

Annual REPORT 2012-13

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FIRES REACH ALL-TIME LOW

Fire Chiefs say they are delighted that the number of fires in Cheshire is now at the lowest level ever recorded but have vowed to continue campaigning for more safety improvements in the future.

Figures show that the total number of primary fires – those involving homes, businesses, cars, injuries and incidents where more than five fire engines were used – fell to 1,181 in 2012-13, a reduction of more than a third over the last five years.

There were four fire deaths during the year and 52 fire-related injuries, again a reduction on the previous year.

“We have a very clear focus on making Cheshire safer for everyone and these excellent results are largely due to the hard work of our staff in providing safety advice and help to those most at risk,” said Fire Authority Chair Cllr. John Joyce.

“We have always believed strongly that prevention is better than cure and even though we face major cuts in our funding, we think it is more important than ever that we continue investing in our community safety work.”

In 2012-13 the Service carried out nearly 23,000 visits to high risk households across Cheshire, giving out key safety advice and fitting free smoke alarms as part of its Home Safety Assessment (HSA) programme. Over the last 10 years firefighters and community safety advocates have completed over 357,000 HSAs throughout Cheshire.

“There is no doubt that our work has been a key factor in reducing fires to their lowest ever level in Cheshire but we can’t be complacent,” added Chief Fire Officer Paul Hancock.

“That’s why our high profile campaigns for the fitting of sprinklers and smoke alarms to be compulsory are vital if we are to maintain these safety improvements going forward.”

For more performance information see page 6

Safety plea to public

Fire chiefs are reassuring communities that they will still be able to provide a fire and rescue service across Cheshire during any potential industrial action by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

Members of the FBU have voted in favour of industrial action as part of a dispute with the Government over plans to reform firefighter pensions.

But Cheshire’s Chief Fire Officer Paul Hancock said: “We have put in place plans and procedures that will enable us to continue to protect the communities of Cheshire if strikes go ahead.

“Clearly, however, there will be fewer fire engines and firefighters available than normal and we would urge residents and businesses to take extra care by following our key safety messages.”

Public safety campaigns are underway, while the Service’s website – www.cheshirefire.gov.uk – will carry up to date information about the potential strikes. Residents are urged to follow the Service on Twitter @CheshireFire or visit it on Facebook at CheshireFRS.

Your SIX steps to fire safety

- 1 fit a smoke alarm and test regularly
- 2 plan your easiest escape route
- 3 switch off appliances before going to bed
- 4 never leave cooking unattended
- 5 close doors at all times
- 6 999 get out, stay out, call 999

Share fire safety - talk to family and friends - see the website

Investing in the future



Cheshire Fire Authority Member, Cllr Stef Nelson, hands over the keys to a new fire engine that will be based at Runcorn Fire Station. The vehicle is part of the Authority’s continued investment in firefighting equipment.

New system to keep you Alert

A new system aimed at keeping local communities across Cheshire informed about incidents, emergencies and key safety campaigns is being launched by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Fire Alert System is a free two-way community messaging system allowing people to receive important alerts from the Service not only by text message but also by email and phone.

“Incidents and emergencies can have a very real impact on the lives of residents and workers and it is important we continue to develop ways in which we can let people know what is going on,” said Deputy Chief Fire Officer Mark Cashin.



“This system offers us a fast and efficient way of providing basic updates and safety advice and I hope that as many Cheshire residents and business owners as possible take just a couple of minutes to register for this free service”.

The secure countywide portal has been developed in partnership with Cheshire Police and means users can also register to receive updates from them and other partners.

Registration is via the Service’s website and users can put in their home or work post code or that of a relative and choose what alerts they would like to receive. People without the internet can call 01606 868422.

Film honour for fire cadets

Cheshire Fire Cadets won a national road safety award, as part of a campaign to help save young lives co-ordinated by the road safety charity, Brake.

The 2young2die awards encouraged young people to get creative and promote life-saving road safety messages to their peers and the wider community through powerful campaigns.

Fire Cadets from Congleton, Sandbach and Runcorn were thrilled to claim the award for their series of hard-hitting short films, which they created in a bid to educate young road users. The inspiration behind the project was their friend and fellow Fire Cadet, Hayley Bates, who was tragically killed in a road crash in September 2010.

Laura Wheelton, Fire Cadet Watch Manager at Congleton, said: "It was a good feeling when we were told that we'd won the 2young2die award. We're proud that we have been able to turn something that has affected us so deeply into something positive."

