

Making Cheshire Safer

**Review of duty system for the second
fire engines at Crewe and Ellesmere
Port Fire Stations:
Third Party Submissions**



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Overview

Through the course of the review of the duty systems for the second fire engines at Crewe and Ellesmere Port, a number of third parties made comments and submissions regarding the review. This document captures feedback provided.

A number of comments made as part of the consultation on the Authority's draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018/19 also referenced the review and have been included for transparency and ease of reference.

Alsager Town Council

Dear Sir / Madam

Alsager Town Council has reviewed the Consultation plan for 2018-19 and have instructed me to comment as follows:

1. The Town Council is supportive of the proposals to carry out more Cardiac Arrest prevention work, work with cadets and disaster work (following Grenfell Tower)
2. However, it is concerned that the proposed cuts to the Crewe Fire station may impact on Alsager and will be monitoring this closely should it happen.

Cheshire East Council – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Proposal relating to the Removal of a Second Appliance at Crewe Fire Station

On 7 September 2017, this Council's Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from Cheshire Fire Rescue Service relating to a proposal to change the utilisation of the second pump at Crewe Fire Station from 'whole time' to 'on call' utilisation.

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service was invited back to Corporate Scrutiny to update the Committee on the latest position with regard to this proposal at its meeting held on the 11 January 2018. On this occasion, the Committee also gave the Fire Brigade's Union an opportunity to address the Committee.

Presentations were delivered by the Fire Service, represented by Paul Hancock and Alex Waller, and the Union represented by Andrew Fox - Hewitt, after which Members of the Committee questioned both parties on various aspects of their respective presentations.

At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Committee authorised me, as Chairman, to write to you to inform you that the Committee cannot support the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service proposal to change the utilisation of the second pump at Crewe from 'whole time' to 'on call' utilisation.

In support of the Committee's resolution, the Committee has also instructed me to write to Cheshire East's Cabinet Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Community Safety to request that he formally requests that the proposal is abandoned and that two 'whole time' pumps are kept in place at Crewe Fire Station.

The Committee has also requested that I write to the Leader of the Council asking that, she too, on behalf of the Cabinet and herself writes to Cheshire Fire and Rescue and Cheshire Fire Authority setting out and supporting Corporate Scrutiny Committee's formal position on this matter.

Yours Faithfully

Cllr Margaret Simon

Chairman, Cheshire East Council's Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cheshire Fire Brigades Union

Extracted submission. Full submission included within feedback to IRMP consultation

CFRS Proposal – Review to remove the Second Appliances at Crewe and Ellesmere Port:

In IRMP 2013/14, the previous aspirational plans were approved, which were subject to review, that the way the second appliances were crewed at Crewe and Ellesmere Port be changed from a wholetime (guaranteed stand of fire cover) to an on call crew (reliant on availability of responders).

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The last 2 years has seen a number of recruitment initiatives that have failed to provide the service with the numbers required to staff these fire engines. In addition, of the few that have been recruited, a number have left. The FBU previously highlighted the issues the service would face in recruiting both the number and the suitability of individuals required to enable this proposal to be realised.

The current proposal is to staff the second appliance in these stations on a new shift system that is Monday-Friday daytime only. This is a reduction in the standard of fire cover during evenings and at weekends. The FBU opposed the plans to downgrade the second appliances at the six wholetime stations at the time, and it re-iterates that opposition again.

Crewe fire station will provide the only appliance that has a guaranteed response to cover the entire Cheshire east area at night. This leaves the area of over 1,116km² and a population of over 370,000 residents at risk from shortages in the level of guaranteed response.

Ellesmere Port station will provide cover to a local population of 57,000, and has seen the building of 3500 new homes since the initial proposal was approved, alongside a 10% increase in industry growth. Cheshire West and Chester has 17 COMAH sites – the largest in the UK. Ten years ago Chester and Ellesmere Port stations had 5 fire appliances and 25 fire fighters compared to just 2 engines and 10 fire fighters if this proposal goes ahead.

The FBU call on the authority to reject the Services proposals regarding the second appliances at Crewe and Ellesmere Port, and instead approve the proposals by the FBU to maintain the two appliances as they are crewed now – 24/7 by wholetime crews on the present duty system. This will ensure adequate fire cover for local communities, improve fire fighter safety by the improved probability of implementing safe systems of work more quickly, and provide the service with the flexibility and capacity to cover training courses and exercises. This is about the level of resilience the service can provide.

Chester Retired Firefighters

Extracted submission. Full submission included within feedback report to IRMP consultation

The IRMP Proposals for Ellesmere Port

Let's recap,

Government places a further burden upon Fire Authorities to produce a plan '*that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the community.... **the plan must have regard to the Community Risk Register produced by Local Resilience Forums***' (p.7, Communities and Local Government Fire and Rescue National Framework for England) .

The **Cheshire Community Risk Register** details 42 categories of risk within Cheshire.

Examples of high level risk pertinent to Ellesmere Port listed in the Cheshire Community Risk Register are;

Category H08

A Toxic release up to 10km off site due to loss of containment of chlorine or a number of other chemicals e.g. anhydrous hydrofluoric acid, refrigerated ammonia, sulphur di-oxide(or tri-oxide) gas with the possibility of **causing significant fatalities and casualties**. The risk register goes on to say that this would present a huge challenge to health care providers, water supplies might be at risk and the contamination of land could lead to the avoidance of certain foodstuffs.

Category H04

A Fire or explosion at a fuel distribution site or site storing flammable and / or toxic liquids in atmospheric pressure storage tanks with the possibility of **causing significant fatalities and casualties up to 3 km around the site**. The risk register goes on to say that impacts would include

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the disruption of air transport, the creation of regional excessive demands on health care services and the closure of roads in the locality.

There are many medium risks in addition to these high level risks.

Risks in the above categories will be found in Ellesmere Port at sites subject to The Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Regulations. Cheshire has 23 Upper Tier sites. This is Cheshire's potential to hit the headlines in a manner much bigger than Grenfell, if we get this wrong the impact could be devastating and there is a serious onus upon the members of the Fire Authority to protect the public here. Without your time and care and all due diligence the public is at serious risk.

