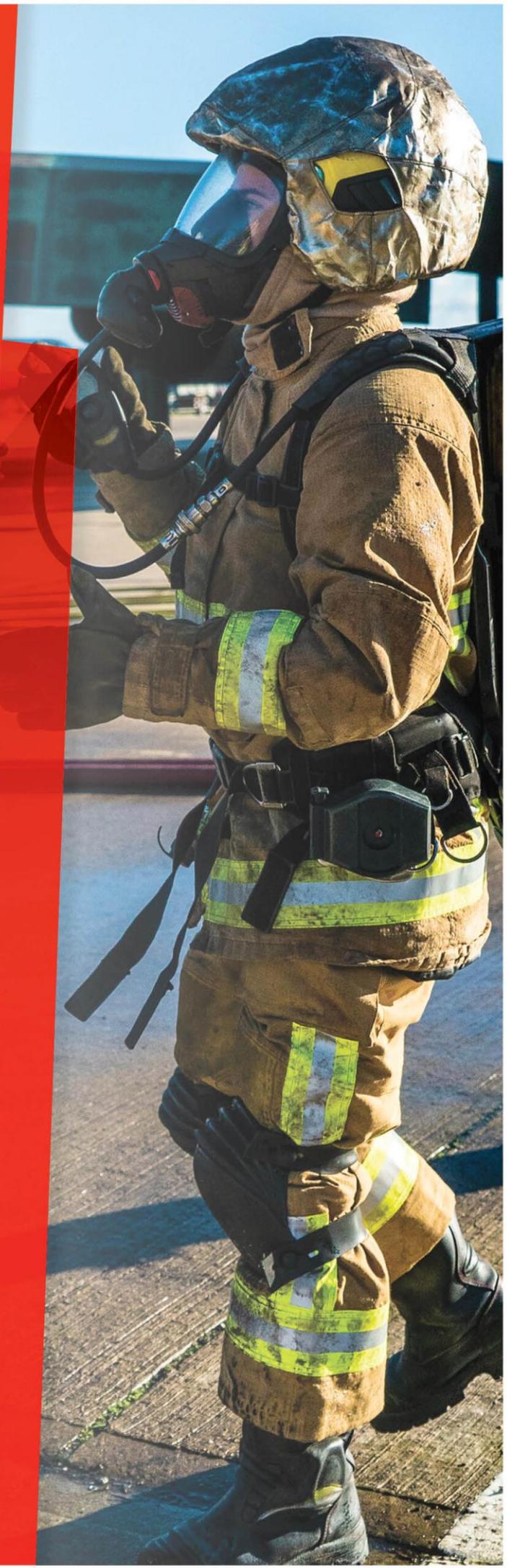




Cheshire
Fire Authority



2021-2022 Precept Survey

Results Information Pack

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www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

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Introduction

The following information pack provides details on the survey results for the Authority's proposed precept increase of 1.99% for 2021/2022. The information provided includes the following:

- Results of the survey questions.
- A summary and full list of the free text comments provided by respondents.
- Contents of additional responses received in writing or via email.
- Demographic profile of survey respondents.

The engagement on the proposed 2021/2022 precept ran from Monday 21 December 2020 to Thursday 28 January 2021. It was conducted as an online survey and awareness was raised through a prominent feature on the homepage of the Service's website and intranet, as well as regular advertising on the Service's Facebook and Twitter social media platforms. This was complemented by a press release to mark the launch of the survey, a paid-for Facebook advertisement that ran for the duration of the survey, and an article in the January 2021 edition of the Service's online newsletter Firelink, which has over 18,000 subscribers. In addition, the Service made use of its own equality, diversity and inclusion contacts to raise awareness of the consultation amongst community and inclusion groups within Cheshire.

Report prepared by:

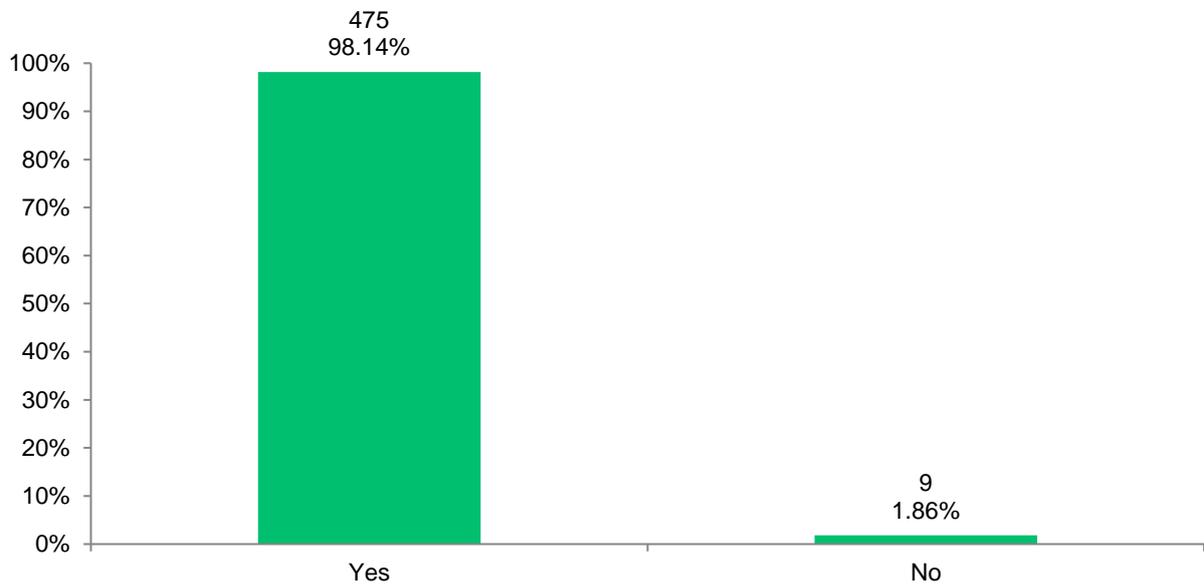
Graeme Worrall

Policy and Transformation Officer

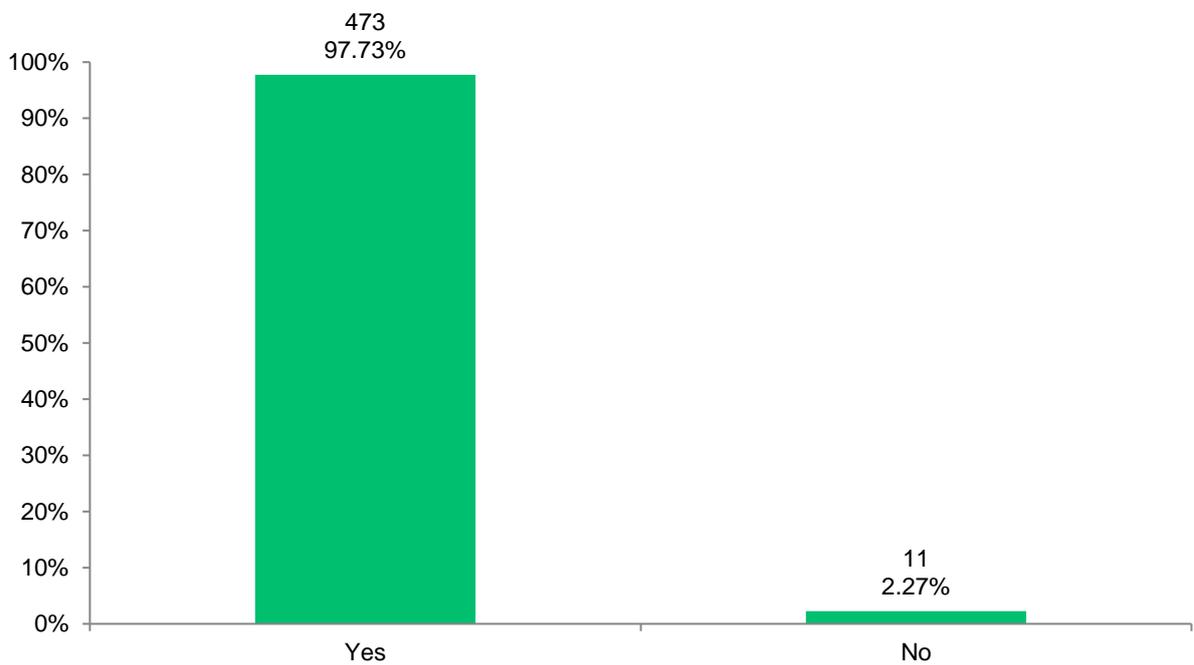
1 February 2021

Survey Results

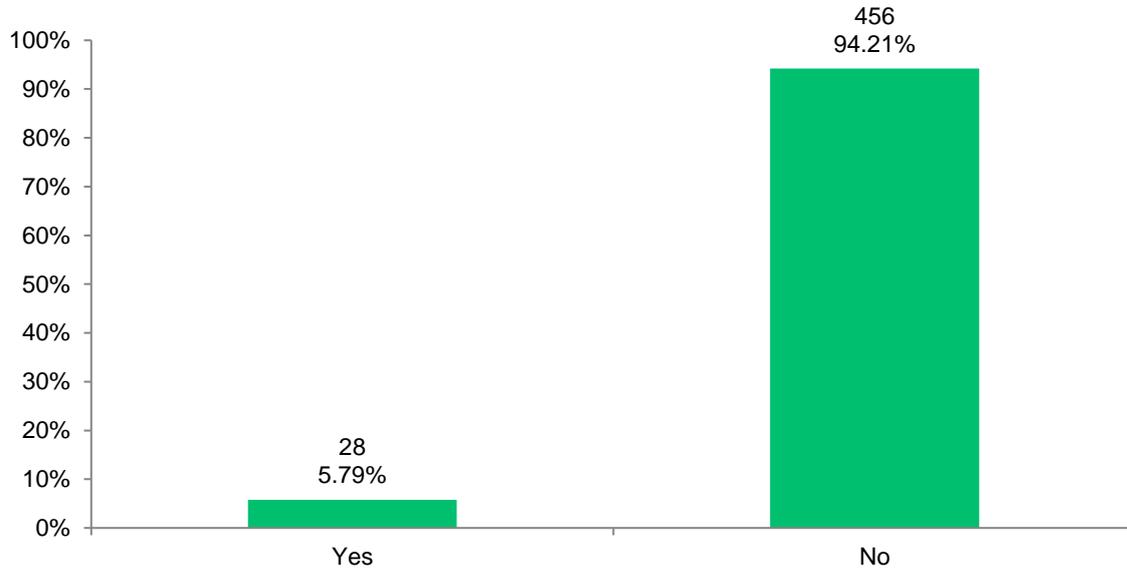
Q.1 Do you live in Cheshire? (484 responses)



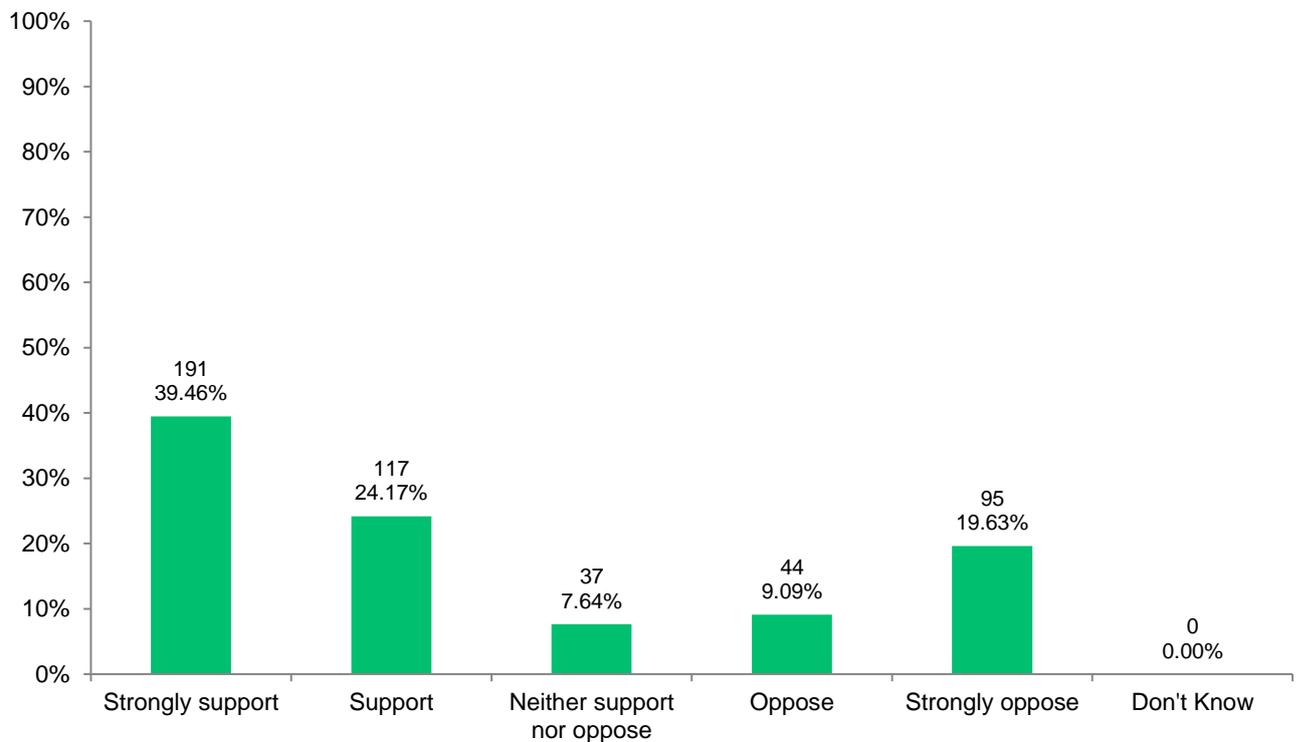
Q.2 Are you a council tax payer within Cheshire? (484 responses)



**Q.3 Are you an employee of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service?
(484 responses)**

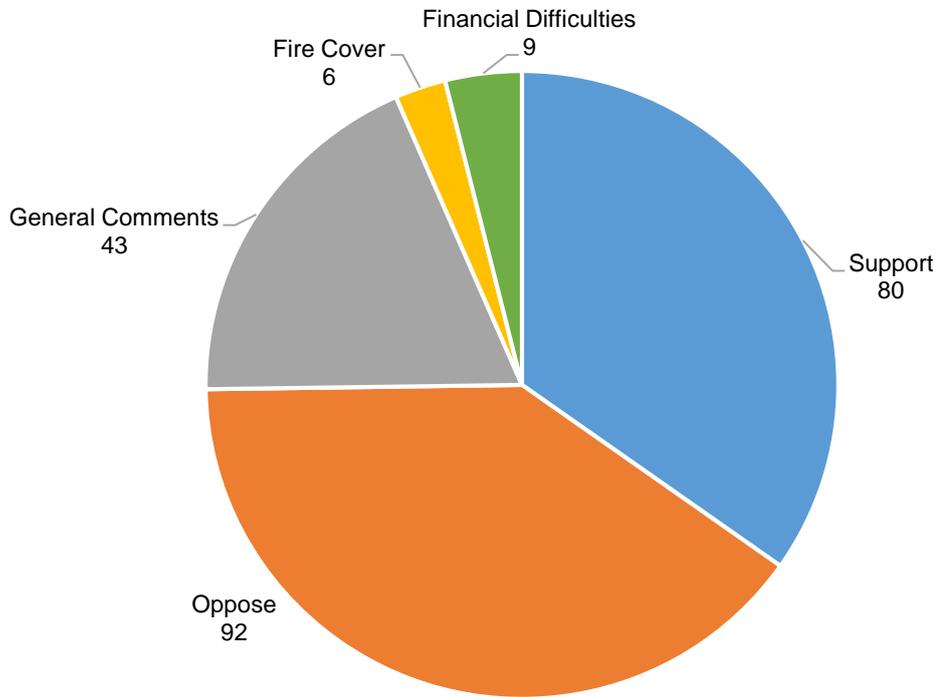


**Q.4 To what extent would you support Cheshire Fire Authority increasing its share of council tax (its precept) by 1.99% for the 2021/2022 financial year?
(484 responses)**



**Q.5 Are there any comments that you wish to provide?
(230 comments)**

Summary of comments



List of comments

Please note that the comments have been listed below according to the unitary authority area in which the respondent resides (where this information has been provided by the respondent)

Comments from Cheshire East residents

- Critical service and needs to be funded. Amount is nominal
- I believe in community services, and funding them according to contributors' means. I am concerned about government cut-backs generally, and am prepared to pay more tax for the benefit of us all if it means fairer distribution of wealth
- This service is amazing and should be well funded.

