

# **Cheshire Fire Authority**

## **Statement of Accounts**

**2018-19**

# STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

<b><u>Contents</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
Narrative Report	3
Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts	13
Expenditure and Funding Analysis Note	14
Financial Statements	
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	16
Movement in Reserves Statement	17
Balance Sheet	19
Cash Flow Statement	20
Firefighter Pension Fund Statement	21
Notes to the Financial Statements (including accounting policies)	
List of the notes	22
Note 1: Accounting Policies	23
Note 2 onwards	38
Glossary of terms	74
Auditor's Report to Cheshire Fire Authority	81
Annual Governance Statement	86

For further information please contact:

Allan Rainford

Treasurer, Cheshire Fire Authority

Winsford

Cheshire CW7 2UA

Tel: 01606 868845

## NARRATIVE REPORT

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome to the 2018/19 Cheshire Fire Authority Statement of Accounts. Cheshire Fire Authority (“the Authority”) is the public body which manages the Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of local communities. The Authority is responsible for providing an efficient and effective fire and rescue service which protects the communities and infrastructure of Cheshire. It is made up of 23 elected Members appointed by Cheshire East Borough Council; Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council; Halton Borough Council; and Warrington Borough Council. The Authority’s vision is a Cheshire where there are no deaths, injuries or damage from fires and other emergencies.

1.2 Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service’s is led by the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive (CFO) and operates out of 28 fire stations, Safety Central at Lymm, training facilities and fleet workshop at the Sadlers Road site in Winsford. 2018/19 saw a change of Chief Fire Officer and a change in the management structure with two Assistant Chief Fire Officers, replacing the Deputy Chief Fire Officer’s role.

1.3 Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has three aims around its core responsibilities of protecting, responding and developing an excellent organisation - each is underpinned by specific objectives:

To protect communities and reduce local risks the Service will:

- Maintain a detailed understanding of its communities and carry out risk analysis and assessment to identify the people and property most at risk
- Deliver campaigns and projects to reduce antisocial behaviour and increase awareness of fire and road safety
- Ensure fire safety legislation is implemented effectively

In responding to emergencies the Service will:

- Ensure plans and resources are in place to provide a flexible, efficient and resilient response to emergency incidents
- Use intelligence and data to match resources to risk and demand
- Ensure the safety of its people by providing them with the right equipment, training and skills.

In developing an excellent organisation the Service will:

- Ensure its workforce is competent and able to deliver the Authority’s vision
- Inform and involve communities and staff in developing services and policies which are open, transparent and accountable
- Deliver value for money services which maximise community safety and minimise the impact on the environment.

1.4 In delivering the above Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service support the national fire and rescue core values of service to the community; valuing all our employees; valuing diversity in the Service and the community; and valuing improvement.

1.5 Every year Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service create an annual action plan, part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). This plan is about improving public safety,

reducing the number of emergency incidents and saving lives. This plan alongside other key documents can be found at [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents).

## 2. Financial Statements

- 2.1 Since 2016/17 the accounts include a new note called 'The Expenditure and Funding Analysis' which is shown on page 14 before the main financial statements. This note shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from Government grants, council tax and business rates by the Authority in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the Authority in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Authority's services and departments. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on page 16.
- 2.2 The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end on the different reserves held by the Authority. This is analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can currently be used to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other 'unusable' reserves (technical accounting adjustment accounts reflecting the difference between the outcome of applying proper accounting practices and the statutory requirements for funding expenditure within the public sector). It shows how the movements in year of the Authority's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to council tax for the year. This Statement has a strong link to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- 2.3 The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. It essentially captures the inflow and outflow of resources for the financial year up to 31 March, which have been received or incurred as part of the ordinary activities of the Authority. A key figure is the (Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services for 2018/19 which shows a deficit of £30.8m compared to £9.8m in 2017/18.
- 2.4 The Balance Sheet is a statement showing the Authority's assets and liabilities i.e. what is owned and what is owed as at 31 March. The net impact of this is funded by Reserves, which is the residual interest in the assets of the Authority after deducting all of the liabilities. The 'net worth' shows the net position for the Authority and is calculated by deducting total liabilities from total assets. This was £495m in 2018/19 compared to £476m in 2017/18.
- 2.5 The final primary statement is the Cashflow Statement. This shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Authority during the financial year. The statement shows how the Authority generates and uses cash by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cashflows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Authority are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to service delivery. Cashflows arising from

financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Authority.

- 2.6 During 2018/19, the Authority maintained an average cash balance of around £27m each month with fluctuations dependent on payroll and paying creditors versus when grants, precept, business rates and income is received. The main impact on these balances going forward is the funding of capital expenditure such as vehicles, equipment and IT as agreed by the Authority.

### 3. Financial Performance 2018/19

- 3.1 Where does the Fire Authority get its revenue funding from?

3.1.1. The Authority receives over half of its revenue funding from its share of the council tax (called the precept) which is collected by the four local authorities (Cheshire East; Cheshire West and Chester; Halton; and Warrington). The precept approved by the Authority for 2018/19 was increased by 2.99% (£75.48 compared to £73.29 in 2017/18 for a Band D property). In addition to the precept, the Authority receives its share of any surplus or deficits on the council tax collection funds. For 2018/19 this amounted to a surplus allocation (council tax only) of £0.3m (£0.41m 2017/18).

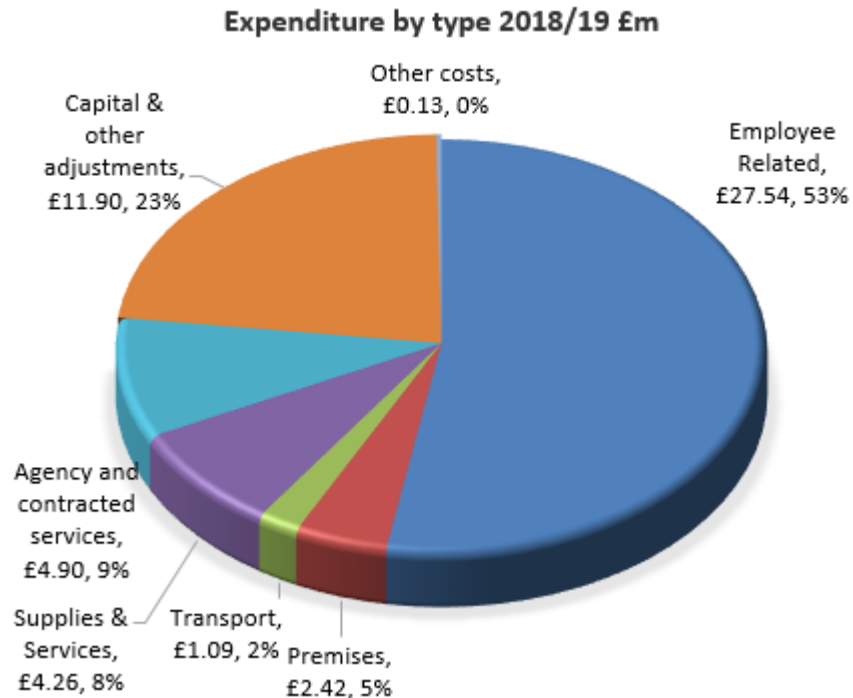
3.1.2. The majority of the balance of revenue funding was received from Central Government and the four local authorities in the form of the Settlement Funding Assessment. This can be broken down into two elements – Revenue Support Grant and Baseline Funding Level. Revenue Support Grant is determined by Central Government and allocated based on a formula. Baseline Funding Level is the amount which Central Government determines should be receivable by the Authority for its share of business rates as collected by the four local authorities. However, the amount of business rates due is not sufficient to meet the Baseline Funding Level so Central Government also pays the Authority a ‘top-up’ grant to meet the shortfall.

- 3.1.3. The funding amounts for Cheshire Fire for 2018/19 were:

Fire Authority's Funding 2018/19	£000	£000	%
Council Tax		(27,735)	64.94
Council Tax – collection fund surplus		(303)	0.71
Revenue Support Grant	(4,513)		10.57
Business Rates	(4,293)		10.05
'Top-up' Grant	(5,163)		12.09
		(13,969)	
Business Rates – collection fund deficit		32	(0.07)
Business Rates – Section 31 Grant		(508)	1.19
Appropriation to Collection Fund Adjustment Account		(223)	0.52
Transfer to provision		2	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>(42,704)</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### 3.3 What does the Fire Authority spend its money on?

3.3.1. Excluding the actuarial pension costs (McCloud judgement), the majority of its expenditure relates to employee costs. The following chart shows a breakdown of what was actually spent by Cheshire Fire in 2018/19 by expenditure type.



3.3.2. On 14 February 2018 the Authority approved the 2018/19 revenue budget of £42.5m together with a capital programme of £9.8m. Budget monitoring reports have been presented to the Performance and Overview Committee on a quarterly basis focussing on the forecast outturn position and revisions to the overall budget in response to changes in-year.

3.3.3. At the end of the financial year the Authority's outturn was an underspend of £721k for the final quarter which has been transferred to the capital reserve as approved at the Fire Authority meeting in February 2018. Details are shown in the table below.

Fire Authority's Service Area	2018/19 Budget £000	Actual £000	Reserve Funding £000	Revised Variance £000
Firefighting & Rescue Operations	23,454	24,543	(906)	183
Protection	1,758	1,661	(6)	(103)
Prevention	2,353	2,221	24	(108)
Support Services	9,090	8,863	(190)	(417)
Unitary Performance Groups	100	130	-	30
Finance resources	5,732	2,051	3,592	(89)
Funding	(42,487)	(42,704)	-	(217)
Surplus transferred to capital reserve at year end			721	721
Cheshire Fire Total	-	(3,235)	3,235	-



- 3.3.4. The main reasons for this underspend was reported to the Authority at its meeting on 10 July 2019, is due to lower than anticipated pay costs; transport vehicle repairs and insurance cost less than budget; business rates S31 grant being higher than budget as well as National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) levy account surplus distribution in March 2019.
- 3.3.5. The Authority holds a number of reserves in support of its transformational programmes and to support the delivery of the Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs). These are explained in detail within these accounts in Note 19, on page 52. As reported to the Fire Authority (February 2018), £6m has been transferred from the general reserve to the capital reserve during 2018/19 to support capital expenditure.

### 3.4 Capital

- 3.4.1. During 2018/19 the Fire Authority invested £1.3m on capital as follows:

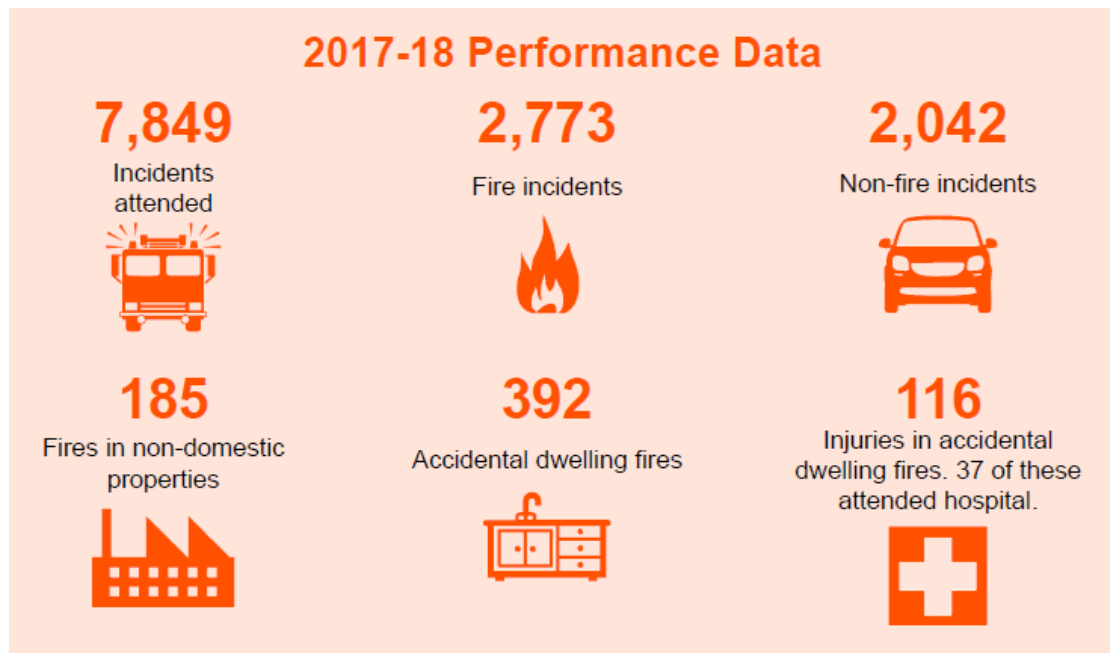
Fire Authority's Capital Expenditure	2018/19 £000
Training Centre	352
New Chester Fire Station	376
Crewe Joint Fire/Police facility	13
Fire Appliances	303
Other Vehicles	186
Thermal image cameras	26
Fleet software	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,301</b>

- 3.4.2. During 2018/19 there has been some initial spend on the Chester station project, where the Authority had agreed to submitting plans to demolish and rebuild Chester Fire Station. The old fire station on St Anne Street, is no longer considered fit for purpose and is costly to maintain in its current state. The work is considered essential in order to meet the requirements of modern day standards in a number of areas, including disability access, energy efficiency and current space usage.
- 3.4.3. Preliminary costs have been incurred relating to the plan for a joint fire and police facility on the site of the existing fire station in Macon Way, Crewe, alongside Cheshire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.4.4. A line rescue vehicle, two water incident units, a display unit and five support vehicles have been brought into service to replace some of our fleet, in keeping with the Authority's vehicle replacement plan. The 2018/19 capital programme which was approved February 2018, included three new appliance, during 2018/19 costs incurred only related to the 3 chassis cabs which have gone to the coachbuilders to build up into fire appliance which will be delivered in 2019/20.

## 4. Non-financial Performance

- 4.1 In 2015 the Fire Authority approved a five year strategy "Planning for a Safer Cheshire" which outlined the challenges facing almost every aspect of the organisation and set out the overarching principles and direction of travel it would adopt in responding to them. Annual action plans set out in more detail the projects and work scheduled for the

forthcoming financial year – an approach which fulfils the Authority’s statutory requirement to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) reflecting up-to-date risk information and outlining how resources will be used. The IRMP 16 also includes a summary of performance data for 2017/18 with the headline performance indicators shown below.



4.2 For further details please follow the link <http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents/irmp>.

4.3 Collaborative working

4.3.1. The work of the Service is now supported by a range of corporate services including human resources, communications and engagement, finance, procurement, stores and legal. Most of this is delivered to both Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service through joint teams based at the shared Police and Fire headquarters at Clemonds Hey, Winsford. 1 April 2018 saw the final tranche of support staff transferring to Cheshire Constabulary as part of the blue light collaboration (BLC) programme with these staff now being part of the joint support services delivering to both Police and Fire.

The Service has strengthened it’s collaborative working with other emergency services and organisations during 2018/19 and undertook a number of initiatives to the benefit of the community;



- 4.3.2. Cheshire Fire joined Cheshire Police in March to deliver a segment on BBC's Crimewatch Roadshow Live to tackle the rise in number of fatal collisions across the county.



- 4.3.3. A joint operation with Cheshire Police was launched to tackle high number of deliberate fires in an area of Warrington.

- 4.3.4. The Authority has had long standing association with the Princes' Trust and in 2018 saw the 25th Anniversary.



- 4.3.5. Cheshire Fire Choir had three representatives take part in national collective of fire fighters to create a group called Fire Tones and released a charity single. The proceeds were distributed to The Fire Fighters Charity and the Band Aid Charity Trust.

- 4.3.6. The Authority provided collaborative aid through cross border working at Saddleworth Moors following major incident during dry summer.

#### 4.4 Other achievements

- 4.4.1. 2018 saw the first year that Fire Authorities have been subject to an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and Cheshire Fire was rated amongst the highest-performing services.

4.4.2. The first cohort of Apprentices which started in 2016 graduated in the summer to become full time recruits.



4.4.3. In December 2018 the Service responded to a major incident at Chester Zoo which was large and complex operation involving more than 80 firefighters. Part of the response was to aid the zoo keepers to move some of the animals away from the fire; manually moving some small reptiles such as turtles and tortoises, and shutting the gates behind the large mammals, such as gibbons and orangutans.

4.4.4. For the Stonewall ranking 2019, Cheshire Fire was ranked 3rd in the Top 100 Employers list (4th in 2018). This is the highest achieving emergency service.



## 5. Pension Liability

- 5.1 The Authority as a responsible employer encourages its employees to participate in a pension scheme. Firefighters have access to four schemes dependent upon when they joined. These are the 1992 Firefighter Pension Scheme; the 2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme; a modified version of the 2006 scheme; and the Firefighter Pension Scheme 2015. For non-firefighters, the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is available.
- 5.2 Under the International Accountings Standards (IAS19), the way in which pensions are reported within these accounts must reflect the full liability incurred for future pension costs in the year it is earned. Therefore, each year the value of the liability is calculated by the Authority's actuaries and is shown on the balance sheet as a long-term liability. The large pension liability shows what the Authority would owe if it had to pay all the pensions for all the existing and retired firefighters and staff in the pension schemes on 31 March. This would not happen as the actual payment of such pensions is made over many years and is funded by future contributions from firefighters and staff, together with Government funding.
- 5.3 The 2018-19 accounts recognise the potential past service cost impact of the recent national McCloud/ Sargeant judgement in respect of unlawful age discrimination arising from the transitional pension provisions in the Fire Pension and the LGPS. This is explained further in note 32 to these accounts. The judgement requires steps to be taken to compensate employees who were transferred to the new schemes potentially including Firefighter Pension Scheme members. This has led to an increase in Firefighter Pension Scheme liabilities.
- 5.4 The impact of an increase in scheme liabilities arising from McCloud / Sargeant judgment will be measured through the pension valuation process, which determines employer and employee contribution rates.
- 5.5 The next Firefighters Pension valuation is due to take place in 2020 with implementation of the results planned for 2023/24 and the Authority will need to plan for the impact of this on employer contribution rates alongside other changes identified through the valuation process. The impact of an increase in annual pension payments arising from McCloud / Sargeant is determined through The Firefighters Pension Fund Regulations. These require a fire authority to maintain a pension fund into which officer and employer contributions are paid and out of which pension payments to retired officers are made. If the Firefighter pension fund does not have enough funds to meet the cost of pensions in year the amount required to meet the deficit is then paid by the Secretary of State to the Authority in the form of a central government top-up grant.

