

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	18/06/2018
Reporting Member	Cllr Peter Lewis/Cllr Meirick Lloyd Davies
Contact Officer	Shân Morris, Assistant Chief Officer (Corporate Policy and Planning) 01745 535286
Subject	Improvement and Well-Being Plan 2019/20



PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To present the Executive Panel's recommendation for the next phase of developing the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA)'s Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019/20, and to agree the basis of the FRA's stakeholder and public consultation over the summer 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Over recent years of financial austerity in the public sector the FRA has succeeded in setting a balanced budget annually that met the estimated costs of providing fire and rescue services in North Wales but that also limited the impact on local authority budgets.
3. Providing fire and rescue services refers primarily to:
 - 'blue light' response to fires and other emergencies;
 - community-based prevention work;
 - enforcement of fire safety arrangements in relevant premises; and
 - civil contingencies operations as a 'category one' responder to large scale emergencies.The cost of enabling and supporting those services is also included.
4. One aspect of setting balanced budgets has meant reducing the FRA's running costs by over £3million (approximately 10% of its revenue budget) and the Service's workforce by 9%. Despite these savings, however, the cost of providing fire and rescue services has risen gradually.
5. Another strategy used for setting a balanced budget has been to allocate money from the FRA's own financial reserves to meet the shortfall between the actual cost of providing fire and rescue services and the financial contributions received from the local authorities.

6. The cumulative effect of this reliance on reserves to meet increasing costs is that the FRA now faces a shortfall of almost £1.9million against an estimated budget requirement of £35.4million, and its financial reserves approaching the minimum level that it is considered prudent to hold.
7. To set a balanced budget for 2019/20, therefore, the FRA is presented with a choice of:
 - o making further reductions in the running costs of the Fire and Rescue Service; or
 - o increasing the contributions the FRA receives from the local authorities; or
 - o a combination of both.
8. Before finally deciding on its financial strategy, the FRA will need to allow a period of consultation for stakeholders to submit their views about how best to ensure that there is enough money to cover the FRA's estimated costs in 2019/20 (a balanced budget).
9. In December 2017 the FRA agreed that a Planning Working Group comprising the members of the Executive Panel would undertake the detailed work associated with developing the FRA's plan for 2019/20.
10. Over the course of five meetings, members considered the likely challenges arising from the anticipated shortfall in the FRA's budget in 2019/20 and explored a range of possible ways of ensuring the sustainability of fire and rescue services in North Wales.
11. Having concluded that there were only three broad approaches that could be taken – increasing contributions, reducing costs or a combination of both – the Working Group was still undecided as to which (if any) of a range of options it could recommend to significantly reduce running costs.
12. The Working Group therefore decided to defer reaching a conclusion until the Executive Panel meeting on 14 May 2018 so that members could formally accept or reject each option in turn and agree what to recommend to the full FRA.
13. In summary, the options for making large reductions in running costs related to adopting one or more of the following:
 - removing the second wholetime fire appliance from Wrexham;
 - changing the hours of the second wholetime fire appliance in Wrexham to cover daytime hours only, not overnight;
 - changing Deeside and/or Rhyl 24-hour shift stations to day staffing only (reverting to retained cover only at night);

- changing one or more day crewed stations to retained duty system (RDS) stations;
 - removing day crewing allowances that are currently paid to day crewing firefighters;
 - closing one or more retained fire stations;
 - removing the retained fire appliance from one or more of the eight wholetime stations.
14. Having discussed the options at length members decided not to recommend consulting on any of the above because of the effect that each one would have on the overall level of fire and rescue services in North Wales.
15. Consequently, the Executive Panel decided to recommend consulting only on the two remaining approaches, which would mean either:
- a) increasing the combined total contribution from the local authorities in 2019/20 by the full amount of the shortfall – almost £1.9million - and so retaining current levels of fire and rescue services in North Wales; OR
 - b) increasing the combined total contribution from the local authorities in 2019/20 by slightly less than the full amount of the shortfall which would similarly ensure that the current levels of fire and rescue services were maintained but requiring efficiency savings on a scale that did not necessitate such measures as closing fire stations, removing fire appliances or firefighter redundancies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

16. That the FRA consults publicly over the summer 2018 on a financial strategy based on either:
- a)** increasing the combined total contribution from the local authorities by an estimated £1,893,000 in 2019/20 and so retaining current levels of fire and rescue services; OR
 - b)** increasing the combined total contribution from the local authorities by slightly less than £1,893,000 in 2019/20 and so retaining the main fire and rescue services in North Wales but requiring some savings to be made.
17. In the event that the FRA decides not to accept the Executive Panel's recommendation and wishes to consult also on a third option of reducing levels of fire and rescue services and so limiting any increases in contributions from the local authorities to significantly less than £1,893,000, members would need to indicate which service(s) the FRA would consider reducing (please refer to Appendix 8) so that this can be adequately explained in the public consultation.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE PANEL/AUDIT COMMITTEE

18. The Executive Panel's recommendations are included elsewhere in this report.
19. At the Audit Committee meeting on 4 June 2018, reference was made to the term 'slightly less than £1,893,000' and the benefit of defining that in more detail.
20. The members of the Audit Committee also felt that in order for them to come to an informed decision at the FRA meeting they would need to be provided with more information on this subject than had been provided in the summary report to the Audit Committee. This report to the full FRA therefore reproduces information previously provided to the Executive Panel.

BACKGROUND

FRA planning duties and timetable

21. The FRA is required to publish annual improvement objectives in accordance with the Local Government Measure 2009. It must also publish long-term well-being objectives in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and take all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.
22. In order to have its Plan in place by April 2019 the Authority will need to have consulted the public on its intended strategy over the summer 2018 and set its draft budget for next year by December 2018. The draft 2019/20 Plan can then be compiled for final approval by the FRA in March 2019.
23. A summary timetable detailing the stages of producing the Authority's Plan for 2019/20 and the associated budget-setting to support its delivery is provided at Appendix 1.

How North Wales FRA is funded

24. North Wales FRA receives its revenue budget for providing fire and rescue services by way of financial contributions towards the total cost from the six North Wales local authorities according to the estimated size of their population (see Appendix 2).