Rich Andrew, senior development officer at Brake, says "The Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Cadets have shown great dedication to spreading road safety awareness and their powerful messages are reaching a large audience of young people."

The Cadets will be presented with their award, at Brake's annual reception at the Houses of Parliament in January 2014.



A 20 year success story

The Service marked a special milestone this year as it celebrated two decades of delivering The Prince's Trust Team Programme – an inspirational project that has helped thousands of young people.

The Team programme is a 12-week personal development scheme which helps unemployed 16 to 25-year-olds build the skills and confidence they need to get a job. The Service's involvement with the programme began back in 1993 when it recognised it as an opportunity to engage with and inspire Cheshire's younger generation.

Chief Fire Officer, Paul Hancock, said: "It is with a huge amount of pride that I am able to reflect on our involvement with the Prince's Trust. Over the past 20 years we have seen thousands of young people pass through our doors. I am delighted to say that for the vast majority of them their involvement with us and The Prince's Trust proves to be a positive turning point in their lives."

To mark this special anniversary the Service held a gala dinner at Chester Racecourse, which was attended by a host of dignitaries, celebrities and people who had played a key role in the success of the programme over the years. In addition the event saw a number of past team members return to share their experience of how the course had helped transform their lives.

The event, which was hosted by Prince's Trust Ambassador and ITV weather presenter Claire Nasir and her husband BBC Radio 6 music presenter Chris Hawkins, featured a video message from His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, which thanked the Service for the work it had done.

Other guests included the Fire Minister Brandon Lewis MP, Cheshire's Lord Lieutenant, David Briggs and rugby player James Roby.

There are many more Team programmes being planned and so if you or your company would like to get involved please contact a member the Service's Youth Engagement team on 01606 868700 or visit our website.



Cheshire wins prestigious award

The Service has won the Improvement and Efficiency (iESE) Fire and Rescue Project of the Year award, which focus on innovation and efficiency in public services.

Cheshire won the award for its ground breaking efforts in the field of fire prevention. It has over a number of years developed a first class range of interventions designed to reduce risk significantly and the need for emergency intervention.

This has seen a range of positive outcomes, not least a reduction of 70% of injuries in fires and a reduction of 41% in house fires.

Head of Community Fire Safety Evan Morris said: "I am delighted that our organisation has won this award and am especially thrilled it's been recognised as a leading Fire and Rescue Service for the work of its Community Safety Department. This is a significant achievement and reflects the hard work invested by all our staff and volunteers."



Investing in safety

As part of the Fire Authority's commitment to keeping firefighters safe, a series of projects have been completed to boost frontline training and equipment.

The investment of around £500,000 includes a new joint facility at Manchester Airport, which will enable crews to access backdraft and flashover training scenarios. The site next to the runway, offers an ideal open area where fuels can be burnt away from any commercial or residential areas. It involves a series of containers and observation points that will enable firefighters to train and observe how to deal with potentially deadly situations.



Investment has also been made in a number of other areas including the purchase of 'Tough Books', which will provide a robust device that can be used to obtain and transfer vital information during incidents.

In addition, flow meters are being fitted to fire engines to provide a digital reading of the litres of water per minute being applied to a fire. This will be invaluable at larger incidents when crews need to tell the Environment Agency how much water is being used. It will also be useful during chemical incidents when crews sometimes need to determine how much water is needed to dilute the substance involved.

The Service has also bought 16 'Eagle Attack' thermal imaging cameras. These vital pieces of equipment enable crews to locate fires and casualties even when there is poor visibility. The 'Eagle Attack' has been chosen because it is small, lightweight and suitable to be attached to crews' breathing apparatus.



Major drive on safety campaigns

Two campaigns which can make a major improvement to public safety are being given top priority by the Fire Authority.

The Service is continuing its campaign to see sprinkler systems fitted in all new buildings in England and it is also launching a drive to get housing landlords signed up to its smoke alarm campaign pledge.

As part of the sprinkler campaign the Fire Authority agreed to earmark £160,000 to work with local housing associations on retro-fitting systems into at least one block of flats in each of the four local council areas.

Fire Authority Chair Cllr. John Joyce said: "Sprinkler systems are proven to save lives and property as well as improving firefighter safety, reducing the amount of damage and limiting the impact on the environment.

"We have been urging landlords and businesses to install these for some time but now we are launching a real drive to ensure action is taken - including providing some part-funding to get them put into tower blocks across Cheshire."

