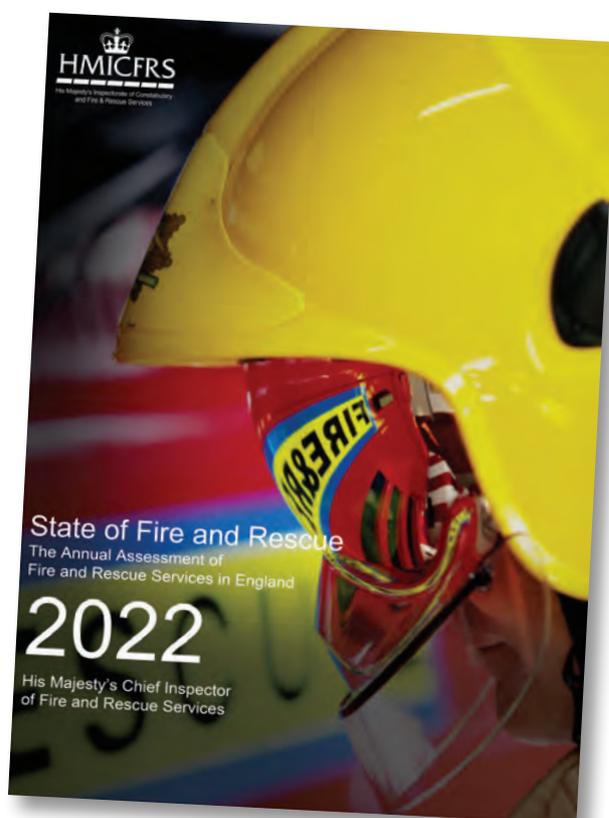
His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is the independent inspectorate of fire and rescue services within England.

HMICFRS uses a similar grading model to that which is used by OFSTED for school inspections with the following gradings: Outstanding, Good, Adequate, Requires Improvement or Inadequate.

The outcome of the most recent inspection of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, which took place in February 2023, was published in August 2023 and can be found [here](#).

Against 11 key metrics which assess our efficiency, effectiveness and how we look after our people; we were graded as "good" across six thematic areas and "adequate" across the remaining five. Encouragingly, we were rated "good" across all areas relating to our workplace culture and looking after our people; and we were highlighted for our innovative practice in relation to our leadership development – an area which required improvement in our previous inspection in 2021.

We will engage with staff to develop an action plan to address the findings of our latest inspection and continue to drive improvements across the organisation.





Continuous improvement

Over the next four years we will continue to develop the organisation so that it is able to deliver frontline services to the community as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This means refining our corporate structure to ensure it meets our business needs, keeping our collaborations under review, having in place robust systems for managing performance and moving towards digital solutions wherever possible.

We will also continue to strive to be sustainable, ensuring our buildings and our fleet have minimal adverse impact on the environment.

Our plans include:

- re-establishing our own dedicated headquarters at Sadler Road in Winsford, bringing together most departments and the leadership team under one roof
- continuing to review the efficiency and effectiveness of our remaining shared corporate services at Cheshire Police and to develop our resilience and community safety partnerships
- completing the modernisation of smaller fire stations and setting out proposals to replace Ellesmere Port and Warrington fire stations, both of which are no longer fit for purpose
- investing in a state-of-the-art system at North West Fire Control for mobilising fire engines to incidents
- getting the most out of our investment in Microsoft 365 by using it to drive the way we store and review management information and bring teams together to collaborate
- continuing our investment in electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.



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Our finances

How we are funded

Cheshire Fire Authority receives funding from two main sources: from central government and from its share of council tax, called its precept. Council tax makes up around 68% of the Authority’s funding with government grants and its share of business rates comprising the other 32%.

For the last full financial year, 2022/23, the Authority had a revenue budget of £46.9m and a capital budget of £7.8m. The graphic to the right outlines what it actually spent in the year. Further details can be found in the Authority’s Statement of Accounts at www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

As part of its budget management process, the Authority produces a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), covering a five year period. The MTFP is updated regularly to reflect emerging local, regional and national issues and makes informed assumptions about issues such as future pay, inflation, government funding and council tax levels. The latest MTFP can be viewed on www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

As with other public sector organisations, the Authority is impacted by spending decisions taken by government. The government outlines its key spending priorities through its annual budget announcement and, longer-term, through Comprehensive Spending Reviews.

The Authority is legally required to set a balanced budget, against a backdrop of considerable uncertainty with regards to public spending decisions. The Authority is mindful of the need to ensure efficient use of public funds and has an annually updated efficiency plan to help it achieve this.

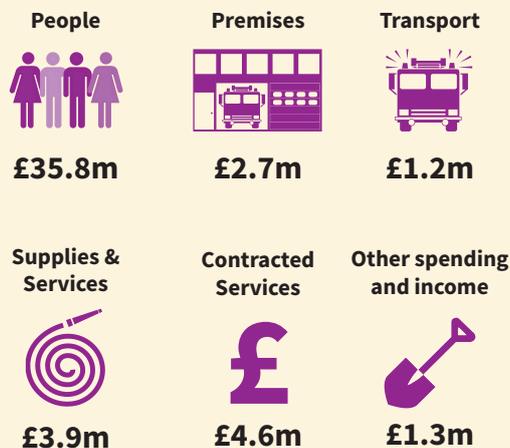
The Authority undertakes an annual priority based budgeting exercise to ensure that it effectively aligns resources to deliver its key aims and objectives. This ensures that its funding is allocated towards priority areas aimed at making the community safer.

Our funding



What we spend it on

2022/23 actual spend:





The Authority's biggest outlay is on its staff, which accounts for about 76% of its revenue spending. Other significant costs include supplies and services such as utilities and equipment.

Since 2014 the Authority has received no capital funding. This has meant that capital spending, such as replacement fire engines, new fire kit and equipment and building refurbishment and replacement, has been completely funded by the Authority either through reserves or by setting aside money from its revenue budget (which is the amount of money the Authority requires to provide its services during the year).

In addition to regular capital spending on items such as those described above, the Authority has a significant capital programme of building replacement and modernisation underway. The programme, which is anticipated to cost in excess of £15m over the four years of the CRMP, will use up a significant proportion of the Authority's reserves and includes building a new fire station at Crewe and completing the modernisation of smaller stations and Authority housing. The Authority also plans to replace dated stations at Warrington and Ellesmere Port but has not identified sufficient funding at present.

Affordability of our proposals

We believe the proposals we have set out in this draft CRMP are affordable within our existing MTFP, as it stands in autumn 2023. If all of the proposals are taken forward the package will have a near-neutral impact on the annual budget (around £55,000 increase). This must be seen in the context of an anticipated budget of around £53.6m in 2024/25. We believe that it will be possible to find efficiency savings elsewhere in the organisation to offset this small additional cost. If the full package of proposals is not taken forward we would have to carry out a further assessment of the financial impact and create a revised MTFP.

The impact of inflationary pressures in the economy and the fact that our final funding settlement for 2024/25 will not be announced by government until December 2023 means there is a significant degree of uncertainty in our funding position. We will need to review the affordability of this CRMP in early 2024 at the same time as we consider the feedback from the consultation.

Prevention, Protection and other organisational projects described earlier in this document will be funded through existing departmental budgets, refined on an ongoing basis through the priority-based budgeting process.

The Authority continues to face a significant challenge to fund capital expenditure, which not only affects the replacement of vehicles and equipment, but also the updating and maintenance of its existing buildings and, in particular, as mentioned above, replacing its fire stations at Warrington and Ellesmere Port. One of the proposals is intended to provide a significant capital receipt that can be used to part-fund works to existing fire stations and the building of a new fire station.



Summary of our plans

Prevention

- Implement the outcomes of a review into our Prevention Department.
- Continue to refine our targeting methodology to ensure our Safe and Well visits target those most at risk; and work with partners to improve the referral process for vulnerable people.
- Reduce the occurrence of deliberate fires in partnership with Cheshire Police.
- Implement a new Road Safety Strategic Plan with our partners, increasing road safety activity.
- Increase the number of Safe and Well visits by the end of this CRMP, from the current 20,000.
- Increase our water safety education activity.
- Improve the way we work with partners to safeguard and support people.
- Provide training to our Prevention team and firefighters to increase our effectiveness in delivering safety messages.
- Incorporate information relating to lithium-ion batteries into our fire safety advice delivered to homes and communities.

Protection

- Review our Protection Department to ensure it remains efficient and effective.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our risk based inspection programme to ensure we are targeting inspection activity at the right premises.
- Review how we undertake our primary authority responsibilities to ensure they are effective and self-funding.
- Ensure our Protection activities align to the outcomes of the Building Safety Review.
- Upskill our operational managers with Protection qualifications to enhance firefighter safety and allow for more effective inspection of non-domestic premises.
- Continue to lobby and campaign for the installation of sprinklers in the built environment.
- Work with the NFCC to become a statutory consultee for planning on BESS facilities.
- Appoint a specialist BESS officer role in the Protection team.

Response

- Review how we respond to flood and water related incidents.
- Research and develop operational procedures to deal with BESSs.
- Change the way we measure response times.
- Convert four on-call fire engines to daytime weekday fire engines.
- Convert Knutsford's on-call fire engine to day crewing.
- Reorganise daytime fire cover in Warrington.
- Strengthen the on-call system.

Objectives carried forward from the 2023/24 risk management plan include: implementing the outcomes from our review of specialist vehicles and resources; implementing an emergency cardiac response capability; and implementing outcomes from our review of the wholetime duty system at fire stations that operate 24/7.



Have **your** say

We are undertaking a comprehensive consultation to seek views on the proposals set out in this draft CRMP before we make any final decisions. We would like you to get involved and have your say.

There are a number of ways in which you can do this. The main way is through an online survey, which you can access via this link (to be inserted).

Alternatively, you can see us in person at one of our roadshows in the community. To find out more about when and where these will take place, call us on 01606 868700, email consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk or visit our website www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

If you would prefer to get in touch in a different way, you can by the following methods:

- Email: consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk
- Facebook: @CheshireFRS
- X (Formerly known as Twitter): @CheshireFire
- Writing: FREEPOST CHESHIRE FIRE CONSULTATION (no stamp required)

Our consultation runs from **Monday 2 October 2023** to **Tuesday 2 January 2024**, so please let us have your comments before then.

If you require this or any other of our consultation documents in a different format, then please call 01606 868700 or email consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Following the consultation, a report containing all feedback received will be presented to members of Cheshire Fire Authority for their consideration at their meeting on 14 February 2024.

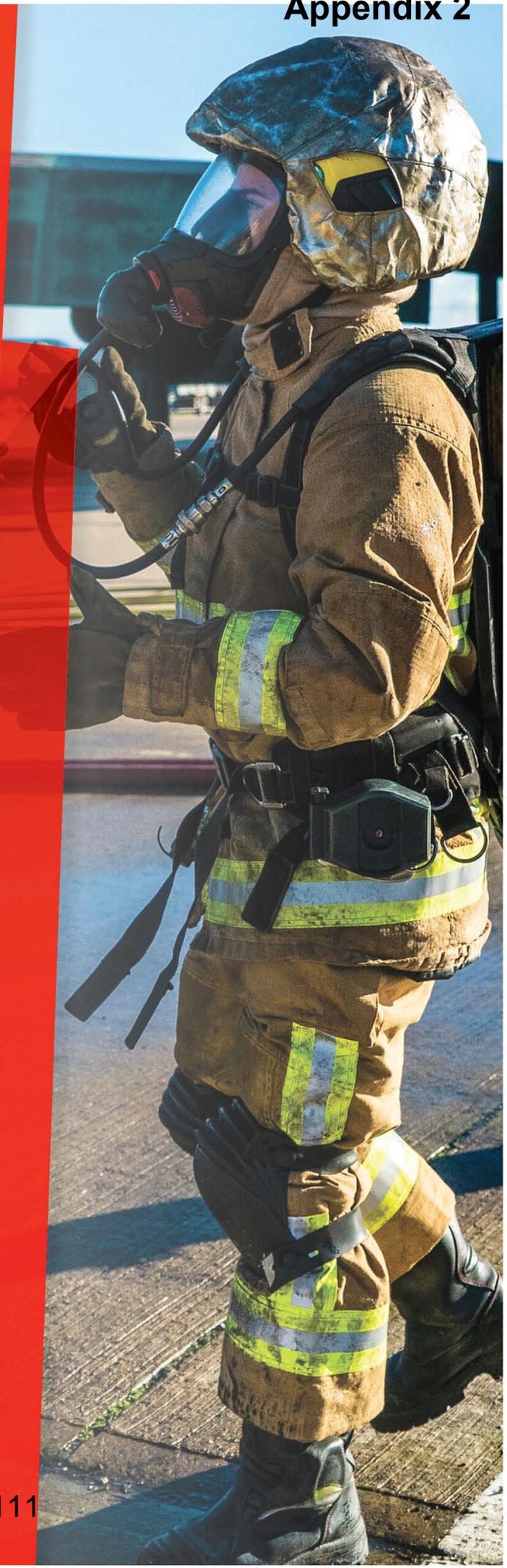
Here, they will take the feedback into account as they consider and decide on the Authority's 2024-2028 CRMP. Subject to approval of the Fire Authority, the CRMP will then take effect from 1 April 2024.



MORE PREVENTION
MORE PROTECTION
BETTER RESPONSE



Cheshire
Fire Authority



**Draft 2024-2028
Community Risk
Management Plan
Pre-Consultation Summary**

.....
www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the activity undertaken to develop the draft 2024-2028 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) ahead of the formal consultation on the proposals within the draft CRMP.

While not a formal requirement for fire and rescue services, pre-consultation is increasingly seen as best practice and leads to a more effective and meaningful consultation process that is conducted in line with recognised standards.

The Consultation Institute was contracted to provide support and guidance to assist in the pre-consultation activity. The Institute is a recognised independent specialist, providing quality assurance, guidance and learning in the field of consultation and has worked with several fire and rescue services to support their consultation processes, as well as with many health bodies – where the conducting of pre-consultation is a formal requirement as part of consultation.

This pre-consultation activity undertaken by the Service was intended to help inform and shape the development of proposals which form part of the formal consultation on the draft CRMP. This activity took place between June and September 2023 and is summarised further within this document.

The draft CRMP highlights where learning from our pre-consultation activity has influenced the development of the draft CRMP.

Report prepared by

Graeme Worrall
Engagement and Public Affairs Manager
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service

September 2023

Online survey

The primary tool for engaging the public and staff was via the use of an online survey hosted on the SurveyMonkey platform. The survey was promoted at regular intervals on the Service's social media channels; via a press release; a dedicated feature on the homepage of the Service's website and through direct email to subscribers to the Service's neighbourhood alert system.

The survey ran between 16 June and 17 July 2023 and gathered 185 responses from the public and 226 members of staff.

The survey asked questions on several issues, which are outlined below:

- Views on the guiding principles
- Expected response times for various incidents
- Response standards and associated measuring/reporting
- Number of fire engines and availability
- Crewing arrangements (for staff only)
- On-call duty system
- Risk identification
- Perceptions on value for money and increasing/decreasing the precept (public only)

A summary of survey results is provided over the page.

Full results are provided within Annex 1. The free text comments are provided separately as an Appendix to this report.

Summary of survey results

Guiding principles

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they supported the guiding principles to develop the CRMP. 81.5% of the public and 84.9% of staff either approved or strongly approved of the principles as set out, compared to 4.9% of public and 1.8% of staff respondents who disapproved.

Narrative comments

Respondents were asked if there were any other issues that they felt should be included within the guiding principles. Comments from the public were largely concerned with the need to ensure sufficient availability of fire engines and provision of fire cover – which are referenced within the guiding principles. Staff comments centred around several themes:

- Staff wellbeing and firefighter safety.
- Career progression and development, and organisational culture.
- Improving fire cover.

Response standard

The next section of the survey asked for views in order to help to develop a proposal around the future response standard i.e. our target for responding to incidents.