25. The FRA operates on the basis of a balanced budget which broadly means raising enough money for the year to meet its revenue expenditure during the year. The size of the FRA's budget will necessarily determine the scale and quality of the fire and rescue services that it is able to provide and the extent of any efficiency savings needed to avoid costing more than it has available.
26. Under the terms of the North Wales Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1995 (see Appendix 3) the FRA must submit to its constituent authorities an estimate of its net expenses for 2019/20 by 31 December 2018, and then confirm the actual amount before 15 February 2019.
27. If the FRA were to face an unexpected shortfall in its revenue budget during the year, the terms of the Combination Order allow for a deficit of this type to be recovered through an in-year supplementary contribution from the local authorities.

How North Wales FRA has managed its budget since 2011/12

28. For most of the last decade North Wales FRA has been seriously affected by the impact of financial austerity in the public sector. Since 2011/12, the FRA has made savings in excess of £3 million from the revenue budget (approximately 10%) and has reduced the Service's workforce by 9%.
29. Changes to the Service (see Appendix 4) have included: reducing staff budgets; restructuring, removing management posts; transferring posts to different terms and conditions; and cancelling/scaling down planned spending. Many of the changes – particularly those made in the first years of austerity – were achieved with little publicly discernible effect on the traditional emergency response services. Eventually, however, changes were introduced (e.g. changing the policy on responding to calls generated by automatic fire alarms and ceasing to respond to animal rescue and rope rescue calls) which were noticed by the public.
30. North Wales FRA contributed to the austerity measures by freezing its budget from 2011/12 until 2014/15 and making savings to balance out anticipated cost increases. In 2015/16, there was a small increase in local authority contributions of around £113k. In 2016/17, rather than increase contributions from the local authorities, the FRA assigned £740,000 of reserves to underpin an anticipated shortfall in its budget in that year.

31. During 2016, the FRA decided to replace its original strategy of continuing to freeze its budget with a financial strategy that combined the three elements of: using reserves, increasing financial contributions and making service reductions. This was on the basis that an increasing funding gap and diminishing reserves would not be sustainable as a strategy.
32. The Executive Panel's recommendation to the full Authority in June 2016 was that with an anticipated funding gap of £2.26million by 2019/20 and diminishing reserves the FRA should adopt a 3-year financial strategy that would increase contributions by £1.36million, and reduce the running costs of the fire and rescue service by £0.9million.
33. It was recognised that reducing running costs by £900,000 would inevitably mean reducing the number of firefighters employed and that this would take time to achieve. With the greatest of reluctance members had concluded that removing the second wholetime fire appliance from Wrexham fire station with the disestablishment of 24 posts would be the "least worst" option for making the savings required, but were satisfied that the anticipated retirement profile over the forthcoming two or three years made this reduction possible without the need for compulsory redundancies of wholetime firefighters. Members at the time had also concluded that this option was a more acceptable proposal than removing fire cover from whole communities by closing 8-10 retained fire stations and imposing compulsory redundancies of retained firefighters.
34. This new three-year strategy would see the Authority through from 2017/18 to 2019/20 and although it would mean a significant increase in contributions in 2017/18 (of around £1.36million) this would be followed by two years (2018/19 and 2019/20) with a frozen budget as the service reductions took effect.
35. In December 2016, faced with unanticipated additional costs (e.g. the apprenticeship levy) the FRA considered a proposal to increase contributions by £1.7million (+5.3%) for 2017/18 - £414,000 more than had originally been discussed. The FRA took the decision instead to limit the increase to £1.275million (+4%) and to assign £414,000 of reserves to fund the shortfall in that year. Rather than pursue a frozen budget for 2018/19, the requirement for the remaining £414,000 (equivalent to the remaining 1.3%) could be revisited nearer the time.
36. In March 2017, faced with some opposition to the possibility of removing a wholetime fire appliance from Wrexham fire station, the FRA withdrew the option of pursuing this as a way of reducing running costs by £0.9million and left any decision about service reductions to the new FRA after the May 2017 local government elections.

37. In December 2017, the new FRA considered the medium term financial strategy 2018-21 and the estimated budget requirement for an additional £978,300 in 2018/19. The Treasurer's report referred to future cost pressures, including the revaluation of firefighters' pension schemes in 2018 and expenditure associated with moving to new national communication systems. The FRA opted to fund the additional requirement through an increase in contributions of £331,600 (1%) and an allocation of the remaining £646,700 from reserves.

North Wales FRA's Public Engagement

38. As part of developing its improvement objectives, the FRA is expected to allow time for anyone with an interest to submit their views before any plans have been finalised.
39. The engagement and consultation process is considered to be an important element in shaping the draft objectives before they are adopted. Failure to consult properly in accordance with the Gunning Principles (see Appendix 5) would expose the FRA to the risk of a legal challenge to its plan.
40. Although there are no strict rules about the duration of consultation periods, 12 weeks is considered to be long enough in most cases. Evidently, the seriousness or significance of a proposed course of action should be taken into account.
41. Public consultations must be done fairly, with an open mind and with sufficient explanation to enable intelligent consideration and response. The product of the consultation must then be conscientiously taken into account by the FRA before proposals are formally adopted.
42. The Executive Panel at its meeting on 14 May 2018 endorsed a public engagement and consultation strategy to support the development of the FRA's Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019/20. Consultation through a variety of media will run from July to September 2018, so the outcome of the consultation will be known before the FRA sets its draft budget in December 2018.
43. The level of consultation undertaken should reflect the level of impact that the course of action being considered would be likely to have. The greater the anticipated effect, the greater the requirement for consulting with the people who would be affected.

The North Wales FRA Planning Working Group

44. In December 2017 the FRA agreed that a Planning Working Group comprising all members of its Executive Panel (see Appendix 6) would undertake the detailed work associated with developing the FRA's improvement and well-being objectives for 2019/20.
45. During the Working Group meetings members received presentations and information on the FRA's financial situation and considered a range of possible options for continuing to provide affordable fire and rescue services. A summary of the meetings is provided at Appendix 7.