The investment is enough to fund 50% of the costs of installing sprinklers in at least four high rise tower



blocks with around 60 flats in each. Initial talks with some local landlords have indicated that they would be prepared to meet the other half of the costs.

"Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has a national reputation for innovation and this programme is an exciting opportunity to kick start an investment in sprinkler systems which are now a cost effective way of dramatically improving people's safety," said Chief Fire Officer Paul Hancock.



SCHEME TARGETS LANDLORDS

While the number of fire related deaths is at an all time low, there is evidence that an increasing proportion of fire deaths occur in those properties without a working smoke alarm. The latest figures show that 37% of deaths occur in the 14% of properties without a smoke alarm.

Data collected by some fire and rescue services also shows that a majority of those who are at risk live in rented properties.

That's why the Fire Authority is launching a scheme this autumn urging private and social landlords in Cheshire to ensure that their properties are fitted with working smoke alarms and their tenants understand the risks and receive safety advice.

The Fire Authority is promoting the 'Smoke Alarm Pledge' scheme in partnership with local and national agencies, such as the Chief Fire Officers' Association, local housing associations, the Cheshire Federation of Women's Institutes (WI) and the Fire Protection Association (FPA).

The Authority is also aiming to persuade the Government of the need to make it a legal requirement for landlords to fit smoke alarms when they renovate their properties. Similar legislation is in place in Scotland and the organisation will be meeting stakeholders and presenting evidence in this financial year to generate support.

Celebrating top employer award



The Service is celebrating after making it into Stonewall's annual guide to the UK's top 100 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) friendly employers.

Stonewall - the national body working to achieve equality for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people - also heralded the Service as the North West's Most Improved Employer after it climbed 101 places to claim the 45th slot in this year's Workplace Equality Index.

Fire Authority Deputy Chair Cllr Stef Nelson said: "This is something we are really proud of - we are totally committed to developing an inclusive working environment where staff feel valued regardless of their background or sexual orientation.

"Our aim is to deliver an excellent fire and rescue service and ensure the communities of Cheshire remain safe. I am certain that this is best achieved when our people feel supported and can be themselves at work."

Seasonal safety



With Summer over, the clocks going back and Bonfire Night coming up, the Service would like to remind residents of some key safety messages:

Clocks - check your smoke alarms are working as you put the clocks back on October 27

Keeping warm - Ensure electric blankets are working properly, any heaters are not obstructed, don't leave fires on overnight and get your chimney swept

Autumn driving - colder nights mean more chance of fog, so slow down if visibility is poor and allow extra time for journeys.

Bonfire night - go to an organised bonfire but if you must light your own, don't use flammable liquids and site away from buildings and trees. Store and use fireworks responsibly.



Residents, businesses, partners and staff have all helped to shape ambitious plans by the Fire Authority to fundamentally change how its emergency response services will be delivered across Cheshire in the future.

Last year the organisation completed its most extensive consultation to date as it sought views on the options to build some new fire stations, keep virtually the same number of fire engines but make significant changes in how many of them are staffed.

The three month consultation was overseen by the Consultation Institute and Cheshire subsequently became the first fire and rescue service in the country to be successfully accredited through its Compliance Assessment scheme.

The outcomes from the consultation were used by the Authority in confirming which of the options it intended to pursue and the map alongside summarises the current plans. The programme is expected to take up to four years to complete and will be scrutinised through the organisation's annual risk management processes to ensure it still meets the Authority's objectives and the challenge of saving nearly £8 million by 2017-18.

Implementing the programme will clearly be the Service's main focus over the coming years, however, it is important that efforts are made to review and improve all aspects of the organisation.

The organisation's draft plan for 2014-15, therefore, also includes a number of new proposals for developing the organisation, protecting local communities and responding to emergencies. While these are not as far reaching as those set out in last year's plan, the Authority remains committed to ensuring residents, businesses, partners and staff have the opportunity to give their views.

Residents are urged to give their views on the projects below by visiting the Service's website – www.cheshirefire.gov.uk – where there is an online survey and details of community roadshow events being held across Cheshire. Alternatively, email consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk or 'phone 01606 868408. The formal consultation runs until December 16.

Summary of proposals for 2014-15

Developing the organisation

- Review key service-wide systems such as those for finance and HR and evaluate options for future collaboration after the launch of the North West Fire Control
- Implement the outcomes from the Service's income generation working group.

