



***Planning For a Safer Cheshire***  
**Cheshire Fire Authority Five Year Strategy**  
**2015 - 2020**

Report on public, staff and partner consultation

April 2015

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## 1. Introduction

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This report sets out the results of the programme of consultation on Cheshire Fire Authority's draft five year strategy, titled '*Planning For A Safer Cheshire*'. The formal consultation period lasted for 12 weeks between 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015

The purpose of this report is to enable the Authority to view feedback on the draft strategy from partner organisations and to understand levels of support among all groups to the proposals set out in the document. This feedback will be among the issues considered by the Fire Authority prior to approval of the final version of the strategy.

This report comprises the following sections:

- An executive summary of the findings of the consultation.
- Details of the consultation programme and the approaches to public, staff and stakeholder consultation.
- Mechanisms for providing feedback to those who responded to the consultation.
- A detailed breakdown of the consultation results.
- Demographic information on staff respondents.
- Details of the promotion of the consultation through traditional media and social media channels.
- Appendices providing details of the consultation documents, stakeholders communicated with, partner responses and any additional comments received.

This report has been made available to public and partners on the Service's website - [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation) - and to staff on the Intranet.

### Report prepared by:

**Graeme Worrall**  
**Consultation and Engagement Officer**  
**Planning, Performance and Communications,**  
**Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service**

**April 2015**

## **2. Executive summary**

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The main focus of the consultation on the draft five year strategy was to inform and involve local partners, stakeholders and staff. While responses from the public were encouraged, key elements of the strategy were the focus of a comprehensive public satisfaction survey in September 2014. This involved face-to-face interviews conducted by an independent provider with over 800 residents across the four unitary areas.

A standard ten question consultation survey was developed to gauge opinion amongst the public, staff and stakeholder organisations. Stakeholders were encouraged to submit written comments and feedback into the consultation. In addition several local partners took up offers of briefings from the Service, including parish and town councils and prospective parliamentary candidates.

A total of 135 members of staff, 29 members of the public and 22 stakeholders formally responded to the consultation on Cheshire Fire Authority's draft Five Year Strategy during the period January 5<sup>th</sup> to March 27<sup>th</sup> 2015.

In summary, the results of the consultation survey show that:

### ***Cheshire 'Footprint'***

- The majority of respondents supported the proposal to retain a 'Cheshire footprint' when collaborating and sharing front-line resources with partners.

### ***Collaboration with Cheshire Police and other partners***

- There was strong support from respondents for collaborating with Cheshire Police, including support from Cheshire Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner (who has committed to increasing collaboration with partners in his new Police and Crime Plan).
- Two-thirds of online respondents supported plans to investigate both local and regional opportunities to share back office services. Support was also evident from stakeholders written responses, with the Countess of Chester NHS Hospitals Trust welcoming the opportunity to explore potential sharing of support services.

### ***Co-responding and preventative health***

- Most respondents supported the expansion of the co-responding scheme to other areas of Cheshire.
- Narrative comments from staff were largely supportive of more co-responding, particularly in rural areas given concerns over response times to incidents by North West Ambulance Service. Other responses supported co-responding but did note that there needed to be a focus

on ensuring adequate training and competencies of staff who do co-respond, as well as remuneration.

- Over half of respondents agreed with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative healthcare activity within the community. Some narrative responses did however express concerns over 'mission creep' and the stretching of existing resources.

### ***Future Funding***

- 61.1% of respondents to the online survey supported the Authority's plan to seek a referendum to enable it to increase its precept by 2% or more. Most stakeholders also supported this, however Warrington Chamber of Commerce and Industry did not support holding a referendum, stating that the service should work within its funding envelope as per local businesses.
- Additional comments from staff and the public were mixed in their support for or opposition to such a referendum.

### ***Future emergency response options***

- Most respondents supported the proposal to carry out a further review of risk and activity levels across Cheshire.
- Opinion was split between support for and opposition to proposals to close low activity stations and to vary the availability of resources according to local risks.
- Narrative comments on this subject were also mixed. Some suggested the Service should instead look to increase the number of on-call 'outpost' stations in areas of Cheshire. However, other comments received expressed concern with an increased reliance on the on-call duty system.

### ***Overall***

- Slightly over half (52.6%) of respondents to the online survey supported the direction as laid out in the draft Five Year Strategy.
- Virtually all stakeholders, including those who provided a written response, supported the overall direction as laid out in the draft Strategy. One further stakeholder stated that they would reserve their comments until more specific proposals were consulted upon in the Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs) that result from the strategy.

### 3. The consultation programme

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#### 3.1 Overview of this year's approach

The table below outlines the engagement methods used for each of the key groups consulted during the 12-week period.

Underpinning the entire approach was a survey, which posed ten questions relating to the various proposals set out within the draft strategy. These standardised questions enable easy comparison of differences in opinion between groups, as shown in Section 8.

| Group    | Methods of engagement  |
|----------|--|
| Public   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Press release marking the launch of the consultation on the draft strategy.</li><li>• Regular updates on social media channels such as the Service's Facebook and Twitter accounts.</li></ul>  |
| Staff    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Online survey accessible from the intranet homepage, together with a dedicated consultation intranet page which provided copies of the draft strategy and supporting documentation.</li><li>• Global emails to all staff, promotional screensaver, reminders in <i>The Green</i> (weekly staff bulletin) and Core Brief (managers bulletin to cascade key messages to staff).</li><li>• Direct emails to the Fire Brigades Union, Fire Officers Association and UNISON representatives.</li></ul>  |
| Partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Email to over 200 local and regional stakeholders.</li><li>• Electronic copies of the draft survey to all Members of Parliament, Peers and prospective parliamentary candidates.</li><li>• Electronic copies of the draft strategy to all unitary councillors and town/parish councils.</li><li>• Tweeting stakeholders including neighbouring fire and rescue services, local NHS hospital trusts, clinical commissioning groups and unitary authorities.</li><li>• Briefing for leaders and chief executive of sub-regional partners including unitary authority leaders and chief executives and the Chief Constable of Cheshire Police.</li><li>• Briefings delivered on request to interested stakeholders.</li></ul> |

Over the next three sections, evidence is provided of the work undertaken to plan and promote key elements of the consultation programme.

## **4. Consulting with the public**

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### **4.1 2014 Public Satisfaction Survey**

As highlighted earlier in the report, public consultation underpinning the draft strategy was conducted through the public satisfaction survey in September 2014.

The Service commissioned an external provider, DJS Research, to undertake a robust survey of the residents of Cheshire which would enable it to benchmark satisfaction with the Service among residents and also gauge opinion on a range of proposals for the future of the Service.

The research surveyed a total of 831 residents across Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington. As well as being demographically accurate in relation to the demographic profile of Cheshire, the results were also representative to within +/- 3.4%. The methodologies used to survey people involved face-to-face interviews and a series of focus groups.

### **4.2 Emerging themes**

The public satisfaction survey asked residents a series of questions around a select number of overarching themes:

- Satisfaction with the Service.
- How people would find out information on a major emergency.
- Priorities for the Service.
- Collaborating with partners.
- Future funding options.

#### **Collaborating with partners**

The outcomes of the survey suggested that there was more support for Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to retain a 'Cheshire' footprint rather than operate across sub-regional boundaries. In addition, when given the option, more respondents preferred that the Service either remained as an independent authority or combine with Cheshire Police than merge into a single regional fire and rescue service.

There was also evident support for sharing the Service's resources with other public services; with over half of respondents supporting the sharing of emergency response staff and resources, support staff and resources, premises and senior management.

#### **Future funding options**

Residents were asked for their views on the current level of precept set by Cheshire Fire Authority. 97% of respondents agreed that the current level (£69.09 at Band D equivalent) represented value for money.

The survey also asked whether residents would support the introduction of a one-off, larger increase in precept above the current rate of increase of 1.99%

per annum. This increase would be above the existing 2% rate increase cap imposed by central Government on local authorities and would therefore require a public referendum to enable a mandate to introduce the increase.

When asked, 90% of residents were likely to support such an increase. As can be seen in the chart below, support was fairly evenly split between different levels of precept increase (ranging from +2% to +10%).

These findings were then considered and refined by the Service's Senior Management Team and Members of Cheshire Fire Authority during the planning process for the draft Strategy and emerging proposals were consulted on.

### **4.3 Consulting on the draft Five Year Strategy**

Given the work undertaken beforehand on the Public Satisfaction Survey, consultation was primarily focused on staff and local stakeholders. Public consultation with regards to the draft Five Year Strategy was directed through the Service's social media channels.

Regular posts and tweets were placed on the Service's Facebook and Twitter accounts, using the hashtag #HaveYourSay to encourage people to submit a response into the consultation. Hyperlinks were also included in each post/tweet that directed users to the consultation page on the Service's website, which contained copies of the draft strategy and a link to the online survey.

A list detailing the Facebook posts and Twitter tweets issued by the Service regarding the Five Year Strategy is below.



## 5. Consulting with staff and internal stakeholders

### 5.1 Online Survey

The primary method of gathering the views and comments from staff was from the use of an online survey, which asked the same questions as in the residents' and stakeholder survey.

A breakdown of responses to these questions is provided in the following section. A total of 135 members of staff submitted a response into the survey.

Responses were received from staff based at locations across the service area. A full breakdown of responses is supplied in the following section of the report, while Appendix 4 contains a comprehensive list of additional comments received from staff (as well as public and stakeholder comments).

### 5.2 Internal communications channels

The full range of internal communications channels were used to raise awareness of the survey throughout the consultation period. This included:

- A dedicated page on the Service intranet and website, plus a regular feature on the homepage of the intranet/website for the duration of the consultation.
- A launch article and subsequent reminders in the Green Bulletin.
- An article in the 'Core Brief' bulletin used for managers to keep their staff informed with developments in the Service.
- Emails to Heads of Department and managers across the Service asking them to encourage their staff to respond to the consultation.
- All-user emails informing staff of the launch of the consultation and also further reminder emails encouraging people to have their say prior to the closing date.
- A corporate screensaver.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Issue:</b>      | Authority launches new draft five year strategy  |
| <b>Background:</b> | Details about the start of consultation on the Fire Authority's draft new five year strategy.  |
| <b>Key points:</b> | <p>The Fire Authority satisfies its Integrated Risk Management Planning responsibilities by having an overarching long term strategy supported by annual actions plans. The current four year strategy needs updating in 2015, and at their meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup>, Members approved a new draft five year strategy for consultation.</p> <p>Key issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new strategy highlights the progress made in the last four years in completing the initial emergency response review, the value for money reviews of non operational areas and the delivery of nearly £7 million in savings</li> <li>• It recognises that even greater change will be required over the next five years but reaffirms the Authority's commitment to continue working with staff and trade unions to minimise the impact of future changes</li> <li>• It highlights the fact that 'Should financial and other pressures increase even more than expected, then the Authority will consider asking residents to vote for an additional Council Tax increase if it feels that the alternatives would increase local risk levels unacceptably.'</li> <li>• The strategy proposes retaining the organisation's existing vision and values and recognises the need to reinforce and reinvigorate these after the end of the national industrial dispute</li> <li>• It proposes that the delivery of frontline services in the future should continue to be based on the current footprint and boundaries of Cheshire Fire Authority</li> <li>• Options for broader collaboration with Cheshire Constabulary and others will be pursued in all support areas</li> <li>• The importance of the new safety centre is highlighted and the need for it to be central to the Service's prevention work in the future</li> <li>• A further emergency response review will be required to identify options for the future after the new station build programme has been completed and revised crewing arrangements completed</li> <li>• That review will consider a range of issues including, changes in risk levels, incident trends, the impact on existing response standards, the sustainability of low activity stations, variations in demand between day and night-time, the type and number of fire engines and vehicles required for different incidents, as well as different firefighting technologies /tactics</li> <li>• Consultation on the new strategy will start in the New Year and will focus on obtaining feedback from staff and key partners, with full details on the website and Intranet</li> <li>• The formal 12 week consultation period will run up to March 27<sup>th</sup> 2015 with a revised strategy due to be considered at the Annual General Meeting of the new Fire Authority on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2015.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Contacts:</b>   | Head of Planning, Performance and Communications –<br><a href="mailto:tim.bevington@cheshirefire.gov.uk">tim.bevington@cheshirefire.gov.uk</a>   |


**CHESHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**  
**THE Green**  
 Issue: 3/2015  
 20 January 2015  
 The Weekly Bulletin for Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Personnel


| INSIDE  | CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT  |
|---|--|
| Firefighters under the F&R Services Act 2004 <b>2</b> | <b>CONSULTATION ON DRAFT FIVE YEAR STRATEGY</b><br>G Worrall, Planning, Performance and Communications, FSHQ - 01606 868407  |
| Training package available manual handling <b>2</b>   | Consultation is now underway on a new draft five year strategy, entitled 'Planning For A Safer Cheshire 2015-2020'. This sets out Cheshire Fire Authority's plans up to 2020. The strategy clarifies some of the stark choices facing the Authority and outlines the approach and principles it will adopt to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighters' safety.   |
| Mileage and expense claims 2014/2015 <b>3</b>         | The strategy proposes to:  |
| Retirement and resignation announcements <b>3</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the Service's frontline resources on its current Cheshire boundaries rather than exploring options to merge with other fire and rescue services.</li> <li>• In relation to support functions, focus on collaboration with Cheshire Police and potentially with other organisations locally and regionally if there are opportunities to save money.</li> <li>• Undertake a new review of emergency response arrangements to ensure that the resources in place reflect local risks and activity levels.</li> <li>• Further review the Service's prevention and protection functions.</li> <li>• Consider asking residents to vote for an additional Council Tax increase if the Authority feels that the alternatives would increase local risk levels unacceptably.</li> </ul> |
| Cooking safety month in February <b>4</b>             |  |
| Lottery numbers <b>4</b>                              |  |
| BBC North poster <b>5</b>                             |  |
| Tutor support 4u poster <b>6</b>                      |  |
| Firefighters Charity poster <b>7</b>                  |  |

**Please Note**  
 All articles for the Weekly Bulletin must be submitted by no later than **2.00 pm Friday afternoon**

| Circulation List |      |      |          |
|------------------|------|------|----------|
| SM/DM            | Sign | Date | File Ref |
|                  |      |      | 014      |

Station Manager or Department Head to use for nominating a responsible person to action their date and sign when completed

 Thu 22/01/2015 09:31  
 announcements  
 Have Your Say On Draft Five Year Strategy

To:  All Email Users

Dear Colleagues,

**Have Your Say On Draft Five Year Strategy**

Consultation is now underway on a new draft five year strategy, titled *'Planning For A Safer Cheshire 2015-2020'*, that sets out Cheshire Fire Authority's plans up to 2020. The strategy clarifies some of the stark choices facing the Authority and outlines the approach and principles it will adopt to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighters' safety.

Please get involved and have your say to help shape the future of the Service. A copy of the strategy and further details, including an online survey that you can complete, can be found by accessing the feature on the homepage of the intranet or by clicking on the link below:

<http://i.cheshirefire.gov.uk/home/draft-five-year-strategy-201520>

Consultation at this stage will primarily be focused on gathering the views of local stakeholders, partner organisations and staff; with the findings of last year's Public Satisfaction Survey also informing the strategy. Once finalised, the objectives within the strategy will underpin public, staff and stakeholder consultation on the Service's future annual Integrated Risk Management Plans (RMPs).

The formal consultation period will run up to March 27th 2015 with a revised strategy due to be considered at the Annual General Meeting of the Fire Authority on June 17th 2015.

Kind Regards,

Graeme Worrall  
 Consultation and Engagement Officer

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 HQ, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2FQ

T: 01606 868407 E: [graeme.worrall@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:graeme.worrall@cheshirefire.gov.uk)



**Draft Five Year Strategy 2015/20**

Have your say on the Service's new draft 5 year strategy  
 'Planning for a safer Cheshire 2015-2020'

The poster features the Cheshire Fire Authority logo at the top left, a central graphic with the text 'Planning for a safer Cheshire 2015-20' and 'DRAFT' in large letters, and a bottom section with a photo of firefighters and the text 'DIRTY GRILLS'. The bottom right corner contains the text 'Visit the intranet for more information'.

**PROMOTING THE CONSULTATION:** Some of the material used to promote the consultation internally; (from previous page) an article in 'The Green' bulletin, an article in the 'Core Brief' newsletter for managers, an all-user email and the corporate screensaver.

#### 5.4 Consulting with representative bodies

Direct emails containing details of the draft strategy, electronic copies of the strategy and summary documents and a link to the online survey were sent to representatives of the Fire Brigades' Union, Fire Officers' Association and UNISON.

## 6. Consulting with stakeholders

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### 6.1 Approach to stakeholders

Through the course of several consultations, the Authority has adopted and refined a systemised process for identifying and engaging its stakeholders throughout the consultation process.

Given the subject matter being consulted on in the draft strategy, such as further collaboration with partner agencies and sharing of resources, stakeholders were a key focal point for consultation.

### 6.2 Stakeholder email

One of the key methods of engagement with stakeholders was the use of an electronic mailout.

Over 250 individuals and organisations on the Service's stakeholder database were written to or emailed with an electronic copy of the draft strategy (and summary) along with a link to a dedicated online survey for partners. Reminder emails were also sent at the mid-point in the consultation and towards the end of the consultation period.

A copy of the email is below, with slightly different versions tailored to various audiences such as Members of Parliament, voluntary bodies and public sector partners. More concise reminder emails were also issued.

Dear partners,

#### **CONSULTATION ON 'PLANNING FOR A SAFER CHESHIRE 2015-2020', CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S DRAFT FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

Consultation is now underway on a new draft five year strategy, entitled '*Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-2020*', which sets out Cheshire Fire Authority's plans up to 2020. The strategy clarifies some of the stark choices facing the Authority and outlines the approach and principles it will adopt to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighters' safety.