INFORMATION

Financial situation

46. Over recent years of financial austerity in the public sector, North Wales FRA has adopted a number of strategies to help control costs and, importantly, to limit the impact on local authority budgets.
47. Approaching 2019/20 the FRA faces the cumulative effect of past decisions to fund shortfalls through unallocated reserves, of pay increases and general inflation over time and of the decision not to start planning to reduce running costs by £900,000 as had originally been intended for 2018/19.
48. Best estimates of the FRA's running (revenue) costs next year indicate an increase from £34,140,000 in 2018/19 to £35,386,000. This is an increase in costs of £1,246,000. However, the recent reliance on reserves means that the difference between the total contributions in 2018/19 (£33,493,000) and the cost of services in 2019/20 (£35,386,000) is actually £1,893,000.
49. Whilst the use of reserves is a legitimate device for addressing budgetary problems, this source of funding is not replenished annually in the same way as the revenue budget. Consequently, unless running costs are reduced in the following year, that year's budget will necessarily increase by the amount that had been underpinned by reserves.
50. By the end of 2017/18 the Authority held £2,057,000 of unallocated reserves. Members had already approved the use of £647,000 of those reserves as part of the budget requirement for 2018/19.

51. The financial forecast shows that by the end of March 2019, the FRA's reserves will have fallen to £1,410,000, which is less than the anticipated shortfall of £1,893,000 for 2019/20.
52. Consequently, the use of reserves should not be viewed as a sustainable funding strategy for recurring areas of expenditure. Ideally, reserves should be used to meet pressures arising from increases in activity or exceptional costs such as those associated with service redesign.
53. The FRA's reserves are now approaching the minimum considered prudent by the Treasurer which limits the scope to use them as part of a budget setting strategy.
54. Whilst the current level of reserves is 4% of the revenue budget, any planned use of reserves as part of the budget strategy for 2019/20 will significantly impact on the Authority's overall financial standing and will not be sustainable in future years.
55. The need to reduce costs or increase local authority contributions will therefore remain, and the Authority's capacity to respond to unforeseen activity pressures or costs will be reduced.
56. The FRA's financial sustainability depends now on securing an increase in the contributions made by the local authorities and/or achieving a permanent reduction in the running costs of the service without having to rely on unallocated reserves as a short-term solution to ensuring a balanced budget.
57. In the eight years between 2011/12 and 2018/19 the contributions from each local authority increased by between £19,758 and £388,523 (average of £260,037).
58. Addressing the entire shortfall in 2019/20 through additional contributions would mean an unusually steep increase in just one year of between £189,702 and £418,798 (average £315,500) from each local authority.
59. Conversely, addressing most or all of the shortfall through efficiency savings would seriously affect fire and rescue services across North Wales.

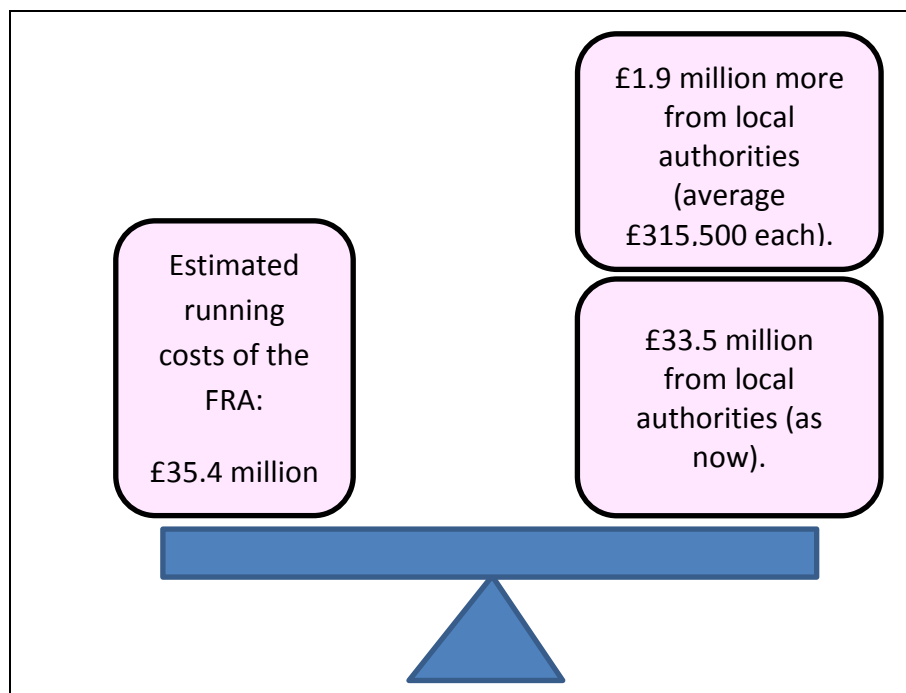
Three possible approaches to balancing the FRA's budget in 2019/20

60. The following measures present three alternative approaches to securing a balanced budget. The Executive Panel's recommendation to the full FRA is that only the first two should be consulted upon over the summer and that the third one should not be pursued.

a) One option is to increase the combined total contributions from the local authorities by almost £1.9million.

What effect would that have?

