

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 20 APRIL 2026 virtually via Zoom at 09:30.

Please note, there will be a Training Session around Prevention delivered ahead of this meeting, commencing at 09:00.

Yours faithfully,  
Gareth Owens, Clerk

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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 19 January 2026

Standing Agenda Items

5. **Chair's Report** and Invitation to 30 Years Celebration
6. Cultural Champions Update Report, for assurance
7. Emergency Cover Review Update, for assurance
8. Hwb Awen Training Centre Update, for information

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

9. Financial Strategies and Statements for 2026/27, for assurance
10. Medium-Term Resource Strategy 2026/30, for approval
11. Pay Policy Statement 2026/27, for approval

**Cont...**

12. Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026/27, for approval
13. Firefighters Pension Schemes Discretionary Policy Statement, for approval
14. Local Pension Board Annual Report 2025/26 and Terms of Reference 2026/27, for approval

#### Items for Consideration

15. **The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru's Annual** Remuneration Report 2026-27, for information
16. Appointment of Independent Member(s) to the Standards Committee
17. Quarterly Provisional Outturn 2025/26, for assurance
18. 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.

19. The Role of Treasurer (Section 151), for approval

## NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Monday 19 January 2026 virtually via Teams. Meeting commenced at 09.00.

Councillor	Representing
Dylan Rees (Chair)	Anglesey County Council
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)	Denbighshire County Council
Bryan Apsley	Wrexham County Borough Council
Tina Claydon	Flintshire County Council
Paul Cunningham	Flintshire County Council
Ann Davies	Denbighshire County Council
Chrissy Gee	Flintshire County Council
Ian Hodge	Flintshire County Council
Chris Hughes	Conwy County Borough Council
John Brynmor Hughes (left 09:48)	Gwynedd Council
Gareth R Jones	Conwy County Borough Council
John Ifan Jones (left 09:53)	Anglesey County Council
Charlie McCoubrey	Conwy County Borough Council
Gwynfor Owen (left 09:47)	Gwynedd Council
Beverley Parry-Jones	Wrexham County Borough Council
Arwyn Herald Roberts	Gwynedd Council
Rondo Roberts	Wrexham County Borough Council
Gareth Sandilands	Denbighshire County Council
Dale Selvester	Flintshire County Council
Gareth Williams	Gwynedd Council
Antony Wren	Flintshire County Council

### Also present:

Dawn Docx	Chief Fire Officer (CFO)
Helen MacArthur	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Justin Evans	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Anthony Jones	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Dafydd Edwards	Treasurer
Gareth Owens	Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Matt Powell	Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Elgan Roberts	Head of Finance and Procurement
Steve Morris	Head of ICT
Llinos Evans	Head of Corporate Communications
Lee Bourne	Area Manager Training and Development
Elin Hughes	Culture Champion
Tom Weston	Culture Champion
Tim Owen	Service Transformation Manager
Heledd Davies	Atebol Translation Services
Lisa Allington	<b>Members' Services</b>

The meeting commenced at 09:00 with a training session around wildfires.

## 1 APOLOGIES

Councillor	Representing
Carol Beard	Conwy County Borough Council
Alan Hughes	Denbighshire County Council
Austin Roberts	Conwy County Borough Council
Gareth A Roberts	Gwynedd Council
Paul Rogers	Wrexham County Borough Council

### ABSENT

Councillor	Representing
Jeff Evans	Anglesey County Council
Marc Jones	Wrexham County Borough Council

The above apologies were offered and accepted.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1. There were no declarations of interest to record.

## 3 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 There were no notices of urgent matters.

## 4 MINUTES OF THE NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2025

4.1 The minutes of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) meeting held on 20 October 2025 were submitted for approval.

4.2 The Chair advised Members that a Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee had now been appointed, Cllr Tina Claydon. A new EDI Champion had also been appointed, Cllr Arwyn Roberts.

4.3 Following the recent consultation on the review of governance of fire and rescue authorities in Wales, the Cabinet Secretary had now proposed that future fire and rescue authorities would be made up of one member from each local authority, with a third of the membership consisting of independent members. This would require changes to secondary legislation which the Senedd had 40 days to pass. It was unknown whether this would be passed prior to the elections due to be held in 2026.

4.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) approve the FRA minutes from 20 October 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

## 5 CHAIR'S REPORT

5.1 It was noted that a written paper had been provided to Members to inform them on the meetings and events attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority in their official capacities between October and December 2025.

5.2 The Chair gave thanks to the Deputy Chair, Cllr Mark Young, for his work whilst the Chair was away. It was noted that the Deputy Chair had visited the Control Room and the Rhyl crew on Christmas Day which had been omitted from the report.

5.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the information provided within the paper.

## 6 FIRE FAMILY SURVEY AND CULTURAL CHAMPIONS UPDATE REPORT

6.1 CFO Docx summarised the content of the Fire Family Survey and Cultural Champions Update Report. This paper gave an update on the Fire Family Staff Survey results, together with an overview of recent activity and workstreams led by the Culture Champions.

6.2 The Chair noted that a 68% response rate for the Fire Family Staff Survey was encouraging.

6.3 A Member thanked the Culture Champions for their contributions to date. It was asked what the long-term vision was in relation to the culture of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) and the CFO responded that structures were being put in place to ensure that both previously raised issues and new matters were dealt with in a constructive manner.

6.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the initial findings of the Fire Family Staff Survey, acknowledging both the positive progress made and the key areas requiring further focus, and support next steps; and
- ii) Note the ongoing programme of improvements and support the next steps outlined in this report by the culture champions.

## 7 EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW

7.1 ACFO Anthony Jones delivered the Emergency Cover Review paper which provided Members of the Authority with an update on the work of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) working group 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.

7.2 The CFO noted that the earlier presentation on wildfires had demonstrated how vital it was that the Service had fire engines available in rural areas. Members thanked officers for their hard work in this area.

7.3 RESOLVED to:

- 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 the collective agreement pilot signed off by the CFO and the Fire Brigades Union is now in full operation from 1 January 2026; and
- iii) Note that the collective agreement is being continually monitored and reviewed, and further data will be presented on its performance.

8 BUDGET SETTING 2026/27

8.1 Elgan Roberts presented the Budget Setting 2026/27 paper which provided Members with the financial planning assessment to set a balanced budget for 2026/27 and sought approval to communicate the final agreed levy to constituent local authorities.

8.2 The members of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group were thanked for their hard work supporting the finance team in putting this budget together.

8.3 A Member asked what the plan was to ensure that the use of reserves were kept to a minimum, and Elgan responded that the reserves were only utilised for one-off expenditure.

8.4 The Treasurer thanked the Finance Team for the hard work that had gone into producing the budget, noted that the budget presented was appropriate and recommended that it be approved.

8.5 RESOLVED to:

- i) Endorse the findings of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, including the planning assumptions being used to develop the revenue budget for 2026/27;
- ii) Approve the current financial planning assessment of a revenue budget requirement of £54.375m and capital budget of £6.661m for 2026/27;
- iii) Approve the proposal to utilise £0.271m of reserves for 2026/27; and
- iv) Approve the communication of the final financial levy of 54.104m from the constituent local authorities.

## 9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT Q2 2025/26

9.1 The Treasurer delivered the Treasury Management Report Q2 2025/26, the purpose of which was to provide Members of the Authority with an update on the treasury management activity and compliance with the treasury management prudential indicators for the period 1 June 2025 to 30 September 2025.

9.2 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the treasury management activities and prudential indicators for the period 1 June 2025 to 30 September 2025.

## 10 HWB AWEN TRAINING CENTRE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

10.1 ACFO Evans presented the Hwb Awen Training Centre Outline Business Case to Members and sought approval to progress to the next stage of development, which would focus on securing funding and determining affordability.

10.2 The Chair thanked ACFO Evans for the provision of information sessions to ensure that Members were fully informed. They had been found to be beneficial.

10.3 Several Members felt that this development was essential and urged those present to approve progression as outlined in the recommendations.

10.4 The Member Champion for Hwb Awen stated that this was an amazing opportunity for a long-term investment into North Wales and urged Members to support and encourage this development moving forward.

10.5 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the content of the Outline Business Case;
- ii) Approve progression to Full Business Case development; and
- iii) Endorse continued engagement with Welsh Government to secure capital funding.

## 11 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2024/25

11.1 ACFO Evans delivered the Gender Pay Gap Report 2024/25 which provided a snapshot of pay data as of 31 March 2025, in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. The report demonstrated continued progress in reducing the gender pay gap across the Service.

- 11.2 A Member asked how the statistics around female representation at 22% compared to other fire and rescue authorities, and ACFO Evans responded that whilst he did not have those figures to hand, anecdotally the Service compared well to others. It was agreed that the data would be collected and passed on to Members.
- 11.3 The CFO confirmed that the Service was one of the higher performing services in relation to the gender pay gap, but that there was still work to be done in this area.
- 11.4 RESOLVED to:
- i) Approve the publication of the Gender Pay Gap Report 2024/25 **on the Service's website, as required by legislation.**

## 12 ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT 2024/25

- 12.1 ACFO Evans presented the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Performance Assessment Report 2024/25 which provided an overview of progress against the Service's five-year EDI Strategy. It demonstrated how the Service has continued to embed inclusivity into its organisational culture, improve workforce diversity, and deliver inclusive services to communities.
- 12.2 The report also highlighted partnership work and actions taken in response to the Independent Culture Review, reinforcing the Service's commitment to creating a workplace where everyone can thrive.
- 12.3 A Member asked if officers had any thoughts on how to embed the work being carried out, and ACFO Evans responded that there had been significant changes in recruitment processes and engagement with the public demonstrating that the Service was committed to providing opportunities for everyone.
- 12.4 RESOLVED to:
- i) Approve the publication of the Annual EDI Report 2024/25 on the **Service's website.**

## 13 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2025-26

- 13.1 ACFO MacArthur delivered the Provisional Outturn 2025-26 paper which provided Members with an update on the revenue and capital expenditure forecast for 2025/26, as of 30 November 2025.
- 13.2 The Treasurer noted that there were several factors involved in maintaining a balanced outturn and thanked officers for the work dedicated to this area.

13.3 The Chair asked why North Wales Police were billing more than the cost of inflation in relation to the Service Level Agreement for the Facilities provision, and whether that would continue. ACFO MacArthur confirmed that this was a one-off incident relating in the main to pay awards and would not continue into future years.

13.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the projected revenue outturn position and the projected capital slippage for the 2025/26 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 £0.548m for LGPS pension rebate.

14 URGENT MATTERS

14.1 There were no urgent matters to consider.

Members and Officers were thanked for their participation.

Meeting closed: 10:45

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Not applicable
Contact Officer	Members Services ( <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 2026.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

#### 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 7 January the Chair sat on a Complaints Panel to adjudicate on a Stage Three complaint.
- 7 On the 9 January both the Chair and the Deputy Chair attended the online workshop for the Training Centre project.
- 8 On the 15 January the Chair and the Deputy Chair met with representatives from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) to discuss the agenda papers for the full Authority meeting.

- 9 On the 30 January the Chair attended an online meeting of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Executive.
- 10 On the 4 February the Chair, together with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Champion, Councillor Arwyn Roberts, attended a hybrid meeting of the Culture Improvement Board.
- 11 On the 6 February the Deputy Chair visited Mold Fire Station to attend the Phoenix Awards Ceremony in respect of pupils from Ysgol Maes Garmon.
- 12 On the 24 February the Deputy Chair attended the Tanio Sgwrs Welsh Language event held at Mold Fire Station.
- 13 On the 26 February the Chair, together with the CFO and Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Helen MacArthur, attended a meeting of the Social Partnership Forum chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government.
- 14 On the 10/11 March the Chair, together with ACFO Helen MacArthur, attended the LGA Fire and Rescue Conference held in Manchester.
- 15 On the 13 March the Chair attended an online meeting of the WLGA Executive Panel.
- 16 On the 20 March the Chair visited Llanfairfechan Fire Station to attend the Phoenix Awards Ceremony in respect of pupils from Ysgol Tryfan.
- 17 On the 25 March the Chair attended online a meeting of the Culture Improvement Board.
- 18 On the 26 March the Chair, together with Councillor Gareth Sandilands, sat on an interview panel to select a new Independent Member to sit on the Standards Committee.
- 19 On the 27 March the Chair attended an online meeting of the WLGA Executive Panel. Later the same day the Chair, together with the CFO and ACFO Justin Evans, met with Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, to brief him on current and future risks facing North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).

## IMPLICATIONS

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

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	
Date	20 April 2026	
Lead Officer	Dawn Docx, Chief Fire Officer	
Contact Officer	Elin Hughes and Tom Weston, Culture Champions	
Subject	Cultural Champions Update Report	

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with an overview of recent activity and workstreams led by the Culture Champions.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Culture Champions have now been in post for six months and **continue to support delivery of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's** (the Service) Cultural Improvement Plan, developed in response to the CREST Culture Review.
- 3 Since their appointment, the Culture Champions have established engagement mechanisms, contributed to key workstreams, and strengthened governance and reporting arrangements to support cultural improvement.
- 4 A programme of station visits is underway to enable direct engagement with staff, with early feedback providing valuable insight into staff experience and priorities.
- 5 A revised, detailed Culture Improvement Plan is now in place, supported by clear governance, ownership, and reporting arrangements. Progress continues to be reported through Service committees and to external stakeholders, including Welsh Government. Draft culture Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed to improve visibility of progress to staff.
- 6 The Culture Champions are also leading national collaboration through the All-Wales Culture Group, including chairing meetings to bring together partners.

## OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 7 The information in this report has not been presented previously to North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) members.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 8 It is recommended that Members:
- i) Note the ongoing programme of improvements led by the Culture Champions.

## BACKGROUND

- 9 The Culture Champions provide regular updates on their workstreams at Authority meetings, Social Partnership Forum, Culture Improvement Board, the People and Organisational Development Committee, and the Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee.
- 10 These updates support assurance and oversight by demonstrating progress against the Service's cultural journey, the Cultural Improvement Plan, and emerging indicators of cultural change and improvement.

## INFORMATION

- 11 The Culture Champions have been in post for six months, with secondments extended to September 2026 to support delivery of the Culture Improvement Plan developed in response to the CREST Culture Review. **They were appointed to support the Service's response to the review and to drive forward delivery of the plan.**
- 12 The role of the Culture Champions includes engaging with staff, supporting delivery of improvement actions, contributing to governance arrangements, and ensuring that cultural change activity is informed by staff feedback and organisational priorities. Since appointment, focus has been on establishing engagement mechanisms, supporting key workstreams, and strengthening monitoring and reporting.
- 13 A programme of station visits is underway to support direct engagement with staff. Initial visits to seven wholtime stations have been positively received, providing valuable insight into staff perceptions and priorities, which are informing ongoing work.
- 14 The Culture Champions continue to contribute to key working groups, including the Fire Family Survey Working Group and the Supporting Staff Experiencing Online Abuse Working Group, and are engaging with staff networks to ensure alignment with wider culture improvement activity.

- 15 A revised detailed Culture Improvement Plan is now in place to plan activity and record progress over the next financial year 2026/2027. This is supported by clear governance, ownership, and reporting mechanisms across relevant Service committees. The Culture Champions are meeting with action owners to review progress and priorities, ensuring updates are captured and communication is strengthened.
- 16 At a national level, the Culture Champions recently chaired the second the All-Wales Culture Meeting, bringing together blue light organisations to share learning and best practice. The latest meeting focused on work relating to staff surveys and psychological safety.
- 17 Draft culture Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been developed and shared with SLT for feedback, with the aim of improving monitoring, reporting, and visibility of progress to staff.

## IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Cultural improvement activity contributes to a healthy, motivated workforce and supports long-term organisational sustainability.
Budget	Activity is being delivered within existing budgets.
Legal	Supports compliance with employment, equality, and organisational governance requirements.
Staffing	Ongoing cultural improvement work aims to enhance trust, leadership confidence, enablement, and fair treatment, supporting staff retention, wellbeing and workforce effectiveness.
Equalities/ Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Cultural improvement activity promotes engagement with staff, fairness, inclusion and dignity at work. Communication activity, including use of Hwb Tân, continues to reflect Welsh language standards.
Risks	Failure to maintain momentum or demonstrate clear follow-through on staff feedback may impact trust, engagement and confidence in leadership.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Mike Plant, Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation
Subject	Emergency Cover Review Update



#### 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) 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 its inauguration in 2025, the ECR group has worked together to jointly produce and agree a Collective Agreement (CA) demonstrating the self-resilience within the current duty system across the 8 Wholetime (WDS)/Day Crewed stations. The CA has allowed for other posts within the establishment to be incorporated into a pilot scheme to provide a more effective and efficient model of emergency cover across the whole of North Wales. The full Pilot is now in its fourth month of operation.
- 3 Whilst only one **quarter years' worth of full data was available prior to** this report, initial indications are that there has been an overall improvement in the number of appliances available on a daily basis since the start of the pilot, and a reduction in the number of hours being paid at overtime for attendance at stations to ensure availability.
- 4 There has also been a significant increase in the percentage of hours each week that rural fire cover is maintained in Dolgellau and Porthmadog.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5 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 launch of the full pilot scheme of the CA on 1 January 2026; and
  - iii) Appreciate the continued efforts of all parties to regularly monitor and review the pilot to ensure that it remains fit for purpose

## BACKGROUND

- 6 At the Authority meeting on 20 January 2025, Members were presented with a progress report, outlining developments since their decision at the December 2023 meeting. They agreed that officers would continue to work with representative bodies to develop solutions to within the agreed budget, to address emergency cover in rural locations.
- 7 A Working Group comprising of Fire Brigades Union (FBU) officials and officers from the Transformation Team started meeting from 21 January 2025 on the next phase of the ECR project. They met with the aim of reinvigorating a proposal from the Task and Finish Group that the 178 posts on the 22 watches across the eight current WDS/Day Crewed stations could be self-sufficient and rely less on the remaining 18 establishment posts to back fill absences. This in turn would allow these posts to be utilised differently to support pilots to base wholetime firefighters in the rural locations identified in the ECR consultation. These meetings resulted in the drafting of a CA as the basis to trial pilots from initially 1 September 2025, until February 2027.
- 8 The CA also agreed to pilot the alignment of shift start times across all eight stations and to extend the day shift at Deeside, Rhyl and Wrexham to 10 hours to increase resilience allowing personnel from each station to provide cover on any other wholetime station if required during the day shift.
- 9 Updates are provided at each Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee (JCNC) meeting in order that other representative bodies are kept informed.

## INFORMATION

- 10 The Collaborative Agreement Implementation Group (CAIG) has now agreed a policy suite that details the principles and working practices of the collaborative agreement in respects of resilience procedures, and which includes a new wholetime rostering policy suite. These documents went through the formal consultation process in October 2025 and have been approved.
- 11 We have implemented the move of our promotion boards for supervisory managers to allow personnel to take up new posts at the beginning of the new annual leave year. These changes will be expanded to all management levels during 2026 to support the collective agreement in full.
- 12 A programme of migration has been delivered from on-call officers to wholetime posts to support the crewing of the nucleus stations at Dolgellau and Porthmadog, providing employment opportunities for our personnel living in those rural areas.
- 13 A programme to fully crew the WDS Rural cadre of personnel has also been completed to ensure that they can further assist existing and nucleus stations in rural areas to enhance resilience and fire cover.
- 14 The pilot involving the provision of two nucleus stations at Porthmadog and Dolgellau to improve rural fire cover began on 2 September 2025. Several visits by the Head of Response and other key officers alongside the facilities team have been implemented to ensure that staff welfare has been prioritised throughout the changes. Facilities have drafted a suite of plans for improvements to be made to both stations to better support the new nucleus crewing model.
- 15 The CA 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 the updated WDS Rostering Policy that aims to give more robustness to the leave arrangements and covering shortfalls on shifts.
- 16 A central repository of information and guidance documents including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) has been placed on the internal intranet, Hwb Tân, for the benefit of all personnel and will be updated after every pilot monitor and review meeting.

- 17 A standard agenda to review the pilot in line with social partnership principles has been agreed with the FBU to ensure that all relevant data is captured to ascertain whether the pilot is performing successfully, or whether it needs further amendments to be introduced in collaboration. Whilst it is still early into the full pilot the initial data captured has shown a slight increase in overall availability and marked increased availability in the rural areas identified.
- 18 The first formal review of the CA between the Chief Fire Officer and the Fire Brigades Union is due to take place on 21 April 2026.

## 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	North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) continues to work with staff and their representative bodies. Regular updates are provided at the JCNC and via the Weekly Brief as well as through visits to stations by Officers.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	The Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer engaged with EDI 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	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Justin Evans, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	
Subject	Hwb Awen Training Centre Project Update



## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with an update on progress with the Hwb Awen Training Centre Project, including governance activity, site status, communications and engagement planning, and emerging external considerations.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Training Centre Project, Hwb Awen, continues to progress through its agreed governance arrangements, with the Project Board most recently meeting on 1 April 2026. Following completion of the site clearance works, the site has now been returned to North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) control and ecological mitigation activity has recommenced, including the ongoing management of Great Crested Newts.
- 3 The project is progressing towards RIBA Stage 2, which will provide further clarity in relation to design development, costs and programme and will inform the next phase of work. Alongside this, work continues to explore external funding and investment options.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 4 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) Note the progress being made with the Hwb Awen Training Centre Project.

## BACKGROUND

- 5 Members will be aware that the Service is progressing proposals for a new Training Centre to address the limitations and risks associated with the current training estate, which no longer meets the needs of a modern fire and rescue service. The project is overseen through a dedicated Training Centre Project Board, supported by established internal governance arrangements.

## INFORMATION

### 6 Project Governance and Progress

The Training Centre Project Board (the Board) met on 1 April 2026 and received updates on project progress, milestones, issues and risks. As part of this update, the Board considered compensation events arising from increases in project scope that had previously been agreed by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority). These compensation events have been reviewed through the project's governance arrangements and approved by the Board, ensuring that the implications of agreed scope changes are fully considered and remain within project tolerances.

The project continues to be managed in line with the RIBA framework, and work is currently progressing towards RIBA Stage 2. This stage will provide increased clarity in relation to design development, costs and programme and will inform the next phase of work and future reporting to Members in line with agreed governance arrangements.

### 7 Site Status and Ecology

Following completion of the site clearance works, the site has now been formally returned to Service control. Ecological mitigation works recommenced this week and include the continued management of Great Crested Newts in accordance with statutory requirements and the agreed ecological management plan. These works are being coordinated alongside the wider project programme to minimise risk and avoid unnecessary delay.

### 8 Training Need and Organisational Risk

The Board continues to recognise that the Service's existing training facilities present operational and safeguarding risks and do not meet the needs of a modern fire and rescue service. The development of a new Training Centre remains central to addressing these risks and to supporting safe, effective training and future operational capability.

### 9 Funding Activity

A dedicated Funding Sub-Group continues to explore external funding and investment opportunities, including engagement with Welsh Government and other stakeholders. Members should note that there is still uncertainty around the timing and availability of any possible Welsh Government funding, reflecting the forthcoming election and the potential for changes within key government roles. It is also recognised that, following the election, there may be a period of delay while funding priorities are confirmed and new ministerial and official arrangements are established. This uncertainty is being factored into project planning and risk management, and Members will be kept informed as the position becomes clearer.

## 10 Communications and Engagement

Communications planning continues alongside the technical and governance workstreams to support clear, consistent and timely engagement. Draft communications and briefing materials have been prepared to support structured engagement with national and local political leaders, ensuring that stakeholders are appropriately informed of **the Service's strategic context, emerging** issues and future needs. This activity is being coordinated to ensure alignment with project governance, consistency of messaging and compliance with political impartiality and pre-election considerations.

### IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The project supports the Service's well-being objectives by improving training environments, strengthening workforce capability and enhancing long-term organisational resilience, while addressing risks arising from the condition and suitability of existing training provision.
Budget	No additional budget approval is sought through this report. Financial implications will be brought forward for Member consideration as the project develops and funding options become clearer.
Legal	Statutory and regulatory requirements, including environmental and ecological obligations, continue to be met. Legal advice is taken as appropriate in relation to governance, procurement and funding considerations.
Staffing	There are no direct staffing implications arising from this update.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Equalities, human rights and Welsh language considerations continue to be embedded within project planning and communications activity.
Risks	Key risks remain under active management through established project governance arrangements. These include uncertainty around the timing of external funding decisions, particularly in the context of the Welsh Government election cycle, programme dependencies and potential delays arising from external factors such as ecology, and ongoing risks associated with the condition and suitability of existing training facilities.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement
Subject	Financial Strategies and Statements for 2026/27



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) with the statutory financial strategies and statements for 2026/27: the Capital Strategy, the Treasury Management Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement. These documents set the framework for capital investment, borrowing, and repayment of debt.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The strategies provide the Authority's approach to capital expenditure, financing, borrowing, investment, and MRP for 2026/27.
- 3 They ensure compliance with the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code.
- 4 The financial implications, prudential indicators, governance arrangements, and risk management approach for 2026/27 are set out in the accompanying reports.

#### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 5 The strategies were scrutinised by the Audit Committee at its meeting of the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Members noted the statutory requirement for the strategies and endorsed the recommendation of approval by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 Members are asked to:
  - i) Approve the Capital Strategy;
  - ii) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy including prudential indicators; and
  - iii) Approve the Annual MRP Statement 2026/27.

## BACKGROUND

- 5 The Authority is required each year to approve a Capital Strategy, a Treasury Management Strategy, and an MRP Statement. Together, they ensure that long-term capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable, and that borrowing and investment activities are managed within a robust control framework.

## INFORMATION

- 6 The Capital Strategy (the Strategy) and associated Prudential Indicators, is contained within Appendix 1 and provides an overview of anticipated capital expenditure for the next 10 years, and capital financing requirements and treasury management activity, for the next 3 years.
- 7 The Capital Strategy sets out proposed capital expenditure, funding sources, and long-term investment priorities.
- 8 The Treasury Management Strategy outlines the approach to borrowing, investments, cash flow management, and associated prudential indicators.
- 9 The MRP Statement confirms the method for calculating the prudent charge to revenue for the repayment of debt.
- 10 All supporting detail is provided in the full reports appended.

## IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	The strategies support long-term sustainability by ensuring investment decisions enable safe and effective service delivery.
Budget	Financing costs arising from borrowing and MRP have been reflected within the 2026/27 revenue budget.
Legal	The strategies meet statutory requirements under the Local Government Act 2003 and relevant CIPFA codes.
Staffing	No direct staffing implications.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	No direct staffing implications.
Risks	The reports set out the financial risks associated with borrowing and investment activities.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Financial Strategies and Statements for 2026-27

*ATAL AMDDIFFYN YMATEB  
PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING*

[www.tangogleddcymru.llyw.cymru](http://www.tangogleddcymru.llyw.cymru)  
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# Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2026/27

## 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 including the loss of invested funds and 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 before the start of each financial year. In addition, the Welsh Government (WG) issued revised Guidance on Local Authority Investments in November 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 *Local Government Act 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 most significant impacts on the Authority’s treasury management strategy for 2026/27 are expected to include: the influence of the government’s 2025 Autumn Budget, lower short-term interest rates alongside higher medium and longer-term rates, slower economic growth, together with ongoing uncertainties around the global economy, stock market sentiment, and geopolitical issues.

The Bank of England’s (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut Bank Rate to 3.75% in December 2025, as expected. The vote to cut was 5-4, with the minority instead favouring holding rates at 4.0%. Those members wanting a cut judged that disinflation was established while those preferring to hold Bank Rate argued that inflation risks remained sufficiently material to leave rates untouched at this stage.

**Interest rate forecast:** Bank rate was held at 3.75% in February, but a cut in Q1 2026 remains probable following a more dovish MPC stance. Arlingclose, the Authority’s treasury management adviser, expect Bank Rate to be cut to 3.25% by middle of 2026.

A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is in Appendix A.

For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new treasury investments will be made at an average rate/yield of 3.95%, and that new long-term loans will be borrowed at an average rate of 4.61%.

# Local Context

On 31st December 2025, the Authority held £14.30m of borrowing and £1.96m of treasury investments. This is set out in further detail at **Appendix B**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

*Table 1: Balance sheet summary and forecast*

	<b>31.3.25 Actual £m</b>	<b>31.3.26 Estimate £m</b>	<b>31.3.27 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31.3.28 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31.3.29 Forecast £m</b>
Capital financing requirement	31.00	35.20	39.50	46.40	49.80
Less: Other debt liabilities *					
<b>Loans CFR</b>	<b>31.00</b>	<b>35.20</b>	<b>39.50</b>	<b>46.40</b>	<b>49.80</b>
Less: External borrowing **	-19.10	-14.30	-12.10	-10.30	-9.10
<b>Internal borrowing</b>	<b>11.90</b>	<b>20.90</b>	<b>27.40</b>	<b>36.20</b>	<b>40.70</b>
Less: Balance sheet resources	-14.50	-21.00	-17.50	-17.00	-16.50
<b>Net Treasury investments and new Borrowing</b>	<b>2.50</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>-9.90</b>	<b>-19.10</b>	<b>-24.20</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 £24.2m 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 2026/27

**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.

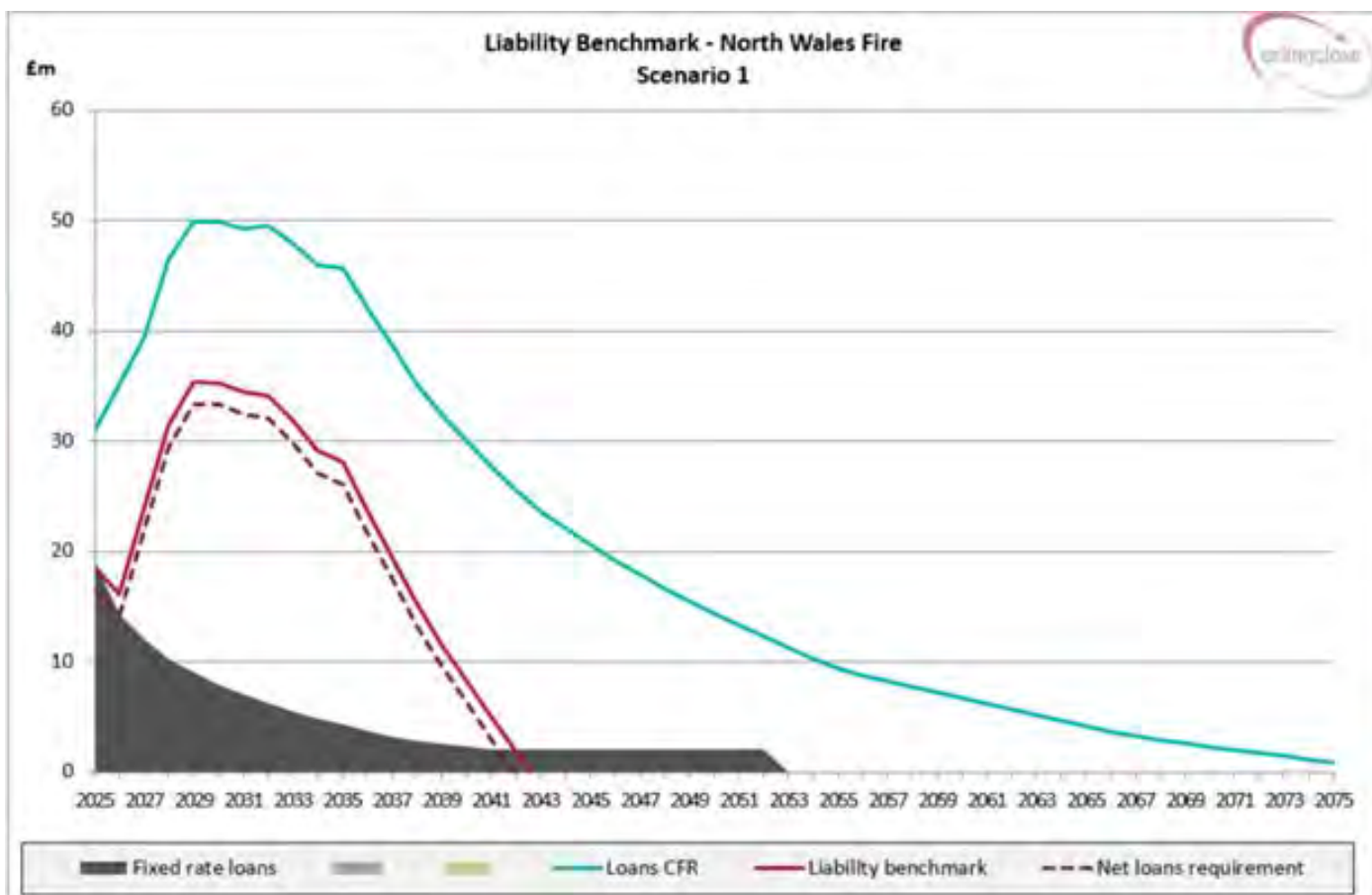
The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Authority is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external 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

	<b>31.3.25 Actual £m</b>	<b>31.3.26 Estimate £m</b>	<b>31.3.27 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31.3.28 Forecast £m</b>	<b>31.3.29 Forecast £m</b>
Loans CFR	31.00	35.20	39.50	46.40	49.80
Less: Balance sheet resources	-14.50	-21.00	-17.50	-17.00	-16.50
<b>Net loans requirement</b>	16.60	14.10	22.00	29.40	33.30
Plus: Liquidity allowance	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
<b>Liability benchmark</b>	<b>18.60</b>	<b>16.10</b>	<b>24.00</b>	<b>31.40</b>	<b>35.30</b>

Following on from the medium-term forecasts in table 2 above, the long-term liability benchmark assumes cumulative capital expenditure funded by borrowing of £22.0m in 2026/27, £29.4m in 2027/28 and £33.3m in 2028/29.

Minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on the 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 £14.30m of loans, a decrease of £4.77 million on balance at 31 March 2025, 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 £9.90 million in 2026/27. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £35.30 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 have fallen over the past year, and are expected to fall a little further, 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 2026/27 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 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 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)
- 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

**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 £1.034m. and £13.733m.

**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, 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.

**UK Government:** Sterling-denominated investments with or explicitly guaranteed by the UK Government, 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% rise in interest rates	-£0.030m
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall 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 are included in Appendix C.

## Financial Implications

The Authority does not hold an investment portfolio and therefore does not budget for investment income. Any income generated relates solely to the overnight placement of surplus cash, for which a budget of £0.037m has been set for 2026/27.

