

Corporate Services

Aim:

Deliver effective services underpinned by a robust governance framework

Objectives:

CS1: Develop a workforce competent and able to realise our vision

CS2: Ensure services meet the needs of all local communities through inclusive consultation and communication

CS3: Ensure value for money and maximise investment in front line services

Headline performance targets

- Reduce the incidence of staff sickness from 9.7 days lost per person to 6 days per person per annum during 2006
- Ensure Cheshire is in the top 25% of all Fire & Rescue Services in all national performance indicators that demonstrate the workforce is representative of the community it serves
- Reduce accidents and injuries in the workplace by 10% by 2007
- Remove all barriers to the recruitment to wholetime positions from within the retained duty system during 2006
- Achieve a score of 3 in the CPA 'Use of Resources' judgement
- Achieve 'Gershon' efficiency targets and redploy savings into front-line service priorities as detailed in the action plan
- Achieve the national Fire & Rescue Service target for e-governance and achieve recognised accessibility standards for online services
- Achieve level 3 in the Local Equalities Standard by 2007
- Achieve 72% customer satisfaction in the 2006/07 general user satisfaction survey
- Reduce paper consumption by 10% by 2007

Key projects for 2006/07

The 'Golden Plait of Improvement': It is impossible for an effective organisation to consider its planning, performance and use of resources as separate issues. Unless they are tightly interwoven (plaited) and seen as interdependent rather than independent, a seamless route to continuous improvement will be impossible to achieve.

During 2006/07 one of our major priorities is to embed what we are calling the 'Golden Plait of Improvement'.

Business continuity (Civil Contingencies Act 2004): In addition to our responsibilities as an emergency service under the Act, we are required to produce and exercise a Business Continuity Plan to ensure we are able to perform our functions in the event of an emergency. Our Plan has been drafted and we will refine it during 2006 as we learn from our experience in exercising it.

Similarly, our Industrial Relations Protocol ensures we are able to maintain our services if industrial action has an impact on our own resources. Our aim is to become self sufficient and not place reliance on the military for emergency cover in the event of industrial action.

Risk management: Our risk management approach, methodology and documentation is good and consistently applied. However, we believe we can improve the link to our financial planning and our appraisal of priorities in 2006-07.

Value for money (VFM): In 2006/7, however, we intend to mainstream VFM in the organisation through: Devolving and delegating budgets; Training staff in contract management; Using our family group for comparing unit costs; Widening our market of trusted suppliers; and exploring different models of measuring efficiency and effectiveness.

Embedding Corporate Governance: The fundamental principles of Corporate Governance are integral to the values of the organisation. In 2006, we intend Corporate Governance to feature as one of the main themes of our bespoke management development programme from Watch Manager (or equivalent) to Group Manager (or equivalent).

Customer service standards: In 2006 Customer Service

Standards will be developed to apply to both internal and external 'customers'.

Local terms, conditions and procedures:

Under the new "Grey Book", the Authority now has significantly more flexibility to negotiate local terms and conditions for staff within a national framework to better enable the achievement of our objectives. Ultimately we aim to achieve harmonisation of the whole workforce as far as permissible.

Asset management: Our redevelopment strategy looks to maximise the development potential of a number of our sites to finance a programme of new build and refurbishment of all of our fire stations. The practical changes carried out at stations through the refurbishment programme will also support the Authority's commitment to modernisation and projects such as the move to a 'wakeful watch'.

Communications and technology: Key issues during 2006/07 include the better use of technology and introduction of online services to allow residents and businesses to improve fire safety and reduce risks at home and at work. In addition, the Service's website will be developed to ensure it meets recognised accessibility standards.

Learning and development: During 2006, we will lead an implementation of the revised National Firefighter Selection Process in our recruitment, adoption of the National Leadership and the Learning and Development Strategy and we will focus on succession planning as the 2007 / 08 retirement peak approaches.



Corporate Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan 2006/07

S U M M A R Y

Introduction

This summary leaflet highlights the key themes and issues contained in this year's Corporate Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan.

It is intended to increase awareness of the organisation's aims, objectives and targets for the next 12 months among all staff. It is also expected that it will be used to start discussion and debate on potential proposals for future plans.