- You provide such a wonderful and irreplaceable service we need you. The cost is insignificant
- Deserve every penny!
- We can't have strong public services without taxes. By lowering tax revenues we are becoming a 3rd world country. And no i am not a political animal.
- Just thanks for all you do and I hope you get the rise.
- I would be happy to pay more if that enabled employees to receive pay increases in line with inflation.
- The Fire Service must be funded properly.
- As long as the monies from the increase go directly to the Fire Service for training, equipment, and such, we have no issue with paying for this indispensable service.
- If this increase can be guaranteed to maintain Frontline firefighters rather than backroom staff and managers I 100-percent support it
- The cuts to this service have been concerning and they are an integral part of keeping our community safe. We need to ensure the finances are there to retain staff and equipment particularly now when the service are supporting other public services
- Providing the increase can be justified I would be happy to pay the increase
- A rise of 1.99% is acceptable to secure the safety and well-being of the Cheshire people, however, the proposed modernising of the service I hope will not reduce the numbers of frontline firefighters to accommodate other expenditures
- I'm all for your capital investment but when I see money being spent on rainbow flags and machines being used for this message I honestly think it's a waste of resources and a political statement and one to make the fire service look better. I would like to see more full time firefighters as opposed to retained ones. I think last year you proposed to reduce the amount of aerial platforms crazy yes they may not be used much but when there needed you want them there quickly. The community fire stations look a much better idea and shared facilities to reduce costs
- Cheshire Fire & rescue Service offer an invaluable service to the local community which at times can be extremely hazardous. I fell they should therefore be fully equipped with up to date, fully functioning top of the range equipment and

vehicles which will assist in their reaction time and keep not only themselves but the community as a whole safe.

- The increase in council tax collection must be used to fund the front line and not the expansion of SMT structures or green book roles. It is unacceptable that our welfare response structures, specialist appliances are single crewed and the establishment reliant on overtime when we are still reporting budget underspends.
- I would support any affordable increase for key services such as fire and police, providing it doesn't get squirrelled away to pay councillor's expenses.
- You do a great and vital job. I absolutely agree that you should receive more funding.
- Our emergency services are or should be valued by all
- Our Firefighters put their lives on the line for us all daily. If we have to have our council tax increased to ensure that they can do their job properly then I agree!
- I support the need for our Fire Service to be properly trained, equipped and rewarded; a vital service to our community.
- This absolutely needs to happen....they need the money for the future maintenance and development of the service.
- I think Cheshire Fire Brigade do a fantastic job and would fully support an increase in tax for revenue!
- For this small increase per house is good value for money
- Out of the 3 main services the fire service have to respond the quickest and we need to keep this service tip top
- This is a very small increase in a critical service that has been cut and cut in real terms over the years. We would support this wholeheartedly.
- seems perfectly reasonable
- I support this measure if the additional funding is spent on better facilities and equipment for front line staff. Cheshire currently sit on substantial reserves which should be spent according on the service it provides, such as better vehicles, station upgrades, better uniform/ppe
- Although the Fire Service has been amazing throughout the challenges for 2020 and I personally have no objection to the rise in council tax, I am not sure it is

appropriate with so many residents losing jobs and currently struggling to feed families

- I would personally not mind this small increase to meet the ever increasing demands put on these services.
- Would happily support a larger increase to allow Cheshire Fire & Rescue to provide an even better service. Thank you for everything.
- Worth every penny , very underrated service
- It's good value for money the service the Cheshire fire and rescue provide for us.. I strongly agree to the rise..
- You provide an excellent service.. much needed. However we can continue to support all ready funded services! Year on my council tax increases. For the police it increased last year / got our local PCO with a speed gun .. not detecting crime!!!
- If it is ensured that Principal Officers are not awarded a bonus or pay rise in line with Firefighters pay freeze then I support this.
- We must provide the best equipment to the fire service to enable the best protection for us
- Cheshire Fire Authority is a vital part of our community & must be fully funded. The Fire Service performs a very important role in protecting lives & property. I fully support this proposal.
- Yes the fire service is one of the most underrated services but such a very important service and they need our support to carry on the great work.
- Not the right time this year. All govt taxes are likely to increase while as a nation and at community level income has drastically decreased or in some cases stopped altogether. Many people are now living below the poverty line. I do not support any increase this year.
- Council tax is so expensive, people struggle to pay it as it is & some of the things we do pay for we don't get, it goes on other things that we don't really need.
- Fantastic service and would love to support but with no inflation to my wage and rising food and other bills, any precept increase adds financial pressure. Cannot support any rise in current situation

- There are hundreds of thousands people going to be without any income if we ever get out of this pandemic. Neither the Fire nor the Police Authorities should even be considering increasing their budgets at this time.
- Given the current Covid situation with many people losing jobs and being furloughed this is not the time to be increasing council tax
- People are in a difficult time at present & cannot afford increases in Council Tax. This increase together with 4.99% for Cheshire East Council plus Police and area increase will put families in a difficult situation.
- Workers furloughed or made redundant, this rise in precept is unacceptable and increasing burden on struggling households.
- There is now very little work for the Fire and Rescue service and there is a need to cut the cloth accordingly.
- I don't think I should have to make up the money the government should be paying you.
- Given the significant economic impact of coronavirus I strongly urge Cheshire Fire & Rescue to consider freezing its share of council tax for the coming year. Furthermore, economic indicators along with surveys of employed suggest many companies are considering pay freezes for 2021, therefore, with many residents already struggling to pay bills as a result of the pandemic, I would urge CF&R to abandon its proposal to increase its share of CT.
- I believe that enough monies are provided not that management should be streamlines a lot and resources better directed to providing the core services.
- Community charge is already sky high plus in our case a parish precept just can't afford any more. Funding for improvements should come from central government
- I have had enough of increases year in and year out and especially when we see nothing for that increase.
- How about focussing on driving costs down rather than looking for handouts? Lazy approach...
- People lost jobs, furloughed, people struggling feed their children. Extra paying out on gas and electric bills which is astronomical for people at home all the time and told to stay there.
- The cost of this service should be decreasing with better use of new technology...

- CFRS has £21.5 million in reserves. Chiefs are still getting bonuses and earning payrises over and above what Firefighters are getting. CFRS has opened new stations at Penketh, Powey Lane, Lymm, Chester and Alsager. At 4 of these stations staffing is inadequate to be efficient when deploying resources (all riding 4s, single crewing ALPs, 1 extra driver at Powey Lane which is clearly inadequate for the vast range of specials it carries and the rope rescue unit being often unavailable). CFRS has also recently invested money in RRRUs for all retained stations. All of this money could and should be directed to frontline structural appliances and to properly crew specials. In addition to this, the budget for CPD courses for Protection staff has been cut recently which directly opposes the requirements following Grenfell. If the money is properly spent, I support this proposal.
- Why is there a need to increase council tax when over the last ten years you have gradually reduced the number of firefighters and fire engines across the county. I understand a new training centre has been built and also a new station at Chester but surely this comes from a budget secured for that purpose and does not require an increase in council tax to pay for.
- At a time where the country has stopped all public sector pay rises, people are out of work due to the virus or earning less because furlow this would be a mistake to increase your tax
- When I see a pay rise of the same amount I would pay this but as I'm not getting one it is in fact cut in my available spending money for essentials
- The council should be more efficient in its operations to pay for this and not keep hammering the residents every year.
- Currently Middlewich have a part time fire service with a growing population. Should the percentage requested not reflect the type of service the town. Middlewich are fighting for additional facilities such as keeping the local tip open. I appreciate the Fire Service is one of the 3 emergency services but the request for additional funds should be by town and reflective of the existing fire service in the town compared to other towns who say have a permanent full time fire station. These are difficult times where difficult choices have to be made and Middlewich residents should not be funding the fire service for other towns in the county.
- In Cheshire east we have seen a reduction in cover especially at night time reduction in specials and how they have been staffed. No pay rise for firefighters! Struggling to see why I should pay more to get less of a service than other unitary areas.
- Every year council tax elements increase under the comment 'it's only £1.58 per year'. It might only be £1 but apply this over the many hundreds of items a year

and it adds up. If the council think this is vital they should reduce their non essential and wasteful spending. Get rid of police and crime commissioners for one