Respondents were asked to what extent they would support the Service measuring its response times from the time the 999 call is received, rather than the current measurement from when the fire station is alerted. 69.4% of public and 52.2% of staff respondents supported measuring from the time of call compared to 17.4% of the public and 23.4% of staff who opposed this.

Respondents were then asked if they would prefer to see the Service's response standard reported as a percentage pass rate (current method) or as an average response time. 59.3% of public and 61.1% of staff respondents stated a preference for an average response time compared to 32.4% public and 33.5% of staff respondents who preferred performance to be reported as a percentage pass rate.

The next question in this section asked for preferences over a single response standard for the whole county, or replacing this with a variable response standard which would lead to different response standards in different areas according to local risk factors. 56.9% of public and 64.5% of staff respondents stated a preference for a single response standard compared to 37.5% of public and 29.5% of staff who preferred a variable standard.

The final part of this section asked respondents to state how long they would consider it acceptable to wait for a fire engine to arrive in a range of different emergency scenarios.

Public and staff responses were broadly similar in these areas, with the expected response times to potential life risk incidents (house and commercial fires, road traffic collisions, water rescues) lower – under ten minutes – than other incidents such as grass fires or animal rescues.

Narrative comments

Regarding the measuring of response from time of call, public comments reference the view that this was a more accurate reflection of their physical experience should they need to call 999. Staff comments were more nuanced, with some questioning how much control the Authority would have over improving response times given that call handling is undertaken by a third party (North West Fire Control). Other staff comments raised a concern that measuring response time from time of call could increase pressure on crews to ensure they meet the response time, particularly on-call firefighters (who once alerted have five minutes to arrive at the station to then respond).

Public and staff comments referred to the preference of using the same standard for all. Recurring themes highlighted include that a fire is a fire regardless of rural or urban areas, and that taxpayers in different areas still pay their precept so should be offered same level of service.

Some public and staff comments highlighted that increasing on-call availability will improve response times in rural areas.

A minority of staff comments supported the use of a different standard, as it was felt that this would better match resources to differing risks, as per rationale for CRMP. However, even where a variable standard was supported, there was an acknowledgement that public expectation would favour a single standard.

There was a general understanding within staff comments that in rural areas it can be challenging to meet the current standard, both as a result of geography and issues around the availability of fire engines at certain times.

Review of the on-call system

Respondents were asked to what extent they would support the Authority reviewing the on-call duty system with the aim of making it more effective and sustainable. 90.9% of staff supported this, along with 91.4% of public respondents.

Staff were asked in more detail which areas should be the focus of any review. Key areas of focus were contractual arrangements (highlighted as important by 93.6% of dual-role staff and 77.3% of solely on-call staff), followed by the pathway to achieving operational competence (marked as a suggested area of focus by 40.9% of on-call staff and 32.3% of dual role staff) and then training commitments (22.6% of dual role staff and 40.9% of on-call staff suggested this as an area of focus).

Regarding weekend cover, staff were asked to what extent a package of greater remuneration, coupled with a more structured approach to planning availability, would encourage them to provide more cover. 62.5% of solely on-call staff and

78.3% of dual-role staff said such a package either probably or definitely would encourage them to provide more cover.

Duty systems

Operational staff were asked to what extent a daytime only shift system would appeal. 81.8% of solely on-call staff, 35.7% of wholetime staff and 36.4% of dual-role staff said such a system would appeal at least a moderate amount. 13.6% of on-call staff, 54.8% of wholetime staff and 51.2% of dual-role staff said such a system would not appeal at all. Comments from those who said a system would appeal said that it would enable them to dedicate their weekends as family time and that it would be a route in to a fulltime position from an on-call role. Staff who said the system would not appeal highlighted the balance that the current 2-2-4 system provides them and how shift work fits in with their individual circumstances.

Wholetime staff were then asked whether they would prefer a more routine shift pattern or a shift pattern that was more flexibly determined on a monthly basis. 76.6% of wholetime and 68.8% of dual role respondents said they would either probably or definitely prefer a more routine shift pattern. Narrative comments provided indicate that a more rigid routine enables those who work it to plan their commitments in advance and the certainty provides a work-life balance though being able to forecast childcare and other needs.

The importance of the 'local' fire engine

The question regarding how important it was that the respondents local fire engine responds was designed to test perceptions around the response from the town or villages local fire engine. In reality, the quickest available fire engine is mobilised to respond; but it has been suggested that there is an attachment to having a local fire engine available within a community.

Narrative comments

Most comments in relation to the importance of the local fire engine suggest the main concern is the response time, with whichever location the fire engine is coming from being a secondary concern.

However, some comments reveal several potential reasons for preferring a local engine:

- Local knowledge (road network etc)
- Travel time from other locations
- Quicker response (suggesting a limited awareness of the 5 min delay with on-call)
- Reduces the need for a responding engine from outside area to be backfilled

Additional comments also highlighted the need to strengthen the on-call duty system to improve the availability of fire engines; in particular the need to make the duty system more attractive to existing and prospective staff, and to promote it more and engage with local employers.

Overall number and availability of fire engines

This question was asked to gauge views on preferences over having a smaller overall number of fire engines but having better availability, or having the same number of fire engines but understanding that there are issues at times with availability.

Narrative comments

Some comments from both staff and public respondents reference the wish for more resources and higher availability. Ultimately, this would require more financial resources than is currently available. More generally, a reduction in the number of fire engines was viewed as a reduction in overall resources.

Comments also alluded to the view that although engines may not always be available, the perception is that more engines equals more resilience. In essence, having them available some of the time is better than not having them at all.

Major incidents was one particular scenario where it was considered important to retain the current fleet size, for the ability to scale up resources and for resilience.

Some staff comments suggest that duty systems in some areas could be changed to increase cover, with others questioning the availability of on-call second fire engines.

- Some comments suggest the number of engines is not the material issue but the ability to meet response times/standards.
- Acknowledgement that on-call system needs to be reviewed made more attractive/sustainable to improve cover and availability.
 - Better pay
 - More flexibility around contracts
 - More utilisation
 - Impact of on-call migration and dual-role staff

Prioritising activities

Respondents (both public and staff) were asked to identify which of the Authority's functions they deemed as most important.

An overwhelming majority of both staff and public respondents viewed the Authority's statutory functions as important (responding to fires and road traffic collisions, major

incident response) Results and free text comments show a clear link and rationale for the Authority carrying out its statutory duties and most operational activity.

The carrying out of animal rescue is one area of operational activity which is viewed as having lower importance (45.1% of the public view it as very/extremely important compared to over 90% for other operational activity), along with responding to some medical emergencies in certain locations. This is reflected in some free text comments; suggesting the need to focus on the Authority's core role, highlighting cardiac response and medical assistance (in particular the training and skills to perform the role versus paramedics/medical staff)

Amongst public respondents, the Authority's prevention work was, on average, viewed as extremely/very important by fewer people (between 33% and 60% of respondents viewing activity as extremely/very important depending on the specific activity). In contrast, views from staff on these issues were comparatively higher (in many case over 10% higher). This suggests that the increased knowledge and awareness of these activities within the workforce has provided a higher awareness of the benefits they can bring.

Value for money and precept

Finally, public respondents were asked whether they considered that the authority provided value for money based on its current precept and for their views on increases/decreases to the precept in future.

A total of 66.9% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed the Authority provided value for money, against 6.2% who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Regarding any future precept, 63.4% of respondents said they would be willing to pay a higher precept to improve or maintain services compared to 16% who disagreed. Of those who were willing to pay a higher precept, the average annual increase they would increase the precept by was £6.90 on a Band D property.

Conversely, 5.3% of respondents agreed that they would be willing to pay a lower precept on the understanding services would be reduced as a result. 75.6% of respondents disagreed to this. Of those who wanted the precept to reduce, the average amount that they would reduce it by would be £9.50 per year for a Band D property.

Additional engagement

The following section outlines the additional engagement as part of the pre-consultation process.

Fire Authority Members

Officers engaged Fire Authority Members at an early stage of the development process. Visioning sessions were provided at two Member Planning Days in July 2023.

Here, officers provided an overview of data and information on several topics:

- Horizon scanning analysis to highlight new and emerging risks
- Performance data to show levels of risk, demand and fire cover/availability.

Members were then provided with the guiding principles and asked if there were any other principles which officers should consider as part of the CRMP development. Key feedback included the desire to maintain the current fleet of 35 frontline fire engines.

Members were also asked to outline what they saw as key risks which should be accounted for within the CRMP. The growth of lithium-ion battery products and electric vehicles were seen as a key risk, as was the impact of climate change.

School students

Officers carried out a similar workshop with eight Year 10 high school students who were in Service on a work placement. Here, the students were asked to identify the key fire and rescue risks they considered to be facing the community. Again, lithium-ion battery products (e-scooters and bikes) and the impact of climate change were highlighted, alongside more traditional fire and rescue risks such as road safety, deliberate fires and home fire safety.

Staff Engagement Forum

The Service has a well established Staff Engagement Forum, which consists of 12-15 members of staff from a range of departments and in both operational and fire staff roles.

A further workshop was then held at the Staff Engagement Forum meeting on 14 July. Here, Forum members were provided with the following information:

- An update on the progress of the fire cover review.
- Information regarding the availability of on-call fire engines.
- Demand data for each fire engine in Cheshire.
- Overall costs for a fire engine on each duty system within Cheshire.

- The overall budget for service delivery in Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Forum members were then split into two groups and each group were asked to design their own model to provide fire cover using the data above, and as far as possible within the same cost base as the current budget.

The crewing configurations devised by each of the groups was then analysed and compared to configurations being developed by the fire cover review team.

Staff workshop

A similar session to that provided for the Staff Engagement Forum was held at Sandbach Fire Station on 26 July 2023. Attendees to this workshop included operational firefighters from a range of duty systems; operational managers and non-operational fire staff.

Representative bodies

On 8 August, officers provided an initial brief to the Fire Brigades Union regarding the pre-consultation work and emergency response proposals which were intended to be included in the draft CRMP. No immediate 'red line' issues were raised during the meeting, however a more considered response would be provided through the course of the consultation after seeking the views of the union's membership.

FBU representatives did highlight the need to engage staff most affected by the proposals at an early stage during the consultation process to ensure that they are supported through the management and implementation of any potential changes, whilst also drawing attention to the both the public and staff feedback that emphasis should be on doing all we can to improve emergency provisions and skill sets and not the target driven agenda they feel is sometimes too much of a focus.

The FBU were very supportive of the proposals around attendance times and variations to the service delivery model, having advocated some elements of the proposals themselves over recent years, but stressed the need to ensure appropriate welfare facilities and agreed daily routines are provided to staff during this transitional phase, and that they looked forward to working on the details. The FBU felt this plan was a progressive and bold plan to look to address the challenges the service faces, and commented that they were impressed by the greater use of data to underpin proposals.

Influencing the draft Community Risk Management Plan

The outcomes of the pre-consultation activity has influenced the development of the final draft CRMP in several areas. These are highlighted and summarised below:

Guiding principles

Although there was broad support for the guiding principles concerning the development of the CRMP and the fire cover review, feedback from the pre-consultation survey suggested that there was a preference to maintain the current operational fleet of 35 fire engines. This was further reinforced during the workshop sessions at Member Planning Days, where feedback from Fire Authority Members indicated a preference to maintain 35 fire engines and our current fire station footprint (28 fire stations).

This feedback was then used to develop and refine the options for the provision of fire cover, including in the development of the proposal within the draft CRMP.

Wider feedback from staff centred on staff wellbeing and firefighter safety, as well as career progression, development and culture. As a result, these issues have been addressed within the draft CRMP; firefighter safety is referenced as a specific risk to be addressed, while a section of the CRMP is dedicated to the organisation's cultural improvements.

Response standard

The feedback from the pre-consultation survey suggested that there was a preference to measure our response time from the time of call rather than the existing measure of from time of alert. The pre-consultation activity also highlighted a preference amongst respondents to have a single response standard for Cheshire, rather than a variable standard which would change according to local risks; as well as reporting this standard as an average response time.

In addition, the pre-consultation survey asked respondents to highlight how long they would expect a fire and rescue response to take in a variety of scenarios. The scenarios where human life was at risk all saw an expected response time of under ten minutes.

This feedback helped to influence the final proposal within the draft CRMP regarding the change to our response standard.

Fire and rescue risks

Several engagement mechanisms, including the survey and in staff, public and Member workshop sessions, asked participants to identify key fire and rescue related risks. It was notable that highlighted amongst emerging risks were the impact of climate change and the use of lithium-ion battery products such as electric vehicles and e-scooters/bikes. This has then been referenced in the draft CRMP under the narrative for the respective risks and has influenced the development of the Authority's proposals to develop prevention advice relating to lithium-ion batteries.

Configuration of duty systems

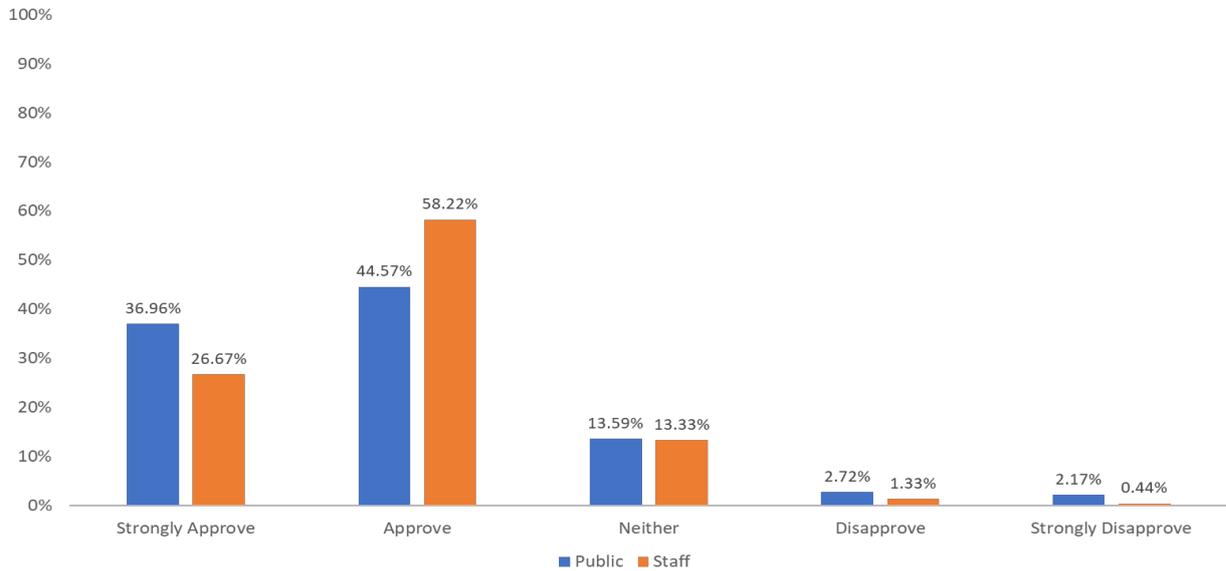
Officers held workshop session with staff which considered the challenges facing the Authority regarding the provision of fire cover. During these sessions, staff were provided with information on the availability and demand of fire engines, as well as some overall costings. They were then asked to design their own duty systems using the same parameters as the fire cover review.

While each session resulted in different final outcomes, there was a general acknowledgement of the need to amend the existing configuration of fire cover arrangements if the desired improvement in daytime cover is to be achieved. Each workshop was also given the option to change the crewing at locations to a hypothetical new duty system if they so wished. This option was taken up by each group within the workshops and helped to inform the development of a new duty system through the fire cover review which could help to improve the availability of some fire engines in the weekday daytime.

Annex 1: Pre-consultation Survey Results

Q.1 To what extent do you approve of the guiding principles to develop our CRMP?