The budget for debt interest paid in 2026/27 is £0.876m, based on an average debt portfolio of £21.224m at an average interest rate of 3.95%. 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’s Treasurer believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. For information only, 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

# Appendix A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast – February 2026

## Underlying assumptions:

- While the MPC acceded to widely held expectations to leave Bank Rate unchanged at 3.75% in February, the decidedly dovish tone in which the decision was delivered prompted investors to reassess interest rate expectations. Four Committee members voted to reduce rates, but two of the slim holding majority also indicated that they would likely vote for a cut soon.
- Budget policies and base effects will mechanically reduce the CPI rate in 2026, on top of the downward pressure arising from soft economic growth and the looser labour market. After reviewing new analysis on wage growth, more policymakers now appear to believe that high wage growth will decline as the labour market continues to weaken, thus undermining previous fears of inflationary persistence. Household inflation expectations remain elevated, but there is a growing consensus that these will ease as headline inflation drops back to target, in line with historical observations. This brings the Committee's view more in line with our own.
- Some economic data has been stronger than expected, such as November GDP growth and recent PMI releases. However, these follow a period of consistent weakness since Q1 2025, GDP growth during which was bolstered by investment/spending ahead of Trump's tariff announcements. While activity data may be stabilising, this does not appear to be causing stronger hiring intentions, with survey evidence suggesting that businesses continue to shed employees. This will only prompt further weakness in spending as households continue to maintain a cautionary stance.
- Risks to the growth and inflation outlook lie to the downside, which may ultimately deliver lower Bank Rate than our central case. However, the bar to further rate cuts beyond 3.25% is relatively high, as policy makers become more cautious as monetary policy becomes looser.
- Recent moves have steepened the yield curve, as investors price a lower path for short term rates. However, sustained heavy borrowing across advanced economies, continued outperformance of the the US economy, the DMO's move towards issuing more short-dated gilts and lingering doubts about the government's fiscal plans will keep short to medium yields above the levels implied by UK interest rate expectations alone.
- Furthermore, while attention has recently shifted away from the UK government's fiscal position, potential changes to political leadership may prompt a higher path for yields should a new team be less fiscally restrained.

## Forecast:

- Bank Rate was held at 3.75% in February, but a cut in Q1 2026 remains probable following a more dovish MPC stance.
- Continued disinflation, rising unemployment, softening wage growth and low confidence suggests that monetary policy will continue to be loosened.
- Arlingclose expects Bank Rate to be cut to 3.25% by middle of 2026.

- Medium and long-term gilt yields continue to incorporate premia for UK government credibility, global uncertainty and significant issuance. These issues may not be resolved quickly and we expect yields to remain higher than would normally be consistent with Bank Rate expectations.

	Current	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27	Mar-28	Jun-28	Sep-28	Dec-28
<b>Official Bank Rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central Case	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50
<b>3-month money market rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central Case	3.79	3.55	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.35	3.35	3.35
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50
<b>5yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Central Case	3.91	3.85	3.80	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.80	3.80	3.80
Downside risk	0.00	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85
<b>10yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Central Case	4.54	4.40	4.35	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.35	4.35	4.35
Downside risk	0.00	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85
<b>20yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Central Case	5.24	5.10	5.05	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.05	5.05	5.05
Downside risk	0.00	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85
<b>50yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.70
Central Case	4.90	4.80	4.75	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.75	4.75	4.75
Downside risk	0.00	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85	-0.85

PWLB Standard Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.00%; PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%  
 PWLB HRA Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.40%; National Wealth Fund Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.40%

- PWLB Standard Rate = Gilt yield + 1.00%
- PWLB Certainty Rate = Gilt yield + 0.80%
- PWLB HRA Rate = Gilt yield + 0.40%
- National Wealth Fund (NWF) Rate = Gilt yield + 0.40%

## Appendix B – Additional requirements of Welsh Government Investment Guidance

	Jan-26 Actual portfolio £m	Jan-26 Average Rate %
<b>External borrowing:</b> Public Works Loan Board Local Authorities <b>Total borrowing</b>	14.80 <b>14.80</b>	3.92%
Other long-term liabilities: Finance Leases <b>Total gross external debt</b>	0.00 <b>14.80</b>	
<b>Treasury investments</b> The UK Government Banks (unsecured) <b>Total treasury investments</b>	2.10 1.03 <b>3.13</b>	
<b>Net Debt</b>	<b>11.67</b>	

## Appendix C – Additional requirements of Welsh Government Investment Guidance

The Welsh Government (WG) published revised Investment Guidance in November 2019 which places additional reporting requirements upon local authorities that are not integral to this Authority's treasury management processes. The guidance also covers investments that are not part of treasury management, for example investment property and loans to local organisations.

**Contribution:** The Authority's investments contribute to its service delivery objectives and/or to promote wellbeing as follows:

- treasury management investments support effective treasury management activities,

**Climate change:** The Authority's investment decisions consider long-term climate risks to support a low carbon economy to the extent that 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.

**Specified investments:** The WG Guidance defines specified investments as those:

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement unless the counterparty is a local authority,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and

- invested with one of:
  - ◊ the UK Government,
  - ◊ a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
  - ◊ a body or investment scheme of “high credit quality”.

The Authority defines “high credit quality” organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds “high credit quality” is defined as those having a credit rating of [A-] or higher.

**Loans:** The WG Guidance defines a loan as a written or oral agreement where the authority temporarily transfers cash to a third party, joint venture, subsidiary or associate who agrees a return according to the terms and conditions of receiving the loan, except where the third party is another local authority.

The Authority does not have any financial exposure to loans to local enterprises, local charities, wholly owned companies and joint ventures.

**Non-specified investments:** The Authority does not have any non-specified investments.

**Non-financial investments:** The Authority does not have any non-financial investments.

**Investment advisers:** The Authority has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisors. The quality of these services is controlled by an internal review.

**Capacity and skills:** The Authority employs professionally qualified and experienced staff in senior positions with responsibility for making capital expenditure, borrowing and investment decisions. For example, the Treasurer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Finance and Resources), and Head of Finance and Procurement are qualified accountants with many years’ experience.

The Authority currently employs Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers. This approach is more cost effective than employing such staff directly and ensures that the Authority has access to knowledge and skills commensurate with its risk appetite.

Arlingclose have provided training to members of the Audit Committee, who have responsibility for reviewing treasury management activities.

**Corporate governance:** All treasury activity is reported to the Audit Committee and Fire Authority, on a quarterly basis. The reports are presented by the Treasurer or Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Finance & Resources). Members have the opportunity to ask questions, following the presentations.

# Capital Strategy Report 2026/27

## Introduction

This capital strategy report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It has been written in an accessible style to enhance members' understanding of these sometimes-technical areas.

Decisions made this year on capital and treasury management will have financial consequences for the Authority for many years into the future. They are therefore subject to both a national regulatory framework and to local policy framework, summarised in this report.

## Capital Expenditure and Financing

Capital expenditure is where the Authority spends money on assets, such as land, property, equipment or vehicles, that will be used for more than one year. In local government this includes spending on assets owned by other bodies, and loans and grants to other bodies enabling them to buy assets.

In 2026/27, the Authority is planning capital expenditure of £6.661m for General Fund service and £2.265m for the Hwb Awen (Training Centre) as summarised below:

Table 1: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure in £ millions

	2024/25 actual	2025/26 forecast	2026/27 budget	2027/28 budget	2028/29 budget
General Fund services	3.821	6.103	6.661	9.654	7.200
Hwb Awen	2.714	1.333	2.265	20.564	24.748
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.535</b>	<b>7.436</b>	<b>8.926</b>	<b>30.218</b>	<b>31.948</b>

The main General Fund capital projects include building works, fleet including specialist vehicles, equipment, information technology and decarbonisation activities. Included separately is the aspiration to construct a centralised training centre, Hwb Awen. Approval has been given by the Fire Authority to complete enabling works, where final approval and funding is required for construction phase for 2027/28 onwards.

**Governance:** By September each year, managers submit bids to include projects in the Authority's capital programme. Bids are collated by the Head of Finance who calculates the financing requirement and cost for inclusion within budget setting assumptions. The Service Leadership Team appraises all bids based on a comparison of strategic priorities and departmental objectives, mitigation of risks, and impact against wellbeing of future generations act, and makes recommendations for schemes to be included in the capital plan. The final capital programme is then presented to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel in December and to the Fire and Rescue Authority in January each year.

- The full details of the Authority's capital programme is within the MTRS Report

All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Authority's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

Table 2: Capital financing in £ millions

	<b>2024/25 actual</b>	<b>2025/26 forecast</b>	<b>2026/27 budget *</b>	<b>2027/28 budget</b>	<b>2028/29 budget</b>
Reserves	0.049	1.379	0	0	0
Revenue resources	1.459	1.451	1.000	1.250	1.500
Debt	4.108	3.746	6.139	8.404	5.700
Grants	0.918	0.860	0.500	20.564	24.748
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.535</b>	<b>7.436</b>	<b>8.926</b>	<b>30.218</b>	<b>31.948</b>

The above debt and Grant includes the new training centre, as detailed in Table 1.

Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as minimum revenue provision (MRP). Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets (known as capital receipts) may be used to replace debt finance. Planned MRP and use of capital receipts are as follows:

Table 3: Replacement of prior years' debt finance in £ millions

	<b>2024/25 actual</b>	<b>2025/26 forecast</b>	<b>2026/27 budget</b>	<b>2027/28 budget</b>	<b>2028/29 budget</b>
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	1.957	2.015	2.241	2.564	2.944
Capital receipts	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.957</b>	<b>2.015</b>	<b>2.241</b>	<b>2.564</b>	<b>2.944</b>

- The Authority's full minimum revenue provision statement is available as part of the Treasury Management Strategy

The Authority's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP and capital receipts used to replace debt. The CFR is expected to increase by £4.30m during 2026/27. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Authority's estimated CFR is as follows:

Table 4: Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions

	<b>2024/25 actual</b>	<b>2025/26 forecast</b>	<b>2026/27 budget</b>	<b>2027/28 budget</b>	<b>2028/29 budget</b>
General Fund services	31.00	35.20	39.50	46.40	49.80

The above debt excludes the new training centre, as detailed in Table 1 as it is assumed that this will be fully funded by grant funding.

**Asset management:** To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Authority is developing an Estate strategy.

**Asset disposals:** When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or to repay debt. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts. The Authority is not planning to receive any capital receipts in the coming financial year.

## Treasury Management

Treasury management is concerned with keeping sufficient but not excessive cash available to meet the Authority’s spending needs, while managing the risks involved. This includes the management of borrowing to fund capital expenditure as well as the day-to-day management of revenue cash. Surplus cash is invested until required, while a shortage of cash will be met by borrowing, to avoid excessive credit balances or overdrafts in the bank current account. The Authority is typically cash rich in the short-term as revenue income is received before it is spent, but cash poor in the long-term as capital expenditure is incurred before being financed. The revenue cash surpluses are offset against capital cash shortfalls to reduce overall borrowing.

Due to decisions taken in the past, the Authority currently has £14.80m borrowing at an average interest rate of 3.92%.

**Borrowing strategy:** The Authority’s main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Authority therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheaper short-term loans and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher.

The Authority does not borrow to invest for the primary purpose of financial return and therefore retains full access to the Public Works Loans Board.

Projected levels of the Authority’s total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases and transferred debt) are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement (see above).

*Table 6: Prudential Indicator: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement in £ millions*

	<b>31.3.2025 actual</b>	<b>31.3.2026 forecast</b>	<b>*31.3.2027 budget</b>	<b>*31.3.2028 budget</b>	<b>*31.3.2029 budget</b>
Debt (incl. Finance leases)	19.07	14.26	22.12	24.92	33.55
Capital Financing Requirement	31.00	35.20	39.50	46.40	49.80

\*The above debt includes the new training centre, as detailed in Table 1. It is assumed that construction phase will be fully funded from grants.

Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from table 6, the Authority expects to comply with this in the medium term.

**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 that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £2m at each year-end. This benchmark is currently £16.10m and is forecast to rise to £35.30m over the next three years.

The liability benchmark does not include the cost of construction for the new training centre.

Table 7: Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark in £ millions

	31.3.2025 actual	31.3.2026 forecast	31.3.2027 budget	31.3.2028 budget	31.3.2029 budget
Outstanding borrowing	19.07	14.26	22.12	24.92	33.55
Liability benchmark	18.60	16.15	23.98	31.41	35.33

The table shows that the Authority expects to remain borrowed below its liability benchmark.

**Affordable borrowing limit:** The Authority is legally obliged to set an authorised limit for external debt each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

Table 8: Prudential Indicators: Authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt in £m

	2025/26 limit	2026/27 limit	2027/28 limit	2028/29 limit
Authorised limit – borrowing	30.99	38.12	42.42	49.32
Operational boundary – borrowing	28.99	36.12	39.42	45.32

- Further details on borrowing are in the treasury management strategy

**Treasury investment strategy:** Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

The Authority’s policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield and as such it places short term cash surpluses into bank call accounts or with the UK Debt Management Office until required. The Authority does not have long term investments. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, with selected high-quality (creditworthy) banks, to minimise the risk of loss.

**Risk management:** The effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of the Authority’s treasury management activities. The treasury management strategy therefore sets out various indicators and limits to constrain the risk of unexpected losses and details the extent to which financial derivatives may be used to manage treasury risks. The Treasury Management Strategy excludes the construction phase borrowing requirement for Hwb Awen pending confirmation of full grant funding.

The treasury management prudential indicators are included in the treasury management strategy

**Governance:** Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to an Assistant Chief Fire Officer and officers, who must act in line with the treasury management strategy approved by the Authority. Reports on treasury management activity are presented to committee. The Audit Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

# Liabilities

The Authority may need to cover the costs of changes to firefighter pension regulations. If no extra funding is received, it will use the pensions reserve to manage any additional expenses and limit increases to the levy.

**Governance:** Decisions on incurring new discretionary liabilities are taken by the Head of Finance in consultation with an Assistant Chief Fire Officer. The risk of liabilities crystallising and requiring payment is monitored by the Head of Finance and reported annually to the Fire Authority. New liabilities exceeding £1m are reported to the Authority for notification as appropriate.

- Further details on liabilities are on pages 43 and 65 of the [2024/25 statement of accounts](#).

# Revenue Budget Implications

Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from the levy and general government grants.

Table 11: Prudential Indicator: Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream

	2024/25 actual	2025/26 forecast	2026/27 budget	2027/28 budget	2028/29 budget
Financing costs (£m)	3.189	4.407	4.501	5.200	5.900
Proportion of net revenue stream	6.48%	8.41%	8.16%	9.2%	10.0%

- Further details on the revenue implications of capital expenditure are detailed within the 2026/27 revenue budget [here](#).

**Sustainability:** Because capital expenditure and financing decisions affect budgets far into the future, spending over the next few years will have revenue implications for up to 50 years. Adding the new training centre poses financial challenges because of its size and expense; however, currently, the impact on capital financing is restricted to the preconstruction stage, as a full capital grant for construction stage is being sought.

# Knowledge and Skills

The Authority entrusts capital, borrowing, and investment decisions to professionally qualified staff with extensive experience, including accountants in key roles such as Treasurer and Head of Finance. It supports employees pursuing relevant certifications like CIPFA and AAT. External specialists, including Arlingclose Limited for treasury management, and Facilities Management consultants engaged through a Service Level Agreement, supplement internal expertise. This strategy is cost-effective and aligns the Authority’s skills base with its risk management needs.

# Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2026/27

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The *Local Government Act 2003* requires the Authority to have regard to Welsh Government’s *Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision* (the WG Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.

The broad aim of the WG Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The WG Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year and recommends several options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance:

- For capital expenditure incurred after 31st March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset in equal instalments, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years.
- For assets acquired by leases or the Private Finance Initiative, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.
- Where former operating leases have been brought onto the balance sheet due to the adoption of the *IFRS 16 Leases* accounting standard, and the asset values have been adjusted for accruals, prepayments, premiums and/or incentives, then the annual MRP charges will be adjusted so that the total charge to revenue remains unaffected by the new standard.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2026/27 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2027/28 or later.

Based on the Authority’s latest estimate of its capital financing requirement (CFR) on 31st March 2026, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

	<b>31.03.2026 Estimated CFR £m</b>	<b>2026/27 Estimated MRP £</b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>35.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>

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Report to	Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement
Subject	Medium-Term Resource Strategy 2026-30



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) for 2026–2030, providing Members with the financial framework that supports delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024–2029 and sets out **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's** (the Authority) medium-term financial outlook, risks and planning assumptions.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The MTRS outlines how the Authority will resource CRMP delivery over the period 2026–2030, ensuring alignment between operational priorities, available funding, and statutory responsibilities.
- 3 The financial environment remains challenging due to inflation, pay uncertainty, capital financing pressures, and the introduction of Emergency Services Network (ESN) costs.
- 4 **Despite these pressures, the Authority's financial position remains sustainable, supported by planned efficiencies, prudent use of reserves, and a structured approach to financial risk management.**
- 5 Indicative levy requirements and capital programme are provided to support forward planning by constituent local authorities and will be subject to annual approval and scrutiny.

#### OBSERVATIONS FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 6 The Medium-Term Resource Strategy 2026-2030 was presented to the Audit Committee for scrutiny at its meeting of 16 March 2026. The Audit Committee endorsed the strategy for approval by the Authority.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 Members are asked to:
- i) Approve the Medium-Term Resource Strategy 2026–2030.

## BACKGROUND

- 8 The Authority is required to set a balanced, sustainable financial plan that supports delivery of the CRMP.
- 9 The MTRS provides the medium-term financial context, setting out assumptions on pay, prices, capital financing, reserves, and anticipated funding. It ensures transparency for Members and constituent authorities and informs annual budget-setting.

## INFORMATION

- 10 The Strategy confirms the planned financial envelope for 2026–2030, including:
- o major cost drivers (pay, inflation, estates, fleet, ESN)
  - o capital programme impacts, including the development of Hwb Awen (subject to external funding)
  - o reserves strategy and planned drawdown profile
  - o indicative levy modelling for constituent authorities
- 11 The 10-year capital plan remains a key element of medium-term planning, with significant expenditure forecast in 2027/28 and 2028/29.
- 12 The Strategy embeds a structured approach to efficiencies, with productivity improvements and targeted non-cash and cash-releasing savings.
- 13 All detailed assumptions, tables and modelling are contained in the full MTRS document.

## IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The MTRS supports the Service's Improvement and Well-being Objectives by ensuring financial resources are aligned to long-term risk reduction, operational effectiveness, and sustainability.
Budget	The MTRS sets the planning parameters for future budgets, incorporating inflation, pay, capital financing, and ESN costs, alongside efficiencies and planned reserve use.
Legal	The Authority must set a balanced budget each year under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The MTRS underpins this legal requirement by providing a robust medium-term planning framework.
Staffing	Over 70% of expenditure relates to staffing. Pay awards, recruitment challenges and workforce planning remain key financial considerations.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	These considerations are integrated into financial planning and will continue to be addressed through CRMP delivery and annual budget processes.
Risks	Key risks include uncertainty in national pay settlements, non-pay inflation, ESN cost pressures, interest rate movements, and reliance on reserves to smooth projected increases. Mitigations are outlined within the Strategy.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service



Medium-Term Resource Strategy  
2026 – 2030

## 1. Purpose of the Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS)

The MTRS sets out how North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) will resource the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024–2029. The CRMP identifies community risks across North Wales and defines the five principles, People, Prevention, Protection, Response and Environment, that guide how the Service will reduce risk and enhance community safety.

In the current global economic climate public financial management is more important than ever and the MTRS provides the financial framework to:

- Ensure resources directly support CRMP delivery and annual CRMP Implementation Plans.
- Fund the assets, workforce, estate, fleet and systems needed to manage the identified risks.
- Enable sustainable planning over the medium term, linking operational priorities to financial availability.
- Maintain a resilient financial position to support long term risk-based service planning.

## 2. Aims of the Strategy

The MTRS assists in:

- Supporting delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2024-2029;
- Ensure financial sustainability during a period of inflationary and operational pressures.
- Maintain sufficient reserves to manage volatility and emerging risk.
- Enable investment in critical operational capability

## 3. Key Messages

**Strategic Alignment:** The MTRS provides the financial framework to support delivery of the CRMP 2024–2029, ensuring resources are aligned to the Authority's operational priorities and statutory responsibilities.

**Financial outlook:** The medium-term financial outlook remains challenging, driven by inflationary pressures, capital financing costs and nationally driven programmes; however, the Authority's overall financial position is assessed as sustainable over the planning period.

**Cost drivers and future pressures:** **Pay remains the Authority's** largest area of expenditure and financial risk, with continued uncertainty around national pay awards alongside sustained non-pay inflation. The Strategy also reflects significant emerging pressures, including the revenue impact of the capital programme, estate and the introduction of Emergency Services Network (ESN) costs from 2028/29.

**Efficiencies and prudent reserve use:** These pressures are mitigated through planned efficiencies and productivity improvements, together with the prudent and time-limited use of reserves.

**Levy:** Indicative levy assumptions are included to support forward planning for constituent authorities, recognising that final levy decisions will be taken annually.

## 4. Principles of the Strategy

The MTRS aligns closely with many NWFRA strategies detailed in Appendix 1, ensuring financial planning supports the Service's long-term strategic and operational aims.

The Authority is committed to living within its approved budgets, maintaining strong financial discipline, and ensuring spending remains within levy-set estimates.

A prudent General Reserve will be maintained and reviewed annually, with any excess used flexibly where it delivers clear value. Earmarked reserves will be held only for justified purposes that directly support agreed objectives and CRMP commitments.

Across all decisions, the Authority will prioritise value for money by securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness, strengthening procurement, and driving continuous improvement. A rolling three year revenue forecast and ten-year capital plan underpins sustainable levy setting and medium-term decision making.

Finally, the Authority, Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer will remain engaged in national fire funding reviews and will continue to advocate for a fair, equitable and sustainable funding model for North Wales.

## 5. Economic outlook

The UK economy has continued to experience marginal growth. Latest ONS data show GDP increased by 0.1% in the three months to December 2025, and 1% higher than Q4 2024.

Labour market conditions have continued to ease, with unemployment rising to five year high of 5.2% and payroll

employment falling, although vacancies have broadly stabilised.

Inflation has fallen but remains above target, with CPI at 3.4% in December 2025. The Bank of England has reduced Bank Rate to 3.75% and signalled further gradual easing during 2026.

For Wales, core funding for local authority increased by 4.5% for 2026/27, providing improved short-term certainty, though pressures continue to exceed funding growth and long term stability.

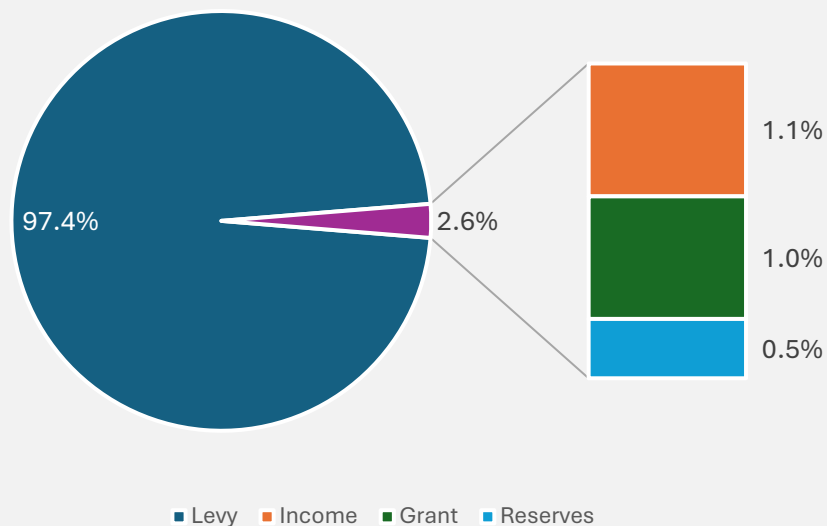
### Implications for 2026/27 and beyond:

- Continued pressure on local authority funding is likely, increasing the risk of sustained levy pressure for the Fire Authority over the medium term.
- Ongoing reductions or consolidation of Welsh Government grants will heighten reliance on core funding and reduce flexibility.
- Persistent labour-market competitiveness is expected to keep recruitment and retention challenging across both operational and non-operational roles.
- Public-sector pay awards may remain above inflation, creating recurring baseline pressures year-on-year.
- Borrowing costs are expected to fall more slowly, affecting long-term affordability of the capital programme and limiting future investment capacity. Increased uncertainty in national fire funding arrangements means long-term planning will continue to require caution, scenario modelling, and a focus on financial resilience.

## 6. Financial Context

North Wales FRA is predominately funded via a levy on the six constituent councils, apportioned by population, with no council tax precept or retained business rates at FRA level; however, ongoing Welsh Government consultation on potential changes to governance and funding arrangements introduces uncertainty over the long-term structure and stability of this model.

Funding is received from the Welsh Government in the form of specific grants. The value of these grants has reduced in recent years and currently represents around 1% of total expenditure. Based on the 2026/27 budget, 97.4% of expenditure is funded through the levy, with the remaining 1.6% met from other income sources and the planned use of reserves.



## 7. Current Financial position

The Authority's budget for 2025/26 is £51.79m. The latest revenue monitoring report shows a projected budget underspend of £0.061m, as at 30 November 2025.

	2025/26 Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance (%)
Employees	38.23	37.62	0.62	1.6
Premises	2.82	3.09	-0.28	-9.8
Transport	1.33	1.49	-0.16	-12.2
Supplies	6.18	5.84	0.34	5.5
Third Party	0.37	0.43	-0.06	-16.5
Capital Finance	4.50	3.85	0.65	14.4
Income	-1.04	-1.14	0.10	-9.8
Use of Reserves	-0.60	0.61	-1.21	201.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.79</b>	<b>51.79</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The budget is held by the Authority to provide the financial resources required to deliver operational fire response and protection services. The Capital Financing budget comprises the revenue provision for the repayment of borrowing, interest costs and investment income.

The forecast closing position on usable reserves at 31 March 2026 is £11.491m, reflecting the transfer of the projected £0.061m underspend to earmarked reserves.

## 8. Service Context

NWFRA is delivering its five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which sets out how risks across the region will be assessed and mitigated through targeted prevention, protection and response activity.

The Service will continue aligning workforce planning, crewing models, and capital investment to CRMP priorities to ensure resources are deployed efficiently and sustainably.

Medium-term planning must also reflect pressures expected over the period, including pay and price inflation, pension volatility, and the revenue impacts of the 10-year capital programme, particularly the development of Hwb Awen, a new Training Centre, which will replace fragmented sites with a single modern facility once external construction funding is secured.

Alongside this, the Service is progressing a collective agreement implementation pilot, testing new workforce arrangements to enhance response, resilience and operational effectiveness. The outcomes of the pilot will inform future workforce planning, financial assumptions and service design as the organisation adapts to evolving risk and demand.

Collectively, these factors form the operating context for 2026/27 and beyond, shaping how the Authority prioritises investment, manages resources and maintains a high-quality, community-focused fire and rescue service within the financial constraints of the medium term.



## 9. Medium-Term Budget Pressures in North Wales

The medium-term financial outlook for NWFRA is shaped by several significant and inter-related budget pressures. These pressures reflect both national cost drivers and local strategic priorities and have been incorporated into the MTRS. Key areas include:

### (i) Pay and Price Inflation

Pay remains the Service's largest cost pressure, with medium-term forecasts reflecting continued uncertainty in national pay awards (assumed at 3.8%, 3.2%, 3%, 2.8% for 2026/27–2029/30). Increasing demand arising from more frequent extreme weather events also places upward pressure on pay costs.

Non-pay inflation continues to affect energy, insurance, business rates, ICT and services, all of which remain above long-term averages and therefore require prudent provision.

### (ii) Estate Backlog

NWFRA, in line with Fire and Rescue Services nationally, faces an increasing estate maintenance backlog driven by the age and condition of stations, training facilities and support buildings, many of which require ongoing investment to remain safe, compliant and operationally effective.

While recent spend has focused on essential and reactive works, emerging condition surveys and the developing estates strategy indicate rising pressure to address deferred maintenance and move towards planned lifecycle

replacement, ensuring the estate is fit for modern operational and workforce needs.

### (iii) Revenue Implications of the Capital Programme

As the Service does not receive a capital allocation, the 10-year capital programmes, have associated MRP, interest, and loan costs built into the medium-term forecasts, as borrowing is required to fund them. It is expected that borrowing costs will rise over the MTRS period.

### (iv) Development of the New Training Centre

The Training Centre remains a major strategic investment, replacing outdated sites with a modern facility. NWFRA continues to self fund all work to RIBA Stage 4, with future construction dependent on grant funding approval. Further information can be seen here: [www.hwbawen.cymru](http://www.hwbawen.cymru)

### (v) Emergency Service Network (ESN)

2028/29 onwards, the transition to the ESN represents a significant medium-term cost pressure. The MTFP includes provision of £2.624m in 2028/29 and £1.485m in 2029/30, reflecting locally borne non-core costs associated with devices, network connectivity and dual-running arrangements. While the programme is nationally led, there remains ongoing uncertainty around the scale and duration of dual-running costs, the extent of central funding support and the final scope of locally funded requirements. The Authority continues to engage with the Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG) to seek clarity and appropriate funding arrangements.

## 10. Medium-Term Efficiencies and Productivity

Alongside the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) and the implementation of the collective agreement to strengthen operational response within a fixed funding envelope, NWFRA is developing a structured medium-term approach to efficiencies and productivity that reflects emerging best practice across the UK fire sector. This approach recognises the need to sustain service capacity while improving value for money over the medium term.

The Service will progress a programme of non cash releasing efficiencies, targeting productivity and efficiency gains of approximately 1-2% per annum. This will include estate optimisation, fleet modernisation, procurement efficiencies and digital transformation, improving operational effectiveness and cost efficiency without reducing frontline delivery.

In addition, cash releasing efficiencies will be pursued where appropriate. Opportunities for efficiency will be identified through analysis of NFCC national benchmarking and CIPFA / Infoshare+ annual statistics, ensuring that initiatives are evidence led and comparable with sector performance.

Planned cash releasing efficiencies for 2026/27 are estimated at £470k, equivalent to approximately 0.9%, with an expectation that overall productivity and efficiency gains will exceed 1%. Progress against these targets will be monitored quarterly through the Finance and Procurement Committee.

## 11. Social Value and carbon reduction

Alongside achieving best value for money, NWFRA is committed to embedding social value and supporting Welsh Government decarbonisation objectives through its financial, procurement and strategic decisions. Social value considerations are increasingly integrated into efficiency and productivity planning, recognising that carbon reduction, environmental improvement, workforce development and community benefit all contribute to long-term organisational sustainability.

Invest to save initiatives such as renewable energy schemes and energy-efficiency measures deliver both financial and environmental benefits by reducing running costs while lowering carbon emissions. Sector practice also demonstrates a growing emphasis on inhouse delivery models, local procurement and collaborative projects that support community wealth building and reduce supply chain emissions.

NWFRA will build on this approach through its capital programme, including the proposed new Training Centre, which provides a significant opportunity to embed modern, low carbon design principles, reduce whole life costs, and maximise social value through construction, skills development and local economic benefit.



## 12. Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

All the budget pressures, budget savings, availability of reserves, and funding assumptions outlined earlier in this Strategy are summarised below.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m
Base Budget	49.246	52.389	54.788	56.866	61.851
Pay Award:	3.20%	3.80%	3.20%	3.00%	2.80%
All other Staff		1.130	0.597	0.626	0.523
Retained Firefighters		0.224	0.284	0.267	0.257
Wholetime Firefighters		0.511	0.303	0.428	0.412
Growth in establishment		0.327	0.133	0.122	0.113
Payroll Inflation	0	2.192	1.316	1.444	1.306
Non-Pay Inflation	0.514	0.296	0.409	0.376	0.405
REFCUS Increase		0	0.250	0.250	0.250
Capital Finance		0.095	0.203	0.391	0.074
Emergency Service Network		0	0	2.624	1.485
Income		-0.127	0	0	0
Recurrent Cash Savings		-0.057	-0.100	-0.100	-0.100
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>52.389</b>	<b>54.788</b>	<b>56.866</b>	<b>61.851</b>	<b>65.270</b>
Non-Recurrent Cash Savings		-0.413	-0.220	-0.187	-0.150
Planned use of reserves	-0.601	-0.271	-0.350	-1.500	-1.000
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>51.788</b>	<b>54.104</b>	<b>56.296</b>	<b>60.164</b>	<b>64.120</b>
Budget Increase	7.17%	4.47%	4.05%	6.21%	6.58%

The MTFP summarises the cumulative impact of known and emerging cost pressures over the period 2026/27 to 2029/30, including pay and non-pay inflation, growth pressures, capital financing costs and the planned introduction of Emergency Services Network costs from 2028/29. These pressures are partially mitigated through planned efficiencies, income assumptions and the prudent use of reserves, smoothing the profile of budget increases over the period. Notwithstanding these mitigations, the plan demonstrates a rising net budget requirement in the later years, reflecting the increasing scale of unavoidable commitments and ongoing uncertainty around funding, particularly for nationally driven programmes.

### 13. Capital Financing

The Authority's capital programme supports the delivery of the CRMP by ensuring that the Service's fleet, estate, operational equipment, ICT and training infrastructure remain safe, modern and fit for purpose. Over the period 2026/27 to 2029/30, the capital programme reflects both ongoing asset replacement requirements and a significant strategic investment in the proposed new training centre, Hwb Awen.

The total indicative capital investment planned over the four-year period amounts to £81.0m, with annual expenditure peaking in 2027/28 and 2028/29 as the Hwb Awen project progresses, subject to the availability of external grant funding.

Capital programme	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m
Fleet	3.271	3.775	4.527	2.506	2.934
ICT	0.986	0.040	0.350	0	0.125
Operational Equipment	0.233	1.861	3.877	0.394	0.446
Training Towers	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.350
Facilities	1.263	0.635	0.550	3.950	2.575
Hwb Awen	1.333	2.265	20.564	24.748	3.453
<b>Capital Budget Estimate</b>	<b>7.436</b>	<b>8.926</b>	<b>30.218</b>	<b>31.948</b>	<b>9.883</b>
Reserves	1.379	0	0	0	0
Revenue resources	1.451	1.000	1.250	1.500	1.750
Debt	3.746	6.139	8.404	5.700	4.680
Grants	0.860	0.500	20.564	24.748	3.453
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>7.436</b>	<b>8.926</b>	<b>30.218</b>	<b>31.948</b>	<b>9.883</b>

Financing of the Capital Programme: The Authority finances its capital programme through a combination of revenue contributions, borrowing, limited use of reserves and external grant funding, as set out in the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.

