

AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB GOGLEDD CYMRU



NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

A meeting of the **NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY** will be held on **MONDAY 19 OCTOBER 2026** virtually **via Zoom** at **09:30**.

Please note, there will be a Cyber Security Training Session delivered ahead of this meeting, commencing at **09:00hrs**

Yours faithfully,
Gareth Owens, Clerk

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Notice of Urgent Matters
(Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972)
4. Minutes of the Fire Authority Meeting held on 20 July 2026
5. Wildfire and activity Report, for assurance

Standing Agenda Items

6. Chair's Report, for information
7. Hwb Awen Training Centre Update, for information
8. Culture Champions update, for assurance

Items for Consideration

9. Budget Setting 2027/28 (first draft), for assurance
10. Quarterly Provisional Outturn Report Q1 and Q2, for assurance
11. Draft Community Risk Management Plan and Implementation Plan 2027/28, for approval to consult
12. Prevention in Action Case Study Presentation
13. Annual Gender Pay Gap Report 2025/26, for approval

14. Constitution, for approval

Reports Previously Considered by Audit Committee, Executive Panel and Local Pension Board

15. Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26, for approval

16. Urgent Matters

(To consider any items which the Chair has decided are urgent (pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972) and of which substance has been declared under item 2 above)

- Draft Supplementary Remuneration Report – Fire and Rescue Authorities (verbal update)

PART II

It is recommended pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 12 to 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

17. Appointment of Chief Fire Officer, for ratification

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority** held on **Monday 20 July 2026** virtually via **Teams**. Meeting commenced at **09.30**.

Councillor

Dylan Rees (Chair)
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)
Bryan Apsley
Tina Claydon
Paul Cunningham (left 10:30)
Ann Davies
Jeff Evans
Chrissy Gee
Ian Hodge
Alan Hughes
Chris Hughes
John Brynmor Hughes
Gareth R Jones
John Ifan Jones
Charlie McCoubrey
Gwynfor Owen (left 11:03)
Beverley Parry-Jones (left 11:30)
Arwyn Herald Roberts
Austin Roberts
Rondo Roberts
Gareth Sandilands
Dale Selvester
Gareth Williams (left 10:28)
Siân Williams (left 10:19)
Antony Wren

Representing

Anglesey County Council
Denbighshire County Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Flintshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Denbighshire County Council
Anglesey County Council
Flintshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Denbighshire County Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Gwynedd Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Anglesey County Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Gwynedd Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Gwynedd Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Gwynedd Council
Gwynedd Council
Flintshire County Council

Also present:

Dawn Docx
Justin Evans
Helen MacArthur
Anthony Jones
Dafydd Edwards
Gareth Owens
Matt Powell
Elgan Roberts
Steve Morris
Llinos Evans
Heledd Davies
Ffion Evans
Lisa Allington

Chief Fire Officer (CFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Treasurer
Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Head of Finance and Procurement
Head of ICT
Head of Corporate Communications
Atebol Translation Services
Executive Assistant
Members' Services

1 APOLOGIES

Name	Representing
Paul Rogers	Wrexham County Borough Council
Carol Beard	Conwy County Borough Council

The above apologies were offered and accepted.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1. There were no declarations of interest declared.

3 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

- 3.1 CFO Docx (CFO) advised Members that since the early hours of 12 July 2026, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) had been responding to a number of significant wildfires. A Major Incident had been declared due to the number of simultaneous incidents and the significant demand placed on operational resources, which was stood down again on Monday 13 July 2026.
- 3.2 Crews continued to respond to wildfire incidents across the region, the most significant being near Harlech, and a multi-agency response group had been initiated. Approximately 2,000 acres had been affected, with a fire front spanning around two kilometres. Operational crews continued to take action to limit the spread of the fire with multiple crews in attendance.
- 3.3 Firefighting efforts remained a challenge due to the significant area of land inaccessible by foot or vehicle. The Service was working closely with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to contain the spread of the fire. A request for aerial support has been accepted, and deployment was expected this week, although delays had been experienced due to demand from wildfire incidents elsewhere across the UK. Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) support had also been considered; however, there was currently no military capability available to assist.
- 3.4 The CFO wished to place on record her sincere thanks to firefighters, firefighters Control, corporate teams and partner agencies who had worked tirelessly throughout this period of sustained operational activity.
- 3.5 Members echoed the CFO's comments giving sincere thanks to all staff involved in the response, recognising their dedication, courage and professionalism during this challenging period, and acknowledging the support provided to local communities.

- 3.6 A Member expressed concern regarding limited support from partner agencies and sought assurance on future planning and preparedness in response to the increasing risk of wildfires. The CFO confirmed that multi-agency work in this area continued.

4 MINUTES OF THE NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2026

- 4.1 The minutes of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) meeting held on 20 April 2026 were submitted for approval.
- 4.2 The minutes were proposed as an accurate reflection of the proceedings of the meeting. This was seconded with all in favour.
- 4.3 The Chair referred Members to paragraph 4.3 of the previous minutes regarding proposed changes to Fire and Rescue Authority governance in Wales.
- 4.4 Members noted the previous Welsh Government's proposal to implement revised Fire and Rescue Authority governance arrangements in South Wales first, with Cabinet Members and independent appointees forming the Authority, before extending arrangements across Mid and West Wales and North Wales.
- 4.5 The Chair advised Members that a written statement issued by the Cabinet Secretary on 13 July 2026 confirmed that Commissioners would remain in place in South Wales until after May 2027. Members noted that the statement did not provide any update on future governance arrangements for Mid and West Wales or North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.
- 4.6 CFO Docx (CFO) advised Members that the Service had been notified of the Cabinet Secretary's statement and had subsequently engaged with Welsh Government officials. Members noted that the revised governance arrangements for all three Fire and Rescue Authorities are now expected to be implemented simultaneously in July 2027. It was also anticipated that the appointment of additional members would be deferred until 2027.
- 4.7 The Monitoring Officer advised Members that discussions had taken place with their counterparts in South and Mid and West Wales. Members noted that a number of questions remained regarding the proposed governance arrangements, with the governance model yet to be confirmed. The Monitoring Officer emphasised the importance of considering alternative arrangements should further delays arise.

- 4.8 A Member expressed concern on the ongoing uncertainty surrounding future governance arrangements. It was felt that significant questions remained unanswered, and that continued engagement with the Cabinet Secretary was needed to emphasise the importance of providing clarity and progressing the proposed changes.
- 4.9 The Monitoring Officer advised Members that the new Fire and Rescue Authority would comprise nine members, including six Cabinet Members. Members noted that the Authority's membership was not expected to be confirmed until June 2027.
- 4.10 The Chair provided Members with an update on paragraph 11.3 of the previous minutes. Members were advised by ACFO MacArthur that the Grey Book pay award had been agreed at 3.8% and had been processed in the July payroll. Negotiations on the Green Book pay award remained ongoing.
- 4.11 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) **Approve the FRA minutes from 20 April 2026 as a true and correct record of the meeting held.**

5 CHAIR'S REPORT

- 5.1 It was noted that a written paper had been provided to Members to inform them on the meetings and events attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority in their official capacities between April and June 2026.
- 5.2 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) **Note the information provided within the paper.**

6 HWB AWEN TRAINING CENTRE UPDATE

- 6.1 ACFO Evans delivered the Hwb Awen Training Centre paper which updated Members on the key risks associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project, the mitigations in place, and the actions underway to secure funding and maintain appropriate programme control.
- 6.2 Members noted that the Service had been unable to secure all required funding for the Hwb Awen project from a single source. As a result, a blended funding approach is being explored, including grant funding, low-interest borrowing and capital contributions from partners.
- 6.3 Members were advised that no funding commitment was being sought at this stage; however, should external funding opportunities not materialise, alternative options, including potential support from Local Authorities, would be brought back for consideration through the Authority's established budget scrutiny and budget-setting processes.

- 6.4 ACFO Evans assured Members that the project was being progressed by an experienced team, with a continued focus on managing risks and protecting the Authority's financial position.
- 6.5 The Chair noted that a number of Members had attended the Service's Benefit Workshop and commented on the positive experience. ACFO Evans advised that over 40 partner agencies were present, providing valuable opportunities to strengthen relationships and improve understanding of how the Service can support partner organisations and work collaboratively.
- 6.6 The Members' Champion for the Training Centre Project provided further assurance to Members that they would continue to receive timely updates as the project progresses through the next stages of governance and procurement. Appreciation to the staff and project team for their ongoing work and commitment in supporting the Hwb Awen project was also expressed.
- 6.7 A Member raised concerns regarding the financing of the project and sought assurance on how the remaining funding requirements would be met without relying on contributions from Local Authorities.
- 6.8 ACFO MacArthur acknowledge members concerns and provided further assurance that budget scrutiny working group work had dedicated a specific meeting to reviewing detailed financial modelling for the Training Centre project. Members were advised that all funding options were being thoroughly evaluated and that this work would inform future budget proposals, which would continue to be considered through the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.
- 6.9 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) **Note the current risks and mitigations associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project;**
 - ii) **Note the proposed adjustment to the programme to allow additional time for funding and stakeholder engagement; and**
 - iii) **Note that no funding commitment is sought at this stage, but that future proposals may be brought for Members consideration if external funding routes cannot be secured.**

7 BIODIVERSITY ANNUAL UPDATE

- 7.1 Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement, delivered the biodiversity annual update to Members and outlined progress towards achieving the Authority's goals set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan (2025-2028) (the Plan).

7.2 Members noted that the Biodiversity Action Plan, approved in October 2025, continued to progress well. Five actions had been completed, with work underway on the further five actions. Members recorded they're thanks to the Environment and Climate Change Manager and the wider team for their work in delivering the Plan.

7.3 **RESOLVED to:**

i) **Note the progress made towards the Authority's biodiversity goals.**

8 ESTATES STRATEGY

8.1 Elgan Roberts presented the Estates Strategy 2026-36 to Members for their awareness.

8.2 Members noted that the Estates Strategy set out a ten-year framework for the modernise and investment of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (the Service) estate, ensuring facilities remain safe, inclusive, operationally effective and environmentally sustainable.

8.3 Members noted that the long-standing Facilities Service Level Agreement with North Wales Police would conclude by mutual agreement in March 2027, marking the end of a successful partnership that had delivered significant benefits to both organisations. Elgan Roberts took the opportunity to thank colleagues at North Wales Police for their professionalism, commitment and support throughout the partnership.

8.4 Members noted the importance of the progression of the Hwb Awen Training Centre project, which remained the Service's preferred long-term solution for meeting its training and infrastructure requirements.

8.5 The Chair noted that a third of the Service's estate required repair or replacement works and sought assurance on the significance of this figure, including how it compared with other Fire and Rescue Services.

8.6 Elgan Roberts provided Members with assurance that the identified works were not considered urgent or critical from a health and safety perspective but were required to ensure the estate remained fit for purpose and in good condition for the future.

8.7 CFO Docx advised Members that the condition of ageing estates was a challenge faced by Fire and Rescue Authorities across the UK.

8.8 Members noted that, unlike many public sector organisations, Fire and Rescue Authorities did not receive a dedicated capital allocation, meaning that estate improvements and maintenance had historically been funded through revenue budgets.

8.9 **RESOLVED to:**

i) **Endorse the Estates Strategy for 2026-2036.**

9 ANNUAL WELSH LANGUAGE MONITORING REPORT 2025/26

9.1 Natalie Jones, Welsh Language Officer, delivered the Annual Welsh Language Monitoring Report for 2025/26 which outlined North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (the Service) compliance with Welsh Language Standards 155, 161, and 167.

9.2 Members noted that no formal complaints were received during the reporting period, which was a very positive outcome and reflected the Service's continued commitment to providing Welsh language services.

9.3 Members noted an increase in demand for Welsh language services and recognised the importance of continuing to develop and provide bilingual services to meet the needs of communities across North Wales.

9.4 Members noted that 90.9% of staff possessed Welsh language skills at Level 1 or above, reflecting the Service's continued commitment to developing Welsh language capacity across the organisation.

9.5 The Chair welcomed the report, noting the positive progress made across a number of areas, and recorded their appreciation of the continued improvements and achievements reflected within the report.

9.6 A Member commended Officers for their positive attitude and commitment to the Welsh language, recognising the important contribution this makes to promoting and supporting bilingual service delivery across the organisation.

9.7 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Approve the Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report for 2025/26 for publication on the Authority's website; and**
- ii) **Note the Service's intention to publicise the document as noted in Standards 155,161,167. Publication will be on the Service website and corporate social media accounts (namely Facebook and Instagram).**

10 ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT PROGRESS REPORT 2025/26

- 10.1 CFO Docx presented the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Performance Assessment Report 2025/26 and sought approval for its publication in line with statutory and organisational commitments.
- 10.2 The report provided an overview of progress against the Service's five-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and demonstrated how the Service has continued to embed inclusivity into its organisational culture, improve workforce diversity, and deliver inclusive services to communities.
- 10.3 The report also highlighted partnership work and actions taken in response to the Independent Culture Review, reinforcing the commitment to creating a workplace where everyone can thrive.
- 10.4 CFO Docx highlighted a correction to paragraph 10 of the cover report, confirming that the mean gender pay gap had reduced from 8.29% to 7.23%.
- 10.5 The Chair welcomed the report, noting the wide range of positive initiatives and good practice taking place across the Service.
- 10.6 Members noted that the report had previously been considered by the Executive Panel at its meeting on 15 June 2026.
- 10.7 **RESOLVED to:**
 - i) **Approve the publication of the Annual EDI Report 2025/26 on the Service's website.**

11 PENSIONS ARRANGEMENTS

- 11.1 ACFO MacArthur summarised the content of Firefighter's Pension Scheme paper which considered the current operating model for firefighter pensions across Wales and highlighted opportunities for collaboration to improve the effectiveness and resilience of the arrangements.
- 11.2 Members noted that the report had been endorsed by the Local Pension, who noted the principle of improvement whilst retaining local accountability and engagement.
- 11.3 ACFO MacArthur provided assurance that steps had already been taken to strengthen the Service's resilience and support the effective management of pension-related responsibilities.
- 11.4 Members noted that the Local Pension Board had endorsed a collaborative tri-Service approach across Wales. The proposed arrangement aimed to improve effectiveness, strengthen

organisational resilience and deliver greater consistency for pension scheme members across the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services.

11.5 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve the Local Pension Board endorsement of the proposal to establish a tri-service workstream for collaboration across Wales to consider opportunities to improve effectiveness and resilience of pension functions.**

12 THE SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP DUTY – ANNUAL REPORT

12.1 ACFO Jones presented the Social Partnership Duty Annual Report for 2025/26 and sought approval for the submission of the same to the Social Partnership Council for scrutiny and to publish the report on the Fire and Rescue Authority's website.

12.2 Members noted that the Chair and Chief Fire Officer had been attending Social Partnership Forum meetings on a regular basis, which had previously been chaired by the former Cabinet Secretary. Members were advised that the Service is awaiting confirmation from the Welsh Government's new administration on whether these meetings will continue in the future.

12.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve the Annual Social Partnership Duty Report for submission to the Social Partnership Council for scrutiny and publication on the Authority's website.**

13 PERFORMANCE MONITORING, APRIL 2025 TO MARCH 2026

13.1 ACFO Jones delivered the Performance Monitoring Report for April 2025 to March 2026 and noted that the performance measures reflected the five key principles outlined in the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) for the 2025/26 financial-year and included commentary on emerging trends and future actions. Key data within the report was highlighted.

13.2 The Chair welcomed the report, highlighting a number of positive outcomes, particularly the improvement in the success rate of targeted Safe and Well Checks for those identified as being at high risk.

13.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the content of the Performance Monitoring Report.**

14 HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT OPINION AND ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

- 14.1 ACFO MacArthur summarised the content of the Head of Internal Audit Opinion and Annual Report 2025/26 and advised that the Authority is required annually to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of Internal Control. Internal Audit was an integral part of that system and a significant contributor to the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).
- 14.2 Members noted that the report had already been considered by the Audit Committee at the meeting held on 15 June 2026.
- 14.3 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) Endorse the content of the Head of Audit and Procurement's Annual Report and the overall 'opinion' upon the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's framework of governance, risk management and control.**

15 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

- 15.1 ACFO Jones summarised the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 and confirmed that this had been produced in line with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.
- 15.2 Members noted that the report had already been considered by the Audit Committee at the meeting held on 15 June 2026.
- 15.3 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) Note the final Annual Governance Statement, and:**
 - ii) Agree the proposed actions for 2026/27**

16 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2025/26

- 16.1 ACFO MacArthur presented the Annual Statement of Accounts 2025/26 as well the findings of the Auditor General for Wales which confirmed an unqualified audit opinion, subject to completion of the outstanding audit work.
- 16.2 Members noted that the draft Statement of Accounts had been presented to the Audit Committee for scrutiny and was subsequently endorsed by the Executive Panel at its meeting on 15 June 2026.
- 16.3 Members noted that, while the accounts process had not yet been completed, good progress continued to be made. The financial position remained stable and consistent with that presented in the report considered at today's meeting.

16.4 Members noted that approval of the final Statement of Accounts had been delegated to the Audit Committee.

16.5 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Note the audited outturn position and performance as detailed within the 2025/26 Statement of Accounts (Appendix 1);**
- ii) **Note the report of the Auditor General for Wales which confirms an unqualified audit opinion (Appendix 2); and**
- iii) **Confirm the recommendation of approval of the final audited 2025/26 Statement of Accounts, subject to no material changes.**
- iv) **If material changes are required approve delegation to Audit Committee and exec panel in September.**

17 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2025/26

17.1 Elgan Roberts delivered the Treasury Management Outturn Report 2025/26, the purpose of which was to provide Members of the Authority with an update on the treasury management activity and compliance with the treasury management prudential indicators for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.

17.2 Members noted that the report had been considered and scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 15 June 2026.

17.3 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Approve the treasury management activities and prudential indicators for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.**

18 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

18.1 Matt Powell, Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer, presented to Members the Standards Committee Annual Report for 2025/26. This report included a summary of the Standards Committee work during the financial year 2025/26.

18.2 Members noted that the annual report for 2025/26 would not be considered by the Executive Panel or Audit Committee.

18.3 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Receive and note the Annual Report for 2025/26; and**
- ii) **Request that the Clerk or Deputy Clerk provide a copy of the Annual Report to the PSOW.**

19 PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND LOCAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

19.1 Matt Powell summarised the proposed updates to the Members Code of Conduct and Local Resolution Procedure (LRP) and sought approval to make updates to the Constitution to reflect these changes.

19.2 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve the changes to the LRP and the Code of Conduct as identified in Appendices 1 and 2; and**
- ii) Request that the Clerk or Deputy Clerk arrange to amend the constitution to give effect to these changes.**

20 URGENT MATTERS

20.1 As announced at the start of the meeting, the Draft Supplementary Remuneration Report was brought to the attention of the Authority as an urgent matter. The content of this report was summarised verbally by Gareth Owens, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, and suggesting a daily rate for councillors based on WG model for assessing.

20.2 Members noted that the proposed governance model would differ from the current arrangements. It was further noted that the Democracy and Boundary Commission was proposing a revised remuneration structure, comprising of a daily rate for both councillor and appointed members.

20.3 The Clerk/Monitoring Officer advised Members that the proposed arrangements were likely to require a greater level of administration and supporting documentation. Members noted that the Fire and Rescue Authority may need to develop local conventions and processes to determine remuneration for attendance at meetings and the undertaking of various roles and functions.

20.4 The Clerk/Monitoring Officer informed Members that there was a deadline for responding to the consultation. Following discussions with the CFO and Section 151 Officer, it was considered appropriate for the Authority to submit a response.

20.5 Members noted that delegated authority would be sought for the Chief Fire Officer, Section 151 Officer and Clerk/Monitoring Officer to prepare and submit the response on behalf of the Authority. The response would subsequently be circulated to all Members.

20.6 The Chair emphasised that all Members should have the opportunity to review the report and provide feedback before any formal response was submitted on behalf of the Authority.

20.7 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve delegation that the Chief Fire Officer, Section 151 Officer, Clerk/Monitoring Officer and the Chair of the Fire Authority prepare the response to the DBCC in relation to future remuneration.**

Meeting concluded 11:47hrs

Members and Officers were thanked for their participation.

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the **Annual General Meeting** of the **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority** held on **Monday 20 July 2026** virtually via **Zoom**. Meeting commenced at **09:00**.

Councillor

Dylan Rees (Chair)
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)
Bryan Apsley
Tina Claydon
Paul Cunningham
Ann Davies
Jeff Evans
Chrissy Gee
Ian Hodge
Alan Hughes
Chris Hughes
John Brynmor Hughes
Gareth R Jones
John Ifan Jones
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Beverley Parry-Jones
Arwyn Herald Roberts
Austin Roberts
Rondo Roberts
Gareth Sandilands
Dale Selvester
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Representing

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Wrexham County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Gwynedd Council
Gwynedd Council
Flintshire County Council

Also present:

Dawn Docx
Justin Evans
Helen MacArthur
Anthony Jones
Dafydd Edwards
Gareth Owens
Matt Powell
Elgan Roberts
Steve Morris
Llinos Evans
Heledd Davies
Ffion Evans
Lisa Allington

Chief Fire Officer (CFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Treasurer
Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Head of Finance and Procurement
Head of ICT
Head of Corporate Communications
Atebol Translation Services
Executive Assistant
Members' Services

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2026/27

1.1 The Clerk to the Authority invited nominations for the position of Chair of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority). A nomination was received from Cllr Mark Young for Cllr Dylan Rees which was seconded by Cllr Gareth Sandilands.

1.2 An vote was held with 25 Members in favour and no abstentions. Cllr Dylan Rees was therefore elected as Chair of the Authority with immediate effect.

1.3 RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllr Dylan Rees be appointed as Chair to the Authority for the year 2026-27.**

2 APOLOGIES

Name	Representing
Paul Rogers	Wrexham County Borough Council
Carol Beard	Conwy County Borough Council

The above apologies were offered and accepted. Cllr Siân Williams was welcomed to her first meeting of the Authority.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest to record.

4 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR 2026/27

4.1 The newly elected Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Chair of the Authority. A nomination was received from Cllr Arwyn Hearld Roberts for Cllr Mark Young which was seconded by Cllr Gareth Sandilands.

4.2 An online vote was held with 25 Members in favour and no abstentions. Cllr Mark Young was therefore elected as Deputy Chair to the Authority with immediate effect.

4.3 RESOLVED that:

- i) Cllr Mark Young be appointed as Deputy Chair to the Authority for the year 2026-27;**

5 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF AUDIT COMMITTEE 2026/27

- 5.1 The Chair invited nominations for the position of Chair to the Audit Committee. A nomination was received from Cllr Tina Claydon for Cllr Gareth Sandilands which was seconded by Cllr Mark Young.
- 5.4 An online vote was held with 25 Members in favour and no abstentions. Cllr Gareth Sandilands was therefore elected as Chair of the Audit Committee with immediate effect.
- 5.5 **RESOLVED that:**
- i) **Cllr Gareth Sandilands be appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee 2026/27;**

6 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR OF AUDIT COMMITTEE 2026/27

- 6.1 The Chair invited nominations for the position of Deputy Chair to the Audit Committee. A nomination was received from Cllr Gareth Sandilands for Cllr Tina Claydon which was seconded by Cllr Jeff Evans.
- 6.2 An online vote was held with 25 Members in favour and no abstentions. Cllr Tina Claydon was therefore elected as Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee with immediate effect.
- 6.2 **RESOLVED that:**
- ii) **Cllr Tina Claydon be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee 2026/27;**

7 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

- 7.1 No notices of urgent matters had been received.

8 MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY INCORPORATING APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES

- 8.1 The Clerk delivered the paper in relation to the membership of the Authority incorporating Appointments to Committees and External Bodies. This paper invited Members to note membership of the Authority and its committees which had changed from the previous year. It also noted the outside appointments such as the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Local Government Association (LGA).
- 8.2 It was noted that there had been four membership changes to the Authority since the previous year. There was also a recommendation to temporarily increase the number of Independent Members on the Standards Committee, should sufficient applicants be received, in order to save further recruitment next year.

8.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Confirm membership of the Authority, appointments to committees and external appointments; and**
- ii) Agree to temporarily increase the number of Independent Member seats on the Standards Committee should sufficient applicants be available.**

9 MEETING DATES 2026/27

9.1 The Clerk presented to Members the meeting dates for the year 2026-27. It was noted that where possible, local authorities had agreed to avoid clashes of council meetings with full Authority meetings.

