

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM – MATRICES AND PROMPTS

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

LIKELIHOOD				
Unlikely	Low Probability	Possible	High Probability	Almost Certain
1	2	3	4	5

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

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

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

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

Purpose

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

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

Title	Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Post Consultation Phase.
Objective being addressed	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Planning Performance and Transformation.
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy?	Project Sponsor – DCFO Stewart Forshaw
Who is involved in the impact assessment process?	AM Anthony Jones – Project Lead Gary Ashton – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager Benji Evans – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	The post consultation EqIA documents key information and feedback that emerged from the CRMP consultation. Although key themes will be discussed and assessed in this EqIA, a full equality analysis report will be produced to produce clear direction with regards to mitigation and next steps.
Who is intended to benefit from the project?	Internal and external stakeholders.
Is the policy / initiative / service for external or internal purposes?	Internal and external.
Does this policy / initiative / service have an impact upon the On-Call duty service?	Yes, all stakeholders are directly involved in this consultation.
Are other organisations involved in the delivery? If so, please state which these may be.	The Service are working closely with the Consultation Institute to quality assure the consultation process.

<p>What information / previous experience does the Service have, i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (information can be demographic data, i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other Services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises).</p>	<p>Our Service will use the most recent demographic and population data which provides intelligence regarding different equality interest groups across the region.</p> <p>The pre-consultation EqIA highlighted different equality interest groups. Also, the service conducted a full consultation in 2023 with regards to their Emergency Cover Review, so the Service will benefit from a well-established community risk profile methodology. A comprehensive mapping exercise was conducted as part of the pre-consultation and this process helped to identify stakeholders, especially people that are seldom heard, which often include some of the most 'at-risk' people in our society.</p>
<p>Has a similar impact assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy? If so – is it possible to adapt / incorporate their findings?</p>	<p>Various EqIAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EqIAs help us identify risk and the Service is able to implement suitable interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EqIAs help the Service reflect on learning of previous experiences of their own practices, but other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.</p>
<p>Date of next review (if applicable)</p>	<p>This EqIA will be reviewed and used as part of the implementation phase of the proposed work which is included in the CRMP 2024-29 document.</p>

Equality Impact Assessment

Protected Characteristics or Equality Theme	Rationale for your decision (include / refer to evidence)
	How might this have an impact?

Age (band)			Description of age band:
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
4	1	4	<p>The total population across North Wales is 687,000 (ONS, 2023a). The trend of population ageing has continued, with more people than ever before in the older age groups. The ONS (2023a) states that 22.3% of the population were aged 65 years and over. Out of all local authorities across Wales, Conwy (27.4%) and the Isle of Anglesey (26.4%) have the highest percentages of people aged 65 years and over. Conwy (1.5%) has the highest percentage of people aged 90 years in Wales.</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to explore disability and age due to a notable difference in the data between 2011 and 2021, particularly in the younger and older age groups (ONS, 2023b). For females aged 15 to 19 years, the percentage of disability was 13.3% in 2021, 8.1 percentage points higher than in 2011 and 7.9 percentage points higher than in 2001. This trend continued into the 20- to 24-year age group, where disability prevalence increased substantially, from 6.2% in 2011 to 17.9% in 2021. For males, the increased prevalence of disability in 2021 began at earlier ages; 8.6% of males aged 5 to 9 years were disabled in 2021, compared with 5.6% in 2011 and 6.5% in 2001 (ONS, 2023b).</p> <p>A variety of themes emerged from people across all age groups. Focus groups were organised with youth groups, further education college, community groups and support sessions set up for people living with a disability and health conditions, which often included older people. The Equality Analysis report provides a comprehensive description of different themes and risks.</p>

Disability		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

According to ONS (2023c), 21.1% of the population have a disability and/or long-term health condition. Although, Gwynedd (18.1%) is one of the local authorities with the lowest proportion of disabled people in Wales, the average percentage of disabled people across North Wales region is higher than other parts of the UK. With intersectionality in mind, 22.3% of females and 19.8% of males were disabled. The percentage of those who were limited a little was 11.9% for females and 10.3% for males. A higher proportion of females than males indicated that they were limited a lot; 10.4% and 9.5% respectively (ONS, 2023b).

Disabled people are some of most disadvantaged people in our society, so we acknowledge the importance of capturing their needs, aspirations and expectations of a modern-day fire and rescue service. Focus groups were organised with community groups that had a membership mostly made up of older people that had a disability (i.e. Dementia, diabetes, CHD, OPCD, arthritis). The Equality Analysis report provides a comprehensive description of different themes and risks.