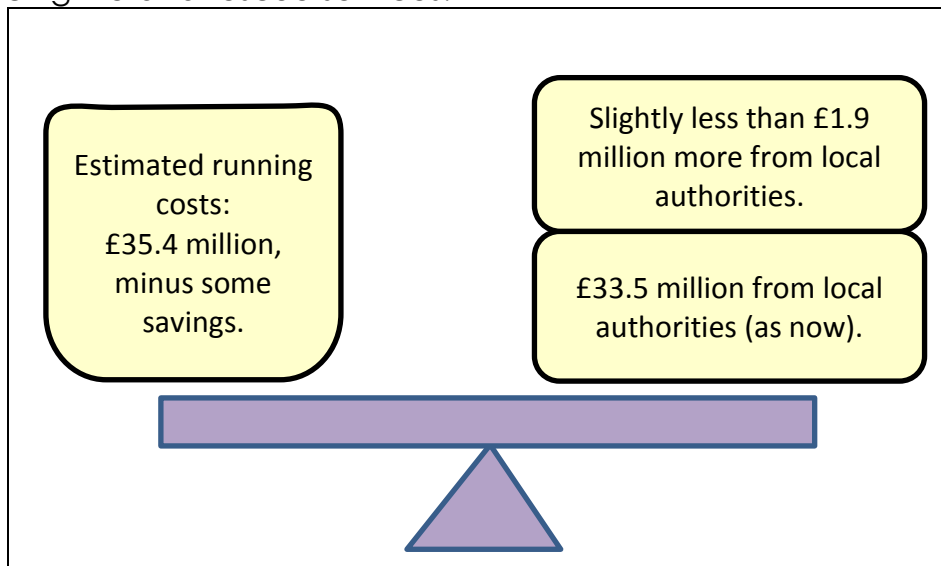
- Just under £1.9million would be added to the combined total contributed by the six local authorities.
- That would equate to an estimated additional contribution of between £189,702 and £418,798 per local authority. Precise figures cannot be calculated until the population estimates have been published, but an average of £315,500 X 6 local authorities = £1,893,000.
- Based on recent estimates using 2018/19 data, this would increase the average contribution made towards the cost of fire and rescue services from around 2.55% of local authorities' total budgets to around 2.71% of local authorities' total budgets.
- All of the FRA's estimated running costs would be met so (assuming no unforeseen and unavoidable financial pressures on the FRA) its ability to set a balanced budget would not be contingent upon reducing either its running costs or the level of fire and rescue services that it provides.



b) Another option is to increase the combined total contribution from the local authorities by slightly less than the estimated £1.9million required.

What effect would that have?

- Slightly less than £1.9million would be added to the amount contributed by the six local authorities in total.
- It would be for the FRA to determine exactly how much less than £1.9million, but the assumption would be that the reduction in running costs that would be needed could realistically be achieved without reducing fire and rescue services.



What do 'some savings' and 'slightly less than £1.9million' mean?

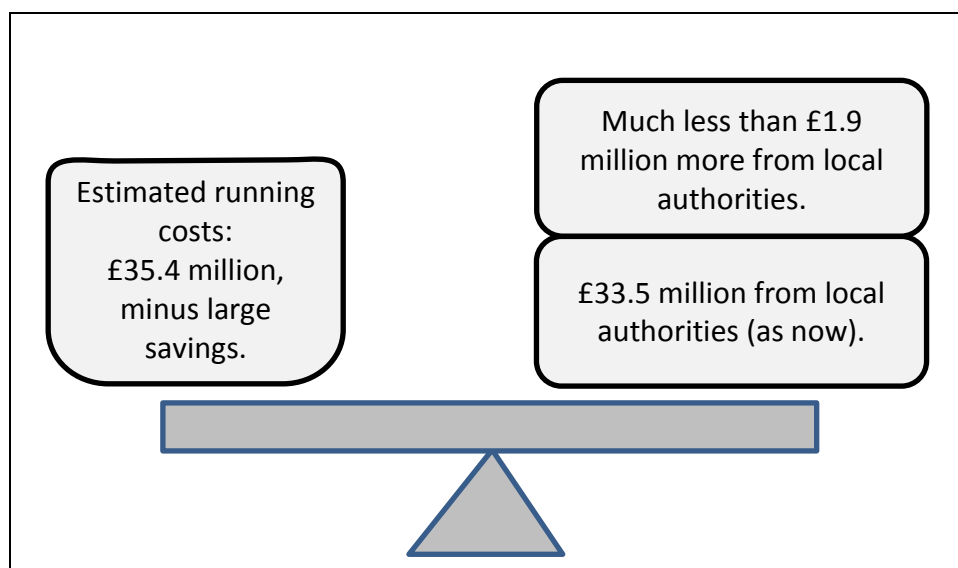
By way of illustration:

- Savings of £90,000 by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £300,500 (total £1,803,000).
- Savings of £180,000 by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £285,500 (total £1,713,000).
- Savings of £270,000 by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £270,500 (total £1,623,000).

c) A third option (not recommended by the Executive Panel) **would be to increase the combined total contribution from the local authorities by significantly less than the estimated £1.9million required.**

What effect would that have?

- Significantly less than £1.9million would be added to the amount contributed by the six local authorities in total.
- It would be for the FRA to determine exactly how much less than £1.9million, but the expectation would be that the amount was sufficiently short of the £1.9million that the only way to achieve a balanced budget would be by reducing the current levels of fire and rescue services (e.g. closing fire stations and making firefighters redundant).



What do 'large savings' and 'much less than £1.9million' mean?

By way of illustration:

- Savings of £0.6million by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £215,500 (total £1,293,000).
- Savings of £1.2million by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £115,500 (total £693,000).
- Savings of £1.8million by the FRA would reduce the average increase in contributions per local authority from £315,500 to £15,500 (total £93,000).

61. Members are reminded that it can take months or even years to implement changes and so cost reductions may not be achievable from the very first day of the financial year. The Treasurer has advised that in order to bridge the shortfall in the intervening period reserves might need to be used for this specific purpose.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Direct implication for agreeing the steps towards the Authority's long-term well-being objectives.
Budget	There is a clear relationship between the Authority's plans for 2019/20 and the level of financial resources available. The draft budget for 2019/20 must be agreed in December 2018 and confirmed by mid-February 2019. The cost of the public consultation will be met from this year's corporate communications budget.
Legal	Supports compliance with improvement planning and well-being legislation.
Staffing	Impact on staffing levels will depend on the eventual decision of the FRA, but no direct implications identified from this report.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	The impact on these aspects will be fully assessed according to the eventual decision of the FRA, but no direct implications identified from this report. The public consultation will be conducted bilingually and will consider the needs of people in relation to their protected characteristics. Groups representing all the protected characteristics are included in the circulation list of consultation stakeholders.
Risks	Potential risks have been considered in the body of the report, but further assessment will be needed as part of the final decision-making process by the FRA. Failure to consult in accordance with the Gunning Principles would risk eventual decisions by the FRA being the subject of a legal challenge.