7 of the 23 Upper Tier COMAH sites in Cheshire are in Ellesmere Port and they are:

Avanti Gas Limited Ellesmere Port Britannia Road Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 4HB COMAH Upper Tier Operator (was Shell Gas Limited) 4325 Wirral England

CF Fertilisers UK Limited Ince Marshes Ince Marshes Ince Chester Cheshire CH2 4LB COMAH Upper Tier Operator 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

CLH Pipeline System (CLH-PS) Limited Backford North PSD Backford PSD Caughall Road Chester Cheshire CH2 4BN COMAH Upper Tier Operator (was Oil and Pipelines Agency) 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

Essar Oil (UK) Limited Stanlow Stanlow Manufacturing Complex PO Box 3 Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 4HB COMAH Upper Tier Operator (was Shell UK Oil Products Ltd) 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

Innospec Limited Ellesmere Port Innospec Manufacturing Park Oil Sites Road Ellesmere Port Cheshire CH65 4EY COMAH Upper Tier Operator 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

Urenco ChemPlants Limited Chester Capenhurst Chester Cheshire CH1 6ER COMAH Upper Tier Operator 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

Veolia ES (UK) Limited Ellesmere Port Incineration Plant Bridges Road South Wirral Cheshire L65 4EQ COMAH Upper Tier Operator 0660 Cheshire West and Chester UA England

The Fire Authority Member *'acts as a duty holder for matters relating to Health and Safety'* (Appendix 1 to Annex 3 Cheshire Fire Authority 17 June 2015).

The Health and Safety Executive do give guidance to duty holders. A few lines here do not give the full perspective. However, duty holders need to ensure that risk is managed to be both 'so far as is reasonably practicable' and also 'as low as reasonably practicable'. It is ultimately for the Courts to decide if these principles have been adhered to. The key case is *Edwards v National Coal Board* where the Court of Appeal decided *'in every case, it is the risk that has to be weighed against the measures necessary to eliminate the risk. The greater the risk, no doubt, the less will be the weight to be given to the factor of cost'* (on line, hse.gov.uk/risk/theory/alarp1.htm#P4-129). So, the higher risk then the less cost can be used as a defence for inaction on mitigating that risk.

We, very respectfully, ask you to consider the possible impact of an off- site large scale release of toxic gas or a serious fire at any one the seven COMAH Sites in Ellesmere Port when deciding whether Ellesmere Port's second fire engine should go to On-Call status. Another factor to consider is that the reduction in dwelling fires and road traffic collisions in recent years amounts to a fall of only 11% which means that 89% are still occurring.

It is clearly a difficult decision you have to make in balancing fire cover provision to the budget and we do not envy your position here. If you do vote the proposal through then the impact will be that the On-Call fire engine is likely to be not available between 40 to 50% of the time and when it is available it is likely to attend the incidents 5 to 10 minutes later than if it was Whole time. This could have a huge impact upon those people who live and work in the consequence zone of any Off-Site emission of toxic gas and ,as we will demonstrate later, this will seriously weaken local resilience in the Cheshire West and Chester area.

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IRMP proposals for Crewe and its surrounding area

Should the current proposals go through, then Cheshire East will have just 1 Whole time fire engine which is available 24/7 whilst at the same time contributing around 35% of the budget. Warrington and Halton who contribute around 20% and 10% respectively, 30% in total, will have 5 Whole time fire engines available 24/7.

To understand how this can happen there is a need to understand the 'Cheshire Response Time Standard' which was set at a 'Blanket 10 minute response standard to all dwelling fires and road traffic accidents' in the 2013-14 IRMP. Now, 10 minutes did not sound too bad when members voted it through in 2012 and after all a 'blanket' standard surely meant the same for everyone. It appeared so when Members voted this through, but a year later a subtle but huge change occurred. The Standard was amended to 'a 10 minute response standard to all dwelling fires and road traffic accidents **on 80 % of occasions**'. This means that 20% of incidents involving dwelling fires do not have to be served in 10 minutes, as they are not important to the target. So, if you know where it is likely that the 80% of dwelling fires are likely to be, you will build your fire stations here. House fires tend to be aligned to socio-economic grouping. This explains why Halton and Warrington are well blessed with 5 Whole time 24/7 fire engines. Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Knutsford, and Congleton have all lost (or about to lose) their 24/7 Whole time fire engines, because they are in the sacrificial 20% who will not get a fire engine in 10 minutes. These are affluent areas who do not have many dwelling fires, but if it is your house that is on fire it is equally devastating. In fact it is likely to be even more devastating because it will be burning longer before you get a fire engine.

The 'Cheshire Response Standard' actually has far more reaching failures than this, it is built on a response to dwelling fires and road traffic accidents only. Applying it just to Crewe, it does not consider COMAH sites, hospitals (Leighton), nursing homes, heritage (the Town Hall, the Lyceum, Crewe Hall) schools, universities and their associated residential blocks (MMU Crewe Campus), sports stadia (Crewe Alex), nationally important railway hubs (Crewe Station), industry (Bentley Motors) and commerce. The 'Response Time Standard' here is that one does not exist, they get a fire engine when it gets there because the 10 minutes only applies to '*dwelling fires and road traffic accidents*'. We think it is also worth mentioning at this point that the '10 minutes' does not include the time that it takes for North West Fire Control to process the emergency call. We understand that the average time is just under 2 minutes. So the reality is that you will get a fire engine in 12 minutes if you are in the '80%' of people catered for by the target.

Let's look at the implications of Crewe only having one Whole time fire engine (which will be the circumstances for about 40 to 50% of the time when the On-Call appliance is not available), it will really make a big difference. Chester used to have two city centre Whole time fire engines until one was moved to Powey Lane Fire Station. A copy of a letter to the Chair of the Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer below will demonstrate the impact of relocating a fire engine, imagine the impact of losing one for 40 to 50% of the time or having it follow on 10 minutes later.