- Most people struggle to keep pace with inflation. ie through wages and extortionate tax rises from public services. If those that are employed to manage can't do this , then replace them with someone who can. Last year we were told how Cheshire East Fire came third in LGBT (if that's what it is) list of employers and if that's the priority forget any rise in council tax.
- Already pay enough
- Why would you increase the amount paid to cheshire fire authority when the government made it very clear public sector workers including our fire men/women would not be getting a pay increase. I wouldn't mind paying it if this money would increase the pay for our fire men/women but that not being the case I strongly oppose this increase.
- Most are all suffering financial loss due to covid19 and are reducing our operating costs. Cheshire Fire Authority should do the same
- Everyone has taken a financial hit. Please please keep council tax vaguely affordable for your residents. Thank you.
- A pensioner ,limited income , and the cost of living going up , can we carry on with constant rises , there's a limit .
- Substantial saving should have been made over the last twelve months with little of no home visits taking place. You are asking for people to increase your funding at a time when furlough has not covered outgoings and has decimated any savings. Cut your cloth to suit like we all have to and not use fire safety as a quilt trip.
- Money could be found by delivering fire safety training fire marshal courses and writing risk assessments. This would meet the current demand that's out there we are the experts so we should utilise this.
- The Fire Service provides wide ranging cover to the people of Cheshire, attending not only fires but also RTC's, hazardous material spills etc. They also save lives (and money) by providing fire safety advice .It's staff are highly trained emergency responders and with the stress which will be placed on the NHS for the foreseeable future, this expertise should be utilised to the maximum.
- Why do we pay for you to cover the whole of Cheshire? Doesn't some funding come from from Cheshire West and Chester?

- Will this lead to an increase in fire cover in my area
- Emergency services should be funded by government and only topped up by council tax. You provide an emergency service and are woefully underfunded.
- I want to support the Fire Service
- No, apart from saying that I hope they can continue to do their good work.
- Thank you for providing the rationale for the 1.99% proposed increase. Often, an increase in Council Tax is implemented without residents being made aware of background, need and rationale in addition to how the increase will be spent. Your rationale is logical and realistic.
- I believe our Fire Service do a great job. Still disappointed there is no longer a Fire Station in Knutsford
- Key emergency services cannot be run on a shoestring. However, I hope this increase is not just going to be used to increase the already generous salaries of senior management
- Thanks for all your hard work
- I wish to support keeping open the local Poynton Fire station
- We are fortunate in that we have not yet had need to call for your assistance but we appreciate what you do for the community and it is reassuring to know that you will be there if we do need help
- The fire service are amazing
- I do not have a problem for the fire brigade
- Well done
- A difficult decision in uncertain times as a lot of people will be feeling the pinch, but the Authority has few options in the face of no real increase in Government funding.

Comments from Cheshire West and Chester residents

- Fully support the essential services our Fire Department provides.
- Support but with concerns. The system of banding properties needs to be examined to establish whether the bands still fairly reflect the very many changes to properties. The emphasis placed on the Stonewall organization seems to be skewed in favour of its constituents and ignores other groups. This seems to be politically motivated, something that should not occur in public service organizations.
- You provide an amazing service and I would be happy if you wanted to increase this amount even further! Thank you.
- None at all. Worth every penny.
- It's important to have a robust fire and rescue service, so if a bit more cash is needed to fund it I'll willingly pay.
- It seems to me to be a negligible amount of increase to maintain a very necessary service.
- In my opinion the precept should be more than that. it's a very small amount considering the way costs have risen in the last few years. Even though we are pensioners we would be glad to pay a bit more to ensure that the fire department have the ability and resources to get to incidents and deal effectively as quickly as possible. The Fire Service is there to save lives after all
- An essential service, therefore needs to be properly funded. Given the cut backs in funding by central government rises are inevitable, I feel the proposed increase is more than reasonable and a much larger amount could have been justified.
- The fire service is a very important community service. I very much value the work they do. They do a lot more than put out fires. If we allow the service to become so neglected it can no longer provide this wide range of services we risk losing it altogether in the future. This would leave us all at risk but especially the most vulnerable members of our communities. We mustn't neglect and take for granted the services we value or leave it too late and be unable to find large quantities of money to rescue them. A small increase is an investment for our future.
- Essential services must be supported.

- Following a road traffic accident in January 2019, we were supported by Malpas station who stayed with us 2 hours whilst they cut me from the car. They were absolutely brilliant.
- They are lifesavers we should all be doing all we can to help to support them! After all they risk their lives to save ours!
- This seems a reasonable increase to support the emergency service with its plans. I do think any increase in the ability to share resources across public services should be seriously considered.
- Go for it! You are a vital service with high overheads. People lose more money than this down the back of the sofa each year.
- Not really a big increase for families, but such a huge amount for a service that gives it all for the community it serves so selflessly
- I believe it is in the best interest of general public especially if it means a 2nd appliance can be based at Ellesmere Port on whole time crew basis, due the mass manufacturing and oil sites based in the immediate area as fires at these can escalate very quickly if firefighters and foam cannot be on scene within a matter of minutes.
- Use some of your capitol reserve do all of the of the retained stations need to be renovated as some are barely used.
- Like many people, as a family we cannot afford to pay further into all the pots for our Council Tax. Money is tight and every penny counts to a family. Last year our household contribution to Council tax rose by over £23 per month, that is an annual cost of £230 which we have to take from somewhere as our wages have not increased by this much during the same period. stating that it is £1.58 per property is not the ACTUAL cost, truth be told, across the board. I would like to see more transparency on where our increases go.
- I am in favour of this as long as it does not give yet another rise to council tax bills.
- Fire and rescue officers need to do more in the community, especially during COVID. The union is so antiquated that it prevents full utilisation of its members. Why should I pay more for firefighters to sleep and have second jobs?
- People are already at breaking point financially, yet you, the police and the council all want to up the amount we pay. So the same as the public are told, Manage your finances better, maybe sell the snooker tables you have in stations. Perhaps some back room staff should have a reduction from their six figure salaries.

- The fire service where I live is virtually none existent our fire fighters are at Ellesmere port when we have needed the fire service not one engine was available because you have it we had no staff to man it. Why should we pay more when we don't have the benefits.
- No increases, if needed, let the government fund it.....
- My income will not increase in 2021/2022, so why should yours.
- This is not the time to be increasing funding for this service. There are other services more in need of increased funding during the pandemic. The service should be looking at economies of scale by working with other services. They should also be looking at reducing costs by improving efficiency and value for money, looking at different working practices and systems of working.
- In my view, this is not the time to increase funding for this service. There are other services that need further investment to deal with our current crisis, and they should be prioritised. I am of the opinion that there are economies of scale that could be made by combining with other agencies. I also believe that there are savings to be made within the service by reviewing operations, working practices etc
- Always seems to be enough money to waste on new fire stations my house is now within 7 miles of 3 separate fire stations Chester, Ellesmere Port and the new station near Costco. Also recently read your own information about the purchase of very expensive motorcycles, but all we ever hear from the unions is constant cuts doesn't look like a shortage of money to me but I'm just a former business owner so what would I know
- It is very difficult to accept any increase when personal income as a result of recent events has been halved
- We are in a global crisis. This is not the time to be putting financial burdens on people. It is time to economise, like your bill payers are having to do.
- The fire service should provide a better service with what they already have and be more proactive in being visible to be public. They should not be in comfortable seats in their station but out providing a service.
- When you don't get much help from the government due to not working, can't claim universal credit or self employed grant every penny helps. Plus I'm band G
- In the current climate there is no justification for unnecessary increases in expenditure!