9.2 RESOLVED to:

- i) Agree the dates for meetings of the full Authority, Executive Panel and Audit Committee.**

10 MEMBERS' REMUNERATION SCHEME

10.1 The Clerk delivered the Members' Remuneration Scheme paper which informed them of the current rates of member remuneration and asked that they formally approve the schedule of payments made during the financial year 2025/26.

10.2 The Clerk noted that an urgent item on remuneration had been requested for the next meeting, as rates of pay for the new authority will need to be considered following the May 2027 elections.

10.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the DBCC's determinations in relation to members' allowances and remuneration with effect from 1 April 2026;**
- ii) Give delegated authority to the Clerk to update the schedule of member remuneration within the Authority's constitution and to make any necessary amendments to the 2026/27 schedule from time to time during the municipal year, in order to reflect any changes in membership of the Authority, or as a result of any supplementary reports issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales; and**
- iii) To approve the schedule of payments made during 2025/26 as required by the DBCC**

11 URGENT MATTERS

11.1 There were no urgent matters to consider.

Members and Officers were thanked for their participation.

Meeting closed: 09.24hrs

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Chief Fire Officer, Dawn Docx
Contact Officer	
Subject	Wildfire Activity Report - Summer 2026



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with assurance on the significant wildfire activity experienced across North Wales during summer 2026, the operational and multi-agency response, the effect on communities and resources, and the priorities for future preparedness and resilience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 From 12 July 2026, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) responded to multiple significant wildfires, including major incidents at Conwy Mountain near Capelulo and in the Rhinogydd mountains near Harlech. A major incident was declared because of simultaneous incidents and the potential effect on service delivery. The Conwy Mountain fire affected approximately 230 acres and required a sustained response for more than 48 hours, while the Rhinogydd fire affected approximately 2,000 acres and required a significant multi-agency response over almost two weeks.
- 3 Crews worked in remote and difficult terrain, using natural and constructed firebreaks, specialist wildfire resources and prolonged ground operations. At Conwy Mountain, 36 properties were evacuated as a precaution and residents later returned safely. At Rhinogydd, aerial support was secured through Natural Resources Wales when a suitable aircraft became available. The response was supported by partner agencies and mutual aid from Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services.
- 4 The incidents demonstrated the professionalism and resilience of firefighters, officers, control room staff, support teams, volunteers and partners, while also reinforcing the significance of prevention, training, specialist equipment, welfare, national resilience and aerial support arrangements.

- 5 Organisational learning and the full financial effect continue to be assessed through established governance and budget monitoring arrangements.

OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 6 This paper was presented to the Executive Panel on 21 September 2026. In response to a question about the financial impact, ACFO MacArthur advised Members that indicative costs were currently estimated at approximately £500,000, although final figures had not yet been confirmed. Members were informed that the Welsh Government Emergency Assistance Scheme had been opened, and a claim would be submitted for eligible costs.
- 7 Concerns around deliberate starting of fires were expressed and Members welcomed the proposed UK and Welsh Wildfire Summits due in October 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

- 8 It is recommended that Members:
- i. **Note the scale and impact of the summer 2026 wildfire activity;**
 - ii. **Recognise the contribution of Service personnel, partner agencies, volunteers and local communities; and**
 - iii. **Support continued work to capture learning, strengthen wildfire prevention and resilience, to reflect emerging operational and financial requirements in future planning.**

BACKGROUND

- 9 The Service's risk landscape is changing. Prolonged periods of hot, dry and windy weather are increasing the likelihood that grass and vegetation fires will develop into complex incidents requiring sustained resources. The summer incidents occurred alongside normal emergency response activity and generated significant public, media and political interest.
- 10 A major incident at Conwy Mountain was declared on 12 July and stood down once resources could manage the remaining activity through normal arrangements. Firefighters remained in attendance to monitor conditions and manage hotspots. The Rhinogydd incident developed across remote mountainous terrain near Cwm Bychan Lake, where access by vehicle and on foot was severely limited and the fire threatened areas of forestry and protected habitat.

INFORMATION

- 11 The operational response required specialist wildfire tactics, narrow access vehicles, incident command support, relief crews and sustained attendance. At Conwy Mountain, crews used natural and additional firebreaks to contain a fire front initially reported at around 1,600 metres. The position improved sufficiently for evacuated residents to return home on 13 July, although smoke and smouldering continued and the site was actively monitored for flare-ups.
- 12 At Rhinogydd, firefighters worked closely with Natural Resources Wales to establish and strengthen firebreaks, dampen hotspots and protect surrounding forestry and environmentally sensitive land. The scale and inaccessibility of the site meant that ground operations continued for an extended period. Thirty-six Service crews were involved at Rhinogydd and 22 crews responded to Conwy Mountain over the course of the incidents.
- 13 Strategic and Tactical coordination arrangements supported joint decision-making and the allocation of specialist resources. Natural Resources Wales provided specialist personnel, land-management expertise and heavy machinery. Aerial support was requested through established arrangements and, after availability was affected by high national demand, a helicopter was deployed to assist work in hard-to-reach areas. Aerial assets supported, rather than replaced, the coordinated work of firefighters and partners on the ground.
- 14 Mutual aid from Mid and West Wales and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services helped maintain resilience. Public communications consistently asked people to avoid affected areas, follow road closures and smoke advice, and report visible fire. Residents affected by smoke were advised to remain indoors with windows and doors closed until conditions improved. Support from the Public and the patience of local communities enabled safe operations.
- 15 The Corporate Communications Team maintained regular incident updates and supported the provision of many media interviews and stakeholder briefings. Messages recognised the work of crews and partners, explained the operational value and limitations of aerial support, and avoided speculation about fire causation while investigations continued. The incidents attracted national attention and strengthened the case for a coordinated Wales-wide conversation on wildfire prevention, preparedness and response.

- 16 Prevention remains the most effective means of reducing harm. Public advice focused on avoiding open fires and disposable barbecues, disposing of smoking materials responsibly, taking litter and glass home, staying away from incident grounds and calling 999 promptly from a safe place.
- 17 The incidents provide a substantial evidence base for structured organisational and multi-agency learning. Priority areas include welfare and relief arrangements during prolonged deployments, access to specialist resources, aerial support assurance, incident command, fire control resilience, mutual aid, communications, equipment, training and prevention. The learning should inform operational guidance, exercises and future capability decisions.
- 18 The incidents also reinforce the strategic importance of realistic training and command excellence. Firefighters increasingly need to prepare for large-scale wildfires, flooding and emerging technology risks. Hwb Awen remains relevant to that future capability, although any progression continues to be subject to its separate business case, funding and governance arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The response supported resilient and cohesive communities by protecting life, homes, businesses, infrastructure, agriculture, wildlife and the natural environment. Prevention and partnership activity also support long-term community resilience and the sustainable development principle.
Budget	The incidents generated additional employee, overtime, retained duty, fuel, catering, welfare, vehicle, equipment, consumable and PPE costs. The full financial effect is still being quantified through budget monitoring, and officers are engaging with Welsh Government regarding potential support through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme. No additional funding decision is sought through this report.
Legal	The response was delivered through North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) statutory emergency response and civil contingencies responsibilities. No separate legal decision is required by this report.
Staffing	The prolonged incidents placed significant operational and personal demands on firefighters, officers, fire control and support functions, including many on-call firefighters balancing Service duties with other work and family commitments. Welfare, recovery, competence and resilience requirements will be considered through the review process.
Equalities / Human Rights / Welsh Language	Public information was provided through official channels and should continue to be accessible and bilingual. Future prevention and preparedness work should consider the needs of people affected by smoke, evacuation, rural isolation, disability, health conditions, language and digital exclusion.
Risks	Wildfire remains a significant and evolving strategic risk. Key exposures include simultaneous incidents, prolonged resource commitment, difficult terrain, limited specialist aircraft availability, firefighter welfare, environmental loss, disruption to communities and financial pressure. Mitigation depends on prevention, trained people, appropriate equipment, robust command and control, mutual aid, resilient partnerships, evidence-led aerial support and systematic learning from significant incidents.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Not applicable
Contact Officer	Members Services (members.services@northwalesfire.gov.wales)
Subject	Chair's Report



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This quarterly report provides Members with information on the meetings and events attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority in their official capacities between July and September 2026.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Chair and/or Deputy Chair have attended several meetings and events, both internally and externally on behalf of the Authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3 It is recommended that Members:

I. note the information provided.

OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 4 This report has not previously been considered.

INFORMATION

- 5 In addition to the Authority-related meetings, the Chair and Deputy Chair have met with the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) on a regular basis.
6. On the 11 July the Chair attended the Charity Car wash at Caernarfon Fire Station.
7. On the 15 July both the Chair and the Deputy Chair attended the Hwb Awen Benefits Realisation Workshop at NWFRS H.Q.

8. On the 30 July the Chair attended the funeral of Station Manager Sheryl Teal-Bromley.
9. On the 1st August the Chair attended the Open Day at Bangor Fire Station.
10. On the 19 August the Chair and the Deputy Chair sat on I.D.R.P. Adjudication Panel to deliberate on a Stage Two pensions complaint.
11. On the 20 August both the Chair and the Deputy Chair attended the Denbigh & Flint Show.
12. On the 3 September the Deputy Chair, and the C.F.O. attended a virtual meeting held by Welsh Government officials together with other Welsh Chairs and C.F.O.'s.
13. On the 16 September, the Deputy Chair attended a hybrid meeting of the L.G.A. Fire Commission.
14. On 16-17 September, the Chair attended the WLGA annual conference held in Swansea.
15. On the 24 September, the Chair attended the annual NWFRS awards ceremony held at Venue Cymru.
16. On the 29 September, the Chair attended a Teams meeting with Matt Wellington, Welsh Government Deputy Director for Local Government and Fire policy.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Not relevant.
Budget	Any costs associated with meetings and events attended by members are, reimbursed from the travel and subsistence budget.
Legal	No specific implications arise from approving the recommendation.
Staffing	No specific implications arise from approving the recommendation.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	No specific implications arise from approving the recommendation.
Risks	No specific risks arise from approving the recommendation.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Justin Evans, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Lee Bourne, Area Manager Training and Development
Subject	Hwb Awen Training Centre Project Update



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide members with an update on the progress of the Hwb Awen training centre project and the key activities planned during the next phase of development.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Hwb Awen Training Centre project continues to progress in line with the revised programme approved by the Project Board. Design development, technical assurance and procurement preparation remain on track, with the project continuing to operate within approved tolerances for programme, budget, scope, resources and quality.
- 3 During the reporting period, significant progress has been made in developing the design, undertaking technical assurance reviews, progressing planning activity and preparing for the procurement of a main contractor. The public consultation process has also concluded successfully, generating strong levels of support from stakeholders across North Wales.
- 4 Whilst the project continues to make good progress, affordability remains a key consideration. Work is therefore continuing to identify and develop a range of potential funding options and delivery approaches. The Project Board has also commissioned additional analysis of phased delivery options to ensure that Members are able to consider a range of affordable and deliverable options through the Authority's normal governance and budget-setting arrangements.
- 5 The project remains on track, and no decisions are required from the Authority at this stage regarding construction funding or future levy implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
- i. **note the progress made on the Hwb Awen Training Centre project,**
 - ii. **note the continued focus on affordability and funding options, and**
 - iii. **note the next steps planned, ahead of future reports to the Authority.**

BACKGROUND

- 7 The Hwb Awen Training Centre project was established to replace aging and increasingly constrained training facilities with a modern purpose-built centre capable of meeting current and future operational, training and organisational requirements.
- 8 The project aims to improve operational competence, firefighter safety, leadership development, multi-agency collaboration and workforce wellbeing, whilst ensuring that the Service is equipped to respond effectively to future risks and challenges.
- 9 The Authority has previously approved progression through the initial development and design stages. The project is moving through detailed design, assurance, planning and procurement preparation activities ahead of future decisions regarding construction and funding.

INFORMATION

- 10 The Project Board met on 29 September 2026 and reviewed progress across all aspects of the project. Members were advised that project delivery remains within agreed tolerances and that the revised programme established earlier in the year continues to provide a realistic and achievable route forward.
- 11 Design development has continued throughout the reporting period. The project team remains on course to complete the RIBA Stage 2+ Cost Confidence Report during October. This work is important because it will provide greater certainty around project costs and support future decision-making regarding procurement, affordability and funding.
- 12 Progress has also been made in preparing for procurement. Legal and contractual work relating to the chosen JCT Design and Build approach is continuing and preparations are being made to commence the procurement process once the next stage of assurance and approvals has been completed.

- 13 Planning activity remains on track. The pre-planning assessment has been submitted, and discussions continue with the planning team regarding the most effective route to securing planning permission. Whilst there has been some delay in receiving pre-planning feedback, this is not expected to have a material impact on the overall programme. Technical reviews, including fire engineering assessments, have also been completed and have identified only minor amendments to the developing design.
- 14 The Project Board received updates on independent assurance activity. Gateway reviews are currently underway and will provide further assurance regarding project governance, risk management and delivery arrangements. The findings will be considered by the Project Board as part of the continuing assurance process.
- 15 A significant focus of the September Board discussion was affordability. Members acknowledged that whilst the project continues to progress well and remains within agreed financial parameters, securing an affordable funding solution for construction remains a critical consideration.
- 16 Work is therefore continuing to develop a range of potential funding options. These include consideration of external funding opportunities, borrowing, reserves, capital receipts and potential partnership arrangements. Alongside this work, the Board requested the development of additional phased delivery options and a minimum operational provision to ensure that Members are presented with a clear understanding of the potential choices available should external funding opportunities not materialise as anticipated.
- 17 Members should note that this contingency planning does not represent a change in the project's preferred outcome. The Board remains committed to delivering a fit-for-purpose training centre capable of meeting the long-term needs of the Service. However, the additional work demonstrates a prudent approach to affordability and will ensure that future decisions are informed by a thorough understanding of costs, risks and delivery options.
- 18 The Project Board also considered the results of the public consultation. A total of 222 responses were received from across North Wales, demonstrating strong support for enhanced firefighter training facilities, community benefits, environmental improvements and modern accessible facilities. Feedback also highlighted concerns regarding affordability, travel implications and environmental impacts, which will continue to be addressed through planning, engagement and business case development.

- 19 Engagement activities have continued with local communities, elected representatives and potential partners. The project team has also continued to promote the operational benefits of the facility, particularly in relation to firefighter safety, operational preparedness, incident command development, climate resilience and emerging risks such as wildfires.
- 20 The next phase of activity will focus on completion of the RIBA Stage 2+ Cost Confidence Report, completion of assurance reviews, development of the funding options for consideration through the budget-setting process and progression of planning activity.

IMPLICATIONS

- 21 The project represents a significant strategic investment in the future capability of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Progress made during the reporting period continues to improve confidence in programme delivery whilst ensuring that future decisions are informed by robust evidence and appropriate scrutiny.

Well-being Objectives	The project supports the Authority's Well-being Objectives through investment in workforce development, firefighter safety, community resilience and sustainable public infrastructure. The development also aligns with the long-term and preventative principles of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
Budget	The project remains within its approved development budget and expenditure continues to be managed through established governance arrangements. The principal financial consideration for the project remains the identification of an affordable funding solution for the construction phase. Work is ongoing to explore all viable funding opportunities and delivery options. Members should be assured that no decisions have been made regarding future funding arrangements and no additional financial approvals are being sought through this report. Any future proposals relating to project funding will be considered through the Authority's normal budget-setting process, including detailed consideration through the Member-led Budget Scrutiny Working Group, before being presented to the Authority for decision.
Legal	Legal advice continues to be obtained throughout project development. Legal review work is currently supporting procurement preparation, contractual documentation and planning activity to ensure that the project remains compliant with all relevant requirements.

Staffing	The project will provide significant long-term benefits for operational and support staff through improved training facilities, enhanced learning environments and greater opportunities for workforce development. Staff engagement will continue throughout the development of the project.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Equality, accessibility, human rights and Welsh language considerations continue to be incorporated within the design and development of the facility. The consultation process demonstrated strong support for the provision of modern, accessible facilities and for the continued promotion of Welsh language and culture.
Risks	The most significant risk facing the project remains the availability of sufficient funding to support construction of the preferred scheme. Other key risks include construction cost inflation, planning timescales, procurement risks and maintaining programme certainty as the project progresses through future stages. These risks continue to be actively managed through the Project Board, independent assurance processes and ongoing affordability assessments. The development of phased delivery options and alternative scenarios further strengthens the Authority's ability to respond to changing financial circumstances whilst maintaining a focus on operational need and value for money. At this stage, the Project Board is satisfied that the project remains on track and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage affordability, risk and future decision-making.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officers	Elin Hughes and Tom Weston, Culture Champ
Subject	Cultural Champions Update Report – 12-month update



PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide the Fire Authority with an overview of progress made through the Culture Champion activity and the arrangements established to sustain culture improvement following the CREST Cultural Review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Culture Champion secondments were established in September 2025 to support the Service's response to the CREST Cultural Review. Over the last 12 months, the role has developed from establishing engagement mechanisms and assurance processes into a broader organisational improvement and assurance function, connecting staff voice, leadership, people processes', governance and organisational performance. This has enabled culture improvement activity to move from implementation planning towards measuring impact and embedding sustainable arrangements across the Service.
3. Key achievements include:
 - Monitoring the 28 actions within the Strategic Culture Improvement Plan across six themes, with 14 actions completed and embedded into business as usual by September 2026, with ongoing oversight transferred to relevant action owners.
 - Development and implementation of Culture Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to strengthen monitoring, accountability and organisational assurance.
 - Development and implementation of a two-phase Culture Dashboard, improving transparency of actions and ownership and supporting the integration of KPIs and outcome monitoring.
 - Establishment of direct and recurring routes for staff voice through the Culture Champion mailbox and Siop Siarad visits.
 - Completion of 24 Culture Champion visits across watches, Control and departments, strengthening understanding of staff experience and helping to identify emerging themes and priorities.
 - Supporting the Fire Family Survey Working Group and wider use of staff feedback, culture indicators and organisational data to inform improvement activity.

- Supporting the development, review and implementation of significant organisational policies and strategies, including the Workforce Representation Strategy, promotion process improvements, transfer arrangements and safeguarding developments.
 - Securing and supporting the delivery of Welsh Government funded culture improvement initiatives, strengthening leadership development, organisational learning and workforce capability.
 - Establishment and chairing of the All-Wales Blue Light Culture Improvement Group, bringing together Fire, Police and Ambulance colleagues from across Wales to share learning, benchmark approaches and identify opportunities for collaborative improvement.
 - Strengthening governance, transparency and accountability through regular reporting to the Fire Authority, Culture Improvement Board and other governance committees.
4. The most significant achievement over the last 12 months has been the transition from a project-based response to the CREST Review towards a sustainable framework for cultural improvement. The Service now has established governance arrangements, culture performance indicators, staff engagement mechanisms, survey-based monitoring, action ownership and external benchmarking arrangements that provide a foundation for continual improvement and organisational learning.
 5. The next phase will focus on maintaining this infrastructure through existing governance, performance management and organisational assurance arrangements, with increasing emphasis on outcomes, impact and evidence of sustained cultural change.
 6. Following the conclusion of Tom Weston and Elin Hughes's secondments on 30 September 2026, Ruth Bateman has been appointed as Culture Champion on a six-month internal secondment following a recruitment process. This provides continuity and supports the next phase of delivery of the Strategic Culture Improvement Plan.

OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

7. The information in this report has not been presented previously to Authority members in this consolidated format.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. It is recommended that Members:
 - i. **Note the progress made through the Culture Champion activity over the past 12 months, and the arrangements established to sustain culture improvement, including the Strategic Culture Improvement Plan, Culture KPI Dashboard, staff engagement mechanisms, Fire Family Survey monitoring arrangements and associated governance structures.**
 - ii. **Members are also asked to support the continued monitoring of organisational culture through existing governance arrangements, with future reporting focused increasingly on outcomes, organisational impact and evidence of sustainable improvement.**

INFORMATION

9. The Culture Champion secondments commenced in September 2025 following the CREST Cultural Review and were established to support the Service's cultural improvement programme.
10. Throughout the year, emphasis has been placed on understanding staff experiences and ensuring organisational improvement activity is informed by feedback. This has included station visits, engagement with staff networks, trade union representatives, working groups and formal governance arrangements.
11. A key milestone has been the establishment of monitoring and assurance arrangements to support transparency and accountability. The development of the Culture Dashboard and Culture KPIs has enabled greater transparency and visibility of progress against actions, strengthened organisational oversight and provides a framework for monitoring longer term outcomes.
12. Progress has been achieved across all six themes of the Strategic Culture Improvement Plan. This has included publication of the Workforce Representation Strategy, implementation of a new Discipline Policy, development of improvements to promotion and transfer processes, strengthening of safeguarding arrangements, relaunch of the Peer Support Network and continued development of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.
13. The Culture Improvement Plan has evolved from a mechanism for tracking recommendations into a broader framework for monitoring culture. Through regular engagement with action owners, committee reporting arrangements, KPI development and the introduction of the Culture Dashboard, the Service has strengthened its ability to monitor

progress, identify emerging risks and demonstrate evidence of improvement.

14. Culture improvement activity has also supported wider wellbeing initiatives. During the reporting period, the Peer Support Network was relaunched, safeguarding arrangements were strengthened and workforce wellbeing initiatives continued to develop, including enhanced mental health support provision across the organisation.
15. Culture Champions have provided regular updates through the Fire Authority, Culture Improvement Board, People and Organisational Development Committee and Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee. These arrangements have strengthened transparency and accountability by providing oversight of strategic actions, workforce feedback, emerging culture indicators and organisational learning. They have also supported the development and implementation of significant organisational improvements, including the Workforce Representation Strategy, Discipline Policy, promotion process improvements, safeguarding developments and improved misconduct reporting arrangements.
16. At a national level, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service has taken a leading role in facilitating collaboration between blue light organisations through the All-Wales Blue Light Culture Improvement Group. This work has supported the sharing of learning, benchmarking of approaches and the development of professional networks focused on organisational culture and improvement.
17. A formal handover has been completed to ensure that the infrastructure, relationships, governance arrangements and monitoring systems established during the secondment are retained and embedded within business as usual.
18. The next phase will focus on maintaining momentum, monitoring impact and ensuring that culture remains an integral component of organisational assurance, performance management and continuous improvement arrangements.
19. The secondments of Tom Weston and Elin Hughes concluded on 30 September 2026. Following a recruitment process, Ruth Bateman has been appointed to the Culture Champion role on a six-month internal secondment basis. She will continue to work with the Senior Leadership Team, staff networks, Trade Unions and colleagues across the Service to support delivery of the Strategic Culture Improvement Plan and the embedding of sustainable cultural change.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Culture improvement activity supports a healthy, inclusive and engaged workforce, promoting staff wellbeing, positive working relationships and long-term organisational sustainability.
Budget	Activity has primarily been delivered within existing budgets, supported by Welsh Government funding for specific culture improvement initiatives.
Legal	Supports compliance with employment, equality, and organisational governance requirements.
Staffing	Ongoing culture improvement activity aims to strengthen trust, confidence in leadership, fairness and employee experience, supporting staff wellbeing, retention and organisational effectiveness.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Culture improvement activity promotes dignity, respect, fairness and inclusion. Work undertaken through the Workforce Representation Strategy, staff engagement and policy development supports the Service's commitment to equality, human rights and Welsh Language Standards.
Risks	Maintaining momentum remains essential. Failure to sustain improvement activity or demonstrate progress in response to staff feedback may impact trust, engagement and confidence in leadership. Continued ownership, monitoring and governance oversight will be required to ensure lasting cultural change.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement
Subject	Budget Setting 2027/28



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present Members with the planning assumptions, emerging budget pressures, strategic developments, consultation requirements and timescales underpinning the 2027/28 revenue budget-setting process for North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Authority is required to approve a balanced revenue budget for 2027/28. This report outlines the initial planning assumptions, emerging budget pressures, strategic priorities, risks and uncertainties that will inform the budget-setting process.
- 3 The financial assessment remains at an early stage and will be refined following detailed reviews of employee costs, non-pay expenditure, income, capital financing and departmental business cases. Particular areas of uncertainty include pay reform, employer pension contribution rates, borrowing costs, grant income, the revenue and capital implications of Hwb Awen, estate investment requirements, and changes in operational and regulatory demand.
- 4 The budget-setting process will be subject to Member scrutiny through the Budget Scrutiny Working Group. Following consideration by the Audit Committee and Executive Panel, the proposed budget requirement will be subject to formal consultation. Consultation responses will be considered before the Authority determines the final budget and levy for 2027/28.

OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 5 The Audit Committee considered the initial budget-setting assumptions at its meeting on 21 September 2026. Members noted the assumptions informing the 2027/28 budget, the remit of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, and the proposed timescales and consultation requirements. Members also sought assurance on the pay award assumption and the scale and management of the estate maintenance backlog

RECOMMENDATIONS

6 It is recommended that Members:

- i) **Note the assumptions informing the 2027/28 budget;**
- ii) **Note the remit of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group; and**
- iii) **Note the timescales and consultation requirements.**

BACKGROUND

- 7 The Authority is required to set a balanced revenue budget annually, approved by the full Authority. While “balanced” is not formally defined in legislation, CIPFA guidance emphasises the need for financial plans that demonstrate how expenditure will be funded over the short and medium term.
- 8 Financial sustainability depends on a clear understanding of the cost of delivering organisational objectives, alongside a realistic assessment of service demand, risks, available resources, capital investment and the Authority’s strategic priorities.
- 9 The 2027/28 planning process builds on the outcome of the Emergency Cover Review and subsequent work on crewing and operational availability. Existing service delivery models remain the starting point for budget planning, subject to any decisions taken through the Authority’s governance arrangements.
- 10 The Service is also progressing substantial strategic and operational work, including the development of Hwb Awen, the transition of facilities management services from North Wales Police, estate condition and decarbonisation requirements, and actions arising from external review and operational assurance activity.
- 11 The financial environment remains uncertain. Pay represents the largest element of expenditure, while non-pay budgets continue to be affected by contractual inflation, insurance, software, energy, equipment and supply-chain pressures. Borrowing and refinancing costs also remain a significant consideration for the capital programme.
- 12 The Authority must also comply with new statutory requirements to consult its constituent local authorities as part of the budget-setting process. This represents a significant change to the process and requires meaningful consultation to be completed, and the responses considered, before final decisions on the Authority’s net expenditure requirement and levy are made.

INFORMATION

- 13 The 2027/28 budget-setting process is informed by the outcome of the 2023/24 Emergency Cover Review and the work of the Collective Agreement Implementation Group. The current planning assumption reflects the continuation of nucleus crewing at Porthmadog and Dolgellau to provide daytime cover. The financial implications of the agreed arrangements will be reflected within the detailed employee budget.
- 14 The budget-setting process is subject to Member oversight and scrutiny through the Budget Scrutiny Working Group. The Working Group includes representation from each constituent local authority and is scheduled to meet on five occasions between August and December 2026.
- 15 Detailed reviews of employee costs, non-pay expenditure, income and capital financing will be undertaken to support Member understanding, scrutiny and challenge. The outcome of this work will inform the proposed budget requirement presented to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel in December 2026.
- 16 The planning process will also consider the Authority's capital requirements over the medium-term planning period, including the affordability and financing of the capital programme. A dedicated Budget Scrutiny Working Group session will be held in October to consider the emerging capital and revenue implications of the Hwb Awen Training Centre project.
- 17 The initial planning assessment and proposed budget requirement for 2027/28 will be presented to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel at their meetings on 14 December 2026. Members will be asked to approve the proposed budget requirement for formal consultation with the six constituent local authorities.
- 18 Following approval to consult, the Authority will undertake a formal consultation process with the six constituent local authorities. The consultation will set out the proposed net expenditure requirement, levy implications, alignment with the Community Risk Management Plan, and the supporting financial narrative. The consultation will provide constituent local authorities with an opportunity to submit meaningful written feedback within the budget-setting timetable.
- 19 The final budget proposals for 2027/28, together with a summary of the consultation responses and any proposed amendments arising from that feedback, will be presented to the Authority for consideration and approval at its meeting on 18 January 2027.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The budget setting process supports the Authority's Improvement and Well-being Objectives by ensuring financial sustainability and respond to evolving community risks in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.
Budget	The budget setting process is likely to result in an increase in the levy.
Legal	The Authority has a legal duty to set a balanced budget based on realistic and evidence-based assumptions.
Staffing	Over 70% of expenditure relates to staff costs and therefore is a material factor when considering future financial stability.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	These issues will be factored into budget setting proposals.
Risks	The key risks and uncertainties to the 2027/28 budget have been outlined in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 -Summary of planning assumptions and risks

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Employee costs	- Existing service delivery models are the starting point, subject to decisions through the Authority's governance arrangements - RDS staff budgets have been based on July 2026 headcount with provision for growth in RDS numbers of 15 during 2027/28. Retained staff headcount has increased by 52 over last 12 months, creating an estimated pressure before pay awards, of approximately £500k. Budgeting for the full required establishment would result in an additional cost of approximately £3 million. - The initial planning assessment for pay awards for 2027/28 is an increase of 4% for all staff groups. - No change in employer pension contribution rates is currently included.	- National agreement was reached in 2026/27 for staff conditioned to the grey book and this included a commitment to progress the pay modernisation agenda. This work is ongoing nationally and the outcome and timing is currently unknown although it may differ from the planning assumption. - Employer pension rates for the firefighter's pension scheme may change following the 2024 GAD valuation which will report in autumn 2026.

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Non-Pay	- Budgets will be based on existing service delivery models and the four-year financial plan. 3% inflation is assumed for 2027/28, reducing to 2% in later years. - Unavoidable costs associated with industry specific health and safety matters have been included within the non-pay budget. These include costs associated with the training of operational firefighters and the management of contaminants. - Budgets have been formulated by each relevant Head of Department based on their knowledge and professional judgement of expenditure necessary to achieve corporate objectives. This includes a review of underlying contractual obligations and estimates of activity. New requests for funding over £10,000 are subject to a business case which is subject to scrutiny.	- Whilst the Service continues to review non-pay costs and strives to manage cost pressures within the planned budget this remains an area of risk and uncertainty. In particular, it has been noted that delays in the delivery of goods or services have impacted on the time profiles of expenditure. - Although cost inflation is generally more manageable than in recent years it is noted that some areas of concern remain. This includes increases in licenses associated with software including business critical systems and insurance cost. - Additional non-pay cost around decision to progress or not with Hwb Awen. - Following the significant activity arising from the adverse weather conditions, work is ongoing nationally to consider the future approach and actions necessary. No budget provision is currently being made as this work is in its early stages.

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Capital Financing	• The capital financing requirement for 2027/28 includes the revenue charge for the minimum revenue provision for existing assets and an estimate of the interest charges arising from borrowing. These costs are influenced by historical capital expenditure, the need to borrow for the 2027/28 capital programme and the impact of interest rate increases when re-financing maturing loans. • The initial planning assessment assumes that all future borrowing will be at the prevailing PWLB rate at the time of budget setting, currently estimated at 5% (4.6% for 2026/27). The Authority receives independent advice and guidance on this matter from Arlingclose, a specialist advisory company. • The capital plan includes potential costs associated with business cases submitted by each Head of Department.	• The increase in interest rates in recent years is a key risk area and is exacerbated due to the capital expenditure profiled in the MTRS. Financial modelling will be undertaken to assess the affordability of all proposals during the budget setting process. • The timing of any costs associated with a new training centre are unknown at this stage as the business case has not been considered by the Authority. Although it is not anticipated that the final business case and funding options will not be presented for approval until 2027 provision for costs associated with detailed planning applications will be included in the initial budget estimates. • Estate backlog and decarbonisation requirements remain subject to prioritisation, cost validation and funding decisions.
Income	• Income budgets have been reviewed and set in line with previous years, subject to inflationary increases as dictated through our SLAs. • Welsh Government grant income reduced significantly in recent years, and the budget setting will assume that remaining Welsh Government grant funding will be received at 2025/26 levels.	• No specific risks have been identified over and above the grant income from the Welsh Government for which inflationary uplifts are not anticipated.

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Other	• The budget assumes normal levels of activity unless a specific pressure is evidenced and approved. • Known operational and regulatory developments will be assessed through departmental submissions and business cases. • £130k is included for two previously approved Technical Operations Crew Manager posts deferred following the CFRAIW review.	• Following the significant activity arising from the adverse weather conditions, work is ongoing nationally to consider the future approach and actions necessary. The outcome of this may increase operational, staffing, fleet and equipment costs. No budget provision has yet been made as this work is in its early stages. • Potential regulatory change affecting buildings between 11 and 18 metres may require additional staffing, training and operational activity. The early assessment has included an estimated additional unavoidable cost of approximately £0.5m. No budget provision has yet been made.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement
Subject	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2026/27 – Period 5



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present Members with an update on North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (The Authority) revenue budget position as at 31 August 2026 and highlight variances, emerging financial risks and the forecast outturn position for the financial year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The latest forecast indicates a projected year-end overspend of £0.313m, equivalent to approximately 0.6% of the Authority's net budget requirement of £54.104m. This forecast should be viewed in the context of a gross expenditure budget and ongoing operational pressures experienced during the first five months of the year.
- 3 The principal financial pressure relates to employee costs, which are forecast to exceed budget by approximately £0.533m. This reflects increased operational activity, particularly during the summer period, together with the financial impact of continued growth in retained firefighter numbers and associated incident response costs. These pressures are substantially offset by forecast underspends within Supplies and Services budgets, primarily arising from project slippage, timing differences and deferred expenditure.
- 4 A particular area of focus remains the financial impact of significant wildfire incidents experienced across Wales during the summer. Officers are currently assessing the full cost implications and are engaging with Welsh Government regarding potential support through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS). At present, the forecast assumes no EFAS reimbursement and therefore represents a prudent assessment of the Authority's financial position.

OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 5 The Audit Committee considered the report at its meeting on 21 September 2026. Members noted the forecast overspend and associated financial risks and received assurance that the Authority's financial position continued to be closely monitored. The Committee also noted the Authority's intention to seek support from the Welsh Government through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme in respect of eligible exceptional wildfire-related costs.
- 6 Members also sought clarification on wildfire and fuel cost pressures, project slippage, the timing of a potential EFAS claim and opportunities to provide greater certainty over future fuel costs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Note the financial position for revenue and capital; and**
 - ii) **Note the Authority's intention to seek support from Welsh Government through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme in respect of exceptional wildfire-related costs.**

BACKGROUND

- 8 Each year the Authority is required to set a balanced revenue budget which must be approved by the full Authority. The final budget for 2026/27 was approved by the Authority at its meeting on the 19 January 2026. This confirmed a net revenue budget requirement of £54.104m to be funded by the constituent local authorities.
- 9 When setting the budget, Members also approved a range of non-recurring measures necessary to achieve financial balance within 2026/27 which included utilising reserves.
- 10 The capital plan of £6.661m was presented to the Budget Scrutiny working group and approved by the Authority.

INFORMATION

REVENUE BUDGET YTD

- 11 As of 31 August 2026, the Authority has incurred gross expenditure of approximately £18.744m against a profiled budget of £20.668m, together with commitments of £4.966m. This results in total expenditure and commitments of £23.710m at the end of Period 5.
- 12 Many supplies, maintenance contracts, software licences and operational commitments fall later in the financial year and therefore the current year-to-date position is not necessarily indicative of the final outturn.

FORECAST OUTTURN

	Budget (£'m)	Outturn (£'m)	Use of Reserves (£'m)	CERA Cont'ns (£'m)	Total (£'m)	Variance (£'m)	Variance (%)
Employees	39.902	40.435	0	0	40.435	0.533	1.34%
Premises	2.578	2.707	0	0	2.707	0.129	5.02%
Transport	1.404	1.442	0	0	1.442	0.038	2.67%
Supplies	6.586	6.034	(0.271)	0	5.763	(0.823)	(12.50%)
Third Party	0.488	0.488	0	0	0.488	0	0%
Capital Cost	4.464	4.605	0	0	4.605	0.141	3.17%
Income	(1.047)	(1.024)	0	0	(1.024)	0.023	(2.22%)
Reserves	(0.271)	0	0	0	0	0	
Sub Total	54.104	54.688	(0.271)	0	54.417	0.313	0.6%
Levies	(54.104)	(54.104)	0	0	(54.104)	0	0.0%
Outturn	0	0	0	0	0.313	0.313	0.6%

- 13 **Employee costs** remain the most significant area of financial pressure and represent over 70% of the Authority's expenditure base. Employee expenditure is currently forecast to exceed budget by approximately £0.533m by year end. Key contributors to this pressure include:
- £0.457m - Retained incident fees year to date.
 - £0.168m - Overtime expenditure year to date.
- 14 The 2026/27 budget included an assumed pay award of 3.8% for all staff groups. The pay award for local government staff, effective from April 2026, was settled at 3.3%, while the firefighters' pay award was settled at 3.8% with effect from 1 July 2026.

- 15 Members will be aware that improving retained firefighter availability has been a long-standing objective of the Authority. During the last 12 months the Service has successfully increased retained firefighter establishment levels, improving operational resilience and appliance availability across North Wales.

RDS Analysis	Budget 2026/27	Aug-23	Aug-24	Aug-25	Aug-26
Headcount	489	465	473	485	536

- 16 During the last 12 months, the Service has continued to strengthen operational resilience through successful recruitment and retention activity within the Retained Duty System (RDS). RDS headcount increased from 485 in August 2025 to 536 in August 2026. This improvement supports appliance availability and the Authority's ability to respond to incidents across North Wales. Whilst this represents a positive operational outcome, increased staffing levels also result in additional expenditure on retaining fees, incident fees, training and employer on costs. Current estimates suggest this growth creates a recurring budget pressure of approximately £500k per annum before the impact of future pay awards.
- 17 **Premises** budgets are forecast to overspend by approximately £129k. This reflects additional property-related expenditure, planned works and consultancy activity across the estate portfolio. Whilst some pressures have emerged during the year, the overall variance remains relatively modest in the context of the Authority's property budget.
- 18 **Transport** budgets are forecast to overspend by approximately £38k, mainly due to specialist maintenance, tyre costs, fuel and other usage-related expenditure. Costs continue to be monitored closely given uncertainty surrounding fuel prices and operational demand.
- 19 **Supplies and Services** budgets are forecast to deliver an underspend of approximately £0.823m, providing the principal mitigation against employee pressures. The forecast underspend reflects:
- Delays to equipment purchases.
 - Project implementation slippage.
 - Reprofiling of expenditure into future periods.
 - Lower than anticipated expenditure against contingency budgets.
 - Timing differences on software, licences and operational projects.

- 20 Officers are reviewing these budgets to determine whether expenditure can still be delivered during 2026/27 or whether future carry-forward requests may be required.
- 21 **Third Party Payment** budgets are forecast to remain broadly in line with budget.
- 22 **Capital financing costs** are forecast to exceed budget by approximately £141k, reflecting borrowing and financing assumptions associated with delivery of the Authority's capital programme and the continued impact of higher interest rates.
- 23 The overall financial position remains manageable at this stage of the year, with a forecast overspend of £313k representing less than 1% of the Authority's net budget requirement. The key financial risks for the remainder of the year are:
- Continued operational activity and wildfire response costs.
 - Employee expenditure particularly retained firefighter costs and overtime.
 - Delivery of planned savings and expenditure profiles.
 - Inflationary pressures.

Wildfire Activity and Financial Impact

- 24 The summer of 2026 has seen extensive wildfire activity across North Wales and neighbouring areas. These incidents have required prolonged operational deployments, extended command arrangements, relief crews, welfare facilities and increased appliance usage. The financial impact is becoming evident across several budget headings including:
- Retained incident fees.
 - Overtime costs.
 - Fuel consumption.
 - Catering and firefighter welfare costs.
 - Vehicle running expenses.
 - Equipment replacement and maintenance.
 - Operational consumables and PPE.
- 25 Year-to-date expenditure on catering and incident-related support costs has already exceeded budget profiles in several areas, whilst the wider impact can also be seen through employee-related expenditure.
- 26 Although the full financial effect of the wildfire season is still being quantified, it is expected that wildfire activity will remain a significant contributor to the employee budget overspend currently forecast.

Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS)

- 27 Officers are currently working with Welsh Government and operational colleagues to identify eligible expenditure arising directly from wildfire response activity.
- 28 Where expenditure meets the relevant eligibility criteria, the Authority intends to pursue recovery through the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme (EFAS). Work is underway to ensure that all additional costs are clearly identified, evidenced and appropriately recorded.
- 29 No EFAS reimbursement has been included within the current forecast outturn position. Consequently, any successful claim would improve the Authority's reported financial position later in the financial year.
- 30 Members will be kept informed as further information becomes available regarding both eligible costs and discussions with Welsh Government.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 31 The Authority approved a capital programme for 2026/27 totalling £6.661m in January 2026, with an additional £3.434m brought forward due to delays in delivery and deferred schemes. And a further £2.600m for Hwb Awen development to RIBA Gateway 4.
- 32 As at the end of August 2026, capital expenditure totalled £0.559m, with commitments of £6.253m. Most schemes are expected to be delivered within the current financial year, with some fleet expenditure expected to rollover into future years due to the procurement and build timescales associated with fleet vehicles.

Project Name/Description	Budget £m	Actual £m	Commitments £m	Total £m
Fleet	3.432	0	2.199	2.199
Facilities	0.985	0.055	0.009	0.064
Tech Ops	1.844	0	0	0
Sustainability	0.400	0.009	0.014	0.023
2026/27 Sub Total	6.661	0.064	2.222	2.286
Rollover Budget	3.434	0.100	2.080	2.180
Hwb Awen	2.600	0.395	1.951	2.346
Sub Total	6.034	0.495	4.031	4.526
Grand Total	12.695	0.559	6.253	6.812

- 33 Progress has been made in committing expenditure against the approved capital programme, with commitments and expenditure totalling £6.812m, representing over 50% of the total programme value of £12.695m. Activity to date has predominantly focused on fleet replacement, Hwb Awen development and ongoing estate investment. Whilst expenditure is lower than would be expected at this stage of the year, this reflects the nature of capital projects where significant expenditure is incurred following procurement, contract award and delivery milestones rather than evenly throughout the year.
- 34 The largest area of committed expenditure relates to the Fleet Programme, where lead times for procurement, vehicle build and specialist equipment installation continue to impact delivery timescales. As a result, some expenditure currently planned for 2026/27 may require reprofiling into future years. Officers continue to review project delivery and funding requirements to ensure the capital programme remains affordable, deliverable and aligned to the Authority's strategic priorities.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This report links to NWFRA's long-term well-being objectives. Funding for the Service benefits the communities of North Wales and ensures there is sufficient investment in infrastructure to enable the service to provide emergency responses and prevention work well into the future.
Budget	Budget is set annually in accordance with the proposed service delivery which includes emergency response and prevention work.
Legal	The Authority remains compliant with its statutory duty to produce financial reports and maintain a balanced budget.
Staffing	Effective financial management supports the long-term workforce strategy to ensure that the Authority is able to discharge its responsibilities
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	None
Risks	Income and expenditure is closely monitored to ensure that deviations from the approved budget are properly identified and reported to Members.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Jon Blyde, Corporate Planning and Performance manager
Subject	Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2027/28



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to members of the Fire and Rescue Authority, the draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan for 2027/28; and to seek approval to obtain feedback on the plan, via public consultation and through engagement with representative bodies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 Under the Welsh Government Fire and Rescue National Framework 2016, one of the key objectives for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales is to continually and sustainably reduce risk and enhance the safety of citizens and communities.
- 3 The North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is required by The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions, by setting itself improvement objectives in each financial year against at least one of seven functions. The public must be consulted on these objectives.
- 4 It is a statutory requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 for Public Bodies to publish annual well-being objectives and to report annually on their progress towards meeting their well-being objectives.
- 5 Welsh Government Fire and Rescue Circular W-FRSC (2024)06 confirms that the duties under the 2009 Measure and the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act (Wales) 2015 can be discharged through the publication of a single report.

- 6 This is the fourth Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP), which has been developed to support the delivery of the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024-2029. The CRMP aims to identify risks facing the community and describes how the Authority will manage those risks and continue to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies. The objectives have been written to take account of the requirements of both aforementioned pieces of legislation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 It is recommended that Members:
- i) **Note the content of the proposed plan for 2027/28; and**
 - ii) **Approve the launch of the public consultation.**

BACKGROUND

- 13 The Authority will report upon its progress against the 2027/28 Community Risk Management Plan objectives in its Annual Performance Assessment in the Autumn of 2028.

INFORMATION

- 14 The public consultation period is planned to commence from 19th October 2026, and to close 8 weeks later, on 14th December 2026.
- 15 Consultation activity will involve engagement with members of the community, via in-person engagement events and through use of electronic media (such as social media, and the opportunity for the public to email queries and feedback to a dedicated mailbox), as per previous years.
- 16 Opportunities will be made for individual feedback to be provided, as well as group feedback via focus-group engagements.
- 17 There will be engagement with equality interest groups, as per previous years, to ensure that the voices are heard from normally under-represented groups.
- 18 Following the close of the public consultation, a report will be produced detailing all feedback received, and with proposals for amendments, demonstrating due consideration to all feedback, aligned to the Gunning Principles.
- 19 Consultation with Representative bodies will take place via the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (JCNC), ensuring that appropriate existing governance is applied.

- 20 The final Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2027/28 will be presented to the authority in April 2027.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2027-28 contains a Well-being statement as required by the Act
Budget	Not applicable
Legal	The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2027-28 has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation.
Staffing	None
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and updated following the public consultation.
Risks	The Community Risk Management Plan supports the Authority's risk management arrangements.



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

Well-being and Improvement Objectives
2027 – 2028



Our five principles for keeping communities safe – have your say

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

One of the key objectives for fire and rescue services in Wales is to continually and sustainably reduce risk and enhance the safety of citizens and communities.

A Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) aims to identify risks facing the community and describes how the Fire and Rescue Authority will manage those risks, and continue to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies.

In July 2024 we published our five-year CRMP following public consultation.

The following annual action plans have now been published, which contain [improvement and well-being objectives](#) to enable us to deliver against our long-term objectives.

- 2024-25 – Published July 2024
- 2025-26 – Published April 2025
- 2026-27 – Published April 2026

This Community Risk Management Implementation Plan, for 2027-28, is the fourth annual plan containing objectives that will continue to deliver against the 2024-29 CRMP objectives.

Our Service

The Fire and Rescue Authority comprises 28 elected councilors from the six unitary authorities of North Wales, with the number of representatives determined by the population of the area. Our mission is Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit. You can read more about [our structure and governance arrangements, including the role of the Fire and Rescue Authority](#).

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is led by a Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and a Service Leadership Team. This comprises senior officers and managers who are responsible for departments looking after our Service's key operational and corporate functions.

The Service operates in a changing environment influenced by national policy developments, climate change, societal trends and evolving community expectations. We are preparing for changes arising from the new National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services while maintaining a strong focus on accountability, sustainability, leadership and risk-based planning. Recognising the increasing complexity and uncertainty facing public services, we will continue to take an agile and resilient approach to planning, ensuring we can adapt to emerging challenges and meet the needs of our communities.



Our Staff

Our firefighters respond to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies from 44 fire stations across North Wales. In total we have 53 fire engines. Some of our fire stations have two fire engines. Other stations have specialist vehicles like aerial ladder platforms, incident support vehicles or boats, depending on the risk in their area.