## 6. North West Fire Control (NWFC)

- 6.1 NW Fire Control Limited is a company limited by guarantee which was incorporated in July 2007 and was established to operate a Regional Control Centre with the responsibility for Fire and Rescue Service mobilisation for the North West region.
- 6.2 A detailed assessment for Group Accounting requirements has taken place again during 2018/19 in respect of NWFC. This is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS 10, 11 & 12). It has been determined that the company is governed by



Joint Control due to the fact that unanimous consent exists for key decisions and that each Authority (including Cheshire) has equal voting rights. Based on materiality – i.e. would it significantly change any individual balance within the accounts, the requirement for Cheshire Fire Authority to show their share of the joint operation in their accounts is now necessary. Further details can be found in the NWFC note on page 62.

- 6.3 The 2017/18 accounts have now been restated to include the Authorities 25% share of the results of North West Fire Control Limited, and 2018/19 include the unaudited accounts.

## **7. Future Developments and Plans**

- 7.1 Fire and rescue services across the country are undergoing a significant period of change. The Government’s fire reform agenda sets out a clear direction of travel and challenges for the sector to ensure services are effective, accountable, transparent and reflective of the diverse communities it serves. This is underpinned by a new statutory inspection regime and a refreshed national framework that sets out the overall strategic direction for fire and rescue authorities, alongside certain expectations and requirements.
- 7.2 The plan for 2019/20, therefore, sets out some short, medium and longer-term proposals aimed at ensuring the Fire Authority is best placed to provide the communities it serves with a first-class fire and rescue service. Achieving this will require the support, involvement and awareness of staff, partners and communities.
- 7.3 The IRMP outlines plans for the future, which include:
- 7.3.1. Continuing with a programme of work to improve how the Service recruits and retains on-call firefighters. On-call firefighters are members of the local community who live or work near to the fire station and use an alerter to respond to emergency calls when required.
  - 7.3.2. Undertake a staff engagement survey to measure the engagement of the workforce.
  - 7.3.3. Subject to planning permission, commencing work on the development of a replacement, fit for purpose fire station in Chester on the site of the existing building on St Anne Street.
  - 7.3.4. Progress the development of an operational training centre at its Sadler Road site in Winsford.
  - 7.3.5. Plan for a joint fire and police facility on the site of the existing fire station in Macon Way, Crewe, alongside Cheshire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
  - 7.3.6. Begin work on a wider programme of modernisation across a number of fire stations and other properties.
- 7.4 Commencing a ‘whole service review’, this review will set the direction for the Service over the period 2020-2024. The outcomes of the review may be subject to consultation as part of future planning.

## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### Responsibilities of Cheshire Fire Authority

Cheshire Fire Authority is required to:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In Cheshire Fire Authority that officer is the Treasurer;
- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets; and
- Approve the Statement of Accounts

### Statement from Cheshire Fire Authority

I hereby approve the Statement of Accounts for Cheshire Fire Authority for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Councillor Bob Rudd  
Cheshire Fire Authority  
26 July 2019

### Responsibilities of the Treasurer to the Cheshire Fire Authority

The Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom ('the Code of Practice').

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Treasurer has ensured that:

- Suitable accounting policies have been selected and applied consistently;
- Judgements and estimates made were reasonable and prudent; and
- The Code of Practice was complied with.

The Treasurer has also:

- Kept proper accounting records which were up to date; and
- Taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### The Treasurer's Certificate

I certify that the Statement of Accounts present a true and fair view of the financial position of Cheshire Fire Authority at the reporting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2019 and that events after this date and prior to the formal approval of the Accounts have been properly considered.

Allan Rainford  
Treasurer, Cheshire Fire Authority  
26 July 2019

## EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS NOTE 2018/19

	As reported for Resource Management £000	Adjust for Earmarked Reserve Movements £000	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (a) £000	Net Expenditure Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000
Firefighting and Rescue operations	23,639	906	24,545	(2,874)	21,671
Protection	1,655	6	1,661	(169)	1,492
Prevention	2,244	(24)	2,220	(261)	1,959
Support Services	8,671	190	8,861	(50)	8,811
UPGs	130	-	130	-	130
Corporate / Finance resources	6,026	(4,313)	1,713	(465)	1,248
Actuarial pension cost - McCloud Judgement	-	-	-	22,610	22,610
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>42,365</b>	<b>(3,235)</b>	<b>39,130</b>	<b>18,791</b>	<b>57,921</b>
Net cost of service - 25% share of NWFC			(198)	279	81
Other Income & Expenditure	(42,365)	-	(42,365)	15,170	(27,195)
Other Income & Expenditure -25% share of NWFC			194	(170)	24
<b>(Surplus) or Deficit</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(3,235)</b>	<b>(3,239)</b>	<b>34,070</b>	<b>30,831</b>
<b>Opening General Fund at 31 March 2018</b>			<b>(27,888)</b>		
<b>Less/Plus (Surplus) Deficit on General Fund in Year</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>(3,235)</b>			
	<b>NWFC (25%)</b>	<b>(4)</b>			
			<b>(3,239)</b>		
<b>Closing General Fund at 31 March 2019</b>			<b>(31,127)</b>		

(a) See Note 6, for further details on the adjustments between funding and accounting basis.  
This analysis is not a Primary Financial Statement and forms part of the Notes to the Accounts.



## EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS NOTE 2017/18 (restated)

	As reported for Resource Management £000	Adjust for Earmarked Reserve Movements £000	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (a) £000	Net Expenditure Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000
Firefighting and Rescue operations	22,541	938	23,479	(513)	22,966
Protection	1,475	(71)	1,404	(30)	1,374
Prevention	2,270	(83)	2,187	(48)	2,139
Support Services	8,958	736	9,694	(56)	9,638
UPGs	100	5	105	-	105
Corporate / Finance resources	4,139	129	4,268	(2,749)	1,519
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>39,483</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>41,137</b>	<b>(3,396)</b>	<b>37,741</b>
* Net cost of service - 25% share of NWFC			74	12	86
Other Income & Expenditure	(41,227)	-	(41,227)	13,238	(27,989)
*Other Income & Expenditure -25% share of NWFC			(79)	101	22
<b>*(Surplus) or Deficit</b>	<b>(1,744)</b>	<b>1,654</b>	<b>(95)</b>	<b>9,955</b>	<b>9,860</b>
<b>Opening General Fund at 31 March 2017</b>			<b>(27,793)</b>		
<b>Less/Plus (Surplus) Deficit on General Fund in Year</b>	<b>Fire</b>	<b>(90)</b>			
*	<b>NWFC (25%)</b>	<b>(5)</b>			
*			<b>(95)</b>		
<b>*Closing General Fund at 31 March 2018</b>			<b>(27,888)</b>		

(a) See Note 6, for further details on the adjustments between funding and accounting basis.

This analysis is not a Primary Financial Statement and forms part of the Notes to the Accounts.

\* The 2017/18 balances have been restated to recognise the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited (NWFC).

## COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

2017/18 restated				2018/19			
Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	
£000	£000	£000	Note	£000	£000	£000	
23,113	(147)	<b>22,966</b>		21,826	(156)	<b>21,670</b>	
1,463	(89)	<b>1,374</b>		1,519	(27)	<b>1,492</b>	
2,893	(754)	<b>2,139</b>		2,559	(600)	<b>1,959</b>	
10,967	(1,329)	<b>9,638</b>		9,689	(878)	<b>8,811</b>	
107	(2)	<b>105</b>		130	-	<b>130</b>	
1,519	-	<b>1,519</b>		1,248	-	<b>1,248</b>	
-	-	-		22,610	-	<b>22,610</b>	
<b>40,062</b>	<b>(2,321)</b>	<b>37,741</b>		<b>59,581</b>	<b>(1,661)</b>	<b>57,920</b>	
*	672	(586)	<b>86</b>	729	(648)	<b>81</b>	
			Other operating expenditure:				
	35	(62)	<b>(27)</b>	46	(70)	<b>(24)</b>	
*	13,866	(126)	<b>13,740</b>	10	15,558	(216)	<b>15,342</b>
*	-	(41,681)	<b>(41,681)</b>	10	-	(42,489)	<b>(42,489)</b>
*	1	-	<b>1</b>	10	1	-	<b>1</b>
<b>* 54,636</b>	<b>(44,776)</b>	<b>9,860</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services</b>	<b>75,915</b>	<b>(45,084)</b>	<b>30,831</b>	
		(4,614)	Surplus or deficit on revaluation of property, plant & equipment assets			(8,258)	
*		19,569	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)	32		(4,669)	
		<b>14,955</b>	<b>Other comprehensive income &amp; expenditure</b>			<b>(12,927)</b>	
		<b>24,815</b>	<b>Total Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure</b>			<b>17,904</b>	

\* The 2017/18 balances have been restated to recognise the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited (NWFC).

## MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT 2018/19

	General Fund	Resource Centre Migs	Community Risk Reduction	UPGs	Capital Reserve	Total General Fund	Capital Grant Unapplied	(Usable) Capital Receipts	Total Usable Reserves	Pensions Reserve	Revaluation Reserve	Collection Fund Adjustment	Accumulated Absences	Capital Adjustment Account	Total Unusable Reserves	Total All Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Balance at 1 April 2018</b>	<b>(8,281)</b>	<b>(15,849)</b>	<b>(475)</b>	<b>(367)</b>	<b>(2,916)</b>	<b>(27,888)</b>	-	<b>(403)</b>	<b>(28,291)</b>	<b>563,828</b>	<b>(19,208)</b>	<b>(637)</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>(39,362)</b>	<b>505,133</b>	<b>476,842</b>
Surplus/Deficit on provision of services	30,831	-	-	-	-	<b>30,831</b>	-	-	<b>30,831</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>30,831</b>
<b>Other Comprehensive income and expenditure</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4,669)	(8,258)	-	-	-	<b>(12,927)</b>	<b>(12,927)</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure</b>	<b>30,831</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>30,831</b>	-	-	<b>30,831</b>	<b>(4,669)</b>	<b>(8,258)</b>	-	-	-	<b>(12,927)</b>	<b>17,904</b>
<b>Adjustments between accounting basis &amp; funding basis under regulations:</b>																
• Depreciation etc.	(2,912)	-	-	-	-	<b>(2,912)</b>	-	-	<b>(2,912)</b>	-	522	-	-	2,390	<b>2,912</b>	-
• Gain/loss on disposal	(150)	-	-	-	-	<b>(150)</b>	-	-	<b>(150)</b>	-	-	-	-	150	<b>150</b>	-
• Revaluation gain/loss	725	-	-	-	-	<b>725</b>	-	-	<b>725</b>	-	-	-	-	(725)	<b>(725)</b>	-
• Pension costs	(32,593)	-	-	-	-	<b>(32,593)</b>	-	-	<b>(32,593)</b>	32,593	-	-	-	-	<b>32,593</b>	-
• Capital expenditure charged to revenue	466	-	-	-	-	<b>466</b>	-	-	<b>466</b>	-	-	-	-	(466)	<b>(466)</b>	-
• Cash sale proceeds	174	-	-	-	-	<b>174</b>	-	(174)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Use of capital receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	477	<b>477</b>	-	-	-	-	(477)	<b>(477)</b>	-
• Use of capital grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Collection Fund	(223)	-	-	-	-	<b>(223)</b>	-	-	<b>(223)</b>	-	-	223	-	-	<b>223</b>	-
• Accumulated Absences	(35)	-	-	-	-	<b>(35)</b>	-	-	<b>(35)</b>	-	-	-	35	-	<b>35</b>	-
• Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (MRP)	478	-	-	-	-	<b>478</b>	-	-	<b>478</b>	-	-	-	-	(478)	<b>(478)</b>	-
<b>Net increase/decrease before earmarked reserve transfers</b>	<b>(3,239)</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>(3,239)</b>	-	<b>303</b>	<b>(2,936)</b>	<b>27,924</b>	<b>(7,736)</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>20,840</b>	<b>17,904</b>
Transfers to/from earmarked reserves	9,234	2,311	145	250	(11,940)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Increase)/Decrease in year	<b>5,995</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>(11,940)</b>	<b>(3,239)</b>	-	<b>303</b>	<b>(2,936)</b>	<b>27,924</b>	<b>(7,736)</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>20,840</b>	<b>17,904</b>
<b>Balances at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>(2,286)</b>	<b>(13,538)</b>	<b>(330)</b>	<b>(117)</b>	<b>(14,856)</b>	<b>(31,127)</b>	-	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(31,227)</b>	<b>591,752</b>	<b>(26,944)</b>	<b>(414)</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>(38,968)</b>	<b>525,973</b>	<b>494,746</b>

## MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT 2017/18 (restated)

	General Fund	Resource Centre Migs	Community Risk Reduction	UPGs	Capital Reserve	Total General Fund	Capital Grant Unapplied (Usable) Capital Receipts	Total Usable Reserves	Pensions Reserve	Revaluation Reserve	Collection Fund Adjustment	Accumulated Absences	Capital Adjustment Account	Total Unusable Reserves	Total All Reserves	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
<b>Balance at 1 April 2017 (*restated)</b>	(8,052)*	(16,791)	(441)	(372)	(2,137)	<b>(27,793)</b>	- (341)	<b>(28,134)</b>	533,350*	(15,033)	(657)	535	(38,034)	<b>480,161</b>	<b>452,027</b>	
Surplus/Deficit on provision of services	9,860*	-	-	-	-	<b>9,860</b>	-	<b>9,860</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>9,860</b>	
<b>Other Comprehensive income and expenditure</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19,569*	(4,614)	-	-	-	<b>14,955</b>	<b>14,955</b>	
<b>Total Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure</b>	<b>9,860</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>9,860</b>	-	<b>9,860</b>	<b>19,569</b>	<b>(4,614)</b>	-	-	-	<b>14,955</b>	<b>24,815</b>	
<b>Adjustments between accounting basis &amp; funding basis under regulations:</b>																
• Depreciation etc.	(2,872)	-	-	-	-	<b>(2,872)</b>	-	<b>(2,872)</b>	-	439	-	-	2,433	<b>2,872</b>	-	
• Gain/loss on disposal	(34)	-	-	-	-	<b>(34)</b>	-	<b>(34)</b>	-	-	-	-	34	<b>34</b>	-	
• Revaluation gain/loss	534	-	-	-	-	<b>534</b>	-	<b>534</b>	-	-	-	-	(534)	<b>(534)</b>	-	
• Pension costs	(10,909)*	-	-	-	-	<b>(10,909)</b>	-	<b>(10,909)</b>	10,909*	-	-	-	-	<b>10,909</b>	-	
• Capital expenditure charged to revenue	2,749	-	-	-	-	<b>2,749</b>	-	<b>2,749</b>	-	-	-	-	(2,749)	<b>(2,749)</b>	-	
• Cash sale proceeds	62	-	-	-	-	<b>62</b>	- (62)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
• Use of capital receipts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
• Collection Fund	(20)	-	-	-	-	<b>(20)</b>	-	<b>(20)</b>	-	-	20	-	-	<b>20</b>	-	
• Accumulated Absences	23	-	-	-	-	<b>23</b>	-	<b>23</b>	-	-	-	(23)	-	<b>(23)</b>	-	
• Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (MRP)	512	-	-	-	-	<b>512</b>	-	<b>512</b>	-	-	-	-	(512)	<b>(512)</b>	-	
<b>Net increase/decrease before earmarked reserve transfers</b>	<b>(95)</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>(95)</b>	- (62)	<b>(157)</b>	<b>30,478</b>	<b>(4,175)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>(23)</b>	<b>(1,328)</b>	<b>24,972</b>	<b>24,815</b>	
Transfers to/from earmarked reserves	(134)	942	(34)	5	(779)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
(Increase)/Decrease in year	<b>(229)</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>(34)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>(779)</b>	<b>(95)</b>	- (62)	<b>(157)</b>	<b>30,478</b>	<b>(4,175)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>(23)</b>	<b>(1,328)</b>	<b>24,972</b>	<b>24,815</b>	
<b>Balances at 31 March 2018 (*restated)</b>	<b>(8,281)</b>	<b>(15,849)</b>	<b>(475)</b>	<b>(367)</b>	<b>(2,916)</b>	<b>(27,888)</b>	- (403)	<b>(28,291)</b>	<b>563,828</b>	<b>(19,208)</b>	<b>(637)</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>(39,362)</b>	<b>505,133</b>	<b>476,842</b>	

## BALANCE SHEET

31 Mar 18 (restated)				31 Mar 19	
£000	£000		Note	£000	£000
58,676		Land and Buildings	11	65,590	
6,931		Vehicles and Equipment	11	6,199	
302		Assets under Construction	11	1,309	
366		Intangible Assets	12	305	
	<b>66,275</b>	<b>Total Long-term Assets</b>			<b>73,403</b>
16,827		Short-term investments	13	20,051	
451		Inventories	14	521	
4,909		Short-term debtors	15	3,944	
2,050		Amount due from pension fund	Pension Fund	3,337	
7,403		Cash and Cash Equivalents	16	5,414	
	<b>31,640</b>	<b>Total Current Assets</b>			<b>33,267</b>
	<b>97,915</b>	<b>Total Assets</b>			<b>106,670</b>
(11)		Short-term Borrowing	13	(880)	
(8,292)		Short-term Creditors	17	(6,988)	
(708)		Provisions	18	(772)	
	<b>(9,011)</b>	<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>			<b>(8,640)</b>
	<b>88,904</b>	<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>			<b>98,030</b>
(1,892)		Long-term borrowing	13	(1,012)	
(25)		Deferred liabilities	31	(13)	
(563,829)		Net Pension Liability (IAS 19)	32	(591,751)	
	<b>(565,746)</b>	<b>Total Long-term Liabilities</b>			<b>(592,776)</b>
	<b>(476,842)</b>	<b>Net Assets / (Liabilities)</b>			<b>(494,746)</b>
	<b>(28,291)</b>	<b>Usable reserves</b>	19		<b>(31,227)</b>
	<b>505,133</b>	<b>Unusable reserves</b>	20		<b>525,973</b>
	<b>476,842</b>	<b>Total Reserves</b>			<b>494,746</b>

The 2017/18 accounts have been restated to include the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited (NWFC).

