

**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 28 APRIL 2025** virtually **via Zoom** at **09:30**.

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 January 2025**
- 5. Matters Arising**
- 6. Chair's Report**
- 7. Emergency Cover Review**
- 8. Training Centre Project Update**
- 9. Independent Cultural Review into North Wales Fire and Rescue Service**
- 10. Appointment Process for the post of Assistant Chief Fire Officer**
- 11. Provisional Outturn 2024-25**
- 12. Budget Confirmation for 2025-26**
- 13. Treasury Management Strategy 2025-26**
- 14. Pay Policy Statement 2025-26**
- 15. Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-26**
- 16. Standards Committee Annual Report 2024-25**

Cont....

**17. Local Pension Board – Terms of Reference**

**18. Firefighters' Pension Scheme – update on legal challenges**

**19. Contract Procedure Rules Summary**

**20. The Social Partnership Duty – Annual Report**

**21. Appointment of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer**

**22. 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.

## **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.

**23. None**

## **NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the meeting of **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority** held on **Monday 20 January 2025** virtually via **Zoom**. Meeting commenced at **09.30**.

### **Councillor**

Dylan Rees (Chair)  
Paul Cunningham (Deputy Chair)  
Bryan Apsley  
Carol Beard  
Tina Claydon  
Adele Davies-Cooke  
Jeff Evans  
Alan Hughes  
Chris Hughes (from 09:48)  
John Brynmor Hughes  
John Ifan Jones  
Marc Jones  
Gwynfor Owen  
Beverley Parry-Jones  
Arwyn Herald Roberts  
Gareth A Roberts  
Rondo Roberts  
Dale Selvester  
Rob Triggs  
Antony Wren  
Mark Young

### **Representing**

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

### **Also present:**

Dawn Docx  
Stewart Forshaw  
Helen MacArthur  
Stuart Millington  
Anthony Jones  
Dafydd Edwards  
Gareth Owens  
Elgan Roberts  
Steve Morris  
Tracey Williams  
George Jones  
Lisa Allington

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

## **1 APOLOGIES**

### **Councillor**

Marion Bateman  
Sharon Doleman  
Gareth R Jones  
Austin Roberts  
Paul Rogers  
Gareth Sandilands

### **Representing**

Flintshire County Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Denbighshire County Council

## **ABSENT**

**Councillor**  
Michelle Walker

**Representing**  
Denbighshire County Council

The above apologies were offered and accepted.

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS**

3.1 No notice of urgent matters had been received.

## **4 MINUTES OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2024**

4.1 The minutes of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) meeting held on 21 October 2024 were submitted for approval.

### **4.2 RESOLVED to:**

- i) approve the FRA minutes from 21 October 2024 as a true and correct record of the meeting held.**

## **5 MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 The CFO advised that in relation to item 7.3, the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor's review into firefighting techniques, the review within North Wales had now commenced with fieldwork research beginning on 27 January. It was anticipated that the report would be published sometime during February.

5.2 In relation to item 7.6 wherein the changes to the governance model for the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) was discussed, the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) noted that this was a more pressing situation in South Wales as the Service would need to know what would be implemented following the removal of the Commissioners. The Cabinet Secretary would be consulting on potential options and would be soliciting views in the Spring of 2025.

- 5.3 In relation to item 7.8, the notification that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) had decided to retire, Members were advised that he had since rescinded that resignation, and the CFO was pleased to welcome him back. However, two very important members of the Service leadership Team (SLT) had since announced that they would be leaving – Area Manager Justin Evans, who had acted as Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) for the last year, had decided to retire at the end of March and Tracey Williams, Head of Corporate Communications for 15 years, had also decided to move onto the next chapter of her career. The CFO gave thanks to them both for their hard work and dedication throughout their time with North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).
- 5.4 The DCFO provided an update on Item 9, the New Training Centre Business Case, and advised Members that following its approval, a Training Centre Project Board was being established and expressions of interest had been invited from Members to become the Lead Members for the project. Cllr Gareth Sandilands had put his name forward and had been successful. The first meeting was planned to take place on 27 January. The Chair gave thanks to Cllr Sandilands and stated that he was sure Cllr Sandilands would bring great value to the project board.
- 5.5 The Chair welcomed Cllr Antony Wren, new Member for Flintshire County Council, to the meeting.

## **6 CHAIR'S REPORT**

- 6.1 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 October and December 2024.
- 6.2 The Chair noted that members of the Fire Service had been instrumental in helping those affected by the burst watermain at Bryn Colwyd waterworks. He asked that his thanks be passed on to all concerned and felt that it was important to note the wide variety of services carried out by members of the Fire Service.
- 6.3 The Deputy Chair advised Members of the sad news that Brian Gorling, ex-Firefighter from Colwyn Bay, had passed away and Members were asked if someone could attend to represent the Authority at his funeral.

### **6.2 RESOLVED to:**

- i) Note the information provided within the paper.**

## **7 INDEPENDENT CULTURAL REVIEW UPDATE**

- 7.1 The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with a progress report into the cultural review which was commissioned from the independent consultancy firm Crest Advisory in July 2024.
- 7.2 Members were informed that the report would likely be published in late January, early February as work was still taking place in finalising the detail and having the reports translated.
- 7.3 Around a third of staff took part in the surveys and interviews, around 300 of 1000 employees. There had been no individual incidents of sexism or racism; however, there were themes around leadership style which the Service was already aware of and were being addressed and staff were being educated that the style of management that may have been appropriate many years ago was not appropriate for today.
- 7.4 There had been a recognition that there had been an improvement in culture over recent years and staff were proud to work for the Service. The FBU had expressed their desire to support the Service on its cultural journey, and were keen to highlight that they had the best interests of the Service and its employees at heart, and that they looked forward to working positively with the Service on its cultural journey
- 7.5 The Chair noted that it was difficult to make informed comments without sight of the report; however, he said that he did not support the second recommendation as he felt that all Members should be allowed to attend a meeting with Crest Advisory. Members supported this statement, and the recommendation was amended accordingly.
- 7.6 **RESOLVED to:**
- i) **Note the progress of the Independent Cultural Review and the timescales for publication contained in the report; and**
  - ii) **agree that all Members of the Authority should be invited to attend a webinar with Crest to discuss the findings of the review and recommendations for the future.**

## **8 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2024-25**

- 8.1 Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement, delivered the Provisional Outturn for 2024-25 which aimed to provide Members with an update on the revenue and capital expenditure forecast for 2024/25, as of 31 December 2024.

- 8.2 Paragraph 13 of the paper was highlighted and it was noted that clarity over the pay award had now been received. A pay award of 4.5% had been budgeted for members of local government staff, and it had now been confirmed that staff on pay points 2 to 43 had received an uplift of just under £1,300, with staff on pay points 44 and upwards receiving 2.5%. This had resulted in a slight cost pressure which was being managed internally.
- 8.3 Based on year-to-date expenditure, the most likely full year forecast as at the end of December indicated an underspend of just over £0.5m. The range in the outturn position was due to the ongoing legal challenge in relation to Firelink, which could reduce in-year costs by around £0.5m; however, as it was not certain that this would be resolved by the year end, an earmarked reserve would be established.
- 8.4 A Member asked how monies that were requested via the levy but not required would be returned to the Local Authorities, and ACFO MacArthur responded that the funds would not be returned, but would be put into reserves to cover future costs in relation to the Emergency Services Network which it was anticipated would gather momentum over coming years and would result in both revenue and capital obligations in order to implement.
- 8.5 A Member asked if a cost pressure was being created due to the shortfall of 30 members of RDS staff, and would this be alleviated if it were budgeted for. The Head of Finance clarified that the additional requirement had been reduced from 30 to 15 and that this had already been budgeted for.
- 8.6 It was further enquired whether overtime costs were budgeted for and ACFO MacArthur confirmed that the establishment around wholetime staff was fully budgeted for and that overtime was managed within this, albeit not totally cost-neutral. It was requested that further figures around this be provided at a later meeting.

8.7 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **note the projected revenue outturn position and the projected capital slippage for the 2024/25 financial year, as detailed within the report;**
- ii) **note the risks associated with the provisional outturn and recognise that the figures forecasted in this report are prudent; and**
- iii) **note the proposed movement to reserves of £0.070m for slippage on non-pay expenditure relating to operational equipment.**

## **9 EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW (ECR)**

- 9.1 ACFO Anthony Jones presented to Members an update on the work of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) Task and Finish Group, established in response to the decision made by the Authority at its meeting on 18 December 2023. The purpose of this group was to research and develop a new permanent option to improve the provision of emergency cover across North Wales.
- 9.2 the CFO emphasised that working relationships with all representative bodies, including the FBU, were very good and the working group, having done so much work, understood that the models being looked at wouldn't work with the limited resources available in North Wales. As such, rather than waste any more time, the FBU had decided to withdraw, but had expressed that they were very keen to continue to explore other options.
- 9.3 The Chair further confirmed that FBU representatives were fully invested in the process of working with officers to find a solution and continued to provide their own views as to how this might work. He further noted that a solution had to be found as soon as possible to reduce the risk to members of the community.
- 9.4 Members felt reassured following the verbal updates above; however, one Member queried whether a deadline had been implemented. ACFO Jones responded that a meeting of the working group would take place on 21 January, and all involved were keen to reach an agreement as soon as possible. Meetings would take place every six weeks and it was hoped that an agreement would be reached by the next group in February or failing that, the following meeting.
- 9.5 A Member proposed that an additional recommendation be added that Members support the ECR working group in working towards a viable option. This proposal was seconded.
- 9.6 Another Member noted that this process had already taken two years, and it was disappointing that a solution had not yet been reached.



9.7 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Note that officers continued to work with staff and representative bodies in social partnership to develop the ECR Task and Finish Group research models two, three or variations of them;**
- ii) **note the agreed conclusion that the five-watch duty system will not work in North Wales and as a result, the withdrawal of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and closure of the task and finish group;**
- iii) **Appreciate the efforts and contribution made by the ECR Task and Finish Group Members;**
- iv) **Ask officers to continue to devise and test alternative solutions with the representative bodies, within the agreed budget, to address emergency cover in rural locations; and**
- v) **Support the ECR Working Group in working towards a viable option.**

**10 BUDGET SETTING 2025-26**

- 10.1 ACFO Helen MacArthur, delivered the Budget Setting 2025-26 paper, which aimed to provide Members with an update on the current financial planning assessment to set a balanced budget for 2025/26, and to seek endorsement to confirm the indicative levy with constituent local authorities.
- 10.2 The Treasurer thanked ACFO MacArthur and all those involved in setting the budget. He also provided some context in that several meetings of the Budget Scrutiny Committee had taken place, and key detailed work had been carried out within these meetings, with an appropriate balance being achieved. He asked Members to note that there had been no significant changes in the figures since the Audit Committee and Executive Panel meetings held on 16 December at which Members had agreed to recommend the budget to the full Authority.
- 10.3 The Chair confirmed that an online meeting had recently been held with Leaders and Chief Executives of the six local authorities and they had confirmed that there had been no surprises in the budget provided. They had thanked ACFO MacArthur for her regular communication with Section 151 Officers in this regard.
- 10.4 A Member stated that he felt it to be disappointing that the allocation received from the Welsh Government via the formula did not equate to the monies required via the levy to the Authority. They further noted that the greatest increase was to Gwynedd who were second to last in the allocations received from the Welsh Government.

10.5 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Note the findings of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, including the planning assumptions being used to develop the revenue budget for 2025/26;**
- ii) **note the current financial planning assessment of a budget requirement of £52.389m for 2025/26;**
- iii) **note the proposal to utilise £0.601m of reserves for 2025/26; and**
- iv) **endorse the communication of the draft financial levy of £51.788m from the constituent local authorities.**

**11 WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION – EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME**

- 11.1 ACFO Helen MacArthur presented to Members the Welsh Government Consultation – employee contribution rates for the firefighters' pension scheme paper which provided information on the Welsh Government's consultation on proposed changes to the employee contribution rates for the firefighters' pension scheme in Wales.

11.2 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **note the background to the Welsh Government consultation; and**
- ii) **approve the response to be submitted on behalf of the Authority.**

**12 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2023-2024**

- 12.1 DCFO Stewart Forshaw, presented the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Performance Assessment 2023-2024 paper which requested Members' approval of the annual assessment of the Authority's performance during 2023/24.

12.2 **RESOLVED to:**

- i) **Approve the annual assessment of the Authority's performance in 2023/24 for publication on the Authority's website; and**
- ii) **note the Service's intention to publish a simple summary version of the key elements of the assessment report.**

**13 POWER DECARBONISATION PLAN**

- 13.1 ACFO Stuart Millington presented the Power Decarbonisation Plan which set out the details of the Service's Power Decarbonisation Plan (the Plan), which provided detailed measures and timescales to mitigate the carbon emissions arising from the electricity consumption of the Service's fleet and estate for the period up to 2030.

13.2 The Chair gave thanks to Tim Christensen for his hard work in this area.

13.3 A Member commended the quality of the work carried out and recommended that the resolutions be approved by Members.

13.4 **RESOLVED to:**

**i) Approve the Power Decarbonisation Plan.**

#### **14 RESIDUAL CARBON EMISSIONS PLAN**

14.1 ACFO Stuart Millington delivered to Members the Residual Carbon Emissions Plan which set out the details of the Service's Residual Carbon Emissions Plan (the Plan), which provided detailed measures and timescales to mitigate those carbon emissions which had not been mitigated by the Decarbonisation Plans in place for Fleet, Heating and Power for the period up to 2030.

14.2 **RESOLVED to:**

**i) Approve the Residual Carbon Emissions Plan; and  
ii) direct the Environment and Climate Change Manager to begin implementing the Plan only once all carbon emissions arising under Scopes 1 and 2 have been fully mitigated.**

#### **15 URGENT MATTERS**

15.1 There were no urgent matters to consider.

Members and Officers were thanked for their participation.

**Meeting closed: 10:44**

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>  |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Not applicable</b>   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Members Services</b><br>( <a href="mailto:members.services@northwalesfire.gov.wales">members.services@northwalesfire.gov.wales</a> ) |
| Subject         | <b>Chair's Report</b>   |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This quarterly report provides Members with information on the meetings and events attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) in their official capacities between January and March 2025.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

## RECOMMENDATION

- 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 17 January the Chair and the CFO attended an on-line meeting with North Wales Local Authority Leaders to brief them on budget proposals and other relevant issues.
- 7 On the 3 February the Chair and the CFO attended in person a meeting of the Social Partnership which was held at the Welsh Government Offices in Cardiff.

- 8 On the 10 February, together with other members of the Authority, the Chair and Deputy Chair attended a presentation by CREST on the Independent Culture Review.
- 9 On the 18 February, together with other members of the Authority, the Chair attended the Tanio "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion" conference at Kinnel Manor.
- 10 On the 23 February the Chair attended a meeting of the FBU Committee at Llandudno Fire Station.
- 11 On the 26 February the Chair attended the Tanio Welsh Language event at Rhyl Fire Station.
- 12 On the 26 February the Chair and Councillor Mark Young met with senior FBU representatives at Rhyl Fire Station.
- 13 On the 7 March the Deputy Chair attended a Phoenix Awards ceremony for the pupils of Ysgol Friars at Llanfairfechan Fire Station.
- 14 On the 12 March the Chair attended the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire and Rescue Conference in Gateshead. The CFO and ACFO Ant Jones were also in attendance.
- 15 On the 17 March the Chair and the CFO attended an online meeting with the Cabinet Secretary Jayne Bryant. The Chairs and CFO's from the other Welsh FRS's were also in attendance.
- 16 On the 27 March the Chair and Councillor Sharon Doleman were observers at a workshop attended by senior representatives of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) to begin the formulation of an Improvement Plan in response to the findings of the Independent Culture Review.
- 17 On the 28 March the Deputy Chair attended a Phoenix Awards ceremony for the pupils of Ysgol Ardudwy at Harlech Fire Station.

## 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/<br>Welsh Language | No specific implications arise from approving the recommendation.  |
| Risks                                      | No specific risks arise from approving the recommendation.   |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>  |  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>  |   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer,<br/>Corporate Planning and Policy</b> |   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Mike Plant, Head of Planning, Performance<br/>and Transformation</b>               |   |
| Subject         | <b>Emergency Cover Review</b>   |   |

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) with an update on the work of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) Task and Finish subgroup. This was set up in response to the recommendation from the 20 January 2025 meeting for officers to continue to devise and test alternative solutions with representative bodies, within the agreed budget, to address emergency cover in rural locations.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 Since January 2025, there have been five meetings of the ECR Task and Finish subgroup. The Group consists of FBU officials and officers from the Transformation Team. The group has worked together to revive an option from the Task and Finish Group in July 2024 that proposed how posts could be utilised differently if the self-resilience in the current establishment on all wholtime fire stations was more robust. The subgroup revisited this option and worked to jointly produce a draft Collective Agreement.
- 3 The Collective Agreement sets out measures to improve the self-resilience within the current duty system across the 8 Wholtime/Day crewed stations. This will allow for other posts within the establishment to then be incorporated into pilots to provide a more effective and efficient model of emergency cover across the whole of North Wales.
- 4 The principles of the Collective Agreement have been agreed which include the need to finalise associated policies and complete an equality impact assessment. In addition, local FBU officials have advised that it is necessary to obtain sign off from the National General Secretary.
- 5 It is proposed that the Collective Agreement will be implemented from 1 September 2025 on a pilot basis.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

6 It is recommended that Members:

- i) **Note that officers have continued to work with representative bodies in social partnership to develop a way forward with the ECR;**
- ii) **note that progress has been made in the drafting of a Collective Agreement with it being agreed in principle by the Fire Brigades Union at a meeting of the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee on 4 April 2025;**
- iii) **appreciate the continued efforts of all parties to progress a solution and introduce a pilot to demonstrate the self-sufficiency of the staffing levels at the current wholetime fire stations; and**
- iv) **Acknowledge that by demonstrating this self-sufficiency that there is scope to introduce pilots to utilise posts from the remaining establishment to provide a more efficient and effective emergency cover model across the whole of North Wales.**

## BACKGROUND

- 7 During the period of July to September 2023 the Authority consulted the public on three possible options for the future delivery on its emergency response to the communities of North Wales. A decision was taken by the Authority in December 2023 not to implement any of the proposals at that time but to continue to work on variations to the proposals. The proposals in the consultation do, however, remain live.
- 8 A Task and Finish Group comprising of 16 colleagues working at various levels, stations and departments throughout NWFRS, including representatives of the Fire Brigades union (FBU) met on 12 occasions between February and November 2024, during which time they discussed and researched several emergency response models.
- 9 Several options were scoped by the Task and Finish Group including different models for rostering staff differently to release the posts required to base them in additional locations to support the provision of a more efficient and effective emergency cover model. This included how the current rostering arrangements could be more self-resilient. The basis for the Collective Agreement is therefore not a new idea but one that has been revisited by the subgroup before proposals from the public consultation are reconsidered.
- 10 The FBU representatives verbally withdrew from the Task and Finish Group on 11 November 2024.



- 11 On 17 December 2024, the Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer met with the workstream leads and the FBU Chair to confirm this position and to thank all those involved for their hard work and diligence.
- 12 At its meeting on 20 January 2025, the Authority reaffirmed its commitment to providing a more effective and efficient emergency cover model across the whole of North Wales to address the risks identified during the emergency cover review that recognised the challenges of providing emergency cover in rural areas and how the use of resources needed to be adapted with no increase to the budget.

## **INFORMATION**

- 13 A Working Group comprising of FBU officials and officers from the Transformation Team started working on the next phase of the ECR project at a meeting on 21 January 2025. They met a total of five times up to the end of March 2025 to draft a Collective Agreement that set out the basis for utilising resources differently to allow for pilots to begin that included aligning shift start times, longer day shifts and scope for other pilots to be developed to base firefighters in other areas of the service to provide a more resilient model of emergency cover.
- 14 The Agreement outlines how the self-resilience in the current duty systems could be enhanced in several ways with the starting point being the alignment of shift start times to make best use of the existing resilience arrangements. This could be realised in the short term though the standard 90 days' notice; however, in the spirit of working together this would commence on 1 September 2025, subject to some further collective work around associated roster and leave policies and procedures. The first full 12-month pilot of an 08:00 start with a 10-hour day shift would then start on 1 January 2026. This would coincide with the start of the leave year and would run for 24 months.
- 15 The Collective Agreement also demonstrates other areas of change such as accommodating more training on duty days to reduce the accumulation of time in lieu and references to an updated Rostering Policy that aims to give more robustness to the leave arrangements and covering shortfalls on shifts.
- 16 The Collective Agreement was agreed in principle by local officials of the Fire Brigades Union on 4 April 2025, but they advised that it must be approved by a National FBU Executive Council Member.

17 Updates were provided at the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (JCNC) meetings on 19 February 2025 and 4 April 2025 in order that other representative bodies were kept informed.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Wellbeing Objectives                       | The ECR outcomes must meet the Authority's obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.   |
| Budget                                     | Any solution must be within the approved budget.  |
| Legal                                      | None  |
| Staffing                                   | The Service has continued to work with staff and their representative bodies and will continue to do so. Regular updates are provided at the JCNC and via the Weekly Brief as well as via visits to stations by officers.             |
| Equalities/Human Rights/<br>Welsh Language | The Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Officer engaged with ED&I groups throughout the consultation. The ECR is within the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) with feedback also gathered on this. |
| Risks                                      | The ECR and the work of the Working Group seeks to reduce the risks of not being able to respond to emergencies effectively and efficiently in the communities of North Wales.  |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>        |
| Date            | <b>10 April 2024</b>                                |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Justin Evans, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Lee Bourne, Head of Training and Development</b> |
| Subject         | <b>Training Centre Project Update</b>               |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with a strategic update on the progress of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service)'s Training Centre project, incorporating recent developments from the April business case workshops, updated risk position, revised timeline, and current focus areas.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The project remains on track with significant progress made in this reporting period, including the development of the critical path, refinement of scope, and identification of viable funding routes. Staff engagement remains strong, and the outline business case is progressing with support from external consultants. The overall project remains rated amber, reflecting ongoing risks relating to funding, staffing capacity, and timescale pressures. A revised RIBA Gateway 4 target date of April 2027 has been established. The project team continues to take proactive steps to mitigate key risks and ensure deliverability within defined parameters.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 3 That Members note:
  - i) The revised critical path and target for RIBA Gateway 4 completion (April 2027).
  - ii) Progress in defining scope, specification, and delivery model through business case workshops.
  - iii) Key risks identified on the project risk register and the measures in place to mitigate them.
  - iv) The strategic alignment of the new Training Centre with broader service community risk management and well-being goals.

## BACKGROUND

- 4 The Training Centre project was established to respond to operational and financial risks associated with current training arrangements and to provide a fit-for-purpose facility that meets the long-term needs of the Service. The project began in 2022, and over the past 12 months has moved from high-level concept to structured development, supported by formal governance and external expertise. April 2025 workshops with MIAA consultants and stakeholders focused on defining project outcomes, aligning the investment with strategic goals, and building a roadmap toward a viable outline business case by Q2 2025/26.

## INFORMATION

### 5 Recent Progress:

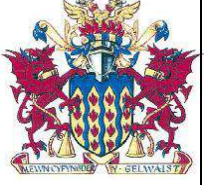
- Working groups for product specification met from February onwards. Outputs are being refined by the Project Team into minimum viable product specifications, aligned with strategic priorities.
- A comprehensive programme review and critical path were developed in April. This clarified timelines, dependencies, and external consultation requirements, with construction forecast to begin mid-2027.
- MIAA-led workshops confirmed alignment between the project and wider service ambitions. Key focus areas include safety, decontamination, EDI, climate sustainability, collaboration, and economic value.
- The outline business case is in development, with a draft strategic case expected by the end of April 2025.
- Cost centres for land and build have been established; a financial dashboard is in development.
- Procurement activity continues, with IKG Consultants and Enfys Ecology appointed and further work underway to transfer the new licence and secure design support.

### 6 Emerging Design and Delivery Preferences:

- A centralised, purpose-built facility remains the preferred option.
- The facility should support operational, corporate, and multi-agency functions.
- Grant funding (including Welsh Government) is viewed as the most viable capital route, with exploration of collaborative models ongoing.
- A single-phase implementation is preferred, subject to feasibility and funding confirmation.

## IMPLICATIONS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Well-being Objectives                             | The new facility directly contributes to workforce safety, community well-being, and organisational sustainability. Design ambitions align with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, focusing on resilience, inclusion, and training excellence.  |
| Budget  | The project remains unfunded beyond the initial development phase. The capital strategy is dependent on successful engagement with Welsh Government and other potential funders. Financial control mechanisms are being strengthened with new cost centres and oversight by the Service's training and financial leads.  |
| Legal   | Procurement processes are compliant with public sector regulations. Planning and ecological constraints (e.g. protected species) are being managed with specialist advice. Public consultation timelines will adhere to NWFRS and statutory requirements.  |
| Staffing  | Staff movements continue to impact project continuity. Defined roles and revised governance structures are being implemented to mitigate this. A need for dedicated programme delivery capacity has been recognised through recent workshops.  |
| Equalities/<br>Human Rights/<br>Welsh<br>Language | The facility is being designed to be inclusive, accessible, and bilingual, with consultation processes reflecting these values. Specification work incorporates diverse workforce and community needs.   |
| Risks   | <p>The following, red-rated risks are under active management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TCR02:</b> Project dependency on Project Manager capacity – mitigated through governance review.</li> <li>• <b>TCR03:</b> Staff turnover affecting continuity – addressed through clear role definitions and induction.</li> <li>• <b>TCR05:</b> Risk of inadequate financial oversight – AM for Training now appointed as budget holder.</li> <li>• <b>TCR06:</b> Dependency on external capital funding – early engagement with Welsh Government and robust outline and full business case development underway.</li> <li>• <b>TCR07:</b> Absence of estate strategy – development is in progress and will form part of the business case.</li> </ul> |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                |  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>  |   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer</b>  |   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>                        |   |
| Subject         | <b>Independent Cultural Review into North Wales Fire and Rescue Service</b> |   |

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) the report of the independent cultural review into North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) and to confirm the next steps on the cultural journey of the Service.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 2 The report was presented to the Executive Panel on 17 March 2025. The Chair reminded Members that he had written to the Chief Fire Officer regarding the report and the Executive Panel endorsed the request for support from Welsh Government.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 3 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) **Acknowledge receipt of the report of the independent cultural review; and**
  - ii) **Approve the request for financial or “in kind” support from Welsh Government to continue the cultural journey of NWFRS.**

## BACKGROUND

- 4 On 3 January 2024, an Independent Culture Review into South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) was published. On 5 February 2024, in response to the findings, the then Deputy Minister for Social Partnership, Hannah Blythyn, announced the removal of South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and the appointment of four independent Commissioners to ensure that the recommendations from the review and those made by the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser were acted upon.

- 5 Following these Ministerial actions, Cllr Dylan Rees and CFO Dawn Docx met with the then Deputy Minister and her officials on 19 February and 4 March 2024 to discuss the progress made around culture within the Service. The Deputy Minister, having had the opportunity to meet with staff and being familiar with the Service, acknowledged that both the Service and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) were at a different place on their cultural journeys compared to SWFRS.
- 6 Nevertheless, the Service and MAWWFRS worked together to propose the commissioning of an external review of each service, to be undertaken by an independent culture specialist. This idea was approved by the Deputy Minister and it formed the basis of her statement on 11 March 2024. The Terms of Reference for the review were agreed based on the Deputy Minister's statement and following a joint procurement exercise, the contract was agreed with Crest Advisory on the 4 June 2024.

## INFORMATION

- 7 From July 2024 until November 2024 Crest Advisory carried out the review work. They undertook a literature review, a document and data review, a staff survey, conducted interviews and focus groups and received written and audio submissions.
- 8 Participation in the review was entirely voluntary, and the intention was to capture the views of current employees and staff who worked for the Service after June 2021 but who may have subsequently left the Service.
- 9 Crest produced a draft report on 23 December 2024 which was provided to a small number of officers to check for factual accuracy and terminology. The publication of the report was scheduled for 5 February 2025 to allow for translation and to coincide with the publication of the report for MAWWFRS.
- 10 Members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) and key stakeholders were notified in advance to the fact that the report was to be published on the Authority's website on 5 February, and Members were invited for an informal briefing by Crest Advisory on 10 February 2025.
- 11 The meeting of the Executive Panel on 17 March 2025 was the first opportunity to formally present the [Crest Independent Culture Review Report](#) to the Executive Panel of the Authority for questions and comment.

- 12 Crest Advisory have made presentations to Authority Members, to the Service Leadership Team, to Middle Leaders and at events open to all employees during February. They also presented their findings to Welsh Government officials on 11 March 2025.
- 13 The report was discussed at length during the Middle Leaders seminar on 12 February 2025 and all Middle leaders have been encouraged to discuss it with their teams, and to feedback on those themes that they thought were the most important to address. A dedicated email address was set up to receive suggestions and it remained open until the end of March 2025.
- 14 On 25 March 2025 the Cabinet Secretary made an oral statement in the Senedd acknowledging the findings in the North Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services reports and the need for support on our cultural journeys. The CFO is currently in negotiations with Welsh Government as to the form of the support but it is recommended to Members that a formal request for support is submitted.
- 15 On 27 March 2025 the Service Leadership Team met to start reviewing the staff suggestions and to start to draft an action plan. This session was also attended by the Chair and Cllr Doleman in her role of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) champion.
- 16 It was decided to invite representatives from all the unions and from across the Service to an action plan workshop. This took place on the 17 April 2025. The resultant action plan is now being finalised and it will be shared with the Executive Panel on 16 June 2025
- 17 It is expected that Progress against the action plan will be regularly reported to each Authority Meeting.
- 18 In the meantime, a Cultural Improvement Board has been set up. It is chaired by the CFO. It will work closely with the staff networks, the Staff Engagement Forum, the Fire Family Staff Survey Project Group as well as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee, which will also be chaired by the CFO. The goal is to ensure this process is as collaborative and inclusive as possible, where everyone has a voice in shaping the future of the Service.



## IMPLICATIONS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Well-being Objectives                   | Future service provision could be impacted if the concerns highlighted by the review are not addressed   |
| Budget                                  | The cost of the review was £150,000 and it was fully funded from the Authority's reserves.   |
| Legal                                   | NWFRS is working with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to ensure that it complies with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010  |
| Staffing                                | An Area Manager was seconded onto this project for 9 months to coordinate, and contract manage the project.  |
| Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language | The project was conducted bilingually, and participation was on a self-selecting, voluntary basis.   |
| Risks                                   | The report identifies both positive improvements and causes for concern. The concerns must be addressed to ensure that NWFRS remains an employer of choice and can attract talent to provide quality services. |

## APPENDIX A


### Positive points reflecting progress

1. **Improved culture since 2021:** the culture at NWFRS has improved significantly since June 2021, largely attributed to the appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer (CFO). The new leadership has emphasised open communication, transparency, and proactive engagement, which has positively impacted the culture
2. **Pride and team camaraderie:** NWFRS staff and former staff expressed deep pride in their work and enjoyed working in supportive and inclusive teams. There is a strong sense of unity and shared purpose among colleagues.
3. **Positive impact of new leadership:** the new CFO's emphasis on open communication, transparency, and proactive engagement has led to improved visibility and approachability of senior leaders. This has been reflected in the positive feedback from staff regarding the opportunities to give feedback on NWFRS's values, culture, fairness, and diversity.
4. **Supportive work environment:** the majority of staff identified supportive colleagues and good collaboration and teamwork as major strengths of NWFRS's culture. Many examples of supportive environments and friendships were provided, where colleagues actively encouraged and uplifted one another.
5. **Operational training improvements:** NWFRS has made a conscious effort to improve the delivery of operational training, with positive results. The training department has shifted towards a supportive, person-centred approach, focusing on individual development needs and learning styles.
6. **Efforts to increase diversity:** NWFRS has implemented targeted recruitment strategies under positive action to attract women into operational roles. These efforts have proven effective, with women representing 15% of the operational workforce in 2023-24, compared to 10% in 2020-2021.
7. **Commitment to cultural change:** NWFRS has shown a commitment to cultural change by putting in place various initiatives to improve Service culture. These include the staff cultural engagement forum, the 'Siop Siarad' ('Culture Cafe') scheme, the introduction of Safecall (an anonymous external reporting service), and various training packages focusing on acceptable behaviours, people management, and equality, diversity, and inclusion

## Negative points reflecting ongoing challenges

1. **Negative behaviours among leaders:** despite improvements, negative behaviours among a minority of middle and senior leaders hinder positive cultural change. These individuals often exhibit unprofessional conduct, including abuse of power and intimidation.
2. **Lack of accountability:** there is a perceived absence of accountability for past misconduct, an avoidant leadership style, and poor decision-making in senior leadership. This has eroded trust throughout NWFRS and continues to affect organisational culture.
3. **Tensions in diversity initiatives:** there are clear tensions surrounding NWFRS's actions and initiatives to improve diversity. The approach to positive action in recruitment has led to concerns of positive discrimination and doubts over the competence of female staff.
4. **Strained union relationships:** despite some improvements, relationships between the fire brigades' union (FBU) and relevant corporate staff at NWFRS remain strained. There is an entrenched 'us vs them' culture, with mutual accusations of poor collaboration and hostility.
5. **Entrenched favouritism and bias:** NWFRS is perceived to be entrenched with favouritism and bias, affecting almost all of the Service's processes, including recruitment, promotions, and transfers.
6. **Hierarchical leadership style:** the leadership style at NWFRS is most commonly perceived as hierarchical, controlling, and unapproachable. This has created a visible divide between management and more junior staff.
7. **Inconsistent training and development:** while operational training has improved, non-operational training is often seen as a tick-box exercise. There is insufficient training on person-centred management approaches, leaving managers unprepared and causing minor issues to escalate.
8. **Widespread bullying and harassment:** bullying and harassment are widespread, with over two-fifths of survey respondents reporting personal experiences since June 2021. There is also significant underreporting and inconsistent responses to reports of unacceptable behaviour.

9. **Health and safety concerns:** changes to auditing standards have resulted in concerns among operational staff about health and safety at NWFRS. There is also an insufficient focus on safeguarding.
10. **Inconsistent mental health support:** while there are good pockets of mental health support, the support for employees on long-term mental health leave remains inconsistent.

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                            |  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>  |   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer</b>                                    |   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Llinos Gutierrez-Jones, Head of Human Resources</b>                  |   |
| Subject         | <b>Appointment Process for the post of Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b> |   |

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) of the arrangements for the recruitment to one of the two vacant Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) posts.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 2 This has not previously been considered by the Audit Committee or Executive Panel.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 3 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) **Note the process as outlined below; and**
  - ii) **confirm the membership of the appointments committee.**

## BACKGROUND

- 4 Following the retirement of an ACFO in May 2023, the resultant vacant post was held open to contribute to the 2023-24 savings and to fund an additional temporary Area Manager post. This post was required because of the workloads involved in the Emergency Cover Review.
- 5 On 20 March 2025, ACFO Stuart Millington submitted his notice to retire from North Wales Fire and Rescue Service on 20 June 2025. He will be taking all his outstanding leave and therefore his last working day will be towards the end of May 2025. In order to maintain the operational rota and manage the significant workloads around the new Training Centre and Emergency Cover Review, it is necessary to replace at least one of the two vacant ACFO posts as soon as possible.

## INFORMATION

- 6 In line with all appointments to the Principal Officer team, this will be a Member appointment. There will be the need to convene an appointments committee of six Members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair, and the Officers of the Authority.

- 7 The vacancy will be advertised on the National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) website in order to attract suitably qualified applicants. The post will be advertised with the expectation that the post holder will be required to operate at Gold Command level and, in order to balance the skillsets in the team, be able to manage operational incidents. Applicants without a Gold Command qualification will be required to achieve Gold Command level within a reasonable timescale.
- 8 Similarly, it will be a requirement for the post holder to have either Level 3 Welsh language skills or be required to achieve that level within a determined timescale.
- 9 The appointment process will follow the assessment process used in 2021 to appoint to the Principal Officer roles. However, it is envisaged that the assessment and interviews will be conducted in person rather than virtually.

## **PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE**

- 10 The provisional timetable for the appointment process is as follows:
  - Advertisement to be placed by 9 May 2025
  - Closing date for applications 30 May 2025
  - Shortlisting and invitation to attend initial assessment by 3 June 2025
  - Officers assessment and Members Panel TBC
  - Confirmation of appointment at the Authority meeting on 21 July 2025

## **IMPLICATIONS**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Well-being Objectives                   | No implications  |
| Budget                                  | The funding for this post is within the existing budget                      |
| Legal                                   | A Members appointment as set out in the Constitution                         |
| Staffing                                | A replacement of an existing post required to provide a continuous duty rota |
| Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language | Open to all suitably qualified candidates                                    |
| Risks                                   | Lack of appointable applicants   |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                   |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Helen MacArthur Assistant Chief Fire Officer,<br/>Finance and Resources</b> |
| Contact Officer | <b>Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement</b>                          |
| Subject         | <b>Provisional Outturn 2024/25</b>   |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with an update on the revenue and capital expenditure forecast for 2024/25, as of 31 March 2025.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The net budget requirement was approved by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) at its meeting on 22 January 2024. This confirmed a net requirement of £48.322m to be funded by the constituent local authorities. To cap the budget requirement at £48.322m, the Authority approved several non-recurring measures, including the use of reserves.
- 3 In the current year, funding of £0.227m has been received from the local authorities as a SCAPE Grant top-up, due to partial funding via the levy included in the budget setting process for 2024/25. Additionally, a grant of £0.208m has been received from the Welsh Government to support pay pressures during 2024/25.
- 4 The forecast outturn position is a surplus of £0.330m. The surplus takes into account all expenditure, income, and planned movements to reserves and for one-off items including reductions in cost for the national emergency service network (Firelink).
- 5 The Authority approved the 2024/25 capital budget of £5.676m on 22 January 2024. Additionally, there is rollover funding of £1.110m from prior years. The capital programme is experiencing slippage on schemes, and by the end of March 2025, it is anticipated that expenditure will be £3.450m, with a requirement to rollover funding of £2.226m.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
- i) **note the draft revenue and capital outturn projections for the 2024/25 financial year as detailed within the report;**
  - ii) **note the risks associated with inflation, tariffs, and supply chain issues; and**
  - iii) **approve the movement to/from earmarked and general fund reserves.**

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

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

## 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 2024/25 was approved by the Authority at its meeting on 22 January 2024. This confirmed a net revenue budget requirement of £48.322m 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 2024/25, which included utilising reserves.
- 10 The capital plan of £5.676m was presented to the budget Scrutiny working group and approved by the Authority at its meeting on 22 January 2024. The Capital Strategy for the period April 2024 to March 2034 was approved at the Audit Committee in March 2024 and ratified by the Authority at its meeting on 15 April 2024.
- 11 This report provides information on the draft revenue and capital expenditure outturn position for the 2024/25 financial year.

## INFORMATION

### REVENUE BUDGET

- 12 **Pay:** Employee costs represent over 70% of gross expenditure and the 2024/25 staffing budget is £35.430m, including measures taken when setting the budget to contain expenditure within the figure approved. However, it was also noted at that time that the national pay negotiations for all staff were still ongoing.



- 13 The budget setting process included an assumption that pay awards for 2024/25 would be 4% for all staff. The outcome of the April 2024 pay award for local government staff was an increase £1,290 on NJC pay point 2 to 43 inclusive, and 2.5% on all pay points above 43.
- 14 The firefighters' pay award was settled in May 2024 and confirmed that 4% had been accepted for from 1 July 2024 onwards. Additional changes to the RDS retainer fee structure were implemented from 1 January 2025, these increased the retaining fee by 50% which is a full year cost pressure of circa £1m.
- 15 **Non-pay:** The non-pay forecasts account for known costs and any reductions in expenditure including the impact of the successful legal challenge in relation to the costs associated with the emergency services network (Firelink).
- 16 **Income:** Whilst the majority of expenditure is funded from the constituent authority levy, income is received from the Welsh Government for grant-funded activities, as well as recharges from other bodies. In addition, the Authority has benefitted from additional income from secondments and a one-off grant from the Welsh Government to support pay inflation for 2024/25 and education around the 20 mile per hour speed restrictions in Wales. Top-up funding of £0.227m has also been received from local authorities for SCAPE pass-through funding which was excluded from budget setting due to uncertainties around the funding.
- 17 **Revenue cost of capital:** Capital financing costs include the costs of borrowing and revenue charges for using capital assets. It is anticipated that this budget will be underspent due to the delays in completing capital projects.

## REVENUE OUTTURN FORECAST FOR 2024/25

- 18 The report is projecting an underspend of £0.330m, which equates to 0.68% of the budget. The breakdown is detailed below.

|                                 | Budget (£m)     | Forecast (£m)   | Variance (£m)  | Variance (%)  |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Employees                       | 35.430          | 34.280          | (1.149)        | -3.24%        |
| Premises                        | 3.530           | 3.386           | (0.183)        | -4.07%        |
| Transport                       | 1.259           | 1.222           | (0.038)        | -2.98%        |
| Supplies                        | 6.622           | 6.565           | (0.057)        | -0.85%        |
| Third Party Payments            | 0.363           | 0.402           | 0.038          | 10.71%        |
| Capital Finance & Charges       | 2.989           | 2.890           | (0.099)        | -3.32%        |
| <b>Subtotal Pay and Non-Pay</b> | <b>50.193</b>   | <b>48.745</b>   | <b>(1.448)</b> | <b>-2.88%</b> |
| Income                          | (0.946)         | (1.576)         | (0.630)        | 66.59%        |
| Levies                          | (48.322)        | (48.549)        | (0.227)        | 0.47%         |
| <b>Subtotal Income</b>          | <b>(49.268)</b> | <b>(50.125)</b> | <b>(0.857)</b> | <b>1.74%</b>  |
| Use of Reserves                 | (0.924)         | 1.051           | 1.975          | -213.75%      |
| <b>Forecast Outturn</b>         | <b>0</b>        | <b>(0.330)</b>  | <b>(0.330)</b> | <b>-0.68%</b> |

Table 1: Forecast Outturn 2024/25

## EMPLOYEE COSTS

- 19 Employee costs form a significant element of the budget (70%) and include pay, pension costs, recruitment and training costs, and employee services, such as occupational health services. The overall forecast expenditure for employee costs is £34.287m, which represents an underspend of £1.149m.
- 20 Efforts continue to increase the number of retained duty (RDS) firefighters to address and maintain availability issues. At the time of budget setting for 2024/25, there were 474 RDS personnel, and a provision was made to increase the RDS capacity by an additional 30 at a cost of £0.413m. This reflected improvements made in recent years to enhance retained capacity and provide much-needed cover. However, as illustrated in the table below, this has remained a significant challenge, with actual numbers dipping below the original budget in the early stages of the financial year. During September 2024, following successful recruitment, it is pleasing to note that the numbers have increased, although a significant full year budget underspend is being experienced.

| <b>RDS analysis</b>        | <b>Budget<br/>2024/25</b> | <b>Apr-24</b> | <b>Jul-24</b> | <b>Sep-24</b> | <b>Dec-24</b> | <b>Mar-25</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Headcount                  | 504                       | 459           | 465           | 487           | 492           | 490           |
| Full Time Equivalent (FTE) | 408                       | 365           | 367           | 385           | 386           | 367           |

Table 2: RDS analysis 2024/25

- 21 The budget underspend in the RDS staff reflects recruitment and retention difficulties, as well as variances in variable pay, including drill fees, training allowances, and activity.
- 22 The FTE has decreased in Q4 compared to Q3. This reduction is attributed to a contractual review to align retained fees with the actual hours provided. Additionally, there has been an increase in dual contract staff, where wholetime staff are providing RDS cover. This arrangement typically results in lower retained hours, further impacting the FTE.
- 23 Within the staff group relating to wholetime operational staff, there have been a higher-than-expected number of retirements, leading to vacancies within the operational workforce. Recruitment measures have been taken to address this shortfall, although an underspend is seen. However, due to the need to maintain operational capacity and deliver training, it has been necessary to utilise overtime.
- 24 The planned review and restructuring of the fire safety department has been deferred into 2025/26 to allow for capacity within the operational crews to be assessed. In addition, the Service has experienced a number of specialist corporate vacancies within corporate planning, ICT and fleet. These roles remain critical but have contributed to the underspend.

## **NON-PAY COSTS**

- 25 The non-pay budget, which covers Premises, Transport, Supplies, Third Party Payments, and Capital Finance & Charges, is forecast to be underspent by £0.298m.
- 26 Non-pay expenditure is subject to ongoing review by budget holders to ensure that the projections continue to be reasonable and incorporates all relevant expenditure. The forecast includes additional costs for vehicle expenses (£0.078m), PPE from stock (£0.380m), and SLA increases (£0.036m), while savings from the review of contracts amount to £0.080m.

- 27 The largest reduction in non-pay is seen within premises, where costs for utilities, insurance, and national non domestic rates are underspent against budget by £0.425m. A reduction can also be seen within Diesel and Oil costs with an underspend of £0.057m. This is due to the Authority benefiting from favourable market conditions and successful appeals against rateable values for national non-domestic rates. However, this underspend is partially offset by additional costs for premises works undertaken and movement of funding to reserves.
- 28 The ICT budget has achieved recurring cost savings of £0.526m for Firelink and £0.206m for BT One.

## **INCOME**

- 29 In addition to the constituent authority levy, the budget also encompasses anticipated income from fees, charges, and grants, primarily related to the recharges for shared buildings with other entities and service level agreements with various organisations.
- 30 The Authority has received income from the Welsh Government to support the provision of education to drivers exceeding the recently introduced 20mph speed limits and grant funding to support pay pressures for 2024/25. Additional income has also been recognised following the sale of vehicles and the remaining balance of £0.227m for SCAPE passed through from local authorities.

## **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

- 31 The Authority approved a capital programme of £5.676m in January 2024, of which £1.1m was rollover funding from 2023/24.
- 32 Due to ongoing delays, capital expenditure to date totals £3.086m, and the year-end projection is forecast to be £3.450m.
- 33 Rollover of funding of £2.257m is required due to delays in the completion of building works. Details of the schemes are in appendix 1.

## **BORROWING**

- 34 Capital expenditure is predominantly funded via external borrowing, but in the short term, the Authority utilises surplus revenue cash, known as internal borrowing.
- 35 The Authority continues to utilise internal borrowing where this is possible on a temporary basis. This means that the capital borrowing needed, as calculated by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), has not been fully funded with external loan debt as cash supporting the Authority's reserves, balances, and cash flow has been used as a temporary expedient mechanism to fund capital spend and generate revenue savings. However, as reserves are utilised, it becomes necessary to replace the internal borrowing with external borrowing.
- 36 The Authority took out a new £5m short-term local authority loan in December 2024, due for repayment in August 2025, to cover short-term cash needs whilst looking to more affordable long-term borrowing during 2025/26, as highlighted in the treasury management strategy paper for 2025/26.

## **USE OF THE GENERAL FUND AND EARMARKED RESERVES**

- 37 The aim of the Authority's financial reserves is to provide funding for investment in future activities and to act as a safety net in case of short-term financial challenges arising from activity demands or unforeseen pressures, such as spare conditions and wildfires.
- 38 The Authority currently had earmarked reserves of £7.398m as of 1 April 2024, which have been built up in recent years due to slippage in recruitment and delivery of projects. In addition, there are reserves set up to fund interest rate rises, increases in inflation, system improvements, and service improvements.
- 39 The provisional outturn assumes that earmarked reserves will not be utilised in the year. The following have been moved to reserves either due to uncertainty over future liability or to cover one-off costs that were not completed during 2024/25:

|                             | Budget (£m)    | Forecast (£m) |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Use of Reserves             | (0.924)        |               |
| • N/A                       |                | 0.000         |
| Movement to Reserves:       | 0.000          |               |
| • Emergency Service Network |                | 0.526         |
| • Pension                   |                | 0.525         |
| • Estates one off costs*    |                | 0.330         |
| • Holmatro*                 |                | 0.070         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>(0.924)</b> | <b>1.451</b>  |

Table 3: Movement to and from reserves


\*The following items were included under premises and supplies costs in table 1, due to uncertainty around delivery of schemes as of the end of March. The figures included in table 3 are indicative numbers that will be refined during the year end processes.

## 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 in to the future. |
| Budget                                 | Budget is set annually in accordance with the proposed service delivery which includes emergency response and prevention work.   |
| Legal                                  | It is a legal requirement that the Authority produces the Statement of Accounts in accordance with the prescribed standards.   |
| 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 are closely monitored to ensure that deviations from the approved budget are properly identified and reported to Members.   |

## Appendix 1

| Lead Dept       | Project Name/Description              | Rollover          |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ICT             | Station end mobilising replacement    | £600,000          |
| Facilities      | Heating and Hot Water Systems         | £52,000           |
| Facilities      | Heating and Hot Water Systems         | £60,000           |
| Facilities      | Replace steel Training Towers         | £300,000          |
| Facilities      | Re-roofing work @ Rhyl                | £63,000           |
| Facilities      | Upgrade the Training House in Deeside | £108,250          |
| Facilities      | Upgrade the Training House in Wrexham | £123,660          |
| Facilities      | Llandudno heating                     | £150,000          |
| Fleet/ Tech     | Flow Meters                           | £250,000          |
| Facilities      | ECR station upgrades - contingency    | £250,000          |
| Facilities      | HVO Tanks                             | £300,000          |
| <b>Rollover</b> |                                       | <b>£2,256,910</b> |

|                 |  |   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>         |  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>                                 |   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b> |   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Elgan Roberts Head of Finance and Procurement</b> |   |
| Subject         | <b>Budget Confirmation for 2025/26</b>               |   |

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) of the final revenue and capital budget for the financial year 2025/26.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Authority confirmed the budget of £52.389 million for the financial year 2025/26 at its meeting on 20 January 2025, including the utilisation of £0.601m of reserves. At that time there was outstanding uncertainty in relation to the costs associated with the emergency service network due to a national legal challenge and a planning risk of £0.5m was noted. This matter has now been concluded and the planning assumption remains valid.
- 3 The revenue budget included capital financing to support the capital programme of £6.103 million funded from borrowing. In addition, expenditure of £2.100 million funded through reserves was approved by the Authority at its meeting of October 2024 to support the training centre project.
- 4 Despite a positive budget outlook, vigilance is needed regarding potential impacts from global supply chain issues, tariffs, and increasing prices.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 5 This report has not previously been considered by other committees.