Crewe Town Council

This Council notes with great concern plans proposed by Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service to in effect, downgrade Crewe Fire Station by staffing Crewe's second pump solely with on-call firefighters therefore reducing the availability of Crewe's second pump. This Council recognises the contribution of Cheshire's on-call, volunteer fire fighters but cannot accept a policy through which community safety and firefighter safety will be put at risk. Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service have not proven that on-call crewing systems for second pumps are effective at large urban stations like Crewe. This Council notes with concern all of the issues surrounding the lack of fire cover in the entirety of Cheshire East. This Council wishes to see a second pump staffed 24/7 by whole-time firefighters, remaining in south east Cheshire – whether that be in Crewe or a neighbouring town. This Council remains unconvinced by the arguments to downgrade Crewe's second pump and therefore resolves:

- Crewe Town Council formally writes to the Senior Management Team of CFRS and all members of the Cheshire Fire Authority rejecting the plans to downgrade Crewe's second

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pump urging an urgent re-think ahead of CFA's February meeting. This letter is to be signed by the Leader and Deputy Leader of CTC.

- Crewe Town Council writes to the Leader of Cheshire East and Cllr Margaret Simon, Chair of Corporate Overview & Scrutiny, requesting further scrutiny on the issue of fire cover and provision in Cheshire East.
- Crewe Town Council releases a press release to reassure local residents that, as a body of elected representatives, we reject the plans to downgrade Crewe's second pump.
- Crewe Town Council and its elected representatives support efforts by all local Borough Councillors and the Member of Parliament to resist plans to downgrade Crewe's second pump.

Crewe and Nantwich Labour Party

More full-time firefighters jobs are being stripped out of the service in the medium to long-term. The resource is not the equipment, it's the firefighters! The service seems intent on discounting that fact.

Crewe & Nantwich Labour Party has grave concerns of the availability of the second pump at an urban station given the service's questionable record across the County. You are in effect reducing fire cover in South Cheshire. CFRS cannot effectively recruit on-call firefighters at Crewe given the location of the station, which is not set to change. The nearby demographics and the awkward location in the far south-east of the town means any short-term solution may not be sustained, that's even if the short term (a fully trained on-call contingent) solution can be achieved.

The Service talks about sacrifices elsewhere in the County. The fact remains you have saved the biggest sacrifice until last. When Chester was downgraded, CFRS built a brand new station and had their 'second' full time appliance positioned in close proximity at Powey Lane. No such offer has been made to the people of South Cheshire.

We also have grave concerns at response times going up. Yes, CFRS tend to hit their response time targets but there is no evidence to suggest that response times are actually coming down, in fact it is our understanding that since the current Chief Fire Officer set the services own standard – a 10 minute response (up from a response within 5 minutes) that attendance times have increased each year. With a pump that will not be available a lot of the time we want to note with concern that senior officers at Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service deem it appropriate to state on public record that the on-call model will provide a pump three and a half minutes after the arrival of a full-time pump. The public will take that as fact and we suspect the senior management team know that. That is the best case scenario and dependent on a number of factors, it would be remiss of the service not to publish the average attendance times of other such on-call times to evidence this claim, made in public to elected local authority members. The Head of Service Delivery, when pressed, has said that 'this is the model and not the reality'. So what is the reality?

We have grave concerns over the sustainability of the on call model that is advocated by the services senior management team, given that from your own documents in the public domain it appears to be consistently failing. Since you have removed a large number of full time appliances we have to ask where the resilience is coming from when these on call appliances are unavailable. We also note with concern the increasing reliance on resources being drawn from Greater Manchester just to make the attendance standard in Cheshire East.

Crewe & Nantwich Labour Party firmly rejects any plans to downgrade Crewe Fire Station. Local people do not support these changes regardless of which political party they support. This is a matter of community safety, protecting skilled employment and defending our residents against the destruction of their public services.

On the IRMP more generally, we have been continually disappointed over a number of years in a document that merely acts as a glossy brochure rather than a detailed, comprehensive document that focuses on risk and the safety challenges faced by our communities.

The risk to our communities from austerity and continual budget cuts is becoming clear for all to see. We do not ask the Fire Authority to set an illegal budget but we are confident that the Service can find £650,000 to keep Crewe's second pump staffed by whole-time fire crews. After spending millions on a new fantastic safety centre in the far North of the Borough for example, we remain confident that the Authority is able to fund Crewe's second pump now and in the long term.

We also note and thank the Chief Fire Officer for Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service for going on record and stating in the press that 'enough is enough' in respect to austerity that is devastating our emergency services. Going onto budget 'season', is it not time that the CFO for Cheshire does the same, rather than to claim these proposals are going to improve response and efficiency, or not have any detrimental effect on attendance times?

The continued practice of making savings only to then transfer them for capital build programmes is wrong. Given the fact that you have achieved quite considerable savings from your emergency response or service delivery budget – over 2 million pounds, the residents of Crewe and the wider Cheshire East area simply do not believe the claims that the service and authority cannot afford to maintain the current second full time appliance at Crewe fire station.

As part of the IRMP, the Authority should front up to residents and be honest with them and stop pretending they are paying more and therefore getting more. The fact is the opposite. We believe there is a great need for more transparency and accountability after witnessing the consultation events at Cheshire East Council and Crewe Town Hall.

Yours,

Crewe and Nantwich Constituency Labour Party

Weaver Vale Constituency Labour Party

Proposed Motion – Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service – Weaver Vale CLP.

Weaver Vale Constituency Labour Party notes with concern the detrimental effects that, as a result of this Conservative Governments ideological drive for austerity, the cuts to the budget of the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service are having on the cover provided to our diverse communities, particularly in times of emergency.

It is particularly concerned with the four year financial settlement that requires the Fire Authority to save a further £4 million by 2020/21 and the impact this will have on the already discredited Integrated Risk Management Plans entitled 'Make Cheshire Safer'.

Weaver Vale Constituency Labour Party believes that further reductions in the number of full time fire fighters and appliances being considered by the Cheshire Fire Authority as a consequence of these budget cuts will result in avoidable delays in response times to incidents leading to an increase in damage and more importantly an increase in the likelihood of preventable injuries and deaths.