## CASH FLOW STATEMENT

2017/18 (restated) £000		Note	2018/19 £000
<b>9,860</b>	<b>Net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services</b>	<b>CI&amp;E</b>	<b>30,831</b>
(15,362)	Adjustment to the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	21	(33,602)
50	Adjustment to for items included in the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	21	162
<b>(5,452)</b>	<b>Net cash flows from Operating Activities</b>		<b>(2,609)</b>
1,615	Investing Activities	21	4,575
23	Financing Activities	21	23
<b>(3,814)</b>	<b>Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>1,989</b>
3,589	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	16	7,403
7,403	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the reporting period	16	5,414
<b>(3,814)</b>	<b>Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>1,989</b>

The 2017/18 accounts have been restated to include the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited.



## FIREFIGHTER PENSION FUND

2017/18			2018/19	
£000	£000		£000	£000
		<b>Contributions receivable</b>		
		Fire Authority contributions:		
(806)		1992 Firefighter Pension Scheme	(498)	
(106)		2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme <sup>1</sup>	(88)	
<u>(1,522)</u>		2015 Firefighter Pension Scheme	<u>(1,769)</u>	
	(2,434)			(2,355)
	-	Actuarial charges for early and ill health retirements		(83)
	<u>(2,434)</u>			<u>(2,438)</u>
		Firefighters' contributions:		
(544)		1992 Firefighter Pension Scheme	(321)	
(142)		2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme <sup>1</sup>	(100)	
<u>(1,337)</u>		2015 Firefighter Pension Scheme	<u>(1,580)</u>	
	(2,023)			(2,001)
	(592)	Transfers in from other pension funds		(95)
	<u>(5,049)</u>	<b>Total amount receivable</b>		<u>(4,534)</u>
		<b>Benefits payable</b>		
12,405		Pensions	13,190	
3,102		Commutation of pensions and lump sum retirement benefits	3,425	
<u>-</u>		Lump sum death benefits	<u>22</u>	
	15,507	<b>Total benefits payable</b>		16,637
		- Transfers out to other schemes		-
		- 1992 Firefighters Pension Scheme – employee contribution holiday refunds		-
		- Administrative expenses		1
	<u>15,507</u>	<b>Total amount payable</b>		<u>16,638</u>
		(Surplus)/Deficit for the year before 'Top-up' Government grant		12,104
	(10,458)	'Top-up' Government grant		<u>(12,104)</u>
	<u>-</u>	<b>Net amount for the year</b>		<u>-</u>

### NET ASSETS STATEMENT

31 Mar 18		31 Mar 19
£000	<b>Current Assets</b>	£000
2,045	'Top-up' Government grant	3,361
34	Employee arrears	3
	<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
	- Contributions received in advance	-
(29)	Benefits outstanding	(27)
<u>(2,050)</u>	Amount due to General Fund	<u>(3,337)</u>
	<b>Net Assets</b>	<u>-</u>

Note <sup>1</sup> - these rows include the Modified Firefighter Pension Scheme  
For further details please see note 32 on page 65

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Note	Description	Page
	Expenditure and Funding Analysis note	14
1	Accounting Policies	23
2	Accounting Standards, issued but not yet adopted	38
3	Critical judgements in applying accounting policies	38
4	Assumptions made	38
5	Events after the Balance Sheet date	39
6	Supporting information for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis note	40
7	Expenditure and Income analysed by nature	41
8	Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under regulations	41
9	Movement in Earmarked Reserves	41
10	Notes to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	42
11	Property, Plant and Equipment	43
12	Intangible Assets	45
13	Financial Instruments	46
14	Inventories	51
15	Debtors	51
16	Cash and Cash Equivalent	51
17	Creditors	52
18	Provisions	52
19	Usable Reserves	52
20	Unusable Reserves	53
21	Notes to the Cash flow Statement	56
22	Members' Allowances	57
23	Officer Remuneration	58
24	Termination Benefits	59
25	External Audit Costs	60
26	Grant Income	60
27	Related Parties	60
28	NW Fire Control Limited (NWFC)	62
29	Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Limited (FRIC)	63
30	Capital Expenditure and Financing	64
31	Leases	64
32	Employee Benefits (Pensions)	65
33	Contingent Assets and Liabilities	73

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

### 1. Accounting Policies

#### 1.1 General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Authority's transactions for the 2018/19 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2019. The Authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 which state that accounts need to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and International Accounting Standards (IAS).

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and where material, financial instruments as determined by the relevant accounting standard.

#### 1.2 Accruals of Income and Expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed - where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption; they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

Exceptions to this principle are immaterial items of income and expenditure such as cash income and some small elements of employee pay, which are recorded on a receipts and payments basis rather than being apportioned between financial years.

#### 1.3 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that

mature in one month or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Authority's cash management.

#### **1.4 Exceptional Items**

When items of income and expenditure are material and exceptional, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or in the Notes to the Accounts, depending on how significant the items are to the understanding of the Authority's financial performance.

#### **1.5 Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies, Estimates and Errors**

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change, and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the Authority's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

#### **1.6 Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets**

Services, support services and trading accounts are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

- Depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service;
- Revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off;
- Amortisation of intangible fixed assets attributable to the service.

The Authority is not required to raise council tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Authority in accordance with statutory guidance. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisation are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance [Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)], by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

## 1.7 Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates

The four local authorities within Cheshire act as agents, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates on behalf of the major preceptors – including the Fire Authority. The authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (called the Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and non-domestic rates. Under the legislative framework for the Collection Fund, the local authorities, preceptors (including the Fire Authority) and central Government share proportionately the risks and rewards should the amount collected be more or less than predicted.

The council tax income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) is the Authority's share of the accrued income for the year. However, regulations determine the amount of council tax that must be included in the Authority's General Fund. Therefore, the difference between the income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account (an unusable reserve) and included as a reconciling item in the Movement of Reserves Statement.

The Balance Sheet includes the Authority's share of the end of year balances held by the four local authorities in respect of council tax and non-domestic rates. It takes into account arrears, impairment allowances for doubtful debts, overpayments and prepayments together with appeals.

Where debtor balances for the above are identified as impaired because of likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the statutory arrangements will not be made (fixed or determinable payments), the asset is written down and a charge made to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure in the CIES. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the revised future cash flows.

## 1.8 Employee Benefits

### 1.8.1 Benefits Payable during Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled wholly within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Authority. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

### 1.8.2. Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Authority to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits and are charged on an accruals basis to the appropriate service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, at the earlier of when the Authority can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Authority recognises costs for a restructuring.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

### 1.8.3. Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Authority are entitled to be members of the following pension schemes:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Cheshire West and Chester Council
- The Firefighter Pension Scheme (1992)
- The New Firefighter Pension Scheme (2006)
- The New Firefighter Pension Scheme (2006) (Modified)
- The Firefighter Pension Scheme (2015)

These schemes provide defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions) earned as employees work for the Authority.

#### The Local Government Pension Scheme for non-uniformed staff

All non-uniformed staff, subject to certain qualifying criteria, are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, which is administered by Cheshire Pension Fund. The scheme, which is a funded, defined benefit statutory scheme, is administered by Cheshire West and Chester Council in accordance with the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and applicable Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

In 2018/19 the Authority paid an employer's primary rate contribution of 18.3% of employees' pensionable pay into the Cheshire Pension Fund. All pension payments to eligible staff are met from this fund. The attributable assets of the scheme are measured at fair value. Assets are valued at bid value.

Employer contribution rates are reviewed every three years. With the latest review undertaken in March 2019, which will impact from 2020/21. Contributions are set at a level intended to balance pension liabilities with the Authority's share of the Fund's investment assets.



The liabilities of the Local Government Pension Scheme attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method - an assessment of the future payments which will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc., and projections of earnings by current employees.

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate, based on a "Hymans Robertson" corporate bond yield curve based on the constituents of the iBoxx AA corporate bond index.

#### The Firefighter Pension Schemes for uniformed staff

These are unfunded schemes, meaning that there are no investment assets built up to meet their liabilities. These liabilities now reside in a local pensions fund into which pension contributions are made and from which pensions are paid. An original scheme commenced in 1992. An additional scheme commenced in 2006 and a further Modified version of this scheme commenced in 2014. A further scheme commenced in 2015; the new Regulations (The Firefighter Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014) states that all current active members will move into the new scheme from 1 April 2015 unless they qualify for protections that allow them to remain in their current scheme. All four schemes are administered through one fund. In 2018/19 the Authority paid an employer's contribution of 21.7% of employees' pensionable pay into the fund in respect of the 1992 and 2006 Modified Schemes, 11.9% in respect of the 2006 scheme and 14.3% in respect of the 2015 scheme. The balance on the local pensions account is funded by Government grant.

#### Firefighter Injury Scheme

Under the Firefighter Compensation Scheme (England) Order 2006, a firefighter receives an injury award where they have retired and are permanently disabled because of an injury received in the execution of their duty. Under IAS19 the Authority is required to account for contingent future injury benefits. The liability is based on an estimate of future benefits earned by members, and movements in this liability are treated in the same way as for the Firefighter Pension Schemes.

The impact of these four pension schemes and the Firefighter Injury Scheme is identified in the revenue account and balance sheet.

The change in net pension's liability is analysed into the following components:

- a) Service cost comprising:
  - Current service cost - the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year - allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked.
  - Past service cost - the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years - debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs.
  - Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) i.e. net interest expense for the Authority - the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement - this is

calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined liability (asset) at the beginning of the period - taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

- b) Re-measurements comprising:
  - The return on plan assets - excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) - charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
  - Actuarial gains and losses - changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions - charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- c) Contributions paid to the pension funds
  - Cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension funds in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant Accounting Standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

### Discretionary Benefits

The Authority also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## **1.9 Events after the Reporting Period**

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue. Two types of event can be identified:

- Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period; the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.
- Those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period; the Statement of Accounts is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the Statement of Accounts.

## 1.10 Financial Instruments

### Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

The Authority's borrowings presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus any accrued interest). Interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Where premiums and discounts have been charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, regulations allow the impact on the General Fund Balance to be spread over future years. The Authority has a policy of charging the full effect of premiums and discounts to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year in which they are incurred.

### Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow characteristics. These three main classes of financial assets are measured at;

- Amortised cost;
- Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL);
- Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVCOI).

The Authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified at amortised cost.

### Financial assets measured at amortised cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value and subsequently at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. For any loan that the Authority makes, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

### Expected credit loss model

The authority recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised at cost, either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to

lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Authority.

Impairment losses are calculated to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place because the borrower could default on their obligations. Credit risk plays a crucial part in assessing losses. Where risk has increased significantly since an instrument was initially recognised, losses are assessed on a lifetime basis. Where risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on the basis of 12 month expected losses.

#### Fair value through Profit or Loss (FVPL)

Financial assets that are measured at FVPL are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to a contractual provision of a financial instrument and are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arrive in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

The fair value measurements of the financial assets are based on the following techniques:

- Instruments with quoted market prices – the market price
- Other instruments with fixed and determinable payments – discounted cash flow analysis

For measuring assets and liabilities at fair value, the authority categorises the inputs to valuation techniques into 3 values as follows

- Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the authority can access at the measurement date
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability

#### **1.11 Government Grants and Contributions**

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, government grants and third party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Authority when there is reasonable assurance that:

- The Authority will comply with the conditions attached to the payments and;
- The grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due to the Authority are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as Creditors. Where conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (attributable revenue grants and

contributions) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

### **1.12 Heritage Assets**

Heritage assets are defined as tangible assets with historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities that are held and maintained principally for their contribution to knowledge and culture.

The Authority does not consider that any of its assets fall into the definition of a Heritage Asset.

### **1.13 Intangible Assets**

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Authority as a result of past events (e.g. software licences) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Authority.

Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by the Authority can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the Authority meets this criterion, and they are therefore carried at amortised cost. The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement with charges commencing in the year of acquisition. An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset might be impaired - any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore posted out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the Capital Receipts Reserve.

### **1.14 Interests in Companies and Other Entities (Group Accounts)**

The Authority has an interest in NW Fire Control Ltd. A detailed assessment for Group Accounting requirements has taken place during 2018/19 in respect of NW Fire Control Ltd, and Cheshire Fire Authority's 25% share is shown in the 2017/18 accounts (restated) and 2018/19 accounts. This is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS 10, 11 & 12). See note 28 for more details.

During 2015/16 a company limited by guarantee, Safer Cheshire Limited, was established. There was no business activity in 2018/19. The company accounts consists of the donation of £5,000 from the Authority to the company in 2016/17 in respect of initial working capital.

### 1.15 Inventories and Long Term Contracts

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using the First in First out (FIFO) costing formula.

The Authority has no long term contracts.

### 1.16 Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

Where a lease covers both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements are considered separately for classification.

Arrangements that do not have the legal status of a lease but convey a right to use an asset in return for payment are accounted for under this policy where fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of specific assets.

#### The Authority as Lessee:

##### Finance Leases

Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Authority are added to the carrying amount of the asset.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property, plant or equipment; applied to write down the lease liability and;
- A finance charge (debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

Property, plant and equipment recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the Authority at the end of the lease period).

The Authority is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation or revaluation and impairment losses arising on leased assets. Instead, a prudent annual contribution is made from revenue funds towards the deemed capital investment in accordance with statutory requirements. Depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses are therefore substituted by

a revenue contribution in the General Fund Balance by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

### Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the services benefitting from use of the leased property, plant or equipment. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (if, for example, there is a rent-free period at the beginning of the lease).

### **1.17 Overheads and Support Services**

The cost of overheads and support services are charged to the service segments in accordance with the Authority's arrangements for accountability and financial performance.

### **1.18 Property, Plant and Equipment**

Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial year are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE).

#### Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense as it is incurred. The Authority does not treat any expenditure under £10,000 as capital expenditure.

#### Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

- The purchase price.
- Any costs attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.
- The initial estimate of the costs of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it was located.

The Authority does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred whilst assets are under construction.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (i.e. it will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the Authority). In the latter case, where an asset is acquired via an exchange, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Authority.



Donated assets are measured initially at fair value. The difference between fair value and any consideration paid is credited to the Taxation and Non-specific Grant Income line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, unless the donation has been made conditionally. Until conditions are satisfied, the gain is held in the Donated Assets Account. Where gains are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Assets are then carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction - depreciated historical cost.
- Surplus assets – fair value.
- All other assets - current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use.

Where there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value.

Where non-property assets have short useful lives and/or low values, depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for current value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Exceptionally, gains might be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement where they arise from the reversal of a loss previously charged to a service.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for by:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).
- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Revaluation Reserve contains revaluation gains recognised since 1 April 2007 only, the date of its formal implementation. Gains arising before that date have been consolidated into the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Impairment

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for by:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).
- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for the depreciation that would have been charged had the loss not been recognised.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives commencing in the year of acquisition. An exception is made for assets without a determinable useful life (e.g. freehold land) and assets that are not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction).

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Dwellings and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer. Useful lives for all firefighter dwellings and other buildings are 25 years.
- Vehicles, plant and equipment - straight-line allocation over the asset's useful life: appliances 13 to 20 years, and other vehicles and equipment 5 to 15 years, as advised in each case by a suitably qualified officer.

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with an amount equal to the difference between current value depreciation charged on assets and the depreciation that would have been chargeable based on their historical cost being transferred each year from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Disposals and Non-Current Assets Held for Sale

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Assets Held for Sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals (if any) are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts and credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve to be used only for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Authority's underlying need to borrow (the capital financing requirement). Receipts are appropriated to the Capital Receipts Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against Council Tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

### Componentisation

The Authority is required under International Financial Reporting Standards to recognise the individual components of its non-current assets and depreciate them separately where necessary. The Authority can also apply a de minimis level below which assets are not considered to be material, and has set this level at £2m or approximately 5% of the total carrying value of assets in the Balance Sheet.

The Authority will take components to be significant if they represent at least 20% of the total cost of the asset. However, components only need to be recognised when they have different useful lives and/or depreciation methods.

## **1.19 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets**

### Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the Authority may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Authority becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year; where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Authority settles the obligation.

Provisions for business efficiency exit packages are charged to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, in the year that the Authority is committed to the new structure.

### Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Authority. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts.

### Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Authority.

Contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

## **1.20 Reserves**

The Authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against council tax for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments and retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Authority. These reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

## **1.21 VAT**

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. VAT receivable is excluded from income.

## 2. Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

The Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting in the UK (the Code) requires changes in accounting policy to be applied retrospectively unless alternative transitional arrangements are specified in the Code. The Code requires an authority to disclose information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted for the relevant financial year. The additional disclosures that will be required in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial statements in respect of accounting changes that are introduced in the 2019/20 Code are:

- Amendments to IAS 40 Investment property: transfers of Investment Property
- IFRIC 22 - Foreign Currency transactions and advance consideration
- IFRIC 23 - Uncertainty over income tax treatments
- Amendments to IFRS 9 Financial Instruments; prepayment features with negative compensation.

The above changes have no impact on these accounts but will be reviewed during 2019/20 and any amendments required will be clearly shown in the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts.