## RECOMMENDATION

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
- i) Approve the final Revenue Budget of £52.389 million;**
  - ii) Approve the utilisation of reserves totalling £0.601 million;**
  - iii) Approve Capital Funding of £6.103 million for the financial year 2025/26;**
  - iv) Approve the utilisation of reserves to cover development costs of approximately £2.100 million for the training centre in the year; and**
  - v) Note the potential impacts from global supply chain issues, tariffs, and increasing prices, which may affect future financial planning.**

## BACKGROUND

- 7 Each year, the Authority is required to set a balanced revenue budget, which must be approved by the full Authority. The indicative financial levy must be communicated to constituent local authorities by 31 December each year, and the final levy confirmed by 15 February before the commencement of the financial year.
- 8 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) requires organisations to have financial plans that demonstrate how expenditure will be funded over the short and medium term. The Authority's financial sustainability is, therefore, underpinned by knowledge and understanding of key cost drivers and evaluation of risks and uncertainties.
- 9 Following the ECR consultation conducted during 2023/24 and in line with the Authority's decision in December 2023, the budget proposals are based on maintaining the existing service delivery model. The work around proposals to improve rural availability is ongoing and outside the scope of this budget setting paper.
- 10 The process has been overseen by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group (the Group), which was established to provide scrutiny of the budget setting process, including all areas of income and expenditure. With membership from each local authority, the Group has met on five occasions between June and November 2024.

## INFORMATION

- 11 The revenue budget for 2025/26 has been confirmed as £52.389 million. Funding from reserves for non-recurring expenditure totalling £0.601 million was confirmed to reduce the impact on the levy and ensure the financial stability and operational efficiency of the Authority.
- 12 During the budget setting process, it was noted that there was an outstanding risk in relation to the costs associated with the emergency service network. The budget allocated was £0.463 million although it was noted that this could increase by £0.500 million should the national legal challenge fail at appeal. Since that time, the court of appeal found in favour of the emergency services and whilst a small risk remains the outcome confirms the planning assumption.
- 13 It is noted that pay award negotiations for all staff groups have not yet been concluded and this remains an ongoing risk.
- 14 The final revenue budget includes capital financing costs associated with the capital plan of £6.103 million. Of the £6.103 million, £3.275 million has been allocated to business cases approved throughout the budget scrutiny process during 2024/25, as detailed in [Appendix 1](#).
- 15 The remaining capital balance will be allocated to the appropriate departments following approval of their business cases at a Formal Service Leadership Team meeting. This ensures that all projects align with strategic objectives and deliver value for money.
- 16 In addition to the capital programme, in October 2024 the Authority gave approval to develop a viable option for the new training centre. With a focus on affordability and sustainable financing options, the final proposals will be considered by the Authority in October 2026. Interim costs of £2.100 million have been approved and will be funded through reserves. Updates reports on progress are reported separately as a standing item on the Authority agenda.
- 17 While the budget outlook is positive, it is crucial to remain vigilant about potential impacts from global supply chain issues, tariffs, and increasing prices. These factors can lead to increased costs and potential disruptions in service delivery, posing significant challenges to future financial planning.
- 18 Conversely, market volatility may result in lower interest rates, thereby reducing the cost of borrowing. Treasury Management advice is provided by the Authority's professional advisors to ensure that borrowing remains in line with approval limits and at the most advantageous rates.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Well-being Objectives                  | This report links to the Authority's Improvement and Well-being Objectives. It reports on the financial viability of the Authority.  |
| Budget                                 | The initial planning assessment has indicated a budget requirement of £52m.  |
| Legal                                  | The Authority has a legal duty to set a balanced budget based on realistic planning assumptions.   |
| Staffing                               | 70% of expenditure relates to staff costs and therefore is a material factor when considering future financial stability. The risks identified by the Chief Fire Officer include ongoing pay negotiations as well as the need to recruit further retained duty staff and build corporate resilience. |
| Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language | These issues will be factored into budget setting proposals.   |
| Risks                                  | The key risks and uncertainties to the 2025/26 budget have been previously documented with the paper highlighting further risks around global supply chain issues, tariffs, and increasing prices.   |

## Appendix 1 – 2025/26 Capital Plan

| Project Name/Description                       | Department           | Approved Funding       |
|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Fire Appliance (5 appliances ordered in 24/25) | Fleet                | £1,035,307             |
| Replace steel Training Towers (two)            | Training             | £250,000               |
| Replacement of Firewalls                       | ICT                  | £72,000                |
| Wireless Application Protocol replacement      | ICT                  | £160,000               |
| Mobile Data Terminal replacement               | ICT                  | £330,000               |
| Fireground Radios                              | ICT/TO               | Grant Funded in 24/25  |
| Halmatro Replacement                           | Technical Operations | £65,000                |
| Reroofing Work- Flint & Colwyn Bay             | Facilities           | £180,000               |
| Appliance Bay Doors replacement programme      | Facilities           | £350,000               |
| Electrical rewiring works                      | Facilities           | £165,000               |
| Upgrade works to Rhyl canteen                  | Facilities           | £30,000                |
| Upgrade works Bangor                           | Facilities           | £200,000               |
| Fire Alarm replacement                         | Facilities           | £80,000                |
| Security upgrades                              | Facilities           | £130,000               |
| ECIR Inspections across all stations           | Facilities           | £100,000               |
| Heating and Hot Water Systems                  | Facilities           | £128,000               |
| <b>Allocated funding</b>                       |                      | <b>£3,275,307</b>      |
| <b>Funding to be allocated</b>                 |                      | <b>£2,827,693</b>      |
|  |                      | <b>Indicative Cost</b> |
| Aerial Appliance                               | Fleet                | £750,000               |
| Technical Rescue Unit                          | Fleet                | £600,000               |
| Light Vehicles                                 | Fleet                | £721,693               |
| Light Special Vehicles                         | Fleet                | £163,888               |
| Equipment                                      | Technical Operations | £232,000               |
| Replacement Command Unit at Rhyl               | Fleet                | £75,000                |
| Foam Carrier                                   | Fleet                | £75,000                |
| TRU Replacement plan                           | Technical Operations | £200,000               |
| Ev Blankets                                    | Technical Operations | £45,000                |
| <b>Total</b>                                   |                      | <b>£2,862,581</b>      |
| Shortfall                                      |                      | £34,888                |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>          |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>                                  |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>  |
| Contact Officer | <b>Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement</b> |
| Subject         | <b>Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) 2025-26</b>     |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for the period April 2025 – March 2026.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) shows how North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) will manage its borrowings (loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLBB)) and investments (mainly cash deposits at banks) for the coming year and sets the policies within which the Treasury Management function operates.

## OBSERVATIONS

- 3 This report has not previously been considered by other committees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4 Members are asked to:
  - i) **Approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26.**

## BACKGROUND

- 5 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the "CIPFA TM Code") requires the Authority to approve the TMS and Prudential Indicators annually.
- 6 The Audit Committee has been tasked with ensuring effective scrutiny of treasury management strategy and performance. Based on its findings, the Audit Committee will make relevant recommendations to the Authority.

## INFORMATION

- 7 The Treasury Management Strategy (the Strategy), and associated Prudential Indicators, are contained within the report and provide an overview of the Authority's approach to borrowing to fund the capital expenditure plans. The Strategy also incorporates the approach to the management of investments, although Members should note that this incorporates the management of short-term surplus cash only.
- 8 Treasury Management involves looking after the Authority's cash, which is a vital part of the Authority's work, as approximately £60m is expected to pass through the Authority's bank account during 2025/26.
- 9 During the year, the Authority has had varying levels of cash available to invest, in the short term, ranging from £1m - £9m, in 2024/25. Consequently, it needs to make sure that the optimal rate of return is achieved without exposing the cash to undue risk. Risk is minimised by diversification, meaning that the Authority's money is invested with a number of financial institutions.
- 10 When investing, the Authority will adhere to the following 'SLY' principles. The order of these three principles is important, with Security being the overriding priority.
  - **Security:** Keeping money safe
  - **Liquidity:** Ensuring that money is available when it is needed
  - **Yield:** Achieving a decent rate of return
- 11 The Authority will continue to borrow to fund capital expenditure, ensuring the necessary resources are available to support its capital program. For the fiscal year 2025/26, the Authority estimates borrowing of £15.6 million. This borrowing will not only fund new capital expenditure but also refinance existing loans, maintaining financial stability and flexibility. The borrowing strategy aims to strike a balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty over the period for which funds are required.
- 12 Additionally, the Authority may consider borrowing additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, provided this does not exceed the authorized limit for borrowing of £36.616 million. This approach aligns with the Authority's objective to manage financial risks prudently while supporting its long-term capital and operational needs.

- 13 The Authority is supported through the use of professional advisors, Arlingclose, who provide advice and guidance in relation to treasury management activities.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Wellbeing Objectives                   | This report links to the Authority's long-term well-being objectives by ensuring that the purchase of assets to support front line service delivery is prudent, affordable and sustainable. The Capital Strategy is designed to ensure that there is sufficient investment in infrastructure to enable the service to provide emergency responses and prevention work well in to the future. |
| Budget                                 | The strategies link to the revenue and capital budget setting which considers longer term affordability.   |
| Legal                                  | The regulatory framework is set out in the appendices to the report.   |
| Staffing                               | None   |
| Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language | None   |
| Risks                                  | The reports set out the financial risks associated with borrowing and investment activities.   |



# **Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26**

North Wales Fire and  
Rescue Service



## Contents

### Section

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction .....                              | 3  |
| External Context.....                           | 3  |
| Local Context.....                              | 3  |
| Borrowing Strategy .....                        | 5  |
| Treasury Investment Strategy.....               | 7  |
| Treasury Management Prudential Indicators ..... | 10 |
| Related Matters .....                           | 11 |
| Other Options Considered .....                  | 12 |

## Introduction

Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks primarily the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy every financial year. In addition, the Welsh Government issued revised Guidance on Local Authority Investments in Nov-2019 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the LGA 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the WG Guidance.

**Revised strategy:** In accordance with the WG Guidance, the Authority will be asked to approve a revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement should the assumptions on which this report is based change significantly. Such circumstances would include, for example, a large unexpected change in interest rates, in the Authority's capital programme or in the level of its investment balance, or a material loss in the fair value of a non-financial investment identified as part of the year end accounts preparation and audit process.

## External Context

**Economic background:** The impact on the UK from the government's Autumn Budget, slower expected interest rate cuts, a short-term boost to but modestly weaker economic growth over the medium term, together with the impact from President Trump's second term in office and uncertainties around US domestic and foreign policy, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2025/26.

The Bank of England's (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held Bank Rate at 4.5% at its March 2025 meeting, having reduced it to that level in February and following a previous 25bp cut from the 4.75% peak at the December MPC meeting. At the March meeting, seven Committee members voted to maintain Bank Rate at 4.5% while two members preferred to reduce it to 4.25%.

**Interest rate forecast (March 2025):** The Bank of England's (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) held Bank Rate at 4.5% at its March 2025 meeting. The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose expects the Bank of England's MPC will continue reducing Bank Rate through 2025, taking it to around 3.75% by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that that new long-term loans will be borrowed at an average rate of 4.5%.

## Local Context

On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the Authority held £19.07m of borrowing and £2.52m of treasury investments. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast

|   | 31.3.24<br>Actual<br>£m | 31.3.25<br>Estimate<br>£m | 31.3.26<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.27<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.28<br>Forecast<br>£m |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Capital financing requirement             | 27.94                   | 35.10                     | 40.30                     | 42.20                     | 46.50                     |
| Less: Other debt liabilities *            | 0.00                    |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| <b>Loans CFR</b>                          | <b>27.94</b>            | <b>35.10</b>              | <b>40.30</b>              | <b>42.20</b>              | <b>46.50</b>              |
| Less: External borrowing **               | -17.78                  | -19.07                    | -8.50                     | -7.10                     | -6.10                     |
| <b>Internal borrowing</b>                 | <b>10.16</b>            | <b>16.03</b>              | <b>31.80</b>              | <b>35.10</b>              | <b>40.40</b>              |
| Less: Balance sheet resources             | -13.13                  | -18.51                    | -16.20                    | -15.70                    | -15.20                    |
| <b>Treasury investments/New Borrowing</b> | <b>2.97</b>             | <b>2.48</b>               | <b>-15.60</b>             | <b>-19.40</b>             | <b>-25.20</b>             |

\* leases and PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's total debt

\*\* shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while balance sheet resources are the underlying sums available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, but minimal investments and will therefore be required to borrow up to £15.6m over the forecast period.

CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. Table 1 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2025/26

**Liability benchmark:** To compare the Authority's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as table 1 above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £2m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.

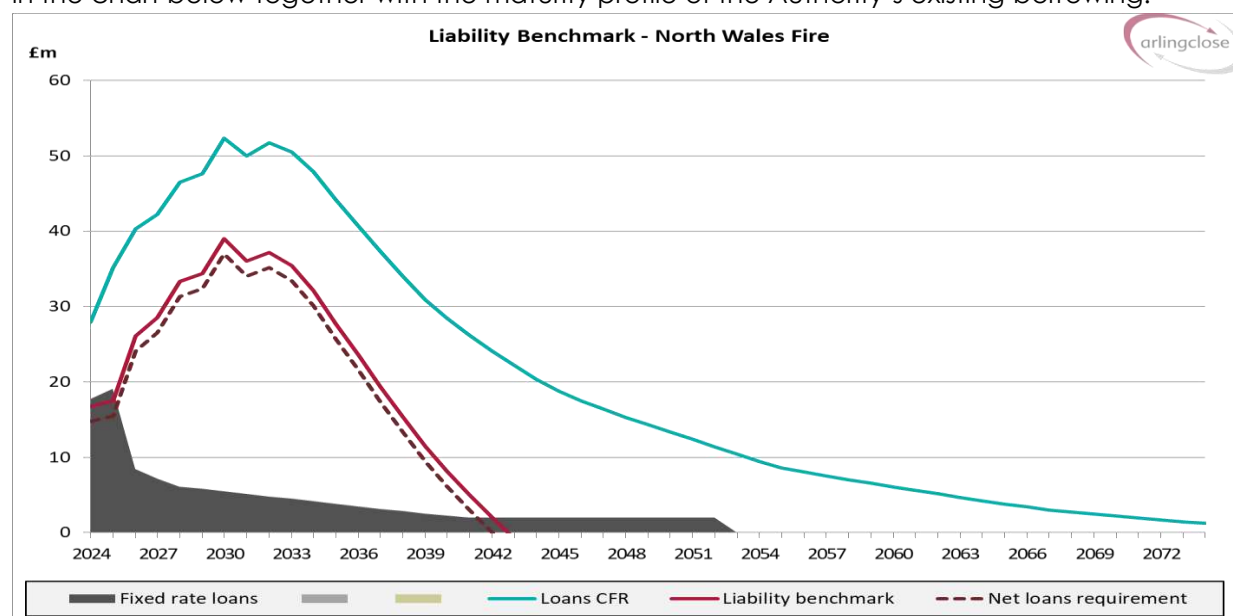
The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Authority is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Authority must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

Table 2: Prudential Indicator: Liability benchmark

|                               | 31.3.24<br>Actual<br>£m | 31.3.25<br>Estimate<br>£m | 31.3.26<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.27<br>Forecast<br>£m | 31.3.28<br>Forecast<br>£m |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Loans CFR                     | 27.94                   | 35.10                     | 40.30                     | 42.20                     | 46.50                     |
| Less: Balance sheet resources | -13.13                  | -18.51                    | -16.20                    | -15.70                    | -15.20                    |
| <b>Net loans requirement</b>  | <b>14.81</b>            | <b>16.59</b>              | <b>24.10</b>              | <b>26.60</b>              | <b>31.30</b>              |
| Plus: Liquidity allowance     | 2.97                    | 2.48                      | 2.00                      | 2.00                      | 2.00                      |
| <b>Liability benchmark</b>    | <b>17.78</b>            | <b>19.07</b>              | <b>26.10</b>              | <b>28.60</b>              | <b>33.30</b>              |

Following on from the medium-term forecasts in table 2 above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £15.60m in 2025/26, £19.40m in 2026/27 and £25.20m in 2027/28.

Minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a their asset life for the class of asset and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.5% a year. This is shown in the chart below together with the maturity profile of the Authority's existing borrowing:



The Authority will continue to be a borrower, as the authority does not hold investments or reserves to fund the capital plan. The blue line denotes the need to fund capital expenditure through borrowing. The red lines represent the need to fund capital expenditure through borrowing once reserves and working capital surplus' (or deficits) have been taken into account – this is actually the real need to borrow which CIPFA have defined as being the Liability Benchmark. The dashed red line represents the position at year end and the solid line represents the average mid-year position. The grey shaded areas show actual loans. When the grey area falls below the red lines this infers a borrowing need.

## Borrowing Strategy

The Authority currently holds £19.07 m of loans, an increase of £1.29 million on balance at 31 March 2024, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Authority expects to borrow up to £15.6m in 2025/26. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £36.616 million.

**Objectives:** The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

**Strategy:** Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. Short-term interest rates are currently higher than in the recent past, but are expected to fall in the coming year and it is therefore likely to be more cost effective over the medium-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead. The risks of this approach will be managed by keeping the Authority's interest rate exposure within the limit set in the treasury management prudential indicators, see below.

By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Arlingclose will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2025/26 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

The Authority has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.

Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

**Sources of borrowing:** The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- any other UK public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except for the Clwyd Pension Fund - Local Government Pension Scheme)
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

**Other sources of debt finance:** In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- sale and leaseback
- similar asset based finance

**Municipal Bonds Agency:** UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to the Audit Committee.

**Short-term and variable rate loans:** These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below. Financial derivatives may be used to manage this interest rate risk (see section below).

**Debt rescheduling:** The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk. The recent rise in interest rates means that more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities should arise than in previous years.

## **Treasury Investment Strategy**

The Authority holds invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's treasury investment balance has ranged between £1.368m and £9.134m.

**Objectives:** Both the CIPFA Code and the WG Guidance require the Authority to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Authority will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested. The Authority aims to be a responsible investor and will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues when investing.

**Strategy:** As demonstrated by the liability benchmark above, the Authority expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments will therefore be made primarily to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments.

**ESG policy:** Environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations are increasingly a factor in global investors' decision making, but the framework for evaluating investment opportunities is still developing and therefore the Authority's ESG policy does not currently include ESG scoring or other real-time ESG criteria at an individual investment level. When investing in banks and funds, the Authority will prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code.

**Approved counterparties:** The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 3 below, subject to the limits shown.

Table 3: Treasury investment counterparties and limits

| Sector  | Time limit | Counterparty limit | Sector limit |
|---|------------|--------------------|--------------|
| The UK Government                             | 50 years   | Unlimited          | n/a          |
| Local authorities & other government entities | 25 years   | £2m                | Unlimited    |
| Banks (unsecured) *                           | 13 months  | £5m                | Unlimited    |
| Building societies (unsecured) *              | 13 months  | £5m                | Unlimited    |
| Registered providers (unsecured) *            | 5 years    | £1m                | Unlimited    |
| Money market funds *                          | n/a        | £1m                | Unlimited    |
| Other investments *                           | 5 years    | £1m                | Unlimited    |

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

**\* Minimum credit rating:** Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

**Government:** Sterling-denominated investments with or explicitly guaranteed by national Governments, including the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility, treasury bills and gilts. These are deemed to be zero credit risk due to the government's ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

**Local authorities and other government entities:** Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, other national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk.

**Banks and building societies (unsecured):** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

**Money market funds:** Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Authority will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

**Other investments:** This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and unsecured loans to companies and universities. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Authority's investment at risk.

**Operational bank accounts:** The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept below £5m per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity.

**Risk assessment and credit ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. The credit rating agencies in current use are listed in the Treasury Management Practices document. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "negative watch") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

**Reputational aspects:** The Authority is aware that investment with certain counterparties, while considered secure from a purely financial perspective, may leave it open to criticism, valid or otherwise, that may affect its public reputation, and this risk will therefore be taken into account when making investment decisions.

**Liquidity management:** The Authority undertakes cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

The Authority will spread its liquid cash over at least two providers (e.g. bank accounts and money market funds), to ensure that access to cash is maintained in the event of operational difficulties at any one provider.



## Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

**Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

| Credit risk indicator    | Target |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Portfolio average credit | A      |

**Liquidity:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling [three] month period, without additional borrowing.

| Liquidity risk indicator             | Target |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Total cash available within 3 months | £2m    |

**Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

| Interest rate risk indicator   | Limit    |
|--|----------|
| Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates | -£0.030m |
| Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates | £0.030m  |

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates.

**Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

| Refinancing rate risk indicator | Upper limit | Lower limit |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Under 12 months                 | 30%         | 0%          |
| 12 months and within 24 months  | 30%         | 0%          |
| 24 months and within 5 years    | 40%         | 0%          |
| 5 years and within 10 years     | 30%         | 0%          |
| 10 years and above              | 100%        | 0%          |

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

## Related Matters

The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.

**Financial derivatives:** In the absence of any explicit legal power to do so, the Authority will not use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options). Derivatives embedded into loans and investments, including pooled funds and forward starting transactions, may be used, and the risks that they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

**Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Authority has retained with its providers of financial services, including advisers, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a greater range of services but with the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Authority's officers believe this to be the most appropriate status.

**Government Guidance:** Further matters required by the WG Guidance have been considered during the completion of the TMS for 2025/26.

## Financial Implications

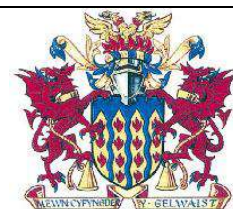
The Authority does not hold an investment portfolio and therefore there is no budget for investment income in 2024/25. Any investment income relates to the overnight placement of surplus cash. The budget for debt interest paid in 2024/25 is £0.852m, based on an average debt portfolio of £24.493m at an average interest rate of 5.25%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from those forecasts, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

## Other Options Considered

The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Authority Treasurer, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

| Alternative   | Impact on income and expenditure   | Impact on risk management   |
|---|--|---|
| Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times | Interest income will be lower  | Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater   |
| Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times     | Interest income will be higher   | Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller   |
| Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates              | Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income | Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain            |
| Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates  | Debt interest costs will initially be lower  | Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain |
| Reduce level of borrowing   | Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income                       | Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain            |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>         |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>                                 |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b> |
| Contact Officer | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b> |
| Subject         | <b>Pay Policy Statement 2025/26</b>                  |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To inform Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) of their responsibilities arising from the Localism Act 2011 (the Act).
- 2 The Act requires the Authority to prepare an annual Pay Policy Statement for approval before the commencement of the financial year to which it relates.
- 3 This paper sets out the proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 which is consistent with previous years.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4 The Authority is required to prepare and approve a Pay Policy Statement on an annual basis in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The statement must also comply with the Welsh Government guidance issued in 2017, *"Pay Accountability in Local Government in Wales"*

## OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 5 This report has not previously been considered.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) **note the requirements of the Localism Act 2011; and**
  - ii) **approve the capital funding and allocation process.**

## **BACKGROUND**

- 7 A Pay Policy Statement must be prepared in accordance with Part 1; Chapter 8 (Sections 38 – 43) of the Localism Act 2011. The guidance issued by the Welsh Government summarises the key elements of the Pay Policy Statement which includes:
  - (a) Information relating to the remuneration of its chief officers;
  - (b) the remuneration of its lowest paid employees; and
  - (c) the relationship between:
    - (i) the remuneration of its chief officers, and
    - (ii) the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.
- 8 The statement must state:
  - (a) the definition of “lowest-paid employees” adopted by the Authority for the purposes of the statement; and
  - (b) the Authority's reasons for adopting that definition.
- 9 The statement must also include the Authority's policies relating to:
  - (i) the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer;
  - (ii) remuneration of chief officers on recruitment;
  - (iii) increases and additions to remuneration for each chief officer;
  - (iv) the use of performance-related pay for chief officers;
  - (v) the use of bonuses for chief officers;
  - (vi) the approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under or to be employed by the authority; and
  - (vii) the publication of and access to information relating to remuneration of chief officers.

## **INFORMATION**

- 10 The purpose of this Pay Policy Statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Authority's approach to setting the pay of its employees, in particular, that of chief officers and employees on the lowest pay scale, by identifying the methods by which salaries are determined.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Wellbeing Objectives                           | The Pay Policy Statement provides a framework for decision making on pay and in particular decision making on senior pay, contributing to securing the Authority's financial sustainability and to being able to demonstrate the fair and equitable allocation of pay. |
| Budget   | Pay awards agreed and published by the National Joint Councils are taken into consideration when setting the Authority's annual budget.  |
| Legal  | Under section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 the Fire and Rescue Authority has a legal duty to produce an annual Pay Policy Statement.   |
| Staffing                                       | The Pay Policy Statement supports the principles of transparency, equal pay and support for staff.   |
| Equalities/<br>Human Rights/<br>Welsh Language | Equal treatment in respect of pay is an important part of the FRA Equality objectives.   |
| Risks  | Non-compliance with legislation leads to legal and reputational risk.  |

# North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

## Pay Policy Statement 2025/26

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) primary role is to:
- perform all the duties and responsibilities of a Fire and Rescue Authority in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations, in particular the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#), and the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) (which came into force on 1 October 2006), and the [1995 Combination Scheme](#);
  - agree the annual service plans the revenue and capital budgets and the contribution for the constituent councils; and
  - monitor the revenue and capital budgets and deal with any significant variations, including decisions on any supplementary contributions.
- 1.2 In order to fulfil its role, the Authority appoints staff to undertake duties on its behalf and in doing so must follow all relevant employment legislation. The Authority also follows a number of key principles which ensure affordability, equal pay, transparency and support for low pay.
- 1.3 The purpose of this document is to meet the Authority's legal obligations under the Localism Act 2011 and to provide information regarding the Authority's approach to setting the pay of its employees. It provides information on the remuneration of Chief Officers and employees on the lowest pay scale. It also provides information on the methods by which salaries are determined for all staff.
- 1.4 The document covers the period 1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026 and provides a framework for decision making on pay and in particular decision making on senior pay.
- 1.5 The Pay Policy Statement is an annual document prepared and approved by the Authority prior to the commencement of the financial year to which it relates.

### 2.0 Legislative framework

- 2.1 Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh Local Authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement from 2012/13 and for each financial year after that. The Act also requires the Authority to have due regard for any guidance issued by Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Government updated the guidance in November 2021, "Pay Accountability within Local Government in Wales".

- 2.2 The Act defines remuneration widely and includes pay, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in/enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.
- 2.3 In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Authority is required to comply with all relevant legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and, where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.
- 2.4 The Authority ensures that there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures to meet its obligations under the equal pay requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Job evaluation processes are embedded across the organisation to ensure that pay differentials between employees can be objectively justified and salaries directly relate to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

### **3.0 Decision making including consideration of value for money**

- 3.1 This policy applies to all Authority employees.
- 3.2 The Authority advocates collective bargaining arrangements and supports existing national level provisions that govern pay and conditions of service for the following employee groups:
- National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services, Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service (Gold Book)
  - Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities; Constitution, Conditions of Service, Salaries (Blue Book)
  - National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book)
  - National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (Green Book).
- 3.3 Pay levels are reviewed annually through these collective bargaining arrangements and any "cost of living" award associated with contractual conditions is implemented upon receipt of notification from the relevant negotiating body.
- 3.4 The Authority will consider any contractual 'cost of living' award for its chief officers in the context of similar decisions on lower paid employees and in accordance with the outcome of collective bargaining outlined above.



- 3.5 All roles conditioned to the NJC for Local Government Services are subject to the Authority's job evaluation scheme which objectively assesses each role on creation of a new post, changes to existing posts or at periodic intervals to determine a fair remuneration pay grade comparable across this group of staff. On voluntary cessation of their duties no additional payments will be made.
- 3.6 In accordance with the constitution, the Authority is responsible for approving the annual financial budget including the affordability of employee costs.

#### **4.0 Role of the Chief Fire Officer**

- 4.1 The Chief Fire Officer is the Head of Paid Service and is responsible for the Service. The role is a full-time appointment and the post holder is appointed on merit and against objective criteria following an open competitive process. The selection process is overseen by an Appointment Panel comprising of members of the Authority.
- 4.2 The Chief Fire Officer works closely with elected members to deliver the strategic aims of the Authority. The organisation has an annual revenue budget of approximately £52.4 million and a capital budget of £6.2 million and is responsible for a wide range of services under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, employing some 900 staff.

#### **5.0 Chief Officers' Pay**

- 5.1 The Authority's pay policy for the remuneration of chief officers, including the Chief Fire Officer, is aligned to the National Joint Council arrangements. Under these arrangements, Brigade Manager pay is reviewed annually at national level which provides the minimum salary for chief fire officers.
- 5.2 Remuneration of chief officers on appointment will be to the market-related base pay prevailing at the time of appointment and approved by the full Authority. In addition, a car will be provided in order to carry out the roles.
- 5.3 The remuneration of chief officers is also subject to a pay review undertaken on a periodical basis. This process benchmarks the chief officer salary levels against relevant comparators in other fire and rescue authorities. The pay review process was approved by the Authority during 2021 and the following principles were agreed:

- i. pay scales will be linked to the average basic pay rates collated and published by the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services in order to give appropriate sector-specific comparisons;
- ii. each seniority level will be employed on a three-point scale with progression up the scale to be subject to satisfactory annual appraisal. Each increment in scale will be based upon £1,500 for the CFO; and a relative proportion for the other posts;
- iii. the Authority will pay, at the bottom of the three-point scale, the average basic pay for an authority in Population Band 2, which will be inclusive of all duties;
- iv. the nationally negotiated and agreed annual pay awards will be automatically applied, as currently happens in the case of “grey book” and “green book” employees (subject to an employee choosing to forego any part of it);
- v. the pay relativities between the roles of CFO, DCFO, ACFO and ACO will be restored. The salary of each seniority level will be calculated as a proportion of the Chief Fire Officer's salary as follows:

|                              | Salary<br>relative to<br>CFO |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Chief Fire Officer           |                              |
| Deputy Chief Fire Officer    | 80%                          |
| Assistant Chief Fire Officer | 75%                          |
| Assistant Chief Officer      | 60%                          |

- vi. posts will be sized appropriately, relative to their seniority level, and will be of equal size across all at that level in order to ensure that officers receive equal pay for work of equal value; and
  - vii. pay will be reviewed at regular intervals in line with the requirements under the ‘two- track’ approach for determining levels of pay for Brigade Managers as prescribed by the National Joint Council. Three years is the accepted interval.
- 5.4 The triannual benchmarking of the Chief Fire Officer's salary was considered by the Executive Panel at its meeting of 16 December 2024. This found that the principles set out above remained valid and confirmed the pay for the Chief Fire Officer was appropriate.

- 5.5 The Authority does not pay any bonuses or additional enhancements such as performance related pay. On voluntary cessation of their duties no additional payments will be made to chief officers.
- 5.6 Following resignation or retirement from their duties no additional payments will be made other than those due for salary purposes or payments made to an individual in line with the appropriate pension scheme on retirement. Such payments may include salary paid in lieu of notice, pension benefit entitlements and holiday pay.
- 5.7 In circumstances where a severance package is being considered upon an agreed cessation of duties other than for the reasons outlined above, the Authority will be offered the opportunity to vote before any severance package is approved for chief officers.
- 5.8 Information on the remuneration of chief officers is published as part of the Authority's annual Statement of Accounts. These are published on the Authority's website.
- 5.9 Business expenses such as for train, car mileage, overnight accommodation and parking are claimed back in accordance with the organisation's travel and subsistence policy which is applicable to all employees.
- 5.10 Chief officers are members of the relevant pension scheme. The Authority does not permit increases or enhancements to the pension outside of standard arrangements.
- 5.11 The notice period for chief officer roles is 3 months.

## **6.0 Senior Staff**

- 6.1 For the purposes of this Pay Policy Statement the term "chief officer" is not limited to Head of Paid Service and includes those who report directly to the Chief Fire Officer. This includes the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officers and Assistant Chief Officers.

6.2 These posts are covered by a range of terms and conditions:

| <b>Employee Group</b>           | <b>Terms and Conditions</b>   | <b>Other benefits</b> | <b>Pension arrangements</b>  |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| Chief Fire Officer              | Gold Book   | Car provided          | Local Government Pension Scheme  |
| Monitoring Officer              | Provided by a named officer from Flintshire County Council under a contracted out arrangement |                       |  |
| Treasurer (section 151 officer) | Part time contract negotiated outside of national terms and conditions.                       |                       |  |
| Deputy Chief Fire Officer       | Gold Book   | Car provided          | Local Government Pension Scheme <b>or</b> Firefighters' Pension Scheme |
| Assistant Chief Fire Officer    | Gold Book   | Car provided          | Local Government Pension Scheme <b>or</b> Firefighters' Pension Scheme |
| Assistant Chief Officer         | Blue Book   | Car provided          | Local Government Pension Scheme  |

## **7.0 Talent management**

7.1 The Authority's strategic focus is on supporting and developing the quality of leadership in the Service. This includes increasing the capacity of existing management teams, planning the development of future leaders, championing leadership values throughout the organisation and attracting effective leaders, where appropriate, from other sectors.

## **8.0 Performance related pay**

8.1 There is currently no performance related pay scheme in operation for any role across the Service.

## **9.0 Remuneration of other staff other than chief officers**

9.1 The Authority's pay policy for the remuneration of employees who are not chief officers is aligned to nationally agreed salary rates negotiated through the National Joint Council comprising of national employer and employee representatives.

| <b>Employee Group</b>   | <b>Terms and Conditions</b> | <b>Other benefits</b>                                    | <b>Pension Arrangements</b>     |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Officers<br>(Station Managers, Group Managers and Area Managers)  | Grey Book                   | A lease car is provided for staff on the flexi duty rota | Firefighters' Pension Scheme    |
| Head of Corporate Departments   | Blue Book                   | NONE   | Local Government Pension Scheme |
| Firefighters  | Grey Book                   | NONE   | Firefighters' Pension Scheme    |
| Apprentice Firefighters   | Grey Book                   | NONE   | Firefighters' Pension Scheme    |
| Control Staff   | Grey Book                   | NONE   | Local Government Pension Scheme |
| Fire Safety and Prevention  | Green Book                  | NONE   | Local Government Pension Scheme |
| Corporate Services  | Green Book                  | NONE*  | Local Government Pension Scheme |
| Apprentices   | Green Book                  | NONE   | Local Government Pension Scheme |
| * A lease car is provided on an optional basis for a small number of posts where significant or frequent travel is undertaken |                             |  |                                 |

- 9.2 The lowest paid employee is engaged on the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (Green Book) spinal column point 6 which equates to £25,183 per annum from 1 April 2024. The Authority occasionally employs apprentices who are not included within the definition of 'lowest paid employees' as they are not employed under contracts of employment.
- 9.3 The statutory guidance under the Localism Act 2011 recommends the use of pay multiples as a means of measuring the relationship between pay rates across the workforce and that of senior managers, as included within the Hutton 'Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector' (2010).
- 9.4 The 2024/25 pay levels within the Authority define the multiple between the lowest paid (full time equivalent basic pay) employee scale and the Chief Fire Officer as 1:6.21.

- 9.5 The Hutton report on fair pay in the public sector was asked to explore the case for a fixed limit on pay dispersion in the public sector, through a requirement that no public sector manager can earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation. The report concluded that the relationship to median earnings was a more relevant measure and the Government's Code of Recommended Practice on Data Transparency recommends the publication of the ratio between highest paid salary and the median salary of the whole of the Authority's workforce. The multiple between the median full time basic equivalent earnings and the Chief Fire Officer is 1:4.15 (excluding RDS). Please note this figure includes full time salaries only and excludes allowances.
- 9.6 The Authority publishes information on the remuneration of Chief Officers, the median earnings of the organisation's workforce, and the ratio between these two figures in their annual financial statement to demonstrate the relationship between the two.

## **10.0 Support for lower paid staff**

- 10.1 All employees of the Service are paid above the living wage. A range of further support measures are offered including a cycle to work scheme, Employee Assistance Programme, counselling, Occupational Health services and childcare vouchers.
- 10.2 A physiotherapy scheme is also offered to all employees. Employees receive financial assistance to refer themselves for therapy arising from muscular-skeletal injury or other ailments.
- 10.3 A range of flexible benefits have also been introduced including corporate discounts. Non-pay benefits and rewards assist with the development of an effective employment package and utilise reward systems whereby employees are able to flex the rewards they receive so they get more of whatever element is important to them at different stages of their careers.

## **11.0 Additions to Salary of Other Employees**

- 11.1 Where appropriate, and in line with national conditions of service or local agreement, individuals may receive an allowance in addition to their salary. Examples include, but are not restricted to:

|                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • on-call or out of hours provision | • telephone allowance            |
| • continuous availability           | • pension employer contributions |
| • additional responsibility         | • mileage allowances             |
| • rent, fuel and light allowance    | •                                |

## **12.0 Honoraria**

- 12.1 A member of staff who performs duties outside the scope of his or her post over an extended period may be granted a one-off additional payment of an amount dependent upon the circumstances of each case. Examples include:
- where an employee temporarily carries out significant additional work over and above their usual responsibilities; or
  - where an employee carries out a significant amount of work over their normal contracted hours, but is not eligible for overtime payments because of their placing on a salary scale.
- 12.2 Any determination relating to a proposed honoraria for chief officers would require approval by the Authority.
- 12.3 Decisions relating to all other staff will be considered by the appropriate Head of Department in consultation with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Finance and Resources).

## **13.0 Exit policy**

- 13.1 On voluntary cessation of their duties no additional payments will be made other than those due for salary purposes or payments made to an individual in line with the appropriate pension scheme on retirement. Such payments may include salary paid in lieu of notice, pension benefit entitlements, holiday pay and any fees or allowances paid.
- 13.2 Employees conditioned to the NJC for Local Government Services may, at the Authority's discretion be entitled to added pension and/or redundancy payments upon authority initiated early termination of employment under the Authority's discretions in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) and the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (as amended) – generally referred to as the Discretionary Compensation Regulations.
- 13.3 The Service has a policy for severance or exit arrangements.
- 13.4 Former employees are, on occasion, re-employed by the Service. Where the combined earnings and pension exceed the inflation adjusted final salary in the original employment the pension is subject to abatement in accordance with the scheme regulations.

## **14.0 Off payroll arrangements**

- 14.1 The Authority does not routinely engage with individuals using off payroll arrangements. These are only considered on an exceptional basis for specialist pieces of work for which there is no internal capacity or expertise. The Authority has arrangements in place to ensure that the employment status indicator tool published by HMRC is completed for each supplier before payments are made.

## **15.0 Appendices**

[Appendix 1](#) Chief Officers' salary matrix

[Appendix 2](#) NJC salary rates  
[2.1](#) Firefighter Roles  
[2.2](#) Retained Duty System  
[2.3](#) Control Roles

[Appendix 3](#) NJC for local government services, salary matrix



## Appendix 1

### North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Chief Officers Pay Rates (as at Jan 2024)

| Post  | Salary   | Salary   | Salary   | % of CFO |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|       | Year 1   | Year 2   | Year 3   |          |
| CFO*  | £153,066 | £154,729 | £156,392 |          |
| DCFO* | £122,453 | £123,783 | £125,114 | 80%      |
| ACFO* | £114,800 | £116,047 | £117,294 | 75%      |
| ACO   | £91,840  | £92,837  | £93,835  | 60%      |

\* includes remuneration for continuous duty arrangements

| External provision of service | Value (per annum)         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Monitoring Officer            | £ 18,921 (excluding VAT)* |
| Section 151 Officer           | £8,340                    |

\*based on last year's cost

**FIREFIGHTING ROLES - PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024****(pay award for 1 July 2025 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)**

|                        | <b>Basic annual<br/>£</b> | <b>Basic hourly rate<br/>£</b> | <b>Overtime<br/>rate<br/>£</b> |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Firefighter</b>     |                           |                                |                                |
| Trainee                | 28,265                    | 12.91                          | 19.36                          |
| Development            | 29,442                    | 13.44                          | 20.16                          |
| Competent              | 37,675                    | 17.20                          | 25.80                          |
|                        |                           |                                |                                |
| <b>Crew Manager</b>    |                           |                                |                                |
| Development            | 40,041                    | 18.28                          | 27.42                          |
| Competent              | 41,767                    | 19.07                          | 28.61                          |
|                        |                           |                                |                                |
| <b>Watch Manager</b>   |                           |                                |                                |
| Development            | 42,672                    | 19.48                          | 29.22                          |
| Competent A            | 43,857                    | 20.03                          | 30.05                          |
| Competent B            | 46,707                    | 21.33                          | 32                             |
|                        |                           |                                |                                |
| <b>Station Manager</b> |                           |                                |                                |
| Development            | 48,580                    | 22.18                          | 33.27                          |
| Competent A            | 50,041                    | 22.85                          | 34.28                          |
| Competent B            | 53,586                    | 24.47                          | 36.71                          |
|                        |                           |                                |                                |
| <b>Group Manager</b>   |                           |                                |                                |
| Development            | 55,953                    | 25.55                          | Not applicable                 |
| Competent A            | 57,632                    | 26.32                          | Not applicable                 |
| Competent B            | 62,028                    | 28.32                          | Not applicable                 |
|                        |                           |                                |                                |
| <b>Area Manager</b>    |                           |                                |                                |
| Development            | 65,690                    | 30.00                          | Not applicable                 |
| Competent A            | 67,658                    | 30.89                          | Not applicable                 |
| Competent B            | 72,054                    | 32.90                          | Not applicable                 |

## APPENDIX 2.2

### FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 January 2025 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)

(pay award for 1 July 2025 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)

|                        | (1)<br>£ per<br>Annum | (2)<br>£ per<br>annu<br>m | (3)<br>£ per<br>Hour | (4)<br>£ per<br>occasio<br>n |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Firefighter</b>     |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Trainee                | 4,240                 | 2,120                     | 12.91                | 4.96                         |
| Development            | 4,416                 | 2,208                     | 13.44                | 4.96                         |
| Competent              | 5,651                 | 2,826                     | 17.20                | 4.96                         |
|                        |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| <b>Crew Manager</b>    |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Development            | 6,006                 | 3,003                     | 18.28                | 4.96                         |
| Competent              | 6,265                 | 3,133                     | 19.07                | 4.96                         |
|                        |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| <b>Watch Manager</b>   |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Development            | 6,401                 | 3,200                     | 19.48                | 4.96                         |
| Competent A            | 6,579                 | 3,289                     | 20.03                | 4.96                         |
| Competent B            | 7,006                 | 3,503                     | 21.33                | 4.96                         |
|                        |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| <b>Station Manager</b> |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Development            | 7,287                 | 3,644                     | 22.18                | 4.96                         |
| Competent A            | 7,506                 | 3,753                     | 22.85                | 4.96                         |
| Competent B            | 8,038                 | 4,019                     | 24.47                | 4.96                         |
|                        |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| <b>Group Manager</b>   |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Development            | 8,393                 | 4,196                     | 25.55                | 4.96                         |
| Competent A            | 8,645                 | 4,322                     | 26.32                | 4.96                         |
| Competent B            | 9,304                 | 4,652                     | 28.32                | 4.96                         |
|                        |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| <b>Area Manager</b>    |                       |                           |                      |                              |
| Development            | 9,854                 | 4,927                     | 30.00                | 4.77                         |
| Competent A            | 10,149                | 5,074                     | 30.89                | 4.77                         |
| Competent B            | 10,808                | 5,404                     | 32.90                | 4.77                         |

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer (15% of the full-time basic annual salary, as set out in Appendix A)

Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system (7.5% of the full-time basic annual salary, as set out in Appendix A)

Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken

Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out

## APPENDIX 2.3

### CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES - PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2024

(pay award for 1 July 2025 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)

|                                  | Basic<br>annual<br>*<br>£ | Basic hourly<br>rate<br>£ | Overtime<br>rate<br>£ |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Firefighter (Control)</b>     |                           |                           |                       |
| Trainee                          | 26,852                    | 12.26                     | 18.39                 |
| Development                      | 27,790                    | 12.77                     | 19.16                 |
| Competent                        | 35,791                    | 16.34                     | 24.51                 |
|                                  |                           |                           |                       |
| <b>Crew Manager (Control)</b>    |                           |                           |                       |
| Development                      | 38,039                    | 17.37                     | 26.06                 |
| Competent                        | 39,679                    | 18.12                     | 27.18                 |
|                                  |                           |                           |                       |
| <b>Watch Manager (Control)</b>   |                           |                           |                       |
| Development                      | 40,538                    | 18.51                     | 27.77                 |
| Competent A                      | 41,664                    | 19.02                     | 28.53                 |
| Competent B                      | 44,372                    | 20.26                     | 30.39                 |
|                                  |                           |                           |                       |
| <b>Station Manager (Control)</b> |                           |                           |                       |
| Development                      | 46,151                    | 21.07                     | 31.61                 |
| Competent A                      | 47,539                    | 21.71                     | 32.57                 |
| Competent B                      | 50,907                    | 23.25                     | 34.88                 |
|                                  |                           |                           |                       |
| <b>Group Manager (Control)</b>   |                           |                           |                       |
| Development                      | 53,155                    | 24.27                     | Not applicable        |
| Competent A                      | 54,750                    | 25.00                     | Not applicable        |
| Competent B                      | 58,927                    | 26.91                     | Not applicable        |

\*(95% of the respective firefighting role basic annual salary, as set out in AppendixA)

**PAY RATES FROM 1 APRIL 2024 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON GREEN BOOK  
TERMS AND CONDITIONS (pay negotiations for 25/26 ongoing)**

| SCP | 01-Apr-24 |           |
|-----|-----------|-----------|
|     | per annum | per hour* |
| 2   | £23,656   | £12.26    |
| 3   | £24,027   | £12.45    |
| 4   | £24,404   | £12.65    |
| 5   | £24,790   | £12.85    |
| 6   | £25,183   | £13.05    |
| 7   | £25,584   | £13.26    |
| 8   | £25,992   | £13.47    |
| 9   | £26,409   | £13.69    |
| 10  | £26,835   | £13.91    |
| 11  | £27,269   | £14.13    |
| 12  | £27,711   | £14.36    |
| 13  | £28,163   | £14.60    |
| 14  | £28,624   | £14.84    |
| 15  | £29,093   | £15.08    |
| 16  | £29,572   | £15.33    |
| 17  | £30,060   | £15.58    |
| 18  | £30,559   | £15.84    |
| 19  | £31,067   | £16.10    |
| 20  | £31,586   | £16.37    |
| 21  | £32,115   | £16.65    |
| 22  | £32,654   | £16.93    |
| 23  | £33,366   | £17.29    |
| 24  | £34,314   | £17.79    |
| 25  | £35,235   | £18.26    |
| 26  | £36,124   | £18.72    |
| 27  | £37,035   | £19.20    |
| 28  | £37,938   | £19.66    |
| 29  | £38,626   | £20.02    |
| 30  | £39,513   | £20.48    |
| 31  | £40,476   | £20.98    |
| 32  | £41,511   | £21.52    |
| 33  | £42,708   | £22.14    |
| 34  | £43,693   | £22.65    |
| 35  | £44,711   | £23.17    |
| 36  | £45,718   | £23.70    |
| 37  | £46,731   | £24.22    |
| 38  | £47,754   | £24.75    |
| 39  | £48,710   | £25.25    |
| 40  | £49,764   | £25.79    |
| 41  | £50,788   | £26.32    |
| 42  | £51,802   | £26.85    |
| 43  | £52,805   | £27.37    |

\*hourly rate calculated by dividing annual salary by 52.143 weeks (which is 365 days divided by 7) and then divided by 37 hours (the standard working week in the National Agreement 'Green Book')

**PAY RATES FROM 1 APRIL 2024 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON BLUE BOOK  
TERMS AND CONDITIONS  
(pay negotiations for 25/26 ongoing)**

| SCP | 01-Apr-24 |          |
|-----|-----------|----------|
|     | per annum | per hour |
| 48  | £57,692   | £29.90   |
| 49  | £59,786   | £30.99   |
| 50  | £60,832   | £31.53   |
| 51  | £61,877   | £32.07   |

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                       |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>                                 |
| Contact Officer | <b>Sandra Williams, Head of Corporate Planning, Performance and Transformation</b> |
| Subject         | <b>Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025/26</b>                       |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the feedback received from the public consultation on the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2025-2026 and the associated Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and to seek approval of the final version of the aforementioned documents.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 Under the Welsh Government Fire and Rescue National Framework 2016, one of the key objectives for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) 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 (the Measure) 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 second 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.

- 7 The response levels were 25% higher (223 to 279) than the 2024-25 public consultation, although fewer respondents (7 down from 48) declared they were members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) staff.
- 8 Support for the proposed improvement and well-being objectives was consistently high across each of the five principles for keeping communities safe, ranging between 99% and 96%.
- 9 Verbatim comments from consultation respondents were shared with the relevant Heads of Department, or subject matter expert, for review and consideration as to what impact, if any, the feedback has upon their proposed objectives for 2025-26.
- 10 There are no proposed changes to any of the objectives as a consequence of the public consultation.
- 11 Trade unions have been engaged in the development of the well-being objectives as part of the Social Partnership Duty and at the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee in February 2025 the Trade Union representatives present agreed that consensus on the objectives had been reached.