Borrowing is required to support the delivery of the capital programme and is undertaken in line with prudential borrowing principles. All associated interest and Minimum Revenue Provision costs are reflected within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

External grant funding is a key component of the programme, particularly for Hwb Awen, with significant grant income assumed during the main construction phase. The delivery and profiling of the capital programme will remain subject to the confirmation and timing of grant funding.



## 14. Reserves

The requirement for financial reserves is set out in statute. Under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Authority must have regard to the level of reserves required to meet estimated future expenditure when setting the budget. Reserves are cash-backed balances held on the balance sheet, can only be used once, and do not form part of the Authority's base budget.

The Section 151 Officer has a statutory duty under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to advise on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of budget estimates, taking account of the Authority's risk register and medium-term financial plans. While reserves may provide short-term flexibility, CIPFA guidance is clear that they should not be relied upon to fund recurring expenditure without a clear medium-term funding plan. The [Authority's Reserves Strategy](#) was approved by the Audit Committee in March 2024 and is reviewed on a three year cycle.

The Authority holds a General Reserve to manage unforeseen events and Earmarked Reserves for specific known or anticipated liabilities. The General Fund Reserve is forecast to be £1.932m at 1 April 2026, representing approximately 3.5% of net revenue expenditure, consistent with recognised good practice. A summary of the balances can be seen below.

Usable Reserves	Actual Balance 31-Mar-25 £'m	Indicative Balance 31-Mar-26 £'m	Indicative Balance 31-Mar-27 £'m	Indicative Balance 31-Mar-28 £'m	Indicative Balance 31-Mar-29 £'m	Indicative Balance 31-Mar-30 £'m
Service Reserves:						
Pension Reserve	1.070	1.618	1.618	1.618	1.618	1.618
Interest Reserve	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300
Fire Hydrant Repairs	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090
PPE Uniform / Stock	0.768	0.768	0.768	0.768	0.768	0.768
Transformational Change	0.851	0.851	0.851	0.851	0.851	-
Facilities Improvements	0.980	0.980	0.980	0.980	0.980	0.980
Legal Liability	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310	0.310
Training	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250
Major Incidents	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150
System Improvements	0.711	0.711	0.513	0.163	0.163	0.163
Inflation	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250	0.250
Firefighters Pay Structure review	0.473	0.473	0.473	0.473	0.473	0.473
Capital & Grant Reserves:						
Capital Projects	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195
Radio Scheme	1.537	1.537	1.537	1.537	0.037	-
Grant Reduction	1.003	1.003	1.003	1.003	1.003	1.003
Total Earmarked Reserves:						
General Fund	1.871	1.932	1.932	1.932	1.932	1.820
Capital Receipts Reserve	0.073	0.073	-	-	-	-
Capital Grants Unapplied	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Usable Reserves</b>	<b>10.882</b>	<b>11.491</b>	<b>11.220</b>	<b>10.870</b>	<b>9.370</b>	<b>8.370</b>
Movement in Reserves Balances		0.609	-0.271	-0.350	-1.500	-1.000
Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE)	48.256	51.788	54.104	56.296	60.164	64.120
Reserve as a % of NRE	22.6%	22.2%	20.7%	19.3%	15.6%	13.1%

Over the MTRS period, usable reserves are forecast to reduce in line with planned usage, with reserves as a percentage of net revenue expenditure declining from 22.6% to 13.1%. This reflects the prudent and time-limited use of reserves to manage known pressures. The Section 151 Officer confirms that reserve levels remain adequate and will be kept under regular review, with any material changes reported to the Authority.

## 15. Risk Assessment

The MTRS contains the most up to date information at the time of drafting, but the Authority's financial position is dynamic. A comprehensive financial risk assessment is undertaken for the revenue and capital budget setting process to ensure all risks and uncertainties affecting the Authority's financial position are identified. The Authority faces a number of significant financial pressures that could affect the position over the medium term. An assessment of the likelihood and impact of each risk and the management controls in place are shown in Appendix 2.

The Section 151 Officer confirms that the budget estimates have been compiled on a robust and prudent basis.



## 16. Financial Resilience

The Authority faces a number of financial pressures over the medium term. The principal risks, together with their likelihood, impact and mitigating controls, are set out in Appendix 2. Financial resilience is underpinned by prudent medium-term financial planning, the maintenance of adequate reserves and a structured approach to identifying and managing financial risk.

The MTRS reflects known and emerging pressures and incorporates mitigations through planned efficiencies and the flexible, time-limited use of reserves. While the medium-term outlook remains challenging and subject to external uncertainty, particularly in relation to national funding, pay awards and the Emergency Services Network, the Authority is assessed as having sufficient resilience to absorb reasonable variations in assumptions without compromising statutory service delivery.

Financial resilience will continue to be reviewed annually as part of the budget-setting process and through ongoing in-year monitoring. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the budget estimates have been compiled on a robust and prudent basis.

## 17. Constituent Authority Levy

The primary source of funding for the Authority is the levy on the six constituent local authorities, which is calculated in proportion to mid-year population data. The levy provides the core, stable funding required to deliver statutory fire and rescue services and to resource the delivery of the CRMP. Final levy contributions are confirmed each year in line with **statutory timescales and reflect the Authority's approved net budget requirement.**

The MTRS sets out indicative levy assumptions over the planning period to support transparency and forward financial planning for constituent authorities. These assumptions reflect known and emerging cost pressures, including pay, pensions, inflation, estates investment and operational change, balanced against planned efficiencies, the use of reserves and anticipated grant funding. While indicative increases are modelled over the medium term, final levy decisions are taken annually by the Authority.

The Authority recognises that levy levels are sensitive to external uncertainty, particularly in relation to national pay awards, inflation, pension costs and changes in Welsh Government funding. The MTRS therefore adopts a prudent approach to levy planning, supported by sensitivity analysis, reserves and efficiency assumptions, to mitigate volatility and avoid undue pressure on constituent authorities. Where additional or late-announced funding is received, the

Authority will work constructively with local authorities to ensure that levy impacts are managed transparently and, where appropriate, on a cost-neutral basis.

## 18. Conclusion

The Medium-Term Resource Strategy demonstrates that the overall financial position of the Authority is sustainable over the medium term, based on current assumptions and planned mitigation measures. This position is, however, dependent on the planned use of £3.121m from reserves over the period 2026/27 to 2029/30 to manage known and emerging financial pressures while maintaining service delivery.

The MTRS provides a clear and transparent framework setting out how each year of the planning period will be financed, balancing levy income, efficiencies, grant funding and the prudent use of reserves. Usable reserves are projected to remain at a reasonable and prudent level, estimated at £11.491m as at 31 March 2026, providing resilience against financial risk and uncertainty.

The Authority will continue to keep its financial position under ongoing review, reflecting changes in funding, pay, inflation and service demand.

## Appendix 1 – Interdependence with other published documents

1.	Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2024–2029
2.	CRMIP
3.	Risk Management Strategy
4.	Capital Strategy 2026-27
5.	Treasury Management Strategy 2026-27
6.	Minimum Revenue Provision Statement
7.	Financial Reserves Strategy
8.	Hwb Awen Outline Business Case

## Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Employee costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing budgets based on existing service delivery models and outcomes of the Emergency Cover Review (2023).</li> <li>Retained Duty System (RDS) budget assumes headcount continuation, not full establishment (approx. additional £3m if fully resourced). Additional RDS recruitment capped at 15 posts (was 30 in 2024/25).</li> <li>Work is ongoing to improve rural availability; however, savings will not be realised as options involving cash releasing savings were not approved by the Fire Authority. The Nucleus Crewing pilot at Porthmadog and Dolgellau will be monitored during 2026/27.</li> <li>At the time of setting the budget for the 2026/27 financial year, the national pay awards for staff for the 2026/27 financial year had not been finalised with 3.8% used as a planning assumption for all staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The National Joint Council (NJC) has not yet reached agreement on the firefighter pay award for 2026/27, each percentage point above the 3.8% is a financial risk of circa £0.270m.</li> <li>The budget planning assumes normal levels of activity. If spate conditions occur budget pressures will be experienced. The working assumption is that the General Fund would be utilised in the first instance.</li> <li>Recruitment challenges for RDS and high retirement levels could increase costs.</li> <li>Ongoing legal challenges (O'Brien/Matthews 2 remedy) are expected to generate additional costs for the Authority, which will not be covered by the pension fund.</li> </ul>

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Non-Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgets formulated using zero-based approach; new expenditure over £10k requires a business case.</li> <li>• Inflationary pressures where known are factored into contracts and supply chain costs.</li> <li>• Unavoidable costs associated with industry specific health and safety matters have been included within the non-pay budget. These include costs associated with the training of operational firefighters and the management of contaminants.</li> <li>• One off non-pay expenditure of £271k allocated to be funded through utilisation of reserves.</li> <li>• Budgets have been formulated using the knowledge and professional judgement of budget managers and underlying contractual obligations but through necessity include a large degree of estimation. Where costs pressures can be quantified these have been separately identified and included.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the Service continues to review non-pay costs and strives to manage cost pressures within the planned budget this remains an area of risk and uncertainty. In particular, it has been noted that delays in the delivery of goods or services have impacted on the time profiles of expenditure.</li> <li>• Although cost inflation is generally more manageable than in recent years it is noted that some areas of concern remain. This includes increases in licences associated with software including business critical systems and insurance cost.</li> <li>• The cost of gas and electricity has been a known cost pressure since 2022/23 due to global cost pressures. The position appears to have stabilised and the budget for 2026/27 is predicated on best estimates at this time. However, volatility in the market continues and this is carefully managed throughout the financial year with the current contract due to expire during 2026/27.</li> </ul>

Heading	Planning assumptions used in budget setting	Risks/Uncertainties
Capital Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The capital financing requirement for 2026/267 includes the revenue charge for the minimum revenue provision for existing assets and an estimate of the interest charges arising from borrowing. These costs are influenced by historical capital expenditure, the need to borrow for the 2026/27 capital programme and the impact of interest rate increases when re-financing maturing loans.</li> <li>The initial planning assessment assumes that all future borrowing will be at the prevailing PWLB rate at the time of budget setting, currently estimated at 4.6%. The Authority receives independent advice and guidance on this matter from Arlingclose, a specialist advisory company.</li> <li>The capital plan includes potential costs associated with business cases submitted by each Head of Department. This includes some provision for initial costs associated with the Training Centre Project to enable a detailed business case and funding model to be developed up to RIBA Stage 4.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increase in interest rates in recent years is a key risk area and is exacerbated as a number of loans require refinancing during the 2026/27 financial year. Financial modelling undertaken to assess the affordability of all proposals during the budget setting process.</li> <li>The timing and scale of costs associated with the proposed new training centre remain subject to uncertainty, as the full business case and funding arrangements have not yet been considered by the Authority. While it is anticipated that the final business case and associated funding options will be presented for approval in 2027, there is an ongoing risk regarding the availability and timing of Welsh Government grant funding. Provision has therefore been included for costs associated with detailed planning and development work within the initial budget estimates, with future construction expenditure remaining dependent on external funding approval.</li> </ul>
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income budgets have been reviewed and set in line with previous years, subject to inflationary increases.</li> <li>Welsh Government grant assumes that remaining Welsh Government grant funding will be received at current levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific risks have been identified over and above the grant income from the Welsh Government for which inflationary uplifts are not anticipated.</li> <li>Projected income streams (e.g., asset sales) are not guaranteed.</li> </ul>

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Mark Morgan, Payroll Manager
Subject	Pay Policy Statement 2026/27



#### 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 2026/27 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 THE EXECUTIVE PANEL

- 5 The draft Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27 was considered by the Executive Panel at its meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The Executive Panel noted that since drafting the report the Service had received notification of its accreditation as a real living wage employer. Subject to that amendment the Executive Panel endorsed the statement.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 6 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) Note the requirements of the Localism Act 2011; and
  - ii) Approve the Pay Policy Statement for the 2026/27 financial year

## 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.
  
- 10 The Pay Policy Statement must be approved formally by full Authority each year and published on the Authority’s website. The statement may be amended during the year following appropriate approval.

## INFORMATION

- 11 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 <b>Authority's financial sustainability</b> 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 <b>Authority's annual budget</b> .
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/ Human Rights/ 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 2026/27

- 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 2026 - 31 March 2027 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 £54.375 million and a capital budget of £6.661 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 relative to 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:

Employee Group	Terms and Conditions	Other benefits	Pension arrangements
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 or Firefighters' Pension Scheme
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	Gold Book	Car provided	Local Government Pension Scheme or 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.

Employee Group	Terms and Conditions	Other benefits	Pension Arrangements
Officers (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 £25,989 per annum from 1 April 2025. 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 2025/26 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 1:6.27.

- 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 1:4.19 (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 The Authority is committed to fair pay and to supporting lower paid employees and has received accreditation as a Real Living Wage Employer, in line with the principles promoted by the Living Wage Foundation.
- 10.2 A range of additional support measures are available to employees, including access to the Blue Light Discount Card, which provides discounts across a wide range of retailers and services. Further support includes a Cycle to Work scheme, an Employee Assistance Programme, counselling services, Occupational Health provision and childcare vouchers.
- 10.3 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.
- 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
  - continuous availability
  - additional responsibility
  - rent, fuel and light allowance
  - telephone allowance
  - pension employer contributions
  - mileage allowances

## 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

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service  
Chief Officers Pay Rates (as at Jul 2025)

Post	Salary	Salary	Salary	% of CFO**
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
CFO*	£159,512	£161,228	£162,945	
DCFO*	£127,919	£129,292	£130,666	80%
ACFO*	£120,022	£121,309	£122,595	75%
ACO	£96,327	£97,356	£98,386	60%

\* includes remuneration for continuous duty arrangements

\*\* The nationally agreed NJC pay award effective January 2025, applying a flat-rate uplift of £1,500, has resulted in a marginal variance in pay relativities of approximately 0.002% for the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officers, and 0.003% for the Assistant Chief Officer. These variances do not alter the Authority's agreed pay principles or intended salary relativities and will be realigned to the agreed percentages as part of the next scheduled chief officer pay review in 2027.

External provision of service	Value (per annum)
Monitoring Officer	£ 20,073 (excluding VAT)*
Section 151 Officer	£8,510

\*based on last year's cost

## FIREFIGHTING ROLES - PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2025

(pay award for 1 July 2026 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter			
Development	30,384	13.87	20.81
Competent	38,881	17.75	26.63
Crew Manager			
Development	41,322	18.87	28.31
Competent	43,104	19.68	29.52
Watch Manager			
Development	44,038	20.11	30.17
Competent A	45,260	20.67	31.01
Competent B	48,202	22.01	33.02
Station Manager			
Development	50,135	22.89	34.34
Competent A	51,642	23.58	35.37
Competent B	55,301	25.25	37.88
Group Manager			
Development	57,743	26.37	Not applicable
Competent A	59,476	27.16	Not applicable
Competent B	64,013	29.23	Not applicable
Area Manager			
Development	67,792	30.96	Not applicable
Competent A	69,823	31.88	Not applicable
Competent B	74,360	33.95	Not applicable

FIREFIGHTING ROLES – PAY RATES FROM 1 July 2025 (RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM)  
 (pay award for 1 July 2026 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)

	(1) £ per Annum	(2) £ per annu m	(3) £ per Hour	(4) £ per occasio n
Firefighter				
Development	4,558	2,279	13.87	5.12
Competent	5,832	2,916	17.75	5.12
Crew Manager				
Development	6,198	3,099	18.87	5.12
Competent	6,466	3,233	19.68	5.12
Watch Manager				
Development	6,606	3,303	20.11	5.12
Competent A	6,789	3,395	20.67	5.12
Competent B	7,230	3,615	22.01	5.12
Station Manager				
Development	7,520	3,760	22.89	5.12
Competent A	7,746	3,873	23.58	5.12
Competent B	9,602	4,801	29.23	5.12
Group Manager				
Development	8,662	4,331	26.37	5.12
Competent A	8,921	4,461	27.16	5.12
Competent B	9,602	4,801	29.23	5.12
Area Manager				
Development	10,169	5,085	30.96	5.12
Competent A	10,473	5,237	31.88	5.12
Competent B	11,154	5,577	33.95	5.12

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer (15% of the full-time basic annual salary, asset 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

## CONTROL SPECIFIC ROLES - PAY RATES FROM 1 JULY 2025

(pay award for 1 July 2026 onwards is still subject to national negotiation)

	Basic annual * £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter (Control)			
Development	28,865	13.18	19.77
Competent	36,937	16.87	25.31
Crew Manager (Control)			
Development	39,256	17.93	26.9
Competent	40,949	18.70	28.05
Watch Manager (Control)			
Development	41,836	19.10	28.65
Competent A	42,997	19.63	29.45
Competent B	45,792	20.91	31.37
Station Manager (Control)			
Development	47,628	21.75	32.63
Competent A	49,060	22.40	33.60
Competent B	52,536	23.99	35.99
Group Manager (Control)			
Development	54,856	25.05	Not applicable
Competent A	56,502	25.80	Not applicable
Competent B	60,812	27.77	Not applicable

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

PAY RATES FROM 1 APRIL 2025 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON GREEN BOOK  
TERMS AND CONDITIONS (pay negotiations for 26/27 ongoing)

SCP	01-Apr-25	
	per annum	per hour*
2	£24,413	£12.65
3	£24,796	£12.85
4	£25,185	£13.05
5	£25,583	£13.26
6	£25,989	£13.47
7	£26,403	£13.69
8	£26,824	£13.90
9	£27,254	£14.13
10	£27,694	£14.35
11	£28,142	£14.59
12	£28,598	£14.82
13	£29,064	£15.06
14	£29,540	£15.31
15	£30,024	£15.56
16	£30,518	£15.82
17	£31,022	£16.08
18	£31,537	£16.35
19	£32,061	£16.62
20	£32,597	£16.90
21	£33,143	£17.18
22	£33,699	£17.47
23	£34,434	£17.85
24	£35,412	£18.35
25	£36,363	£18.85
26	£37,280	£19.32
27	£38,220	£19.81
28	£39,152	£20.29
29	£39,862	£20.66
30	£40,777	£21.14
31	£41,771	£21.65
32	£42,839	£22.20
33	£44,075	£22.85
34	£45,091	£23.37
35	£46,142	£23.92
36	£47,181	£24.46
37	£48,226	£25.00
38	£49,282	£25.54
39	£50,269	£26.06
40	£51,356	£26.62
41	£52,413	£27.17
42	£53,460	£27.71
43	£54,495	£28.25

\*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 2025 FOR STAFF EMPLOYED ON BLUE BOOK  
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

(pay negotiations for 26/27 ongoing)

SCP	01-Apr-25	
	per annum	per hour
48	£59,538	£30.86
49	£61,699	£31.98
50	£62,778	£32.54
51	£63,857	£33.10

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Mike Plant - Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation
Subject	Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026/27



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide an overview of the feedback received from the public consultation on the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2026-2027 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 in Wales is to continually and sustainably reduce risk and enhance the safety of citizens and communities.
- 3 The North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is required by The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions, by setting itself improvement objectives in each financial year against at least one of seven functions. The public must be consulted on these objectives.
- 4 It is a statutory requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 for Public Bodies to publish annual well-being objectives and to report annually on their progress towards meeting their well-being objectives.
- 5 Welsh Government Fire and Rescue Circular W-FRSC(2024)06 confirms that the duties under the 2009 Measure and the Wellbeing of Future Generation Act (Wales) 2015 can be discharged through the publication of a single report.

- 6 This is the third Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP), which has been developed to support the delivery of the **Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)2024-2029**. The CRMP aims to identify risks facing the community and describes how the Authority will manage those risks and continue to prevent and respond to fires and other emergencies. The objectives have been written to take account of the requirements of both aforementioned pieces of legislation.
- 7 The response levels showed a 42% increase (397 this year from 279) from the 2025-26 public consultation, although responses reported as being from staff members remained low.
- 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 93% to 97%.
- 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 2026-27.
- 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 2026 the Trade Union representatives present agreed that consensus on the objectives had been reached.

#### OBSERVATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE PANEL

- 12 The CRMIP 2026/27 was taken to the Executive Panel on 16 March 2026 where Members approved it for publication.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 13 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) Note the content of the Consultation report; and
  - ii) Approve the attached CRMIP 2026-27 and associated EqIA for publication.

## BACKGROUND

- 14 The Authority will report upon its progress against the 2026-27 Community Risk Management Plan objectives in its Annual Performance Assessment in the Autumn of 2027.

## INFORMATION

- 14 The consultation was opened for responses between the 23 October and 16 December 2025. The Service undertook a data quality assurance exercise on the available Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) data to ensure figures quoted were correct. This delayed the planned release of the consultation by two days.
- 15 The draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27, and an Easy-Read version were published, in Welsh and English, on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) website. An Equality Impact Assessment of the Plan was also published.
- 16 Respondents were invited to complete a questionnaire indicating whether or not 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.
- 17 The consultation was publicised online, internally on the Service intranet, Hwb Tân, on social media and through paid adverts in the written press.
- 18 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.
- 19 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.
- 20 Letters in the Chair's name were sent to everyone on the Stakeholder Register inviting them to participate.
- 21 The EDI Officer arranged specific face to face engagement events with different equality interest groups.
- 22 The verbatim comments can be viewed in the appendices of the Consultation Report.

## IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27 contains a Well-being statement as required by the Act
Budget	Not applicable
Legal	The Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27 has been prepared in accordance with the relevant legislation.
Staffing	None
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and updated following the public consultation.
Risks	The Community Risk Management Plan supports the Authority's risk management arrangements.



North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

# Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

## Well-being and Improvement Objectives 2026 – 2027



Our five principles for keeping communities safe – have your say

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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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.

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

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

This Community Risk Management Implementation Plan, for 2026-27, is the third annual plan containing objectives that will continue to deliver against the 2024-29 CRMP objectives.

## Our Service

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

# Our Staff

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

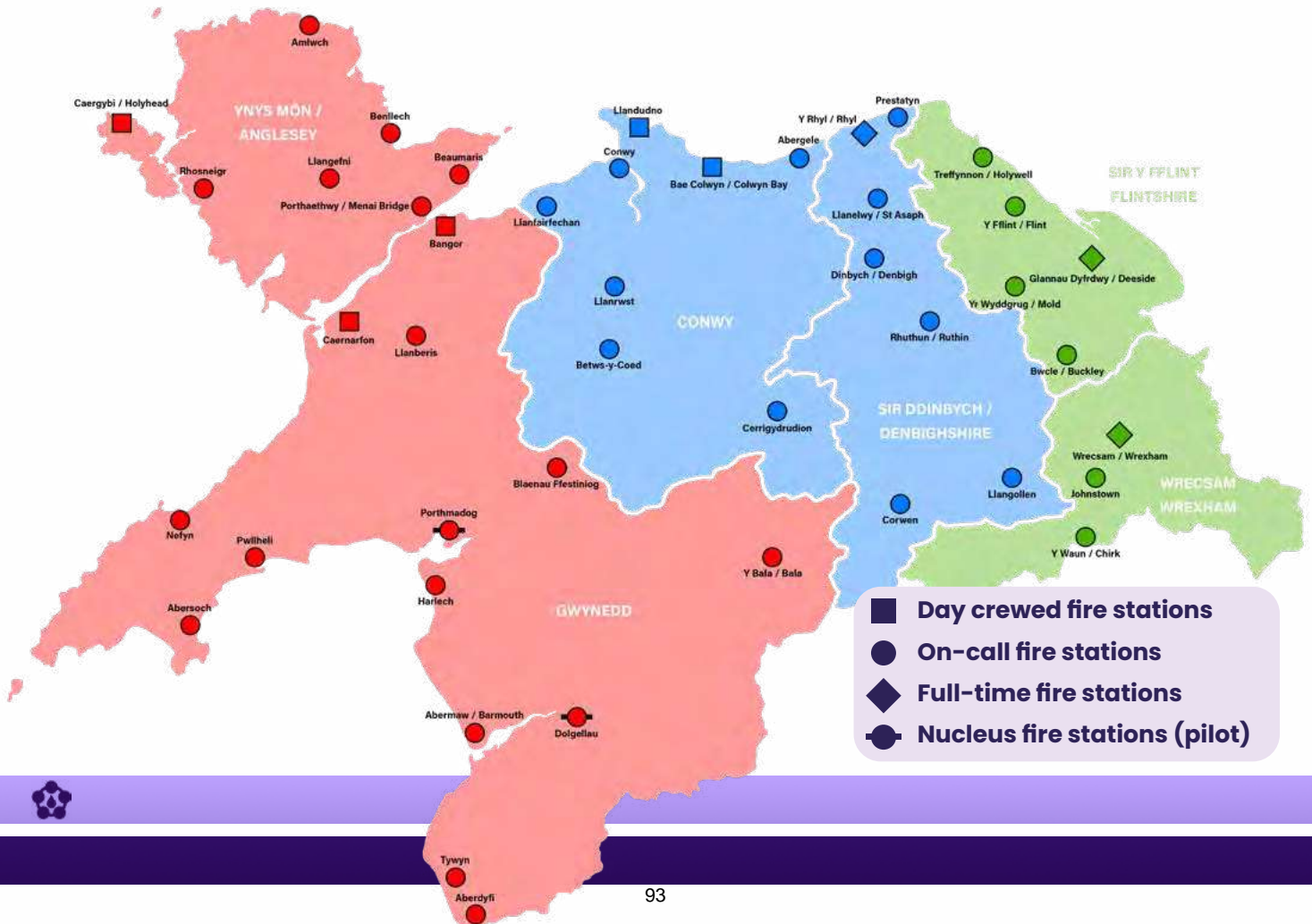
From firefighters to business area specialists, you can read more about the roles of the people that respond to emergencies and the people who keep the Service running [here](#).



# 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. The public consultation was open from the 23 October 2025 until 16 December 2025. The feedback received has been considered in shaping our final proposals. A separate report presenting the consultation findings will be available on our website at the point of publication.

You can read about our assessment of our performance against our previous well-being and improvement objectives in our Annual Performance Assessment 2024-25 [here](#).

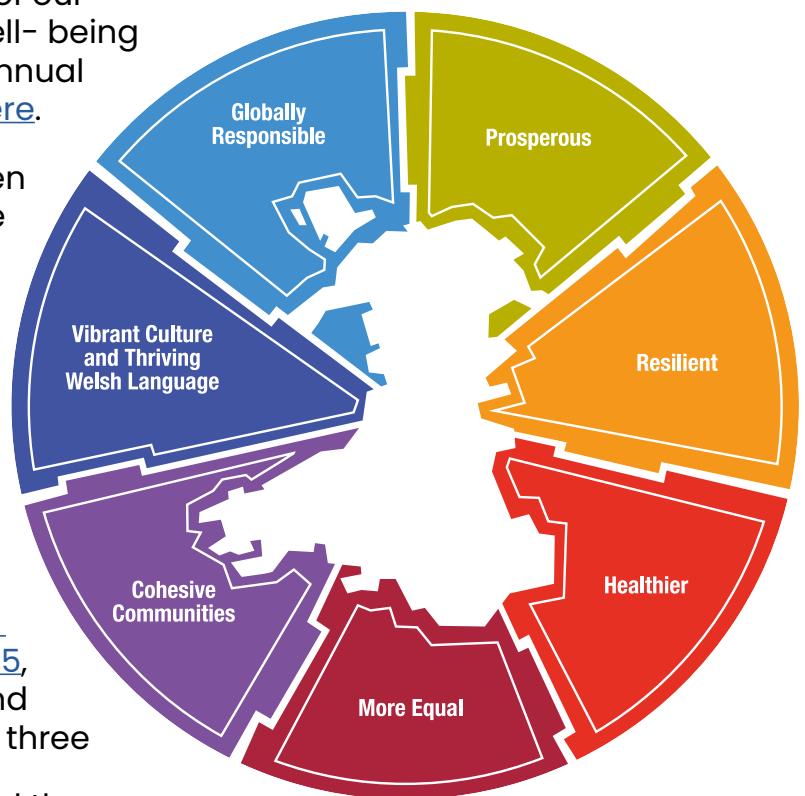
Our 2026-27 objectives have also been developed in line with the sustainable development principle of the [Wellbeing of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

## 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



## 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

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# Our 2026–27 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 2026–27?

- 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 internal action plan for improvement following the 2025 Fire Family Staff Survey.
- Undertake Fraud Awareness training for Finance department staff to minimise the potential for financial loss.
- Evaluate the implementation of recommendations from the Crest Cultural review, and continue to deliver against them.
- Explore ways to support and enhance the Health and Well-being of employees as their life circumstances change.
- Enhance and streamline the Human Resources processes.
- Carry out improvements to the Information and Communications Technology Infrastructure and make Cyber Security improvements in line with the Cyber Response Action Plan.
- Review Data Protection and Governance arrangements, create a new asset register and undertake a review of the data retention policy.
- Implement the 2025–30 People and Organisational Strategy.
- Implement an Operations and Control Training Strategy and Training delivery plan.
- Embed The Wellbeing of Future of Generations (Wales) 2015 Act throughout the Service.
- Continue to build on our initial success and embed our commitment to working in Social Partnership across all areas of the Service.

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

- Strategic Effectiveness, Fairness, Efficiency and Innovation



People

Prevention

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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 2026–27?**

- Provide quality data to support the Community Fire Safety department in the new risk-based approach to conduct identified high level Safe and Well Checks.
- Deliver intelligence led home safety interventions targeting the most at risk residents in our communities. We will deliver four targeted multi-agency campaigns across North Wales.
- Coordinate a project group to research a replacement for the Farynor Record Management System.
- Reduce water related fatalities and serious incidents through education and community engagement.
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on North Wales Roads through targeted, evidence-based interventions.
- Implement a comprehensive Arson Reduction Strategy, to reduce deliberate fire setting and safeguard communities.
- Embed safeguarding as a core element of everyday practice, by ensuring staff receive regular and role appropriate training.

## **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 2026–27?**

- Undertake an intelligence led approach to our Risk Based Inspection Programme to reduce injury and death from fire in domestic and non-domestic properties.
- Develop all supervisory and flexi duty system officers to Level 2 Fire Safety and Inspectors to National Fire Chiefs Council competence framework.
- Undertake monthly business fire safety reassurance campaigns to promote fire safety in commercial premises.

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

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



People

Prevention

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# 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 2026–27?**

- Continue to react to new and national emerging fire risks and attend the Lithium-Ion multi-agency working group.
- Progress with the planned project for a new Training and Development Centre in St. Asaph, which will fulfil the training and development needs of the modern firefighter.
- Continue to deliver the action plan to consider the recommendations from the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor and Inspector for Wales report into how Fire and Rescue Services 'Respond to Domestic Dwelling Fires'.
- Deliver the next phase of the Training Towers replacement programme.
- Review our On-call firefighter working practices.
- Implement a Business Continuity Management Group, to review the current Business Continuity processes for the Service.
- Implement a program of change to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of availability of response crews across our communities.
- Continue in our planning and preparations for the UK Government led change to the Emergency Services Network.
- Continue to regularly monitor and review the ongoing Nucleus station and Resilience shift system pilot schemes to improve fire cover in our rural areas and increase fire cover resilience service wide.
- Look to replace an Aerial Ladder Platform with a modern turntable ladder.
- Continue to purchase fire appliances with the 'clean cab' principle in mind to reduce exposure from fire contaminants to firefighters.

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

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



People

Prevention

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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 2026–27?**

- Continue to expand the existing Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) network across the Service, and transition to electrical vehicles.
- Continue to progress our transition of existing diesel use vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) use vehicles.
- Update the Building Management software System.
- Implement the planned new 'Mechanical and Electrical' preventative maintenance strategy.
- Undertake a detailed feasibility study of our buildings to strengthen environmental data monitoring.
- Expand the subject matter advisors' remit to incorporate climate change and technological advancements in site specific risk information gathering and sharing.
- Look to improve our procurement lifecycle reporting and supplier engagement.

## **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

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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 2026-27, 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 23rd October to 14th December 2025.

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

## Call us:

07920 084 603

## 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](https://twitter.com/northwalesfire)

 [@northwalesfireservice](https://facebook.com/northwalesfireservice)

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

 [@nwalesfireservice](https://youtube.com/nwalesfireservice)



People

Prevention

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Environment





North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

# Draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

## Consultation Report 2026 - 2027



Our five principles for keeping communities safe - have your say

PEOPLE

PREVENTION

PROTECTION

RESPONSE

ENVIRONMENT

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## 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 Authority 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 third annual plan (Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-2027) which will contribute to the five-year CRMP 2024-29.

A total of 397 responses were received this year, which is an increase in comparison to previous years:

- 2024-25 - 223 Responses received
- 2025-26 - 279 Responses received

Acting on feedback received from the consultation last year, a new question was added 'Question 23: What is your primary language?'. This was to try and better understand the diversity of language of respondents involved in responding to the questionnaire. A detailed breakdown of the responses received can be found later in this report.

## 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

The consultation was opened for responses between the 23 October and 16 December 2025. The Service undertook a data quality assurance exercise on the available Equality and Diversity Inclusion data to ensure figures quoted were correct. This delayed the planned release of the consultation by two days.

The draft Community Risk Management Implementation Plan 2026-27 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.

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 total of 551 leaflets were distributed as part of a Safe and Well Check.

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, demonstrating due regard from a legal perspective. The Service also ensured that a Welsh Speaker was available at community events to ensure responses could be captured in either English or Welsh.

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 397 responses during the eight-week period, of which 386 were completed in English and 11 were completed in Welsh.

## Observations

The response levels were 42% higher (279 to 397) than the 2025-26 public consultation, although responses from fire and rescue staff remained low.

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, 100, mainly around:

- Visibility in the community and,
- Engagement with vulnerable groups

And Our People Principle receiving 95 additional comments, concerning:

- Recruitment,
- Diversity and,
- Retention

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 2026-27.