Weaver Vale Constituency Labour Party therefore calls upon the Cheshire Fire Authority to:

- Ensure staffing of all whole-time appliances with five firefighters as a minimum.
- Maintain Ellesmere Port and Crewe second appliances with whole time firefighters.
- Review and introduce an attendance time standard for the second appliance to life risk incidents in Cheshire.
- Review and introduce an attendance time standard for non-life risk property fires in Cheshire.
- Ensure that response times take full account of the call handling time when responding to calls for service.

- Review the funds held in Reserves so that only the amount needed to ensure levels of service in accordance with Risk Management Plans are secured and maintained and a realistic contingency fund is available.
- Work more closely and in collaboration with the Fire Brigades Union to make Cheshire safer.
- Recruit, train and retain a cohort of on-call firefighters so Frodsham can ensure and maintain its appliance for mobilisation at all times.

Written Response from Mr William Atteridge

Ref: Reduction in Full time Fire Fighters, Crewe Station

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you to object to the proposed cuts in the full time manning of the appliances based at the Crewe Fire Station. I understand that one of the full time crew will be reduced to an on-call crew. I have a number of questions/comments and kindly request your response.

1) – I have completed your latest consultation request currently on your website but note that the proposed reduction in full time Crewe manning levels is not included in this document. Could you please explain why something so important is not included in this formal public consultation exercise? Do you intend to have a separate consultation on this manning reduction proposal?

2) – The reduction in full time crew will impact the response time for the Crewe serviced area. On-call crew cannot respond as quickly as resident full time crew.

3) – The consultation indicates that you are considering relocating the Crewe Station. The selection of any new location will need to consider the potential for response times for on-call staff (if this is to be seriously considered), local traffic and future increases in automobile traffic and the substantial increase in new homes and business premises in the Crewe area.

4) – Crewe and the surrounding area is scheduled to have many thousands of new homes in the next few years, with the estimated additional traffic from these dwellings and new businesses numbering in the tens of thousands.

5) More than 1500 new dwellings have been approved in and around Shavington alone. This will result in some 2500 additional cars on the Shavington-surround roads, potentially reducing response times during busy traffic periods. Recent traffic increases have been witnessed on key through roads such as the intersection of Crewe Road and Newcastle Road in Shavington, where cars queue at the intersection traffic lights for up to 100m or more for most of the day.

6) – The new dwellings on sites such as the Shavington/Wyburnbury triangle are being constructed at densities of up to 45 units/ha, substantially closer together than legacy building in surrounding areas. If there were to be a major fire incident with buildings in this proximity, response times would be even more crucial.

7) – Crewe has a significant number of older homes with all the potential fire hazards that this carries.

8) – The full time crew are also very much involved in liaison with the local community – safety checks & inspections, school and local organisation visits, etc. How will this continue if the personnel are on-call?

As I have worked in the oil & gas industry for more than 40 years I have a healthy respect for fire and the potential for fire and fully understand the importance of response times. Given the current and developing circumstances in the Crewe Station response area, it does not make any sense to reduce a full time crew to an on-call crew. If cost is an issue, literally a few pence on the precept could be the best and safest solution to keeping the full time crew at Crewe.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

William Atteridge CEng

Public comments received via online IRMP consultation survey

All comments also included within feedback report on IRMP consultation.

Crewe specific comments

- Crewe should definitely maintain 2 full time pumps. We only have the DC1 system in Cheshire east which ended up shafting us on call as we were never involved in the talks even though it had massive implications for us.
- Do not downgrade Crewe - you are forgetting the HS2 programme, extra housing, increased population and risk
- Crewe needs its 2 full time engines as the fire cover and number of engines in Cheshire east is so poor. We have had enough of being asked to pay more each year only to get less for our taxes.
- Re CREWE, it is far more important to me to have TWO FULL TIME 24/7 Fire Engines available rather than a new Fire Station. I cannot comment on the others. I am know in detail about CREWE!
- As long as it supports the current level of full time manned fire engines, Crewe fire station is currently in a busy area of town
- I am strongly opposed to your plans to reduce staffing arrangements in Crewe to only one fully 24/7 pump and retained services for the second pump. In my opinion, your plans put the lives of local residents at risk. The proportion of funding from Cheshire East is not proportionately located back to Cheshire East by Fire and Rescue service.
- Crewe station really needs to keep its second full time engine, Crewe is an industrial town and expanding and is very close to the motorway. it could be better located as it's in a very busy spot
- With regards to Crewe, the plans to you remove the second pump and down grade the fire station at Crewe would appear to contradict the above point made.
- Yes - regarding Crewe. I would be supportive of and would urge a new Fire Station to be constructed in Crewe. However, I would implore all those involved in making decisions NOT to downgrade either of the pumps at Crewe Fire Station. It is imperative that the two engines in Crewe retain their full time 24/7 firefighter cover.
- Keep the second pump at Crewe
- Keep the 2nd appliance full time a Crewe as Crewe fire station is the only wholetime station in Cheshire East
- Do not remove the second whole time pump from Crewe. There are more houses, hs2 is coming and retained can't cover properly. Response time won't be 3.5 minutes as the limit is 5 min and from experience I know the pump won't leave the station as quick as you say. We will potentially have 4 fire fighters with much delayed back up responding to incidents. Where is the health and safety?
- All fire stations should have permanent full-time fire fighters on site at all times please for safety of community and firefighters keep the current levels don't cut them. In Crewe keep the second fire engine staffed with F/timers 24/7
- Crewe Fire Station due to its geographic location should be a fully manned station at all times.
- Yes, what is happening to Crewe's 2nd appliance, the town is growing at a fast rate and we should not be reducing the cover or response times to incidents.
- When considering Crewe would like you to assume there will be two engines staffed 24 hours by full time staff.
- I believe Crewe station should keep two whole time appliances. Having worked as a firefighter for 30 yrs. (West Yorkshire) I know how quickly fire can spread, and the importance of having a quick response. Also, as well as having a quick response, you need to have sufficient resources to safely manage the incident. With one appliance this is not possible. Using a day crewed system on the second appliance would add at least 5 mins to the attendance time. Also, the surrounding stations Alsager, Sandbach, Nantwich, are all retained stations which would delay an immediate response. For these reasons I strongly oppose any downgrading of fire cover in Crewe
- The staffing of Crewe fire station is a huge concern. We have more residents in Crewe than when the initial IRMP report was done in 2013, we have more business units, a lot more HMO (Houses of Multiple Occupancy) 36,000 new homes have planning permission and HS2 is on its way! Not to mention the M6 corridor and all the red routes in the area, including a new

network of roads to be added. I think relying on retained firefighters with the inevitable increased population will just put more people at risk by not having a full-time staff. Please reassess the reasons and safety issues for implementing a retained staff, there has been problems across the county in recruitment and retention of retained firefighters