The strategy proposes to:

- Provide the Service's frontline resources on its current Cheshire boundaries rather than exploring options to merge with other fire and rescue services.
- In relation to support functions, embark upon a programme of collaboration with Cheshire Police and potentially with other organisations locally and regionally.
- Further review the Service's prevention and protection functions, including exploring the potential to work more closely with health bodies to reduce the demand on services.
- Consider asking residents to vote for an additional council tax increase if the Authority feels that the alternatives would increase local risk levels unacceptably.
- Undertake a new review of emergency response arrangements to ensure that the resources in place reflect local risks and activity levels.

We urge you to get involved and value your comments to help shape the future of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

A copy of the strategy and further details can be found on the Service's website [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk). Please submit your response or any comments that you have either via email to [consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk) or in writing to:

Graeme Worrall  
Consultation and Engagement Officer  
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service  
Sadler Road  
Winsford  
Cheshire  
CW7 2FQ

Alternatively, there is an online survey that you can complete and is accessed via [www.surveymonkey/s/five-year-strategy](http://www.surveymonkey/s/five-year-strategy). When prompted, please ensure that you respond as a local stakeholder or partner organisation.

Consultation at this stage will primarily be focused on gathering the views of local stakeholders, partner organisations and staff; with the findings of a comprehensive, independent survey of residents in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington undertaken in 2014 also informing the strategy.

Once finalised, the objectives within this strategy will underpin public, staff and stakeholder consultation on the Service's future annual action plans, called Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs).

The formal consultation period will run up to March 27th 2015, with a revised strategy due to be considered at the Annual General Meeting of the Fire Authority on June 17th 2015.

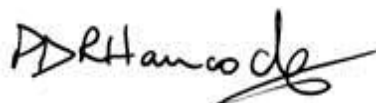
If you have any questions about this consultation or require any further information please call Graeme Worrall on 01606 868407 or email [graeme.worall@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:graeme.worall@cheshirefire.gov.uk)

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours Sincerely



Cllr John Joyce  
**Chair**  
**Cheshire Fire Authority**



Paul Hancock  
**Chief Fire Officer**  
**Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service**

### 6.3 Survey responses

Copies of written responses from stakeholders are included in an Appendix to this report. So too is a list of organisations that were communicated with.

#### **6.4 Members of Parliament (MPs)**

The Service emailed directly to all 11 Cheshire Members of Parliament and provided copies of both the summary draft IRMP and the full draft document. In addition the Service also emailed Cheshire Members of the House of Lords, encouraging Peers to provide their views through a written response.

Given the timing of the consultation period ahead of the General Election, the service also contacted by email the prospective parliamentary candidates selected by the Conservative, Labour or Liberal Democrat parties for each constituency (where such candidates had been selected). Offers of face to face briefings were taken up by a number of candidates, including the Labour candidates in Chester, Crewe and Nantwich and Ellesmere Port and Neston.

#### **6.5 Unitary authorities**

The Service emailed directly to the Leader and Chief Executive of each of the four unitary authorities; Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington.

Additionally, the Chief Fire Officer briefed unitary leaders and chief executives, the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner at a meeting of the Cheshire and Warrington Sub-Regional Leaders Board on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February at Cheshire East Council HQ, Sandbach.

In addition, individual councillors from Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington were contacted and encouraged to provide any comments that they had on the draft strategy.

#### **6.6 Local Town and Parish Councils**

An email message was sent to the clerks of all town and parish councils within Cheshire. This message mirrored the text contained in the message attached on pages 12 and 13 and encouraged local councils to respond either via the online survey specifically created for partners or through submitting a written response. A list of all town and parish councils that were sent consultation material is included as an Appendix to this report.

In addition the Head of Planning, Performance and Communications and the Service Delivery Manager for Cheshire West and Chester delivered a presentation on the draft strategy to Audlem Parish Council, which had requested a briefing. The Policy and Inclusion Manager also delivered a briefing to Winsford Town Council.

#### **6.7 Local partner agencies**

An email message was circulated to local partner agencies encouraging them to respond to the consultation. Partners included local NHS Trusts, Directors of Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Chambers of Commerce and the Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Partnership.

Chief Fire Officers from each of the neighbouring fire and rescue services were contacted directly and asked to comment on the strategy.

## **7. Feedback, evaluation and communicating outcomes**

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The following section outlines the proposed methods to communicate the outcomes of the consultation and provides details on the review and evaluation of consultation activity.

### **7.1 Feedback**

Following the decisions taken by Members and subject to final approval of the Strategy, feedback on the consultation will be provided to those who participated in the process. This feedback will be communicated to the public, staff and stakeholders via the following methods:

#### *Public*

- Press release.
- Using the Service's website and social media channels.
- Reference in development of future Integrated Risk Management Plans.

#### *Staff*

- Departmental and team briefings.
- Articles within internal newsletters and bulletins (The Green, Alert, Core Brief).
- Internal email message to staff.

#### *Stakeholders*

- Articles in the Service's newsletter to local stakeholders, distributed quarterly.
- Email responses to the submissions provided by stakeholders.

### **7.2 Accessibility**

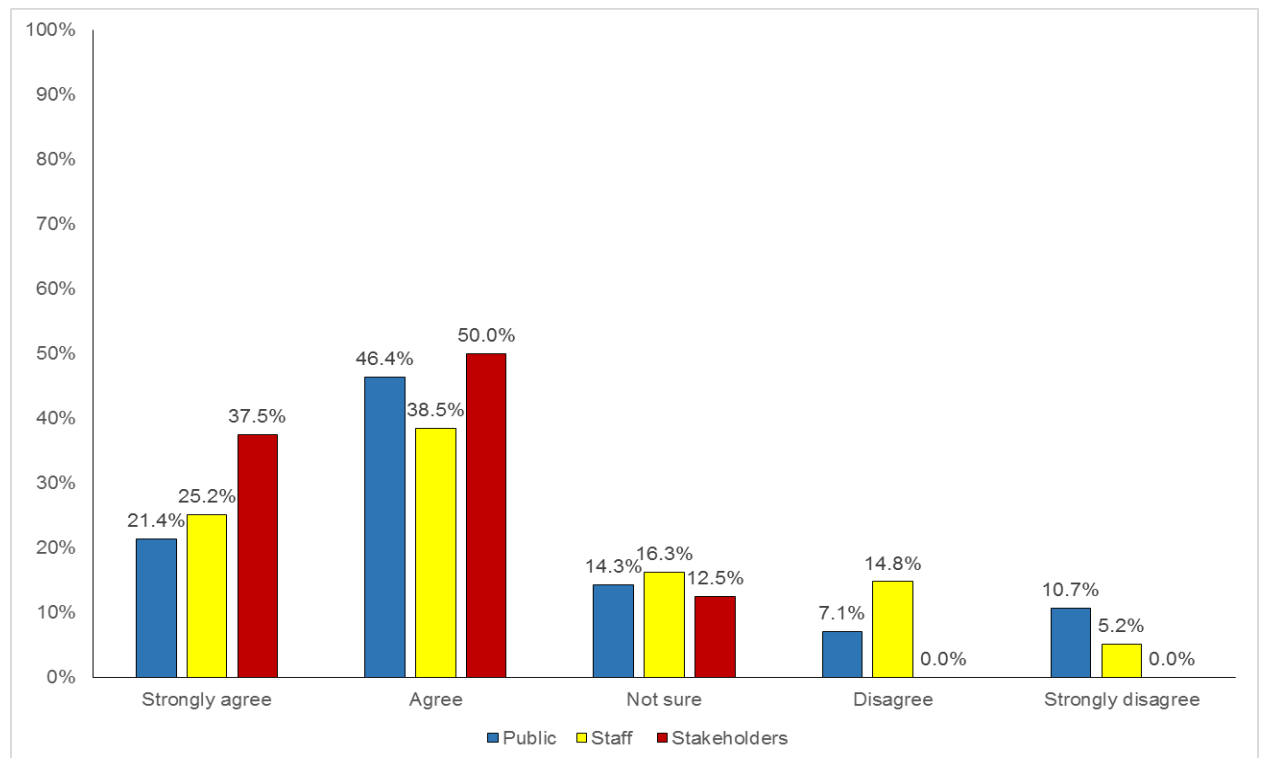
The consultation section of the Service's website – itself designed to be accessible to people with special information needs and with a translation function – made it clear that information about the proposals and the survey was available in alternative languages and formats, such as large print, Braille and audio on request. No such requests were made during the consultation period.

## 8. Detailed results

This section sets out survey responses from the residents, staff and partners in greater detail. The legend underneath each chart shows how many individuals from each group answered that particular question and the overall level of support or agreement from each group to the proposal.

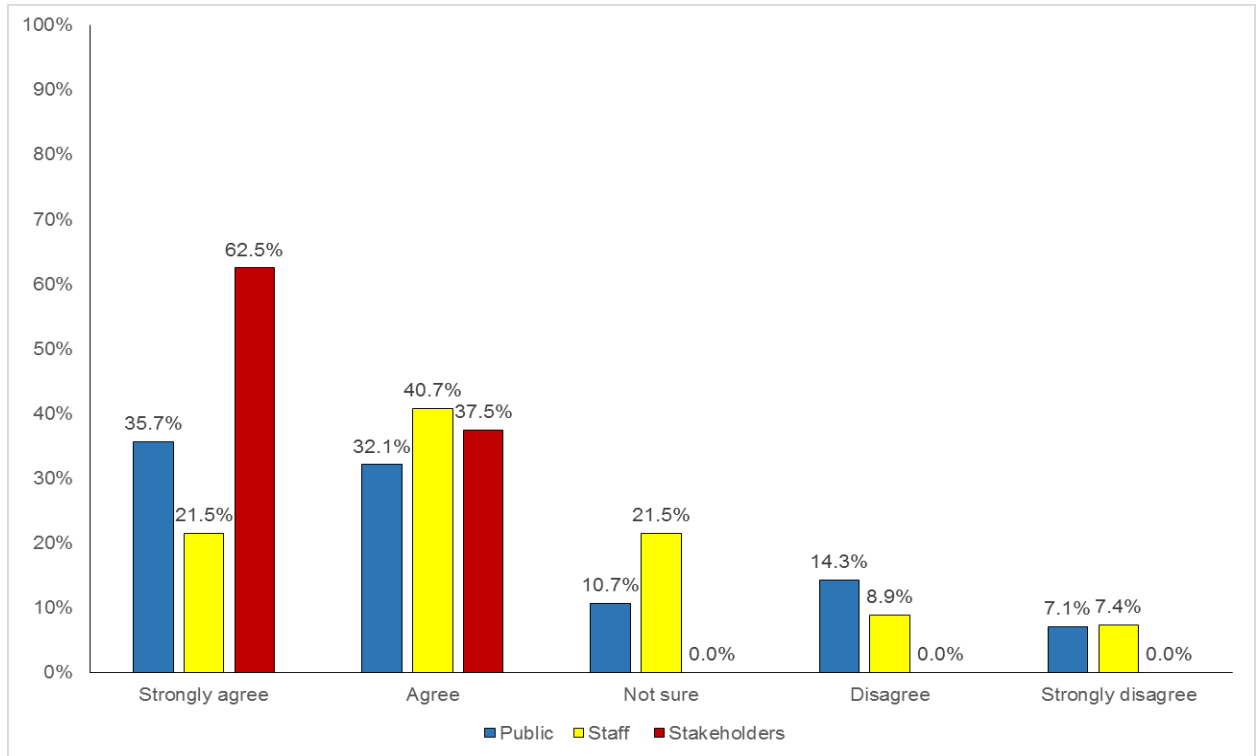
### 8.1 Working with partners

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*



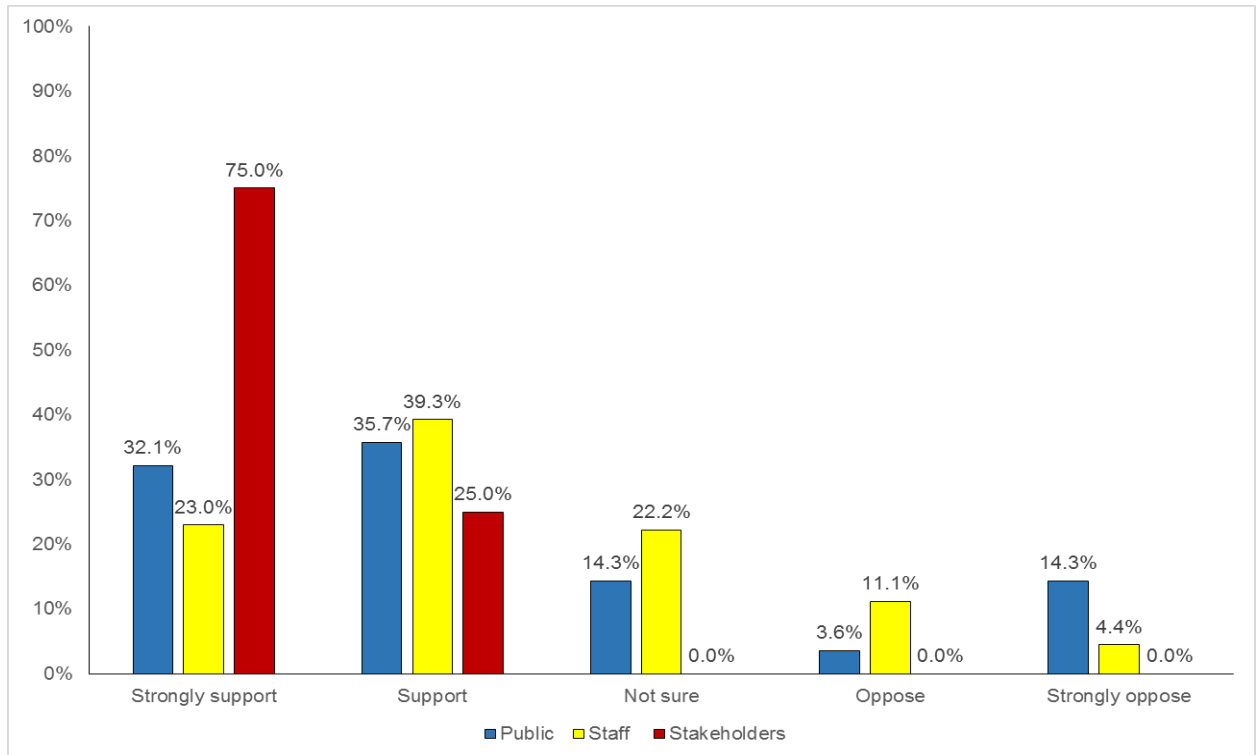
Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8

**Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?**



*Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8*

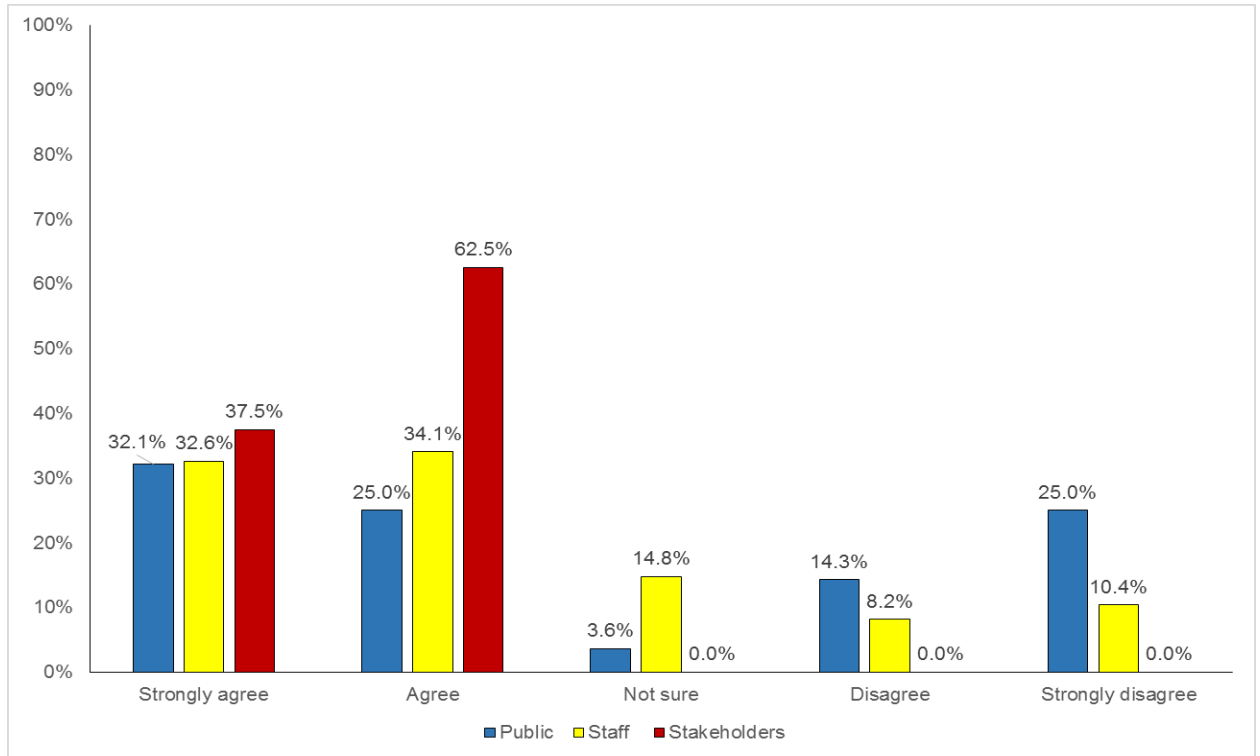
**Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?**



*Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8*

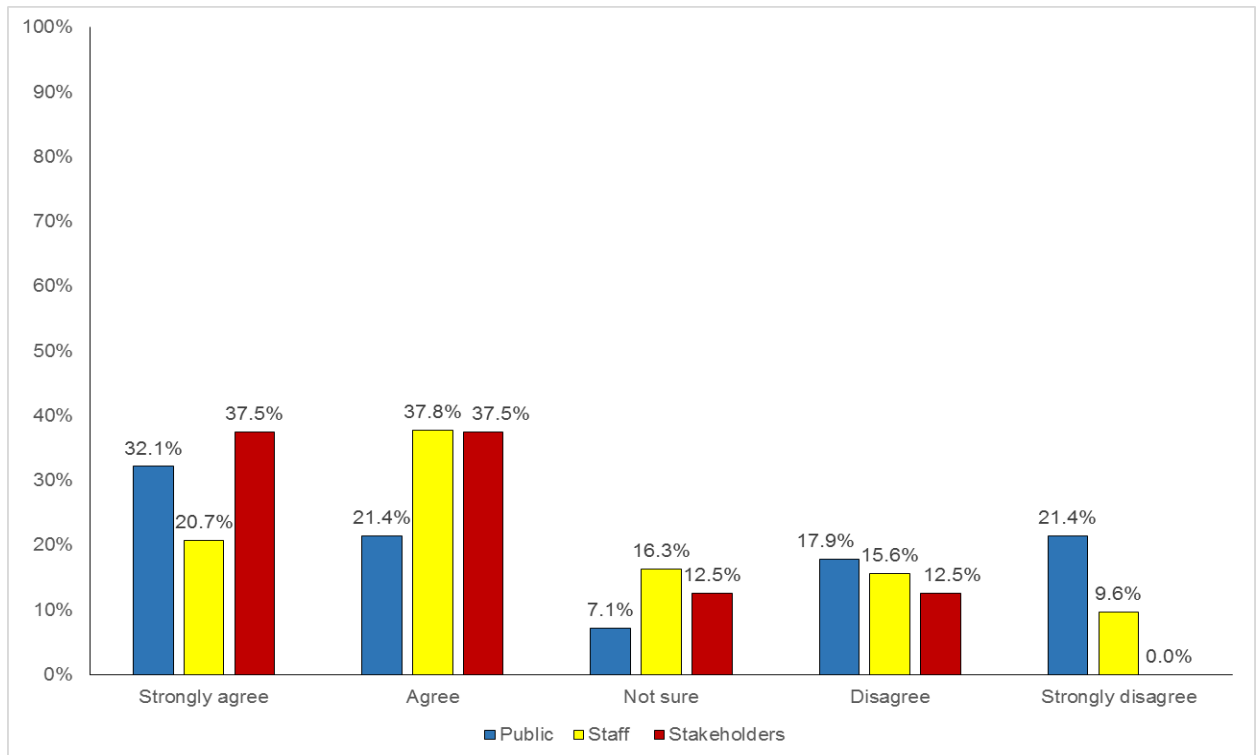


**Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?**



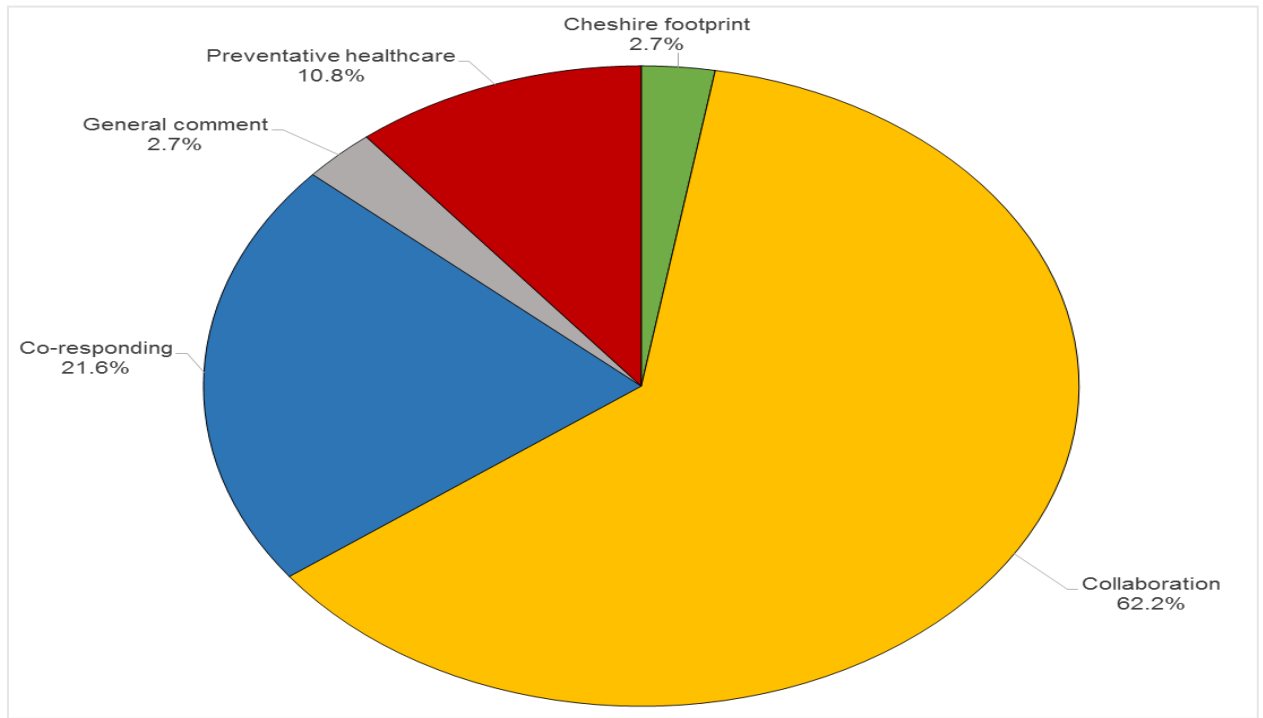
Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8

**Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?**



Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8

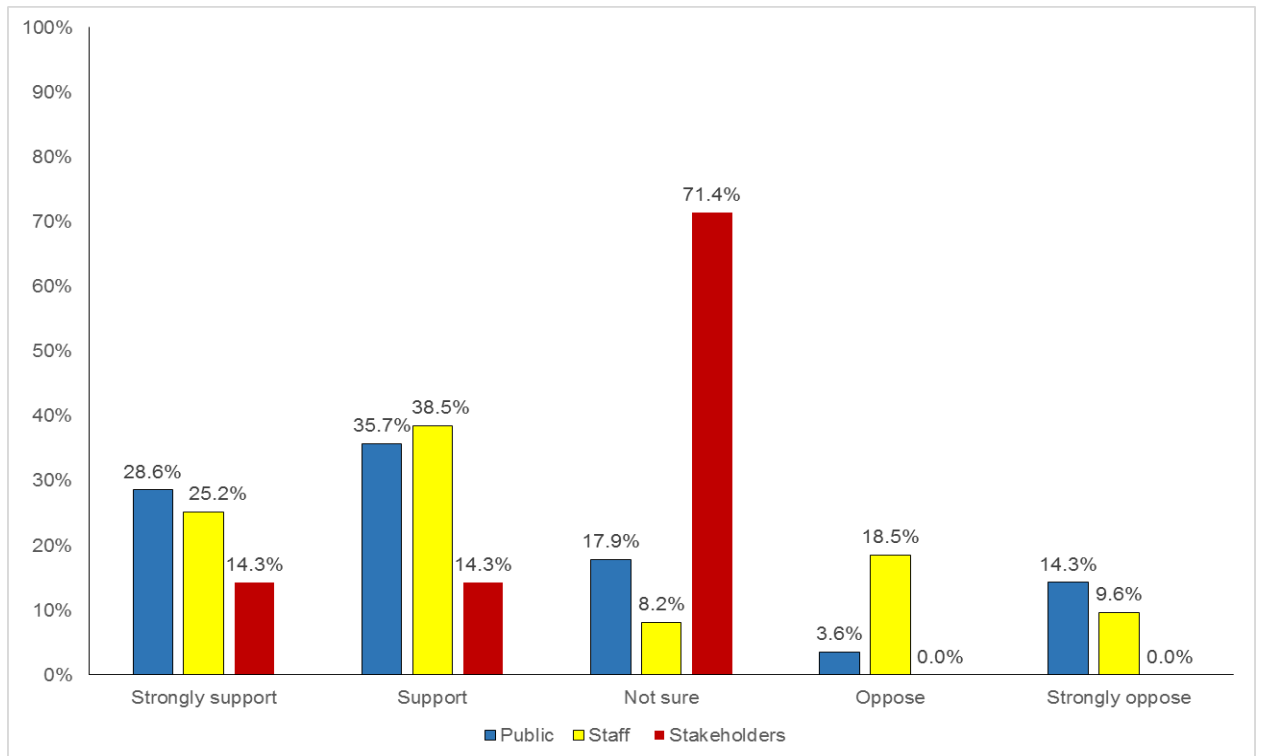
Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:



Public n=5 Staff n=28 Stakeholders n=4

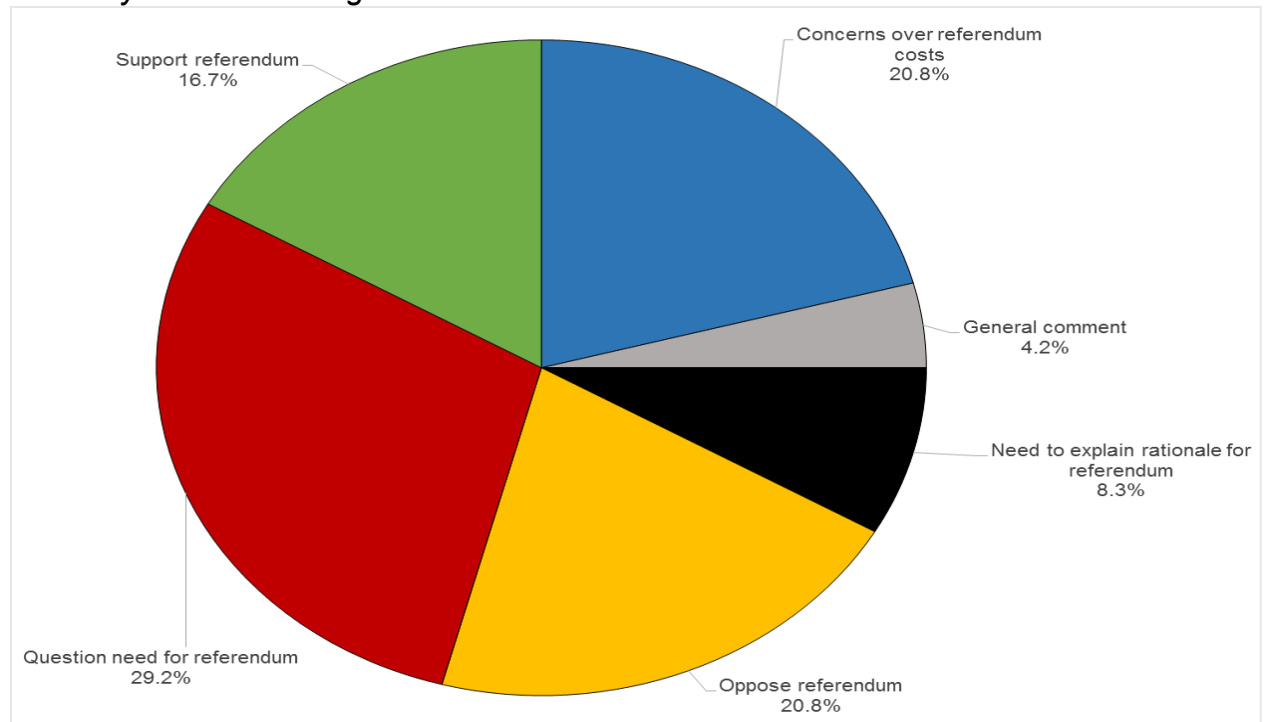
## 8.2 Future funding

Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?



Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=7

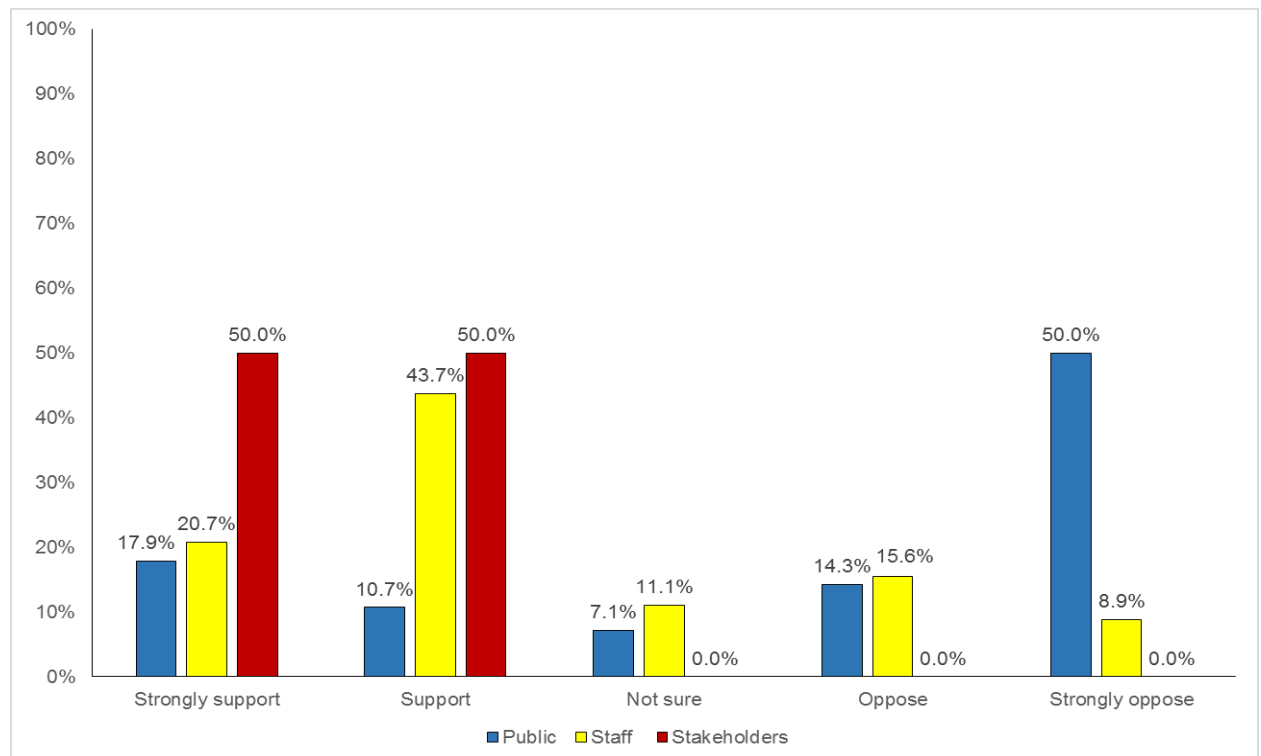
**Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:**