Protecting local communities

- Develop new data sharing agreements with local health partners and take a lead role on negotiations over access to national data sources
- Set up a pilot project to provide a paid-for Home Safety Assessment programme for low risk households
- Establish the smoke alarm landlord pledge project and implement the first phase of the project to part fund the retro-fitting of sprinklers in some hi-rise flats
- Examine the feasibility of establishing Cheshire's own dedicated Safety Centre for young people
- Review options to further reduce the number of false alarms from automatic fire systems which the Service attends.

Responding to emergencies

- Continue to implement the Authority's emergency response programme including new crewing arrangements for the second fire engine at Runcorn, a new shift system at Macclesfield and new on-call recruitment at Alsager, Congleton, Knutsford, Northwich, Penketh, Stockton Heath and Winsford
- Review the impact of the Service having a presence at the former Redsands Children Centre in Willaston, Nantwich
- Review how the Service's fleet of fire engines should be bought, specified and maintained in the future.



Planning

This map highlights the emergency response proposals the Service has over the next few financial years.

While the Service doesn't operate its fire stations purely on local authority boundaries, they are grouped by unitary areas for easy reference. Visit www.cheshirefire.gov.uk for the draft risk management plan for 2014-15.

Warrington

Proposals:

1. **Penketh** – build a new wholetime community fire station with two fire engines, one operated by on-call staff in 2015-16
2. **Warrington** – move the second fire engine to Penketh the same year
3. **Lymm** - build a new wholetime station near the M6/M56 motorway interchange and use it as a base for other specialist vehicles in 2015-16
4. **Stockton Heath** - change crewing to on-call and move the aerial appliance to Warrington the same year
5. **Birchwood** – no change.



Cheshire West and Chester

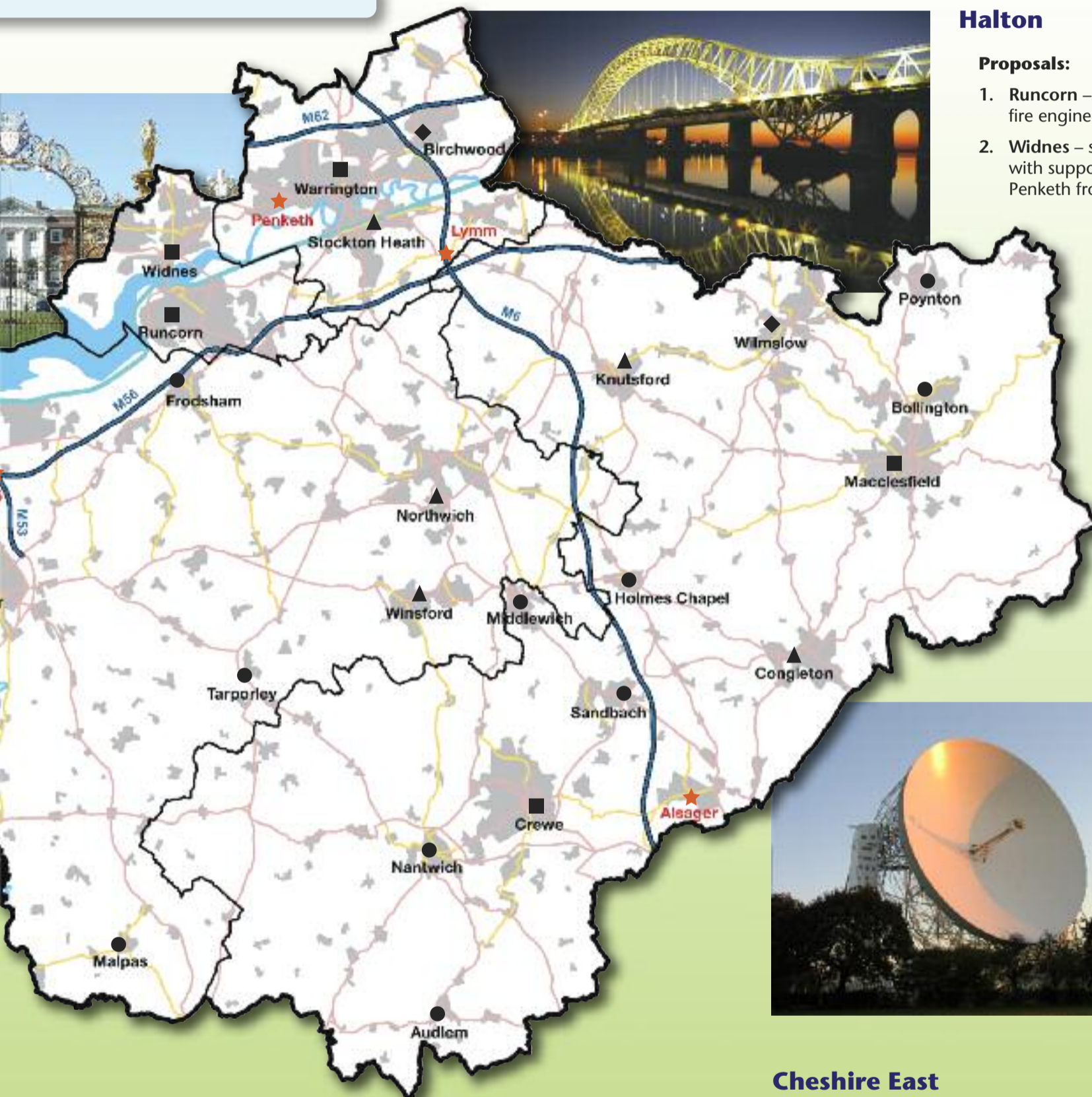
Proposals:

1. **M56/M53 motorway interchange** – open a new wholetime station near the M6/M56 motorway interchange and use it as a base for other specialist vehicles from 2016-17
2. **Chester** – move the second fire engine to the new motorway base the same year
3. **Neston** – continue to review the feasibility of creating a new on-call station with one fire engine
4. **Ellesmere Port** – change the crewing of the second fire engine or move it to a new on-call station at Neston in 2016-17
5. **Winsford and Northwich** – change from day crewing to a nucleus crewing arrangement in 2015-16
6. **Frodsham, Malpas and Tarporley** – no change.

for a safer Cheshire

Service intends to implement over the next

local council boundaries, the proposals are available on www.fire.gov.uk to see a full copy of the



Halton

Proposals:

1. Runcorn – change the crewing of the second fire engine to on-call from 2014-15
2. Widnes – stop crewing the second fire engine with support provided by the new station at Penketh from 2015-16

- Key
- Wholetime
 - ▲ Day crewed
 - On-call
 - ◆ Nucleus
 - ★ Proposed stations



Cheshire East

Proposals:

1. Macclesfield – introduce a new crewing system for the main fire engine during 2014-15
2. Knutsford – change to on-call from 2015-16
3. Alsager – open a new on-call station with one fire engine in 2015-16
4. Congleton – remove the second engine and change the station to a nucleus crewing arrangement in 2015-16
5. Crewe – crew the second fire engine by on-call staff from 2016-17
6. Wilmslow – no change.



Scan this code with a smart phone to go to our online consultation.

Operational excellence

Training its operational staff to the very highest possible standards has remained a top priority for the Service.

Thankfully major incidents are a rare occurrence, however, it remains vital that fire crews are exposed to realistic training scenarios to prepare them just in case something serious happens.

The Service's Command Training Group has overseen a number of training events both at Headquarters and out on location.

The events, which involved crews from across Cheshire as well as volunteers playing 'live casualties', all involved very realistic scenarios that were designed to test the crews' practical application of skills and the incident commander's decisions.

The training scenarios have included chemical leaks, fires in high rise buildings and incidents at major public events.

In addition to this sort of training the Service's state-of-the-art Incident Command Training Suite continues to use the very best in virtual technology to ensure that Cheshire has some of the best prepared crews in the country.



Safety Day triumph



The third annual Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Safety day was another success as firefighters joined forces with staff from across the organisation to help spread some winter warmth.

The event, which was entitled, 'Get Set for Winter', focused on cold weather awareness as well as the standard fire safety advice. More than 850 residents, many of who were older more vulnerable people, were visited on the day as the Service aimed to create safer communities.

Chair of Cheshire Fire Authority, Cllr John Joyce, took part in delivering Home Safety Assessments on the day. He said: "The day was a fantastic success and one that saw us directly engaging with hundreds of older people in their homes."

Summary of accounts 2012-13



Fire Authority

Cheshire Fire Authority is the public body which manages the fire and rescue service on behalf of local communities. It is made up of 23 elected Members, with eight appointed by Cheshire East Council, seven by Cheshire West and Chester, three by Halton Borough and five by Warrington Borough. The current political make up of the Authority is Labour (12), Conservative (9), Liberal Democrat (1) and Independent (1).

