

# Making Cheshire Safer

**Consultation on proposing to  
increase the Authority's precept  
by 2.99% in 2018/19**

Consultation report  
February 2018



## Contents

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	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Consultation feedback	4
3. Profile of respondents	6

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Additional public responses	11
Appendix 2: Public comments received	14
Appendix 3: Staff comments received	30

## 1. Introduction

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This report sets out the feedback on the 2018/19 precept consultation, which was undertaken between Monday January 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 and Monday February 12<sup>th</sup> 2018. A total of 923 members of the public and 30 members of staff responded.

The purpose of this report is to enable the Authority to understand the differing level of opinion in order to assist the Authority in giving consideration to the results of the consultation in its decision making process. This feedback will be among the issues considered by the Fire Authority prior to approval of 2018/19 budget.

This report comprises three sections, as follows:

- The feedback from the consultation and an analysis of responses
- Copies of free text comments from members of the public (including social media)
- Copies of free text comments from staff

This report has been made available to public and partners on the Service's website - [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation) - and to staff on the Intranet.

**Report prepared by:**

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**February 12<sup>th</sup> 2018**

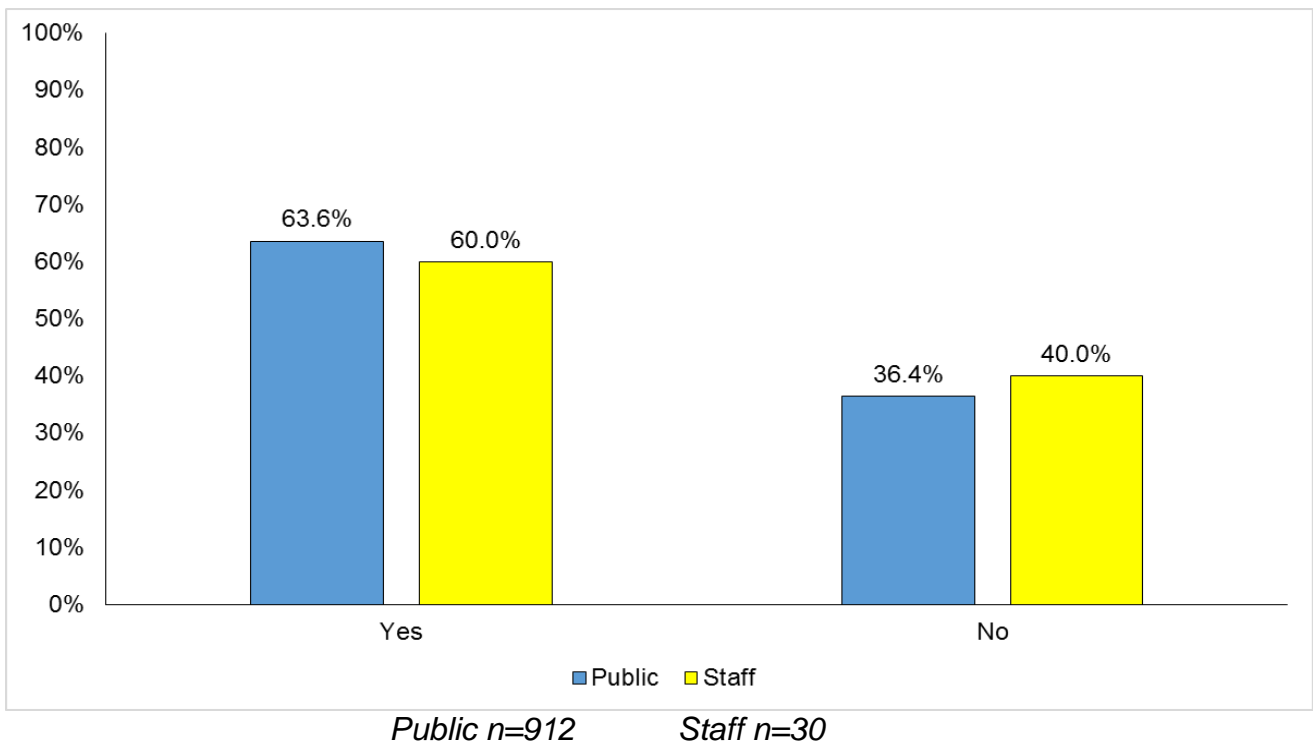
## 2. Consultation feedback

The following section provides the results of feedback on the precept consultation, which was undertaken between Monday January 15<sup>th</sup> 2018 and Monday February 12<sup>th</sup> 2018. A total of 923 members of the public and 30 members of staff responded.

As a guide, the public response enables the application of a margin of error of +/- 3.22% at a 95% confidence interval. This is to say that, if all residents across Cheshire were surveyed, there is a 95% confidence that the results presented would be within the specified margin of error.

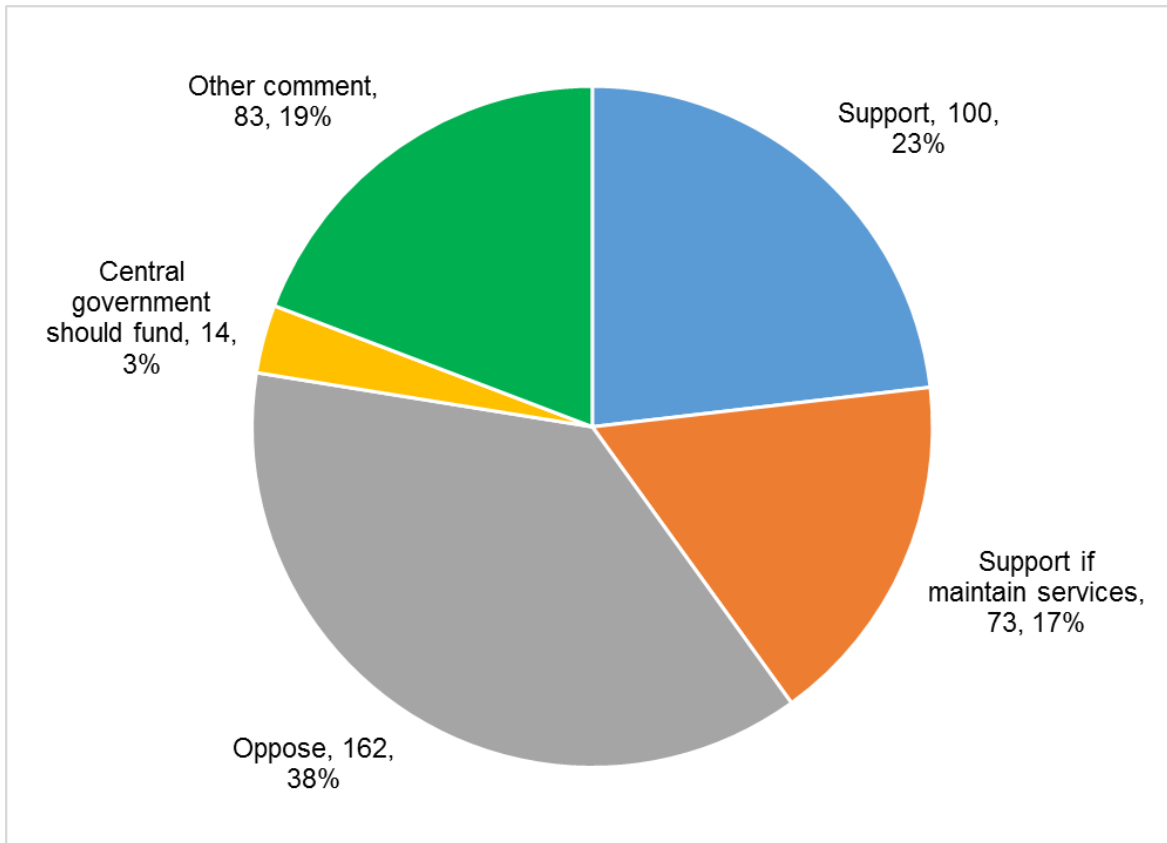
The consultation asked a single question to both public and staff, the results of which are provided below:

**Would you support Cheshire Fire Authority increasing its share of council tax in 2018/19 by 2.99%?**



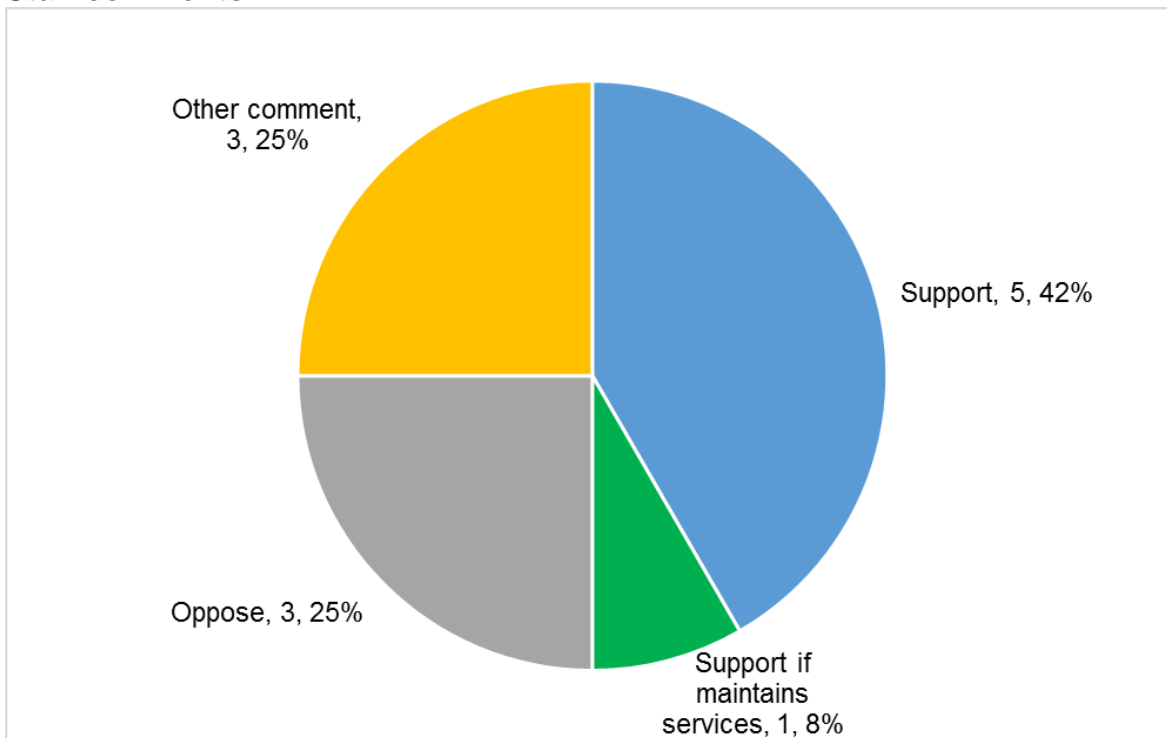
Respondents were also able to provide additional comments if they chose to do so. A total of 432 public comments and 12 staff comments were received. These are summarised below, with copies of individual responses provided as an appendix to this report.