Public n=6 Staff n=16 Stakeholders n=2

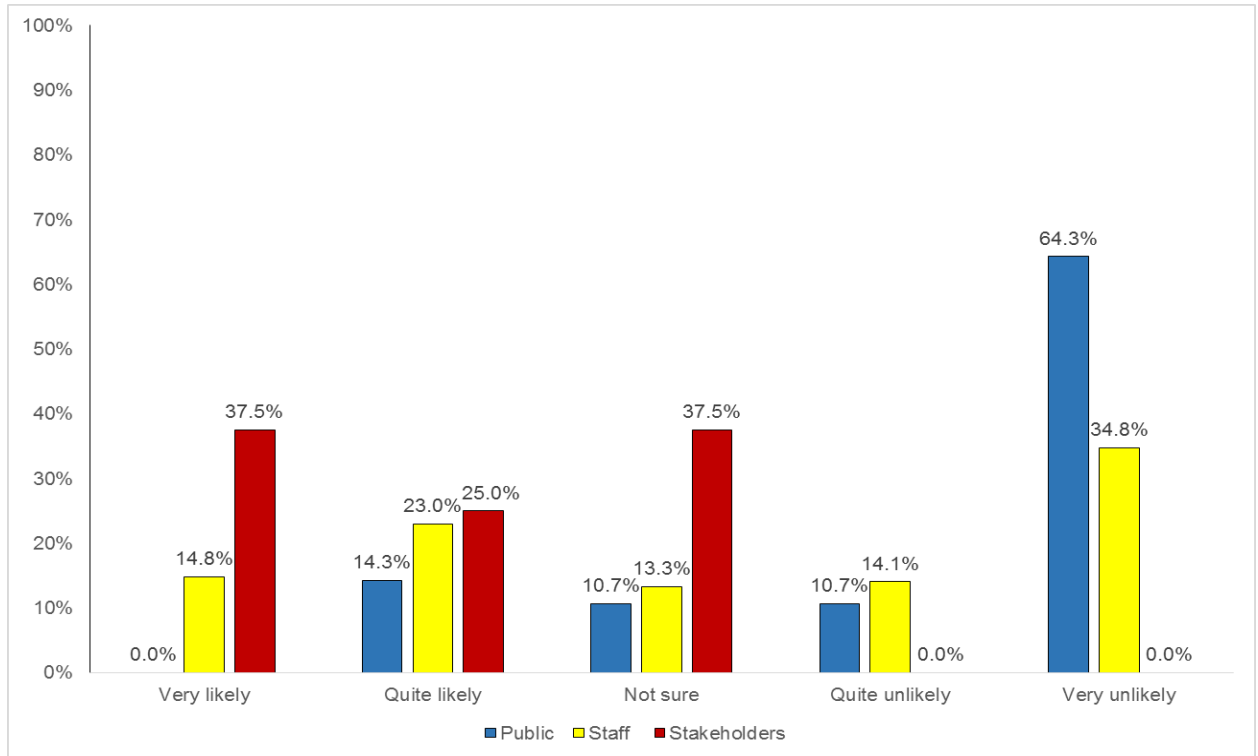
### 8.3 Reviewing our service

**Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?**



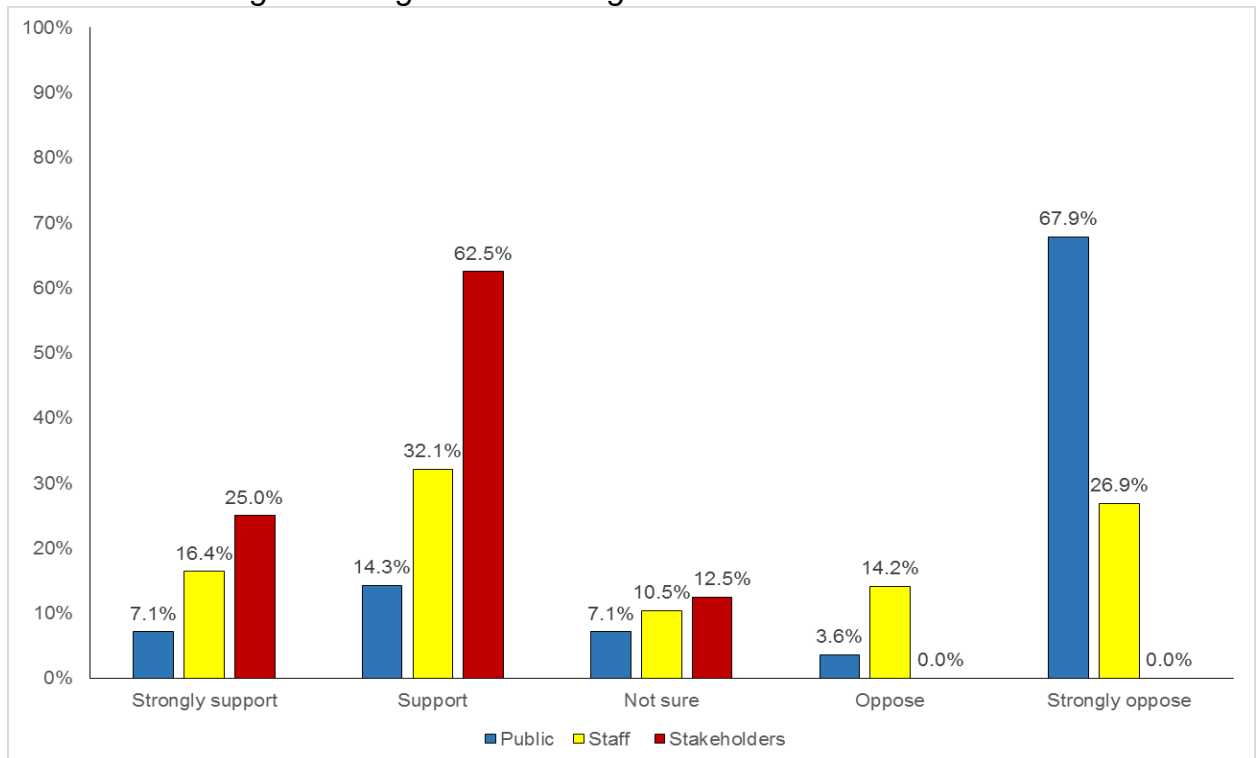
Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8

**Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?**



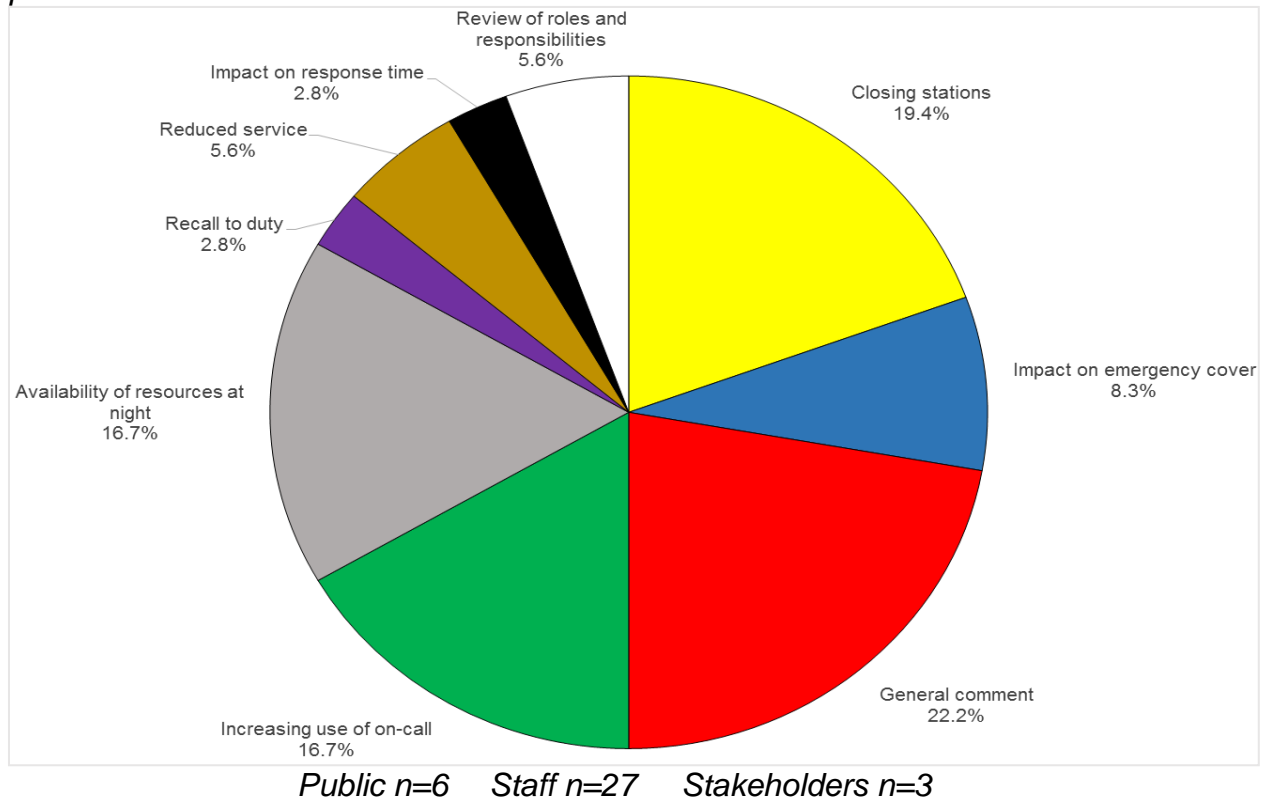
*Public n=28 Staff n=135 Stakeholders n=8*

**Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?**



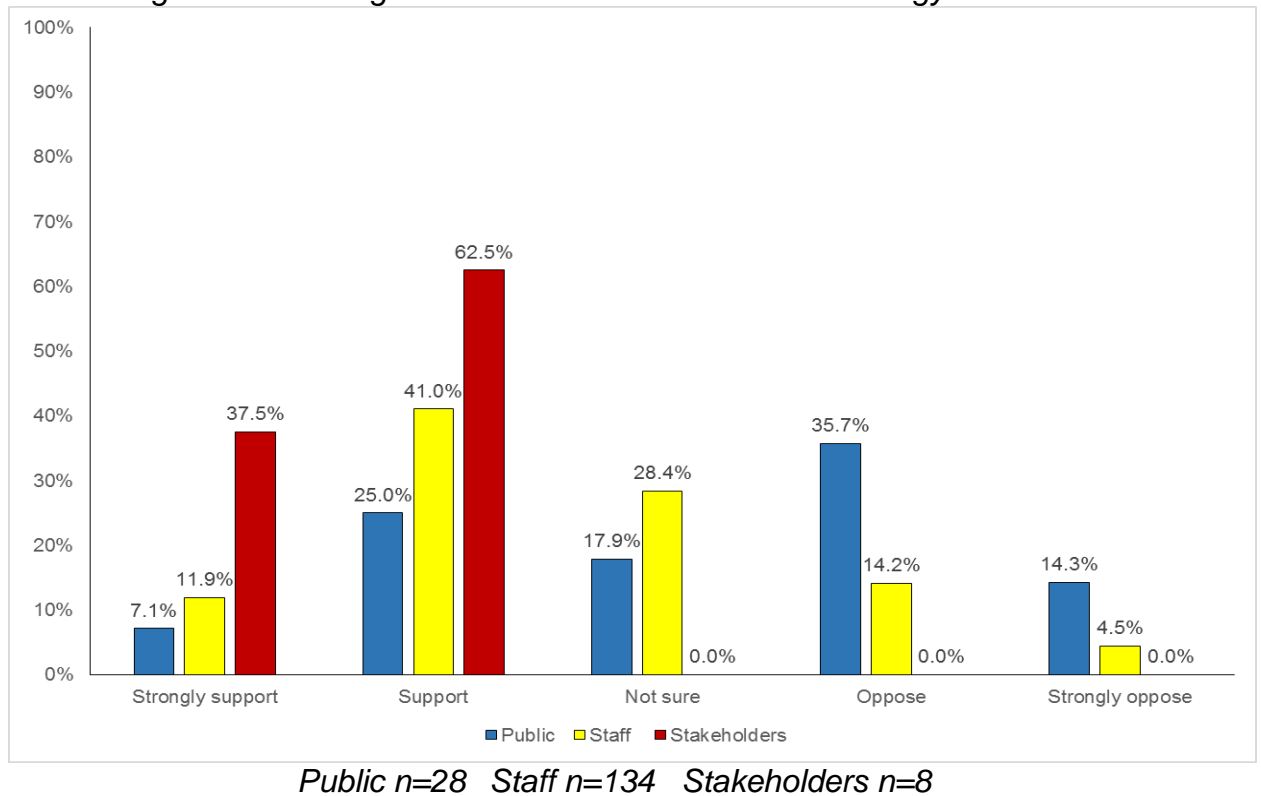
*Public n=28 Staff n=134 Stakeholders n=8*

**Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:**

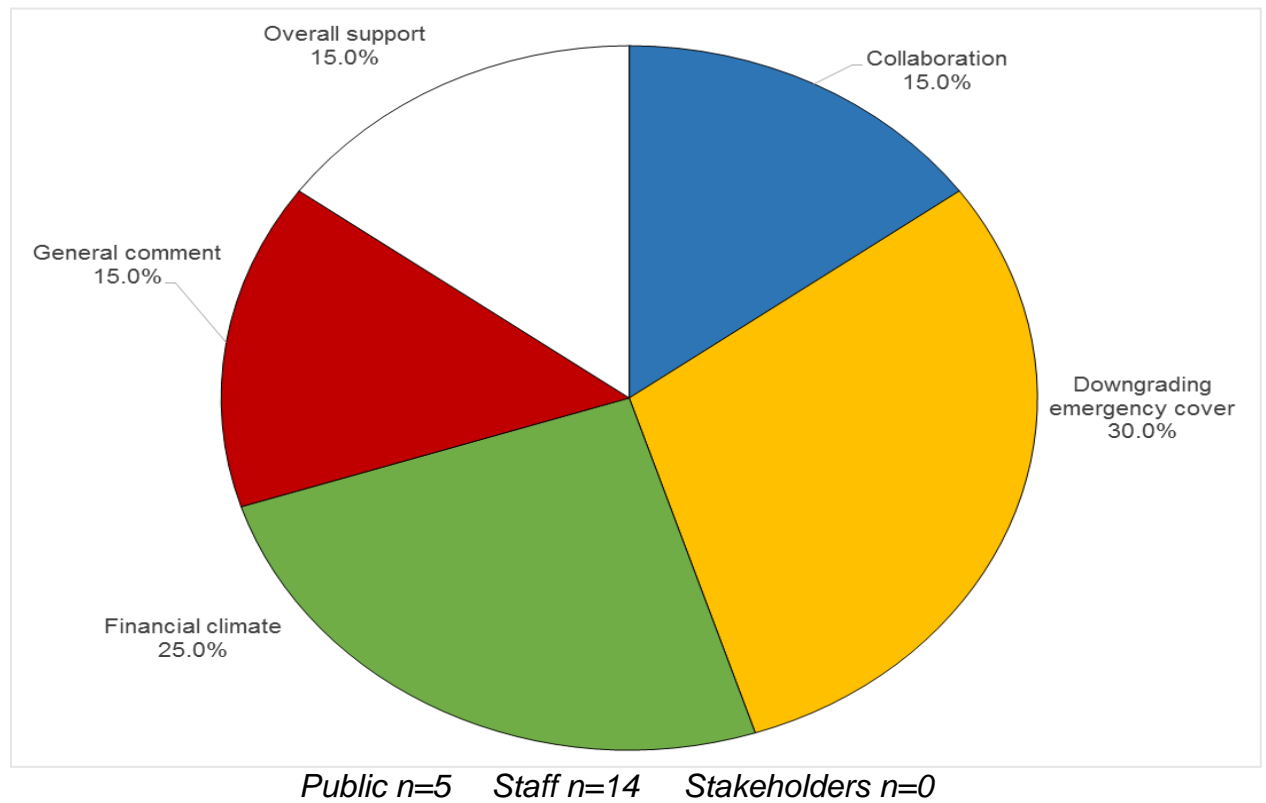


**8.4 Overall comments**

**Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority’s plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?**



Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:



## 9. Profile of respondents

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### 9.1 Public

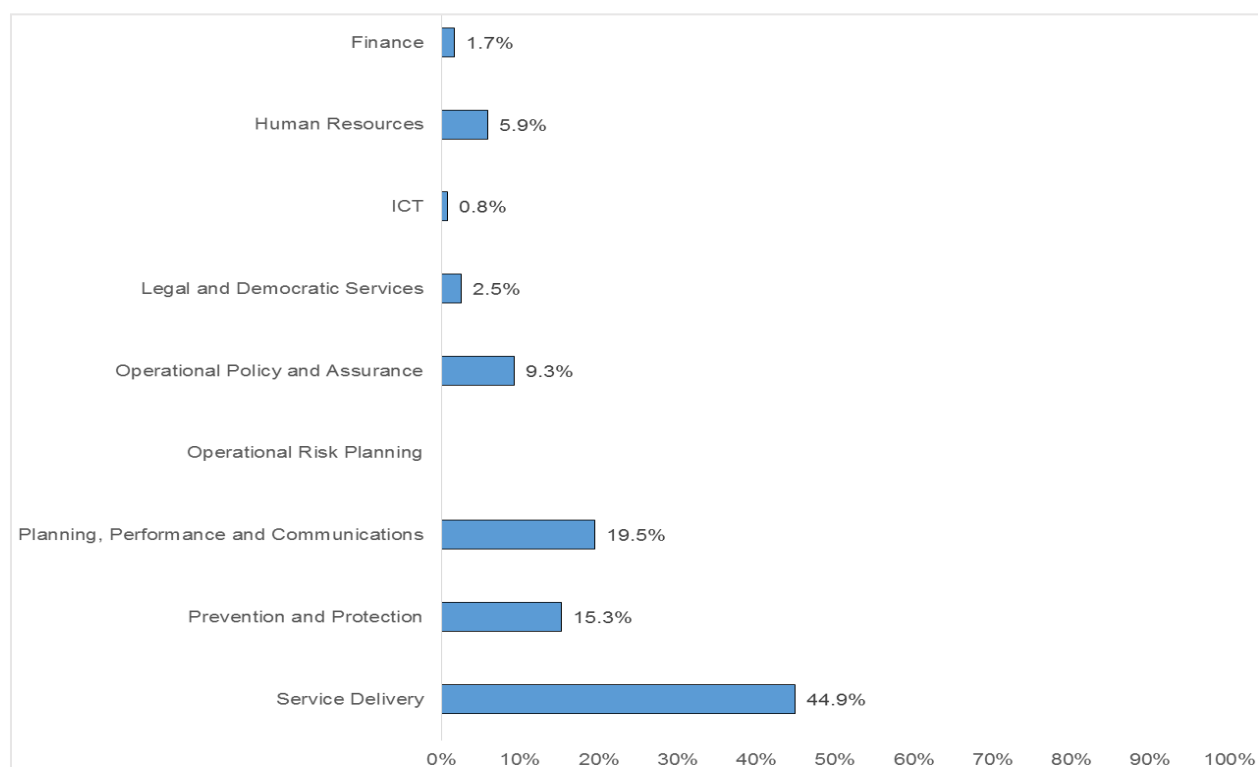
A total of 26 members of the public responded to the consultation during the 12-week period. Given focus on staff and stakeholders during this consultation, the lower number of public responses to this consultation would not enable a robust analysis of demographic information.

As highlighted previously in the report, reference should be made to the demographic breakdown of the 831 respondents who took part in the 2014 public satisfaction survey.