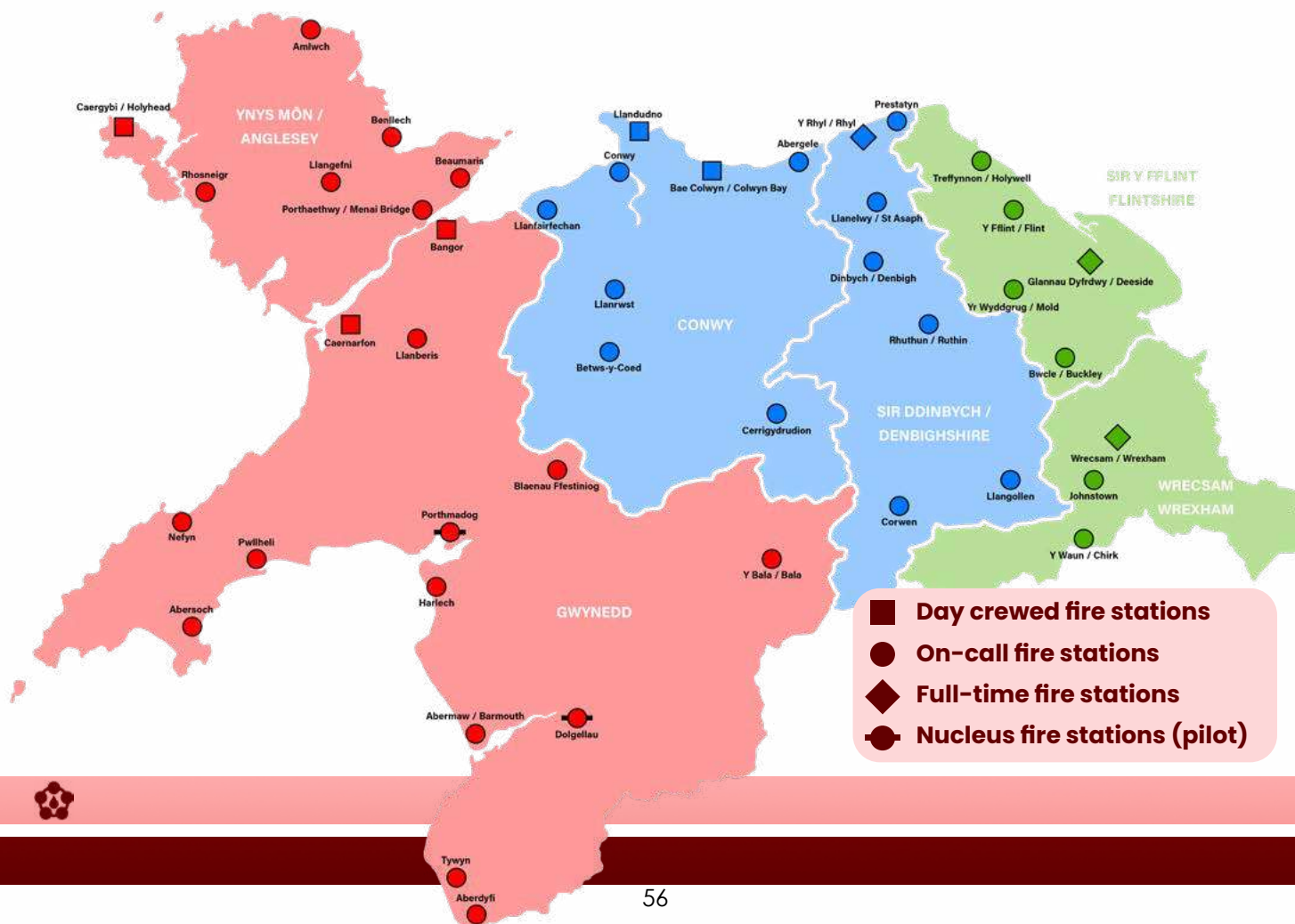
You can read about our [emergency response and other roles](#) to learn how firefighter and business area specialists keep the fire service running.



Our Service area

Covering an area of 6,172 square kilometres and with a population of 687,000, North Wales encompasses a diverse landscape, including the mountains of Eryri National Park, coastal areas, rural communities and major urban areas.

North Wales comprises six counties, Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham. The A55 runs through five of the six counties and is part of one of the longest European routes, running between Holyhead and eastern Europe. Read our [geography and demography](#) report.



Our Governance and Legislation

Like all public-sector bodies, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is required to operate in accordance with numerous pieces of legislation. You can read more about the legislation that governs our Service [here](#).

In line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority must make arrangements for continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions, by setting itself improvement objectives in each financial year against at least one of seven functions.

Furthermore, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority must consult with the public on its proposed improvement objectives. Read about how you can provide [feedback in our consultation](#) report.

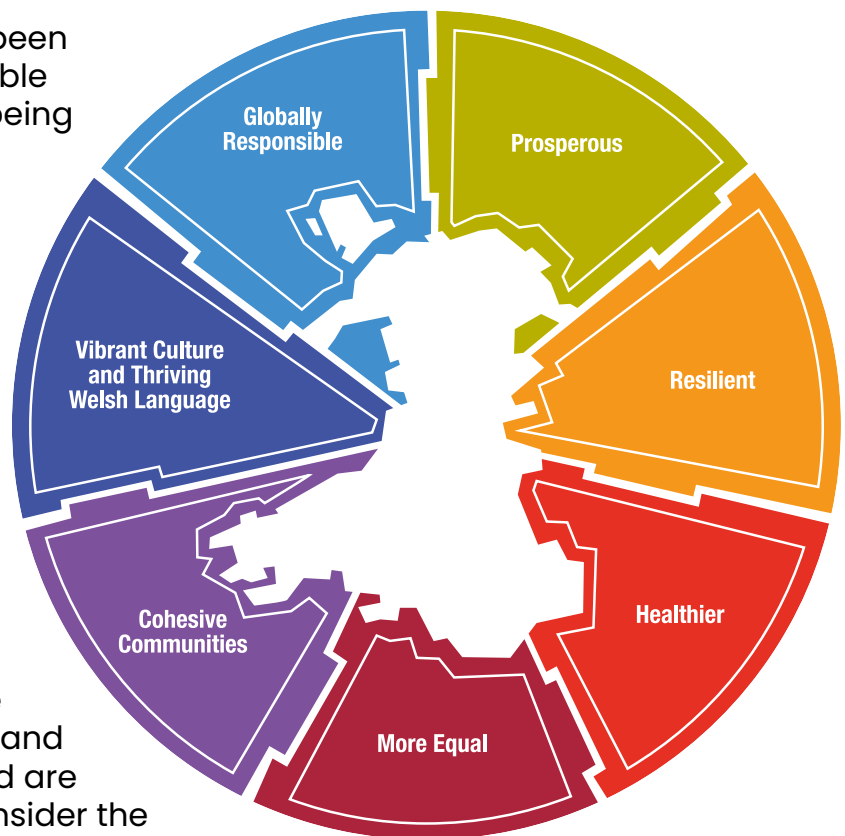
You can read about our assessment of our performance against our previous well-being and improvement objectives in our [Annual Performance Assessment 2025-26](#) report.

Our 2027-28 objectives have also been developed in line with the sustainable development principle of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Statement

We are committed to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and we have embraced our duties and our role as a statutory partner across three Public Services Boards. We understand the purpose and aim of the Act and are committed to ensuring that we consider the long-term impact our decisions may have on the communities we serve.

We will therefore ensure that when making decisions, we consider the potential impact these decisions could have on the people living their lives in North Wales both now and in the future. We will also remember to consider the rich diversity of people who live, work and visit North Wales and continue to work collaboratively with others to help the Authority achieve its objectives, and, where relevant, help others to achieve theirs.



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A Prosperous Wales

Through our **Prevention and Protection Principles** we will work innovatively to keep people safer in their homes and businesses. By reducing the costs associated with fire death, injury damage and disruption we will enhance our support to the local economies of North Wales.



A Resilient Wales

Our **Environment Principle** and underpinning objectives contribute towards a Resilient Wales by adopting eco-friendly practices in our daily operations to cut down on carbon emissions. Through our **Protection Principle**, we will work to reduce wildfires thereby improving air quality and preserving natural habitats and ecosystems.



A More Equal Wales

Through our **People Principle** we will recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled, motivated and bilingual workforce that represents and champions the diversity of the communities we serve. We will also identify and maximise staff potential through effective people management and development, leading to a high-performance culture, where people value and respect each other, thereby contributing to a More Equal Wales. We will continue to consult staff, trades unions and the public on statutory matters and proposals which may have a significant effect upon the services we provide to the public.



A Healthier Wales

We will contribute to a Healthier Wales through our **Prevention Principle** by delivering Safe and Well Checks to our most vulnerable citizens and making every contact count by sharing any health and wellbeing concerns identified with relevant partners.

By delivering intelligence led, multi-agency campaigns targeting those most vulnerable from Road Traffic Collisions and inland drowning incidents, we will reduce the risk of death and serious injury.

Through our **People Principle** we will support our workforce to be physically fit and mentally resilient and through our **Response Principle** we will improve emergency cover in our more rural, less densely populated areas.



A Wales of Cohesive Communities

Through our **Prevention, Protection, Response and Environment Principles** we will contribute to a Wales of Cohesive Communities ensuring fires in homes, businesses or on open land are either prevented or the impact is minimised as far as possible.



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A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

We will contribute to a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, through our **People Principle** by offering access to our services and the ability to communicate with us in Welsh and supporting our staff to speak their preferred language in the workplace and to offer opportunities to staff who wish to learn Welsh.



A Globally Responsible Wales

We will play our part in a Globally Responsible Wales through our **Environment Principle**. We will reduce our own carbon emissions by switching our fleet of diesel fire engines to run on Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, purchasing only zero or ultralow emissions cars and vans and phasing out gas and Liquid Petroleum Gas heating from our estate.

Through our **Prevention and Protection Principles** we will ensure North Wales is safe through our preventative activities prioritising the most vulnerable in our communities and being prepared to respond to risks identified in the Community Risk Register.

Through our **Protection** work we will seek to avoid or limit the emission of harmful gases into the atmosphere as a result of industrial or environmental waste fires.

Through our **Protection Principle** we will work with local partners to keep heritage sites and buildings safe from fire.

Our Risks and Demand

The delivery of our one-year objectives are designed to mitigate some of the risks identified as part of the development of our Community Risk Management Plan.

Our risk landscape is changing. As a Service, we must continue to evolve to meet these emerging risks and the increasing demand. We are preparing for a future where incidents are more complex, prolonged and interconnected.

Climate change is increasing the number and severity of weather-related emergencies. We must be ready to respond to consecutive or concurrent major incidents across Wales. This places greater pressure on our people, equipment and specialist resources.

At the same time, emerging energy technologies are creating new and more complex risks. The development of the Hwb Awen Training Centre is therefore a strategic necessity. It will help ensure our workforce has the skills, knowledge and operational



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readiness needed to meet these changing risks. It will also provide facilities that support firefighter wellbeing and help reduce exposure to contaminants and carcinogens.

Growing international instability and emerging security threats are increasing risks to our communities. In the future, the Service could play a greater role in strengthening civil resilience and community preparedness. We can help build safer, stronger and more resilient communities before emergencies occur. This will be achieved through public education, community engagement and partnership working.

A detailed study of '[Our Risks and Demands](#)' was undertaken in 2024 and is reviewed annually, areas of concern include:

- Tourism
- Accidental Dwelling Fires
- Non-Domestic Premises Fires
- Wildfires
- Drowning
- Road Traffic Collisions
- Flooding
- Emerging Technologies
- Modern Methods of Construction

Delivery of these objectives will be undertaken within approved revenue and capital budgets, and in accordance with the Authority's governance arrangements. Where appropriate, individual projects and investments will be supported by detailed business cases, procurement activity and approval through established decision-making processes. The Authority will continue to seek value for money and ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the Service whilst delivering against its Community Risk Management Plan objectives.

Progress against these objectives will be monitored throughout the year. The Authority may revise priorities and delivery timescales in response to emerging operational risks, legislative changes, funding settlements, workforce requirements or other significant factors affecting service delivery.



Our Principles

Our Core Values have guided us towards adopting five Principles, through which we will deliver innovative and high-quality services to our communities and the people who visit and work in North Wales. Our Principles were developed following internal consultation and they will assist us to mitigate the risks to our communities and help us to focus on improvement within our Service over the next five years. You can read more about [Our Principles](#).



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Our 2027–28 Community Risk Management Implementation Plan objectives

Our People Principle



Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.

Ensuring a highly skilled workforce by recruiting, developing and retaining a motivated and bilingual workforce that represents and champions the diversity of the communities we serve.

What do we intend to do during 2027–28?

- Continue to ensure compliance with the Welsh language standards, including providing opportunities for learning Welsh, and promotion of activities in line with our commitment to being a bilingual organisation.
- Continue with the four-year implementation Action Plan, from the All-Wales People and Organisational Development Strategy (2025–29).
- Continue to develop cultural values and behaviours which makes the Service a great place to work for everyone.
- Support and enhance the Health and Well-being of all employees.
- Work to attract a skilled and valued workforce; creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, where all employees feel valued, and have the opportunity to succeed.
- Develop and implement an organisational approach to Project and Programme management work.
- Enhance the quality, consistency, and intuitiveness of online learning resources to support station-based training, personal development and self-directed learning.
- Introduce new onboarding, and induction processes for new employees to the Service.

These actions will satisfy the following Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 Improvement Objectives;

- Strategic Effectiveness, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation.



Our Prevention Principle



Working with partners to help make communities safer.

Reducing risks to our communities, especially for those people who may be more vulnerable, through our established intervention programmes such as Safe and Well Checks and the Phoenix Project.

What do we intend to do during 2027–28?

- Deliver intelligence led home safety interventions targeting the most vulnerable residents in our communities.
- Every fire station will deliver one Safe and Well-being check multi agency campaign, targeting the most vulnerable communities.
- Work to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on North Wales roads through targeted, evidence-based interventions that prioritise high-risk, and vulnerable road users.
- Work to reduce water-related fatalities, and serious incidents in North Wales through a multi-agency, risk-based approach that prioritises public education, infrastructure improvements, and community engagement.
- Undertake monthly training sessions for all prevention staff that enhance professional competence, promote personal well-being, and strengthen engagement with internal and external service networks, ensuring a holistic approach to workforce development and resilience.
- Implement a comprehensive arson reduction strategy that applies the 4 Ps model, Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare to reduce deliberate fire-setting incidents, safeguard communities, enhance multi-agency response and resilience.
- Embed safeguarding as a core element of everyday practice by ensuring all staff receive regular, role-appropriate training, are confident in identifying, and referring concerns, and understand their responsibilities in creating a safe and supportive environment.
- Deliver bespoke early intervention packages accredited through the Kings Trust adopting a trauma informed approach to develop safer, stronger, and more resilient children and young people in North Wales.
- Co-ordinate an internal project group to research a replacement solution for the Community Fire Safety departments Farynor record management system.

These actions will satisfy the following Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 Improvement Objectives;

- Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment

Our Protection Principle



Making businesses safer together.

Providing businesses with expert guidance on fire protection to help ensure the safety of buildings, employees, and customers, thereby supporting businesses to grow. High-risk buildings are prioritised for inspections, contributing to overall public safety.

What do we intend to do during 2027–28?

- Deliver a risk-based inspection programme that prioritises high-risk premises using enhanced data, intelligence, and partner insight, ensuring compliance with fire safety legislation, and improving safety within the built-up environment.
- Develop and embed a structured competency pathway for operational and supervisory staff through the delivery of a nationally recognised Level 2 Fire Safety qualification, enabling consistent and assured fire safety activity at a local level, and supporting escalation to specialist fire protection functions.
- Align fire protection activity with emerging building safety legislation, and national frameworks, ensuring readiness for regulatory reform, effective engagement with partners, and a consistent approach to improving safety within the built-up environment.

These actions will satisfy the following Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 Improvement Objectives;

- Strategic Effectiveness, Sustainability, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment

Our Response Principle



Providing an effective emergency response.

Being ready to respond when you need us: to protect what matters to you, to save lives, reduce harm and protect homes and businesses.

What do we intend to do during 2027–28?

- Continue to improve emergency cover in rural communities across North Wales, by evaluating the pilot of wholetime crewing systems in Porthmadog, and Dolgellau fire stations. Review and make changes to shift times, and the way firefighters take their leave.
- Digitise how wholetime firefighters manage and access their shift schedules, improving efficiency, flexibility, and workforce planning.
- Review technological advances in firefighting equipment, such as drones, and review firefighting tactics and practices.
- Design, procure, and deliver specialist firefighting appliances, including a new Turn Table Ladder Aerial appliance, and two new Technical Response units. Continue to introduce new fire engines into the emergency response fleet.
- Standardise the content, structure, assessment methods, and onboarding process for wholetime, on-call, migration, and inter-service transfer course programmes; and review the success of the 2026–27 firefighter recruitment campaign, and positive action initiatives.
- Continue to lead on the Emergency Services Network implementation project.
- Upgrade the existing Command and Control system within the Control Room environment.
- Strengthen public safety by delivering a modern, resilient, and integrated workforce management system that improves firefighter availability, operational readiness, and emergency response across North Wales.

These actions will satisfy the following Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 Improvement Objectives;

- Strategic Effectiveness, Service Quality, Service Availability, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment

Our Environment Principle



Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.

Adopting eco-friendly practices in our daily operations to cut down on carbon emissions and other environmental impacts and raise environmental awareness amongst our staff and our communities.

What do we intend to do during 2027–28?

- Undertake detailed feasibility studies to strengthen environmental data monitoring which will inform a long-term estate-wide decarbonisation strategy, while ensuring accurate, and compliant reporting of energy, water, waste, and carbon performance to Welsh Government.
- Use procurement effectively to deliver value for money, meet statutory duties and maximise opportunities for North Wales suppliers and for small and medium enterprises.
- Actively monitor, and record progress against the Fleet Decarbonisation Plan, and Estates Sustainability Goals, by enhancing infrastructure to enable behavioural change, and protect biodiversity across our sites.
- Expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) network across NWFRS sites.
- Transition from Diesel fuel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) in all compatible vehicles.
- Continue with Flow Meter installation onto emergency response appliances, as a response to a learning outcome from the Grenfell Tower fire.
- Expand the subject matter to incorporate climate change in conjunction with the community risk profile, and review the use of new and national emerging risks.
- Continue progress with the delivery of 'Hw̃b Awen', the Training and Development Centre project.

These actions will satisfy the following Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 Improvement Objectives;

- Strategic Effectiveness, Sustainability, Efficiency and Innovation.



Wales' Well-being Goals – How we contribute

Examples of how North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority contributes to the seven national Well-being goals includes;



A Prosperous Wales

- Implementation of the Emergency Cover Review aims to improve the provision of emergency cover in rural areas, creating new employment opportunities.
- Increase the on-call establishment across North Wales presenting pathways to full-time employment.
- Training all staff to use Microsoft 365 and to be cyber aware.



A Resilient Wales

- We already ensure that no mowing takes place on our estate between May & September each year.
- We will continue to actively educate landowners in responsible land use including use of natural grazing and other measures which mitigate wildfires.
- We are installing swift nesting boxes at appropriate locations around our estate.
- We aim to transition from Diesel fuel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for our heavy vehicle fleet.
- We will be working to transition our estate away from hydrocarbon heating systems.
- We aim to install solar photovoltaic panels at the majority of our sites by 2030.



A More Equal Wales

- We will develop a 2026-29 training and development strategy based on a training needs analysis, enabling our staff to develop the skills and knowledge to be fulfilled.
- We will give people the opportunity to participate in decision making through our public consultations, the Social Partnership Duty and biennial Fire Family Surveys.
- Equality of Health Outcomes – fire and road safety – Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) & Youth interventions.





A Healthier Wales

- We will continue to embed positive and supportive processes to improve attendance by providing excellent occupational health and welfare support.
- We will continue to support community green spaces by participating in events such as litter picks, in partnership with housing associations and local councils.
- We will create high-quality analysis to support an enhanced risk-based approach to proactive Safe and Well Checks.
- Work in partnership to understand the evolving threat of Battery Energy Storage Systems and deliver publicity campaigns to inform the public.
- We actively promote the cycle to work scheme and other healthy and active lifestyles campaigns. Our people are encouraged to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle through promoted.



A Wales of Cohesive Communities

- Internal staff networks and resource groups create safe and inclusive platforms for people to access advice, raise concerns, share ideas and to provide feedback.
- Through inclusive design, our people minimise their environmental footprint by agile, remote and flexible working. Car share initiatives are effective and help our people to minimise fuel costs and reduce the environment impact.
- By the very nature of our prevention work, our service add huge value to the North Wales community through safe and well advice which include safety, health and wellbeing. Through active engagement in the community during 2025-26, our service will deliver programmes, projects and campaigns to promote healthier and safer communities. Advice and information is communicated through a range of communication methodologies to widen access for different stakeholders, particularly those who are most at risk.
- We add significant value to the North Wales community through Safe and Well Checks, positively impacting personal safety, health and wellbeing.
- We are active members of various networks and forums that have been established by community anchor organisations. For example, The North Wales Community Cohesion Team established the North Wales Interfaith Forum.





A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

- We will continue to provide opportunities for learning Welsh and promotion of activities in line with our commitment to being a bilingual organisation, offering work based Welsh courses to staff at levels 2 and 3.
- We ensure front-line staff, such as our Control room operators and our Home Safety Support Workers, who deal directly with vulnerable people, are all fluent Welsh speakers. This allows us to commit to offering a proactive language choice in line with the values found in the Welsh Government's 'More than Words' framework.
- By promoting the services we provide bilingually, all residents or visitors to North Wales that may need to use them can do so in the language of choice.
- We will continue to collaborate with 'Mentrau Iaith' initiatives across North Wales to ensure we are at the forefront of any cultural celebrations or events that will be happening and that we can engage with as a Service.



A Globally Responsible Wales

- We will review stock items in our Stores and develop working practices to minimise waste.
- We will continue to migrate our light vehicle fleet to hybrid and electric vehicles.
- We will continue supplier analysis on development of Sustainability scoring & development of Carbon intensity scoring.
- There is on-going supplier due diligence checks including; tax and legal compliance, modern slavery & adherence with National or Minimum Living Wage legislation to ensure suppliers are acting in an ethical manner.
- Utilisation of suppliers within frameworks with predetermined ethical and sustainable Key Performance Indicators.
- We have published a Modern Slavery statement.
- We undertake DBS checks on all staff as part of our safeguarding measures, ensuring we maintain a safe and secure working environment for both employees and the communities.



How to Provide Feedback

We are undertaking a comprehensive consultation to seek views on the proposals set out in this draft CRMIP before we make any final decisions. We would like you to get involved and have your say.

There are a number of ways in which you can do this. The main way is through an [online survey](#), or scan the QR code to take part.



Alternate Versions

If you do not have access to the internet

Call or text us on **07345 030 316**; or E-mail us at **OurFivePrinciples@northwalesfire.gov.wales** – we can send you a paper copy of the questionnaire, which you can return to us free of charge.

An easy read format is available on our website – which also offers information in English and Welsh and provides a user-friendly assistive toolbar, including a read aloud function, larger text and the ability to view the information in a wide range of additional languages.

We welcome your comments or suggestions. Our consultation runs from **19 October to 13 December 2026**.

Alternatively, you can provide your feedback, by contacting us via our website **www.northwalesfire.gov.wales**, telephone us on **01745 535250** or write to us at;

Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Ffordd Salesbury
St Asaph Business Park
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 0JJ

What Happens Next?

Following the consultation, a report containing all feedback received will be presented to members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority for consideration at the meeting scheduled on **19 April 2027**.

The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2027–28 will take effect from 1 April 2027 and will be published on our website.





Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Dawn Docx Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Chris Dinwoodie Organisational Development Manager
Subject	Annual Gender Pay Gap Report 2026



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present the Annual Gender Pay Gap Report 2026 to Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, based on the statutory snapshot date of 31 March 2026.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations require relevant employers to publish prescribed gender pay gap information annually. The attached report sets out North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (the Service) gender pay gap data as at 31 March 2026.
- 3 The Service's mean gender pay gap was 7.32% and its median gender pay gap was 11.70%. Both results are below the UK comparative figures referenced in the report.
- 4 The analysis indicates that the gap is mainly influenced by workforce structure and composition, with men more highly represented in higher-paid operational roles. Women remain underrepresented across the workforce, although their representation is higher in the upper pay quartile.
- 5 The report also sets out the Service's mean and median Development to Competent (DTC) bonus pay gaps and the proportion of women and men receiving a DTC payment, together with the actions the Service will continue to take to improve representation, development and progression all of which are intended to contribute towards reducing the gender pay gap over time.

OBSERVATIONS FROM SERVICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 6 The Annual Gender Pay Gap Report was considered and approved by the Service Leadership Team, with amendments incorporated into the final report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 It is recommended that Members:
- i) note the contents of the Annual Gender Pay Gap Report 2026; and**
 - ii) approve the publication of Annual Gender Pay Gap 2026 Report in line with legal requirements.**

BACKGROUND

- 8 Gender pay gap reporting measures the difference between the average hourly earnings of women and men across an organisation. It is distinct from equal pay, which concerns differences in pay between women and men carrying out equal work.
- 9 The report uses the sex recorded for employees in the Service's HR/payroll records at the statutory snapshot date of 31 March 2026 and presents the prescribed measures for hourly pay, pay quartiles and bonus pay.
- 10 At the snapshot date, the Service employed 895 employees across 989 roles, including multiple roles held by some employees. Of these roles, 210 (21.2%) were held by women and 779 (78.8%) by men.

INFORMATION

- 11 The mean gender pay gap was 7.32%, with average hourly pay of £19.15 for women and £20.66 for men. The median gender pay gap was 11.70%, with median hourly pay of £17.86 for women and £20.22 for men.