### Public comments



Public n=432

### Staff comments



Staff n=12



### 3. Profile of Respondents

The following section provides an analysis of both public and staff respondents.

#### 3.1 Public Response Demographics

The following section will provide a demographic analysis of the responses provided by members of the public.

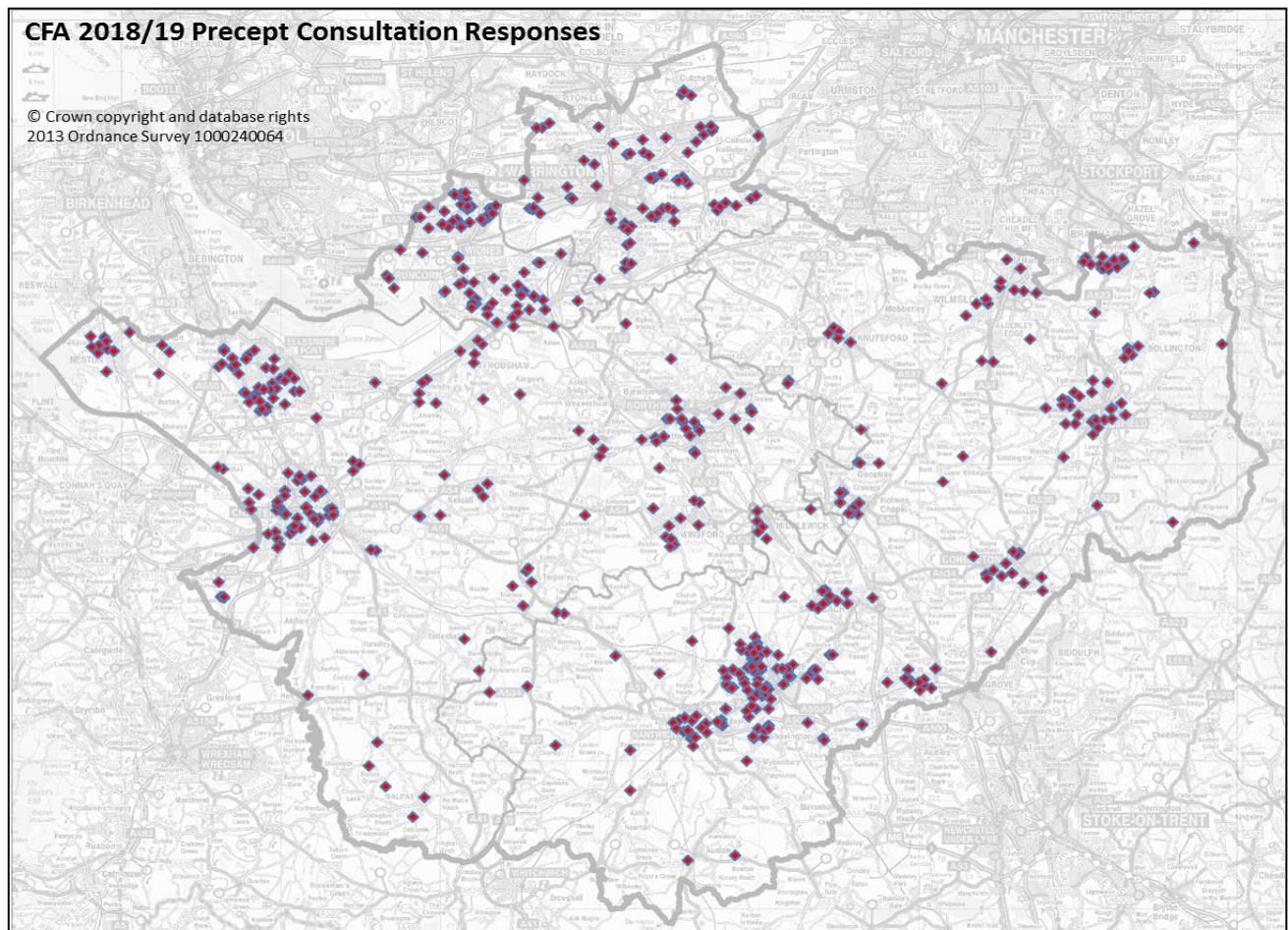
##### Which area do you live?

Unitary	Cheshire East	Cheshire West and Chester	Halton	Warrington
No. responses	362	285	109	105
% age of total	42.04%	33.1%	12.66%	12.2%

Public n=861

##### Postcode

This image shows that responses were received from across Cheshire.



Public n=777

## Gender

	Male	Female
<b>No. responses</b>	519	307
<b>% age of total</b>	62.83%	37.17%

Public n=826

## Is your gender the same as that assigned to you at birth?

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	738	0	72
<b>% age of total</b>	91.11%	0%	8.89%

Public n=810

## Ethnic origin

White British	89.31%	735
White Irish	0.49%	4
Gypsy or Irish traveller	0.00%	0
Any other white background	0.49%	4
White and black Caribbean	0.12%	1
White and black African	0.00%	0
White and Asian	0.12%	1
Indian	0.12%	1
Pakistani	0.12%	1
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.24%	2
Any other Asian background	0.12%	1
African	0.00%	0
Caribbean	0.00%	0
Any other black/African/Caribbean/black British background	0.00%	0
Arab	0.12%	1
Any other ethnic background	0.49%	4
Prefer not to say	8.26%	68

Public n=823

## Age Range

Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	1.59%	13
25-34	7.68%	63
35-44	10.85%	89
45-54	16.83%	138
55-64	19.63%	161
65-74	26.71%	219
75+	9.51%	78
Prefer not to say	7.20%	59

Public n=820

## Religion

Buddhist	0.51%	4
Christian	54.61%	432
Hindu	0.13%	1
Jewish	0.00%	0
Muslim	0.13%	1
Sikh	0.00%	0
No religion	28.70%	227
Prefer not to say	15.93%	126

Public n=791

## Disability

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	113	628	82
<b>% age of total</b>	13.73%	76.31%	9.96%

Public n=823

## Sexual orientation

	Heterosexual	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	657	11	3	131
<b>% age of total</b>	81.92%	1.37%	0.37%	16.33%

Public n=802

### 3.2 Staff Response Demographics

The following section will provide a demographic analysis of staff responses.



## Primary Role

	Operational	Support
<b>No. responses</b>	9	14
<b>% age of total</b>	39.13%	60.87%

Staff=23

## Department

	Finance	Legal & Democratic Services	Op Policy & Assurance	People and Development	Prevention	Protection	Service Delivery
<b>No. responses</b>	3	0	5	1	4	3	6

Staff=22

## Gender

	Male	Female
<b>No. responses</b>	68.18%	31.82%
<b>% age of total</b>	15	7

Staff n=22

## Is your gender the same as that assigned to you at birth?

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	81.82%	0%	18.18%
<b>% age of total</b>	18	0	4

Staff n=22

## Ethnic origin

White British	77.27%	17
White Irish	0.00%	0
Gypsy or Irish traveller	0.00%	0
Any other white background	0.00%	0
White and black Caribbean	0.00%	0
White and black African	0.00%	0
White and Asian	4.55%	1
Indian	0.00%	0
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Any other Asian background	0.00%	0
African	0.00%	0
Caribbean	0.00%	0
Any other black/African/Caribbean/black British background	0.00%	0
Arab	4.55%	1
Any other ethnic background	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	13.64%	3

Staff n=22

## Age Range

Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	0.00%	0
25-34	14.29%	3
35-44	23.81%	5
45-54	23.81%	5
55-64	19.05%	4
65-74	0.00%	0
75+	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	19.05%	4

Staff n=21

## Religion

Buddhist	5.00%	1
Christian	45.00%	9
Hindu	0.00%	0
Jewish	0.00%	0
Muslim	0.00%	0
Sikh	0.00%	0
No religion	35.00%	7
Prefer not to say	15.00%	3

Staff n=20

## Disability

	Yes	No	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	1	17	4
<b>% age of total</b>	4.55%	77.27%	18.18%

Staff n=22

## Sexual orientation

	Heterosexual	Gay/Lesbian	Bisexual	Prefer not to say
<b>No. responses</b>	15	2	0	5
<b>% age of total</b>	68.18%	9.09%	0%	22.73%

Staff n=22

## Appendix 1 – Additional Public Responses

A paid-for advertisement was placed on social media in order to raise awareness of the consultation. Comments received in response to this advertisement are included below.



The image shows a screenshot of social media comments. The comments are arranged in a vertical list. Each comment includes a profile picture, the name of the user, the text of the comment, and the date and time it was posted. Some comments have a 'like' icon and a count. There are also 'reply' and 'report' icons next to some comments.

**Ben Adams** Totally agree with it, the Fire BRIGADE work really hard and are legally obliged to attend every 999 call (Police and Ambulance are allowed to downgrade or simply just not attend) and they risk their lives to save others. Worth every penny. In fact why not give them 2.99% of the Police's budget as well. They deserve it.  
13 · 23 January at 03:16

**Craig Michael** Its just as well police dont need to attend every call, otherwise they would be turning out when people complain about taxi not arriving. And ambo, when people phone up with a splinter, what a stupid comment.  
3 · 23 January at 05:37

**Phillip Irlam** Get rid of the crewe town council we dont need it as we have the cheshire council and divert the moeny  
2 · 23 January at 10:12

**Ben Adams** Craig Michael I agree that there is a huge problem with hoax and nuisance calls, but the answer to that is to actually punish those who do it. I'm sorry you feel my comment is stupid but I do not agree with the way the Police (and Crime Commissioner) take a much larger stake of the precept and seemingly have an easier time obtaining even further monies.  
1 · 23 January at 10:18

**Stephen Orme** I pay enough tax  
Totally insane that the burden or responsibility is at the feet of hard working people  
3 · 23 January at 13:27

**Chris Farmer Hollister** Only answer calls for fire not the cat up a tree dog in the pipe let the rspca deal with that or the swan stuck in a bush.  
1 · 28 January at 11:45 · Edited

**Michael Hardman** I agree with the increase, but can I ask, what have Cheshire Fire Circus done with the £30 million it has in reserve?  
4 February at 11:14

**James Fellows** Circus?  
Do you have to insult them?  
4 February at 14:03

**Michael Hardman** I was in the circus for 34 years, I should and do know. Its not an insult its a compliment to the so called senior officers.  
4 February at 15:14

