

# New fire engines despite tax freeze

**N**ew fire engines and the development of a fleet of four wheel drive vehicles are among investments planned by Cheshire Fire Authority over the next 12 months – despite freezing its Council Tax level for a second year.

Three new standard fire engines and five 4 wheel drive vehicles are planned at a total cost of £864,000 to keep the front-line emergency fleet up to date and further improve the Service's ability to respond in severe weather.

Other proposals include a £152,400 investment in mobile technology so firefighters, community safety advocates and technical fire safety staff can work more efficiently and effectively at incidents, in homes and in business premises.

Also planned is a £122,000 scheme to work with partners and turn a redundant building at Runcorn Community Fire Station into a community gym.

Continuing to invest in these new projects at the same time as freezing its Council Tax level has required the



Authority to make ongoing efficiencies.

Savings of £1.9 million were made in the last financial year, while a further £1 million has been cut from the 2012-13 budget. The savings include:

- £368,000 from restructures and post reductions in the Community Safety and Community Fire Protection departments
- £103,000 by cutting posts and restructuring the Service Management Team
- £300,000 through a recruitment freeze and keeping some non-operational posts vacant
- £242,000 from freezing non-critical departmental budgets.

The Authority expects that over the next four financial years it will need to achieve efficiencies totalling over £4 million to make up for cuts in Government funding.

More details about how Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service aims to protect local communities over the next 12 months are set out in 'Making Cheshire Safer'. This annual publication, also referred to as the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2012-13, is on the Service's website.



## Safety at Home

Our new 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](http://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'.

## 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

#### Cheshire East

Cllr David Brickhill  
Cllr Dorothy Flude  
Cllr Bill Livesley  
Cllr Gillian Merry  
Cllr Margaret Simon  
Cllr Chris Thorley  
Cllr David Topping  
Cllr Jacqui Weatherill

### Meeting dates



Wed 13 June	2012
Wed 19 September	2012
Wed 12 December	2012
Wed 13 February	2013
Wed 17 April	2013

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](http://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:

- 689 operational staff
- 25 control room operators
- 256 community safety and other support staff.

## Fire budget 2012-13



The Fire Authority has agreed that a budget of £44.7 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 2012-13.

With £19.7 million provided through Government grants, it means that £25 million will need to be raised from local Council Tax, which is equivalent to £66.43 for each Band D dwelling. This is the same charge as for 2010-11 and 2011-12.

The budget equates to a cost per resident of less than 85p per week.

Queries about this leaflet should be sent to: Head of Finance, CFRS Headquarters, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ  
t: 01606 868815 e: [feedback@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:feedback@cheshirefire.gov.uk)

## Estimated expenditure and income



	2012-13 £m	2011-12 £m
Pay related expenditure		
Firefighters	27.7	27.6
Other staff	6.5	6.5
Non-pay expenditure	15.8	13.3
Gross revenue expenditure	50.0	47.4
LESS Income	(1.2)	(1.2)
IRMP & financing adjustments	(3.3)	(1.9)
2012-13 Council Tax freeze grant	(0.8)	—
Budget requirement	44.7	44.3

## How the budget compared with last year



The Fire Authority budget requirement for 2012-13 is £44.7 million compared with a budget of £44.3 million for last year. The reasons for the 0.9% increase in the overall budget are as follows:

	£m	% increase
Last year's budget	44.32	
Pay and price inflation	0.24	0.5
Essential growth	0.52	1.2
Efficiencies and Savings	(1.01)	(2.3)
IRMP & Financing adjustments	1.36	3.1
Other*	(0.71)	(1.6)
Total	44.72	0.9
*Other includes:		
Allocation of second homes precept	0.04	
Council Tax grant	(0.75)	

## Where the money will come from



	£m	£ Per Resident	£ Band D Equivalent
This year's budget	44.72	44.32	118.57
Less Government grants	(19.66)	(19.48)	(52.14)
Local Council Tax	25.06	24.84	66.43