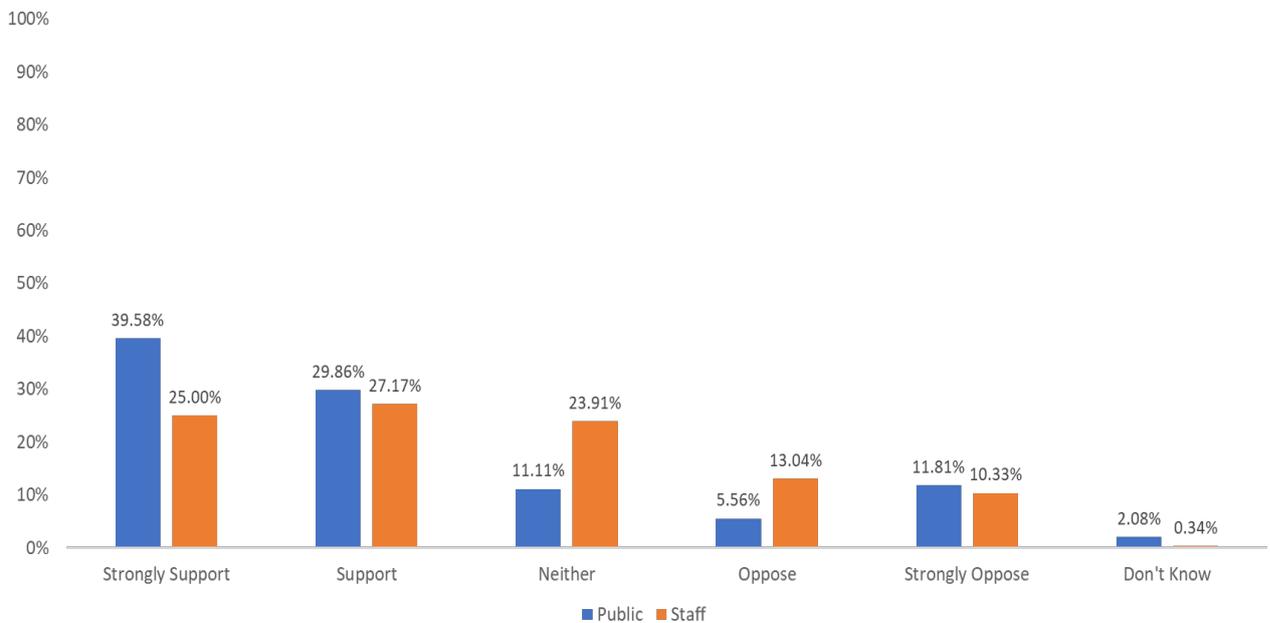
Public responses: 184 Staff responses: 225



Q.2 Comments provided in appendix.

Q.3 To what extent would you support the Service measuring its response times from the moment a 999 call is received rather than from when the first fire engine is alerted to the incident?

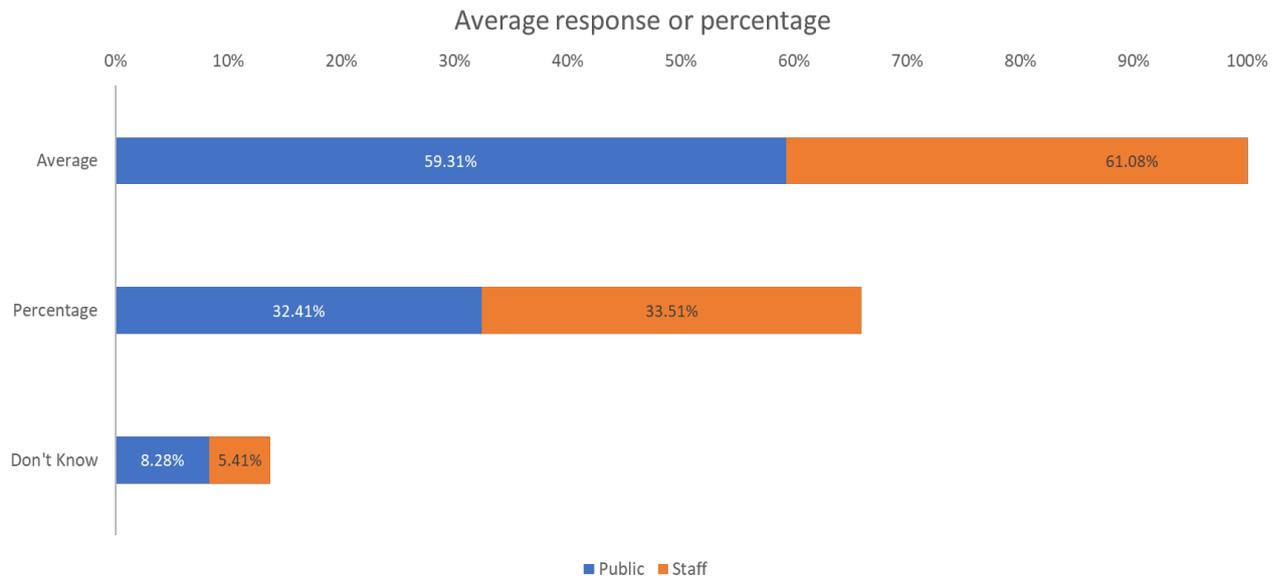
Public responses: 144 Staff responses: 184



Q4. Would it be easier for you to understand how the Service is performing if it reported its performance as an average response time or as a percentage pass rate?

In other words, would you prefer the Service to say, for example:- its average response time is 9.5 minutes against a target of 10 minutes- OR the Service meets its 10 minute response standard 80% of the time?

Public responses: 145 Staff responses: 185



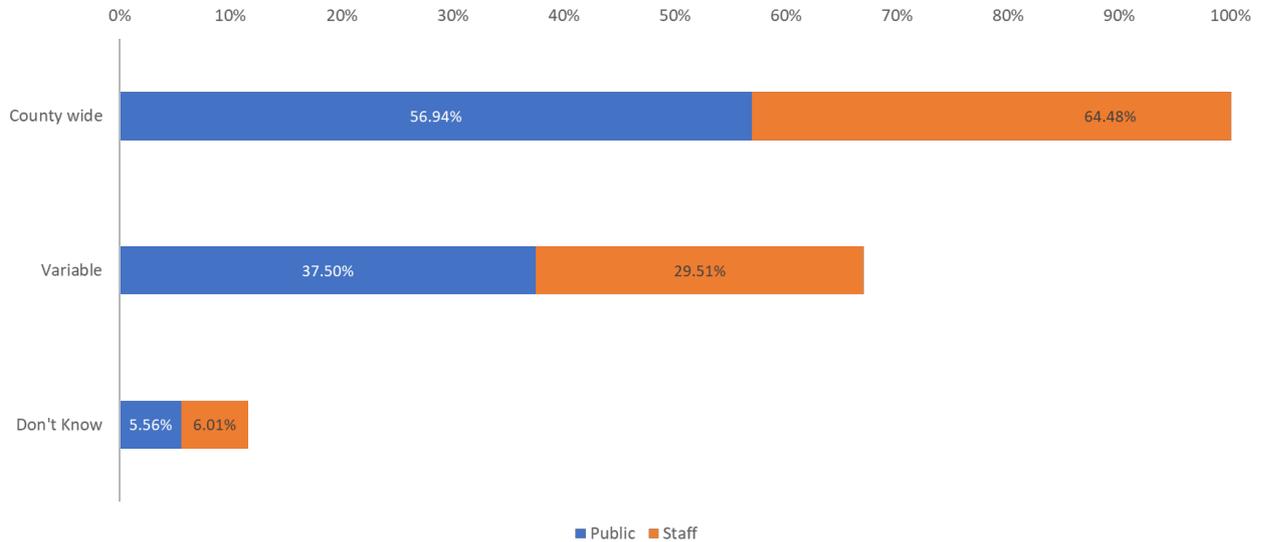
Q.5 – Q.11 How long do you think it is acceptable to wait for a fire engine to arrive?

Average public response: 133 Average staff response: 182

Scenario	Public average (mins)	Staff average (mins)
House fire	9	8
Fire in a commercial premises	10	9
Small fire	14	12
Road traffic collision	9	9
Rescuing someone from water	8	8
To help paramedics gain entry to a property where someone needs medical attention	10	10
To rescue an animal	15	14

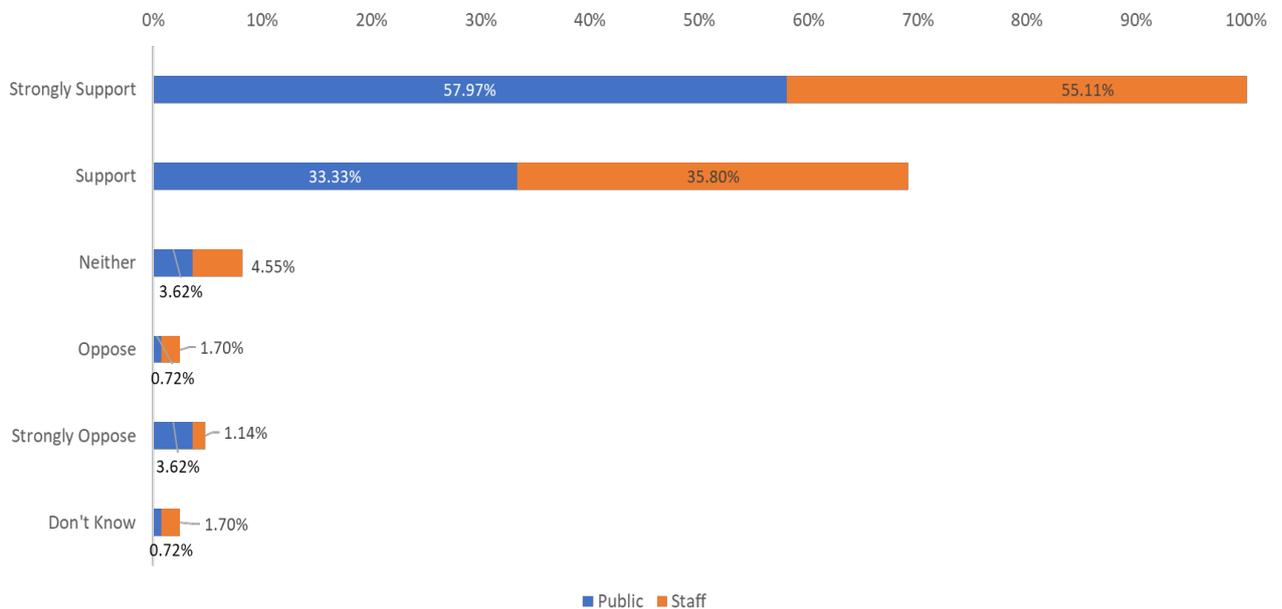
Q.12 Do you think the Service should have the same response standard across all areas of Cheshire, or differ the speed of its response to reflect fire and rescue risks in local areas?

Public responses: 144 Staff responses: 183



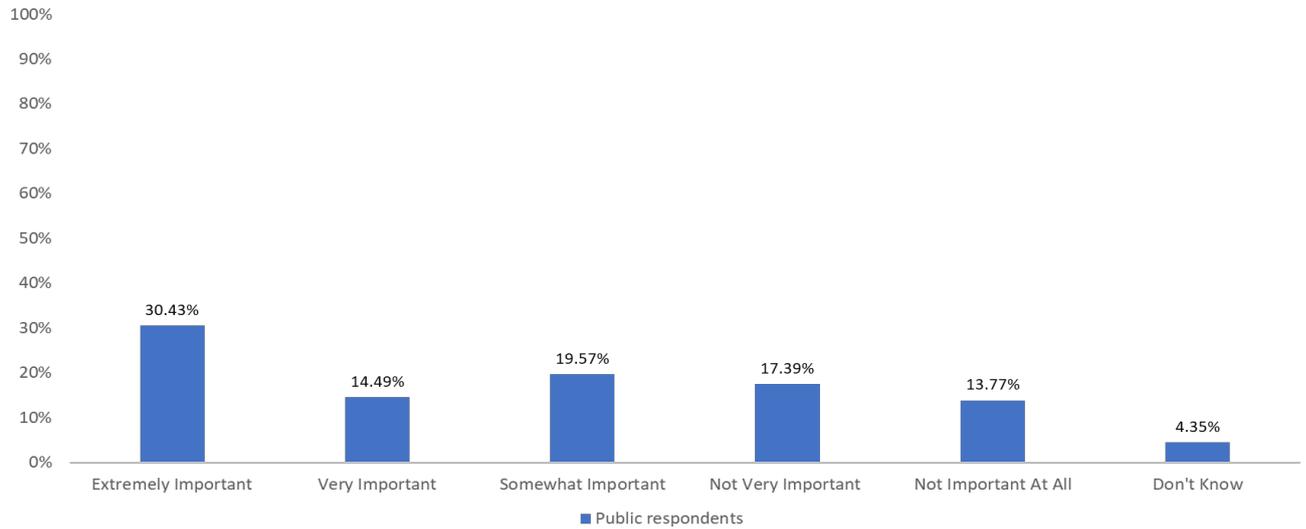
Q13. To what extent would you support the Service reviewing its on-call model to improve the availability of its fire engines?

Public responses: 144 Staff responses: 176



Q14. How important to you is it that the local fire engine from your town/village responds to you in an emergency rather than an engine from elsewhere in Cheshire, even if firefighters attend within the response standard?

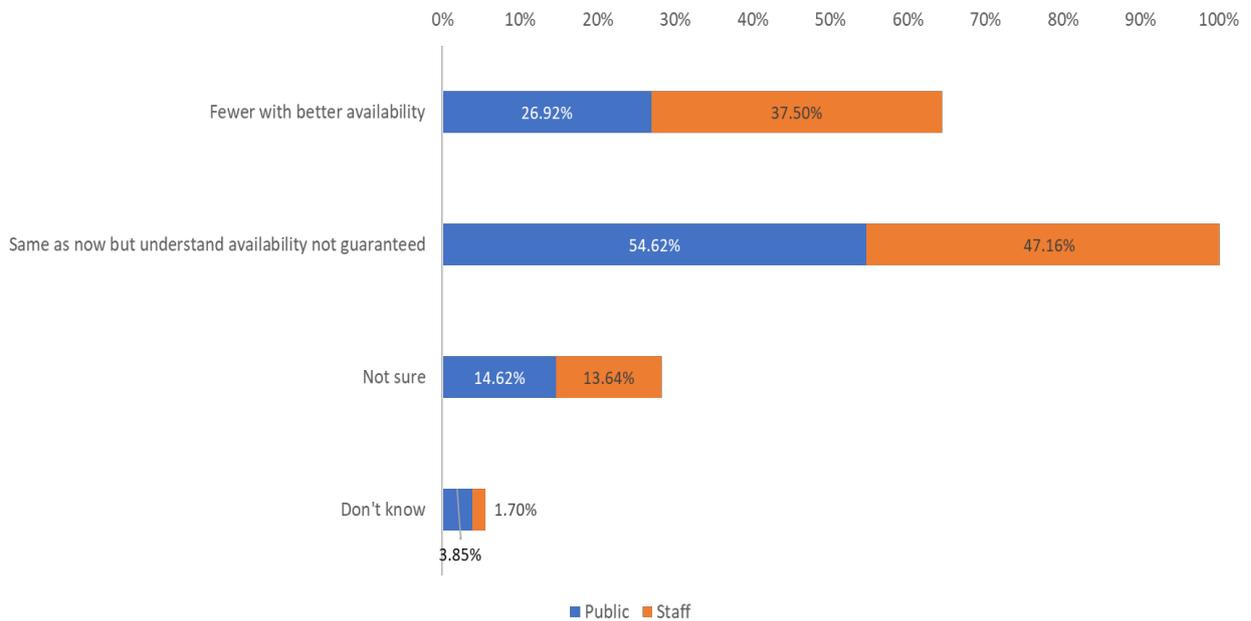
Public responses: 138



Q.15 Thinking about the number and type of fire engines across Cheshire, which option would you prefer?

Public responses: 130

Staff responses: 176



Q16. How important is it to you that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service carry out the following activities?