**Robert Longworth** 30million is hidden in one part of budget only. There is twice as much elsewhere. They are buying property which will be used by the council. Talk of spending at Winsford is on top of millions spent in recent years on a place they wanted to leave 12months ago  
6 February at 02:39

**Alec Jervis** People are missing the point here. There is one fundamental reason why the increase in contribution is needed and that is because of our wonderful government. As far as I am aware, nobody has even raised the fact that they keep cutting the budget for p... [See more](#)  
5 · 31 January at 02:42

**Roger Perris** I would much rather pay the increase in tax than have a longer response time because of government cut backs. Starving the fire service of money is putting property and lives at risk. Keep up the good work you guys. You are greatly appreciated.  
5 · 24 January at 15:31

-  **Ann Charlton-Toye** Agree totally. The Fire Brigade are being asked to take on more and more responsibilities because of their skill and experience...they deserve to go home safe at the end of their shift. So funding and no cuts are no 1!
-  3 · 24 January at 00:50
-  **Andrew Dixie Dean** what about ppl in low paid jobs that simply cant afford to pay this increase its getting worse and putting more ppl into debt to simply pay this
-  5 · 24 January at 14:19
-  **John Prout** No we pay enough, we know they a good job but that's no reason to keep asking for more for stuff on top of what we pay
-  3 · 24 January at 14:10
-  **Graham Hitchmough** I do hope you never need there services when you carnt put youf house fire out
- 4 February at 08:21
-  **Wayne Davies** As usual the government cut funding then ask the tax payer to bail them out. They've raped and pillaged all public services and then capped public servants wages. All sections of public services are over stretched, underfunded. You only have to look at... See more
-  1 · 31 January at 04:13
-  **Phil Lee** Is the increase to pay for a new Business Support Manager or as the people of Crewe would prefer, to keep two full time manned pumps covering most of the south of the county?????
-  1 · 22 January at 13:34
-  **Hamlin Jason** It's not like we have a choice - it's legalised robbery. The roads are a state, the services are shrinking, the police force are only interested if you can offer them the right tick in the box they are after at that particular point in time ... and I see the council offices car park full of 50-60k German cars, many of high in private plates !
- 27 January at 11:04
-  **David Evans** They should be lobbying the government to fund ALL of our services properly for its the government cutting money from ALL the services while taking in more revenue from the council tax from all these new houses springing up everywhere with no infrastructure put in place for them.
- 31 January at 23:57
-  **Iain Ashbrook** James fellows. Why not? Lots of admin posts in the emergency services. Same for police etc. If civil servants had to abide by the same pension rules as everyone else, we might see some changes for the better for everyone else.
- 31 January at 10:38
-  2 Replies
-  **Wayne Bibby** As most people are earning less money each year, unfortunately I'm against further increases for all services. When my pay increases fair enough. We will no doubt get an increase regardless on our council tax every year. Maybe the council can make cuts to sort this out.
- 31 January at 04:13
-  **Thomas Taylor** Agree with previous comments that firefighters 100% deserve wage increase but will Cheshire fire service put the increased share all in firefighters wages?? I'd like to think so....
-  2 · 23 January at 13:50
-  5 Replies
-  **Graham Hitchmough** Iv i had my way the wages should be doubled .they could be your last chance.sack a few lords and you can get your money back
- 4 February at 08:18
-  **Pete Churchill** I think you got a some front to ask for rises like this when the money's not going into the pockets of our hard working fire fighters!
-  2 · 25 January at 03:45
-  **James Fellows** Cliff Smith  
It's strange isn't it Cliff how so many people resent contributing a fraction more for life saving services.
-  1 · 30 January at 12:17
-  **Bob Rawlinson** when wages and pensions reach 2.99% then you can do the same, i get 1% and the cost of living is higher than that, i see firefighters giving away freebies at the local hospital, that money could be used to pay the bloody bill, i agree we need them and the rest of the emergency services, but we public are being financially raped between these rises and the governments disinclination to fund them.
-  2 · 26 January at 11:37
-  **Graham Simpson** Only when they stop paying out massive pensions from an early age
- 25 January at 16:07
-  **Dave Jackson** Wish I was getting that, where do you get it from?
-  1 · 26 January at 11:26
-  **Ryan Younger** Hi Graham, reference the massive pension and early age pension you talk about. A firefighter pays 12.7% of their salary into the pension every month. £321.41 monthly. I can retire at 60. After 32 years of service I will have paid over £123,000 into my... See more

- Dave Jackson** Ryan Younger I couldn't be bothered to answer to that level. It's wasted on some.  
2 - 28 January at 12:46
- Ryan Younger** To be fair jacko some people are misguided and don't realise. If they feel the same after seeing facts then fair enough, each to their own but at least they will have a better idea what they're commenting on and can then make a calculated decision, even if we don't agree bud  
2 - 28 January at 12:54
- Graham Simpson** At the end of the day my income is stagnant so every year when these things ie the utility bills are put up my standard of living drops every fireman I know entered the service because of the pension schemes and because they could also retire a... See more  
28 January at 13:41 - Edited
- Chris Colton**  
1 - 29 January at 01:12
- Stephen Allman** The Fire and rescue service is a brilliant and cheap form of insurance for us all . I hope I never have to use it but I am extremely glad it's there. Firefighters pay a large sum of their pay into a pension and should they be able to have a long retirement much of that money goes back into the economy thereby helping to sustain jobs and public services.  
6 - 30 January at 05:20
- James Fellows** Stephen Allman  
Well put Stephen. Agree entirely.  
1 - 31 January at 01:02 - Edited
- Brian Cuthell** How old are firemen when they have to retire, thought it was fifty  
3 February at 13:42
- Andy Scanlan** 60 Brian  
4 February at 12:58
- Christopher Callanan** Graham Simpson I would like to see you do a fire fighters job at 65 believe me it is hard enough at 55 obviously you do not know what a firefighter does why dont you try and find before you make a comment  
3 - 1 February at 11:47
- James Fellows** Spot on Christopher  
1 February at 12:42
- Alan Watson** Can't be ready enough for disaster  
1 - 30 January at 21:21
- Michael Campbell** What about cutting wages for all the fat cats who sit at the top driving nice cars at the expense of public money ? The public funds doesn't get used properly as it ment for then complain that their a short fall in money because the money gets wasted. We pay nic for nhs then paye tax on top of that plus tax on goods and sevicees road tax on our cars then council tax adding up in thousands for working class people and they want more money ? We don't get a say on how it spent and we get reduced services and get dictated to by the very same people who takes it  
1 - 30 January at 03:20
- Michael Anthony Jones** CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING AT SERVICE HQ WINSFORD. 14th FEBRUARY. 1030. PUBLIC MOST WELCOME. IF YOU CARE,PLEASE TRY TO BE THERE.  
4 February at 13:54
- James Fellows** Graham Simpson  
Are you suggesting Firefighters should stay on until they're 65?  
30 January at 12:24
- Graham Simpson** I have to work until im 67  
1 - 30 January at 12:41
- Iain Ashbrook** No. National pension age. Whatever that may be.  
31 January at 11:58
- Robert Longworth** it would b e intereting to se how much has been spent  
26 January at 01:57
- Robert Longworth** why does this consultation ask questions about sexuality etc  
4 February at 08:02
- Neil Foster** What % of your annual funding goes on pension?  
28 January at 14:46
- Andrew Spencer** No  
24 January at 11:55
- Derek Earles** No i am sick of paying council tax to a corrupt cheshire east perhaps they might start by using our money to repair the roads in macclesfield most i use now have more potholes than the yorkshire dales i am sick of funding their greedy wages and pensions its high time we all with held our money from them they will soon sit up and do something about it they cant take us all to court can they  
2 - 24 January at 23:49 - Edited
- Wendy Harrison** Diane Harrison  
23 January at 14:53

## **Appendix 2 – Public comments received via the consultation survey**

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Responses which have provided either N/A or stated no further comment have been excluded.

- Subject to the extra money ensuring that every first responder appliance is crewed with sufficient crew to enable the immediate deployment of two BA wearing firefighters to enter an incident as soon as the appliance arrives and the vehicle and crew are rigged for action.
- I do not mind at all as long as the money raised is spent on providing fire cover equal to what the people of Cheshire had 10 years ago. With £30 million in your reserves why do you need to increase the council tax?
- IF the money is used to improve or protect the levels of fire cover. NOT if the current downgrading of fire stations is to continue.
- Reluctantly, I would support the increase on the basis that the additional income would go towards the support of front line services and not be used in any unnecessary additional administrative costs. I believe strongly that the support of government for our essential services has been held back for political reasons and that services have and will continue to be reduced to the detriment of public safety as a result. We need to pay for these services either locally or nationally but it is wrong when credit is taken for reducing central taxation whilst forcing this shift to the local purse.
- Put up the precept so that you don't have to reduce the number of fire engines across the county
- I particularly feel full-time fire fighters should continue in post, staffing both the tenders currently at Crewe fire station.
- Providing you stop making cuts and reductions in the existing fire cover around the county without consulting properly on any cuts.
- The support for this is conditional on maintaining Appliances and Fire Cover at present levels: no cuts.
- The increase should go towards salary increases for Firefighters.
- I appreciate you can't give much details on budgets, but you are asking us to vote to pay more with no finer details. I have said yes but this is as long as it stops cuts, stops Cheshire reducing any further the already "to bone" service. I would vote no if it was to build safety centres, to build new fire station less the 2 miles from exciting stations, to develop new training centres ( without exploring and sharing from neighbouring services) while I appreciate things need to improve and investment, but I pay to have firefighters and fire engines turn up if I need them ( in the time frame there needed) put this money to stopping cuts you have my support
- Happy to pay more for fire protection in Crewe to keep 2 full time staffed fire engines,
- Only if it's spent on our front line fire fighters, as we are sick of paying more for less,
- If the services are streamlined and Ellesmere Port has 24/7 for the purpose of the industry
- "I am supportive of the CFRS increasing their share of council tax if the Service promise that this increase is spent on frontline services such as full time Firefighters rather than vanity projects such as Lymm and increased benefits for Officers. For example are Land Rover or Range Rivers really necessary in this day and age?
- An increase would be acceptable to maintain front line services.
- Any extra income should be put towards Crewe keeping its second pump.
- If it means more fire crews to keep our community safe then an extra £2.19 per year is worth it.
- As long as it is to protect the firefighters jobs, keep the secondary fire pump in Crewe and protect the worker's. Not management and director pay increases.
- One of the most essential services we all rely on. Most important they maintain all services.
- As long as the extra monies are wisely spent on improving this emergency service, or to assist fairly those who operate same, then no one should stand in the way of such a minor increase per household.
- 'Yes' provided it is fixed until 2020/21 and your use of the term 'essential protection and ... ' stands up to scrutiny. This is therefore not a carte blanche 'Yes'.
- As long as we keep our second fire engine in Crewe
- Well worth it for a just over a couple of pounds a year to help try and preserve our fire service and hopefully continued effort to trim any wastage and improve efficiency will give the public of Cheshire the fire service they deserve.



