# 2014-15 Analysis of External Drivers - PESTELO

# Introduction

## Analysis of External Drivers (PESTELO)

The PESTELO is the organisation's annual assessment of external and organisational drivers, which provide the context for and help to shape the policies and strategies of Cheshire Fire Authority.

The document provides an overview of key demographic data for Cheshire, Halton and Warrington and considers the most important drivers from the political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental/ethical and legal spheres, along with organisational data and analysis, to inform the corporate planning process.

This process delivers the Authority's key documents, such as the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and its longer-term strategies. The PESTELO is updated throughout the year and this new edition has been produced to support the latest IRMP, to cover the period 2015-16.

The build-up to the publication of the IRMP comes at a time of external upheaval, which includes what is seen as a pivotal UK General Election in May 2015. Therefore, this document will evolve over the next few months, as some of the related issues and detail become clear.

## Cheshire: An overview

Cheshire as a whole encompasses four unitary authority areas; Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington. As a county, Cheshire covers an area of 2,343 square kilometres (905 square miles), split by the four unitary authority areas:

- Cheshire East: 1,116km²
- Cheshire West and Chester: 918.28km²
- Halton: 79.09km²
- Warrington: 180.65km²

## Population

According to the 2011 census, the population of Cheshire is 1.028 million, with an average age of 40.4 years.

- 0-14 yrs: 175,025 (17.03%)
- 15-24 yrs: 121,011 (11.78%)
- 25-44 yrs: 261,896 (25.48%)
- 45-64 yrs: 286,610 (27.89%)
- 65-84 yrs: 159,847 (15.55%)

- 85+ yrs: 23,320 (2.27%)

In the decade between this census (2011) and the 2001 census, the population in Cheshire as a whole has increased by 44,264 (or +4.39%).

The population in each unitary area is listed below:

- Cheshire East: 370,127
- Cheshire West and Chester: 329,608
- Halton: 125,746
- Warrington: 202,228

The rate of population growth in each of the unitary areas is as follows:

- Cheshire East: +18,282 (+5.20%)
- Cheshire West and Chester: +7,641 (+2.37%)
- Halton: +7,585 (+6.42%)
- Warrington: +11,116 (+5.82%)

By 2021, the population is forecast to rise by 52,000 to 1.08 million. Growth is expected to be concentrated in Cheshire East (+19,000) and Warrington (+18,000).

The proportion of the population aged 65 years and over has risen. In Cheshire this age group has from 15.81% of the population in 2001 to 17.8% in 2011. In contrast, the population aged from 0-24 years old as a percentage fell by 1% in the past decade.

Taken in a national context it is important to note that in Cheshire, the growth in the over 65 population is not as pronounced as other areas of the country, particularly in relation to parts of East Anglia, Yorkshire and the coastal South East, as well as much of Wales and the South West of England.

However, the growing number of people aged over 65 presents the most significant challenge for all local authorities in relation to the provision of effective public services.


## Demography

As a whole, the vast majority of the population of Cheshire identify themselves as being White British (94%). However there are a number of other ethnic groups that make up the population of the area, notably:
White Other (21,321); White Irish (6,589); Asian/British Asian Indians (5,474) and Non-Chinese Asians (3,613).

As with a number of areas across the country, Cheshire has seen a net increase in migration over the past decade, although the number of migrants settling in the area has dropped since the onset of the financial crisis.

Historically, Polish and other Eastern European nationalities have comprised the majority of migrants coming into Cheshire, in addition to communities from India and Ireland.

However, it is important to note that while there are some long standing communities within areas of Cheshire, migrant populations can be fairly transient in nature and may fluctuate according to political and economic factors.

This is reflected in the latest National Insurance Number (NiNo) registration data, which shows that in 2011-12 the highest number of migrants entering Cheshire were Portuguese (1,200), followed by the more historically common nationalities of Poland (1,070), Ireland (1,000) and Slovakia (540).

In relation to language, the vast majority of residents aged 3 and over use English as their main language (97.8%). However, there are a number of other languages spoken within Cheshire, which largely correspond to the migration patterns experienced in each local area.