Appendices

1	Summary timetable for producing the FRA's 2019/20 Plan
2	Recent financial contributions from constituent local authorities
3	Sections of the North Wales Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1995
4	Summary of savings and efficiencies already achieved
5	Gunning principles for public consultation
6	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority members
7	Summary of Planning Working Group 2018 meetings
8	Planning Working Group options report
9	Map of North Wales showing location of fire stations

Summary timetable for producing the FRA's 2019/20 Plan

DATE	MEETINGS	ACTION
January – March 2018	Planning Working Group	To undertake the detailed work associated with developing draft objectives for 2019/20 onwards (considering budgetary implications) for approval by the full FRA.
14/05/2018	Executive Panel	To agree recommendations to the full FRA in June 2018 for a draft consultation proposal based on options to address the anticipated budget shortfall.
18/06/2018	FRA	To consider recommendations from the Executive Panel and agree the basis of stakeholder and public consultation over the summer.
July – October 2018	Stakeholder and public consultation.	
22/10/2018	Executive Panel	To consider the response to the public consultation and agree recommendations to be presented to the full FRA in December 2018
17/12/2018	FRA	To agree the FRA's draft budget 2019/20 and the objectives to be incorporated into its draft 2019/20 Plan.
February 2019	Executive Panel	To consider the near final draft 2019/20 Plan for approval by the full FRA at its March meeting.
15/02/2019	Last day for notifying the constituent authorities of their financial contributions for 2019/20.	
March 2019	FRA	Final approval of the draft 2019/20 Plan for publication.
31/03/2019	Last day for publishing the FRA's 2019/20 Plan.	

Appendix 2

Recent contributions from constituent local authorities towards the
total cost of fire and rescue services in North Wales

£	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Môn	3,236,545	3,219,270	3,216,231	3,198,669	3,200,523	3,190,812	3,330,579	3,356,175
Gwynedd	5,588,685	5,525,827	5,507,985	5,588,255	5,602,787	5,598,221	5,851,817	5,914,137
Conwy	5,240,568	5,206,959	5,198,570	5,283,704	5,289,891	5,277,177	5,539,433	5,589,830
Denbs	4,549,039	4,569,316	4,593,630	4,342,155	4,360,740	4,363,962	4,524,683	4,568,797
Flints	7,051,716	6,981,590	6,955,089	7,018,721	7,033,548	7,022,578	7,339,795	7,409,315
Wrexham	6,266,101	6,269,049	6,300,506	6,340,507	6,398,354	6,433,093	6,574,971	6,654,624
TOTAL	31,932,654	31,772,011	31,772,011	31,772,011	31,885,843	31,885,843	33,161,277	33,492,877
Change		-160,643	0	0	+113,832	0	+1,275,434	+331,600
Population estimate	688,417	690,434	691,986	694,038	695,549	697,122	698,715	700,310
£ per head	£47	£46	£46	£46	£46	£46	£47	£48

North Wales 'constituent authorities' are: Isle of Anglesey County Council, Gwynedd Council, Conwy County Borough Council, Denbighshire County Council, Flintshire County Council and Wrexham County Borough Council.

The North Wales Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1995

PART IV COMBINED FIRE SERVICE FUND

21.—(1) Each constituent authority shall, in respect of each financial year, pay into the combined fire service fund, in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph, a contribution equal to its appropriate proportion of the net expenses of the Authority in respect of that year.

(2) The Authority shall, before 31st December in any year, submit to each constituent authority an estimate of its net expenses for the next financial year, and shall subsequently, before 15th February, give notice to each constituent authority of the amount of the contribution to be paid by that authority under this paragraph in the next financial year.

Sub-paragraphs (3) – (5) deal with arrangements for making payments.

(6) The Authority may, after consultation with each constituent authority, revise the estimate referred to in sub-paragraph (2) at any time before the end of the financial year to which that estimate relates and shall, as soon as is practicable, give notice in writing to each constituent authority of the revised amount of the contribution to be paid by that authority under this paragraph.

Sub-paragraphs (7) – (8) deal with arrangements for interim payments.

(9) For the purposes of this paragraph the net expenses of the Authority, in respect of any financial year, shall be the amount of its expenditure in respect of that year less all income which is credited to the combined fire service fund in respect of that year, other than contributions paid or payable under sub-paragraph (1), but may, for the purposes of preparing the estimate referred to in sub-paragraph (2) and if the Authority so resolves, include such amount or amounts as the Authority considers appropriate with a view to minimising any upward revision of an estimate under sub-paragraph (6).

(10) In this paragraph—

“appropriate proportion” means, in the absence of agreement between the constituent authorities, an amount determined by reference to the proportion which the population of the area of each constituent authority bears to the total population of the combined area, the population in any area being the number of persons usually resident in that area, as estimated by the Registrar General and indicated in the latest data available from him on 30th June in the year preceding the financial year referred to in sub-paragraph (1);

Summary of savings and efficiencies

already achieved:

2011/12	
<p>Total contributions of £31,932,654.</p> <p>Year 1 of 3-year financial plan 2011/12 - 2013/14.</p> <p>Costs reduced by £800,000.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £460,000 removed from the operational management budget by restructuring the officer cover arrangements. • £200,000 removed from specific budget lines by either discontinuing or scaling down planned spending. • £90,000 removed from the Support Staff budget. • £50,000 removed from the Community Fire Safety budget. • £30,000 removed from the Control budget by restructuring the department. • Costs of delivering the Business Fire Safety function reduced, including by transferring posts from grey book (operational) to green book (support staff) terms and conditions. • One of four Aerial Ladder Platforms removed from the Service's fleet. • <u>Other savings:</u> • Keeping attendances at conferences down to a minimum. • Changing the way non-operational learning was provided. • Not funding Young Firefighter Association event. • Combining different awards ceremonies.
2012/13	
<p>Total contributions of £31,772,011 (£160,643 less than the previous year).</p> <p>Year 2 of 3-year financial plan 2011/12 - 2013/14.</p> <p>Savings of £815,000 made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £500,000 removed from the operational firefighters' pay budget (22 wholetime posts) by changing the way working shifts were rostered but without affecting the number of firefighters in a crew. • £150,000 removed from specific budget lines by either discontinuing or scaling down planned spending. • £50,000 removed from the Community Fire Safety budget. • Further £90,000 removed from the Support Staff budget.