## **OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE**

- 12 The papers were presented to the Executive Panel on 17 March 2025. No observations were made.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 13 It is recommended that Members;
  - i) **Note the content of the feedback report; and**
  - ii) **endorse the attached CRMIP 2025-26 and associated EqIA for publication.**

## **BACKGROUND**

- 14 The Authority will report upon its progress against the 2024-25 CRMP objectives in its Annual Performance Assessment in the Autumn of 2025.

## **INFORMATION**

- 15 The public consultation on the Authority's Improvement and Well-being objectives for 2025-26 was open between 21 October and 16 December 2024.
- 16 The draft CRMIP 2025-26, and an easy-read version was published, in Welsh and English, on the Service website. An Equality Impact Assessment of the CRMIP was also published.



- 17 Respondents were invited to complete a questionnaire indicating whether they agreed that the proposed objectives would deliver against 'Our Five Principles for keeping communities safe'. Respondents were invited to add comments in support of their opinion.
- 18 The consultation was publicised online, internally on Hwb Tân, on social media and through paid adverts in the written press.
- 19 Bilingual leaflets bearing a QR Code, facilitating immediate and easy access to the online survey questionnaire, were printed and distributed during Safe and Well Check visits and made available during engagement events.
- 20 A dedicated bilingual email address was set up to facilitate requests for additional information or hard copy questionnaires. A dedicated mobile telephone number was established to respond to any queries that could not be submitted by email.
- 21 Letters in the Chair's name were sent to everyone on the Stakeholder Register inviting them to participate.
- 22 The Equality and Diversity Officer arranged specific face to face engagement events with different equality interest groups.
- 23 The verbatim comments can be viewed in the appendices of the Consultation Report.

## IMPLICATIONS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Well-being Objectives                   | The CRMIP 2025-26 contains a well-being statement as required by the Act.                      |
| Budget                                  | Not applicable   |
| Legal                                   | The CRMIP 2025-26 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 CRMP supports the Authority's risk management arrangements.                                |



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

# Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

Well-being and Improvement Objectives  
2025 – 2026



**Our five principles for keeping communities safe – have your say**

**PEOPLE**

**PREVENTION**

**PROTECTION**

**RESPONSE**

**ENVIRONMENT**



# Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                                | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Our Service</b>                                 | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Our Staff</b>                                   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Our Service area</b>                            | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Our Governance and Legislation</b>              | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Our Risks and Demand</b>                        | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Our Principles</b>                              | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Our People Principle</b>                        | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Our Prevention Principle</b>                    | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Our Protection Principle</b>                    | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Our Response Principle</b>                      | <b>13</b> |
| <b>Our Environment Principle</b>                   | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Wales' Well-being Goals – How we contribute</b> | <b>15</b> |
| <b>How to Provide Feedback</b>                     | <b>18</b> |



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment



# 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 and our 2024-25 Implementation Plan, which contained improvement and well-being objectives to enable us to deliver against our long-term objectives. Both of these plans can be accessed [here](#).

This Community Risk Management Implementation Plan, for 2025-26, is the second 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 councillors 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 [here](#).

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.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment



# Our Staff

Our firefighters respond to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies from 44 fire stations across North Wales. In total we have 54 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.

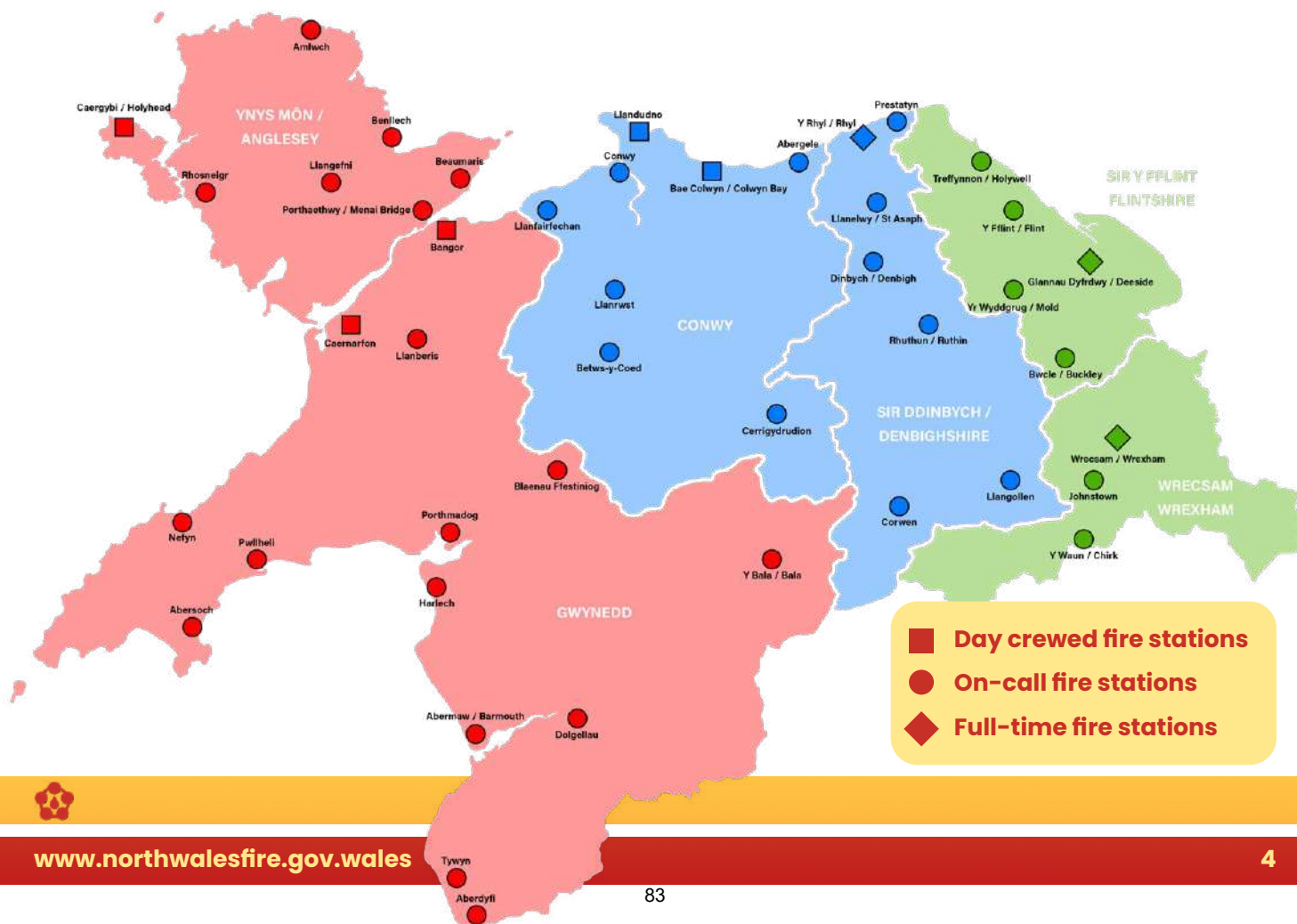
From firefighters to business area specialists, you can read more about the roles of the people that respond to emergencies and the people who keep the Service running [here](#).



# 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. You can read more about our geography and demography [here](#).



# 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. This plan was subject to public and stakeholder consultation between 21st October and 16th December 2024.

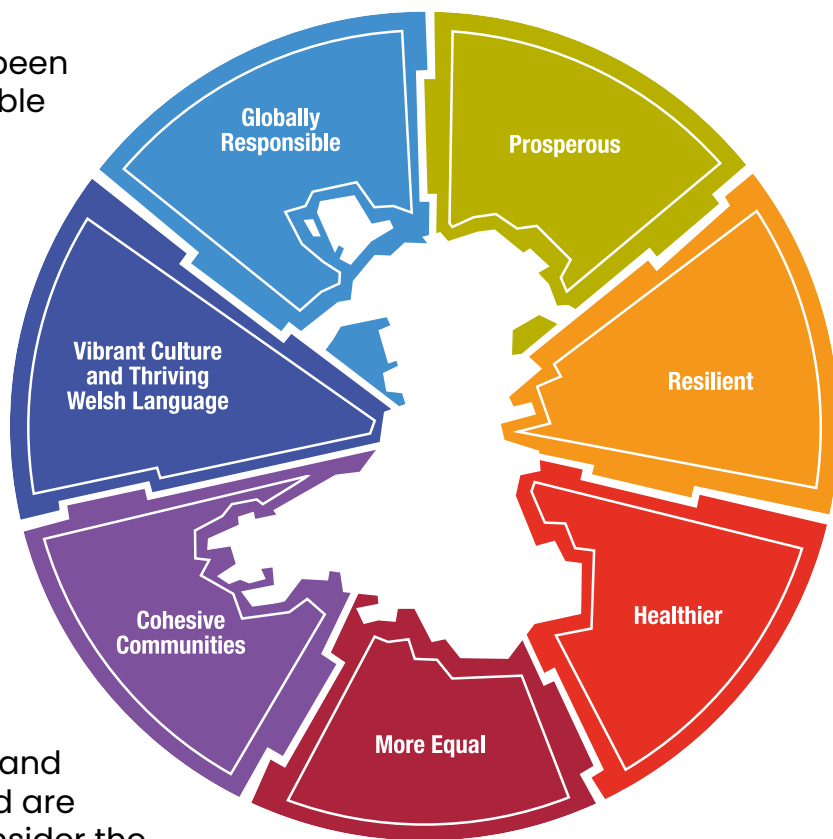
You can read about our assessment of our performance against our previous well-being and improvement objectives in our Annual Performance Assessment 2023-24 [here](#).

Our 2025-26 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.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment



# Social Partnership Duty

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 came into force on 1st April 2024 and places social partnership on a statutory footing in Wales, complementing existing well-being duties.

This requires the Fire and Rescue Authority, to seek consensus or compromise with their recognised trade unions, when setting their well-being objectives and making decisions of a strategic nature about the reasonable steps they intend to take to deliver those objectives.

Whilst this is the first year that the legislation has been in place, staff have previously been encouraged to participate in the public consultation.

The Joint Consultation and Negotiating Committee (JCNC) is the forum at which the recognised Trade Unions meet the lead Principal Officer on a quarterly basis and it was at the August meeting that the objectives were discussed and representatives consulted at the formative stage of the process.

Further updates were provided following the end of the public consultation and trade union representatives were provided with enough information for them to consider the proposed objectives and sufficient time for them to respond.

The final draft version of the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan was presented to JCNC on 8th January for formal consensus prior to being approved by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 17th March 2025.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment



## 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.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment





## 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. You can read about how we assess risk and demand [here](#).

# 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 [here](#).



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment

# Our 2025–26 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 2025–26?

- 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.
- Support the delivery of an action plan for improvement following the 2023 Fire Family Staff Survey.
- Plan for and deliver the 2025 Fire Family Staff Survey.
- Communicate the findings of the CREST independent cultural review to staff and external stakeholders and working with staff develop and implement how we respond, based upon the recommendations of the report, to further strengthen and improve our workplace culture.
- Continue a positive and supportive process to improve attendance by providing excellent occupational health and welfare support.
- 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.
- Address and maintain the cyber security profile of the Service systems, aligning with evolving cyber threats.
- Deliver technical training, which includes the introduction of a phishing campaign, cyber training, and bespoke IT training.
- Write a Social Partnership Report to comply with the requirements of Welsh Government, which meets approval of the Fire Authority.



- 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.
- Develop a 2026-29 Training and Development Strategy.
- Continue to foster an inclusive workplace culture that empowers all staff members to excel and effectively address the diverse needs of our communities.
- Develop and deliver the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.
- Identify and implement digital improvements to the efficiency of the payroll function.
- Develop the financial planning process.
- Monitor transformation and change management outcomes.

**These actions will satisfy the following 2009 Measure Improvement Objectives;**

- Strategic Effectiveness, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment

# 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 2025–26?**

- 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.
- Deliver intelligence led home safety interventions targeting the most vulnerable residents in our communities. We will deliver 12 targeted multi agency campaigns across North Wales.
- Develop localised area plans in line with the 2025–29 Community Risk Management Plan.
- Deliver 12 intelligence led multi-agency campaigns targeting those most vulnerable from Road Traffic Collisions and inland drowning incidents.
- Deliver bespoke, early intervention packages accredited through the Prince's Trust, adopting a trauma informed approach to develop safer, stronger, and more resilient children and young people.
- Provide staff with 12 Continuous Professional Development events throughout the year to build knowledge and understanding to better serve local communities.

## **These actions will satisfy the following 2009 Measure Improvement Objectives;**

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



# 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 2025–26?**

- Develop all supervisory and flexi-duty system officers to Level 2 in Business Fire Safety.
- Undertake an intelligence-led approach to our Risk Based Inspection Programme, to reduce injury and death from fire in domestic and non-domestic premises.
- Undertake monthly business fire safety reassurance campaigns to promote safety in commercial premises.
- Work with partner agencies and deliver seasonal interventions and engagements to manage our landscape and reduce wildfires.

## **These actions will satisfy the following 2009 Measure Improvement Objectives;**

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





# 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 2025–26?**

- 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.
- 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.
- To lead and coordinate the upgrade of technology systems across the Service to ensure they are cyber-secure and fit for purpose.
- Support and implement the delivery of decisions and recommendations from the Fire Authority Emergency Cover Working Group.
- Increase the on-call establishment to facilitate an improvement in appliance availability across the region.
- Create a schedule of exercises in line with the Local Resilience Forum risk profile of North Wales.
- Conduct a review of our fleet of special appliances to ensure they remain suitable to meet the current and future risk/demand profile.
- Continue multiagency consultation response and risk management of large battery and energy storage systems.
- Continue to develop the business case for a new Training and Development Centre.
- Review and implement relevant recommendations of the Grenfell Tower inquiry phase 2 report, to improve operational preparedness and response, firefighter training and firefighter safety.
- Continue with the Training Towers replacement programme.

## **These actions will satisfy the following 2009 Measure 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 2025–26?**

- Review stock items and develop best working practices in order to improve efficiency and management of stock levels.
- Expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) network across the Service.
- 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.
- To transition existing diesel use vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) use vehicles.
- Upgrade the Building Management System to negate the impact of terminated BT copper lines.
- Monitor and report on energy, water, and waste data including reporting to Welsh Government on carbon reporting.

## **These actions will satisfy the following 2009 Measure 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.



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment





## 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 nutritional plans and allocated time to use our fitness suites.



## 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

The draft version of this Community Risk Management Implementation Plan underwent a period of public consultation from 21st October to 16th December 2024.

Even though the consultation period has closed we are always looking for ways to improve our service and to present information that is meaningful. In order to help us 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 plan, or how we might improve future plans, we would still very much like to hear from you.

## Write to us:

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS)  
Fire and Rescue Headquarters  
Ffordd Salesbury  
St Asaph Business Park  
St Asaph  
Denbighshire  
LL17 0JJ

## Call us:

07717 516187

## Send us an email:

[OurFivePrinciples@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:OurFivePrinciples@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

## Request a Safe and Well Check

You can request A safe and well check for yourself or on behalf of someone else by contacting the Service on **0800 169 1234**.

## Follow us

 **@northwalesfire**

 **@northwalesfireservice**

 **@northwalesfire**

 **@nwalesfireservice**



People

Prevention

Protection

Response

Environment







North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

# Draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

Consultation Report 2025 – 2026



**Our five principles for keeping communities safe - have your say**

**PEOPLE**

**PREVENTION**

**PROTECTION**

**RESPONSE**

**ENVIRONMENT**

# Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Background.....  | 2  |
| Introduction .....                                     | 3  |
| Methodology.....                                       | 3  |
| Observations .....                                     | 4  |
| Next Steps.....  | 5  |
| Responses at a Glance .....                            | 6  |
| Questionnaire Responses.....                           | 7  |
| Community Risks.....                                   | 7  |
| SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PEOPLE PRINCIPLE' .....              | 8  |
| SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PREVENTION PRINCIPLE' .....          | 10 |
| SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PROTECTION PRINCIPLE' .....          | 11 |
| SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR RESPONSE PRINCIPLE' .....            | 12 |
| SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLE' .....         | 13 |
| Other Areas in Relation to the Service we Provide..... | 14 |
| Equality Issues .....                                  | 15 |
| Additional Information .....                           | 16 |
| Social Media Responses and Comments .....              | 19 |
| Appendix A .....                                       | 20 |
| Appendix B.....  | 27 |
| Appendix C .....                                       | 33 |
| Appendix D .....                                       | 39 |
| Appendix E.....  | 43 |
| Appendix F .....                                       | 48 |
| Appendix G .....                                       | 50 |
| Appendix H .....                                       | 54 |
| Appendix I.....  | 57 |

## Background

The Fire and Rescue 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.

It is also a statutory requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 for Public Bodies to publish annual well-being objectives.

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 came into force on 1st April 2024 and requires the Fire and Rescue Authority, to seek consensus or compromise with their recognised trade unions, when setting their well-being objectives and making decisions of a strategic nature about the reasonable steps they intend to take to deliver those objectives.

The duties under the 2009 Measure and the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act 2015 can be discharged through the publication of a single report- Source: Welsh Fire and Rescue Circular W-[FRSC\(2024\)06](#).

## Approach

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.

As part of the '[Fire Standard](#)' a fire and rescue service should 'effectively consult and engage (in line with its governance arrangements) with communities, staff and stakeholders at appropriate stages of the community risk management planning process.

The CRMP document attempts to identify the expected risks and challenges that the Service may experience within the next five years.

The CRMP 2024-2029 is a five-year plan, supported by annual implementation plans, and this is the second annual plan (Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-2026) which will contribute to the five-year CRMP 2024-29.

## Introduction

The consultation sought views on the proposed improvement and well-being objectives under five key principles that were developed by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority during 2023-24:

- Our People Principle
- Our Prevention Principle
- Our Protection Principle
- Our Response Principle
- Our Environment Principle

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, an Equality Impact Assessment was completed.

## Methodology

Between the 21 October and 16 December 2024, the draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2025-26 was published, in Welsh and English, on the Fire and Rescue website along with links directly to the survey questionnaire.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was also prepared and published in Welsh and English, and there was a specific question about the EqIA in the survey questionnaire.

The best practice adopted during the Emergency Cover Review consultation, was again followed, including the Gunning Principles.

The consultation was publicised online, internally on Hwb Tân, on social media and through paid adverts in the written press.

Bi-lingual leaflets bearing a QR Code, facilitating immediate and easy access to the online survey questionnaire, were printed and distributed during Safe and Well Check visits and made available during engagement events.

A dedicated bi-lingual e-mail address was set up to facilitate requests for additional information or hard copy questionnaires. A dedicated mobile telephone number was established to respond to any queries that could not be submitted by e-mail.

Letters, in the Chair's name, were sent to everyone on the Stakeholder Register inviting them to participate.

The Equality and Diversity Officer arranged and facilitated engagement with a broad range of community representative groups, thereby demonstrating due regard from a legal perspective.

Additional social media campaigns were carried out towards the end of the consultation period, as a reminder that the last date for people to respond was approaching.



With regard to the Social Partnership Duty, the Joint Consultation and Negotiating Committee (JCNC) is the forum at which the recognised Trade Unions meet the lead Principal Officer on a quarterly basis and it was at the August meeting that the objectives were discussed and representatives consulted at the formative stage of the process.

Further updates were provided to JCNC following the end of the public consultation and trade union representatives were provided with enough information for them to consider the proposed objectives and sufficient time for them to respond.

In total the consultation survey received a total of **279** responses during the eight-week period, of which **277** were completed in English and **2** were completed in Welsh. Although only two welsh questionnaires were submitted online, around 50 questionnaires were completed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer on behalf of people who spoke Welsh as a first language in the focus groups.

## Observations

The response levels were 25% higher (223 to 279) than the 2024-25 public consultation, although fewer respondents (7 down from 48) declared they were members of NWFRS staff.

The purpose of objective setting is to improve service delivery and to do so in a way that supports the sustainability principle, outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, so whilst there were generally high levels of support for the proposed objectives, comments generally related to existing workstreams or business as usual activity.

However, all comments have been shared with the relevant Heads of Department or subject matter experts for their consideration as to whether any proposed objective requires amending or any additional objectives are required.

Our Prevention Principle received the most additional comments, 114, especially around, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Water Safety and Education Activities with Young People.

There is continued strong support for Safe and Well Checks, but activity in relation to Business Safety, Our Protection Principle, appears less well understood.

There was generally greater support for Our Environmental Principle compared to the 2024-25 consultation, with support up from 91% to 97%.

Concerns relating to firefighter cover in rural areas were expressed, particularly in relation to South Gwynedd, and a lack of appreciation of how many communities are served by firefighters on the Retained Duty System, with Buckley featuring in particular.

In line with the Gunning Principles, the Service Leadership Team has given 'conscientious consideration' to the consultation responses prior to agreeing upon the proposed objectives for 2025-26.

## **Next Steps**

Any typographical errors or other minor formatting issues identified during the consultation period have been rectified. All comments have been shared with, and reviewed by, the relevant Heads of Department or subject matter expert.

However, as the survey feedback demonstrates overwhelming support for the Principles and the Well-being and Improvement objectives, there has been no change to the Principles or the objectives.

The contents of this report will be considered by members at the next Fire Authority meeting 17 March 2025.

# Responses at a Glance



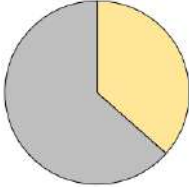
# Questionnaire Responses



## Community Risks

In our five year plan we highlight the risks we face. Do you feel there are any other risks we should be considering or planning for?

### Question 1:

| Breakdown by Response |     |     |     |   |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | Yes | 102 | 37% |  |
| <input type="radio"/> | No  | 177 | 63% |   |

A total of **103** additional comments for this question were received. (See Appendix A)

### Question 2: Summary

- Responses received highlighted concerns with the availability of fire fighters, especially in certain areas.
- Concerns surrounding tourism and the affects this has on local areas; increase in the number of people and vehicles on local roads.
- Providing education on water safety and how to prevent injury on or around water, specifically with younger people and those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

### Narrative Response

Whilst almost two thirds of respondents agreed that the CRMP had identified the most relevant community risks, more than a third identified other risks. However, the majority of the issues raised are either mitigated by site specific plans or major incident preparedness or simply outside the scope of the fire service. Examples of such risk will be of interest to Fire and Rescue Authority Members in their capacity as County Councillors, for example:

- Improving the mobile phone signals in rural areas.
- The introduction of the 20MPH speed limit.
- Road / highway maintenance with particular regard to potholes, and excessive mud on roads.
- Inappropriate use of e-bikes.

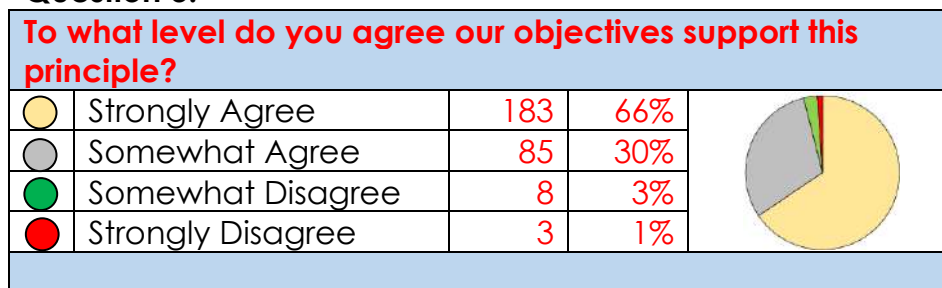


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PEOPLE PRINCIPLE'

*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.

### Question 3:



A total of **99** additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix B)

### Question 4: Summary

- Look to increase the diversity within the current workforce, which will ultimately benefit local communities; increasing the number of underrepresented groups.
- As well as English and Welsh languages, look to improve regular use of other languages, including Polish, British Sign Language.
- Look to make improvements to the recruitment process. Consider removing entry boundaries such as GCSE requirements and having to have a full driving licence.
- Work with partners during recruitment campaigns to increase the pool of applicants who may consider applying.
- To continue and improve on our engagement activities with young people, especially when undertaking periods of firefighter recruitment.
- Look to increase the visibility of staff at fire stations, which will enhance the fire service presence within local communities.
- Concern about thoughts of suicide and experience of poor mental health at work amongst firefighters.

### Narrative Response

96% of respondents 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat Agreed' that the proposed objectives would support Our People Principle.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee consider all aspects of diversity in reviewing recruitment and retention rates on a quarterly basis.

Ways to encourage members of our communities to apply for part time, day time or whole-time fire fighter roles are kept under constant review.

A Mental Health paper will be presented at next Health Safety and Wellbeing meeting and access to specialised counselling via the national suicide hotline was introduced last year with 24/7 access.



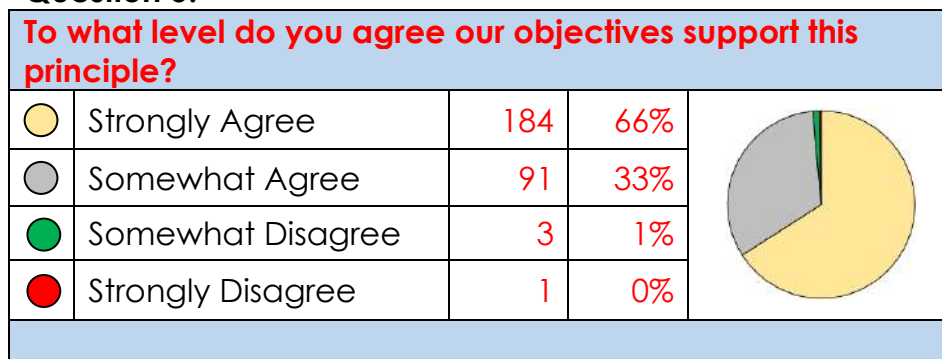


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PREVENTION PRINCIPLE'

*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.

### Question 5:



**A total of 114 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix C)**

### Question 6: Summary

- Continued approval of the Safe and Well Check programme; and the installation of fire alarms.
- Employ people who can speak languages other than Welsh and English, as diversity expands within communities.
- Increase staff awareness of mental health conditions, such as autism and dementia.
- Concerns raised around water safety, especially after the loss of life during the recent storms in Conwy.
- Increase engagement with students and carry out checks on student accommodation.
- Promote safety of electric vehicles, including mobility scooters.

### Narrative Response

99% of respondents Strongly or Somewhat Agreed that the proposed objectives would support Our Prevention Principle.

The use of Exeter data (Health Service data about people over 65) and partner agency referrals enable a more targeted approach to Safe and Well Checks.

There is a programme of proactive engagement with other vulnerable groups and at high risk locations such as [Biker Down](#), [Operation Ugain](#) (roadside engagement with drivers regarding the introduction of 20mph speed limits) and [water safety initiatives](#).




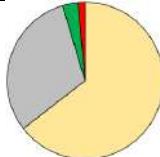



## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PROTECTION PRINCIPLE'

*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.

### Question 7:

**To what level do you agree our objectives support this principle?**

|   |                   |     |     |   |
|---|-------------------|-----|-----|---|
|  | Strongly Agree    | 180 | 65% |  |
|  | Somewhat Agree    | 86  | 31% |   |
|  | Somewhat Disagree | 9   | 3%  |   |
|  | Strongly Disagree | 4   | 1%  |   |

**A total of 79 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix D)**

### Question 8: Summary

- To check on properties with narrow or restricted access, which may hinder the safe escape in the event of an emergency.
- To focus on rented properties and landlords who rent out properties that are below standard.
- Identify unsafe buildings and carry out an inspection regime on them.
- To focus on specific business types, such as care homes.
- Supermarkets being too crowded: not only causes difficulty for people with mobility problems, but could be an escape risk should an emergency incident occur.

### Narrative Response

96% of respondents 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat Agreed' that the proposed objectives would support Our Protection Principle.

We will develop business fire safety training to our business fire safety staff and to operational firefighters to support firefighter safety and improve technical awareness.

We will continue to deliver an intelligence led Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) to reduce injury and death from fires in domestic and non-domestic premises.

We will work to develop business engagement through training our officers and share industry advice to reduce incidents of fire. We will work to understand the impact of automatic fire alarms on the use of our resources and their impact in a non-domestic environment.



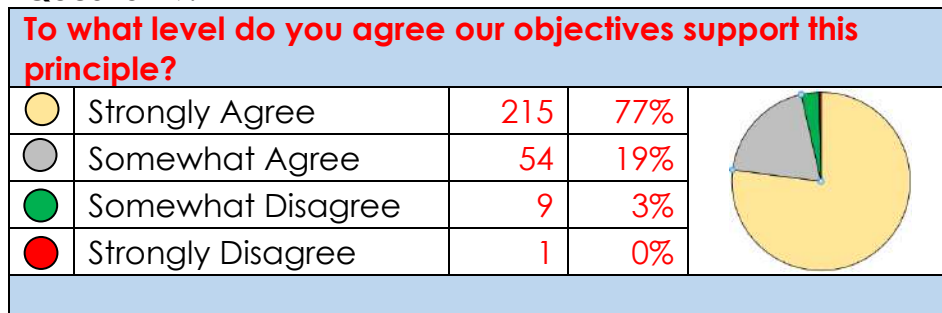


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR RESPONSE PRINCIPLE'

*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.

### Question 9:



A total of **99** additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix E)

### Question 10: Summary

- Concern around the availability of firefighters to attend emergency incidents.
- Comments about the recruitment of firefighters.
- Comments about traffic concerns, including the reduced speed limit, potholes and mud on the road.
- The ability to respond quickly to alternative properties, such as canal boats.

### Narrative Response

96% of respondents Strongly or Somewhat Agreed that the proposed objectives would support Our Response Principle.

- We work closely with our Fire and Rescue colleagues 'over the border' to ensure that we provide a reciprocal arrangement whereby the best available station / appliance will attend. However, station location outside of our own Service area, is for the owning Fire Authority to review and determine.
- Improving mobile phone signals in rural communities. The emergency 999 number should be available regardless of the individual phone provider.







## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLE'

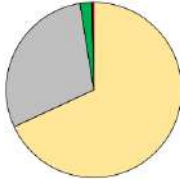
*Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.*

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.

### Question 11:

**To what level do you agree our objectives support this principle?**

|   |                   |     |     |
|---|-------------------|-----|-----|
|  | Strongly Agree    | 190 | 68% |
|  | Somewhat Agree    | 82  | 29% |
|  | Somewhat Disagree | 6   | 2%  |
|  | Strongly Disagree | 1   | 0%  |



**A total of 58 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix F)**

### Question 12: Summary:

- Look at introducing electrical vehicles into the Service.
- Look at using HVO fuel and recycling processes.
- Look at alternative fuel sources, such as solar and wind farms.

### Narrative Response

97% of respondents Strongly or Somewhat Agreed that the proposed objectives would support Our Environment Principle.

Many of the suggestions feature as part of the Fire and Rescue Authority's Environmental Strategy and featured as objectives in the CRMP 2024-29.

With regard to suggestions that the Service switch to electric fire appliances, national developments in this area are under active surveillance and it is anticipated such vehicles will form a significant part of our future fleet. However, following a financial and technical appraisal of currently available market options, the decision has been taken not to pursue this option before at least 2030."

## Other Areas in Relation to the Service we Provide

*Providing a response to the following questions was optional.*

Are there any other areas in relation to the services we provide that you would like us to consider?

**A total of 87 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix G)**

### Question 13: Summary

- Carry out more fire safety audits on commercial properties.
- Road Safety.
- Review of fire stations locations and duty systems.
- Increasing mental health awareness throughout the Service.

### Narrative Response

The Service operate a Risk Based Inspection Programme in respect of business premises.

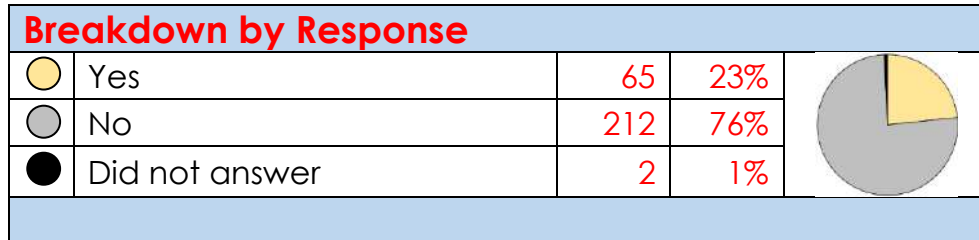
Partnership working in relation to road safety is well-established ([Biker Down](#), [Olivia's Story](#), [Operation Ugain](#)) and there are resources dedicated to delivering road safety initiatives.

The Emergency Cover Review continues its work to explore appropriate and proportionate solutions to the need to respond to fires and other emergencies across North Wales.

A Mental Health paper will be presented at next Health Safety and Wellbeing meeting and access to specialised counselling via the national suicide hotline was introduced last year with 24/7 access.

## Equality Issues

**Question 14 and 15:** Are there any other equality issues that we could be thinking about?



- A number of respondents referred to our Service needing to improve its communication with ethnic minority groups and people with sensory disabilities (i.e. British Sign Language), both in terms of community engagement and translation/interpretation of fire safety advice and other key information.
- Some respondents referred to growing concerns for people that experience adverse mental health, who felt this group of people are at an increased risk of fire and emergencies based on their protected characteristics, but also other factors such as domestic abuse, poverty and homelessness.
- A number of respondents referred to older people and the ageing population in North Wales, but also a general feeling that people are living longer, but not necessarily healthier. In summary, respondents view older people as the most 'at risk' group of people in the region in terms of fire and other emergencies.

### Narrative Response

Regular detailed analysis is undertaken in relation to Accidental Dwelling Fires to ensure that the profile of occupants, property type and causation factors are clearly understood and prevention activities are matched to that profile.

Older people, particularly those who live alone and may have physical or mental health issues are currently the most vulnerable to fire in their own home and the focus of Safe and Well Checks by dedicated Community Safety staff and Watches.

# Additional Information

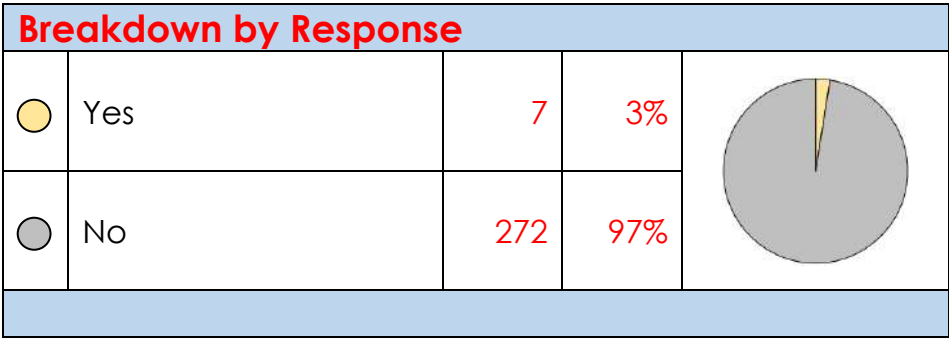
Providing a response to the following questions was optional.

**Question 16:** If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or group please tell us who you represent and where you are based/which area you cover.

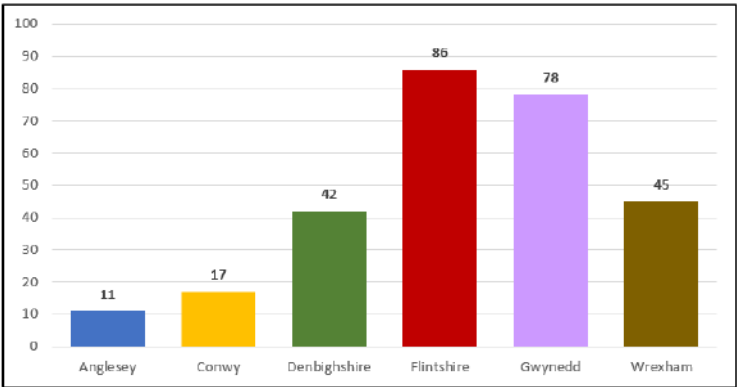
Summary of just some of the local groups that responded.

- Autism Wales
- Bangor University
- Dementia Groups
- Red Cross
- Unique Transgender
- Vale of Clwyd Mind

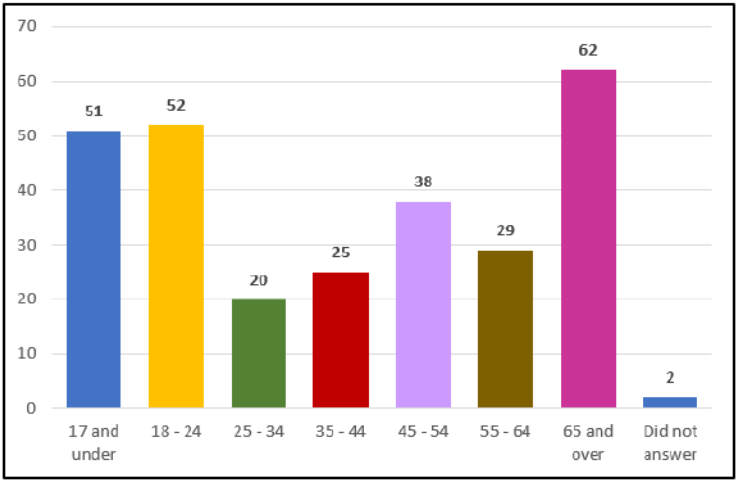
**Question 17:** Are you an employee of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service?



**Question 18:** Please choose one of the following to indicate the Local Authority area in North Wales where you live, work or are visiting.



**Question 19:** Which age group are you?



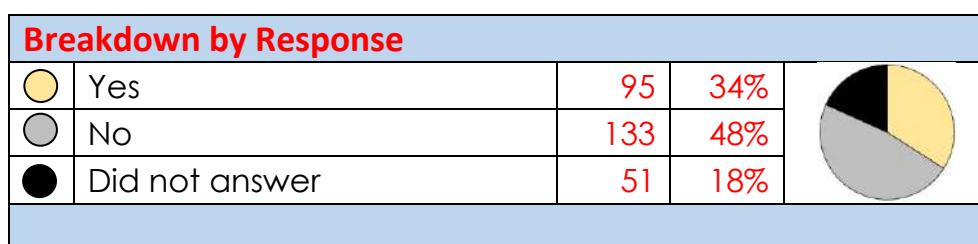
**Question 20:** Gender – how do you identify?

| Breakdown by Response |                |     |     |  |  |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-----|--|--|
|                       | Male           | 147 | 53% |  |  |
|                       | Female         | 120 | 43% |  |  |
|                       | Other          | 4   | 1%  |  |  |
|                       | Did not answer | 8   | 3%  |  |  |
|                       |                |     |     |  |  |

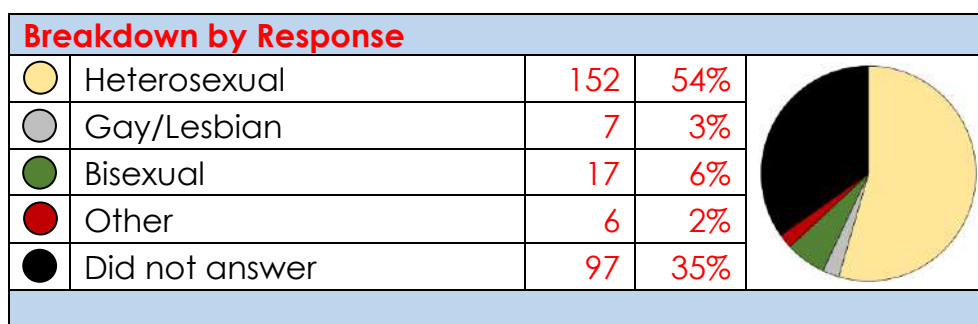
**Question 21 and 22: Race/Ethnicity - which of the following best describes you?**



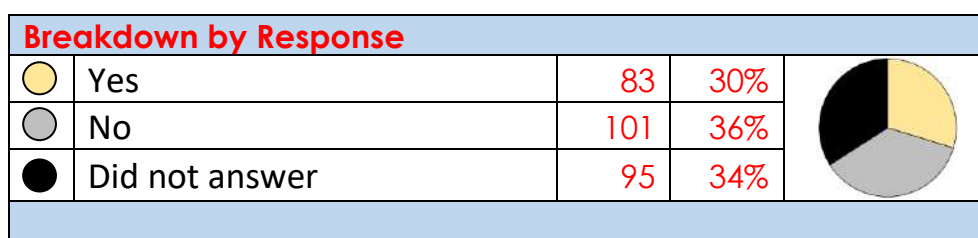
**Question 23 and 24:** Disability - are you disabled or have a long-term health condition?



**Question 25:** Sexual Orientation



**Question 26 and 27:** Religion and/or Belief - do you affiliate with any particular religion, faith or belief system?



## Social Media Responses and Comments (See Appendix H)

Posts promoting taking part in the consultation were posted on Facebook and Twitter throughout the consultation period as well as videos from staff explaining how to take part. Paid adverts were also created on Facebook and Instagram targeting public across North Wales encouraging them to take part in the consultation.



## Appendix A

| Ref | OTHER RISKS – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |
|-----|---|
| 1   | More focus should be placed on the identification of self-catering holiday let accommodation because there are properties out there being used as such but are yet to be identified. Once identified they should be subjected to appropriate audit activity with appropriate response if found to be inadequate.  |
| 2   | Wrexham increasing in size and population.  |
| 3   | You need to include a section or at least a bullet point about prioritising employee health and well-being. In the Prevention Principle the words "Promote Well-being" are mentioned and that's all. I would like there to be some detail about who this refers to. Employees who are fit and healthy are less likely to book sick, be more productive and operational firefighters will be able to carry out their duties better. We shouldn't be aiming for the minimum levels, mention that we want a service full of healthy employees who are well equipped to carry out their role. Otherwise you will have to wait another 5 years to add it to a Corporate Plan. Set that service for the future, don't ignore it now. Please just add some text to reflect these details in the People Principle. If the Corporate Health Award comes back in the future this CRMP makes no reference to the health of employees or the general public, it would be a shame for the sake of a couple of sentences. Prioritise health and well-being please.  |
| 4   | <p>1. The Firefighters' Wellbeing &amp; Inclusivity Crisis: Mind Cymru state that 37% of firefighters have considered suicide, and 85% have experienced poor mental health at work. The cultural reviews of London, Avon, GMC, South Wales, West Midlands and East Sussex Fire Services all concur with the bleak national cultural picture painted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Despite these concerns, Fire and Rescue Services have not yet formally integrated mental health, wellbeing and inclusivity education or activities into the working day. A proposal currently rests with the NWFRS Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee to create a WEDI Hour (Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Hour) to create an hour per dayshift where EDI education, mental health education, and time to practice wellbeing activities can take place. Building such support systems into the daily routine would help firefighters address both their wellbeing, foster an inclusive workplace where all staff feel authentically supported, and offer NWFRS the chance to set a national example.</p> <p>2. Aging Infrastructure Obstructing Inclusivity Efforts The aging infrastructure within NWFRS presents risks beyond the physical state of equipment and facilities. As efforts continue to diversify our workforce, most NSWFRS stations currently do not provide changing or shower facilities for non-binary staff, who are forced to choose a gendered space, potentially alienating and marginalising them. As time goes on, this could significantly impede recruitment and retention efforts via word-of-mouth reputational damage, undermining the Service's aims of a more diverse and inclusive workplace.</p> <p>3. Increased Strain on Resources Due to Societal Changes: North Wales, like much of the UK, faces an aging population and a growing number of single-person households. As this demographic trend continues, the demands for Safe and Well Checks, emergency response and other welfare services are likely to rise. Failing to anticipate and prepare for this increased demand could strain already limited resources, particularly in rural areas, where responses are slower, and crews are stretched.</p> |

|    |   |
|----|---|
|    | <p>4. Sustainability of the Retained Duty System: The RDS system, encouraged by the Bain Report in 2003, is 20 years later becoming increasingly viewed as outdated. With modern work patterns, fewer individuals live or work close enough, leading to a significantly reduced pool of potential recruits, as well as additional recruitment and retention challenges. By this token, CFO Roger Thomas has stated that the RDS system is 'unsustainable' in its current form. These pressures, if left unaddressed, could compromise emergency cover, particularly in rural or low-population areas where finding recruits is already challenging. Without significant reform, the RDS model risks becoming a barrier to ensuring timely and effective response across the region.</p> <p>5. Cybersecurity Threats: As NWFRS becomes more reliant on technology for its operations, it becomes more at-risk of cyber-attack. Public sector bodies, including the NHS, Police, and local councils, have already faced major disruptions due to cyberattacks. Hackney Borough Council, Redcar and Cleveland Council, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and South Staffordshire Water have all experienced significant and expensive service disruption and recovery. A similar incident could disrupt NWFRS' ability to respond to emergencies, posing a serious risk to public safety and business continuity.</p> |
| 5  | Ensuring local businesses are giving their staff fire warden training and basic fire safety advice.   |
| 6  | Children playing in the road and crossing the road without looking. Children being hazards, even when they are with their parents, which indicates parents need educating.  |
| 7  | You said you [the Service] have an EDI Strategy, but do you include the increasing number of autistic people in society and specific risk to this group of people?  |
| 8  | Impact of cost of living, emerging risks with technology and climate change.  |
| 9  | I feel you face a challenge educating and receiving feedback from some community groups. To grasp the risks to some groups, you need to ask them and this is an ongoing challenge for us at the council too. There is an opportunity to promote Dangerpoint who run education sessions for children.  |
| 10 | Fly tipping is a huge issue. Blocking roads hazard. Arson fire risk. Fly tipping in Ivy Street, Penrhyn Road and road just off station road in Colwyn Bay.  |
| 11 | E-bikes a problem in Rhyl. Kids on paths (on bikes) in Rhyl.  |
| 12 | E-scooters are also a problem in Rhyl. You see e-scooters everyway in Kinmel Bay and Rhyl front. Mobility scooters on roads are not safe. Some [mobility scooters] are not licenced to go on the road.  |
| 13 | E-bikes and E-scooters are seen in Denbigh, but doesn't seem to be an issue in surrounding villages.  |
| 14 | Any electrical bikes, scooters and cars are a huge concern to us [x5 people in the focus group].  |
| 15 | Make refugees and asylum seekers aware of fire detection/alarms. Use Red Cross to connect with us.  |
| 16 | Water safety, drowning campaigns and acknowledging people (ethnic groups of people) that can't swim.  |
| 17 | Students drunk is always a concern, especially for freshers and those who haven't lived away from home before. The university do lots of awareness work and education, but it may be in your interest to promote safety concerning walking out in the road and falling in to water. Share any information with the student union.   |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 18 | Currently HMO's licences are issued by the local authorities without the need to see fire risk assessments. There is a gap and some landlords can clearly get away with having substandard fire safety measures until something clearly goes wrong.         |
| 19 | Water safety risks in Bangor. Tide can turn quickly. Recreation activities present risks, friends had a close encounter with death when they hired canoe last year.   |
| 20 | Many black people can't swim so drowning is more likely.  |
| 21 | Drowning risks to young men, especially black people.   |
| 22 | Fireworks is an obvious one.  |
| 23 | Random fireworks being set off.   |
| 24 | It would be useful to have links to some of the information you have listed in your plan [Fire Family Survey 2023].   |
| 25 | Although no specific risks identified, consider international students.   |
| 26 | [Included in the prevention section to avoid duplication].  |
| 27 | Off road motorbikes.  |
| 28 | [NWFRS] Competing with the army, RAF etc. [Other recruiters].   |
| 29 | Increasing concerns of knife crime. Could firefighters be part of the solution in providing emergency and lifesaving response, especially in urban areas where incidents are more likely.   |
| 30 | Provide training and regular briefings for care homes.  |
| 31 | Helping people who have fallen over. Like today [In reference to the adverse weather, icy & snow].  |
| 32 | Climate change and adverse weather.   |
| 33 | Increasing traffic on A55 creates more work [for fire service].   |
| 34 | Drowning in river Dee and quarries.   |
| 35 | More fulltime jobs needed. More attention needed in 'quieter' areas. 24/7 availability needed.  |
| 36 | Do more talks in schools, especially high schools on basic tips in fire health and safety.  |
| 37 | Traffic congestion caused by Menai Bridge being closed. Traffic and road works are a regular occurrence causing carnage on roads and delays.  |
| 38 | Poor phone signal in Barmouth. I'm on Vodaphone now which are better but still areas that ringing for fire brigade would not be possible.   |
| 39 | I always wonder if fire crews are trained to deal with potential accident on single line training track for situations where two trains collide.  |
| 40 | Really poor access in and out of buildings, business, shops. People would get hurt trying to escape the shop. The Hillman and other shops on Harbour Lane are dangerous. Steps and narrow spaces insides.   |
| 41 | Recruiting and retaining older people and people changing career in later life. This group of people often reside in so called retirement locations Barmouth, Harlech, Llandudno and they could address your recruitment needs in specific areas Llandudno. |
| 42 | Standard fire engine not enough for high buildings in area.   |
| 43 | Extreme weather conditions.   |
| 44 | Mental health of the nation and people feeling isolated and lonely.   |
| 45 | local businesses that operate unsafe practices. Unsafe ratios of staff in confined spaces. No first aiders in teams. teams with no fire warden training.  |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>46</b> | Car parking causing access issues. Specific areas of concerns are Rhyl town city in summer, Howard Drive and all streets nearby. Never get fire engine down the streets some days.   |
| <b>47</b> | Tourists and increase risk to coastal areas during the summer months. People in sea that can't swim, extra cars, people walking on paths without consideration for other people who are elderly or disabled. People drunk, holiday makers on caravans' parks, campers setting fires outside designated areas. Fisherman taking risks out on wet sand [estuary] when the sea is coming in fast. Drowning only a few weeks ago in Conwy, water catches people out. |
| <b>48</b> | Issues in supermarkets, no staff, no help and I worry if something went wrong [heart attack, fire etc].  |
| <b>49</b> | I have huge concerns about barriers, limited space and one-way systems in supermarkets. You can't find staff in supermarkets to help, so it would be concerning if there was an emergency. I will list further concerns in the protection section.   |
| <b>50</b> | Supermarkets for many reasons. Busy car parks, not enough disabled parking spaces. Poor lay out in supermarkets mean escaping the building is challenging for older people. No staff in supermarkets to assist disabled people and older people. All self-serve and no staff.  |
| <b>51</b> | Cars speeding on Sandy Lane, no 20mph. Children broken the bus shelter, people don't feel safe at night, people catch the bus up the road [to avoid children], but it's on a nasty corner, not safe! Broken glass on road [from broken bus shelter], not been cleared up, could cut tyres and cause accident.  |
| <b>52</b> | Shops are very busy on coast. Llandudno. Busy roads. Everyone seems to be rushing around.  |
| <b>53</b> | Possible terrorist / politically motivated action. I'm sure this is included but I couldn't see it in the documentation.   |
| <b>54</b> | Access for wheelchair users, lack of disabled parking for disability vehicles, accessible taxis and mini bus that bring us to events and activities. Energy crisis, winter fuel payments need increasing, people get cold and won't put heating on!  |
| <b>55</b> | Deaf alarms and suitable for all parties including them may have sensory issues? Deaf alarms for carbon monoxide.  |
| <b>56</b> | The number of fulltime firefighters based in, and covering Gwynedd Coastal areas, national park and central areas including Llanberis, Bala, and Corwen.   |
| <b>57</b> | Excessive mud on roads.  |
| <b>58</b> | The huge potential for slow responses times in Dolgellau and rural areas.  |
| <b>59</b> | I feel you should have more emphasis on recruitment and your ability to conduct prevention activity in Dolgellau and other parts of South Gwynedd.   |
| <b>60</b> | Future recruitment may be impacted because nobody wants to be a firefighter in Dolgellau.  |
| <b>61</b> | Make the firefighter role more attractive. I know people in the service so I know, other [people] don't have a clue what training you get for example.   |
| <b>62</b> | As a carer for a person that requires a wide powerchair, Dolgellau is not very accessible and it is a risky place in terms of getting about. Lots of paths blocked by cars and getting into shops is tricky.   |
| <b>63</b> | Local businesses need to do more to enable people to get in and out of buildings. Coffee events in the library are popular, but often crowded and it's impossible for us to attend [when support a Service user in wide Powerchair] and get past people.   |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 64 | I have lots of concerns relating to the poor accessibility in/out of buildings [in Porthmadog]. Book shop in town use the excuse of being a 'grade 2 listed' buildings, but this shouldn't stop them providing a ramp for people who are not steady on their feet.  |
| 65 | Extreme weather dry and wet.  |
| 66 | Better engagement (open days would be good). I didn't know you already have open days, never heard about them or been invited!  |
| 67 | People walking whilst using their phone is a big risk because they walk into other people, walk across the road without looking and some wear headphones and don't take care of their surroundings - huge hazard. Dog walkers on extended leads are not in control. Dogs are a risk near roads and for public safety. Slips, trips and falls in icy weather. Paths not gritted anymore. Food items made with flimsy material, not good for older people and those living with dementia. For example, milk tops are clear (Used to red, blue or green), people with dementia can't tell if the lid is on and spill the milk on floor causing slips hazard. Issue for people living alone if they fall and alone for hours. Many more examples like this. |
| 68 | Poor signage in public and in town centres to help navigate my way around. Sometimes I forget [living with Dementia].   |
| 69 | More people [that live alone] should have welfare call installed because it only costs a few quid each month and it really is a life line if you need help.   |
| 70 | Risks concerning speeding and fast driving through Bala.  |
| 71 | Gender equality.  |
| 72 | Motor bikes and cars. The volume of traffic, but the high speed going through the town, up past the school [towards Porthmadog] and out past the lake.  |
| 73 | Review the 5 minutes response time could open recruitment to people like me who live the other side of the lake.  |
| 74 | The ongoing challenges for the fire service to work develop strategic partnerships with local employers that are able to release their staff to response as on-call firefighters is no-longer viable.   |
| 75 | ASB amongst children and young adults. Arson threats and attacks. E-bikes and e-scooters are a huge problem.  |
| 76 | There is not a lot of service provision in Tywyn (Police, fire or paramedics) and response times can be slow.   |
| 77 | This looks like a good plan.  |
| 78 | Risks at large scale events in the region to reduce potential harm.   |
| 79 | I believe that the plan is very good.   |
| 80 | Mobile phone signal not very good [in Barmouth]. Currently using Vodaphone, but family members tell me other providers are not good either.   |
| 81 | You are likely to miss out on recruiting talented people if you apply entry requirements that exclude children that don't achieve specific GCSE's results. Some children have a challenging childhood and they should not be judged on these experiences they have to experience.   |