Public responses: 133

Activity	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important	Don't Know
Responding to fires	96.2%	3.0%		0.8%		
Responding to RTCs	90.2%	9.9%				
Rescuing people from water	76.7%	18.8%	4.5%			
Rescuing trapped animals	21.8%	23.3%	37.6%	11.3%	6.0%	
Responding to some medical emergencies in certain locations	27.1%	35.3%	26.3%	4.5%	5.3%	1.5%
Major incident response	80.5%	13.5%	4.5%	0.8%		0.8%
Providing fire safety and health advice and fitting smoke alarms in the local community	22.0%	31.1%	33.3%	9.9%	3.8%	
Educating people on road safety	14.3%	23.3%	39.1%	15.8%	7.5%	
Running fire cadet units on fire stations for 11-17 year olds	13.5%	25.6%	37.6%	18.1%	4.5%	0.8%
Working with the Prince's Trust to deliver its Team Programme for 16-24 year olds	9.0%	24.1%	36.1%	21.1%	5.3%	4.5%
Working with young people to prevent fires and anti-social behaviour	26.3%	34.6%	25.6%	7.5%	4.5%	1.5%
Engaging schools through visits, our safety education centre and tailored programmes for pupils at risk of exclusion	22.6%	37.6%	23.3%	13.5%	3.0%	
Providing fire safety and health advice and fitting smoke alarms in the local community	22.0%	31.1%	33.3%	9.9%	3.8%	
Educating people on road safety	14.3%	23.3%	39.1%	15.8%	7.5%	
Running fire cadet units on fire stations for 11-17 year olds	13.5%	25.6%	37.6%	18.1%	4.5%	0.8%
Working with the Prince's Trust to deliver its Team Programme for 16-24 year olds	9.0%	24.1%	36.1%	21.1%	5.3%	4.5%
Providing volunteering opportunities	8.3%	29.3%	39.1%	12.0%	10.5%	0.8%
Delivering station open days within the community	10.6%	18.9%	48.5%	12.9%	8.3%	0.8%
Attending community events to engage people about safety	11.3%	27.1%	48.1%	9.8%	3.8%	
Providing fire safety advice to local businesses	17.3%	42.1%	30.8%	5.3%	3.8%	0.8%
Prosecuting businesses who don't comply with fire safety regulations	57.9%	29.3%	10.5%	0.8%		1.5%

Staff Responses: 164

Activity	Extremely Important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important	Don't Know
Responding to fires	99.39%		0.61%			
Responding to RTCs	98.78%	0.61%	0.61%			
Rescuing people from water	90.24%	6.71%	3.05%			
Rescuing trapped animals	38.41%	26.22%	29.27%	4.88%	1.22%	
Responding to some medical emergencies in certain locations	38.41%	28.66%	20.73%	6.71%	3.66%	1.83%
Major incident response	82.32%	13.41%	3.66%	0.61%		
Providing fire safety and health advice and fitting smoke alarms in the local community	32.32%	38.41%	23.17%	4.27%	1.83%	
Educating people on road safety	24.54%	40.49%	28.22%	6.75%		
Running fire cadet units on fire stations for 11-17 year olds	10.98%	28.66%	37.80%	17.07%	3.66%	1.83%
Working with the Prince's Trust to deliver its Team Programme for 16-24 year olds	8.59%	28.83%	37.42%	17.18%	5.52%	2.45%
Working with young people to prevent fires and anti-social behaviour	21.95%	46.95%	27.44%	2.44%	0.61%	0.61%
Engaging schools through visits, our safety education centre and tailored programmes for pupils at risk of exclusion	21.34%	51.22%	21.34%	4.88%		1.22%
Providing volunteering opportunities	7.93%	28.66%	42.07%	14.63%	5.49%	1.22%
Delivering station open days within the community	19.75%	35.80%	27.16%	11.73%	4.94%	0.62%
Attending community events to engage people about safety	20.12%	40.24%	32.32%	6.71%	0.61%	
Providing fire safety advice to local businesses	25.00%	48.17%	23.17%	2.44%	1.22%	
Prosecuting businesses who don't comply with fire safety regulations	54.88%	35.98%	8.54%	0.61%		

Q.17 – Q.19

Free text responses provided in appendix.

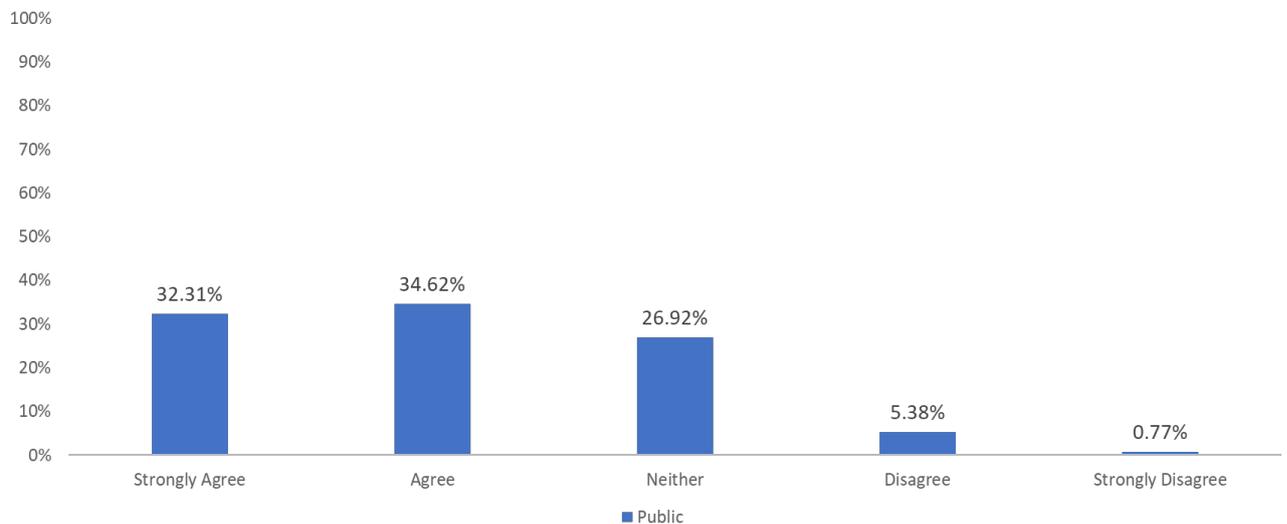
Q.20 How do you find out about the activities that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service carries out?

Public Responses: 127

Platform	Percent
National or regional TV	4.72%
Local or regional radio	0.00%
Local newspapers or news sites	6.30%
Cheshire Fire Facebook	21.26%
Cheshire Fire Twitter	7.09%
My local fire station's Twitter	1.57%
Other social media	11.81%
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service website	16.54%
Cheshire Fire Alert (messaging system)	11.81%
Other news sites	3.15%
Word of mouth	15.75%

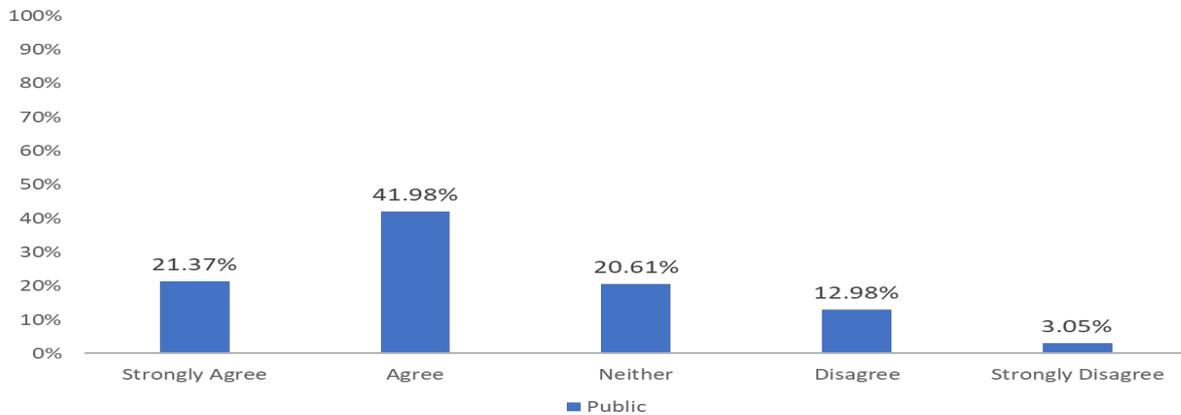
Q.21 To what extent do you agree that the current precept (the Authority's share of council tax) represents value for money in the provision of fire and rescue services across Cheshire?

Public responses: 130



Q.22 I would be willing to pay a higher precept to Cheshire Fire Authority to maintain or improve the services that are currently provided.

Public responses: 131



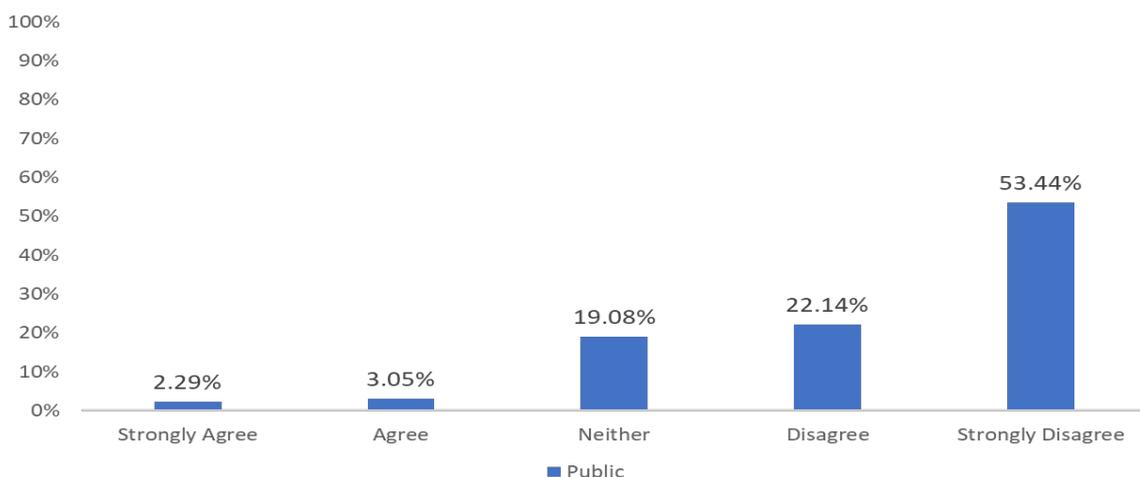
Q.23 If you would be willing to pay a higher precept, please use the slider to indicate how much more per year you would be willing to pay. For reference, the Authority's share of council tax for 2023/2024 is £87.48 for a Band D property.

Public Responses: 107

Average amount selected for increase: £6.90 per year

Q.24 I would like to pay a smaller precept to Cheshire Fire Authority but accept that this would lead to a reduction in the services provided, including a reduction in emergency response provision.

Public Responses: 131



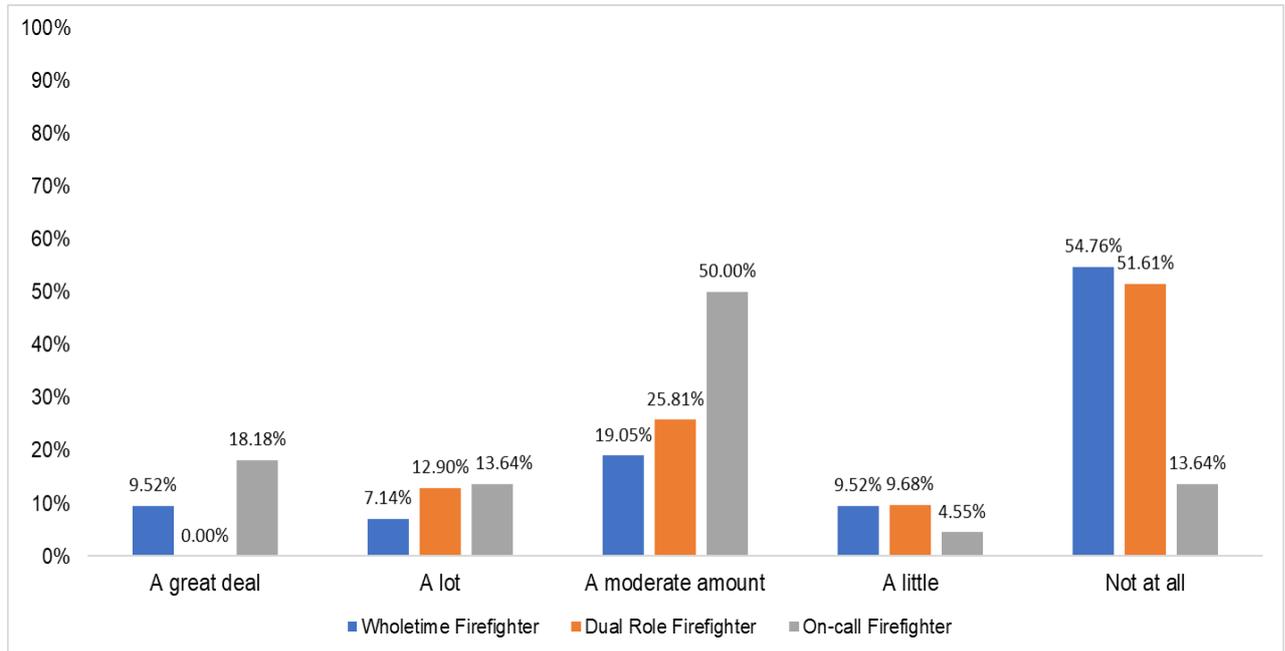
Q.25 If you would prefer to pay a smaller precept, please use the slider to indicate how much less per year you would be willing to pay. For reference, the Authority's share of council tax for 2023/2024 is £87.48 for a Band D property.

Public Responses: 41

Average amount selected for decrease: £9.50 per year

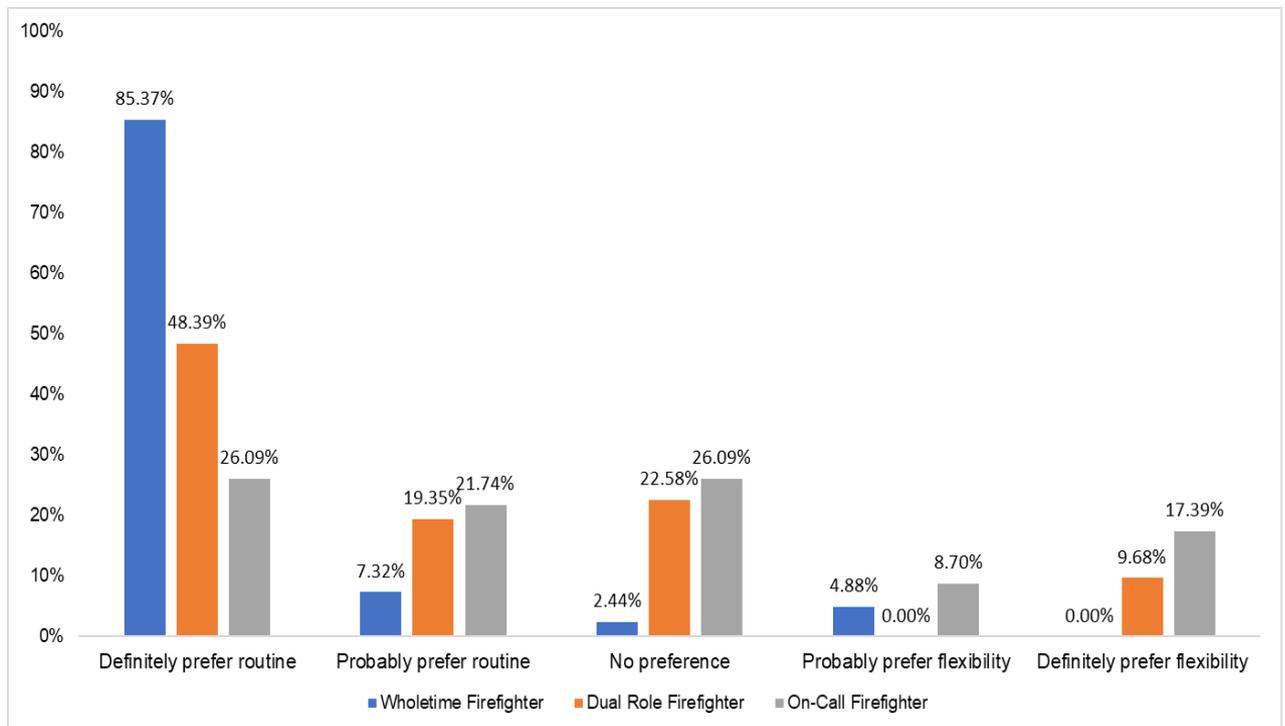
Q.26 To what extent would a daytime only shift system appeal to you?