## 3. Critical Judgements in applying Accounting Policies

In applying the Accounting policies set out in Note 1, the Authority has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions of those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in this Statement of Accounts are:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for the public sector. However, the Authority has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Authority might be impaired as a result of a need to reduce levels of service provision. The Authority reviews its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to assess the potential impacts of reduction in funding. The need to make efficiencies is factored into the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) process.

## 4. Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Authority about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Authority's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2019 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustments in the forthcoming finance year are set out below.

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment (see Note 11)	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Authority will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, although the Authority does not feel that this poses any immediate quantifiable risk.	If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the assets falls. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings would increase by £81k for every year that useful lives had to be reduced.
Provisions (see Note 18)	Provision, an amount set aside to provide for a liability, which is likely to be incurred, but the exact amount and date on which the liability is due is uncertain. The uncertainty is because the Authority are relying on data from other authorities that this Authority do not own and cannot readily verify.	The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement has been charged with the amount of the provision. Any change would result in a credit/debit to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
Pension Liability (see Note 32)	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement age, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Authority with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. Sensitivity analyses in respect of the Firefighter and Local Government Pension schemes are shown on next page and Note 32, together with the monetary value that would result if they came to fruition.

The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the pension scheme liabilities are shown in Note 32.

## 5. Events after the Balance Sheet date

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Treasurer on 26 July 2019. Events taking place after this date are not reflected within the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place prior to this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2019, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respect to reflect the impact of this information. No such events are known to have taken place.

**6. Supporting information for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis note**

<b>Adjustments from General Fund (GF) to arrive at the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>Adjustments for Capital Purposes <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments</b>	<b>Other Differences <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total Adjustments 2018/19</b>
<b>2018/19</b>	£000	£000	£000	£000
Firefighting & rescue operations	1,873	(4,777)	30	(2,874)
Protection	111	(282)	2	(169)
Prevention	170	(434)	3	(261)
Support Services	32	(83)	1	(50)
UPGs	-	-	-	-
Corporate/Finance Resources	(465)	-	-	(465)
Actuarial pension cost - McCloud Judgement	-	22,610	-	22,610
<b>Net cost of services</b>	<b>1,721</b>	<b>17,034</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18,791</b>
<b>NWFC 25%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>279</b>
Other income & expenditure from the funding analysis	(502)	15,449	223	15,170
<b>NWFC 25%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(170)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(170)</b>
<b>Difference between GF surplus/ deficit and CIES surplus/ deficit</b>	<b>1,219</b>	<b>32,592</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>34,070</b>

Note <sup>1</sup> – in general this column contains depreciation, impairment and revaluation gains and losses. It also adjusts for profit/loss on asset disposals and capital grants. There are two items, minimum revenue provision and capital expenditure which are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices.

Note <sup>2</sup> – these include the timing differences relating to the cost of outstanding employee leave and variations in the amount chargeable for business rates and council tax under statute and the Code of Practice.

<b>Adjustments from General Fund (GF) to arrive at the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>Adjustments for Capital Purposes <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments</b>	<b>Other Differences <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total Adjustments 2017/18</b>
<b>2017/18 (restated)</b>	£000	£000	£000	£000
Firefighting & rescue operations	1,853	(2,347)	(19)	(513)
Protection	107	(136)	(1)	(30)
Prevention	177	(223)	(2)	(48)
Support Services	202	(255)	(3)	(56)
UPGs	-	-	-	-
Corporate/Finance Resources	(2,749)	-	-	(2,749)
<b>Net cost of services</b>	<b>(410)</b>	<b>(2,961)</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>(3,396)</b>
<b>NWFC 25%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12</b>
Other income & expenditure from the funding analysis	(539)	13,757	20	13,238
<b>NWFC 25%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Difference between GF surplus/ deficit and CIES surplus/ deficit</b>	<b>(949)</b>	<b>10,909</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>9,955</b>

\*2017/18 is restated to include 25% of NWFC.



## 7. Expenditure and Income analysed by nature

2017/18 restated*		2018/19	
£000		£000	£000
	Expenditure:		
28,296	Employee pay	26,578	
607	Other Employee expenses	577	
408	Pensions	386	
2,741	Premises	2,423	
1,158	Transport	1,088	
4,274	Supplies, Services & other expenses	4,261	
3,070	Agency & Contracted Services	4,902	
10,796	Net change for the Pension adjustments	32,483	
2,471	Capital Charges & Finance Resources	2,331	
133	Members' Allowances	132	
(13)	Provisions	2	
<b>53,941</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>75,163</b>	
695	25% NWFC expenditure	752	
<b>54,636</b>	<b>Total Financial reporting entity Expenditure</b>		<b>75,915</b>
	Income:		
(2,099)	Fees & Other Service Income	(1,594)	
(31)	Sales	(21)	
(125)	Interest	(216)	
(26,449)	Council Tax Precept	(27,735)	
(15,486)	Government Grants & Contributions	(14,870)	
<b>(44,190)</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(44,436)</b>	
(586)	25% NWFC income	(648)	
<b>(44,776)</b>	<b>Total Financial reporting entity Income</b>		<b>(45,084)</b>
<b>9,860</b>	<b>Net (surplus)/deficit provisions of services</b>		<b>30,831</b>

\*2017/18 restated to include 25% of NWFC.

## 8. Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under regulations

Please refer to the Movement in Reserves Statement for details on the adjustments that are made to the total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The adjustments reflect items recognised by the Authority in year in accordance with proper accounting practice and are further analysed in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis on page 14.

## 9. Movement in Earmarked Reserves

For details on all earmarked reserves and any in-year movement, please refer to Note 19.

## 10. Notes to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

Within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statements there are three summary lines which are explained in more detail within the next two tables.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>restated £000</b>
<b>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</b>		
Interest and Investment Income	(216)	(126)
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	86	87
Pension Net Interest	15,471	13,779
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,342</b>	<b>13,740</b>

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>restated £000</b>
<b>Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income</b>		
Council Tax Income	(28,037)	(26,862)
Non-domestic Rates/Business Rates Retention Scheme	(9,424)	(8,843)
Non-specific Government Grants	(5,028)	(5,976)
Capital Grants and Contributions	-	-
	(42,489)	(41,681)
NWFC – taxation (25%)	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>(42,488)</b>	<b>(41,680)</b>

Note that council tax and non-domestic rates income has been adjusted to reflect the surpluses and deficits on Collection Fund accounts, as reflected in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

## 11. Property, Plant and Equipment

The following table shows the movement of assets classified as property, plant and equipment including work in progress (WIP).

2018/19	Cheshire Fire Authority					NWFC (25%)		Financial reporting entity	
	Land & Buildings	Vehicles	Plant & Equipment	Assets Under construction	CFA Total	Fixtures & Fittings	Computer equipment	NWFC Total	TOTAL
<u>Cost or Valuation</u>	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2018	58,842	14,010	3,983	302	<b>77,137</b>	62	124	<b>186</b>	<b>77,323</b>
Additions	(7)	186	26	1,044	<b>1,249</b>	-	33	<b>33</b>	<b>1,282</b>
Revaluations: charged to reserve	6,534	-	-	-	<b>6,534</b>	-	-	-	<b>6,534</b>
Revaluations: charged to CIES	356	-	-	-	<b>356</b>	-	-	-	<b>356</b>
Disposals	(135)	(746)	(67)	-	<b>(948)</b>	-	-	-	<b>(948)</b>
Reclassifications	-	37	-	(37)	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2019	65,590	13,487	3,942	1,309	<b>84,328</b>	62	157	<b>219</b>	<b>84,547</b>
<u>Depreciation</u>									
At 1 April 2018	(166)	(8,056)	(3,036)	-	<b>(11,258)</b>	(34)	(122)	<b>(156)</b>	<b>(11,414)</b>
Charge in year	(1,945)	(806)	(164)	-	<b>(2,915)</b>	(9)	(2)	<b>(11)</b>	<b>(2,926)</b>
Written out to reserve	1,724	-	-	-	<b>1,724</b>	-	-	-	<b>1,724</b>
Written out to CIES	369	-	-	-	<b>369</b>	-	-	-	<b>369</b>
Disposals	18	713	67	-	<b>798</b>	-	-	-	<b>798</b>
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2019	-	(8,149)	(3,133)	-	<b>(11,282)</b>	(43)	(124)	<b>(167)</b>	<b>(11,449)</b>
Net Book Value at 1 April 2018	58,676	5,954	947	302	<b>65,879</b>	28	2	<b>30</b>	<b>65,909</b>
Net Book Value at 31 March 2019	65,590	5,338	809	1,309	<b>73,046</b>	19	33	<b>52</b>	<b>73,098</b>

## 11. Property, Plant and Equipment

The following table shows the comparable movements in 2017/18.

2017/18 (restated)	Cheshire Fire Authority					NWFC (25%)		Financial reporting entity	
	Land & Buildings	Vehicles	Plant & Equipment	Assets under Construction	CFA Total	Fixtures & Fittings	Computer equipment	NWFC Total	TOTAL
<u>Cost or Valuation</u>	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2017	47,259	12,972	4,601	8,534	<b>73,366</b>	61	123	<b>184</b>	<b>73,550</b>
Additions	1,190	1,502	-	302	<b>2,994</b>	1	1	<b>2</b>	<b>2,996</b>
Revaluations: charged to reserve	2,093	-	-	-	<b>2,093</b>	-	-	-	<b>2,093</b>
Revaluations: charged to CIES	219	-	-	-	<b>219</b>	-	-	-	<b>219</b>
Disposals	-	(917)	(618)	-	<b>(1,535)</b>	-	-	-	<b>(1,535)</b>
Reclassifications	8,081	453	-	(8,534)	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2018	58,842	14,010	3,983	302	<b>77,137</b>	62	124	<b>186</b>	<b>77,323</b>
<u>Depreciation</u>									
At 1 April 2017	(1,137)	(8,123)	(3,451)	-	<b>(12,711)</b>	(24)	(120)	<b>(144)</b>	<b>(12,855)</b>
Charge in year	(1,865)	(819)	(200)	-	<b>(2,884)</b>	(10)	(2)	<b>(12)</b>	<b>(2,896)</b>
Written out to reserve	2,521	-	-	-	<b>2,521</b>	-	-	-	<b>2,521</b>
Written out to CIES	315	-	-	-	<b>315</b>	-	-	-	<b>315</b>
Disposals	-	886	615	-	<b>1,501</b>	-	-	-	<b>1,501</b>
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2018	(166)	(8,056)	(3,036)	-	<b>(11,258)</b>	(34)	(122)	<b>(156)</b>	<b>(11,414)</b>
Net Book Value at 1 April 2017	46,122	4,849	1,150	8,534	<b>60,655</b>	37	3	<b>40</b>	<b>60,695</b>
Net Book Value at 31 March 2018	58,676	5,954	947	302	<b>65,879</b>	28	2	<b>30</b>	<b>65,909</b>

\* The 2017/18 balances have been restated to recognise the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited.

## Revaluations

Assets included in the Balance Sheet are revalued at least every five years. The Fire Authority's property portfolio had a full valuation on 31 March 2019, by Edward Cottrell, MRICS of Cottrell Commercial with any significant variations reported within these accounts. The basis of the valuations is as follows:

- Day Crewed Housing – Existing Use Value
- Fire Service Headquarters – Existing Use Value
- Fire Stations and Safety Centre – Depreciated Replacement Cost
- Surplus Assets – Fair Value

Surplus assets are measured for their economic benefits at fair value under IFRS13 – Fair Value Measurement. The Authority holds just over two acres of land next to Hallwood Link Road, Runcorn which it has deemed as a surplus asset. It is currently valued at £0.35m (£0.33m March 2018).

The 2019 valuation resulted in an overall net increase in asset values of £7m.

Other non-current assets are valued at depreciated historical cost in line with the Authority's accounting policies.

## Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2019 the Authority had capital commitments of £0.507m (31 March 2018 £0.428m).

The Authority has approved the building of a newly refurbished and expanded Operational Training Centre along with a replacement Fire Station in Chester and a replacement joint Fire and Police Station in Crewe. These major build projects were in various stages of the design phase at 31 March 2019, but no major commitments had been entered into at 31 March 2019. In addition, in line with the Authority's ongoing vehicle replacement programme, five replacement support vehicles had been ordered but not delivered at 31 March 2019 and a further three new specialist pumping appliances were ordered and in the build phase at 31 March 2019.

These commitments are detailed as follows:	<b>31 March 19</b>	<b>31 March 18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
New station build – Chester	-	177
New Operational Training Centre	6	160
Appliance replacement programme	440	-
Water incident units	-	35
Specialist and Support vehicles	61	56
Total capital commitments	507	428

## 12. Intangible Assets

The Authority accounts for software as intangible assets, to the extent that the software is not an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item in plant and equipment. The intangible assets reflect the purchased software and licences.

All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Authority. The useful lives generally assigned to the major software suites used by the Authority is five years.

The movement on intangible assets during the year is as follows:

	2018/19			2017/18*		
	CFA £000	NWFC £000 (25%)	Total £000	CFA £000	NWFC £000 (25%)	Total £000
<b>Carrying Amount</b>						
Balance at start of year	289	687	<b>976</b>	492	677	<b>1,169</b>
Additions	45	5	<b>50</b>	-	10	<b>10</b>
Disposals	-	-	-	(203)	-	<b>(203)</b>
Balance at end of year	<u>334</u>	<u>692</u>	<b><u>1,026</u></b>	<u>289</u>	<u>687</u>	<b><u>976</u></b>
<b>Amortisation</b>						
Balance at start of year	(289)	(321)	<b>(610)</b>	(492)	(221)	<b>(713)</b>
Charge for the year	(9)	(102)	<b>(111)</b>	-	(100)	<b>(100)</b>
Disposals	-	-	-	203	-	<b>203</b>
Balance at end of year	<u>(298)</u>	<u>(423)</u>	<b><u>(721)</u></b>	<u>(289)</u>	<u>(321)</u>	<b><u>(610)</u></b>
Net Book Value at 1 April	-	366	<b>366</b>	-	456	<b>456</b>
Net Book Value at 31 March	<u>36</u>	<u>269</u>	<b><u>305</u></b>	<u>-</u>	<u>366</u>	<b><u>366</u></b>

\* The 2017/18 balances have been restated to recognise the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited (NWFC).

### 13. Financial Instruments

The definition of a financial instrument is "any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability, or equity instrument of another entity". The term 'financial instrument' covers both financial assets and liabilities. These range from straight forward debtors and creditors to more complex investments and borrowings. The following categories of financial instruments are carried in the Balance Sheet; current is deemed to be under one year and long-term over one year.

	Long-term		Current	
	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 £000	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 restated £000
<b>Investments</b>				
Loans and receivables				
- Investments	-	-	20,051	16,827
- Imprest and cash	-	-	5,414	7,403
<b>Total Investments</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<b><u>25,465</u></b>	<b><u>24,230</u></b>
<b>Debtors</b>				
- Loans and receivables	-	-	1,111	925
- Plus items not classed as Financial Instruments	-	-	2,833	3,984
<b>Total Debtors</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<b><u>3,944</u></b>	<b><u>4,909</u></b>
<b>Borrowings</b>				
Financial Liabilities at amortised costs				
- PWLB	(1,012)	(1,892)	(880)	-
- Salix	-	-	-	(11)
<b>Total Borrowings</b>	<u>(1,012)</u>	<u>(1,892)</u>	<b><u>(880)</u></b>	<b><u>(11)</u></b>

	Long-term		Current	
	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 £000	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 restated £000
<b>Creditors</b>				
- Financial liabilities at amortised costs	-	-	(4,484)	(5,871)
- Plus items not classed as Financial Instruments	-	-	(2,504)	(2,421)
<b>Total Creditors</b>	-	-	<b>(6,988)</b>	<b>(8,292)</b>

### Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

	Financial Liabilities at amortised costs £000	Financial Assets; Loans and Receivables £000	TOTAL £000
<b>2018/19</b>			
Interest Expense	(86)	-	(86)
Impairment losses (bad debt provision)	-	(4)	(4)
Total expense in Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	<b>(86)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(90)</b>
Interest Income	-	216	216
Total income in Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	-	<b>216</b>	<b>216</b>
Net Gain/(Loss) for the year	<b>(86)</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>2017/18 restated</b>			
Interest Expense	(87)	-	(87)
Impairment losses (bad debt provision)	-	3	3
Total expense in Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	<b>(87)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(84)</b>
Interest Income	-	126	126
Total income in Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	-	<b>126</b>	<b>126</b>
Net Gain/(Loss) for the year	<b>(87)</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>42</b>

### Fair Values of Assets and Liabilities

Financial assets and liabilities represented by loans and receivables and long-term debtors and creditors are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value can be assessed by



calculating the present values of the cash flows that will take place of the remaining term of the instrument, making the following assumptions:

- For PWLB and Salix loans, interest rates prevailing at 31 March 2019;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument will mature in the next 12 months, the carrying amount is assumed to be an approximate to fair value; and
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

<b>Financial Liabilities</b>	<b>31 March 2019</b>		<b>31 March 2018</b>	
	<b>Carrying</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Carrying</b>	<b>Fair</b>
	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Value</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
PWLB	(1,892)	(2,163)	(1,892)	(2,206)
Salix	-	-	(11)	(11)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(1,892)</b>	<b>(2,163)</b>	<b>(1,903)</b>	<b>(2,217)</b>

Short-term debtors and creditors are carried at cost with bank deposits and short-term investments also carried at cost as this is deemed a fair approximation of their value.

The Authority's activities in relation to financial instruments expose it to a variety of financial risks:

- Credit Risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Authority.
- Liquidity Risk – the possibility that the Authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments and payments.
- Re-financing Risk – the possibility that the Authority might be requiring to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms.
- Market Risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Authority as a result of changes in measures such as interest rates, foreign exchange rates or stock market movements.

The Treasury Management Strategy is approved annually by the Fire Authority when it approves the budget. It includes a section on risks associated with Treasury Management and identifies the Joint Head of Finance (Fire and Police) as being responsible for managing them. The overarching principle is to seek to maximise financial benefit from Treasury Management activities within a control framework which mitigate against the high risk attached to these activities. The Authority's principal objectives for investments are security first, liquidity next and finally yield.