The most commonly spoken other languages are shown below:

Top 10 Non-English Spoken Languages in Cheshire

## Religion

As an average, 71% of the population across Cheshire identified themselves as Christian in the 2011 census. A further 21% stated that they followed no religion while 6% did not state a religious preference on their census return.

There is a fairly even split between followers of other religions amongst Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Warrington, while Halton has a more homogenous religious composition.

## Sexual orientation

While the legacy of criminalisation and discrimination makes it difficult to come up with precise figures for the UK's lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population, the Government uses an estimate of between 5-7%. This means that out of a total population of 1.028 million in Cheshire there is likely to be an LGB population of between 51,350 and 71,939 individuals.

While no current data shows a direct link between fire risk and being LGB we know from research, such as Stonewall's 'Serves you right' (2010) report that many LGB and transgender (T) people do not readily engage with public agencies. Rightly or wrongly, this can have an impact on the way LGBT people interact with organisations such as Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and result in them being more at risk.

It is well understood that some of the key risk factors for dying in a house fire relate to age, isolation, mental health and alcohol.

Research undertaken by organisations such as Stonewall and the Lesbian and Gay Foundation (LGF) show that these factors can be significantly higher among LGBT individuals than the population as a whole, as these headlines (below) from

Stonewall's 'Lesbian, gay and bisexual people in later life' report (2011) demonstrate;

- 41% of LGBT older people live alone compared to 28% of heterosexual older people

- 45% drink alcohol at least three or four days a week compared to 31% of heterosexual people

- One in 11 have taken drugs compared to one in 50 heterosexual older people

- LGBT older people are more likely to have a history of mental ill health and have more concerns about their future mental health

- Three in five are not confident that social care and other support services would be able to understand and meet their needs

## Housing

As of the 2011 census, there are 439,335 dwellings within the Cheshire area, split as follows:

- Cheshire East: 159,441.
- Cheshire West and Chester: 141,442.
- Halton: 53,312.
- Warrington: 85,140.

Virtually half (49.9%) of dwellings within Cheshire are rated either A or B in the Council Tax banding system.

The majority of all dwellings within Cheshire (70.1% of housing stock) are owner occupied as opposed to rented.

Rented properties within Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington are roughly equally split between social rents (11-14%) and private rents (11-12%). However, in Halton social rented properties account for 25% of all housing stock.

21.3% of households are aged 65 or over, although this figure is slightly higher in Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester.

29.5% of all properties are one-person households – around the national average – while 12.5% of homes are occupied by a lone person over the age of 65.

## Indices of Multiple Deprivation

While Cheshire may be viewed stereotypically as an affluent, largely rural (and flat) landscape, the reality is somewhat more complex.

As a local authority area, Halton is ranked nationally as the 27th most deprived out of 326 areas. Warrington and Cheshire West are ranked 153rd and 171st respectively, while Cheshire East lies further down at 226th.

There are also a number of pockets of deprivation throughout each of the four authorities, with 16 lower super output areas (LSOAs) in Cheshire East, 34 LSOAs in Cheshire West and Chester, 39 in Halton and 20 in Warrington falling within the 20% most deprived areas of the country.

The maps over the page provide an overview of the indices of multiple deprivation by local authority area.

## Businesses and Employment

As of 2012, Cheshire is home to 45,000 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses and commercial organisations, ranging from self-employed individuals and small micro-businesses to large internationally recognised organisations such as Bentley Motors, General Motors (Vauxhall) and Astra-Zeneca.

There are also several large employers on the border of Cheshire, including both Manchester and Liverpool airports, British Aerospace in Broughton and the Trafford Centre.

Key employment sectors within Cheshire include:

• Wholesale and retail trade, motor vehicle repair: 17.4%
• Health and social work: 12.2%
• Manufacturing: 11.3%
• Education: 8.8%
• Construction: 6.6%
• Professional, scientific and technical: 6.2%

The composition of main industrial sectors (by number of businesses) is as follows:

• Professional, scientific and technical industries: 17.1% of all businesses
• Retail: 10.9%
• Construction: 8.7%
• Public services (public administration, defence, education and health): 8.6%
• Business administration and support services: 7.7%

The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area sustains Gross Value Added (GVA) economic output at 96% of the national average. This is higher than neighbouring LEP areas such as Liverpool, Manchester and Stoke and Staffordshire, making the Cheshire and Warrington LEP area one of the most productive in the North.