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 82 | As CEO of a charity that provides support for girls and women, there are several risks that you could consider. Girls and women are disproportionately impacted by domestic abuse/violence, homelessness, life changing distribution caused by short term prison sentences, unemployment in male dominated organisations (especially when they don't have a fixed address, criminal records, childcare responsibilities etc.).  |
| 83 | Your plan has no consideration for paid carers and people that are unpaid fulltime carers for family members that are often very poorly, living with health condition and disability. This is a disadvantaged group of people that should be considered, especially in your prevention work.  |
| 84 | I know there is reference to the Welsh language in the CRMP, but over the years welsh language has been very much a token gesture and it should be a priority. I see you have produced the CRMP in welsh which is fantastic, but this same commitment needs to go across everything you do.   |
| 85 | More focus on ethnic minority groups and refugees who arrive in North Wales. The needs and risks often differ in terms of lived experiences which is often traumatic and complex. Their cultural practices are different so behaviours differ and their interaction with government officials [Civil & public services] are sometimes negative, so it will take time to get to know some of them, especially if you want them to work for you and communicate the work that you do. |
| 86 | Road safety, flooding, potholes and mud on roads.   |
| 87 | Lack of fire cover parts of Wrexham, particularly the old little Flintshire patch from Ruabon out as far as Bronington.   |
| 88 | Continuation of the emergency cover review. More cover in certain areas. Review needed so community members know what's happening.  |
| 89 | Animal rescue.  |
| 90 | Tourists and holiday makers. Extra people, cars, traffic and everything that comes with drunk people.   |
| 91 | Quad bikes on roads, some not road worthy and some don't wear helmets which is not safe.  |
| 92 | Public safety in relation to illegal parking on paths. Cars/vans blocking crossings and dropped kerbs are a huge concern in Rhyl and Prestatyn.   |
| 93 | People using mobile phones whilst driving continues to be an issue.   |
| 94 | More and more people living with poor mental health. This may present additional risks when it comes to your work.  |
| 95 | I need to mention how mobile phone signal has not improved for 20 years!  |
| 96 | Growing ethnic population and their ability to understand welsh and English. Its great people want to move here [North Wales], but do they know how to access information that helps keep them safe.  |
| 97 | Not many people I know have a mobile phone. With hardly any phone boxes around anymore, how can people call for help. Do your staff know about the latest tech and apps. Are you staff using the 'In Case of an Emergency' (ICE) App for example, it provides access to essential medical information that people have consented for emergency service to access via their personal mobile phone.   |
| 98 | Hoax calls waste your time and resource. Flooding risk to the coastal area.   |
| 99 | People living longer. All risks associated with old age, falls, at some point, most of us will live alone, be isolated.   |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>100</b> | The alarming increase in cases of mental health we see in our service [Vale of Clwyd MIND). Majority of people we see don't have mobile phones, so it was right that people brought this up in the focus group earlier this morning. Reduced funding that we received could see a further reduction in our service delivery and less session for people [with mental health] to go and seek support. Without us [our sessions], many people who see their mental health decline rapidly and some people [We support] stay at home and our sessions enable them to socialise, talk and seek advice. |
| <b>101</b> | Associated risks with animals escaping from Welsh Mountain Zoo. Big multiple car pile-up in Conwy tunnel. Boats colliding on Liverpool Bay.  |
| <b>102</b> | Providing emergency response to Ynys Môn if the Menai Bridge and Britannia Bridge out of action.   |
| <b>103</b> | Increased number of people with adverse mental health that we see [Bright Futures]. As a trustee that help set up the charity here in Wrexham, I have seen a huge increase in the past decade and more and more people being turned away from NHS services which is concerning. This increase surely places a risk on how people are coping and they are more at risk in terms of their personal safety in the home, out in the community (i.e. crossing the road) and more likely to fall into deep depression and experience suicidal thoughts.  |

## Appendix B

| Ref | OUR PEOPLE PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |
|-----|--|
| 1   | Add in Employee Health and Wellbeing so that they are well equipped to undertake their roles and responsibilities.   |
| 2   | If the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee were to approve and formalise WEDI Hour (Wellbeing, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity), this would provide dedicated time during the working day for staff to focus on mental health and structured inclusivity training. This would be a national first, and foster a healthier and more supportive workplace culture, helping firefighters better manage the demands of their jobs, reducing stress, and promoting inclusivity by raising awareness about diversity issues. The introduction of more inclusive changing facilities, such as non-binary or gender-neutral spaces, would ensure all staff feel respected and accommodated. This would eliminate discomfort or marginalisation for non-binary individuals, supporting the Service's goals to diversify its workforce and create a more inclusive environment where everyone feels safe and valued. Together, these changes would improve retention, boost morale, and enhance operational effectiveness. |
| 3   | I agree more diversity within the workforce will add value and enable our service to deliver inclusive services. One good example is staff completing deaf awareness and basic BSL training. Communicating with our community members is a basic requirement, so bringing in people that have the desire to develop skills that help promote inclusive should remain a priority for 2025-2026 and beyond until the existing CRMP concludes in 2029.  |
| 4   | Train your staff on matters concerning cyber security is improvement.  |
| 5   | Do you employee Autistic people? How many? If not, why not?  |
| 6   | Employing people from across the UK helps to bring in diversity and strengthen local communities.  |
| 7   | I understand how welsh language is important in some areas and not as important in others. You look like you have lots in place to look after your firefighters.   |
| 8   | I think more should be done as a result of working from home. People know what to do at work, but they may need more support to work from home.  |
| 9   | Eye contact. Cultural considerations when interviewing. Don't judge folk too quickly. Be an inclusive employer and give people a chance.   |
| 10  | Recruiting a diverse workforce should be top of this list. You should consider recruitment of LGBT people and don't right off people with mental health conditions.  |
| 11  | You [NWFRS] can benefit from recruiting refugees [and those here through the resettlement programme]. Speak multiple languages, life experience, culturally aware, so much to offer.   |
| 12  | Promote roles amongst student population, especially 3rd years that will be looking to enter the world of work soon.   |
| 13  | Employing talented people is essential so looking after employees should be a priority too.  |
| 14  | All seems to make sense.   |
| 15  | Diversity agenda is king in it.  |
| 16  | Employing people that are willing to learn new language skills should be an essential skill requirement. This is common for government departments in other parts of the world.  |
| 17  | Diversity is good.   |
| 18  | Strongly Agree.  |



|    |  |
|----|--|
| 19 | It is unclear how your organisation will achieve your plan. How will you deliver a training plan to so many staff? Your organisation has made some huge goals in your plan and to achieve them in one year, really? What is the CREST review? why not include link so people can see, give examples.   |
| 20 | I am surprised you don't have a volunteer fire service like most of Europe. Volunteers enhance engagement. Finland model works well, [and particularly well for people from a] bad backgrounds [deprived]. Volunteers programme run after school [and enables] people move into fulltime paid roles. I am autistic, are you [FRS] inclusive? This can help attract and retain staff. |
| 21 | Speak Welsh is important.  |
| 22 | Consider entry requirements to vacancies, especially entry roles and junior roles. Don't create unnecessary barriers.  |
| 23 | How will you know if you are diverse? Invisible disabilities etc.  |
| 24 | Never considered being a fireman. The [Fire] station is never open [Specific reference to Buckley].  |
| 25 | Skilled workforce yes. Not sure Welsh language should be essential in Flintshire.  |
| 26 | Not specific detail around how recruiting diverse teams will be achieved. Your plan is not SMART. Champion the diversity of the community, not sure what this means.   |
| 27 | Recruit more older people and disabled people. Give people a chance. Tesco's give people a chance [In reference to initiatives they have run to recruit more older people and disabled people].  |
| 28 | Remove barriers. Be mindful of entry requirements and whether they are really needed. GCSE's for example.  |
| 29 | I know people in the fire service and the current duty systems don't work. Extend response times [that on-call staff need to respond]. More fulltime firefighters required. Turn some on-call [fire] stations from on-call to fulltime.  |
| 30 | Second language [Polish speakers].   |
| 31 | Recruit people who can swim. Rescue from water.  |
| 32 | Employ different people.   |
| 33 | The CRMIP does mention mental health, maternity pay or other family friend policies that make employers attractive and maximises your ability to retain good people. Your plan is not really a plan, it's a list of perfectly worded bullet points.  |
| 34 | Disagree for the same reasons [the plan fails to mention how it will look after employees, Mental Health strategy, family friendly policies].  |
| 35 | More 24/7 availability needed.   |
| 36 | Access to recruit training [Potential barriers to recruitment] e.g. poor transport links to Rhyl.  |
| 37 | Very few proper jobs on the island. You will always have issues recruiting if you only offer part time jobs which are not enough to live on.   |
| 38 | It is not possible to work fulltime in Barmouth or other parts South Gwynedd. More career opportunities are required to be part of the fire service to encourage local people.   |
| 39 | My son is working in a shop, can't afford to drop wages to work in Barmouth fire service.  |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 40 | Surprised the area [Barmouth] doesn't have fulltime firefighters. This can't be right. Dolgellau would be ideal [wholesome fire station].   |
| 41 | As I mentioned in the last section, recruit older people, make conditions right and you can recruit experienced people who want let you down like some of the younger generation.   |
| 42 | Bread and butter for the fire service [To recruit people and to be ready].  |
| 43 | Yes, recruit folk, but local people know the area and the risks. People that live on the coast know the risks with the sea, people visiting get tripped or let their dogs off the lead.   |
| 44 | Strongly agree.   |
| 45 | Anyone who wants to join should be able to.   |
| 46 | Bilingual Welsh and English. Recruit people who can speak different languages can open doors so there is a benefit to recruiting diversity.   |
| 47 | Strongly agree.   |
| 48 | You haven't got just "agree" so this skews the replies.   |
| 49 | Highly skilled firefighters in all areas please.  |
| 50 | Try to recruit people in the local area who speak Welsh to high level.  |
| 51 | Strongly agree.   |
| 52 | More promotion of firefighter role. Get colleges to target people my age. Nobody wants to be a firefighter. I hear the fire station doesn't even have a gym. That's mad.  |
| 53 | I agree population size has grown. More risks to deal with. RTC's, flooding, fires, to cover a huge area.   |
| 54 | You don't see people on the station [in Porthmadog].  |
| 55 | RNLI recruit volunteers really well. maybe worth speaking with them.  |
| 56 | Gender equality. Better care for female firefighters. Improve female facilities.  |
| 57 | I agree local people have local knowledge of the area, river, mountains and back roads. An ability to speak Welsh is important.   |
| 58 | Increased response time to 6 or 7 minutes could open recruitment to more people who are fit and willing to do on-call [In Bala].  |
| 59 | The current on-call system doesn't work for local businesses who may have released their staff in previous years. As a leisure centre [Deeside], it is not possible to release staff like we used to do twenty odd years ago. The coaching ratios and safeguarding responsibilities mean it's not possible to release staff who work in the gym, sports, play or ice skating. There are strict rules around having skilled responsible and qualified staff in a room [unable to leave]. From an opportunity perspective, the leisure centre provides the perfect platform to recruit people. From what you have said, recruitment of on-call is a challenge, but also recruiting more women is a priority. The leisure centre attracts 1,000's of women each month, through soft play, parenting classes, fitness, sports competitions and water. For example, we see 1,000 girls and women play netball, 1,000 use the ice rank, 200 use the gym, 300 use the inflatables... Saturday and Sunday are busiest days. |
| 60 | Does the service give a perception of being an LGBTQ+ inclusive employer and culture? How do you demonstrate diversity outwardly? Do you monitor and challenge hate crimes involving arson? Do you profile your commitment to inclusion on significant calendar dates? How do you show visibility to LGBTQ+ communities? These are the things that will help you attract LGBTQ+ people.   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 61 | Maximise recruitment efforts by working with local partners like us [Flintshire Council Sports Development]. We run a Fit, Fed and Read programme targeting people in deprived areas. We engage 5,000 kids over the Summer months. We engage with thousands of children and young people in deprived areas each year. Our focus on nine areas including Holywell, Connahs Quay and Deeside.          |
| 62 | I can see why there are recruitment challenges, but every effort should be made to address the lack of availability of firefighters in Tywyn. There are people in the area that would be great [Firefighters], but they don't know about the job, what is required and that the station needs to recruit people.   |
| 63 | I don't, sorry.  |
| 64 | No comments.   |
| 65 | Employ a wider range of skills to ensure you foresee the growing risks concerning event management, terrorist attacks, cyber security and so on...   |
| 66 | Ensuring skill means you have the right people to do the job to a high standard.   |
| 67 | I have no comments.  |
| 68 | While I have no improvements, I believe the plan is excellent.   |
| 69 | It is vital to ensure that your workplace is highly skilled. This is to ensure you are able to efficiently communicate to the public.  |
| 70 | No comment.  |
| 71 | I like people principle.   |
| 72 | No.  |
| 73 | No comment.  |
| 74 | It is important to ensure diversity is kept within the organisation. This however should come after community safety in the priority list. A more broad hiring strategy should be adopted.   |
| 75 | You don't pay very good wages [for on-call duty system].   |
| 76 | You don't appear to take in account people from different backgrounds. For example, entry requirements are not mentioned and this is important to young people that don't finish school or achieve very good GCSE results. You don't mention people with criminal records, people make mistakes, but it's not to say they won't be excellent firefighters or mechanics fixing your fire engines etc. |
| 77 | Entry requirements and qualifications that you require may place on people from lower socio-economic backgrounds at a disadvantage.  |
| 78 | Ensuring the workforce is skilled and bilingual will help deliver effective public services in Llangefni.  |
| 79 | We need more people who speak Welsh because there are more people who only speak Welsh and can't speak to the people who try to help them but don't understand them.   |
| 80 | No Comment, thanks.  |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>81</b> | I trust that you consider the risks and work that is needed to develop trust from girls and women, especially those who have been victims of abuse and those let down by employees who are male dominated. As an employer of mostly men, some women will be put off joining, so this is something you need to think about when recruiting. How you recruit needs consideration and care. Having female firefighters and other women visible is hugely important so girls and women see the potential and they also see the fire and rescue service isn't just men anymore. As a CEO [of North Wales Women's Centre], I see you [NWFRS] are working hard to be visible, but some of the girls and women, and those [females] who we don't support won't see the potential career in front of them. Male allies need to be active and visible. You are welcome to use our HQ in Rhyl or other sites to promote recruitment, but it will require effort and coming back time after time to build the trust, it won't happen overnight. Childcare and having reduced on-call contracts will certainly help more women consider and possibility join your service. |
| <b>82</b> | I support this principle.   |
| <b>83</b> | There is no consideration for carers and you are likely to be missing out on recruiting this group of people have lots to offer in terms of skills and talents. Hundreds of thousands of people across Wales juggle their unpaid caring responsibilities with paid employment. For many, balancing work and care can be a real struggle, so if you have a good inclusive offer in your employment, you can really benefit from recruiting people who are carers. 41% providing between 20 – 50 hours of care a week, 59% up to 19 hours of care. This data is specific to Wales and this useful evidence can help you understand carers have capacity and willingness to change careers if the opportunities are right for them.  |
| <b>84</b> | Ensure you recruit people who are Welsh speakers and if not, they learn to speak the language.  |
| <b>85</b> | The perception and reality of being a firefighter will be very different for people that have migrated here from south Asia, middle east and Ukraine. In some of these places there is no fire service, so there is no career aspiration 'to work for the fire service when I grow up', these thoughts will not be there. This is something you need to consider and if you have any Asian or Arab [firefighters / staff], use them to promote and engage. I am a teacher [in Rhyl], and I surprised so many people including the children in the school, parents and even other teachers. I was the only Muslim women working in the school, but I had so many Muslim children approach me and tell me how happy they were to see me and they didn't know it was possible for a Muslim woman to be a teacher. 'See it to be it', visibility really matters.  |
| <b>86</b> | There is value in recruiting people from middle east, India and other countries that have outstanding education systems. They have strong values for education and learning and they would make excellent employees in your organisation.   |
| <b>87</b> | Not in the right place currently. Not enough cover in the area. Whitchurch only one fire engine and Prees can't recruit staff which leaves Wrexham to cover the City which has demanding risks, growing population, industrial estate, prison, student population, A483 traffic. Our communities are left out and this is now on record.  |
| <b>88</b> | Make offer attractive.  |
| <b>89</b> | You talk about being inclusive without really explaining how you will achieve this.   |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>90</b> | I agree with the need to recruit diverse teams, why shouldn't women and other groups work for you, but people don't know you are recruiting and how fantastic it could be working for you. Local cycling group use the local roads all year around and some of them don't wear helmets which is not a good example to the young ones [people] who are observing.  |
| <b>91</b> | You need to understand mental health if you are to look after employees with poor mental health. They can be great for you, but you need to be kind.  |
| <b>92</b> | Maybe not everyone wants to be a firefighter.   |
| <b>93</b> | You should clearly state who you mean by diverse communities, list underrepresented groups and this shows intention and how you intend to recruit people and this can make people (i.e. Autistic people) feel they fit in.  |
| <b>94</b> | Employ more older people who still have a lot to offer.   |
| <b>95</b> | I feel there is no consideration for mental health within your plan and it's essential you show empathy and kindness due to how common mental health has become. Almost all your staff will get stressed and require support, it doesn't seem responsible for any modern employer to not have mental health as a priority especially after all the research that emerged as part of our Blue Light programme. |
| <b>96</b> | Bilingual yeah, but what about other languages. BSL.  |
| <b>97</b> | The strategic positioning of staff if the two bridges connecting North Wales and Ynys Môn were out of action. Surely the recruitment of people in Ynys Môn is a priority to counteract potential closures to both bridges which happens when there are storms or serious traffic collisions.  |
| <b>98</b> | You play an important role in keeping the public safe.  |
| <b>99</b> | Chatting to fire service staff at a community event, they confirmed that not all staff in your service receive mental health awareness which is a crying shame as you not only need the training, but you are able to help people you come across in your community work and response.  |
|           |   |

## Appendix C

| Ref | OUR PREVENTION PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | <p>The ongoing transition to a more data-driven approach is highly encouraging and has been fully welcomed by crews. However, further opportunities exist to enhance the effectiveness of our efforts by increasing the percentage of high-risk SAWCs carried out by our crews. By investing in additional data overlays and equipping crews with updated 'top 50 streets' list - highlighting roads with the highest concentration of high-risk individuals - crews' work could become even more targeted. For instance, cross-referencing those over 75 with individuals living alone triples the risk score for those households compared to couples over 65. Shifting from high-volume targets to more quality-focused goals could also revolutionise our approach and yield significant results. Rather than spending a full hour each shift on broad over-65s targeting, crews could split their time more effectively - spending half focused on streets with the highest proportion of over-75s living alone - whilst using the remaining time to collaborate around the mess table, utilising their topographical knowledge and deep Community ties to design bespoke Community Safety initiatives. Given that some high-risk groups (such as those affected by drug and alcohol misuse or mental health issues) fall under GDPR restrictions, it's essential to tap into the creativity and local knowledge of our crews to find other ways to target these groups. Allowing time for brainstorming sessions, where teams can work closely with Community Safety and leverage their understanding of local communities, will enable us to design even more impactful, localised safety initiatives. By combining the quantitative, data-led approach with a qualitative, creativity-driven one, we could see our high risk Safe and Well Check delivery rise significantly.</p> |
| 2   | <p>I feel we still need to improve the way we engage and connect with diverse groups in the community. There are still far too many groups that we fail to connect with effectively. Chinese, Indian communities for example. As a Service, we do some excellent work around road safety, water safety and engaging with children in schools.</p>   |
| 3   | <p>I feel safe at home. My landlord arranges for everything for me.</p>   |
| 4   | <p>Children playing in the road and crossing the road without looking. Children being hazards, even when they are with their parents, which indicates parents need educating.</p>   |
| 5   | <p>Do you consider risks that impact on Autistic people?</p>  |
| 6   | <p>Work closely with the health agenda of other agencies such as the third sector and NHS.</p>  |
| 7   | <p>Yes. You have my full support.</p>   |
| 8   | <p>More attention on fly tipping. Arson and hate crime. I witnessed an arson attack in Bangor targeting Chinese students on Holyhead road. Gas-Can poured on rubbish bin which was tipped over and set alight. blocking door. Police informed but nothing done about it. I saw it all happen through reflection in my window so I know this happened.</p>   |
| 9   | <p>SAW checks important. Positive experience of NWFRS installing fire detection in the past. Exploitation of disabled people or mate crime in Denbigh being taken advantage of. This has been reported to the police. 20mph not working in the Denbigh area. Tractors getting bigger and going faster. I have seen many tractor drivers on their phone whilst driving. This is a big issue in Denbigh.</p>  |
| 10  | <p>Still many people using chip pans in Denbigh.</p>  |
| 11  | <p>Electric cars going on fire are a huge concern.</p>  |



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 12 | Mobility scooters and how they are stored and charged inside houses and buildings is concerning.  |
| 13 | Sounds like you [NWFRS] doing great work. Give regular advice 'Test it Tuesday' and these types of messages work well.  |
| 14 | Water safety, drowning campaigns and acknowledging people (ethnic groups of people) that can't swim.  |
| 15 | The installation of fire alarms is a great service you provide.   |
| 16 | No reference to students in your plan. The student population make a valuable contribution to the economy and their existence should not be underestimated.   |
| 17 | Seems to make sense.  |
| 18 | Keep plugging the water safety message. Although, we did get some useful advice when we moved into the area.  |
| 19 | [Your Service] work in partnership with leisure centre to provide free or discounted swimming lessons. Swimming is very expensive for students.   |
| 20 | Yes.  |
| 21 | Same as health, the cost of preventing is better than reacting.   |
| 22 | Strongly Agree.   |
| 23 | Lots of scenarios. Holyhead road, certain risks of arson, buildings at risk [of being set on fire]. St Mary's student housing, close to golf course at the back is a typical hot spot for young people setting off fireworks at different (and random) times of the year, not just Halloween. Huge issue with BBQ's, especially in the Summer, usually residents [not students who usually get blamed]. |
| 24 | Fireworks and BBQ in golf course area that back up to St Mary's Student Housing [student used to live there].   |
| 25 | Although not a huge issue, safe use of candles is useful. Students use them [candles].  |
| 26 | Some international students feel isolated. Very common in Bangor. People [miss speaking] native language where they can celebrate culture and have things in common with others. Different for Chinese or Indian [students] who study in large numbers [and speak language and socialise]. Not the same for smaller European nations [like Finland].  |
| 27 | Deliver services in Welsh.  |
| 28 | Better investment in prevention required.   |
| 29 | You engage well. always at events and visiting college. Checking homes is a good thing to do.   |
| 30 | We see [redacted] [redacted] at events and she gives us advice to help keep us safe.  |
| 31 | The Walk and Talk events are good [In reference to the Dementia walk and talks the prevention team organise twice a year].  |
| 32 | Weather warnings are poor and the met office doesn't notify [the public] quick enough [when adverse weather is immanent]. [This was made in reference to the weather forecast not predicting snow in Bangor this week.  |
| 33 | I like your Safe and Well Service.  |
| 34 | Cadets programmes can benefit young people and get young people involved with what you do.  |
| 35 | I find a lot of the time the roads within the Bagillt, Greenfield and Mostyn area are extremely flooded with no preventative measures and many problems with the road drains kicking back water onto the roads.   |
| 36 | Deliver workshops in colleges.  |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 37 | [I] Never knew about this service [SAW], so clearly better promotion is needed so.   |
| 38 | Resources in Polish written and spoken.  |
| 39 | Drowning in river Conwy a few days ago. Scary that can happen. Too many people can't swim. Half this room can't swim.  |
| 40 | Prevention goes beyond the most vulnerable. What about people that are almost vulnerable?  |
| 41 | Kind of agree, but disagree mostly because fitting fire alarms shouldn't be based on age and people who live alone. Some people have partners that work away. Army for example.  |
| 42 | I didn't know you have fulltime staff that carry out those home safety checks. Good way of finding people who are struggling on their own.   |
| 43 | The prevention jobs you have discussed sound perfect for older people and those who fancy a chance of career.  |
| 44 | Since I have lived in the home [Care home], I have noticed more and more people with very limited mobility. People are living longer.  |
| 45 | Mental health training for your staff could enhance your understanding and service delivery.   |
| 46 | Sounds good to me.   |
| 47 | Can't do enough education. Get in the schools. let people know.  |
| 48 | Strongly agree.  |
| 49 | I have working fire alarms that the fire service installed a few years ago.  |
| 50 | I have got Co2 alarm, but I have had no working fire alarms for 3 years. Husband passed away and he sorted everything out. I did call you [NWFRS], but I changed my number because phone/broadband contract changed. Safe and well checks are important.   |
| 51 | Got fire alarms, vibrating plate under my pillow. I have hearing loss and recently started to wear hearing aids. Installed by Medicare and Flintshire County Council sort everything.  |
| 52 | I have previously requested a safe and well check, but never heard back despite leaving a couple of voice messages. I am over 65, live alone and had stroke  |
| 53 | List prevention issues in the first part of the questionnaire.   |
| 54 | People don't use road crossings.   |
| 55 | I do agree. However, the volume of travel on the A5 has increased I'm recent years. The A55 was meant to reduce the traffic through Anglesey but nobody seems to address the growing number of vans, HGV, and cars racing through.   |
| 56 | You haven't got just "agree" so this skews the replies.  |
| 57 | Coedpoeth is a better place since the 20mph rule was enforced. Could do with double yellow lines along main road by ASDA. Parking on road shouldn't be allowed as this causes a genuine hazard and it's a matter of time before accident happens. Road surfaces require attention and upgrade as you travel out to Llandegla and Ruthin. Agriculture problems with hedge cutters leaving splinters on the road, which is concern as a regular road runner and cyclist. |
| 58 | It's good the fire service focus on us [older people]. I feel safe in my home.   |
| 59 | As stated ensuring right alarm are giving for their needs.   |



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 60 | Fighters helping more in South Gwynedd. This can be addressed with more fulltime firefighters based in these parts.   |
| 61 | Your prevention work is important.  |
| 62 | Strongly agree.   |
| 63 | Flooding is a big issue around here. Lorry got stuck last week. Water rescue train up Dolgellau staff.  |
| 64 | Agree, but we work in council buildings which have fire alarms and fire risk assessments in place. No need for you to install alarms.   |
| 65 | We operate out of a council building, so we have fire alarms and fire alarm practice.   |
| 66 | Lack of public awareness of Dementia because it is invisible and hidden. Public perception is people look okay, they are not disabled or vulnerable, when they are at risk a lot of the time. Drains are not being cleared anymore and this is a root cause of a lot of the flooding in towns because there is no run off. Floods are blocking roads. I have seen these roads [in Caernarfon area] for many years and they the rain fall hasn't changed much over the years, but natural ability for water to drain and run off needs sorted ASAP. It is particularly bad on the road between Caernarfon castle and Pwllheli and along the coastal roads. |
| 67 | Signage to help avoid people getting lost, especially in the high of the summer when coastal towns are busy with people and extra tourists.   |
| 68 | Increased RTC's in the Summer months.   |
| 69 | Continue to raise safety awareness of electrical goods.   |
| 70 | Very happy with the 20mph rule, especially in Town centres, schools and built up areas.   |
| 71 | Female firefighters can help engage and communicate with other women. I prefer to speak to a woman to be honest. I agree that the 20mph rule has been a positive change.  |
| 72 | The 20mph rule is working well in Bala.   |
| 73 | Similar to the potential approach to recruitment, the leisure centre is the ideal place to promote your prevention messages and engagement activity. We have school engagement days which see hundreds of school kids in the centre. British Transport Police run successful events here in partnership with Network Rail. Football festivals are busy. Maybe NWFRS could sponsor an event and get your name out there.   |
| 74 | For some LGTGG+ people social isolation or risk of homelessness is real. Some people are an increased risk of using drugs, alcohol, smoking and at increased risk of fire because of such factors. Are you considering this?  |
| 75 | There are barriers for LGBTQ+ people to engage and participate in physical activity. Same LGBTQ+ people may present same challenges accessing careers and LGBTQ+ may perceive joining the service is not possible. Through physical activities, your service can attract LGBTQ+ people, so working with partners can help you engage.   |
| 76 | E-bikes and e-scooters are a huge problem. We see CYP talking proudly about ASB and even arson and misuse of fire when BBQs have been set on camping trips. Sports development staff and sports coaches are well positioned to educate and pass on your messages for you and even invite you in to talk to the young people, although uniform can sometime be a barrier.  |
| 77 | Huge concerns associated with the estuary [in Tywyn] tidal and strong currents that people don't expect.  |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>78</b> | No comment.   |
| <b>79</b> | Nope.   |
| <b>80</b> | No comments.  |
| <b>81</b> | Prevention is cheaper and better than devising a cure.  |
| <b>82</b> | I have no comments.   |
| <b>83</b> | Is good yet hard to understand.   |
| <b>84</b> | This is important if people are willing to attend the events. As long as you have your audience then I believe educating those who are more vulnerable is vital.  |
| <b>85</b> | No comment.   |
| <b>86</b> | I like it a lot.  |
| <b>87</b> | I think it's perfect.   |
| <b>88</b> | It provides a highly broad and detailed plan to keep different organisations and people safe.   |
| <b>89</b> | No mention of suitable young provision that other public sectors organisations are providing. Merseyside Fire are doing loads of projects for young people, disappointing North Wales are not doing anything.   |
| <b>90</b> | I think this is a good idea.  |
| <b>91</b> | No Comment.   |
| <b>92</b> | The FRS have an excellent reputation. Your plan covers really important themes surrounding early interest, trauma, younger people, home safety checks. Homelessness is a group of people we see as a high priority and lots of behaviour may require some attention, setting fires to keep warm is an obvious one, using drugs and alcohol is also a risk. The constant cycle this group of people face because they are unable to get a job, employers won't give them a job without a fixed address or bank account which remains a huge problem in North Wales. There is a lack of housing and accommodation for when people leave prison, so they are sometimes given a tent and left without proper support (or some people don't choose to take support offered because the lack of trust in services). Mental health is a huge problem and this could be more front a centre in your prevention principle, although you have said [in person], that mental health is something you use to prioritise some prevention work. |
| <b>93</b> | I support this principle.   |
| <b>94</b> | Your plan has no consideration for carers (paid and unpaid). Some older carers will be looking after their partners and there is often excessive pressure on them to, which impact their own physical health, mental health and wellbeing.  |
| <b>95</b> | Welsh speakers in every team please. Your walk and talk sessions [with dementia groups] and engagement with older people is important. Engagement with refugees and people who have been displaced is important too.  |
| <b>96</b> | I suggest working closely with British Red Cross going forward because we can help you connect directly with people to want to target [safety messages], and recruit people. We currently run various sessions including ESOL, advice workshops, food bank etc.   |
| <b>97</b> | It is a good approach to recruit people from diverse backgrounds.   |
| <b>98</b> | Nowhere near enough done to prevent accidents on the road. Police and fire need to do more.   |
| <b>99</b> | Properties around here are not receiving services in rural areas. Nobody picks up the phone up when you call fire service.  |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>100</b> | Your safety checking in houses works well. Missing other key safety work that Shropshire and Cheshire seem to promote. You never mention flooding of the River Dee.   |
| <b>101</b> | More face to face promotion and attendance at community groups.   |
| <b>102</b> | Continue to fit fire alarms.  |
| <b>103</b> | There is consultation on whether a new national park should be developed and this involves a huge area where I live [near Llangollen]. A national park will bring many people into the area which in turn will bring huge risks, extra traffic and the roads won't cope, rubbish and litter and of course campers and BBQs [potential increase in fire risk] will be an issue like other national parks in Wales. |
| <b>104</b> | Your plan outlines some important points.   |
| <b>105</b> | You should provide mental health awareness training for your staff who work with the public.  |
| <b>106</b> | People with dyslexia is increasing. Keep [safety] information jargon free and avoid complex words.  |
| <b>107</b> | You should consider risk based on person's disability and health.   |
| <b>108</b> | Maintain high standards in your prevention work efforts.  |
| <b>109</b> | Your plan covers lots of important topics.  |
| <b>110</b> | Services using BSL are not really covered on your website. You have one-page <a href="http://www.youtube.com/embed/jlKtycoedyA">www.youtube.com/embed/jlKtycoedyA</a> , but nothing else which provides information and many of the videos you post on social media do not have captions or subtitles. Hardly inclusive.  |
| <b>111</b> | Vulnerable people.  |
| <b>112</b> | It was good to hear the fire service installed CO2 detectors and fire alarms on canal boats as part of your prevention services. We rarely get to access public services on the boat and most services forget about us.   |
| <b>113</b> | Increased number of people with adverse mental health which is placing them at an increased risk of harm and injury. People that live alone are particularly vulnerable.  |
| <b>114</b> | There is a huge benefit in North Wales Fire & Rescue Service becoming an accredited Dementia Friendly Organisation which can be achieved through Dementia Friendly Wrexham. We [Home Instead] work closely with your service and we work well as a team to refer at risk people to receive safe and well checks and advice from your home safety department.  |

## Appendix D

| Ref | OUR PROTECTION PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |
|-----|--|
| 1   | You should ensure that the buildings you identify as "high-risk" include those that may only have two storeys but contain significant amounts of fire hazards and risks, including some self-catering holiday let accommodation.   |
| 2   | I don't know a great deal about protection work, but we appear to be covering a lot of key areas in terms of keeping people safe. We appear to take a supportive approach which can benefit local businesses and landlords and this approach also helps build a rapport with local companies/business owners.  |
| 3   | I work in the hospital [Wrexham Maelor] and I recently had a situation where the fire alarm went off and I had no idea what to do. Naturally I left the building via the fire exit, but nobody came to check where I was or check on me. I was working late and alone. I was surprised that nobody came to see I was okay and I am a new staff member with no idea of this building. |
| 4   | Food outlets appear safe [In Wrexham], but RBIP is a good measure to keep communities safe.  |
| 5   | Conduct more business visits under scheme more than SSRIs.   |
| 6   | Not fully understand this work, but the plan looks well thought out.   |
| 7   | The old North Wales Hospital [In Denbigh] has become very unstable and dangerous. There used to be security, but not anymore. Big risks and teenagers hang around there on an evening and weekends.  |
| 8   | Mobility scooters and how they are stored and charged inside local businesses, cafes, restaurants, care homes etc.   |
| 9   | Check on landlords to ensure students are safe is a good thing.  |
| 10  | Clear gap in that HMO landlords don't need to produce a fire risk assessment in order for the local authority to issue a licence to the landlords. Surely this is an opportunity to check landlords have everything in place.  |
| 11  | It is not clear how you keep students safe. There are some rubbish landlords around.   |
| 12  | Safety of buildings helps keep everyone safe.  |
| 13  | No issues with our landlords. Fire alarms work.  |
| 14  | I didn't know business get support [from the fire service]. You could provide safety advice to landlords who can pass on information to us [the tenants].  |
| 15  | Yes.   |
| 16  | Public safety.   |
| 17  | Strongly Agree.  |
| 18  | Support businesses through the medium of Welsh.  |
| 19  | Don't really understand this part.   |
| 20  | Prevention is better than cure.  |
| 21  | Make an example of them when they [specific reference to local businesses] mess up [break the law].  |
| 22  | Some dodgy ones [Specific reference to food outlets and take-a-ways] in Shotton / Connahs Quay.  |
| 23  | Look after care homes and residential buildings.   |
| 24  | Any advice you can provide Cae Gareded [Care Home] will help keep us safe.   |
| 25  | Lots of unsafe buildings in Buckley, Connahs Quay and Queensferry.   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 26 | Unused buildings let unsupervised. Place on Chester Road. A few places in Buckley. Cars left overnight in car parks are a fire hazard.   |
| 27 | Inspect businesses to keep people safe.  |
| 28 | Guidance for businesses yes. What formats are you doing this?  |
| 29 | Shouldn't business owners take responsibility for their own affairs.   |
| 30 | Neither agree/disagree really. Mostly agree over disagree.   |
| 31 | It is important because they need to make places easily accessible such as ramps for those who have disabilities.  |
| 32 | Need to make sure that thing is divest in our community especially to elderly people.  |
| 33 | I live in rented accommodation so fire alarms fitted by my landlord. Most landlords are on the ball because they let out their rooms to tourists and everything needs to be right.   |
| 34 | This work is needed. Lots of rogue operators in the area. Hoarders in flats just off the main high street, curtains always closed.   |
| 35 | What are you inspecting. Certainly not fire escapes route and getting out of businesses in Barmouth. Porthmadog is the same.   |
| 36 | I'm not sure about other places [Care homes], but we have weekly practice [Fire Alarms Tests] and everyone knows what to do [Fire exits, closest exit] and we all feel safe.   |
| 37 | We are a big building so it comforting to know the buildings are checked.  |
| 38 | Your current system is not working. far too many businesses operating unsafe practices. Teams with no first aider is not good. Agency workers coming in and not knowing what they need to know. It's a matter of time before something serious happens in Kronaspan.   |
| 39 | Strongly agree.  |
| 40 | Yes.   |
| 41 | I feel you need to consider how supermarkets are changing the infrastructure in their large shops. People stealing and Covid has made supermarkets think about keeping people flowing, but there is a bottle neck, supermarkets are getting very busy, people everywhere, overwhelming. No staff around to help. Cages in aisles cause a barrier. Aldi in Broughton is really bad. |
| 42 | Yes.   |
| 43 | Yes.   |
| 44 | Far more needs to be done to address issues in supermarkets. I got stuck in a lift once in ASDA and I was there for ages. Tesco's in Broughton, people leave trolleys in car park which is a hazard. People would leave trolleys in narrow aisles in supermarket which can make it difficult to escape if there was a fire and emergency.  |
| 45 | Strongly agree.  |
| 46 | You haven't got just "agree" so this skews the replies.  |
| 47 | There will always be fires, but I believe more inspections and checks are needed in local businesses bakery for example. Big fire there a few years again.   |
| 48 | Inaccessible venues. Didn't realise until I was in a wheelchair.   |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>49</b> | The fire service needs to communicate and promote protection much better. I read lots of news and I have never heard about protection unlike your prevention work. We see fire safety team and they tell us what's happening.   |
| <b>50</b> | Keep local businesses staff. Website is good, but face to face advice is good too.  |
| <b>51</b> | Strongly agree.   |
| <b>52</b> | Lots of shops have ramps, but tight spaces when you are in the building. Library tight space.   |
| <b>53</b> | More can be done in 2024 to sort out access in and out of buildings. Limited space.   |
| <b>54</b> | I have lots of concerns relating to the poor accessibility in/out of buildings [in Porthmadog]. Book shop in town use the excuse of being a 'grade 2 listed' buildings, but this shouldn't stop them providing a ramp for people who are not steady on their feet.  |
| <b>55</b> | There are lots of risks for people living with Dementia. There are more and more buildings with black steps and these are difficult for people to see. Businesses could add a white strip to the black step so it is clear to increase visibility and people can see the steps and where they are standing. I conduct dementia friendly audits of buildings and I see issues [i.e. Risks] all the time. Too many buildings with no handrails on steps. I recently conducted an audit at the outdoor centre at Plas Brennon on the A5, there was no handrails, no walk-in showers, no signage to make it clear where people need to go, not accessible for people with dementia. Excuses that the buildings were 'graded and listed' but there are small changes they can do to make access better and fire escape possible. |
| <b>56</b> | Businesses could have better signage to help people navigate their way around the place. Supermarkets are great at putting signs up so people know where to go, other businesses should adopt this approach.  |
| <b>57</b> | Local businesses don't manage car parking very well. 4x4s stick out, non-disabled people parking in blue badge spaces, business need to address this because disabled people forced to park in main car park and there is a walk to the shop or town centre which is not ideal for people who are not good on their feet. Disabled person more likely to get hit because they can't move out of the way quick enough.   |
| <b>58</b> | You don't hear many issues with businesses [in Bala]. Although farm accidents appear to be up. Local farmer died in slurry pit this year, it was a firefighter who rescued him, not a good job to go to. Farm safety is a huge concern.   |
| <b>59</b> | No comment.   |
| <b>60</b> | No, I don't.  |
| <b>61</b> | No comments.  |
| <b>62</b> | This is a great principle as incidents such as the Grenfell Tower could have been prevented with more routine fire checks. This is a amazing for prevention.  |
| <b>63</b> | No comment.   |
| <b>64</b> | It is great.  |
| <b>65</b> | It is very interesting.   |
| <b>66</b> | It provides a highly detailed plan to assist different companies in different ways.   |
| <b>67</b> | No Comment.   |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>68</b> | I support this principle.  |
| <b>69</b> | People from different backgrounds can help build positive relationships with many business owners here that have come from India, Bangladesh, UAE and other parts of the world.  |
| <b>70</b> | Clearly businesses doing what they want and not being monitored Mold factory fire.   |
| <b>71</b> | Too many run-down buildings and people living in substandard conditions.   |
| <b>72</b> | I am not convinced you have a handle of all issues in Rhyl. Many multi use accommodation [HMOs] are being run by landlords that don't invest in their property, particularly buildings on Johns Street and River Street spring to mind.  |
| <b>73</b> | There are some areas of deprivation in Rhyl, poor living conditions. This is a vital service you provide.  |
| <b>74</b> | Important work.  |
| <b>75</b> | I assume you are on the ball, but there has been a skip full of rubbish on our street for months. Its [REDACTED] Oakville Street, Rhyl. There is a sofa in the guy's front garden too, surely a fire risk if somebody lit the rubbish, nit beyond the rem's of possibility. It's been reported to the council several times, but maybe the fire service could highlight the risks [Arson]. |
| <b>76</b> | Local authority premises are safe. It's the private [landlords] ones you need to watch.  |
| <b>77</b> | I agree with others in your earlier focus group that there are many landlords that don't invest in their properties and some areas of Rhyl is run down, mostly flats and shared accommodation. Side streets off the seafront are concerning. River street, water street and Johns street, plus others.   |
| <b>78</b> | Business safety.   |
| <b>79</b> | I wasn't sure if you were aware where all the care homes are located across Wrexham and Flintshire. It may be worth doing some kind of exercise to locate all the dementia groups, but also care homes in the two counties.  |