- The rapid expansion of Crewe suggests strongly that a smaller station with less engines could be potentially a dangerous decision. Please ensure we retain current coverage at a minimum
- Crewe cannot rely on retained fire fighters. Apart from the massive expansion plans for Crewe (that Cheshire East Council started consultation on today) there are already issues with the availability of suitable people who live within 5 minutes of the fire station. At present five minutes from Crewe consists of mostly commercial and railway, with housing split between mostly elderly on one side and mostly low income, working long hours on the other. None of the new homes will be any closer and moving the fire station is unlikely to make it any better unless you can work out how to put it in the middle of a housing estate designed for people of the right fitness levels with time to spare.
- At Crewe in view of its location near the M6, HS2 and the and major developments in the area, we need to retain two full time engines. If one was crewed by retained firemen then people will be in danger
- The location in Crewe needs to consider the traffic issues especially with the planned closures of roads and bridges. Crewe should also keep 2 full time staffed fire engines because the population of the town is growing quickly, there are frequent accidents on the smart motorway section of the M6, any incident causes immediate grid lock which means delays in attendance times and also means on call firefighters cannot attend quickly enough.
- As with all forward planning you have to second guess what Cheshire will look like in the future. Thousands of houses are planned to be built employment for 40000 people IF Hs2 is to be believed. Crewe was built for trains but full of cars restricted by rail bridges. I do have concerns about response times especially if Crewe fire station is to be reduced to one Full time engine. I appreciate that costs are restrictive but if Crewe is to have a population explosion/industry/schools/ infrastructure. Provision should be surely increased in the long term not reduced.
- The existing second engine in Crewe needs to remain full time and firefighters full time jobs in Crewe need protecting.
- Priority should be given to maintaining the current provision at Crewe (2 appliances manned on a 24/7 basis) and to protecting the FTE number of whole-time firefighters in the county.
- Crewe has to be saved, as nearly all the engines in Cheshire east are retained
- 2 full time engines at Crewe. it is the LARGEST area to cover including the M6
- go back to two fire engines at Crewe as Crewe is getting bigger with all the new houses that Cheshire east is letting being built
- Crewe needs to keep its current level of manning and fire engines, to support the local area. Cost cutting should be done at higher levels and not front-line services which keep residents safe.
- The Crewe station must be staffed at its current level and the same amount of vehicles
- Please don't reduce hours or appliances in Crewe, the town is growing and there will be further demands on services with hs2
- Disregard this plan - particularly Crewe with the impending arrival of HS2 your proposal is totally hypocritical - or have you forgotten about HS2?
- Part time firefighter could never be recruited In sufficient numbers in the Crewe area, insufficient residential property near station. After spending 17 years (deputy. Stn Commander) at Crewe I think I have good idea of the area, and it's a lot worse now due to traffic and road conditions. 10 mins to get to the station is excessive remember they may have another 10 mins to get to the fire.
- The downgrading of Crewe Station to a single manned appliance (with on-call firefighters for the second appliance) seems to be missing from this consultation, in either the summary or detailed document. This seems to be in direct contradiction to the requirements of the Crewe area. There are many thousands of new homes to be built in and around Crewe (over 1500 new-builds in the parish of Shavington alone!) and this would indicate the need for the full time crewing to continue, to allow for visits to residents (we are all getting older, from an older demographic base), schools and new businesses that will follow the resident population boom. The Crewe station location is in a congested area at the best of times, with rush hour traffic almost static at times. How will on-call fire fighters manage to arrive within the allotted

times? Much of the surrounding area is not residential, forcing the on-call crew to necessarily live further from the station than may be desirable. This needs careful consideration in any downgrading plan. I WILL BE WRITING A SEPARATE LETTER WITH FURTHER COMMENTS REGARDING THIS POTENTIAL DOWN GRADING OF CREWE STATION MANNING.