Notable local industries that contribute to local GVA include:

- Advanced engineering: 1,613 companies supporting 23,600 jobs.
- Life science and chemicals: 689 companies supporting 8,800 jobs.
- Energy and environment: 7,422 companies supporting 30,600 jobs.
- Financial and professional services: 7,178 companies supporting 45,000 jobs.

The majority (83%) of business are small to medium sized enterprises with a turnover of up to £249,000 each and the vast majority (82%) of businesses within Cheshire operate with fewer than 10 employees.

## PESTEL Drivers

### Political drivers

The context for the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2015-16 will be driven by the outcomes and consequences of the 2015 General Election and a series of local elections that will impact heavily on the make-up and membership of the Fire Authority.

Ahead of the elections, the period in which the content of the IRMP will be refined and consulted upon will be highly politicised. This may have the result of distorting public debate and the outcomes of consultation.

### National elections

A succession of weekly and monthly polls have failed to provide a consistent picture of the outcomes of the General Election, which fluctuate between a Labour Government with a small majority to a Labour or Conservative minority Government with a reduced Liberal Democrat vote and/or other smaller parties, principally UKIP, acting as king-maker.

A number of Cheshire's 11 Parliamentary constituencies are likely to face tight contests due to the existing balance of the parties. The closest-fought contests are expected to take place in Weaver Vale, Warrington South and Chester.

In most constituencies, candidates for all of the main parties have already been selected and these are now active within the community.

The nature of political candidates (rightly) is to take advantage of local grievances and to become the focus of conversations and campaigns around divisive issues in order to raise their profile. This might have implications for the reaction to existing and new proposals included within the IRMP.

## Local elections

Within Cheshire, where both Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester have all-out elections the likely outcomes seem more certain with Labour likely to increase its presence on Cheshire West and Chester Council, potentially taking overall control.

In Cheshire East the Conservatives are likely to retain comfortable control of the council, but with Labour, independents and smaller parties such as UKIP increasing their numbers of councillors. Both Halton and Warrington, which only have a third of their seats up for re-election, are likely to continue a trend in recent years by strengthening their existing Labour presence. Although Parties, such as UKIP might also make an impact here.

As is the case with the General Election, local candidates and activists are already active within those wards and communities affected by local ballots. Therefore, these elections are likely to have either a distorting or magnifying effect on any public discourse around IRMP or developing the future proposals for response options in particular.

Equally, partnerships across the sub-region, both at a unitary and Cheshire-wide level, are likely to suffer from a degree of inertia ahead of the elections. The likely changes to personalities and politics after the election will also have an impact on the effectiveness of the partnerships themselves going forward.

Most importantly, the elections will have a major impact on the make up and membership of the Fire Authority – the greatest impact since Local Government Reorganisation in 2008.

18 out of the 23 Members of the Authority face ballots or intend to stand down, meaning that there is the potential for three quarters of the membership to change. With that comes the possibility of a new Authority wanting to set a different direction to that pursued so far.

While this scale of change is unlikely, it is probable that at least a third of Members will be replaced. Currently it is understood that five existing councillors do not intend to stand again in their unitaries, meaning that the minimum change to the Fire Authority will be at least five new Members.

## Policies and party positions

The main political parties have already made various policy announcements on a range of issues that will impact the fire and rescue service and the wider public policy arena in the years ahead.

However, the Coalition has had a distorting factor on the traditional political cycle, meaning that the independent policy-platform of the two Governing parties going into the General Election has yet to be made clear – and as a result the Labour Party appear to have held back too.

The recent Conservative reshuffle marked the beginning of the end of the Coalition, by promoting ministers who are not signed up to or feel tied into the original Coalition Agreement from 2010.

The introduction of new faces has seen the Conservatives begin to outline the policies they would include in their manifesto, particularly around immigration, Europe and Human Rights.  Equally, the Lib Dems will start to outline their red-lines that will indicate their willingness to do deals in the event of a new Coalition.


The period moving towards Christmas will see a rapidly developing political context and along with the period from February 2015 until the elections in May, will be the most politically charged.

As such this section of the PESTELO will be a moving feast that will be continually updated.