## Appendix E

| Ref | OUR RESPONSE PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | 1,726 responses to a CRMP consultation is NOT 'an unprecedented response', it represents 0.25% of the north Wales population - hardly a big enough sample to make decisions off.  |
| 2   | The plan addresses increasing on-call firefighter availability, but as previously mentioned, the RDS model is increasingly outdated.  |
| 3   | Clear a strong need to improve availability in various areas. The incentives for working on-call are simply not good enough, but it good to hear that we are offering reduced contacts in some areas (i.e. 75%, 50%, 25%), it may be worth opening this offer out to people who don't work wholetime like other FRS's in England. I agree that the Service need to invest in new ALP's/TRUs and other special equipment to future proof against risks that we know will be present for the next decade and beyond (i.e. wildfire, flooding, electrical fire at RTC's, bariatric rescue to name a few). Personally, I feel we need to develop more day crew. |
| 4   | The clean cab solution is a good idea. This will keep people [Firefighters] safe. In the health profession, training is vitally important, I am sure a new training centre will be exactly what your fire officers will need to develop the skills to perform.  |
| 5   | Happy with the job Wrexham Fire Station does for its community. Response is more and more important with so many high buildings in the town. I am in support of a review into special appliances to manage the risks with tall buildings in the town.   |
| 6   | It is great to hear that you provide Autism training for your staff.  |
| 7   | The idea of less retained stations and more whole-time fire stations will give greater cover and resilience. Retained model doesn't fit modern day living and commitment.   |
| 8   | Living in the Corwen area, I feel confident you [response] come when called out.  |
| 9   | It is comforting to know there is a fire station in Colwyn Bay. The fire service is visible and you see Colwyn Bay crew out and about.  |
| 10  | Fire station in Denbigh is important. They [The Denbigh crew] are part of the community. I support the development of a new training centre. Training is vital, new technologies etc. Do the fire service train to rescue people from slurry lagoons [most dairy farms have them]? If not, they should do.  |
| 11  | The fire service [Bangor crew] visit the students during fresher's week to give a talk on fire safety. Maybe a similar talk could be given on road safety and water safety and other safety messages you wish to promote.   |
| 12  | Fire cover in all areas is clearly the only way to be. Your current map doesn't indicate guarantee response which is deeply concerning.   |
| 13  | I haven't needed to use the service, but based on what others have said the fire service are active.  |
| 14  | Acknowledge people have verbal shutdowns/meltdowns in stressful situations. It is good to hear your organisation provide autism awareness training for your firefighters. I am impressed.   |
| 15  | Knowing that you [NWFRS] are ready to response is comforting should we every need you.  |
| 16  | Bread and butter.   |
| 17  | Yes, to this one.   |



|    |  |
|----|--|
| 18 | Maybe Bangor station could reduce the number of hours firefighters [On-call] have to work and this could help attract students who will be in the area for at least 3 years whilst they study. Create more fulltime [Wholetime] stations to increase career aspirations and possibility.   |
| 19 | Strongly Agree.  |
| 20 | [All Firefighters in Bangor should have] basic language skills (i.e. Mandarin, French, Sign Language). This would enhance service to the public locally.   |
| 21 | Ensure teams [of Firefighters] speak Welsh. Particularly important when people [Welsh speakers] are distressed.  |
| 22 | It is good to know '999' is there.   |
| 23 | Buckley could do more to promote [Firefighter] jobs. Recruitment days, but promote them so we know about them. [The fire station] Never open!  |
| 24 | You're not always ready though [specific reference to Buckley not always available].   |
| 25 | Provide an effective emergency response.   |
| 26 | Improve response by upping your game in areas that need you.   |
| 27 | Very happy with the service you provide.   |
| 28 | You lot were here last week [Bangor crew attended an AFA at the home].   |
| 29 | Appears sensible to review special appliances and keep them in Bangor due to its location and the high number of care homes in this area [Bangor].   |
| 30 | Link recruitment to specific college courses i.e. engineering for example. Help people understand career pathways.   |
| 31 | More fulltime fire stations to replace current on-call.  |
| 32 | Not guaranteed in North Wales. More 24/7 availability needed. Need to be able to have someone on the scene ASAP.   |
| 33 | If possible have more people on-call to be called on if needed.  |
| 34 | Not enough vehicles in some stations. Not enough 24hour response fire stations in Wales.   |
| 35 | Within Gwynedd and Anglesey there is limited fulltime fire stations.   |
| 36 | Barmouth Station crew are great. You always see them around.   |
| 37 | Barmouth and Harlech do a good job. Barmouth fire station is a bit out of the way, could do with signage so people know where it is. Tourists use the car park in the summer that could be a risk to staff who need to park up quickly.  |
| 38 | It's not possible for you to always respond quickly if firefighters have to travel in from afar and quickly.   |
| 39 | I trust you [NWFRS] know what's needed. I am frustrated about the poor escape planning from business owners.   |
| 40 | I never knew you had so many fire stations.  |
| 41 | Standard fire engine not big enough to reach some of the high buildings [In Barmouth]. You think of height as floors high, but you don't take in account some ground floors are 15 or 20 feet from the road. I believe this is a huge risk you don't take into account. One example is 3 and 4 floor buildings along Porkington Terrace which are 40+ feet. Some of the houses on the hillside facing the sea are high up and standard fire engine won't be big enough building. |
| 42 | Excellent service from NWFRS. Your lot [Bangor Crew] were here last week [Attending AFA]. They were here quickly.  |
| 43 | Need better promotion of jobs.   |
| 44 | Need to put pressure on council and police to address the parking issues in side streets. As I said you won't get a fire engine down some streets. Outside schools is carnage as well.   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 45 | Yes, recruit folk, but local people know the area and the risks. People that live on the coast know the risks with the sea, people visiting get tripped or let their dogs off the lead.  |
| 46 | Strongly agree.  |
| 47 | Local stations do a good job.  |
| 48 | Deeside station is well placed to respond to the [Connahs] Quay and Queensferry.   |
| 49 | Local fire crew at Deeside do a good job.  |
| 50 | Strongly agree. Plenty of fire stations mapped across Anglesey.  |
| 51 | You haven't got just "agree" so this skews the replies.  |
| 52 | I worry about response times in rural areas. Out towards Llandegla, Ruthin, Bala.  |
| 53 | More needs to be done to improve availability in this area [Porthmadog]. Part-time [firefighters] is not secure enough, although they do a good job.   |
| 54 | FRS have an excellent reputation. But reading this [CRMP], review. I didn't know the fire station was a retained station. Surely an area the size of Porthmadog deserves better provision. Are you always ready to respond?  |
| 55 | Yes, agree with you being ready, but not enough regular fulltime work in Gwynedd for people who want to work fulltime within their own community. People tell me you have to travel to Rhyl, Bangor or Colwyn Bay. Young people should be able to work here in Porthmadog and central locations like Bala or Corwen. |
| 56 | There is a high risk if the fire service continues to have no fulltime firefighters in the area. Adverse weather in the past 3 years is a clear sign better cover is needed. Visitors increase demand in the summer too.   |
| 57 | I agree that you should be ready to respond, but I don't believe you are ready and responses can be slow if multiple fires happen at the same time.  |
| 58 | Strongly agree. Dolgellau crew should be water rescue trained. Recent floods have been a reminder how bad things can get. Recent flooding saw a long wait for Bala firefighters to travel across to rescue lorry stuck in a flood.   |
| 59 | I have noticed the population has increased in Dolgellau. More people remote working has made Dolgellau attractive place to live. Real need for a day crew station in Dolgellau.   |
| 60 | I work in hospitality. Dolgellau is getting busier each year. We get lots of passing by traffic too.   |
| 61 | An area the size of Porthmadog should have fulltime firefighters to cover this large and challenging road network. It is confusing if there is only one fire engine [In Porthmadog], but you need two fire engines to attend a house fire.   |
| 62 | I am fully supportive of wholtime cover being proposed in South Gwynedd.   |
| 63 | It is comforting to know you are there when we call 999.   |
| 64 | Local people have local knowledge of where to go.  |
| 65 | Bilingual firefighters please.   |
| 66 | Ability to speak Welsh is important.   |
| 67 | It is good to know there is a fire station across the road should we ever need you.  |
| 68 | Attracting people who play sport may be difficult if potential firefighter working hours clash. Maybe flexible working could help tap into new people.   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 69 | As mentioned earlier, willing people in Tywyn, but many people don't know there is such a need to recruit and they don't know what is required. Women wouldn't even think of the job as its mostly men that are visible. This is the same as the police years ago, but you see far more [women] now.   |
| 70 | Good response principle, but always can improve.   |
| 71 | I don't understand.  |
| 72 | No comments.   |
| 73 | Review current provision and equipment to ensure you are in the best possible position to response.  |
| 74 | This is vital to save lives.   |
| 75 | No comment.  |
| 76 | The response principle is interesting.   |
| 77 | No, I don't.   |
| 78 | It gives a plan with a wide variety of tasks to complete.  |
| 79 | Some of the young people we support would make amazing emergency workers if given the chance.  |
| 80 | I was delighted to hear no fire stations were closed last year.  |
| 81 | I think this is a good wish but we need a lot of people to work to put out a fire because then we can go to more businesses and still get a lot of people to go to another fire. Ambulances it's a long way for them to turn to me maybe we need more people.  |
| 82 | Respond when you need to.  |
| 83 | I mentioned this earlier, but review your duty systems should involve considering reduced on-call contracts and even part-time fixed hours under fulltime [wholetime] terms. Would it be possible to do 5 or 6 days providing 5 or 6 hours each day? These changes could help more attract to girls and women, especially in areas where you are having challenges recruiting.   |
| 84 | I support this principle.  |
| 85 | Do you monitor how carers are affected/impacted in your prevention and incident data?  |
| 86 | The only consideration is some refugees may not know how to contact you. '999' is not a thing in some countries and there is no fire service. Naturally we [Red cross] educate new arrivals on all essential services, but it is worth you being aware of this.  |
| 87 | Fire engine needs to be located in Overton or Penley to cover rural part of Wrexham that gets left out.  |
| 88 | Response times out to rural areas to the east of Wrexham are too slow. Many fires here are attended by Whitchurch but they only have one fire engine. Prees can't recruit staff, Wem is 15-20 minutes away but slow to respond. This leaves Wrexham to cover the entire City and deprived areas and demanding risks associated with a growing population, industrial estate, prison, student population, A483 traffic. Our communities are left out and this needs to be considered. |
| 89 | I completely agree we need response, but talks of reducing firefighters in Rhyl last year was very concerning indeed.  |
| 90 | I don't doubt that you are able to respond effectively. I live in a rural area, so I do worry you will get to me quickly, but you can response quickly here [in Rhyl]. I do need to mention that mobile phone signal is very poor around here which may be an issue for people wanted to get hold of you [i.e. 999].   |
| 91 | Bread and butter.  |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>92</b> | You can alter the duty systems as you see fit, but please don't take any fire engines away from Rhyl.  |
| <b>93</b> | Provide an effective emergency response.   |
| <b>94</b> | Mobile phone signal is really poor and around 50% of the people we see don't have a mobile phone because they can't afford one or they don't know how to use one. I am concerned that many people we support wouldn't be able to raise the alarm. Also, some of the people we see have mobile phones, but they are pay as you go and don't have much money due to being unemployed or retired. |
| <b>95</b> | Totally understand deaf people can't be firefighter, but do your firefighters know how to do basic BSL. The BSL Act legally recognises BSL as a language in Wales.   |
| <b>96</b> | Plenty of fire stations on Ynys Môn.   |
| <b>97</b> | Response.  |
| <b>98</b> | It will be challenging to respond to canals boats, but it is comforting to know there are fire stations along the Llangollen branch.   |
| <b>99</b> | May I recommend that all staff receive mental health training for all staff.   |

## Appendix F

| Ref | OUR ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |
|-----|---|
| 1   | Change diesel powered fire appliances to electricity powered vehicles.  |
| 2   | Examination of use of all electric, with range extender, fire appliances. Given the relatively short distance covered and the very low duty cycle of Fire Appliances, it seems an ideal fit. There is an added advantage of quietness when responding into residential areas for false alarm calls. |
| 3   | We are doing great work around environmental considerations. [REDACTED] has done a great job and credit to SLT for allowed [REDACTED] to have the freedom to do his work and make improvements without too much resistance for change.  |
| 4   | I like that you are planning to cut down carbon emissions.  |
| 5   | Using hydrotreated vegetable oil is a fantastic idea. This could help recycle oils from local businesses (i.e. fish and chip shops) and supports local farmers to grow rapeseed and other crops used to produce oil.  |
| 6   | Recycling HVO is a good idea.   |
| 7   | Using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as fuel is a fantastic idea.   |
| 8   | Think about future generations.   |
| 9   | You are taking responsibility.  |
| 10  | Your plan explains how carbon emissions will be reduced. Some other sections of your plans require the same clarity.  |
| 11  | Invest in technology and AI.  |
| 12  | Strongly Agree.   |
| 13  | UK doesn't get too cold like Finland. UK residents and businesses heat too much. Waste energy.  |
| 14  | Go electric where possible.   |
| 15  | Get better deals on energy and fuel.  |
| 16  | I imagine old buildings cost a fortune to heat and keep warm.   |
| 17  | Focus on getting firefighters [comment made in reference to Buckley Fire Station].  |
| 18  | My mum's work has hybrid working which reduces fuel costs and time. You seem to have lots of meetings.  |
| 19  | It makes good sense to save money where possible doesn't it.  |
| 20  | Not too sure solar energy is viable [In reference to other energy saving options].  |
| 21  | New special appliances can help reduce energy and emissions.  |
| 22  | I think that protecting the environment is extremely important.   |
| 23  | eco-friendly practices can't come at a cost of efficiency.  |
| 24  | Carbon neutral has to be the end goal.  |
| 25  | Just need electric trucks.  |
| 26  | If using this form of operation [On-call duty system] is much different it might slow down response   |
| 27  | Is it not possible to have wind turbine on your sites to generate energy and feedback I to the network which could generate income? Lots of wind on the island.   |
| 28  | Yes, do what you can, but how the heck you controlling what plastic packaging equipment comes in, dirty water you deal with. I guess you raise issues with people in charge.  |
| 29  | Limited impact until they sort out climate issues in China and India and other places.  |
| 30  | Your review of specials makes sense to reduce carbon emissions. Some of the old fire engines are not good for carbon emissions and ozone layer etc.   |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 31 | The review seems well thought out and deals with all the concerns I have.   |
| 32 | Strongly agree.   |
| 33 | Recycle what you can.   |
| 34 | Agree, but don't get caught up too much recycling stuff that ends up in Land Fill anyway.   |
| 35 | Can't North Wales fore tap into local farmers who have wind turbines and solar panels.  |
| 36 | Yes, but is the latest tech reliable. I don't believe you should implement electric cars for your emergency crews.  |
| 37 | Strongly agree.   |
| 38 | To save costs and time, be efficient. Gwynedd Council recently sent me and my husband the same letter which is a waste of paper, waste of stamp, additional cost to process the letter and print them off. Try to minimise time and energy and paper. |
| 39 | It's good that you care.  |
| 40 | It's a good approach to make your firefighters take their own rubbish home with them.   |
| 41 | No comment.   |
| 42 | I don't have any comments.  |
| 43 | No comments.  |
| 44 | Massively important to reduce energy consumption and costs. Be smart and future proof the organisation.   |
| 45 | Don't buy products that can't be recycled.  |
| 46 | Adopting eco-friendly practices to cut down on carbon emissions and other environments impacts could cause higher costs.  |
| 47 | Hard to understand.   |
| 48 | No, thank you.  |
| 49 | Service resources should not be spent on EV charging station in an economic environment the tax payers are in at this moment. This could be done in a different time.   |
| 50 | I don't have a comment.   |
| 51 | No Comment.   |
| 52 | It makes sense to go electric or hybrid where possible, but I completely understand fire engine need to be diesel to take on terrain in North Wales and attend incidents for long durations.  |
| 53 | I support this principle.   |
| 54 | Neither agree or disagree really.   |
| 55 | Do whatever you can to do your bit.   |
| 56 | Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations is what any responsible organisation would do.   |
| 57 | Reduce carbon footprint on the planet.  |
| 58 | Excellent!  |

## Appendix G

| Ref | OTHER AREAS IN RELATION TO THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |
|-----|---|
| 1   | I personally don't believe you conduct enough fire safety audits, regularly enough, and take appropriate action when deficiencies are found.  |
| 2   | Prioritising employee Health and Wellbeing. Also, mention that Safe and Well checks have a fundamental positive impact on the wellbeing of the general public, providing peace of mind.   |
| 3   | Rural roads network with getting about in summer.   |
| 4   | Last year, my crew completed over 650 Safe and Well Checks. However, the software we use to log these visits is extremely slow, cumbersome, and inefficient. On average, it takes around 15 mins to input a single visit, often requiring the repeated entry of details that have already been recorded multiple times. This resulted in the crew spending over 160 hours sat at a computer. This time could have been better spent drilling, training, devising and delivering community safety initiatives, conducting 72d inspections, or planning larger-scale exercises to train with our RDS colleagues. Surely, with modern day technology advances such as AI, ICT can solve this issue (Nb. The use of tablets during SAWCs significantly slows down Safe and Well Checks – the issue is the software we use and the method of input). |
| 5   | There does not appear to be a clear strategy regarding the Service work concerning Mental health and wellbeing. Also, I don't feel Safeguarding gets the attention and due regard it deserves and recruiting (or develop someone internally) to be a subject matter expert (or a DSL) could help address this issue.  |
| 6   | Educating parents about children playing and crossing the road.   |
| 7   | Your services look fine as long as autistic people are considered.  |
| 8   | Create more whole-time fire stations and have fire appliances driving around the areas much more rather than responding from a station have them patrolling communities this should aid response model.   |
| 9   | Possibility. Think about how you will promote inclusion for transgender people.   |
| 10  | Work with local partners to resolve the fly tipping issue. Prevent fires.   |
| 11  | Consider e-bikes in your prevention work.   |
| 12  | All staff in your service that engage with the community should link with MIND and other mental health charities  |
| 13  | Any emerging risks to refugees. Social tensions can cause isolation so engaging can be difficult.   |
| 14  | Specific sessions that benefit students.  |
| 15  | HMO's issue I have mentioned throughout the questionnaire.  |
| 16  | Risks to students and young people.   |
| 17  | Maybe promote your services through the [Bangor] university.  |
| 18  | Nope.   |
| 19  | Specific safety info for students. Post info on student platforms, make it so easy for yourselves, nobody will follow fire service platforms. Reward students for feedback, encourage participation in your research, understand your market.   |
| 20  | International students.   |
| 21  | Written information in different languages to aid understanding.  |



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 22 | Consider volunteers programme.  |
| 23 | CPR Rescue. Act for first responders in the absence of unavailable ambulance and paramedics.  |
| 24 | Do the fire stations have solar panels? If not, why not?  |
| 25 | Lobby for cycle lanes to keep people safe between Queensferry and College [College Cambria, Deeside Campus].  |
| 26 | You mentioned Buckley are part time, can't they visit care homes and fit smoke alarms and that. The work is there so what's the problem.  |
| 27 | Responding and preventing.  |
| 28 | Maybe improve the [your] engagement in rural areas outside the larger towns.  |
| 29 | Emergency response to knife crimes and other life changing injuries.  |
| 30 | Not that I can think of.  |
| 31 | More content creation to spread information to the youth via Tik-Tok and You Tube shorts.   |
| 32 | Drowning. Too many people die in water.   |
| 33 | Access to info. North wales fire rescue website looks old and boring.   |
| 34 | Maximise spaces in fire stations. Let community use the facilities.   |
| 35 | Need some more fulltime stations down hear Llanberis their closest on is Rhyl.  |
| 36 | Save money by investing in local people, especially young people. Create more job opportunities for local people.   |
| 37 | Cars parking and blocking roads, especially in the summer. It's crazy here in the summer with cars parked [either side of road] [blocking access for fire engine].  |
| 38 | Already mentioned really poor escape route in businesses. Not ramps, narrow spaces. Parked cars right outside doors.  |
| 39 | Illegal parking restricting access for emergency vehicles.  |
| 40 | People are living longer so everything that comes with that really. I'm sure you [NWFRS] have everything covered.   |
| 41 | Responding to big buildings with people high up.  |
| 42 | Education for the public.   |
| 43 | Finance. Who you purchase from. Ethnical purchasing from supply chains and suppliers with high standards.   |
| 44 | Local bus services are very busy, especially when kids get on [School run], but confusion who has right of way on bus pushchairs or wheelchairs, not enough room for a couple of disabled people [with chairs]. I worry about how I would get off a busy bus if there was a crash. Kids stand up and bus drivers don't manage them. |
| 45 | Traffic using A5. Traffic in Llangefni.   |
| 46 | Larger disabled parking areas to account for large taxis and mini buses. Needs to be thought for drop off spaces at venues such as supermarkets, leisure centres, community venues you know. Better management of these venues to stop people parking illegally.  |
| 47 | Can't think of any.   |
| 48 | Fulltime firefighters' opportunities in Gwynedd.  |
| 49 | More education concerning old age.  |
| 50 | Do you provide services in different languages and BSL?   |
| 51 | Flooding, excess water, flash floods, dirty water run off fields.   |
| 52 | Who is responsible for cleaning roads? They need to do better!  |



|    |   |
|----|---|
| 53 | Lots of things. Wildfire in summer. Kids underestimating risks in water. Local river is shallow, but can change quickly and catch people out, especially if they are not local.   |
| 54 | Weather.  |
| 55 | Recruitment in some areas.  |
| 56 | More prevention activity in the Dolgellau. Limited numbers of staff here currently.   |
| 57 | No.   |
| 58 | Quality of life for everyone.   |
| 59 | Cause and effect of cars/vans parking on paths.   |
| 60 | To save costs and time, be efficient.   |
| 61 | Funding cuts to public services. You should have a strong business case to secure extra funding.  |
| 62 | Mud on roads are a huge risk to other drivers. Farmers left a right mess on the roads this year. don't clean up like they used to do.   |
| 63 | Water safety talks at Bala lake.  |
| 64 | Improve female facilities.  |
| 65 | Do more around speeding. Increased number of farm accidents.  |
| 66 | Use the leisure centre as much as possible.   |
| 67 | You need to consult with young children as well. Year 7, 8 & 9 etc. They are the future. They come up with good ideas. Different perspectives.  |
| 68 | When asking for gender/sexuality, you could just use blank space for everyone to define their preferences using their own words. This approach is inclusive.  |
| 69 | Water safety risks.   |
| 70 | Not that I can think of.  |
| 71 | New or improved areas of work could include working closer with charities and voluntary sector.   |
| 72 | Terrorist attacks on local venues, MPs offices, places of worship. Consider impact of growth to Wrexham football.   |
| 73 | Dual role of firefighter and paramedic like they do in USA.   |
| 74 | No.   |
| 75 | Not at this moment in time.   |
| 76 | I think things are going well, so I have no idea what you can say.  |
| 77 | Provided a list of risks on the front page.   |
| 78 | Consider becoming an accredited organisation. Forward thinking employers now recognise caring as a barrier to recruitment and retaining existing members of their organisation. These employers recognise that caring will have an increasing impact on their employees and their business as a result. Currently 90% of working carers are aged 30 plus – employees in their prime employment years. The 2021 Census found that the biggest proportion of people caring in Wales are from the 55-59 age group. |
| 79 | Fire engine in Penley to cover Overton, Hamner and Bronington. Too much reliance on Whitchurch and other English fire stations.   |
| 80 | Farms with plans to have fields full of solar panels. Gaps between panels are tight, can you get fire engine to a fire if one broke out in a solar farm?  |
| 81 | Fire Station in Kimnal Bay? If not, why not?  |
| 82 | Campaign to ban quad bikes on roads in Urban areas.   |
| 83 | Animal rescue. Also, mountain rescue services just in case funding gets pulled from current mountain rescue teams.  |
| 84 | Services appear fine, just be inclusive in how you deliver them.  |
| 85 | Bulk buy fuel to save costs.  |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 86 | Not really.  |
| 87 | Keep up the good work organising community events. |

## Appendix H

| Ref | EDI Comments  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | In your EqlA: Mental health and wellbeing cover a broad group of people that experience low mood, anxiety, depression etc. - Everyone has mental health and personal wellbeing which can dip from day to day. This should cover everyone, not just a select few with mental health disorders. A comprehensive mapping exercise has identified mental health charities and support groups in all three areas of the service. - What are these 3 areas?? Which Charities? Need to mention the Service support schemes.  |
| 2   | Whilst the EqlA makes commendable strides in addressing broader inclusivity concerns, it could be enhanced by directly addressing non-binary facilities and the formalisation of time for mental health and wellbeing within the workplace. Whilst the EqlA acknowledges the importance of engaging with the trans and non-binary communities, it does not explicitly address the need for inclusive, non-gendered changing and shower facilities. These facilities are critical for creating a more welcoming and respectful environment for non-binary individuals. Whilst the EqlA mentions mental health and wellbeing as a priority and includes plans for engaging mental health charities and support groups, it does not suggest formalising dedicated time within the working day for mental health and wellbeing activities or regular inclusivity input. Having a structured hour for this would provide firefighters with the necessary time and space to address their mental health proactively, contributing to both their personal wellbeing and operational effectiveness. Regular and topical EDI input can help maintain an inclusive workplace. |
| 3   | Still appears to be a huge divide between grey book and green book. Expenses and allowances are not equally approved. CPD and training opportunities don't appear to be available for green book in the same way grey book have huge budgets to develop ops staff. More leadership and management training is required. [REDACTED] does a good job with the resources she has and the conferences that are organised are beneficial. I feel more informal and formal training opportunities are required for green book staff, especially to aid the development of future leaders and it would be an effective way to develop future leaders before they have leadership responsibilities. More focus could be on disability. Although neurodiversity networks and training has been welcomed feature of the Service, not enough is done around physical disability and more drive and leadership needs to come from SLT and leaders   |
| 4   | Businesses need to think about better support for new staff [from overseas]. We don't know anything [i.e. safety protocols].  |
| 5   | You mentioned that [the Service] educate children through schools, but what about children that don't go to school? You should look into how the Service cater for home schooled children and those who are excluded.   |
| 6   | It is good to see North Wales Fire Service at these events [organised by Autism Wales].   |
| 7   | Recruit more from LGBTQ.  |
| 8   | Gender equality in its broadest sense. Transphobia is a real thing when you experience it almost every day.   |
| 9   | Create information in more languages to help those who are not first language Welsh/English.  |
| 10  | Needs of trans, mental health and disability who often get left behind.   |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 11 | How do people without a mobile phone contact fire (i.e. call 999). Phone boxes don't exist anymore. There is a movement towards people not having/using mobile phone devises. Some people cant afford to have a phone either [Socio-economic status]. |
| 12 | Consider all age groups.  |
| 13 | All staff in your service that engage with the community should link with MIND and other mental health charities.   |
| 14 | Mental health and wellbeing.  |
| 15 | Don't discriminate against people with historic mental health diagnosis.  |
| 16 | Your equality impact assessment is useful. It is good to see mental health is considered.   |
| 17 | Refugees have unique needs. It is pleasing that you have thought about us [Refugees and people living in the area that have arrived through the resettlement programme].  |
| 18 | Water safety, drowning campaigns and acknowledging people (ethnic groups of people) that can't swim. One family in the group lost their son last year in a drowning incident in Barmouth.   |
| 19 | Student considerations. Age, intergenerational factors, values led, neurodivergence, sexuality and gender diversity.  |
| 20 | Equal investment in all areas of fire safety. Huge gap in HMOs currently.   |
| 21 | Risks to students and young people.   |
| 22 | Cultural differences.   |
| 23 | International students.   |
| 24 | Inequality and racism.  |
| 25 | Racism and hate crime   |
| 26 | Think about the barrier's young adults in HE [University] face and how you can create part time jobs for fulltime students whilst they study.   |
| 27 | Student population are a unique market with strange behaviours. away from home first time etc.  |
| 28 | International students.   |
| 29 | Ensure the Welsh language is developed and maintained.  |
| 30 | How promotion [Recruitment] targets younger people. [Specific reference to on-call recruitment in Buckley].   |
| 31 | Inconsistent service in Buckley [Comment made in reference to Buckley being unavailable some of the time].  |
| 32 | Old people I guess.   |
| 33 | Consider how you will speak [communicate] with older people [From Polish background that speak very little or no Welsh/English].  |
| 34 | Your commitment and engagement in rural areas should be equal to everything that happens in larger towns and Wrexham.   |
| 35 | Improve response in all areas, not just Wrexham and Rhyl.   |
| 36 | Older people. Limited mobility.   |
| 37 | Those with physical disabilities and those isolated [lack of social mobility].  |
| 38 | I think just being mindful as to how people are identifying as and if you get it incorrect just correct yourself, apologise and move on.  |
| 39 | Entry requirements and removing barriers to joining. Thinking about people that haven't got GCSEs.  |
| 40 | Access. Resources in Polish languages.  |
| 41 | More diversity to people that don't fit the stereotypical fire service.   |

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 42 | Inequality. Not equal access to swimming lessons in schools. Rubbish swimming lesson provision.  |
| 43 | Bring North Wales fire rescue website up to date.  |
| 44 | Create jobs for local people. Fire service tends to attract people from England when there are enough local people to choose from.                               |
| 45 | work with local employers to create dual roles.  |
| 46 | People living longer, but not healthy.   |
| 47 | We [older people aged 65+] are more likely to fall over. We rarely go out alone which is not the same as being alone [feel she has lost a sense of independence] |
| 48 | Lack of access due to poor on street parking   |
| 49 | Relocation of staff in the future requires careful consideration.  |
| 50 | Equality to fire cover.  |
| 51 | BSL Considerations. Deaf. Hearing loss.  |
| 52 | Ability to access the same services as Caernarfon and Bangor.  |
| 53 | Thank you for listening to us.   |
| 54 | People in wheelchairs and power chairs.  |
| 55 | Access to fire service promptly.   |
| 56 | Improve female facilities is a common barrier.   |
| 57 | No comment.  |
| 58 | Think about all religions.   |
| 59 | Ensure populated areas don't see a reduction in firefighters, fire appliances or fire stations.  |
| 60 | Risks to area in response to a terrorist attack or large-scale explosion to fuel station opposite the University or chemical factory on industrial estate.       |
| 61 | Best value for money. Consider dual role, address CPR and first responder risks when ambulances are stuck at A+E.  |
| 62 | Procurement and where you purchase items from, where items you purchase are made, modern slavery etc.  |
| 63 | Good to see gender covered.  |
| 64 | Carers (paid and unpaid).  |
| 65 | The fire service has broadly covered ethnicity and you are clearly engaging with us.   |
| 66 | No equality of service in rural areas east of Wrexham.   |
| 67 | BSL needs to be embedded through anything.   |

## Appendix I

| Ref | COMMENTS RECEIVED OUTSIDE CONSULTATION (Facebook, email etc.)  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | <p><b>Subject: Community Risk Management Plan 2024 - 2029</b></p> <p>I write to commend you on the presentation of your "Community Risk Management Plan 2024 - 2029" as published on your website at the following hyperlink.<br/> <a href="https://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales/media/esphgori/nwfrs-community-risk-management-plan-2024-2029-final.pdf">https://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales/media/esphgori/nwfrs-community-risk-management-plan-2024-2029-final.pdf</a></p> <p>I write to enquire whether the Fire and Rescue Service have undertaken any risk assessments and published guidance on how wind turbine fires on industrial sites in a forestry setting should be managed in Wales.</p> <p>The 10 pre-assessed areas for industrial wind energy sites are outlined in Welsh Government "Future Wales National Plan 2040". The plan is reproduced below in Annex 1 for your convenience.</p> <p>Many of the proposed wind energy projects, now being submitted for planning permission, comprise wind turbines with heights from ground level in the region of 200 metres, creating a challenging environment for the Fire Service, particularly in an upland forest setting. As you are no doubt aware, there have been numerous fires recorded on wind energy sites in various countries. A typical photograph is included in Annex 2 below.</p> <p>I would be grateful if you could give consideration to including details - in your Risk Management Plan - of how any future fire on these industrial sites should be managed to mitigate risk to the general public and site operators.</p> <p>I look forward to your observations at your convenience. Thank you.</p> |
| 2   | Here we go again!  |
| 3   | Are you producing a fire cover review within this at all? Given the chargin around reducing Wholetime appliances last time it would be good to know  |





Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

## (CRMIP) Consultation 2025-26

### Equality Impact Analysis Report



**ATAL AMDDIFFYNN YMATEB**  
**PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING**

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Introduction.....   | 3  |
| Background and Context of the CRMIP Consultation .....          | 3  |
| Equality Impact Analysis (EIA): The Legal Context .....         | 4  |
| The PSED has three main facets, and these are to: .....         | 5  |
| Methodology .....   | 6  |
| North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Area Demographics.....      | 7  |
| Age .....   | 8  |
| Disability .....  | 9  |
| Gender .....  | 10 |
| Sexual Orientation .....  | 10 |
| Gender Reassignment .....                                       | 11 |
| Pregnancy and Maternity .....                                   | 13 |
| Race .....  | 13 |
| Religion and/or Belief.....                                     | 15 |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership .....                            | 15 |
| Welsh Language Considerations.....                              | 17 |
| Socio-economic Considerations .....                             | 17 |
| Engagement and Consultation with Specific Equality Groups ..... | 21 |
| Summary of the Findings of the Equality Impact Analysis .....   | 22 |
| People Principle.....   | 22 |
| Prevention Principle.....                                       | 23 |
| Protection Principle .....                                      | 26 |
| Response Principle .....  | 28 |
| Environmental Principle .....                                   | 29 |



## Introduction

This equality Impact analysis report has been developed alongside the service's consultation report concerning its Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2025-2026 following the consultation period between 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024. Specific engagement with different equality interest groups during the consultation period has helped capture how different people feel about the proposed workstreams, their perceptions in terms of risk and to assess whether any of the proposed plans could place certain groups of people or communities at a disadvantage.

The overarching aim of this equality impact analysis is to highlight specific themes that emerged from the feedback during the CRMIP 2025-26 consultation. From this analysis, potential risks of discrimination can be identified and mitigation can be implemented accordingly. As defined by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, this analysis will focus on the protected characteristics which fall within the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and within the Socio-Economic Duty in Wales, as well as consideration of any possible implications on the Welsh Language, according to the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

## Background and Context of the CRMIP Consultation

Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and Wellbeing of Future Generation Act 2015, Fire and Rescue services within Wales are required to consult on the arrangements they propose to put in place to secure continuous improvement and the improvement objectives and standards they intend to set themselves.

In June 2024, the service adopted a five-year CRMP (2024-29) with annual implementation plans, based on a strategic framework developed by The National Fire Chiefs Council. The CRMP is intended to assist in transparent and justifiable decision-making and help Fire and Rescue Services identify collaborative opportunities with partner organisations more easily. In developing this plan, there is a requirement to 'effectively consult and engage' (in line with its governance arrangements) with communities, staff and stakeholders at appropriate stages of the community risk management planning process.

The annual CRMIP document identifies the expected risks and challenges that the Service may experience within the next year, so annual consultations enable the Service to review existing risks, but also identify any new and emerging risks.

## **Equality Impact Analysis (EIA): The Legal Context**

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is part of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and came into force in April 2011.

Section 149 of the Equality Act sets out the main duty and states that authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, “have due regards to the need to” eliminate any conduct that is prohibited by the Act. This includes discrimination, harassment and victimisation related to the ‘Protected Characteristics’ which include:

- Age
- Disability (Including long term health conditions)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (Ethnicity)
- Religion or belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual orientation

Whilst ‘marriage and civil partnership’ is also a protected characteristic, under the Equality Act 2010, it is not covered by the PSED in the same manner as the other protected characteristics, listed above and is for the purposes of the duty to eliminate discrimination. It is important to note that Section 1 of the Equality Act ‘Socio-economic duty’ came into force in Wales on 31st March 2021, and this requires the same due regard as the nine protected characteristics listed above.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 is also another legal consideration which has been included in the EIA. In compliance with the Policy Making standards within the Service's Welsh Language Standards compliance notice, it states that consideration should be made of any effects, whether positive or adverse to the Welsh Language. The EIA must include any identifiable effects on the opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and treating the Welsh language no less favorably than the English language.

### **The PSED has three main facets, and these are to:**

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to 'advance equality of opportunity' between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not includes having due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by them. Having due regard also means public organisations, such as NWFRS, take measures to meet the needs of such persons where those needs are different from persons who do not have that characteristic, and encourage those who have a protected characteristic to participate in public life.

As an essential part of meeting their PSED, public authorities conduct Equality Impact Analysis. This will be documented through the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). An Equality Impact Analysis is an assessment of a proposed organisational policy, or a change to an existing one so that it can be determined whether the policy has a disparate impact on persons from the protected characteristics. Whilst there is no longer a prescriptive way of doing this, case law has provided guidance in how to undertake an equality impact analysis, namely:

- Ensure there is a written record of the equality considerations that are considered.

- Ensure any decision-making included consideration of the actions that would help to avoid or mitigate any negative impacts on particular equality groups.
- Ensure the decisions made are done so on evidence, and
- Ensure the decision-making process is transparent.

## Methodology

Underpinned by the three main facets of the PSED (listed earlier), this report highlights various themes which emerged from feedback in response to the exact same questions that were included online questionnaires and focus groups.

This report and the accompanying Equality Impact Assessment (EqIAs) focus on the equality related findings of the public consultation which was conducted between 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

Approximately 70 different partner organisations and community groups were contacted to help promote the consultation. Amongst these partners included equality interested groups which consisted of community groups, charities and organisations that support specific groups of people (i.e. ethnic minority groups, young people, people living with dementia to name a few). Some equality interest groups were happy to complete and promote the online questionnaire amongst their members, whilst most groups preferred to organise a focus group which enabled them to provide feedback directly. In person focus groups also addressed barriers that some people experience relating to language, limited communication skills, those who are digitally excluded and people that just simply prefer to speak to a person and ask questions.

This report draws together the detail around engagement and consultation activity; the demographics of the NWFR area, with specific reference to protected characteristics; the potential impact of the proposed activities relating to the five principles, specifically regarding equality of access; and any mitigating factors which will help to manage and mitigate any potential risks associated.

## North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Area Demographics

North Wales has a population of circa 687,000 people spread over a geographical area of 2,383 square miles (or 6,172 square kilometres). The region is made up of six counties which include Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Anglesey, and Wrexham. It encompasses a diverse landscape, including Eryri National Park, coastal areas, and rural communities. The region is well connected, with major highways, railways, and ports providing access to the rest of the UK and Europe.

The largest city in North Wales is Wrexham, which serves as a hub for commerce and industry, while other major conurbations include Bangor, Caernarfon, Colwyn Bay, Deeside, Llandudno and Rhyl. The region is also home to several universities and colleges, providing a strong talent pool for local and international businesses that are located here. Additionally, the region is a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from all over the world with its stunning coastline, rich history, and unique culture.

Welsh, as a language for living, remains at the heart of the modern Welsh identity. Enjoying family life, education, work and leisure all through the medium of Welsh is testimony to the importance of the language to the people of Wales.

With regards to the 687,000 people that reside in North Wales, the 2021 Census data<sup>1</sup> states that 22.3% of the population were aged 65 years and over. Out of all local authorities across Wales, Conwy (27.4%) and Anglesey (26.4%) have the highest percentages of people aged 65 years and over. Conwy (1.5%) has the highest percentage of people aged 90 years in Wales.

With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to explore disability and age due to a notable difference in the data between 2011 and 2021, particularly in the younger and older age groups<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> Office of National Statistics (2021) Population and household estimates, Wales: Census 2021, Found at:

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimateswales/census2021#local-authority-populations-in-wales](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimateswales/census2021#local-authority-populations-in-wales)

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023b) Disability by Age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at:

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-)

For females aged 15 to 19 years, the percentage of disability was 13.3% in 2021, 8.1 percentage points higher than in 2011 and 7.9 percentage points higher than in 2001. This trend continued into the 20 to 24-year age group, where disability prevalence increased substantially, from 6.2% in 2011 to 17.9% in 2021. For males, the increased prevalence of disability in 2021 began at earlier ages; 8.6% of males aged 5 to 9 years were disabled in 2021, compared with 5.6% in 2011 and 6.5% in 2001<sup>3</sup>.

The population of North Wales is much less ethnically diverse than across England and Wales as a whole and 96.8% of the population identified as “White” in the 2021 Census. In North Wales, the highest proportions of people from “Any other White background” in 2021 were in Wrexham (4.8%) and Flintshire (3.9%) and the lowest found in Anglesey (1.9%)<sup>4</sup>.

## Age

The age of an individual, when accompanied with additional factors such as other ‘protected characteristics’ may affect their access to public services. Individuals may also experience discrimination and inequalities because of their age.

The European Social Survey 2012 found that age discrimination was the most common form of prejudice experienced in the UK, with 28% of respondents saying they had experienced prejudice based on age. In this section the age category to which most attention is given is 65+, as this is the age band that faces the most age-based discrimination. Analysis of the 2021 Census data shows that North Wales residents aged 65 or over were more likely than those under 65 to:

- Have a long-term limiting illness.
- Be in poor health.
- Be living on their own.

---

<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023b) Disability by Age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-Embed%20code&text=In%20Wales%2C%2022.3%25%20of%20females,10.4%25%20and%209.5%25%20respectively](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-Embed%20code&text=In%20Wales%2C%2022.3%25%20of%20females,10.4%25%20and%209.5%25%20respectively)

<sup>4</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales - Census 2021, Found at: <https://www.gov.wales/ethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion-wales-census-2021-html#:~:text=90.6%25%20of%20the%20population%20identified,to%202.3%25%20in%202011>)

**Be without access to a car:**

- Be providing unpaid care of 50 hours or more a week.
- Be living in a household without central heating.

**People aged 50 or over were more likely than those under 50 to:**

- Be living on their own.
- Be isolated and excluded.
- Be providing unpaid care, and
- Have no qualifications.

The ageing population will have financial and resource implications, as this will likely to be the age at which the health and social care needs of individuals will increase.

## Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This is consistent with the Census definition of a limiting long-term health problem.

According to 2021 Census data, North Wales has 20.7% of the total population reporting a disability and/or long-term health condition. The national average in Wales is 21.1% and for comparison purposes 17.7% in England<sup>5</sup>.

Disability and age are closely related, with older people being more likely to be disabled. In North Wales, Census 2021 data shows that the age group with the highest proportion of people with below average health are those ages 65 and over (12.5%), with the lowest proportion in those aged 15 years and under (0.5%). This was seen in all local authorities with some minor variation in the percentages.

---

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics (2023c) Disability, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20Wales%2C%20in%202021%2C%20a,\(23.4%25%2C%20696%2C000\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20Wales%2C%20in%202021%2C%20a,(23.4%25%2C%20696%2C000))

In North Wales, the highest percentage within the population aged 17 years or under with below average health were aged 16 to 17 years (1.2% of this population), and the lowest percentage in North Wales was in those aged 2 years and under (0.3% of this population). There was some variation in the local authorities although the highest percentage was in those aged 16 to 17 years in all local authorities except Denbighshire where the highest percentage was in those aged 15 years (1.7% of this population). It is not possible to compare this data with the data included in the previous report as an alternative data source was used.

## Gender

According to the Census 2021 data, the North Wales population by gender is 51% female and 49% male. When combined with additional factors such as living alone, employment status, financial income, health and social care needs, research suggests that one's gender can have disproportionate outcomes. People are disproportionately affected by their gender when different concepts are explored which include Hate crime and domestic abuse<sup>6</sup>, gender pay gap and financial income<sup>7</sup>, accessing health care<sup>8</sup>, mental health<sup>9</sup>, domestic abuse<sup>10</sup> and individuals may also experience discrimination and inequalities because of their gender<sup>11</sup>.

## Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is an umbrella term covering sexual identity, attraction, and behaviour. According to Stonewall<sup>12</sup>, approximately 7% of people identify as having a sexual orientation that involves being attracted to people of more than one gender.

---

<sup>6</sup> Stop Hate (2023) Gender Based Hate Crime, Found at [www.stophateuk.org/about-hate-crime/gender-based-hate-crime/](http://www.stophateuk.org/about-hate-crime/gender-based-hate-crime/)

<sup>7</sup> ONS (2022) Gender Pay Gap 2022, Found at [www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2022](http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2022)

<sup>8</sup> WHO (2023) Gender and Health, Found at [www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/gender-and-health](http://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/gender-and-health)

<sup>9</sup> Mental Health Foundation (2023) Men and Mental Health, Found at [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/men-and-mental-health](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/men-and-mental-health) <sup>10</sup> ONS (2021) Domestic Abuse Victims, Found at [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022)

<sup>11</sup> CIPD (2023) Gender Equality Work, Found at [www.cipd.org/uk/views-and-insights/cipd-viewpoint/gender-equality-work/](http://www.cipd.org/uk/views-and-insights/cipd-viewpoint/gender-equality-work/)

<sup>12</sup> Stonewall (2022) Rainbow Britain Report, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/rainbow\\_britain\\_report.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/rainbow_britain_report.pdf)



According to the Census 2021<sup>13</sup>, 89.4% of the Welsh population identify as heterosexual or straight, 7.6% of the population 'did not answer', with 3% of the population identifying as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or 'other'.

Research investigating people's experience of accessing public services has found that people that identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or an orientation other than heterosexual, often involves inequality and restricted access. Although there is very limited research on fire and rescue services, restricted access has been highlighted in various public services including health care<sup>14</sup> and Police and Local authorities<sup>15</sup>.

## Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This means an individual does not need to have undergone any treatment or surgery to be protected by law. Evidence shows that when transgender (41%) and/or non-binary (31%) people reveal their gender variance, they are exposed to a risk of discrimination, bullying and hate crime<sup>16</sup>.

67% of transgender people and 70% of non-binary people had experienced depression in the past year<sup>17</sup>. Almost half of the people who identified as transgender (46%) thought about taking their own life in the past year; 60% thought their life was not worth living; and 12% had made a suicide attempt.

---

<sup>13</sup> ONS (2021) Sexual Orientation, Age and Sex in England and Wales, Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/articles/sexualorientationageandsexenglandandwales/census2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/articles/sexualorientationageandsexenglandandwales/census2021)

<sup>14</sup> Stonewall (2018) LGBT+ in Britain Report 2018, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_health.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt_in_britain_health.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Stonewall (2017) LGBT+ in Britain: Hate Crime, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_hate\\_crime.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt_in_britain_hate_crime.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Stonewall (2018) LGBT+ in Britain: Trans Report, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_-\\_trans\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt_in_britain_-_trans_report_final.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Manchester University (2018) Found at: <https://sites.manchester.ac.uk/carms/2020/06/17/gender-identity-why-are-transgender-and-non-binary-people-more-at-risk-of-suicide/>

By comparison, it is estimated that around 20% of the general population experience suicidal feelings in their lifetime<sup>18</sup> and around 13% self-harm<sup>19</sup>. Therefore, transgender and non-binary people are at a much greater risk of a range of suicidal experiences, as they face mental health problems and suicidal experiences at significantly higher rates than the general population, especially amongst younger people<sup>20,21</sup>.

Research has also found that trans and/or non-binary people encounter significant difficulties in accessing and using health and social care services due to staffs' lack of knowledge and understanding and sometimes prejudice<sup>22</sup>.

Research carried out by Stonewall<sup>23</sup> found that a quarter of health and social care staff were not confident in their ability to respond to the specific care needs of trans and/or non-binary people patients and service users.

An increasing number of trans people are accessing Gender Identity Clinics; it is unclear if this represents an increase in the trans population or an increasing proportion of the trans population accessing Gender Identity Services<sup>24</sup>.

Whilst there are no official estimates of gender reassignment at either national or regional level, Stonewall estimate<sup>25</sup> that around 1% of the population identify as trans, including people identifying as non-binary. Therefore, a logical estimation would suggest between 6,000 and 7,000 people in North Wales are experiencing some degree of gender variance.

<sup>18</sup> Time To Change (2020). Suicidal feelings, Found at: <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/about-mental-health/types-problems/suicidal-feelings#toc-2>

<sup>19</sup> Selfharm UK (2020) Self-harm statistics, Found at: <https://www.selfharm.co.uk/get-information/the-facts/self-harm-statistics>

<sup>20</sup> Stonewall (2017) School Report, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/school-report-2017](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/school-report-2017)

<sup>21</sup> Transgender Trend (2016) The Suicide Myth, Found at: [www.transgendertrend.com/the-suicide-myth/](http://www.transgendertrend.com/the-suicide-myth/)

<sup>22</sup> Royal College of Nursing (2020) Fair Care for Trans and Non-Binary, Found at: [www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-fair-care-trans-non-binary-uk-pub-009430](http://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-fair-care-trans-non-binary-uk-pub-009430)

<sup>23</sup> Stonewall (2018) LGBT+ in Britain: Trans Report, Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_-\\_trans\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/lgbt_in_britain_-_trans_report_final.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> LGBT Foundation (2017) Transforming Outcomes A review of the needs and assets of the trans community, Found at: <https://dxfy8lrzbpwv.cloudfront.net/Files/acd2bcc5-a2d4-4203-8e22-aed9f4843921/TransformingOutcomesLGBTFdn.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> University of Bristol (2018) Ensuring trans people in Wales receive dignified and inclusive health and social care in later life: The Trans Ageing and Care (TrAC) project, 2016-18, Found at: [www.bristol.ac.uk/policybristol/policy-briefings/trans-ageing-and-care-project/](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/policybristol/policy-briefings/trans-ageing-and-care-project/)

## Pregnancy and Maternity

The Equality Act 2010 protects people who are pregnant, have given birth in the last 26 weeks (non-work context) or are on maternity leave (work context) against discrimination in relation to their pregnancy.

In the past 20 years, North Wales range between 7,086 and 7,826 live births each year. Over this period, the largest proportions of these deliveries were in the 25 to 29-year-old age group. The second largest proportion of births were in the 30 to 34-year-old group, whereas the over 40's group were the lowest. Over the past two decades, teenage births have made up between 4.7% to 9.6% of overall births in North Wales each year. With exception of the occasional year, teenage births have reduced year-on-year since 2003.

## Race

The Equality Act 2010 states that race includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. 96.8% of people in North Wales identify as White Welsh/British. Asian or Asian Welsh/British was the second largest ethnic group (1.4%), followed by mixed or multiple ethnic groups (1.1%), other ethnic group (0.4%) and Black, British Welsh/British, Caribbean or African (0.3%).

The population of North Wales is much less ethnically diverse than across England and Wales as a whole and 96.8% of the population identified as "White" in the 2021 Census. In North Wales, the highest proportions of people from "Any other White background" in 2021 were in Wrexham (4.8%) and Flintshire (3.9%) and the lowest found in Anglesey (1.9%).

The COVID-19 pandemic had a disproportionate impact on people from ethnic minority communities and recently the Welsh Government<sup>26</sup> highlighted that highlighted many people, including those who were born in Wales, still experience racism on a regular basis.

---

<sup>26</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Anti-Racism Action Plan, Found at: [www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-06/an-introduction-to-an-anti-racist-wales.pdf](http://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-06/an-introduction-to-an-anti-racist-wales.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016) Healing a divided Britain, Found at: [www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2021/healing-a-divided-britain-august-2016.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/2021/healing-a-divided-britain-august-2016.pdf)

An Equality and Human Rights Commission report<sup>27</sup> from 2016 highlighted various issues that are still relevant in 2023 for people from ethnic minority groups that continue to experience discrimination and inequality in education, employment, housing, pay and living standards, health, and the criminal justice system.

Amongst people aged 65 and over, Asian/Asian British people and Black African/Caribbean/Black British people were more likely than people from other ethnic backgrounds to have a long-term limiting illness and to be in poor health.

People of Gypsy or Irish Traveler origin were considerably more likely to be in poor health compared with all other ethnic groups (15.9% of Gypsy/Irish Travellers compared with 4.6% of White British people). Gypsies and Travellers are still regarded as having the poorest health and lowest life expectancy in the UK.

Households headed by people from 'other White', mixed/multiple, Asian/Asian British, Black African/Caribbean/Black British and 'other' ethnic backgrounds were all more likely than households headed by people from White British backgrounds to have fewer bedrooms than was required. People from mixed/multiple and Black African/Caribbean/Black British backgrounds were more likely than other ethnic groups to live in social housing. People from White British and White Irish backgrounds were less likely than other ethnic groups to be living in private rented housing.

People from all groups which were not White British were more likely than White British people to be living in a household without access to a car or van. Amongst people aged 25-34, people from White backgrounds were less likely to be unemployed than people from Black and Minority ethnic backgrounds. Amongst people aged 25-34, people from White Irish and Asian/Asian British backgrounds were more likely to have level 4 qualifications (a degree or higher) than White British people, whilst people from Black African/Caribbean/Black British, 'other' White, and 'other' ethnic backgrounds were less likely than White British people to have this level of qualification.

Amongst people aged 16-24, people from mixed multiple, White Irish, 'other' White and 'other' ethnic backgrounds were all more likely than people from White British backgrounds to have no qualifications. In the same age group, people from Asian/Asian British backgrounds were less likely than White British people to have no qualifications. The percentage of people in this age group with no qualifications was similar for Black African/Caribbean/Black British people and White British people.