The Authority is a separate legal body and has the power to set council tax and agree its own policies and procedures without needing the approval of these local councils. Its meetings are open to the public and are usually held at the Service's Winsford headquarters full details are on the website – www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

Its key duties include setting the annual budget, agreeing the numbers of staff and levels of equipment necessary to provide an effective service and approving the organisation's key policies, plans and strategies.

It is also responsible for ensuring its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is properly accounted for and how it aims for continuous improvement. To

demonstrate this it produces an Annual Governance Statement to accompany the Statement of Accounts, available via the Service's website.

From 2013-14 there is also a requirement under the new Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to publish an annual Assurance Statement. The first statement will be made available on the Service's website in December 2013.

Accounts

The Fire Authority's accounts show how it uses its resources to deliver a fire and rescue service across Cheshire. The summary accounts below provide an overview of where the funds come from, how they are used and the financial position as at March 31st 2013.

Summary Revenue Account

The 2012-13 Fire Authority budget was £44.7m, with total expenditure incurred of £44.5m resulting in an underspend of around £200,000.

The Authority has a General Reserve of £6.7m. This has been assessed as proportionate to the risks facing the organisation and balances the current public sector financial position with the need to ensure there are

sufficient funds to deal with major incidents.

In line with the continuing financial pressure it faces, the Authority has developed a range of options to deliver future savings. Implementing some of these will take time, however, and it is recognised that the reserves will be needed to smooth the financial pressure over the next few years.

Summary Balance Sheet

The Summary Balance Sheet shows the 2012-13 end of year position and the most obvious point to note is the net liability of £358.9m. In other words, the Fire Authority has assets worth £50.9m, but has long term liabilities of £409.8m.

Most of the liabilities relate to all expected future pension costs – £405.9m, compared to £349.7m in 2011-12. All local authorities are required to recognise this liability in their balance sheet even though it is not an immediate call on their resources, but instead is paid out over the life of our existing and future pensioners.

At present, all deficits on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme are funded by Government through a specific top up grant.

Summary Revenue Account 2012-13	£'000	£'000
Community Fire Safety	4,607	
Firefighting and Rescue Operations	31,687	
Corporate And Democratic Core	695	
Non-Distributed Costs	67	
Net Cost of Service		37,056
Other income, expenditure and adjustments	7,476	
Amount to be met by Govt Grant and Local Taxation		44,532
Revenue Support Grant and Local Taxation	-19,664	
Council Tax	-25,064	
Net General Fund (Surplus)\Deficit		-196
Balance on General Fund brought forward	-6,545	
Balance on General Fund Carried Forward		-6,741

Summary Balance Sheet 2012-13	£'000	£'000
Long Term Assets	35,677	
Current Assets	19,858	
Long Term Liabilities	-409,766	
Current Liabilities	-4,634	
Total Assets less Total Liabilities		-358,865
Financed by:		
Unusable reserves	380,770	
Earmarked Reserves	-15,164	
General Reserve	-6,741	
TOTAL NET WORTH		358,865

A full copy of the Statement of Accounts is available on our website - www.cheshirefire.gov.uk or by telephoning 01606 868815.

Focus on Performance 2012-13

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service closely monitors and manages its performance so it can improve the way it protects the safety of local communities. For 2012-13 a new scorecard approach to performance reporting was developed using segments to represent different aspects of the organisation and provides an overview of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across the Service's main activities. Each segment displays a small number of KPIs and shows performance against targets set for the year as well as performance compared with the previous year.

Community Outcomes

It is remarkable that the number of fires attended by the Service continues to be driven down. The number of primary fires during 2012-13 was 1,181 which is the lowest level ever recorded for Cheshire. Of these, just over a third were accidental dwelling fires (ADFs). Deliberate primary fires reduced by around a quarter compared with the previous year, as did non-domestic premises fires.

There were four fire deaths during the year, all occurring in house fires. While the number is very low, the details known about these tragic incidents highlight the importance of continually refining our targeting policy to ensure we maximise data sharing arrangements with other organisations to reach individuals at highest risk of fire. Our target every year will be zero deaths so performance against this indicator will show red until that ambition is achieved.

In addition to the fatalities, there were 52 fire-related injuries recorded. This is slightly lower than the previous year, although higher than the target that was set at the start of the year. Around a fifth of these injuries were classed as serious and these were mostly burns - the rest were recorded as slight injuries, the majority of which were due to smoke inhalation.