Themes

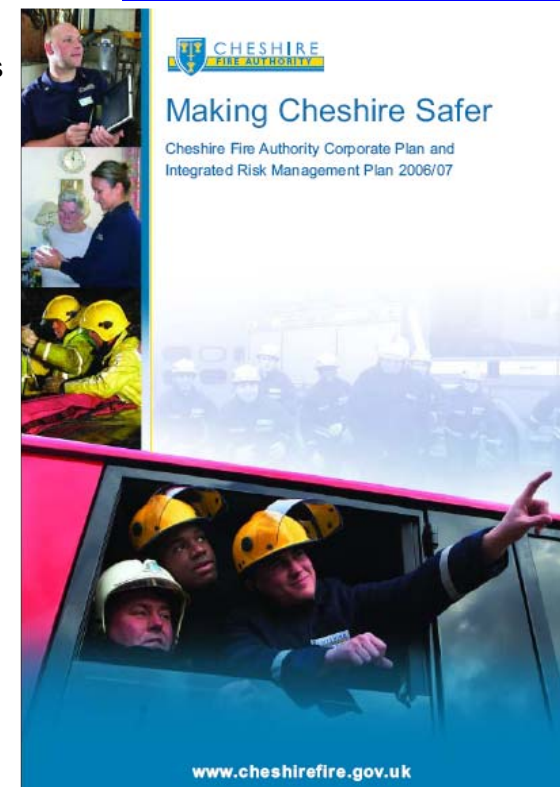
This year's Plan is first to be produced in the organisation's new name of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service. The reason for the name change is to highlight the far greater responsibilities the Service now has and this is one of the main themes of this year's Plan.

The key new responsibility is obviously the increasing need for us to play our part as an emergency response on a local, regional, national and international basis to the twin threats of terrorism and climate change.

There are also formal new responsibilities under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to attend emergencies other than just fires such as road traffic collisions, chemical emergencies and major accident hazards.

Not only do we now have a duty to attend a wider range of emergencies, we also have a responsibility to try to prevent them. To achieve these wider goals for community safety we will have to work more closely with other public, private and voluntary sector bodies – and local communities - and persuade them to act on our behalf.

This change of emphasis means that the organisation has shifted from simply emergency response to greater community leadership and involvement. That requires all parts of the organisation to support each other and play their part, which is why for the first time this year's document also includes the corporate plan.



Corporate vision, mission and values

Our vision is about where we want to be; our mission is about what we want to do; our values are about how we do it.

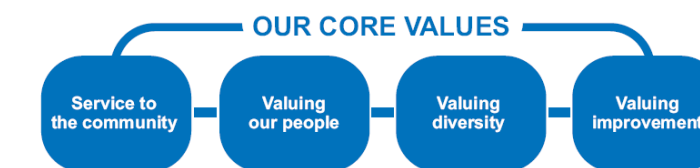
The focus of Cheshire Fire Authority remains clear - to make Cheshire a safer place and to deliver our vision of 'zero preventable deaths'.

This Plan is the key strategic document which sets out our future aims, objectives, priorities, the resources needed to deliver these priorities and the targets to measure our progress.

We also have to show continuing value for money and demonstrate our commitment to communicate and consult with local residents, businesses and other partners, so they can influence the way their fire and rescue service develops.

The charts on the following pages demonstrate in more detail how the three functions of Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Emergency Response (ER), and Corporate Services (CS) will contribute to the achievement of the objectives.

Our Core Values



Establishing effective values plays a major part in providing our Service with a clear and consistent picture of what we are all about.

Emergency Response

Aim:
Respond effectively to emergency incidents

Objectives :

ER 1: Deploy emergency teams according to risk

ER 2: Deal effectively with emergency incidents

Headline performance targets

- Achieve good or better performance in operational assurance under the second round of Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- Achieve the Cheshire standards of Emergency Response overall on 90% of occasions
- Meet the Cheshire 'Resilience' standard on 95% of occasions
- Ensure all stations achieve the 'turn-out' time standard on 90% of occasions
- Reduce the number of fires that spread beyond the room of origin from 0.6 to 0.4 per 1,000 properties by 2008
- Attain the use of the strategic reserve for ER, CRR and training / exercising on 90% of occasions
- Reduce the incidence of malicious hoax calls by 20% by 2008
- Maintain Station minimum crewing levels on 90% of occasions

Key projects for 2006/07

Review of fire stations: In previous IRMPs we have said that we would review the provision of stations at Northwich, Middlewich and Winsford and examine the staffing at Birchwood and Wilmslow.

Since then there have been a number of major changes, with the Authority committing to a major redevelopment package. As a result we will use data and computer analysis to carry out a fundamental review of the provision and distribution of all of our stations.

One of our most important innovations in this IRMP will be the creation of a virtual fire station – Station 29. This will be a mixed crewed station providing a virtual base for a number of wholtime staff in the form of a central resource. The appliances aligned to Station 29 will include the Service's Reserve Fleet (when not in use), three Targeted Response Vehicles (TRVs), and the fire bike.

New appliances: We intend to investigate the implications and risks associated with expanding the use of TRVs as a second appliance on at least one station – most likely a day crewing station.

We also intend to re-visit the issue of dual purpose, aerial appliances and this will feature in the work on response standards.

We will conclude the work on "fire bikes" and the joint road traffic unit 'Rescue 1' and decide whether or how to proceed.

CCTV on appliances: We will continue our programme of installing CCTV cameras on specific appliances and work with the police to prosecute offenders.

Inland water rescue: During 2006/07 we will formally review both the resources and the working arrangements for the water rescue service and establish new standards.