Amongst people aged 25-49, people from White Irish, White British and 'other' White backgrounds were less likely to be unemployed than people from Black and Minority ethnic backgrounds. Amongst people aged 25-49, White Irish and Asian/Asian British people were more likely to be in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations than White British people, whilst people from Black African/Caribbean/Black British, 'other' White, mixed/multiple, and 'other' ethnic backgrounds were less likely than White British people to be in such occupations.

## **Religion and/or Belief**

According to the 2021 Census<sup>28</sup>, Christianity is the most common religion within all ages in North Wales and represents 49.8% of the population. Whilst the next main group stated they had no religion at 41.7%, statistics show 1.8% of the population account for people who follow Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh religions. 6.7% of people chose not to state their religion or belief.

In summary, North Wales has a higher proportion of people who are Christian, have no religion, or have not stated a religion than the national figures. In contrast it has a lower proportion of people who follow a religion other than Christianity, which reflects the ethnic composition of the region.

---

<sup>28</sup> Office for National Statistics (2021) Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021 Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021)

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

As mentioned earlier in the report, marriage and civil partnership do not fall under the PSED in the same way as the other protected characteristics, however the Equality Act 2010 does protect individuals who are in a civil partnership, or marriage, against discrimination. The Service has considered this protected characteristic in the same way, mainly because a person's relationship status is one of the many factors that may place them at more 'risk' of fire in the home. For example, if people live alone, they are more at risk of experiencing fire in the home. People aged 65 and over that live alone are at even further risk.

Evidence suggests being married is associated with better mental health<sup>29</sup>, and physical health<sup>30</sup>. There is less evidence on the benefits of being in a civil partnership, but it is likely the benefits will also be experienced by people in similarly committed relationship such as civil partnerships. Where heterosexual couples differ from couples in same-sex relationships and civil partnerships, they experience hate crime, discrimination, and victimisation because of their sexual orientation<sup>31</sup> and this is likely to negatively impact on their mental wellbeing and sense of safety. This may also relate to a lack of public recognition and a consistent social framework on which such relationships can be built<sup>32</sup>.

Across older age groups, both men and women living as a couple were more likely to be in very good or good health compared to those not living as a couple, regardless of whether those not living as a couple lived with other people<sup>33</sup>.

---

<sup>29</sup> Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K. & Newton, T. L. (2001) Marriage and health: his and hers. *Psychological bulletin*, Vol 127(4), 472.

<sup>30</sup> Johnson, D.R. & Wu, J. (2002) An empirical test of crisis, social selection, and role explanations of the relationship between marital disruption and psychological distress: A pooled time-series analysis of four-wave panel data. *Journal of marriage and family*, Vol 64(1), 211-224.

<sup>31</sup> King et al (2003) Mental health and quality of life of gay men and lesbians in England and Wales: controlled, cross-sectional study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol 183(6), 552-558. <sup>32</sup> King, M. & Barlett, A. (2006) What same sex civil partnerships may mean for health Found at: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2465551/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2465551/)

<sup>33</sup> Office of National Statistics (2021) People Population and Community, Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/profileoftheolderpopulationlivinginenglandandwalesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-04-03](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/profileoftheolderpopulationlivinginenglandandwalesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-04-03)

<sup>34</sup> Office of National Statistics (2021) People Population and Community, Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/profileoftheolderpopulationlivinginenglandandwalesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-04-03](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/profileoftheolderpopulationlivinginenglandandwalesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-04-03)

As you would expect, people aged 16-24 are the most likely to be single, while those aged 65+ are the most likely age group to be widowed or a surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership<sup>34</sup>. Same sex civil partnerships are most common amongst 35–49-year-olds, where they account for 0.2% of the total age group. The proportion of people that are married, separated or divorced increases with age, until 65+ when it begins to fall, to consider the increasing proportion of people who have lost a partner.

## Welsh Language Considerations

According to the 2021 Census<sup>35</sup>, significantly, the highest percentages of Welsh speakers in Wales can be found in the North Wales counties of Gwynedd (64.4%) and Anglesey (55.8%). North Wales as a region is home to over a third of Wales' Welsh speaking population.

The Service is committed to promoting and facilitating the use of Welsh as a language of the workplace and community, and reports on this annually as required under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure (2011). Alongside this, the Service supports the Welsh Government's 'Cymraeg 2050' Welsh language strategy with the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 (Welsh Government, 2017). The strategy aims to increase both the number of Welsh language speakers and to create favourable conditions for this to happen, including increasing the use of Welsh within the workplace across all sectors. More information is published in the Equalities and Human Rights Commission monitoring report [click here](#).

## Socio-economic Considerations

According to the Census 2021, some of the most deprived areas in Wales are concentrated in North Wales coastal and border towns<sup>36,37</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Welsh Language in Wales, Found at: [www.gov.wales/welsh-language-wales-census-2021.html](http://www.gov.wales/welsh-language-wales-census-2021.html)

<sup>36</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Analysis of population characteristics by area deprivation (Census 2021), Found at: [www.gov.wales/analysis-population-characteristics-area-deprivation-census-2021.html](http://www.gov.wales/analysis-population-characteristics-area-deprivation-census-2021.html)

<sup>37</sup> Welsh Government (2021) Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): April 2020 to March 2021. Found at: [www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2021/9/2/1632824878/young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet-april-2020-march-2021.pdf](http://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2021/9/2/1632824878/young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet-april-2020-march-2021.pdf)



These areas include Rhyl and Kinmel Bay. In Rhyl Southwest, around 70% of households are affected by deprivation according to the map. Other areas, such as Abergele, Denbigh West and Gronant also have some high rates of deprivation, at around 60%. Around 50% of homes are affected by at least one type of deprivation in St Asaph, Dyserth and Mostyn. Caia Park Community in Wrexham lies within the 10 most deprived areas for the income, education and community safety domains. Other deprived areas include coastal communities across Flintshire such as Deeside, Delyn and Alyn. Comprehensive engagement was conducted in these deprived areas and a full breakdown is provided in full consultation report.

North Wales (14.4%) has the highest proportion of young people (aged 16 to 24) who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), when compared to 13.1% in South Wales who have the lowest<sup>38</sup>. With intersectionality in mind, 55.8% (26,600) of males aged 16 to 24 years old were NEET, compared to 44.2% (21,100) of females aged 16 to 24. Disabled young people are more likely to be NEET than young people that are not disabled and the proportion of disabled people who are NEET rises from 18.1% at age 16 to 18 to 41.2% at age 19 to 24<sup>39</sup>.

The employment rate for people aged 16 to 64 in Wales was 73.0% in the year ending March 2023, down 0.6 percentage points on the previous year<sup>40</sup>. Unemployment rates differ across North Wales with Gwynedd (26.4%), Denbighshire (26.1%), Conwy (24.2%), Anglesey (22.6%) (Wrexham (22.1%) and Flintshire (21.3%)<sup>41</sup>.

---

<sup>38</sup> Welsh Government (2023) Participation of young people in education and the labour market: 2021 and 2022 (provisional), Found at: [www.gov.wales/participation-young-people-education-and-labour-market-2021-and-2022-provisional.html](http://www.gov.wales/participation-young-people-education-and-labour-market-2021-and-2022-provisional.html)

<sup>39</sup> Welsh Government (2022) Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): April 2020 to March 2021, Found at: [www.gov.wales/young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet-april-2020-march-2021.html](http://www.gov.wales/young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet-april-2020-march-2021.html)

<sup>40</sup> Welsh Government (2023) Labour market statistics (Annual Population Survey): April 2022 to March 2023. Found at: [www.gov.wales/labour-market-statistics-annual-population-survey-april-2022-march-2023.html](http://www.gov.wales/labour-market-statistics-annual-population-survey-april-2022-march-2023.html)

<sup>41</sup> Welsh Government (2023) Labour market statistics (Annual Population Survey): April 2022 to March 2023. Found at: [www.gov.wales/labour-market-statistics-annual-population-survey-april-2022-march-2023.html](http://www.gov.wales/labour-market-statistics-annual-population-survey-april-2022-march-2023.html)

<sup>42</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2020) UK Poverty Report 2019/20. Found at: [www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2019-20](http://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2019-20)

<sup>43</sup> Welsh Government (2019) Most children in poverty living in working households. Found at: [www.gov.wales/most-children-poverty-living-working-households-new-report](http://www.gov.wales/most-children-poverty-living-working-households-new-report)

<sup>44</sup> Office of National Statistics (2021) Household deprivation variable: Census 2021, Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/census/census2021dictionary/variablesbytopic/demographyvariables/census](http://www.ons.gov.uk/census/census2021dictionary/variablesbytopic/demographyvariables/census)



Employment (or working) does not preclude experiencing poverty and deprivation. Low-paid work is the biggest contributor to in-work poverty as it makes it very difficult to escape poverty, mainly because some people don't get paid enough or there are not many well-paying jobs in a particular area<sup>42</sup>. Pay gaps and in-work poverty affect certain groups much more than others and the risk of in-work poverty is greater for disabled and ethnic minority workers<sup>43</sup>.

In terms of health, a household is classified as deprived if any person in the household has general health that is bad or very bad or is identified as disabled<sup>44</sup>. A breakdown of disability can be found in the relevant section on page 9, it is worth noting that 21.1% of the North Wales population have a disability and/or long-term health condition<sup>45</sup>. Although, Gwynedd (18.1%) is one of the local authorities with the lowest proportion of disabled people in Wales, the average percentage of disabled people across the region is higher than other parts of the UK. With intersectionality in mind, 22.3% of females and 19.8% of males were disabled. The percentage of those who were limited a little was 11.9% for females and 10.3% for males. A higher proportion of females than males indicated that they were limited a lot; 10.4% and 9.5% respectively<sup>46</sup>.

With intersectionality in mind, there is a direct link between the cost-of-living crisis and health with 60% of people in Wales saying that their health has worsened due to rising costs<sup>47</sup>.

---

[s2021/householddeprivation#:~:text=A%20household%20is%20classified%20as%20deprived%20in%20the%20health%20dimension,or%20illnesses%20are%20considered%20disabled](#)

<sup>45</sup> Welsh Government (2023) Health disability and provision unpaid care Wales Census 2021, Found at: [www.gov.wales/health-disability-and-provision-unpaid-care-wales-census-2021-html](http://www.gov.wales/health-disability-and-provision-unpaid-care-wales-census-2021-html)

<sup>46</sup> Office of National Statistics (2021) Disability by age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales: Census 2021, Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20England%2C%2018.7%25%20of%20females,19.8%25%20of%20males%20were%20disabled.](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20England%2C%2018.7%25%20of%20females,19.8%25%20of%20males%20were%20disabled.)

<sup>47</sup> National Health Service (2022) 60 per cent of people in Wales say their health has worsened due to rising cost of living. Found at: [www.nhsconfed.org/news/60-cent-people-wales-say-their-health-has-worsened-due-rising-cost-living](http://www.nhsconfed.org/news/60-cent-people-wales-say-their-health-has-worsened-due-rising-cost-living)

Life expectancy is an important consideration when exploring living standards and health. In Wales, life expectancy at birth was 82 years for women and 78 years for men for 2018-20<sup>48</sup>. This was a slight reduction for both males and females, following higher death rates in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthy life expectancy was 62 years for females and 61 years for males in 2018 to 2020.

Welsh Government statistics<sup>49</sup> suggest the highest life expectancy for women in North Wales was 83.1 years in Conwy and Gwynedd, while in men it was Gwynedd (79.5). The lowest life expectancy for women in North Wales was in Denbighshire (81.1) and in men it was Denbighshire and Wrexham (78.3).

<sup>48</sup> Welsh Government (2022c) Wellbeing of Wales, 2022. Found at: [www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-2022-healthier-wales.html#:~:text=Life%20expectancy%20at%20birth%20was,males%20in%202018%20to%202020](http://www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-2022-healthier-wales.html#:~:text=Life%20expectancy%20at%20birth%20was,males%20in%202018%20to%202020)

<sup>49</sup> Welsh Government (2022c) Wellbeing of Wales, 2022. Found at: [www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-2022-healthier-wales.html#:~:text=Life%20expectancy%20at%20birth%20was,males%20in%202018%20to%202020](http://www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-2022-healthier-wales.html#:~:text=Life%20expectancy%20at%20birth%20was,males%20in%202018%20to%202020)

## Engagement and Consultation with Specific Equality Groups

A series of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion focus groups were organised in partnership with equality interest groups across North Wales. During each focus group, an overview of the CRMIP was provided and feedback was captured in line with the same questions listed in the consultation questionnaire. This approach ensured the questions posed to the community members were consistent, and feedback could be compared and contrasted.

A total of 24 focus groups were organised in partnership with equality interest groups, which included community and youth groups, charities and specific departments within local authorities that supported people that are traditionally more 'at risk' of fire and other emergencies. 23 focus groups took place in person in Flintshire (x 9), Gwynedd (x 7), Denbighshire (x 4) and Wrexham (x 3). 1 online focus group was organised for a charity that cover North Wales. While no focus groups were specifically requested in Conwy or Anglesey during this consultation, people from these areas participated in the focus groups that were organised.

Consultation questionnaires were completed during the focus groups and scribes assisted some people who were unable to write. Some attendees chose to take a copy of the CRMIP 2025-26 and questionnaire with them to complete and return at a later stage. Focus groups are a very effective way to capture feedback, especially amongst people who know very little about the fire and rescue service as they are able to ask questions and query information that is not clear.

Although 279 people responded to the consultation, some of the respondents were providing feedback on behalf of a much wider group of people (i.e. their 'community' group or charity). Amongst the 24 focus groups, over 1,000 people were engaged and represented in the feedback that was provided.

## Summary of the Findings of the Equality Impact Analysis

Equality related themes relating to all five principles has been included in the relevant sections. Feedback has been summarised below and mitigation can be found in **BOLD**. Please note that detailed action plans sit behind many of the 'mitigation' summaries provided.

### People Principle

**Developing diverse teams:** There was a strong consensus amongst respondents that recruiting and developing diverse teams adds value and helps deliver inclusive services. There was some specific reference to age, ethnicity, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

**Mitigation:** To ensure the service attracts and recruits talented people from all backgrounds, a range of communication methods are adopted and specific interventions are developed to target people from groups that are underrepresented in the workforce. The service also reviews its recruitment practices on a regular basis to ensure best practice is adopted.

**Language and cultural barriers:** Concerns were raised about different ethnic minority groups experiencing language barriers regarding recruitment and how religious and cultural practices could clash with recruitment activity.

**Mitigation:** Recruitment activity take place in response to the demands of the service, although the recruitment of firefighters is ongoing which presents multiple opportunities for people to apply around specific key dates in the annual calendar.

**Addressing the issue of fulltime and on-call recruitment:** Some respondents felt the service should improve the way it recruits people into on-call roles to provide more effectively emergency cover. There was specific reference to improving emergency cover in all locations, but feedback from various stakeholders suggested south Gwynedd was a particular concern. There was particular concern for the lack of fulltime employment opportunities for people living in Gwynedd who are currently unable to work fulltime in the area they live.

**Mitigation:** In partnership with multiple stakeholders, the service is conducting a review of its emergency cover and the outcome of the review will determine future duty systems and fire cover arrangements to ensure the best possible fire cover is provided.

**Entry Requirements:** The topic of entry requirements and criteria to join the Service as a Firefighter and across different Corporate Service roles emerged during the consultation. People in various areas of North Wales were concerned that the Service could be missing out on talented people because entry requirements that include GCSE grade 4 or above (or 'C' or above under the previous grading system), other formal qualifications and the need to have a full driving license excludes many talented and capable people from joining.

**Mitigation:** Feedback will be passed on the Service's Organisational Resource Committee and People and Development Group to consider, and every effort will be made to adjust entry requirements and promote inclusion where possible.

## Prevention Principle

**Safe and Well Provision:** There was huge support for Safe and Well checks (SAWC), although some equality groups felt the service should increase the number of Safe and Well checks we conduct. Many respondents reported concerns that disabled people, including those with health conditions and older people are at an increased risk regarding fire and emergencies due being isolated, having limited mobility and often unable to escape an emergency situation quickly and independently.

**Mitigation:** The Service has increased the number of SAWC in 2024/25 and due to an evidence-based points scoring criteria that is used to prioritise which people will receive a SAWC, often includes disabled people and older age groups. With regards to independence, people that live alone also score additional points which ensures a holistic view is taken.

**People living longer, but not always living healthier:** Many respondents raised concerns relating to an aging population, mainly around the fact people are living longer, but not living healthier. Concerns relate to a growing number of people being more at risk of slips, trips and falls, with particularly reference to people living with dementia. Many respondents also highlighted people that live alone were more vulnerable if they fall or get injured, while increased number of people feeling lonely and isolated was mentioned multiple times in various focus groups.

**Mitigation:** This feedback will benefit the prevention team and many partner agencies that include charities and public services that work collaboratively to address social care, health and safety concerns. This information (i.e. people live alone, disabled, older people) also reinforces the Service's approach and criteria 'high priority' groups that receive a Safe and Well Check.

**Blocked and restricted access to paths and walkways:** Various disabled people and older people with restricted mobility raised concerns about paths and walkways that are often blocked by parked cars, vans and other vehicles. The main issue is access, especially for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs who have to enter busy roads to pass parked vehicles. Issues of vehicles blocking dropped curbs were also highlighted.

**Mitigation:** This feedback will benefit the prevention team who can work with partner agencies that work collaboratively to address concerns relating to road and public safety.

**Increase in mental health and wellbeing:** Individual respondents and local charities raised their concerns regarding the increase in cases of adverse mental health and wellbeing in the region. Many respondents felt that people with poor mental health are at an increased risk of accidents, fire, other emergencies, self-harm and suicide ideation. Respondents also pointed out that people that live alone are particularly vulnerable.

**Mitigation:** The Service use mental health (and living alone) within the criteria that helps prioritise those who receive a Safe and Well Check. The Service also signpost (and in some cases, refer) members of the community that they feel can benefit from professional advice and support regarding their mental health and wellbeing. The Service also promote useful resources and information through the delivery of services and through specific campaigns.

**Language and cultural barriers:** Suggestions were made by different ethnic minority groups concerning how the Service considers language barriers, religious and cultural practices. Some ethnic minority groups felt the Service could improve the way it engages with them to ensure key safety messages are received and acted upon.

**Mitigation:** This feedback will benefit the Prevention Team and they review their campaigns and associated community engagement annually. Planned activity is shaped around safety campaigns and new and emerging trends. This holistic approach ensures the services is identifying risk and developing safety messages to help prevent associated emergencies.

**People living in poverty:** Some respondents referred to themes that relate to lower socio-economic status including people that may be an increased risk due to poverty and deprivation. Discussions related to people living in poor living conditions was raised, but it was unsure whether the conditions were as a result of individual lifestyle choices or the condition of the physical buildings, potential to heat their property or other factors outside the control of the individual.

**Mitigation:** Although the Prevention team have excellent awareness of the current trends regarding risk in domestic properties, further engagement and research will be beneficial. Specific campaigns and projects have been designed to protect people, prevent various types of emergencies alternatives and refer people who are in need to external partners (i.e. food banks, financial advice, care support).

**Inequality and Disproportionate Impact on Women:** Consultation with women and gender-based charities highlights a growing concern that women are disproportionately impacted by domestic abuse/violence. Women are also disproportionately impacted when they are sentenced to jail as they often lose their employment, homes and access to their children. Many women have no alternative and they fall back into their abusive relationships because of the lack of support and provision available for them to start a new life. These situations are likely to cause some women adverse mental health and those that end up homeless become at an increased risk of emergencies.

**Mitigation:** As an emergency service that works hard to prevent emergencies, we will work closely with women support groups and gender-based charities to monitor the situation to ensure key safety messages are reaching women in abusive relationships and people at risk of homelessness.

**Concerns relating to Road Safety:** Respondents, especially disabled people and older people were deeply concerned about road safety. There was specific reference to people driving whilst being on their phones, 20mph speed restriction being effective, but also some drivers still speeding, modern agriculture vehicles taking too much space up on the roads and late harvest this year has left mud on the roads. Particularly concern in central parts of Denbighshire concerning tractor drivers using phones whilst driving.

**Mitigation:** This feedback reinforces many points that were raised during the initial CRMP consultation in April 2024. This feedback will benefit the prevention team and partner agencies that work collaboratively to address concerns relating to road and public safety.

**New and Emerging Technologies:** Many respondents were concerned about e-bikes and e-scooters in terms of fire risk, but also how they are hazards on pathways, roads, but also a fire risk in the home. Although concerns were raised in various areas, particular concerns were raised in Bala, Rhyl and Wrexham.

**Mitigation:** This feedback will add the growing numbers of reports which enables the service to assess concerns raised by the public and incidents data which informs risk, response and prevention activity.

## Protection Principle

**Strong support for the protection work:** The majority of respondents felt the service's protection team add value, and a risk-based approach helps ensure local businesses are safe, and they promote public safety.

**Mitigation:** Through a risk-based inspection programme and referrals, the service advises local businesses accordingly, thus holding landlords and business owners to account for potential and actual risks to public safety.

**Limited space in business settings:** Respondents, particular disabled and older people highlighted concerns at various businesses across North Wales. The inability to escape a shop in an emergency was mentioned several times. 'So called *physical modifications*' to supermarkets and shops since the Covid-19 pandemic was particularly concerning because some changes appear to have negatively impacted on access.

**Mitigation:** The Service's Protection team collate intelligence on an ongoing basis to assess risk. This feedback can be shared with partner agencies and local businesses to consider and assess.



**Specific concerns in Supermarkets:** Several respondents raised concerns about their perceived inability to escape fire or emergency situation in supermarkets, particularly the large stores where respondents have seen a huge reduction of staff which impacts the potential support they would require in an emergency situation. Also, many respondents felt that staff who restock shelves use large cages which block access and restrict ability to escape, mostly because there is a fear everybody would dash for the exit in an emergency and leave older people and disabled people behind.

**Mitigation:** The Service's Protection team collate intelligence to assess risk. This feedback can be shared with partners agencies and local businesses to consideration and assess.

**Infrastructure and accessibility concerns:** Feedback suggests many people across North Wales experience access issues getting in and around shops, often older buildings, with steps on the entrance (or exit) and narrow access inside. There were particular concerns for the limited number of accessible parking in supermarkets and other private business settings. Several respondents across North Wales felt strongly that having to park in the main car park away from the main entrance increases the risk of falls, being hit by a vehicle and undermines the need to have blue badge. Parents with disabled children, disabled people, especially those amongst the older age groups where particularly concerned.

**Mitigation:** The Service's Protection team collate intelligence which help assess risk. This feedback can be shared with partners agencies and local businesses to consideration and assess.

**New and Emerging Technologies:** Many respondents were concerned about the fire risk relating to e-bikes and e-scooters, especially in shared accommodation and housing. Other electrical items such as power chairs were mentioned, particularly in terms to how they are stored in buildings such as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), care and residential homes.

**Mitigation:** The Service collate intelligence which help assess risk, plus checks within the current inspection framework identify risks and safety measures involving electrical goods. Any specific reports and referrals are followed up by the Protection team.

## Response Principle

**Population aging:** With a significant portion of North Wales' population aged 65 and over, concerns were raised during the consultation regarding response times, particularly in rural geographical areas where slower emergency response times might affect their safety. There was general support for another review of emergency cover provision, strong support to extend the current provision in Gwynedd, ideally more full-time positions and several individuals proposed building new fire stations as a way of improving cover in both rural and urban areas.

**Mitigation:** The Service have a working group that are focused on devising viable options to ensure all areas of North Wales have effective fire and emergency capability in terms of response.

**Disability and age:** Feedback suggests an increasing prevalence of disability in different age groups, which could affect emergency response needs and the ability of certain individuals to escape during emergencies, such as fires. More than half the respondents aged over 65 were disabled with limited mobility and reduced ability to escape from an emergency situation. The increase of people with long term health conditions and obesity were also raised as concerns.

**Mitigation:** The service target older people, disabled people and those that meet other criteria to receive Safe and Well checks which enable people to receive advice of how to escape a building safely and quickly, as well as fire detection systems that are installed to alert them of fire at the earliest possible stage. With regards to responding and rescuing people who are obese, the Service are reviewing its current fleet of special vehicles with the view of purchasing new purposeful vehicles that ensure bariatric rescues are possible in the future.

**General support to review specialist vehicles:** A small number of respondents specifically highlighted their support for the service to conduct a review into our fire appliances and specialist vehicles. Specific reference to this workstream was evident amongst older people and disabled people who felt specialist vehicles will help future proof the service to be able to respond effectively in the future. Respondents with an invested interest in caring for family members and those working in the care sector were supportive of this area of work.

**Mitigation:** The Service have developed a robust business case to purchase new specialist vehicles to enhance our ability to respond effectively to a range of fire incidents and other emergencies. This feedback will benefit various working groups that will focus on special vehicles and also inform strategic decision making in the future.

## Environmental Principle

**General support to reduce carbon footprint:** There was general support for this principle amongst all equality interest groups, particularly any changes that will reduce the Service's carbon footprint and costs long term. There was also recognition that a blanket switch to electric vehicles was not viable, particularly with fire appliances as the technology is not proven and cost effective.

**Mitigation:** The service has planned to reduce their carbon footprint and become more energy efficient through various projects which can be seen within the service's [Environmental Strategy 2023-2030](#).

**Creative cost saving ideas:** Respondents provided various ideas which related to the Service investing and installing new and emerging technologies such as wind turbines, solar panels and exploring alternative fuels which are possible long-term cost-effective changes.

**Mitigation:** Although all the ideas mentioned that been previous considered, some similar projects are already in the development and implementation stages, which can be seen within the service's [Environmental Strategy 2023-2030](#). In addition, the feedback and ideas provided during the consultation will be forwarded to the Service's Environment and Sustainability Group for further discussion and possible action.

### If you require this report in an alternative format

Please [contact us](#), Telephone:

01745 535250

Or email us: [enquiries@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:enquiries@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM – MATRICES AND PROMPTS

**Equality Matrix and Scoring** - the Integrated Impact Assessment is based on the RAG risk scoring as follows:

| LIKELIHOOD |                 |          |                  |                |
|------------|-----------------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Unlikely   | Low Probability | Possible | High Probability | Almost Certain |
| 1          | 2               | 3        | 4                | 5              |
| VL         | L               | M        | H                | VH             |

| IMPACT |    |  |
|--------|----|--|
| 5      | VH | Catastrophic – legal action (discrimination claim)   |
| 4      | H  | Major – a serious matter that may lead to negative publicity and disciplinary action within the Service context. |
| 3      | M  | Moderate – an external complaint or internal grievance.  |
| 2      | L  | Minor – additional small amendments or changes to policy are required.   |
| 1      | VL | Little impact – only minor considerations are required.  |

|            |                  |   | IMPACT |    |    |    |    |
|------------|------------------|---|--------|----|----|----|----|
|            |                  |   | VL     | L  | M  | H  | VH |
|            |                  |   | 1      | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| LIKELIHOOD | Almost Certain   | 5 | 5      | 10 | 15 | 20 | 25 |
|            | High Probability | 4 | 4      | 8  | 12 | 16 | 20 |
|            | Possible         | 3 | 3      | 6  | 9  | 12 | 15 |
|            | Low Probability  | 2 | 2      | 4  | 6  | 8  | 10 |
|            | Unlikely         | 1 | 1      | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |

| Overall Risk Rating          | Description   | Monitoring   |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>1 – 4<br/>Manageable</b>  | The risk may be so low that the Service chooses to accept it and instead simply records that the risk has been identified and that, due to its low likelihood or impact, no further action will be required. Alternatively, minor considerations may be needed upon implementation.                                 | The Project Lead will maintain oversight and continue to manage locally.   |
| <b>5 – 10<br/>Medium</b>     | The EIA owner will mitigate identified risks through slight amendments or implement further controls that reduce or eliminate the risk. Alternatively, the owner could confirm that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate the risk and no further reasonable action is possible.                         |  |
| <b>12 – 15<br/>High</b>      | This policy, project or service cannot be rolled out until detailed external and / or internal consultation has taken place with those that this area of work affects.  | Scores above 12 will require further action, at which point it is advisable to consult with the relevant project sponsor or Principal Officer. |
| <b>16 – 25<br/>Very High</b> | High risks have been identified, so take immediate action. If legal action is likely, then the Service cannot go ahead with the policy without fundamentally changing it. If the impact remains severe even with this mitigation, then consultation with internal and / or external groups will have to take place. |  |

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

### Purpose

This Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) ensures that the Service's policies, projects and provision do not unlawfully discriminate against any person, especially those who fall under protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The scope of this particular EqIAs ensures our Service go beyond any legal requirements and public sector equality duties. This document sets out to identify risk(s) to people, and provides some description as to how the Service intends to mitigate such risk.

Once an EqIA has been completed, it will have to be checked and signed off by the relevant Head of Department. Anyone completing an EqIA who is unclear as to any of the content should contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Title.</b>   | <b>Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2025-26<br/>Post Consultation Phase</b>  |
| <b>Corporate objectives being addressed.</b>                    | People Principle.<br>Prevention Principle.<br>Protection Principle.<br>Response Principle.<br>Environment Principle.  |
| <b>Department / function carrying out the assessment.</b>       | Planning Performance and Transformation.  |
| <b>Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy?</b> | Project Sponsor – DCFO Stewart Forshaw.   |
| <b>Who is involved in the impact assessment process?</b>        | ACFO Anthony Jones – Project Lead.<br>Gary Ashton – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager.<br>Benji Evans – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer. |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?</b>   | The post CRMIP consultation EqlA aims to reassess the potential risks that were initially highlighted in the pre-consultation EqlA. Initial mapping of external stakeholders (including different equality interest groups) enabled the Service to identify, engage and communicate as a way of seeking feedback from a representative population of people across North Wales. Through the methodology of online surveys and physical engagement achieved in 24 focus groups, the Service have been able to effectively engage with people from diverse backgrounds and geographical areas. This insight helped identify new and emerging risks, but also assess how community members feel about the current principle within the CRMIP 2025-26. |
| <b>Who is intended to benefit from the project?</b>   | Internal and external stakeholders.  |
| <b>Is the policy / initiative / service for external or internal purposes?</b>  | Internal and external.   |
| <b>Does this policy / initiative / service have an impact upon the On-Call duty service?</b>  | Yes.   |
| <b>Are other organisations involved in the delivery?<br/>If so, please state which these may be.</b>  | Various stakeholders that will assist our Service to mitigate the risks highlighted in this EqlA and full Equality Impact Analysis Report.   |
| <b>What information / previous experience does the Service have, i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (information can be demographic data, i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other Services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises).</b> | <p>Our Service benefit from the recent census 2021 data which provides insight regarding demographics, population information and specific intelligence on different equality interest groups across the region.</p> <p>Following similar consultations where extensive engagement took place with the North Wales community, the Service will benefit from an established community risk profile methodology, comprehensive mapping exercises and the production of Equality Impact Analysis reports which outline strategies and specific actions that help mitigate risks to members of the local community.</p>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Has a similar impact assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy?</b></p> <p><b>If so – is it possible to adapt / incorporate their findings?</b></p> | <p>Various EqlAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EqlAs help us identify risk and the Service is able to implement suitable interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EqlAs help the Service reflect on learning of previous experiences of their own practices, but other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.</p> |
| <p><b>Date of next review (if applicable).</b></p>  | <p>This post consultation EqlA will help inform future CRMIP consultations.</p>   |

## Equality Impact Assessment

| Protected Characteristics or Equality Theme |               |                | Rationale for your decision (include / refer to evidence)<br><br>How might this have an impact?  |
|---|---------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Age (band)</b>                           |               |                | Description of age band:   |
| <b>Likelihood</b>                           | <b>Impact</b> | <b>Overall</b> | <p>The total population across North Wales is 687,000 (ONS, 2023a). The trend of population ageing has continued, with more people than ever before in the older age groups. The ONS (2023a) states that 22.3% of the population were aged 65 years and over. Out of all local authorities across Wales, Conwy (27.4%) and the Isle of Anglesey (26.4%) have the highest percentages of people aged 65 years and over. Conwy (1.5%) has the highest percentage of people aged 90 years in Wales.</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to explore disability and age due to a notable difference in the data between 2011 and 2021, particularly in the younger and older age groups (ONS, 2023b). For females aged 15 to 19 years, the percentage of disability was 13.3% in 2021, 8.1 percentage points higher than in 2011 and 7.9 percentage points higher than in 2001. This trend continued into the 20 to 24-year age group, where disability prevalence increased substantially, from 6.2% in 2011 to 17.9% in 2021. For males, the increased prevalence of disability in 2021 began at earlier ages; 8.6% of males aged 5 to 9 years were disabled in 2021, compared with 5.6% in 2011 and 6.5% in 2001 (ONS, 2023b).</p> |
| 5   | 1             | 5              |  |



|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>Age as a concept emerged various times during the consultation. From a recruitment perspective, respondents in the consultation felt strongly about the Service's ability to recruit people across all age groups and older people have a lot of life experience and lots to offer. Our Service promote equality and inclusion within its recruitment processes by adopting best practices, thus easing any concerns the community hold. From a service delivery perspective, multiple respondents acknowledged North Wales has an ageing population. Respondents typically viewed older people as the most 'at risk' group of people in the region and although people are living longer, they are not necessarily living healthier. In terms of Safe and Well checks, there was a high level of support for this prevention activity and specific reference was made to older people, especially older disabled people as the main group of people to benefit. Further factors that impact on older people is provided in the full Equality Impact Analysis report.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Disability |        |         | <p>According to ONS (2023c), 21.1% of the population have a disability and/or long-term health condition. Although, Gwynedd (18.1%) is one of the local authorities with the lowest proportion of disabled people in Wales, the average percentage of disabled people across North Wales region is higher than other parts of the UK. With intersectionality in mind, 22.3% of females and 19.8% of males were disabled. The percentage of those who were limited a little was 11.9% for females and 10.3% for males. A higher proportion of females than males indicated that they were limited a lot; 10.4% and 9.5% respectively (ONS, 2023b).</p> <p>Disability as a concept emerged multiple times during the consultation. Respondents reinforced existing evidence that disabled people are one of the most disadvantaged groups of people in our society, especially old disabled people as they are often more at risk of fire and other emergencies. There was some reference to people living longer, but people not necessarily living healthier, often because of restricted mobility caused by physical disability and long-term health conditions. In terms of Safe and Well checks, there was a high level of support for this prevention activity and specific reference was made to disabled people, especially older disabled people being one of the main groups of people to benefit. Various respondents highlighted dementia as one health condition which is growing concern with more people being diagnosed and the various symptoms of the disease makes them more at risk of slips, trips, falls, fire and other emergencies. Further factors that impact on disabled people is provided in the full Equality Impact Analysis report.</p> <p>To help mitigate the risks highlighted in the Equality Impact Analysis report, the prevention team will continuously work hard to engage with disabled people and through effective partnership working with a range of stakeholders, our Service will use targeted interventions and specific safety campaigns to help protect and safeguard disabled people. Further information that impact on disabled people is provided in the full Equality Impact Analysis report. One challenge to the Service is to develop further partnerships to reach out to more disabled people, whilst maintaining its existing relationships to ensure disabled people on our systems are continuously engaged and supported each calendar year to access key safety information.</p> |
|------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood | Impact | Overall |  |
| 4          | 2      | 8       |  |

| Mental Health and Wellbeing |        |         | <p>Although mental health falls under the definition of disability, NWFRS have separated this group of people due to the nature and challenges associated with targeting people from a mental health and wellbeing perspective. Mental health and wellbeing cover a broad group of people that experience low mood, anxiety, depression etc. Therefore, NWFRS worked closely with mental health charities and various equality interest groups that traditionally have higher levels of adverse mental health to capture feedback and insight.</p> <p>Various respondents referred to growing concerns for people that experience adverse mental health as being at an increased risk of fire and emergencies. With intersectionality in mind, multiple respondents referred to certain protected characteristics which appear to be more vulnerable to adverse mental health (i.e. LGBTQ+, disabled people, older people), but other factors such as domestic abuse, poverty and homelessness emerged during the consultation.</p> <p>To mitigate risk, the prevention team and other team members will continue to engage with mental health charities and other equality interest groups to target key safety messages. Further information that impact on disabled people and those who experience adverse mental health is provided in the full Equality Impact Analysis report.</p> |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood                  | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4                           | 2      | 8       |   |

| Gender     |        |         | <p>According to ONS (2021a), the North Wales population is evenly split across females (51.1%) and males (48.9%). Although engagement with males and females has occurred organically throughout the consultation, some engagement with specific gender-based charities and organisations enabled our Service to connect with different binary and non-binary genders across different age groups, people who are unemployed and parents, including single parents.</p> |
|------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4          | 2      | 8       |   |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>Many female respondents strongly agree that the Service should make the recruitment of females a priority. There was acknowledgement from some respondents that more women firefighters are visible in the community, but more needs to be done to encourage more women to join. Various female respondents felt the Service need to focus more on specific targeting, engagement and communication with girls and women. Female students (16-18 years old) in community and education settings and adult women.</p> <p>Some people in South Gwynedd, included women that felt the Service would fail to attract women in this area because of the lack of opportunities to work within their own community and there was specific reference to the lack of fulltime employment opportunities. The inability to work locally was viewed as a potential barrier by some female respondents because spending 13 weeks to complete initial training in Rhyl would be challenging, especially for women who are the primary carer giver. A number of women across different parts of North Wales felt the CRMIP 2025-26 document didn't really mention specific contemporary issues that appear to negatively impact on women. Specific reference was given to poor maternity pay, lack of purposeful shared parental leave arrangements, gender pay gap and other policy driven themes that women felt leave them disadvantaged and devalued, thus avoiding the fire and rescue sector as a possible career option. Naturally, information was provided during the focus groups to reassure many girls and women that the Service is modern forward-thinking employer that is working hard to become more inclusive. To mitigate public perceptions of our Service (and sector), more communications can be devised to focus on the many positives to working in our service and sector, and also myth bust some of the misconceptions that emerged during the consultation.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>Consultation with various gender-based charities and individuals, found that many women that experience domestic abuse and violence may avoid working in male dominated industries. To reassure girls and women that the Fire and Rescue Service is a viable and safe employer, further engagement and partnership working with gender-based charities such as North Wales Women's Centre will enable our Service to connect with hundreds of females where a rapport and trust can be gained, thus enabling the Service to promote careers to this talented pool of people. Specific recruitment activities will be developed to target this group of people.</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, some women that do experience domestic abuse/violence, may at some point decide to live alone which could make them more at risk of fire and other emergencies.</p> <p>To mitigate risk in terms of the prevention team and other team members will continue to engage with gender-based charities and other community groups that support girls and women to help target key safety messages. Further information that impact on people based on their gender is provided in the full Equality Impact Analysis report.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Pregnancy and Maternity |        |         | <p>To ensure NWFRS reached out and captured the needs of people that are pregnant and those within their maternity phase, the comprehensive mapping exercise identified key partners to help connect with this target audience. Focus groups were organised with women only groups, local and regional parent support groups, LGBTQ+ and pride groups and baby support groups.</p> <p>Some respondents, mostly women made specific reference to our Service's poor maternity leave policy, lack of mentioned for contemporary challenges for women such as gender pay gap. These feelings left many girls and women feeling the Service lacked an ability to look after parents with babies and young children, particularly single parents and women that wanted to maybe have a family in the near future.</p> |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood              | Impact | Overall |  |
| 4                       | 2      | 8       |  |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>The Service is doing lots of progressive work to promote gender equality and these points were emphasised during the focus groups, however, there is a genuine need to address public perception, in some cases tackle misconception through myth busting. To mitigate risk and public perceptions, communication and updates can be achieved through community engagement and careers workshops in local community settings and educational establishments where these comments were made. Other media channels could be used to promote careers and to highlight the service progressive work concern gender equality and other aspects of EDI.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Gender Re-assignment / Identity |        |         | <p>The exact number of trans and/or non-binary people in North Wales is unknown. However, stonewall (2022) estimate between 0.5% and 1% of the population is Trans and/or non-binary which gives us some kind of indication who we needed to engage with during the consultation is capture reflective and meaningful feedback.</p> <p>Through the extensive contacts the Service has developed with various local LGBTQ+ networks and pride groups, comprehensive feedback from trans, non-binary and gender non-conforming people has been captured. Pride Cymru, Unique Transgender and other LGBTQ+ networks across North Wales has enabled the Service to connect and capture specific insight to the risks impacted on this community.</p> <p>With regards to recruiting and developing diverse teams as a priority, here was a strong consensus amongst respondents, including many people that identify as trans and non-binary that recruiting and developing diverse teams adds value and helps deliver inclusive services. There was specific reference to gender identity alongside other interconnecting characteristics. To mitigate this, the service aims to attract and recruit talented people from all backgrounds, a range of communication methods are adopted and specific interventions are developed to target people from groups that are underrepresented in the workforce. The service also reviews its recruitment practices on a regular basis to ensure best practice is adopted.</p> |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood                      | Impact | Overall |   |
| 2                               | 4      | 8       |   |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | Some trans people felt, their community can be disproportionately impacted by adverse mental health, mostly because of discrimination and exclusion, but some respondents also mentioned trans people are more likely to live alone compared to binary sex people. This is relevant insight that will inform our prevention activities. |
|--|--|--|---|

| Sexual Orientation |        |         | <p>Stonewall estimate between 5-7% of the population are lesbian, gay, bisexual or another sexual orientation which is other than heterosexual (See NHS, 2015). Stonewall (2022) have published more recent reports which suggest younger people are more likely to be open about sexual orientation and gender identity. North Wales has a growing LGBT+ community and the emergence of new pride events, support groups and staff networks in the workplace means that engagement with this audience is more meaningful than previous years.</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to know the age profile of people who identified as LGBT+ which tends to be younger than the overall population. More than half of those who identified as LGBT+ (57.9%) were aged between 16 and 34 years (ONS, 2021d). In contrast, less than a third of the overall population were aged between 16 and 34 years (29.6%). This intelligence helps our service know who to engage.</p> <p>To ensure NWFRS reach out and capture the needs of people with different sexual orientations, a comprehensive mapping exercise identified key partners to help connect with this target audience. Through Pride Cymru and other LGBTQ+ networks, feedback helped gain a specific insight to risks that this community experience in North Wales.</p> |
|--------------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood         | Impact | Overall |   |
| 2                  | 4      | 8       |   |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>With regards to recruiting and developing diverse teams as a priority, there was a strong consensus amongst respondents, including many LGBTQ+ people that recruiting and developing diverse teams adds value and helps deliver inclusive services. There was specific reference to sexual orientation alongside other interconnecting characteristics. To mitigate this, the service aims to attract and recruit talented people from all backgrounds, a range of communication methods are adopted and specific interventions are developed to target people from groups that are underrepresented in the workforce. The service also reviews its recruitment practices on a regular basis to ensure best practice is adopted.</p> <p>Some LGBTQ+ people felt, their community can be disproportionately impacted by adverse mental health, mostly because of discrimination and exclusion, but some respondents also mentioned LGBTQ+ people are more likely to live alone compared to non-LGBTQ+ people. This is relevant insight that will inform our prevention activities.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Marriage or Civil Partnership |        |         | <p>48.1% people aged 16 and over are married or in a civil partnership (Stats Wales, 2020). Generally, this protected characteristic does not experience particular risks. Although, it is important to stress, people that live alone are deemed more at risk and just because people are in a relationship, this doesn't mean they are not living alone (i.e. partner work nights/away), thus presenting similar to risk to people who do live alone. As a protected characteristic, it is useful to understand households which include two or more people who are accessing services, mainly because single occupants can be at an increased risk of some incident types (i.e. domestic dwelling fires).</p> |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood                    | Impact | Overall |  |
| 3                             | 2      | 6       |  |



|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>Organically, the Service connected with people that are married or in a civil partnership through the online survey and 24 focus groups. Although a person's actual relationship status does not directly impact on them, living alone can result in some people being more at risk of fire and other emergencies. Feedback from respondents found some people living alone are in poverty and considerations have been given under the socio-economic status section.</p> <p>Also, it is worth stressing that just because two people are married or in a civil partnership, it does not mean they are at less risk based on socio-economic status criteria. Some married couples or those in civil partnerships could be living in poverty, although no specific feedback during the consultation highlighted any concerns relating to this protected characteristic.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Religion and/or Belief |        |         | <p>Our service acknowledges there is some diversity regarding people's religious affiliations and belief systems across North Wales. Equally, it must be acknowledged that more people reported "No religion" than any single religious affiliation, up from 32.1% in 2011 to 46.5% in 2021 (WG, 2022b). This data indicates approximately half the North Wales population have religious affiliations. Therefore, places of worship and faith-based organisations are a logical avenue to engage with people who are religious.</p> <p>To ensure the Service capture feedback from religious people and those who observe a particular belief system, the pre-consultation mapping exercise identified key partners which included the North Wales Interfaith Forum, places of worship, faith-based organisations and different charities that operate locally. No feedback from the consultation identified any specific issues relating to religious and/or belief.</p> |
|------------------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood             | Impact | Overall |  |
| 2                      | 2      | 4       |  |

| Race       |        |         | <p>Like other regions in Wales, North Wales has become more ethnically diverse in the past decade. According to the census data in 2021, ethnic minority groups has increased from 4.4% in 2011 to 6.2% in 2021 (WG, 2022b). For clarity, ethnic minority is any ethnic group outside of white 'Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish and British'.</p> <p>The largest ethnic minority group in every local authority in Wales was "Other White". The proportion of the population identifying with this ethnic group was highest in Wrexham (4.8%) and Flintshire (3%). Within the high-level "White" ethnic group, Conwy was the local authority with the highest proportion of those identifying as "Irish" (0.7%) in Wales. Interestingly, 5.3% of households were multiple ethnic group households, up from 4.2% in 2011 (WG, 2022b).</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, NWFRS acknowledge there are potential language, communication and cultural barriers. Nationally in Wales, 2.9 million usual residents aged three years and over speak English or Welsh as their main language (96.7% of the population, down from 97.1% in 2011). According to the 2021 Census, residents in Wales that did not select English or Welsh as a main language, 78% said they could speak English well or very well, while 22% could not speak English very well or at all. As in 2011, Polish was the most common main language after English or Welsh at 0.7% of the population. Arabic (0.3%) was the most common main language aside from English, Welsh or Polish in 2021. British Sign Language (BSL) was the preferred language of 900 people (which equates to 0.03%) usual residents aged three years and over across Wales.</p> <p>During the consultation, many respondents that were either from ethnic minority groups or professionals that work closely with this group were concerned for how the Service considers language barriers, religion and cultural practices. Some ethnic minority groups felt the Service could improve the way it engages with them to ensure key safety messages are received and acted upon.</p> |
|------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4          | 2      | 8       |   |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  | <p>To mitigate any potential risk, through the NFCC national programme, key safety information is available in multiple languages including leaflets and booklets relating to safety in the home, water safety and some road safety information. The Service's Partnership Managers, Health and Fitness Team and other specialists such as the Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer actively engage with community members including ethnic minority groups to ensure key safety messages are communicated effectively. There are other specific campaigns that the promote to target boat dwellers and travellers that reside on the Llangollen Canal. The Service work closely with Race Council Cymru, Asian Fire Service Association and local partners to ensure the Service are using national campaigns and religious observances and celebrations to maximise community engagement opportunities that enable communication.</p> |
|--|--|--|--|

| Socio-Economic Duty |        |         | <p>The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on March 31st 2021 and requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions (such as deciding priorities and setting objectives), to consider how their decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>According to the Census 2021, some of the most deprived areas are concentrated in north Wales coastal and border towns (WG, 2021). Working does not preclude experiencing poverty. To explain further, in-work poverty has risen over the last 5 years and a total of 12.7 per cent of workers live in poverty due to low pay or limited hours (JRF, 2020).</p> <p>To ensure NWFRS reach out and capture the needs of people who meet the criteria for low economic status and deprivation, the initial mapping exercise during the pre-consultation identified key partners to help connect with this target audience. Key partners include local authorities, charities, foodbanks, places of worship, faith-based organisations and local support groups.</p> |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood          | Impact | Overall |  |
| 4                   | 3      | 12      |  |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  | <p>Some respondents referred to themes that relate to lower socio-economic status including people that may be an increased risk due to poverty and deprivation. Discussions related to people living in poor living conditions was raised, but it was unsure whether the conditions were as a result of individual lifestyle choices or the condition of the physical buildings, potential to heat their property or other factors outside the control of the individual. The Service's Prevention team have excellent awareness of the current trends regarding risk in domestic properties, but further engagement and research will be beneficial. Specific campaigns and projects have been designed to protect people, prevent various types of emergencies alternatives and refer people who are in need to external partners (i.e. food banks, financial advice, care support).</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

| Welsh Language |        |         | <p>All materials relating to the CRMIP consultation project will be produced (written and verbal) in Welsh and English. The number of people that stated they could speak welsh in North Wales is 235,567 and this equates to 34.3%. Our service is extremely proud to communicate in Welsh and we ensure we meet (and where possible exceed) the welsh standards.</p> <p>The most recent data published by the Welsh Government suggests 29.1% of people aged three and over were able to speak Welsh. This figure equates to 883,600 people and there is evidence that the Welsh language is growing in popularity as a spoken language and as a first spoken language. With intersectionality in mind, we acknowledge that the highest percentages of Welsh speakers in Wales can be found in Gwynedd (77%) and the Isle of Anglesey (67%) which are both located in North Wales (WG, 2022).</p> <p>Throughout the consultation and in each focus groups, resources and questionnaires were available in Welsh and English. The consultation saw 279 people respond and only 2 were received in Welsh. Although many first language Welsh speakers provided feedback in focus groups and this was translated into English for the purpose of recording and submitting feedback online onto one system. Welsh translators were organised in various focus groups, especially in Gwynedd where there is a higher percentage of welsh speakers.</p> |
|----------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood     | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4              | 1      | 4       |   |

| Geography and Location |        |         | <p>North Wales is a large geographical area which has several urban areas that are highly concentrated with diverse people and groups. In contrast, some rural areas have extremely small amount of people residing in the area.</p> <p>The region includes the localities of Wrexham, Deeside, Rhyl, Colwyn Bay, Flint, Bangor, Llandudno and Holyhead. The largest localities in North Wales are the city of Wrexham and the conurbations of Deeside, Rhyl and Prestatyn, where the main retail, cultural, educational, tourism, and transport infrastructure and services of North Wales are located. Bangor, St Asaph and Wrexham are the region's cities, Bangor is Wales' oldest city, whereas St Asaph is one of Wales' smallest, and Wrexham which gained city status in 2022 is the region's largest settlement.</p> <p>Some areas have well established community groups which make engagement relatively straight forward. However, some areas don't have established community social hubs which can present a challenge for the Service to capture meaningful feedback in some areas.</p> |
|------------------------|--------|---------|--|
| Likelihood             | Impact | Overall |  |
| 4                      | 2      | 8       |  |

| On-Call System or Considerations for Part-Time Staff |        |         | <p>On-call staff are directly involved in this project. On-call teams have been involved with the design and development of the Services CRMIP through Heads of Departments and middle managers seminars. Naturally, on-call staff that work the retained system will be able to provide feedback that will help shape the CRMP and strategic direction of the Service between 2024-2029.</p> <p>On-call teams were made aware of the consultation through internal communications and during organised visits.</p> |
|--|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood   | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4  | 2      | 8       |   |

| Other Equality Interest Groups |        |         | <p>For all protected characteristics, there have been increases in the number of recorded hate crimes in Wales in recent years (EHRC, 2018). Very low prosecution rate in court means some victims of hate crime lack trust in uniformed public services. Although this lack of trust mostly impacts the police and community engagement teams in local councils, fire and rescue services can experience some adverse impacts too.</p> <p>The recent Culture reviews in England and Wales have highlighted cultural issues in the sector. This means there may be a lack of trust and confidence in fire and rescue services within the community.</p> |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|---|
| Likelihood                     | Impact | Overall |   |
| 4                              | 1      | 4       |   |

**Do any of the above criteria have a score of 12 and above and therefore need to move to a full equality impact assessment?**

Yes

☒

No

☐

If yes, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer via e-mail [benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales) to proceed with the full impact assessment.