A variety of themes emerged from the feedback provided by disabled people and people with health conditions during the consultation. Concerns often centred around a disabled person's inability to escape an emergency situation, mainly because of limited mobility and the increased risk of falls. Various health care professionals and older people felt disabled people were at an increased risk because some of them were isolated and some people felt they were at more risk because they live alone. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.

Mental Health and Wellbeing		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

Although mental health falls under the definition of disability, NWFRS have separated this group of people due to the nature and challenges associated with targeting people from a mental health and wellbeing perspective.

Mental health and wellbeing cover a broad group of people that experience low mood, anxiety, depression etc. Very few themes emerged relating to adverse mental health, although some respondents did describe feeling more vulnerable because they feel 'isolated' and 'alone'. The incident data reports remind the service that suicide and mental health related emergencies have increased in recent years, so this area of work is important despite no many respondents raised it

			directly during the consultation. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes and risks which may indirectly relate to mental health.
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Gender			<p>According to ONS (2021a), the North Wales population is evenly split across females (51.1%) and males (48.9%). Although engagement with males and females will occur organically through contact with different equality interest groups, some specific gender-based organisations enable us to connect with gender groups with specific needs (e.g. older people, unemployed, parents).</p> <p>A variety of themes emerged from the feedback provided by people across different genders. There was strong support for the service become more gender diverse, especially across operational roles. The consultation was a reminder that majority of the public still view the fire and rescue service as a career that males pursue, mostly because the respondents only see 'male fighters' in North Wales. Some respondents felt the service could do more to promote careers amongst all gender groups, specific feedback from ethnic minority groups suggest, tailored engagement and communication is required. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
4	2	8	

Pregnancy and Maternity			<p>To ensure NWFRS reach out and capture the needs of people that are pregnant and those within their maternity phase, a comprehensive mapping exercise has identified key partners to help connect with this target audience.</p> <p>The focus groups enabled people from across all groups to provide feedback on employment terms and conditions, policies and other features that people may want to know. Indirectly, respondents asked questions relating to geographical locations of fire stations, work shift patterns and duty systems, but it is unknown of these questions relate to a person's need to explore childcare arrangements or for people who maybe planning to have a family in the future. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation which may relate to pregnancy and maternity.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
4	2	8	

Gender Re-assignment / Identity		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

The exact number of trans and/or non-binary people in North Wales is unknown. However, Stonewall (2022) estimate between 0.5% and 1% of the population is Trans and/or non-binary which gives us some kind of indication who we need to engage with to ensure our consultation is meaningful.

There was strong support for the service developing a more diverse workforce inclusive of people from all genders, people that identify as non-binary and non-gender conforming. Specific engagement with people via local pride events, LGBTQ+ charities and support groups helped ensure trans and non-binary people were able to provide feedback. Some respondents felt the service could do more to promote careers amongst all gender groups, specific feedback from people that identify as LGBTQ+ suggest, tailored engagement and communication is required. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.

Sexual Orientation		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

Stonewall estimate between 5-7% of the population are lesbian, gay, bisexual or another sexual orientation which is other than heterosexual (See NHS, 2015). Stonewall (2022) have published more recent reports which suggest younger people are more likely to be open about sexual orientation and gender identity. North Wales has a growing LGB+ community and the emergence of new pride events, support groups and staff networks in the workplace means that engagement with this audience is more meaningful than previous years.

With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to know the age profile of people who identified as LGB+ which tends to be younger than the overall population. More than half of those who identified as LGB+ (57.9%) were aged between 16 and 34 years (ONS, 2021d). In contrast, less than a third of the overall population were aged between 16 and 34 years (29.6%). This intelligence helps our service know who to engage.