Operational rigour and assurance: A new audit and in-



spection system will lead to an assessment of operational assurance against the national model and ensure that our systems and procedures are appropriate and that all relevant officers are trained and experienced in the command of major incidents.

Civil contingencies and the terrorist threat: The Authority will continue to carry out its new duties and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) 2004. It has taken a leading role in the Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Local Resilience Forum – a new body set up to co-ordinate the plans and activities of all of the key 'Category One'

public authorities. It has already led the project to establish the area's first Community Risk Register.

Innovations in emergency response: We already use volunteers and an extended fire family for our own safety activity, but believe there is now scope for working more closely with other agencies in areas of low risk firefighting. In this IRMP we want to evaluate the ability to use Community Safety, Highways Agency officers and community wardens as "small fire responders".

Co-Responding: In the life of this IRMP we will enhance the level of training in trauma care as a necessary step towards co-responding with colleagues in the Ambulance Service. Our expectation is that we will go live with a co-responding pilot within the next year.

Working with commercial partners

We intend to evaluate a partnership with a commercial partner to provide a better service for the clean up operation after a serious fire in a commercial premises.

Community Risk Reduction

Aim:
Improve community safety by risk reduction

CRR 1
Prevent dangerous anti-social and careless behaviour

CRR 2
Protect life, property and other interests

Headline Performance Targets

- Reduce the number of accidental fire-related deaths in the home by 20% averaged over the period 1999—2010
- Achieve a 10% reduction in deliberate fires by 31 March 2010
- Reduce the numbers of unwanted fire signals from automatic fire alarm systems by 6% in 2006/07
- Target and deliver over 40,000 home safety assessments each year and ensure that smoke detectors are fitted to those homes identified as being at greatest risk
- Carry out Fire Safety Order risk assessment audits to premises identified as very high and high risk
- Reduce the numbers of fire-related incidents in non-domestic properties to no more than 21.43 per 1,000 properties in 2006/07
- Increase the number of volunteers working on community safety risk reduction issues by 100% based on the 2005/06 baseline (a minimum of another 100 volunteers)
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Cheshire's roads (excluding motorways) by 44% by 2008 through a partnership agreement with others

Key projects for 2006/07

Home Safety Assessment (HSAs): In support of our goal of "zero preventable fire deaths", we aim to complete over 40,000 HSAs a year. Specific 'at risk groups' will be targeted by location. Between 2006 and 2008 the Service and our partners will concentrate on the over 65's in this group.

Community Profiling: We have bought extra data sets and begun a data sharing project with the Cheshire and Warrington Information Consortium (CWIC). We will continue to further refine our analysis and move responsibility to Community Risk Reduction.

Post incident scene management: We are developing a more sophisticated approach to the way we collect and interpret information during our investigations after fires and other emergencies.

Outreach fire station: We plan to extend the use of our three units in enabling us to reach out into communities and to deliver joined up initiatives.

Developing our volunteer strategy: We intend to achieve a 100% increase in the number of volunteers engaged. We also intend to appoint co-ordinators and volunteers for issues such as disability groups, minority communities and older people.

Deliberate fires (Arson): We intend to separate incidents we can truly classify as arson from those that are more accurately nuisance incidents. This will enable us to target our resources and efforts more efficiently.

Kooldown/Get Up and Get Out (GUGO): A partnership bid in conjunction with Cheshire County Council has won £1 million from the Government's Invest to Save Fund which will be used to develop a "Respect" programme of further work with young people.

Princes Trust: We will continue to explore alternative funding opportunities and will review the range of our young people's programmes to ensure they address local



needs and satisfy national priorities.

Young offenders cadet unit: Cheshire's pilot project to set up a fire cadet unit in the Thorn Cross Young Offenders' Institute at Warrington is the only one of its kind in Europe. A full-time post, funded by Thorn Cross, will develop this initiative in 2006/07.

Fire Cadets: We believe that during the life of this IRMP we will achieve our major

goal of a fire cadet unit at every single fire station. We intend to support this growth by providing administrative support in 06/07.

New priorities - "vulnerable people": Our review of community risk profiles has shown that we need to focus more on reducing risk to 'vulnerable people' - older people (60yrs +) and those with sensory, physical or mental disabilities. We intend to redirect one station manager and two youth support officers and employ a new 'vulnerable persons' programme manager to this area .

Road traffic collision reduction: We have taken the lead role in the Cheshire Partnership LPSA2 target of reducing death and injury from road collisions. We have appointed a full-time project co-ordinator to support our Road Safety Unit, and will now promote educational joint campaigns to respond to local concerns on road deaths.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005: This comes in to force in October, 2006 and is one of the most significant ever changes in business safety legislation.

A prioritised programme has been devised to raise awareness among the business community and to ensure that the introduction of the Order does not lead to increased fires and financial losses in Cheshire. The work involves making best use of new technology both locally and nationally to provide businesses with online access to help, support and guidance.