### 9.2 Staff

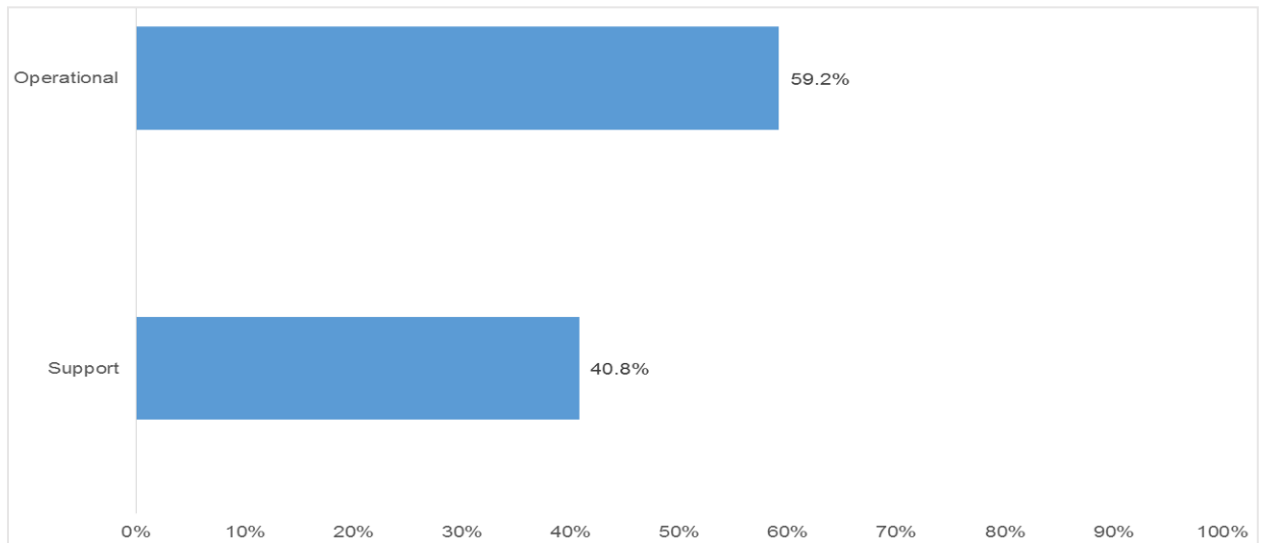
A total of 135 individual staff responded to the consultation from the following departments and locations.

#### *Respondents by department*



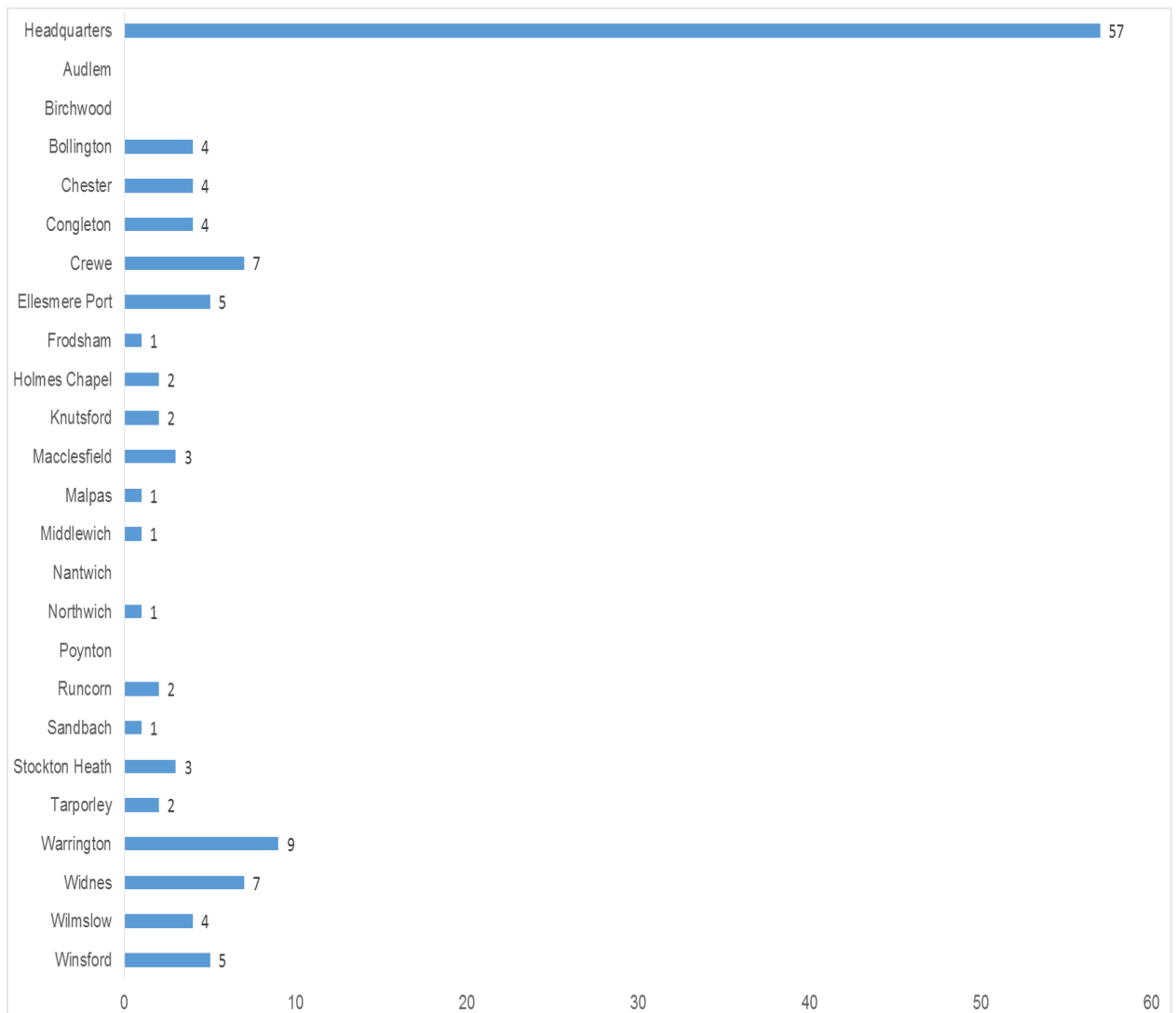
*n=118*

*How respondents described their primary role*



*n=126*

*Where respondents are based for the greatest proportion of their time*



*n=125*



## **10. Media relations, press coverage and use of social media**

### **10.1 Engaging the media**

#### *Press Release*

The Service issued a press release during the consultation period to mark the formal launch of the consultation and provided an overview of the draft strategy. The release also directed people to supporting information on the Service's website.

A copy of the press release is included at the end of this section.

### **10.2 Social media**

The Service utilised its Facebook, Twitter and Google+ channels (shown below) to widen the reach of messages promoting the consultation. The Service's Facebook page currently has more than 3,500 people who 'like' it, nearly 15,000 people follow the Service's Twitter feed and 225 people are signed up to its Google+ account.

#### *Using Facebook*

The Service made use of its Facebook account to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage followers to get involved in the consultation.

The table below shows each of the posts issued on the Service's Facebook page, how many users 'liked' and/or shared the post on their own Facebook page and how many clicked on the link within the post to access the Service's webpage.

The table also shows the 'reach score' of each post. Post reach is the number of people who have seen the post in their own Facebook news feed.

#### *Date and content of consultation posts on the Service's Facebook page*

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Content of post</b>  | <b>Likes</b> | <b>Shares</b> | <b>Link Clicks</b> | <b>People Reach</b> |
|-------------|---|--------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 19/01/2015  | Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has launched a draft five year strategy that sets out plans for the future and would like communities to share their views about it.<br><br>'Planning For A Safer Cheshire' sets out how the Service will continue to provide the residents and businesses of Cheshire with a first class fire and rescue service despite the fact the Fire Authority is facing some significant cuts in its budget. | 4            |               | 17                 | 608                 |

|            |  |   |   |    |     |
|------------|--|---|---|----|-----|
|            | Find out more about our draft five year strategy.  |   |   |    |     |
| 19/01/2015 | #HaveYourSay on Planning For A Safer Cheshire 2015/2020 – our new draft 5 year strategy    | 5 | 2 | 4  | 469 |
| 28/01/2015 | Please #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future | 3 |   | 10 | 440 |
| 30/01/2015 | Don't forget to #HaveYourSay on our draft 5 year strategy!                                 | 7 |   | 2  | 313 |
| 03/02/2015 | #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future        | 1 |   | 4  | 317 |
| 12/02/2015 | Please #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future | 4 |   | 2  | 239 |

#### *Twitter*

Regular 'tweets' were posted onto the Service's Twitter page, with each post tagged with a #HaveYourSay hashtag and also containing a link to the consultation page on the Service website.

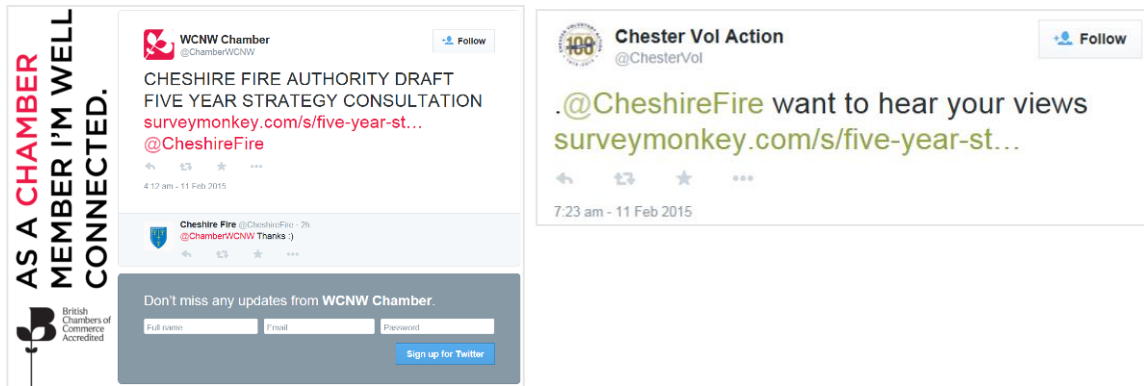
The data below shows how many times each tweet was viewed by Twitter users, how many users re-tweeted each tweet and how many people clicked on the link within the tweet to access the Service's webpage.

#### *Tweets on the Service's Twitter page*

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Content of tweet</b>  | <b>Views</b> | <b>Re-tweets</b> | <b>Link Clicks</b> |
|-------------|--|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 19/01/2015  | #HaveYourSay on Planning For A Safer Cheshire 2015/2020 – our new draft 5 year strategy.   | 1,945        | 4                | 3                  |
| 28/01/2015  | Please #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future.  | 1,876        | 3                | 16                 |
| 30/01/2015  | Don't forget to #HaveYourSay on our draft 5 year strategy.   | 1,697        | 1                | 11                 |
| 03/02/2015  | #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future.<br><br>*Tweet retweeted by BBC Radio Merseyside (28.7k followers) | 3,258        | 2                | 9                  |
| 12/02/2015  | Please #HaveYourSay on our draft Five Year Strategy that sets out our plans for the future.  | 535          | 2                | 535                |

### Stakeholder use of social media

Some stakeholders also took the opportunity to promote awareness of the consultation on the draft strategy to their members and associates. West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce tweeted a link to the consultation page to their 1,554 Twitter followers and Chester Voluntary Action tweeted the link to their 1,169 followers. Both tweets are shown below.



In addition to supplying a response through the online survey, Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Andrew Dawson also compiled a blog entry which discussed the draft strategy. An image of the blog is shown below, with the full text included within Appendix 3, which details stakeholder responses.



#### *Use of the Service's website*

A page was created on the Service's website ([www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/consultation)) which summarised the ways in which people could have their say, provided a full and summary draft strategy for download and a link to the online survey.

Key statistics relating to visits to the website and intranet are as follows:

| <b>Website traffic relating to the consultation</b>  |                          |                               |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
|  | <b><i>Page views</i></b> | <b><i>Unique visitors</i></b> |
| Service website <a href="http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk">www.cheshirefire.gov.uk</a> between 5 <sup>th</sup> January and 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2015 | 390,031                  | 99,233                        |
| Five Year Strategy intranet page views   | 606                      | 413                           |
| Five Year Strategy website page views  | 191                      | 146                           |
| Summary Strategy PDF downloads   | 114                      | 98                            |
| Draft full Strategy PDF downloads  | 331                      | 272                           |

**Press release issued 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015**

### **Views sought on Service's plans for the future**

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has launched a draft five year strategy that sets out its plans for the future and would like communities to share their views about it.

'Planning for a Safer Cheshire' sets out how the Service will continue to provide the residents and businesses of Cheshire with a first class fire and rescue service despite the fact the Fire Authority is facing some significant cuts in its budget.

Chief Fire Officer, Paul Hancock, said: "We have already made nearly £7 million savings over the past four years but we know that the challenge over the next five years will be even harder as it becomes more difficult to maintain improvements in community safety at the same time as making the savings we need.

"However, this strategy clarifies some of the stark future choices facing the Authority and outlines the approach and principles it will adopt to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighter safety."

Mr. Hancock added that he was delighted at the continuing improvements in community safety, with figures for the last financial year showing that the number of fires in Cheshire had reached an all-time low. In addition, the number of fire-related injuries was down to 44 from 52 the previous year, with only five classed as being severe.

The Strategy proposes that the Service's frontline services should continue to be provided on its current Cheshire boundaries rather than exploring options to merge with other fire and rescue services. For support areas of the organisation, however, it says there should be an emphasis on collaboration with Cheshire Constabulary and potentially with other organisations locally and regionally if there are opportunities to save money and improve services.

Fire Authority Chair Cllr John Joyce added: “The future may be daunting but we have a proven track record of enthusiasm, commitment and innovation which I am sure will help to continue these improvements and focus on our overall vision of ‘a Cheshire where there are no deaths, injuries or damage from fires or other emergencies.’

“I would encourage people to share their views about our plans for the future as people’s opinions really do matter and by listening to them we can make sure we continue to meet the needs of the communities we serve.”

Consultation on the new strategy is now open. People who want to share their views should visit [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk) where they can find a copy of the strategy, a summary document and access to a survey.

The formal consultation period will run up to March 27th 2015 with a revised strategy due to be considered at the Annual General Meeting of the Fire Authority on June 17th 2015.

**ENDS**

# Appendix 1 – Draft Five Year Strategy Documents

The summary document (shown below) and the full strategy were available from the Service’s website and intranet and electronic copies of both documents were distributed to local stakeholders along with a link to the online survey.

## Draft Five Year Strategy Summary

**CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
Five year strategy summary

# Planning for a Safer Cheshire

Cheshire Fire Authority is the democratically accountable body responsible for delivering a fire and rescue service to the residents and businesses of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington.

Ensuring the community continues to be protected by a first class fire and rescue service during the most significant cuts in its history is the biggest challenge the Authority has ever faced.

The previous four year strategy, published in 2011, enabled the Service to make savings of nearly £7m while maintaining a reduction in the number of fires and emergency incidents. The total number of incidents attended has fallen by 43% over the last decade.

The challenge over the next five years will be even harder, as it becomes more difficult to maintain improvements in community safety as the need to make financial savings increases.

The new draft strategy clarifies some of the choices facing the Authority and outlines the principles and approach it will adopt to ensure it does not compromise on its commitment to protecting local communities, reducing risk and maintaining firefighters’ safety.

### Consultation and feedback

This summary highlights the key areas covered by the draft strategy and links into the consultation, which will capture feedback around these important themes.

Individuals and partners who want to share their views should visit [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk) where they can access the survey, or email [consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:consultation@cheshirefire.gov.uk).

The consultation period will run until 27th March 2015, with a revised strategy to be considered by the Fire Authority on 17th June 2015.

### Focusing on Cheshire

The strategy proposes that the Authority’s frontline services should continue to be provided on its current Cheshire footprint rather than exploring options to merge with other fire and rescue services.

This means that the organisation will retain its strong and recognisable brand and reputation, which enables us to access vulnerable people or establish relationships and partnerships with other local agencies.

### Working with partners

While the strategy reaffirms the Cheshire ‘footprint’ for delivering frontline services, it outlines a number of options for delivering back-office services in collaboration with others.

In particular, it highlights the potential for the Authority to deliver and integrate many of its support services with Cheshire Police.

The Authority also believes that this footprint provides the best way of engaging with communities and providing local accountability.

The Authority uses its hugely successful programme of Home Safety Assessments (HSAs) to target its safety messages to those households which are most vulnerable.

In the future this approach will be supplemented by the building of a dedicated safety and life skills centre at Lynton, which will provide a base for the Authority’s preventative services.

The centre provides a foundation for demonstrating the added value the fire and rescue service can bring to reducing the future demand on public services. The organisation will also look to be commissioned to deliver programmes that will improve the safety of vulnerable residents, including promoting key health messages, youth engagement initiatives and working with partners to improve road safety.

As part of this new strategy, a further detailed review will be undertaken to consider a range of issues to ensure emergency response arrangements remain fit for purpose, including changes in risk levels, the sustainability of low-activity stations and matching resources to meet variations in demand i.e. between daytime and night time.

### Future funding

The Authority continues to model its medium term financial plan on ongoing annual reductions of 8% in its Government funding and a maximum 1.99% annual increase in its Council Tax. To achieve a balanced budget, this requires savings of £2m a year up to 2020.

The Authority is confident that the strategy provides a sound basis to deliver these savings. However, if financial pressures increase more than expected the Authority will consider asking residents for an additional Council Tax increase if it feels the alternatives would increase local risk to unacceptable levels.

[www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)

**CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

While the programme will initially focus on transactional services, it will also explore the potential to share other services, as well the development of more shared sites, like the joint police, fire and ambulance station at Poynton.

The Authority will also consider extending the current co-responding arrangements with the North West Ambulance Service, at Nantwich Fire Station, into other areas. The aim of the scheme is to cut the time taken for a patient to receive initial treatment when firefighters may be closer to an incident than an ambulance.

In the future this approach will be supplemented by the building of a dedicated safety and life skills centre at Lynton, which will provide a base for the Authority’s preventative services.

The centre provides a foundation for demonstrating the added value the fire and rescue service can bring to reducing the future demand on public services. The organisation will also look to be commissioned to deliver programmes that will improve the safety of vulnerable residents, including promoting key health messages, youth engagement initiatives and working with partners to improve road safety.