Staff responses: 96



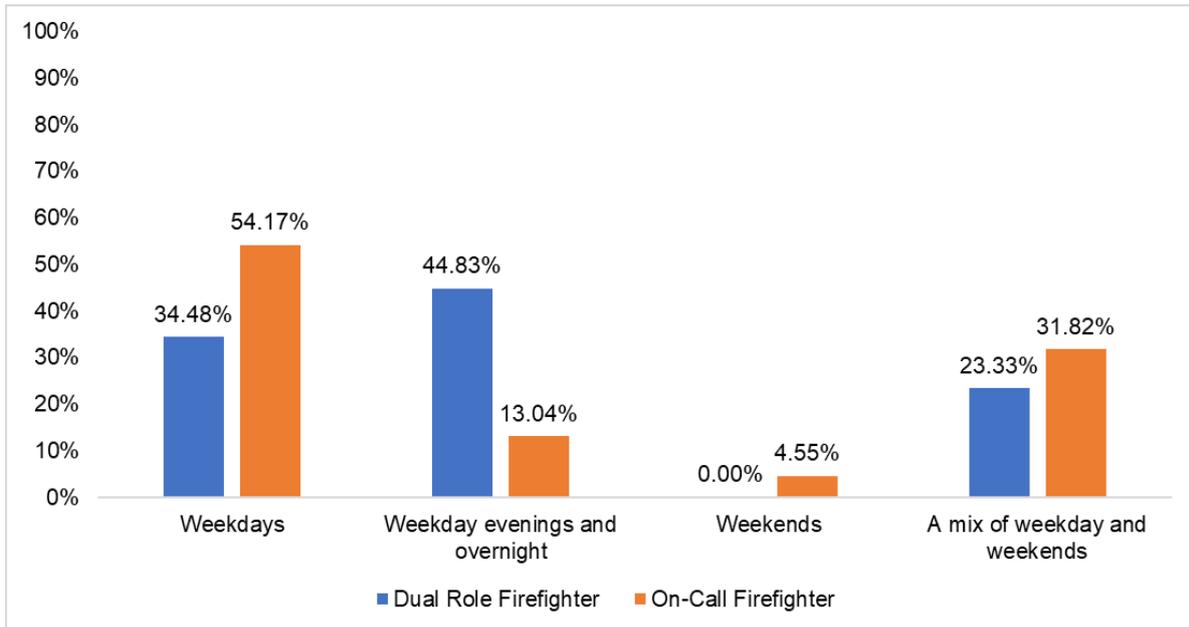
Q.27 To what extent would you prefer working a regular routine shift pattern or one which is flexibly determined on a monthly basis?

Staff responses: 96



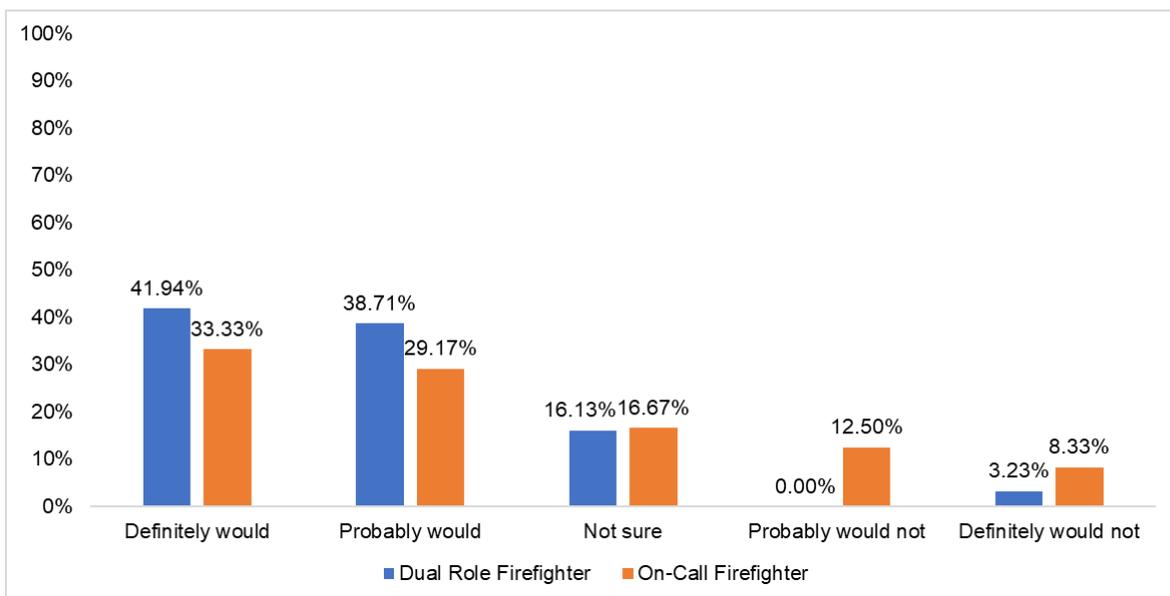
Q.28 Which time period do you prefer to provide on-call cover?

Staff responses: 54



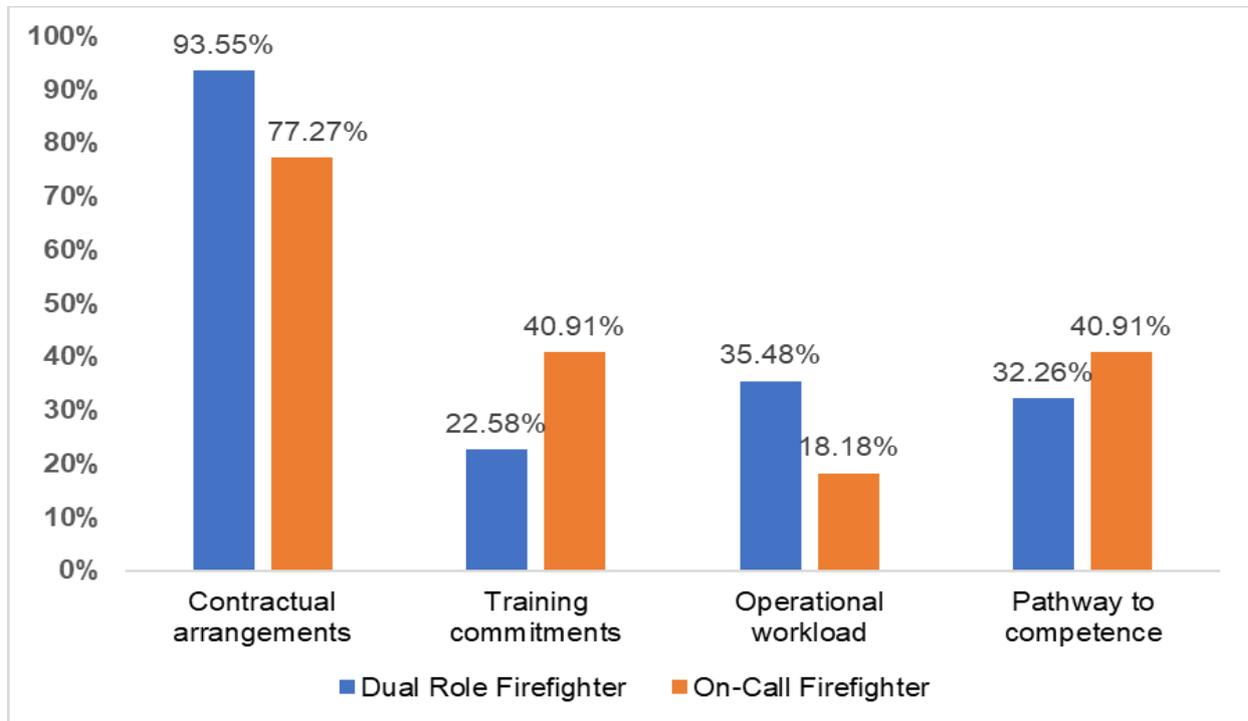
Q.29 To what extent would a package of increased financial remuneration encourage you to provide additional cover over weekends, but using a more structured approach to planning and managing availability?

Staff responses: 61

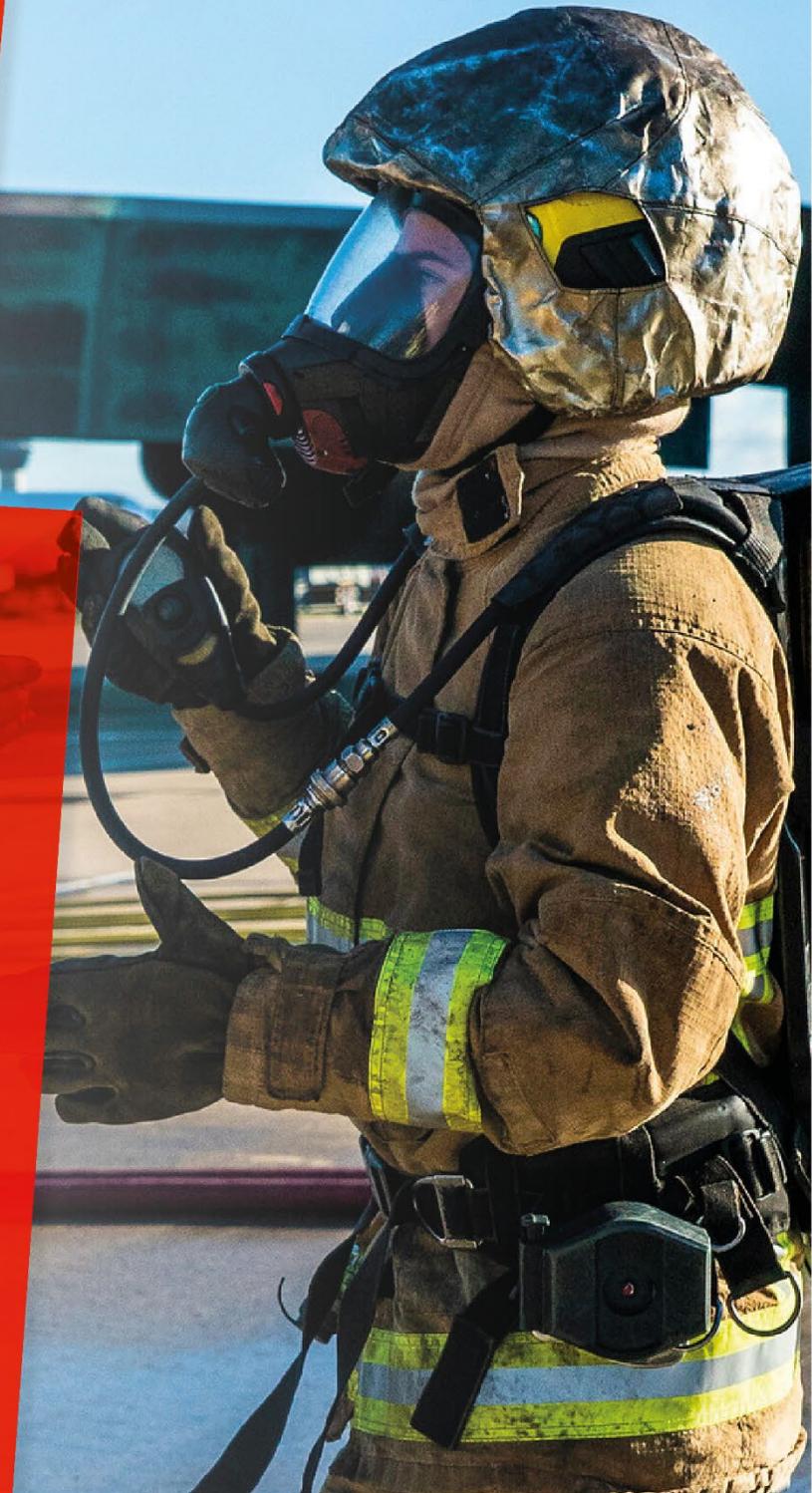


Q.30 Which areas of the on-call duty system do you feel could be improved in order to improve availability and staff retention?

Staff responses: 53



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EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT (EIA)
2024-2028 CRMP
Proposal – Introduction of
Day Crewing in Knutsford

Introduction

By undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) the Service will have a better understanding of the risks presented to its workforce and communities, with specific emphasis on the consideration of those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This will then inform any necessary changes to policies and practices, working arrangements and will also ensure that there are no unintended consequences in terms of discrimination relating to any new working arrangements, activities, policy changes and/or reasonable adjustments.

Process

It is essential that where working practices and/or service delivery methods change, the Service can provide assurance by reflecting on the potential impacts of the changes and demonstrating that it has done the due diligence to promote equality and inclusion.

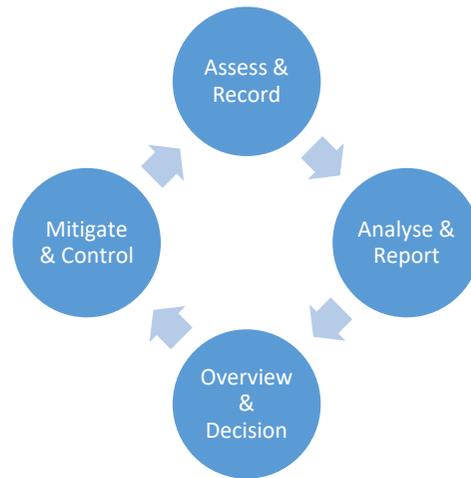
Assessing the impact of changes is a continuous process not only to ensure that mitigating actions are effective and being carried out, but also to identify any consequences or likelihood of risks evolving or changing over time. The EIAs will also help to inform future decisions on the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the changes.

The following process should be followed for the production and sign-off of EIAs and the monitoring of the risks and associated mitigating actions and proposed changes contained within them.

Stage 1 – Assess & Record

Where required, each service area should carry out an EIA to identify and record any changes that have been implemented or will be implemented.

The EIA template within this document has been developed to help structure the assessment. This is not a tick box exercise so professional judgement will be required to ensure that assessments are comprehensive and relevant.



Assessments should be co-produced with staff involved in the delivery of the activity, policy or procedure to ensure that experience and knowledge is shared and included in any mitigation plans. Completion of the EIA template does not end the process. Further assessments will be required to ensure the scale, likelihood and level of impact is not increasing and that the mitigating actions/changes are making a positive impact. The output of Stage 1 is the completion of a comprehensive impact assessment with the level of risk and impact measured for review by the Head of Department.

Stage 2 – Analyse & Report

The Head of Department reviews draft assessments and analyses the totality of the impact risks across their services/function.

This will:

- Enable a robust peer review and scrutiny on the assessment and mitigation plans.
- Provide direction and decisions within the remit of the Head of Department's resources.
- Identify actions or interdependencies with other areas of the business.

Stage 3 – Overview & Decision

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisor will review the EIAs in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department and maintain an overview of the impact risk across the wider organisation.

The level of risk and likelihood of occurrence will help to identify themes and potential solutions and will confirm the level of oversight needed for implementation of actions and mitigation plans – Service or departmental level.

This will also prompt direction where required in respect of any necessary escalation to SMT for decision or investment.

Stage 4 – Mitigate & Control

Mitigation actions/changes should be developed/implemented with monitoring and review processes in place.

The frequency of the monitoring and review process should be considered in line with the assessed level of risk. i.e. if risk was deemed to be high then more frequent checks and balances need to be put in place to monitor the result of implementation of the changes.