## Next Steps

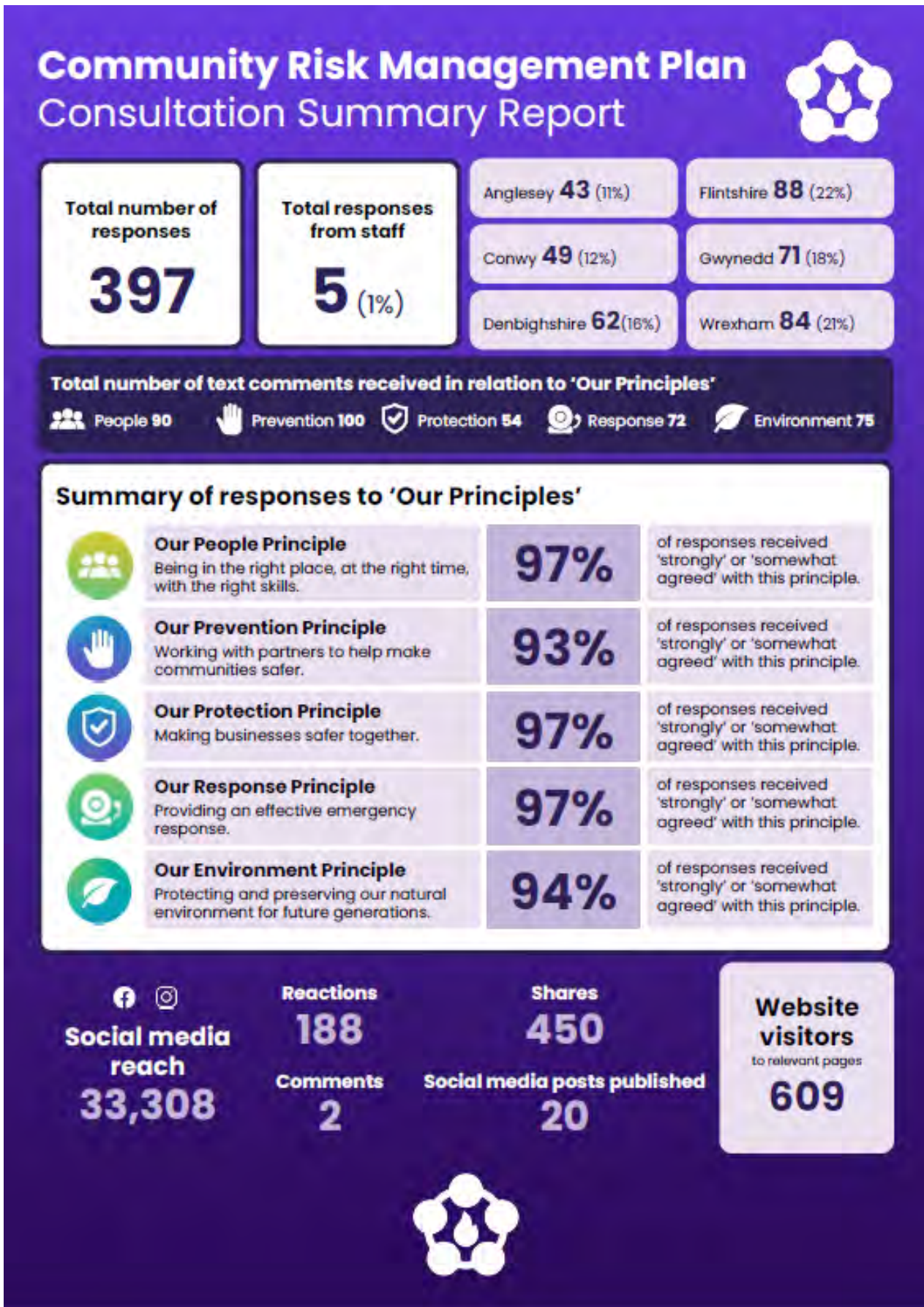
Any typographical errors or other minor formatting issues identified during the consultation period have been rectified. All comments have been shared with, and reviewed by, the relevant Heads of Department or subject matter expert.

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 20 April 2026.

# Responses at a Glance

This shows the percentage breakdown of total responses received. Percentage figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



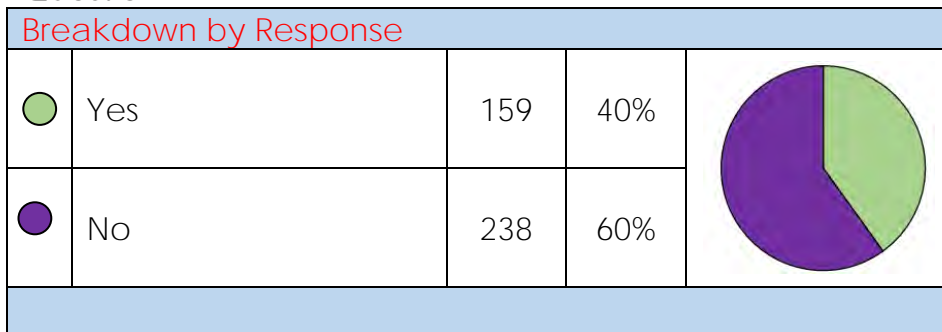
# Questionnaire Responses



## 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:



A total of **151** additional comments for this question were received. (See Appendix **A**)

Question 2: Summary

- **Technology:** Concerns were raised around air fryers, e-bikes/e-scooters, vaping and charging equipment. Also, the increase in electric vehicles and, the addition of solar panels on roof tops.
- **Environment:** Comments received about wildfires, flooding, coastal and tidal water safety, and the impact on the environment from episodes of severe weather. Also, requests to reintroduce large animal rescue.
- **Transport and Infrastructure:** References were made to the Conwy Tunnel incident and incidents on the A55. The decision regarding the nuclear power station on Anglesey was also mentioned.

Fire Service response to comments received:

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service deliver far more than Safe and Well Checks and youth programmes. Our prevention work spans a wide range of activities designed to keep every community in North Wales safe. Alongside targeted home safety interventions, we run comprehensive programmes covering road safety, water safety, arson reduction, anti-social behaviour, serious violence prevention, community engagement, seasonal safety campaigns and wider wellbeing initiatives, all aligned with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Person-Centred Framework. Our website highlights ongoing work across these areas, including safety advice, public campaigns, multi-agency operations and year-round engagement with residents across 44 fire stations and 6,172 square kilometres of urban, rural and coastal communities. We also

work closely with partners in health, social care, policing, housing and the voluntary sector to identify those most at risk and to coordinate prevention activity that protects people in their homes, on the roads, near water and during major events. Together, this demonstrates a wide, modern and proactive approach to community safety, one that goes well beyond traditional fire prevention and places the wellbeing of all our communities at the heart of what we do.

The service have implemented a Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) Lithium Ion working group, working closely with our Technical Operations and Training & Development departments on equipment and training, whilst conducting horizon-scanning activities to ensure that North Wales Fire and Rescue Service is equipped to effectively handle any incidents relating to emerging technologies. The group meet on a quarterly basis to ensure that any updates are provided to the Operational Learning Committee.

A strategic lead has been appointed within the Service, to ensure that we are kept up to date with developments relating to the nuclear power station on Anglesey.

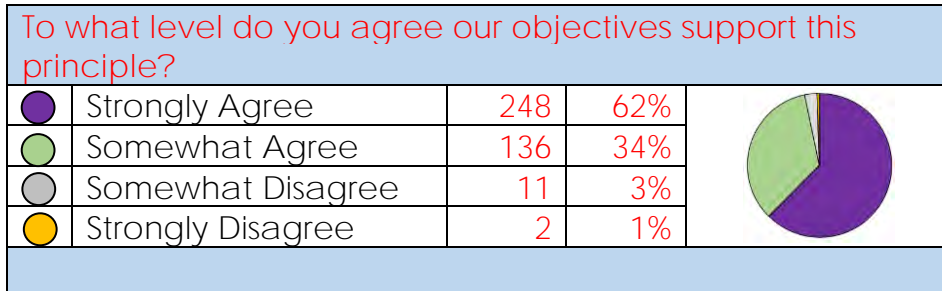


## SPOTLIGHT ON ‘OUR PEOPLE PRINCIPLE’

*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 90 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix B)

Question 4: Summary

- Recruitment and Workforce Diversity: Many responses debated the emphasis on diversity versus prioritising the physical and mental health requirements needed for the role of a firefighter. Suggestions included to recruit more women and those from diverse backgrounds and people with life experience. However, others argued that ability should come first.
- Recruitment Process and Communication: Comments about the slow recruitment process; how it's unclear and not widely advertised. This was followed with suggestions for improvement, such as attending Fresher Fairs and improving the website.
- Staff Development and Retention: Strong emphasis on career progression, training and retaining staff in order to cut costs. A few comments were received about improving culture and improving empathy for people experiencing mental health conditions.

Fire Service response to comments received:

Recruitment and Workforce Diversity

The Service recognises the importance of both diversity and firefighter standards. It is possible to promote diversity while fully maintaining the physical and mental health standards required for the role of a firefighter. Increasing diversity does not mean lowering standards; rather, it involves widening access, removing unnecessary barriers, and encouraging applications from underrepresented groups, while ensuring that all candidates meet the same rigorous operational requirements. This approach supports an inclusive workforce without compromising safety, performance, or effectiveness.

## Recruitment Process and Communication

Enhancing candidate experience, accessibility, and transparency remains a priority for the Service. To support improvement in this area, the Human Resources department will shortly be implementing a new 'Applicant Tracking System'. This system will streamline and modernise our recruitment processes, helping to reduce delays, improve communication with applicants, and provide a clearer and more efficient end-to-end recruitment journey, including a personalised onboarding page for candidates.

In addition, our recruitment website is currently undergoing a refresh to improve usability, enhance the clarity of information available, and increase the visibility of current vacancies. This will enable prospective applicants to more easily understand the recruitment process, role requirements, and indicative timelines.

We are also continuing to strengthen our outreach and engagement activity, including attendance at employment and recruitment events such as Fresher Fairs and other community-based initiatives, to ensure our roles are promoted as widely as possible and are accessible to a diverse range of potential applicants. We currently attend a range of employment fairs where resources allow, including events at venues such as Bangor University.

All vacancies are advertised on our website and are also promoted through a variety of external platforms, including Indeed, Jobcentre Plus, Career Transition Partnership (for Armed Forces personnel), Disabled Workers, Forces Families, RAJA Jobsite, Bangor University, and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC). In addition, individuals can register on our website to receive email alerts when new vacancies are published.

We are mindful of our responsibility to utilise resources effectively and to ensure value for money for the public purse. As such, the external platforms we currently use to advertise vacancies are free of charge.

We remain committed to continuous improvement in how we attract, recruit, and communicate with potential applicants. We are always open to further suggestions on how our recruitment processes can be enhanced.

## **Staff Development and Retention – Mental Health**

A review in 2025 was undertaken in relation to mental health provisions within the Service.

The review looked at mental health absence data to understand reasons, types and patterns for such absence before outlining the current support that is provided to employees and identifying further actions and interventions that could be introduced to offer further support. This included implementing changes to current processes to support engagement between the Health, Fitness and Wellbeing Advisors and employees who are absent and ensure wider promotion of the Employee Assistance Programme for the different types of support offered, both pre-emptive and during absence. Other recommendations include additional training for current Blue light champions, access and funding to immediate mental health/counselling support via Occupational Health, further research into private health care and whether this would be employee funded or Service funded, guidance information for families on

supporting employees, and also availability of financial wellbeing information as this was recognised as an underlying factor that can cause or exacerbate stress and anxiety.

Other actions to enhance this work were training for staff on Mental Health First Aid, Bystander training relating to anti-sexual harassment and Supporting People with Suicidal Thoughts training. These courses equip employees with improved knowledge of mental health conditions and different approaches that may need to be considered in supporting and signposting colleagues, as well as ensuring that employees providing the support feel they are equipped with the right skills to provide this.

Looking at responses from NWFRS staff only:

There were five responses received from NWFRS employees.

A breakdown showing how NWFRS employees responded to the 'People Principle'.

To what level do you agree our objectives support this principle?	
Strongly Agree	0
Somewhat Agree	2
Somewhat Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

There were two additional comments, which were:

- Why are you still on about diversity, you need capable skilled firefighters no matter what background they have.
- Feel it could have more of a focus and commitment on improving the culture within the service. Not just measuring progress of the recommendations of the crest report.

Fire Service response to comments received:

Diversity is recognised as important for building an inclusive and representative workforce, however, there is always a strong emphasis on the need to prioritise the rigorous physical and psychological demands of the role to maintain safety, effectiveness, and operational readiness.

The Service recognises that improving organisational culture is critical. The Culture Improvement Plan, which takes into account the CREST recommendations, places a clear and explicit emphasis on wider cultural change. This includes leadership behaviours, staff wellbeing, psychological safety, fairness, inclusion, and confidence to speak up in day to day working practices. The Plan is intended to drive meaningful and sustained cultural change across the Service.

This emphasis will shape how improvement activity is prioritised, implemented, and reviewed, rather than focusing solely on measuring progress against individual recommendations. While the actions and recommendations provide structure and external assurance, they are not an end in themselves. The true measure of success will be whether staff see, feel, and experience positive change in behaviours, leadership, and ways of working.

The Culture Champions are supporting the ongoing delivery of the Culture Improvement Plan. Their role includes engagement with staff networks, representative bodies, and colleagues across all departments, with a focus on embedding inclusive practices, strengthening trust, and supporting the development of a culture that is open, respectful, and empowering.

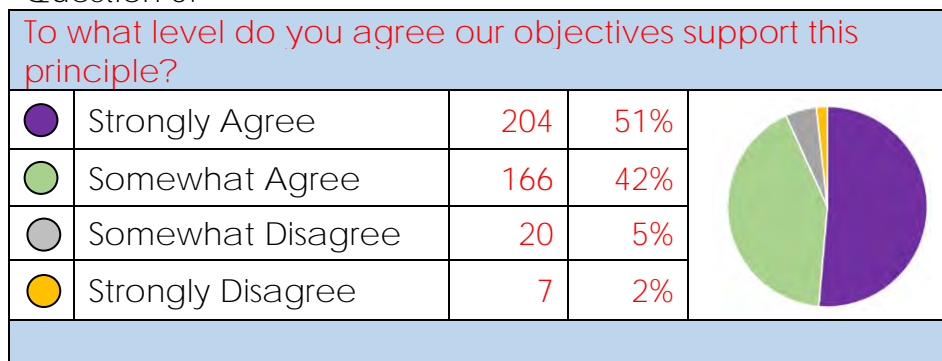


## SPOTLIGHT ON ‘OUR PREVENTION PRINCIPLE’

*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 100 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix C)

Question 6: Summary

- Visibility and Community Engagement: Prevention work is not visible enough in communities, with Wrexham and rural areas mentioned. The Service should use social media more effectively to spread fire safety messages. Comments also highlight the lack of awareness of the risks mentioned in the Community risk Management Plan 2024-29.
- Vulnerable Groups: Look to expand the Service's definition of 'vulnerable Groups' to include homelessness, drug users, LGBTQ+ people, young people and students, and for people experiencing poverty.
- Partnership Working: Respondents felt the prevention principle is too narrow and lacks detail. The Service needs to work more closely with charities, health providers, and community groups to address risks.

Fire Service response to comments received:

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service delivers far more than Safe and Well Checks and youth programmes. Our prevention work spans a wide range of activities designed to keep every community in North Wales safe. Alongside targeted home safety interventions, we run comprehensive programmes covering road safety, water safety, arson reduction, anti-social behaviour, serious violence prevention, community engagement, seasonal safety campaigns and wider wellbeing initiatives, all aligned with the NFCC Person-Centred Framework. Our website highlights ongoing work across these areas, including safety advice, public campaigns, multi-agency operations and year-round engagement with residents across 44 fire stations and 6,172 square kilometres of urban, rural and coastal

communities. We also work closely with partners in health, social care, policing, housing and the voluntary sector to identify those most at risk and to coordinate prevention activity that protects people in their homes, on the roads, near water and during major events. Together, this demonstrates a wide, modern and proactive approach to community safety, one that goes well beyond traditional fire prevention and places the wellbeing of all our communities at the heart of what we do.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service takes an evidence-based, person-centred approach to prevention, following national guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council. This means we identify individual risk factors, such as age, health, mobility, smoking, deprivation or living alone and focus support where the risk of serious harm is proven to be highest. National and local data show that older people and those with complex vulnerabilities are significantly more likely to be injured or killed in a fire, so prioritising these groups is not restrictive; it is the most effective way to prevent harm. We use NHS and multi-agency data, incident history and deprivation indices to make sure we reach those at greatest risk, supported by our tiered Safe and Well Check model.

Vulnerability can be present anywhere in our communities, and our approach reflects that. While we prioritise those statistically most at risk of fire harm, our prevention offer is broad, collaborative and designed to improve safety across North Wales. It is not narrow, but proportionate, evidence-led and aligned with national standards.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service understands that vulnerability exists in every community, including rural areas where factors such as isolation, distance from services and environmental conditions can increase the risk of harm. Guided by the **NFCC's Person-Centred Framework**, we use intelligence, incident data and local knowledge to identify people most at risk, wherever they live, and ensure our prevention activity remains evidence-based and person-centred. Crucially, many of those at highest risk in rural communities are identified through trusted partner agencies, including health, social care, safeguarding boards and local voluntary groups whose referrals enable us to reach individuals who may be isolated, harder to contact or reluctant to seek help. This partnership-driven approach ensures we can provide the right support to the most vulnerable residents across all parts of North Wales

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service absolutely recognises that people living in poverty, with serious illness, disability or complex health needs are among the most vulnerable in our communities, and our five-year Community Risk Management Plan and Prevention Strategy are built around identifying and supporting exactly these **groups**. Guided by the **NFCC's Person-Centred Framework**, we assess risk based not just on age but on deprivation, long-term illness, mobility issues, cognitive impairment and the wider environmental challenges people face. Our intelligence-led approach uses data on deprivation, health, incident history and living circumstances to ensure we prioritise those most likely to be harmed by fire or other emergencies. Crucially, many of the residents most affected by poverty or ill-health

are identified through trusted partner referrals from health, social care, safeguarding boards, housing providers and voluntary agencies ensuring we reach people who may be isolated, unwell or less able to seek help themselves. Far from overlooking these groups, our plan deliberately centres them, with targeted Safe and Well Checks, community safety interventions and multi-agency support aimed at reducing harm for the most vulnerable across North Wales.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service recognises that vulnerability is complex and can arise from many different personal and environmental factors, which is why we **follow the NFCC's evidence-based Person-Centred Framework** rather than relying on a simple list of "vulnerable people." Vulnerability is influenced by a combination of age, disability, long-term illness, mobility issues, mental health, smoking, deprivation, living circumstances and the ability to respond in an emergency — all factors set out in our Prevention Policy and Strategy. Because these factors can change over time and vary between individuals, we use an intelligence-led approach that considers each person's unique circumstances, supported by data such as NHS Exeter information, incident history and deprivation indices. Crucially, many of the people at highest risk are identified through referrals from trusted partners in health, social care, safeguarding boards, housing and voluntary services, helping us reach individuals who may not otherwise be known to us. This approach ensures we focus on actual risk rather than labels, enabling us to provide the right prevention support to the right people at the right time.

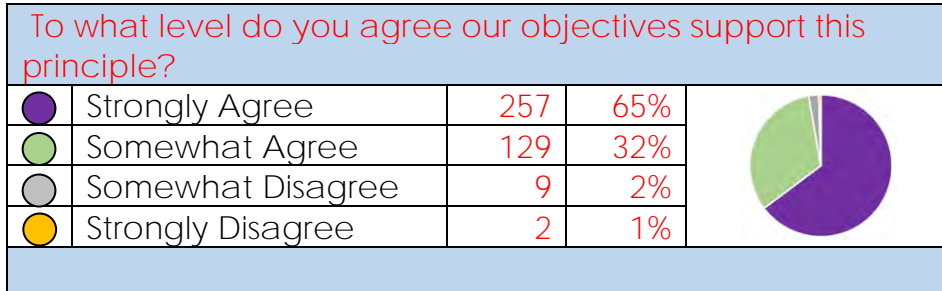


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR PROTECTION PRINCIPLE'

*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:



A total of 54 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix D)

Question 8: Summary

- Clarify the Principle: Unclear what this principle covers and which type of businesses are classified as high risk. The plan lacks detail compared to the other Principles.
- Business Fire Safety and Support: Support for protecting businesses and livelihoods by fire safety visits. However, more checks should be completed on hotels, holiday lets, takeaways and pubs.
- Rural and Industrial Risks: Seasonal risks mentioned, such as holiday homes and summer houses. Industrial risks included the mention of Cadburys and Kronospan in Chirk.

Fire Service response to comments received:

Through a risk-based inspection programme, referrals from multi-agency partners, complaints and post fire activity the service prioritises specific businesses based on criteria, thus holding landlords and business owners to account for potential and actual risks to public safety. All the business types mentioned by community members during the consultation are featured heavily within our inspection programme. The Service also use incident data and referral information to identify trends that shape priorities.

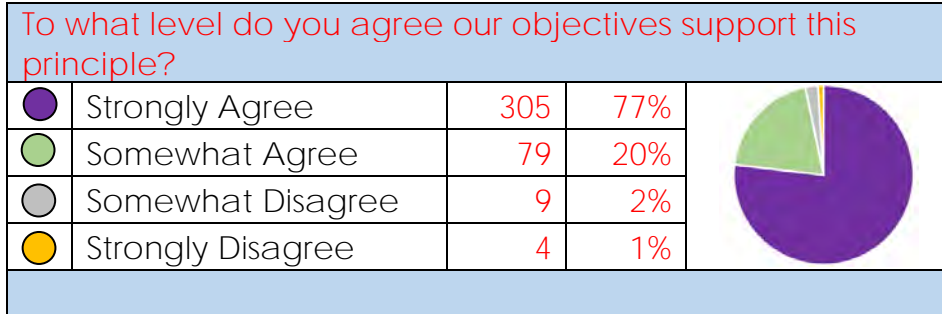


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR RESPONSE PRINCIPLE'

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 72 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix E)

Question 10: Summary

- Availability and Coverage: Concerns in general regarding the adequacy of fire engines, fire stations and staffing levels across the Service area. Repeated requests not to close fire stations.
- Response Times: Need for a quick response time and the monitoring of them. Concerns around slow response times in rural areas.
- Recruitment Challenges: Lack of advertising for vacant posts, recruitment process issues, retention and the need for more reliable staff.

Fire Service response to comments received:

The Service has no intention to close any fire stations. The Service has increased the number of wholtime fire stations (from eight to 10) following the introduction of a pilot project at Dolgellau and Porthmadog fire stations, which now operate a day crewed system, thus improving fire cover across different rural areas in South Gwynedd. To ease any concerns of people living in rural parts of Wrexham, Wrexham fire station and the surrounding areas of Chirk and Johnstown cover this area effectively. In addition, cross-border arrangements with Shropshire FRS to ensure effective fire cover is provided to specific rural areas located to the southeast of Wrexham.

The Service has experienced ongoing challenges regarding the recruitment of people into the role of an on-call-retained firefighter and some corporate service roles. The Service have a dedicated recruitment and availability team, and their sole focus is to address the challenges associated to on-call recruitment and availability, plus the Human Resources team conduct ongoing evaluation of all recruitment activities.

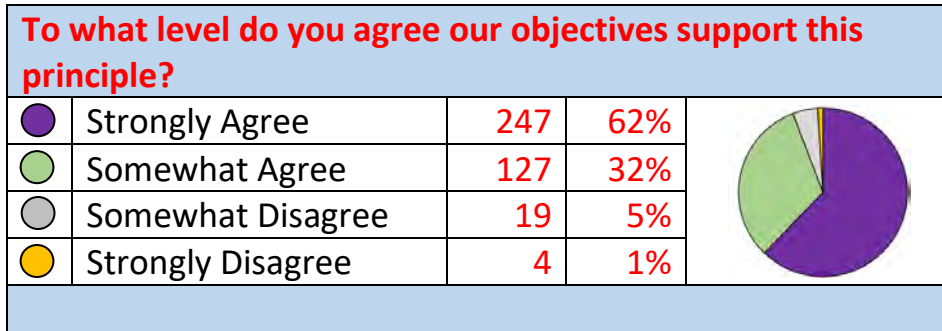


## SPOTLIGHT ON 'OUR ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLE'

*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:



A total of 75 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix F)

Question 12: Summary:

- Climate Change: The plan does not give enough emphasis to climate change, flooding, and weather-related risks. The Service needs a better understanding of the risks, for example the pollution from farm fires.
- Eco-Friendly Practices: Support for switching (where practicably possible) to electric or HVO vehicles. Recycling on stations.
- Costs: Debate the cost versus the benefit of implementing eco-changes.

Fire Service response to comments received:

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](#).

## 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 76 additional comments for this principle were received. (See Appendix G)

### Question 13: Summary

- Rural Challenges: Requests for more visibility in rural areas. Repeated requests to reinstate large animal rescue, which causes stress to both animals and local people. Concerns around wildfires and emergency incidents located at farms.
- Engagement and Education: More proactive engagement, including school and college education. Promoting fire safety with students, especially new students and those from overseas.

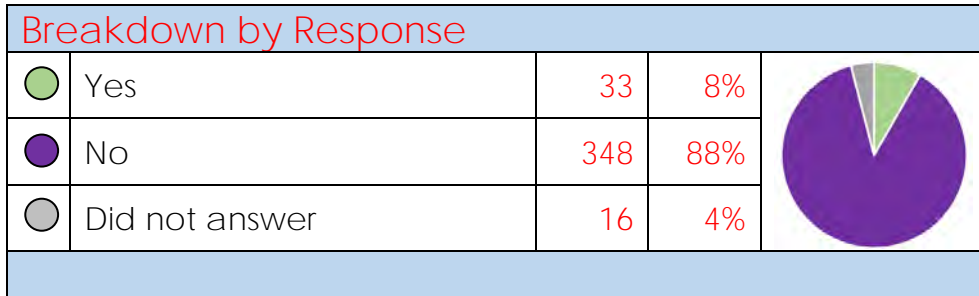
Fire Service response to comments received:

Our prevention work goes much wider than home fire safety. Our strategy includes community safety, road safety, water safety, anti-social behaviour reduction, serious violence prevention and a strong programme of youth engagement, including Fire Cadets, Phoenix and work with the LFC Foundation. We work closely with safeguarding boards, local authorities, health, police, housing and third-sector organisations so we can identify and support people of all ages who may not engage with other services.

Our prevention activities have a robust community engagement plan (that aligns with a campaigns calendar) that enables us to visit and promote a range of services including Safe and Well Checks. However, we do acknowledge that the range and diversity of the group we visit could be broader, both in terms of geography and community groups that sometimes align with one or more protected characteristic(s).

# Equality Issues

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



## Question 15: Summary

- Language Accessibility: To provide conversational Welsh language skills and English support as part of the recruitment process. Improve language awareness and cultural differences within local communities.
- Equality Focus: The Service is placing too much emphasis on equality, diversity, and inclusion targets. Recruitment should focus on the best person for the role, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or language skills.
- Barriers for Specific Groups: Ignoring equality, diversity, and inclusion differences will create barriers to recruiting.

Fire Service response to comments received:

A specific equality Impact analysis report has been developed alongside the service's consultation report concerning its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2026-2027 following the consultation period between 20th October 2024 and 14th December 2025. Specific engagement with different equality interest groups during the consultation period has enabled people across all protected characteristics to provide feedback regarding the proposed principles, 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 (particularly with regards to equality of access and opportunity) that emerged from the feedback during the CRMP 2026-27 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.

## Additional Information

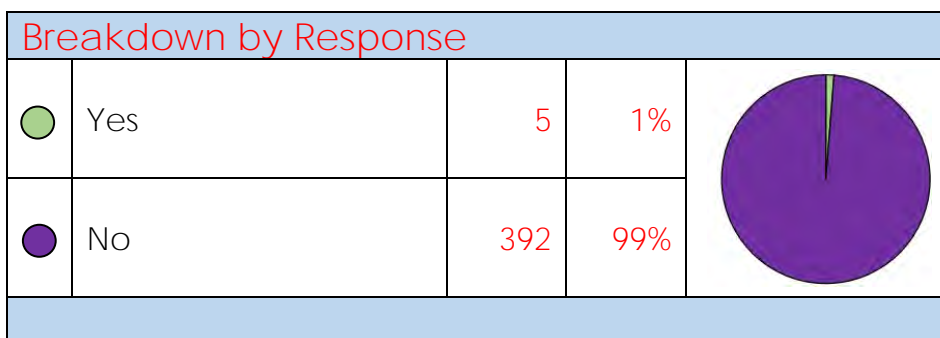
Providing a response to the following questions was optional.

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.

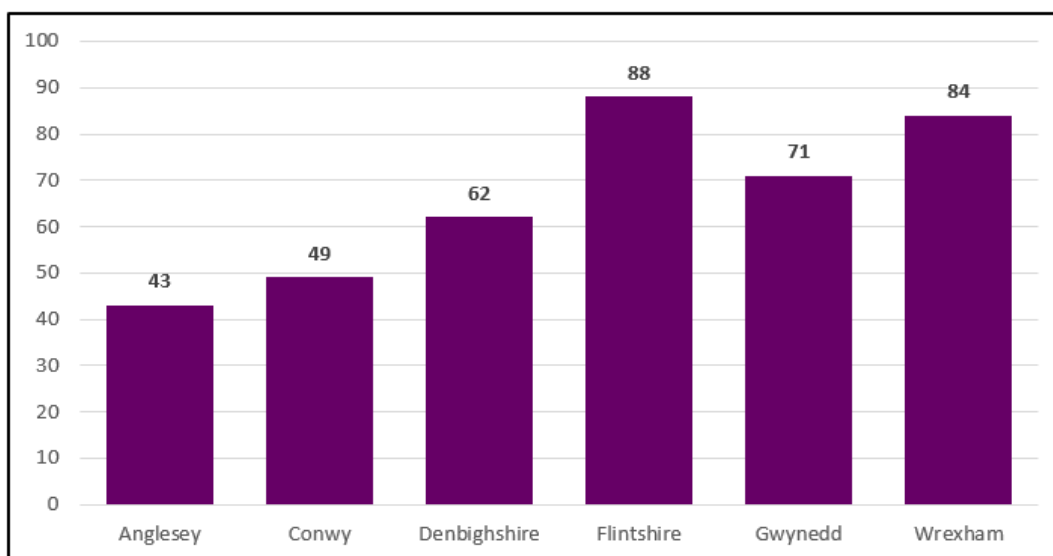
Summary of just some of the local groups that responded:

- Brew and Biscuits Groups
- Students from Bangor and Wrexham Universities
- Dementia Support Groups
- Red Cross Wrexham
- Unique Transgender LGBTQ+ Group
- Vale of Clwyd Mind

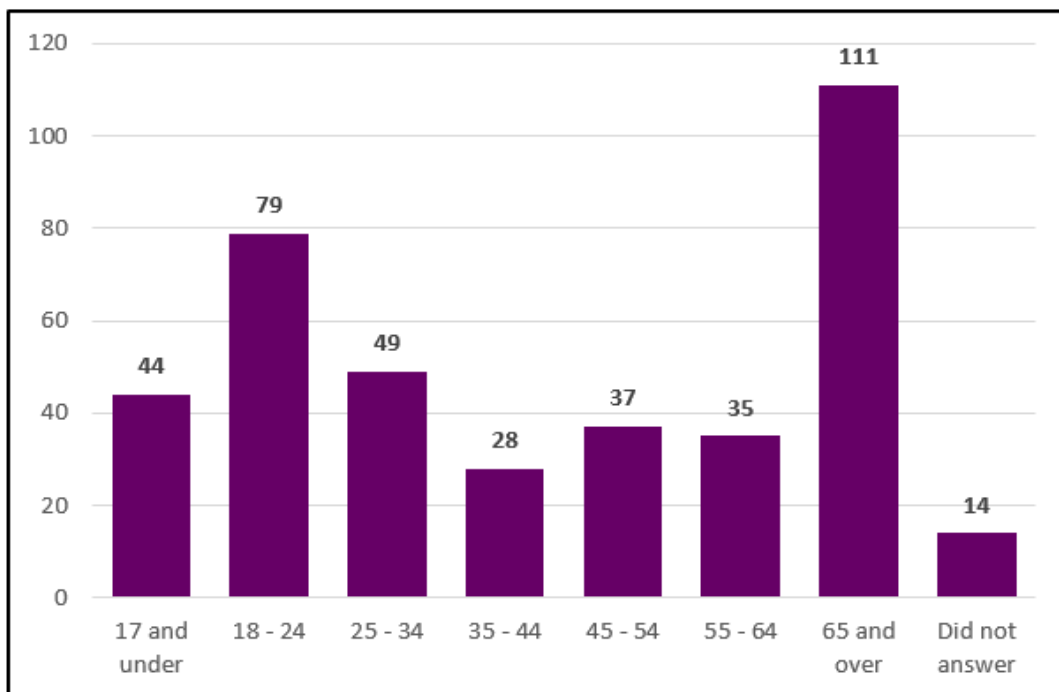
Question 17: Are you an employee of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service?




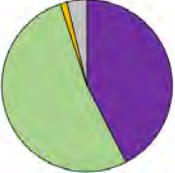



Question 18: Please choose one of the following to indicate the Local Authority area in North Wales where you live, work or are visiting.