- I'm happy to pay an extra 2.99% in order to offset cuts that would have to be made to services to make the required savings.
- I'd pay £21.90 extra if it means essential services are protected and provided.
- Yes I would gladly pay this small increase but only if it's spent on jobs for full time firemen and not all the rubbish you are currently spending money on
- Only if the money is spent on the provision of fire cover by fire fighters, as I am fed up with the continued reductions in service
- Only if my taxes are spent solely on full time fire cover and not on a thing else
- As long as the shortfall is made up by admin efficiencies like not replacing people who retire or leave, not supporting silly events; in short, getting some council priorities established.
- Yes - providing this goes on front line fire fighters and not on vanity project or bonuses for the senior officers
- I agree, providing it isn't used to hand out bonus payments to the chief fire officer and his mates on the top table!
- Any improvements to the service would be welcome whether it's 1.99% or 2.99%. I am happy to pay the increase if the service is also to be improved.
- If it keeps Crewe station full-time
- Need the 2nd Engine at Crewe
- yes if it saved a second appliance
- It is possible it could be £2.19 well spent! Does it mean Crewe keeps its second fulltime appliance?
- The additional revenue should be spent on protecting the full-time firefighters / second pump in Crewe.
- Providing this money was not to pay increased salaries for senior officers
- I said yes, so long as Crewe keeps two full-time fire engines fully manned.
- I agree to this increase only if a second full time fire engine is retained at Crewe Fire Station
- Crewe needs to retain its present full time staff & engines. At least one other station in the District should be manned full time if costs allow.
- We do not want to lose the fire service but would disagree with any more cuts as lives will be put at risk. We hope that this extra money would be able to increase the firefighters so no lives would be lost
- We need to maintain the investment in core critical services that benefit all Council citizens.
- Vital public services must be maintained: in so many cases that now means crowd funding as central government progressively abandons its responsibilities.
- Surely no-one wants to pay more yet everyone wants an efficient Service. Providing the Service is being run efficiently there is no choice and consultation is a waste of time.
- I would support an increase of 2.99% if all fire stations were crewed whole time 24hrs per day
- For continued prevention and protection the fire service provides, the proposed increase I feel is well worth it.
- As long as monies spent on fire services and not on wages
- As long as this is being spent on fire services and not a big boost in wages
- Further funding is required to ensure a good provision of services.
- Agree providing the extra funding is actually used to enhance the overall facilities and resources; not used to simply increase the salaries of the top echelon!
- I would support this provided that the income generated by this increase went to front line services and not pay raises and bonuses for Senior Management.
- Rise in cost is inevitable in a free trade agreement that is within our society. Therefore to maintain the high standards of service provision by our fire service they must be funded correctly and proportionate to the overall requirements of supply and demand.
- I think it is essential to maintain a good emergency force
- Absolutely this is important but only if Crewe fire station stays as it is a full time station with the same number of fire engines. Crewe is its area needs this to happen.
- It may be that a lot of people in the East Cheshire region cannot afford any increase, but the maintenance of this type of service is extremely important.
- Living in a rural area I am concerned about how long it would take you to get here in an emergency given cuts etc. If this increase helps this for us and others, then we are in favour. You all do a great job
- If it helps to maintain essential services that's fine

- As one of the emergency service I'm happy to support the rise in precept. Assuming of course that other funding to the emergency services is not cut due to the increase of funding via this method.
- Provided that the whole of the 2.99% increase went directly to the Cheshire Fire Authority.
- As long as you keep the second full time team at Crewe. You can't ask more for less and for putting our lives at risk. If the second team remain then I'd pay a lot more
- I support it subject to quality of performance conditions. These conditions would include a report by an independent expert body as to whether (a) Cheshire Fire Authority's past performance showed they had efficiently used funds allocated to them in the past; (b) Ditto showing after a further 1 year that the funds now allocated to them had been and are being used efficiently; (c) That 3rd party influences, e.g. legislation, central and local government regulations and the enforcement or lack of enforcement of these regulations, e.g. the fire safety of industrial, educational and residential buildings etc., were not hindering the work of Cheshire Fire Authority. Otherwise I do not support the increase.
- I think we should ensure the present coverage and funding is maintained
- If it meant that it would secure the fire services within our local area then I would support this.
- This is a small price to pay per household to save this essential service. There have been a number of house fires locally recently and I dread to think what would have happened if Crewe had been reduced to one engine.
- As long as the increase definitely goes to the Fire Service
- As long as the money raised was used for this purpose and NOT lining the pockets of Councillors!
- I would support this increase, however I have seen my Fire cover reduce and I have now read your looking at reducing it further by reducing night cover at the new Warrington/Penketh station. I live in Widnes. So I support subject to no more reductions
- Worth every penny and if the addition funds enhance the service even more, it can only be a win-win for all of us
- This is a key, major service. Our fire fighters, who save lives, have to be 1st on the scene of fatal accidents...risk their own lives.... NEED more than this small amount of additional funds. But this is a step in the right direction if it goes towards reducing the risk of cuts to our fire service.
- Happy to be charged £2.19 p.a. if this helps towards us being safer in our home, and the authority enables the essential preventative, and emergency response measures that it says this amount will help fulfil.
- Happy to be charged £2.19 p.a. if this helps towards us being safer in our home, and the authority enables the essential preventative, and emergency response measures that it says this amount will help fulfil.
- Not unless Crewe retains 2 full time appliances. You can't have your cake and eat it
- While the fire and rescue service is something I have never had the need to use the fact they are there makes it value for money. The community work they are doing is vital from fitting smoke alarms to visiting school. The service along with all public sector has seen large real terms cuts in budgets and needs funding properly
- Worth every penny I'd hate to be in a queue for a fire engine like there are reports of people waiting hrs for ambulances
- Absolutely the correct thing to do! I'm sure we even need to discuss this. Great work by every one in the fire department.
- The fire service is essential and potentially life saving for everyone .We expect them to be "there" whenever we need them .They both need and deserve the extra money to maintain the service they provide??
- It is vital that Cheshire Fire & Rescue are properly funded.
- From what I have seen since I came to live in Chester 8 years ago the Cheshire Fire & Rescue provide an excellent service and one that is essential to all residents and motorists. This government has got its priorities wrong to a great extent. If National Government will not provide an increase in funding for such an emergency service then we, the public and beneficiaries, must contribute a little extra. The proposal has my full support.
- Please, please, please increase by 2.99% this is such a small price to pay for the vital service provided.
- Well worth the money
- £2.19 increase per year for the Fire service is perfectly reasonable.
- I would rather have small, annual increases than freezes for a longer period and a then a massive jump in taxes.
- This is a service I would prefer to have an increase even if they were to stay in the fire station most of the year, it is vital to the community both public and business -- one life saved is far better than one

lost --- if there is a need for cuts let it be in drug and gay groups that have chosen the lifestyle so let them fund it

- Well worth every penny
- I do agree providing it does not become the norm when you require extra funding.
- I will agree to £1 per month increase, matching the suggested increase to support policing.
- £2.19p doesn't even buy a pint of beer, so I would rather the fire service have the extra money.
- My husband and I definitely think you need the extra money. The work you do is invaluable.
- Emergency services must continue to be well funded if as a public we expect them to respond competently to our requirements.
- A very valuable service for which I am prepared to pay
- Firefighters do an excellent job and need support
- Funds are badly needed
- I can ill afford the increase but if we want public services we must pay for them
- As long as we see where this money is reinvested back into the Cheshire Fire Authority transparently
- We must ensure we keep and support our local emergency services, or lose them.
- Best investment we could make
- This is a guarded "yes" as you haven't given us much to go on. I agree that residents should plug the gap caused by a reduction in Central Government funding but you don't tell us how much this will be.
- A small price to pay for our safety, pity the government don't value people's lives in the same way, just a shower of crooks in Westminster
- The fire service provide a vital life saving service and I would have no problem paying the small increase.
- It would help Cheshire Fire Authority due to the cuts they have had in the last 7 years
- As much as I want to say no, it's all down to the Tory cuts and it's disgusting. But I support the fire authority and the way it's going about it.
- An increase of a drop in the ocean per household to fund this essential service.
- No brainer
- I understand the need to raise additional funding in this way - I just wish schools could do the same!!
- As long as it's not a year on year thing - we need the protection, but should find ways to prevent and ever increasing increase in bills
- A small price to pay for the added security
- It is important we support our local Authorities.
- I support this proposal. Though many see the 2.99% rise as excessive, for a band D property this equates to less than 20p per month, which would make very little difference to people (who I believe think the rise would equate to much more). I am, however, concerned that this money will be raised whilst services at Crewe fire station are cut. This move risks the lives and safety of residents and motorists, and for the rise in council tax and the cut in service provision to occur simultaneously seriously damages the reputation of Cheshire Fire Service.
- If it is necessary: so be it.
- I'd spend less than that on a meal deal for one day's lunch. Council tax goes up every year anyway, why should this be any difference? Just the last week has shown how much we need our local service!
- I am in favour of this, however, is it necessary? Cfrs have got millions in financial reserves and have built 3 new fire station, soon to be 4 (Chester) with plans for a new station at Crewe. On top of this there is a new training centre being built. But cuts to the frontline have continued?
- Absolutely!
- All the emergency services are vital to the safety and well-being of all residents of this country and I have no qualms in agreeing to whatever amount of money they need to carry out their services in a safe manner to both themselves and residents.
- For the service you provide to us all the increase is more than justifiable especially when on many occasions there a lives at risk of those Officers saving and the public being saved.
- For the Service you provide, although I/we have been lucky enough in not having to use, I believe the increase is not unreasonable, especially when there are lives at stake. Good luck
- Money well spent.
- The Fire Service is the only one I would vote yes to. Ambulances don't turn up, and police are a waste of money - they are not impartial. The Fire Service is always there and completely undervalued
- Why 2.99%? Your not in the supermarket business are you?!?!?! Increase it by a full 3%. What's £2.20 in the scale of things? And it's AN YEAR!! Not a day, not a week, not a month. It's AN YEAR!!