Consideration should be given to the following questions:

- Are the changes/mitigating actions happening and working?
- Has the consequence/impact changed since the last review?
- Has the likelihood of the impact changed since the last review?
- What additional support/resource/action is required to manage the risk?

Impact Assessment Form

Once completed, please store on Corporate Docs, Cheshire Planning System and return to equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Name of policy / initiative / service to be impact assessed	2024-2028 CRMP Proposal – Introduction of Day Crewing in Knutsford
Which of our Core Values are being addressed?	We are doing the right thing by providing improved cover during our busy daytimes for the people of Knutsford, and allowing for more community engagement and Home Safety Visits to take place.
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Engagement and Public Affairs, within Communications and Engagement
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)	To be determined once the CRMP has been approved
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon), Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worrall)
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	<p>Improve response times</p> <p>Reduce our reliance on On-Call fire engines, particularly during the day</p> <p>More Wholetime fire engines in On Call Station areas, resulting in increased capacity to deliver prevention and protection activity</p>

	<p>Look after our people & mitigate the impact of any changes</p> <p>No fire station closures or building of new stations</p> <p>Maintain the same cost base, whilst improving service, outputs and value for money</p>
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	Communities across Cheshire, primarily those in station areas covered by a fully on-call fire engine.
Is the policy/initiative/service for external or internal purposes?	External and internal
Does this policy/initiative/service affect the on-call duty service?	Yes
<p>Are other organisations involved in the delivery?</p> <p>If yes please state who:</p>	No
<p>What information / past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)</p>	<p>There is a range of data available on local areas within Cheshire that can be accessed via Business Intelligence. This will help to build a profile of the local community and the presence of any particular groups within the community, or any issues/trends that may require particular attention or consideration at specific local events.</p>

Has a similar assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy / initiative / service? If yes – is it possible to adapt / incorporate findings	
Date of next policy / initiative / service review (if applicable)	Date of EIA: April 2023 Date of Review: April 2024 – on commencement of 2024 CRMP and to be reviewed by project lead(s)

Impact Assessment

The impact assessments will be based on the red, amber, green (RAG) risk scoring as follows:

LIKELIHOOD				
Unlikely	Low probability	Possible	High probability	Almost Certain
1	2	3	4	5
VL	L	M	H	VH

IMPACT		
5	VH	Catastrophic – legal action (discrimination claim)
4	H	Major – serious matter that may lead to negative publicity and disciplinary action within service context
3	M	Moderate – external complaint or internal grievance
2	L	Minor – Additional small amendment or changes to policy, initiative or service.
1	VL	Little impact – minor considerations only required.

		IMPACT					
		VL	L	M	H	VH	
		1	2	3	4	5	
LIKELIHOOD	VH	5	5	10	15	20	25
	H	4	4	8	12	16	20
	M	3	3	6	9	12	15
	L	2	2	4	6	8	10
	VL	1	1	2	3	4	5

Overall Rating	Description	Monitoring
1 – 5 Manageable Risk	The risk may be so low that we choose to accept it and instead simply record that the risk has been identified and that due to its low likelihood or impact no further action will be required. Alternatively, minor considerations may be needed on implementation.	Department will maintain oversight and continue to manage locally
6 -10 Medium	The EIA owner will need to consider slight amendments or further controls to the substance of the policy/initiative/service to take account of any issues identified OR GM to confirm that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate the risk and no further reasonable action is possible	
12 – 15 High	The policy / initiative / service cannot be rolled out until detailed external and/or internal consultation has taken place with those that the policy / initiative / service affects.	Updates provided to the EDI Advisor
16 – 25 Very High	Take immediate action. If legal action is certain to occur then we cannot go ahead with the policy / initiative / service, without fundamentally changing it. If even with this mitigation, the impact remains severe, then consultation with internal and/or external groups will need to go ahead.	

Outlined below are relevant groups who or factors that may be affected by the policy / initiative / service and suggested impacts (please note that these suggestions are not exhaustive and you will need to consider whether there are any further impacts). Enter a commentary explaining the potential risks/impacts both on employees and external community groups. Specify any controls which are currently in place or that will be put in place to address and mitigate these impacts. Please document all impacts, both negative and positive.

Protected Characteristics or EDI theme			Impact/risk
Age (younger, older or particular age group)			<p>External Risk Older age increases the risk of an individual dying or being seriously injured in the event of a fire. Within the Knutsford fire station area there are 26.27% of residents who are 65+. At local authority ward level, the Knutsford ward has 32.6% of its pensioner population recorded as living alone.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Younger people may also be at risk as a result of deliberate fire setting. Within Knutsford 20.08% of residents are under 18.</p>
2	3	6	<p>External Control The proposed introduction of day crewing into Knutsford provides increased capacity to undertake safe and well fire prevention visits in the area, which will help to reduce the risk of fire facing a household. These are prioritised according to risk factors, with age and living alone being key considerations.</p> <p>There would also be additional capacity for the local crew to undertake a range of Key Stage 2 visits to provide age-appropriate fire safety advice for young people.</p> <p>Internal Risk The additional remuneration which the day crewing system attracts may increase its attraction to staff interested in working the system. This may particularly be the case with staff nearing retirement and therefore there may be a disproportionately higher number of older members of staff interested in working at Knutsford.</p> <p>Internal Control The service has an established redeployment and establishments process.</p>

<p>Disability (physical, sensory, long-term illness, hidden, neurodiversity)</p>			<p>External Risk Within the three local authority wards that make up Knutsford, the percentage of population recognised as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 is 16.0% (Knutsford), 16.3% (High Legh) and 18.5% (Mobberley); compared to the Cheshire East average of 17.0%.</p>
<p>Likelihood</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Overall</p>	<p>Mobility issues stemming from obesity are an increasing demand on fire and rescue services, with 2,326 incidents of assisting other agencies with a bariatric rescue in England during 2022/2023; compared to 429 in during 2012/13. Within the three local authority wards that make up Knutsford, the percentage of obese adults is 17.5% (Knutsford), 19.9% (High Legh) and 19.5% (Mobberley); all of these are below the average for Cheshire East (21.5%)</p> <p>Disability can increase the individual’s risk of harm in the event of a fire and some disabilities or learning differences may require staff to provide advice in different or alternative ways.</p> <p>As the fire station building will have the same level of accessibility to visitors, there is no perceived risk to those with disabilities accessing the station as a result of the proposed changes.</p> <p>External Control Provision of safe and well activity, targeted according to risk. Provision of fire safety education via Key Stage 2 visits and other community engagement.</p> <p>Internal Risk Day-crewing is within sociable hours rather than evenings and weekends, which could be more agreeable for those with long-term conditions who have considerations such as pain management and exhaustion to consider. However, this will be a big change in routine which may cause distress to those with neurodiverse conditions who are used to a certain structure.</p> <p>The introduction of a day crewing system may mean that adjustments to housing may be needed in order to accommodate particular disabilities if there is a change in residence.</p> <p>Internal Control Keep staff informed on what is going to be happening, timescales, what it will look like etc. in order to</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>9</p>	

			<p>minimise any unexpected changes. Support any individuals with neurodiversity by identifying it early and linking in with L&D to discuss resilience training and support.</p>
<p>Mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, bipolar, serious mental illness)</p>			<p>External Risk The changes may cause confusion and potential distress to the public if not communicated properly.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>External Control The Service has created a detailed document which is accessible and available on our website. We have sought consultation from the public and advertised this to try to make as many people as possible aware. We have also created a video in order to explain the changes fully.</p>
3	2	6	<p>Internal Risk Those with underlying conditions such as anxiety may be triggered by changes to working conditions and the uncertainty which comes along with this.</p> <p>Internal Control We have a dedicated mental health advisor who is on hand to visit stations and gauge the morale of individuals, providing support to those who need it, and signposting anyone who may need further support to our Occupational Health Unit where they can access counselling sessions. Regular visits should be scheduled in order to ensure that everyone is given opportunity to seek that support.</p> <p>We also have individuals throughout the Service who are trained in providing mental health support, such as mental health first aiders and TRIM practitioners. These are identified by name and a photo on posters which are on the notice board of every station and Service building.</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment / identity (someone in transition or who has transitioned from one gender to another)</p>			<p>External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender identity or transitioning.</p> <p>External Control The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally.</p>

Likelihood	Impact	Overall	Internal Risk This change should not be disruptive to anyone who is transitioning, as they should be given sufficient time off in order to recover from any surgeries, as per the Trans policy.
1	1	1	Internal Control Trans policy.
Marriage/civil partnership (applies to same-sex as well as opposite sex couples)			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status.
			External Control N/A
			Internal Risk Although the proposed changed will cause some people to be moved to a different station, and there may be some changes to living situations, these should be positive changes as it will see more firefighters living closer to their workplace and working more sociable, family friendly hours.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	1	2	Internal Control N/A
Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding)			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity.
			External Control N/A
			Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. Staff working at Knutsford who become pregnant or require maternity provision can seek advice from their HR advisor or the EDI advisor.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	1	2	

			<p>Internal Control The Service has an established maternity policy and a range of guidance to support individuals through their pregnancy via specific risk assessments and amendments as necessary.</p>
<p>Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)</p>			<p>External Risk The population of the Knutsford station area is 91.1% White British. The resident Asian/Asian British population stands at 2.47%, while small this is larger than the average across Cheshire East. 2.41% of the population in Knutsford identify as Gypsy/Irish Traveller or 'Other White' within the ONS classification</p> <p>No risks are identified due to the proposed changes. The increase in fire cover will give crews more opportunity to engage with those in their communities who can be difficult to reach, such as the traveller community, who often encounter the Service in passing at community engagement and positive action events. The increase in this type of work may help to form stronger bonds with these communities and may even help in diversifying our workforce.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	3	6	<p>External Control Community safe and well visits and wider prevention work. If required, staff have access to language line to provide translation services. Fire safety information is also available in a range of different languages, including easy read.</p> <p>Internal Risk As the plans to move to weekday cover include an intention for more home and business safety visits to take place, there will be more contact between our staff and the public. This creates greater opportunity for both positive and negative interactions, and unfortunately will slightly increase the risk that a member of our staff could come into contact with racially motivated harassment from members of the communities they are working in.</p> <p>Internal Control Crews will not be working alone, and will try to stay together when making visits as much as possible. Conflict training is available to all staff, as well as support from our Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage network. All managers receive training on race and should be equipped to deal with any incidents.</p>

Religion/Belief System (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist etc.)			<p>External Risk Christianity is the majority religion across Cheshire East (54.39%). There are also sizeable populations of those who do not follow a religious belief (average of 36% across Cheshire). There are few large concentrations of other religious groups, with one group of note being the Muslim population in Cheshire East (1.04% of population). There is a small cluster of Hindus within the Knutsford ward (133 individuals).</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>No specific external risks are identified as a result of the proposed introduction of day crewing at Knutsford. The proposal will provide additional capacity to undertake community work locally, which may benefit local religious groups.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>External Control Staff are already active in the community and attend a range of religious events as per their respective community action plans. Home fire safety advice is provided to the community, which is tailored to times of year which feature major religious festivals.</p> <p>Internal Risk Religious activities which are done at certain times of the day, such as prayer, may be affected by the change to day crewing.</p> <p>Internal Control Watches with colleagues who observe such religious practices may make workplace adjustments such as doing more strenuous activities earlier in the day during Ramadan if somebody is fasting, or changing the timings of tasks in order to fit in with their prayer times.</p>
Gender (male, female or gender non-binary or fluid)			<p>External Risk The population of the Knutsford area is 51.5% male and 48.5% female. No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender in isolation. However, when coupled with other characteristics there are identifiable risks. Older males, particularly those living alone, are at most risk of death and injury from fire.</p> <p>External Control The provision of a day crewing resource within Knutsford would provide greater capacity to undertake prevention work within the community. This work is carried out using the Service's targeting methodology</p>

Likelihood	Impact	Overall	to prioritise those most at risk. Where older males living alone are identified, these would be prioritised accordingly, and a home safety visit would be arranged to minimise risk.
2	2	4	Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender. Internal Control N/A
Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual)			External Risk 91.5% of the Cheshire East population aged over 16 identify as straight/heterosexual; 1.3% identify as gay or lesbian and 0.9% identify as bisexual. A further 0.3% of the population are of a different sexual orientation (pansexual, asexual etc). While the fire risk facing LGBT+ individuals can be higher than average, including the risk of arson related hate crime, there are no specific risks are identified from this proposal in relation to someone's sexual orientation.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	External Control
2	2	4	The provision of increased fire cover provides more opportunity for community engagement with LGBT+ residents and an improved emergency response. The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally. Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's sexual orientation. Internal Control N/A
Geography and Deprivation (does the service or policy affect lower income people or those			External Risk 58.4% of households in the Knutsford ward, 57.7% of households in the High Legh ward, 60% of households in the Mobberley ward and 62.5% of households in the Chelford ward are not deprived in any

<p>who live in areas of disadvantage?)</p>			<p>dimension (Cheshire East data, 2021 census) The impact of the proposed changes should be positive for the community as there is increased capacity for community interventions in the area.</p> <p>External Control N/A</p> <p>Internal Risk The introduction of day crewing at Knutsford will have positive and negative impacts on certain parts of the workforce. There may be staff who currently reside in the housing at Knutsford who do not transfer on to the day crewing system. In these cases, they would be required to vacate the premises and find their own accommodation – potentially at a greater cost and leading to a financial impact.</p>
<p>Likelihood</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Impact</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Overall</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Conversely, staff who join the day crewing establishment at Knutsford may see a positive financial impact in moving to service housing and in a potential increase in pay if they are moving from a different shift system to day crewing.</p> <p>Internal Control The Service has a range of different shift patterns available and an established redeployment process to manage changes in establishments.</p>
<p>Occupation (internal – shift systems, working patterns etc. External – shifts, retired etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk No specific risks have been identified due to the occupation of an individual. The provision of day crewing cover would have a positive impact in more capacity to undertake home safety assessments and in an improvement in emergency response.</p> <p>External Control N/A</p> <p>Internal Risk</p>
<p>Likelihood</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Overall</p>	

3	3	9	<p>Some staff may be required to change shift pattern or station, which will necessitate a change in their circumstances.</p> <p>Internal Control The Service has a range of different shift patterns available and an established redeployment process to manage changes in establishments.</p>
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What other positive outcomes or changes will need to be taken as a result of any points identified by this impact assessment?

The provision of day crewing at Knutsford will provide additional capacity for firefighters to provide community safety interventions in the area, as well as improve the average emergency response times.



EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT (EIA)
2024-2028 CRMP
Proposal – Reorganising
daytime fire cover in
Warrington

.....
www.cheshirefire.gov.uk



Introduction

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Process

It is essential that where working practices and/or service delivery methods change, the Service can provide assurance by reflecting on the potential impacts of the changes and demonstrating that it has done the due diligence to promote equality and inclusion.

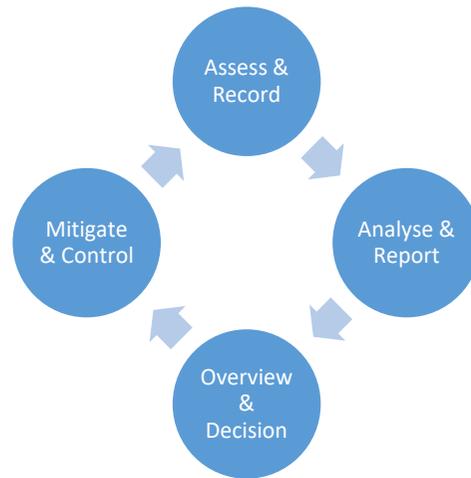
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Stage 1 – Assess & Record

Where required, each service area should carry out an EIA to identify and record any changes that have been implemented or will be implemented.

The EIA template within this document has been developed to help structure the assessment. This is not a tick box exercise so professional judgement will be required to ensure that assessments are comprehensive and relevant.



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Stage 2 – Analyse & Report

The Head of Department reviews draft assessments and analyses the totality of the impact risks across their services/function.