## National resilience

Previous PESTELOs highlighted the conclusions of Sir Ken Knight, in his review of the fire and rescue service and the contributions of other figures such as Tobias Ellwood on the need for greater national blue-light collaboration around resilience.

While talk of full-scale sector takeovers and the reorganisation of resilience within government have diminished, the major storms in early 2014 highlighted that there is still a need to consider the ongoing integration of systems, capabilities and communications across the emergency services.

All of the major parties remain open to the idea of revisiting these questions and issues. The recently commissioned review by Adrian Thomas into firefighter terms and conditions is likely to have a broader remit.  This will include issues around governance, remit and approaches.

The Review will report in February and will provide an incoming government with a blueprint for wider reform of the sector. Reviews and proposals from the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) will also provide a new Government with food for thought.

The physical move of the Department for Communities and Local Government into the Home Office will do little to abate calls for the greater integration between police and fire. While continued budget-based threats to service delivery at the Department of Health will continue to raise questions about the scope and remit of the ambulance service within the NHS.

Any changes to the position of the fire within Whitehall structures would obviously have knock-on effects for fire policy.


## Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCS) and blue light governance

On the broader issue of reform to the structures and governance of blue light services there are already two clear and opposing views from the Conservative and Labour Parties, which have been reinforced at the recent Party Conference.

In Manchester Labour repeated their commitment to replace single elected Police Commissioners with a board of locally elected councillors – similar to a Fire Authority. The Conservatives committed to retaining the model, although they have yet to provide further details on whether/how they would reform it.

The Liberal Democrats were unenthusiastic about the policy when it was introduced in 2010, but have since committed to removing PCCs.

There is a reality check in relation to the future of PCCs, which will see the detail of these policy positions heavily influenced by the partnerships and arrangements already in place and being pursued at the local level – such as collaborative approaches between police and fire in Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire and Derbyshire.

The uncertainty of these policies underlines the need for fire and rescue services and their partners to continue to develop local solutions and joint approaches where possible in the absence of a clear national direction.


## Integration of local services

During the last five years, the reduction in central funding has driven the development of collaborative initiatives and partnerships, which have expanded in a myriad of projects and pilots – such as the Altogether Better programme in West Cheshire.

Using the methodology of Total Place, which was launched under the last Labour Government, community budget models and pilots build on the idea that local

agencies should invest in prevention, weed out duplication and collaborate to develop better (and cheaper) local public services.

These concepts are not alien to the fire and rescue sector, which explains why fire services have been actively engaged across the country – such as in Greater Manchester and London.

The new approaches being trialled favour more realistic and effective models for transforming frontline services. This includes multi-agency and co-located teams, shared intelligence and the better use of technology – an example would be West Cheshire's Integrated Early Support model or the models being considered as part of the Cheshire-wide Transforming Community Safety (TCS) and the Complex Dependency Programme.

In the build up to the General Election, all main political parties have given their support for these concepts, which suggests that the overall direction of travel of the last few years will continue beyond 2015.--

It is expected that variations in and around this theme will form a key plank for how all the main Parties will work to reduce public expenditure further, while aiming to protect service delivery with fire and rescue services integrated in this agenda.


## Health agenda and wellbeing

The health agenda still poses significant opportunity and risks for fire and rescue services. This includes the potential to broaden the range of preventative services offered by fire, to bid for contracts and to be commissioned to deliver in key areas by health agencies.

However, the new commissioning powers of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), the integration of health and social care and the transfer of public health into local authorities also risk sidelining fire and rescue services in a new world of council and NHS-led collaboration.

The recent Five Year Forward View strategy published by NHS England set out the need for a programme of transformation of preventative and primary care, which all local agencies including the fire and rescue service must contribute to.

As with the broader collaborative agenda, all mainstream political parties are committed to this vision and embedding health within wider local government in order to unlock savings and efficiencies.


## Industrial action

The current dispute between the Government and the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) has dramatically impacted the operation of the fire and rescue, although services (on the whole) have coped with the strikes undertaken so far.

It is unlikely that some smaller, particularly county services will be able to cope easily with a continued escalation of tactics and strikes by the FBU.