£.0060 a day!!! It's not going to break the bank surely!! People who can afford it won't blink an eyelid. People who say they can't afford it probably spend a lot more than this on cigarettes, alcohol and sugary drinks. If someone can prove to me that they genuinely can't afford it I'll give them £2.20 myself. I think we get a bargain for our money. If my house was on fire or my family were involved in a RTC I'd prefer to see the service arrive quickly in a recent, well maintained truck than slowly, or not at all, on some rusty, smoky old second hand Scania. Same goes for the NHS and the ambulances. We must support our services. Thank you for reading my rant :)

- Protecting ourselves against the risks and devastation of fire must be paid for. I am happy to pay.
- It's a small price to pay to ensure we have an effective Fire Service.
- I look upon the fire and rescue service as cheap insurance considering the crews put themselves in danger when needed. this entitles them to have the best and latest equipment available and this can only be paid for by adequate funding year on year
- I am permanently bed ridden and their concern and care is excellent. The advice given and the smoke alarms are crucial not to mention their action and response in a crisis. Who can begrudge them?
- They are worth their weight in gold and so caring. A real community service.
- My husband and I both believe that taxation should be raised for everyone to cover essential services and that the upper tax rate should be raised further. Those in lower income brackets who are already struggling to make ends meet should not suffer further undue hardship to compensate shortfall.
- I am loathe to see any increase as many people will struggle to pay this, however, pragmatically, with the Government's austerity measures and cuts, this seems to be the only way to continue to provide essential services
- I would support an overall increase in Income Tax for EVERYONE in the UK - to finance not only local fire and police services, but also the NHS, national transport infrastructure, and defence. An increase of between 1p and 5p in the pound should do it!
- Fire authorities are a necessity to all categories of everyday life & increases should be supported without question. What price do you put on every life saved?
- I would be happy to pay this increase. We have recently seen the effects of underfunded fire services in the media, I am not wealthy but feel this is important.
- Seems reasonable and is a lot less than the police propose increasing their precept by.
- This is a very reasonable increase for the safety the Fire Authority provides.
- It is obvious that service isn't able to meet its obligations under emergency conditions. One way or another the funding must be available!
- I recognise the value of the fire services in such a wide variety of ways, including motoring incidents, and other rescue situations. I think it should be funded to keep up with modern equipment and eventualities.
- I have no objection of paying extra council tax for essential services like NHS type services, Fire and Refuse collection etc but not impressed with the council Fat Cats getting big pay increases!!
- We need to give the fire authority a budget they can work with.
- Although the fire service is perceived to have crews sat playing pool whilst waiting for a job, I know this is rarely the case as they do safety testing and training when not on call-outs. If more than 3% is needed, then it should be taken also. I'd rather have too many crews, than not enough.
- Public services are important and need to be paid for.
- It will be money that the service need.
- They deserve it they put their lives on the line ....
- This service should be paid for by ALL WHO LIVE HERE in Cheshire not just rate payers.
- I live on The Deck and we have had to call the fire brigade many times recently, if the extra funding means that we continue to get good service it is worth it for me to feel safe.
- Essential services should be adequately funded
- Such a shame that we have to resort to asking the public for more money, but times are hard and it's worth it
- This is a small amount to pay for such a great service.
- It is ridiculous to expect quality services 24/7 if we are not prepared to pay the men and women who risk their lives an appropriate salary and the necessary equipment to do their job
- The fire service do more than attend fires. All services come at a price I am happy to contribute my share towards those costs.
- I think this is a great idea
- It is not unreasonable to have a higher increase as the services are required by all and not openly wasted.

- £2, or so, per year is a small price to pay for maintaining a good and efficient service.
- I'm happy to pay extra to assist with the good job that you do and especially if it will fund additional staff.
- Totally in favour of supporting the fire service
- I think all of the emergency services get far less than they should
- Essential services should receive support on this issue.
- Happy to support. Fire fighters provide an essential service and should have the funding they need.
- I do support an increase but think that 2.99% alongside the police proposal to increase and social care precept will mean almost a 9% increase to council tax payers which many can not afford
- I think it's terrible that the government's solution to its own austerity cuts is to tax us more. However, the fire service is an essential and life-saving resource and £2 more a month seems like a contribution I could easily make without noticing the sting too much. That said, if education, the police, the NHS etc are all granted the same privileges then it is going to start having an impact. I lose about a third of my wages through tax and other deductions. It's not like the government aren't raking it in. I think they should match whatever extra contribution you ask of us. So in conclusion, yes I am in support.
- You need every penny you can get for a great service that you provide for such a dangerous job that you do.
- All the EMERGENCY services, for that's what they are, deserve every penny so I have no problem paying that little bit extra to ensure they will be there if I need them
- Think our Emergency Services do a remarkable job under difficult circumstances and with ever-decreasing resources. Even though I am a pensioner, I would rather see my money go to them than other bodies.
- This seems a small price to pay to contribute to fire safety.
- Emergency services need every penny in today's climate
- I would be quite happy to pay the increase for your excellent service. I was unfortunate to be involved in a car accident and your service were the first to get to me and gave me excellent and thoughtful attention. Thank you.
- The Fire Service is very important and currently under funded.
- These are universal and essential services which have to be paid for. Whilst no one welcomes increased living costs, there are some services which we simply cannot do without.
- I would support an increase of double the percentage if it was presented, the fire service deserve as big a slice of the council tax as they desire.
- It's an essential service that we all hope we'll never need but wouldn't hesitate to call if we did need them. I don't agree with waste services charging more to collect less often but when it comes to police and fire services they should have the resources they need
- With resources spread as thinly as they are any extra funding for emergency services is a good thing
- I support it because the funding is absolutely necessary, but I think the under-investment by our appalling government in essential public services, necessitating this, is completely shocking.
- Worth every penny
- Considering the dangerous work undertaken by the firemen who risk their lives to save ours, I consider it a small amount to pay.
- We need to support a well resourced fire service.
- An increase of approx. £2.19 per year seems a low amount to help support an essential service that might save a life so would be happy to pay the increase.
- Would fully support a 2.99% increase
- This is a very regressive tax that hits the poorest in the community the most. If you don't care about people having to find the extra money then go ahead and vote for the higher increase.
- You all seem to think that you all deserve a bigger slice of the cake up to whatever limit central government sets.
- There has been recent strong and local (Liverpool) information that operational services have been impacted on by cuts. We must retain a safe and reliable service
- Police need more funding
- Shame. 2.99% doesn't seem to add up to much. I know 250k is a lot of money but in the context of Cheshire it's not a lot of extra funding.
- Valuable work done in the Community.
- The fire service is trying to do more and more all the time with less and less. It either needs to go back to basics or have a bigger share of the public purse.

- It's a crime that this financial burden is placed on the poorest of this country. The Tories are strangling the poor whilst they Line their pockets. I will always support the emergency services for the personal sacrifices made. Thank you!
- enough cuts have been made
- It is not clear if this is a proposal for an increased share of a fixed sum against the interests of other agencies such as highways or an increase in the total sum to be raised. I would not object to a rise in total precept of this size but if it is a question only of allocation of limited resources, I do not feel qualified to offer a view.
- I am not sure if this is merely a question of taking a larger share of a fixed sum as against other priorities such as highways or as an authority to raise a larger total tax.
- You do a good job
- This is an essential service!
- If you were to raise the precept by 1.99% What services would be lost that not be if the increase were 2.99%
- I think Chester & Ellesmere Port Fire Service gives us a wonderful service, the odd occasion when my husband or I have needed help or advice, they have been very quick in responding and helping us.
- I'm fed up with the government cutting public services to the bone.
- Without clear information on how it is to be allocated it is difficult to give an opinion.
- I have to ask and understand the Governmet are happy for a 3% increase without any proposals but if Fire, Police, etc adopt a 3% increase it adds up. What I ask is the Local Government are not asking for uplift & have already lost more than 300 employees this year where does this leave one. Is it we have fire, police but NO support from our Local Council.
- Purely because it will become Police as well as fire and anyone else who can claim it, e.g. Social care.
- Having completed all the questions came back to this point to ask what on earth were all the other questions about. they had nothing to do with the question DID I AGREE TO THE INCREASE
- But why not the full 3% - 2.99% just seems like the pricing structure used in shops to make people physiologically feel it's cheaper.
- Is this raise coming out of the total council tax? Or is it an extra amount on top of next year's council tax? An extra 3 % on top of the police and general council tax could well end up being a substantial amount for tax payers. We need to see the total picture before supporting this. Completely
- I am sure that costings etc would stand up to robust scrutiny and it would seem that the increase is not out of kilter with other services viz a viz railway fares and the like. What about cash-strapped NHS? How many fires could not be attended within - say - 30 minutes?
- Whilst I appreciate funds are cut for our essential service this increase is huge for our household we per year at a time when we are on wage freezes.
- Why was this not proposed first, or do you just put it up to the max. for the year?
- Like the Police They Both Need Extra
- Provided to stay fire and rescue service
- Think of Crewe as an example, large population, many centres of employment including industrial sites, lots of educational establishments, busy railway lines, very heavy traffic on M6 nearby etc etc and very little fire and rescue cover proposed.
- Why do the Fire Authority need more money when the demand for their services continues to reduce?
- I value the services that you provide for the community. Thank you for continuing to serve your communities and helping us. I appreciate you all.
- It is a vital service that if compromised, could be fatal!
- Here is an opportunity to look at how to improve efficiency within the Fire Authority.
- Because each time there is an increase service levels seem to go down or we are hit with a charge for a service that was previously included.
- This tory government will not care if there are no police or fire up north.got to help ourselves
- A similar option should be available for the Ambulance and Police services.
- My pension hasn't increased by this amount!
- Local funding is important for local services
- The proposed usage of the suggested increased precept may be desirable and for which a supportive argument can, no doubt, be conjured. However, the ordinary person on the street is often faced with urgent and desirable needs, but has to ask the question - Can I actually afford this expenditure? If the answer is in the negative, there is no alternative but to go without. I suggest the Fire Authority adopt



the same approach and ask themselves whether they think the man in the street can afford this extra expenditure in these financially straightened times!