This will:

- Enable a robust peer review and scrutiny on the assessment and mitigation plans.
- Provide direction and decisions within the remit of the Head of Department's resources.
- Identify actions or interdependencies with other areas of the business.

Stage 3 – Overview & Decision

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisor will review the EIAs in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department and maintain an overview of the impact risk across the wider organisation.

The level of risk and likelihood of occurrence will help to identify themes and potential solutions and will confirm the level of oversight needed for implementation of actions and mitigation plans – Service or departmental level.

This will also prompt direction where required in respect of any necessary escalation to SMT for decision or investment.

Stage 4 – Mitigate & Control

Mitigation actions/changes should be developed/implemented with monitoring and review processes in place.

The frequency of the monitoring and review process should be considered in line with the assessed level of risk. i.e. if risk was deemed to be high then more frequent checks and balances need to be put in place to monitor the result of implementation of the changes.

Consideration should be given to the following questions:

- Are the changes/mitigating actions happening and working?
- Has the consequence/impact changed since the last review?
- Has the likelihood of the impact changed since the last review?
- What additional support/resource/action is required to manage the risk?

Impact Assessment Form

Once completed, please store on Corporate Docs, Cheshire Planning System and return to equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Name of policy / initiative / service to be impact assessed	2024-2028 CRMP Proposal – Reorganising daytime fire cover in Warrington
Core Value being addressed	Doing the right thing and making a difference will be addressed, as more cover will be available for the people of Cheshire.
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worrall) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon)
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)	To be determined once the CRMP is approved
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worrall) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon)
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	<p>Improve response times</p> <p>Reduce our reliance on On-Call fire engines, particularly during the day</p> <p>More Wholetime fire engines in On Call Station areas, resulting in increased capacity to deliver prevention and protection activity</p> <p>Look after our people & mitigate the impact of any changes</p> <p>No fire station closures or building of new stations</p>

	Maintain the same cost base, whilst improving service, outputs and value for money
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	Communities across Cheshire, primarily those in station areas covered by a fully on-call fire engine.
Is the policy/initiative/service for external or internal purposes?	External and internal
Does this policy/initiative/service affect the on-call duty service?	Yes
Are other organisations involved in the delivery? If yes please state who:	No
What information / past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)	There is a range of data available on local areas within Cheshire that can be accessed via Business Intelligence. This will help to build a profile of the local community and the presence of any particular groups within the community, or any issues/trends that may require particular attention or consideration at specific local events.
Has a similar assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy / initiative / service? If yes – is it possible to adapt / incorporate findings	Various EIAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EIAs help us identify risk and we are then able to implement interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EIAs help us reflect on learning of experiences of other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.

Date of next policy / initiative / service review (if applicable)	Date of EIA: April 2023 Date of Review: April 2024 – on commencement of 2024 CRMP and to be reviewed by project lead(s)
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Impact Assessment

The impact assessments will be based on the red, amber, green (RAG) risk scoring as follows:

LIKELIHOOD				
Unlikely	Low probability	Possible	High probability	Almost Certain
1	2	3	4	5
VL	L	M	H	VH
IMPACT				
5	VH	Catastrophic – legal action (discrimination claim)		
4	H	Major – serious matter that may lead to negative publicity and disciplinary action within service context		
3	M	Moderate – external complaint or internal grievance		
2	L	Minor – Additional small amendment or changes to policy, initiative or service.		
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LIKELIHOOD	D	1	2	3	4	5	
	VH	5	5	10	15	20	25
	H	4	4	8	12	16	20
	M	3	3	6	9	12	15
	L	2	2	4	6	8	10
VL	1	1	2	3	4	5	

Overall Rating	Description	Monitoring
1 – 5 Manageable Risk	The risk may be so low that we choose to accept it and instead simply record that the risk has been identified and that due to its low likelihood or impact no further action will be required. Alternatively, minor considerations may be needed on implementation.	Department will maintain oversight and

6 -10 Medium	The EIA owner will need to consider slight amendments or further controls to the substance of the policy/initiative/service to take account of any issues identified OR GM to confirm that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate the risk and no further reasonable action is possible	continue to manage locally
12 – 15 High	The policy / initiative / service cannot be rolled out until detailed external and/or internal consultation has taken place with those that the policy / initiative / service affects.	Updates provided to the EDI Advisor
16 – 25 Very High	Take immediate action. If legal action is certain to occur then we cannot go ahead with the policy / initiative / service, without fundamentally changing it. If even with this mitigation, the impact remains severe, then consultation with internal and/or external groups will need to go ahead.	

Outlined below are relevant groups who or factors that may be affected by the policy / initiative / service and suggested impacts (please note that these suggestions are not exhaustive and you will need to consider whether there are any further impacts). Enter a commentary explaining the potential risks/impacts both on employees and external community groups. Specify any controls which are currently in place or that will be put in place to address and mitigate these impacts. Please document all impacts, both negative and positive.

Protected Characteristics or EDI theme			Impact/risk
Age (younger, older or particular age group)			<p>External Risk</p> <p>Regarding age, the communities of Birchwood and Stockton Heath station areas have a similar profile:</p> <p>Under 18's: Birchwood – 18.27% Stockton Heath – 19.49%</p> <p>18-64: Birchwood – 58.35% Stockton Heath – 57.00%</p> <p>65+: Birchwood – 23.38% Stockton Heath – 23.52%</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	4	12	<p>Older people are often retired and therefore more likely to be at home in the day to receive visits, or to be home alone and have an accident where crews are required to attend. Older people are also known to be more socially vulnerable and the target of criminals who could impersonate Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service staff in order to gain entry to their homes.</p> <p>External Control</p> <p>All of our staff carry warrant cards and wear uniform. We have security measures in place to ensure that our uniforms are returned when somebody leaves and that only legitimate staff have access to these items.</p> <p>Internal Risk</p> <p>There are a small number of staff who provide on-call cover at Stockton Heath who have retired from their previous wholetime operational role. Due to employment regulations they may not be able to enter a redeployment process for an operational role.</p> <p>Internal Control</p> <p>Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.</p>

Disability (physical, sensory, long-term illness, hidden, neurodiversity)			<p>External Risk 16.91% of the population in Warrington borough council area is classified as disabled under the Equality Act.</p> <p>External Control Provision of safe and well activity, targeted according to risk. Provision of fire safety education via Key Stage 2 visits and other community engagement.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	2	6	<p>Internal Risk The proposal involves a major change in routine which has the potential to cause distress to those with neurodiverse conditions who are used to a certain structure.</p> <p>Internal Control Keep staff informed on what is going to be happening, timescales, what it will look like etc. in order to minimise any unexpected changes. Support any individuals with neurodiversity by identifying it early and linking in with L&D to discuss resilience training and support.</p>
Mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, bipolar, serious mental illness)			<p>External Risk The changes may cause confusion and potential distress to the public if not communicated properly.</p> <p>External Control The Service has created a detailed document which is accessible and available on our website. We have sought consultation from the public and advertised this to try to make as many people as possible aware. We have also created a video in order to explain the changes fully.</p> <p>Internal Risk Those with underlying conditions such as anxiety may be triggered by changes to working conditions and the uncertainty which comes along with this.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	2	6	

			<p>Internal Control We have a dedicated mental health advisor who is on hand to visit stations and gauge the morale of individuals, providing support to those who need it, and signposting anyone who may need further support to our Occupational Health Unit where they can access counselling sessions. Regular visits should be scheduled in order to ensure that everyone is given opportunity to seek that support.</p> <p>We also have individuals throughout the Service who are trained in providing mental health support, such as mental health first aiders and TRIM practitioners. These are identified by name and a photo on posters which are on the notice board of every station and Service building.</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment / identity (someone in transition or who has transitioned from one gender to another)</p>			<p>External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender identity or transitioning.</p> <p>External Control The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Internal Risk This change should not be disruptive to anyone who is transitioning, as they should be given sufficient time off in order to recover from any surgeries, as per the trans policy.</p> <p>Internal Control As a very small number of staff members will be affected by these changes, we can deal with them on an individual basis. We are not currently aware of anybody who is affected by changes in crewing also happening to be transitioning. If we were to be made aware of this, we would be able to signpost with the support of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, the Firepride network, and other resources as we would with any other staff member to offer support and signpost them as per our Trans policy.</p>
1	1	1	

Marriage/civil partnership (applies to same-sex as well as opposite sex couples)			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status.
			External Control N/A
Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding)			Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status.
			Internal Control N/A
Likelihood 2	Impact 1	Overall 2	
Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity.
			External Control N/A
Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)			Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. Staff working at the effected stations who become pregnant or require maternity provision can seek advice from their HR advisor or the EDI advisor.
			Internal Control The Service has an established maternity policy and a range of guidance to support individuals through their pregnancy via specific risk assessments and amendments as necessary.
Likelihood 2	Impact 1	Overall 2	
Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)			External Risk Both Birchwood and Stockton Heath areas are predominantly White British (92.28% and 92.54% respectively). At ward level, there is a higher than average percentage of Asian/Asian British residents in Appleton (Stockton Heath), at 3.4% of population. In Birchwood there is a higher than average percentage (4.9%) of those whose ethnicity is classed as 'Other White'
			External Control N/A

			<p>External Control Community prevention activity is supported by a host of resources including alternative language material, access to language line and a dedicated Equality and Diversity Advisor.</p> <p>Internal Risk As the proposal increases capacity for more home and business safety visits to take place, there will be more contact between our staff and the public in Stockton Heath. This creates greater opportunity for both positive and negative interactions, and unfortunately will slightly increase the risk that a member of our staff could come into contact with racially motivated harassment from members of the communities they are working in.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	3	6	<p>Internal Control Crews will not be working alone, and will try to stay together when making visits as much as possible. Conflict training is available to all staff, as well as support from our Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage network. All managers receive training on race and should be equipped to deal with any incidents.</p>
<p>Religion/Belief System (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk Christianity is the majority religion across Warrington (56.87%). There are also sizeable populations of those who do not follow a religious belief (average of 36% across Cheshire). There are few large concentrations of other religious groups, with one group of note being the Muslim population in Warrington (1.71% of population).</p> <p>No specific risks are identified as a result of the proposal due to someone's religion.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	<p>External Control Staff are already active in the community and attend a range of religious events as per their respective community action plans. Home fire safety advice is provided to the community, which is tailored to times of year which feature major religious festivals.</p> <p>Internal Risk Religious activities which are done at certain times of the day such as prayer during Ramadan may be affected by the change to weekday cover.</p>

			<p>Internal Control</p> <p>Watches with colleagues who observe such religious practices may make workplace adjustments such as doing more strenuous activities earlier in the day during Ramadan if somebody is fasting, or changing the timings of tasks in order to fit in with their prayer times.</p>
<p>Gender (male, female or gender non-binary or fluid)</p>			<p>External Risk</p> <p>The gender profile differs slightly in regard to each station area:</p> <p>Birchwood – 49.83% male, 50.17% female Stockton Heath – 51.24% male, 48.76% female</p> <p>No specific risks are identified in relation to someone’s gender in isolation. However, when coupled with other characteristics there are identifiable risks. Older males, particularly those living alone, are at most risk of death and injury from fire.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	<p>External Control</p> <p>Safe and well visits and other safety interventions in the community</p> <p>Internal Risk</p> <p>No specific risks are identified in relation to someone’s gender.</p> <p>Internal Control</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual)</p>			<p>External Risk</p> <p>91.8% of the Warrington population aged over 16 identify as straight/heterosexual; 1.3% identify as gay or lesbian and 1% identify as bisexual. A further 0.2% of the population are of a different sexual orientation (pansexual, asexual etc).</p>

Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
1	2	2	<p>While the fire risk facing LGBT+ individuals can be higher than average, including the risk of arson related hate crime, there are no specific risks are identified from this proposal in relation to someone's sexual orientation.</p> <p>External Control The provision of increased daytime cover in Stockton Heath provides more opportunity for community engagement with LGBT+ residents and an improved emergency response. The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally.</p> <p>Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's sexual orientation.</p> <p>Internal Control N/A</p>
<p>Geography and Deprivation (does the service or policy affect lower income people or those who live in areas of disadvantage?)</p>			<p>External Risk The ward areas of Stockton Heath (deprivation score 7.4), Appleton (7.6) and Grappenhall (4.8) are comparatively less deprived compared to the Warrington Borough average (19.1, source 2021 ward profiles, Warrington Borough Council).</p> <p>In comparison, the Birchwood ward is slightly more deprived than the average in the Warrington area (22.8); although the Culceth, Glazebury and Croft ward is less deprived than the borough average (11.5).</p> <p>External Control Safe and well visits are targeted according to fire risk and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation are accounted for within the methodology.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	4	12	<p>Internal Risk The disestablishment of on-call posts at Stockton Heath and sale of housing is likely to mean either a loss of role or the requirement to vacate Authority housing as the proposal is implemented. Depending on the individual circumstances this could lead to:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in household income, through loss of post if solely on-call (although the Service would offer redeployment opportunities where possible to offset this), or reduced income through loss of earnings from a secondary on-call role. • A potential increase in household expenditure as staff affected source alternative, unsubsidised accommodation <p>Conversely, the sharing of daytime cover could provide on-call firefighters at Birchwood with more opportunities to respond, and therefore, earn more through their on-call provision.</p> <p>Internal Control</p> <p>Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.</p>
<p>Occupation (internal – shift systems, working patterns etc. External – shifts, retired etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk</p> <p>No specific risks are identified as a result of an individual’s particular shift pattern or occupation.</p> <p>External Control</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Internal Risk</p> <p>The proposal to share wholetime daytime cover between Birchwood and Stockton Heath involves the on-call duty system. The proposal would see the disestablishment of on-call posts at Stockton Heath, while enabling on-call firefighters at Birchwood with more opportunities to provide cover than present.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Internal Controls</p> <p>Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.</p>
3	4	12	

What other positive outcomes or changes will need to be taken as a result of any points identified by this impact assessment?

Increased capacity for prevention and protection community work within the Stockton Heath area.



EQUALITY IMPACT
ASSESSMENT (EIA)
2024-2028 CRMP
Proposal – Wholetime
Weekday Fire Engines



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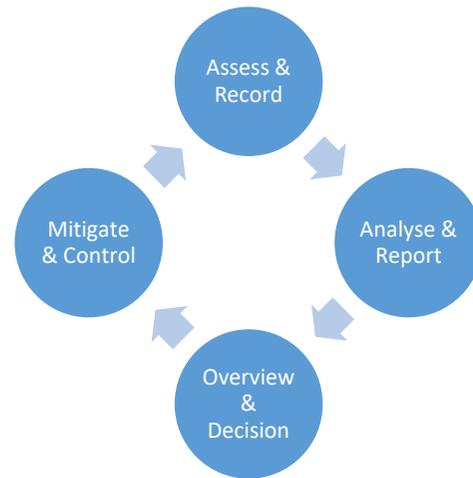
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Name of policy / initiative / service to be impact assessed	2024-2028 CRMP Proposal – Wholetime Weekday Fire Engines
Core Value being addressed	Doing the right thing, by offering more cover to the residents of Cheshire in the daytime when there is the most risk.
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor and the Engagement and Public Affairs Manager
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)	To be determined once the CRMP is approved
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon), Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worrall)
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	Improve response times Reduce our reliance on On-Call fire engines, particularly during the day More Wholetime fire engines in On Call Station areas, resulting in increased capacity to deliver prevention and protection activity

	<p>Look after our people & mitigate the impact of any changes</p> <p>No fire station closures or building of new stations</p> <p>Maintain the same cost base, whilst improving service, outputs and value for money</p>
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	Communities across Cheshire, primarily those in station areas covered by a fully on-call fire engine.
Is the policy/initiative/service for external or internal purposes?	External and internal
Does this policy/initiative/service affect the on-call duty service?	Yes
<p>Are other organisations involved in the delivery?</p> <p>If yes please state who:</p>	No
<p>What information / past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)</p>	<p>There is a range of data available on local areas within Cheshire that can be accessed via Business Intelligence. This will help to build a profile of the local community and the presence of any particular groups within the community, or any issues/trends that may require particular attention or consideration at specific local events.</p>

Has a similar assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy / initiative / service? If yes – is it possible to adapt / incorporate findings	Various EIAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EIAs help us identify risk and we are then able to implement interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EIAs help us reflect on learning of experiences of other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.
Date of next policy / initiative / service review (if applicable)	Date of EIA: April 2023 Date of Review: April 2024 – on commencement of 2024 CRMP and to be reviewed by project lead(s)

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16 – 25 Very High	Take immediate action. If legal action is certain to occur then we cannot go ahead with the policy / initiative / service, without fundamentally changing it. If even with this mitigation, the impact remains severe, then consultation with internal and/or external groups will need to go ahead.	