If no, and any of the criteria has a score of between 1-5 or 6-10, what additional control mechanisms or amendments can you put into place to reduce the score even further? Please identify what the score will be after the control mechanism in place.

Some sections have a score of 12 or over which is trigger to conduct further equality analysis. Due to the nature of the CRMP 2024-29 and the fact this plan outlines the key priorities of our Service, a full Equality Impact Analysis report has been produced.

**What positive outcomes or changes will be taken as a result of any points identified by this impact assessment?**

As part of the CRMIP consultation 2025-26, this EqlA demonstrates how the service has shown due regard for the diverse needs of the North Wales community. The initial pre-consultation EqlA shown consideration for how the service will engage and communicate with its community and through careful planning, engagement and communication methodologies, 24 focus groups helped capture meaningful feedback from different equality interest groups. This current EqlA has assessed risk based on the feedback and the EQIA summarises how identified risk will be mitigated and, in some cases, referred to relevant external stakeholders. The full Equality Impact Analysis report provides more clarity on the identified risks and mitigation.



## Post-initiative evaluation

Where applicable, please provide an overview (age range, gender, ethnicity etc.) of who attended the event(s), or were involved in or affected by the policy or initiative, and any relevant comments or complaints that were received in terms of equality and inclusion. The information should then be used to address any relevant concerns.

Before finalising, you may wish to seek advice from the services Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer. You can do this by emailing to [benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales) for review.

Once completed please return to [benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

## Reference List

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2020). UK Poverty Report 2019/20. Found at: [www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2019-20](http://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2019-20), Accessed: 12 April 2023.

Office for National Statistics (2023a) Population and household estimates, Wales: Census 2021. Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimateswales/census2021#:~:text=4.-,Age%20and%20sex%20of%20the%20population,men%20\(49.0%25\)%20in%20England](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimateswales/census2021#:~:text=4.-,Age%20and%20sex%20of%20the%20population,men%20(49.0%25)%20in%20England), Accessed: 13 April 2023.

Office for National Statistics (2023b) Disability by Age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-Embed%20code&text=In%20Wales%2C%2022.3%25%20of%20females,10.4%25%20and%209.5%25%20respectively](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/disabilitybyagesexanddeprivationenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=Source%3A%20Office%20for%20National%20Statistics%20-%20Census%202021,-Embed%20code&text=In%20Wales%2C%2022.3%25%20of%20females,10.4%25%20and%209.5%25%20respectively), Accessed: 13 April 2023.

Office for National Statistics (2023c) Disability, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at: [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20Wales%2C%20in%202021%2C%20a,\(23.4%25%2C%20696%2C000\)](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/disabilityenglandandwales/census2021#:~:text=In%20Wales%2C%20in%202021%2C%20a,(23.4%25%2C%20696%2C000)), Accessed: 13 April 2023.

Office for National Statistics (2023d) Sexual orientation: age and sex, England and Wales: Census 2021. Found at:

[www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/articles/sexualorientationageandsexenglandandwales/census2021](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/articles/sexualorientationageandsexenglandandwales/census2021), Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

National Health Service (2015) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report. Found at: [www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk/images/boardpapers/300715/Paper8e.pdf](http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk/images/boardpapers/300715/Paper8e.pdf), Accessed: 4 April 2023.

Stats Wales (2020) Marital Status by Age and Sex. Found at: [Marital Status by Age and Sex \(gov.wales\)](http://Marital%20Status%20by%20Age%20and%20Sex%20(gov.wales)), Accessed: 4 April 2023.


Stonewall (2022a) Attraction, identity and connection in Great Britain in 2022. Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/rainbow\\_britain\\_report.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/system/files/rainbow_britain_report.pdf), Accessed: 4 April 2023.

Stonewall (2022b) The truth about trans. Found at: [www.stonewall.org.uk/the-truth-about-trans#trans-people-britain](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/the-truth-about-trans#trans-people-britain), Accessed: 12 April 2023.

Welsh Government (2021) Implementing the Socio-economic Duty A review of evidence on socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome. Found at: [www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2021-11/review-of-evidence-on-socio-economic-disadvantage-and-inequalities-of-outcome-revised.pdf](http://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2021-11/review-of-evidence-on-socio-economic-disadvantage-and-inequalities-of-outcome-revised.pdf), Accessed: 12 April 2021.

Welsh Government (2022a) Welsh language data from the Annual Population Survey: 2020. Found at: [www.gov.wales/welsh-language-data-annual-population-survey-2020](http://www.gov.wales/welsh-language-data-annual-population-survey-2020), Accessed: 14 April 2023.

Welsh Government (2022b) Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales - Census 2021. Found at: [Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales \(Census 2021\) | GOV.WALES](http://Ethnic%20group,%20national%20identity,%20language%20and%20religion%20in%20Wales%20(Census%202021)%20|%20GOV.WALES), Accessed: 12 April 2023.

|                 |  |   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>   |  |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>   |   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Matt Powell, Deputy Clerk</b>   |   |
| Contact Officer | <a href="mailto:matthew.powell@flintshire.gov.uk">matthew.powell@flintshire.gov.uk</a> |   |
| Subject         | <b>Standards Committee Annual Report 2024/25</b>                                       |   |

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present the annual report of the Standards Committee (the Committee) to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Committee has produced an annual report since its inception, and since 2021 it has also been a statutory duty to produce such a report.
- 3 The Annual Report provides information about the work carried out by the Committee during the past 12 months and identifies any particular issues that have arisen.
- 4 As a matter of good governance, each year the annual report produced by the Committee is presented to the Authority for information.
- 5 This is the Committee's twentieth annual report which includes a summary of the work undertaken during the financial year 2024/25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 It is recommended that Members:

i) **note the Annual Report.**

## APPENDICES

- 7 The annual report of the Standards Committee for the year 2024/25, is at [Appendix 1](#).

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Wellbeing Objectives                       | Considered not relevant   |
| Budget for 2024/25                         | The annual report can be produced within budget. Any costs associated with meetings and events attended by members are reimbursed from the travel and subsistence budget.                             |
| Legal                                      | The Committee has a duty under section 63 Local Government Act 2021 to produce an annual report, which must be considered by the fire authority within 3 months of receipt.                           |
| Staffing                                   | Considered not relevant   |
| Equalities/Human Rights/<br>Welsh Language | The report has been produced in bilingual format  |
| Risks                                      | The work of the Committee described within its annual report should help to reduce the risk of Authority Members behaving in a manner that is inconsistent with the code and thus with best practice. |

## **Appendix 1 –Annual Report**

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY 2024/25**

#### **Background**

This is the Standards Committee (the Committee)'s twentieth annual report to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) and spans the period from April 2024 to March 2025. Legislation requires that standards committees meet at least once annually and that they prepare a report on their activity for consideration by the Authority.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee provide a remit to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members of the Authority. Also, where statute permits, to receive reports and complaints about Members and to conduct or oversee investigations and make recommendations to the Authority.

#### **Membership**

The Committee membership has not changed since new councillors were appointed after the elections in 2022. The Committee's membership is as follows:

##### **Independent Members**

- Sally Ellis 01/01/22 – 31/12/26 (serving for a second term) (Deputy Chair)
- Julia Hughes 01/01/22 – 31/12/26 (serving for a second term) (Chair)
- Gill Murgatroyd 01/09/23 – 31/08/27 (serving for a second term)
- Gareth Pritchard 01/09/23 – 31/08/27 (serving for a second term)

##### **Fire and Rescue Authority Members**

- Councillor Marion Bateman (20/06/2022 until the next council elections)
- Councillor John Brynmor Hughes (20/06/2022 until the next council elections)

#### **Attendance**

Meetings were held virtually on the following dates with the named members in attendance:

**5 April 2024** - present: Julia Hughes (Chair), Sally Ellis (Deputy Chair), Gareth Pritchard, Gill Murgatroyd

**2 October 2024** – present: Julia Hughes (Chair), Sally Ellis (Deputy Chair), Gareth Pritchard, Gill Murgatroyd

**27 March 2025** – present: Julia Hughes (Chair), Sally Ellis (Deputy Chair), Gareth Pritchard, Gill Murgatroyd, Cllr John Brynmor Hughes

## **Issues Discussed**

At its extraordinary meeting on 5 April 2025:

- The Committee considered and approved its nineteenth annual report to the Authority;
- The Committee finalised its rolling review of the members code of conduct and recommended that the Authority should voluntarily adopt changes to the Code which have been recommended by the Penn Review;
- Members' attendance at meetings was reported. Members asked that a column indicating whether attendance had improved or declined, and any mitigating circumstances be included in future reports;
- The Committee finalised its rolling review of the Protocol on Member / Employee relations recommending that the Authority should adopt changes to widen the scope of the protocol to include other relevant categories of worker whilst noting that there were no reported issues arising under the protocol;
- As a regular standing item, the Committee received a report on the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales's "Our Findings" informing Members about recent findings made by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales; and
- The Chief Fire Officer attended the meeting to provide a verbal update on the Cultural Review

The Committee met again on 2 October 2024:

- The Committee received a report on the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales's Annual Report which provides statistical data on complaints about councillors at local councils, fire authorities and national park authorities over the year. Members noted that the majority of complaints relate to equality and respect and that there was an overall increase in complaints but there had been none relating to Members' conduct within fire authorities across Wales;
- The Committee received a report on the Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report. This provides statistical data on the number of hearings completed over the year;
- Feedback was provided by the Chair and Deputy Clerk from the Chairs' meeting which had taken place on 27 June 2024; and

- As a regular standing item, the Committee received a report on the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales's "Our Findings" informing Members about recent findings made by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

The Committee met again on 27 March 2025:

- The Committee received verbal feedback from the Chair on the National Standards Committee Chairs' Forum;
- Members' attendance at meetings was reported and the Standards Committee noted that expected attendance rates have improved and are now being met but this will be kept under review;
- The Committee discussed and approved its Annual Report;
- As a regular standing item, the Committee received a report on the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales's "Our Findings" informing Members about recent findings made by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales; and
- The Committee undertook a rolling review of the Social Media Protocol and requested further consultation.

During the course of its meetings, the Committee has also considered feedback from the National Forum for Standards Committee Chairs. That forum is an opportunity to share good practice and build consensus around common areas of work. The views expressed there are taken into account when the Committee considers issues such as amendments to the code. The Committee also received a verbal update on the Audit Wales review of governance of Fire and Rescue Authorities.

During this period, representatives of the Committee attended a Cultural Review meetings in order to understand whether any issues around that fall within the remit of the Standards Committee.

## **Training**

The Committee aims to undertake training at each of its meetings on matters pertinent to its terms of reference.

## **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee has set itself an annual forward work programme to ensure that it fulfils its terms of reference and considers all items that it needs to cover within a year. Regular standing items include "Our Findings" from the Ombudsman's website, feedback from the National Forum, members' attendance as well as training on its roles and responsibilities.



The Committee also sets itself a multi-year programme to review the codes and protocols within its terms of reference. Each is considered at least once per Authority term. That programme has commenced again following the elections in 2022.

### **Complaints against Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority**

There were no complaints about FRA Members during this period. Consequently, there were no referrals under the local resolution process or to the Adjudication Panel for Wales or the Committee to hold a hearing in respect of an alleged breach of the code.

### **Group Leaders' Duty to Promote Ethical Behaviour**

The Authority does not divide its membership by political grouping. However, the Committee Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the Chairs of the Authority and Audit Committee to ensure the Committee adds value.

### **Financial Implications**

The budget for the Committee is managed through a single budget heading for all Authority costs. Independent members of the Committee are entitled to claim remuneration based on meetings and events attended. For attending meetings in this financial year, a total of £1,206 has been claimed.

### **Conclusion**

The Committee recommends that the Authority notes its Annual Report for 2024/25.

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Report to    | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                     |
| Date         | <b>28 April 2025</b>   |
| Lead Officer | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer,<br/>Finance and Resources</b>  |
| Subject      | <b>Firefighters Pension Schemes Local Pension<br/>Board – Terms of Reference</b> |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To seek approval from Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) for the Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board (LPB) for the 2025/26 financial year.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The establishment of a Local Pension Board is a requirement of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the Local Government (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015. The purpose of the LPB is to act in support of the Authority in its role of Scheme Manager. The Terms of Reference set out the scope of the LPB and its operating arrangements.
- 3 The Local Pension Board considered the Terms of Reference for 2025/26 at its meeting of 30 January 2025 and recommended approval by the Authority. The recommendation was subject to amending the quorum from six members to three, to include a minimum of one employer and one employee representative.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 4 Members of the Local Pension Board are asked to
  - i) **Note the scope and requirements of the Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board;**
  - ii) **note the recommendation of the Local Pension Board to amend the quorum; and**
  - iii) **approve the Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board for the 2025/26 financial year.**

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Wellbeing Objectives                       | The effective operation of the pension's schemes supports staff wellbeing.   |
| Budget                                     | Cost of the Local Pension Board is funded from existing Members' Services budget.  |
| Legal                                      | The new governance requirements around pensions were introduced as a result of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013.<br>FPS (Amendment) Governance regulations 2015.                           |
| Staffing                                   | Transparent and effective operation of the pension schemes ensures that staff are treated fairly and equitably.  |
| Equalities/Human Rights/<br>Welsh Language | It is not considered that there are any issues that need addressing as the recommendations apply equally to all Members regardless of protected characteristics under the Single Equality Act. |
| Risks                                      | All FRAs need to comply with the guidance provided by the Pensions Regulator around the governance arrangements for Local Pension Boards.  |

## **Terms of reference for the Local Pension Board of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service**

1. This document sets out the terms of reference for the Local Pension Board (the Board) of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Firefighters' Pension Scheme as required by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the Local Government (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015.

### **Scheme Management**

2. North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority), as administering authority, is the Scheme Manager. Its functions are discharged in accordance with the Authority's scheme of delegation by the Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer.

### **The Local Pension Board**

3. The role of the Board is to assist the Authority, as the administering authority:
  - to secure compliance with the scheme regulations and other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the scheme;
  - to secure compliance with requirements imposed in relation to the scheme by the Pensions Regulator;
  - ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes for Dyfed Pension Fund;
  - the role of the Board will be oversight of these matters and not decision making;
  - in undertaking any relevant work as requested; and
  - in such other matters as the scheme regulations may specify.
4. The Board will ensure that the Code of Practice on governance and administration issued by the Pensions Regulator is complied with. The Board will also ensure that it complies with the knowledge and understanding requirements in the Pensions Regulator's Code of Practice.
5. The Board is accountable to the Pensions Regulator, the National Scheme Advisory Board and the Administering Authority in their role as Scheme Manager.
6. The principal functions of the Board shall include, but not be limited to:
  - reviewing decision making processes, policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with relevant Regulations;
  - seeking assurance that these are followed and adhered to with regard to Pensions decisions;

- seeking assurance that administration performance is in compliance with the Authority's performance framework and that monitoring arrangements are adequate and robust;
  - considering the effectiveness of communication with employers and scheme members including a review of the Communication Strategy; and
  - considering and commenting on internal audit recommendations and external auditor reports.
7. Any complaint or allegation of a breach of the Regulations brought to the attention of the Board shall be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Practice as published by the Pensions Regulator.

### **Frequency and Notice of Meetings**

8. The Board shall meet sufficiently regularly to discharge its duties and responsibilities effectively; four meetings will be scheduled during each financial year.
9. The Members' Services Officer shall give notice to all Board members of each meeting of the Board, including the date, location and time of the meeting and shall ensure that a formal record of Board proceedings is maintained.
10. Papers will be provided three working days before each of the formal Board meetings.
11. All agendas and non-confidential Board papers and minutes of meetings will be published on the Authority's website, together with the Board Terms of Reference and details of the Board membership.

### **Membership**

12. The Local Pension Board shall consist of no fewer than 10 members (in total), and must include an equal balance of employer and scheme member (employee) representatives. These shall be constituted as follows:

| <b>Constituency</b>      | <b>Definition/Constraints</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Employer                 | To represent the Authority  |
| Scheme Member (employee) | To represent all members of the scheme (active, deferred and pensioner) |

13. The term of office for all members of the Board will fall in line with council elections and therefore it is anticipated that the membership will remain until 2027. Members may at the end of their term, express a wish to be considered for re-election.

14. Board members must meet key attendance and training requirements to retain their membership during this period. All members must:
  - endeavour to attend all meetings of the Board;
  - comply with the training plan produced by the Pensions Manager; and
  - ensure compliance with the Pension Regulator's Code of Practice.
15. Each Employer Representative and Scheme Member Representative will have an individual voting right.
16. All members within the Firefighters' Pension Schemes must have an equal opportunity to be nominated for the role of member representative.
17. For the purpose of appointing employer representatives to the Board, nominations will be sought from all Authority members. The Treasurer and Monitoring Officer (or deputy) will also provide employer representation.
18. For the purpose of appointing scheme member (employee) representatives to the Board, nominations will be requested through the Departmental Representatives and Trade Union Forum with further nominations being sought via an advert placed on the Authority's website. Where more than three nominations are received candidates will be considered, shortlisted and interviewed by a representative of the Scheme Manager who will then make recommendations to the Chief Fire Officer to formally appoint.
19. If a Board member acting as an employer representative leaves the employment of the employer they are representing they will no longer be eligible to sit on the Board.
20. In the event of consistent non-attendance of a Board member, or for failure to meet key attendance and training requirements as set out in (13) above, the tenure of that membership will be reviewed. In the case of a member representative, this will be done by a representative of the Scheme Manager who may make recommendation for the membership to be revoked if considered necessary. In such event, there will be a right of appeal to the Chief Fire Officer prior to any recommendation. In the case of an employer representative, any such decision will be considered by the chair of the Authority.
21. If an employer or scheme member representative wishes to resign they must write to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Finance and Resources, giving at least one month's notice.
22. The Chairperson of the Board will be rotated on a bi-annual basis between a member representing employers and those representing scheme members.

23. It will be the role of a representative acting as Chairperson to:
- agree and set the agenda for a meeting of the Board;
  - manage the meetings to ensure that the business of the meeting is completed in the agreed time;
  - ensure that all members of the Board show due respect for process and that all views are fully heard and considered;
  - strive as far as possible to achieve a consensus as an outcome; and
  - ensure that the actions and rationale for decisions taken are clear and properly recorded.
24. Due to the specialist nature of the work of the Board, personal attendance at all meetings is expected of all Board members with no provision for a substitute. However, deputies would be allowed, but they would be responsible for maintaining their own training to ensure they were *au fait* with pensions issues.
25. The Board may, with the approval of the Chief Fire Officer, co-opt persons who are not members to aid the Board for a period of time or for a specific task where this would provide additional skills, knowledge or experience. The co-opted members would not be permitted to vote.

## **Quorum**

26. Three members of the Board must be present for a meeting to be quorate, to include one employer and one employee representative. If the Chairperson is absent at a meeting and there is a quorum then the attending members must choose a Chairperson to preside over that meeting.

## **Knowledge and Skills**

27. A member of the Board must be conversant with:
- the legislation and associated guidance of the four Firefighter Pension Schemes;
  - any policies, procedures or decision-making processes about the administration of the Schemes adopted by the Authority and Dyfed Pension Fund.
28. A member of the Board must have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions and any other matters which are prescribed in Regulations.
29. It is for individual Board members to be satisfied that they have the appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the Board.

30. Board members are required to be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and to refresh and keep their knowledge up to date. Board members are therefore required to maintain a written record of relevant training and development.
31. Board members must confirm to the Pensions Manager within six months of joining the Board that they have completed the Pension Regulator training.
32. During the first meeting of the financial year, Board members must consider and agree an annual training programme.

### **Standards of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest**

33. The role of Board members requires the highest standards of conduct and therefore the 'seven principles of public life' will be applied to all Board members. Board members will be required to observe the members' code of conduct and data protection policies of the Authority. The Board is required to always act within these terms of reference. In accordance with the Public Service Pension Act 2013 a Board member must not have a financial or other interest that could prejudice them in carrying out their Board duties. This does not include a financial or other interest arising merely by virtue of membership of the Firefighter Pension Scheme (FPS).
34. As such all members of the Board will be required to declare any interests and any potential conflicts of interest in line with the requirements of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and the Pension Regulator's Code. These declarations are required as part of the appointment process, as well as at regular intervals throughout a member's tenure.

### **Reporting**

35. The Board is expected to produce an annual report to the Authority which should include:
  - a summary of the work of the Board and a work plan for the coming year;
  - details of areas of concern reported to or raised by the Board and recommendations made;
  - details of any conflicts of interest that have arisen in respect of individual Local Pension Board members and how these have been managed;
  - any areas of risk or concern the Board wish to raise with the Scheme Manager;
  - details of training received and identified training needs; and
  - details of any expenses and costs incurred by the Board and any anticipated expenses for the forthcoming year.



- 36 Although the Board is only required to produce a single annual report, minutes for each meeting of the Board will be published on the Authority's website.
- 37 Should the Board have concerns believed to be sufficiently serious that they should be reported at a higher level than is standard (to the Pensions Manager) they should report to the Chief Fire Officer. This may include, but not be limited to, occasions where the Board feel that previous recommendations have not been acted upon. In extreme cases such as a fundamental breach of Regulations or a fundamental failure by the Administering Authority to ensure effective governance of the fund, the Board may consider reporting to the National Scheme Advisory Board and/or the Pensions Regulator.

### **Remuneration**


- 38 Remuneration for members of the Board will be limited to a refund of actual expenses incurred in attending Board meetings and training. It is expected that employers of Board members will provide appropriate capacity to allow the member to perform this role within their normal working day without any reduction to pay.
- 39 Expense claims should be submitted no later than one month following the incursion.

### **Publication of Local Pension Board Information**

- 40 Up to date information will be posted on the Authority website showing:
- Names and information of Board members;
  - how the scheme members and employers are represented on the Board;
  - responsibilities of the Board as a whole;
  - full terms of reference and policies of the Board and how they operate; and
  - Local Pension Board appointment process.

### **Review**

- 41 These Terms of Reference were formally adopted by the Board at its first meeting on 20 April 2015 and are reviewed annually, or upon statutory or regulatory changes.
- 42 The Chief Fire Officer is authorised to make minor amendments, consequential upon statutory or regulatory change, or to update arrangements consequential on other external factors.

|              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| Report to    | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>                                    |  |
| Date         | <b>28 April 2025</b>  |   |
| Lead Officer | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer,<br/>Finance and Resources</b> |   |
| Subject      | <b>Firefighters' Pension Scheme – update on legal<br/>challenges</b>            |   |

## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) with an update on the statutory changes to Firefighters' Pension Scheme following significant legal challenges. These are more commonly known as the McCloud and O'Brien (Matthews 2) pension remedy exercises.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The recent legal challenges to the UK public sector pension schemes have resulted in regulatory changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). These changes are necessary to address two main issues; age discrimination following the implementation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (McCloud Judgment) and an historic issue relating to the pension arrangements for part time workers (O'Brien Judgment).
- 3 The changes arising from the McCloud judgment require a retrospective review of the pension benefits of eligible pension members between the period 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. This includes the provision of pension options for retired members, beneficiaries, deferred members and active members. The work to reconcile the payroll and pension records of staff within scope is in progress but the deadline of 31 March 2025 has not been achieved for all categories of members. Members within scope of immediate detriment are being prioritised and a report has been made to the Pensions Regulator.
- 4 The changes arising from the O'Brien judgment require a review of the contracts relating to eligible part time staff who express an interest in receiving pension benefits from the commencement of their employment. Staff who wish to proceed will be permitted to buy back their pension entitlement. The regulations currently require that this work is completed by 31 July 2025, however due to significant workload pressures it is unlikely that these deadlines will be achieved. Cases are being managed to ensure that those at risk of detriment are prioritised.

## RECOMMENDATION

5 It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the progress with implementing the McCloud Judgment;**
- ii) note that a report has been made to the Pensions Regulator as the Service has been unable to achieve the statutory requirements; and**
- iii) note the position regarding the implementation of the O'Brien Judgment.**

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD

6 The Local Pension Board receives regular updates on progress towards implementing the changes required and has noted the complexity of the issues and the significant challenges to achieving the statutory deadlines. The Local Pension Board recognised the national challenges being faced and impact of the workload on both the Pensions Team within the Service and the Dyfed Pension Fund who administer the scheme on our behalf.

## BACKGROUND

- 7 The Public Service Pensions Act (2013) is the primary enabling legislation for all public sector pension schemes. As responsibility for the management of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme is a devolved function in Wales, the Senedd has responsibility for updating and maintain the regulations. The Authority is the Scheme Manager with responsibility for compliance with the underlying regulations.
- 8 There have been two significant legal challenges which are applicable to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme; the McCloud Judgment which relates to age discrimination and the O'Brien Judgment which relates to the pension arrangements for part time workers.

## INFORMATION

### MCCLOUD JUDGMENT

- 9 Following Lord Hutton's 2011 review of public sector pensions, the Public Service Pensions Act (2013) provided the legal framework to reform public sector pension schemes. Reforms included restricting existing final salary schemes, extending retirement ages, and introducing CARE (Career Average Revalued Earnings) Schemes.

- 10 In 2015 the majority of public service pension schemes were reformed to provide defined benefits, on a CARE basis, and extended the normal retirement age of members. The pension scheme regulations were amended to introduce these changes, with the amended regulations also providing protections for certain members of existing final salary schemes. This protection was age related and members reaching the normal pension age of 55 by 31 March 2012, were afforded full protection with other members receiving protection on a tapered basis depending on their age. This protection was known as transitional protection and members who did not qualify for protection, transitional or otherwise (unprotected), were moved out of their legacy schemes, into the new 2015 Firefighters Pension Scheme on the 1 April 2015.
- 11 In 2018 the Court of Appeal ruled that the transitional protection element of the 2015 public service pension reforms constituted unlawful age discrimination, in the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. This is now referred to as the McCloud/Sargeant case. On the back of this decision, the Government confirmed that it would remove the difference in treatment across all public service pension schemes
- 12 In October 2020 the UK Government undertook to consult the public on the way forward in relation to public service pension schemes and, in particular, how it should respond to the detail outlined in the judgement. The outcomes of the consultation were published on 4 February 2021, with an option called 'the Deferred Choice Underpin' being adopted. This means that members will make their decision between scheme benefit options shortly before their benefits are paid from the scheme, at the point of retirement. In the meantime, members will be deemed to have accrued benefits in their legacy schemes rather than reformed schemes, for the remedy period. The remedy period has been determined to be 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.
- 13 The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 (PSPJO) was given Royal Assent on 10 March 2022 and provides an overarching framework to allow public service pension schemes to remedy the impact of unlawful age discrimination.
- 14 There were two distinct elements to the changes in legislation; the first came into effect on 1 April 2022 and was known as Prospective Remedy, which meant that from that date all members of the Firefighters Pension Schemes would be automatically become members of the Reformed 2015 Scheme.

- 15 The second was known as Retrospective Remedy, which came into effect on the 1 October 2023 and meant that those that had membership, in a fire scheme, during the remediable period will have the choice of taking those benefits in either the final salary legacy scheme or the reformed career average scheme.
- 16 It is these complex changes, that fall under Retrospective Remedy, that form a large part of the national remedial exercise that is currently underway. The McCloud Remedy Exercise timelines are set out in the new legislation and dictate that active pension scheme members, those that have already retired and member dependents must have received a Remedial Service Statement, no later than 31 March 2025.
- 17 The implementation of remedy requires a full reconciliation of each individual record for the period 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2022 which can take a number of days to complete. This is due to the complexity of the underlying data and other associated factors including the tax consequences, transfers in and out of service and divorce settlements.
- 18 There is a significant administrative burden arising from the changes to the regulations which has required the prioritisation of cases. All staff retiring from the Service receive the choice of taking their legacy or career average benefits for the remedy period. Thereafter, in order to facilitate progress through the project, members have been grouped into cohorts to ensure that those at immediate detriment are prioritised.
- 19 The implementation of remedy has created significant challenges across the public sector both within local teams and also with the pension administrator. It has not been possible to achieve the statutory deadline of 31 March 2025 for all members and consequently a report has been made to the Pensions Regulator.
- 20 This matter is being monitored through both the Local Pension Board and the Scheme Advisory Board. Letters have been circulated to all affected members and work is ongoing to progress this issue.

## **BACKGROUND – O'BRIEN**

- 21 In April 2006, the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992 (FPS 1992) was closed to new members, and the Firefighters Pensions Scheme 2007 (FPS 2007), came into force, which enabled On-Call Firefighters to become pension scheme members from that date. Although the FPS 1992 Scheme remained unchanged for those regular firefighters who were already members.

- 22 Historically, On-Call firefighters were excluded from the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992 (FPS 1992), which was challenged under the Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000. This resulted in a determination that enabled certain On-Call firefighters, with service between 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006, to become members of a pension scheme.
- 23 Between 2014 and 2015 an options exercise was undertaken, which gave those that were eligible the opportunity to join the firefighters' pension scheme. As the 1992 scheme had been closed to new members, the FPS 2007 scheme was modified to provide benefits analogous to the 1992 scheme (known as the 2007 modified scheme). This was the first options exercise, which is often now referred to as Matthews 1.
- 24 This principle was subsequently challenged at the European Court of Justice in relation to fee-paid judges. The Court ruled, in that case, that service going back to the start of employment should be considered and the UK government accepted that the same principles applied to certain On-Call firefighters, whether they had made a legal challenge or not.
- 25 As a result, a second options exercise is now taking place to allow eligible On-Call firefighters to buy pensionable service, backdated to the start date of their employment. As part of this exercise the following individuals are eligible for the second options exercise:
- I. On-Call firefighters employed on any date between 7 April 2000 and 30 June 2000 (inclusive);
  - II. On-call firefighters employed on any date between 7 April 2000 and 30 June 2000 (inclusive) as well as on any date between 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006 (inclusive); and
  - III. On-call firefighters employed on any date between 1 July 2000 and 5 April 2006 (inclusive), but not on any date between 7 April and 1 July 2000, who were eligible to take part in the first options exercise but were not given opportunity to do so.
- 26 To enable the second options exercise to proceed, the Senedd has made the necessary regulatory changes to the pension regulations. These came into force on 1 February 2024 with an 18- month timeframe for full implementation of this project.

- 27 The Service has written out to 622 On Call, or previously On Call, employees to advise them that they are within scope and to date. 312 individuals have formally responded, requesting calculations on their benefits. The calculation does not obligate the individual to buy back their pension and they then have a period within to make a choice. The relevant periods linked to this exercise can go back as far as the 1960s. For some individuals there are also interdependencies with the McCloud Remedy Exercise.
- 28 The O'Brien exercise alongside the McCloud remedy has placed a significant burden on both the Service's Pensions Team and also the Pensions Administrator, Dyfed Pensions Fund. As the challenges being faced are national across a range of public sector schemes there is a backlog in processing. Consequently, proposals are expected to be drafted to extend the statutory deadline for the O'Brien exercise. Whilst this may provide additional time for processing, work will continue to prioritise those who are most at risk of detriment.
- 29 Staff who are considered to be out of scope (i.e. On-Call firefighters whose service commenced between 1 July 2000 – 5 April 2006 who did not take part in the first options exercise but were given the opportunity to do so) have also been communicated with and will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- 30 There are interdependencies between the McCloud and O'Brien Remedy exercises for some On Call firefighters which may pose some complications in meeting these timelines, on a purely individual basis.
- 31 The Government Actuary's Department has provided a calculator that enables Services to provide information on the purchase of previous service for eligible staff. This process is very complex and requires salary information for each year of employment, the calculation of contributions that should have been paid, tax and interest that applies, alongside the benefits that those individuals would be entitled to receive should they proceed in buying back this service.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Wellbeing Objectives                       | The effective operation of the pension schemes support staff wellbeing.  |
| Budget                                     | There are no budget implications directly related to these timelines.  |
| Legal                                      | The Authority has a statutory requirement to ensure that all legislative changes are implemented accurately and within the given timescales The Authority is required to administer the scheme in accordance with existing and new scheme regulations. |
| Staffing                                   | Transparent and effective operation of the pension schemes ensures that staff are treated fairly and equitably.  |
| Equalities/Human Rights/<br>Welsh Language | It is not considered that there are any issues that need addressing as the recommendations apply equally to all Members regardless of protected characteristics under the Single Equality Act.   |
| Risks                                      | Given the complexities of these projects, the resource considerations and timescales, there is a risk that the statutory deadlines may not be met.   |



|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>          |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>                                  |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>  |
| Contact Officer | <b>Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement</b> |
| Subject         | <b>Contract Procedure Rules Summary 2025</b>          |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the proposed changes to the Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority), following amendments to align with the Procurement Act 2023, implemented on 24 February 2025.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The CPR outline the methodology for procuring goods, works, and services for the Authority. These Rules ensure that procurement procedures are efficient, transparent, and accountable, requiring high standards of probity from officers and Members involved in the procurement process.
- 3 The CPR is updated to align with the Procurement Act 2023 and is based on the current version of the CPR last published in November 2021. The updates include provisions for procurement planning, sustainable procurement, and safeguarding, as well as requirements for quotations and tendering, contract management, and specific contracts such as land transactions.
- 4 By adhering to the updated CPR, the Authority can achieve its strategic objectives while maintaining transparency, accountability, and the highest standards of probity in all procurement activities.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- 5 The Audit Committee recommended approval of the CPR by the Authority at its meeting on 17 March 2025, noting that, unless it involves specialised procurement, a minimum of three quotes should usually be obtained. Where one quote only was used, the responsible officer would be required to demonstrate the most advantageous offer.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

6 It is recommended that Members:

**i) Approve the Contract Procedure Rules.**

## BACKGROUND

- 5 The Procurement Act 2023 mandates that the Authority must adhere to updated Contract Procedure Rules to ensure compliance with statutory provisions. These Rules, last revised in November 2021, have been updated to align with the latest legislative requirements and to enhance procurement efficiency, transparency, and accountability.
- 6 Under the terms of reference, the Audit Committee is responsible for maintaining an overview of the Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules.

## KEY CHANGES

- 7 The updated CPR have undergone several significant changes since the last version published in November 2021. These changes are designed to align with the Procurement Act 2023 and enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of the procurement process.
- 8 One of the key updates to note is the changes to the thresholds for quotations and tendering. These changes aim to provide clearer guidelines and improve the procurement process seen below:

| Contract Value               | Proposed  |
|------------------------------|---|
| All Contracts                | Use Corporate Purchasing Agreement if available; Purchase order must be sent via purchase-to-pay solution.  |
| Up to £30,000                | Normal procedure is for three quotes to be obtained although the relevant Officer's discretion will permit one quotation providing the Most Advantageous Offer (value for money) is clearly demonstrated. |
| £30,000 - £119,000           | Obtain formal quotations through Sell2Wales if no Corporate Purchasing Agreement is available.  |
| £120,000 - WTO GPA Threshold | Issue Invitation to Tender via Sell2Wales if no Corporate Purchasing Agreement is available.  |
| Over WTO GPA Threshold       | Invite tenders with appropriate advertisements on Sell2Wales if no Corporate Purchasing Agreement is available.   |

- 9 Several terminology changes have been made to the CPR, with the key updates being, the term "Most Economically Advantageous Tender" has been changed to "Most Advantageous Tender," and "Value for money" is now referred to as "Most Advantageous Offer."
- 10 The updated CPR also introduces new provisions for procurement planning, sustainable procurement, and safeguarding. The rules now emphasise the importance of considering social, economic, and environmental issues when setting tender evaluation criteria.
- 11 The roles and responsibilities within the procurement process have also been adjusted. The responsibilities previously held by the Monitoring Officer have been transferred to the Procurement Team. Additionally, there is now a requirement for legal advice to be sought for certain procurement activities, ensuring that all procedures are compliant with the new regulations.
- 12 Another update is the introduction of electronic submission for tenders. This change removes the need for sealed envelopes and streamlines the tendering process. Invitations to Tender are now required to be issued through Sell2Wales, further enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the procurement process.
- 13 Lastly, various minor wording and structural changes have been made throughout the document to improve clarity and consistency. A detailed version control section has been added to track changes and identify the individuals responsible for those changes.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- 14 Once approved by the Authority, a formal review of the CPR will be conducted every three years. In the interim, the Procurement Team and the ACFO for Finance and Resources will continuously monitor and implement any minor changes necessary to maintain the integrity of the CPR.
- 15 Training sessions will be provided to officers and their teams to familiarise them with the updated CPR and ensure compliance with the new regulations.
- 16 The CPR will be published on North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service)'s external website to ensure transparency and accessibility. Over the next 12 months, the Service will also develop and add guidance to support local suppliers in engaging with us effectively and to enhance their understanding of our procurement processes.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Wellbeing Objectives                   | The Contract Procedure Rules align with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, ensuring that procurement activities meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This includes considering social, economic, and environmental issues when setting tender evaluation criteria. |
| Budget                                 | Before undertaking any procurement exercise, the Responsible Officer must ensure that there is an approved budget for the expenditure. The total expected cost of a proposed contract, including any extensions and ancillary costs, must be estimated, and recorded.   |
| Legal                                  | The Contract Procedure Rules comply with all relevant statutory provisions, UK law, and public procurement rules. Legal advice must be sought prior to the early termination of any contract, and all contracts must be in writing and executed under seal if required by law.  |
| Staffing                               | To comply with the Procurement Act 2023 a procurement officer is being recruited. This post will also support with education of officers and their teams.   |
| Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language | The Authority must consider social, economic, and environmental issues when setting tender evaluation criteria. There is no detriment to Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language.  |
| Risks                                  | The reports set out the financial risks associated with borrowing and investment activities.  |



# North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority

## Contract Procedure Rules

---

This document is uncontrolled when printed. All users are responsible for checking to confirm that this is the current version before use.

---

## Introduction

The purpose of these Contract Procedure Rules is to provide a methodology for the procurement of goods, works and services for North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) and to ensure that the relevant procedures are efficient and transparent and provide a system of openness and accountability. The highest standards of probity are required of all officers and Members involved in the procurement, award and management of the Authority's Contracts.

Any queries in respect of these Contract Procedure Rules shall be referred to the Procurement Team.

## Version Control

| Version | Date       | Description of change/s   | by            |
|---------|------------|---|---------------|
| 0.1     | 26/02/2025 | Initial draft issued for review by Head of Finance and Procurement. | Jack Millward |
| 0.2     | 27/02/2025 | Minor tweaks following Head of Finance review                       | Elgan Roberts |
| 1.0     | 06/03/2025 | Completed version issued for inclusion with Formal SLT Papers       | Jack Millward |
| 1.1     |            |   |               |
| 2.0     | 17/03/2025 | Final Version issued for inclusion with Audit Committee Papers      | Elgan Roberts |
|         |            |   |               |

Formal review to be undertaken every 3 years from publication.

## CONTENTS

### General

1. Interpretation
2. Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and Legislation
3. Duties of Responsible Officers and Members
4. Declaration of Interests
5. Scheme of Delegation
6. Electronic Procurement Solutions
7. Corporate Purchasing Agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Agreements
8. Use of Consultants

### Procurement Planning

9. Purchasing Need and Procurement Planning Approval
10. Determining the Contract Value
11. Pre-Tender Enquiries
12. Sustainable Procurement and Safeguarding

### Exemptions

13. Exempt Contracts
14. Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules

### Approved List

15. Authority's Approved Lists
16. Removal of a Contractor from an Approved List

### Quotations and Tendering

17. Requirements for All Contracts
18. Contracts Valued at less than £30,000 (Goods, Works and Services)
19. Contracts Valued between £30,000 and £119,000 (Goods, Works and Services)
20. Contracts Valued between £120,000 and WTO's GPA Threshold (Goods, Works and Services)
21. Contracts Valued over WTO's GPA Threshold (Goods, Works and Services)
22. Request for Quotes and Invitation to Tender Documentation
23. Tender Specifications
24. Tender Bid Clarifications
25. Tender Submissions
26. Tender Opening
27. Late Tenders Received
28. Tender Evaluation
29. Errors in Tenders

- 30. Negotiations
- 31. Contract Award
- 32. Joint Procurements
- 33. Standstill Period
- 34. Notification of Tender Award and De-briefing Requests
- 35. Post-Contract Award Requirements
- 36. Letters of Intent
- 37. Non-Concluded Terms and Conditions of Contract

#### **Form of Contract**

- 38. Contracts in Writing
- 39. Bonds, Securities, Liquidated and Other Damages
- 40. Parent Company Guarantee

#### **Operation of Contract**

- 41. Contract Management
- 42. Contract Performance
- 43. Termination of Contract
- 44. Contract Variations and Contract Extensions
- 45. Contract Payments
- 46. Assignments and Novation
- 47. Nominating Products or Contractors or Suppliers

#### **Specific Contracts**

- 48. Land Contracts

#### **Other**

- 49. Retention of Contract Files
- 50. Review and Amendment of the Contract Procedure Rules



## GENERAL

### 1. Interpretation

1.1 In these Contract Procedure Rules, the following terms have the following meanings:

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Approved List                  | A list drawn up for and maintained by services for use under The Procurement Act 2023  |
| Business Case                  | The process for weighing up the expected benefits with the cost and risks of a proposed project.   |
| Call Off                       | A Contract let using a Framework Agreement where the terms allow for a Contract to be awarded without the need for mini competition.   |
| Code of Conduct                | The Codes regulating the conduct of Officers and Members as set out in the Authority's constitution  |
| Community Benefits             | Social or economic or environmental requirements which benefit the community within the Authority area   |
| Contract                       | An agreement for the supply of goods or services or concessions or the execution of works  |
| Contract File                  | A record of all matters relating to the Contract and procurement process   |
| Contractor                     | A supplier of goods or services or concessions or works for the Authority  |
| Contracts Register             | A Register of Contracts currently operating within the Authority   |
| Corporate Purchasing Agreement | A Contract or Framework Agreement which has been endorsed and approved for use by the PO, Finance and Resources and its use shall be mandatory. This includes joint procurement arrangements and membership of official planning consortiums |
| Contract                       | A Contract covered by The Procurement Act 2023 Regulations   |
| Authority                      | North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority  |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| E-Sourcing                    | Electronic systems for the facilitation and conducting of procurement exercises   |
| Find A Tender (FTS)           | Service manages tenders and contracts whose overall spend is, or will be, above the current public procurement thresholds.  |
| Framework Agreement           | An agreement which allows a Responsible Officer to Call Off or undertake a mini competition to provide goods, services or works in accordance with the terms of the agreement. The Framework Agreement usually constitutes a non-binding offer with no obligations to Call Off from the Contractor. If the Authority Calls Off from the Contractor a binding Contract comes into being. |
| GPA                           | Government Procurement Agreement  |
| Chief Fire Officer (CFO)      | Overall responsibility for each area of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service   |
| Principal Officer (PO)        | Responsible for specific areas within the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service   |
| Invitation to Tender          | Invitation to Tender documents in the form required by these Contract Procedure Rules   |
| Member(s)                     | A Member of the Authority   |
| Monitoring Officer            | The Officer designated by the Authority as its statutory Monitoring Officer from time to time   |
| Month                         | A calendar month  |
| Most Advantageous Tender      | The tender which is the most advantageous to the Authority based on a combination of price and quality criterion  |
| Public Procurement Thresholds | Thresholds determined by the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) reviewed every 2 years.  |
| Quotation                     | A quotation of price and any other relevant matter made without the formal issue of an Invitation to Tender   |
| Relevant PO                   | The PO whose department is responsible for the procurement exercise in question   |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Responsible Officer | Any permanent or temporary staff member or consultant or any other person properly authorised by the Authority to carry out any of the Authority's Contracts functions                         |
| Section 151 Officer | the officer designated by the Authority to undertake its duties under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972   |
| Tender              | a Contractor's formal proposal submitted in response to an Invitation to Tender  |
| Tenderer            | a Contractor who is invited to submit a Tender for the provision of works, services, goods or concessions to the Authority   |
| Value for Money     | the optimum combination of whole life costs, quality and benefits to meet the Authority's requirement. Such term equates to the WTO's GPA procurement requirement of "most advantageous offer" |
| Working Day         | any day other than a Saturday or a Sunday or a day which is a bank or a public holiday throughout Wales  |
| WTO                 | World Trade Organisation   |

- 1.2 Unless the context otherwise requires, words in the singular shall include the plural and in the plural include the singular.
- 1.3 Unless the context otherwise requires, a reference to one gender shall include a reference to the other gender.
- 1.4 Any reference to actions within these Contract Procedure Rules can also be undertaken by Responsible Officers with the appropriate delegated authority to carry out such tasks.
- 1.5 Under these Contract Procedure Rules, periods expressed as a certain number of days from a particular event run from the day following that on which the event takes place. If the last day of the period falls on a Saturday, Sunday or a bank or public holiday it will end on the next working day.
- 1.6 Periods will include public holidays and weekends unless these are expressly excluded or the periods are expressed as a certain number of working days.

## **2. Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and Legislation**

- 2.1 These Contract Procedure Rules apply to all Contracts entered into by or on behalf of the Authority.
- 2.2 The ACFO (Finance and Resources), Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer shall advise on the implementation and interpretation of the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.3 Every Contract entered into by the Authority or on its behalf shall be entered into pursuant to, or in connection with, the Authority's functions and shall comply with:
  - 2.3.1 all relevant statutory provisions;
  - 2.3.2 the relevant UK law and the UK and Wales public procurement rules;
  - 2.3.3 the Authority's constitution including these Contract Procedure Rules and the Authority's Financial Regulations.
  - 2.3.4 schemes of delegation;
  - 2.3.5 the Authority's strategic objectives and policies;
  - 2.3.6 the relevant data protection legislation.
- 2.4 Should there be a conflict between the provisions of the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules and any provision of an UK directive or any domestic legislation, the directive or legislation shall prevail.
- 2.5 All Responsible Officers must comply with the Authority's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations. Other officers must not enter into Contracts on behalf of the Authority.
- 2.6 Any failure by a Responsible Officer to comply with any of the provisions of these Contract Procedure Rules or the Authority's Financial Regulations or associated guidance adopted by the Authority or any UK legal requirements may result in disciplinary action.
- 2.7 Any failure to comply with these Contract Procedure Rules by Responsible Officers shall be reported immediately to the ACFO (Finance and Resources).
- 2.8 Any failure to comply with these Contract Procedure Rules by Members shall be reported immediately to the Monitoring Officer.

## **3. Duties of Responsible Officers and Members**

- 3.1 The highest standards of probity are required of all Responsible Officers and members involved in the procurement, award and management of Authority Contracts.

- 3.2 Responsible Officers shall always:
- 3.2.1 seek value for money;
  - 3.2.2 show no undue favour to any Contractor or Tenderer, nor discriminate against any Contractor or Tenderer;
  - 3.2.3 ensure that all procurement is in accordance with the highest standards of propriety and proper practice (including respecting the confidentiality of commercial information);
  - 3.2.4 do nothing that contravenes UK domestic law;
  - 3.2.5 ensure that adequate Contract files are kept for Contracts upon which they are engaged.
- 3.3 Members and officers must comply with the Authority's policy and processes in relation to gifts and hospitality. As a general rule, offers of gifts or hospitality must not be accepted without the written authorisation of the CFO or Relevant PO. This includes offers from Contractors, Tenderers or any firm or organisation with whom the Authority has had, is having or may have any dealings of any kind. Authority members may wish to discuss the offer of a gift or hospitality, with the monitoring officer / clerk.
- 3.4 Members shall comply with the members' code of conduct.
- 3.5 Responsible Officers shall comply with the officers' code of conduct.
- 3.6 Members and officers should seek advice from the Procurement Team in respect of any matter arising out of these Contract Procedure Rules whenever there is any doubt as to the correct procedure.