2013/14	
<p>Total contributions of 31,772,011 (the same as the previous year).</p> <p>Year 3 of 3-year financial plan 2011/12 - 2013/14.</p> <p>Savings of £800,000 made.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £500,000 removed from the operational firefighters' pay budget (as previous year). • Wholetime firefighters allocated through an Operational Resource Pool to support day-to-day availability of Retained fire stations. • £70,000 removed from specific budget lines by either discontinuing or scaling down planned spending for a third time. • £50,000 removed from the Community Fire Safety budget. • £180,000 removed from the Support Staff budget.
2014/15	
<p>Total contributions of 31,772,011 (budget frozen for another year).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision taken to use financial reserves to cover any shortfall and so avoid introducing the large-scale cuts that would otherwise have been necessary. However, it was understood that this option would not be sustainable for longer than this one year.
2015/16	
<p>Total contributions of £31,885,843 (increase of £113,000),</p> <p>£223,000 of reserves made available to cover shortfall.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £16,000 of predicted savings from discontinuation of non-statutory services e.g. providing large animal rescues and line rescue incidents. • £35,000 saved by discontinuing non-statutory services (Atal Tân). • £25,000 of predicted savings from changing policy on responding to Automatic Fire Alarm calls. Actual savings were higher - cashable savings of £67,889.50 and non-cashable savings from more effective use of time for activities such as community safety. • £250,000 of potential savings by removing four middle management posts (flexible duty officers), reducing the number of such posts from 32 to 28 which is the absolute minimum required to implement safe systems of work under the national Incident Command System. • New operational Management Structure (Sept 2015). • Introduction of new "WDS rural" contracts providing 21 hours per week.

2016/17

Total contributions of **£31,885,843** (the same as the previous year).

£454,000 of reserves made available to cover shortfall.

- May 2016 the Authority estimated that there would be a funding gap of £1.7million by 2018/19 and diminishing financial reserves. Although sympathetic to the financial pressures on most public services, also acknowledged the unavoidable cost pressures from pay and price inflation and changing government policy around pensions.
- June 2016 the Authority estimated that there would be a funding gap of £2.26million by 2019/20 and diminishing financial reserves. It did not consider that its strategy of continuing to freeze the budget was sustainable.
- The Executive Panel proposed that the Authority should adopt a new strategy from 2017/18 of combining higher contributions, reducing services and using reserves to cover any shortfall. This would mean a significant increase in contributions in 2017/18 but it would be followed by two years (2018/19 and 2019/20) without further increases in contributions.
- The planning working group looked how savings could be made to help keep county council contributions down and identified a potential £1,000,000 saving by removing a wholtime fire appliance from Wrexham (leaving one wholtime and one retained fire appliance there).
- October 2016 the Authority reflected on the fact that the Service had achieved £3million of savings and its workforce had been reduced by 9%, but to accommodate a 1% pay increase, the cost of the apprenticeship levy, the revenue cost of the capital budget and non-discretionary price inflation, the county council contributions would have to increase by £1.7million in 2017/18.
- December 2016 the Authority again reflected on the savings already achieved but the proposal to increase contributions by £1.7million in 2017/18 (which included a budget shortfall in 2016/17 of £740,000 which had been funded from reserves) was rejected. As an alternative, the Authority decided to increase the contributions by

	<p>£1.28million in 2017/18 and then to increase them again by 1.3% in 2018/19 if necessary. Any shortfall in 2017/18 could be met from reserves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Authority's intention was that preparations would begin in 2017 to reduce running costs by £1,000,000 from 2019/20 onwards. However, in March 2017 the possibility of pursuing £1,000,000 of savings with effect from 2019/20 by removing a fire appliance from Wrexham was abandoned when the Authority decided to withdraw the option and allow the new Authority after the May 2017 elections to make its own decisions about its financial strategy.
2017/18	
<p>Total contributions of £33,161,277 (an increase of £1,275,434).</p> <p>£414,000 made available from reserves to cover shortfall.</p>	
2018/19	
<p>Total contributions of £33,492,877 (an increase of £331,600).</p> <p>£646,000 made available from reserves to cover shortfall.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · £366,000 saved annually by revising the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy. December 2017 the Authority decided on an additional 1% (£331,600) in contributions for 2018/19 – less than the 1.3% mentioned in December 2016 and less than the 4.05% that would have met the total estimated costs in 2018/19 (as calculated before the MRP policy decision).

Consultation: The Gunning Principles

Whether or not there is a legal duty to consult, where consultation is carried out it must be done fairly. What is fair will depend on the circumstances of the case and the nature of the proposals under consideration.

Subject to the overall requirements of fairness, the decision-maker will have a broad discretion as to how consultation should be carried out, and what should be consulted upon.

The consultation must also comply with the following principles (termed the Gunning principles after the case in which they were set out, or the Sedley requirements after the barrister that suggested them in that case):

- Consultation must take place when the proposal is at a formative stage. Public authorities must have an open mind during consultation and must not have already made the decision, but may have some ideas about the proposal.
- Sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal so as to allow for intelligent consideration and response. Consultees must have enough information to be able to make an informed input to the process.
- Adequate time must be given for consideration and response. The timing and environment of the consultation must be appropriate, sufficient time must be given for people to develop an informed opinion and then provide feedback, and sufficient time must be given for the results to be analysed.
- The product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account.

It is prudent for a decision-maker to show in its decision that it has undertaken consultation and has given proper weight to the representations received. This may involve the decision-maker showing that it has understood the points being made by the responses and has considered them.