- 12 Women accounted for 17% of the lower pay quartile, 14% of the lower-middle quartile, 23% of the upper-middle quartile and 34% of the upper quartile. This shows that women remain underrepresented at all pay levels, although representation is strongest in the upper quartile.
- 13 The mean DTC bonus gender pay gap was -9.23% in favour of women, and the median DTC bonus gender pay gap was 0%. During the reporting period, 13.9% of women and 26.3% of men received a DTC payment. The report explains that this reflects workforce composition and the distribution of DTC payments rather than differences in pay arrangements or treatment.
- 14 The report identifies a range of actions to continue addressing the Service's gender pay gap. These include promoting firefighter opportunities to women, monitoring DTC completion by gender, exploring barriers to promotion, improving development and progression pathways for corporate staff, supporting an inclusive culture, developing a menopause action plan, increasing the visibility of female role models and continuing to develop the Women in the Fire Service network.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Well-being Objectives: The report supports the Service's well-being objectives and contributes particularly to the national well-being goal of A More Equal Wales, by supporting action to improve equality, workforce representation, development and progression.
Budget	2027/28 budget requests have been submitted to support this work.
Legal	Supports compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations.
Staffing	Supports the Service's work to create a diverse, inclusive workplace in line with "Our Core Values."
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The report will be published in both Welsh and English.
Risks	Failure to publish the required information would create legal, governance and reputational risk. Continuing to monitor the gap also supports identification of workforce representation and progression issues.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service

Gender Pay Gap Report 2026

ATAL AMDDIFFYNN YMATEB
PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

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www.northwalesfire.gov.wales



Introduction

This report sets out North Wales Fire and Rescue Service’s gender pay gap data as of 31 March 2026, in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations.

Definition used for reporting

For the purposes of statutory gender pay gap reporting, calculations are based on the sex recorded for employees in the Service’s HR/payroll records at the snapshot date.

What are pay gaps?

Pay gaps are a measure used to assess the difference in average earnings between different groups of people in an organisation, for example men and women. The gender pay gap measures the gap between the hourly rate of women and the hourly rate of men.

Our workforce profile

As of 31 March 2026, we employed 895 employees across 989 roles (including multiple roles held by some employees):

Total Staff:	Female:	Male:
989	210 (21.2%)	779 (78.8%)

Our mean and median gender pay gaps

Our MEAN gender pay gap was 7.32%		Our MEDIAN gender pay gap was 11.70%	
The MEAN shows the difference between the average hourly pay for men and women.		The MEDIAN is the midpoint in the pay range.	
Our MEAN average hourly pay was:		Our MEDIAN average hourly pay was:	
Women £19.15	Men £20.66	Women £17.86	Men £20.22
When comparing MEAN hourly wages, men make £1.08 for every £1 that women make.		When comparing MEDIAN hourly wages, men make £1.13 for every £1 that women make.	

Our quartile pay bands

These quartiles are calculated by listing salaries of men and women from lowest to highest and splitting the list into four equal segments, known as quartiles.

The proportion of male and female employees in the lower, lower-middle, upper-middle and upper quartile pay bands is as follows:

17%	83%	14%	86%	23%	77%	34%	66%
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Lower quartile salaries up to £16.85ph		Lower middle quartile salaries £16.86ph - £19.89ph		Upper middle quartile salaries £19.90ph - £22.55ph		Upper quartile salaries £22.56ph and above	

Our mean and median gender bonus pay gaps

The Bonus Pay Gaps reflect the Development to Competent (DTC) payments made to all eligible firefighters as part of their nationally negotiated terms and conditions of employment.

Our MEAN (DTC) bonus gender pay gap was: -9.23%	Our MEDIAN (DTC) bonus gender pay gap was: 0%	The proportion of staff in receipt of a (DTC) bonus payment was: Women 13.9% Men 26.3%
Compares the average DTC payment received by eligible men and women during the relevant 12-month period.	Compares the middle DTC payment received by eligible men and women when all payments are ranked from lowest to highest.	Compares the percentage of men and women who received a DTC payment during the reporting period.

What do our results mean?

Our mean and median gender pay gaps are lower than the UK average*:

- UK median gap (all employees): approximately **12.8%**
- UK mean gap (all employees): approximately **13%**

This means the difference in pay is smaller in our Service than across the UK.

However, a gap still exists. We will continue to take action to reduce it.

*Office for National Statistics Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, published October 2025. These national figures are based on part-time and full-time roles, providing a consistent comparison with our own data.

Our pay quartile information indicates women are underrepresented across all pay levels. However, their representation increases in the higher paid quartiles. This is a positive sign. It shows more women are moving into senior roles. However, men are still the majority at all levels.

Our Development to Competent (DTC) payments are nationally agreed and paid equally regardless of gender. Although a higher proportion of men received DTC payments due to their greater representation within firefighter roles, a smaller number of women received higher-value DTC payments, which had a greater influence on the average payment received by women.

This resulted in a mean bonus pay gap of -9.23% in favour of women, while the median bonus pay gap remained 0%. This indicates that the difference is driven by workforce composition and the distribution of DTC payments, rather than any difference in pay arrangements, pay practices or treatment.

What do our results show?

- Our gender pay gap is mainly influenced by workforce structure and composition.
- More men work in higher-paid operational roles, which increases the overall average pay for men.
- This does not mean men and women are paid differently for doing the same job.
- While more women are working in senior roles, they remain underrepresented across the workforce.

Our commitment and next steps

We will continue to take action to reduce our gender pay gap by:

- Promoting wholetime and retained firefighter roles to women through targeted advertising and experience days
- Monitoring completion of the firefighter Development to Competence programme by gender
- Exploring barriers to promotion for current firefighters
- Improving development and progression pathways for corporate staff
- Strengthening our approach to bullying, harassment, victimisation and third party harassment to support an inclusive culture
- Developing a menopause action plan to better support female staff
- Increasing the visibility of female role models at public events and outreach activities
- Continuing to grow our Women in the Fire Service network and support mentoring, advice, and peer support

Summary

Our gender pay gap is lower than the UK average. However, it remains an area of focus.

The gender pay gap is mainly a reflection of workforce structure and composition, with men currently more represented in higher-paid roles. We will continue to improve representation, support progression and ensure fair opportunities for all.

If you require this report in large print or alternative format, please contact us via email: enquiries@northwalesfire.gov.wales or Telephone: 01745 535250.



**Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service**

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Gareth Owens, Clerk
Contact Officer	Gareth Owens, Clerk (01745 535286)
Subject	Refresh of Constitution



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To approve minor changes and corrections to the constitution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Authority publishes its constitution which contains the key rules governing how it functions. The content of the constitution was last reviewed in 2021 and since then minor amendments have been made.
- 3 We have reviewed the document to ensure that all those amendments have been captured. We have also undertaken a comprehensive re-translation of the document to ensure that the sense of the document is preserved and that piecemeal changes to the English document haven't resulted in sections in the Welsh document that no longer make sense

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Approve the changes to constitution as shown in Appendix 1**

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 5 This report has not previously been considered by Members.

BACKGROUND

- 6 As a matter of good practice, the FRA publishes a constitution which contains the key documents underpinning its governance. The document sets out the democratic structure, terms of reference for committees, contract procedure rules etc.

- 7 The document was comprehensively reviewed in 2021, and the FRA took the opportunity at that time to look and reconsider its processes. Since then, the FRA has approved a number of minor amendments e.g. changes to the terms of reference for the Local Pension Board or most recently the changed in designation of the s.151 officer

INFORMATION

- 8 Officers have refreshed the text to ensure that:
- a. the document reflects all the changes that have been approved
 - b. to remove any lingering examples of gendered language
 - c. to correct some formatting errors
 - d. to tighten wording without changing the sense or meaning
- 9 Approved changes to the constitution have primarily been made to the English text as this is the clerk's first language. Minor amendments to the English text may not necessarily translate directly in Welsh. Sometimes a more comprehensive change is required to respect the different grammar and sentence structures in Welsh so that the language remains coherent. We have therefore undertaken a comprehensive re-translation from the English to ensure that piecemeal changes in English haven't unintentionally affected the sense or drafting in Welsh. This has the extra benefit of ensuring that the Welsh and English documents each express exactly the same thing in their respective language.
- 10 The refreshed document is attached showing tracked changes at Appendix 1 and as a clean copy at Appendix 2.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Considered not relevant
Budget for 2025/26	The translation costs are within budget.
Legal	The FRA, unlike constituent councils, is not required to publish a constitution. However, it does publish such a document as a matter of good practice.
Staffing	Considered not relevant
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	As indicated within the report we have taken steps to ensure that the Welsh language is respected.
Risks	Considered not relevant

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	19 October 2026
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Jon Blyde, Corporate Planning and Performance manager
Subject	Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to members of the Fire and Rescue Authority the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for 2025/26,

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 Section 15 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Fire and Rescue Authority to make arrangements for the publication of the authority's assessment of its performance during a financial year by no later than 31st October in the financial year following that to which the information relates.
- 3 Schedule 1 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 makes provision requiring each public body to publish annual reports of the progress it has made in meeting its well-being objectives.

OBSERVATIONS FROM SERVICE LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 4 Minor Amendments to wording and formatting were requested throughout the document, which have been implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **note the contents of the Annual Performance Assessment for the period 2025/26; and**
 - ii) **approve the Annual Performance Assessment 2025/26 for publication before the statutory deadline date of 31st October 2026.**

BACKGROUND

- 6 The Annual Performance Assessment is a self-assessment of progress against the previous year's improvement (The Measure 2009) and Well-being objectives (Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015).
- 7 There is flexibility in how FRAs choose to report on their performance but for consistency in reporting and accountability it is recommended that all reports contain:
 - Evidence of the processes that the FRA has gone through to discharge its general duty to improve as expressed in the previous year's improvement plan;
 - A summary assessment of the FRA's view of its success in achieving its improvement objectives as set out in the previous year's improvement plan;
 - A statement of performance as measured by all statutory Performance Indicators, whether or not these relate directly to improvement objectives;
 - Details of other performance information and its use, including the results of peer review, any assessments made by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser and other sources of qualitative information including benchmarking data;
 - An assessment of performance by comparison with the FRA's performance in previous years and with other comparable bodies (including other FRAs) so far as this is reasonably practicable;
 - Details of the ways in which the FRA has exercised its powers of collaboration during the reporting year including details of whether a collaborative activity has achieved its intended outcomes; and
 - Any statements of activity that the FRA has issued as a result of any reports issued under Section 19 of the Measure by the Auditor General for Wales to that FRA in that reporting year.

INFORMATION

- 8 The design of this Annual Performance Assessment mirrors the 'Our 5 Principles' design, and is consistent with the design of the APA 2024-25
- 9 As it is the second year of the five-year plan, a reflection of progress over the life of the plan is included, as well as the annual update on progress.
- 10 The APA contains the All-Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The publication of the Annual Performance Assessment is a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Budget	No implications
Legal	The publication of the Annual Performance Assessment is a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.
Staffing	No implications
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The Annual Performance Assessment will be published in English and Welsh.
Risks	No implications



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Annual Performance Assessment 2025-26

Published Autumn 2026

Mae'r cyhoeddiad hwn ar gael yn Gymraeg

Version Control

Date Amendment Applied	Summary of Amendment/s	Page Number
August 2026	Service Leadership Team Feedback	-
October 2026	Document Published on Website	-

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**Welcome to the first annual review of our 5-year
Community Risk Management Plan.**

This Annual Performance Assessment provides an overview of the progress made by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority during 2025-26 in delivering its Community Risk Management Plan and supporting the well-being of the communities we serve.

Over the past year, we have continued to focus on keeping people safe, reducing risk, responding effectively to emergencies, supporting our workforce, and protecting the environment. This report highlights the achievements made across our five strategic principles and demonstrates how we are delivering against the priorities set out in our Community Risk Management Plan 2024-2029.

The year has seen continued investment in our people, equipment, technology and partnerships, alongside significant work to strengthen organisational culture, improve services, and prepare for future challenges. We have continued to work closely with our staff, representative bodies, local authorities, emergency services, voluntary organisations and other partners to support safer and more resilient communities across North Wales.

We remain committed to openness, accountability and continuous improvement. By publishing this assessment, we aim to provide a clear and transparent account of our performance, celebrate what has been achieved, and identify where further work is required. We hope that this report helps residents, staff, members and partners understand how the Authority is delivering value and making a positive difference to the communities of North Wales.

As always, we welcome your feedback on any suggestions for improving our reporting. Our contact details can be found on the final page of this report.



**North Wales Fire and
Rescue Authority**



**Chief Fire Officer
Dawn Docx**



**Fire Authority Chair
Dylan Rees**

Making North Wales a safer place to live, work and visit

Legal Requirements For Reporting

The Authority considers public accountability and transparency to be of vital importance in all aspects of its relationships with local communities, partners, and organisations, and welcomes the opportunity to publish performance information.

Each year the Authority is required to publish an assessment of its performance in accordance with the legislation which can be found [here](#).

About North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

There are 28 elected members of the [North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority](#). The Service, led by the Chief Fire Officer, is made up of many different departments which all contribute to the running of the fire service. More information about how the service operates can be found [here](#).

About North Wales

Knowing about North Wales today helps the Authority plan to make positive changes for the future. Information about the area which the Service helps protect can be found [here](#).



Resources and Activity

Below is a summary of activity levels during 2025-26.

Fire Stations	Front Line Fire Engines	999 Calls Handled	Fire Service Staff (as on 31 March 2025)
 44	 54	 15,972	 989 (headcount)
Emergency Incidents Attended	Fires	False Alarms	Non-Fire Emergencies
 6,614	 2,043	 3,209	 1,362

Incident data can be subject to minor change.

Staffing

At 31 March 2025	Full time equivalent strength	Headcount of individual staff
Wholetime Operational (WDS)	284.00	284
Retained Operational (RDS/on-call)	371.40	512
Corporate Services	156.33	160
Control	32.50	33
Totals	844.23	989

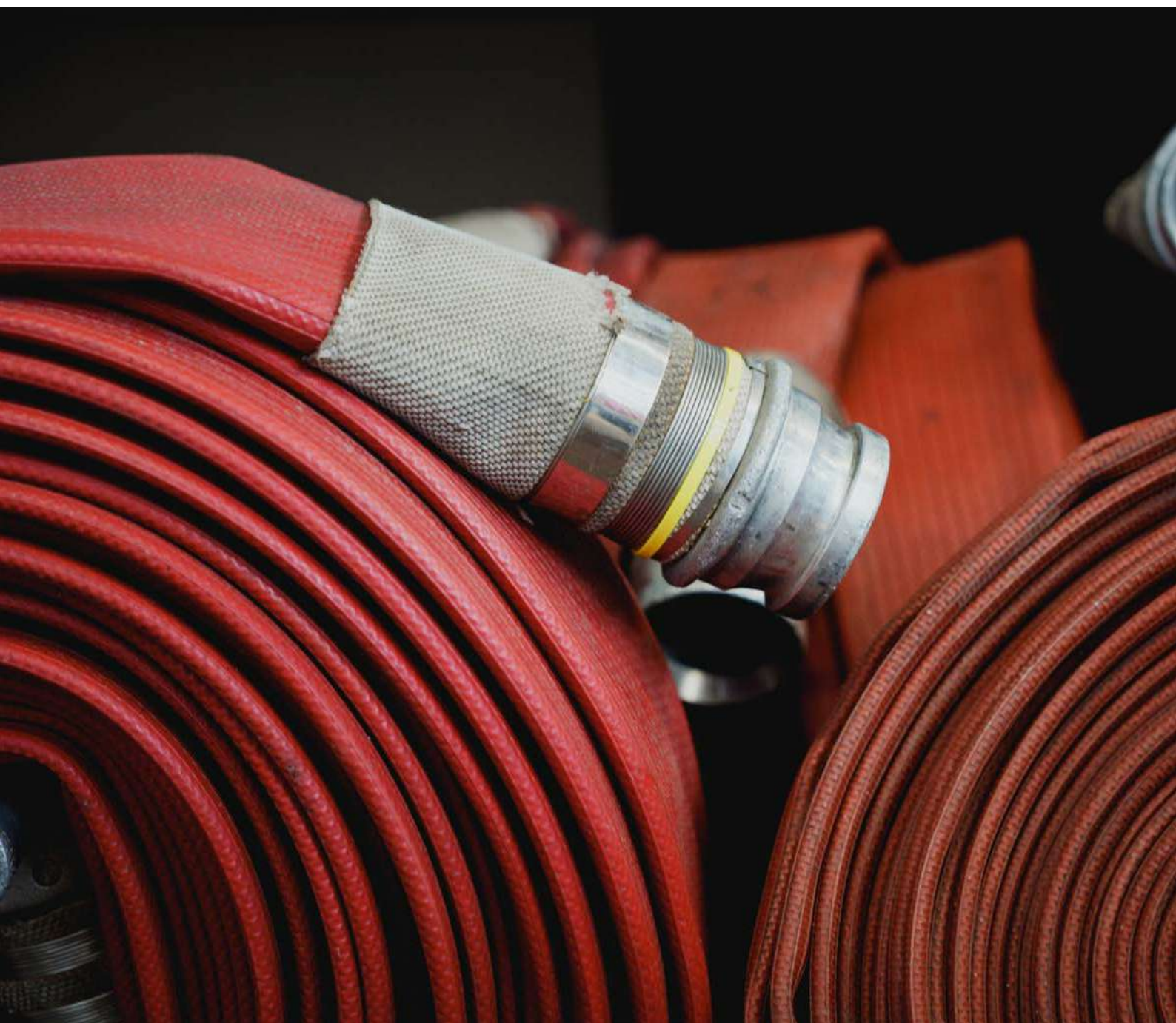
Please note the 989 headcount figure quoted above, equates to 895 people. This is due to individuals who are employed by the Service in more than one role or position. For example, a firefighter control operator could also work as an on-call firefighter.

Over half of the personnel employed by the Authority are categorised as on-call firefighters.

Managing Public Resources Responsibly

Throughout 2025-26, the Authority continued to manage public funds responsibly, directing resources to the areas of greatest risk and need. Investment decisions were supported by robust business cases, procurement processes and governance arrangements to ensure value for money. Despite ongoing financial pressures, the Service remained focused on maintaining frontline services while investing in improvements that benefit communities across North Wales.

Full details of the Authority's financial performance and position are available in the [Audited Statement of Accounts](#).



What is Expected of the Fire Authority

Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales

Fire Prevention	Must arrange for fire safety to be promoted in their area. This would include informing people about fire prevention and advising them how best to react if a fire does break out.
Fire Safety Enforcement	Have a duty to enforce fire safety in non-domestic premises, for example, hotels, schools, shops and offices. This duty includes exercising powers to issue alteration, enforcement and even prohibition notices if they find that fire safety arrangements in premises are unsatisfactory.
Emergency Response	Must make arrangements for receiving 999 calls and for sending trained and equipped personnel to extinguish fires and protect life and property at those fires. They must also make arrangements for rescuing people from road traffic collisions and for protecting them from serious harm.
Planning for and Responding to Other Emergencies	Must make arrangements for the mass decontamination of people after chemical, biological or radio-active incidents, and for rescuing people from trains, aircrafts and collapsed buildings. They must also be prepared to assist with large-scale emergencies (including terrorist attacks) elsewhere in the UK. As 'Category 1' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act, fire and rescue authorities also have duties relating to large-scale events that threaten serious damage to the welfare of people, wildlife, the environment and primary supply chains.
Flooding and Inland Water Emergencies	Must make arrangements to respond to incidents of flooding or water rescue which pose a direct threat of death or injury.
Equalities	Must work towards eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with different protected characteristics.
Welsh Language	Treat the Welsh and English languages equally, promoting the use of Welsh and complying with defined Welsh language standards.
Continuous Improvement	Must set objectives continuously to improve what they do and publish information about their improvement and performance.
Future Planning	Must work towards improving people's social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being, as well as working in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the needs of future generations.

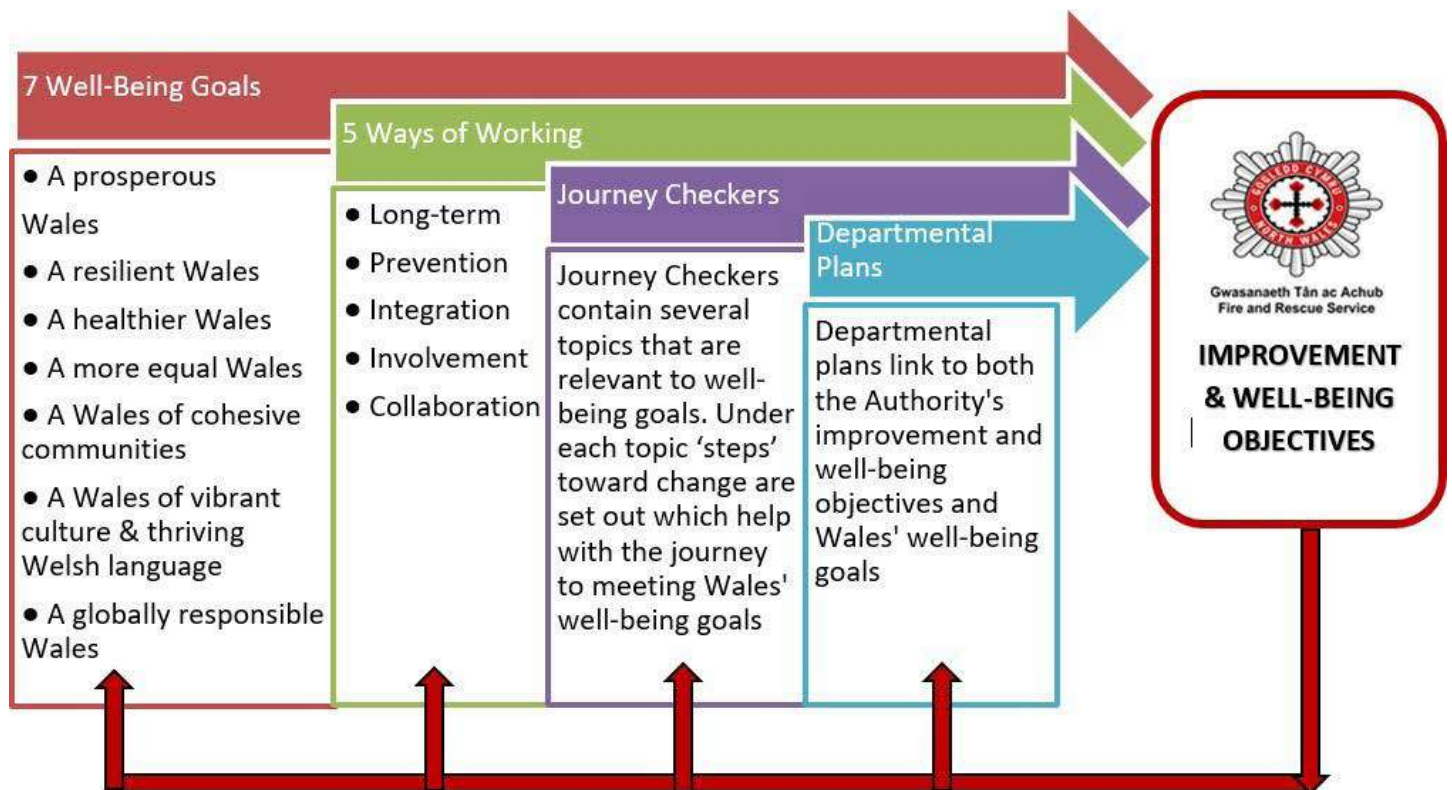
You can read more about our statutory obligations [here](#).

Progress Against Improvement and Well-being Objectives

This section describes the progress the Authority made towards meeting its long-term improvement and well-being objectives during 2025-26. The Authority is required to publish this assessment of its own performance for 2025-26, and the statutory performance indicators for the same year, by 31 October 2026.

In April 2021 the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) approved the 'Community Risk Management Planning' (CRMP) as a [Fire Standard](#) for English Fire and Rescue Services. Although Fire and Rescue Services are devolved to Welsh Government, all Fire and Rescue Services within Wales have adopted the NFCC guidelines to publish a CRMP.

The Authority have incorporated the NFCC recommendations into its annual reporting cycle and, have updated its previous long-term plan with a new five-year [Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29](#). The Authority's new Five Principles have replaced the existing seven long-term improvement and well-being objectives.



During 2025-26, work was undertaken to ensure the well-being objectives were embedded throughout all departmental plans where applicable.

The [Annual Governance Statement for 2025-26](#) provides an overview of the governance arrangements as well as confirming a work plan for 2026-27.

Once approved and published, performance against the forward work plan will be monitored through the Service Leadership Team's Performance Board.



Our People Principle

Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.