Deliberate secondary fires were at an all-time low during 2012-13 with a 36% decrease compared with the previous year. The wet weather during the year undoubtedly contributed to the low numbers in addition to the Service's

continuous monitoring and analysis of arson which ensures very targeted intervention work in problem areas. Cheshire's arson conviction rate is much better than the national average which is testament to the proactive way that the Service tackles these issues and the close working relationship with the Police, including a detective paid for by the organisation.



COMMUNITY OUTCOMES KPIs				
Indicator	Actual	Year End Target	Year on Year Change	
Primary fires per 100,000 population	117.01	124.07	↓	Meeting target
Fatalities in primary fires per 100,000 population	0.4	0	↓	Failing against target by at least 10%
Injuries in primary fires per 100,000 population	5.06	4.56	↓	Meeting target
Deliberate fires per 10,000 population	14.36	20.96	↓	Meeting target
RTCs attended	364	327	↑	Failing against target by at least 10%
Customer satisfaction with the Service	83%	85%	↑	Meeting target

- Key:**
- Performance better than target by at least 10%
 - Meeting target
 - Within 10% of target
 - Failing against target by at least 10%

Prevention and Protection



Delivery against planned prevention and protection activities has been successful on the whole. Strong performance management during the year has ensured that targets have been met, and in some cases significantly exceeded.

An exception relates to Age UK Contact Assessments for older people – the take-up rate hasn't been as good as desired so during 2013-14 there will be a concerted effort by crews and advocates to improve this.

A new policy was launched in July 2012-13 to reduce the number of times the Service attends false alarm calls caused by problems with automatic alarm systems. An accompanying target was set for 2012-13 to reduce the number by 10% and a reduction of 15% was actually achieved by the end of the year through the implementation of the policy.

COMMUNITY PROTECTION KPIs				
Indicator	Actual	Year End Target	Year on Year Change	
Thematic Inspections Completed	1,859	1,848	↑	Meeting target
NDP fire safety audits completed	2,055	1,894	↑	Meeting target
Arson conviction rate	13%	6-8%	↑	Meeting target
Unwanted Fire Signals per 1,000 non-domestic premises	51.40	54.91	↓	Meeting target
Hits to business safety internet pages	5,594	None*	New KPI	

PREVENTION KPIs				
Indicator	Actual	Year End Target	Year on Year Change	
HSAs delivered to high risk dwellings	22,723	20,000	↓	Failing against target by at least 10%
Contact assessments acceptance rate	33%	40%	↑	Meeting target
Number of young people completing a youth programme	1,026	708	↑	Meeting target
Number of people reached through road safety events	40,820	21,844	↑	Meeting target

* New baselines being established during 2012-13

Response



The pass rate against the Cheshire Response Standards stood at 88% at the end of the year which was slightly below the target of 92%. For residential fires the Cheshire Standards were met on 98% of occasions.

The pass rate for road traffic collisions was somewhat lower at 73%. As published in IRMP 10, the Service has adopted a new 'blanket' 10 minute response time for life risk incidents from 2013-14.

A further reduction target was set for 2012-13 to continue to drive down the number of times the Service turns out in response to malicious calls.

Since 2007-08 there has been a 68% reduction in attendance at these incidents and this has been a result of rigorous call challenge and publicity regarding hoax calls.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE KPIs				
Indicator	Actual	Year End Target	Year on Year Change	
Cheshire Standards pass rate	88%	92%	↑	Meeting target
Average On-Call availability	66%	None*	↑	Meeting target
% Emergency calls handled within the standards	80%	85%	New KPI	
% Malicious calls not attended	52%	60%	↑	Meeting target

* New baselines being established during 2012-13

Resources



The resources KPIs focus on internal aspects of the organisation including a number relating to the Service's workforce. This segment shows healthy performance with all targets having been met.

'Working days lost to injury' is a Health and Safety measure. Overall, accidents and near misses in the workplace have reduced compared with 2011-12.

Any serious accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

During 2012-13 the number of accidents reported to the HSE was eight, which is a continuation of the trend in recent years for low numbers of serious accidents.

RESOURCES KPIs				
Indicator	Actual	Year End Target	Year on Year Change	
Average days/shifts lost to sickness	5.43	5.5	↓	Meeting target
ICT core service availability	100%	96%	New KPI	
Working days lost to injury	106	150	↓	Meeting target
Core skills training completed	100%	100%	New KPI	
Overall staff satisfaction*	83%	65%	↑	Meeting target
Website visitors	325,966	166,610	↑	Meeting target

* Measured every two years: last recorded in 2011-12

Crews bring a major blaze under control



Firefighters rose to the challenge when a fire broke out at a Widnes recycling plant – a fire that was to burn for 32 days.