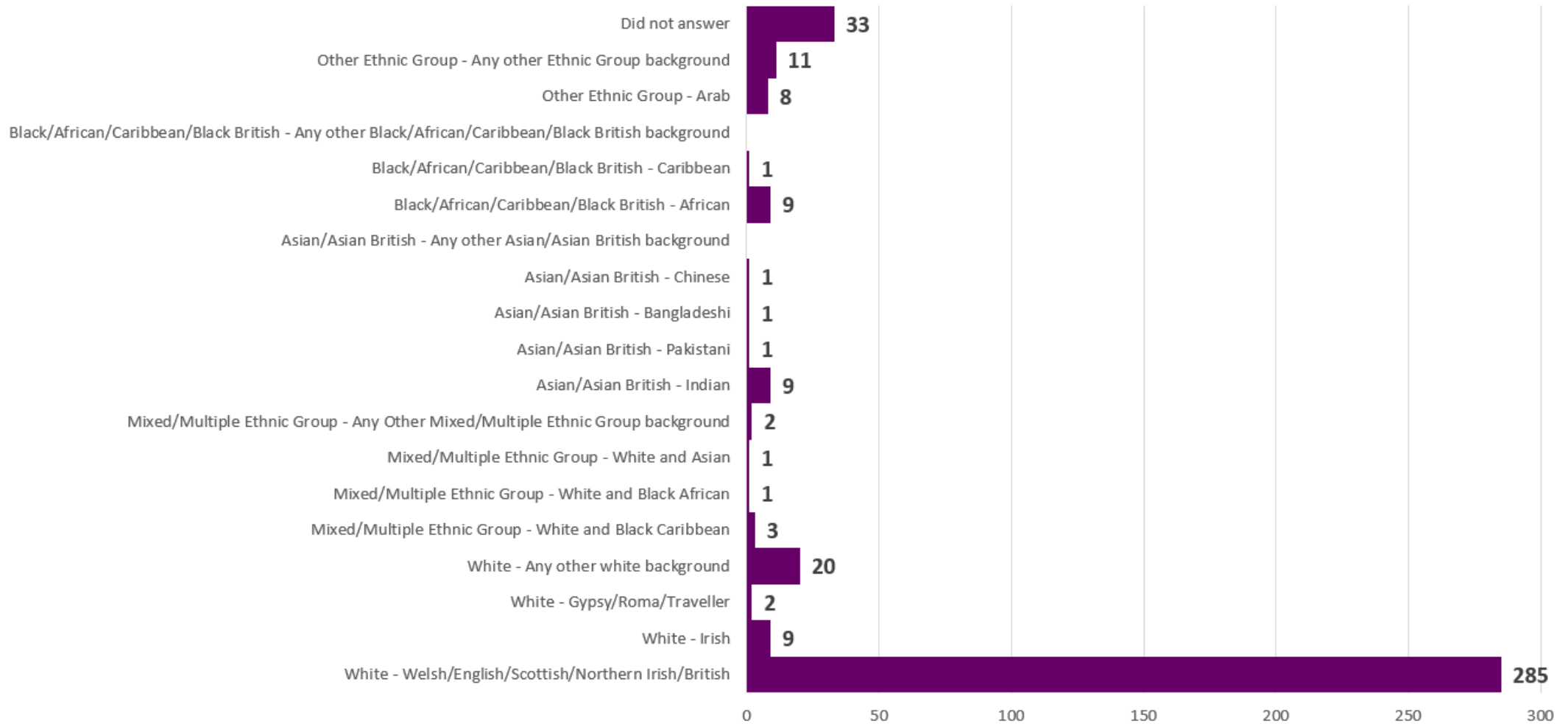
Question 19: Which age group are you?



Question 20: Gender – how do you identify?

Breakdown by Response				
	Male	168	42%	
	Female	208	52%	
	Other	5	1%	
	Did not answer	16	4%	

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

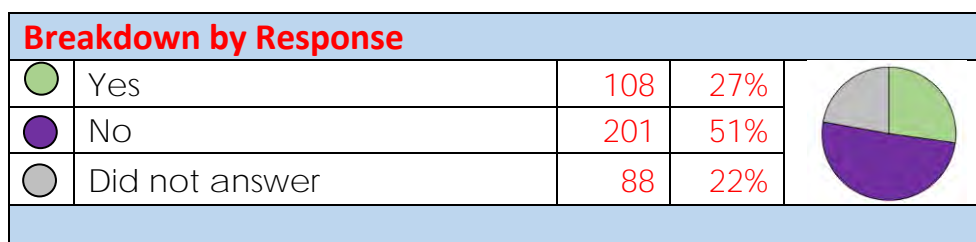


Question 23: What is your primary language?

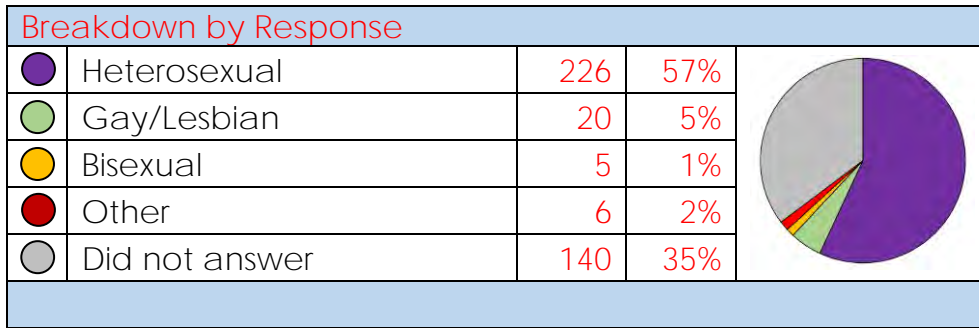
While most respondents listed Welsh or English as their primary language, it's encouraging to see the diversity of other minority languages represented among those who took part in the consultation

Primary Language	Number of Responses
English	178
Did not Answer	137
Welsh	32
Arabic	11
English and Welsh	7
Polish	6
French	3
Hindi	3
Punjabi	3
Polish and English	2
Somalian	2
Bengali	1
Bulgarian	1
Czech	1
Dari & Pashto	1
Dari and Farsi	1
English/Gaelic	1
German	1
Greek	1
Gujarati / Hindi	1
Hindi / Punjabi	1
Portuguese	1
Ukrainian	1
Urdu and English	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>397</b>

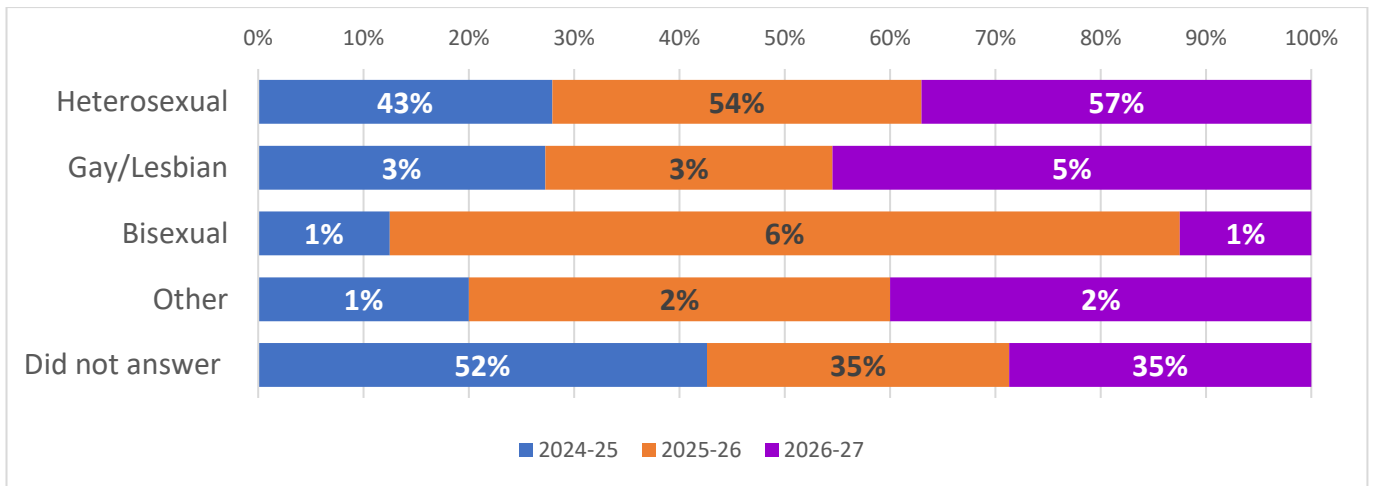
Question 24 and 25: Disability - are you disabled or have a long-term health condition?







Question 26: Sexual Orientation



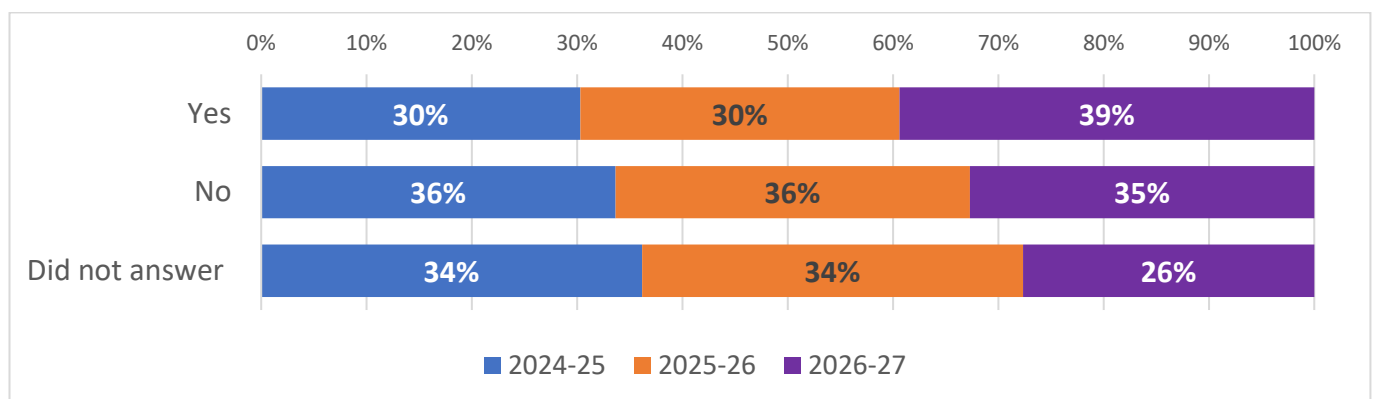
Responses shown by percentage since the implementation of the CRMP.



Question 27 and 28: Religion and/or Belief - do you affiliate with any particular religion, faith or belief system?

Breakdown by Response				
	Yes	156	39%	
	No	138	35%	
	Did not answer	103	26%	

Responses shown by percentage since the implementation of the CRMP.



### 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

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OTHER RISKS – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	Risk of wildfires.
2	A change of leadership of NWFRS to ensure objectives are achieved during any transformation.
3	A reminder of your five-year plan would be helpful. Given the ever expanding population of NWales, ANY reduction of operational cover ESPECIALLY in the Wrexham area is unacceptable. The general public simply have no real grasp of your objectives.
4	Your lack of funding - your difficulty covering retained duties - the increasing pressure of wildfires.
5	Availability of your appliances must be improved especially Special Appliances.
6	I believe it would be beneficial to include the fire service's duties under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). To ensure the public is aware of the additional requirements placed on the fire service.
7	Faulty gaming equipment that are starting to break.
8	Growing population, number of housing developments, new football stadium and impact on traffic on match days. Increasing numbers of takeaways. No mention of Berwyn prison which I believe your service attend regularly. No mention of e-scooters and number of unregulated and modified e-bikes in the area. You mention climate change, but nothing specific to our area.
9	Addressing the use of fireworks! Possible organised firework displays only. No sale to the public. Very distressing for elderly, animals etc. and dangerous in the wrong hands! I Feel very strongly about this issue.
10	1. Air Fryers are concerning. 2. Eye level cookers. People put tea towel over the top (draping oven!). Fire risk. 3. Plug in fragrance / smelley's – get hot. 4. Scented candles get hot causing people to drop them. 5. Big square block / multi plug-in in holiday homes (very old school) risky!
11	1. Air Fryers are concerning. 2. Eye level cookers. People put tea towel over the top (draping oven!). Fire risk. 3. Plug in fragrance / smelley's – get hot. 4. Scented candles get hot causing people to drop them. 5. Big square block / multi plug-in in holiday homes (very old school) risky!
12	1. Air Fryers are concerning. 2. Eye level cookers. People put tea towel over the top (draping oven!). Fire risk. 3. Plug in fragrance / smelley's – get hot. 4. Scented candles get hot causing people to drop them. 5. Big square block / multi plug-in in holiday homes (very old school) risky!
13	Power Station not mentioned in your plan. Huge risks to consider.
14	Cars not indicating on Market Street, some go up the hill and some go to the shopping area. It's dangerous for pedestrians trying to cross the road.

15	Visiting homes regularly to check if they have working alarms.
16	Inconsiderate riders of horses, and drivers.
17	Horses, bikes, scooters, runners. Need to be aware of their surroundings more and don't own the road.
18	Dangerous drivers / cyclists.
19	Vapes and chargers.
20	Cheap vapes. Charges overheating - no fuses! Rumours of cheap products coming in from China.
21	Vapes. Snus - Pouch of powered tobacco under the lip for nicotine. Nicotine pouches.
22	Flooding. Trees on the side of the road.
23	Inconsiderate parking on narrow roads.
24	Overhanging trees which look in a dangerous state, which might cause an accident. Obscured road signs. Charging electric bikes.
25	Mountain rescue. Maybe tourism. Flooding. Wildfires increasing (heather burning). Trees overhanging (dead trees). Narrow access (parking).
26	Trees on / by roads. Narrow access on roads. Water access in rural areas.
27	My Stupidity :)
28	Mobility scooters - blocking pavements or where pavements are not adequate. They can be a hazard on the road. Also speed. Electric scooters - too fast!
29	Some people feel unsafe and lock door using more than one lock. However, this approach means it is more difficult to / for us to get out if there was a fire.
30	People on bikes not using cycle lanes are causing unnecessary hazards on tight, narrow roads in Barmouth area.
31	Cheap costumes are fire risk. Children went out on fire last year (little girl) in Halloween dress (big dress caught fire).
32	Too many people not using smoking areas these days. This is happening in colleges, businesses and on the high street. It is wrong and disrespectful and risky in my view. No mention of power stations and the new nuclear plant on Anglesey. Not enough emphasis on flooding in your plan, Rhyl, Abergele are both huge concerns for future flooding.
33	It is unclear where you source your data, but there is gaps within what you collect and monitor. As a student of environmental studies, you are not showing enough considering for climate change and expected changes to weather conditions which will impact rainfall, flooding and extreme dry weather that will increase the risk of wildfire. You mention these briefly, but there is no risk classification listed. Surely increases to the population should be considered and highlighted between 2024-2029. Does geopolitics get any mention in your plan as I couldn't find any. War and conflicts can cause supply issues. Cyber security is not mentioned also.
34	Terrorist attacks did not feature in your document.
35	Specific risks to infrastructure, cyber-attacks and terrorist attacks.
36	Streams not cleaned. Flooding.

37	No reference in your plan regarding anti-social behaviour in communities and arson attacks on domestic dwellings. This is a particular large issue in this area (Flint, Mold, Deeside, Connah Quay).
38	Air fryers are concerning. Older people charging electrical scooters inside buildings unaware of the risks.
39	Fire risk in the marina [Conwy] and Conwy Tunnel. We have two big fires in there.
40	Cavity in between walls is worrying.
41	Conwy tunnel fires.
42	Electric cars.
43	Water risks. People with a fear of water.
44	Phones and laptops are charge in homes. People don't know about the risks of leaving items on charge overnight and unattended. Maybe your safety talks can include this. Candles, people leaving unattended.
45	I am surprised your plan is basic. Risks to consider include Conwy tunnels and traffic on A55 more generally. Wildfires and rough campers set up fires in random places along the coastal areas.
46	Yes, retained stations off the run to regularly.
47	I can think of several risks. These include risks to the public crossing roads in Flint. The lack of car parking in Flint means many people park in the retail park and walk into town often crossing the busy road. Although the speed limit slows traffic down, some drivers do go too fast. Fire risk in homes. Candles are more popular these days.
48	Wildfire.
49	Refugees and Asylum seekers.
50	Joining the fire service can be challenging for some people. Social tensions and terrorist attacks could feature more heavily in your plans.
51	Homeless people is a huge problem in Rhyl and other parts of North Wales
52	Arson and fire being used as a means of attacking people. Various homeless people being attacked in their tents at night, some have had their tents set on fire. Police know all about different cases in Rhyl and I am sure fire [Service] have been involved. The incident down marina lake was serious and there was a tent [with homeless people inside] set on fire near the war memorial gardens. Many homeless people being targeted and not protected. There is no mention of this group [Homeless people] in your plans, but it is good you are consulting with partners to identify these risks.
53	Electric cars.
54	Electric cars in terms of fires and self-drive technology.
55	Electric e-bikes bought off the internet could be of poor standard and makes risk more likely.
56	Electric car fires.

57	Dodgy electric cars going on fires. Recent Conwy tunnel fire was an electric fire.
58	Fire risk at Berwyn prison which appear regular. Fire risk on Wrexham industrial estate. Fire risk on the Queens Park estate fences set on fire. and cars set alight for drug runners who don't pay up.
59	Wildfires and major incidents on the A55 and Conwy Tunnel.
60	Risks on the A55 including HGVs and large caravans being moved across North Wales.
61	No risks considered in relation to the football club development, impact of an extra 7500+ football fans on a matchday. Traffic in general. Huge issues with traffic around the new McDonalds. Traffic up surely makes your ability to respond - challenging response.
62	There are various risks relating to poor access to emergency response to farming communities in Bettisfield, Northwood, Hanmer, Overton and Penley. Farmers are informed that fire engines responding to fires in our areas almost always come from Ellesmere, Whitchurch and Press. Why are Wrexham fire engines not coming as you receive the tax payers payments. It is not good enough to rely on Shropshire because their fire engines are not always available and they won't prioritise us if there is a fire on their door step. Solar panels on houses are also a concern.
63	Fast drivers in town centre. Dangerous to cross roads.
64	High volume of tourists during the Summer. Proposed power station which will be great although huge additional risk. Heavy goods up and down the road networks.
65	Funding in the future.
66	The reopening of the nuclear plant has not been included in your CRMP plan surely this presents risk.
67	Drowning risks, changing tides, visitors to the island, children not wearing helmets on bikes, people getting stuck in sand, dog walkers getting stranded etc.
68	Your CRMP document doesn't refer to issues relating to mental health and the huge impact mental is having on emergency services and NHS. It would add value to consider mental health, your response to people experience poor mental health and suicidal thoughts. I am not sure how many suicide attempts you go to, but the demand and impact on your staff must be a risk.
69	The air fryer documentary was concerning.
70	Risks associated with air fryers.
71	Water levels in Rhyl coast and river Clwyd flooding.
72	You state your 5-year plan, but you are consulting on your 2026-27 plan. Very confusing. There are no risks on specific roads. Here we see more and more RTCs between Whitchurch and Wrexham. Also, always cars overturned on Bronington road. Lots of speeding, icy roads, broken down cars and vans on bends. Big risks.

73	The new nuclear power station planned for Wylfa on Anglesey and the community infrastructure to meet the needs of 1,000's of new people in the area.
74	Funding. governance arrangements changing. Fire service reform.
75	Huge problems with fly tipping in Rhyl. This creates a major fire risk as some of the fly-tipping is card, paper, wood and other flammable materials.
76	Right wing activists. Transphobic abuse/attacks on trans people. Hate crime/arson.
77	Fly tipping continues to be an issue here (Rhyl) and where I used to live (Conwy).
78	Arson / fire setting behaviours amongst youths and young adults
79	Flooding Risk. Climate Change-raising Sea levels.
80	Businesses. Lots of stock. Are they assessing their fire safety risks.
81	Rising energy costs are causing people to burn usual items in their fire such as plastic bottles and household rubbish.
82	Solar panels.
83	Cost of living and rising energy costs.
84	Homeless people are being placed into local hotels in Rhyl by the local council. These people are given basic foods items, but some are uneasy around other people, so they cook in their rooms, often using toasters.
85	Pot holes in roads are causing a major issue including costs of repairing cars and increased risk of RTCs.
86	Fly tipping near Rhyl train station has been an issue, not the first time it's happened. The rubbish is piled up at the back of Phillips Care Home, rubbish includes fridges, paint cans and household rubbish which creates huge fire risk if set alight.
87	Lack of disabled parking in Rhyl in public buildings and in and around Rhyl front and high street.
88	People experiencing poor mental health.
89	Increase of mental health and reduced social interaction.
90	People using any fryer incorrectly, using foil to create barrier but foil flakes under high temperature and blocks air circulation causing air fryers to overheat.
91	Air fryer causing problems/risks. People filling with water to clean them, so when they are turned on creating steam and electrical items fail.
92	Local pubs run down no investment.
93	Children setting fires to bins.
94	Children setting fires to bins.
95	Consider future funding and retention of staff.
96	Children setting fires to bins.
97	Children setting fires to bins.
98	Children setting fires to bins.
99	Apart from fresher's fair, what other engagement do you do with the students here in Wrexham? Do you provide info in other languages? Where does flooding become a risk? It's not referenced under any principle.

100	Large animal rescue e.g. horses trapped.
101	Large animal rescue.
102	Large animal rescue is still not listed under your response principle. Missing this is failing a significant part of your rural communities.
103	Please reinstate the large animal rescue service. Only a week ago we had a situation where elderly 16.6 Irish draught horse had lay down but rolled onto a slight incline. Her arthritis and slippy ground resulted in her being unable to get up. I called for help and 4 of us between the ages of 60 and 83 got straps on her legs and as she tried to roll back we had to pull her over. Yes, we took risks but who else was going to help her, if a vet had attended, they would have euthanized her. Please reinstate a service which is so important.
104	Large animal rescue.
105	Flash flooding.
106	Your plan is interesting, and it includes many risks. Climate change and weather present risk. Not sure about other risks.
107	Student populations and people unemployed and those on low income.
108	Young people living on their own. People alcohol and drug dependant. People in poverty that experience poor health as a result of access issues to healthcare and nobody to have an eye out or signpost to relevant healthcare provision.
109	Student safety.
110	Some people [New arrivals, refugees) don't know how to raise the alarm '999'.
111	Other languages should be considered.
112	Do you support people to develop their English language skills.
113	Language barriers.
114	Water safety concerns relating to ethnic minority groups. Unknown and high risks [people that can't swim] at seaside resorts and tidal flow.
115	Higher risks to ethnic minority groups that bare less likely to be able to swim. Ethnic groups sometimes get missed when accessing safety information relating to water and other risk factors.
116	Language barriers for refugees.
117	People living alone and isolated are more vulnerable.
118	Activities for youths. More cadets provision needed to cater for youths in most deprived areas.
119	Busy roads.
120	Maybe consider aging population.
121	Recruitment. People going on strike. Funding. Political changes. Climate change. Wages you pay.
122	Climate change and its impact on wildlife and people.
123	Not having enough staff.
124	Increasing costs and not having funding.
125	Increasing demands on current resources.
126	Immigration policies restricting recruitment efforts.
127	False roundabouts that are painted on road. People don't stop often go straight over causing a hazard.

128	<p>Access to canal boats can be challenging if a boat is on fire. Canal paths are narrow, uneven and access can be deeply impacted during adverse weather. Canals have poor signal for technology devices and internet connections can rely on GPS. I know a person that fell in-between a canal boat and canal edge near Chirk, and he crushed 4 ribs and found it hard to breathe. Although an ambulance arrived, it was located about 1000 metres up from where the man had fallen and the only way to get him to the ambulance was on a canal boat which is slow, and he was blue by the time he got to the ambulance. This highlights the extremely challenging terrain for emergency staff to access boats and those who live on boats. I would like to highlight this as a high risk and the need for emergency services on canal boats is more common than you may think. We have had two fires on canal boats in the past year and separately a man died on a boat last week. Some people on canal boats live alone. People tend to be over 55, mostly retirement age. Chatting to a member of the fire service, he explained that many of us [Travellers and people living on the canal boats] would fall into the high-risk category if we lived in domestic housing. I can see you [North Wales FRS] are making a big effort to consult with us, so please continue to educate us, inform us and help keep us safe.</p>
129	<p>Key contacts at Chirk Marina will be lost as the company has gone bust. There is an opportunity for your Service to develop a relationship with the new owners in a few months' time once the paperwork has been signed and agreed. We have had two fires on canal boats in the past year. The second fire occurred a few weeks after the big fire that we had here last year. A man died on a canal boat last week and I want to stress that some residents [living on canal boats] are very vulnerable.</p>
130	<p>Reinstate large animal rescue.</p>
131	<p>Large animal rescue.</p>
132	<p>Animals domestic/farm, lost, trapped, missing need rescuing.</p>
133	<p>Terrorist attacks, protests and large crowds [including students] being targeted.</p>
134	<p>One key risk that has not been fully addressed is the withdrawal of large animal rescue provision in 2015. Community Safety: North Wales has a significant rural population, with many farms and equestrian centres. Incidents involving horses, cattle, or other large animals are not uncommon, and they can pose serious risks to both the public and responders. Public Impact: Without specialist rescue provision, residents are left vulnerable. Farmers and horse owners often have no safe support when animals are trapped, injured, or loose on roads. This can lead to unsafe improvisation and increased danger. Wider Consequences: These incidents can cause road closures, traffic disruption, and emotional distress for communities. They also risk escalating into larger emergencies if not handled professionally. Risk Planning: The absence of large animal rescue should be explicitly recognised as a risk in the Community Risk Management Plan. Reintroducing or partnering to provide this service would significantly improve resilience and public safety.</p>

135	People crossing the roads, hardly any safe places [No zebra or other type of crossing] to cross the road on the bottom road [Down from the Pontio Building]. Although 20mph speed restriction is in place, some people drive faster and you can't hear electric cars/vans as they speed up!
136	Increasing costs could mean you have to make difficult cuts.
137	I would suggest you grasp a good understanding of the impact of wildfire on eco-systems and people living in the area.
138	People pushing around to get on/off trains. I visit friends in Liverpool, and the trains can be busy.
139	Arson.
140	Leaving things on charge.
141	1. Risk of getting burnt. 2. Dealing with difficult people. 3. Putting your life in danger. 4. Getting ceilings falling on you.
142	Irresponsible behaviour with flammable items or items that can cause fires. For a teenager, some examples are vapes, cigarettes and unexperienced knowledge in a kitchen.
143	Fires from new technology, for example electric bikes. Road traffic accidents.
144	Technological disruption
145	Speed limits. Fireworks. Strong winds/storms.
146	Cycling without bells is dangerous.
147	Flooding, pools of water on paths. Unlevel walking paths.
148	Flooding. Water and puddles in the road. Uneven pavements.
149	Flooding, and unlevel pavements.
150	Be aware that Pen Llyn / Abersoch changes over the Summer and the risks increase.
151	The elderly need more information. Also, we are seeing an increase in poverty.

## Appendix B

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OUR PEOPLE PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	Why are you still on about diversity, you need capable skilled firefighters no matter what background they have.
2	Diversity has nothing to do with you.
3	Very comprehensive.
4	Ensure ALL staff are given development not just the few. Utilise the skills within the workforce more efficiently.
5	The public support our brave firefighters and it's good to see a diverse workforce. What language they speak is of little importance as long as everyone can speak English?
6	You do not value your staff as well as you say
7	Do not waste time and money trying to get a workforce that represents the diversity of the communities you serve. While you should have a recruitment policy that is non-discriminatory in terms of ethnicity or gender, it is far more important that you recruit the people with the right mental and physical attributes for the job. I don't think anyone cares if the people who put out their house fire didn't accurately mirror the percentage of LGBTQ+ or BAME people in their community.
8	People in emergency situations are unlikely to care about anything other than the fire fighters ability to assist. Commitment to diversity is commendable but should not be pursued at the expense of ability to assist.
9	The 'Our People Principle' is essential to allowing the fire service to do their work. It provides provision for the up-skilling of current staff with training on fraud and Welsh language. Also, a strong emphasis on promoting the Welsh language and diversity within communities. This principle is also inline with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (hereafter 'WFGWA'). It allows for a Wales of cohesive communities by allowing the Welsh language to thrive. Possibly, more could be included about recruitment and retaining staff. Specific examples are provided on staff training, however, no information is provided on how staff will be retained nor recruited. For example, is there further training available for career progression or a change to the recruitment procedure to get the best talent working for the fire service.
10	let younger generation know about how inclusive the fire service are
11	It looks good
12	Advertise more broadly than you currently do. Not everyone is on social media.
13	I agree it's a good principle, but your service isn't doing enough to recruit more women
14	We never know when we might need these services. - it helps me to feel safe knowing they are there.
15	I strongly agree you should recruit skilled people
16	Employ people with lived experiences. Different age profiles.
17	Employ people with lived experiences. Different age profiles.
18	There are not many female firefighters on the Llyn Peninsula.
19	Excellent principles and includes focus on continual improvement.

20	There should be employment from people from all background of life
21	I think this a good idea for your people principle
22	The main and important thing is to ensure people that you can do your job and do it well, although a diverse fire and rescue service is good and gives members of their community a sense of comfort, I think that being qualified is the most important thing.
23	Makes sense.
24	Possible communication between individuals who speak any other language apart from English and Welsh.
25	Defibrillators on vehicles. Increased need during holiday season.
26	Glad to have full-time firefighters at Dolgellau.
27	Defibrillators on engines. I just want firefighters when I need them. Consider increasing firemen during tourist season.
28	Possible need more information before making a decision.
29	You should consider BSL and other languages.
30	Being motivated should be a given. To what level do people need to speak Welsh as this can be an advantage, but also a barrier to potential applicants. Your job page on your website is a little dull, you could make it far more contemporary and embed videos to aid prospective employers ability to navigate what they are looking for.
31	You don't list the required skills you need; you don't list what you are looking for, and you don't mention what the right skills are. Just being honest.
32	I strongly agree.
33	It is of paramount importance to recruit skilled people that can counteract risks relating to cyber-attacks and terrorist attacks.
34	I am unsure women have the physical capacity to fulfil the role of a firefighter.
35	I absolutely agree that you need to recruit people from diverse backgrounds, but you could do far more to make this happen. Several friends and colleagues of mine have tried multiple times to get in the fire service and they have been overlooked. Some of them have joined the Police, NHS and other private sector jobs, but can't appear to get through the application and selection processes in your Service. There could be better support put in place to support applicants because some of them are really good, and you are missing out on local talent. It is good that you are promoting the Welsh language.
36	You should have the freedom to recruit whoever you need.
37	Your recruitment activity does not reach out far enough. I used to work in HR and I have never seen a job advert for the fire service in local buildings or job centre.
38	More women (Why not).
39	Takes too long to train and recruit.
40	You could help staff improve English language skills.
41	I agree that you need to recruit diverse people, but your plans fail to explain how you will achieve this. I have friends that work in recruitment and your service doesn't attend recruitment events in the area.

42	You rarely hear about jobs and careers in your organisation.
43	Recruit more local people that know the Wrexham area.
44	Welsh language should be priority but not across all areas as some areas require <b>Welsh speakers whilst other areas don't.</b>
45	Yes, to diverse workforce. You need to ensure your recruitment practices are inclusive.
46	Barriers to employment for people especially women who are primary carers.
47	It is important that you recruit highly skilled workforce that shows empathy towards people with poor mental health.
48	As the Employer and Partnership Manager for Gwynedd and Ynys Mon, I have seen the benefit having North Wales Fire Service attending our job fairs and events recently in Llangefni. Moving forward, I think that this would be a good way to continue for our customers to be aware of the career opportunities. We also held an Emergency Services day at Bangor Jobcentre on the 9th of September and we had very positive feedback about North Wales Fire and Rescue Service from this event from jobcentre claimants.
49	Lack of women, black, LGBTQI+ and social class to be considered and acknowledged.
50	Surely there is a benefit to recruiting people that can speak a wider range of other languages.
51	Difficult to get in the Fire Service.
52	Young and old, age groups bring something to the table.
53	Having recently been through the recruitment process in your service I am not confident in a fair and equal manner.
54	Staff need to know.
55	Staff need to know.
56	Upskilling and supporting new and old staff is really positive.
57	Staff need to know.
58	Staff need to know.
59	Staff need to know.
60	Your organisation isn't linking in with student services to promote careers - missing opportunities.
61	It would be beneficial for employers like you to provide English learning to enable language learners to learn Welsh. Non-English primary language.
62	Extremely strong initiative which will only strengthen fire and rescue services.
63	Have flexible working / work from home. Job share options. Part time options are vital.
64	Large animal rescue e.g. horses.
65	Standard risks. Retaining staff can save money.
66	Better links with universities can help recruitment priorities.
67	It is unclear from your plan how you support language development. It may be beneficial to explain how you will support people with their language development and this can help attract and recruit people.
68	Other languages should be considered to attract and recruit people.
69	Do you support people to develop their English language skills?
70	The lack of English language skills may be a barrier.

71	Challenging for most refugees to be able to speak English well enough to pass initial assessments. Will be easier for next generation as they will grow up learning English and Welsh in local school. May your Service could provide English language skills.
72	Language barriers which restrict access to employment opportunities for refugees.
73	Employing people that enjoy getting outdoors and getting to know boaters is important.
74	It's always difficult to reflect your community, but as close as possible is ideal.
75	Cadet's programmes in more places can empower youths to get involved with the fire and Rescue service.
76	Good plan.
77	Possibly run careers workshops at the university to spark interest.
78	Emphasise your USP, salary and perks.
79	Attend fresher's fairs 'Sereldipity' events. Everybody attends and there are stall and socialites that will be there.
80	Develop staff skills.
81	Combating recruitment challenges in the current climate.
82	While having a bilingual service is great, the farmers of North Wales are mostly Welsh speakers, yet they have no support with rescuing their animals. I'm sure they would be grateful of a bilingual service that supports them!
83	Only just seen this haven't time to read it all & research it before deadline.
84	I welcome the commitment to a skilled, bilingual, and diverse workforce. However, I believe the principle should also emphasise specialist skills for rural risks, such as large animal rescue, which was withdrawn in 2015. Without training and provision in these areas, the workforce cannot fully meet the needs of all communities in North Wales.
85	Develop and retain people.
86	Feel it could have more of a focus and commitment on improving the culture within the service. Not just measuring progress of the recommendations of the crest report.
87	The recruitment of people that can speak different languages can be a huge benefit especially with so many Indian people in Wrexham now.
88	Everyone doesn't need to speak Welsh.
89	Difficult to recruit, unlike it used to be. Only self-employed people have the time; other people won't want to have the permission to go to fires from their employers.
90	The Service is in two languages and appreciated, with thanks.

## Appendix C

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OUR PREVENTION PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	Not really sure these have a great impact.
2	very comprehensive.
3	NWFRS has resorted to a quantity over quality approach which is a shame.
4	The schemes work well and it's great to see firefighters in the community. Vulnerable people will allow firefighters into their homes when they might refuse social workers, health professionals etc.
5	Fire Safety and Prevention departments have under qualified staff especially.
6	The focus on prevention is excellent.
7	The prevention principle, provides in-community projects that target vulnerable individuals of the community. This is done to reduce the risk of fire and promote early intervention. This principle within the CRMIP is important as it allows prioritisation of resources during times of emergency to the most serious incidents.
8	It is important to prevent risk to stop them from happening in the first place.
9	Never heard of these services. More needs to be done to promote services.
10	Kids take too many risks on bikes. Baggy clothes/loose on bikes. Some kids have the freedom to roam. Some parents don't keep an eye on them i.e. playing near water, swim on hot days, but water is cold. Many people don't know how flammable household products. Fire risk in the home e.g. paint, cleaning products.
11	Hardly no community engagement considering the size of your team in Wrexham. Are you really doing enough to prevent. Need to be more visible and your never in the local media anymore.
12	Some great work happening, but we didn't know about many risks you have mentioned today. Can you communicate more: • Videos on Facebook work well. • More 'in-person' engagement. School visits are really good! Keep us this good work.
13	Some great work happening, but we didn't know about many risks you have mentioned today. Can you communicate more: • Videos on Facebook work well. • More 'in-person' engagement. School visits are really good! Keep us this good work.
14	Some great work happening, but we didn't know about many risks you have mentioned today. Can you communicate more: • Videos on Facebook work well. • More 'in-person' engagement. School visits are really good! Keep us this good work.
15	Some great work happening, but we didn't know about many risks you have mentioned today. Can you communicate more: • Videos on Facebook work well. • More 'in-person' engagement. School visits are really good! Keep us this good work.