As part of this new strategy, a further detailed review will be undertaken to consider a range of issues to ensure emergency response arrangements remain fit for purpose, including changes in risk levels, the sustainability of low-activity stations and matching resources to meet variations in demand i.e. between daytime and night time.

### Protecting communities

The Authority uses its hugely successful programme of Home Safety Assessments (HSAs) to target its safety messages to those households which are most vulnerable.

In the future this approach will be supplemented by the building of a dedicated safety and life skills centre at Lynton, which will provide a base for the Authority’s preventative services.

### Reviewing our Service

A key element of the previous strategy involved a fundamental review of emergency response services. That was completed and work is well underway on the subsequent programme, which includes building four new fire stations.

The Authority is confident that the strategy provides a sound basis to deliver these savings. However, if financial pressures increase more than expected the Authority will consider asking residents for an additional Council Tax increase if it feels the alternatives would increase local risk to unacceptable levels.

**CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Headquarters  
Walsford Cheshire  
CW7 3FQ

£ 01606 868700  
£ 01606 868712  
[www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)



## **Appendix 2 – Partners and stakeholders communicated with**

The following pages document each of the stakeholders the Service communicated with throughout the consultation process.

| <b>Representative Bodies and Organisations</b> |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| Cheshire Members of Parliament                 | Cheshire Members of the House of Lords | North West Members of the European Parliament     |
| UK Youth Parliament                            | Prospective Parliamentary Candidates   | Cheshire Unitary Councillors                      |
| Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner         | Fire Brigades Union                    | Fire Officers Association                         |
| East Cheshire Chamber of Commerce              | Halton Chamber of Commerce             | Macclesfield Chamber of Commerce                  |
| South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce             | Warrington Chamber of Commerce         | West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce |

| <b>Public sector organisations</b>            |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Cheshire East Council                         | Cheshire West and Chester Council           | Halton Borough Council                        |
| Warrington Borough Council                    | Cheshire Police                             | North West Ambulance Service                  |
| Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service            | Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service  | Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service            |
| North Wales Fire and Rescue Service           | Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service          | Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service         |
| Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group | Halton Clinical Commissioning Group         | Mid Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group     |
| South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group   | Vale Royal Clinical Commissioning Group     | Warrington Clinical Commissioning Group       |
| West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group    | Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust   | Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust      |
| East Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust             | Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | Warrington and St Helens NHS Foundation Trust |
| Cheshire and Greater Manchester Probation     | HMP Risley                                  | HMP Styal                                     |
| HMP Thorn Cross                               |   |   |

| <b>Voluntary and community sector organisations</b> |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Halton Disability Partnership                       | Vale Royal Disability Services          | Warrington Disability Partnership      |
| Macclesfield Disability Information Bureau          | Congleton Disability Information Bureau | Cheshire Centre For Independent Living |
| Disability Resource Exchange                        | O.C.E.A.N.                              | Crewe and Nantwich CVS                 |
| Cheshire Asian and Minority Communities Council     | Wah Lei Chinese Association             | Warrington Hindu Cultural Association  |
| Warrington Islamic Association                      | Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Sikh Temple)       | Gypsy and Travellers Voice             |
| Cheshire Rainbow                                    | Body Positive Cheshire                  | Age UK Cheshire                        |



|                                  |  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|                                  | and North Wales  |                                   |
| Crewe and Nantwich Senior Forum  | Chester Pride  | Age UK Mid Mersey                 |
| Four Estates                     | Halton LGBT  | MIND Halton                       |
| Shaw Trust                       | Vision Support   | EPNAVCO                           |
| Link Up Cheshire and North Wales | Youth Federation for Cheshire, Halton, Warrington and Wirral | Chester Sanjhi Indian Association |
| Xin Hua Chinese Association      | God's Heritage Ministry                                      | Great Opportunities Together CIC  |
| The Epiphany Trust               | Walton Lea Partnership                                       | Warrington Community Living       |
| Warrington Older People's Forum  | Warrington Visually Impaired                                 | Warrington Voluntary Action       |
| Cheshire Community Action        |  |                                   |

| <b>Town and Parish Councils</b> |                         |                         |                                |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Acton, Edleston & Henhull       | Adlington               | Alderley Edge           | Aldford, Saughton and District |
| Alpraham                        | Alsager                 | Alvanley                | Anderton with Marbury          |
| Antrobus                        | Appleton                | Arclid                  | Ashley                         |
| Ashton Heyes                    | Aston                   | Aston-by-Budworth       | Audlem                         |
| Backford and District           | Barnton                 | Barrow                  | Barthomley                     |
| Beeston                         | Betchton                | Bickerton & Egerton     | Birchwood                      |
| Bollington                      | Bosley                  | Bostock                 | Bradwall                       |
| Brereton                        | Brindley & Faddiley     | Broxton and District    | Buerton                        |
| Bulkeley & Ridley               | Bunbury                 | Burland                 | Burtonwood and Westbrook       |
| Byley                           | Calveley                | Capenhurst and Ledsham  | Chelford                       |
| Choldmondston & Wettenhall      | Cholmondley and Chorley | Chorley                 | Christleton                    |
| Church Lawton                   | Church Minshull         | Churton                 | Clotton Hoofield               |
| Coddington and District         | Comberbach              | Congleton               | Cranage                        |
| Crewe Green                     | Croft                   | Crowton                 | Cuddington                     |
| Cuddington (Malpas)             | Cuerdley                | Culceth and Glazebury   | Daresbury                      |
| Darnhall                        | Davenham                | Delamere                | Disley                         |
| Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley           | Doddington and District | Doddleston and District | Duddon                         |
| Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford | Dutton                  | Eaton                   | Eaton, Eccleston and Claverton |
| Elton                           | Farndon                 | Fouk Stapleford         | Frodsham                       |
| Gawsworth                       | Goostrey                | Grappenhall and         | Great Boughton                 |

|                                   |                                      |                                 |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                   |                                      | Thelwall                        |                                      |
| Great Budworth                    | Great Warford                        | Guilden Sutton                  | Hale                                 |
| Halebank                          | Handforth                            | Hankelow                        | Hartford                             |
| Haslington                        | Hassall                              | Hatherton and<br>Walgherton     | Hatton                               |
| Helsby                            | Henbury                              | High Legh                       | Higher<br>Hurdsfield                 |
| Holmes Chapel                     | Hough and Chorlton                   | Huntington                      | Huxley                               |
| Ince                              | Kelsall                              | Kingsley                        | Kingsmead                            |
| Knutsford                         | Lach Dennis                          | Lea By Backford                 | Little Budworth                      |
| Little Leigh                      | Little Stanney &<br>District         | Little Warford                  | Littleton                            |
| Lostock Gralam                    | Lower Peover<br>(Nether Peover)      | Lower Withington                | Lyme Handley                         |
| Lymm                              | Malpas                               | Manley                          | Marbury &<br>District                |
| Marston                           | Marton                               | Mere                            | Mickle Trafford &<br>District        |
| Middlewich                        | Millington                           | Minshull Vernon &<br>District   | Mobberley                            |
| Mollington                        | Moore                                | Moston                          | Mottram St.<br>Andrew                |
| Mouldsworth                       | Moulton                              | Nantwich                        | Neston                               |
| Nether Alderley                   | Newbold Astbury-<br>cum-Moreton      | Newhall                         | No Man's Heath<br>and District       |
| Norley                            | North Rode                           | Northwich                       | Oakmere                              |
| Odd Rode                          | Ollerton and Marthall                | Penketh                         | Peover Inferior                      |
| Peover Superior                   | Pickmere                             | Plumley with Toft<br>and Bexton | Pott Shrigley                        |
| Poulton and Pulford               | Poulton with<br>Fearnhead            | Poynton                         | Prestbury                            |
| Preston Brook                     | Puddington and<br>District           | Rainow                          | Rixton with<br>Glazebrook            |
| Rope                              | Rostherne                            | Rowton                          | Rudheath                             |
| Rushton                           | Sandbach                             | Sandymoor                       | Saughall and<br>Shotwick Park        |
| Shavington-cum-<br>Gresty         | Shocklach Oviatt<br>and District     | Siddington                      | Smallwood                            |
| Snelson                           | Somerford                            | Sound & District                | Sproston                             |
| Spurstow                          | Stapeley & District                  | Stockton Heath                  | Stoke &<br>Hurleston                 |
| Stretton                          | Styal                                | Sutton                          | Sutton                               |
| Swettenham                        | Tabley                               | Tarporley                       | Tarvin                               |
| Tattenhall & District             | Thornton-le-Moors                    | Threapwood                      | Tilston                              |
| Tiverton and Tilstone<br>Fearnall | Tushingam,<br>Macefen and<br>Bradley | Twemlow                         | Upton-by-<br>Chester and<br>District |
| Utkinton                          | Walton                               | Wardle                          | Warmingham                           |
| Waverton                          | Weaverham                            | Weston & Basford                | Whitegate and<br>Marton              |
| Whitley                           | Willaston                            | Wilmslow                        | Wincham                              |
| Winsford                          | Winwick                              | Wistaston                       | Woolston                             |
| Worleston & District              | Wrenbury-cum-Frith                   | Wynbunbury                      |                                      |

## **Appendix 3 – Responses received from partners and stakeholders**

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Partners and external stakeholders were encouraged to provide written responses and comments. 22 stakeholders provided full responses to the consultation, which are included below.

### **Consultation Responses**

#### **Warrington Borough Council Response to the Cheshire Fire Authority: Planning for a Safer Cheshire Five Year Strategy 2015-20**

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft strategy. Before I outline some specific comments, I would like to acknowledge the significant achievements of the authority in terms of meeting its challenging savings targets, maintaining excellent standards of service, and leading the way on national initiatives to further enhance the safety of both our residential and business communities.

I welcome the underpinning of the strategy with the detailed annual action plans which also enable us to provide ongoing comments as a key partner and more importantly, allow our communities to play an active role and have the opportunity to get involved to voice their opinions. It is excellent and a credit to the Authority that customer satisfaction levels are such a high percentile.

As the Borough Council reflected in its recent response to the annual “Making Cheshire Safer” proposals it is reassuring the Authority continues to view its transformation as a continually evolving process. We know, as public sector organisations, that we face further unprecedented challenges in terms of funding and the continued drive for public sector reform. Therefore, it has never been more important that collectively we aim to deliver the best, most appropriate services to our communities for the future.

#### **Vision and Key Aims**

You have our continued support for the Authority’s Vision which accurately reflects what the Authority should be aiming to achieve, and the three key aims which underpin the Vision. These aims very much mirror those of the Council as we move to address the future challenges for public services.

#### **Current Resource and Future Changes**

I understand that in the first instance the Authority will look to maintain its current boundaries rather than explore mergers with other services in order to provide focus and serve the best interests for the communities of Cheshire as a whole.

It is inevitable that the emerging national picture and potential developments over the next five years to drive thinking around greater collaboration of the

blue light services, alongside potential merges of Fire and Rescue Services will greatly influence and impact the service in the future. I am sure this will be closely monitored and that the Authority will seek to have a full and active role in response to any proposed developments, providing both the opportunity to identify and analyse the risks in addition to the opportunities that any such arrangement may pose for Cheshire.

### **Partnerships & Collaborative Working**

It is important that we continue to work together and your local officers are working effectively with the Partnership and Local Strategic Partnership to ensure we are best addressing emerging issues in a collaborative manner.

Looking beyond partnership working at group and specific initiatives level, and more at the intention of the Authority to explore joint Transactional Services, and the potential use and development of shared sites, this sounds eminently sensible in these financially challenging times. This is an area Warrington would like to be involved in any discussions as to how we may be able to support this moving forward.

The potential extension of the co-responding arrangements with the Ambulance service is fully supported. This can only be viewed as a very positive move which benefits those who are in critical need of urgent emergency service support at the time of an accident.

### **Data Sharing and Intelligence**

It is good to see that the Authority is at the forefront of this work both nationally and locally. As previously indicated, collaborative working to share data and intelligence to inform priorities, target behaviour change and develop preventative campaigns is essential for all agencies. I would strongly support that we make the best use of the resource and the intelligence available to all partners in this area. The Authority already has the links in place with the relevant teams within the Council through the success of the HAS programme, the sub regional Community Safety Transformation programme and the TCA Complex Dependency Programme, but if there is anything further needed to progress this initiative please let us know.

As previously advised, Directorates, particularly colleagues within the Families & Wellbeing Directorate are happy to support the ongoing work in any way possible in relation to vulnerable families, adults and children. We greatly acknowledge this is very much a two way approach which undoubtedly brings benefits to both organisations.

### **Meeting the Financial Challenges / Future Funding**

We support the approach the Authority has taken and the use of the MTFP strategy to meet the demands of reducing budgets. However, we would welcome the opportunity to share lessons learned with the Authority as a result of our recent move towards outcomes based budgeting alongside our traditional methods which has identified additional cross cutting savings.

### **Response and Resilience**

We support the continual risk based review of emergency response which ensures the response is informed, fit for purpose and tailored to mitigate the risks identified. It is also appropriate that the service considers and acknowledges the differing levels of demand over the duration of a 24 hour period in order to be resourced effectively.

It remains important through horizon scanning that the Authority continues to monitor the potential significant changes through public sector reform and has a strategy and flexibility to respond to accordingly.

Warrington Borough Council has no doubt that the Authority will continue to rise to the ongoing challenges the public sector are faced with and ensure that the service available to the community is fit for purpose. It is reassuring that there is an ongoing drive to seek excellence, informed through peer review, customer insight and the changing nature of the risk profile to shape the future look of the service.

Thank you again for your continued engagement with the Council's safeguarding boards, strategic partnerships and related activity.

Yours sincerely

Professor Steven Broomhead  
Chief Executive

## **Warrington Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

### **Fire Authority Five Year Plan**

Thank you for inviting us to comment on the future of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service.

We would support all of your strategy proposal with one exception which is that of seeking an additional council tax increase from Cheshire residents, business generally has to live within its means and that must equally apply to the fire and rescue service.

Yours Sincerely,

Colin Daniels  
Chief Executive

## **South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry**

We are supportive of the work of Cheshire Fire Authority and your new draft strategy. We are keen as a membership organisation for businesses in South Cheshire, to work with you and possibly be a conduit for your organisation to reach and work with local businesses.

Please advise us of your revised strategy and any further opportunities to work together.

Kind regards

Madeleine Abbey

## **Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

### **RE: Cheshire Fire Authority Draft Five Year Strategy Comments**

Thank you for the Authority's tweet on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015, we really appreciate and value your request to comment on your draft five year strategy.

As two Cheshire public sector organisations we are responding to the same ageing demographic profile of the area which brings with it specific challenges. Therefore we were pleased to read of your targeted approach to over-65's and believe we could work together further for the benefit of our local population in this aim.

We feel it would be beneficial to enter a local data sharing agreement between the two organisations and reflect how we could collaborate based upon risk analysis data combined with health stratification.

Linking together our Dementia Friendly services and our new Healthy Ageing Centre together with your Home Safety Assessments could be a quite powerful service for our ageing population. The benefits of aligning discharge assessment together with a home safety assessment could have tremendous benefit to the community and potentially provide greater economies of scale and increased assessments. This works towards elements of the NHS Five Year Forward View which focuses more on working together in partnership and collaboratively rather than competing for commissioning of services within an already limited budget whilst simultaneously working to reduce future demand.

It was with great interest we read about the emergence of Cheshire's first dedicated safety and life skills centre at Lymm and recognised the benefits that partnership working could bring to such a project. The location of Lymm more than 30 minutes driving time away from Chester could restrict access for those in our locality, therefore an opportunity to link with the Countess of Chester Hospital's training centre provision, together with our dementia friends training course both of which would seem to fit seamlessly with your strategic intentions.

It seems apparent that all public sector services are carrying out comprehensive money reviews due to the public spending challenges we all face. With that in mind we would welcome the opportunity to work together sharing where appropriate both our organizational achievements to grow our organizational learning. Simultaneously we would be delighted if we could take the opportunity to discuss potential shared services, such as payroll and pensions and occupational health.

Yours Sincerely,

Mark Brandreth  
Deputy Chief Executive

## **NHS West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group**

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

**No comment received**

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**No comment received**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**No comment received**

*Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?*

**QUITE LIKELY**



*Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:*

**No comment received**

*Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

**No comment received**

Alison Lee  
Chief Executive Officer

## **Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service**

Dear Sir,

### **CONSULTATION ON 'PLANNING FOR A SAFER CHESHIRE 2015-2020', CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S DRAFT FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your new draft five year strategy, entitled '**Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-2020**'

We have read and discussed your proposals and priority areas with interest. Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Authority is underdoing similar funding shortfalls, and this has been the subject of a recent consultation Transforming Service Delivery 2022 – Fit to Respond. We understand the difficulties you are experiencing.

Your plans do not have a direct bearing on our operations, except in the fact that the majority of FRAs are faced with similar challenges and we can take some support from this.

This is a challenging time for the Fire and Rescue Service and consultation with all stakeholders is essential in achieving the best possible outcomes. We wish you all the best in this process.

## **Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service**

### **Re: Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-20.**

Further to the recent publication of your 5 year strategy 'Planning for a Safer Cheshire' I would like to formally respond to the document as part of your consultation process. In particular Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority must place on record our thoughts and comments with respect to current and future emergency Response Planning in full recognition that we now share a common mobilisation platform with respect to North West Fire Control (NWFC).

Recently there has been dialogue with respect to the mobilisation/reinforcement of resources from one Authority to another and certainly since MWFC went live the number of cross-border incidents has escalated. In the main our current section 13 and 16 arrangements deal with these, however, we would like to place on record our concerns with respect to how Planning for a Safer Cheshire strategy could impact on our own Authority.