Protected Characteristics or EDI theme			Impact/risk
Age (younger, older or particular age group)			<p>External Risk Those over 65 are at greater risk of death and/or serious injury in the event of a fire.</p> <p>External Control The proposal would provide additional capacity across the Service to undertake Safe and Well visits (c. 2700 extra visits annually), particularly in on-call station areas. These are targeted using a risk-based methodology, which factors in the age of an individual. The visits help to reduce the risk of fire.</p> <p>In addition, the provision of weekday fire engines provides increased guaranteed fire cover during the daytime in several on-call areas, which have a higher proportion of elderly residents:</p> <p>Weekday fire engine 1 – Change Runcorn second engine (19.42% of residents in station area aged 65+, 2021 census data) and provide cover across Frodsham (26.86%) and Tarporley (27.97%). Weekday fire engine 2 – Change Winsford second engine (18.22%) and provide cover across Middlewich (21.61%), Sandbach (22.84%), Holmes Chapel (27.40%) and Alsager (27.28%). Weekday fire engine 3 – Change Macclesfield second engine (21.09%) and provide cover across Bollington (24.73%) and Poynton (29.01%). Weekday fire engine 4 - Change Northwich second engine (20.68%) and provide cover across Nantwich (23.67%), Malpas (25.12%), Audlem (33.03%).</p> <p>Internal Risk There are no perceived internal risks to older or younger age groups due to the proposed changes.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	

Outlined below are relevant groups who or factors that may be affected by the policy / initiative / service and suggested impacts (please note that these suggestions are not exhaustive and you will need to consider whether there are any further impacts). Enter a commentary explaining the potential risks/impacts both on employees and external community groups. Specify any controls which are currently in place or that will be put in place to address and mitigate these impacts. Please document all impacts, both negative and positive.

			Internal Control N/A				
Disability (physical, sensory, long-term illness, hidden, neurodiversity)			<p>External Risk The demographic profile of those classified as having a disability is provided below:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Disability Disabled under the Equality Act</td> <td>Cheshire East 16.41%</td> <td>Cheshire West and Chester 18.02%</td> <td>Halton 21.69%</td> </tr> </table>	Disability Disabled under the Equality Act	Cheshire East 16.41%	Cheshire West and Chester 18.02%	Halton 21.69%
Disability Disabled under the Equality Act	Cheshire East 16.41%	Cheshire West and Chester 18.02%	Halton 21.69%				
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Disability can increase the individual's risk of harm in the event of a fire and some disabilities or learning differences may require staff to provide advice in different or alternative ways.</p> <p>External Control Provision of safe and well activity, targeted according to risk. Provision of fire safety education via Key Stage 2 visits and other community engagement.</p> <p>Internal Risk Weekday crewing is within sociable hours rather than evenings and weekends, which could be more agreeable for those with long-term conditions who have considerations such as pain management and exhaustion to consider. However, this will be a big change in routine which may cause distress to those with neurodiverse conditions who are used to a certain structure.</p> <p>Internal Control Keep staff informed on what is going to be happening, timescales, what it will look like etc. in order to minimise any unexpected changes. Support any individuals with neurodiversity by identifying it early and linking in with L&D to discuss resilience training and support.</p>				
2	3	6					
Mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, bipolar, serious mental illness)			<p>External Risk The changes may cause confusion and potential distress to the public if not communicated properly.</p>				
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>External Control The Service has created a detailed document which is accessible and available on our website. We have</p>				

2	2	4	<p>sought consultation from the public and advertised this to try to make as many people as possible aware. We have also created a video in order to explain the changes fully.</p> <p>Internal Risk Those with underlying conditions such as anxiety may be triggered by changes to working conditions and the uncertainty which comes along with this.</p> <p>Internal Control We have a dedicated mental health advisor who is on hand to visit stations and gauge the morale of individuals, providing support to those who need it, and signposting anyone who may need further support to our Occupational Health Unit where they can access counselling sessions. Regular visits should be scheduled in order to ensure that everyone is given opportunity to seek that support.</p> <p>We also have individuals throughout the Service who are trained in providing mental health support, such as mental health first aiders and TRIM practitioners. These are identified by name and a photo on posters which are on the notice board of every station and Service building.</p>
<p>Gender re-assignment / identity (someone in transition or who has transitioned from one gender to another)</p>			<p>External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender identity or transitioning.</p> <p>External Control The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication, they are an LGBT+ ally.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Internal Risk This change should not be disruptive to anyone who is transitioning, as they should be given sufficient time off in order to recover from any surgeries, as per the Trans policy.</p>
1	1	1	<p>Internal Control Trans policy</p>

Marriage/civil partnership (applies to same-sex as well as opposite sex couples)			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status.
			External Control N/A
Likelihood Impact Overall			Internal Risk Although the proposed changed will cause some people to be moved to a different station, and there may be some changes to living situations, these should be positive changes as it will see more firefighters living closer to their workplace and working more sociable, family friendly hours.
			Internal Control N/A
2 1 2			External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity.
			External Control N/A
Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding)			Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. Staff working at the effected stations who become pregnant or require maternity provision can seek advice from their HR advisor or the EDI advisor.
			Internal Control The Service has an established maternity policy and a range of guidance to support individuals through their pregnancy via specific risk assessments and amendments as necessary.
Likelihood Impact Overall			
2 1 2			

Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)			<p>External Risk Each of the station areas is predominantly White British. Data for each area is provided below, along with any notable minority groups in the local population:</p> <p>Runcorn: White British 93.69% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.36% Frodsham: White British 94.94% Tarporley: White British 95.57%</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Winsford: White British 92.77% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.93% Middlewich: White British 94.12% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.64% Sandbach: White British 94.1% Holmes Chapel: White British 94.05% Alsager: White British 95.38%</p> <p>At specific ward level, the Winsford Wharton ward (13.4%) has a higher ethnic minority population than the Cheshire West and Chester average.</p> <p>Macclesfield: White British 90.4% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 3.35% Asian/Asian British: 2.44% Bollington: White British 93.31% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.7% Poynton: White British 94.06%</p> <p>Northwich: White British 92.9% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.7% Nantwich: White British 93.38% Gypsy/Irish Traveller/Other White: 2.4% Audlem: White British 95.78% Malpas: White British 95.65%</p> <p>At specific ward level, the Northwich Witton wards (14.9%) has a higher ethnic minority population than the Cheshire West and Chester average.</p> <p>No specific risks are identified due to the proposed changes. The increase in cover during the daytime will give crews more opportunity to engage with those in their communities who can be difficult to reach, such as the traveller community, who often encounter the Service in passing at community engagement and</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	

			<p>positive action events. The increase in this type of work may help to form stronger bonds with these communities and may even help in diversifying our workforce.</p> <p>External Control N/A</p> <p>Internal Risk As the plans to move to weekday cover include an intention for more home and business safety visits to take place, there will be more contact between our staff and the public. This creates greater opportunity for both positive and negative interactions, and unfortunately will slightly increase the risk that a member of our staff could come into contact with racially motivated harassment from members of the communities they are working in.</p> <p>Internal Control Crews will not be working alone, and will try to stay together when making visits as much as possible. Conflict training is available to all staff, as well as support from our Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage network. All managers receive training on race and should be equipped to deal with any incidents.</p>																																				
<p>Religion/Belief System (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk The religious make-up of each local authority area affected by the proposal is as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Religion</th> <th>Cheshire East</th> <th>Cheshire West and Chester</th> <th>Halton</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No religion</td> <td>37.81%</td> <td>37.84%</td> <td>35.32%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Christian</td> <td>54.39%</td> <td>54.68%</td> <td>58.66%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buddhist</td> <td>0.33%</td> <td>0.30%</td> <td>0.22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hindu</td> <td>0.51%</td> <td>0.43%</td> <td>0.25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jewish</td> <td>0.16%</td> <td>0.08%</td> <td>0.04%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Muslim</td> <td>1.04%</td> <td>0.96%</td> <td>0.56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sikh</td> <td>0.09%</td> <td>0.07%</td> <td>0.06%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>0.39%</td> <td>0.34%</td> <td>0.35%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Religion	Cheshire East	Cheshire West and Chester	Halton	No religion	37.81%	37.84%	35.32%	Christian	54.39%	54.68%	58.66%	Buddhist	0.33%	0.30%	0.22%	Hindu	0.51%	0.43%	0.25%	Jewish	0.16%	0.08%	0.04%	Muslim	1.04%	0.96%	0.56%	Sikh	0.09%	0.07%	0.06%	Other	0.39%	0.34%	0.35%
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Likelihood	Impact	Overall																																					
2	2	4	<p>No risks are identified as a result of the proposed duty system due to someone's religion.</p>																																				

			<p>External Control Staff are already active in the community and attend a range of religious events as per their respective community action plans. Home fire safety advice is provided to the community, which is tailored to times of year which feature major religious festivals.</p> <p>Internal Risk Religious activities which are done at certain times of the day such as prayer during Ramadan may be affected by the change to weekday cover. Staff who move on to a weekday crewing system may be required to work through particular religious observances e.g. Good Friday, Christmas, Eid al-Fitr, however this is no different to colleagues on other shift systems.</p> <p>Internal Control Watches with colleagues who observe such religious practices may make workplace adjustments such as doing more strenuous activities earlier in the day during Ramadan if somebody is fasting, or changing the timings of tasks in order to fit in with their prayer times.</p>																														
<p>Gender (male, female or gender non-binary or fluid)</p>			<p>External Risk The gender profile of each station area is as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Station</th> <th>Percentage Male</th> <th>Percentage Female</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Runcorn</td> <td>51.32%</td> <td>48.68%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Frodsham</td> <td>51.75%</td> <td>48.25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tarporley</td> <td>51.66%</td> <td>48.34%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Winsford</td> <td>50.78%</td> <td>49.22%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middlewich</td> <td>51.19%</td> <td>48.81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sandbach</td> <td>51.27%</td> <td>48.73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H Chapel</td> <td>51.37%</td> <td>48.63%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alsager</td> <td>51.23%</td> <td>48.77%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Northwich</td> <td>50.63%</td> <td>49.37%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Station	Percentage Male	Percentage Female	Runcorn	51.32%	48.68%	Frodsham	51.75%	48.25%	Tarporley	51.66%	48.34%	Winsford	50.78%	49.22%	Middlewich	51.19%	48.81%	Sandbach	51.27%	48.73%	H Chapel	51.37%	48.63%	Alsager	51.23%	48.77%	Northwich	50.63%	49.37%
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			<p>Malpas 51.73% 48.27%</p> <p>Nantwich 51.53% 48.47%</p> <p>Audlem 50.69% 49.31%</p> <p>Macclesfield 51.18% 48.82%</p> <p>Bollington 50.76% 49.24%</p> <p>Poynton 51.55% 48.45%</p> <p>No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender in isolation. However, when coupled with other characteristics there are identifiable risks. Older males, particularly those living alone, are at most risk of death and injury from fire.</p> <p>External Control The provision of a weekday resource within the effected areas would provide greater capacity to undertake prevention work within the community. This work is carried out using the Service's targeting methodology to prioritise those most at risk. Where older males living alone are identified, these would be prioritised accordingly, and a home safety visit would be arranged to minimise risk.</p> <p>Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender.</p> <p>Internal Control N/A</p>																	
<p>Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual)</p>			<p>External Risk The demographic profile according to each local authority area affected is as follows:</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1153 1193 1310 1233">Sexual orientation</th> <th data-bbox="1310 1193 1467 1233">Cheshire East</th> <th data-bbox="1467 1193 1848 1233">Cheshire West and Chester</th> <th data-bbox="1848 1193 2206 1233">Halton</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1153 1233 1310 1273">Straight or Heterosexual</td> <td data-bbox="1310 1233 1467 1273">91.48%</td> <td data-bbox="1467 1233 1848 1273">91.18%</td> <td data-bbox="1848 1233 2206 1273">91.90%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1153 1273 1310 1313">Gay or Lesbian</td> <td data-bbox="1310 1273 1467 1313">1.29%</td> <td data-bbox="1467 1273 1848 1313">1.58%</td> <td data-bbox="1848 1273 2206 1313">1.50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1153 1313 1310 1353">Bisexual</td> <td data-bbox="1310 1313 1467 1353">0.91%</td> <td data-bbox="1467 1313 1848 1353">76.16%</td> <td data-bbox="1848 1313 2206 1353">0.94%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Sexual orientation	Cheshire East	Cheshire West and Chester	Halton	Straight or Heterosexual	91.48%	91.18%	91.90%	Gay or Lesbian	1.29%	1.58%	1.50%	Bisexual	0.91%	76.16%	0.94%
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Likelihood	Impact	Overall	All other	0.27%	25.28%	0.20%
1	2	2	<p>While the fire risk facing LGBT+ individuals can be higher than average, including the risk of arson related hate crime, there are no specific risks are identified from this proposal in relation to someone's sexual orientation.</p> <p>External Control The provision of increased weekday cover provides more opportunity for community engagement with LGBT+ residents and an improved emergency response. The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally.</p> <p>Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's sexual orientation.</p> <p>Internal Control N/A</p>			
<p>Geography and Deprivation (does the service or policy affect lower income people or those who live in areas of disadvantage?)</p>			<p>External Risk</p> <p>17 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within Runcorn are within the top 10% of the most deprived nationally.</p> <p>4 LSOAs within Winsford fall within the top 10% most deprived nationally, and a further 2 lie within the top 20% most deprived. 3 LSOAs within the Northwich area are within the top 20% most deprived.</p> <p>1 LSOA within Macclesfield lies within the top 20% nationally.</p>			
Likelihood	Impact	Overall				

3	2	6	<p>External Control The impact of the proposed changes should be positive for communities across Cheshire as a whole, as guaranteed daytime cover will be improved, and the capacity to provide more prevention and protection work in the community will be introduced.</p> <p>Internal Risk No specific risks have been identified from the proposal.</p> <p>Internal Control</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>Occupation (internal – shift systems, working patterns etc. External – shifts, retired etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk The impact of the proposed changes should be positive for the communities as fire cover will be improved, and more capacity to undertake prevention and protection work will be introduced.</p> <p>External Control N/A</p> <p>Internal Risk The proposal to change the second fire engines at Runcorn, Northwich, Winsford and Macclesfield concerns the on-call duty system. The proposal would see the disestablishment of 85 on-call posts (though the number of staff impacted is not as high as 85 due to vacancy and dual role factors). This will be offset by the creation of c. 20 wholetime positions.</p> <p>The introduction of wholetime weekday fire engines would require the agreement of a new wholetime crewing arrangement.</p> <p>Internal Controls Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used to help manage changes and will engage with staff and rep bodies to manage the impacts on staff.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	4	12	

What other positive outcomes or changes will need to be taken as a result of any points identified by this impact assessment?

The proposal will provide an increase in guaranteed daytime weekday fire cover and the introduction of additional capacity to undertake risk-reducing prevention and protection work in the community.

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CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023
REPORT OF: GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING
MANAGER
AUTHOR: DONNA LINTON

SUBJECT: EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Recommended:

That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Order 2006, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business listed below on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12 A to the Act in the paragraphs indicated:

Item 5

Year Three Fire Station Modernisation Programme Update

Paragraph

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

CONTACT OFFICER: DONNA LINTON, FIRE SERVICE HQ, WINSFORD
TEL: [01606] 868804

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: NONE

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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