### **Credit Risk**

Credit Risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions as well as credit exposure to the Authority's customers. This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, in accordance with the Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's Credit Ratings Services. The Annual Investment Strategy also considers maximum amounts and time limits with a financial institution located in each category. It imposes a maximum sum of £10 million to be invested at any one time with any single institution or group.

The Fire Authority uses the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service uses a sophisticated modelling approach with credit ratings from all three rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's, forming the core element. However, it does not rely solely on the current credit ratings of counterparties but also uses the following as overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies
- credit Default Swaps to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit overlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative standing of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Authority to determine the suggested duration of investments.

As this methodology uses a wide range of information beyond basic credit ratings, it ensures that no one source of information is given undue credence. All ratings and colour codes are monitored weekly via Link's credit listings and in-between via business press.

Customers of goods and services are assessed taking into account their financial position, past experience and other factors to produce an individual credit limit in accordance with the parameters set by the Authority.

The Authority's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies of £20.1m (2017/18 £16.8m) cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such organisations to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of non-recovery applies to all of the Authority's deposits but no evidence exists at 31 March 2019 to indicate any material likelihood of this occurring.

The following analysis summarises the Authority's potential maximum exposure to credit risk on other financial assets based on historic experience of default and non-collection and demonstrates that the risk is clearly not material at 31 March 2019:

	Amount at 31/03/2019 £000 <b>A</b>	Historical Risk of Default at 31/03/2019 % <b>B</b>	Estimated maximum exposure to default and uncollectability at 31/03/2019 £000 <b>(A x B)</b>
Deposits with banks and financial institutions	20,051	0.013	2.6

During 2018/19 there were no breaches of the approved credit limits set within the Annual Investment Strategy. The Authority does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counter-parties in relation to deposits but continues to invest in a prudent manner. The Authority does not generally allow credit for customers.

The level of debt held which is past its due date is analysed by age as follows:

Analysis of the Fire Authority's system debtors	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 £000
Less than three months	271	302
Three to six months	23	7
Six months to one year	-	47
More than one year	10	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>367</b>

### Liquidity Risk

The Authority has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected cash demands occur the Authority has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loan Board. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise the necessary funding to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead the risk is that the Authority will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The Authority set limits on the proportion of its fixed rate borrowing maturing during specified periods. The maturity analysis of the current financial liabilities is as follows:

	31 March 2019 £000	31 March 2018 £000
Less than one year	880	11
Between one and two years	-	880
Between two and five years	426	-
Between five and ten years	586	1,012
Between ten and fifteen years	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>1,903</b>

The analysis above includes PWLB and Salix borrowing. All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

### Market Risk

If interest rates had been 1% higher (with all other variables held constant) the financial effect would have been as follows:

	2018/19
	£000
Daily average investment balance (average rate of interest 0.84%)	21,263
Additional interest assuming such rates were 1% higher than actual	213
Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowing liabilities (no impact on CIES)	62

The Authority aimed to minimise interest rate risk by working with its Treasury Management advisers during 2018/19, Link Asset Services to agree a strategy in relation to investment and debt portfolios which is reflected within the overall Treasury Management Strategy. The Authority's policy is to maximise the percentage of borrowings and investments at fixed rates as this provides cost certainty for budget purposes, especially in the current economic climate. In addition the Authority has relatively small portfolios of loans and investments which makes it more difficult to offset risk through a mixed portfolio.

The Authority does not have any investment in equity shares and is therefore, not exposed to price risk. The Authority has very low levels of transactions in foreign currencies and therefore has minimal exposure to exchange rate risk.

**14. Inventories**

	Workshops	Uniform	Firefighters & General	<b>TOTAL</b>
2018/19	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April 2018	89	264	98	451
Purchases in year	23	593	265	881
Distributed in year (expended)	(32)	(470)	(309)	(811)
Write-off in year	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>521</b>

	Workshops	Uniform	Firefighters & General	<b>TOTAL</b>
2017/18	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April 2017	91	251	98	440
Purchases in year	13	377	361	751
Distributed in year (expended)	(2)	(361)	(339)	(702)
Write-off in year	(13)	(3)	(22)	(38)
<b>Balance at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>451</b>

**15. Debtors (Amounts due to the Authority)**

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18 restated
	£000	£000
Central Government bodies	813	583
Other Local Authorities	867	1,136
NHS bodies	23	14
Other Entities and Individuals	462	1,489
Princes Trust related debtors	327	319
Collection Fund – Council Tax payers	982	943
Collection Fund – Business Rate payers	121	130
<b>Total for Cheshire Fire</b>	<b>3,595</b>	<b>4,614</b>
Cheshire Fire share of NWFC debtors (25%)	349	295
<b>Financial reporting entity Total</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>4,909</b>

**16. Cash and Cash Equivalent**

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18 restated
	£000	£000
Cash held by the Authority	31	26
Bank Current Accounts	5,242	7,213
<b>Total for Cheshire Fire</b>	<b>5,273</b>	<b>7,239</b>
Cheshire Fire share of NWFC cash (25%)	141	164
<b>Financial reporting entity Total</b>	<b>5,414</b>	<b>7,403</b>

**17. Creditors (Amounts payable by the Authority)**

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18 restated
	£000	£000
Central Government bodies	(2,855)	(4,031)
Other Local Authorities	(1,029)	(1,192)
Public Corporations	(3)	-
Other Entities and Individuals	(1,837)	(1,781)
Collection Fund – Council Tax payers	(447)	(408)
Collection Fund – Business Rate payers	(81)	(96)
<b>Total for Cheshire Fire</b>	<b>(6,252)</b>	<b>(7,508)</b>
Cheshire Fire share of NWFC creditors (25%)	(736)	(784)
<b>Financial reporting entity Total</b>	<b>(6,988)</b>	<b>(8,292)</b>

**18. Provisions**

The Authority is subject to the fluctuations of the business rates collection funds of the four unitary councils in Cheshire. A provision has been created to reflect the likely costs of a deficit on the funds and the Authority's share of the cost of business rate appeals.

	Collection Fund £000
Balance as at 1 April 2018	(708)
Additions to provision in year	(646)
Amounts used in year	-
Reduction to provision in year	582
<b>Balance as at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>(772)</b>

**19. Usable Reserves**

Usable reserves are those reserves that can be used to fund general expenditure or reduce local taxation. Usable reserves held by the Authority are set out below.

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18 restated	31 Mar 17 restated
	£000	£000	£000
General Fund	(2,210)	(8,210)	(7,987)
Capital Receipts	(100)	(403)	(341)
Capital Grant – unapplied	-	-	-
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>			
- Resource Centre Managers	(13,538)	(15,849)	(16,791)
- Community Risk Reductions	(330)	(475)	(441)
- Unitary Performance Groups	(117)	(367)	(372)
Capital Reserve	(14,856)	(2,916)	(2,137)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(31,151)</b>	<b>(28,220)</b>	<b>(28,069)</b>
NWFC (25%) general fund balance	(76)	(71)	(65)
<b>Financial reporting entity Total</b>	<b>(31,227)</b>	<b>(28,291)</b>	<b>(28,134)</b>

**General Fund:** The general fund represents resources available to meet the potential financial consequences of the Authority's risk profile and other unforeseen circumstances. On a separate line 25% of North West Fire Control Ltd is also shown.

**Capital Receipts:** Capital receipts holds the proceeds from the sale of fixed assets and can only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt.

**Capital Grant – unapplied:** This reserve holds grants and contributions received towards the Authority's capital programme for which the terms and conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the funds, have been met but has not yet been applied to fund expenditure. The use of this reserve is restricted to the terms and conditions of the funding received.

**Resource Centre Managers:** This earmarked reserve is set aside to meet future identified commitments within the respective Resource Managers' areas.

**Community Risk Reduction:** This funding has been earmarked to support the cost of the Authority's home safety assessments and other community safety activities.

**Unitary Performance Groups:** This earmarked reserve is set aside for facilitating partner engagement in community safety activities.

**Capital Reserve:** This reserve is earmarked to fund future capital expenditure.

## 20. Unusable Reserves

The Authority also holds unusable reserves (technical accounting adjustment accounts reflecting the difference between the outcome of applying proper accounting practices and the statutory requirements for funding expenditure within the public sector). This note shows the movements in year.

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18	31 Mar 17
		restated	restated
	£000	£000	£000
Revaluation Reserve	(26,944)	(19,208)	(15,033)
Capital Adjustment Account	(38,968)	(39,362)	(38,034)
Pensions Reserve*	591,751	563,828	533,350
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(414)	(637)	(657)
Accumulated Absences Account	547	512	535
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>525,972</b>	<b>505,133</b>	<b>480,161</b>

\* The March 2017 and 2018 balances have been restated to recognise the Authority's 25% share in North West Fire Control Limited.

### Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its non-current assets. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- Re-valued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost;
- Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation; or
- Disposed of and the gains are realised.

The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Revaluation Reserve</b>		
Balance at 1 April	(19,208)	(15,033)
Upward revaluation of assets	(8,272)	(4,614)
Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses	14	-
Difference between fair value depreciation & historical cost depreciation	522	439
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(26,944)</b>	<b>(19,208)</b>

### Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or additions to those assets under statutory provisions. The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or subsequent costs as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and subsequent costs.

The Capital Adjustment Account contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>restated £000</b>
<b>Capital Adjustment Account</b>		
Balance at 1 April	(39,362)	(38,034)
Charges for depreciation and impairment on non-current assets	2,904	2,872
Revaluation losses on property, plant and equipment	(725)	(534)
Amortisation of intangible assets	9	-
Impact of disposal or sale of non-current assets	150	34
Adjusting amounts written out of the revaluation reserve	(522)	(439)
	<b>(37,546)</b>	<b>(36,101)</b>
Capital financing – charged against the General Fund	(466)	(2,749)
Capital financing – funding from Capital Grants and Contributions	-	-
Capital financing – charged against Capital Receipts	(477)	-
Capital financing – charged against Capital Grants – unapplied	-	-
Statutory provision for financing of capital expenditure (MRP)	(478)	(512)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(38,968)</b>	<b>(39,362)</b>

### Pensions Reserve

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Authority accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income



and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs.

However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>restated £000</b>
<b>Pensions Reserve</b>		
Balance at 1 April	563,828	533,350
Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)	(4,669)	19,569
Reversal of pension accounting entries in the CIES	47,869	25,020
Employer's pension contributions and payments to pensioners in year	(15,277)	(14,111)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>591,751</b>	<b>563,828</b>

#### **Collection Fund Adjustment Account**

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council tax payers and business rates payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Collection Fund Adjustment Account</b>		
Balance at 1 April	(637)	(657)
Amount by which the council tax and non-domestic rates income credited to the CIES is different to the income calculated under statute.	223	20
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(414)</b>	<b>(637)</b>

#### **Accumulated Absences Account**

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Accumulated Absences Account</b>		
Balance at 1 April	512	535
Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(512)	(535)
Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	547	512
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>512</b>

**21. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement**

Cash Flow Statement - Operating Activities - adjustment for non-cash movements charged to the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services:

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
		<b>restated</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Depreciation	(2,914)	(2,885)
Impairment and downward revaluation	725	534
Amortisation	(111)	(100)
Movement in impairment provision for bad debts	(4)	3
Movement in creditors	1,117	(1,737)
Movement in debtors	(965)	28
Movement in amount due from pension fund	1,287	(149)
Movement in stock/inventories	70	11
Movement in pension liability	(32,953)	(10,909)
Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or de-recognised	(150)	(34)
Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(64)	(124)
<b>Total adjustment for non-cash movements</b>	<b>(33,602)</b>	<b>(15,362)</b>

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Interest received	216	126
Interest paid	(86)	(87)

Cash Flow Statement - Investment Activities

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
		<b>restated</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Purchase of non-current assets	1,525	3,427
Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	44,824	38,850
Proceeds from sale of non-current assets	(174)	(62)
Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	(41,600)	(40,600)
Other receipts from investing activities	-	-
<b>Net cash flows from investing activities</b>	<b>4,575</b>	<b>1,615</b>

Cash Flow Statement - Financing Activities

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Cash receipts of short-term and long-term borrowing	-	-
Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases	12	12
Repayment of short-term and long-term borrowing	11	11
<b>Net cash flows from financing activities</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>

Adjustments for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities:

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Reverse - Other receipts from investing activities	-	-
Reverse - Proceeds from sale of non-current assets	174	62
Reverse - Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases	(12)	(12)
<b>Total</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>50</b>

## 22. Members' Allowances

The Authority paid the following amounts to Members during the year:

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Members' allowances	134	135
Travel and subsistence, training and conferences	20	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>155</b>

**23. Officers' Remuneration**

	Dates in Post	Gross Annual Salary (a)	Salary and Allowances	Benefits in kind (b)	Compensation for loss of office	Pension Contribution	Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>2018/19</b>							
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive - Paul Hancock	01/04/2018 to 30/06/2018	159,023	41,057	-	-	8,712	49,769
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive - Mark Cashin	01/07/2018 to 31/03/2019	146,450	110,510	-	-	20,127	130,637
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	01/04/2018 to 30/06/2018	33,949	34,520	-	-	7,294	41,814
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (d)	21/06/2018 to 31/03/2019	109,838	85,429	1,399	-	18,534	105,362
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (d)	21/06/18 to 31/03/2019	109,838	85,429	694	-	8,373	94,496
Director of Governance and Commissioning	Full year	88,915	93,361	-	-	17,085	110,446
Director of Transformation	Full year	70,741	70,741	-	-	12,946	83,687
Treasurer (Section 151 Officer)	Full year	57,096	23,147	-	-	4,236	27,383
<b>Total 2018/19</b>			<b>544,194</b>	<b>2,093</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>97,307</b>	<b>643,594</b>
<b>2017/18 (restated)</b>							
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive - Paul Hancock	Full year	157,449	158,738	-	-	34,251	192,989
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	Full year	134,450	135,682	-	-	29,248	164,930
Director of Governance and Commissioning	Full year	85,101	85,101	-	-	15,573	100,674
Director of Transformation	Full year	67,673	71,056	-	-	13,003	84,059
Treasurer (Section 151 Officer)	05/12/2017 to 31/03/2018	55,977*	7,320	-	-	1,340	8,660
<b>Total 2017/18</b>			<b>457,897</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>93,415</b>	<b>551,312</b>

- Notes:
- a) Gross annualised salary represents the gross full time equivalent salary applicable to the post at 31 March, or when the person left post if earlier. (\*adjusted 2017/18 to reflect FTE)
  - b) Benefits in kind consist of taxable benefits relating to car lease and mileage payments.
  - c) Members of the Leadership Team are excluded from the remuneration banding figures shown on next page.
  - d) Officers are in different pension schemes.

Of the Authority's remaining employees, the following numbers received more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions):

Remuneration Band	No of Employees	
	2018/19	2017/18
£50,000 - £54,999	13	14
£55,000 - £59,999	9	10
£60,000 - £64,999	7	9*
£65,000 - £69,999	2	1
£70,000 - £74,999	2	1
£75,000 - £79,999	1	3*

\* These numbers include a redundancy payment in each of the bands.

The number of exit packages with total cost per band and the total cost of the compulsory and other redundancies are set out in the table below.

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	Total cost of exit packages in each band £
---	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--	--

<b>2018/19</b>				
£nil - £20,000	1	3	4	16,518
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16,518</b>
Amounts provided for in CI&E not included in bandings			-	-
<b>Total cost included in 2018/19 CI&amp;E Statement</b>				<b>16,518</b>

<b>2017/18</b>				
£nil - £20,000	-	1	1	5,025
£20,001 - £40,000	-	1	1	25,562
£80,001 - £100,000	-	1	1	87,537
£100,001 - £150,000	-	1	1	100,346
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>218,470</b>
Amounts provided for in CI&E not included in bandings			-	-
<b>Total cost included in 2017/18 CI&amp;E Statement</b>				<b>218,470</b>

#### 24. Termination Benefits

The Fire Authority terminated the contracts of four employees in 2018/19, incurring liabilities of £16.5k (£218k in 2017/18 relating to four employees) as a result of service reviews.

In 2017/18 three employees left as a result of restructures following collaboration with Cheshire Constabulary (£213k) and one mutually agreed termination (£5k).

See Note 23 for the number of exit packages and total cost per band.

## 25. External Audit Costs

The Authority has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts, certification of grant claims and statutory inspections and to non-audit services provided by the Authority's external auditors:

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
Fees payable to Grant Thornton with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year.	23	30

## 26. Grant Income

The Authority credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year:

	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
<b>Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure</b>		
Non-domestic rates / Business Rates Retention Scheme	(9,424)	(8,843)
Revenue Support Grant	(5,028)	(5,976)
	<b>(14,452)</b>	<b>(14,819)</b>
<b>Credited to Services</b>		
DCLG New Dimensions Fund	(6)	(16)
DCLG Fire Revenue Grant - FireLink	(158)	(153)
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP)	(115)	(194)
Fire Revenue Service and Maintenance Support Grant	-	(60)
Apprenticeship Levy	(33)	(2)
Other Grants	(9)	(20)
Donations	(4)	(5)
Donations - smoke alarms	-	(9)
Other contributions	(70)	(89)
	<b>(395)</b>	<b>(548)</b>

## 27. Related Parties

The Authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Authority or to be controlled or influenced by the Authority. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Authority might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Authority.

### Central Government

Central Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Authority - it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Authority operates, provides a substantial part of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Authority has with other parties.

Grants received from Government Departments are set out in Note 26, Grant Income.

The Authority has utilised the borrowing facilities operated by the Debt Management Office (PWLB loans).

## Members

Members of the Authority have direct control over the Authority's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in the year is shown in Note 22 (Members' Allowances). There were no transactions during the year in which members were required to declare an interest.

## Officers

There were no transactions during the year in which officers were required to declare an interest.