Ensuring a highly skilled workforce by recruiting, developing and retaining a motivated and bilingual workforce that represents and champions the diversity of the communities we serve.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A Wales
of vibrant
culture and
thriving
Welsh
language



A more equal
Wales



A prosperous
Wales

Achievements in 2025–26

Action 1: Ensure compliance with the Welsh language standards, including providing opportunities for learning Welsh and promotion of activities in line with our commitment to being a bilingual organisation.

As part of the Fire Authority's efforts to strengthen the use of the Welsh language, and preserve the heritage of local areas, our new internal Welsh language policy states that, where appropriate, station names in all internal communications will be referred to using their Welsh-language forms only.

Most of our stations already use the singular Welsh name for their location. However, the few that have dual names will be referred to by their Welsh name in internal communications.

English Name	Welsh Name	How to Pronounce
Buckley	Bwcle	Book – lare
Barmouth	Abermaw	Aber – maw (rhymes with 'now')
Colwyn Bay	Bae Colwyn	By – Colwyn
Chirk	Y Waun	Ugh – Wine
Deeside	Glannau Dyfrdwy	Glan – eye – dove – dwi
Denbigh	Dinbych	Din – bich (Welsh 'ch')
Flint	Fflint	No change

Holyhead	Caergybi	Kire – gybee
Holywell	Treffynnon	Trare – fur – non
Mold	Yr Wyddgrug	Ugh With – grig
Ruthin	Rhuthun	Rhith – in
St Asaph	Llanelwy	Llan – elwi
Wrexham	Wreccsam	No change

Place names help tell the story of who we are as a nation, and some places have even lost their original Welsh name officially in favour of the English name.

We have been inspired by institutions that have already put this in place such as the national park authority who have decided to use Eryri rather than Snowdonia, and Yr Wyddfa instead of Snowdon back in 2022 and also the Football Association of Wales who have been using Cymru instead of Wales, internally since 2021.

The Welsh Language continues to be promoted internally with the issue of newsletters, social media posts, and ‘Paned a Sgwrs’ events. Where staff are encouraged to use their Welsh Language skills, at whatever level, at an informal setting over a cup of tea.

The latest Welsh Language standards Annual Report can be found [here](#).

Action 2: Support the delivery of an action plan for improvement following the 2023 Fire Family Staff Survey.

The categories for the annual Service Awards have been reviewed in response to staff feedback and as part of ongoing work to strengthen how staff are recognised across the organisation.

The award categories have also been aligned with the Service’s four core values: Service to the Community, Striving for Excellence, People, and Diversity and Inclusivity.

The following highlights progress made in response to feedback from the 2023 staff survey:

- **Role indicators introduced:** Most respondents supported the introduction of operational role indicators, which were implemented in January 2025. The decision was made not to provide ‘role markers’ to other staff groups.
- **Recognising and celebrating staff:** A new Reward, Recognition and Innovation Policy has been introduced, alongside a regular feature in the Services’ weekly staff update to celebrate staff achievements across the organisation. Work is also ongoing to explore new ways to strengthen staff engagement and collaboration.
- **Supporting managers:** Targeted development and training has been introduced in response to areas identified for improvement in the survey.
- **On-call engagement:** Staff engagement sessions have helped shape planned improvements, including more accessible survey options, local champions, and stronger support arrangements.

The service are now focussing on the outcomes from the 2025 Staff Survey.

Action 3: Plan for and deliver the 2025 Fire Family Staff Survey.

The third Fire Family Survey was open for staff feedback from 3 October 2025 until 14 November 2025. This gave all staff the opportunity to help shape the future of the Service. The Fire Family Working Group ensured that the survey was accessible, engaging, and meaningful. Discussions focused on finalising the survey questions, developing a clear communications plan and preparing launch materials that reflected the diversity and values of our fire family.

Following feedback gathered from the previous survey in 2023, members of the working group acted as 'Survey Champions', visiting stations and workplaces to raise awareness of the survey and provide practical support, such as helping staff access the link, understand the questions, and complete the survey if needed.

The results were presented highlighting key themes and outcomes, and the Fire Family Staff Survey Working Group will create an action plan based on these common trends.

Action 4: Communicate the findings of the CREST independent cultural review to staff and external stakeholders and work with staff to develop and implement how we respond, based upon the recommendations of the report, to further strengthen and improve our workplace culture.

As part of the Service's commitment to strengthening organisational culture, two Culture Champions were appointed to support the delivery of the Service's cultural improvement programme.

Working closely with senior leaders, representative bodies, staff networks and colleagues across the organisation, the Culture Champions have championed inclusive practices, strengthened engagement and trust, and supported the development of a workplace culture that is open, respectful and empowering. They have worked across the Service by attending key governance meetings, engaging with external organisations to identify good practice, and undertaking extensive engagement with staff across a variety of settings.

A key focus of the roles has been to improve communication and engagement, ensuring that colleagues are informed, listened to and regularly updated on progress against the Service's culture improvement programme. Feedback gathered through staff engagement has directly informed priorities and actions, helping to ensure that improvements reflect the experiences of our workforce.

In March 2024, the Welsh Government commissioned an independent cultural review of both North Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services in response to national and local concerns relating to workplace culture, values, behaviours and fairness. Following a competitive procurement process, Crest Advisory completed and published its independent review in February 2025.

In response to the findings, the Service has made significant progress in delivering its improvement programme. This includes:

- Finalising and publishing the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan.
- Establishing clear governance arrangements, implementation timescales and accountable leads for each recommendation.

- Strengthening leadership development with an increased focus on people management, values-based leadership and inclusive behaviours.
- Improving transparency, consistency and fairness across recruitment, promotion and complaints processes.
- Maintaining regular communication with staff, representative bodies and external stakeholders on progress and achievements.
- Developing an interactive Culture Improvement Dashboard, enabling all staff to monitor progress against improvement actions and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Continuing to build trust through openness, meaningful engagement, recognition of progress made and an honest acknowledgement of areas where further improvement is required.

Progress against the Strategic Cultural Improvement Plan continues to be closely monitored. To date, 13 of the 28 improvement actions have been successfully completed and embedded into business-as-usual activity, with ongoing oversight transferring to the relevant action owners to ensure improvements are sustained. The remaining 15 actions are progressing as planned and continue to be monitored by the Culture Champions in collaboration with action owners, supported by the Service's governance arrangements and regular reporting through the Culture Improvement Dashboard.

The Service remains committed to embedding a positive organisational culture and delivering sustainable, long-term improvements that ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is an inclusive, respectful and supportive place to work for everyone.

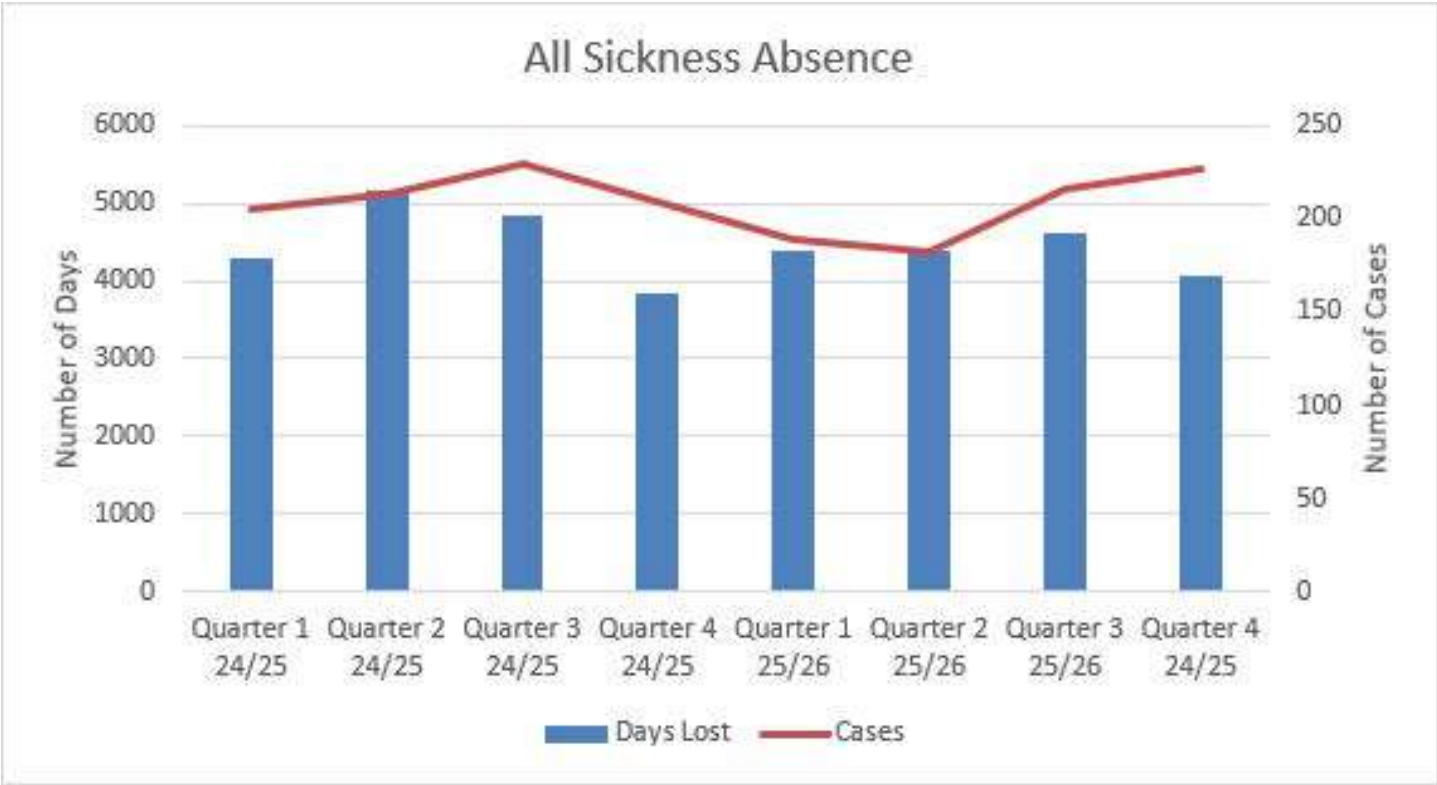
Action 5: Continue a positive and supportive process to improve attendance by providing excellent occupational health and welfare support.

Over the year, significant progress was made to improve employee support, attendance management and wellbeing across the Service. Work focused on making policies clearer, more supportive and better aligned with current legislation and best practice. This included continued review of the Attendance Management Policy, changes to staff contracts, and updates to processes around modified duties, medical appointments and injury-related support.

Support for employee health and wellbeing was strengthened through the ongoing implementation of the new Occupational Health contract, the introduction of feedback forms for Occupational Health and physiotherapy services, and improved monitoring of performance and reporting. Mental health support also developed during the year, with recommendations from a mental health review progressing, additional training for HR staff, and continued promotion of available internal and external support.

Further progress was made in areas of staff wellbeing, including menopause support, where training sessions, regular menopause cafés and a new working group helped build awareness and improve support available to employees. Work also continued on wider wellbeing initiatives, including the planned reintroduction of chaplaincy support.

Both short-term (1.09%) and long-term (3.89%) sickness absence have reduced year-on-year, and remains a key improvement.



Action 6: Transform the Service and its resources to inform future demand for people and skills and enable the Service to efficiently develop and build on the existing workforce and platforms to meet that demand.

This year, the Human Resources (HR) team made good progress with policies, procedures and staff welfare support. A wide range of training was delivered, including bystander training, investigative training, grievance and misconduct training, mediation training, and support for people with suicidal thoughts. Professional standards were strengthened by helping to build a UK-wide network and attending national events and workshops.

A number of important policies and procedures were reviewed and updated. This included work on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking, neonatal care, work experience, locker use, disciplinary procedures, grievances, market supplements and wider HR policy changes linked to new employment law. Several papers were prepared and presented to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) for decision-making, including postvention support, the Real Living Wage, private healthcare options and the Corporate Blue Light Card. Business continuity arrangements were also reviewed and updated for 2025.

There was also strong progress in recruitment, workforce representation and employee wellbeing. Recruitment processes were improved through new flowcharts, feedback forms, communications and ongoing work with the Talos recruitment portal.

Senior appointments were completed successfully, and the corporate induction handbook was updated.

A workforce representation strategy was also developed, which has created positive action materials for station visits, and contributed to wider wellbeing work including a menopause passport, the Fire Family Survey and peer monitoring activity with Healthy Working Wales.

Alongside workforce development initiatives, the Service continued to maintain effective systems and processes to support workforce planning, payroll administration and employee support, helping to ensure staff are paid accurately and receive the benefits and support to which they are entitled.

Action 7: Address and maintain the cyber security profile of the Service systems, aligning with evolving cyber threats.

The Service continues to face repeated attempts to gain unauthorised access to its IT systems. The ICT team works relentlessly to prevent these attacks and protect all Service electronic systems. Cyber-attacks are prolonged, ongoing, and can adapt quickly.

The following work has been completed to help prevent unauthorised access to computer systems:

- Firewalls have been put in place to help protect computer systems from unauthorised access. The infrastructure is now in place, but there remains a small amount of work required to complete this action. The ICT personnel need to arrange time to bring the network equipment down on sensitive sites, and that has been a challenge.
- The majority of the wireless equipment has been installed and tested to help provide secure and reliable access to our systems.
- Disaster recovery arrangements have been reviewed to help ensure services can be restored quickly if systems are disrupted.

Action 8: Deliver technical training, which includes the introduction of a phishing campaign, cyber training, and bespoke IT training.

To reduce the effects of cyber-attacks even further it is vital that all service staff remain vigilant when dealing with electronic communications.

All staff must undertake a 'GDPR and Cyber Security' training module annually, to keep up to date with legal requirements, using systems securely, and how to keep data secure.

During periods of targeted attacks, the ICT department will also issue electronic reminders about how to handle emails and other electronic communications safely, helping to further reduce the risk of unauthorised access to our network.

Action 9: Write a Social Partnership Report to comply with the requirements of Welsh Government, which meets approval of the Fire Authority.

The annual report has been approved by Union representatives and Fire Authority members and can be found [here](#).

Action 10: Continue work undertaken by the Contaminants Group in relation to fire contaminants from all fires, and to progress best practices from Regional and National learning.

Regular meetings of the 'Contaminants Working Group' continued to take place throughout the year.

Breathing apparatus and respirator face-fit testing was undertaken in line with changes to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. This has been provided by an external company following a successful procurement process. This work may continue into the first few months of the new financial year.

As part of an operational exercise in the Conwy Tunnel, it was found that a sanitising wipe was the most effective product for operational staff to use when 'Showering within the hour' on return from an emergency incident.

Additionally, it has been recognised that many operational firefighters face time constraints that prevent them from thoroughly decontaminating themselves on return to a fire station. These constraints often stem from personal commitments outside of their fire-fighting role, such as primary employment, family responsibilities, childcare obligations or redirection to other emergency incidents.

As a result, the Service has procured sample-sized products that allows personnel to take the product home and complete the decontamination process there.

Action 11: Develop a 2026–29 Training and Development Strategy.

A new Training and Development Strategy was required to replace the previous three-year Strategy which ran from 2023–26.

This new Strategy will take into consideration the recommendations from reports such as Phase 2 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry (September 2024), which places a greater focus on initial training, maintenance of competence, management and leadership development, and command skills. In addition, it will be necessary to incorporate insights from the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser in Wales' review into operational preparedness at South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (Autumn 2024), which builds on the thematic review into firefighter training in Wales. These reports will influence how the Service continues to refine its approach to training staff, and ensure it is fully equipped to meet future demands and expectations.

The final Strategy has now been approved by the Service Leadership Team, ready to take effect in the new financial year.

Action 12: Continue to foster an inclusive workplace culture that empowers all staff members to excel and effectively address the diverse needs of our communities.

During National Hate Crime Awareness week (11 to 18 October), the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer attended the All-Wales National Hate Crime Event which was funded by the Welsh Government and organised by Victim Support Cymru and Wales Hate Support Centre. The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip spoke at the event. In her presentation, Jane highlighted the importance of reporting hate crime and challenging discrimination, harassment and prejudice. She also highlighted that one of

the main equality objectives 2024-2028 is to tackle hate crime and discrimination and she acknowledged disability hate is a particularly huge problem in Wales.

Hate Crime Strand	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Percentage change 2023/24 to 2024/25
Race	71,995	87,905	84,039	77,901	82,490	6
Religion	4,527	6,510	6,513	6,973	7,164	3
Sexual Orientation	15,668	22,317	21,306	19,127	18,702	-2
Disability	9,418	13,611	13,637	11,131	10,224	-8
Transgender	2,510	3,920	4,477	4,258	3,809	-11
Total number of motivating factors	104,118	134,263	129,972	119,390	122,389	3
Total number of offences	99,813	128,485	123,033	113,166	115,990	2

Overall, there has been an increase of 5% in hate crime reporting in Wales. Although it was highlighted by Victim Support that under reporting is still an issue and unofficial reports of hate crime, especially disability hate crime has increased in Wales. Hate crime impacts confidence in people with disabilities, and can lead to social isolation, loneliness and have an adverse effect on mental and physical health.

During December the Service participated in 'Lead the Change Bystander Intervention' training. This training forms part of the Welsh Governments strategy to tackle Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. The training empowers those attending to safety challenge inappropriate attitudes and behaviours that are supportive of violence against women within the workplace, peer group or community.

The Service then delivered 'Bystander Training' to support staff in recognising and challenging attitudes and behaviours linked to violence, sexism and misogyny. The training provided an overview of gender-based violence, addressed common myths about abuse, and introduced practical techniques for intervening safely and appropriately when inappropriate behaviour is identified. This forms part of the Service's wider cultural development work. Further training dates will be arranged in 2026 and staff will be invited to attend.

Action 13: Develop and deliver the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.

During the year, the Procurement function continued to strengthen its support across the Service. Regular meetings were held with departments to review existing contracts, plan future procurement activity and improve understanding of procurement requirements. This helped embed procurement into day-to-day business and made sure it was considered earlier in planning and decision-making.

A number of important improvements were made over the course of the year. Contract Procedure Rules were updated to reflect the Procurement Act 2023. Supporting documents, including the All-Wales Procurement Strategy, invitation to tender documents and the procurement pipeline, were also reviewed and updated.

The Service also registered on the central government platform for publishing procurement notices, helping to ensure compliance and improve transparency.

The year also saw investment in people and systems. A new procurement apprentice was appointed and has started studying towards qualifications through Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply courses.

New software was introduced to help monitor supply chain risk, and work began with the Finance team to improve the process for onboarding new suppliers. Training and awareness remained an important part of the work programme. Ongoing workshops were planned to help departments understand the Procurement Act 2023 and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act 2023. The development of a new business case document also helped ensure procurement is identified at an early stage, so that the correct and compliant route to market can be chosen.

Progress was also made on contract management systems. Work on the contract's module restarted with support from the Finance team, with testing and rollout planning taking place during the year. By the end of the reporting period, the module was ready to go live from 2 April 2026. This will help improve visibility of contracts across the Service and support compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.

Overall, the year was focused on strengthening procurement arrangements, improving compliance, building internal knowledge and putting the right systems and resources in place. Many of these developments are now becoming part of normal day-to-day working, providing a stronger foundation for the Procurement function going forward.

Action 14: Identify and implement digital improvements to the efficiency of the payroll function.

This year work focused on improving payroll and employee systems, strengthening internal processes and supporting the rollout of digital tools. The main areas of activity included:

1. Development of the Travel and Expenses Module:

Working with the software developer a new module was introduced to support the digital processing of mileage and subsistence claims submitted by Service staff. Training materials were produced to assist users which also supported the roll-out of the new module.

2. Improvements to payroll administration:

A review of payroll processes was undertaken, including work to reduce reliance on P11D

forms (a UK statutory form submitted to HM Revenue & Customs by employers listing the benefits they provide). This is in anticipation of future legal requirements.

3. Changes to support employee benefits and leave processes:

The Cycle to Work Scheme process was reviewed and strengthened after eligibility checks were found to be inconsistent. The Pilot Leave Scheme was also extended into next year, with a further 17 stations joining the pilot. Feedback from participating stations has been broadly positive.

Action 15: Develop the financial planning process.

Throughout the year there was good progress in improving financial planning and budget management. A full review of the TechOne budget module was undertaken, with support from external consultants to improve calculations, data tables, and reporting. Templates used for budget-setting were also reviewed, to better capture the information needed, and provide clearer support for budget holders.

Work continued with TechOne consultants to improve forecasting arrangements within the financial system. Alongside this, the first draft of budget requests and departmental plans for the 2026–27 budget were received and reviewed, including supporting business cases. Pay budget workings were also updated to make collecting information, revising assumptions and uploading data into the financial system more efficient.

The Scheme of Financial Delegation was updated and approved, and work began to update the financial system, guidance and training materials to reflect these changes. A weekly report was introduced for requisitioners to prompt action on open purchase orders, supported by reminder communications about the correct purchase-to-pay process. The Budget Scrutiny Working Group process was completed, the draft budget was approved, and briefing information was shared with Directors of Finance along with indicative levies.

Performance also improved in invoice processing, with the average payment time being reduced to 28 days, bringing performance into compliance. Further work will continue during 2026–27 to increase the proportion of invoices paid within 30 days to above 95%. In addition, the Medium-Term Resource Strategy covering the period to 2030 was completed, along with the financial strategies and statement for 2026–27. A number of these improvements are now complete and will continue as part of business as usual.

Action 16: Monitor transformation and change management outcomes.

Preparing the Service for organisational resilience and future change, the HR department worked across key HR priorities, including:

- **Workforce Development and Inclusion**

The Corporate Induction Handbook has been updated, and Positive Action materials have been developed to support consistent engagement across the Service.

- **Policy Review and Legislative Compliance**

Human Resources policies and procedures are being reviewed in response to the Employment Rights Act 2025, with relevant legislative updates incorporated.

- **Health and Wellbeing**

The Service continues to support workplace health and wellbeing through participation in the Healthy Working Wales Peer Monitoring Programme.

- **External Complaints Procedures**

External complaints procedures are being reviewed, including options for improved reporting and case management.

- **Business Continuity and Organisational Resilience**

The Business Continuity Management Plan has been reviewed and updated for 2025, and a process flow chart has been developed to support consistent recruitment, movement, and transfer arrangements.

- **Partnership Working and Professional Standards**

Work has progressed on Blue Light corporate membership, Real Living Wage accreditation, and the development of a UK Fire and Rescue Service professional standards network.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation governing workplace health and safety in Great Britain. Work related incidents and near misses are monitored through the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee. Whilst it is not currently mandatory, public bodies are encouraged to include a summary of their health and safety performance in their annual reports.

Health and Safety

Safety event reporting statistics during financial year 2025/26



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Fire and Rescue Service



**0.35% increase
in accidents**

290 safety events were reported between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, which compares with **289** in total for the comparable period in 24/25. This is a slight increase of **0.35%**.



105

Near Misses reported



40

injuries reported



34%

**of injuries resulted
in time off work**



24

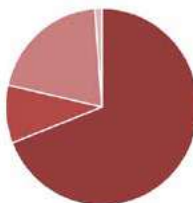
**reports of White Fleet
vehicle damage**



65

**reports of Red Fleet
vehicle damage**

Vehicle Accident Type



Forward: **54 (61%)**

Reverse: **9 (10%)**

Stationary: **26 (29%)**



Our Prevention Principle

Working with partners to help make communities safer.

Reducing risks to our communities, especially for those people who may be more vulnerable, through our established intervention programmes such as Safe and Well Checks and the Phoenix Project.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales

Achievements in 2025-26

Action 1: Utilise quality data to support fire safety activities, in particular the new risk-based approach, to identify and conduct a minimum of 17,500 high risk Safe and Well Checks.

A total of 19,374 Safe and Well Checks were delivered during the year, exceeding the Services' own target by 1,876.

The number of high risk Safe and Well Checks (SWAC) increased as an overall percentage, showing the Service has been successful in its work to reach more vulnerable people. This work has been achieved through the use of NHS Exeter Data and revised SWAC referral management.

Dashboards are now being created, and are refreshed daily, which provides prevention staff with clear and accurate information to assist with their individual workloads.

	SAWC by Priority (number)	SAWC by Priority (percentage)
High Priority	5,491	28.3%
Medium Priority	3,839	19.8%
Low Priority	10,044	51.9%
Total	19,374	100.0%

	SAWC by Referral (number)
From an Agency	3,917
Not from an Agency	15,457
Total	19,374

Action 2: Deliver intelligence led home safety interventions targeting the most vulnerable residents in our communities. We will deliver four targeted multi agency campaigns across North Wales.