While the Government's pension reforms provide the backdrop to this action, it is unlikely to remove the threat of further strike action, once passed, which is also tied to the politics of the General Election and the austerity agenda of the Government.

The Labour Party front bench has remained relatively quiet throughout the strikes, providing further uncertainty as to the likelihood of any FBU campaigns continuing under a possible Labour Government in 2015.

This action, along with those strikes undertaken by other public sector trades unions, such as the GMB, Unite, NUT and the PCS has prompted the Conservative Party to pledge to reform strike legislation should they win the next elections. This could include prohibiting strikes unless 50% of members vote in favour of action and enforcing a three month time limit for strikes to take place.

## Economic outlook and public spending in 2015-16

While the economic outlook for the UK in 2015-16 is significantly more positive than in the previous four years, there are still major challenges for the economy as a whole and for public spending.

The overall package of public spending for the first financial year after the General Election (2015-16) has been agreed to by the Coalition parties and by the Labour Party. This will see further reductions in the funding made available to local government, including the fire and rescue service.

These reductions equate to £11.5bn across the whole of Government, with the Department for Communities and Local Government's budget falling by 10%.

The period immediately following the Election will see a further and wide-ranging Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) take place, in which spending across the whole of Government will be reviewed and reconsidered.

The CSR process will set out the future funding allocation for the fire and rescue service and will have to allow for ringfencing and protection for the NHS Budget (see graph), which all Parties have committed to. It will spell out the scale of further reductions and efficiencies required by the sector.

Many analysts suggest that the UK is around halfway through its deficit reduction programme. All main political parties have indicated that public spending will continue to fall after the General Election and for the foreseeable future, as the UK budget deficit is brought back under control.

The Conservatives have gone further in suggesting that if they were re-elected they would work to achieve a balanced budget and eradicate borrowing going forward.

To achieve the currently forecast levels of borrowing, without any further tax increases or cuts to welfare spending, the Government would need to cut spending by government departments by a further 10.6% in real terms (or £37.6 billion) between 2015–16 and 2018–19. This is on top of the £8.7 billion cut that has already been set out for 2015–16.

## Growth and sub-regional governance

Local Enterprise Partnerships were the structures introduced by the Coalition to act as drivers for local economic growth. As voluntary partnerships with locally-defined and often complex geographies they have had a mixed record, both within Government and the areas they serve.

Cheshire is covered by two LEPs, with Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington in a principal LEP and Halton sitting within the Merseyside structure.

LEPs have only recently begun to find their feet and gain the trust of Ministers. It was only in mid-2014 that they were promised significant funds from Whitehall to deliver local infrastructure projects and initiatives.

In Cheshire, the sub-regional partnership, made up of the four local authorities, fire, police, probation, PCC and health agencies has been working to integrate the economic agendas of the LEPs with broader societal and public service priorities, using developments in areas such as Crewe and Chester to drive social improvement and transformation.

Under both Conservative and Labour-led governments LEPs would remain as part of the local partnership landscape. However, while the Conservatives would continue with the bottom-up approach seen so far, Labour have committed to reviewing the geography of LEPs and installing 'government approved' chief executives.

In light of the outcome of the Scottish Referendum the main Parties are committed to devolving further powers to cities particularly in the North of England and those areas that form combined authorities, or formal multi-council governance structures.

While the Leaders in Cheshire have considered a combined authority previously, such models have been rejected to date. However, this could change when further incentives, such as greater funding and transport investment.

If the Cities become the focus of these offers in the drive for economic growth then the areas in between will be sidelined. This is despite the fact that Cheshire and Warrington have one of the best performing local economies outside London.

Major programmes of transport investment, such as One North and the newly proposed HS3 rail link between the Northern cities will also tip the balance of power further towards urban and metropolitan areas.

## Crime and extremism

The oft-predicted rise in crime that was supposed to accompany the recession and economic downturn has failed to materialise in any significant sense and there has been no repeat of the riots seen in 2011. Youth unemployment is recovering from its dramatic high levels.

Crime figures on the whole have continued to fall to record low levels, with Cheshire below the national average. However, there have been recent increases in violent crime in a number of areas, which the police and Home Office will want to address.

A recent police report from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) highlighted that while police forces were coping well with funding reductions, the public have begun to notice falls in visible and neighbourhood policing and local forces will adapt their studies to meet the expectations of communities.