## Entities Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Authority

The Authority was one of four Fire and Rescue Authorities that together set up NW Fire Control Limited (NWFC). NWFC is a company limited by guarantee which was incorporated in July 2007 and was established to operate a Regional Control Centre with the responsibility for Fire and Rescue Service mobilisation for the North West region. It has been determined that the company is governed by Joint Control due to the fact that unanimous consent exists for key decisions and that each Authority has equal voting rights. This joint arrangement has been deemed to be a Joint Operation as the parties have rights to the assets, and obligations for the liabilities relating to the arrangement. More details on NWFC can be found in the next Note.

Safer Cheshire Limited, a company limited by guarantee, was established by the Authority on 15 December 2015, with the object of reducing accidental death, injury and harm by educating those most at risk about staying safe at home, on the road and in the community. An application to register this company with the Charity Commission has been unsuccessful. There was no activity in 2018/19, which leaves Safer Cheshire Limited with the donation of £5k from the Authority to the Company in respect of initial working capital.

## Firefighters Pension Fund

The Fire Authority administers the Firefighter Pensions Schemes. The account for the schemes is included in the Statement of Accounts. See note 32 for more details.

## Other Public Bodies (subject to common control by central government)

The Fire Authority consists of 23 members, who are nominated by the constituent local authorities (the unitary councils of Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington). All transactions between the Authority and these authorities are included in the accounts. The principal transactions between the Authority and the constituent authorities are in respect of precept of council tax and the baseline funding (the Fire Authority's share of Business Rates raised in its four constituent authorities).

These are as follows:

<b>Billing Authority</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>[a] Council Tax</b>		
Cheshire East Council	(11,128)	(10,641)
Cheshire West and Chester Council	(9,187)	(8,734)
Halton Borough Council	(2,660)	(2,578)
Warrington Borough Council	(5,062)	(4,909)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(28,037)</b>	<b>(26,862)</b>
<b>[b] Business Rates</b>		



Cheshire East Council	(1,369)	(1,306)
Cheshire West and Chester Council	(1,365)	(1,312)
Halton Borough Council	(524)	(493)
Warrington Borough Council	(1,003)	(913)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(4,261)</b>	<b>(4,024)</b>

Note that council tax / business rates income has been adjusted to reflect the surpluses and deficits on Collection Fund accounts, as reflected in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

## 28. NW Fire Control Limited (NWFC)

NW Fire Control Limited is a company limited by guarantee which was incorporated in July 2007 and was established to operate a Regional Control Centre with the responsibility for Fire and Rescue Service mobilisation for the North West region.

During 2011/12 decisions were made about the future of the project following the closure of the National Project announced in December 2011 by the Fire Minister. The Company has four members which are Cheshire Fire Authority, Cumbria County Council, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Authority (FRAs). The liability of each member in the event of the company being wound up is limited and shall not exceed £1. Each member of the company has the right to appoint two directors. All directors have equal voting rights.

During May 2014 all four services transferred their Control Room functions into the regionalised service provided by NWFC. The cost of the service is charged out to the four FRAs on a pro rata basis and provided in accordance with a Service Level Agreement. The implementation phase continued to be funded by a section 31 grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government plus an ongoing grant to fund 66% of the lease costs for the building. The grant is paid to Greater Manchester Combined Authority as lead Authority for the North West region and released to the company as required. From 8 May 2017 Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service became the responsibility of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. There have also been contributions to the project from the FRAs.

A detailed assessment for Group Accounting requirements has taken place again during 2018/19 in respect of NWFC. This is in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS 10, 11 & 12).

It has been determined that the company is governed by Joint Control due to the fact that unanimous consent exists for key decisions and that each Authority has equal voting rights. This joint arrangement has been deemed to be a Joint Operation as the parties have rights to the assets, and obligations for the liabilities relating to the arrangement.

For the 2018/19 accounts on the basis of materiality of the 25% share against the balances of Cheshire Fire Authority it has been determined that Cheshire Fire Authority's share of this joint operation are required to be reported for this financial year and has meant restating the accounts for 2017/18 as well.

Below shows the key information from the draft financial statements of NW Fire Control Ltd:

<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
----------------	----------------

	£000	£000
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	304	285
Net Assets *	(3,953)	(2,859)
Profits/(deficit) before taxation	(412)	(427)
Profits/(deficit) after taxation	(417)	(432)

\*Net assets include £4.26m (£3.14m 2017/18) for the future pension liabilities under FRS17 reported by the Cheshire Pension Fund actuaries. All figures are shown net of VAT.

2018/19 transactions between Cheshire Fire Authority and NW Fire Control Ltd include invoices raised by NW Fire Control Ltd to Cheshire Fire Authority for the control room service £829k (£810k 2017/18); and use of facilities in the building £2k (£3k 2017/18).

2018/19 invoices raised by Cheshire Fire Authority to NW Fire Control Ltd include reimbursement of £7k (£11k 2017/18) costs relating to the network link.

The 2017/18 statements of accounts have been restated to reflect the data in the table below:

<b>Cheshire Fire Authority's 25% share of NWFC ,a joint operation</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balance sheet 31.03.2018	
Vehicle and equipment	30
Intangible assets	366
Short-tem Debtors	295
Cash and cash equivalents	164
Short-tem creditors	(784)
Pension Liability	(785)
Usable Reserves	(71)
Unusable Reserves	785
	<hr/>
	-
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure 2017/18	
Cost of Services - expenditure	672
Cost of Services - income	(586)
Interest payable & similar expenses	22
Interest receivable & similar income	(1)
Taxation	1
Actuarial gains/(losses)	(102)
Increase in general fund (NWFC)	<hr/> 6

The Company's 2017/18 Financial Statements can be obtained from Companies House, and the 2018/19 Financial Statements will be available by the 31 December 2019 (standard deadline for submission for the final audited 2018/19 accounts).

## **29. Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Limited (FRIC)**

The Fire Authority became a member of a mutual, the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Limited (FRIC), on 1 November 2015. Eight other Fire Authorities are also members. The mutual provides discretionary protection against claims against the Authority and procures insurance cover on its behalf. Consideration has been given to the nature of the relationship which the Authority has with the mutual. The Authority has no right to appoint directors to the board of the mutual, and the relationship is not therefore one of joint control. This means that under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in England and International Financial Reporting

Standards 10, 11 and 12 no liability to complete group accounts in relation to the Authority and the mutual exists.

### 30. Capital Expenditure and Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below, together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Authority that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed below.

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>restated £000</b>
<b>Opening Capital Financing Requirement</b>	7,379	7,646
<b>Capital Investment</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	1,282	2,996
Intangible assets	50	10
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	-	-
<b>Sources of Finance</b>		
Capital receipts	(477)	-
Government grants and other contributions	-	-
<b>Sums set aside from revenue</b>		
Revenue contributions (Cheshire Fire)	(466)	(2,749)
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	(478)	(512)
Revenue contributions (NWFC 25%)	(38)	(12)
<b>Closing Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<u>7,252</u>	<u>7,379</u>
<b>Explanation of movements in year</b>		
Increase/(decrease) in underlying need for borrowing (Supported)	(478)	(512)
Increase/(decrease) in underlying need for borrowing (Unsupported)	351	245
<b>Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<u>(127)</u>	<u>(267)</u>

### 31. Leases

#### Authority as Lessee

##### Finance Leases

The Fire Authority has a training vehicle held under a finance lease. The vehicle is carried in the Balance Sheet at the value of £12,929 at 31 March 2019 (£25,265 at 31 March 2018).

The Authority is committed to making minimum payments under this lease comprising settlement of the long-term liability for the interest in the asset acquired by the Authority and finance costs that will be payable by the Authority in future years while the liability remains outstanding.

The minimum finance lease payment is made up of the following amounts:

	<b>2018/19</b>	
	£	£
Cost or valuation		128,743
Accumulated depreciation		
As at 1 April 2017	(91,709)	
Charge for 2017/18	(11,769)	
Charge for 2018/19	<u>(12,336)</u>	
As at 31 March 2019		<u>(115,814)</u>
		<u>12,929</u>

Outstanding obligations to make payments under this lease (excluding finance costs) at 31 March are as follows:

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18
	£000	£000
Not later than 1 year	(12,929)	(12,336)
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	(12,929)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u><b>(12,929)</b></u>	<u><b>(25,265)</b></u>

### Operating Leases

Expenditure on operating leases in 2018/19 totalled £238,365 (2017/18 £264,555). All expenditure on leases relates to vehicles.

The future minimum lease payments due in future years are as follows:

	31 Mar 19	31 Mar 18
	£000	£000
Not later than 1 year	(141)	(150)
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	<u>(75)</u>	<u>(145)</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u><b>(216)</b></u>	<u><b>(295)</b></u>

## 32. Employee Benefits

### Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

#### Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, the Fire Authority makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Authority has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) that need to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their full entitlement.

The Fire Authority participates in five post-employment schemes:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-uniformed staff, administered locally by Cheshire West and Chester Council. This is a funded defined benefit scheme, meaning that the Authority and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions' liabilities with investment assets. Up until 31 March 2014 this was a final salary scheme. Since 1 April 2014 this has changed to a LGPS benefit design career average revalued earning (CARE) scheme.
- There are four pension schemes for uniformed staff.

The original scheme commenced in 1992 with the funding arrangements for uniformed Firefighter pensions changing from 1 April 2006. Until that time, the net cost of pensions (principally on-going payments to pensioners and lump sum commutations) was met by the employer. The main source of income to offset the expenditure was the contribution made by employees.

With effect from 1 April 2006, a new Firefighter Pension Fund for each English Fire Authority was introduced. Firefighter and employer contributions are paid into a pension fund, from which pension payments are made. The fund is balanced to nil each year by receipt of top-up grant from Central Government if there is a deficit, or by paying over the surplus to Central Government. Details of the pension fund for 2018/19 are shown in the Pension Fund Statement. At this point members of the 1992 Scheme were given the choice of staying with their existing Scheme or transferring to the 2006 Scheme.

The new arrangements remove the annual volatility for Fire Authorities that resulted from fluctuations in firefighter retirements. However, there are still no investment assets nor do the Fund's financial statements take account of liabilities to pay pensions and other benefits due after the end of the financial year.

A third scheme was introduced in April 2014 which is a modified version of the 2006 scheme and is available for on-call firefighters now entitled to participate in a pension scheme from 2000 as a result of the decision to backdate part-time workers' rights.

The 1 April 2015 saw the introduction of a new 2015 scheme. The new Regulations (The Firefighter Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014) states that all current active members will move into the new scheme from 1 April 2015 unless they qualify for protections that allow them to remain in their current scheme.

All four Firefighter Pension Schemes are administered through one fund. These are unfunded schemes, meaning that there are no investment assets built up to meet the liabilities so that cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they become due.

<b>FIREFIGHTER PENSION SCHEMES - pension contribution rates on pensionable pay</b>	employee	employer <sup>(a)</sup>
	%	%
1992 Firefighter Pension Scheme	11% - 17%	21.7%
2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme (modified)	11% - 17%	21.7%
2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme	8.5% - 12.5%	11.9%
2015 Firefighter Pension Scheme	11% - 14.5%	14.3%

- (a) The employers' contribution consists of amounts shown in table above, together with formula-based charges for the cost of ill-health and other early retirements.

## Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

Local Government Pension Scheme	Cheshire Fire Fair value of scheme assets		NWFC (25%) Fair value of scheme assets	
	31 Mar 19 £000	31 Mar 18 £000	31 Mar 19 £000	31 Mar 18 £000
<b>Cash and cash equivalents:</b>				
• All	931.6	1,597.4	48.7	85.0
<b>Equity instruments: by industry type</b>				
• Consumer	579.8	938.6		
• Manufacturing	358.9	626.1		
• Energy and utilities	76.1	88.5		
• Financial institutions	674.3	828.0		
• Health and care	211.9	275.8		
• Information technology	2,245.3	3,195.1		
• Other	149.1	163.4		
Sub-total equity	<b>4,295.4</b>	<b>6,115.5</b>	<b>1,094.9</b>	<b>892.1</b>
<b>Bonds: by sector</b>				
• Corporate	-	-		
• Government	-	-		
• Other	-	-		
Sub-total bonds	-	-	<b>1,094.9</b>	<b>977.0</b>
<b>Property: by type</b>				
• United Kingdom	3,914.3	3,405.2		
• Overseas	69.5	69.1		
Sub-total property	<b>3,983.8</b>	<b>3,474.3</b>	<b>194.5</b>	<b>169.9</b>
<b>Private equity:</b>				
• All	1,657.0	1,443.9		
Sub-total private equity	<b>1,657.0</b>	<b>1,443.9</b>	-	-
<b>Other investment funds:</b>				
• Equities	6,867.8	4,682.5		
• Bonds	21,624.2	20,174.0		
• Hedge Fund	6,423.2	5,735.5		
• Other	1,971.0	1,995.9		
Sub-total other investment funds	<b>36,886.2</b>	<b>32,587.9</b>	-	-
<b>Derivatives:</b>				
• All	-	-		
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>47,754.0</b>	<b>45,219.0</b>	<b>2,433.0</b>	<b>2,124.0</b>

### Transactions Relating to Post-employment benefits

The Authority recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge we are required to make against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC-25%)		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes (CFA)		Total for all Schemes	
	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
<b>Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Statement (CIES)</b>								
Cost of Services:								
▫ Current Service Costs	191	192	1,460	1,924	8,100	9,100	9,751	11,216
▫ Past Service Costs	-	-	247	25	22,400	-	22,647	25
Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure:								
▫ Net interest expense	22	22	249	257	15,200	13,500	15,471	13,779
<b>Total post-employment benefit charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>1,956</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>45,700</b>	<b>22,600</b>	<b>47,869</b>	<b>25,020</b>
<b>Other post-employment benefits charges to the CIES</b>								
Re-measurement of the net defined pension liability comprising:								
▫ Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(115)	(19)	(1,232)	(442)	-	-	(1,346)	(461)
▫ Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	-	-	-	-	(40,600)	(5,400)	(40,600)	(5,400)
▫ Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	284	(83)	5,193	(1,187)	39,800	(9,100)	45,277	(10,370)
▫ Other experience	-	-	-	-	(8,000)	35,800	(8,000)	35,800
<b>Total post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>5,917</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>36,900</b>	<b>43,900</b>	<b>43,200</b>	<b>44,589</b>



	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC-25%)		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes (CFA)		Total for all Schemes	
	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Movement in Reserves Statement</b>								
□ Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(213)	(214)	(1,956)	(2,206)	(45,700)	(22,600)	(47,869)	(25,020)
<b>Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:</b>								
□ Employers' contributions payable to scheme (gross amount before the Authority's receipt of the Firefighter pension scheme top up grant)	104	101	773	1,510	14,400	12,500	15,277	14,111

#### Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet:

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Authority's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC-25%)		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes (CFA)		Total for all Schemes	
	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18	2018/19	2017/18
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	3,495	2,909	61,642	53,963	576,800	554,300	641,937	611,172
Fair value of plan assets	(2,433)	(2,124)	(47,754)	(45,219)	-	-	(50,186)	(47,343)
Sub-total	1,062	785	13,888	8,744	576,800	554,300	591,751	563,829
Other movements in the liability (asset)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Net Liability arising from defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>13,888</b>	<b>8,744</b>	<b>576,800</b>	<b>554,300</b>	<b>591,751</b>	<b>563,829</b>

#### Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets:

	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC-25%)		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes (CFA)		Total for all Schemes	
	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2017/18 £000
<b>Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets:</b>								
<b>Opening fair value of scheme assets</b>	2,124	1,920	45,219	42,708	-	-	47,343	44,628
Interest income	59	54	1,221	1,122	-	-	1,280	1,176
Remeasurement gain/(loss):								
The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	115	19	1,232	442	-	-	1,346	461
Contributions from employer	104	101	773	1,510	14,400	12,500	15,277	14,111
Contributions from employees into the scheme	35	33	250	314	2,100	2,500	2,385	2,847
Benefits paid	(4)	(3)	(941)	(877)	(16,500)	(15,000)	(17,445)	(15,880)
<b>Closing fair value of scheme assets</b>	<b>2,433</b>	<b>2,124</b>	<b>47,754</b>	<b>45,219</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50,186</b>	<b>47,343</b>
<b>Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation):</b>								
<b>Opening balance at 1 April</b>	2,909	2,694	53,963	52,385	554,300	522,900	611,172	577,979
Current service cost	191	192	1,460	1,924	8,100	9,100	9,751	11,216
Interest cost	81	76	1,470	1,379	15,200	13,500	16,751	14,955
Contributions by scheme participants	34	33	250	314	2,100	2,500	2,384	2,847
Remeasurement (gains) and losses:								
Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	-	-	-	-	(40,600)	(5,400)	(40,600)	(5,400)
Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	284	(83)	5,193	(1,187)	39,800	(9,100)	45,277	(10,370)
other experience	-	-	-	-	(8,000)	35,800	(8,000)	35,800
Past service cost	-	-	247	25	22,400	-	22,647	25
Benefits paid	(4)	(3)	(941)	(877)	(16,500)	(15,000)	(17,445)	(15,880)
<b>Closing balance at 31 March</b>	<b>3,495</b>	<b>2,909</b>	<b>61,642</b>	<b>53,963</b>	<b>576,800</b>	<b>554,300</b>	<b>641,937</b>	<b>611,172</b>

The Liabilities shown on the Firefighter Pension Schemes include liabilities in respect of injury pensions. Of the £576.8m liability, £26.4m related to injury pensions (2017/18 £554.3m liability, £25.3m related to injury pensions).