Acknowledgment: <http://law.gov.wales/constitution-government/public-admin/intro-admin-law/welsh-government-guidance-on-making-good-decisions/has-any-consultation-been-carried-out-fairly-and-properly/what-are-the-requirements-for-any-consultation-that-is-carried-out/?lang=en#/constitution-government/public-admin/intro-admin-law/welsh-government-guidance-on-making-good-decisions/has-any-consultation-been-carried-out-fairly-and-properly/what-are-the-requirements-for-any-consultation-that-is-carried-out/?tab=overview&lang=en>

Members of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Members who are also members of the Executive Panel (and Planning Working Group)		Members who are also members of the Audit Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eric Wyn Jones, ericjones@anglesey.gov.uk ○ Richard Griffiths, richardgriffiths@anglesey.gov.uk 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dylan Rees, DylanRees@ynysmon.gov.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gethin Glyn Williams, cynghorydd.gethinglynwilliams@gwynedd.gov.uk ○ John Brynmor Hughes, Cynghorydd.JohnBrynmorHughes@gwynedd.llyw.cymru 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annwen Daniels, cynghorydd.annwendaniels@gwynedd.llyw.cymru ○ Simon Glyn, cynghorydd.simonglyn@gwynedd.llyw.cymru ○ Dilwyn Lloyd, cynghorydd.i.dilwynlloyd@gwynedd.llyw.cymru
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Peter Lewis, cllr.Peter.Lewis@conwy.gov.uk ○ Roger Parry, cllr.roger.parry@conwy.gov.uk ○ Adrian Tansley, cllr.adrian.tansley@conwy.gov.uk 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sue Lloyd-Williams, cllr.sue.lloyd-williams@conwy.gov.uk ○ Nigel Smith, cllr.nigel.smith@conwy.gov.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meirick Ll Davies, Meirick.davies@sirddinbych.gov.uk ○ Ann Davies, janetann.davies@denbighshire.gov.uk ○ Brian Blakeley, brian.blakeley@denbighshire.gov.uk 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Peter Evans, peter.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Veronica Gay, veronica.gay@flintshire.gov.uk ○ Marion Bateman, marion.bateman@flintshire.gov.uk 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paul Shotton, paul.shotton@flintshire.gov.uk ○ Ian Dunbar, ian.dunbar@flintshire.gov.uk ○ Owen Thomas, owen.thomas@flintshire.gov.uk ○ David Wisinger, david.wisinger@flintshire.gov.uk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rondo Roberts, Rondo.Roberts@wrexham.gov.uk ○ Michael Dixon, michael.dixon@wrexham.gov.uk 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ J Rodney Skelland, rodney.skelland@wrexham.gov.uk ○ Geoff Lowe, geoff.lowe@wrexham.gov.uk ○ Bryan Apsley, bryan.Apsley@wrexham.gov.uk

Summary of Planning Working Group 2018 meetings.

The Planning Working Group met on five occasions – January 15th, February 5th and 26th, March 5th and 19th.

Members considered the likely challenges arising from an anticipated shortfall in the Authority's budget in 2019/20 and a range of possible approaches to ensuring sustainability of fire and rescue services in North Wales.

Members were provided with information from officers and reflected on a range of subject areas including:

- the Authority's planning responsibilities, specifically in respect of the Well-being of Future Generations Act;
- the importance of meaningful consultation with the public and other stakeholders before finalising strategic plans;
- the statutory duties of fire and rescue authorities in Wales:
 - promoting fire safety; fire-fighting; responding to road traffic accidents; and dealing with other prescribed emergencies;
 - removing chemical, biological or radio-active contaminants in an emergency; rescuing people trapped following the collapse of buildings or other structures; certain emergencies involving trains, trams or aircraft;
 - responding to flooding and inland water emergencies that present a risk of death, serious injury or serious illness to people;
 - being the enforcing authority in respect of the majority of non-domestic premises; and
 - being a 'category 1 responder' under the Civil Contingencies Act, with duties to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and to make and maintain appropriate plans;
- the extensive partnership working that goes on with other emergency services, local authorities and other agencies including the third sector;
- the FRA's *annual budgets since 2011/12*;
- the FRA's *past record of accommodating unavoidable cost increases by reducing services and making savings*;
- *what achieving a balanced budget in future might mean, given the potentially large budget deficit facing the FRA in 2019/20 and beyond*;
- the uncertainty around *unspecified changes that the Welsh Government would like to introduce in Welsh FRAs' governance and funding arrangements*;
- *fire stations and fire and rescue appliances in North Wales*;

- operational activity levels,
- fire station availability,
- how mobilising decisions are made - the principles of pre-determined attendances to different types of incidents;
- the role of operational firefighters and national discussions about their future role;
- the immediate pressure to balance the budget but the longer timescale for actually achieving large reductions in running costs;
- staff redundancy;
- how changes to services would be unlikely to be welcomed by the public, but that there would be an expectation from county councils that contributions can be kept low;
- the potential for industrial action in response to firefighter redundancies;
- the potential impact of reducing running costs by closing fire stations, removing fire appliances and changing staffing arrangements at different types of fire stations;
- the possible options for reducing the running costs of the fire and rescue service;
- the recent investment in firefighter apprentices and the difficulty of balancing redundancies alongside that investment;
- the implications of introducing new fire stations which would necessarily involve a large amount of work and planning, and would have to be considered in relation to retained duty system crews who need to live or work in close proximity to the fire station;
- how RDS fire stations with poor availability and which attend the fewest incidents would be the ones that produce the least savings;
- the importance of acting decisively and of not creating uncertainty by embarking on a proposed course of action without being fully committed to it; and
- the importance of involving staff and representative bodies in discussions about redundancies or if any changes to contractual terms of employment are proposed;
- changes made to the Service since 2011/12 in order to save money;
- the difficulty in implementing significant savings (over £250k) by as early as the start of the 2019/20 year.

Various options for addressing the anticipated shortfall were considered by the Planning Working Group. The Group decided that it wanted the Executive Panel to consider each option at its May meeting together with the option of fully funding the shortfall through increased contributions from the local authorities.

PLANNING WORKING GROUP

DISCUSSION PAPER 19/03/2018

Typical pay costs (used for calculation estimates):

	Wholetime Duty System (WDS)*		Retained Duty System (RDS)**	
	24-hour shift	Day crewing	100% contract	75% contract
Watch Manager B	£48,082			
Watch Manager A	£45,148	£50,717	£6,959	£5,580
Crew Manager	£42,997	£48,459	£6,222	£5,314
Firefighter	£38,782	£44,034	£5,612	£4,793

*Includes on-costs (e.g. national insurance and pension contributions).