### **Current section 13/16 arrangements:**

Our current arrangements for cross-border working are generally working well. However, as an Authority we have seen a significant increase in GMFRS appliances responding to incidents into Cheshire since NWFC was introduced. Current arrangement allow for the quickest appliance to potentially

arrive at an incident to respond to a life risk incident irrespective of Authority. In addition, appliances are currently being mobilized to other incident types, also. As GMFRS is predominantly whole-time this means that our appliances at Leigh, Altrincham and Cheadle, for example, have all seen increased activity into Cheshire.

We believe that the issue is not based purely on geographical parameters but is impacted by changes to the duty systems employed, shift patterns (i.e. when appliances are stood up/down) and 'on-call' response standards.

### **General Response Standards:**

Within your strategy you have applied a general 10 minute response standard across the County. In applying this standard we would expect that these standards are based on a Cheshire response and have not been modelled on predicted response standards using NWFC data as this will invariably use the quickest appliance irrespective of Authority.

We should all as independent Fire and Rescue Authorities reserve our right to change our duty systems, crewing arrangements and response standards independently without jeopardizing the public which is the responsibility of another Authority. This balance can be achieved through effective consultation with respect to our risk modelling and regular review of our section 13 and 16 arrangements and we would welcome your comments on this aspect.

### **Costs:**

As you are aware, Officers from both Authorities are currently discussing cross-border arrangements and the potential need to reduce the cross-border impact and/or ensure there is mutual agreement on financial recompense for one Authority's resources being deployed into another.

If you or your Officers have any queries about this response or the matters discussed, please contact me at any time.

Paul Argyle  
Director of Emergency Response  
Assistant County Fire Officer

### **Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service**

The Chief Fire Officer has asked me to respond to the consultation on your draft five year strategy on behalf of the Service.

"Planning for a safer Cheshire 2015-20" is an easy to read and informative document which offers a pragmatic approach to dealing with future challenges whilst building on past successes. The focus on delivering prevention services to the most vulnerable and working with partners, make financial and operational sense in the current climate. The references to collaboration with

the Police and Ambulance services and the safety and life skills centre in Lymm appear to offer innovative ways to deal with risk and the financial challenges you face.

Regards

Deb Appleton  
Director of Strategy and Performance

## **North Wales Fire and Rescue Service**

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**AGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

**North Wales Fire and Rescue is similarly committed to developing partnerships with relevant agencies to improve public safety across our region and beyond. We therefore look forward to continuing to work with colleagues in Cheshire FRA to find innovative and successful solutions to improving our effectiveness in the safety agenda.**

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**North Wales Fire and Rescue acknowledges the financial challenges facing public services. We are similarly working to continue to deliver and improve service delivery in an affordable and sustainable manner.**

Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?

**SUPPORT**

Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?

**NOT SURE**

Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?

**SUPPORT**

Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:

**North Wales Fire and Rescue recognises the need to constantly review risk and activity levels in order to maximise available resources. We look forward to further detailed discussions in order to maintain effective cross-border and resilience arrangements.**

Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?

**SUPPORT**

Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:

**No comment received**

Richard Fairhead  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer

### **Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service**

With regard to your 5 year strategy we don't foresee any significant implications with regard to our good relationship with CFRS here in Shropshire.

We note your intention to build a life skills centre and would be interested in investigating any links we could make with you with regard to our own Community safety strategy. On page 23 I note that you have not included the results of our 2012-13 % of HFSCs to over 65 year olds. Apologies for the late submission, but for completion of the diagram it is in the 40% bracket.

Regards,

John Redmond  
Chief Fire Officer

## **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

### **Cheshire 5 Year Strategy**

Please find below comments on behalf of Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service in relation to the current public consultation on your new five year strategy entitled "Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-2020." I have provided this brief response rather than complete the electronic consultation questionnaire.

Having read through the strategy I fully understand and recognise the reasoning behind it and how you intend to review your emergency response arrangements to ensure that the resources in place reflect local risks and activity levels. I believe that the strategy is very similar in approach to that adopted by our Service in analysing demand, identifying vulnerability and planning resource allocation.

From the information provided I do not envisage a significant impact on our Service although I would ask that consideration be given to direct conversations regarding the development of the new station in Alsager and where there is any possibility that your proposals may impact on any current 13 and 16 arrangements.

Naturally the approach to maintain the provision of frontline services within the current footprint and boundaries is a matter for the Authority and residents of Cheshire; however the benefits of developing effective relationships with key partners who share common boundaries is clearly understood.

Given the significant financial challenge facing the Service and the drive for greater blue-light collaboration it seems entirely reasonable to explore options for broader joint working. Where opportunities exist to share back office services, deliver projects in a more cost effective way, streamline business processes, share facilities and contribute to wider community safety and wellbeing; these should be investigated in order to provide value for money and sustainable services.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss further your review of the Service's prevention and protection functions and in particular your approach to Home Safety Assessments; how you intend to work with health bodies to reduce the demand on services and the development of the dedicated safety and life skills centre.

The strategy demonstrates a clear vision and sense of direction through a coordinated approach to prevent, protect and response activities and it was

noted that the 3 key aims, underpinning specific objectives and core values were not too dissimilar to our own strategic priorities and cultural framework. In closing I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to your consultation exercise. The economic situation, scale of change, need for innovation and cooperation to ensure the on-going safety of our communities is without doubt unprecedented. If there is any way in which we as a Service can support you either through collaboration, joint problem solving or sharing each other's thinking and delivery plans then please do not hesitate to let me know.

Kind Regards,

Brian Moss  
Corporate Safety Plan Manager

## **HMP/YOI Thorn Cross**

### **Potential Implications for fire arrangements at HMP/YOI Thorn Cross 2015 onwards**

If the proposed changes take place then it will be unlikely that a fire appliance will be able to meet the 10 minute attendance time.

Given that it could take up to seven minutes for an on call firefighter to respond from home/place of work to the fire station and that it could take five minutes for an appliance responding under emergency call conditions from Stockton Heath Fire Station to Thorn Cross

The estimated turn out time could be 12 minutes or longer.

If the 'on call' system is adopted at Stockton Heath then a new contingent of firefighters will be recruited to fulfill the requirements of the duty system. It may be the case that these new entrants may not be as familiar with Thorn Cross as the existing crews.

### **Recommendation**

Cheshire Fire and Rescue use computer modelling to monitor the ten minute standard where it applies to life risk.

As the Draft Five Year Plan and the IRMP are consultation documents, we should submit comment regarding possible increase in attendance times should the proposed changes to staffing arrangements at Stockton Heath be implemented in the future.

As soon as the new crews are embedded at Stockton Heath we should invite CFRS to take part in familiarisation visits and a joint practical exercise should be designed and implemented in consultation with the Station Manager at Stockton Heath.

Kind Regards

Chas Blair  
Fire Advisor



## **Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire**

### **Cheshire Fire Authority: Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-2020 Consultation: Response**

Thank you for the copy of the new draft five year strategy setting out Cheshire Fire Authority's plans up to 2020. I have the following observations:

- The strategy is clear and accessible. It reflects the positive work that Cheshire Fire Authority (Authority) has undertaken over the course of recent years particularly in terms of prevention, home safety and demand reduction.
- I believe the key aims and core values are positive and relevant. It is positive to note that the aims and objectives are supported by more detailed action plans and performance measures to monitor and ensure implementation.
- I strongly support the Authority's proposal that frontline services should continue to be provided on the current Cheshire footprint rather than exploring options to merge with other fire service areas. As a partner organisation, it is clear to see the strong brand of Cheshire's emergency services and how this enables a responsive, efficient and effective service for our residents.
- I agree that retaining a local footprint is the best way of engaging with our communities and providing local accountability.
- I was delighted to read the Authority's commitment to further exploring what collaboration opportunities there are between fire and police services in Cheshire. Within my refreshed Police and Crime Plan I have reiterated my commitment to exploring and developing collaboration to improve services to the public of Cheshire. The Authority has my strong support in this area and I look forward to working with you on the development of these proposals. It was also positive to note that options to expand current co-responding arrangements with North West Ambulance Service will also be investigated.
- The Authority may wish to consider expanding the areas it identifies as potential commissioning opportunities to include the delivery of wider community safety and criminal justice related activity.
- I know that the Authority has a strong history of partnership working across Cheshire and I support the further commitments that have been made in this area within the plan.
- The Authority's approach to protecting our communities through the Home Safety Assessment programme is very positive. I strongly support the protection of the vulnerable and the Authority may wish to further highlight

its approach and contribution to the wider safeguarding adult agenda, namely the multi-agency prevention work associated with initiatives such as MARAC.

- The development of the Lymm safety and life skills centre is a positive step and I would anticipate that this will be a valuable resource for the public and partner agencies across Cheshire and beyond.

I fully understand the challenges in developing long term plans within the context of a reducing income and with the need to continue to deliver a high quality service for the public. In summary I believe the Authority's draft five year strategy sets a positive direction for fire services in Cheshire and acknowledges the need to be flexible in approaching emerging organisational and community risks and issues.

I hope my feedback is useful in finalising the strategy.

Yours Sincerely,

John Dwyer  
Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire

## **Cheshire Police**

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**DISAGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

***The Service should explore all opportunities to share transactional services***

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**No comment received**

*Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?*

**VERY LIKELY**

*Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:*

**No comment received**

*Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

**No comment received**

Janette McCormick  
Deputy Chief Constable

### **Audlem Parish Council**

Audlem Parish Council considered the information on the Fire Service Strategy and, whilst understanding the need for progression and evolution within the service, would strongly oppose any loss of provision in Audlem as an outlying Local Service Centre for a wide rural area of South Cheshire.

Kind regards,

Kirstin Dixon  
Audlem Parish Clerk

### **Burland Parish Council**

Dear Sirs,

The Parish Council considered the draft five-year strategy, 'Planning for a Safer Cheshire 2015-2020', which set out Cheshire Fire Authority's plans up to 2020.

The Parish Council's comments are as follows:

In view of the specialist requirements in Ellesmere Port, Halton and Warrington, the Parish Council expected that these areas might have been transferred to Merseyside. Other than this comment, the Parish Council supported the proposals and were pleased to note that the number of incidents had reduced from 15,000 to 8,000.

Regards

Carol Jones  
Clerk to Burland Parish Council

### **Neston Town Council**

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?

**AGREE**

Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?

**STRONGLY AGREE**

Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:

**NTC support the proposal to work with other services. This should improve the efficiency of all the services.**

Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?

**NOT SURE**

Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:

Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?

**SUPPORT**

Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?

**QUITE LIKELY**

Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?

**SUPPORT**

Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:

**Provided the new fire station at Powey Lane near the M56 is built in the near future the emergency responses in this area will be greatly improved.**

Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?

## **SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

***If the continued improvements in figures for fires, injuries, arson attacks and road traffic injuries can be maintained with the reduced staffing and fire cover, NTC will be happy to support these proposals.***

Alison Kunaj  
Clerk, Neston Town Council

## **Tarporley Parish Council**

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**AGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

***The Service should explore all opportunities to share transactional services***

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**No comment received**

*Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:*

**No comment received**

*Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

**No comment received**

David Carter  
Deputy Clerk to the Council

**Walton Parish Council**

**Planning for a Safer Cheshire**

Whilst Parishioners are interested in how the Fire Service will develop, it would be useful to see targets and comparative data quoted so that achievement and performance can be recognised. Comparisons can be made with previous documents and then with those produced in the future.

There is reference to "a new 10 minute response time". There is no explanation of what this actually is, what has been changed, why changed or what has previously been achieved. Nor how public confidence would be affected. If the public were more aware of times for assistance to arrive, they may modify their own controls.

The document refers to a reduction in fires in businesses, but does not give the extent of the reduction nor the reasons for the reductions. Did the Fire Service play any part in the reduction?

There is no information on the success of H.S.A's i.e. has there been a reduction in house fires where HSA's have been carried out. There is no mention on data collection on the causes of home fires such that HSA's should be further developed so as to include other risks e.g. faulty or age of permanent wiring in houses.

Fire Brigade services are increasingly used at RT Incidents, but their unique service is then unavailable for fires. There is no mention of how a demand for fire service vehicles is then managed and if the arrival time is compromised.

Councillor Bob Hardie  
On behalf of Walton Parish Council

### **Winsford, Northwich and Middlewich Town Councils (joint response)**

The following is the joint response of Winsford, Northwich and Middlewich Town Councils to the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service draft 5 year strategy 'Planning for a Safer Cheshire'

'Winsford, Northwich and Middlewich Town Councils note that the new draft strategy is based on a requirement to make savings of £2m a year up to the year 2020. The Councils are pleased to see that the strategy reaffirms the Cheshire 'footprint' for delivering frontline services in that there are no plans to change the existing frontline service arrangements at either the Winsford, Northwich or Middlewich stations.

The opportunity to further develop the delivery and integration of back-office services in collaboration with other partners, in particular the police, is supported, as is the proposal to extend the current co-responding arrangements with the North West Ambulance service at Nantwich Fire Station into other areas.

The Councils are pleased to note the reduction of almost 50% in fire incidents attended over the last 10 years and welcome the proposed building of a dedicated safety and life skills centre at Lymm.

Finally the Councils are delighted to note that the wonderful work carried out by the Fire and Rescue Service in support of The Prince's Trust will continue'.

Regards

Alan Warburton  
Town Clerk/Finance Officer  
Winsford Town Council



**Cllr Andrew Dawson**

Cheshire West and Chester Councillor (Frodsham Ward) and Frodsham Town Council

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**AGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

**No comment received**

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**No comment received**

*Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?*

**QUITE LIKELY**

*Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:*

**No comment received**

*Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?*

**SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

**No comment received**

## **Cllr Andrew Dawson blog entry**

### **Cheshire Fire Authority's Consultation**

Cheshire Fire Authority are consulting all of us about their five year strategy to take Cheshire Fire Service through to 2020. A summary of their proposals can be found by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/Assets/1/5yr-strategy-summary-A4.pdf>

The document is well worth a read as it (and the full version) explores some of the options open to the Fire Service in terms of maintaining its effectiveness, increasing what it does, whilst at the same time minimising back office costs.

In a nutshell the strategy proposes that:

- Cheshire Fire Service should concentrate solely on Cheshire rather than exploring options to merge with other fire and rescue services;
- The Fire Service's support functions should be shared with others if costs savings can be made - such as a focus on collaboration with Cheshire Police and potentially others locally;
- A review of emergency response arrangements takes place so as to ensure that the resources in place reflect local risks and activity levels;
- The Service reviews its prevention and protection functions; and
- The Fire Authority should consider asking residents to vote for an additional Council Tax increase if the Authority feels that the alternatives would increase local risk levels unacceptably.

From my point of view I believe the Fire Authority is absolutely right to ask these questions. It must be right that the Authority should seek to minimise 'back-office' costs and ensure that the Services resources are deployed appropriately and effectively. I also support collaboration with others

especially if it improves emergency cover overall. I do believe it makes sense for fire officers to be able to act as paramedics, for example.

That said before any decisions are made I would want to know what the change to any risk profile would be and understand whether such changes make sense. I also believe that the communities who may be affected by any change should also be consulted about them specifically. I'd be interested in seeing detail on the following sort of level:

E.g. - moving an appliance from Station A to Station B would mean the response time to Community C would change by X minutes. Community C has the following vulnerabilities etc... Over the last Z years there have been Y call-outs to Community C. This proposed change is justified because...

Over the last 4 years the service has saved £7m.  
In the last decade the number of call-outs have fallen 43%

You can let the Fire Authority know your views through an on-line survey by following this link:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/five-year-strategy](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/five-year-strategy).

Incidentally I do think it is somewhat daft that each of our emergency services has different governance arrangements. The police now have the Police and Crime Commissioner. How about we have one commissioner for all our blue light services? That would be very interesting and would no doubt lead to significant cost savings and perhaps a more integrated response.

**Cllr Paul Kennedy**

Warrington Borough Councillor (Hatton, Stretton and Walton ward)

*Question 1: Do you agree with the Authority's approach of keeping to the existing Cheshire boundaries when collaborating and sharing frontline services with other organisations?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 2: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to share back office services and collaborate with Cheshire Police?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 3: Do you support the Authority exploring opportunities to share back office services with other partners at a local or regional level?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 4: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to explore introducing the co-responder scheme to other areas of Cheshire?*

**STRONGLY AGREE**

*Question 5: Do you agree with the Authority's plans to work with partners to deliver preventative health services in the community?*

**AGREE**

*Question 6: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans around future partnership working:*

**Fully support partnership working**

*Question 7: Would you support the Authority in seeking a public referendum to enable it to increase its share of council tax by more than 2% in a single year?*

**NOT SURE**

*Question 8: Please share any further comments you have about the Authority's future funding:*

**The cost of the referendum could be very costly so it needs to be thought through very carefully.**

*Question 9: Do you support the Authority carrying out a new comprehensive review of risk and activity level across Cheshire, including the staffing of some low activity fire stations?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 10: If the review recommended such moves, how likely are you to support the closure of low activity fire stations?*

**VERY LIKELY**

*Question 11: Would you support proposals for the Authority to vary the level of resources it has in certain areas depending on local risk, such as the number of fire engines being reduced at night?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 12: Please share any additional comments you have about our plans to review our service:*

**No comment received**

*Question 13: Overall, to what degree do you support the Fire Authority's plans for meeting future challenges as outlined in the Five Year Strategy?*

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

*Question 14: Please share any further comments you may have about the contents of the Five Year Strategy:*

**No comment received**

## **Appendix 4 – Additional comments**

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There were a total of 116 additional comments made as part of the consultation. A full list of comments is provided below, with comments separated into different themes according to each category of respondent.