The incident, thought to be the longest incidents in the Service's history, took place on Johnson's Lane and involved thousands of tonnes of recycled plastics.

At the height of the blaze there were 15 fire engines at the scene battling to get the initial fire under control.

In the weeks that followed crews from Halton endured some challenging circumstances, as they ensured that the fire was dealt with in such a way that the damage to the surrounding environment was kept to a minimum.



How clean is your grill?

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service launched its latest campaign - 'Dirty Grills Kill' - at Runcorn Fire Station Open Day. The campaign encourages people to clean their cookers to prevent a build up of oil causing a fire to break out.

Terry McDermott, Head of Service Delivery said: "Cooking remains the biggest cause of house fires in Halton. A major cause of this type of fire is unfortunately dirty grills.

"The problem occurs when a build up of fat and oil is left in the grill pan and heats up – basically creating a mini chip pan in your cooker. One spark can lead to it igniting and causing the type of blaze that at best will destroy your kitchen or even your home but at worst it could cost you your life or that of a loved one.

"Therefore we are urging people to join our campaign by making sure they keep their grills and cookers clean. I am certain that together we can drive down the numbers of these potentially devastating fires."

Between 2009-10 and 2012-13 there have been 861 cooking related house fires in Cheshire with 16% of incidents involving an injury or fatality.

Terry added: "We have a clear vision in Cheshire of seeing the number of fire deaths drop to zero but we need people's help so please get behind this campaign and start scrubbing those grills!"

Keeping hearts healthy

The Service has opened a new facility at its Runcorn Fire Station to assist those with cardiac-related illnesses.

The Healthy Hearts Runcorn Gym has been unveiled at the Heath Road site. It was inspired by firefighters at the Station, who worked closely with the NHS to create the gym for use by Halton Hospital's Cardiac Rehabilitation Team.

Runcorn Fire Station Manager Sean Henshaw, said: "For many years now Runcorn Fire Station has been at the heart of the local community, with facilities such as its community garden and climbing wall. The Healthy Hearts Gym is a great new development that will be used as an outreach facility for delivering fitness sessions to patients who are rehabilitating following heart surgery or heart attacks."



The old engine house has been completely refurbished to create a fully-equipped gym which has been designed in partnership with Warrington and Halton NHS Foundation Trust and is supported by the Local Area Forum.

Runcorn fire station staff will also be able to use the facility for training and fitness.



Halton Unitary performance area profile



In the last three years, primary fires in Halton have reduced by 25%. These are fires that involve buildings and vehicles and include both accidental and deliberate incidents. In 2012-13 we saw the lowest number ever recorded. Although there was one fatality in a fire in Halton during 2012-13, this is the first since 2008-09. Injuries have reduced over the last three years and all of them in 2012-13 were categorised as 'slight' with no serious injuries.

Accidental dwelling fires are included in the primary fires category and these numbers are at an all-time low and have been relatively static over the last three years in Halton. Delivery of Home Safety Assessments continues to be focused on those households most at risk and this is backed up with publicity campaigns highlighting key safety messages, particularly around safety in the kitchen where around 50% of house fires start.

Deliberate fires are more of an issue in Halton than in the other areas covered by the Cheshire Fire Authority, however, there has been a dramatic reduction of 35% over the last three years. It is likely that the wet weather will have contributed to the reductions in 2012-13, however, there have been concerted efforts to tackle the problems in 'hotspot' areas in Halton, particularly focusing on small (secondary) deliberate fires associated with anti-social behaviour.

Key statistics	2010-11	11-12	12-13
Deliberate primary fires per 10,000 population	8.3	7.0	5.9
Deliberate secondary fires per 10,000	44.8	39.8	28.7
Primary fires per 100,000	169.5	166.8	127.3
Fatalities from primary fires per 100,000	0.0	0.0	0.8
Non-fatal casualties per 100,000	6.7	4.2	4.0

Key contacts



Alex Waller
Service Delivery
Manager

Emma Coxon
Locality Safety
Manager

Liz Thompson
Hub Administration
Manager

Ian Kay
Station Manager -
Community Fire
Protection

Fire Authority Members



Stef Nelson

Rob Polhill

Phil Harris



■ Wholtime station

Your local station

For more information about your local fire station, its opening times and any upcoming open days or other events please visit our website www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

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