- If anyone says no then they're clearly a Tory.
- Provides an excellent and much needed service
- An essential service.
- It would have been useful and more likely to produce a positive response overall if the Authority gave some idea of the difference in the service provided between both scenarios.
- As with every organisation sound financing is needed but we hope that all increases affecting particularly small businesses are considered carefully. A comment I would like to put forward for consideration: Continental Fire Services are also supported by voluntary fire services who train just as well as our Sea rescue services. Maybe having a look at the Continental systems would help to save costs in the long run, increase local community cohesion and assist people in new skills and taking on responsibilities.
- Important to provide the best possible service, including the most modern equipment and practices
- As a NHS WORKER I have little sympathy with wages paid to other essential services
- But if money is so tight why have Warrington Borough Council spent £200 million on buying Birchwood Park????.
- An essential service to the community.
- My answer is yes and no. I fully accept that all public services are short of cash and that you could make good use of extra money, but it's a balancing act. I would like to know which services that Halton Borough Council provide to me and my family will cut when they are told that CFA are getting a bigger chunk of the money.
- All emergency services are essential to the safety of people and property and do an excellent job
- Questions on gender, ethnic background etc. have no relevance to the question being asked. Please leave out of future questionnaires.
- Would be reassuring to have more permanently manned fire stations
- We have to put our safety and security first.
- Fires only need to happen ONCE - death, injury, loss of everything results from poor Fire Service support
- In Cheshire we pay more for fire than other fire authorities such as Greater Manchester yet have less fire cover. Why is that?
- However, it would be very helpful to understand by how much central government funding has been reduced, as I have nothing to gauge this request against. That is the first question I asked myself. And no, I don't have the time to go searching for that information. Nor, do I expect, does anyone else in this mad world of ours.
- But only if the overall cost of council tax stayed the same - the council don't provide services to the community apart from bin emptying so should give the 2.99% to the fire service from their share
- All though we have a very good fire service. Due to cuts we see a depleted staff service. Government hold responsibility to ensure services are fit for purpose and as such fund the service to be fit for purpose. We have seen recently new fire stations opening up, were these a necessary cost?
- If councils did not spend money on stupid things and councilors pay/expenses increases to themselves, which are very high this increase should not be necessary and of course the purchase of the Birchwood Chopping Centre with hidden costs they forgot to mention, put all the above with the reduction in services, and the fact we now have to pay for our green garden waste bins to be emptied, this rise is totally inappropriate and should be covered by the current rates we pay.
- The Fire Authority gives no reason why it wants more money.
- Assuming the appropriate financial controls and supervision of expenditure are in place.
- Don't think they have no choice
- I don't think this can be commented on in isolation. As someone on a modest fixed income I need to know what other increases are being made to Council Tax and to any other precepts eg Police. I would like to just agree as we need a decent properly manned and equipped Fire and Rescue Service as we do all emergency services.
- They seemed happy to increase it by 1.99%. The Council Tax has gone up considerably in the past couple of years and I'm hoping it won't go up again.
- Questions 5 & 10 are totally needless.
- So the fire service want all of the 2.99% precept the Government allows before consultation. What about other services?
- The local fire station has recently been merged to save cost.

- Like a lot of living costs this increase won't be popular with many but cuts are laying the country to waste and making it look decidedly tatty. Big fires like at the Echo Arena car park illustrate that major emergencies are increasingly hard to protect against due to these cuts so yes I agree and with the extra £1 for the police but many won't.
- Any cuts / cost savings should be applied to Cheshire East council who are inefficient, useless and corrupt
- This is in line with the current rate of inflation.
- Cuts to Emergency Services puts lives at risk.
- I have no knowledge of finances required to sustain the service but know it is a vital service, and the preventative measures taken are essential for awareness and safety. Something we all value in an emergency.
- Fire Authority are talking about removing second full time tender from Crewe fire station. This I don't support. It's putting people in danger.
- What metrics are available for comparing the efficient management of fixed costs by Cheshire vs the other regional Services?
- only if councillors don't take a pay rise
- I think it's an invaluable service but my biggest concern is policing, Halton needs more police in the area, too many youths carrying weapons and violent crimes on the increase.
- Perhaps the management team could travel standard class like the civil service, instead of first class, to reduce their spending. And reduce catering costs for meetings as the civil service.
- Without them many People would not have survived or will not if the F & R services decide not to do their job.
- The cfrs provides a wonderful service, i definitely believe that the free smoke alarms and general safety advice given by the service is beneficial in reducing the number of fires to our area. The fire service teams are a great asset to the area and should not be underestimated ,
- ONLY IF THE LOCAL FIRE SERVICE CAN PROVIDE FIGURES SHOWING THE NUMBER OF FIREMEN/WOMEN/OFFICERS EMPLOYED, THE NUMBER OF HOURS SPENT SITTING AROUND DOING NOTHING WAITING FOR CALL-OUTS AND THIS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WORKING HOURS, THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS ATTENDED DURING 2017, THE NUMBER AND TYPE OF VEHICLES EMPLOYED AND THE COST OF RENEWALS/REPLACEMENTS DURING THE COMING FISCAL YEAR. A LOCAL POLICE OFFICER HAS SAID "MUCH OF THE TIME SPENT INSIDE THE FIRE STATIONS COULD BE GAINFULLY USED EXTERNALLY AS IS DONE IN FRANCE, BELGIUM AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, CLEANING UP BUILDINGS , PAVEMENTS AND PUBLIC MASONRY DISPLAYS AS WELL AS EDUCATING THE PUBLIC AND SCHOOLS IN FIRE SAFETY"
- Police asking for the same
- The current govt have for the last few years cut local funding to threadbare levels causing all public services to be underfunded. Much more needs to be done to increase the tax take i.e.: chase corporate tax evaders & dodgers so our public services can be financed properly. The current govt refuses to invest in local services - a change to Labour govt would reverse this situation
- Essential services cannot be cut any further.
- Not in support should Warrington Borough Council decision to increase tax by 5.99% be granted.
- Think the money should be given to the NHS ambulance service.
- Personally think the service should look internally to make savings and not pass it on to the public. The number of call outs and reported fires are decreasing year on year. So if the fire service is not spending the money attending to incidents then what is it wasting money on?
- I do believe that cuts could be made internally. The fire service cannot say if it struggling with the "cut backs" how many brand new stations have be built?
- I believe the authority has sufficient reserves that it could use that this is unnecessary
- The Fire Service should stick to its primary role of firefighting, fire risk education and their role in road traffic accidents. It seems to be reinventing itself as a public and schools education service in all things affecting daily public safety. We all know that actual firefighting has reduced (thanks to education/better alarms) so the service should be contained not expanded on the Public Purse.
- not while wholetime firefighter numbers are decreasing
- Appreciate a rise may be required but my pay rise was 1%. Cannot afford CF putting up by 2.99% then Police putting theirs up and Council putting the precept up. Something has to give
- Pay enough tax and council tax! Joke
- Not unless you declare what the increase will be used for
- I do not want to pay more for a service that is being reduced

- Why pay more for less service and for the Fire Authority to hold more reserves that they won't spend.
- As the consultation process for the precept had already began, the Government announcement should have no bearing on this years proposal and should remain at 1.99%.
- CFRS should use their accumulation of reserves before asking for more. Sheer greed.
- My minimum wage household can no longer cope with any further council tax increases.
- You put to increase by 2.99% because if you did 3% the public would vote no so it wouldn't go through. Start by making your pensions lower why should we pay for this when we get nothing like your pension. I think you got some front to suggest this increase. I say no no no. I am writing to my np to lobby him to stop this.
- Assuming your original assessment was meaningful CFA should adhere to the 1.99% proposal and disregard government's random interference in local authority good management
- The public should not have to pay for the shortfall of the government.
- Council tax is too expensive as it is for the poor services we receive.
- sick and tired of excuse after excuse by people that are masters in bad management, the new toll bridge has generated cash through fines so stop robbing the public and dip into the fines pot, cut your staff because I tell you this now! I'm not standing for this kind of crap no more!!  
#thepeopleofhaltonarebeingrobbedblind
- The money required should come from abolishing the police commissioners and their offices and staff and pensions and running costs - as far as I can see they don't do anything except send out emails - they are one additional unnecessary layer of bureaucracy - the old watch committee used to do the same job for nothing - local business men ran it with the police chief.
- I think the Fire Brigade have a big enough budget already
- Cant afford it I struggle as it is. We no fire services and other services need the help but we aren't the one to provide that
- Why pay more when there is plenty of money at the top. Take it from the foreign aid and millions we send to India and such like places.
- How can the fire authority propose an increase in revenue when they are cutting front line services and sitting on huge reserves? If the proposed increase was guaranteed to go to increasing front line service I would support it but not while the cuts are being applied
- When will this all stop
- The fire service have enough money sat in their bank and an increase is not needed. They needs to find savings like everyone else does.
- We already pay over the odds - you need to make changes to allow the shortfall to be found elsewhere - start charging people for the smoke alarm fitting!
- This is just another way of supporting a Chief Officer and his allies on the Fire Authority who have spent nothing on supporting fire fighting in their efforts to destroy the fire service and a total disregard to lifesaving.
- No. The cuts are down to the government and should not be left to the public to fill the gap.
- The government can pay! Pay enough income tax and council tax as it is!
- How do you expect people to be able to afford these rises every year? Enough is enough council tax bills are becoming as expensive as a mortgage and we are seeing less and less for it.
- I don't agree with this as the benefit will be to those who live in Crewe and paid for by the whole of cheshire east.
- You should be looking to save money not spend more.
- happy with the service now, would rather the money spent on other public services
- Make the savings internally!
- Why does the fire service need more money? It's not like your strapped for cash with all the brand new stations! Why should the public pay more!
- Money could be better spent with other services such as the ambulance service.
- The fire service keeps saying it needs more funding and how the government cut backs had affected the capabilities. However how many brand new stations have been built in Elsmere port/Warrington/Lymm and then the extra funding to improve Chester fire station can the fire service explain how the 5 million pounds will be spent in one station? And how it will improve the service to the public? I do believe extra savings could be made internally and not passed on to the public. There are other public services which are in desperate need of funding who are dealing with people and incidents every day not the occasional incident which the fire service are needed.
- The money should be coming from central gov not members of the public. Yet again Police now Fire what's next you cannot keep asking the local resident to fund this.