- YES. Ensure that you keep TWO 24/7 crews because the number of houses is increasing and set to increase much more (Leighton area for instance) Road traffic is increasing and HS2 is scheduled to be up and running in 10 years. This will bring yet more people, houses and businesses into the area. Travel times for Retained Firefighters cannot ever be guaranteed and I foresee major difficulties in the future as local roads become yet more congested.
- Ensure that adequate full-time manning is provided for the East Cheshire area. This would seem to indicate that the Crewe station does not see full time manning reduced to one appliance.
- Crewe needs 2 full time staffed fire engines to service Crewe, a town that is growing quickly and will continue to grow in the future, a second full time fire engine supports fire prevention work and is available to support the first fire engine faster than an 85%-part time manned fire engine!
- Retain the two pumps at Crewe full time.
- Very concerned about the review of plans to downgrade Crewe Fire Station to only one staffed fire engine. The second pump services the whole of Cheshire East! It supports the M6 and local areas. My friend is a firefighter in Sandbach who advises that the Crewe engine often gets to Sandbach before the retention firefighters from Sandbach get there. Since the plans in 2013 have been drawn up our population has grown vastly, more houses, HMO's, HS2 on the way. You cannot seriously consider with all the new house's and therefore council tax coming your way to reduce our services? This reduce response times and endanger life's. Have you ever visited the roundabout, seen the traffic? How are the on-call firefighters supposed to battle that traffic in and then battle back out and provide acceptable response times. It's an irresponsible decision that will cost lives.
- End the proposal to drop the downgrading of Crewe fire station from two pumps down to one. Protect local firefighter's jobs by re-investing the large cash reserves built upon over the past 7 years, which have been accrued via unnecessary cost cutting.
- Keeping Crewe 2nd full time pump and crew is essential to the area. As a H&S rep and railway man I am aware of the dangers which surround our communities especially dangerous goods transport through the area. A skilled workforce like what we have in fire and rescue in Crewe is essential to safety and saving lives. This is why we should retain the 2 full time pumps at Crewe.
- In respect of the comments below I would urge the Fire Authority and the CFRS to retain the full-time cover 24/7 at Crewe Fire Station. Crewe is growing and challenging town which provides service to outlying areas and the motorway. There is a plethora of Homes of Multiple Occupation, deprived areas and vast areas of congestion on the road networks. The town is envisaged to continue to expand greatly over coming years and as such no downgrading of Crewe Fire Station should take place. I find it sad that Cheshire East contributes financially and yet the principal town within Cheshire East could have their fire station service reduced. As the ward Councillor for where the current station is I can categorically state that to recruit and MAINTAIN on-call firefighters will be difficult. The nearest housing estate to Crewe station is small and comprises elderly residents. The station is surrounded by businesses including a petrol station and a railway station making it difficult to recruit.
- The plans to man the second appliance at Crewe Fire Station with on call fire fighters is unacceptable in terms of the safety of local residents. Response times as well as the actual firefighting capability will be negatively impacted if these plans are implemented. We have a right to expect a proper fire service coverage and this is a dilution that has the potential to jeopardise lives in the event of incidents.
- Keep Crewe full time
- I strongly object to the proposal to downgrade Crewe fire station to a single appliance. Fire fighters have proved themselves so adaptable in working in areas in addition to firefighting or prevention: dealing with cardiac arrests, raising awareness of safety in schools, working at road traffic incidents, rescuing obese ill people from their homes, etc., that we may be in danger of forgetting how vital their ability is, to be at the peak of fitness, and in strength of numbers, to save people's lives when professionals are required. The possible dangers are

increasing - over-busy roads. overcrowded living conditions - now is not the time to reduce the service. If necessary, increase the precept a little more to continue the service all residents are proud of.

- I am very concerned regards the future fire cover for the Crewe area?
- Keep full time crews, especially in Crewe
- Makes no sense to me to replace 24 hour staffed engine with on call firefighters. Crewe has been expanding constantly since I moved here 17 years ago and this shows no sign of changing anytime soon. With the potential of HS2 hub being in Crewe fire services are likely to be on demand more than ever. The whole of Cheshire East is a very large area to cover with one engine manned by full time professionals.
- Yes, keep two 24/7 fire engines at Crewe fire station
- Put council tax up more if you need it. Ensure that the Crewe station does not move to an on-call second crew.
- I do not support an increase in council tax when you intend to take an engine away from Crewe fire station and use part time firemen.
- A reduction in active units at Crewe would be a mistake given the growing population and infrastructure of the town. With new road developments and housing developments the same number of units will logically be required and whilst I am aware of the further cuts to the budget going forward it is perhaps time to work with the local population to counter this
- Down grading Crewe fire station would be a massive mistake due to the expansion planned for Crewe over the coming years
- I'm very concerned about the prospect of firefighters in Crewe losing their jobs or having their hours dramatically reduced if the second engine gets 'downgraded'. I'm also very concerned about the time it takes getting to incidents increasing with less staff and a downgraded engine, this seems inevitable.
- Think it would be a very bad move to go to one fire engine at Crewe, lives would be put at risk.
- Priority should be given to maintaining the current provision at Crewe (2 appliances manned on a 24/7 basis) and to protecting the FTE number of whole-time firefighters in the county.
- more investment in Crewe to protect local people. as many full times crews as possible be full time. safety of the public is paramount and lives should not be sacrificed for a few pounds saving.
- It is putting the public and firefighters at risk. Do not downgrade cover anymore. keep Crewe and Ellesmere port wholetime. Put 5 riders on every appliance.
- Yes, what has happened to the proposals for Crewe and Ellesmere Port's reduced crewing, there is absolutely no mention in the plan? Have these plans been changed? The plan is far too light on detail on these planned changes to crewing.
- The proposals around removing the 2nd whole time pump from Chester I believe are fundamentally short sighted, potentially dangerous and flawed. A model that relies on whole time crewed pumps based on risk (heritage and growing population and demographics) not necessarily numbers of calls) is essential. Whilst on call is an option. Reliance is very dangerous- especially when coupled with significant reductions in whole time provision. Whilst community safety initiatives are of course worthy and proven, they cannot be resourced at the expense of operational cover (Safety net). In summary - You must rethink your agenda on removal of second pumps at Chester and Crewe and 5-person crewing. The cardiac attendance is of course worthy however it is required because NWS are significantly under resourced and there for underperforming. Are CFRS being paid to undertake this additional work? Are any incomes then reflected in FF's pay as additional responsibility payments? New Stations have been required at a number of locations for many years so as long as the financial arrangements are acceptable and not at operational staffing expense I support.

Ellesmere Port specific comments

- Crewing levels. As a resident of Ellesmere Port, my town is expanding at an almost exponential rate. I would not wish to see a new station built with a reduction in WHOLE TIME cover. The amount of appliances and crew should be increased.