Since the outbreak of civil war in Syria and the rise of Islamic State (IS) in Iraq - as well as the so called 'Trojan Horse' issue, in which hard-line Muslims were accused of trying to exert control within West Midland schools, the security services and police have warned of the rise of extremism. The overall UK threat level has now been raised to severe.

The risk includes the return of potentially 'radicalised' individuals, coming back to Britain from conflicts abroad – even those engaged in charitable activities. There have also been concerns raised about individuals and groups with opposing extremist views reacting to these issues and targeting Muslim communities and facilities i.e. far right groups.

In Cheshire, while these issues are not common there remains a limited risk, due to our proximity to the larger urban areas and some issues have already occurred. These matters are monitored jointly by Cheshire and Greater Manchester Police.

## Legislative drivers

In June 2014 Her Majesty the Queen delivered the Queen's Speech, opening the final session of the current Parliament.

The speech was widely expected to be short, a mere pre-cursor to the General Election and providing an opportunity for the two governing parties to set out their political offerings. However, it included a relatively meaty legislative agenda, some of which has implications for the fire and rescue service.

The reality however, is that much of the programme will be overshadowed by the politics of the long run-in to the General Election meaning that the programme will have little bearing on the 2015-16 IRMP.

The Bills included in the Speech are set out below;

## Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill

Small firms will be given fair access to government and other public sector procurement. Childcare regulations will be made more flexible. Highly paid public sector workers will be prevented from claiming redundancy and returning to the same line of work within 12 months.

## National Insurance Contributions Bill

The way national insurance contributions are collected from self-employed will be simplified and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will get more powers to target tax avoidance.

## Infrastructure Bill

The Highways Agency will be turned from an executive agency into a government-owned company, with a shake-up of funding. Subject to the outcome of a consultation, developers will be able to run shale gas pipelines under people's land without their permission.

## Pension Tax Bill

People aged 55 and over with defined contribution pensions will be able to withdraw their savings as they wish, subject to conditions.

## Private Pensions Bill

New "defined ambition" collective pension schemes will be launched as an alternative to other options. Pending the outcome of a consultation, the government will have the power to ban people transferring out of private and unfunded public defined benefit schemes.

## Childcare Payments Bill

A new tax-free childcare subsidy worth up to £2,000 a year per child will be introduced in autumn 2015. All parents with children under the age of 12 will be eligible, if they are in paid work and earn less than £150,000 a year. The existing employer-supported childcare scheme will be repealed.

## Modern Slavery Bill

Existing criminal offences relating to slavery will be consolidated into one piece of legislation.

## Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism Bill

People who are sued after intervening in emergencies or acting to protect the safety of others will have new legal defences. When considering negligence and breach of duty cases, courts will have to consider the "wider context" of defendants' actions, including whether they behaved responsibly and "for the benefit of society" or had taken "heroic action" to help people in danger with no regard to their own safety.

## Service Complaints Bill

The commissioner who investigates complaints against members of the armed forces will be given added powers.

## Serious Crime Bill

The laws on recovering criminal assets will be strengthened and introduces a range of new offences relating to cyber crime and psychological harm to children.

## Recall of MPs Bill

Voters will be able to trigger a by-election where an MP is convicted of an offence receiving a custodial sentence of under 12 months and 10% of their registered constituents have signed a petition calling for a recall.

Draft Governance of National Parks (England) and the Broads Bill

It would allow direct elections to be held for positions in National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority.

## Draft Riot (Damages) Act Bill

The system for compensating individuals and businesses that have been victims of criminal damage and financial loss as a result of riots would be modernised.

## Draft Protection of Charities Bill

Subject to the outcome of a consultation, the powers of the Charity Commission would be strengthened.

# Organisational Drivers

## Incident Trends

The above graph shows total incident volumes per year for 10 years between 2004/5 and 2013/14 and projections to 2017/18 using two different trend-lines (logarithmic and exponential).

The r-squared value represents how well the trend line fits the historic data and the nearer the score is to 1.0, the better the fit.

Both lines show a downward trend, with exponential being the strongest fit.