- You propose to reduce the service in Crewe to one full time tender and then want to increase your cut of the pot. What a damned cheek??
- Too expensive - the police will add theirs next and so on- im getting no rise again this year. No money left. Find the savings even if you cut the expensive company cars for the top people.
- the rate is high enough
- I strongly object to the current level of property tax. I supported the poll tax idea of everyone paying the equivalent of 2 pints of beer a week to support local services. My husband and I have always lived within our means, and are now living on a tightening budget. I object to being penalised for housing my family.
- You have £35 million you in reserve , use that
- Instead of raising the precept, sell off its HQ and go the whole hog with the police in the alliance that was proposed a couple of years ago. What was the point of the half hearted collaboration that we ended up with, thousands of pounds wasted!!!!
- Just because you can increase up to 3% doesn't mean you have to make that high an increase. Has anyone's wages increased by that much or has a person's pension increased by 3%? No. Think of those people who have limited resources before making these increases. Just because someone lives in a large house doesn't mean they are wealthy, it just means they can't live anywhere else.
- The reason I put no is we pay enough council tax ... our boroughs roads are the worst by far they are not being maintained bins are not emptied a lot of the time so take the extra that is required from the bin percentage and the budget for the highways as this is not being spent in Crewe and Nantwich!!
- I do not support the increase of my council tax for 2018/19, but would suggest a realignment of the funds currently provided to the Fire Authority. Living in Lymm, there does not appear to be an adequate amount of council services for the provision of cleaning pathways/draining grids along the A roads. Therefore the money paid to the council for such things, should be diverted to the Fire Authority, unless of course the council are going to use their share of council tax and actually clean the pathways/draining grids?????
- While I agree that it is wrong by the current government to have stopped the annual capital grant. There should be pressure applied to have it reinstated not asking council tax payers to pay more.
- This looks like a grab for money rather than part of a considered financial plan.
- My tax is too high already
- I think that increase is too much.
- Cut down on admin, management staff and live within your means like the rest of us.
- I have other priorities that I would prefer to support - such as the care of older people. I would like to see a massive re-evaluation of the pay of chief execs and their senior staff in the public and private sector to ensure that pay reflects actual worth and not jobs for the boys/girls at over-inflated and unrealistic levels - note the protected and greedy pay structures for senior execs in Carillion. My own priority would be for care of the elderly at above the minimum wage.
- Whilst being sympathetic to the challenges being met by public services generally I think there is still more to be done in terms of cutting out waste and improving efficiency and collaboration - especially in terms of sharing resources/assets with police forces.
- no feck off no further hikes in tax take money from the overseas aid budget
- I work and receive and have a child with additional needs. I live literally on the bread line as many folks do and I struggle to pay my council tax already £100 a month I can't afford another raise in the bill otherwise it's bailiffs at the door for me
- I would like to see inefficiency removed and more streamlined ways of working before any increase are even considered
- Absolutely not. The Cheshire Fire Authority must already have had plans to provide essential prevention, protection and emergency response services with the budget at 1.99% or they were not providing a duty of care to the public. Without a detailed breakdown of what the extra funding would be spent on then this purely looks like an opportunistic money grab.
- Given the fact Cheshire Fire Authority already have 40million surplus and they are cutting service no I would not agree to paying more. It is time our services became accountable to it users and started to listen to there concerns.
- I am already paying over £1600 a year the police also want us to pay more ,what are we getting for our money the council is very keen on spending money on projects I would the government to be giving taxpayers money to provide services and help fire and police not ask us to pay more for lesser service

- Perhaps I don't understand the figures..? But if the initial plan was 1.99% why is there a need to go to 2.99% purely on the basis that the government have now allowed up to 3%. Is this you just saying we are allowed up to 3% without a referendum so let's have it?
- All areas of the local authority including police and fire depts need to make greater cost savings and secure more money from the Chancellor not hit the local community via increased rates as this makes some of the poorest and elderly residents in Cheshire fork out a compulsory amount they cannot afford
- Why would I support this when I am getting far less fire cover than I got 18 months ago. 1 Water ladder covering population of 332,200 in 2014 which I am sure has risen since then in one of the most historical cities in the country. 10 minute attendance time which is consistently not being met. Value for money you have got to be kidding. Building new stations investing in your building stock when you really need more Firefighters.
- If 1.99% (which I would support) was enough before the government changed the rules, an additional 1% smacks of opportunism. Given these days of stagnant incomes, it is a rise too far
- Whilst I appreciate the work the fire authority does, I am sick and tired of seeing never ending increases in council tax and the precepts, we pay enough.
- 1.99 % yes
- We all have to live with cuts and increases in living expenses. My wages have not been above 1% for the last few years (a manager in Education). It might not be related to this particular Fire budget but the new station at Lymm is an architect's dream- and an expensive one. A curved building is more expensive than a 'straight' one. The time it must have taken to install the wood 'cladding' I can only imagine --over the cost for a basic brick wall?
- Like many others in Halton everything about our daily living is on the increase. I would like to know your suggestion as to how we fund these increases as many are on minimum wage, unemployed or like myself receiving a government pension. The police service are proposing a similar increase in their portion of the council tax. There are many workers who have not themselves had wage rises for a number of years. I myself would not like to pay anymore for the services we currently get but to see the councils and unions get together and force this government to fund the police service responsibly.
- No pay rises for fat cats
- It is easy to spend other people's money. Budgetary consultation should start from NEED not ability to raise more money and spend it. I have seen alternate means of managing the fire risk implemented already. I am not sure that more funds are needed.
- Already Cheshire east council and Nantwich council are raising their taxes. Along with the police and now the fire service. Families are being squeezed to the absolute max. I am a nurse who has not had a pay rise for over 8 years. Cheshire east are not making it easy to continue to live in the county. I fully support the first service and the police but if we are being told to be more resourceful then sorry so should you.
- The money should come from increased grants to Cheshire East, not cuts.
- On a low income & my rates are high enough without increases.
- Cheshire Fire Authority needs to streamline services and 'cut its cloth according to its budget' and not see council tax payers as cash cows to be milked annually for more and more funding! The Fire Authority needs to urgently downsize its back office bureaucracy, gold plated final salary pensions and its extensive property portfolio to meet current economic conditions. New competent management need to be brought in to effect these urgently needed changes.
- I would love to say yes, but I am on a fixed retirement budget, what with the council increase, police increase and know the fire service, I don't have the income to pay it
- This is ahead of inflation and gives no credit for monies spent on efficiency gains in previous years.
- Year on year - when does it stop?
- I am struggling to pay my council tax as it is so another 2.99% I could in no way afford.
- No to Council tax increases for as long as the Cheshire East Mayor lords it in his Chauffeur driven Bentley. When he gets rid of that and the Council also reviews its internal spending policy....then maybe just maybe I could agree to an increase. Also is the Fire service website a little too grand for what it needs to be....bet that costs a fair amount! Cost saving....works wonders
- Cannot understand the logic behind imposing greater burden on council tax payers when pay rises still fall below the proposed increase.
- too much
- I support the fire service and the work that they do. However this last minute increase to request to the maximum possible (without invoking further consultation) when the previous plan and request for a lower amount was deemed 'manageable' seems to be unnecessary. Whilst obviously the more

funding received the more money available to provide the service, the original request was for c.1% lower and this should stand. In addition I do not support this transfer of method of funding which sees government funding reduce (with no correlating reduction for citizens) and civil/private funding increase. During these times of austerity the government vowed to protect front line emergency services. They should be challenged to maintain funding for the fire service and maybe save money with further efficiencies in non core areas rather than "palming off cost" to the public just because this method exists rather than say establishing a pay as you use service in other areas.

- Council tax is already too high.
- Use the 280 thousand reserve pot
- Where will it end
- If the precept of 1.99 is considered adequate and the government is allowing UPTO 3% then I fail to see why asking for the maximum is considered necessary. With company pension pegged at 1% per annum for the last 6 years even the 1.99% is eroding the income of fixed income persons. NOT supported.
- Presumably the authority had presented its calculations for its agreed share of the council tax (its precept) for 2018/19. Without the authority providing a revised budgeted proposal to why it NEEDS the further increase of 1.0% from 1.99% to 2.99%. It seems that they do not wish to miss out on this increase and no doubt will find some way of disposing of this unexpected "bounty"
- Rate payers on minimum wage and pensioners are under enough pressure from rising prices you should demand the government increase taxation to pay
- Surely the budget for the fire authority was set prior to the government announcement that the percentage could be increased. Peoples wages are not increasing by anything close to 3%
- I am a pensioner and any increase in council tax would be another burden on the cost of living.
- This level of increase is unnecessary and unjustified in such austere times. Cheshire West and Chester Council need to manage their affairs better. Any increase could then be paid for from savings which could be made.
- I firmly believe that 1.99% is adequate to meet the demand and any more required must be sourced from payable organised events for the public.
- The increase will end up driving up salaries not for additional resource. Thus further making life hard for everyone who is not in the public sector and does not get these kind of pay increases.
- Funding should be increased by Government funding not local councils. Fire authorities should be National and show united front.
- There is not enough explanation or information to explain why you would increase the cost, and decrease the provision locally. I appreciate there is natural inflation but in the documents I don't think there is a strong enough message or simple enough explanation as to what is planned. Yes times are hard but it just doesn't tell the story of how you have tried every option before putting tax up.
- They should stick to what they were going to raise which was 1.99% Instead they have all of a sudden without any reason increased this by another 50% to just below the maximum of 3% This is the reason authorities got into the overspending and had to be controlled by central government
- Council tax increased by large amount last year and pensioners on fixed incomes do not need another price hike.
- I am a pensioner and that is all this government is doing. Getting people to live on less and less money, while prices for food are rising all the time.
- The 1.99% proposed increase would have been more fitting with general inflation (which has increased lately). Also it would have been coped with, so a shame to put it up to the maximum, just because you can.
- The amount of council tax now being proposed for Band D and above is not something I support. It becomes more difficult for people to pay and does not improve services but merely gives license for more bureaucracy and unaccountable budget increases. Until services become more efficient and front ended for the public I see no reason for the tax to continually be increased just because they can be. Thank you for asking.
- We pay enough tax already, the government need to use the money with less waste
- As pensioners it adds another charge
- Just because the government has changed the percentage goal posts to 3% shouldn't mean that it is fair to increase the original percentage by 1%, the Authority had obviously originally set the precept to 1.99% which would supposedly cover their original budgeting.
- The incidence of fires has reduced substantially compared to ten years ago. So, without further justification I fail to see why the fire service should receive a higher fraction of my council taxes, compared to, for example, library and social services.