- In the current climate increases in all essentials are happening. On limited pension payments these increases are not taken into account so enough is enough.
- It never ever goes down always up. 2020 has been a horrendous year for the public and rising costs should not even be considered. Council tax is getting far too expensive, pay more get less. I want to pay less and get more, but I don't seem to have a choice.
- I respect the work and commitment of our uniformed services. However, at a time when families already face severe financial hardship, they shouldn't now be bearing the brunt of a hike in council tax. The problem is, it doesn't stop at Cheshire fire and rescue. It will then move onto the crime commission attempting to justify an increase. I already pay nearly £200 a month on council tax. I have a newborn and a wife to take care of. Also because of the impacts of Covid-19 I lost my previous job and as a consequence, I am now on a fairly large pay cut. The government should be reaching into their pockets to cover any losses. Not the hard working people of Cheshire who have already had a very challenging year.
- Everyone has to cut back, and so should you
- When everyone else is having to make difficult choices it is unfair to what will inevitably result in larger than inflation increases in council tax. Cut out bureaucracy and waste first. The men and women firefighters do a great job but it's not these that should be penalised
- Demand is not there to support more finance
- Perhaps consider the struggle and financial ruin so many members of the public are currently going through, before demanding more money.
- Many people are furloughed or have lost their jobs. Where do you think they can find the extra money for your precept, as well as Cheshire Constabulary who are also seeking an increase? There is only so much money to live off.
- The threat of council tax increases is too much in light of the COVID-19 financial impact to family incomes, which coincide with price increases from BREXIT, & the very real, but yet unknown, threat of tax hikes to come, following all the financial support afforded the public & businesses during the pandemic. I really don't know how this Gov & local councils can believe they can keep squeezing UK citizens for more, when it simply doesn't exist. Any local council tax increases need to be delayed until the COVID-19, & BREXIT travesties calm down & more info is shared from Rishi Sunak on general tax rises. Thank you.

- Because council tax is rising constantly year on year.
- Due to the pandemic, thousands of people are losing their jobs and therefore this is not the time start increasing things.
- Reminds me of the Police Authority WE ARE NOT CASH COWS. The Fire Authority ought to look at cutting back on what it does and work at its core business of fighting fires/emergency response and REAL emergencies - at that not animal first responders.
- Yes in current climate of this pandemic where people are struggling who have lost their jobs trying to make ends meet could not afford it. Also when this country comes out of this crisis the UK economy is going to be a massive recession. If you increase the council tax, the Council will increase it for others, waste collection, the police. To be truthful in the current climate where many peoples mental health due to worry, loss of job, loss of business you have just added to the strain to peoples mental health by now worrying that the council tax is going to increase. To be blunt who ever made the decision to put this survey on at this time needs their heads banging together. So wrong shame on them. For example I'm out of the army in May, my employment prospects like many others is very bleak due to the current crisis, I have complex ptsd and now with this survey about increasing the tax has added another additional worry and panic to the future. I'm sure many many others are in the same boat. I'm sure if any one had any sort of brain cell the could of waited until firstly this pandemic went away and secondly when the economy is gets back on its feet this is going to happen for a long time. With the cost of damage this virus has cost the UK economy I'm 100% the Government will drastically increase the tax on wages etc.
- Why every year am I being asked to support and increase in precept when my local fire cover has been cut and the wages of the Senior Officers has increased? This money is going straight into the pockets of the 3 members of the Principal Officers team.
- Every one wants to put there cost up, I have not had a pay rise so have to find the money elsewhere. No to an increase
- I don't mind as long as my council tax does not go up to fund this increase in your precept share. Perhaps attend less animal rescues or charge owners. It's not for the general public to fund irresponsible pet owners allowing their animals to get stuck. I do not consider the majority of these incidents life threatening or an emergency to the public. You are not an animal welfare charity.
- 2020 financially crippled so many people, council tax rises of any amount would disproportionately affect those already most in need.

- The fire service needs to document its efficiency savings before asking for an increase in funding. Most people will be facing redundancy this year, and the timing to ask people to contribute more in taxation, is really insensitive. Home office statistics show a 4% decrease in incidents compared to the prior year (up to June 2020) and a 15% reduction in fires. So an increase in funding doesn't seem proportional to the requirements of the service over the past year.
- I am a single person living in a 1 bedroom flat. I pay nearly 100 pound a month in council tax. The roads are disgraceful and are causing damage to my car which I pay all taxes and insurance for. I do not have a garden yet I pay to have an unnecessary green bin collection. No option to opt out of this. Where does my council tax money go? On paying the interest for barons quay? An empty shopping centre which no one wanted, or is it going to Northgate vision, the same design as the already money pit built in Northwich. How about the council take the money for this build and put it towards the essential needs of the community like the fire brigade and police instead of wasting it on things no one wants or will use. The council should represent the community not go against what the community wants.
- Everything is going up, but wages are not and people are losing their jobs. This is a time to look for savings, not increasing costs.
- In a time when people have lost jobs and income and people are having real time pay cuts it is irresponsible of the Authority to propose an increase in the fire precept. Additionally attendance standards and appliance availability have got worse over the years. We should not have to pay more for a reduced service. If attendance times were improved and on call availability increased then an increase could be justified. But not this year
- I don't mind paying for a fire service. But the budget get spent on so much more than fire and rescue service activity. I admire that but in a time where public sector money is tight. Then maybe cfrs should keep within its remit. Stop spending money on gimmicky fire engine paint jobs!
- Relatively speaking Cheshire FRS more financially stable than its counterparts around the UK. This seems to be largely due to sound financial decision making through difficult and challenging economic climates previously. COVID-19 support has been provided by central government so in financial terms there appears to have been no significant impact to date. Many people are having significant difficulty managing their finances at present and things may get even worse in the short term. Funding increase demands by multiple authorities will on add to the community's financial burden and Cheshire Fire Authority should work to find alternative ways to fund their plans, certainly in the short to medium term at least.

- Stop bonuses to POs and spending a fortune on gifts for CFA. You increase the council tax every year regardless of what the tax payer says
- Not a lot more money won't make a difference most people paying it . But think any increase is difficult in these hard times
- I understand that it's essential for fire services to be maintained to an efficient standard and I am aware that central government are not contributing to this. Therefore local people must be prepared to give more financial support and in return I presume will have scrutiny of their local service
- I know it's needed but everyone is struggling at the moment.
- I would like to see in the public domain where the extra money is going to be spent. I'd like to have a Fire Service that is crystal clear where the extra money has been and is going to be spent. I'd also like to see the Fire Service make savings and reinvest that money. Can fire engines life span be extended, can Fire Fighters pay a more realistic and fairer rent on the property that they rent from the Service. I know of one married couple that pay a totally unacceptably low amount of rent for their property, when the general public pay several times that amount.
- Only to say you must always bear in mind that some of us live in rural locations far from centres of population and therefore some distance from fire stations.
- Thank you for your good work.
- Keep 2nd appliance at E/port.
- I believe it is important for services to be up to best standards. Equally, however, I would expect those services to more cost-efficient than they are currently and in which case I would expect that the council tax increase would decrease following the completion of plans.
- I would be strongly opposed to the PCC getting involved in the governance of the Cheshire Fire and Rescue service. That office only adds cost at operational expense.
- Maintain the current standard of our fire service
- Would like to see more support for Ellesmere Port fire station as there is a lot of dangerous industry in the area.
- Thank you

- I do not want to see any more cut backs to our fire service

Comments from Halton residents

- It's a small price to pay for such a service that is provided
- £1.58 extra is a price worth paying for the service you provide.
- Think this is essential to ensure you are able to complete all operational commitments to the area.
- The Fire service does a tremendous job, not just in reacting to a range of emergencies and critical incidents but more importantly in its prevention role. Vitally important to maintain these services.
- I am very grateful for the service provided by the fire service, thankfully I have not needed to utilise the service, but feel reassured if I needed to. I feel this increase is in keeping with inflation.
- The Fire Authority and staff are noted to have supported across areas to support resilience during the current crisis. This proposal for an increase in precept is a small contribution against the services provided.
- I think that this is a request for a modest increase in order to help keep the service supported.
- I'd pay more to keep my family safe and the more we pay the more personnel and appliances can be provided. Same for the Police
- I don't have a problem with any increase towards Cheshire Fire Authority's funding, what I do object strongly to is HBCs ongoing waste of money on silly "schemes"
- You do a great job and need the proper funding
- Times are hard but £1.58 for this vital service is justified
- Although I feel the fire department deserves the increase, people have been hit hard by coronavirus. I do have a suggestion however. Perhaps it could be taken from the police budget as they are wasting money chasing people over masks and sitting on park benches. Further, if they have time to drop to their knees as much as they do for every imported 'cause', then they are hardly busy!