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and the Firefighter Pension Schemes have been assessed by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries. Estimates for the Local Government Pension Scheme are based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2018. The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC)		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes	
	2018/19 %	2017/18 %	2018/19 %	2017/18 %	2018/19 %	2017/18 %
<b>Long-term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme:</b>						
Equity investments	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.7	-	-
Bonds	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.7	-	-
Property	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.7	-	-
Cash	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.7	-	-
<b>Mortality assumptions:</b>						
	At age 65		At age 65		At age 60	
Longevity for current pensioners:						
▪ Men	22.3 years	22.3 years	22.3 years	22.3 years	27.3 years	29.5 years
▪ Women	24.5 years	24.5 years	24.5 years	24.5 years	29.4 years	31.5 years
Longevity for future pensioners:						
▪ Men	23.9 years	23.9 years	23.9 years	23.9 years	28.4 years	30.8 years
▪ Women	26.5 years	26.5 years	26.5 years	26.5 years	30.6 years	32.8 years
Rate of inflation (CPI)	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4
Rate of increase in salaries	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	3.5	3.4
Rate of increase in pensions	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.7	2.4	2.7

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that the life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in the previous period.

### Impact on the Defined Benefit Obligation in the Scheme

Change in financial assumptions at year ended 31 March 2019	Local Government Pension Scheme (NWFC)*		Local Government Pension Scheme (CFA)		Firefighter Pension Schemes	
	Approximate monetary amount (NWFC 25%)	Approximate increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount	Approximate increase to Employer Liability	Approximate monetary amount	Approximate increase to Employer Liability
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
Longevity/ increase in member life expectancy (increase of 1 year)	26 to 44	3-5%	1,849 to 3,082	3-5%	17,305	3
Rate of increase in salaries (increase by 0.5%)	135	4	994	2	6,321	1
Rate of increase in pensions (increase by 0.5%)	390	11	6,165	10	43,538	8
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (decrease by 0.5%)	537	15	7,275	12	54,227	9

### Impact on the Authority's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. Cheshire West and Chester Council, the administering body, has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over the forthcoming years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is in 2019. The Authority anticipated to pay £0.7m expected contributions to the Local Government Pension scheme in 2019/20.

### **33. Contingent Assets and Liabilities**

As a result of the insolvency of a historic insurer, the Authority is aware of the possibility of future insurance claims which may lead to the Authority incurring liabilities which it is not possible to quantify.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by the Authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.

### **ACCRUALS**

The concept that income and expenditure are recognised as they are earned or incurred, not as money is received or paid.

### **APPROPRIATIONS**

Amounts transferred to or from revenue or capital reserves.

### **BALANCE SHEET**

The Balance Sheet is fundamental to the understanding of the Authority's financial position at the year-end. It shows the Authority's balances and reserves, its long term indebtedness, and the non-current and current assets employed in the Authority's operations, together with summarised information on the non-current assets held.

### **BUDGET**

A statement defining in financial terms the Authority's plans over a specified period. The budget is prepared as part of the process of setting the precept.

### **CAPITAL ADJUSTMENT ACCOUNT**

Provides a balancing mechanism between the different rates at which assets are depreciated under the IFRS and are financed through the capital control systems.

### **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Expenditure on the acquisition of non-current assets such as land, buildings, vehicles and equipment which are of long term value, or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of existing assets.

### **CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS**

Each service is charged with an annual capital charge to reflect the cost of non-current assets used in the provision of services.

### **CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENT**

This measures the underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure.

### **CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

Money received from the sale of capital assets such as vehicles, which may be used to repay outstanding debt or to finance new assets.

### **CASH FLOW STATEMENT**

Summarises the inflows and outflows of cash transactions and links the opening and closing balance sheet with the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year.

### **COLLECTION FUND ADJUSTMENT ACCOUNT**

The collection fund adjustment account provides a mechanism for recognising the Authority's share of the Collection Fund surplus/deficits at year end.

## **COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT (CI&E)**

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement reports the net cost of all of the activities of the Authority for the year and demonstrates how the cost has been funded by income from local taxpayers and grants from central government.

## **COMMUTATION**

This is where a member of the pension scheme gives up part of their pension in exchange for an immediate lump sum payment.

## **CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC CORE**

The corporate and democratic core is concerned with the costs of corporate policy making and member based activities. Other costs relate to the general running of the Authority including corporate management, public accountability and treasury management.

## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

This is concerned with the Authority's accountability for the stewardship of resources, risk management, and relationship with the community. It also encompasses policies on whistle blowing, fraud and corruption.

## **COUNCIL TAX**

The means of raising money locally which pays for Fire Authority services. This is a property based tax where the amount levied depends on the valuation of each dwelling.

## **CREDITORS**

Amounts owed by the Authority for work done, goods received or services rendered, but for which payment has not been made at the balance sheet date.

## **CURRENT ASSETS**

Items from which the Authority derives a benefit but which will be consumed or realised during the next accounting period, e.g. stocks, debtors, and cash.

## **CURRENT LIABILITIES**

The sum of money owed by the Authority and due for payment during the next accounting period, e.g. short term borrowing and creditors.

## **DEBTORS**

Sums of money due to the Authority for work done, goods sold or services rendered but not received at the balance sheet date.

## **DEFERRED LIABILITY**

Amounts owed by the Authority for work done, goods received or services rendered, to be paid in predetermined instalments over more than one accounting period.

## **DEFINED BENEFIT SCHEME**

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme where the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable, and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded.



**DEPRECIATION**

The measure of the wearing out, consumption, or other reduction in the useful economic life of a non-current asset, whether arising from use, passage of time, technological obsolescence or changes in demand for the goods and services produced by the asset.

**ESTIMATION TECHNIQUES**

The methods adopted by an entity to arrive at estimated monetary amounts, corresponding to the measurement bases selected, for assets, liabilities, gains, losses and changes to reserves.

Estimation techniques implement the measurement aspects of accounting policies. An accounting policy will specify the basis on which an item is to be measured; where there is uncertainty over the monetary amount corresponding to that basis, the amount will be arrived at by using an estimation technique.

Estimation techniques include, for example:

- (a) Methods of depreciation, such as straight-line and reducing balance, applied in the context of a particular measurement basis, used to estimate the proportion of the economic benefits of a tangible fixed asset consumed in a period.
- (b) Different methods used to estimate the proportion of debts that will not be recovered, particularly where such methods consider a population as a whole, rather than individual balances.

**EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS**

This links to the CIES and demonstrates how available funding has been used to provide services. This follows accounting practice and reports in accordance with the management reporting structure used for decision making purposes rather than legislative purposes.

**FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

This is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity of another. The term covers both financial assets (e.g. loans receivable) and financial liabilities (e.g. borrowings).

**FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS**

Documents issued by the Accounting Standards Board, setting out approved accounting treatment.

**FINANCE LEASE**

A finance lease is one that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a non-current asset to the lessee. It should be presumed that such a transfer of risks and rewards occurs if at the inception of a lease the present value of the minimum lease payments including any initial payment amounts to substantially all of the fair value of the leased asset.

**FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS ADJUSTMENT ACCOUNT**

Provides a balancing mechanism between the different rates at which discounts on the early repayment of debt are recognised under the SORP (statements of recommended practice) and are required by statute to be met from the general fund. It should be noted this reserve is matched by borrowings and investments within the Balance Sheet. They are not resources available to the Authority.

**FUNDED PENSION SCHEME**

A funded pension scheme is one in which the future liabilities for pension benefits are provided for by the accumulation of assets held externally to the employer's business.

**GOING CONCERN**

The concept that the Authority will remain in operational existence for the foreseeable future, in particular that the revenue accounts and Balance Sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of operations.

**GOVERNMENT GRANTS**

Assistance by government and inter-government agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national or international, in the form of cash or transfers of assets to an authority, in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Authority.

**GROUP ACCOUNTS**

Accounts prepared on a group basis where Local Authorities have interests in other bodies which are material in aggregate.

**HERITAGE ASSETS**

Heritage Assets are defined as assets preserved in trust for future generations because of their cultural, environmental or historical associations, which have historical, artistic, scientific, geophysical or environmental qualities, and which are held and maintained by the Authority, principally for the contribution to knowledge and culture.

**IMPAIRMENT**

A reduction in the value of a non-current asset below its carrying amount on the balance sheet.

**INTANGIBLE ASSETS**

These are assets that have no physical substance, for example, the purchase of computer software licences.

**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS (IFRS)**

These are the accounting standards that were adopted for 2010-11 onwards. IFRS are designed as a common global language for financial reporting so that organisation's accounts are understandable and comparable across international boundaries.

**INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP)**

This is the Authority's annual plan which is based on the current year of a four year strategy. The Plan is premised on ensuring that the Authority recognises risk and manages its resources to reduce potential impact on the communities which it serves.

**INVENTORIES (formerly stocks)**

The amount of unused or unconsumed stocks held in expectation for future use. When use will not arise until a later period, it is appropriate to carry forward the amount to be matched to the use or consumption when it arises.

**LONG TERM BORROWING**

Loans that are raised with external bodies, for periods greater than one year.

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP)**

Budget plan for the Authority for the next few years.

**MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP)**

This is the amount which should be set aside from revenue as provision for debt repayment.

**MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT**

This statement shows the movement in year on the different reserves held and identifies both usable and unusable. It links in with the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement through the impact of the surplus or deficit on provision of services on the General Fund.

**NET BOOK VALUE (NBV)**

The amount at which fixed assets are included in the balance sheet, i.e. their historical cost or current cost, less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation and/or impairment.

**NET CURRENT REPLACEMENT COST**

The cost of replacing or recreating the particular asset in its existing condition and in its existing use, i.e. the cost of its replacement or of the nearest equivalent asset, adjusted to reflect the current condition of the existing asset.

**NON CURRENT ASSETS**

Tangible assets yielding benefits to the Authority and its services for a period of more than one year.

**NON DISTRIBUTED COSTS**

Costs incurred by the Authority which are excluded from service costs. These include past service costs relating to changes in pension regulations, the costs associated with unused shares of ICT facilities, and impairment losses relating to assets under construction.

**NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS**

Non-current assets held but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services.

**OPERATIONAL ASSETS**

Non-current assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Authority in the direct delivery of services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility or for the service or strategic objectives of the Authority.

**OPERATING LEASES**

A lease other than a finance lease.

**PENSION FUND ACCOUNT**

The Fire and Rescue Authority is required to set up a separate fund from the rest of its operation for transactions relating to firefighter pension arrangements. The Authority has a formal responsibility for paying firefighter pensions. The fund is balanced to nil each year by the receipt of a pensions top-up grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government.

**PRECEPT**

An amount of money levied by one Authority (the precepting authority) which is collected by another Authority (the billing authority) as part of the council tax. The Fire Authority is the precepting Authority and the East Cheshire Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Warrington Borough Council and Halton Borough Council are the billing authorities.

### **PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS**

Those material adjustments applicable to prior years arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of fundamental errors. A fundamental error is one that is of such significance as to destroy the validity of the financial statements. They do not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior years.

### **PROVISIONS**

An amount set aside to provide for a liability, which is likely to be incurred, but the exact amount and date on which the liability is due is uncertain.

### **PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD (PWLB)**

The Public Works Loan Board is an independent and unpaid statutory body. PWLB consider loan applications from local authorities and other prescribed bodies and, where loans are made collect the repayments.

### **REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE (REFFCUS)**

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provision but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset that has been charged as expenditure to the CIES.

### **REMUNERATION**

All sums paid to or receivable by an employee and sums due by way of expenses allowances (as far as those sums are chargeable to UK income tax) and the money value of any other benefits received other than in cash. Pension contributions payable by the employer are excluded.

### **RESERVES**

Amounts set aside to meet future obligations.

### **RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

All forms of consideration given by the Authority in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after the completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either:

- (a) The Authority's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date.
- (b) An employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

### **REVALUATION RESERVE**

This reserve contains revaluation gains recognised since 1 April 2007 only, the date of its formal implementation, from holding non-current assets.

### **REVENUE EXPENDITURE**

This is the day to day running costs the Authority incurs in providing the service. It is usually of a constantly recurring nature and produces no permanent asset.

### **REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT**

This is Government grant in aid of the Authority's services generally. It is based upon the Government's assessment of how much the Authority needs to spend in order to provide a standard level of service.

**THE HOME OFFICE**

The Home Office is a ministerial department of the Her Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom, which, from 5 January 2016 is responsible for Fire and Rescue Policy. This was a role previously undertaken by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

**UNFUNDED PENSION SCHEME**

A pension scheme in which liabilities for pension benefits are charged to the employer's revenue account in the year in which they arise and are not financed from investments held. The Authority operates such a scheme for its firefighters.

---

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

### Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Cheshire Fire Authority (the 'Authority') for the year ended 31 March 2019 which comprise, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Firefighter Pension Fund Account and Net Assets Statement, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The notes to the financial statements include the Expenditure and Funding Analysis. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2019 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Treasurer's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Treasurer has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Authority's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

**Other information**

The Treasurer is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, the Narrative Report, the Annual Governance Statement, other than the financial statements and, our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge of the Authority obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice**

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with the 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)' published by CIPFA and SOLACE or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit. We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinion on other matter required by the Code of Audit Practice**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements and our knowledge of the Authority gained through our work in relation to the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts, the Narrative Report, the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.



## **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

## **Responsibilities of the Authority, the Treasurer and Those Charged with Governance for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities set out on page 13, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2018/19, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Treasurer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Treasurer is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless there is an intention by government that the services provided by the Authority will no longer be provided.

The Fire Authority is Those Charged with Governance. Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are

considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## **Report on other legal and regulatory requirements - Conclusion on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of our work, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, we are satisfied that the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

### **Responsibilities of the Authority**

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources**

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance on the specified criterion issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2017, as to whether in all significant respects the Authority had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined this criterion as that necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether the Authority put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2019.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to be satisfied that the Authority has put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

## **Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – Certificate**

We certify that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of the Cheshire Fire Authority in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the members of the Authority, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Authority's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

John Farrar, Key Audit Partner  
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor

Manchester

30 July 2019

---

## ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

### 1. Scope of Responsibilities

- 1.1 Governance comprises the systems and processes by which Cheshire Fire Authority (the Authority) and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) direct and manage. It is also about culture and values – the way that officers and Members think and act.
- 1.2 The Authority covers the four unitary areas of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington. The Authority is a separate legal body, with the power to set council tax and to set its own policies and procedures, without seeking the approval of these local councils. Each council appoints a number of elected Members to serve on the Authority. As an Authority Member, councillors represent the whole of Cheshire and are not just required to represent their appointing council. The Authority as the governing body ensures that the Service operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest manner; making sure public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and spent wisely; and has effective arrangements in place to manage risk.
- 1.3 Production of an Annual Governance Statement is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 and helps to ensure that a reliable system of internal controls can be demonstrated.

### 2. The Governance Framework

- 2.1 The Authority is responsible for ensuring that business is conducted in accordance with the law, with openness and engagement with stakeholders and that risk is managed through robust internal control and strong public finance management to deliver effective accountability. The Authority has a Constitution, which sets out the governance framework that will assist in enabling the Authority and the Service to fulfil their statutory obligations. The Constitution is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it remains up to date and relevant taking into account local and national changes in the way fire and rescue services operate.
- 2.2 The Authority's Constitution:
  - Explains the Authority's decision-making arrangements;
  - Sets out the responsibilities of elected Members and officers; and
  - Contains details of rules and controls.
- 2.3 Full details of the Constitution can be found on the website ([www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)).

2.4 The Governance Framework focuses on the Authority's strategic aims and objectives and includes:

### **Corporate**

- The organisation's vision and purpose which drive the service planning, delivery, risk, project and performance management frameworks
- The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)
- Consultation Engagement and Communications Strategies
- A published set of core values

### **Committee Structure and Member Scrutiny**

- The Authority's Constitution
- Established structure of Authority and Committee meetings, each with formal Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Scrutiny by Members e.g. Performance and Overview Committee responsible for thematic areas such as E&D, Performance Management
- Crisis Management Plan – owned and scrutinised by Risk Management Board
- Local Code of Corporate Governance Action Plan reviewed by the Governance and Constitution Committee
- Published Anti-Fraud, Corruption, Whistle-blowing and Complaints policies and procedures
- Medium term financial forecasting and budget management processes
- Code of Conduct

### **Scrutiny and Reporting**

- Integrated Corporate and Financial planning processes with regular reporting
- Treasury Management Strategy
- Risk Management Board – responsible for championing an effective Risk Management Policy and Framework – regular review of Strategic Risk Register
- Performance and Programme Board – responsible for monitoring and reviewing organisational performance including the Corporate Performance Scorecard setting out the Authority's key indicators and scrutiny of key projects and programmes
- Service Management Team – strategic direction for the Authority's IT delivery
- Information Governance arrangements

### **People**

- Dynamic, intelligent training programme which is tailored to the development needs of the Authority's frontline staff
- Appraisal system and personal development programmes
- Established Health, Safety and Wellbeing policies – compliance Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board review of fitness performance

2.5 For the purposes of financial reporting, the Authority has decided that the functions of an audit committee with responsibility for governance will be exercised by the Authority meeting as a whole.

### 3. Internal Financial Controls

3.1 The objective of the internal financial controls is to maintain sound and proper financial arrangements; to explain why safeguards and controls are important and necessary; to profile a framework for financial management, which will enable, wherever possible, managerial and financial responsibilities to be aligned safeguarding all Members and officers.

3.2 The key documents that set out the internal financial controls are:

- Financial Regulations – as set out in the Constitution
- Scheme of Delegation – as set out in the Constitution
- Treasury Management Strategy – approved by the Authority each year which sets out the Annual Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement
- Treasury Management Practices – which set out the detailed processes and practices to be followed in order to deliver the Treasury Management Strategy

3.3 In addition to the above, there are a series of governance checks and controls carried out through the Finance and HR teams to ensure financial systems are operating effectively. These are supported by periodic Internal and External Audit reviews to provide appropriate assurance to those charged with governance or with the production of action plans where necessary. The Director of Internal Audit's Opinion and their annual report for 2018/19 provide substantial assurance that there is a good system of internal controls designed to meet the organisation's objectives and that controls are generally being consistently applied.

3.4 Further assurance is now provided through HM Inspectorate of Constabularies, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) which began its first annual assessment of fire and rescue services in 2018. This assessment examines the service's effectiveness, efficiency and how well it looks after its people. It is designed to give the public information about how their local fire and rescue service is performing in several important areas, in a way that is comparable with other services across England. The results for the Service are shown below with further details available on the HMICFRS website ([www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs)).