- A permissible increase is not permission. 'Extra' cash needs to fund future preventive savings or to plug an agreed hole in the service which is recognised by the public.
- We are taxed enough in every day life and we now only have one income in the household due to myself being ill but unable to access my pension.
- Having just moved from a band B to E property the massive increase is already enough to manage!
- Slippery slope - would be the first of many small increases for all sorts of reasons adding up to a longer term significant increase
- 2.99% is too much of an increase - would prefer the Fire Service to cut overheads instead including middle management
- I object to this proposal, not because I wish to deny the Authority the funds it needs, but because Government policy is substantially shifting the burden of costs on to the shoulders of Council Tax payers. Due to the nature of council taxation, those living in larger properties will carry an increased burden without necessarily having the resources to pay it. Given Local Authorities are now able to increase their share of council tax by a much higher percentage, plus the addition for social care, along with the Police precept increasing as well, this process needs to stop. My argument is with central government policy, but I must also resist your consequent proposals as part of that.
- because you can does not seem to be a proper reason for the greater increase
- Suggest increase of 2%
- Why not go 3 percent and have a proper public vote. I is it because you know your will not get the support. How about a pay cut to bring you in line with the rest of the zero hour minimum wage populace
- It seems cynical to propose increases up to the highest level allowable before a referendum is needed. There is insufficient information provided to allow me to ascertain whether the increase will be to increase pay of existing staff or whether there is a genuine growth in service provision.
- I rarely have dealings with CFA so have no feel for any added value or services that would come from the suggested increase.
- Reductions should be made in other areas to account for this as this is required for the authorities to do their job
- If you thought the smaller increase was enough then why now ask for more
- The Council are increasing Council Tax, the Police are going to increase their precept. If you genuinely believe that a 2.99% Rise is required why not increase it by 3% and a have a referendum. Increasing it by anything less and in particular by 0.01 below the level at which public consent is required is a back door and devious way of pretending you have a public mandate without giving the Cheshire Public a genuine vote at a referendum. Whilst I agree that Cheshire Fire and Rescue need to be adequately funded the majority of ordinary Cheshire Public are at a breaking point in terms of demands by authorities for more and more money. You should be lobbying central government reducing managerial bureaucracy and seeking shared service savings. If a raise is then genuinely required you should seek a public mandate via a referendum.
- How can you increase charges by that much when peoples salaries are not increasing, you are obviously just greedy because you were setting the increase to 1.99% then jumped on the "greed" band wagon because it was suggested that you could ask for more, absolute rip off.
- Council tax is already becoming unaffordable.
- Like everyone else, the Authority has to work within its budgets. It cannot, and should not, just think that it can keep increasing the precept to cover its profligate spending plans. The taxpayers of the Authority are not seeing their salaries or pensions increasing and are& being taxed above and beyond what is fair or morally just.
- If I understand it right the fire Authority wanted an increase of 1.99% so why do you now want 2.99%, I'm happy to support your original increase but don't understand why you now want more.
- Unfortunately this increase would put a lot of financial pressure on people
- If it means increasing the council tax residents pay, then no, I don't agree. I do believe the fire service should receive more funding. Cheshire East has failed consistently to manage its senior employees and have wasted monies on raising councillors pay, increasing own pay and failing to deliver. They should be investigated for fraud.
- Work within your allocated budget. I don't receive an increase in salary.
- Although a very small rise, in line with all other public and private services implementing similar rises at a time when public sector wages in real terms have decreased significantly is unfair and unsustainable for the average household. It's time the conservative government filled the funding gap to keep us safe

- It not about the money I value your service and you do a excellent job but I think your being greedy because the government said you can have 3% you have to go for 0.01 % less at 2.99% you did you risk assessment and got 1.99% stick with it and don't take more than you need.
- Where do I get the money to pay for the increase. I am a Pensioner and suffered an increase in council charge last year. It is my contention that all Pensioners should be exempt. Your increase in my opinion is cynical. ALL rises in such taxes locally should be referendum based.
- This looks like opportunism rather than putting up a real need for more money. You had planned to manage without it
- I am a pensioner on a fixed income and any additional cost would cause me a problem. Therefore I cannot support an increase.
- Not needed reduce costs
- I am oap my band is G i cannot pay anymore
- Then where does this stop. 2.99% this year and how much next year. It never will be enough and households are stretched enough as it is.
- My pay is not increasing by this much. 1% will do thanks. What the hell have questions 4 to 10 got to do with this?
- Whilst agreeing that the Fire Service is a much needed service, as pensioners in limited income and seeing prices increasing and products such as food, toiletries etc also getting smaller and utility bills rising, we are feeling the pinch, Also, the Police are also asking for an increase in their share of council tax. We feel that more pressure should be put on the government to 'cough up'.
- Likewise with my comment regarding police. Council tax increases year after year, where is this money going, not increasing their wage. Cut the counsellors and their wage. There is your saving. Warrington Borough Council have enough money. What is this Parish contribution that appears on the council tax bill. That gets the majority of money, cut that instead. I live on my own, work full time and pay enough.
- I would support a 1.5% rise.
- We are taxed enough as it is.
- Just because the government have decided to increase the limit from 2 to 3% before requiring a referendum, doesn't mean you should now try and increase your precept to the maximum you possibly can. It is opportunistic of you to put it bluntly.
- Tax is already expensive enough. As some one who works in the public sector and not had a pay rise for over 7 years and finds it tough enough to pay the bills this is too much to ask. I agree that the service need investment but not by adding more financial hardship on people who are already struggling.
- Should be funded by central government
- The Police require more, and now the fire brigade and we need more for elderly care etc. The elderly and police would get my vote for an increase this year.
- I have not seen any justification for increasing funding
- Increase in funds disappear in pay raises
- Please find savings in your operation.
- I think maybe it's time you started using your reserves, I'm having to use mine!
- Not until I learn what reduction in funding the fire authority have experienced in the past two years before answering the question.
- The government already raise enough money by other forms of taxation to fund public services and I fail to see the reason why ordinary working people should have to dig further into their own resources to cover the costs of public services that the government has already taken from us
- The government should provide the extra funding
- Robbing gits. Cut there pensions instead. My pay is on a downward trend yet bills on upward trend. Not sustainable
- I do not have enough information to judge what level of investment is sufficient to sustain and where necessary invest in services. I don't have the business case for the medium term strategy and understand what is needed investment wise, what can be funded by savings and reserves and what by Government grant.
- This should be funded by central government. Tell the f...ers in treasury to stop foisting their inefficiency on the public. No increase is acceptable
- I'm disabled and they have stopped my benefits last time it took me 18 months to win my appeal and again no I have to fight for basic benefits... any increase would make it even more difficult to survive. The government need to stop paying out money to other countries and spend more on its own country where it's needed just as much

- If the Authority had a consultation a decided they needed an increase of 1.99% to cover costs and subsequently the Government allowed an increase of UPTO 3% without consultation why do they need an extra 1% if they had already agreed they only needed 1.99%. What is the justification of needing a further1%, is it just a case of 'if its there will might as well take it'
- Why do we have to have an increase when all these new builds what is the Council doing with all that new money
- There needs to be some really fundamental thinking on how to operate within a budget and not just increase local taxes. The Police are playing the same muddled game - little thought and PCC increasing staff count. How about Police, Fire & Rescue and Ambulance sharing the same resources
- Both you police and council want to put up council tax but pensions are not keeping up
- where do you think people are getting the money from, wages rising slower than inflation and council taxes going up 5.99%
- With rising costs for every household, this will add to the already mounting debt that many residents face. What benefits will we see this increased as we don't currently see much benefits for the council tax we pay, for example, poor roads and highways maintenance, traffic congestion, lack of schools and surgeries etc.
- I'm a local resident in Widnes. Why should I pay more when my local station, Penketh is at threat of losing night time cover? Paying more for a lesser service
- It either comes from central or local government funds so we pay for it anyway.
- Increase funding should come from central government. The government have reduced the amount of funds to local council since 2019
- The money should come from central government also use cash from the war chest the council must have
- The government SHOULD provide the extra funding and no questions asked. If we allow them to do this it will be something else next time and the time after that. I have no problem in giving the firefighters extra money, very do an excellent job, but this despicable government is robbing of the poorest people to give the money to their rich friends.
- Would prefer national government to pay for a good fire authority if they can't or wont we must pay ourselves
- I don't agree funding from central government should be cut.
- Should be funded by the government as a emergency service!!!
- The funding of our emergency services is the function of central government. If this allowed to happen, what is to stop it eventually being entirely funded at local levels leading to another instance of mismatched provision between areas? This shouldn't be a postcode lottery.
- Government should pay back cuts
- Since central Government won't provide adequate funding there isn't much choice but to raise it locally.
- If the fire service was funded properly from government there would be no need for this. But seeing they are not, what more can the Fire Service Do, If we are to have a service fit for service.
- Although in addition to Police precept, council precept etc. it would place additional expenditure on our household income, at a time when bills and living costs are rising and wages are falling, I consider it absolutely necessary to ensure public service are properly funded. Essentially, however, I believe it is the government as the recipient of taxes who should ultimately be responsible and not local residents. But I support what the Fire Authority are trying to achieve and understand the budget pressures that they are facing.
- I would support a minimum increase of council tax across all services but police increase, fire increase... the list is how long? Before you know it, the extra yearly cost is significant and some if us just can't afford it. I value your lifesaving work and am disgusted that you are not funded appropriately by the government. Change needs to be made there, people should think before they vote!
- I don't think you have any other option given central government cuts.

## Appendix 3 – Staff comments received via the consultation survey

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Responses which have provided either N/A or stated no further comment have been excluded.

- I would support an increase.....but ONLY if this additional money is spent on the protection of front line appliances (Crewe, Ellesmere port, Penketh, Etc) the protection of frontline fire fighter posts and the protection of 24/7 whole time fire cover at fire stations without downgrading to on call at night....I will NOT support an increase if the money is spent in any other way...
- I agree with the proposed increase, but if it goes ahead the Authority should consider lifting the pay cap for the relatively small number of Green Book (local government) staff still employed by CFRS post-blue light collaboration. It is deeply unfair that the teams at the coalface of all the important prevention, protection and transformation work - the success of which CFRS is banking on for its HMICFRS inspection - struggle with 1% rises, when Grey staff are awarded above-inflation increases for refusing to do life-saving work (cardiac response) and blocking changes that will secure the future of the service (second pumps at Crewe and Ellesmere Port). We are already poorly-paid compared to colleagues elsewhere in the public sector and some tangible recognition and reward from the Authority for the work we do would go some way to stop hardworking, talented and previously loyal staff looking for opportunities elsewhere.
- The percentage of council tax money for the fire and rescue service is very low and in times of cuts we can not afford to cut a vital emergency service as the Fire and Rescue Service any more. With the proposed planning permission granted for 2018 surely the increased revenue from these properties will help in the future to secure this vital public service.
- I appreciate that Fire services are having to make savings which will impact on service delivery, so any way to increase funding rather than make savings is always a better solution.
- Small increase to ensure current levels of service can be maintained.
- I understand how tight budgets are so understand the need for this rise in council tax.
- This was laughed off as a bad idea at a chief's roadshow years ago- if it had been implemented earlier, we would not have had to cut so far. I think we should be open and honest with the public, informing them that we are suffering huge financial cuts from government funding- they would then be likely to support this kind of initiative.
- Not if it means reducing the amount of front line appliances and sacrificing attendance times throughout Cheshire. I would not like to see Ellesmere Port or Crewe, with its local industries, transport networks, waterways and commercial and business areas, be downgraded to one appliance after an increase in council tax!
- Will £268,000 make a big difference when we already hold £36,000,000 in reserve?
- I believe that with a healthy bank account of £38m in reserve, which has been built up over the last 7 years by consistent cuts to services and personnel, CFRS is quite capable of operating for the foreseeable future without increasing its share.
- I think that the service should stop wasting money before increasing council tax. Considerable sums seem to be wasted on things such as star awards and the choir.
- CFRS need to review all the money wasting activities and maybe then they would be able to function more efficiently. Cheshire Fire Choir costs money, STAR awards costs money, over expensive corporate uniform costs money, members xmas lunch and expenses costs money. There is no accountability for spending and no one seems to care that money is wasted day in and day out