In order to use this information to predict trends we should consider how we realistically think incident trends will progress in the coming years. It is perhaps unlikely that incidents will continue to reduce steadily as an exponential trend might suggest so although the logarithmic trend has the lowest r-squared value it could prove to be the more realistic predictor as logarithmic trend lines are best used with data that show rapid reductions or increases and then a period of stability.

From 2012/13 to 2013/14 incidents marginally increased by 64 (0.8%) though from scrutinising the data this was mainly due to a large increase in secondary fires (29%).

Secondary fires include incidents involving grass, rubbish and wheelie bins and are often determined by the weather with more incidents occurring when it is sunny and dry. Due to a particularly rainy and dull summer in 2012 incident numbers were exceptionally low and even though the weather was much dryer in 2013 incidents of secondary fires actually reduced based on the three year trend.

Other incident types have continued to reduce in 2013/14 including 36 fewer house fires (-7.5%), 34 fewer road traffic collisions (-9.2%) and 217 fewer other special service calls (-21.9%).

In terms of primary fires there were 65% fewer incidents recorded compared to 10 years ago.

## Emergency Response Programme

Following changes proposed by IRMP the incident levels at all fire station areas and the attendances of pumps in the Service are regularly monitored.

When reviewing the three year trend attendances in Runcorn, Macclesfield, Ellesmere Port and Crewe continue to drop, being amongst the lowest numbers ever recorded.

The following graph shows the predicted attendances per pump, post ERP based on a Phoenix simulation using 4 years of incident data (2009/10 to 2012/13). With 100%

on-call availability this scenario is predicted to improve 1st pump pass-rate by approximately 1%.

## Observations

- Warrington would attend the most incidents overall, followed by Chester.
- Out of the new stations M53/M56 would attend the most incidents, followed by Penketh and Lymm.
- Stockton Heath's two pumps are predicted to attend very few incidents (less than 1 per week).

## Value of appliances – 1st and 2nd Pumps

The following graph looks at first and second pump pass-rates against the 10 minute standard (first pump) and a 15 minute standard (second pump) for life-risk incidents. The percentages in the graph illustrate the amount the pump contributes to the overall Service pass-rate, hence it is a good measure of 'value' in terms of achieving the key performance response indicator.

## Observations

- The most valuable first pump is Warrington, contributing 11.5% towards achieving the 10 minute first pump standard, followed by Crewe's whole-time pump (8.5%), Chester (7.7%), Ellesmere Port (7.2%) and Lymm (6.8%). -

- M53/M56 is the most valuable second pump contributing 15.1% towards achieving a 15 minute second pump standard, followed by Penketh (8.8%). This illustrates the work that both pumps will undertake in supporting neighbouring whole-time stations. Crewe's on-call second pump (8%), Lymm (6.1%), Widnes (5.8%), Warrington (5.7%) and Birchwood (5.6%) also feature highly.

## Risks

This analysis also raises a number of risks following the Emergency Response Programme implementation.

- Stockton Heath – will attend very few incidents which raises a question around its future.
- Dependence on On-Call – Crewe's 2nd will make 5.1 attendances per week, and is classed as the 3rd most valuable 2nd pump. This means that on-call availability at Crewe is very important.

- While it attends fewer incidents, Macclesfield (Nucleus) contributes more to achieving the 10 minute standard than whole-time pumps at Runcorn ±and Widnes.

## Home Safety

In 2012/13 Cheshire delivered the highest percentage of home safety assessments to over-65s and were in the top three (with London and Merseyside) in terms of total number.

The Service continue to target high risk dwellings through home safety assessments – in 2013/14 a total of 27,206 were delivered, 22,998 of which were high-risk households made up of 'gold' over-65s and partnership agency referrals.

All 20,000 gold addresses were offered an HSA, with clients in 61% of visits by Ops and 53% of visits by Community Safety/Prevention accepting the offer. In order to ensure that the Service is making every effort to deliver interventions to the most at risk premises the target for accepted HSAs in 2014/15 is 65%.

In 2013/14 HSA acceptance rates ranged from 34% to 73% across different watches – exploration of the delivery methods from watch to watch should be explored to identify good practice and improve acceptance rates across the Service. This can include exploring the reasons why Community Safety acceptance rates are much lower than Ops.