- This move has been warranted for a long time, it is the only viable option when government funding is reduced, it is far better than a reduction in services which has been the previous option.
- I am a 78 year old pensioner living alone where do I find the money from I would love to hear your answer
- As I live in The Decks, and the local Fire Brigade have banned us from using our parking spaces and then seemingly ignored us, I don't see why I should support them in any way whatsoever!
- Due to current covid restrictions feel everyone struggling so why can't you find your increase from another avenue
- At a time when we're all struggling financially, it's difficult to agree to any rise in council tax.
- Wages etc are not going up, the central government and local councils are squandering billions let them pick up the tab. We already pay too much tax as it is for diminishing services.
- The extra added to our council tax to pay to Steve Rotherham should be given to the fire service instead
- Council Tax should be responsibly put to use in the areas, which are best suited, to fulfil the needs and requirements of the people within the community.
- we need to support our fire service or lose it
- A Fair and Reasonable system would be that everybody should pay or receive the ONS CPIH yearly inflation index as measured November 2020. This is the government's ONS of 0.6%. The problems when somebody obtains more than the 0.6% is that it can cause a lot of hardship to the public who may only receive 0.6% less tax. The government with its unfair policy, that effectively creates the fire, police and councils into another tier of tax collectors by forcing tax increases on everybody of increases of 1.99% for the fire, almost 7.2% for the police and over 6.5% from local councils. The local councils have added other precept charges for social services of 3%, green bin charges. The government have other precepts lined up for 2022 to 2023. It by-passes the person's ability to pay these increased charges. It NOT based on your tax based on your income PAYE codes. Both myself and wife don't receive enough yearly income to pay tax, however we cannot obtain any other relief or benefits from the DWP. So what we have is fully accounted for each and every month. Then with dip into our small amount of saving in case of emergencies to make up the overspend of £700 per year. People on low incomes like me and my wife do not obtain any benefits to top up our income. However our monthly outgoing are were outstripping our

monthly income by over £57 per month over the last year. This year I expect that we will have to turn the heating system completely and just use 1 room with 1 electric heater to keep us warm. I understand that the fire service has managed to keep down the increases over the last five years. They have managed to control its budget, make a lot of saving. So thank you very much for keeping taking the public into consideration with the small increases. it has helped us when it keep small increases. However the Cheshire police precept over the last 5 years has been like a uncontrolled rocket with £60+ worth of increases and the public do not see any increase in performances. It's a pretty bad service and poor VFM the police service. Anybody in Cheshire will have the same view. Thank you.

- Just that we appreciate that all you do for us in the present climate.
- I understand why you would want an increase but timing could be better. In the middle of a pandemic, redundancies, difficulty getting another job. My partner has just been made redundant leaving us in a massive debt as he's struggles to get another job. Then finding out I'm being made redundant in March, the anxiety I have knowing I need to find another job and the worry of going further into debt, an increase is the last thing I need but council tax is going to increase regardless. Funny isn't it, all these bills increase year upon year but I don't get a pay rise each year.
- We all need your services
- Times are tough and I've been severely impacted too. Plus I haven't had a wage increase for over 25 years.
- My daughter recently had a fire in her kitchen at midnight, faulty washing machine circuit board, she could of lost her house if it wasn't for the quick response of the 2 fire crews, as it is she's been living in temporary housing since 1st December while we make her house habitable again. We will be forever grateful to the fire service, without them there will be disasters and more deaths. This is why I'll always support them.
- Following the successful smoke detector campaign, its time to consider targeting premises Fire risk assessments for complete accuracy.
- In these trying times it's hard for everyone concerned. Covid has caused hardship for everyone. Although £1.58 may not seem like a great deal of money, it is for many households that have lost their incomes, due to the governments restrictions! The lockdown, lack of furlough for self employed. I know that our council has taken cuts, but money has been saved by the council in other aspects! So surely they can help out in some way? I can see from both points of view hence my stance on this!

Comments from Warrington residents

- We need public services to be properly funded. If the government will not do so by taxing big companies effectively then the public has to step up.
- I think you should get even more money because you have had you cope with cuts in the past when you didn't have enough money then . All this increase will do is give you a little bit extra, which won't even bring you up to where you probably were before you had the cuts . In my opinion the NHS ,the Fire Service and the Police force are shamefully underfunded and are vital to the welfare of the public!
- We need this service
- CFRS do a fantastic job and a small increase for us will mean a lot for the service they will be able to provide
- Happy to pay increased council Tax to protect and improve local Services.
- Whilst I wholeheartedly support this application for an increase, this also shouldn't be/come from/to the detriment of residents whom (just like those serving) may and are dealing/suffering with the ongoing consequences of this pandemic. Local Government should be assisted by UK Government to ensure that these active Firefighters/fire Authorities gain what they rightly should. On both sides they need to assess if they get value for the money paid to have high titled positions and decrease some vastly overpaid positions and even consider cutting or amalgamating these to ensure value for money. That includes both Local/Council positions and Fire Authorities too. The cats at the top appear to get fatter on both sides, whilst they those doing the actual work and those paying into the pot just keep giving
- They all deserve a pay rise as they a emergency service.
- People are struggling enough to pay the council tax, you can't increase it again!
- It's difficult times for most residents. We can't afford a rise in our council tax
- I am struggling enough during this pandemic without having this increase
- At a time when unemployment has risen at all levels of the employment scale, increasing taxes will not be well received. I am mindful that costs need to increase over time, but perhaps consider deferring this for a year. I appreciate we are only talking of a small amount, but for a parent struggling to find a new job the stress the word 'increase' may induce could be significant

- Cut members payments also reduce higher ranks
- Covid grants have been provided to CFRS during the pandemic. The council tax payers of Cheshire have had no grants so how can you ask the public to pay more.
- Already receive too much funding which fire service squander. now you want to squander even more taxpayers money on fancy stations, it is not acceptable.
- Make mandatory to buy appliances and ancillaries that are only UK made
- Failure to use voluntary services.
- The work that the fire service carries out is not recognised as much as it should be - the work you do is amazing and is carried out in such a professional way
Thankyou
- All fire brigade staff should be full time. Imagine having on call police or ambulance personnel. It would not happen in big cities or towns
- Do we really have any choice?? Yes I support both you the Fire authority and Police but being a pensioner on a pension it gets rather tight having to find the increase 9f the council tax, because on top of your increase the council will want to increase for their social care etc.
- These surveys suggest resident's comments can decide if the increase goes ahead or not. It's not like an election where a vote matters as this increase WILL go ahead.....but the survey makes it look as if there's a chance it won't and it ticks a box called customer relations.
- Keep up the great work and stay safe
- Concerned over the times to respond to a house fire at night in Croft, Warrington. If the single appliance at Warrington is already out and the on call team at Birchwood need raising from their beds it could easily be 20mins before you attend which is probably too late! The 2nd appliance at Warrington should be reinstated.