There was strong support for the service developing a more diverse workforce inclusive of people regardless of their sexual orientation. Specific engagement with people at local pride events,

			LGBTQ+ charities and support groups helped ensure lesbian, gay, bisexual and those that align with other diverse sexual identities were able to provide feedback. Some respondents felt the service could do more to promote careers amongst all gender groups, specific feedback from people that identify as LGBTQ+ suggest, tailored engagement and communication is required. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.
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Marriage or Civil Partnership			48.1% people aged 16 and over are married or in a civil partnership (Stats Wales, 2020). Generally, this protected characteristic does not present any particular risks. Although, it is important to stress, people that live alone are deemed more at
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
4	2	8	<p>There was strong support for the service developing a more diverse workforce inclusive of people regardless of their relationship status. Although no specific feedback was given regarding a person's relationship status, respondents did ask a variety of questions relating to a career in the fire and rescue service regarding pay, holiday entitlement, shift patterns, duty systems, geographical location of fire stations, which may relate to considerations of partners.</p> <p>Other themes which emerged during the consultation, especially amongst the older respondents was the feeling of being 'isolated' and 'alone' in situations where a partner had passed away. Another respondent had mentioned about feeling vulnerable because they didn't feel good on their feet anymore and living alone, there is nobody to help if they fell. The Equality Analysis report provides a more comprehensive description of different themes and risks. Mitigation can be achieved through prevention activities.</p>

Religion and/or Belief		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

Our service acknowledges there is some diversity regarding people’s religious affiliations and belief systems across North Wales. Equally, it must be acknowledged that more people reported “No religion” than any single religious affiliation up from 32.1% in 2011 to 46.5% in 2021 (WG, 2022b). This data indicates approximately half the North Wales population have religious affiliations. Therefore, places of worship and faith-based organisations are a logical avenue to engage with this audience.

To ensure NWFRS reach out and captured the needs of religious people and those who observe a particular belief system, the pre-consultation mapping exercise helped to identify key partners across North Wales. During the consultation, people from different religions and faiths groups provided feedback. Indirectly, respondents asked questions relating to prevention activity which align to specific religious campaigns and the service work to date was well received. However, there was a feeling amongst some respondents that more prevention activity could take place. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation which indirectly relate to safety campaigns and recruitment.

Race		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

Like other regions in Wales, North Wales has become more ethnically diverse in the past decade. According to the census data in 2021, ethnic minority groups has increased from 4.4% in 2011 to 6.2% in 2021 (WG, 2022b). For clarity, ethnic minority is any ethnic group outside of white ‘Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish and British’.

The largest ethnic minority group in every local authority in Wales was “Other White”. The proportion of the population identifying with this ethnic group was highest in Wrexham (4.8%) and Flintshire (3%). Within the high-level “White” ethnic group, Conwy was the local authority with the highest proportion of those identifying as “Irish” (0.7%) in Wales. Interestingly, 5.3% of households were multiple ethnic group households, up from 4.2% in 2011 (WG, 2022b).

With intersectionality in mind, NWFRS acknowledge potential language, communication and cultural barriers. Nationally in Wales, 2.9 million usual residents aged three years and over spoke English or Welsh as their main language (96.7% of the population, down from 97.1% in 2011).

			<p>According to the 2021 Census, residents in Wales that did not select English or Welsh as a main language, 78% said they could speak English well or very well, while 22% could not speak English very well or at all. As in 2011, Polish was the most common main language after English or Welsh at 0.7% of the population. Arabic (0.3%) was the most common main language aside from English, Welsh or Polish in 2021. British Sign Language (BSL) was the preferred language of 900 people (which equates to 0.03%) usual residents aged three years and over across Wales.</p> <p>To ensure NWFRS reach out and captured the needs of people across different ethnic groups, the pre-consultation mapping exercise helped to identify key partners across North Wales. During the consultation, people from different ethnic backgrounds provided feedback.</p> <p>Indirectly, respondents asked questions relating to recruitment process, especially concerning criteria and ability to speak English and Welsh and opportunities for young people from ethnic backgrounds to learn more about careers. Some respondents commented on prevention activity and suggestions were given relating to the service tailoring future engagement and communication which promote equality of access to different ethnic groups. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.</p>
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Socio-Economic Duty			<p>The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on March 31st 2021 and requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions (such as deciding priorities and setting objectives), to consider how their decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>According to the Census 2021, some of the most deprived areas are concentrated in north Wales coastal and border towns (WG, 2021). Working does not preclude experiencing poverty. To explain further, in-work poverty has risen over the last 5 years and a total of 12.7 per cent of workers live in poverty due to low pay or limited hours (JRF, 2020).</p> <p>To ensure NWFRS reached out and captured the needs of people who meet the criteria for low economic status and deprivation, the pre-consultation mapping exercise helped to identify key partners to help connect with this target audience. During the consultation, respondents from across North Wales support the service proposal to review the emergency fire cover to ensure the</p>
3	3	9	