- Yes, nowhere in your reports do you mention the poor availability of your on-call appliances. I know for a fact that on bonfire night, there were 7 appliances either not available for the whole night, part of the night, or available only for small incidents. A pump from Ellesmere Port, one of your busiest and most populous areas, was sent to Wilmslow to cover all night, thereby reducing cover in CWAC. You cannot continue to hide the inadequacies of the on-call system. The decisions being taken by the current Fire Authority members are, in a word, DANGEROUS. If they result in the death of a member of the public or a firefighter due to reduced rider numbers, then the can will be carried by those responsible for the lack of challenge to budget cuts from central government, i.e. the FA and Senior Managers.
- Ellesmere Port second pump to on call is a disaster waiting to happen
- Much of the wording of questions in IRMP 15 Consultation Doc may be interpreted as having a bias to confirm the changes proposed. The cuts proposed go too far. The on-Call Model fails regularly and On Call Stations are an integral part of predictive attendance times under the IRMP15. Chester's and other wholtime Fire Appliance are consistently attending incidents that should be covered by On Call Appliances that are not available. This leaves Chester and other places further exposed. The Chief officer is unable to demonstrate that the On-Call Model is robust and fit for purpose. Therefore, how can they consider downgrading Crewe and Ellesmere Port to each have an on-call appliance to support a whole-time response? Ellesmere Port have a very high risk from commercial industries which can result in high loss of life, the fire cover under these proposals leave Ellesmere port and surrounding areas very exposed. With regard to the Community Risk Register and Comah/Cimah sites Cheshire is no longer capable of responding effectively in a timely manner. The on-call model simply does not support this requirement.

Comments referring to both Crewe and Ellesmere Port

- The local risks are far too great for any of these to have less than two whole time pumps. Chester has major life risk and heritage. Crewe has vast area of Cheshire East and Eport has seven COMAH sites listed on community risk register.
- I have read with horror the plans to downgrade the engines at Crewe and Ellesmere Port, this is not acceptable. Cheshire fire seems to be in the press every week, incidents injuries and deaths, so I believe it to be dangerous to further reduce the numbers of full time staff
- If new stations are built to replace current sites at Chester Ellesmere Port Crewe and Warrington should have a minimum of 2 whole time appliances crewed with a full-time crew of a minimum of 5 crew members 24/7
- All of these stations need full time people as they are in our biggest towns with the biggest risks, Crewe and Ellesmere Port need to engines and the reliance on part time volunteers needs to stop.
- Crewe and Ellesmere Port should have 2 full time engines
- Need updated stations they are looking tired - and Crewe and Ellesmere port should keep its two full time engines
- Crewe and Ellesmere Port should have 2 full time pumps
- Crewe and Ellesmere port must remain staffed by full time fire fighters the cuts have gone too far
- Crewe and Ellesmere Port should keep its second appliances as full time. The current response model is a farce, on call never available. You can find money to hoard in reserves, money to increase the number of group managers, money to increase the pay of senior managers, money to unbelievably pay senior managers bonuses, but cannot find the money to provide a fit for purpose fire service.
- Spend this money to benefit communities on more firemen and engines. Chester is big risk with only one engine. Crewe and the port should keep there's fully crewed 24/7
- Chester needs 2 full time pumps with its massive heritage economy and risks, and we are seeing an increase in fires in the area. Crewe has the only full-time provision at night and at weekends in the whole of Cheshire east, and Ellesmere Port has a massive industrial risk. Removing these two appliances would make it impossible to release staff to training events as these two pumps are used as standby cover to release pumps. All are major towns with high risk and call activity. The full-time response model CANNOT cope with any more

reductions in staff or appliances, we no longer feel safe at incidents, we are taking risks with not enough people on the ground, and the delay in getting support crews in attendance is now very noticeable. The on-call crews when they arrive are not experienced or competent. We often talk back on station that it is a matter of time before a fire fighter in Cheshire is killed or seriously injured.

- Chester and Warrington stations look very rated and as you have removed half the staff from these stations they must be larger than necessary. However, the loss of one engine at those stations and proposed loss in Crews and Ellesmere Port is disgraceful, particularly in light of the recent fatal fire in Chester when the fire engine from Chester was not available as it was at an emergency in Tarporley.
- Make Chester's big enough to bring the second fire engine back and house the Firefighters as well. Make Crewe's big enough to house 2 Wholetime fire engines and the required number of Firefighters. Make Ellesmere Port's big enough to house 2 Wholetime fire engines and the required number of Firefighters.
- Chester should have 2 full time pumps, the heritage and tourism are worth millions of pounds. Crewe and Elsmere port should have 2 full time pumps.
- Chester should have two whole time pumping appliances adjacent to the city centre at a location similar to St Anne Street. Ellesmere Port should continue to have two whole time pumping appliances. Crewe should continue to have two whole time pumping appliances
- Stop cutting the service and return Chester and Ellesmere Port to at least 2 pumps...
- Don't lose either second pump at Crewe or Eport. Too many varied risks across these areas. COMAH sites presenting major public risk and Crewe would be only whole-time pump in EAST of county. Also, service appears to be involved in too much peripheral activities.
- Return our missing fire engine. Do try downgrade Crewe or Ellesmere Port. Too dangerous given variety of risks. Seems the fire service ice are getting involved in all sorts, much of it not related. Re- focus on what you were once good at.
- There seems a preoccupation with achieving recognition in a whole raft of outside activities. You're losing sight of your core responsibilities. Chester is at Serious risk and Crew and E'Port are about to go same way.
- The document is worded towards confirming the changes proposed. The cuts go too far. The on-call model fails regularly and on call stations are an integral part of predictive attendance times under IRMP15. Chester is too exposed. They are attending incidents that should be covered by on call appliances that are no longer available. The on-call model is not demonstrably fit for purpose. How therefore can Crewe and Ellesmere Port be downgraded to on call appliance to support a whole-time response. Ellesmere Port is a high-risk area due to industries in the area. There is potential for huge losses, so proposals leave this area highly exposed.
- Why has there not been any questions regarding the proposal to downgrade Crewe and Ellesmere Ports second engine to on call? Surely something as important as this deserves some feedback from Cheshire residents.
- I have heard that you are trying to downgrade another two stations Ellesmere and Crewe but spend money on stations, so on one hand you have no money but the other hand has excess, so I would find an increase for properties hard to take but for more firefighters a lot easier
- Cardiac response should only be considered when the firefighters responding are given a decent pay rise to help them with the cost of living. Crewe's second fire engine should stay as a wholetime appliance otherwise at certain points you could have 1 fire engine covering a large area and second pump response to life risk incidents being delayed. This is the same as Ellesmere Ports second appliance.
- Return Chester's fire engine. Big population and heritage which supports economy. Crewe and Eport should keep second pumps whole time. Port has Cloudburst risks and Crewe has large area of EAST to cover with just one wt pump. Concentrate on your critical duties and not all the fancy incidental stuff.
- Return to basic values. Chester must have pump returned. The proposals for Eport and Crewe should be scrapped. Cheshire East is too big an area for just one 24/7 pump. Eport has number of COMAH SITES REQUIRING 4 PUMPS IMMEDIATELY. Chester has vast heritage risk which supports the economy
- The on-call system is failing. Crewe and eport need to keep two full time engines. Chester must have second returned. Too much risk each area. Lives and property will be lost.