Email Responses

Received 18 December 2020 (name and email address supplied)

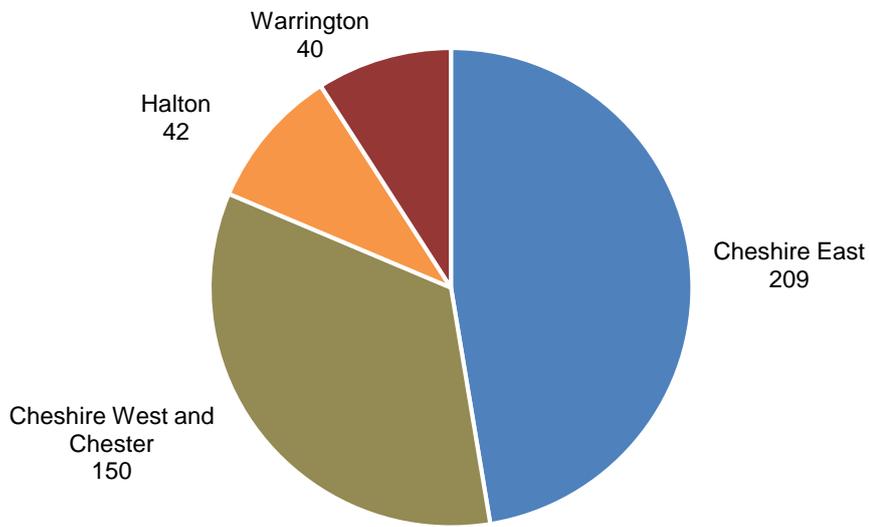
We have no complaints about our fire service increasing their current costs. They provide me and my family with a great service, and I'd like to take this opportunity and THANK every single person involved with our local fire brigade. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Received 18 December 2020 (name and email address supplied)

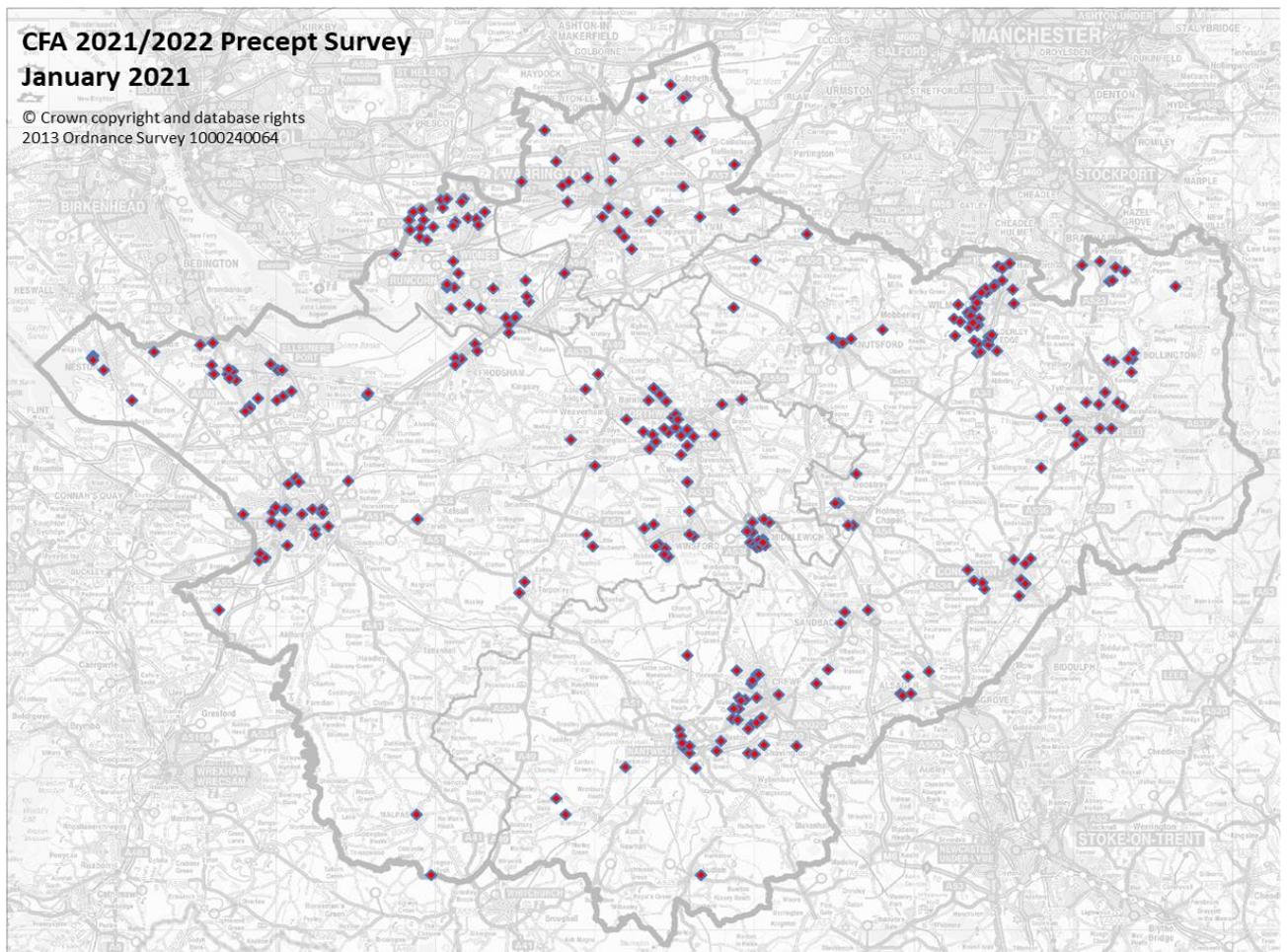
I have just completed your online survey through a Facebook link as a retired community worker I would like to ask why you are more interested in equality diversity sexual orientation than the Frontline reality of firefighting and road traffic incidents I am not questioning the quality for a moment please don't try to portray a different story

Profile of Respondents

Which area do you live in? (441 responses)



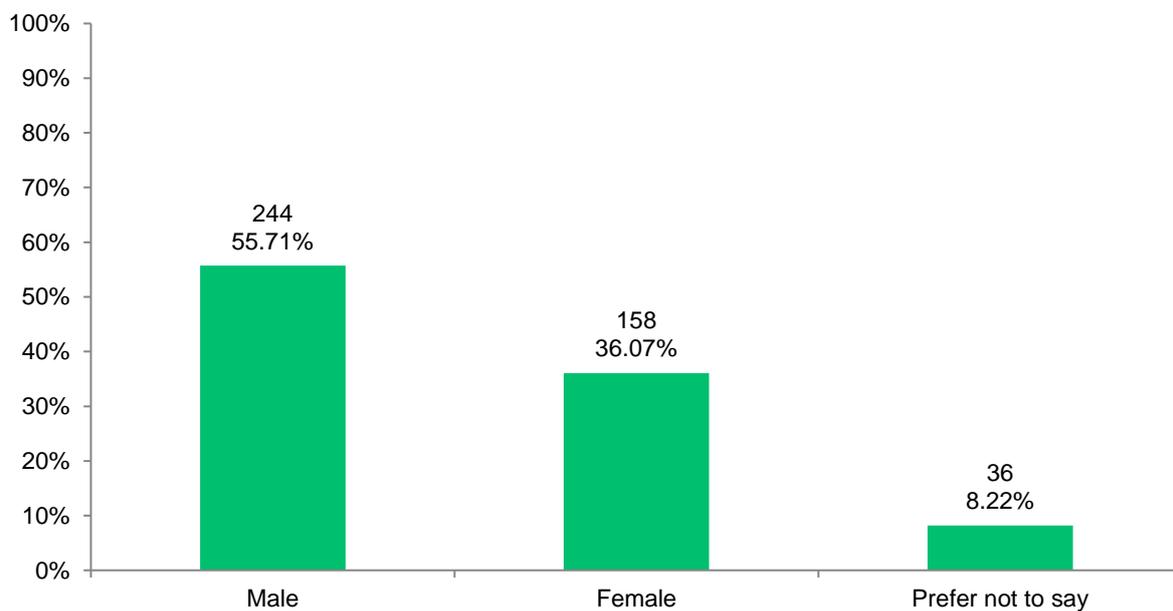
What is your postcode? (441 responses)