			<p>best possible cover is provided. Feedback from respondents in specific areas referred to the importance of having fire cover, especially in areas of deprivation (i.e. Deeside, Garden City, Kinmel Bay, Queens Park). There was support for the service to conduct a review into its special vehicles which can support emergency incidents in all areas, especially deprived urban areas. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation which cover prevention and people principles.</p>
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Welsh Language		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

All materials (written and verbal) relating to the CRMP consultation project were provided in Welsh and English. The census data (2021) informed the service that North Wales has 235,567 welsh speakers which equates to 34.3%. The most recent data published by the Welsh Government suggests 29.1% of people aged three and over were able to speak Welsh. This figure equates to 883,600 people and there is evidence that the Welsh language is growing in popularity as a spoken language and as a first spoken language. With intersectionality in mind, we acknowledge that the highest percentages of Welsh speakers in Wales can be found in Gwynedd (77%) and the Isle of Anglesey (67%) which are both located in North Wales (WG, 2022).

During the consultation, 223 respondents completed the questionnaires, of which 221 were completed in English and 2 in Welsh. Focus groups were deliberated offered to partner organisations in all six counties across North Wales. There was strong support for the protection of Welsh language and the respondents were very complementary of the service commitment to promoting the welsh language. A small number of respondents felt being able to speak Welsh was a barrier for the service in recruiting some talented people. The views by some respondents reinforces the need for the service to promote careers more effectively, especially highlighting the services ability to provide welsh language training for people that speak little or no welsh language. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.

Geography and Location		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
5	2	10

North Wales is a large geographical area which has several urban areas that are highly concentrated with diverse people and groups. In contrast, some rural areas have extremely small amount of people residing in the area.

The region includes the localities of Wrexham, Deeside, Rhyl, Colwyn Bay, Flint, Bangor, Llandudno and Holyhead. The largest localities in North Wales are the city of Wrexham and the conurbations of Deeside, Rhyl and Prestatyn, where the main retail, cultural, educational, tourism, and transport infrastructure and services of North Wales are located. Bangor, St Asaph and Wrexham are the region's cities, Bangor is Wales' oldest city, whereas St Asaph is one of Wales' smallest and Wrexham which became a city in 2022 is the region's largest settlement.

During the consultation, respondents from all six counties provided feedback. 12 focus groups were organised across North Wales and although focus groups were conducted in every area except Denbighshire, over 100 people from Denbighshire either responded directly via the online questionnaire or they provided feedback via one of the organised focus groups in another location. There was general support to provide better emergency cover across all areas and there was support for the service to conduct another emergency cover review. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.

On-Call System or Considerations for Part-Time Staff		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

On-call staff are directly involved in this project. On-call teams have been involved with the design and development of the Services CRMP through Heads of Departments and middle managers seminars. Naturally, on-call staff that work the retained system will be able to provide feedback that will help shape the CRMP and strategic direction of the Service between 2024-2029.

Feedback suggests there was general support to provide better emergency cover across all areas and there was specific reference to the service needing to improve its on-call retained duty system provision in the future. There was genuine support for the service to conduct another emergency cover review which can hopefully address some of the ongoing issues with recruitment and

			retention of on-call firefighters that is evident across the whole of the UK. The Equality Analysis report does provide a comprehensive description of different themes, risks and mitigation.
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Other Equality Interest Groups		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	1	4

For all protected characteristics, there have been increases in the number of recorded hate crimes in Wales in recent years (EHRC, 2018). Very low prosecution rate in court means some victims of hate crime lack trust in uniformed public services. Although this lack of trust mostly impacts the police and community engagement teams in local councils, fire and rescue services can experience some adverse impacts too.

The recent Culture reviews in England and Wales have highlighted cultural issues in the sector. This means there may be a lack of trust and confidence in fire and rescue services within the community. Despite some initial concerns, no respondents raised concerns relating to the medias representation of the cultural issues that surround the UK fire and rescue service.

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

Yes No

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

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

A full consultation has been conducted and an Equality Analysis report has been produced.

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

This EqIA demonstrates how the service have shown due regard for potential risks of discrimination to the North Wales community. There has been consideration for how the service engaged and communicated with its community members, especially equality interest groups which are often seldom heard. Intersectionality has been considered in various sections of the EqIA and Equality Analysis Report. This approach enables the service to carefully plan how it can mitigate any risks that have been identified, but also promote best practice when it comes to the implementation stage.

Post-initiative evaluation

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

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

Once completed please return to benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales

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