COMAH sites. Heritage properties. Service involved in too many outside issues. Need to re-focus.

- Chester warrants it's second pump returning. Major life and heritage risk. Eport should keep second full time pump COMAH risks. Crewe needs two full time pumps as this station supports many on call stations across a wide area. If reduced to on call there will be only one full time engine in the whole of Cheshire East at night. Not safe.
- Chester has major heritage and life risk. Return the other Fire engine. Meanwhile the second pumps at Crewe and Ellesmere Port should remain full time 24/7. The Port has many COMAH sites with major potential serious incidents. Crewe is surrounded by part-time stations and has a responsibility to regularly support the services. Keep both full-time pumps not on call. Across the county the on-call system is far too unreliable.
- Chester should have its second pump returned. Crewe and Eport must maintain second pumps full time. Should these cuts continue don't be surprised should there be major loss of property and loss of life in these areas. Also, it appears that the service nationally has lost sight of its primary purpose by trying to be involved
- Concentrate on core duties. Too much peripheral stuff going on. Bad move suggesting FRS props up underfunded ambulance service. Chester should have second part returned. Crewe and Ellesmere Port should keep second whole time pumps. Serious consequences in all these areas if plans go through. Chester heritage6
- County wide increase whole time pumps. The on-call system is not working. CREWE AND EPORT SHOULD HOLD ON TO SECOND PUMPS CREWED WHOLE TIME 24/7 CHESTER SHOULD GET IT'S SECOND PUMP BACK. In these three instances a disaster is not far away if these changes are passed and continue
- Return pump to Chester. Keep second pumps at Crewe and EPORT. THERE IS A SERIOUS RISK in each of these areas for a major embarrassment! What about COMAH sites and City heritage? Not to mention life risk.
- Keep second pumps at Crewe and eport. Too much risk of varying sorts in these areas. Return the other Fire engine to Chester. Collectively the loss of each of these could be disastrous! Concentrate on your core responsibilities. Too much incidental involvement which detracts from critical matters.
- Propping up the ambulance service is not a forward step. Please concentrate on what you used to be good at: putting out fires and rescuing people. Chester needs it's second engine returning. Crewe and E'Port cannot afford to have theirs downgraded. We have a disaster just around the corner. Please listen.
- I feel very exposed now that I know Chester has but one fire engine. I live South of the river and the backup has a long distance to travel, bring back our fire engine. Crewe and Ellesmere Port are also threatened. This is a disaster waiting to happen with the refinery and chemical works
- Return Chester's second fire engine. Areas south of the river are at most risk. Don't let Crewe and Ellesmere Port go same way by losing second fully staffed pump to on call. More consideration should be given to chemical sites in area in case of major leaks/ fires. Service appears to have lost its way and is too involved with peripheral matters which seemingly carry kudos.
- Concentrate your efforts on the delivery of an improved level of fire cover. too many sideshows going on. Chester one pump?? Eport second to on call?? Crewe second to on call?? This last one would be the only fully crewed engine in CHESHIRE EAST. STILL THINK CHESHIRE IS SAFER??
- Chester having one engine is a disaster in the making. Crewe and eport are about to be equally vulnerable. Why are we propping up an underfunded ambulance service? Have you seriously considered the COMAH risks in Ellesmere Port area?
- the loss of the second engine from Chester along with the proposal for Ellesmere Port to have its second downgraded would appear to be a dangerous step with particular regard to the number of COMAH sites in the area. Likewise, if Crewe should lose its second engine to similar changes it could leave the whole of Cheshire East to one fully staffed 24/7 pump. Cuts have gone too far.
- I'm concerned at your proposals to do ambulance work. This shows a lack of appreciation of just how qualified ambulance personnel are. At just one step down from a doctor I'd much sooner have them attend me than a firefighter who with the best intentions is less qualified. Return Chester's 2nd fire engine and keep CREWE and E'PORT fully staffed 24/7

- No cuts for Crewe or eport. Return Chester's second fire engine. Focus on basic responsibilities and not the peripheral stuff that seems to have taken over.
- Fire services should not be used to prop up underfunded ambulance services. Return Chester's fire engine and don't downgrade Crewe and E'Port.
- Return Chester's other Fire pump. We feel vulnerable. Don't lose second engines at Port and Crewe. this is dangerous.
- Be more aware of you core responsibilities rather than seeking credit for peripheral activities which flatter to deceive! Chester is vulnerable Crewe and the port are about to become so. This madness has gone too far. Listen to common sense and along with all other frs stand up to central government.
- Chester is extremely vulnerable. Ellesmere Port is too big a risk to lose its second pump. Crewe is too big and area in the EAST to have just one engine 24/7. Stop attempting to prop up a severely underfunded ambulance service.
- My concerns are that Chester has been left severely exposed and Crewe and ellesmere port read about to suffer the same fate.
- I'm totally bemused that Chester has lost a fire engine with the size of population, students etc. The city heritage is worth many millions to the economy. One significant fire would be catastrophic to this economy. Ellesmere port second pump to on call?? What about CIMA sites. Crewe second pump on call?? Leaving only one whole time pump in whole of EAST at night. Need to rethink all of these.
- Too many cuts. You've gone too far. return Chester's second pump. Don't downgrade Crewe and Ellesmere Port. The potential losses are too horrendous to imagine. Stop trying to do ambulance work. Yes, they are under resourced but your skills are being diluted.