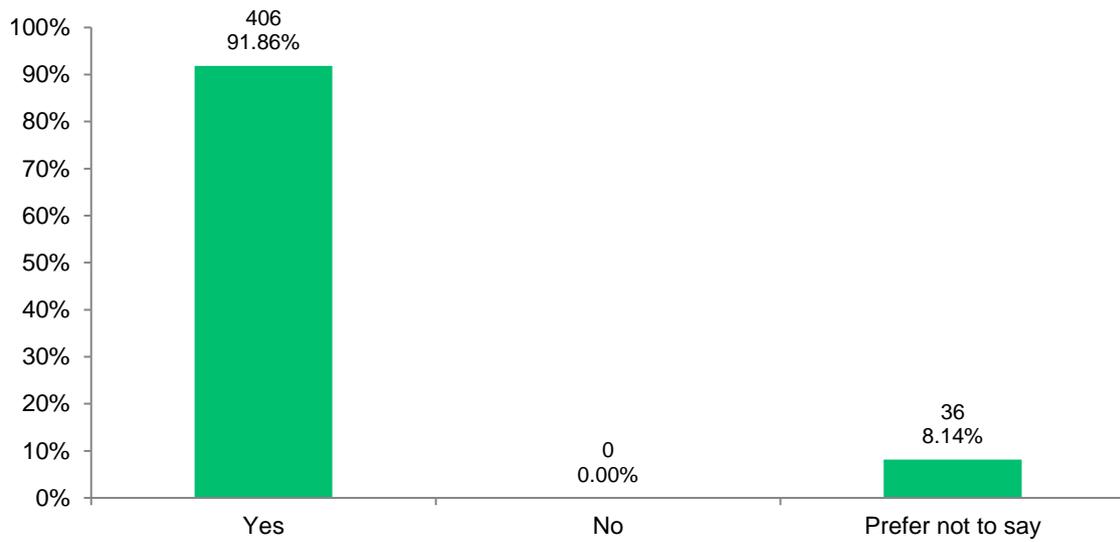
Where is your nearest fire station? (441 responses)

| Fire Station | Number of Responses | Fire Station | Number of Responses |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Alsager | 7 | Nantwich | 21 |
| Audlem | 1 | Northwich | 40 |
| Birchwood | 9 | Penketh | 9 |
| Bollington | 6 | Powey Lane, Mollington | 2 |
| Chester | 32 | Poynton | 7 |
| Congleton | 17 | Runcorn | 17 |
| Crewe | 35 | Sandbach | 8 |
| Ellesmere Port | 36 | Stockton Heath | 8 |
| Frodsham | 10 | Tarporley | 4 |
| Holmes Chapel | 7 | Warrington | 14 |
| Knutsford | 5 | Widnes | 24 |
| Lymm | 7 | Wilmslow | 49 |
| Macclesfield | 21 | Winsford | 25 |
| Malpas | 3 | | |
| Middlewich | 17 | | |

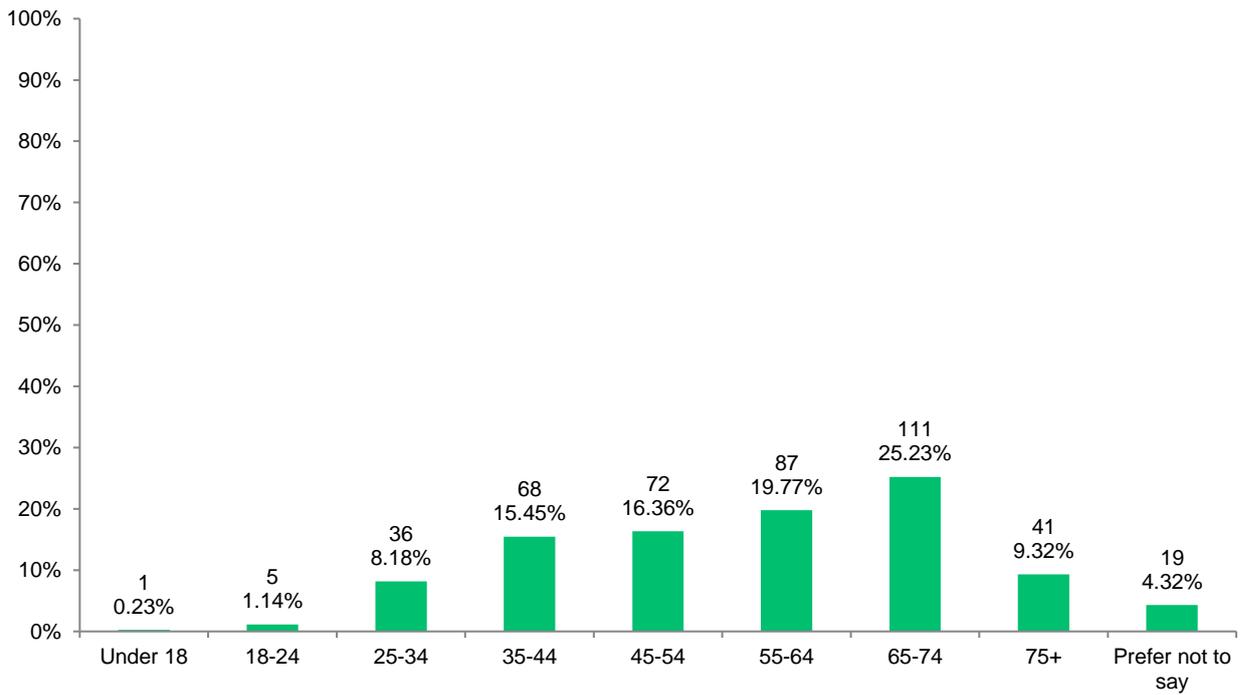
Gender (438 responses)



Is your gender the same as that assigned to you at birth? (442 responses)



Age Range (440 responses)



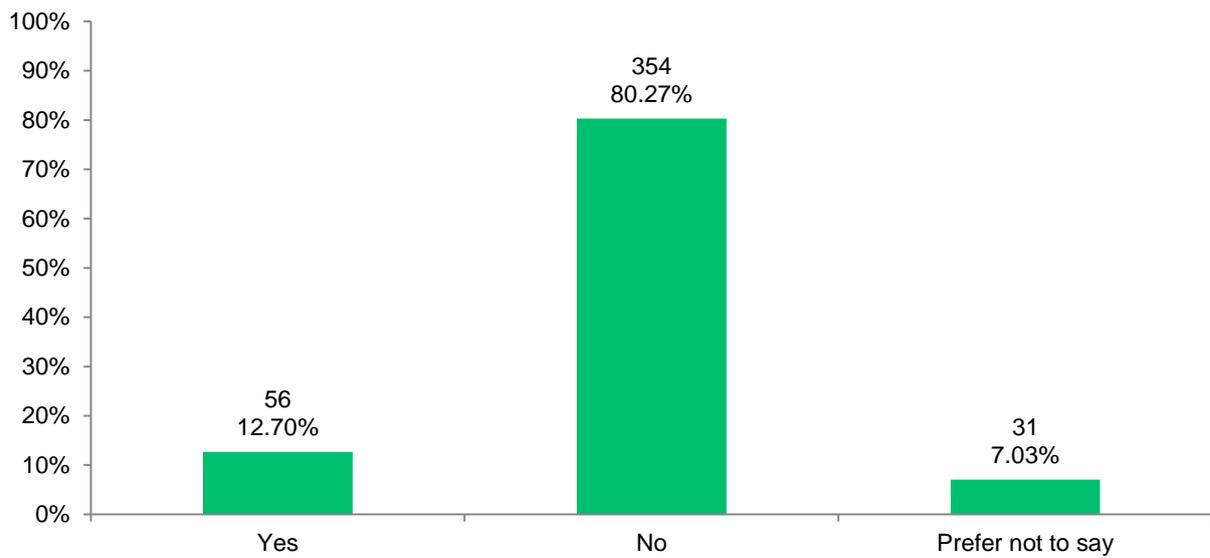
Ethnic Origin (432 responses)

| Ethnicity | Number of Responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| White British | 377 |
| White Irish | 3 |
| Gypsy or Irish traveller | 1 |
| Any other white background | 8 |
| White and black Caribbean | 2 |
| White and black African | 0 |
| White and Asian | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 1 |
| Any other Asian background | 0 |
| African | 0 |
| Caribbean | 0 |
| Any other black/African/Caribbean/black British background | 0 |
| Arab | 0 |
| Any other ethnic background | 1 |
| Prefer not to say | 38 |

Religion (414 responses)

| Religion | Number of Responses |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Buddhist | 1 |
| Christian | 221 |
| Hindu | 0 |
| Jewish | 0 |
| Muslim | 1 |
| Sikh | 0 |
| Other religion | 11 |
| No religion | 132 |
| Prefer not to say | 48 |

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (441 responses)



Sexual Orientation (434 responses)