16	The vulnerable people in our community need extra support - so reducing risks is so important.
17	Safe checks sound important.
18	Strongly agree you should target older people and others most at risk. Lorry drivers always on their mobile phones on the A55! Some playing games, huge risk.
19	Strongly agree you should target older people and others most at risk. Lorry drivers always on their mobile phones on the A55! Some playing games, huge risk.
20	Excellent principles and great partnerships.
21	It helps for making communities much safer.
22	They seem really important, and it is important to look after our community.
23	Reducing risks to the community. Electric bikes. Speed signs not in use / effective (the ones that light up but no longer in use since 20MPH came into force).
24	Safe and Wells sound good.
25	Over 65's unlikely to be on social media for flood alerts.
26	It would be good if we had more home visits - especially over 65 - to make sure correct prevention - alarms in place.
27	Not enough emphasis on targeted interventions. The plan doesn't go into any detail about who and how you target
28	Nothing planned concerning flooding. Very little mentioned in the way of targeted work. Planned work to target over 65s, what about under 65s. Not enough consideration for children or young adults
29	There is no mention of students which is strange considering you feel to need to consult with us.
30	You mention people aged over 65, but surely some risks are worth noting for people of working age. I disagree that you are ignoring a large group of people in your plans.
31	I somewhat agree.
32	The plan looks okay. But very little in your plan to counteract risks associated with cyber-attacks and terrorist attacks.
33	Check before leaving house and before bedtime.
34	Children and teens that gather.
35	In Mostyn some resident is up the hill, and the road is 30 degrees down. The main road speed limit is 40MPH. There is the road to turn. It has 2 accident history. So, the local residents put the mirror opposite to road but its railway wall, so its removed. Even there is a speedcam there is a risk of accident. But the mirror is not allowed to kept. To avoid the future accident there is the place needs to review or allow to kept the mirror. (It's all a suggestion).
36	You could broaden your talks to includes phone charging.
37	I didn't know you install hard of hearing devices.
38	Work more closely with local charities.

39	It's unclear what partners you work with. I work for a local health care provider and fire do very little with us at all.
40	Road safety could be better.
41	Do more to prevent wildfires.
42	Surely your prevention work goes beyond safe well in the home and a youth project for a very small group of people. Compared to other public services, you could be doing so much more.
43	There are far more vulnerable people other than older people. Drug and substance misuse, homeless people, unemployed people, young LGBTQ+ people kicked out of their family homes for being gay to name a few.
44	As explained in the first section, various groups of at risk people are not included in your plans. Homeless people, drug users, high risk individuals, sex offenders and unemployed people spring to mind.
45	Could the fire service provide a pole so people can reach and test their fire alarms. These items are provided in other areas and this enables people that not good on their feet to reach up and test their fire alarms are working.
46	Recruit more people from Wrexham that know the area and how to prevent risk in the area.
47	Limited provision on offer. This area of work needs to be more visible and active in Wrexham area. Huge population to cater for.
48	You never see the fire service in Bettisfield or Northwood.
49	No access.
50	We don't believe your prevention principle does enough to reduce risk.
51	More women can open doors and enable the fire service to connect better with people living in the area.
52	There is no consideration for supporting people with poor mental health that surely you encounter in your engagement with the public. I want to assume that you equip every member of your team with mental health training, if not why not. The fact you haven't got mental health in your risk profile is concerning and as a worker in a mental health charity, you will know safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all public services need to play their part.
53	Consideration for black, LGBTQI+, Disabled and poverty to name a few specific risks that require attention.
54	Promote safety re: air fryers.
55	In comparison to other public services, you prevention focus is narrow and misses large groups of people who are at risk.
56	There is opportunities for you to work with more partners to achieve your strategic objectives.
57	RTCs.
58	Work with partners? Which ones? Your CRMP plan doesn't list partners you work with or ones you need to work with. Not specific enough. Not a plan at all.
59	Consider trans people in your risks.

60	Arson / Fire setting amongst youths / young adults ASB huge issue in North East Wales.
61	Promote safety to community groups.
62	Visit more community groups like ours.
63	Visit more community groups like ours, Conwy Mind. Should do more.
64	Hair straighteners being left on or used on bed. People are drugs fall asleep etc.
65	Always new and emerging issues/risks to consider. It's all about capacity and funding.
66	The recent work done within community has been much more visible done last couple of years.
67	Has to be considered Mon-Fri. Not just one hour.
68	Has to be considered Mon-Fri. Not just one hour.
69	Recruit locally would support and limit risks with exceptional circumstances I.e Menai Bridge. Working with local agencies Mon CF or DWP will support this principle.
70	Has to be considered Mon-Fri. Not just one hour.
71	Has to be considered Mon-Fri. Not just one hour.
72	Has to be considered Mon-Fri. Not just one hour.
73	Safety info not in alternative language! No reference to promoting safety in the home for children (huge risks), not just over 65's. What about flooding risks?
74	It sounds very well but doesn't speak to younger people being stupid with open flames.
75	I think that everyone deserves protection.
76	My friends dried her clothes with a hairdryer, and it went up in flames. In 2020 I tried to melt chocolate in the microwave, and it burned and it cracked the cup inside, and black smoke was everywhere. I had B&M hair-straighteners that randomly started sizzling which then blew up in my hand. I put water on toast once. I just didn't know this was the wrong thing to do.
77	Be aware we could need you for animal rescue.
78	Consider vulnerable communities from the rural environment.
79	Education, education, education.
80	Basic but I see how you mitigate risk to people.
81	HE student populations.
82	The CRMP misses the opportunity to protect people living in poverty and those who are really ill as a result. Your plan is limited in many ways because it fails to mention lots of people that are very vulnerable.
83	<b>Don't receive information about your services previously.</b>
84	We have referred people to your services but long waiting lists. Drowning incident in Barmouth last year really impacted the family but wider community as well. Fire Service could do more to promote water safety to ethnic groups and safety information should be translated into relevant languages.
85	Language barriers which restrict access for refugees to access information.

86	You refer to 'people who maybe vulnerable...'; surely you know who is and isn't vulnerable. It's odd that you don't list vulnerable people which makes it impossible to agree because there isn't a plan in place.
87	Cadets can help spread positivity similarly to police and army cadets in the area.
88	Good plans we see NWFRS around the university a lot.
89	Providing information in more languages.
90	Sound plans.
91	I attended the phoenix course and found it very resourceful.
92	You are clearly engaging with the boating community. Keep up the good work.
93	Having to rescue large animals with no support is dangerous.
94	How do you expect members of the public to read & understand your policies in such a short time, have you been out into communities to get real feedback.
95	The focus on vulnerable people through Safe and Well Checks and the Phoenix Project is excellent. I would encourage the Service to expand prevention work to include rural safety education, for example around farm incidents, equestrian risks, and road safety in rural areas. Prevention should reflect the realities of both urban and rural living.
96	Prevent wildfires.
97	Maybe consider risks to students, especially international students living far away from home.
98	Continue working with others.
99	Continue working with groups.
100	Because of decreasing budgets, co-working is a good thing.

## Appendix D

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OUR PROTECTION PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	Very comprehensive.
2	Develop managers automatically to a higher knowledge of business fire safety.
3	An important role.
4	You do not have principles in the prevention and protection department, it's completely dysfunctional.
5	The protection principle will ensure that the fire service is making businesses and all associated safer with expert guidance on fire safety. Would it be beneficial to offer a training package for businesses following the risk assessment on that business? This would provide the businesses with the initial support in identifying fire risks, but also equip them with the training to continue being fire safe and not drain the resources of the fire service to provide a risk analysis on all buildings.
6	Not off the top of my head.
7	Lots of industry with risks.
8	Your service need to be more involved in planning and there are too many takeaways creating unnecessary risks.
9	Especially high rise building!! But all public buildings need to be safe.
10	I agree you should support businesses.
11	Important work you do. People sleeping illegally above business premises.
12	Important work you do. People sleeping illegally above business premises.
13	Good ongoing monitoring.
14	It makes sure businesses are safe environments for the staff and customers helping to keep it protected through guidance.
15	this is a good idea for people to keep safe.
16	Businesses are people's livelihoods so they should be kept safe, especially from fires as they can be so destructive so quickly.
17	Safe and Well Checks are good to protect businesses who may not be aware of the correct legislation or advisories on fire and safety and electrical use.
18	Yep.
19	Checks on holiday lets.
20	In this area it is important that you check hotels and holiday accommodation regularly. Also, HMOs.
21	Not enough information to understand this area.
22	This principle is confusing because I wasn't aware that fire services provide advice to businesses as I thought the public sector could mark its own work so to speak.
23	I strongly agree.
24	I somewhat agree but private business should get their own house in order.
25	This makes sense to me.

26	For people to feel safer.
27	Accommodation above take-aways a risk.
28	Not enough knowledge to comment.
29	Why bother when you don't go to AFAs in many premises.
30	This looks like a good service you provide.
31	Huge area to cover.
32	No access.
33	Promote this service more.
34	Protecting our buildings is important.
35	Is it the fire services role to make businesses to grow. I don't completely agree with your approach.
36	Businesses with food a priority.
37	Focus on various pubs that are run down in Rhyl, Prestatyn and surrounding areas.
38	Marketing to the right people and community awareness is important awareness of legislation.
39	Amazing making businesses more knowledgeable which is only a positive.
40	Don't really know the difference between protection. And prevention.
41	Landlords exploring students.
42	There are many local businesses that do the minimum.
43	<b>Housing places refugees into buildings with windows that don't open.</b>
44	Similar to your prevention section, what businesses are high risk? Your plan fails to list them so how do you expect the public to agree to this principle.
45	Your plan doesn't seem to do much protection work compared to other principles.
46	Sound plans.
47	There is lots of industrial risk in Chirk with Kronspan, and Cadburys.
48	Having to rescue large animals with no support is dangerous and putting the lives of the owners and the animal at risk which could be avoided with the correct support.
49	Does business include private & council landlords of residential housing?
50	Pub landlords keeping an eye out for vulnerable people.
51	Supporting businesses with fire safety guidance is vital. I would suggest extending this principle to include agricultural and equestrian businesses, which face unique risks (barn fires, livestock housing, etc.). Tailored protection advice for rural enterprises would strengthen community resilience.
52	<b>Continue what you're doing.</b>
53	Many summer homes in Abersoch. Whilst going passed them in the summer, it is clear that no one cares about them, for example the glass and window edges.
54	We need to ensure that businesses have information about the principles.

## Appendix E

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OUR RESPONSE PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	This should be number one, this is the only one that's really important.
2	Dai iawn. Very Good.
3	Very comprehensive.
4	The service currently is in a state of flux and it is important to monitor and assess the current improvements on availability and response.
5	Firefighters are thin on the ground in North Wales. Huge area - too few operational personnel.
6	Should provide more cover on rural station to help RDS.
7	No reduction in stations or resources.
8	I am concerned that any reductions in numbers of appliances and locations of fire stations could result in a level of service akin to that of the ambulance service which I would consider wholly inadequate.
9	I think it is important to have a quick response.
10	Need fire station in Connahs Quay.
11	Better availability needed at Deeside fire station.
12	Population is growing, lots of people from other areas moving here (Anglesey). They don't know the risks.
13	It was crazy you were thinking about removing a fire engine fairly recently. Keep what you have got because the population is growing and the community need to know a fire engine is ready to respond in Wrexham
14	Like Ambulances, in emergencies we all want the response to be immediate.
15	I agree you need to be ready, but according to Google availability isn't very good.
16	Holyhead always there when you need them.
17	Holyhead always there when you need them.
18	Excellent but need better communication to identify needs e.g. short staffed, need recruitment or volunteers.
19	it is good to keep people safe and stay away from harm so i feel this is a good idea.
20	The orange emergency cord in elderly peoples houses are effective for people living on their own who may not be pro-tech with mobile phones.
21	100%!
22	Most important.
23	Monitor response times.
24	Response times??
25	Monitor response times.
26	Good that we have full time fire fighters in Dolgellau.
27	Dolgellau full-time - big tick!
28	Goes without saying. Can't fault the fire service for response, especially now you have stopped talking about closing fire stations.

29	Are 53 fire engines enough to cover such a large area. Also, you don't have fire engines, you clearly don't enough firefighters to cover this area during busy periods.
30	I don't believe you are able to protect what matters to people because you are not ready to respond in some areas.
31	I strongly agree.
32	This is a standard offering surely.
33	999 and prompt response.
34	Need to clean streams and rivers. Fireworks going off too long.
35	Benefit other people.
36	More fire stations should be wholetime/fulltime instead of on-call response which can be hit and miss in some areas. Stations like Flint and Denbigh are large towns with huge industrial units, business parks and farming community presenting too much risk for on-call hit and miss.
37	It's good that you haven't closed Conwy fire station.
38	Too many stations not available for many, many hours.
39	Yes, but your workforce is not as diverse as it could be so improvements can be made.
40	Similar to the Police, your workforce diversity is not going to change if people don't know you are recruiting and what careers you have open.
41	More fire engines may be needed in the future. New housing developments planned. New football stand bringing in more people. Increases to population.
42	There are no fire engines based in our area and Wrexham is simply too far away. We should not rely on Shropshire fire engines when there are so many risks to farms, woodlands, peat fields and many businesses that are based in our rural area. I believe there should be a fire engine based in Penley, Bronington or Hanmer to cover this area.
43	Agree on the basis you develop capacity and safeguard jobs.
44	Recruitment issues require attention.
45	Reduced funding cuts could present an issue.
46	Your CRMP is high level. Being ready to respond when you the public need you is expected. However, responding to emergencies involving people with poor mental health needs to be treated carefully and skilfully. If you don't already, do train your staff well.
47	The way on call firefighting has been explained, clearly, it's not enough to have fire stations being available some of the time. Fulltime fire stations work better, and the recruitment of more reliable staff should be a priority.
48	It would be useful to know your response times to assess whether you perform in this area.
49	Slow response out here.
50	Response only occurs when you have staff who are employed and ready to respond. On call retained staff are not ready in some areas. Poor recruitment efforts. Not enough incentives or pay for on call retained enough.
51	Could Flint become fulltime?

52	Increase in population and traffic.
53	Recruitment drives. Uncalled locations should be evaluated. Keeping the community updated and involved. Evaluate state of equipment.
54	Train staff, yes. Safety equipment, yes. You need more full-time firefighters.
55	Adequate staff. Adequate fire stations. Adequate resources. Ensure that anyone involved in an emergency is safe.
56	Probably need higher focus on rural areas, car crashes and everything.
57	Respond to large animal rescue e.g. horses.
58	Large animal owners are part of your community and sometimes we need help to rescue an animal not responding those in need is not looking out for your community.
59	As noted previously, large animal rescue is a significant part of North Wales rural community needs, NWFS does not accommodate for this.
60	Yeah, response needs to happen as fast as possible.
61	Possibly base a fire engine on the Wrexham industrial estate where high risks exist.
62	I am not so sure your fire stations are based in the right places and I feel you have too many fire stations which I imagine are expensive to run and manage.
63	Language barriers restrict access for some refugees to call for help. I have learned today about 'What three words' but many [Refugees that don't attend British Red Cross] don't know about 999 and what three words.
64	I strongly agree but protecting and saving lives is what you do. Your plan fails to list the 'how' you will respond to the demands in north Wales.
65	Keep staff from leaving.
66	Yes response is good.
67	As discussed in question 1, access to canal boats between Chirk, Cefn Maur and Llangollen can be challenging. It should be on your radar this is a risk and should be considered within your risk profile. Although rare, various incidents occur on the canal and many people living on the boats are older people and some live alone.
68	Consider your ability to respond at Chirk Marina and along different stretches of the canal. Some areas have good solid access for a fire engine to approach close to the water, but other stretches may go 1000's of metres and be completely inaccessible.
69	Do you respond to animal rescues, to prevent owners getting into difficulties, farmers injury statistics are high as they use dangerous machinery & do own rescues or help other farmers, neighbour's animals.
70	The Service is committed to effective emergency response, but the absence of large animal rescue since 2015 has left a gap. Rural residents often face emergencies involving horses or cattle, which can endanger both people and animals. Reintroducing or partnering to provide this capability would make the response principle truly comprehensive.
71	Recruit committed students. Often available and hard working.
72	We have to commend the Service for (unreadable) over the years.

## Appendix F

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OUR ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	Eco-friendly is another political scam you have no business getting involved in
2	Nonsense.. you need diesel!
3	I've read through the CRMP, and while I find it to be very thorough, I believe it would benefit from further emphasis on the efforts to mitigate environmental impacts specifically related to incident response, rather than just focusing on how they aim to operate as an eco-friendly service. This section could be expanded to better align with and enhance the environmental principles outlined in the document. For example, fire services commonly use chemicals such as certain foams and water additives, which can have significant environmental consequences. Historically, substances like PFOS and PFOA, found in firefighting foams, have been highly polluting and toxic. Due to this, regulations now ban their use, and disposal must be carried out through licensed high-temperature incineration.
4	Investing in extra staff and changes should speed this up, though it should be monitored and recorded. increase our transition, th
5	Increased cost and less value for the residents.
6	Some appliances are 25 years old, releasing vast amounts of emissions, all officers drive petrol vehicles, majority of vans are diesel. Large proportion of stations rely heavily on gas boilers and are falling behind on basic maintenance.
7	At the IOACC we have placed great importance on the climate emergency and reducing the carbon footprint. We welcome the environmental principle, specifically the steps that are going to be taken to include: transitioning from diesel vehicles to HVO, expanding the electrical fleet and improving on procurement life cycles. This will ensure compliance with WFGWA and that the carbon footprint of the fire service is lower moving forward.
8	Good work.
9	It's good this is on your radar! Be conscious of what you are doing and the impact of your actions on other people and the environment.
10	Refreshing to see plans to reduce carbon footprint and recycling.
11	We are so privileged to have clean good air here, and I strongly believe we should protect our environment. Look at the damage done to Powys Mountain recently - though the growth is now fighting back!
12	Our enviroment is very important. Everybody should get involved, stopping cars from using certain gas stops. Felling to many trees it would all help the environment. Stop fireworks that hurt people.
13	Kind of, but what is happening with your recyclable plastic and do you know where it ends up?
14	It's good you recycle rubbish. I would support the Fire Service spending more on products if they were better for the environment.

15	It's good you recycle rubbish. I would support the Fire Service spending more on products if they were better for the environment.
16	Individual risk awareness to different areas.
17	Are you clothes made out of recycled materials ?
18	Its crucial that we have eco-friendly practices to protect the planet.
19	As long as the jobs done at the end that should be all that matters.
20	Recycle / reuse where possible.
21	Need further info to comment.
22	Flooding.
23	I disagree because you mention flooding and climate change in your consultation pack, but it doesn't get any limelight at all considering it is such a huge future risk.
24	As a student of environmental matters, I don't believe your environmental principle is broad enough and your fail to mention climate change, expected increase in rain fall and increased risk to flooding. You don't mention road surfaces either and the adverse weather will impact road surfaces impacting driving conditions.
25	I strongly agree.
26	This makes sense. Do what you can.
27	I fully support the seeking to identify alternative fuel sources.
28	Money could be spent better than these magazines.
29	Responding, safety is on the way.
30	One of the problems that come to my attention is some of them left plastic cover (or) cig in the forest which make high risk. E-cig issue where environment pollution. Damaging bins.
31	I am unable to see how an electrical fire engine will ever produce the power to be suitable to pump water at high enough pressure and run for long enough to supply firefighters at a big job (i.e. large house fire, barn fire at a farm).
32	Where possible.
33	I don't have much knowledge about this but it sounds positive.
34	Eco-friendly practices can help save money.
35	Don't know enough about this.
36	Yes important.
37	Can't see how you go electric with fire engine. Good luck with that one.
38	You may consider the environmental impact if the Bettisfield Moss goes on fire, it would hugely impact eco-systems, wildlife and major carbon release.
39	Agree on the basis you continue to do more in the future.
40	You have no mention of solar or wind energy. Lots of wind on Anglesey to generate AI.
41	Adopting eco-friendly practices and reducing the negative impacts is positive.

42	Have you considered promoting car share, cycle to work and work from home.
43	This principle sounds positive.
44	Not possible to cut down emissions. If a fire engine needs to go then it goes surely? Maybe replace some petrol cars with electric.
45	Massive capital expenditure. Change as and when.
46	Electric cars may cause increased fire risk on fire stations.
47	Cost to purchase electric cars and vans is expensive. Cost to replace electric car battery is so high, is this option viable long term.
48	Extra Costs.
49	Extra Costs.
50	Extra costs.
51	Extra Costs.
52	Extra Costs.
53	Extra Costs.
54	Electric cars/vans still not good enough for long trips (200+ miles). North Wales is a large area.
55	To some degree there is a lot of this out of your control.
56	Good ethos currently where sources come from. Low emission vehicles.
57	Completely agree.
58	Continue to raise awareness about climate change and wildfires.
59	This was one of my main thoughts on how fire and rescue could improve as carbon omissions are really poor from many services.
60	100%.
61	Not sure investment pays back every time.
62	Climate change and weather risks.
63	Chemical fires on industrial estates.
64	The carbon footprint is too high.
65	Your plan is basic, not realistic, nor does not reflect the ambition.
66	Cadets can educate youths about the environmental issues, and you can inspire future generations.
67	Good planning.
68	Impact of climate change and wildfire on wildlife and biosphere.
69	Protect future generations.
70	Do you work with farmers, vets & wildlife charities?
71	I support eco-friendly practices and reducing carbon emissions. I would encourage the Service to also consider environmental risks linked to rural incidents, such as pollution from farm fires or animal accidents. Protecting the environment should include proactive planning for these scenarios.
72	Adopting eco-friendly practices yes yes yes!
73	This is good to hear.
74	Focus more on keeping safe - then emissions.
75	This the way to go. Recognising a way to go for collaboration.

## Appendix G

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	OTHER AREAS IN RELATION TO THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
1	It looks like you've learnt nothing whatsoever from the cultural review, what's the point of these surveys if you just ignore the results you don't like.
2	We face real threats from wildfires - there doesn't seem to be any focus on that here.
3	I feel the current wildfire projections may not fully reflect the reality of climate change. Our logs (from NWC-REPS) show this year had a significant increase in wildfire incidents across North Wales, particularly due to prolonged dry weather, which the CRMP briefly mentions in the wildfire section. I would suggest revising the projections to align more closely with the trends we are already observing, similar to the approach taken with flooding predictions (which recognise the difficulty in accurate forecasting).
4	1A.
5	The public values our fire service- and expect it to be funded properly- you underestimate the goodwill in the community.
6	Fire service should have ambulances and paramedics for emergency only calls to take pressure off Welsh ambulance service. Other countries the fire service run ambulances.
7	In relation to the Isle of Anglesey, as a local authority we have concerns on the ability of the fire service to respond to emergencies on the island with the current <b>infrastructure</b> . <b>Recently, the island's residents have been hit hard with the sudden</b> closure of the Menai suspension bridge, which again has highlighted the lack of resilience for the crossing and the vulnerability that Anglesey faces during times of extreme weather with the neighbouring Britannia bridge also being closed at times due to high wind. The fact there is only crewed station on the island (at Holyhead) places a reliance for the South of the island to be dependant on the day crewed station at Bangor for assistance in the case of a fire. This places the citizens on the South side of Anglesey in a vulnerable position should issues arise with one of the 2 bridges as significant queues of traffic on both sides of the bridges. Additionally, when responding to the emergency cover review in 2023, it was highlighted that most emergency calls to the service included the island of Anglesey as part of the highest volume. Further highlighting the need for additional resources on the island. To ensure that Anglesey is adequately resourced, would the fire service consider upgrading the present station at Llangefni to a day crewed station. This would allow for the South of the island to be serviced by an Anglesey based crew and eliminate the over reliance on the station at Bangor.
8	Fire Service do a good job of being involved in local bonfires. Keeping people safe and putting out fire at the end.
9	Be more visible, better community engagement in Wrexham and other parts of north Wales. Do consider recruiting more non-operational staff to deal with prevention demands.

10	Safety in the home - plugs, extension leads, phone chargers etc.
11	I am unsure why you don't have more cadet groups to get more people interested in working in your fire service.
12	Lorry drivers on mobile phones in Holyhead and A55 (see page 5).
13	Lorry drivers on mobile phones in Holyhead and A55 (see page 5).
14	Yes - Employees should have arrangement to healthcare. Prospective recruits to increase possibility.
15	Since last meeting in this area great progress and clear principles developed. Good information needs to continue.
16	Connah's Quay, Penyfordd, Hawarden, Buckley, and Wrexham.
17	Connah's Quay, Penyfordd, Hawarden, Buckley, and Wrexham.
18	Avoid white paper as some people struggle reading white and black.
19	Expand education into colleges / universities.
20	Open day in local fire station to promote staying safe.
21	Meeting people personally - not just on social media. Warnings via Whatapp? Glossy paper - not easy to write on and is it recyclable?
22	Chimney fires - checks on cleaning. Mobile phone alerts - Whatsapp.
23	Meet the public. Not do it all on social media for pensioners. Non glossy paper please!
24	Wider groups that you fail to target. You should plan to develop capacity that align with population changes which see more tax payer money coming in.
25	How to contact you.
26	Risks to new arrivals.
27	I would say you have the right services, but your focus and priorities don't appear to align.
28	Climate change and flooding. Consider preventative work with more people and people of working age.
29	I can't think of any.
30	You have covered most things. I would adopt a phased roll out of electric until it becomes more energy and cost effective.
31	Organise health session in fire stations possibly.
32	Fights.
33	Fights.
34	Floods. Friends using chip pans.
35	Fireworks. Flooding - need to clean streams.
36	Educate young people in schools and colleges.
37	Brooke Road, Shotton. Sluice blocked and made flooding worse.
38	Alarm from Carelink goes off at night for no reason.
39	Black ice notice board sign in road as temporary sign to alert drivers. It's better to close some roads where the high risk of fall and review based on the history of accidents (or risk in the Winter period). (Prevention is better than cure).
40	Smoke alarms going off.
41	Work more closely with local charities.
42	More education shared through partnerships especially health charities.
43	Appliances on the run is key!! Simple as that.
44	Hate Crime and Community Tensions.

45	Educational talks.
46	People who drive on opposite side road.
47	Better service delivery in Bettisfield, Northwood, Hanmer, Bronington, Penley and other rural areas.
48	Prevention activity that goes beyond your basic safe checks and school programme.
49	Road safety talks, advice for farmers and getting out in the community.
50	Cardiac response and supporting paramedics during busy periods.
51	Safe and well talks for large groups.
52	No. Just focus better on your recruitment of on call retained employees. Do this <b>well and don't take on more work.</b>
53	Visit more community groups like ours.
54	Work closely with local charities.
55	Flood prevention measures.
56	Regular visits to centre so you can speak to people (those who prefer verbal updates / don't speak very good English).
57	Encourage companies to keep an accessible list of staff who are either attending or absent. This will help to ensure that everyone is together in a safe place from any emergencies.
58	Education with high school students because they are very likely to partake in negative and fire risk activity.
59	Produce materials that are more inclusive.
60	Yes, large animal rescue.
61	Yes, reinstate large animal rescue and support all humans and animals alike <b>animals have died in horrendous circumstances because we can't get help.</b>
62	Large animal rescue - please reconsider the problems faced by your rural communities in North Wales with the decision not to do this.
63	As previously stated, please reinstate the large animal rescue service.
64	Students living independently for the first time.
65	Can't think of any.
66	Fire safety provision aimed at students and people entering the world of work.
67	Water safety sessions. We have used RNLI to provide info, but opportunity for local fire service staff to do this.
68	Not really sure exactly what you do, so maybe promote your services more effectively.
69	Develop partnerships with natural resource Wales and wildlife Trust Cymru.
70	Co response like the United States.
71	Don't you cover geographical areas.
72	Large animals rescue - farm animals horses etc.
73	Animal rescues, before owners & by standers try to help & end up needing rescuing or don't have equipment.

74	The most pressing issue is the lack of large animal rescue provision since 2015. This has had a real impact on rural communities and public safety. I urge the Service to recognise this as a risk in the plan and explore options to reinstate or partner for this capability. More broadly, I encourage the Service to ensure rural risks are given equal weight alongside urban fire risks, so that all communities feel supported.
75	Offering internships for degree students to focus on impact on wildfires on the wildlife and land.
76	Make sure that the Service controls, especially in areas of tourism, where there has been a large increase.

## Appendix H

Please note that repeated comments where shown, are due to multiple responses recorded on the same consultation form.

Ref	EDI Comments
1	Stop pushing the LGBT agenda.
2	The Service is too engaged in EDI, it should be the best person fit for role regardless to EDI. It's going too much towards hitting EDI targets instead of just taking people in roles for their skill sets.
3	You should give equality to all your personnel - not show favouritism to anyone due to gender, orientation or language.
4	Risks to different equality groups by staying the same. Status quo will make service go backwards.
5	You can do more with young people my age.
6	Prevention risk based on age and disability makes sense.
7	Prevention risk based on age and disability makes sense.
8	In this day and age, men do not like women working in a workplace known for men. It is currently getting worse as they feel there will be little to no consequences. There needs to be more awareness of this because women will not feel safe at all! This may be due to feeling threatened that we do not need males to live.
9	Better access for disabled and people who are ill.
10	Student age population, mostly 19 to 25 years old.
11	People that live near to rivers and coastal areas to mitigate the flooding risk.
12	Risks to students, especially those living from home for the first time and those in a different country.
13	Health and disability.
14	Homeless people and people in crisis.
15	People from overseas studying here.
16	People living in rural areas.
17	Disabled people and those with poor health.
18	Whole towns and villages without on call retained cover makes uneven access to fire engines. Postcode lottery.
19	Job roles similar deal with stereotypical toxic masculinity.
20	People should need to learn conversational Welsh due to the Welsh only speaking demographics.
21	I think that even people who are disabled in a way which limits mobility and therefore ability to be a firefighter, should still be able to provide assistance in the field.
22	Don't care who is in the service as long as they are capable of doing the job.
23	Student populations further education and higher school.
24	Lack of provision means many youths don't think about firefighting and safety prevention.
25	Disability, age and human rights.
26	Making best use of public funds.
27	We have looked at risks, people places and communities.
28	There are lots of empty homes in the area.
29	It is important to be accountable.

## Appendix I

Ref	COMMENTS RECEIVED OUTSIDE CONSULTATION (Facebook, email etc.)
1	<p>“Cheeky ** these lot. They come round about someone's fire alarm going off in another flat, then start demanding entry into other people's flats, even though they already know where the fire is... Next time... They can **** off... I'm not letting these lot in my place again when it's not me having fires.</p> <p>“North Wales Housing needs to sort it's smackheads out... It's them that causes fires all the time, not me. Never had one. So why I got to let these lot into my **** flat... Won't happen again I tell you.... Not letting you in next time”</p>
2	“Da iawn [REDACTED] 🙌🙌🙌”



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Community Risk Management Implementation Plan

(CRMIP) Consultation 2026-27

Equality Impact Analysis Report



**ATAL AMDDIFFYN YMATEB  
PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING**

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## Introduction

This equality Impact analysis report has been developed alongside the service's consultation report concerning its Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMIP) 2026-2027 following the consultation period between 23rd October 2024 and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025. Specific engagement with different equality interest groups during the consultation period has enabled people across all protected characteristics to provide feedback regarding the proposed principles, 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 (particularly with regards to equality of access and opportunity) that emerged from the feedback during the CRMIP 2026-27 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 has 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 and implementation 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 favourably 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 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

Approximately 80 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/older people, disabled people 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 language and communication skills, those who are digitally excluded and people that 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 NWFRA 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 2383 square miles (or 6,172 square kilometres). The region is made up of six counties which include Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Ynys Mon, 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>. For females aged 15 to 19 years, the 2021, particularly in the younger and older age groups<sup>2</sup>. For females aged 15 to 19

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<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,-)

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.

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<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.

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<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.

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<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 and/or non-binary 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.

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<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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

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<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.

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<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 Traveller 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>.

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<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>.

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<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 South West, 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)

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>.

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<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)

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).

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[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)

<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.

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 2026-27 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.

397 people responded to the consultation. 386 people responded in English, and 11 people responded in Welsh. Some of the respondents provided feedback on behalf of a much wider group of people (i.e. their 'community' group or charity). Amongst the 23 focus groups that were organised, over 1000 people (directly or indirectly) were engaged and represented in the feedback that was provided.

The mixed method approach used for the CRMIP consultation enabled the Service to show due regard across different equality interest groups. This was reflected in the wide range of feedback from people across all age groups, all geographical areas, (including rural and urban), disabled people, LGBTQ+ people and there was an equal gender balance. Also, feedback emerged from people across all ethnic backgrounds and amongst people that affiliate with different religions and beliefs.

North Wales has some of the most deprived areas and communities in Wales, so specific charities were identified to organise focus groups and promotion of the consultation. In addition to this specific targeting, engagement with people from different socio-economic backgrounds did occur naturally due to the range of community partners and charities we worked with to organise focus groups and those that promoted consultation amongst their communities and networks. The importance of specific engagement with people from lower socio-economic backgrounds helps to assess that our future plans and service delivery is both suitable and accessible, thus ensuring this group of people are placed any disadvantage.

## 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 specific actions are assigned to relevant departments as a way of addressing many of the 'mitigation' summaries provided.

### People Principle

Recruitment Process and Communication: Various community members felt the recruitment process was slow and some community members felt the process was unclear, with some vacancies not widely advertised. There were also suggestions that advertising could be improved, such as improving the website and attending more community groups and student fresher fairs.

Mitigation: Recruitment processes are always being monitored, evaluated and improved for effectiveness. With regards to community engagement, the Service are proactive in engaging with various equality interest groups all year around. Although, it can be acknowledged that better and wider engagement is required, especially in some specific geographical areas and amongst people from specific protected characteristics, some of which are seldom heard.

Recruitment and Workforce Diversity: Many responses debated the emphasis on diversity versus prioritising the physical and mental health requirements needed for the role of a firefighter. Suggestions included to recruit more women and those from diverse backgrounds and people with life experience. However, others argued that ability should come first.