#### **4. Declaration of Interests**

- 4.1 No Member, officer or agent of the Authority shall improperly use their position to obtain any personal or private benefit from any Contract entered into by the Authority.
- 4.2 The following shall declare any interests which may affect the Contract process:
  - 4.2.1 all Responsible Officers who play any role in the procurement process, including those designated under a scheme of delegation in CPR 5.3;
  - 4.2.2 Members involved in the procurement process; or
  - 4.2.3 external consultants.

- 4.3 The CFO or responsible PO shall ensure that members, officers, consultants or anyone else who is not an officer of the Authority appointed or agreed by them make declarations on their appointment and on any change in circumstances (and annually in the case of officers), and shall either certify them as acceptable or take any necessary action in respect of potential conflicts of interest. Responsible Officers shall keep completed consultants' declarations on the Contract file.
- 4.4 All members and Responsible Officers must complete a declaration of interest form, which must be appropriately approved in compliance with the Authority's declaration of interests policy. The Authority shall maintain a register of declarations indicating the names and grades of those declaring and the nature of their declaration.

## **5. Scheme of Delegation**

- 5.1 The Authority shall maintain a scheme of delegation setting out the delegated limits for Chief Officers and Responsible Officers. Responsible Officers must operate within delegated limits when entering into a Contract on behalf of the Authority.
- 5.2 Each PO shall compile and maintain a scheme of delegation specific to their service, detailing the names and grades of Responsible Officers approved for the purposes of obtaining quotations, tendering, entering contracts and placing orders on behalf of the authority and the maximum contract or order value allocated to each Responsible Officer for these purposes.
- 5.3 Each PO must provide the ACFO (Finance and Resources) with their scheme of delegation before the start of each financial year and on making any amendment.
- 5.4 The ACFO (Finance and Resources) shall keep a register of all schemes of delegation and shall ensure the appropriate scheme of delegation is replicated within the purchase-to-pay solution (for ordering, receipting and payments).

## **6. Electronic Procurement Solutions**

- 6.1 All purchase to pay processes including requisitioning, ordering, receipting and invoice payments shall be conducted via the corporate purchase-to-pay solution.

## **7. Corporate Purchasing Agreements and Dynamic Purchasing Agreements**

- 7.1 The use of the following Corporate Purchasing Agreements as endorsed by the ACFO (Finance and Resources) shall be mandatory, unless a justification not to use them has been made in writing and been approved by the ACFO (Finance and Resources):
- 7.1.1 Corporate purchasing agreements resulting from the WGCD (Welsh Government Commercial Delivery) or any other approved official purchasing consortiums;

- 7.1.2 Any other Framework Agreements and any subsequent call off arrangements; and
  - 7.1.3 Joint procurement arrangements.
- 7.2 Any membership of an official purchasing consortium which requires upfront Authority commitment shall be approved by the ACFO (Finance and Resources) prior to the involvement by or on behalf of the Authority.
- 8. Use of Consultants**
- 8.1 The engagement of consultants must be approved, in the first instance, by the Relevant PO and such approval shall be recorded on the corporate Contracts Register.
- 8.2 When calculating the estimated value of the Contract, due consideration must be given to any follow on work that may result from the original Contract. Where it is proposed that consultants are engaged by the Authority, the Relevant PO shall ensure that:
  - 8.2.1 there is a clear identification of need. In particular, the availability of in-house resources must be considered before seeking to engage external consultants;
  - 8.2.2 a budget has been agreed;
  - 8.2.3 a project brief has been prepared;
  - 8.2.4 Contracts are in accordance with these Contract Procedure Rules, unless CPR 14 applies;
  - 8.2.5 comprehensive criteria against which proposals will be evaluated are set;
  - 8.2.6 the selection decision is clearly documented;
  - 8.2.7 a formal agreement or detailed letter of engagement is prepared and signed;
  - 8.2.8 fee payments and progress are monitored;
  - 8.2.9 a detailed Contract file is maintained;
  - 8.2.10 performance is reviewed and adequate management monitoring and reporting is in place, including implementation of any recommendations made by consultants;
  - 8.2.11 there is a clear requirement for knowledge and skills transfer from the consultant to in-house staff;



- 8.2.12 declare any interests which may affect the Contract process.
- 8.3 Consultants shall be required to provide evidence of and maintain professional indemnity policies to the satisfaction of the Relevant PO for the periods specified in the respective agreement. The excess for any one claim shall be no more than £20,000 except with the approval of the ACFO (Finance and Resources).
- 8.4 For the engagement of technical external staff such as architects, surveyors, engineers and lawyers, the Relevant PO shall annually review the level of use of such external staff.
- 8.5 Where consultants or technical external staff such as architects, surveyors, engineers or lawyers are appointed to be responsible for supervision of a Contract on behalf of the Authority, it shall be a condition of appointment that they shall comply with these Contract Procedure Rules and the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules in relation to that Contract as if they were an officer of the Authority and that on completion of the Contract they shall submit all relevant records to the Relevant PO.

## **PROCUREMENT PLANNING**

### **9. Purchasing Need and Procurement Planning Approval**

- 9.1 The Relevant PO shall, having established and identified a purchasing need, nominate a Responsible Officer to fully assess the purchasing need.
- 9.2 Before undertaking a procurement exercise the Responsible Officer shall ensure that the authority's business planning process is followed. This includes the appropriate scoping of goods/service requirements, ensuring that there is approved budget for such expenditure and the route to market is compliant with these procedure rules.

### **10. Determining the Contract Value**

- 10.1 Before conducting any procurement exercise the Responsible Officer will estimate and record the total expected cost of a proposed Contract, including any Contract extensions, incidental or ancillary costs net of recoverable VAT over the full duration of the Contract. For construction Contracts the estimate must be produced by a suitably qualified officer.
- 10.2 Where a service or supply Contract does not stipulate a total price, the value shall be estimated as follows:
- 10.2.1 fixed term service Contracts of up to 48 months: total consideration payable over the term;



- 10.2.2 service Contracts or Contracts for the hire of goods for an indefinite or uncertain period or for a fixed term of more than 48 months; consideration payable in respect of each month multiplied by 48.
- 10.3 The value of regular or renewable service or supply Contracts shall be estimated either:
  - 10.3.1 by aggregating the value of similar Contracts for the same categories of services or supplies awarded by the Authority over the previous financial year or 12 months, adjusted where possible for anticipated changes in quantity or value over the next 12 months; or
  - 10.3.2 by taking the estimated aggregate value during the 12 months following the first supply or service performed, or during the term of the Contract where this is greater than 12 months.
- 10.4 A Contract cannot be artificially divided, nor a valuation method selected with the intention of avoiding any clauses within these Contract Procedure Rules. Contracts shall be packaged to ensure best service delivery, competition and value for money.
- 10.5 Where a purchasing requirement is subdivided into several smaller Contracts, the estimated value of each shall be aggregated to estimate the total Contract value. However it will not be necessary to aggregate the following:
  - 10.5.1 any works Contract that has an estimated value of less than the small lots provision in the table of values; or
  - 10.5.2 any service Contract that has an estimated value of less than the small lots provision in the table of values, provided that the aggregate value of all those smaller Contracts is less than 20% of the total Contract value.

## **11. Pre-Tender Enquiries**

- 11.1 Enquiries of Contractors may be made before tenders are invited in order to:
  - 11.1.1 establish whether goods, works or services that the Authority wishes to purchase are available and within what price range;
  - 11.1.2 prepare the Invitation to Tender, price estimates and Contracts;
  - 11.1.3 establish whether particular Contractors wish to be invited to tender or quote.

## 11.2 In making enquiries:

- 11.2.1 no information shall be disclosed to one Contractor which is not then disclosed to all those of which enquiries are made, or who are subsequently invited to submit a tender or quotation;
- 11.2.2 no Contractor shall be led to believe that the information they offer will necessarily lead to them being invited to submit a tender or quotation, or being awarded the Contract;
- 11.2.3 a written record, including notes of any meetings held, the responses and the names of all individuals present shall be kept by the Responsible Officer on the Contract file.

## 12. Sustainable Procurement and Safeguarding

- 12.1 The Authority has a duty under the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to act in accordance with the sustainability principle and to ensure this guides decision making. The Authority must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 12.2 For all Contracts for goods and services the Authority shall consider social, economic and environmental issues when setting the tender evaluation criteria.
- 12.3 For all Contracts exceeding £2,000,000 the Authority must demonstrate compliance with the Welsh Government's Community Benefits in Procurement requirements. For relevant Contracts, Contractors will be required to complete the Community Benefits Toolkit as part of their Contractual requirements.

## EXEMPTIONS

### 13. Exempt Contracts

- 13.1 An Exempt Contract is one to which these Contract Procedure Rules do not apply.
- 13.2 The following Contracts are exempt from the requirements of these Contract Procedure Rules:
  - 13.2.1 employment Contracts;
  - 13.2.2 agreements relating solely to disposal or acquisition of an interest in land with the exception of Development Agreements (see CPR 52);
  - 13.2.3 internal purchases or service provision;

13.2.4 Contracts for the engagement of counsel; and

13.2.5 Contracts for the engagement of an expert witness.

#### **14. Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules**

14.2 For Contracts other than those specified under CPR 13, a Responsible Officer may seek an exemption from applying these Contract Procedure Rules in exceptional circumstances.

14.3 A Contract shall only be negotiated with a single Contractor where the Authority having considered all the circumstances decides that such a course is desirable in the public interest. Such a decision shall be made only after consideration by the ACFO (Finance and Resources) in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer where appropriate. Circumstances may include:

14.3.1 where the works, goods or services can only be provided by a particular Contractor for reasons that are technical or connected with the protection of exclusive rights;

14.3.2 urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the Authority and in accordance with the strict conditions stated in the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations;

14.3.3 goods are required as a partial replacement or addition to existing goods or installations and obtaining them from another Contractor would result in incompatibility or disproportionate technical difficulties in operation or maintenance;

14.4 No exemptions may be granted which would result in a breach of UK domestic law.

14.5 A register of approved exemptions will be maintained.

#### **APPROVED LISTS**

##### **15. Authority's Approved Lists**

15.1 Approved lists may be established for certain types of goods, works and service Contracts. Generally these will be for low value high frequency purchases.

15.2 The approval from the ACFO (Finance and Resources) must be sought prior to set up or adoption of an Approved List.

15.3 Authority Approved Lists shall:

15.3.1 indicate whether the Contractors listed are approved for all Contracts or for only some of the specified categories, values or amounts;

- 15.3.2 be publicly advertised and reviewed in full at least every four years. As a minimum, a public advertisement must be published on the National Procurement Service website (Sell2Wales);
- 15.3.3 be open to receive new expressions of interest from any Contractor;
- 15.3.4 be an Approved List prepared by another public body providing that it has been composed in a proper manner by that body and that the Responsible Officer is satisfied that the procedure used does not conflict with the Authority's policies and procedures.
- 15.4 The financial standing of Contractors may be subject to financial assessment. Where the CFO or POs choose not to adhere to the financial assessment limits advised by the ACFO (Finance and Resources), a documented risk assessment must be undertaken to support the decision.
- 15.5 A Contractor shall not be placed on an Authority Approved List or invited to tender if:
  - 15.5.1 it is bankrupt or is being wound up or is having its affairs administered by a court or has entered into an arrangement with creditors or has suspended its business activities or is subject to court proceedings regarding any of these matters;
  - 15.5.2 it, or any of its directors, have been convicted of an offence concerning professional conduct or have been guilty of grave professional misconduct;
  - 15.5.3 it has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes or other statutory contributions;
  - 15.5.4 it has fundamentally misrepresented information supplied to the Authority.
- 15.6 Where an Approved List is in place, the consideration of other Contractors shall only be permitted where the Contractors are to be subject to a separate pre-qualification questionnaire exercise as part of a specific procurement exercise.
- 15.7 Responsible Officers must ensure a process of continual checking and verification is in place with respect to Contractors who are on an Approved Lists or Framework Agreements or have a Contract in place. Issues which shall be subject to verification shall include financial standing (see CPR 15.6), level of insurance cover (including any policy exclusions), accreditations, level of prosecutions and any other relevant information which may be subject to change or renewal.

## **16. Removal of a Contractor from an Approved List**

- 16.1 The Relevant PO may, in consultation with the ACFO (Finance and Resources), immediately suspend a Contractor from an Approved List, Framework Agreement, dynamic purchasing agreement or (in exceptional circumstances) Contract, whenever there are substantiated concerns regarding the Contractor's financial standing or technical capability or compliance with health and safety requirements.
- 16.2 Investigations of the Contractor must take place immediately. If the suspicions are confirmed, the Contractor must be removed from the Approved List, Framework Agreement or dynamic purchasing agreement. If the suspicions are dispelled, the Relevant PO must immediately reinstate the Contractor.
- 16.3 A Contractor may be removed from an Approved List, Framework Agreement if the Relevant PO considers that the Contractor or its staff have breached standards of conduct that are relevant to the nature of the work performed by the Contractor. Action may be taken under this paragraph even if there are no doubts about the financial standing or technical capability of the Contractor.
- 16.4 In the event that a Contractor is removed from an Approved List, Framework Agreement the ACFO (Finance and Resources) will be notified of the decision.
- 16.5 A Contractor which has been removed from an Approved List or Framework Agreement shall have the right to appeal the decision within 7 working days of receipt of the letter informing them of their removal.
- 16.6 Any appeal shall be heard by the Procurement Team and Section 151 Officer.

## **PROCUREMENT APPROACHES**

### **17. Requirements for All Contracts**

- 17.1 The Authority is actively involved in collaborative agreements and arrangements across the public sector. These include joint procurement agreements to secure economies of scale and the use of public sector procurement frameworks.
- 17.2 Such arrangements known as Corporate Purchasing Agreement must be considered in the first instance. If in place an order shall be placed under the Corporate Purchasing Agreement accordingly.
- 17.2 A purchase order must be sent via the purchase-to-pay solution following award of the Contract.

**18. Contracts Valued up to £30,000 (Goods, Works and Services)**

- 18.1 The need to obtain one quotation shall be at the Relevant Officers discretion although this does not alleviate the Relevant Officer of their responsibility to demonstrate that value for money has been obtained.

**19. Contracts Valued between £30,000 and £119,000 (Goods, Works and Services)**

- 19.1 Where a Corporate Purchasing Agreement is not available, the Responsible Officer must follow the tender requirements and obtain formal quotations through Sell2Wales.

**20. Contracts Valued between £120,000 and World Trade Organisation (WTO) Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) Threshold (Goods, Works and Services)**

- 20.1 Where a Corporate Purchasing Agreement is not available, the Responsible Officer must follow the tender requirements and issue Invitation to Tender through advertisement on Sell2Wales

**21. Contracts Valued over WTO's GPA Threshold (Goods, Works and Services)**

- 21.1 Where a Corporate Purchasing Agreement is not available, the Responsible Officer shall invite tenders with appropriate advertisements on Sell2Wales.

**22. Request for Quotes and Invitation to Tender Documentation**

- 22.1 The Invitation to Tender and all other procurement documentation (including requests for quotation, pre-qualification questionnaires and Contract award letters) used shall be in compliance with the corporate standard documentation.
- 22.2 Every set of procurement documents shall state the nature and purpose of the Contract for which tenders are invited, specify the last date and time when tenders will be received and state that the Authority reserves the right not to accept any tender or to accept a tender other than the lowest where payment is to be made by the Authority or the highest where payment is to be received by the Authority.
- 22.3 The Invitation to Tender must include an indication of the method of selection of the successful tender i.e. price basis, quality basis or a combination of price and quality (most economically advantageous tender).
- 22.4 Instructions must be given to Tenderers regarding submission of documents which state that tenders must be received by the time and date indicated on the Invitation to tender. Receipts will be issued for hand delivered tenders.

- 22.5 All Tenderers shall be required to submit a signed statement to the effect that their tender price has not been communicated to others apart from that disclosed in confidence to insurers and that they have not adjusted the amount of any tender or quotation in accordance with any agreement or arrangement between the proposed Tenderer and any other person.

## **23. Tender Specifications**

- 23.1 The Responsible Officer shall ensure the Invitation to Tender specifies the quality, performance, safety and other characteristics required of the works or goods or services or supplies. Specifications may include requirements relating to methods of construction, design and costing, tests, testing methods, inspection and acceptance, quality assurance, packaging, marking and labelling.
- 23.2 Technical specifications shall be defined by reference to relevant specifications, in the following order: to British technical specifications, British standards implementing international standards, other British standards and technical approvals or any other standards. Where an appropriate standard is current at the date of tender, all works, goods, services and supplies shall be at least of equal quality.
- 23.3 Specifications shall not refer to goods of a particular make or source unless:
- 23.3.1 it is justified by the purchasing requirement; or
- 23.3.2 the purchasing requirement cannot otherwise be described precisely and intelligibly, provided references are accompanied by the words 'or equivalent'.

## **24. Tender Bid Clarifications**

- 24.1 At all times during the procurement process the Authority shall ensure that all Tenderers and Contractors are treated equally and in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner.
- 24.2 Tenderers must be provided with an opportunity to ask questions of the Authority in relation to the procurement exercise and Contract requirement. Where a Tenderer seeks clarification from the Authority prior to tender submission, the Responsible Officer shall ensure that the clarification question and response are brought to the attention of all Tenderers.
- 24.3 Following receipt of tenders, the Responsible Officer may seek clarification from Tenderers where appropriate in consultation with the ACFO (Finance and Resources).

## **25. Tender Submissions**

- 25.1 The principles governing the submission of tenders should apply to electronic submissions. and in compliance with the instructions to Tenderers issued as part of the Invitation to Tender.



- 25.2 The tender should be submitted electronically in accordance with the subject to which it relates, and the tender conditions shall clearly indicate the last day and time for receipt of tenders.
- 25.4 No Responsible Officer or member shall communicate with any Tenderer once the Invitation to Tender has been posted to or collected by the Tenderer. No information relating to that procurement process shall be disclosed to anyone not involved directly in arranging the Contract, except where it is necessary:
- 25.4.1 for an officer or Tenderer to carry out an inspection of works, in which case all Tenderers shall be offered an equal opportunity to carry out an inspection; or
- 25.4.2 to inform Tenderers of a change in the procurement arrangements, including the supply of additional or changed information, in which case all Tenderers shall be sent the same information at the same time; or
- 25.4.3 in response to a request for clarification.

## **26. Tender Opening**

- 26.1 All tenders shall be opened at the same time and place after the closing time for receipt of tenders as stated in the Invitation to Tender or as early as reasonably practical thereafter.
- 26.2 The Authority have arrangements in place to record the following details of each tender:
- 26.2.1 The last date and time for the receipt of tenders;
- 26.2.2 The time and date the tender was received;
- 26.2.3 The name of each Tenderer and where practicable the value of each tender;
- 26.2.4 The date the tenders were opened;
- 26.2.5 Contract title;

## **27. Late Tenders Received**

- 27.1 Any tender received after the specified time shall be endorsed with the time and date of receipt.
- 27.2 If all other tenders have been opened, the late tender shall not be considered for evaluation and shall be opened only to ascertain the name of the Tenderer. No other details of the tender shall be disclosed. The Responsible Officer shall arrange for the tender to be returned to the Tenderer immediately. A notification letter explaining why the tender has not been considered shall be sent to the Tenderer.



27.3 The late tender may be considered, providing that the other tenders have not been opened and that the Monitoring Officer or relevant PO is satisfied:

27.3.1 that there is evidence that the late tender was posted or submitted in time for delivery by the due date in the normal course of postal service or internet service; or

27.3.2 that exceptional circumstances surround the submission of the late tender.

27.4 Any decision is to be recorded on the tender opening document and a copy of the decision should be included in the register.

## **28. Tender Evaluation**

28.1 All tenders for goods, services or works shall be evaluated and awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tender, which shall include a combination of price and quality criteria, unless an exemption to this requirement has been approved by the ACFO (Finance and Resources).

28.2 Any scoring or weighting attributable to any criteria or sub-criteria must be clearly stated in the Invitation to tender. The criteria shall be strictly observed and remain unchanged at all times throughout the evaluation process. It must be noted that prior disclosure of and adherence to award criteria and weightings is a fundamental requirement of the core principle of transparency. The core procurement principles of transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination apply to all procurements.

## **29. Errors in Tenders**

29.1 As a general rule no adjustment or qualification to any tender shall be permitted. However, errors identified during the examination of tenders may be addressed. invitations to tender must state the method to be used for dealing with errors in tenders.

29.2 Responsible Officers may invite Tenderers to amend their tender to correct genuine arithmetical error(s). In this case, no other adjustment revision or qualification is permitted.

29.3 Where examination of tenders reveals other errors not stated in CPR 34.2 or omissions which would affect the tender figure, the Tenderer shall be given details of such errors and an opportunity of confirming or withdrawing its tender.

29.4 Where a standard form Contract is used, the Responsible Officer shall deal with errors in accordance with the rules applicable to that form of Contract.

- 29.5 The Responsible Officer shall ensure that the forms of tender are scrutinised in order to identify any errors or other discrepancy affecting the validity of the tender. Where tender values are compiled from a detailed bill of quantities the Responsible Officer shall also scrutinise the priced bill of quantities supporting the lowest tender received and any others he considers appropriate.
- 29.6 If a Tenderer withdraws or a corrected tender is no longer the highest ranking, the tender from the next highest-ranking Tenderer in competitive order will be examined in more detail.

### **30. Negotiations**

- 30.1 Where procurement is conducted pursuant to the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations through either the open or restricted procedures, no negotiations are permitted following tender submission. The Responsible Officer may seek clarification from Tenderers where appropriate. Negotiations on price are never permissible.
- 30.2 At all times during the procurement (whether subject to the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations or not), the Authority shall consider and implement the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and transparency.
- 30.3 The Responsible Officer shall keep a written record of all negotiations, including notes of all meetings and the names of all individuals present and signed as such by all participants. At least two officers should be present when conducting negotiations; these procedures also apply where it is proposed to extend an existing Contract by negotiation.
- 30.4 Where negotiation results in a fundamental change to the specification or Contract terms, the Contract must not be awarded but re-tendered.

### **31. Contract Award**

- 31.1 The Authority shall only award a Contract where it represents best value for money. Tenders duly invited and submitted in accordance with the provisions of these Contract Procedure Rules may be awarded in accordance with the Authority's scheme of delegation.
- 31.2 In respect of Contracts where the lowest price is predetermined to be the appropriate criteria for award, a tender or quotation other than the lowest if payment is to be made by the Authority or the highest if payment is to be received by the Authority shall not be accepted until the ACFO (Finance and Resources), has considered a written report from the Relevant PO.

## **32. Joint Procurements**

- 32.1 The use of any Framework Agreements or Joint Contracts resulting from a procurement exercise involving other public bodies as the lead authority shall be approved by the ACFO (Finance and Resources) prior to their use. All such requests shall be made in writing to the ACFO (Finance and Resources) and, once approved; the Responsible Officer shall ensure that the Framework Agreement or Joint Contract shall be inputted onto the Corporate Contract Register.
- 32.2 The Responsible Officer will ensure that the Contract Procedure Rules or equivalent of the lead authority or organisation will be acceptable to the Authority and are to be followed throughout the procurement exercise and the duration of the Contract.
- 32.3 Any joint procurement arrangement with any other public sector organisation that results in the Authority being committed to Contractual obligations on behalf of those other organisations (not including Framework Agreements) shall be approved by the ACFO (Finance and Resources) prior to commitment stage.

## **33. Standstill Period**

- 33.1 'Standstill' letters issued as part of the process for procurements over the WTO's GPA threshold under the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations or optionally as part of any Sub public procurement process must not be issued prior to confirmation of Contract award.
- 33.2 There must be a mandatory standstill period between communicating the award decision to all Tenderers and conclusion of the Contract with respect to procurements above the WTO's GPA threshold. This standstill period shall be 8 working days. Where the last day of the standstill period is not a working day, the standstill period is extended to midnight at the end of the next working day.
- 33.3 With respect to Contract awards involving mini competitions undertaken within a Framework Agreement or Contract awards with respect to Sub public procurement threshold procurements a standstill period is not mandatory, but a voluntary standstill period may be applied.

## **34. Notification of Tender Award and De-briefing Requests**

- 34.1 The notification letters which are sent to any Tenderer who was successful or unsuccessful at either prequalification or Contract award stage shall be sent promptly once the decision has been made. The unsuccessful Tenderer shall be informed of the reasons for being unsuccessful and shall also be informed of the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful Contractor as well as the name of Contractor awarded the Contract.

### **35. Post-Contract Award Requirements**

- 35.1 Following approval for Contract award and having received no legal challenges during the 'standstill' period, the Responsible Officer shall ensure all Contracts are in writing as per CPR 42 and that a purchase order is entered on to the purchase-to-pay solution (where available), once the Contract has been signed.
- 35.2 The Responsible Officer shall record all Contracts awarded by their service on the corporate Contracts register along with the E-Sourcing solution (where available).
- 35.3 The Responsible Officer shall issue a Contract award notice on the FTs portal within 30 days of the award with respect to an above WTO's GPA Threshold Contract. The Responsible Officer shall publish a Contract award note to be published on the Welsh Government Commercial Delivery Platform (Sell2Wales) website for Sub WTO's GPA Contracts.

### **36. Letters of Intent**

- 36.1 Letters of intent must only be used in exceptional circumstances after prior approval in writing has been obtained from the Procurement Team and shall only be used as follows:
  - 36.1.1 where the Contractor is required to provide services, goods or works prior to formal written acceptance by the Authority; or
  - 36.1.2 where all the Contractual terms and conditions have been agreed and there would be an unacceptable delay in waiting for the Contractual documentation to be completed.
- 36.2 In all cases, where appropriate, Contract award letters should be used rather than a letter of intent.

### **37. Non-Concluded Terms and Conditions of Contract**

- 37.1 The Authority must always ensure that terms and conditions are fully agreed by including them in the Invitation to Tender and requiring Tenderers to accept them as part of the procurement process.
- 37.2 Where the terms and conditions of Contract are not fully agreed, no Contractor shall be allowed to commence delivery of goods, works or services until all terms and conditions have been agreed and signature or written agreement of both parties obtained.
- 37.3 Responsible Officers must in no circumstances contemplate entering a Contract on the Contractor's own standard terms and conditions or negotiate terms which are significantly different to those included or referred to during the procurement process without the prior approval of the Procurement Team and subject to CPR 31.

## FORM OF CONTRACT

### 38. Contracts in Writing

- 38.1 The following Contracts shall be in writing and executed under seal:
- 38.1.1 if the Authority wishes to enforce the Contract for more than six years after its end;
  - 38.1.2 where the price paid or received under the Contract is a nominal price or there is no consideration and does not reflect the value of the works, goods or services;
  - 38.1.3 where there is any doubt about the authority of the person signing for the other Contracting party;
  - 38.1.4 where it is required by law; or
  - 38.1.5 where the total value of the Contract exceeds £1m.
- 38.2 The seal must not be affixed without the authority of the Executive Panel or a Member or CFO or PO acting under delegated powers. All Contracts under seal will also require an official purchase order to be created on the purchase-to-pay solution (where available).
- 38.3 All Contracts shall be in writing and in a form of Contract approved by the Procurement Team and be signed by the Relevant PO or their nominated representative. All Contracts require an official purchase order to be created on the purchase-to-pay system.
- 38.4 All Contracts shall be in the form of an official purchase order which refers to the Authority's relevant general terms of conditions or such other terms and conditions included in request for quotation. All such Contracts shall be created on the purchase-to-pay solution (where available) and can be approved or signed by the CFO or Relevant PO or their nominated representative.
- 38.5 Emergency Contracts awarded under CPR 14.3.3 or 14.3.11 need not be in writing before commencement but must be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.
- 38.6 All original Contracts in writing should be retained by the Responsible Officer.
- 38.7 Where there is an appropriate national standard form of Contract, that standard form shall be used, subject to any amendments as may be agreed with the Procurement Team in consultation with Relevant PO. Responsible Officers must ensure that any standard form Contract used in any procurement is still in force, up to date and reflects current legislation.

- 38.8 Commencement of any Contract shall not take place until the written documentation is finalised, except in cases of emergency, in which case the written documentation shall be finalised as soon as practicable.

### **39. Bonds, Securities, Liquidated and Other Damages**

- 39.1 The Responsible Officer shall undertake a risk assessment to determine whether a performance bond or performance guarantee is required.
- 39.2 All Contracts shall include a provision for liquidated damages to be paid by the Contractor where applicable in case the terms of the Contract are not duly performed, save where the Procurement Team approves another type of remedy.

### **40. Parent Company Guarantee**

- 40.1 The Responsible Officer shall seek a parent company guarantee when a Contractor is a subsidiary of a parent company and:
- 40.1.1 The award is based on evaluation of the parent company; or
- 40.1.2 There is some concern over the stability of the Contractor.

## **OPERATION OF CONTRACT**

### **41. Contract Management**

- 41.1 All Contracts must have a named Contract manager for the duration of the Contract. Contract managers must comply with these Contract Procedure Rules and where appropriate a project management framework.
- 41.2 All Contracts which are strategically critical or high risk or high value or high profile as determined by the Relevant PO, are to be subject to a formal Contract review with the Contractor.

### **42. Contract Performance**

- 42.1 All Contractors shall be subjected to regular Contract performance reviews through feedback received from external and internal stakeholders. Where appropriate, a performance review shall be undertaken at the end of each completed Contract or job. This shall include a requirement to record good and poor performance including complaints, issues and defects arising under a Contract and to monitor the aggregation of Contractor defaults including performance issues.



- 42.2 Incidents of poor performance shall first be raised with the Contractor in writing or at a meeting where notes are made and sent to the Contractor before the annual report is despatched. In cases of particularly poor performance or persistent poor performance, the Responsible Officer shall consider whether to recommend suspension or exclusion from the Authority's Framework Agreement or Dynamic Purchasing Agreement or to terminate early the Contract as per CPR 47.

### **43. Termination of Contract**

- 43.1 Legal advice should be sought prior to the early termination of any Contract.
- 43.4 Any Contracts that are terminated early must be recorded against the Contract entry on the corporate Contracts register.

### **44. Contract Variations and Contract Extensions**

- 44.1 Any Contract may be varied or extended in accordance with its terms and conditions and providing that the Contract has not expired.
- 44.2 Where the terms do not expressly provide for variation or extension then variations or extensions may be made with the agreement of the other Contracting parties and approval from the Relevant PO.

No variation or extension may be made if the proposed variation would:

- (a) mean the works, services or goods to be added to or deleted from the original Contract are substantially different in scope: or
  - (b) be in breach of UK legislation.
- 44.3 The value of a variation or extension shall be calculated by taking the aggregate value of all variations or extensions made to the Contract. No variation which adds to the cost of the Contract shall be made until funding has been identified by the Relevant PO.
- 44.4 CPR 44.2 shall not apply in cases of emergency, the variation or extension may be approved by the Relevant PO providing that the same is reported as soon as practicable.
- 44.5 All Contract variations shall be entered in the register of Contracts and an amendment shall be made to the original purchase order via the purchase-to-pay solution (where available).

### **45. Contract Payments**

- 45.1 The relevant officer shall maintain Contract documents, ensure the Contracts register is updated and raise a purchase order on the purchase-to-pay solution.

- 45.2 Payments to Contractors on account of Contracts shall be made only on a certificate issued by the Relevant PO, or private consultant whenever engaged by the Authority, or by an officer nominated by the Relevant PO as appropriate. The names of officers authorised to approve such records shall be sent to the Section 151 Officer.
- 45.3 The final certificate of any Contract should not be issued until the Responsible Officer has produced a detailed statement of account and all relevant documents.
- 45.4 The ACFO (Finance and Resources) may use discretion to offset any sums due from a Contractor to the Authority against any sums due from the Authority to the Contractor, provided that a standard form Contract is in place, any action taken is in accordance with that standard form.
- 45.5 Claims from Contractors in respect of matters not clearly within the terms of any existing Contract shall be referred to the Procurement Team before a settlement is reached.
- 45.6 The Responsible Officer shall consider applying liquidated damages in accordance with the conditions of the Contract where the requirements of the Contract are not duly performed.

#### **46. Assignments and Novation**

- 46.1 Assignment of any Contract to another Contractor can only be done with the prior approval of the Relevant PO providing this has been included as a Contract condition and is permissible under UK legislation.

#### **47. Nominating Products or Contractors or Suppliers**

- 47.1 The core procurement principles of transparency, non-discrimination and equal treatment are undermined by the nomination of products and suppliers.
- 47.2 Responsible Officers must seek to specify goods and services by reference to objective, non-product specific descriptions. Equivalent goods or services are nearly always capable of being specified. If this is not possible for genuine technical reasons, and a particular type of product or service or method of production or delivery has to be stated, then the words “or equivalent” must always be added.
- 47.3 The Authority may provide potential main or principal Contractors with a list of Authority-approved suppliers or sub-Contractors provided that it is made clear that they are free to sub-Contract to whoever they wish, subject to the Authority’s right to consent. The Authority’s consent shall not be unreasonably withheld. Any sub-Contractors must meet the Authority’s reasonable requirements in relation to technical standards, financial standing and insurance levels.



- 47.4 These Contract Procedure Rules apply to the nomination of a sub-Contractor or supplier for carrying out works or services or supplying goods. Sub-Contractors or suppliers shall send with the tender an undertaking to work for the main Contractor and indemnify them for the sub-Contracted works, services or goods.

## **SPECIFIC CONTRACTS**

### **48. Land Contracts**

- 48.1 All land transactions must comply with Section 120 - 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 48.2 The appointment of a developer under a Development Agreement may be subject to the Procurement Act 2023 Regulations and CPRs 18, 19, 20 and 21 of these Contract Procedure Rules.
- 48.3 Legal advice must be sought in respect of any land transactions which involve Development Agreements.

## **OTHER**

### **49. Retention of Contract Files**

- 49.1 Where funding has been received from an external organisation, the Responsible Officer must ensure that the Contract and Contract file are retained for the length of time specified by that funding body.
- 49.2 In all other cases, the Contract file prepared for all Contracts over £40,000 must be kept for **six years from the end of the Contract term** unless the Contract was executed under seal, in which case the Contract must be kept for **twelve years from the end of the Contract term**.
- 49.3 Documents relating to unsuccessful Tenderers may be micro-filed or electronically scanned or stored by some other suitable method after 12 months from award of the Contract, provided there is no dispute about the award.

### **50. Review and Amendment of the Contract Procedure Rules**

- 50.1 The ACFO (Finance and Resources) and Procurement Team may make any minor or consequential changes to these Contract Procedure Rules.
- 50.2 The ACFO (Finance and Resources) in conjunction with the Procurement Team shall continually review these Contract Procedure Rules and shall undertake a formal review every three years.

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Report to       | <b>North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority</b>   |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>                                     |
| Contact Officer | <b>Sandra Williams, Head of Corporate Planning<br/>Performance and Transformation.</b> |
| Subject         | <b>The Social Partnership Duty – Annual Report</b>                                     |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To seek approval for the submission of the first Annual Social Partnership Duty Report to the Social Partnership Council for scrutiny, and to publish the report on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority)'s website.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 ("SPPP Act") fulfils a Programme for Government commitment placing social partnership on a statutory footing in Wales.
- 3 On 1 April 2024 the new Social Partnership Duty ("the Duty") on public bodies came into force in Wales.
- 4 The Duty requires the Authority to produce an annual report to evidence how they have complied with the Duty created by the SPPP Act.
- 5 The Duty requires the Authority to seek consensus or compromise with their recognised trade unions, when; i) setting their well-being objectives; and ii) making decisions of a strategic nature about the reasonable steps they intend to take to deliver those objectives.
- 6 The Duty also requires that the annual report must be agreed with the Authority's recognised trade unions or contain a statement explaining why it was not agreed.
- 7 All of the requirements of the SPPP Act have been discharged through the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee, including agreement upon the annual report itself.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 8 The Report was presented to Executive Panel on 17 March 2025. No observations were made.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 9 It is recommended that Members:
- i) **Approve the Annual Social Partnership Duty Report for submission to the Social Partnership Council for scrutiny and publication on the Authority's website.**

## BACKGROUND

- 10 This requirement is linked to the setting of well-being objectives, upon which the Authority already consult the public and members of staff by virtue of the requirement to publicly consult upon improvement objectives, as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

## INFORMATION

- 11 This is the first year that the Social Partnership Duty Report has been prepared. The Social Partnership Council have not provided a template for the report.

## IMPLICATIONS

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Well-being Objectives                   | The Social Partnership Duty relates to the consultation and involvement of trade unions when setting well-being objectives. In addition, the Authority has consulted the public and staff on its proposed objectives for 2025-26. |
| Budget                                  | No implications   |
| Legal                                   | The publication of the Social Partnership Duty Report will ensure the Authority discharges the Social Partnership Duty.   |
| Staffing                                | No implications   |
| Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language | A separate Equality Impact Assessment has been developed by the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Officer in respect of the Authority's Improvement and Well-being objectives.   |
| Risks                                   | No implications   |





Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

**TÂN FIRE**

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

# **Social Partnership Duty Annual Report 2024–25**

**ATAL AMDDIFFYN YMATEB**  
**PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING**

[www.tangogleddcymru.llyw.cymru](http://www.tangogleddcymru.llyw.cymru)  
[www.northwalesfire.gov.wales](http://www.northwalesfire.gov.wales)



# Introduction

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, (SPPP Act), which came into force on 01 April 2024, requires public bodies, including North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, (NWFRA), to produce an annual report to evidence how they have complied with The Social Partnership Duty created by the SPPP Act.

The Social Partnership Duty requires North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority to seek consensus or compromise with their recognised trade unions, when

- i. setting their well-being objectives; and
- ii. making decisions of a strategic nature about the reasonable steps they intend to take to deliver those objectives.

Section 16(2) of the Act sets out several specific requirements relating to the Duty, with which NWFRA must comply when 'seeking consensus or compromise'.

In order to seek consensus or compromise a public body must include its recognised trade unions or other representatives of its staff in the process of setting objectives or making decisions, by (in particular)—

- a. consulting them at a formative stage of the process, and
- b. otherwise involving them throughout the process by;
  - i. providing sufficient information to enable them to properly consider what is proposed, and
  - ii. providing sufficient time to enable them to adequately consider what is proposed and respond.

Section 18 of the SPPP Act states:

1. A public body must prepare, in respect of each financial year, a report of what it has done to comply with the duty.
2. The report must be agreed with the public body's recognised trade unions or contain a statement explaining why it was not agreed.
3. The public body must publish the report, and submit it to the Social Partnership Council, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year.

# Background

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority delegates responsibility for certain functions to the Chief Executive/Chief Fire Officer of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS).

In addition to the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to set well-being objectives, there is a separate statutory duty for Fire and Rescue Services in Wales to consult with the public annually on improvement objectives, as required by the [Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2009](#).

Welsh Government Fire Circular ([W-FRSC\(2024\)06](#), dated 6th April 2024) provides that the “duties under the 2009 Measure and the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act 2015 can be discharged through the publication of a single report.”

NWFRS has established a Governance Assurance Framework to discharge its responsibilities on behalf of NWFRA. Part of that Framework includes a Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (JCNC), chaired by a Principal Officer, and whose membership includes representatives from each of the recognised trade unions. Relevant officers from across the Service attend with the Head of Operational Response and Head of Human Resources attending each meeting.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority’s recognised trade unions are;

- The Fire Brigade Union,
- Fire & Rescue Service Association,
- Fire Officers Association,
- Fire Leaders Association,
- UNISON,
- Unite.



# How we complied with the Social Partnership Duty

JCNC meets six weekly and the Social Partnership Duty has been incorporated into the objectives of the Committee and is included as a standing item on the agenda for each meeting.

The Committee's focus is on fostering good working relationships with all representative bodies and discussing matters of relevance to all staff.

Although the Committee is strategic, a broad range of issues are discussed at each meeting; these can include forward looking matters of strategic importance through to more tactical issues.

Notably all policies and procedures are highlighted for consultation prior to approval by the Service Leadership Team, ensuring that matters of note or concern are addressed at the relevant time. During the course of the year the following matters have been considered and recorded under the social partnership duty:

- Emergency Cover Review – a staff led working group to consider future options for improving rural availability
- Development of a new Training Centre – updates and dialogue relating to the options for training facilities critical to operational firefighters
- External review of culture – engagement with the members of JCNC in relation to the external review and appointment of the independent consultant
- Station manager framework – engagement and development of principles around changes to the way in which stations are supported
- Agreement of proposed changes to the promotional process for operational staff to ensure a fair, consistent and transparent approach

Following Fire and Rescue Authority approval of the Community Risk Management Plan for 2024-2029, work has focussed on the development of the 2025-26 improvement and well-being objectives. The Corporate Planning and Performance Manager attended each of the following meetings, to initially brief the Trade Union representatives on the new Social Partnership Duty and then to consult with the Union representatives and subsequently provide sufficient information to enable them to properly consider the draft objectives and how they were to be achieved.

## 26th February 2024

Trade Union representatives were provided with an overview of the requirements of The Social Partnership Duty and advised that formal consultation with Trade Unions would be conducted through the work of the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee.

## **21st August 2024**

Trade Union representatives were reminded of the requirements of The Social Partnership Duty and advised that Heads of Department had been tasked with developing their improvement and well-being objectives for 2025-26 and that public and staff consultation on those draft objectives would take place between 21st October and 16th December 2024.

Representatives were invited to make any comment about well-being objectives either at the meeting or subsequently by contacting the Corporate Planning and Performance Manager.

## **3rd October 2024**

Draft objectives were shared with Trade Union representatives and they were reminded that the consultation period of eight weeks was about to commence and that staff were actively encouraged to participate in the consultation.

## **8th January 2025**

The outcomes of the consultation were reported to the representatives and copies of the draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan, in which the improvement and well-being objectives will be published following consensus or compromise with the Trade Union representatives and ratification by the Fire and Rescue Authority, were shared and comments invited by the 10th February 2025.

## **20th January 2025**

At the request of The Fire Brigades Union a face to face meeting with the Corporate Planning and Performance Manager took place to discuss specific aspects of a number of objectives. The Union provided feedback on the wording of three objectives, as opposed to the nature of the objectives themselves. The objectives were reworded based upon their feedback and agreed prior to progressing to the Fire and Rescue Authority for approval.

## **19th February 2025**

As no further comments were received from any other Trade Unions by the 10th February, the draft, first annual Social Partnership Duty Report was shared with JCNC Trade Union representatives in advance of the February 19th meeting in order for the content to be agreed,

At the meeting the Trade Union representatives present agreed that consensus on the NWFRA 2025-26 well-being objectives had been reached and this was captured in the minutes of the meeting.

The contents of the first annual Social Partnership Duty Report was agreed upon at that meeting, prior to approval by the Fire and Rescue Authority on 28th April 2025.

NWFRA approved the Social Partnership Duty report for publication on the 28th April and can be accessed [here](#).



|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Report to       | <b>North Wale Fire and Rescue Authority</b>            |
| Date            | <b>28 April 2025</b>                                   |
| Lead Officer    | <b>Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer</b>                   |
| Contact Officer | <b>Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>   |
| Subject         | <b>Appointment of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer</b> |



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise Members on the requirements of the statutory posts of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer and to seek approval to extend the current appointments to 31 March 2027.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The roles of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer are statutory posts which must be held by named individuals with the relevant knowledge, skills and experience. Following a competitive process the posts were filled from 1 April 2021, and it is recommended that this arrangement be extended to 31 March 2027.
- 3 Under the terms of the Authority's constitution, this appointment needs to be considered by the Executive Panel prior to full approval by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PANEL

- 4 This matter was considered by the Executive Panel at its meeting of 17 March 2025. Following discussion and assurances on the performance of the existing arrangements, the Executive Panel endorsed the recommendation to extend the contracts for both the Monitoring Officer and S151 officer to the 31 March 2027.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) **note the requirement to appoint to the statutory roles of Treasurer and Monitoring Officer; and**
  - ii) **approve the recommendation to extend the current arrangements to 31 March 2027.**

## BACKGROUND

- 6 The statutory role of Monitoring Officer was established by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by Schedule 5 of the Local Government Act 2000. The Monitoring Officer is required to provide advice and guidance to the Authority in respect of matters of law and administration.

- 7 The statutory role of Treasurer was established by the Local Government Act 1972. This requires that every authority plans for the proper administration of its financial affairs and that responsibility is vested with one individual, the responsible finance officer.
- 8 The requirement to appoint to these statutory roles is recognised within the Authority's Constitution and Article 7 includes the designated posts of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer. Given the statutory nature of these roles there is a requirement for them to be held by a named officer.
- 9 The relevant section from the Constitution is replicated in [Appendix A](#) for ease of reference to confirm the scope and functions of these posts.
- 10 The services of the current Monitoring Officer are procured from Flintshire County Council and the role is fulfilled by a named officer, its Monitoring Officer, Gareth Owens. The appointment followed a competitive process, concluded during 2022, and the contract was let for a three year period to 31 March 2025 with the option to extend for two further years, until 31 March 2027.
- 11 The current Treasurer is Mr Dafydd Edwards who was appointed following a competitive process, concluded during 2022, and the contract was let for a three year period to 31 March 2025 with the option to extend for two further years, until 31 March 2027.

## **INFORMATION**

- 12 The roles of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer require specific knowledge of local authority arrangements including constitutional matters, governance, statutes, regulations and relevant codes. The appointment process should allow for full consideration of these technical aspects when awarding the contracts.
- 13 The Authority's Constitution requires adherence to public sector principles of openness and transparency and the process followed an open and competitive process to enable those qualified to fulfil them to consider the role. The contracts were let for a minimum period of three years from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025 with the option to extend for a further two years.
- 14 In accordance with the requirements of the Constitution, the decision to extend the contracts should be considered by the Executive Panel prior to approval by the Authority.

## IMPLICATIONS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Well-being Objectives                  | Robust governance arrangements are a key factor in ensuring that the Authority functions in accordance with its well-being objectives.                |
| Budget                                 | These are statutory roles for which budget provision has been made.   |
| Legal                                  | The appointment of a Monitoring Officer and a Treasurer is a statutory requirement.   |
| Staffing                               | No impact identified.   |
| Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language | The appointment process will give due consideration to compliance with these aspects.   |
| Risks                                  | Failure to appoint would result in the Authority not discharging its statutory responsibility and expose it to legal challenge and reputational risk. |

## **7. Officers**

### **7.1. Management structure**

- (a) The Authority shall engage such people (referred to as officers) as it considers necessary to carry out its functions. Officers may be authorised either by the Authority or a Committee to take decisions. The scope of these delegated powers is set out in the general Scheme of Delegation in Part 3 of this Constitution.
- (b) Although there is no legal requirement for the Authority to appoint a Head of the Paid Service, the Authority has chosen to do so as a matter of good practice. The Head of the Paid Service will determine the overall departmental structure and deployment of staff.

#### **(c) Head of the Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer.**

The Authority will designate the following posts as shown:

| POST                               | DESIGNATION                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive | Head of the Paid Service Section 151 |
| Officer/Treasurer                  | Treasurer                            |
| Clerk                              | Monitoring Officer                   |

### **7.2. Functions of the Head of the Paid Service**

#### **(a) Discharge of functions by the Authority**

The Head of the Paid Service will report to the Authority on the manner in which the discharge of the Authority's functions are co-ordinated.

#### **(b) Restrictions on functions**

The Head of the Paid Service may not be the Monitoring Officer but may hold the post of Treasurer if a qualified accountant.

### **7.3. Functions of the Monitoring Officer**

#### **(a) Maintaining and reviewing the Constitution**

The Monitoring Officer will maintain an up-to-date version of the Constitution and will ensure that it is widely available for consultation by Members, staff and the public. He/she will keep the constitution under review in accordance with Article 11 below.

#### **(b) Ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making**

After consulting with the Head of the Paid Service and Treasurer, the Monitoring Officer will report to the Authority if he or she considers that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to unlawfulness or if any decision or omission has given rise to maladministration. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.

### **(c) Ethical Standards**

The Monitoring Officer will contribute to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct through:

- (i) provision of training to Members
- (ii) receiving, acting upon and where appropriate investigating complaints of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct in accordance with the Arrangements for Code of Conduct Investigations and Decision; and
- (iii) provision of advice and support to the Audit and Standards Committee.

### **(d) Proper officer for access to information**

The Monitoring Officer will ensure that decisions of the Authority and its committees and relevant officer reports and background papers are made publicly available as soon as possible.

### **(e) Providing advice**

The Monitoring Officer will provide advice on the scope of the Authority's powers, maladministration, financial propriety, the Codes of Conduct, Standing Orders and the protocols to all Members and will advise and support Members and officers in their respective roles.

### **(f) Restrictions on posts**

The Monitoring Officer cannot be the Treasurer or the Head of the Paid Service.

## **7.4. Functions of the Treasurer**

### **(a) Ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making**

After consulting with the Head of the Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer, the Treasurer will report to the Authority and the Authority's external auditor if he or she considers that any proposal, decision or course of action will involve incurring unlawful expenditure, or is unlawful and is likely to cause a loss or deficiency or if the Authority is about to enter an item of account unlawfully.

### **(b) Administration of financial affairs**

The Treasurer will have responsibility for the administration of the financial affairs of the Authority.

### **(c) Providing advice**

The Treasurer will provide advice on financial impropriety, probity and budget and policy framework to all and will support and advise councillors and officers in their respective roles.

### **7.5. Conduct**

- (a) Officers will comply with the Protocol on Officer/Member relations set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.
- (b) The Monitoring Officer shall record in a book to be kept for the purpose particulars of any notice given by an Officer of the Authority under Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972, of a pecuniary interest in a contract, or proposed contract, and the book shall be available during office hours for inspection by any Member of the Authority.

### **7.6. Employment**

The recruitment, selection and dismissal of officers will comply with the Officer Employment Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.