The extent to which the service is effective at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is **good**.



The extent to which the service is efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks is **good**.



The extent to which the service looks after its people **requires improvement**.

- 3.5 In summarising their findings, HMICFRS stated that *'We are pleased with most aspects of the performance of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. But it needs to improve how it looks after its people, to give a consistently good service'*.
- 3.6 In addition, they stated that *'The service is effective at keeping people safe and secure. It understands risk and is good at preventing it. The service makes good use of fire regulation to protect the public. Its response to fires and emergencies locally is good, and it responds well to national risks, too. The service is efficient. It uses resources well and it is affordable.'*
- 3.7 However, HMICFRS also noted that *'The service should improve the way it looks after its people. In particular, it must do better at: promoting the right values and culture; and ensuring fairness and promoting diversity'* but, acknowledged that the service *'is good at getting the right people with the right skills and at managing performance and developing leaders.'*

#### 4. Good Governance in the Fire Service

- 4.1 In 2016, CIPFA, in association with various groups including representation of fire and rescue services, issued best practice guidance on Delivering Good Governance. It sets out seven principles of good governance which are illustrated below:



- 4.2 The ethos of the above is for principles A and B to permeate the implementation of principles C to G. It also illustrates that good governance is dynamic and that an organisation as a whole should be committed to continually improving through a process of evaluation and review. Each principle is considered from the Authority's and Service's perspectives.



5. **Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law**

5.1 The Service has developed a set of core values setting out expectations with respect to attitudes, behaviour and culture that is expected of everyone associated with the Service. The core values are:

- **Aiming for excellence:** Constantly seeking ways to improve the things that we do and the way that we do them
- **Developing and respecting our people:** Valuing our people and constantly developing their diverse range of talents, learning from all that we do
- **Delivering our promises:** Acting with integrity and taking personal responsibility for making the right thing happen
- **Putting customers first:** Ensuring that our people and communities are at the heart of all that we do, striving to meet their differing needs and expectations
- **Promoting equality and diversity:** Embracing diversity and finding ways to improve our services and the safety and prospects for individuals and communities
- **Working together:** Working in partnership with others for the future of Cheshire and its citizens

5.2 The Director of Governance and Commissioning is the Authority's Monitoring Officer as set out in section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, whose role is to advise on the rule of law and ensure decision making is legally sound.

5.3 The Treasurer is the Officer appointed in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and his role conforms with the requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015), with the Joint Head of Finance acting as his deputy.

6. **Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement**

6.1 The Authority has a clear Consultation Strategy that sets out how and when it will consult with communities and other stakeholders. The Community Engagement Strategy includes guiding principles and explains how the Service will engage with its communities.

6.2 The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) sets out how the Authority intends to deliver the services each year, and is widely consulted on before it is finalised. The IRMP sets out the rationale behind planned activity including current performance and forecasts. The IRMP essentially reviews the effectiveness of previous activity and highlights any areas of focus for the coming year.

6.3 Consultation with stakeholders includes both staff and public events at various venues, a web-based questionnaire and consultation with stakeholders during which the proposed plans are put forward and feedback is requested. The results of consultation are published on the website and reported to Members before the IRMP is finalised.

6.4 Working in partnership with others is a key part of the Authority's ethos. For example, the Blue Light Collaboration involved bringing together most of the back office and professional services, which support the Service and Cheshire Constabulary, and establishing a single,



shared headquarters site at Clemonds Hey. At the same time, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire now has been given the right to attend Authority meetings.

**7. Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social & environmental benefits**

7.1 The Service's vision is a Cheshire where there are no deaths, injuries or damage from fires and other emergencies. The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) explains the approach the Authority will take to support this vision, given the context in which the Service operates, and sets out the planned activity to deliver and achieve the intended outcomes.

7.2 The IRMP specifies which activity will take place in each year, what the result will be and when there may be an impact. Performance indicators are agreed, setting out the projected performance and reported to Members and the public in line with the approved corporate planning and reporting timelines. The Service approach to risk is explained in its risk management policy, which is reviewed every three years, and risks to key projects are outlined and managed through the project management framework.

7.3 A Medium Term Financial Plan is produced annually, reviewed regularly and updated as necessary setting out the financial assumptions and demands upon the Service to highlight budgetary pressures and set out options to address any funding shortfalls to ensure sustainability. From 2019/20, this has been supplemented by a Capital Strategy and Reserves Strategy.

**8. Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes**

8.1 The Constitution sets out a decision making framework which ensures that all decisions are supported by all relevant information, including financial, legal and other appropriate professional advice, that available options are considered and that internal and external stakeholders are consulted. All decisions are formally recorded and published subject to confidentiality requirements.

8.2 Progress against planned activity and projects is monitored and risks are reviewed regularly and reported quarterly to Performance and Overview Committee. Quarterly reports also include performance against targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as well as financial and project performance. If the circumstances in which the Service operates change, activity can be adapted accordingly. Decisions affecting Service delivery are delegated to officers in order to ensure they are able to react to changing circumstances quickly.

8.3 KPIs are set as part of the planning process and reported on every quarter. A Corporate Scorecard is produced showing performance against each of the KPIs. The corporate scorecard is published on the public website and the annual report is produced detailing the activity and performance of the Service. The following is an extract from the scorecard.

	Actual	Target	Q3 Year on Year	Q3 2017-18
Deaths in Primary Fires	1	0	↔	1
Injuries in Primary Fires	38	35	↓	51
Accidental dwelling fires	275	280	↓	289
- % starting in kitchens	54%	n/a	↓	168 (58%)
- % in homes with residents over pensionable age	16%	n/a	↓	58 (20%)
Deliberate fires (Primary and Secondary)	885	997	↓	1,012
Fires in Non Domestic Premises	120	128	↓	143
AFAs in Non Domestic Premises	328	456	↓	422

8.4 KPI data is generated from various internal systems and analysed by the Business Intelligence Team. The Team works closely with the Prevention, Protection and Service Delivery teams to provide data and analysis that highlights any current issues or emerging trends so that activity can be targeted and resources deployed effectively.

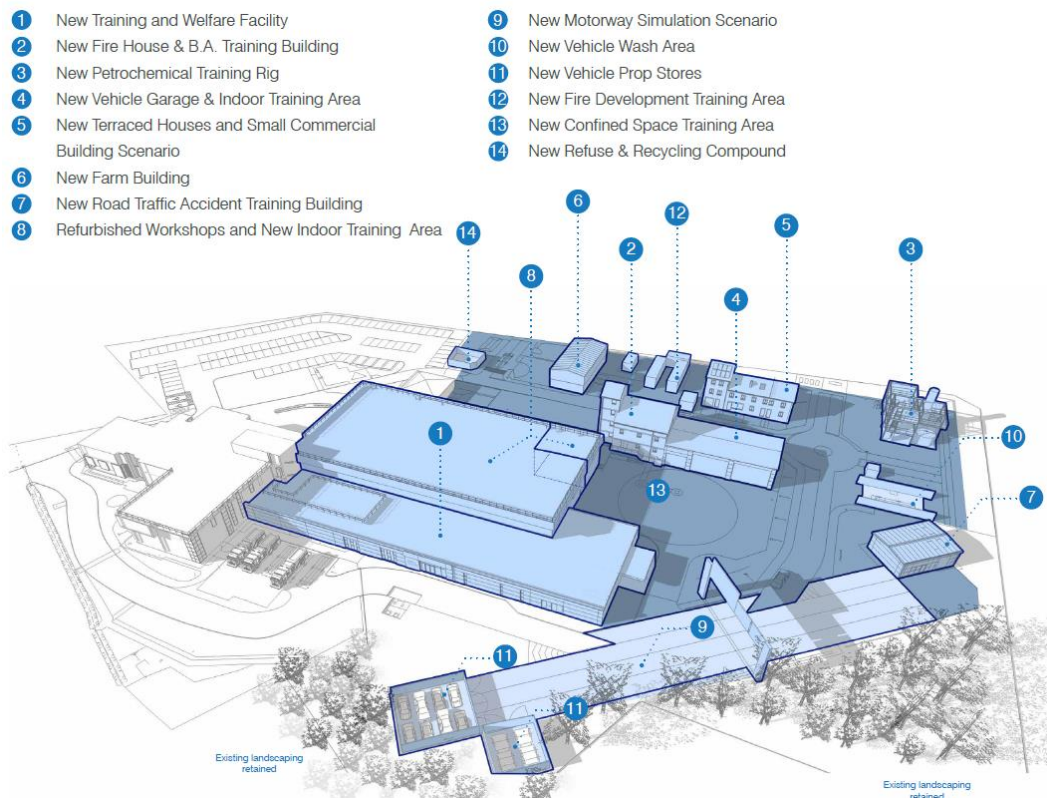
8.5 Budgets are prepared in accordance with the priorities set out in the IRMP and Medium Term Financial Plan which integrates and balances priorities, affordability and other resources. This ensures the budget process is all-inclusive, taking into account all costs of operations over the medium and long term.

8.6 Performance against budgets is monitored by the Performance and Programme and Budget Management Boards, which examine the progress against planned activity and spend against set budgets.

9. **Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

9.1 The Authority has commenced work on a 'Whole Service Review' to align the provision of services to future resources and priorities. This review is currently ongoing and will set the future direction of the Service for the period 2020-2024. The review will be developed using the Service's Community Risk Management model and will be informed by incident data, risks, statistics, information sources and feedback, as well as the outlook for public finances. The Whole Service Review will also incorporate and expand on previously commissioned reviews, e.g. the crewing arrangements at Wilmslow and Penketh fire stations; the provision of the Authority's third aerial appliance and the second fire engine at Ellesmere Port. It will also include the outcomes of the review of the Protection department. The outcome will be subject to public consultation.

- 9.2 Ensuring the all firefighters are appropriately trained is a key priority developing and maintaining their skills, safety and capabilities. One way that this is achieved is through the Incident Command Training Suite (ICTS).
- 9.3 The suite is designed to provide all incident commanders with the opportunity to develop and practice the full range of decision-making skills required in the most realistic training environment possible. While there is always a need for practical skills training in using equipment to fight fires and rescue people from vehicles, the use of virtual reality facilities is also a vital element now and in the future.
- 9.4 The Authority has approved the building of a state-of-the-art firefighter training centre at its Sadler Road site. It will provide a state-of-the-art firefighter training centre that is fit for the future. The new training facility will provide ground-breaking technology and provide real-life scenarios, ranging from serious motorway collisions to dealing with building fires, keeping our firefighters highly-skilled and equipped to deal with a myriad of life-saving situations. The proposed layout is shown below.



## 10. Principle F: Managing risks & performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

- 10.1 There is a Risk Management Policy and Practitioner Guide used throughout the Service which is applied to projects, programmes and some planned departmental activity. All strategic risks are reviewed quarterly by the risk owners and six monthly by the Risk Management Board (RMB).
- 10.2 There is a well-established network of Risk Champions who promote good practice and ensure that risk is considered locally as part of regular team meetings. This network gains some real value in sharing of best practice and acting as a 'peer group' in the management and maintenance of risk.

- 10.3 Members and officers at all levels of the Authority recognise that risk management is part of their day to day job. An owner is allocated to risks on the risk register and they are responsible for regularly reviewing and managing the risks to which they are assigned. Risk training is scheduled every two years and forms part of the Member development and induction programmes.
- 10.4 Health and Safety risks are robustly managed via the Health and Safety Policies and Procedures and by the application of Standard Operating Procedures that are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.
- 10.5 Within the strategic risk register, identified risks are scored based on both probability and level of impact, the outcome of which is rated using a Red, Amber and Green basis. Below is an example of a strategic risk linked to governance:

Risk	Mitigation	Rating
1. Competing demands on resources and achieving MTFP savings targets – Forecast of reducing funding in addition to decisions taken around service delivery will require savings. To achieve these whilst maintaining expected levels of service to the public will require a Whole Service Review.	Whole Service Review being undertaken, report due late 2019. Robust financial planning and the regular updating of a Medium Term Financial Plan – linked to Central Government’s Spending Review which is due in 2019.	Amber

- 10.6 The Service’s Performance and Programme Board (members of the Service Management Team) receives a quarterly review of performance against KPIs. The Board is responsible for monitoring and reviewing progress against performance targets and ensuring that action is taken wherever possible if targets are not being met. The performance reviews are also reported to the Performance and Overview Committee.
- 10.7 Financial performance is also reported to the Performance and Overview Committee on a quarterly basis. Budget Managers are provided with detailed information monthly and all financial activity is subject to audit. The Director of Internal Audit provides an annual assurance statement together with the External Auditor’s Annual Audit Letter both of which are published together with the Statement of Accounts on the website.
- 10.8 The use and disclosure of personal data is governed in the United Kingdom by the Data Protection Act 2018 (the Act) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Chief Fire Officer is a ‘data controller’ for the purposes of the Act and ensures that Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service handles all personal data in accordance with the Act.
11. **Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability**
- 11.1 The Corporate Communications Strategy sets out the approach the Service will take to communicating with the public and other stakeholders. It recognises the need for different approaches for different audiences and the increased use of social media as a communications tool.

- 11.2 The Service's website includes details of performance, strategy, plans, financial statements and Annual Report. The Annual Report highlights key challenges and achievements from the year and includes performance and financial information set out in a simple but informative way. Members and Senior Management agree the report before it is published.
- 11.3 The process for assessing the Authority against this framework is agreed by the Governance and Constitution Committee. Evidence is reviewed yearly and an action plan is maintained highlighting areas for improvement. Progress against the action plan is reported to the Service Management Team and to Governance and Constitution Committee. The framework and the evidence supporting the assessment is included in the annual Statement of Assurance. Internal Audit review the assessment and evidence against at least two of the sections of the Code of Corporate Governance Framework each year and make recommendations for improvement accordingly.
- 11.4 As a public service organisation, the Fire Authority will use public funds prudently and apply the highest standards of conduct throughout the organisation. Under the remit of the Governance and Constitution Committee, the Authority has an Anti-Fraud Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (Confidential Reporting) in support of this aim.
- 11.5 External assurance in terms of accountability is provided by both Internal and External Audit, HMICFRS reviews and partner reviews of collaborations. The Director of Internal Audit carries out his role in accordance with guidance issued in the CIPFA Statement on the role of the head of internal audit (2010).

## 12. **Review of Effectiveness**

- 12.1 As part of the on-going governance roles, each of the above principles is reviewed and evidence sourced to show effectiveness in terms of communications, actions, policies and procedures. This evidence is scrutinised and challenged by the Treasurer together with the Director of Governance and Commissioning.
- 12.2 These statutory roles have the responsibility to ensure the Authority has a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and as such maintain the Authority's Code of Governance including financial regulations.

### 12.3 **Report on Areas for Action during 2018/19**

Within the 2017/18 Annual Governance Statement, the review of effectiveness identified three areas where further action was required. The following re-visits the actions and reports on the outcome in 2018/19.

**Joint Corporate Teams** – continue to develop the arrangements and relationships for the delivery of support services by the Joint Corporate Teams.

Update – The joint teams are at different levels of operational maturity, largely depending upon how long ago they were created and whether there have been barriers to their integration. There are many positive signs that the joint teams are performing as expected, but there is still a way to go on integration and in developing suitable performance monitoring arrangements. Work is continuing to ensure this moves forward through the

Bluelight Executive Board, Joint Corporate Services Board and the production of service plans.

**Partnership Governance Model** – continue to embed the Partnership Governance Model and relaunch the revised policy.

Update – The revised partnership policy has been reviewed and amended as necessary, has been published and is available from the CorpDocs site. Communications in relation to the revised Policy appeared in the Green.

Awareness training for staff was programmed to be completed in April 2019. This has now taken place therefore, the action is now complete.

**Budget Preparation and Management Processes** – continue to develop and streamline the budget preparation and management processes.

Update – The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive led a review which considered spending compared to budget and the level of earmarked reserves. This resulted in the identification of sufficient savings to balance the budget and to finance other priorities.

Consideration will be given in 2019-20 to approaches that will further improve the alignment of resources with priorities.

During 2018-19, the quarterly budget monitoring reports to the Members have provided details of the proposed movements on reserves and secured Member approval. The 2019-20 Budget Report also provided greater clarity on the level and purpose of proposed contributions to and from reserves.

#### 12.4 Areas for Action in 2019/20

The governance framework, internal controls and application of the principles have been reviewed during 2018/19 with the following areas highlighted as risks together with the mitigating actions required.

**Financial Sustainability** – forecast of reducing funding in addition to decisions taken around service delivery will require savings. To achieve these whilst maintaining expected levels of service to the public will require a Whole Service Review.

Action: Undertake a Whole Service Review. Robust financial planning and the regular updating of a Medium Term Financial Plan – linked to Central Government’s Spending Review which is due in 2019. (Action Owners: Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Treasurer)

**People** – HMICFRS reported that the service should improve the way it looks after its people. In particular, it must do better at promoting the right values and culture; and ensuring fairness and promoting diversity. In addition, there has been an inability to sustain sufficient level of experienced operational staff.

Action: Produce a People Strategy, action plan for those areas requiring improvement and undertake Exit Interviews to provide learning for retention purposes. (Action Owners: Director of Transformation and Head of Human Resources)

**Collaborations** – HMICFRS reported that this was an area for improvement. Its main concerns centred upon a consistent approach to the effective monitoring, review and evaluation of the benefits and outcomes of collaboration.

Action: Prepare an Action Plan concerned with existing collaborations and approach to future collaborative activity. (Action Owner: Director of Governance and Commissioning)

### 13. Summary

- 13.1 We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the issues identified above to enhance further the governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvement as identified in the review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementations and operation as part of the next annual review.

### Signed

Cllr Bob Rudd  
Chair of Fire Authority

Mark Cashin  
Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive

Andrew Leadbetter  
Director of Governance and Commissioning

On behalf of the Members of Cheshire Fire Authority and officers of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.