

# Planning for a safer Cheshire

**C**heshire Fire Authority is the public body which is accountable to the communities of Cheshire for ensuring that they are protected by an effective fire and rescue service.

Over the past few years residents, businesses, partners and staff have all helped the Authority to develop its four year programme, which is transforming how its emergency response services will be delivered in the future.

This summary sets out the progress achieved to date and outlines the projects planned for the next financial year. Thanks to the hard work of staff, volunteers and partners, the numbers of fires and injuries continues to fall – see chart below.

## Reviews

A robust series of value for money reviews have taken place within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service over the past few years to ensure efficient and effective staffing levels.

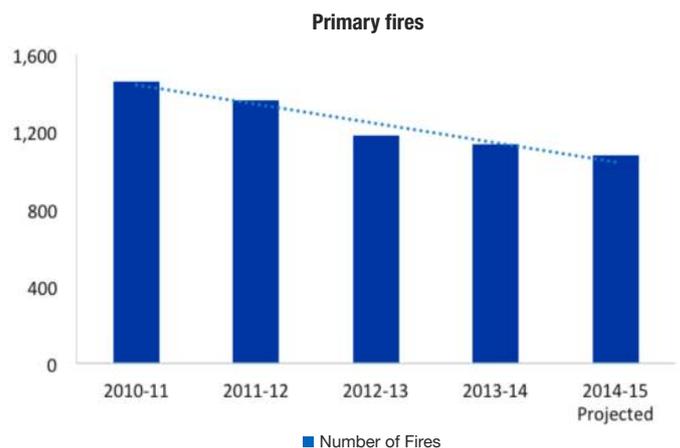
This process delivered significant efficiencies and changes to the way the Service works. However, it also highlighted the need for the organisation to plan and invest in its future workforce. As a result, a 'Step into Work' programme has been developed, which incorporates and extends the Service's current range of youth activities.

It includes the launch of a trainee and apprenticeship programmes in 2015-16 and the development of a 'talent pool' of those who have successfully completed some of the Service's youth engagement programmes.

They will be given the same opportunity as existing staff to apply for a specified range of roles.

During 2015-16 a business case will also be developed to consider the launch of a firefighter apprentice programme.

Visit the Service's website to see the full Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2015-16.



# Focus on the future



Major progress has been made over the last 18 months on the Fire Authority's four year emergency response programme which will see more fire stations, virtually the same number of fire engines but significant changes in how many of them are staffed.

When completed the programme will help to deliver a major part of the £8 million in savings the Authority needs to achieve over the next four financial years. The remainder is coming from cuts elsewhere in the organisation, including £1 million from a series of value for money reviews into back office services.

Work is underway on building the new station at Alsager with the building due to open in July 2015, although it will only become operational when all staff are fully trained. An outline building programme has been drawn up for the other new stations at Penketh, Powey Lane near the M56/M53 junction and at Lymm where the building will incorporate an innovative new safety centre - see map.

As well as the new stations, other key projects in 2015-16 include:

- recruiting and training new on-call firefighters at several locations, including Crewe and Ellesmere Port where they will crew the second fire engines
- implementing new 12 hour shifts for wholetime firefighters and changing arrangements on the day crewing stations at Congleton, Winsford and Northwich
- launching a new value for money review into back office services
- establishing the management, partnership and funding arrangements for the Lymm Safety Centre project
- launching a comprehensive programme to review all aspects of how frontline emergency response services can be delivered in the future in support of the Authority's new five year strategy.

## Draft Timetable

### 2015-2016

- Complete the building of a new on-call fire station at Alsager
- Start recruiting for on-call staff at Crewe and Ellesmere Port
- Implement new crewing arrangements at Congleton, Winsford and Northwich
- Extend the 12 hour shift model to all wholetime stations
- Develop options for future station management and 24/7 management of emergency incidents

### 2016-2017

- New on-call fire station at Alsager becomes fully operational
- New fire station at Penketh – "go live" using the second fire engine from Warrington
- Remove the second fire engine from Widnes
- "Go live" for new fire station at Powey Lane, near M56 – using the second fire engine from Chester. Transfer the Foam and Environmental Protection Units at Ellesmere Port, the Incident Response Unit from Chester and the High Volume Pump from Congleton to the new station
- New fire station at Lymm – "go live"
- Launch of new safety centre at Lymm
- Transfer Technical Rescue Unit from Knutsford to Lymm and Incident Response Unit from Winsford to Lymm
- Transfer the hydraulic platform from Stockton Heath to Warrington
- Introduce on-call model for Stockton Heath and Knutsford

### 2017-2018

- Introduce new crewing arrangement for second fire engine at Crewe
- Introduce new crewing arrangement for second fire engine at Ellesmere Port
- On-call crew at Penketh become fully operational

# Projects and proposals 2015-16 - summary

## Developing the organisation

- Publish a new five year strategy outlining the approach and principles which will be used by the Authority in planning for a safer Cheshire towards 2020
- Launch a further value for money review on all areas of the Service not covered in the emergency response programme with the aim of achieving savings totalling £1 million
- Organise a second independent Operational Assessment and Peer Review of the organisation and seek reaccreditation under the national Fire and Rescue Service Equality framework
- Launch schemes for apprentices and trainees and produce a business case for the introduction of a firefighter apprentice scheme
- Complete a feasibility study into switching some of the Service's fleet of support vehicles to electric
- Support the development of a blue light services collaboration project in Cheshire



## Protecting local communities

- Establish the management, partnership and funding arrangements for the Lymm Safety Centre project
- Produce a new community safety strategy setting out how its prevention services will be delivered in future and integrate with the Centre.
- Review any opportunities for streamlining processes and improving safety under the Government's new 'primary authority scheme'



## Responding to emergencies

- Continue to implement the Authority's emergency response programme including opening the new on-call fire station at Alsager
- Start recruiting for on-call staff at Crewe and Ellesmere Port
- Implement new duty systems at Congleton, Winsford and Northwich
- Extend the 12 hour shift model to all wholetime stations and review future options for the management of stations and flexible 24/7 emergency cover
- Launch a comprehensive programme to review all aspects of how frontline emergency response services can be delivered in the future in support of the Authority's new five year strategy