Mitigation: To ensure community members are clear about the benefits of recruiting and developing a diverse workforce, specific content could be published on the website and other communications. Clearly, some community members provided feedback which lacked any clarity to the reasons and benefits of having a diverse workforce.

Staff Development and Retention: Community members placed a strong emphasis on career progression, training and retention of staff to cut costs, thus recruiting new staff is expensive. There was a common theme regarding the Service needing to continue to improve its culture and improving empathy for people experiencing adverse mental health conditions.

Mitigation: In 2025, the Service devised various interventions to improve its workplace culture including new policies, staff training and culture champions programme to name a few. Two culture champions were appointed, and they are overseeing the Service's cultural action plan which addressed the key actions from the independent culture review.

The Service enable its people to access training relating to mental health awareness and mental health first aid, but it was clear many community members were unaware of this. Further positive news stories could be promoted with the public to raise awareness of all the good work that is happening.

## Prevention Principle

Visibility and Community Engagement: There was huge support for Safe and Well checks (SAWC), although some equality groups, particularly older people, felt the service could be more effective at promoting this service. However, community members felt the Service's broader prevention work is not visible enough in communities, with Wrexham and rural areas mentioned. Community members felt the Service should use social media more effectively to spread fire safety messages. Comments also highlight the lack of awareness of the risks mentioned in the Community risk Management Plan 2024-29.

Mitigation: The Service's prevention has a robust community engagement plan (that aligns with a campaigns calendar) that enables us to visit and promote a range of services including SAWC's. However, the Service do acknowledge that the range and diversity of the group we visit could be broader, both in terms of geography and community groups that sometimes align with one or more protected characteristic(s).

**'At Risk' Groups:** Community members felt the Service should expand the Service's definition of 'At risk' groups, also described as 'vulnerable' to include homelessness, drug users, LGBTQ+ people, young people and students, and for people experiencing poverty and hardship.

Mitigation: Although the Service monitor emergency trends on daily basis, a monthly review of incident types enables the Service to plan and adapt its prevention interventions and communications. The feedback received has been very informative and this information helps ensure the Service are proactive in prevention emergencies in North Wales.

Partnership Working: Respondents felt the prevention principle is too narrow and lacks detail. The Service needs to work more closely with charities, health providers, and community groups to address risks.

Mitigation: The Service is proud that it has developed an excellent rapport with **identified 'at risk' groups of people**. Although we do acknowledge that there is an opportunity to broaden the range of partners we work with and establish relationships with more seldom heard communities to ensure our key safety messages are reaching those most at risk.

New and Emerging Technologies: Many respondents were concerned about e-bikes, e-scooters, use of electric items and cooking safely and there was concerns raised amongst children and young adults.

Mitigation: Our Service is proactive in promoting various safety campaigns that cover all the fire risks highlighted by the public during the consultation. This approach is overlaid by a robust prevention campaigns calendar that includes specific fire risks campaigns, but also specific groups of people that ensure young people, older people, people with religious affiliations, disabled people plus other relevant groups are targeted with key safety information, **thus widening access to identified 'at risk' groups**.

## Protection Principle

Business Fire Safety and Support: There was strong support for protecting businesses and livelihoods by fire safety visits. However, community members felt that more checks should be completed on hotels, holiday lets, takeaways and pubs.

Mitigation: Through a risk-based inspection programme and referrals, the service prioritises specific businesses based on criteria, thus holding landlords and business owners to account for potential and actual risks to public safety. All the business types mentioned by community members during the consultation are featured heavily within our inspection programme.

Rural and Industrial Risks: Seasonal risks highlighted by the community, such as holiday homes and summer houses. Industrial risks included the mention of businesses at Wrexham Industrial Estate and large companies like Cadburys and Kronospan in Chirk.

Mitigation: Through a risk-based inspection programme and referrals, the service prioritises specific businesses based on criteria. Also, incident data and referrals are used to identify trends that shape priorities.

## Response Principle

Availability, Response Times and Coverage: Concerns in general regarding the adequacy of fire engines, fire stations and staffing levels across the Service area. Community members stated repeated requests not to close fire stations. There was some specific reference to access to fire cover in rural parts of Wrexham.

Mitigation: The Service has no intention too close any fire stations. The Service has increased the number of wholetime fire stations (from 8 to 10) with wholetime following the introduction of a pilot project at Dolgellau and Porthmadog which now operates a day crewed system, thus improving fire cover across different rural areas in South Gwynedd. To ease any concerns of people living in rural parts of Wrexham, Wrexham fire station and the surrounding areas of Chirk and Johnstown cover this area effectively. In addition, cross-border arrangements with Shropshire FRS ensure effective fire cover is provided to specific rural areas located to the southeast of Wrexham.

Recruitment Challenges: Several community members felt there was a lack of advertising for vacant posts, too many recruitment process issues, retention and the need for more reliable staff.

Mitigation: The Service has experienced ongoing challenges regarding the recruitment of people into the role of an on-call-retained firefighter and some corporate service roles. The Service have a dedicated recruitment and availability team and their sole focus is to address the challenges associated to on-call recruitment and availability, plus the Human Resources team conduct ongoing evaluation of all recruitment activities.

## Environmental Principle

Eco-Friendly Practices: Community members strongly supported the Service to environmental principle, with specific reference to switching from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric or HVO vehicles (where practically possible). There was strong support for our staff adopting recycling practices and reducing carbon footprint.

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](#).

Are there any other equality issues that we could be thinking about?

During the consultation, a specific question in the questionnaire sets out to identify any additional information relating to equality and access issues. Three key themes emerged during the consultation.

**Language Accessibility:** Community members stated the importance of our Service providing conversational Welsh language skills and English support as part of the recruitment process. Improve language awareness and cultural differences within local communities.

**Mitigation:** Our Service provides a comprehensive training and development programme to ensure every member of staff can develop the relevant Welsh Language skills for their role. Our Service employ a dedicated Welsh Language Officer to support the development of Welsh Language. In addition, the Service have Welsh Language champions that are strategically positioned across North Wales to support and mentor learners and people wishing to advance their **existing language skills**. All apprentices that don't hold English pass grades are supported to access and complete their English alongside the qualification they are working towards as part of the role map.


**Barriers for Specific Groups:** Several community members highlighted the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion with regards to recruitment practices and by ignoring individual differences will create barriers to recruiting.

**Mitigation:** As a Disability Confident Employer, our Service adopts inclusive recruitment practices to ensure individual needs are met during all stages of the recruitment process. Our Service are proactive to identify individual needs throughout the recruitment process, and this helps to identify and implement individual requests and reasonable adjustments.

**Equality Focus:** In contrast to the above theme, several community members felt the Service place too much emphasis on equality, diversity, and inclusion recruitment targets. From this small group of community members, they placed lots of emphasis on the Service needing to recruit the best person for the role, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or language skills.

**Mitigation:** Our Service does not have recruitment targets, although it does acknowledge that the diversity of its existing workforce fails short of being reflective of the diverse community it serves. Therefore, every effort is made to ensure people from specific protected characteristics are not disadvantaged, excluded or discriminated against during any stage of the recruitment process. Our Service uses positive action as a valid and legal way to attract people that are underrepresented in the workforce, but a nationally agreed set of criteria is used to assess the suitability of candidates, thus ensuring no favoritism exists when recruiting people regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, language skills or other protected characteristic(s).

If you require this report in an alternative format,  
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telephone: 01745 535250  
or email us: [enquiries@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:enquiries@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	
Date	20 April 2026	
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Officer, Finance and Resources	
Subject	Firefighters Pension Schemes Discretionary Policy Statement	

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To inform Members of the requirement for the Scheme Manager, North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) to produce and keep under review a Firefighters Pension Discretionary Policy Statement.
- 2 To remind Members of the previous approval of the resolutions within the Firefighters Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy Statement including the proposal that, on behalf of the scheme manager, decisions will be delegated on a day-to-day basis to officers of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).
- 3 Whilst the Service took forward a Discretions Policy Statement for approval in July 2025, in order to correctly reflect the minor changes to the reinstatement of survivor benefits, under Rule C9 - Reinstatement of **Widow's pension** the Service is now seeking approval for the below addition to be included in this previously approved policy.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4 Members will recall that the **Firefighters'** Pension Scheme Regulations provide the Authority with the responsibility to make decisions on certain discretionary elements of the scheme. The Authority is required to formulate and publish a discretionary policy which sets out how the Authority will discharge this responsibility. T
- 5 The discretionary policy was previously approved in July 2025 and in accordance with good practice has now been reviewed and a minor amendment introduced.

## CONSIDERATION BY THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD

- 6 Since the approval of the Firefighters Pension Scheme Discretionary Policy Statement, in July 2025, further work has been undertaken and there is a need to introduce a minor amendment to correctly reflect **Rule C9" Reinstatement of Widow's pension"**. This discretion was considered by the Local Pension Board on 2 April 2026 and was unanimously approved.

- 7 Under the 1992 Scheme a person entitled to a widow's pension who marries, remarries, forms a civil partnership or a subsequent civil partnership is not entitled to receive any payment on account of the pension in respect of any subsequent period; but if the marriage or civil partnership is dissolved or the other party to it dies, the Authority may pay the whole or any part of the pension for such period after the dissolution or death as they deem reasonable.
- 8 Whilst the likelihood of this request being made is minimal, a decision on whether or not to apply this discretion does need to be included in the current policy statement that is being relied upon.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9 It is recommended that Members:
- i) approve the minor changes being introduced for the reinstatement of survivor benefits, under Rule C9.

## BACKGROUND

- 10 There are currently four pension schemes in place for firefighters, the 1992 scheme (FPS), the 2007 scheme (NFPS), the 2007 RDS modified pension scheme (MPS) and the 2015 scheme. This policy sets out the discretions applicable to the schemes on which the Authority in its capacity of Scheme Manager is required to determine its desired approach.

## INFORMATION

- 11 The **firefighters'** pension scheme regulations require every scheme manager to:
- (i) issue a written policy statement on how it will exercise the various discretions provided by the pension schemes;
  - (ii) keep it under review; and
  - (iii) revise it as necessary.
- 12 The amendment under Rule C9 – **Reinstatement of Widow's pension** and the recommended approach is attached at Appendix A.

## IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	The Discretionary Policy provides clarity for decision making on certain pension issues <b>contributing to securing the Authority's financial sustainability.</b>
Budget	Certain decisions can impact the budget in terms of increased employer superannuation payments and the impact on future actuarial valuations.
Legal	The regulations governing the administration of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes provide for a number of discretionary powers on the part of the Fire Authority.
Staffing	Potential impact on staffing levels if certain <b>discretions impact a member's retirement</b> decision making process. Potential impact on the acceptance of temporary promotions offered.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	None
Risks	Non-compliance with legislation

## Appendix A

Firefighters Pension Schemes Discretionary Policy Statement amendment – **Rule C9 “Reinstatement of Widow’s pension”**

### **The Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992**

<b>Regulation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>NW Decision</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Rule C9 - Reinstatement of Widow’s pension	Under the 1992 Scheme a person entitled to a widow's pension who marries, remarries, forms a civil partnership or a subsequent civil partnership is not entitled to receive any payment on account of the pension in respect of any subsequent period; but if the marriage or civil partnership is dissolved or the other party to it dies, the Fire and Rescue Authority may pay the whole or any part of the pension for such period after the dissolution or death as they deem reasonable.	It is unlikely that the Authority will reinstate an ex-spouse’s pension at the end of a new remarriage or civil partnership or cohabitation; however, each case will be considered on an individual basis by the Authority, should an application from a previous beneficiary be made.	This discretion is in line with the amendments made in 2017 and retrospectively apply back to April 2015.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur, Assistant Chief Fire Officer Finance and Resources
Subject	Firefighters Pension Schemes Local Pension Board – Annual Report 2025/26 and Terms of Reference



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) the Local Pension Board annual report detailing the work undertaken during the 2025/25 financial year. The annual report is attached at [appendix 1](#).
- 2 To present to the Authority the Terms of Reference for the Local Pension Board for 2026/27.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3 The annual report of the Local Pension Board details the work undertaken by the Board during 2025/26 and provides a work programme for 2026/2027.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 4 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) approve the Local Pension Board 2025/26 Annual Report; and
  - ii) approve the Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board for 2026/27.

#### OBSERVATIONS BY THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD

- 5 The annual report for 2025/26 and the Terms of Reference for 2026/27 were considered and endorsed by the Local Pension Board at its meeting of the 2 April 2026.

#### BACKGROUND

- 6 This document sets out the work undertaken by the Local Pension Board of the Authority. The Authority is the Scheme Manager as defined under Section 4 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. The Board is established in accordance with Section 5 of that Act.

- 7 The governance requirements around pensions were introduced as a result of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (the Act). The Act provides for clearer governance arrangements with specific defined roles, the publication of more information on a consistent basis, and administration practices in line with those in the private sector.
- 8 **The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015** relating to the creation and ongoing operation of local pensions came into force on 1 April 2015. These regulations require the Authority to establish a Local Pension Board in respect of **the Firefighter's Pension Scheme by 1 April 2015.**
- 9 The role and remit of the Board is to assist the Authority in its capacity as **Scheme Manager by making sure it is administering the Firefighters' Pension Scheme** effectively and efficiently and is complying with relevant laws and regulations. To aid transparency, the Scheme Manager is required to publish the annual report of its Local Pension Board.
- 10 The function and scope of the Local Pension Board is set out within its Terms of Reference and are subject to annual review.
- 11 As set in the terms of reference for the Board, the annual report 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 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.

## INFORMATION

- 12 The Local Pension Board Annual Report 2025/26 is set out in [Appendix 1](#).
- 13 The Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board for 2026/27 are set out in Appendix 2.

## IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Considered not relevant
Budget	Cost of the Local Pension Board is funded from <b>existing Members' Services budget</b>
Legal	The new governance requirements around pensions were introduced as a result of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013. FPS (Amendment) Governance regulations 2015.
Staffing	Considered not relevant
Equalities/Human Rights/ 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.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service  
**Firefighters' Pension Scheme**

Local Pension Board  
Annual Report  
2025/26

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## 1.0 Introduction

This is the Annual Report of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board (the Board), covering the period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This report includes commentary on the following:

- Details of any conflict of interest that have arisen in respect of Board members;
- Details of training received and identified training needs for Board members;
- A summary of the work undertaken by the Board during 2025/26;
- Areas of concern or risk reported to or raised by the Board; and
- The forward work programme for 2026/27.

## 2.0 Roles and Functions

In accordance with Section 5 and Section 30 (1) of the Public Services Pensions Act 2013 and Regulation 4A of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015, the Board was established in April 2015. The role and remit of the Board is to assist the Scheme Manager (North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, "the Authority") to secure compliance with:

- The relevant laws and regulations;
- Any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme;
- The requirements imposed by the Regulator in relation to the Scheme; and
- To ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

The Board is expected to complement and enhance the Authority's existing arrangements for managing the firefighter pension schemes. It does not replace the existing arrangements and it is not a decision-making body. Rather, it is designed to act as a critical friend to the Authority and its officers when they act in the capacity of scheme manager.

## 3.0 Membership and meetings of the Board

The Board membership comprised of ten members made up as follows:

- Five employer representatives comprising of three members of the Authority, the Clerk to the Authority (or nominated deputy) and Treasurer of the Authority.
- Five employee representatives – four of whom are from each representative body officially associated with the Authority and one representing the retained duty system.

A summary of the membership for 2025/26 is provided below:

Name	Role	Representing	Dates (aligned to meeting dates for part year)
Bryan Apsley	FRA Member	Employer	Full year
Dafydd Edwards (Chair)	Authority Treasurer	Employer	Full year
Gareth Owens	Monitoring Officer	Employer	Full year
John Brynmor Hughes	FRA Member	Employer	Full year
Gwynfor Owen	FRA Member	Employer	Full year
Dawn Docx	Fire Leaders' Association	Employee	17/07/2025-present
Stuart Millington	Fire Leaders' Association	Employee	30/01/2025-15/05/2025
Paul Kay	Fire Officers' Association	Employee	Full year
Geraint Evans	RDS Representative	Employee	Full year
Terry Ledden	Fire Brigades Union	Employee	Full year
Rebekah Uden	Fire Brigades Union	Employee	Full year

In addition to Local Pension Board members, the following key officers support the Board and attend Board meetings:

- Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Finance and Resources;
- Service Pensions Manager; and
- Technical Lead (joint arrangement with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service).

## Chair of the Board

The Chairperson of the Board is rotated every two years between a member representing employers and those representing scheme members.

Dafydd Edwards was elected as Chair for the period 2025/26, representing the employer. **The Chair is also nominated to sit on the National Firefighters' Pension Scheme Advisory Board for Wales.**

The Board was scheduled to meet on four occasions during the 2025/26 financial year, and meetings were held on the following dates:

- 15 May 2025
- 17 July 2025
- 2 October 2025
- 21 January 2025

## 4.0 Conflicts of Interest Policy

The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (the Act) requires that a member of a pension board does not have a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as a financial or other interest which is likely to prejudice a person's exercise of functions as a member of a pension board. The Act is clear that actual membership of one of the Firefighter Pension Schemes is not in itself a conflict of interest, so would not preclude a scheme member from serving on the Board.

The Board has a policy for the management of potential conflicts to ensure that they do not become actual conflicts and all members of the Board are familiar with the policy. In addition, conflicts of interest is a standing item on all Board agendas and any interests noted by Members are recorded so that appropriate action can be taken to manage the conflict.

There have been no declarations made by any Member, advisor or attendee during the relevant period.

A copy of the Conflict of Interest policy can be found here:

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

## 5.0 Knowledge and Understanding

It is a statutory requirement of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 that members of the Local Pension Board should have the capacity to become conversant with, and develop a knowledge of, detailed pension related issues to effectively carry out their duties.

Everyone appointed to the Board must have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions and such other matters as may be prescribed in other legislation.

A Board member should have an understanding of what is relevant to their role in the following areas:

- The Firefighter Pension Scheme regulations;
- Other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the schemes;
- Requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator; including
- The standards and expectations set out in any relevant code of practice issued by the Pensions Regulator.

Upon appointment, Members are required to complete the online training **modules available on the Pensions Regulator's website**. In addition, the Authority provides both induction training to new Board members and ongoing training sessions during Board meetings for all Members to assist them in undertaking their role.

The Scheme Manager keeps appropriate records of the learning activities provided to individual Members and the Board as a whole. Members of the Board are encouraged to identify their own training needs in order that the training provided remains relevant and appropriate. Training is provided **through the pensions regulator's public sector toolkit, through external events** such as those provided by the LGA and through in-house training.

## 6.0 Work Programme 2025/26

The Board met on four occasions during the financial year and the scope its work was defined by the Terms of Reference. The Board considers its Terms of Reference on an annual basis and makes recommendations for any changes to be considered by the Fire and Rescue Authority. The Terms of Reference were revised for the 2025/26 to reduce the number of members required to achieve a quorum to three (previously six). In addition, each meeting should have a minimum of one employer and one employee representative.

The Terms of Reference can be found via the following link:

[Local Pension Board - Fire and Rescue Authority - North Wales Fire And Rescue Service \(gov.wales\)](#)

During the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 the following specific matters were considered by the Board:

- Review and approval of the Terms of Reference;
- Consideration of the national legal challenge relating to the transitional pension scheme arrangements (McCloud Judgment);
- Consideration of the legal matter relating to the pension arrangements **for on call firefighters (O'Brien Judgment)**;
- Updates in relation to the 2020 GAD valuation including financial support from the Welsh Government;
- Review and submission of the proposal for employee contribution rate changes following the 2020 GAD valuation;
- Review of the updated Discretionary Policy covering the schemes;
- Updates from the Scheme Advisory Board for Wales;
- Knowledge and training update;
- Updates on concerns raised through the internal dispute resolution procedure; and
- An update on the risks associated with the scheme and revision to the risk register.
- Matters of significance escalated to the Scheme Manager include the administration of legal challenges.

Each agenda also includes the following standing items:

- Declaration of Interest;
- Minutes of last meeting;
- **Firefighters' Pension Schemes Update Report** which focuses on membership and internal complaints and cases referred to the Pensions Ombudsman;
- Administrators Update Report (Dyfed Pension Fund) confirming compliance with Welsh Government circulars and data quality;
- An update on legal matters affecting the scheme;
- Scheme Advisory Board Update;
- Training for members of the LPB;
- Risk Register; and
- Matters for escalation to full FRA.

Since the Local Firefighter Pension Board was set up in 2015, the work of the Board has been shaped by the Board members and by officers supporting the Board. Some regular reports have been developed and these are:

- **The Firefighters' Pension Schemes Update Report** which provides the Board with the latest information on areas of significant pension work, and includes both local and national issues. As well as enhancing the knowledge and understanding of Board members, this regular report serves to prompt discussion at the Board about the impact of issues on pension Scheme members and about how workloads are being managed. This helps to achieve the Board's purpose of securing effective governance and administration;
- The Dyfed Pension Fund Update Report which is produced by the administrators and provides assurance that the scheme is being properly administered. As well as providing regulatory updates, the report focuses on specific workload issues, such as, the Guaranteed Minimum Pension reconciliation, data quality, appeals, breaches and activity levels on the 'My Pensions Online' tool; and
- Specific areas of the Risk Register which are reviewed regularly by the Scheme Manager and is presented to the Board at each meeting, with any amendments highlighted. This allows the Board to keep track of the key risks and the control measures designed to manage those risks.

More detail is available in the agendas and minutes of the above Board meetings which can be accessed via following link: [Local Pension Board](#)

## 7.0 Work Programme 2026/27

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme Board maintains a work programme which is considered at every meeting. Now that the Board has completed a number of training activities, it will begin to select topics for in-depth analysis with a view to making recommendations to the Authority as and when necessary. The Work Programme for 2026/27 is as set out below:

### Local Pension Board Forward Work Plan 2026/27

Agenda item	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3	Meeting 4
Review of membership and confirmation of meeting dates	X			
Service update report	X	X	X	X
<b>Administrator's update report</b>	X	X	X	X
Legal challenges and regulatory matters	X	X	X	X
Scheme Advisory Board Wales	X	X	X	X
Risk Register	X	X	X	X
Member Induction	This is ongoing as new members are appointed to the LPB			
Training needs analysis	X			
Training update	X	X	X	X
The Pensions Regulator – Code of Practice		X	X	X
Annual Report and Terms of Reference	X			
Discretionary Policy update	X			
Review of Service Level Agreement with Dyfed Pension Fund	X			
Items of significance to be escalated to Fire and Rescue Authority	X	X	X	X

## 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 General Code of Practice 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 and the National Scheme Advisory Board in its 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:

Constituency	Definition/Constraints
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	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Gareth Owens, Clerk and Dafydd Edwards, Treasurer
Contact Officer	Gareth Owens, Clerk (01745 535286)
Subject	Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru Annual Remuneration Report 2026/27



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To inform Members about the proposed rates of member remuneration for the financial year 2026/27.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The function of setting councillors' allowances has been transferred from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC). The DBCC's latest report on members remuneration is attached and this report contains information on those changes that affect members of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3 Members are asked to:
  - i) note the DBCC's **determinations in relation to members' allowances** and remuneration with effect from 1 April 2026; and
  - ii) give delegated authority to the Clerk to update the schedule of **member remuneration within the Authority's constitution and to** make any necessary amendments to the 2026/27 schedule from time to time during the municipal year, in order to reflect any changes in membership of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority), or as a result of any supplementary reports issued by the DBCC;

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

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

## BACKGROUND

- 5 The function of deciding what level of payment should be made to members and co-opted members of local authorities, national park authorities and Welsh FRAs has been transferred to the DBCC. In line with the practice of its predecessor, the DBCC prepared a draft report for consultation and has now issued its final report for the coming year.

## INFORMATION

- 6 The DBCC Panel (the Panel) uses averaged earning across Wales as the basis for its calculations in relation to elected councillors on principal councils.

“The Panel has determined that for the financial year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 it is right to retain the link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. The basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of all Wales 2022 ASHE (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings) for 2022 to 2023, the latest figure available at drafting.”

- 7 The Panel then links payment for FRA members to the payment to principal councillors.

“In line with the Panel’s decision to increase the basic salary of elected members of principal councils, the remuneration level for ordinary members of both NPAs and FRAs is also increased in line with ASHE.

The remuneration for Chairs will remain linked to a principal council Band 3 senior salary. Their role element will therefore increase accordingly. Deputy chairs, Committee chairs and other paid senior posts will remain linked to a Band 5. ...”

- 8 For FRAs the Panel’s determinations are as follows:

	2025/26 Salary from 1 April 2025	2026/27 Salary from 1 April 2026	Increase
Basic salary for FRA ordinary member	£2,788	£2,968	6.46%
Senior salary for the Chair of an FRA	£12,674	£13,490	6.44%
Senior salary for the Deputy Chair of an FRA and the Chair of Audit Committee*	£6,743	£7,177	6.44%

9 In addition to the above:

- The Panel has determined to include a provision for FRAs to apply for specific or additional senior salaries that do not fall within the current remuneration framework;
- Members must not receive more than one FRA senior salary;
- An FRA senior salary is paid inclusive of the FRA basic salary and must reflect significant and sustained responsibility; and
- Members of a principal council in receipt of a band 1 or band 2 senior salary (paid for Cabinet/Executive positions) cannot receive a salary from any FRA to which they have been nominated. Where this situation applies, it is the responsibility of the individual member to comply.

10 The Chair of the Authority is also the Chair of the Executive Panel and can only claim one salary. The Chair of the Audit Committee will be paid under the category “Committee Chair or other senior post”.

#### Independent Members

11 The fee paid to independent members of the Standards Committee has remained the same again. The Panel did receive representation that the rate had not increased for five years and so should be increased. However, the Panel noted:

“12. The IRPW last updated the remuneration of co-opted members of principal councils, national park authorities (NPA) and fire and rescue authorities (FRA) in its 2022 annual report<sup>2</sup> and included lay members of corporate joint committees (CJC) in its 2024 supplementary report<sup>3</sup>. The rates were linked to the public appointment rates paid by Welsh Government, which have not been updated in some years.

13. Welsh Government have begun a review of these rates, and the Commission will consider the outcome of that review before making any determination in respect of co-opted and lay members of relevant authorities. “

- 12 The daily fee is capped at a maximum of four full days per year on the following rates:

	2025/26 daily rate from 1 April 2025	2026/27 daily rate from 1 April 2026
Standards Committee Chair	£268 daily fee (£134 for half day)	£268 daily fee (£134 for half day)
Independent Member	£210 daily fee (£105 for half day)	£210 daily fee (£105 for half day)

#### Travel, Subsistence and Care Allowance

- 13 There have been no changes to travel, subsistence and care allowances which are in line with Welsh Government rates. Members are reminded that it was agreed at the Authority meeting in June 2018 that subsistence can be claimed when members are away from home for five hours or more, this is in line with the HMRC rules.

- Subsistence

£28 per day                      Day allowance for meals, including breakfast, where not provided in the overnight charge. Must be away for five hours or more to claim subsistence.

- Accommodation

£200 per night                  London  
£95 per night                    Elsewhere  
£30 per night                    Staying with friends and/or family

- Mileage rate remains at 45p per mile.

- 14 Members are also reminded that to support current members and to encourage diversity, and in line with the DBCC's recommendations, the Authority reimburses the cost of care for dependents on production of receipts as follows:

- For registered care – actual costs
- For unregistered care - up to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage.

- 15 The Authority must also publish each the year the total payments made to each member. This schedule is published at the July meeting.

## IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Considered not relevant
Budget for 2025/26	These increases have been included in the budget for 2025/26.
Legal	<p>Part 8 and schedules 2 and 3 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 set out the arrangements for the payments of Members of relevant authorities and the functions and responsibilities of the DBCC.</p> <p>In accordance with DBCC Regulations the Authority must produce and maintain an annual Schedule of Member Remuneration which sets out details of the specific payments that it intends to make to Members and Co-opted Members in accordance with the levels of remuneration and allowances determined by the DBCC in its final Annual or Supplementary Reports. Any amendments to the Schedule made during the municipal year must be conveyed to the DBCC as soon as practicable after the amendments are made.</p>
Staffing	Considered not relevant
Equalities/Human Rights/ 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	Considered not relevant



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Democracy  
and Boundary  
Commission Cymru

# Annual Remuneration Report

2026-27

[dbcc.gov.wales](http://dbcc.gov.wales)  
[remuneration@dbcc.gov.wales](mailto:remuneration@dbcc.gov.wales)

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The Commission welcomes correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh or English.  
Mae'r ddogfen ar hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg.  
This document has been translated into Welsh by Calan.

Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru  
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# Foreword

We are pleased to present the Annual Remuneration Report for 2026–27 from the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru. This report outlines the determinations regarding pay, expenses, and benefits for members of principal councils, community and town councils, fire and rescue authorities, and national park authorities, effective from 1 April 2026. Recognising the service of elected representatives is vital, as this work supports the broader democratic framework in Wales.

Further details about the Commission can be found on our website [Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru | DBCC](#).

This is our first report since assuming responsibility for this area, previously managed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. We extend our thanks to the Panel for their comprehensive framework and to the Welsh Government for their assistance during the transition.

The determinations for 2026–27 are set out in this report. We have developed these within the framework established by the Panel. Our attention now turns to preparing the next report, which will involve a thorough review of both the remuneration framework and the mechanisms used for annual adjustments, as required by the Welsh Government.

In accordance with the [Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013](#), we are required to consider appropriate resettlement payments for councillors who lose their seats in elections and to advise the Welsh Government accordingly.

We will also evaluate the current remuneration structure for senior roles within principal councils and corporate joint committees to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

Additionally, we will review the index used for annual remuneration adjustments and reassess the workload of elected members to ensure fair compensation.

Throughout this process, we will engage with the Welsh Local Government Association and other stakeholders to inform our decisions.

Finally, I would like to thank the Commission's secretariat for their valuable support in developing this report.

**Karen Jones**

**Chair**

## Chapter 1. Introduction

1. The Commission has taken on the functions of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW). We are mindful of the past work of the IRPW and thank them for their legacy report<sup>1</sup>.
2. We plan to make substantive changes to the remuneration framework only once in each electoral cycle. The report prior to each local government election will give consideration to major changes to the framework, with those in between focusing on annual uprating. This means that this draft report for 2026-27 considers uprating amounts where appropriate but leaves the framework unchanged. The next report, for 2027-28, which we are required to publish by the end of February 2027, will update the framework for those members who will be elected at the May 2027 local elections.
3. The Welsh Government's remit letter for 2025-26 outlines several key objectives for the Commission regarding remuneration:
  - To assess the potential need for resettlement payments and support officials with briefing materials for any related regulatory considerations.
  - To revisit the Framework and Methodology for Remuneration of Senior Roles across Principal Councils and Corporate Joint Committees.
  - To examine the current benchmark linked to the Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings, alongside an evaluation of members' workloads.

### Resettlement payments

4. The Welsh Government has asked us to consider what payments, if any, principal councils should make to councillors who stand for re-election but are unsuccessful. We have sought to balance the needs of elected members as they move away from being a councillor against the budgets of councils, taking account where appropriate of those receiving sums from senior roles within their council.
5. The Commission has determined that a resettlement payment scheme should be established. We have written to the Cabinet Secretary to ask if they are minded to draft regulations for this to be in place for the 2027 local elections. If they agree, we will then undertake a consultation on what a scheme should look like as part of our work for next year's report.

### Senior roles

6. The Commission will be surveying authorities, their members and representative bodies to ascertain whether the current framework of remuneration for those with senior roles appropriately recognises the time commitment and responsibilities of those roles. We will include any determination to follow from this research in our annual report for 2027-28.

### Community and town councils (CTC)

7. The IRPW had previously simplified the reporting requirements for CTCs to encourage members to accept allowances to which they are entitled, and work will continue to monitor the impact of this.

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<sup>1</sup> [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: legacy report | GOV.WALES](#)

8. The rate at which returns have been submitted to the Commission has been significantly lower than when the IRPW had responsibility for this area. Less than 50% of councils submitted their returns to us. 9% of councils published their returns on their websites, while not sending them on to us. We will discuss this with the representative bodies to explore what additional support we can offer to councils in fulfilling their responsibilities.

## Corporate Joint Committees (CJC)

9. CJs are a relatively new type of body. Each of the four committees are made up of the leaders of the principal councils within its area and the chair of any national park authority that lies wholly or partly within its boundary. These leaders are in receipt of remuneration for their role within their respective bodies.
10. Each committee has established a number of sub-committees to deal with specialist areas and in one instance a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These are made up of councillors and co-opted members.
11. The Commission will consult on whether any additional remuneration is appropriate to reflect the additional time commitment and responsibilities relating to CJs, and include any determination in its 2027-28 annual report.

## Co-opted and lay members

12. The IRPW last updated the remuneration of co-opted members of principal councils, national park authorities (NPA) and fire and rescue authorities (FRA) in its 2022 annual report<sup>2</sup> and included lay members of corporate joint committees (CJC) in its 2024 supplementary report<sup>3</sup>. The rates were linked to the public appointment rates paid by Welsh Government, which have not been updated in some years.
13. Welsh Government have begun a review of these rates and the Commission will consider the outcome of that review before making any determination in respect of co-opted and lay members of relevant authorities.

## Link with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

14. The Commission will consider for our next report whether it continues to be appropriate for remuneration to be linked with the Office for National Statistics data from the Welsh element of their Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

## Engagement

15. We will continue to engage with the Welsh Local Government Association, One Voice Wales, the Society of Local Council Clerks, and the North & Mid Wales Association of Local Councils as the representative bodies across the local government family, as well as individual authorities, and consider their views in reaching our determinations, whilst continuing to take account of the impact of our decisions on the budgets of authorities.

