

Funding the fire service of the future

A major investment in new fire stations and fire engines has been agreed by Cheshire Fire Authority as it launches a programme to change how its emergency response service will be provided in the future.

The programme involves building at least four more fire stations, maintaining the same number of fire engines but making significant changes in how many of them are staffed.

With crews attending 40% less incidents than seven years ago, the proposals aim to ensure staffing is more in line with risk and

activity levels and that the new stations improve overall average response times.

The invest to save programme will deliver around half of the estimated £8 million savings the Authority needs to make over the next four years following significant cuts to its central funding.

In 2014-15 savings of £2.2 million are required, with £1.7 million coming from the emergency response changes and the remainder mostly from cuts in support service areas. In addition, the Authority is increasing its Council Tax by 1.99% - meaning that people in a Band D home will pay £69.09



The Authority's capital programme for 2014-15 is £13.78 million, with £8.1 million earmarked towards the start of building new stations planned for Alsager, Penketh, Lymm and near the junction of the M53 and M56 motorways and £3.9 million for a new safety centre at Lymm.

The Authority will be using a one-off £4.5 million capital grant it has won from the Government which will limit the impact on its day to day revenue budget.

Other key capital projects for 2014-15 include:

- £700,000 on a new hydraulic platform to help firefighters work and tackle fires at height
- £670,000 on two new fire engines and two new four wheel drive vehicles
- £300,000 for a new energy efficient biomass boiler at the Service's Headquarters and training facility
- £74,000 to ensure all fire engines are fitted with the latest thermal image cameras which identify hotspots at fires.

More details about how the Authority aims to protect local communities are set out in 'Making Cheshire Safer'. This annual publication, also known as the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2014-15, is on the Service's website.



Safety at Home

Our Home Safety Direct system can protect you and your home - at the click of a button.

Take the quick online test at cheshirefire.gov.uk/5mins - it could save your life.

For safety advice on everything from barbecues to winter driving, check out the public safety section of the website.

Safety at Work

Fire safety legislation now covers over 30,000 businesses across Cheshire, Halton and Warrington.

Owners are responsible for carrying out effective risk assessments. Make sure you know what you have to do - visit our website and click on 'business safety'.

You can also register to get key updates by visiting the 'My account' section.

Cheshire Fire Authority

The Authority manages the local fire and rescue service on behalf the community. It comprises 23 councillors – eight from Cheshire East, seven from Cheshire West and Chester, five from Warrington and three from Halton.

Representing

Halton

Cllr Stef Nelson

Cllr Rob Polhill

Cllr Phil Harris

Meeting dates



Wed 18	June	2014
Wed 24	September	2014
Wed 10	December	2014
Wed 11	February	2015
Wed 22	April	2015

All meetings are open to the public, start at 10.30am and are held at the Service Headquarters in Winsford.

All reports and minutes are on the Service's website - www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

Facts and figures



Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service operates:

- 24 Fire Stations
- 4 Community Safety Centres
- 3 Community Fire Protection Offices
- A Headquarters and training facility.

The Authority provides a 24 hour service to just over 1 million people and employs some:

- 695 operational staff
- 238 community safety and other support staff.

Fire budget 2014–15



The Fire Authority has agreed that a budget of £42.7 million is required to provide a fire and rescue service to the communities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington areas for 2014–15.

With £19.03 million provided through Government grants, it means that £23.66 million will need to be raised from local Council Tax, which is equivalent to £69.09 for each Band D dwelling. This is a rise of 1.99%, or 2.6p a week for a Band D home.

The budget equates to a cost per resident of less than 80p per week.

Queries about this leaflet should be sent to: Head of Finance, CFRS Headquarters, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ
t: 01606 868700 e: feedback@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Estimated expenditure and income



	2014–15 £m	2013–14 £m
Pay related expenditure		
Firefighters	23.8	26.0
Other staff	6.9	7.0
Non-pay expenditure	13.1	11.9
Income	(1.1)	(1.3)
Budget requirement	42.7	43.6

How the budget compared with last year



The Fire Authority budget requirement for 2014–15 is £42.7 million compared with a budget of £43.6 million for last year. The reasons for the 2.1% decrease in the overall budget are as follows:

	£m	% increase (decrease)
Last year's budget	43.6	
Pay and price inflation	0.7	1.6
Essential growth	0.2	0.5
Efficiencies and Savings	(2.2)	(5.1)
IRMP & Financing adjustments	0.6	1.4
Other*	(0.2)	(0.5)
Total	42.7	(2.1)
*Other includes:		
Allocation of second homes precept	0.001	
Section 31 grants	(0.213)	

Where the money will come from



	£m	£ Per Resident	£ Band D Equivalent
This year's budget	42.69	41.50	125.62
Less Government grants	(19.03)	(18.50)	(56.53)
Local Council Tax	23.66	23.00	69.09