Four multi-agency campaigns were undertaken:

1. During April staff hosted a Water Safety event on Bangor High Street.

The aim of this event was to raise water awareness, and the potential dangers in and around water in the lead up to the warmer weather.

Prevention staff hosted a 'pop-up' event on the High Street, showcasing Water Rescue equipment, and encouraging members of the public to stop and speak with firefighters to obtain water safety advice.

2. On the 1 October, the Service marked International Day of Older Persons by hosting a community event at Denbigh Fire Station, alongside partners, to promote the various support available to older members of our community and offer Safe and Well checks to those who need them.

Members of the Prevention Team were on hand to provide important home fire safety information, with specific advice tailored to help combat some of the challenges faced by the older generation when it comes to keeping their homes fire safe. Home Safety Support Workers headed out to undertake Safe and Well checks in the local area, targeting households with older residents. They were joined by members of corporate staff who had volunteered to assist with visits, helping to ensure that some of the most vulnerable members of our community can feel fire safe in their homes.

3. In November the Service created and shared a number of videos via social media promoting cooking fire safety tips, and advice on what to do should a cooking fire get out of control.

Cooking fires remain one of the most leading causes for emergency call outs to dwelling fires. Of the 322 accidental dwelling fires the Service attended during the year, 56 of them were as a direct cause of 'Cooking'.

More detailed cooking safety information can be found [here](#).

4. Fire Prevention staff and operational firefighters visited farmers' markets across North Wales and Shropshire to highlight the importance of following the Heather and Grass Burning Code. They provided advice directly to farmers and also distributed information leaflets.

Action 3: Develop localised area plans in line with the 2025-29 Community Risk Management Plan.

This action was discussed at the Service Leadership Team (SLT) 2025-26 planning day, and as part of the strategic risk assessment and planning framework, it was identified that there would be insufficient resources to deliver against this action.

SLT members choose not to implement this action at this time.

Action 4: Deliver 12 intelligence led multi-agency campaigns targeting those most vulnerable from Road Traffic Collisions and inland drowning incidents.

Road Safety Campaigns:

- Multiple sessions of 'Olivia's Story' were held throughout the year, with over 2,200 attendees. Olivia's story is based on a real-life event, using dashcam footage to highlight the dangers of reckless driving.

Staff and colleagues from North Wales Police filmed a short video in collaboration with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai which was released on social media. The video explains what the Service hopes to achieve through the delivery of Olivia's Story, and also captured the thoughts and feelings of the students who had received the Olivia's Story session.

- BikerDown sessions were presented to over 100 bikers. Staff representatives attended the MCL Bikeshow in Birmingham to promote the BikerDown and BikerSafe courses, and were able to sign up over 300 people to attend local sessions. July saw the first BikerDown course to be held in Pwelli. This was supported by representatives from the 'Mental Health Motorbike' initiative.
- Collaboration with North Wales Police continued with the launch of 'Operation Apex'. This is a highly visible campaign aimed at reducing motorcycle casualties and improving rider safety. As part of this initiative, two key routes now have PRIME (Perceptual Rider Information for Maximising Expertise and Enjoyment) road markings, to assist riders with handling corners.
- The Service continued its participation with 'Operation Ugain'. Through 'Operation Ugain' drivers travelling over the speed limit, can choose to take an alternative to penalty points and/or a fine. The alternative is a free 10-minute presentation delivered by fire service staff and aims to inform people about the dangers of speeding.

Welsh Government funding for this collaborative work, has been extended due to the positive outcomes.

- Other road safety events included 'Biker Brew' events, and promoting the 'Fatal 5' Police campaign.

Water Safety Campaigns:

- Early in the year, water safety campaigns, such as #BeWaterAware and Float to Live, were promoted via social media, and a public engagement session in Bangor. Training was also delivered to DangerPoint rangers.
- A 'Spot the Difference' child safety campaign also helped raise awareness of water hazards through interactive sessions in schools and community groups.
- Water safety training was delivered to wardens from Eryri Nation Park, which consisted of a three-hour session, combining both theory and practical learning.
- During 'Drowning Prevention Week', operational staff visited a primary school, along with the 'Water Line Rescue Unit', from Bangor fire station.

- In July staff joined forces with partners for 'World Drowning Prevention Day', to help spread potentially lifesaving messages within our community areas. Two public water safety awareness events were held at Llyn Tegid, Bala, and Llyn Padarn, Llanberis. Both events saw staff undertake practical demonstrations and water safety activities.
- In November, Service staff welcomed colleagues from Llanberis Mountain Rescue, Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue, and Aberglasyn Mountain Rescue teams to Bangor Fire Station. This initiative was designed to enhance co-ordination and strengthen working relationships during water rescue incidents across the region.
- A new 'Swim Safety' pilot scheme is being developed. This is aimed at children aged nine through to 11 and will be undertaken at leisure centre's, to provide practical pool-based activities. The first sessions are planned to take place during 2026.

Action 5: Deliver bespoke, early intervention packages accredited through the King's Trust, adopting a trauma informed approach to develop safer, stronger, and more resilient children and young people (CYP).

Throughout the year, the [Phoenix Project](#) continued to deliver strong outcomes for young people referred by schools. During the year, 20 courses were delivered, all recording high completion rates.

Schools reported clear benefits from the programme, including 80% behaviour improvement in quarter one and 78% in quarter two, along with 100% positive feedback about the intervention in both quarters. In addition, 70% of participants in both quarters achieved a full [Agored Cymru](#) qualification.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of courses run	4	4	6	6
Number of CYP	33	29	55	55
% behaviour improvement reported	80%	78%	66%	73%
% positive feedback	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Agored Cymru	70%	70%	62%	92%
% CYP completed course	88%	86%	67%	92%

Alongside delivery, significant progress was made in developing the project's link with [The King's Trust](#). During the year, the required policies were consulted on and submitted to the Service Leadership Team (SLT), and supporting impact assessments were shared with relevant leads. By quarter three, the Prevention Team was finalising the documentation needed to connect the Phoenix Project with The King's Trust framework, and by quarter four, accreditation had been approved. This means the Phoenix Team is now delivering in line with The King's Trust syllabus and qualification.

Quarter four also saw an increase in wider engagement activity. The team carried out nine school engagements, providing bespoke fire safety advice to more than 800 pupils. In the same quarter, six Phoenix courses were run with 55 pupils attending, showing continued growth in reach and demand for the programme.

Overall, this has been a positive year for the Phoenix Project, with strong participant outcomes, excellent feedback from schools, and important progress in securing accreditation and aligning the programme with The King's Trust.

Action 6: Provide staff with 12 Continuous Professional Development events throughout the year to build knowledge and understanding to better serve local communities.

The roles previously known as Partnership Managers have undergone a transformation to provide more focused and specialised leadership that better serves both our staff and the Service as a whole.

In line with this change, the title Partnership Manager is being replaced with Prevention Manager to reflect the proactive, community-focused nature of the roles.

Training activities undertaken by members of the Prevention Department included:

1. Deaf Awareness
2. Victim Support
3. Well-being Day
4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Training
5. Hard of Hearing – specific training delivered by 'Fireblitz'
6. Conflict resolution



Our Protection Principle

Making businesses safer together.

Providing businesses with expert guidance on fire protection to help ensure the safety of buildings, employees, and customers, thereby supporting businesses to grow. High-risk buildings are prioritised for inspections, contributing to overall public safety.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales



A prosperous
Wales

Achievements in 2025–26

Action 1: Develop all supervisory and flexi-duty system officers to Level 2 in Business Fire Safety.

The Service focused on training to achieve Level 4 qualifications in Fire Safety due to promotions, new starters and staff movement within the team.

This decision supports alignment with Risk Based Inspection Programme Key Performance Indicators and the National Fire Chiefs Council competency framework for Fire Safety – Protection. Expressions of interest have been issued and assessed centrally before course bookings are made. The Fire Engineering Technician has explored opportunities to enable internal delivery of the Level 2 course, including a visit to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

This action remains ongoing due to staff movement within the Service.

Action 2: Undertake an intelligence-led approach to our Risk Based Inspection Programme, to reduce injury and death from fire in domestic and non-domestic premises.

Protection staff took part in a UK-wide multi-agency operation implemented to tackle organised crime.

Operation Machinize is a nationally co-ordinated initiative led by the National Economic Crime Centre (NECC) and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), focusing on tackling the criminal abuse of cash-intensive high street businesses that are exploited to launder illicit funds and support wider organised crime.

Throughout 2025, officers from North West Regional Organised Crime Unit (NWROCU) worked alongside partners including HMRC, Trading Standards, Immigration Enforcement, Environmental Health, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS).

As part of this multi-agency approach, NWFRS officers and compliance officers from the Protection team carried out inspections to assess fire safety compliance under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

In November, Compliance Officers attended a landlords' forum at Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham in partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

The event aimed to provide fire safety guidance to current and potential landlords through presentations and networking opportunities, highlighting landlords' responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

It also served as a platform for the Service and WCBC to showcase their multi-agency partnership work across various property types, including takeaways, nail bars and Airbnb accommodations. This demonstrated that regulatory efforts extend beyond Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and single-occupancy premises to ensure all accommodation meets the same standards. The presentation emphasised the comprehensive behind-the-scenes work undertaken to identify risks, follow up on concerns and take appropriate enforcement or prohibition action when necessary.

Action 3: Undertake monthly business fire safety reassurance campaigns to promote safety in commercial premises.

Over the year, work in this area has continued despite ongoing staff shortages, which have limited the amount of activity that could be carried out. Even so, business-as-usual work has continued with partners, and some targeted action has been delivered where capacity allowed.

This included joint work with partner agencies on specific premises and risks, support for enforcement activity, and ongoing work with HMP Berwyn and other stakeholders to help reduce fire incidents. North Wales Fire and Rescue Service also supported training activities for health and safety staff and inspectors.

In the final quarter of the year, there was a multi-agency visit to Flats near Menai Bridge which led to several enforcement notices being issued to the property directors.

Action 4: Work with partner agencies and deliver seasonal interventions and engagements to manage our landscape and reduce wildfires.

The Fire Authority adopted the National Fire Chiefs Council definition for recording wildfires, which is defined as any uncontrolled vegetation fire where a decision or action is needed about its suppression. A wildfire will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Involves a geographical area of at least one hectare (10,000 square metres)
- Has a sustained flame length of more than 1.5 metres
- Requires a committed resource of at least four fire and rescue service appliances / resources
- Requires resources to be committed for at least six hours
- Present a serious threat to life, environment, property and infrastructure

The Service attended 40 wildfires during the year. Of these, 33 were started accidentally and seven were thought to have started deliberately.

Despite there being an overall reduction in the number of wildfires attended compared to last year, the number of those started deliberately increased by three.

The Service was particularly busy during August when substantial incidents were attended at Mynydd Bodafon in Llannerchymedd, Anglesey and Cwm Mountain in Llandudno, Conwy and in Trefriw, Sarnau, Denbighshire.

The graph below shows how emergency attendance to wildfires can vary year-on-year.



In February the new ‘Argocat’ vehicle became operational. This is an all-terrain vehicle, which will provide additional support for both personnel and equipment. This vehicle will be based at Colwyn Bay fire station but will be used to attend emergency incidents across North Wales as needed.





Our Response Principle

Providing an effective emergency response.

Being ready to respond when you need us: to protect what matters to you, to save lives, reduce harm, and protect homes and businesses.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A more equal
Wales

Achievements in 2025–26

Action 1: Design, procure, and deliver firefighting appliances with enhancements that will provide a clean cab solution, minimising the risk, as far as reasonably practical, of contaminants exposure to our fire fighters.

During the year, five new emergency response appliances completed acceptance testing and were brought into service. Each appliance includes the 'Clean Cab' design, which helps reduce firefighters' exposure to fire contaminants. The design was developed through research and development led by the Contaminants working group, with input from key stakeholders across the Service and representatives from the Fire Brigades Union. The appliances also include new 22mm hosereels and branches, in line with recommendations from the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor and Inspector for Wales report on responding to domestic dwelling fires. This latest delivery is the second to use this design, which will now form the basis for future appliance builds as we continue to improve the fleet through user feedback and ongoing replacement programmes.

Action 2: Install Flow Meters on pumping appliances, as a response to learning outcomes from Grenfell and a recommendation from the Chief Fire & Rescue Advisor in Wales.

During the year, progress continued on expanding the use of flow meters across the red fleet (vehicles that attend emergency incidents). Five vehicles are already in service with flow meters fitted, and plans are still being developed for the remaining vehicles and the timescale for completion. A further eight kits were ordered, with the Fleet department continuing to pursue delivery. Once received, Fleet department staff plan to install the hardware on the platforms, with support from Emergency One for software installation and commissioning. Contact has also been made with Emergency One to arrange training for Fleet staff in May or June 2026 so they can install the hardware for the eight flow meters already owned. However, there is still no confirmed delivery date for the remaining ordered kits.

Action 3: To lead and coordinate the upgrade of technology systems across the Service to ensure they are cyber-secure and fit for purpose.

An audit of all ICT services was conducted together with an inspection of cyber security stance. Work has been carried out to replace out-of-date operating systems and decommission unsupportable systems where the technical risks could not be mitigated. This ensures that critical systems are ready and robust at the moment they're depended upon.

Action 4: Support and implement the delivery of decisions and recommendations from the Fire Authority Emergency Cover Working Group.

The Emergency Cover Review (ECR) was a phased programme of change to improve the effectiveness and resilience of emergency cover across North Wales, particularly in rural areas, without increasing the budget. Following the Fire and Rescue Authority's reaffirmation of this commitment in early 2025, officers, the Transformation Team, representative bodies and Fire Brigades Union officials worked together to develop a collective agreement and establish the Collective Agreement Implementation Group (CAIG). This work led to pilot arrangements designed to make the 178 posts across the 22 watches at the eight wholetime/day crewed stations more self-sufficient, reducing reliance on wider establishment posts to cover absences and creating capacity to support new approaches such as nucleus crewing in rural areas including Dolgellau and Porthmadog.

During 2025, CAIG oversaw implementation, staff communication and the development of supporting processes, including FAQs, recruitment activity, shift alignment and the Wholetime Rostering Policy. Shift alignment was introduced from 2 September 2025 and nucleus crewing pilots were launched to strengthen rural daytime cover, with communications consistently emphasising collaboration, staff support and regular review. Early feedback and monitoring suggest the changes are beginning to improve resilience, with encouraging signs of better daytime pump availability in rural areas, reduced need for additional hours, and wider benefits through community safety activity, local engagement and stronger support for on-call crews.

Action 5: Increase the on-call establishment to facilitate an improvement in appliance availability across the region.

Recruitment numbers were assessed and reviewed, and a presentation was delivered to the Service Leadership Team (SLT) in April.

As part of a more localised approach to on-call recruitment, individual station needs were reviewed and discussed at every 'Recruitment and Availability Group' meeting.

During January the Service released new on-call recruitment promotional materials on social media.

The end of the year recorded an improvement to the number of on-call firefighters available to attend emergency incidents; up to 502 people from 489 people at the beginning of the year.



On-Call Station Availability

The below table shows the average pump availability for all On-call fire stations between 06:00 and 18:00. The availability is broken down by month, showing the respective weekday and weekend/bank holiday availability.

The table is representative of all On-call watches that are not based at wholetime or day crewed stations.

Average of On-call Stations Availability 06:00–18:00																	
Day/Month	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Jul	Aug	Sep	Q2	Oct	Nov	Dec	Q3	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q4	Whole Year
Weekday	6	6	5	6	6	4	6	5	6	7	7	6	7	7	6	7	6
Weekend (incl. Bank Holiday)	14	14	12	13	11	12	12	12	12	11	9	11	11	11	10	11	12
Overall Average	9	9	7	8	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	9	8	7	8	8
2025/26	7	7	6	7	6	7	6	6	6	7	9	7	10	9	9	9	7

Please note that availabilities have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The below table reflects the number of On-call firefighter starters and leavers during quarter two, compared to the same quarter of last year. Many of the On-call firefighter leavers this quarter have migrated to the Wholetime Duty System.

Year	Starters	Leavers	Position Headcount at Year End	Headcount (single role only)
Apr 2024 – Mar 2025	86	65	487	425
Apr 2025 – Mar 2026	88	71	512	427
+/-	2	6	25	2

Starters – the number of On-call firefighter starters from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts.

Leavers – the number of On-call firefighter leavers from each respective quarter. This does not include secondary contracts, or migrations to the Wholetime Duty System.

Position Headcount at Quarter End – the number of On-call firefighter positions that are filled, including those who have more than one role.

Headcount (single role only) – the number of individuals who are on the On-call firefighter only i.e., those who do not have two roles in the Service.

Action 6: Create a schedule of exercises in line with the Local Resilience Forum risk profile of North Wales.

A new electronic calendar featuring exercise events taking place across the Service area was introduced. This provides staff with an early awareness of exercises taking place and allows them the opportunity to express an interest in taking part or being a spectator.

Station Managers and staff from the Control Room are able to add details of any upcoming live exercises or tabletop exercises to ensure that the calendars are as up to date as possible.

In total 20 exercises were undertaken during the year, which included:

- **Electric vehicle incident training:** Crews in Holyhead practiced responding to an electric van fire following a collision, focusing on safely extinguishing EV fires using specialist blankets.
- **Building fire and Breathing Apparatus (BA) emergency exercise:** Firefighters trained for a first-floor building fire with casualties, testing incident command, BA procedures, search and rescue, and emergency response after a simulated ceiling collapse trapped BA crews.
- **Water outage multi-agency training:** Partners across public services took part in a Colwyn Bay exercise based on a major water outage, reviewing lessons learned, improving coordination, and strengthening preparedness for large-scale incidents.

Action 7: Conduct a review of our fleet of special appliances to ensure they remain suitable to meet the current and future risk/demand profile.

Following a competitive tender process, Emergency One Group (UK) Ltd was awarded the contract to supply the Service's new 'Turntable Ladder' vehicle. This is a major investment and forms part of the ongoing replacement programme for aerial appliances that are reaching the end of their operational life. The specification and design were developed through a working group involving staff from across the Service, with strong emphasis on feedback from end users. Since the contract award, colleagues in Fleet, Technical Operations and Procurement departments have continued to work closely with the supplier to finalise the design, identify improvements and achieve value for money. This collaborative approach has helped create a clear specification for the new appliance and will support the project as it moves into the next stages of build and delivery.

Action 8: Continue multiagency consultation response and risk management of large battery and energy storage systems (BESS).

Over the past year, strong multi-agency collaboration has continued between the BESS group and the Regional Minerals and Waste Service, including close working with the lead officer and planning team. A key development has been the agreement to ensure that partners are automatically notified when private companies submit planning applications for renewable energy projects. This improved information-sharing process will apply across all six North Wales councils, helping partners stay informed and respond more effectively.

Regular meetings have been held throughout the year to maintain momentum and coordination. Alongside this, ongoing work has focused on identifying and mapping renewable energy sites, further improving awareness and supporting both future planning and operational response.

The service has also explored new equipment to address emerging risks, including extinguishers designed for solar panel (PV) fires. These have been assessed for suitability on appliances and are now scheduled for purchase in the 2026–27 budget.

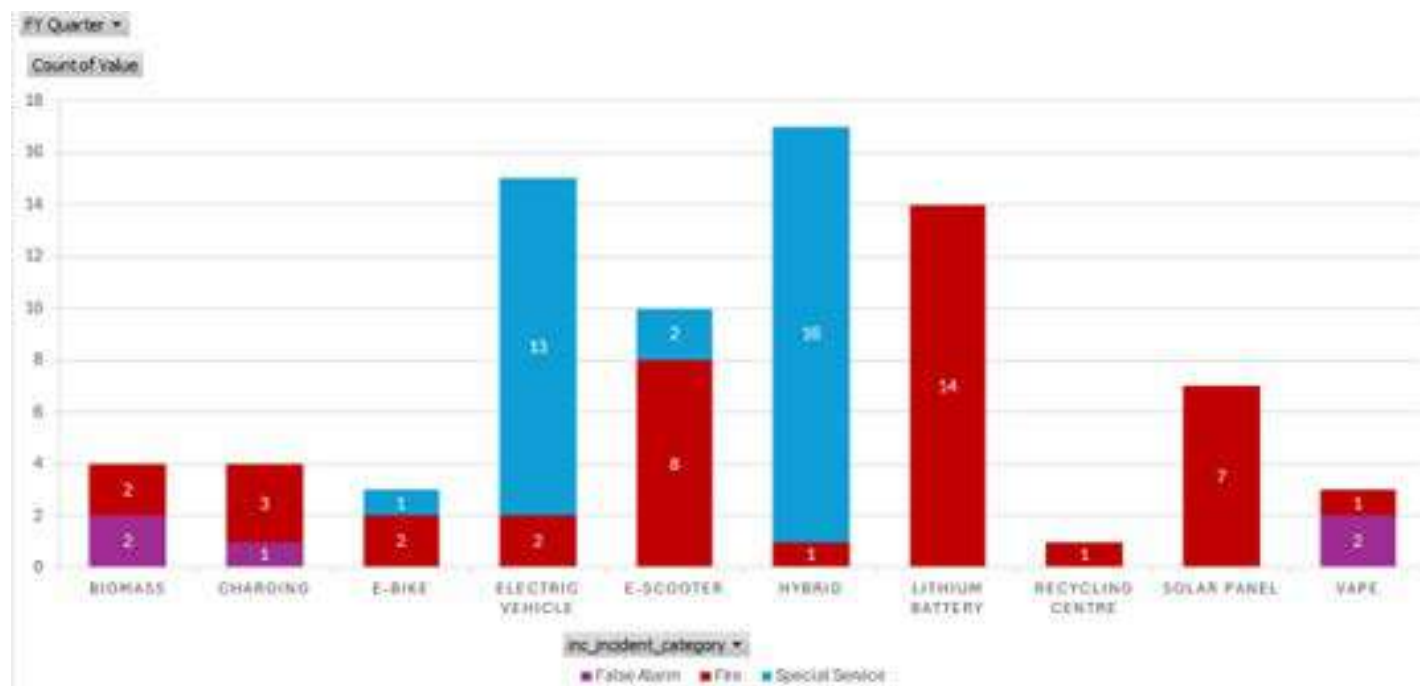
Overall, the year has seen steady progress, with enhanced partnership working, better information sharing, and continued steps towards strengthening the response to renewable energy-related risks.

Emergency incidents attended by the Service during the year.

As technology evolves and our societal reliance upon it increases, it has become apparent that new and complex risks are presented to our Fire Service. Emerging technologies can make up a variety of forms, including things like:

- Electric Vehicles
- Wind Farms
- Devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries

Many of these technologies do not have dedicated reporting categories within national fire and rescue incident data systems. As a result, key word searches are conducted on incident logs in order to identify and analyse trends.



Although Electric vehicles and Hybrid vehicles feature heavily in the above figures for 2025–26, the chart demonstrates that most of these incidents were not fire calls.

Action 9: Continue to develop the business case for a new Training and Development Centre.

Progress has continued throughout the year on developing the business case for a new Training and Development Centre, now named **Hwb Awen**. Early site works began in summer 2025, including fencing, environmental surveys, vegetation clearance and preparation of the land. Planning remains at the outline stage, with detailed design work ongoing.

Strong progress has been made on design and planning, supported by a newly appointed design team and input from staff, working groups and visits to other fire service training facilities. Environmental considerations have also been carefully managed, including protection of wildlife on site.

Engagement has been a key focus, with regular communication, staff visits, and drop-in sessions helping to gather feedback and shape the development. This feedback has already influenced plans, such as including overnight accommodation and ensuring facilities meet operational training needs.

A major milestone was the approval of the outline of the Business Case which was approved by members at the Fire Authority meeting in January. Alongside this, branding work has progressed following a staff vote to name the centre Hwb Awen.

Overall, the project is progressing well, with steady development of plans, strong staff involvement, and early sitework completed or nearing completion, keeping the long-term goal of a new training centre on track for delivery.

Action 10: Review and implement relevant recommendations of the Grenfell Tower inquiry phase 2 report, to improve operational preparedness and response, firefighter training and firefighter safety.

Over the year, steady progress has been made toward completing all recommendations, although some areas remain only partially compliant due to the complexity and nature of the work.

Key improvements have been achieved, including the introduction of digital handheld radios, which has enabled some recommendations to be fully completed. A small number of areas will remain partially compliant in the short term while further work is carried out.

There has also been a strong focus on improving evacuation procedures for tall buildings. Learning has been shared through collaboration with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, including presentations, joint exercises, and observation of live training scenarios. These activities have helped inform local review work, with the Tall Buildings Group assessing how best to adopt or adapt these procedures in North Wales.