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<sup>2</sup> [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2021 to 2022 | GOV.WALES](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: review of remuneration for lay members of corporate joint committees | GOV.WALES](#)

## Chapter 2. Methodology

21. The Commission is committed to making evidence based decisions in respect of remuneration.
22. This year we prepared an evidence and research paper to pull together the various sources of information that the Commission considered in making its draft Determinations. This provided a wide range of data, evidence, and contextual factors to inform the Commission's decision-making process in relation to its Determinations for the 2026-27 financial year. This included:
  - Data on average UK and Wales weekly earnings, including ASHE.
  - Public and private sector pay trends
  - Annual CPIH and CPI inflation rates
  - Benchmarks, including councillor remuneration in Scotland
  - Research on councillor workload
  - Views and attitudes to remuneration and diversity (Welsh Government)
  - Data collected on the take up of remuneration and benefits packages by councillors
  - Data on local authority finances
23. The full set of evidence and research considered will be published on our website.
24. We attended the WLGA Annual Conference 2025, and will continue to do so in future years, so that councillors and leaders can hear about the full range of the Commission's role, include remuneration, and discuss their views with us.
25. We also attended the Society of Local Council Clerks and One Voice Wales Joint Conference 2025 during the consultation period for our draft report, and spoke to them about trends in the claiming of allowances by members of community and town councils.
26. During the year we heard concerns about a few issues.
27. Leaders in some of the larger community and town councils felt that their role was deserving of greater remuneration than was currently offered. They thought that we might consider something more on a par with that paid to ordinary councillors in principal councils. We note this concern and will seek a more detailed view from the community and town council sector as part of our research for the 2027-28 report.
28. Co-opted and lay members of principal councils expressed a view that their remuneration has not been increased in some years, and that its value has been eroded as a result. We await the outcome of the Welsh Government review of public appointment rates so that we can consider what impact that should have for co-opted and lay members.
29. The Commission would like to thank all those that contributed to our deliberations either directly or through feedback on our draft report.

## Chapter 3. Consultation on the Draft Annual Remuneration Report 2026-27

30. We published our draft report on 23 September 2025 for an eight-week consultation, which closed on 18 November 2025.
31. Stakeholders and the public were asked to provide their feedback on our proposed determinations. A total of 26 responses were received, all by email to [remuneration@dbcc.gov.wales](mailto:remuneration@dbcc.gov.wales). The Commission would like to thank those who responded and acknowledges the low response rate. We will be reviewing our engagement with stakeholders as part of the wider work being undertaken for the next report.
32. The Commission considered the representations carefully before it formulated its final determinations. All representations are published on the Commission's website in line with our publication and redaction policy.
33. A number of responses expressed concern with our continued application of ONS data on median salaries in Wales, and the increase that has indicated for the final year of the local government electoral cycle. We recognise that concern and are committed to carrying out research on the range of measures available. We are retaining the link to ASHE for this report as we, and the Panel before us, committed to do for this cycle, but we will consult on the index to be used for increases across the next electoral cycle as part of the work towards our report for 2027-28.
34. The Commission has considered the feedback received and concluded that the draft determinations will be adopted for 2026-27. They are included in the next chapter of this report.

## Chapter 4. Determinations for 2026-27

35. The following determinations will apply to all payments due to be paid in the 2026-27 financial year.
36. Members retain the right to opt out of any payment, in full or in part. That is an individual decision for members. Authorities are not permitted to make a collective decision to opt out of mandatory payments.

### Determination 1/2026: Basic salary for elected members of principal councils

37. The basic salary, paid to all elected members, is remuneration for the responsibility of community representation and participation in the scrutiny, regulatory and related functions of local governance. It is based on a full-time equivalent of 3 days a week. The Commission has reviewed this time commitment, and no changes are proposed for 2026-27.
38. The Commission is fully aware of the current constraints on public funding and the impact its decisions will have on the budgets of principal councils. The Commission is also mindful of our aims and objectives to provide a fair and reasonable remuneration package to support elected members and to encourage diversity of representation.
39. The Commission has determined that for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 it is right to retain the link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. The basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of the all-Wales 2024 ASHE<sup>4</sup>, the latest figure available at the time of writing. The basic salary will be £21,044, an increase of 6.4% on 2025-26.

### Determination 2/2026: Salaries paid to senior, civic and presiding members of principal councils

40. All senior salaries include the basic salary payment. The different levels of additional responsibility of and between each role is recognised in a banded framework. No changes to banding are proposed this year.
41. The basic pay element will be uplifted in line with ASHE and the same uplift will also apply to the role element of Bands 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, giving all roles a 6.4% increase.
42. The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will therefore be £78,917. All other payments have been determined with reference to this and are set out in Tables 1 and 2 below.

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<sup>4</sup> [Annual survey of hours and earnings: 2024 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Table 1: salaries payable to basic, senior, civic and presiding members of principal councils

Description	Amount
<b>Group A</b>	
Band 1 leader	£78,917
Band 1 deputy leader	£55,242
Band 2 executive member	£47,350
<b>Group B</b>	
Band 1 leader	£71,025
Band 1 deputy leader	£49,717
Band 2 executive member	£42,615
<b>Group C</b>	
Band 1 leader	£67,079
Band 1 deputy leader	£46,955
Band 2 executive member	£40,247
<b>All principal councils</b>	
Basic salary	£21,044
Band 3 committee chair (if paid)	£31,567
Band 4 leader of the largest opposition group	£31,567
Band 5 leader of other political groups (if paid) and deputy civic head	£25,253
Civic head (if paid)	£31,567
Deputy civic head (if paid)	£25,253
Presiding member (if paid)	£31,567
Deputy presiding member (basic only)	£21,044

Table 2: Council groups by population

Group A Population over 200,000	Group B Population 100,000 to 200,000	Group C Population up to 100,000
Cardiff	Bridgend	Blaenau Gwent
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Caerphilly	Ceredigion
Swansea	Carmarthenshire	Denbighshire
	Conwy	Isle of Anglesey
	Flintshire	Merthyr Tydfil
	Gwynedd	Monmouthshire
	Newport	Torfaen
	Neath Port Talbot	
	Pembrokeshire	
	Powys	
	Vale of Glamorgan	
	Wrexham	

There are no further changes to the payments and benefits paid to elected members.

## Determination 3/2026: Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) members

43. The salary of a chair of a JOSC will continue to be aligned to Band 3 and will be set at £10,522.
44. The salary of a vice-chair is set at 50% of the Chair and will be £5,261.
45. There are no other changes in this area.

## Determination 4/2026: Payments to NPA and FRA members

46. The 3 national parks in Wales; Eryri, Pembrokeshire Coast and Bannau Brycheiniog, were formed to protect spectacular landscapes and provide recreation opportunities for the public. The Environment Act 1995 led to the creation of a NPA for each park. NPAs comprise members who are either elected members nominated by the principal councils within the national park area or are members appointed by the Welsh Government through the public appointments process. Welsh Government appointed and council nominated members are treated equally in relation to remuneration.
47. The three FRAs in Wales; Mid and West Wales, North Wales and South Wales were formed as part of Local Government re-organisation in 1996. FRAs comprise elected members who are nominated by the principal councils within each fire and rescue service area.
48. In line with the Commission's decision to increase the basic salary of elected members of principal councils, the remuneration level for ordinary members of both NPAs and FRAs is also increased in line with ASHE.
49. The remuneration for chairs will remain linked to a principal council Band 3 senior salary. Their role element will increase accordingly. Deputy chairs, committee chairs and other paid senior posts will remain linked to a Band 5. Full details of the levels of remuneration for members of NPAs and FRAs is set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Payments to NPA and FRA members

NPAs	Amount
Basic salary for ordinary member	£5,936
Chair	£16,458
Deputy chair (where appointed)	£10,144
Committee chair or other senior post	£10,144
FRAs	Amount
Basic salary for ordinary member	£2,968
Chair	£13,490
Deputy chair (where appointed)	£7,177
Committee chair or other senior post	£7,177

50. Other than the above increases, there are no changes proposed this year.

## Determination 5/2026: Co-opted members of principal councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and lay members of Corporate Joint Committees

51. Principal councils, NPAs and FRAs must pay their co-opted members who have voting rights fees at the rates in Table 4 below.

52. All determinations in this section that relate to co-opted members will apply equally to CJC lay members with voting rights from 31 July 2024.
53. The appropriate officer within the authority must set in advance whether a meeting is programmed for a full or half day. When the meeting is set for a full day, the fee will be paid on this basis even if the meeting finishes within 4 hours.
54. The Commission has determined there should be local flexibility for the appropriate officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings.

Table 4: Fees for co-opted and lay members (with voting rights)

Role	Hourly rate payment	Up to 4 hours payment rate	4 hours and over payment rate
Chairs of standards, and audit committees	£33.50	£134	£268
Lay chairs of CJs	£33.50	£134	£268
Ordinary Members of Standards Committees who also chair Standards Committees for Community and Town Councils	£29.75	£119	£238
Ordinary lay members of CJs	£29.75	£119	£238
Ordinary Members of Standards Committees; Education Scrutiny Committee; Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£26.25	£105	£210
Community and Town Councillors sitting on Principal Council Standards Committees	£26.25	£105	£210

### Determination 6/2026: Payments to community and town council (CTC) members

55. CTCs can opt to pay financial loss compensation to their members, where such loss has occurred for attending approved duties. The Commission has determined to maintain the alignment with the daily rate of ASHE as follows:
- Up to £67.45 for each period not exceeding 4 hours.
  - Up to £134.90 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours.
56. Other than this change to the financial loss compensation, no changes are made to payments to CTC members. Remuneration is due as set out in Tables 5 and 6 below.

Table 5: Extra costs payment (per group) for all members of CTCs

Type of payment	Group 1	Group 2 and 3	Group 4 and 5
Extra costs payment	Mandatory £156 for all members	Mandatory £156 for all members	Mandatory £156 for all members
Senior role	Mandatory £500 for 1 member; optional for up to 7	Mandatory £500 for 1 member; optional up to 5	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or chair	Optional up to a maximum of £1,500	Optional up to a maximum of £1,500	Optional up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy mayor or chair	Optional up to a maximum of £500	Optional up to a maximum of £500	Optional up to a maximum of £500
Attendance allowance	Optional up to a maximum of £30	Optional up to a maximum of £30	Optional up to a maximum of £30
Financial loss	Optional	Optional	Optional
Travel and subsistence	Optional	Optional	Optional
Costs of care or personal assistance	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Office consumables	Mandatory £52 or full reimbursement for all members	Mandatory £52 or full reimbursement for all members	Mandatory £52 or full reimbursement for all members

Table 6: CTC groups by electorate

Group	Electorate
1	over 14,000
2	10,000 to 13,999
3	5,000 to 9,999
4	1,000 to 4,999
5	below 1,000

If the annual income or expenditure of a community or town council permanently exceeds £200,000, they will be moved to the next largest group.

## Chapter 5. Summary of determinations for 2026-27

### 1/2026

57. The basic salary for elected members of principal councils is set at £21,044.

### 2/2026

58. The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will be £78,917. All other payments have been determined with reference to this and are set out in Table 1.

### 3/2026

59. The salary of a chair of a JOSOC will be set at £10,522. The salary of a vice-chair will be £5,261.

### 4/2026

60. The basic pay of NPA and FRA members has been increased as set out in Table 3.

### 5/2026

61. The fees for co-opted members of principal councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and lay members of Corporate Joint Committees are set out in Table 4.

### 6/2026

62. The optional financial loss compensation for CTC members is increased to:

- up to £67.45 for each period not exceeding 4 hours
- up to £134.90 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours

63. All other payments to members of CTCs are unchanged from previous years.

## Chapter 6. Current determinations from previous years

64. The following determinations are unchanged from previous years, but are restated here for completeness.

### Salaries payable to senior, civic and presiding members of Principal Councils

65. The limit on the number of senior salaries payable, known as the cap, remains in place. This is set out in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Maximum numbers of council membership eligible for payment of a senior salary

Council	Group	Number of councillors	Maximum senior salaries payable
Cardiff	A	79	19
Rhondda Cynon Taf	A	75	19
Swansea	A	75	19
Bridgend	B	51	18
Caerphilly	B	69	18
Carmarthenshire	B	75	18
Conwy	B	55	18
Flintshire	B	67	18
Gwynedd	B	69	18
Neath Port Talbot	B	60	18
Newport	B	51	18
Pembrokeshire	B	60	18
Powys	B	68	18
Vale of Glamorgan	B	54	18
Wrexham	B	56	18
Blaenau Gwent	C	33	16
Ceredigion	C	38	17
Denbighshire	C	48	17
Isle of Anglesey	C	35	17
Merthyr Tydfil	C	30	15
Monmouthshire	C	46	17
Torfaen	C	40	17

Group A councils: population over 200,000

Group B councils: population 100,000 to 200,000

Group C councils: population up to 100,000

### Restrictions on senior post remuneration

66. Posts within the principal council (Determination 7 of 2022)

- An elected member must not be remunerated for more than 1 senior post within their authority.
- An elected member must not be paid a senior salary and a civic salary.
- All senior and civic salaries are paid inclusive of basic salary.
- If a council chooses to have more than 1 remunerated deputy leader, the difference between the senior salary for the deputy leader and other executive members should be

divided by the number of deputy leaders and added to the senior salary for other executive members in order to calculate the senior salary payable to each deputy leader.

## Restrictions on payment for posts outside the principal council

67. Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any NPA or FRA to which they have been appointed.
68. They remain eligible to claim travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance from the NPA or FRA. (Determination 8 of 2022)
69. Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 salary cannot receive any payment from a community or town council of which they are a member. They remain eligible to claim travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance from the community or town council. Where this situation applies, it is the responsibility of the individual member to comply. (Determination 9 of 2022)

## Support to elected members of principal councils

70. Each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee, must ensure that all its elected members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. All elected members should be provided with adequate telephone, email and internet facilities giving electronic access to appropriate information. (Determination 10 of 2022)
71. Such support should be without cost to the individual member. Deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective authority as a contribution towards the cost of support which the authority has decided necessary for the effectiveness and or efficiency of members. (Determination 11 of 2022)

## Specific or additional senior salaries and assistants to the executive

72. Principal councils can apply for specific or additional senior salaries that do not fall within the current Framework (Determination 12 of 2022).
73. The Commission will decide on a case-by-case basis the appropriate senior salary, if any, for assistants to the executive (Determination 13 of 2022).
74. Guidance to local authorities on the application process was issued in April 2014.

## Local Government Pension Scheme

75. The entitlement to join the Local Government Pension Scheme shall apply to all eligible elected members of principal councils (Determination 16 of 2022).

## Family absence provisions for elected members of principal councils

76. In this section, "family absence" refers to maternity, newborn, adoption and parental absences from official business.
77. These different categories are defined in [The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities \(Wales\) Regulations 2013](#). The Welsh Government has published guidance on the different kinds of absence at [Absence from local authority meetings: family absence \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#).
78. An elected member is entitled to retain a basic salary when taking family absence under the original regulations or any amendment to the regulations irrespective of the attendance

record immediately preceding the commencement of the family absence. (Determination 17 of 2022)

79. When a senior salary holder is eligible for family absence, they will continue to receive the salary for the duration of the absence. (Determination 18 of 2022)
80. It is a matter for the authority to decide whether to make a substitute appointment. The elected member substituting for a senior salary holder taking family absence will be eligible to be paid a senior salary if the authority so decides. (Determination 19 of 2022)
81. If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries which relates to it, as set out in the IRPW's Annual Report, an addition to the maximum will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. However, this will not apply to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council if it would result in the number of senior salaries exceeding fifty percent of the Council membership. Specific approval of Welsh Ministers is required in such circumstances. (Determination 20 of 2022)
82. Isle of Anglesey County Council was included in Determination 20 of 2022, but subsequent changes to the number of councillors for Isle of Anglesey County Council made its inclusion in this exception unnecessary.
83. When a council agrees a paid substitution for family absence the Commission must be informed within 14 days of the date of the decision, of the details including the particular post and the duration of the substitution (Determination 21 of 2022).
84. The council's schedule of remuneration must be amended to reflect the implication of the family absence (Determination 22 of 2022).

## Sickness absence payments for senior salary holders of principal councils

85. The framework provides arrangements for long term sickness absence for senior salary holders. These arrangements are set out in the Annex to this report.

## Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs)

86. The payment of contribution to costs of care and travel and subsistence for CJC related activities has applied to all members of CJCs since 2022.
87. Payments to CJC co-opted lay members are covered below under the heading Co-opted Members of Principal councils, NPA and Fire and Rescue Authorities and lay members of Corporate Joint Committees.

## Payments to National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

88. Members must not receive more than one NPA senior salary (Determination 27 of 2022).
89. A NPA senior salary is paid inclusive of the NPA basic salary (Determination 28 of 2022).
90. Members of a principal council in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any NPA to which they have been appointed. Where this situation applies, it is the responsibility of the individual member to comply (Determination 29 of 2022).
91. Members must not receive more than one FRA senior salary (Determination 34 of 2022).
92. An FRA senior salary is paid inclusive of the FRA basic salary and must reflect significant and sustained responsibility (Determination 35 of 2022).
93. Members of a principal council in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any FRA to which they have been nominated. Where this situation applies, it is the responsibility of the individual member to comply (Determination 36 of 2022).

## Co-opted members of principal councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and lay members of Corporate Joint Committees

94. Travelling time to and from the place of the meeting is to be included in the claims for payments made by co-opted members (up to the maximum of the daily rate). (Determination 39, 2022)
95. Fees must be paid for meetings and other activities including other committees and working groups (including task and finish groups), pre meetings with officers, training and attendance at conferences or any other formal meeting to which co-opted members are requested to attend. (Determination 41 of 2022)
96. Reasonable time for pre meeting preparation is to be included in claims made by co-opted members the extent of which can be determined by the appropriate officer in advance of the meeting (Determination 5 of 2023).
97. Each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee or other appropriate committee, must ensure that all voting co-opted members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. Such support should be without cost to the individual member (Determination 42 of 2022).
98. Co-opted and lay members of relevant authorities with voting rights are also able to claim travel, subsistence, care and personal assistance payments as set out in the sections below.

### Travel and subsistence expenses

99. The rates of reimbursement of mileage, other travel costs and subsistence costs that can be claimed by members of principal councils, NPAs, FRAs, and their co-opted members, and to members of CJsCs and their lay members is set out below.
100. Community and Town Councils can opt to reimburse travel and or subsistence costs. Where the option to reimburse has been made, this must be as specified in the Travel and subsistence guidance.

### Mileage costs

101. Reimbursement must be at the current HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) rates.<sup>5</sup>

### Other travel costs

102. All other claims for travel, including by taxi if this is the only or most appropriate method of transport, must only be reimbursed on actual cost as shown on receipts.

### Subsistence costs

103. The maximum rates for subsistence payments are set out below on the basis of receipted claims:
  - £28 per 24-hour period allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided
  - £200 London overnight
  - £95 elsewhere overnight
  - £30 staying with friends and or family overnight

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<sup>5</sup> [Travel — mileage and fuel rates and allowances - GOV.UK](#)

## Costs of Care and Personal Assistance Payments

104. All relevant authorities must provide a payment towards necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs as follows:
- formal (registered with Care Inspectorate Wales or equivalent) care costs to be paid as evidenced
  - informal (unregistered) care costs to be paid up to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage hourly rates as defined by the Living Wage Foundation<sup>6</sup> at the time the costs are incurred
105. This must be for the additional costs incurred by members to enable them to carry out official business or approved duties. Each authority must ensure that any payments made are appropriately linked to official business or approved duty. Payment shall only be made on production of receipts from the care provider (Determination 43 of 2022).

## Community and town councils

106. Reporting returns due from all community and town councils need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home and the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid. This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances. (Determination 8 of 2024)
107. Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council (that is leader, deputy leader or executive member) cannot receive any payment from any community or town council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance. (Determination 53 of 2022)
108. Community and town councils can decide to reimburse their members in respect of travel and or subsistence costs for attending approved duties. Where the option to reimburse has been made, the Travel and subsistence expenses guidance must be applied. (Determination 46 and 47 of 2022)

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<sup>6</sup> [What is the real Living Wage? | Living Wage Foundation](#)

## Annex: sickness absence payments for senior salary holders of principal councils

The Commission's framework provides arrangements for long term sickness absence for senior salary holders as follows:

- Long term sickness is defined as certified absences in excess of 4 weeks.
- The maximum length of sickness absence within these proposals is 26 weeks or until the individual's term of office ends, whichever is sooner (but if reappointed any remaining balance of the 26 weeks will be included).
- Within these parameters a senior salary holder on long term sickness can, if the authority decides, continue to receive remuneration for the post held.
- It is a decision of the authority whether to make a substitute appointment, but the substitute will be eligible to be paid the senior salary appropriate to the post.
- If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries payable for that authority, as set out in the Annual Report, an addition will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. (However, this would not apply to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council if it would result in more than 50% of the membership receiving a senior salary. It would also not apply in respect of a council executive member if it would result in the cabinet exceeding 10 posts, the statutory maximum).
- When an authority agrees a paid substitution, the Commission must be informed within 14 days of the decision of the details including the specific post and the estimated length of the substitution. The authorities' Schedule of Remuneration must be amended accordingly.
- It does not apply to elected members of principal councils who are not senior post holders as they continue to receive basic salary for at least 6 months irrespective of attendance and any extension beyond this timescale is a matter for the authority.

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Clerk to the Authority
Contact Officer	Gareth Owens
Subject	Appointment of Independent Member to serve on the <b>Authority's Standards Committee</b>



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To recommend that North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) appoint David Davies to the **Authority's Standards Committee**.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Authority must appoint Independent Members to its Standards Committee. These are people with no connection to politics or the authority who are co-opted on to the Authority. The Authority required has conducted an open recruitment exercise to select suitable candidates.

#### RECOMMENDATION

- 3 It is recommended that Members:
  - i) Appoint David Davies for a period of four years from 20 April 2026; and
  - ii) Thank Julia Hughes and Sally Ellis for their hard work and commitment.

#### BACKGROUND

- 4 The Authority has an established Standards Committee. This committee comprises of six members, four of whom are Independent Members and two representatives from the Authority. Independent Members are people who are neither a councillor nor an officer with the Authority or any other local authority. People who have been councillors or officers in the past are able to serve as Independent Members after a period of at least 2 years has elapsed. The duration of that period is longer if the person has held a more senior position in a local authority.

- 5 Julia Hughes and Sally Ellis have served as Independent Members since 1 September 2019. They are the current Chair and Deputy Chair of the committee. They have served two terms of office and so cannot be reappointed. The Authority therefore needed to recruit to replace them.
- 6 There is detailed legislation governing the recruitment of Independent Members.

## INFORMATION

- 7 The vacancies were advertised in the North Wales Chronicle (covering Bangor, Caernarfon and surrounding areas), the Journal (covering Rhyl, Prestatyn, Abergele and surrounding areas), Denbighshire Free Press (covering Denbighshire, Mold and surrounding areas), and the Wrexham Leader (covering Wrexham and surrounding areas) as well as on the Authority website. They were also circulated to Monitoring Officers and posted on social media websites during November 2025. Five applications were received in response to the advertisement, of whom four were short listed.
- 8 On 26 March an interview panel met to interview the short-listed candidates. The panel was supported by the Clerk, Gareth Owen and Louise McCabe-Allen, Deputy Head of HR. It consisted of:

Councillor Dylan Rees	Chair of the Authority and Executive Panel
Councillor Gareth Sandilands	Chair of Audit Committee
Gareth Pritchard	Member of Standards Committee
Noela Jones	Lay person

- 9 At the completion of the interview process the Panel deliberated at length on the attributes and strengths of the candidate and concluded that David Davies was appointable.
- 10 The Panel recommends that the Authority appoint David Davies with effect from 20 April 2026 for the maximum permitted first term of six years.
- 11 The membership of the Committee and their terms of office will be as follows:

### Independent Members

Gill Murgatroyd	01/09/19 - 31/08/27 (second term)
Gareth Pritchard	01/09/19 - 31/08/27 (second term)
David Davies	20/04/26 – 19/04/32

Fire and Rescue Authority representatives

Councillor Brynmor Hughes 07/06/2022 – 10/05/2027

Councillor Ian Hodge 20/05/2025 – 10/05/2027

## IMPLICATIONS

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

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 April 2026
Lead Officer	Helen MacArthur Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Elgan Roberts, Head of Finance and Procurement
Subject	Provisional Outturn 2025-26



#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with an update on the revenue and capital expenditure forecast for 2025/26, as at 31 March 2026.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) approved a net revenue budget of £51.788m for 2025/26, funded by the constituent local authorities. To maintain this budget cap, a number of non-recurring measures were agreed, including the use of £0.601m from reserves.
- 3 Based on expenditure to 31 March, the revenue expenditure is now forecast to be £51.654m, which is an underspend of £0.134m, which includes costs relating to various projects, national pay settlements and movement to reserves.
- 4 The Authority approved a capital budget of £6.100m for 2025/26 supplemented by £2.589m in rollover funding from prior years. The capital programme is experiencing slippage on schemes and it is anticipated that expenditure will be £5.009 m and a requirement to rollover funding of £4.625m.
- 5 During the 2025/26 financial year key financial risks were managed including workforce availability, notably overtime, temporary promotions, and sickness-related cost which are driven by operational demand and establishment changes. Inflation and supply-chain pressures affecting both non-pay (utilities, third-party services) and the capital programme and finally interest-rate volatility and refinancing risk on our borrowing. These risks continue to be actively monitored through the Service Finance and Procurement Committee and recorded on the Authority's risk register.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 Members are asked to:
- i) note the projected revenue outturn position and the projected capital slippage for the 2025/26 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) 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 2025/26 was approved by the Authority at its meeting of the 20 January 2025. This confirmed a net revenue budget requirement of £51.788m 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 2025/26 which included utilising reserves.
- 10 The capital plan of £6.100m was presented to the Members Budget Scrutiny working group and also approved by the Authority.
- 11 This budget monitoring report provides information on the draft revenue and capital expenditure outturn position for the 2025/26 financial year.

## INFORMATION

### REVENUE BUDGET

- 12 Pay: Employee costs represent over 70% of gross expenditure and the 2025/26 staffing budget is £38.233m, 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 were ongoing.
- 13 The budget setting process included an assumption that pay awards for 2025/26 would be 3% for all staff. The outcome of the April 2025 pay award for local government staff was an increase 3.2% with firefighters' pay award also settled at 3.2% from 1 July 2025 onwards.

- 14 Non-pay: The non-pay forecasts are based on known commitments and expenditure at this stage. As the year-end position is finalised, the forecasts remain subject to change.
- 15 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 relation to the use of our premises. 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 2025/26.
- 16 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 and reduction in MRP following utilisation of CERA (Capital Expenditure charged to Revenue Account).

#### REVENUE OUTTURN FORECAST FOR 2025/26

- 17 The report is projecting an underspend of £0.134m, which equates to 0.3% of the budget. The breakdown is detailed below.

	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)	Variance (£m)	Variance (%)
Employees	38.233	37.447	0.786	2.1%
Premises	2.818	3.338	(0.520)	-18.4%
Transport	1.327	1.663	(0.336)	-25.3%
Supplies	6.182	5.750	0.432	7.0%
Third Party Payments	0.367	0.449	(0.083)	-22.6%
Capital Finance & Charges	4.501	4.224	0.277	6.1%
Income	(1.039)	(1.217)	0.178	-17.1%
Use of Reserves	(0.601)	(0.000)	(0.601)	100.0%
Forecast Outturn	51.788	51.654	0.134	0.3%

#### EMPLOYEE COSTS

- 18 Employee costs form a significant element of the budget (over 70% of gross costs) and include pay, pension costs, cost of recruitment and training, and employee services, such as occupational health services. An underspend of £0.786m is forecasted for 2025/26.

- 19 Action continues to focus on increasing the number of Retained Duty System (RDS) firefighters to address and maintain appliance availability. At the time of setting the 2025/26 budget, there were 474 RDS personnel, and provision was made to increase capacity by a further 15 posts. This reflected the improvements achieved in recent years to strengthen retained capacity and provide essential cover.
- 20 However, as shown in the table below, this remains a significant challenge. Following a dip in headcount over the summer months, numbers have increased later in the year, reflecting successful recruitment. Notwithstanding this improvement, the 100% equivalent measure, which reflects contracted hours, remains significantly below the original budgeted level and has shown a slight decline over the course of the year.

RDS Analysis	Budget 2025/26	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Nov-25	Mar-26
Headcount	489	490	487	484	503	502
100% equivalent	390	367	364	357	366	363

- 21 The underspend in the RDS staff budget reflects ongoing recruitment and retention challenges, as well as variances in variable pay elements such as drill fees, training allowances, and activity payments.
- 22 Within the wholetime operational staff group, similar to RDS, there was a reduction in establishment over the summer months. This was followed by a successful wholetime recruitment campaign commencing in September 2025, and a further 12 RDS to WDS conversion course.

WDS Analysis	Budget 2025/26	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Nov-25	Mar-26
Headcount	208	209	202	204	216	210

- 23 Quarter 3 also saw nucleus crewing progress to pilot and live implementation in quarter four, providing daytime cover at Dolgellau and Porthmadog within the existing budget. Since going live, nucleus crewing has already helped to improve rural availability, supporting more resilient crewing arrangements and reducing reliance on short notice abstractions in harder to staff locations.

- 24 Recruitment to specialised posts within corporate departments has continued to prove difficult during 2025/26, and a full-year underspend is anticipated. In response, apprentices are increasingly being used to fill posts, supporting longer-term succession planning.

#### NON-PAY COSTS

- 25 The non-pay budget which covers Premises, Transport Supplies, Third Party Payments, and Capital Finance & Charges, is forecast to be overspent by (£0.230m).
- 26 Non-pay expenditure is subject to ongoing review by budget holders to ensure that the projections continue to be reasonable and to manage unavoidable costs.
- 27 The premises forecast indicates an overspend of (£0.520m) driven by several factors. These include (£0.300m) for leases detailed in paragraph 28, (£0.047m) has been allocated for estate strategy work, which will be funded from reserves if required, and £0.028m for a condition report on mechanical and electrical systems. Further cost pressures have arisen from reactive works exceeding budget, although these have been partially mitigated by reductions in utility costs.
- 28 Following the adoption of IFRS 16, lease costs are now recorded within departmental budgets such as premises or transport to improve visibility of expenditure. For 2025/26, the overall budget for these leases sits under capital financing; therefore, any local overspend within departments is offset against the capital financing budget.
- 29 Third-party payments are exceeding the allocated budget by (£0.083m), primarily due to a higher-than-inflation increase in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with North Wales Police for the 2025/26 financial year.
- 30 The cost pressures detailed above are being mitigated by underspends in supplies due to efficiencies of £0.168m, and a delay in migration of key systems in control from on premises to the cloud which is anticipated to occur in 2026/27 at a cost of £0.242m.
- 31 The forecast for capital finance is currently under budget. This is due to lease costs offsetting departmental overspends and the funding of capital schemes from revenue during 2024/25, which has reduced the minimum revenue provision payable in 2025/26 by £0.277m.

## INCOME

- 32 In addition to the constituent authority levy, the budget includes anticipated income from fees, charges, and grants. This primarily relates to recharges for shared buildings with other entities and service level agreements with various organisations.
- 33 Income is forecast to exceed the budget by £0.178m. This overachievement is due to the Authority receiving £0.084m from the sale of vehicles, higher levels of income than anticipate for apprenticeship delivery with Coleg Llandrillo, and an additional £0.051m from Welsh Government to help meet the cost of pay awards above the standard 3% assumption. This supplementary funding reflects the 3.2% settlements for both grey and **green book staff and provides targeted support for this year's cost pressures.**

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 34 The Authority approved a capital programme of £6.100m for 2025/26, with a further £2.589m carried forward from prior years due to delivery slippage. As at the end of March, total capital expenditure stands at £5.009m against the overall unfinanced capital plan of £8.689m.
- 35 During the year, a number of planned schemes have been deferred, including works associated with the new FOB access control system and the decarbonisation project at Rhyl. The Rhyl scheme had been expected to be delivered during the year and was supported by £0.648m of potential grant funding allocated by Welsh Government. However, due to increasing costs and tender prices received, the project has been paused and will be reassessed during 2026/27 to ensure that a suitable heating and hot water solution is implemented that delivers value for money.
- 36 As a result of programme slippage, rollover funding of £4.625m is forecast into 2026/27, principally relating to deferred schemes, Facilities projects and the procurement of appliances. Significant Facilities expenditure is expected to be incurred during Quarter 1 of 2026/27, including station works at Dolgellau, Porthmadog and Bangor, construction of training towers at Llangefni and Denbigh, and roofing works at Colwyn Bay and Flint.

Department	Budget £m	Actual £m	Rollover £m
Fleet	2.392	1.792	0.764
Facilities	1.385	0.452	0.806
ICT	0.232	0.180	0.171
Tech Ops	0.395	0.317	0.000
Environemnt	0.080	0.066	0.012
Deferred	1.616	0.000	1.616
Sub Total	6.100	2.806	3.368
Rollover from prior year(s)			
Fleet	0.037	0.037	0.000
Facilities	1.092	0.449	0.310
ICT	0.000	0.160	0.000
Tech Ops	0.850	0.182	0.432
Environemnt	0.610	0.120	0.514
Sub Total	2.589	0.949	1.256
Unfinanced Capital Plan 2025/26	8.689	3.755	4.625
Grants			
Facilites - Rhyl	0.648	0.058	0.000
Financed Capital Plan 2025/26	0.648	0.058	0.000
Hwb Awen	0.000	1.253	0.000

37 The capital programme is funded through a combination of borrowing £3.397m, CERA £1.450m and grant funding £0.162m. Further detail is set out in the accompanying table.

Funding	Amount £m
Borrowing	3.397
Capital expenditure charged to the GF (CERA)	1.450
Grant Funding	0.162
Total	5.009

## BORROWING

38 Capital expenditure is predominantly funded via external borrowing, but in the short term, the Authority utilises surplus revenue cash, known as internal borrowing.

39 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.

40 In March 2026, the Authority secured a new £2 million short-term local authority loan at an interest rate of 6.35%, with repayment scheduled for April 2026. This loan was arranged to meet immediate cash flow needs until anticipated income is received in April 2026. Although commercial loans or loans from the PWLB had lower interest rates, they required longer repayment terms, which would have resulted in higher overall costs.

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

41 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.

42 The Authority currently had earmarked reserves of £8.938m as of 1 April 2025, 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.

43 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 2025/26:

	Budget (£m)	Forecast (£m)
Use of Reserves	(0.601)	
• N/A		0.000
Movement to Reserves:	0.000	
• Pension		0.548
• Trucks Cartel		0.134
<b>Total</b>	<b>(0.601)</b>	<b>0.659</b>

Table 3: Movement to and from reserves

\*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 into the future.
Budget	Budget is set annually in accordance with the proposed service delivery which includes emergency response and prevention work.
Legal	The Authority remains compliant with its statutory duty to produce financial reports and maintain a balanced budget.
Staffing	Effective financial management supports the long-term workforce strategy to ensure that the Authority is able to discharge its responsibilities
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	None
Risks	Income and expenditure is closely monitored to ensure that deviations from the approved budget are properly identified and reported to Members.