### **Partnership working**

#### **Public comments**

- Cut costs by sharing expensive back office functions but do not try and take over areas that you are not funded for
- The more collaboration the better to ensure a focused delivery of community support
- Co-responder needed in the Bollington area due to poor NWS response times
- As long as the FRS are not being used at extra expense to hide shortfall of NWS, and the reasons remain for the best possible care as quickly as possible for patients for co-responder scheme, and with preventative work it is important that the FRS is not being expected to do all the work for the NHS, and that a partnership would involve their staff working alongside FRS staff
- I don't think the 5-year strategy gives much detail in terms of the above projects and how they might work.

#### **Staff comments**

- It is important for local communities and accountability that the Cheshire footprint is retained. The Authority and senior managers need to take a hard nosed approach to partnership working and only commit where services can be improved or maintained and where there is a better likelihood of securing people's jobs. Chasing partnerships because of an available funding pot may prove beneficial in the short term but ultimately the funding can be turned off just as it was introduced.
- North West Fire & Rescue service would remove the need for individual fire & rescue services, standardise training, save money by all using GMF&RS new training centre at Bury.
- Would expect all reasonable options to be considered given the reduction in numbers of incidents and cost of front line resources, rather than taking a political approach based on geographical boundaries.
- A need to share facilities with other services as per the example at Poynton
- As an operational WM I don't care what back room services are shared as it has no effect on me, I strongly disagree with the introduction of On call fire firefighters that reduce the response times to tax payers of Cheshire, myself included.

- Back office staff duplicate tasks. Front line staff don't, so one can be shared the other not.
- Whilst exploratory talks regarding collaboration at local or regional level is useful, the entering into of formal agreements until some time after the next general election would be wise as some agreements may have to be unwound given the political landscape
- We should ensure that our prevention and community safety work is embedded in the agendas of our partners - especially with regard to the safety centre.
- The use of meeting rooms in partnership venues would be a good idea as well as partnerships using our meeting rooms.
- Careful consideration will no doubt go into ensuring that partnership working in areas of Prevention will compliment our raison d'etre.
- I think differences in cultures between different organisations can be a huge issue which can affect the success of a project/merger and needs to be seriously considered as part of any feasibility study.
- The need to get partners to share their information is key to the Service delivery especially with an ageing population
- I think we need to be even more radical with the joining up of services than the strategy indicates - a combined community safety service for Cheshire, bringing together our work with the (decreasing level of) preventative work carried out by the police and youth services, would surely benefit the public, create efficiencies and reduce duplication of effort.
- Partnership working with the Ambulance Service would be of benefit to our communities
- Historically it's the paramedics who don't want the services to be mixed. CFRS would struggle with the low manning levels of the future IRMP to make sure A&E training competence for firefighters would be in place. It's hard enough to get regular firefighter training at HQ never mind to paramedic standards
- The opportunity to provide Emergency Medical Services is one that will no doubt expand our remit in the future, as per many Fire Services in USA, and Ireland.
- Roll out of co-response across the county is long overdue. With BTACC and ATACC trained staff on all stations it is a disgrace to let the public we serve wait for current ambulance response times.
- Co-responder Scheme would seem to be a good idea providing the relevant training and remuneration is provided.
- Explore full EMT collaboration with Ambulance Service
- If fire service personnel where to deliver preventative health services would we as a service receive extra income i.e. for each flu jab? Or would the fire service staff who are carrying out the service be paid more income due to the increase of work?

Would we be held accountable for damages if we didn't correctly apply the health services? More importantly, is there a demand for this service or are we trying to re invent the wheel and create more jobs?

- No too sure about question 5. This looks like it could be a little 'mission creep' in terms of stepping into the Health Services remit.
  - By delivering health services to the community, the Fire Service will again be stretching our resources to help the government cover the cracks they've created in the NHS.
  - Providing that current CFRS staff are working within their current skill set, working on preventative health collaboration may well work. It is important to remember that we cannot be experts in several areas & we must maintain our own specialism & ensure it does not get lost.
  - It's all very well getting FFs to perform the duties of other agencies, but this inevitably leads to the loss of jobs in other agencies. There is also the issue of remuneration; are FFs to get a pay rise for these additional responsibilities?
- 
- I believe there is certainly room for collaboration in some areas however I do have concerns that it could go too far and be detrimental to the Service.
  - Where there are financial benefits and service improvements benefits i would agree but not at any cost to the fire service. Care must be taken to ensure the fire service's reputation is not affected by collaboration with other partners.
  - Any collaboration needs to have a set of key principles to protect CFRS's unique identity and reputation. In addition, joint arrangements must as a minimum deliver either a better service at the same cost or ideally an improvement AND savings. Improving services but increasing costs would go against what is happening across the rest of the public sector.
  - Stick to being a fire service and try and get that right first.

### **Stakeholder comments**

- North Wales Fire and Rescue is similarly committed to developing partnerships with relevant agencies to improve public safety across our region and beyond. We therefore look forward to continuing to work with colleagues in Cheshire FRA to find innovative and successful solutions to improving our effectiveness in the safety agenda.
- The Service should explore all opportunities to share transactional services.
- I feel strongly about working across professions as a senior nurse it is the way forward but I feel we must accept that aspects of support should be retained by each specialist service.
- Fully support partnership working.



## Future funding

### Public comments

- I would agree if you would stop cutting front line staff and closing fire stations
- £20 m in reserves shows that there is no need especially when the front line has been cut so much to create this reserve
- It will only be achieved I expect by 'efficiency' savings whatever that means. Is there a role here for the 'territorial' army in providing defined support
- Regionalise the service with NW, cumulative council tax alone could probably pay for a service with less borders. Do not raise council tax.
- Council tax is expensive all ready and all departments provide less of service year on year.
- Would the costs of a referendum outweigh the benefit of running one for a 2% increase?

### Staff comments

- The amount paid each year is small so increases above 2% would be a positive step
- I would support this providing the proposed increase was realistic and relatively affordable (i.e. for me, about +£5 p.a.). There needs to be careful consideration to the costs of holding a referendum that will not secure a mandate as the requested increase is too large. Also, I would only support this as a one-off increase of over 2%.
- It should be made clear how much money is being spent on additional Fire stations that aren't necessary
- I agree with increasing council tax contributions, but I think a referendum would be unworkable, expensive and probably inconclusive.
- We should agree a minimum level of frontline resources - staff, appliances and stations - which from a professional perspective addresses the risks in Cheshire. Then any further significant savings should be met by a one-off £5 increase in our Council Tax level.
- Only if it meant improving the service residents get- it's currently getting worse and worse without any reduction in cost to residents.
  
- You raised it by 1.99% this year, and then put the approximate amount raised of £480,000 straight in the bank. Should the residents of Cheshire really be funding that?
- Or why don't our chiefs and financial advisers stand up and say enough is enough! They can only speak on behalf of the area they cover (Cheshire) but surely they can all stand together. Have we asked Cheshire residents if they can afford to pay 2% a year and what benefits would they as the public receive for this increase? Be honest and tell the people paying the extra 2% why we need it?

- Use the surplus budget that they have put aside in order to save anymore cutbacks
- Tax payers are unaware of low manning levels and zero cover as it is already. in a fire service with 24 mil in the bank (used to be only 6 mil) money from Europe to build new stations to reduce cover and yet bleat about year on year savings remaining is a bit rich for council taxpayers to swallow, most chiefs salaries have increased during the recession too.
- If we are going to be saving money through collaboration and changes to duty systems + a 2% increase in council tax, will this not be enough?
- I think the demand for FRS resources has reduced therefore it is appropriate to reduce the costs. Increased funding doesn't seem to be justified.
- It is important that when they are asked, local residents to understand what they are paying for
- Always increasing the precept yet constantly cutting frontline services is not the way forward, reduce middle and senior managers benefit packages to balance the books
- This would be costly and involve 4 separate referenda in each authority area, would the cost of this exceed the amount we are likely to receive with a small increase in council tax?
- The cost of the referendum to the country would not benefit the country. Would it be not better to increase 1.99% each year therefore increasing money for the fire service. If the public had this explained surely they would not oppose increases for up to 1.99% for a number of years. If this is not agreed then a referendum may be necessary. Fire cover should not be adversely protected if possible.

### **Stakeholder comments**

- North Wales Fire and Rescue acknowledges the financial challenges facing public services. We are similarly working to continue to deliver and improve service delivery in an affordable and sustainable manner.
- The cost of the referendum could be very costly so it needs to be thought through very carefully.

## Reviewing the Service

### Public Comments

- Strong reasons would need to be proven in closing stations and reducing staffing at night, are there other savings to be made from less officers on cover, etc as well
- Use more on-call staff and open more on-call stations. Do not close on-call stations unless they can't be staffed. Low activity does not equal closure, some stations (Malpas, Audlem) are 'outposts', without them means extremely long response times. We need more of these 'outpost' stations (if we can staff them), not fewer. Neston, Burtonwood, Disley, Kelsall/Delamere, Weaverham, Culcheth should all be considered for on-call.
- Even the most sophisticated software cannot predict trends over a number of years and you cannot predict the impact of climate change and increased population
- You are putting peoples lives at risk
- You have to focus on need
- Are you trying to provide a fire & rescue service that responds to the communities needs when required, or are you trying to calculate how little you can spend on a service that makes the minimum response to fire & rescue with in its communities.

### Staff Comments

- I feel a bold approach is required. We should recognise that decisions made in the recent past were right for the time, but if we need to change our tact, it should be done to keep pace with the dynamic nature of our transition into a more streamlined and efficient Service.
- The Authority needs to be brave enough to withstand community and trade union opposition to even more radical changes to providing an emergency response.
- Close low activity on call & day crewing stations like is proposed in Staffs. Have all remaining stations manned 24/7.
- Different staffing models can be used to ensure the availability of appliances remains much as it is now. The closure of stations and the reduction in the number of appliances available is a huge risk to carry for the organisation. Reputational damage could be considerable if we are unable to respond as expected. (see NWAS)

It will also expose front line firefighters to increased risk - despite safe systems of work being implemented, there is always a 'pressure to act' for those first in attendance at a life risk incident (speak to a crew of 4 who have been in attendance at a persons reported house fire, alone, for 15 minutes). The cost/benefit analysis for the reduction in pumps available at any time should be considered very carefully. The benefit

is a reduction financial cost. The actual cost could be much more serious.

- Before we consider closure, the Service should make sure that all efforts to keep the station open are explored, including co-responding schemes. An assessment should also be undertaken to ensure that any community groups using the station/facilities are not left homeless.
- It is right that all aspects of the service are regularly reviewed. However the potential impact on response times and reputation in the community need to be considered if fire stations are to close (particularly on-call areas with strong links into the local community) and resources taken away.
- If the maths has already been applied to determine attendance times, why reduce the number of stations? Are we considering extending the attendance time even further? Will there be longer attendance times for rural areas? If so, then we would be going back to the old system of determining attendance time by risk area
- Stations with lower activity levels should move to on call crewing, rather than face closure. If they are already using on call crewing any savings from closure are likely to be minimal when weighed against the benefit of having a local fire station in a rural area
- Incidents are definitely on the decrease but I would like to think if something major kicked off the resources would be there.
- EVERY individual that pays council tax deserves the same quality of response (time and quality) wherever they live. Otherwise, they shouldn't have to pay as much! I will never support the reduction of our resources because every station still; has at least one serious incident to respond to each year, so they should still be there. With an increasing population we should be improving our service not ruining it.
- It is not the volume of calls but the impact that a major incident can have if there are fewer fire engines in an area. A fire service can only be reviewed in business terms up to a point and then at some point the fire service will be over stretched and the public given a service that doesn't protect them properly.
- Although I appreciate our Fire Service has to make difficult decisions making spending cuts across all facets of the service, frontline is essential for all parts of the community and to reduce them at night in low risk areas doesn't mean the risk isn't there and could lead to an increase in fire deaths not just our customer but to Fire Fighters taking longer to get to incidents with already less crews making potentially dangerous decisions, when they might not need to now.
- Don't just make changes for changes sake
- Review fairly
- Cover is at a min now. We have wholetime propping up low cover stations already or no cover at night. The people who sign up for retained realise how little they get for the cover, they leave the contract. It's too restrictive and poorly paid.

- Some of the savings from moving to on-call should be set aside to ensure we provide a better level of support in the future otherwise the model will be unsustainable.
- Cheshire currently struggles to cope with any incident over 5 appliances, an over reliance on On-Call is folly and only works currently as it is backfilled by the full time crews having to go and cover at On-Call stations.
- The ability to recall Fire Fighters for incidents and reliefs would be an advantage if these proposals are accepted and commenced
- The previous question is about asking the Cheshire tax payers for more money, yet this question is all about giving them a reduced service, are we going to be paying more for less, and are you selling this to the public as a good thing
- Fire appliances need to be in the local area. How many appliances is not as important. Response time is everything.
- More domestic activity in the evenings!
- I disagree with these questions because most of the most serious incidents happen during the night i.e. property fires when people are in bed asleep. Also the one about closing the quieter fire stations, there is a reason why they were built there in the first place and that main reason is the fact they may be out lying so quiet but if there is an incident in that area then that station's early response could be the difference of someone's life being saved or lost. I'm sure if you put this to most of the public this way I'm sure they would want to keep the fire engines and not loose them and except the extra increase on the council tax as long as it was spent on the frontline services of the service.
- The number of fire engines in one area at night should not be reflected on how many call they receive at night times. It should be evaluated on the risk in that area. if there is significant risk in a area, day or night the risk is the same. Don't judge it on "its quieter at night" judge it on "if and when it goes wrong, what services have we got to make a first attendance?" "Are we still providing sufficient cover and maintaining attendance times in this area?"
- Fires are generally an accident and accidents happen at any time. in my experience fatal house fires occur more often at night, so to have less fire engines or longer turn out times at night will only increase fire deaths
- I fire unfortunately cannot be predicted, and when an incident at night does occur it's usually a more serious incident do to the time taken to discover the fire and alert the fire service. It's also more difficult to deal with incidents during the night and so usually require more resources not less.
- If the authority is considering reductions for low activity, are they equally looking at paying ALL staff more when carrying out additional responsibilities over and above their role maps?

- I would expect more flexibility in relation to shifts, roles and response requirements.

### **Stakeholder Comments**

- North Wales Fire and Rescue recognises the need to constantly review risk and activity levels in order to maximise available resources. We look forward to further detailed discussions in order to maintain effective cross-border and resilience arrangements.
- Answer to 10 (station closures) would depend on the inherent risks and any mitigation thereof
- Resource centres in outlying villages would be reassurance to those living in the area but would aid and support fire and rescue on those fringe calls.

## Overall comments

### Public comments

- The reduction in effective response will have a detrimental effect on the outcomes operational staff will be able to achieve, this has the potential to lead to more dangerous incidents, more life threatening injuries and more risk.
- I do not support shutting community fire stations in my area
- There is not much detail about how changes are going to be implemented so difficult to answer the question.
- Every year plans change, what the fire service needs is a period of stability. How much has this latest plan cost?
- Appalling behaviour.

### Staff comments

- I support the need to collaborate but think it should be wider than with the Police. Changes in emergency response commitments and senior management are justified given the reduction in incidents.
- We need to get operational staff to recognise and accept that providing additional services such as co-responding are essential if we want to maintain any semblance of the Service we currently have in the future. The Service should also lobby strongly for us and similar FRAs to be allowed to increase their Council Tax by the higher of either £5 or 1.99%.
- There are some elements that I can support, such as keeping to a Cheshire footprint, police collaboration and seeking a referendum on a council tax increase. However I would not support the closure of stations and would not support removing resources at night, particularly within Cheshire East.
- I feel we are speeding down a path, but not sure of the direction. We need to pause, and reconsider all options before proceeding. Is On-call really the future, or is it the past? (please refer to Staffordshires recent plans) It hasn't worked at any of the stations in Cheshire yet (Wilmslow, Runcorn and even the promised second pump at Macclesfield). Why are we still throwing money at, and forging ahead with a change to the system which is not working?
- I think ultimately CFRS want it to become like north wales.....majority lower cost retained / low wholetime stations or day manning. I think this wont work in the long run due to risks and getting the right cover long term
- I understand the fire services predicament with the cutting of budgets and that the service does their best as a whole to provide the best cover possible. However the cutting of fire cover should not happen in my opinion.

- Seems strange to have so much money in reserve, yet there are still issues with cut backs
  - You should be campaigning for more money from the government, and explain to them, and the general public that we serve, that they are at more risk now and explain that it's only going to get worse.
  - If CFRS were a business we would have folded many years ago. We waste money everyday by no-one being held accountable for their decisions when spending public money. This is anything from expenses, electric cars, uniform and unnecessary building amendments.
  - Ultimately, Cuts costs lives, instead of exploring cuts, we should be looking to make money, utilizing our specific skills and expertise to generate revenue.
  - Disappointed that there is no strategy regarding voluntary redundancy of FFs. The number of incidents has decreased dramatically over the last 10 years yet the number of front line staff has stayed relatively constant. Natural wastage from retirements will not be enough to make the savings required. When you have the busiest Station in Cheshire only spending 4% of its time responding to incidents I don't believe this can continue without looking at reducing the number of front line staff.
- 
- It's a clear plan in light of the potential changes in May and the challenges that will bring. Further collaboration with the Fire Sector and partners is key to our success. We seem to look to the NW region for fire collaboration and not towards Shropshire and Staffordshire who seem a more effective fit.
  - The five year strategy is necessary to ensure it can deliver the service to the public whilst meeting the financial challenges at local and national level.
  - I think the strategy is really compelling, especially in the context of so much uncertainty. Once agreed it should be sent to DCLG as a blueprint for other FRSs. Its only weakness is that the financial summary at the end is unfathomable for anyone who isn't an accountant. It needs some user-friendly commentary against each line - for example, what is 'council tax (second homes)' and 'settlement funding assessment'. It jars with what is otherwise a really readable document.