Exercises have been carried out to test evacuation arrangements, with debriefs identifying areas for further improvement. These findings will help shape future changes and ensure continued progress.

Overall, the year has seen ongoing improvement, with practical changes implemented, strong partnership learning, and continued work to address remaining compliance gaps.

Action 11: Continue with the Training Towers replacement programme.

The training tower replacement and renovation programme was agreed in line with 2024-25 capital budget planning. In addition, an inspection programme was introduced and a RAG priority list created for all training towers across North Wales Fire & Rescue Service. Unfortunately, due to external supply issues and delays with the introduction of the estates project management team, key deadlines have been missed with training tower replacements being delayed and placed into forthcoming planning life cycles.





Our Environment Principle

Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.

Adopting eco-friendly practices in our daily operations to cut down on carbon emissions and other environmental impacts and raise environmental awareness amongst our staff and our communities.

Well-being goals met:



A resilient
Wales



A Wales of
cohesive
communities



A healthier
Wales



A globally
responsible
Wales

Achievements in 2025–26

Action 1: Review stock items and develop best working practices in order to improve efficiency and management of stock levels.

Over the year, we continued to improve stock management and strengthen working relationships with other departments to make stores processes more efficient. We reviewed stock levels regularly, reduced unnecessary stock holding and worked with colleagues to improve ordering, communication and day-to-day processes.

We regularly reviewed minimum stock levels whenever orders were placed to make sure stock levels remained appropriate and products were still needed. We built stronger working relationships with other departments, including taking part in recruitment and availability meetings so stores could be involved earlier and more effectively.

We reviewed welfare vehicle stock provisions, reduced waste and agreed a simpler list of frequently requested items with the Operations Department.

Additional wildfire kit was received to improve stock levels, and barcoding was completed alongside changes to the laundry process.

We continued to improve joint processes with Operations, including out-of-hours procedures, leaver kits, promotion-related kit and emergency kit arrangements.

We began sourcing a new supplier for 'undress kit' because stock levels had fallen and the previous supplier no longer offered the same style or material.

The year-end stock take was completed, with positive progress in reducing the amount of stock held and further work planned to improve the process.

This work will continue as part of business as usual, with the stores team reviewing systems and making the best use of technology each Wednesday.

Arrangements are also being made to attend supply chain meetings with other public sector organisations using TechOne.

Action 2: Expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) network across the Service.

Work has been carried out to expand the EVCP network across the Service in order to operate a greater number of Electric Vehicles.

Grant funding was approved, and two single socket chargers have now been installed at Wrexham fire station, and one twin socket charger installed at Dolgellau fire station.

A trial was successfully concluded which allows Service staff to use the EVCP network to charge their own vehicles using an app to make payment for the electricity consumed.

A draft policy and procedure has been written which allows not only Service personnel but also allow external public organisations to charge their electric vehicles using these newly installed electric chargers.

All fire stations and other fire related sites now have at least one EVCP.

Action 3: Procure light vehicles in order to maintain the age profile at a reasonable level and ensure that our light vehicle fleet is reliable, with the latest safety standards for our staff and as environmentally efficient as possible.

Work started with identifying suitable vehicles within Service budget, with zero emissions vehicles being prioritised in accordance with Welsh Government Carbon Budget 2 and the Services 'Fleet Decarbonisation Plan'.

In total 53 light vehicles (cars and vans) have been successfully procured during the year, although arrangements had to the initial allocation plans, to accommodate individual requirements.

Action 4: To transition existing diesel use vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) use vehicles.

So far, no major issues have been identified with the HVO trial at Deeside Fire Station, so it is expected that work with the provider will continue. There are still several weeks left before planning applications for the next seven fire station sites are decided. Based on how the BSmart back-end system operated at Deeside Fire Station, it appears to work well and provides effective tracking and oversight.

Action 5: Upgrade the Building Management System to negate the impact of terminated BT copper lines.

Progress against this action has been delayed due to the cost associated with replacing the existing traditional boilers. At this stage, it is considered more cost effective to replace the entire boiler system at the appropriate time, rather than carry out interim works to the boiler panels in support of this action.

Action 6: Monitor and report on energy, water, and waste data including reporting to Welsh Government on carbon reporting.

The Service has closely monitored energy and corporate water consumption, as well as our waste outputs to identify ways we can improve our operational efficiency and reduce our environmental impacts.

We have worked closely with the Welsh Government Energy Service to improve the way we calculate and report on our carbon emissions, by gathering more specific environmental impact data from our suppliers. This reporting forms an integral part of our work towards the ambition for a net zero public sector in Wales by 2030.

Recognition of Our Collaborative Working

Definition of Collaboration

“the act of working together with other people or organisations to create or achieve something”.

Moorland Partnership Project

Denbighshire County Council’s countryside team received the Community Safety Partner Award for its Moorland Partnership Project at an awards night.



The project, run in partnership with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, supports the fire service in tackling dangerous wildfires.

Councillor Alan James, lead member for local development and planning, said: “I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the team for achieving this great award.

“This reflects some of the vital services that the team provide in dangerous situations and it serves as a great example of what an effective collaborative approach can achieve.

“Our countryside rangers work tirelessly to ensure that residents and visitors to the county are able to enjoy our vast landscape and it’s great that their hard work has been recognised with this award.”

Earlier this year, the team supported the fire service during a four-day multi-agency operation on the Berwyn range, where a wildfire affected nearly 350 hectares of moorland on Moel Fferna.

The partnership has continued beyond the emergency response, with rangers and fire crews working together on wildfire training exercises and public awareness campaigns.

These efforts aim to promote the responsible use of fires and BBQs in the countryside, making sure everyone understands the serious dangers they can pose to our National landscape.

Disability Confident 'Employer Status' Accreditation

The Service successfully achieved the Disability Confident Level 2 'Employer' accreditation.

The Disability Confident scheme is a UK government initiative designed to support employers in recruiting, retaining, and developing disabled people.

This achievement clearly demonstrates to prospective and existing employees how the Service is following best practice across various areas of work, and is a step up from the Level 1 'Commitment' status achieved in 2022.

A task and finish group of Service staff helped to assess our current position. The group worked together to capture evidence of inclusive practices and highlight gaps and opportunities to improve in the future. The task and finish group was made up of 12 representatives from across the Service, who met three times in July and August to drive forward this work.

The group members all made important contributions in the meetings, with many also conducting vital research and evidence gathering.

Chief Fire Officer Dawn Docx said "Gaining this advanced level accreditation is a positive example of collaboration and team work".



Real Living Wage Accreditation

The Service have also achieved real living wage accreditation, becoming the 18th public body in Wales to do so, and the first in North Wales.

Our Living Wage commitment will see everyone working at the Service receive a minimum hourly wage of £13.45 – higher than the government minimum for over 21s, which currently stands at £12.21 per hour.

The office for the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales tells us that we are based in a region where 15.8% of jobs earn less than they need to get by – with around 199,000 jobs paying less than the real Living Wage.

The Living Wage Foundation's real Living Wage remains the only UK wage rate independently calculated based on the cost of living, rising annually based on living costs.

Our people are at the heart of everything we do.

By becoming a Living Wage accredited employer, we are reaffirming our commitment to fairness and ensuring that everyone who works for us is paid a wage that reflects the real cost of living.

It's all about doing the right thing for our staff and recognising the vital contribution they make to our communities every day.





Performance Information Summary

The Fire and Rescue Authorities (Performance Indicators) (Wales) Order 2015 introduced three statutory performance indicators that accompany locally collected sector indicators.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:	2024-25		2025-26	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Fires attended	1,804	26.07	2,043	29.31
False alarms attended	3,264	47.17	3,209	46.03
Road traffic collisions	255	3.69	297	4.26
Other emergency incidents attended	1,166	16.85	1,065	15.28
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population				
Fire deaths and injuries	49	7.08	55	7.89
Deaths and injuries arising from fires started accidentally	45	6.50	53	7.60
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population				
Dwelling fires confined to room of origin	308	87.01%	282	87.58%
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended				

All Wales Sector Indicators

Sector indicators were introduced for 2015 and agreed to be collected and shared by all three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

ALL WALES			2025-26			
SECTOR INDICATORS:	North Wales FRS		Mid & West Wales FRS		South Wales FRS	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Deliberate fires	544	7.80	1,509	16.42	4,386	27.92
Accidental fires (or motive not known)	1,499	21.50	1,632	17.76	1,791	11.40
Where the rate is based on 10,000 population						
Fire related fatalities	2	0.29	4	0.44	9	0.57
Injuries caused by fires	53	7.60	24	2.61	54	3.44
Fire related fatalities in accidental dwelling fires	2	0.29	2	0.22	9	0.57
Fire related fatalities in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	1	0.11	0	0.00
Fire related injuries in accidental dwelling fires	30	4.30	19	2.07	46	2.93
Fire related injuries in deliberate dwelling fires	0	0.00	2	0.22	8	0.51
Where the rate is based on 100,000 population						
Dwelling fires	346	10.29	428	9.68	643	9.06
Accidental fires in dwellings	325	9.67	393	8.89	587	8.27
Deliberate fires in dwellings	21	0.62	35	0.79	56	0.79
AFA false alarms in dwellings	1,481	44.04	1,528	34.56	2,182	30.73
Where the rate is based on 10,000 dwellings						
Fires in non-domestic premises	155	4.65	143	3.54	361	6.88
AFA false alarms in non-domestic	379	11.37	325	8.05	1,535	29.24
Where the rate is based on 1,000 non-domestic premises						
Dwelling fires attended where a smoke alarm was not fitted	45	13.01	134	31.31	245	38.10
As a percentage of the number of dwelling fires attended						



The Dwelling Fire Response Charter in 2025–26

During 2012 the three Welsh fire and Rescue Authorities jointly developed an all-Wales Charter to ensure that wherever people live in Wales, they can expect to be helped and supported to remain safe from fire in their homes. They should also be able to expect that if a fire does break out, they will receive a prompt, effective and professional emergency response to their call for assistance.

The Charter makes seven specific commitments that the Fire and Rescue Authority will:

1. Take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people.
2. React quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire.
3. Attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them.
4. Deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally.
5. Help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.
6. Investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so.
7. Strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

The following pages provide information about our compliance with these commitments during 2025–26.

For consistency, we use a standard narrative for reporting against the Charter each year and only update the figures within the narrative framework.

1. We will take the lead in driving down the number of dwelling fires that occur and in reducing their impact on people

We are committed to taking the lead in maintaining a downward trend in the incidence of dwelling fires and associated casualties in Wales.

In 2025-26 we provided advice and encouragement to people on how they can prevent fires from starting in their home and how they can keep themselves safe from fire.

Our prevention activity included delivering 19,374 Safe and Well Checks (SAWCs) to householders, and 4,110 children and young people at key stages 1 – 4 received a fire safety talk.

During 2025-26 we attended 322 accidental dwelling fires. As a consequence of those fires, there were 2 recorded fatalities, but 29 people sustained injuries. The number of accidental dwelling fires in the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) area has remained consistent, with 338 accidental fires also attended during 2024-25.

The number of accidental dwelling fires in the FRA area remains at their lowest level in the past five years.

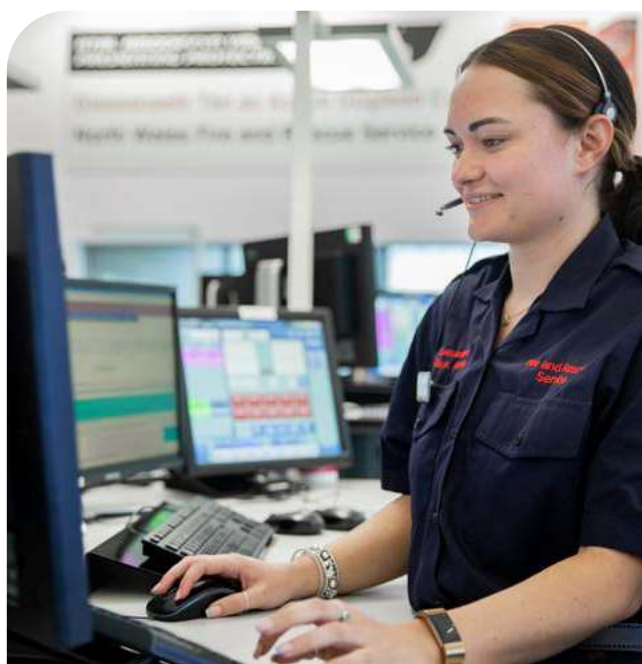
2. We will react quickly and efficiently every time we receive an emergency 999 call to attend a dwelling fire

We are committed to reacting quickly and efficiently when emergency 999/112 calls are put through to us by the operator.

Our emergency fire control facility remains available around the clock every day of the year, with special arrangements in place for a seamless transfer of calls from one control facility to another in the event of serious disruption or a surge in the number of calls coming in at the same time.

Sophisticated mapping and electronic systems help us to: a) identify the location of the reported incident and b) send the most appropriate available resource to attend the incident.

In 2025-26, we handled a total of 15,972 emergency 999/112 calls. We were able to obtain enough information about dwelling fire incidents to alert the appropriate initial response within 90 seconds on 79.2% of occasions and between 91 and 120 seconds on 10.9% of occasions.



However, we know that the speed of call handling – although important – is not the only relevant yardstick. Knowing where our services are needed requires specialist skills to effectively glean information from callers who may, for example, be unfamiliar with the area they are in, be frightened or in distress, be very young, or have communication or language difficulties.

Another important skill is recognising when a caller is abusing the 999/112 system by falsely claiming that there is an emergency when, in fact, there is not. It is a criminal offence to knowingly make false calls to the emergency services. Sadly, that does not seem to deter a minority of people who tie up the 999 lines and divert services away from people who may be in a genuinely life-threatening situation. Every time we turn out to one of these malicious false alarms, it wastes both time and money, and also places the rest of the community at higher risk.

In 2025–26, we received 124 malicious false alarms. In 57.3% of cases, we were able to establish that these calls were not genuine and so avoided needlessly mobilising resources to attend.

3. We will attend dwelling fires swiftly and properly equipped to deal with them

Once we have answered the emergency 999/112 call and allocated the most appropriate resources to make up the initial attendance at the incident, our next priority is to get to the incident quickly, safely and properly equipped to deal with it.

Response times can be effected by a number of different factors, including the urban/rural geography and the nature of road networks in the area.

Speed of response to dwelling fires is extremely important, but we cannot over- emphasise the importance of preventing those fires from happening in the first instance, and of having at least one working smoke alarm fitted and a pre- planned escape route in case a fire does occur. However, if a dwelling fire has occurred, we ensure that our firefighting crews are properly equipped to deal with it.

We equip our firefighters with high quality personal protective equipment and firefighting equipment. We require them to be operationally fit and healthy, and we make sure that their skills are routinely tested and exercised. We also routinely check that the way our crews dealt with incidents was in accordance with accepted firefighting procedures.

We take the safety of our firefighters very seriously, given the nature of the work that they undertake. In 2025–26, our crews attended 2,043 fires in a variety of different types of premises and at outdoor locations. Whilst fighting those fires, 8 operational staff received an injury.



4. We will deal with dwelling fires effectively, efficiently and professionally

We are committed to dealing with fires effectively, efficiently and professionally. To this end, we equip our highly trained fire crews with the right skills, knowledge, information, firefighting equipment and command support so that whatever the circumstances of the dwelling fire, they will be correctly prepared to deal with it.

In 2025-26, of all the dwelling fires that we attended, 88% were successfully contained within the room of origin, without spreading any further. Although, a number of factors could contribute to this statistic that would be outside the control of the attending crews such as how long it took for someone to discover the fire in the first instance, whether

or not internal doors had been shut to help prevent the spread of the fire, and how far away from a fire station the dwelling was located, we still consider this to be a reasonable indicator of our firefighting success.

We recognise the importance of research and equipment improvements, and ensure that we invest time and effort in staying in touch with the latest developments.

We also take very seriously the professional image of the fire and rescue service. We place great emphasis on the personal qualities and attributes of all our operational staff, as well as their physical and psychological fitness and the high standard of their operational and management training.

We encourage all our staff to adhere to a set of core values that were adopted nationally by the UK Fire and Rescue Service. This expresses our commitment to valuing service to the community, people, diversity and improvement.

5. We will help to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires

We are committed to helping to restore normality to communities in the aftermath of dwelling fires.

A fire in the home can leave people feeling extremely vulnerable.

When people have lost their possessions, they will have need for practical as well as emotional support. When people have been injured or killed in the fire, the experience can affect whole communities as well as the individual and his or her immediate friends and family. For this reason, the fire and rescue service's role in supporting communities does not end when the fire was extinguished and everyone was accounted for.



In all cases, the cause of the fire will be investigated and carefully recorded. Every detail of how and where the fire started, how far it spread, any special circumstances, and any particular factors that contributed to the fire will be recorded as a source of future learning, research and monitoring.

If there are reasons to believe that a fire was started deliberately in a dwelling, either by someone living there or by someone else, this will be followed up with the police and other relevant agencies.

In some premises, such as blocks of flats or houses occupied by a number of different tenants, the post-incident investigations might indicate that a landlord had failed to ensure the necessary level of fire safety. Our specialist fire investigators might then be involved in a criminal investigation and court proceedings.

If a fire is found to have started accidentally, we might undertake some form of community safety activity or campaign in the vicinity, offering advice and reassurance by way of free SAWCs.

6. We will investigate the causes of dwelling fires and hold relevant people to account when appropriate to do so

We always investigate the causes of dwelling fires. In many cases the cause and origin of a fire will be very clear and straightforward, but in others a more in-depth, forensic investigation will be required to ascertain the most likely cause of the fire. In 2025-26, 19 dwelling fires were recorded as having an unknown cause.

If a crime is suspected, the investigation of the fire will be conducted with the police. People suspected of deliberately setting fire to a dwelling are likely to face criminal prosecution, although in some cases this may not be the only course of action available, for example if the fire was started by a young child or by a person attempting suicide.

In 2025-26, we attended 346 fires in dwellings, of which 21 were found to have been started deliberately.

In some residential premises, such as flats and houses of multiple occupation, the communal and shared areas are covered by regulations that require whoever is responsible for those premises (such as the landlord or the premises manager) to have good fire safety arrangements in place.

Failure to do so can lead to the closure of the premises and prosecution of the person responsible with the prospect of imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

As an enforcing authority, we ensure that responsible persons fulfil their obligations under this legislation and can select from a range of enforcement options available to us, depending on the seriousness and risk posed by the contravention.

In 2025-26, we served six enforcement notices and three prohibition notices. No formal cautions or prosecutions were concluded during the year.



7. We will strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do

We continuously strive to maintain high standards and improve aspects of what we do.

Under legislation, Fire and Rescue Authorities are classed as 'Welsh Improvement Authorities' and are expected to routinely review and continuously improve their own performance through a formal process of setting, implementing and reporting against annual improvement objectives.

We do not limit our improvement activity to this formal annual process; high standards and continual improvement form an integral part of our everyday running of the Fire and Rescue Service.

Examples of improvement activities that go on include:

- Responding positively to peer reviews, audits and inspections.
- Responding positively to consultation responses, feedback from stakeholders, complaints and compliments.
- Learning from our experiences, such as from post-incident debriefs, reports of accidents, or 'near misses'.
- Contributing to working groups, sharing good practice, and learning from research undertaken.
- Taking opportunities to learn from, and with, other organisations through partnerships, committees, boards and professional associations.
- Planning for potential challenges in order to maintain our operations, such as through business continuity management processes.
- Planning for potential challenges to future service delivery, such as through local resilience forums.
- Continuously developing the technical and professional skills of our staff.
- Maintaining and renewing our physical and computerised assets such as our equipment, vehicles, buildings and technology.



What Others Said About Us

Audit Wales – Well-being Objectives

Their report can be found [here](#).

Other Information

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External information sources used in compiling this document:

- [Wales Fire and Rescue Incident Statistics](#)
- [Wales Future Trends Report \(2021\)](#)

Intervention in the event of failure or potential failure to comply:

The Welsh Government has powers of intervention:

- under section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the National Framework. In such cases, section 23 – Intervention Protocol would apply.
- under section 29 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 if it considers that a Fire and Rescue Authority is failing, or is at risk of failing, to comply with the Measure. However, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, Welsh Ministers may only intervene after they have offered voluntary support to the Authority under section 28 of the Measure.

Consultations

Each year the Authority seeks the opinions and views of the North Wales public and other stakeholders as part of its process of developing its strategic plans and objectives.

Public consultations are listed below:

Title	Consultation	Publication	For year
Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27	Autumn 2025	Spring 2026	2026-27
Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-26	Autumn 2024	Spring 2025	2025-26
Community Risk Management Plan 2024-29	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	2024-29
Emergency Cover Review	Summer/Autumn 2023	Winter 2023	2023-24

Recent staff surveys are listed below:

Title	Consultation	
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2025	3 October – 14 November 2025
Crest Advisory Cultural Review	Autumn 2024	23 August – 11 October 2024
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2023	18 September – 16 October 2023
Fire Family Survey	Autumn 2021	18 October – 08 November 2021



Glossary and Definitions

Fires

All fires fall into one of three categories – primary, secondary or chimney.

Primary Fires

These are fires that are not chimney fires, and which are in any type of building (except if derelict), vehicles, caravans and trailers, outdoor storage, plant and machinery, agricultural and forestry property, and other outdoor structures such as bridges, post boxes, tunnels, etc.

Fires in any location are categorised as primary fires if they involve casualties, rescues or escapes, as are fires in any location that were attended by five or more fire appliances.

Secondary Fires

Secondary fires are fires that are neither chimney fires nor primary fires. Secondary fires are those that would normally occur on open land, in single trees, fences, telegraph poles, refuse and refuse containers (but not paper banks, which would be considered in the same way as agricultural and forestry property to be primary fires), outdoor furniture, traffic lights.

Secondary fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes, and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Chimney Fires

These are fires in occupied buildings where the fire is confined within the chimney structure, even if heat or smoke damage extends beyond the chimney itself.

Chimney fires do not involve casualties, rescues or escapes and will have been attended by four or fewer fire appliances.

Wildfires

A grassland, woodland and crop fire where the incident was attended by four or more vehicles, or the Service was in attendance for six hours or more, or where there was an estimated fire damage area of over 10,000 square meters.

Special Service Incidents (other emergency incidents)

These are non-fire incidents which require the attendance of an appliance or officer and include:

- Local emergencies e.g. flooding, road traffic incidents, rescue of persons, 'making safe' etc.
- Major disasters.
- Domestic incidents e.g. water leaks, persons locked in or out etc.
- prior arrangements to attend incidents, which may include some provision of advice and inspections.

Fire Deaths (fire related)

This is where a person whose death is attributed to a fire even if the death occurred weeks or months later. There are also occasional cases where it becomes apparent subsequently that the fire was not the cause of the death. These figures are therefore subject to revision.

Fire Injuries

For consistency after April 2009 across the UK, fire casualties are recorded under four categories of severity:

- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be serious.
- The victim went to hospital, injuries appear to be slight.
- The victim was given first aid at the scene only, but required no further treatment.
- A precautionary check was recommended – the person was sent to hospital or was advised to see a doctor as a precaution, but having no obvious injury or distress.

False Alarm (general guidance)

Where the Fire and Rescue Service attends a location believing there to be an incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.

Note: if the appliance is 'turned around' by Control before arriving at the incident it is not classed as having attended and does not need to be reported.

Malicious

These are calls made with the intention of getting the Fire and Rescue Service to attend a non-existent incident, including deliberate and suspected malicious intentions.

Good Intent

These are calls made in good faith in the belief that the Fire and Rescue Service really would attend a fire or special service incident.

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA)

These are calls initiated by fire alarm and fire-fighting equipment. They include accidental initiation of alarm equipment or where an alarm operates and a person then routinely calls the Fire and Rescue Service as part of a standing arrangement, with no 'judgement' involved, for example from a security call centre or a nominated person in an organisation.

Have your say

We are always looking for ways to improve our service and to present information that is meaningful. In order to help us to do this we want to ensure your views are considered when delivering our activities and keeping you informed. So, if you have any comments about this assessment, or how we might improve our future annual performance assessments, we would very much like to hear from you.

Other versions of this document are available

- In paper and electronic formats.
- In Welsh and English.
- In accessible formats through our website.

Write to us



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Visit our website



www.northwalesfire.gov.wales

Or follow us on



X (previously Twitter): [@northwalesfire](https://twitter.com/northwalesfire)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/northwalesfireservice

Instagram: [@northwalesfire](https://www.instagram.com/northwalesfire)

Please ring 999 only in an emergency