**Includes retainer and drill fees, but not incident fees.

Remove the 2nd WDS fire appliance from Wrexham:

From:	4 X 1 = 4 WM B	£192,329
Two appliances	4 X 3 = 12 CM	£515,965
	4 X 9 = 36 FF	£1,396,170
		£2,104,464
To:	4 X 1 = 4 WM A	£180,591
One appliance	4 X 2 = 8 CM	£343,977
	4 X 4 = 16 FF	£620,520
		£1,145,088

Savings:

WM (reduced pay)	-£11,738
CM (4 fewer employed)	-£171,988
FF (20 fewer employed)	-£775,650
	-£959,376

Estimated one-off cost of statutory redundancy payments (total):**£127,140 (excluding notice period)****OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)****Associated savings:**

Fleet (e.g. cost of maintenance and replacement of 1 fire appliance and on-board equipment).
 Staff (e.g. personal equipment, training, ICT and employment administration of 24 employees).

Legal implications:

Need to ensure fair processes for up to 24 firefighter redundancies (consultation, selection criteria, business grounds for redundancy, alternatives, etc) and for reducing the pay of 4 Watch Managers from B (higher paid) to A (lower paid).
 Need to ensure sufficient consultation with stakeholders ("Gunning principles").

Potential for:

- Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station);
- Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the removal;
- Predicted savings not achieved – e.g. only part-year savings achieved while discussions/challenges continue; pay increases negotiated nationally;
- Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and employment-related);
- Increased workloads associated with redundancy and pay reduction processes;
- Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest;
- Increased workloads associated with adapting mobilising and/or other protocols following the permanent removal of the appliance;
- Increased use of/reliance on the remaining appliances/operational equipment;
- Increased use of/reliance on the remaining crews at Wrexham and/or nearby fire stations (the closest ones are retained stations at Johnstown, Llangollen, Chirk and Buckley);
- Longer attendance times (additional time for RDS crew to arrive at the station);
- Heavier reliance on maintaining full RDS cover in the area (recruitment and retention challenge);
- Reduced Service capacity to undertake future (possibly new) duties/collaboration;
- (Criticism of) under-use of the fire station facility in Wrexham;
- Smaller pool of wholetime firefighters to progress into specialist/management roles.

Change the hours of the 2nd WDS fire appliance in Wrexham (to daytime only, not overnight):

From:	4 X 1 = 4 WM B	£192,329
Two appliances on 2:2:4	4 X 3= 12 CM	£515,965
	4 X 9 = 36 FF	£1,396,170
		£2,104,464
To:	4 X 1 = 4 WM A	£180,591
One appliance on 2:2:4 (four shifts)	4 X 2 = 8 CM	£343,977
	4 X 4= 16 FF	£620,520
		£1,145,088
and		
One appliance on 4 on 4 off (two shifts)	2 X 1 = 2 WM A	£90,296
calculated at 24-hour shift pay rates	2 X 2 = 4 CM	£171,988
	2 X 4 = 8 FF	£310,260
		£572,544
		£1,717,632
Savings:		
	WM (on the basis of 2 additional)	+£78,557
	CM (same number required)	£0
	FF (12 fewer employed)	-£465,390
		-£386,833

Estimated one-off cost of statutory redundancy payments (total):**£48,900 (excluding notice period)****OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)****Associated savings:**

Staff (e.g. personal equipment, training, ICT and employment administration of 10 employees).

Legal implications:

Need to ensure fair processes for making staff redundant (consultation, selection criteria, business grounds for redundancy, alternatives, etc) and for reducing Watch Manager posts from B (higher paid) to A. New untried “day staffing” contract would have to be negotiated. (Applying day crewing rates instead of the 24-hour shift rates to the day staffed pump would reduce the savings from £386,833 to £311,830).

Potential for:

- Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station);
- Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the change;
- Predicted savings not achieved – e.g. only part-year savings achieved while discussions/challenges continue; “day staffing” pay rates and allowances higher than assumed; national pay negotiations;
- Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and pay/employment-related);
- Increased workloads associated with redundancy and pay negotiation processes;
- Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest;
- Increased workloads associated with adapting mobilising and/or other protocols for night-time;
- Increased use of/reliance on the remaining crews at Wrexham and/or nearby fire stations at night (the closest ones are retained stations at Johnstown, Llangollen, Chirk and Buckley);
- Longer attendance times at night (additional time for RDS crew to arrive at the station);
- Heavier reliance on maintaining full RDS cover in the area at night (recruitment and retention challenge);
- Slightly reduced Service capacity to undertake future (possibly new) duties/collaboration;
- Smaller pool of wholetime firefighters to progress into specialist/management roles.

Change Deeside and/or Rhyl 24-hour shift to day staffing only (to retained cover only at night)

From:		
	4 X 1 = 4 WM A	£180,591
One appliance, 4 shifts	4 X 2 = 8 CM	£343,977
	4 X 4 = 16 FF	£620,520
		£1,145,088
To:		
	2 X 1 = 2 WM A	£90,296
One appliance, 2 shifts	2 X 2 = 4 CM	£171,988
calculated at 24-hour shift pay rates	2 X 4 = 8 FF	£310,260
		£572,544

Savings:

WM (2 fewer employed)	-£90,296
CM (4 fewer employed)	-£171,988
FF (8 fewer employed)	-£310,260
	-£572,544

Estimated one-off cost of statutory redundancy payments (total) for each station:**£88,509 (excluding notice period)****OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)****Associated savings:**

Staff (e.g. personal equipment, training, ICT and employment administration of 14 employees).

Legal implications:

Need to ensure fair processes for making staff redundant (consultation, selection criteria, business grounds for redundancy, alternatives, etc).

New untried "day staffing" contract would have to be negotiated. (Applying day crewing rates instead of 24-hour shift rates would reduce the savings from £572,544 to £497,542).

Potential for:

- Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station);
- Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the change;
- Complaints from firefighters who live far away from the fire station (relocation costs);
- Predicted savings not achieved – e.g. only part-year savings achieved while discussions/challenges continue; "day staffing" pay rates and allowances higher than assumed; national pay negotiations;
- Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and pay/employment-related);
- Increased workloads associated with redundancy and pay negotiation processes;
- Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest;
- Increased workloads associated with adapting mobilising and/or other protocols for night-time;
- Increased use of/reliance on the retained crews at Deeside and/or nearby fire stations at night (the closest ones are retained stations at Flint, Holywell, Mold and Buckley);
- Increased use of/reliance on the retained crews at Rhyl and/or nearby fire stations at night (the closest ones are retained stations at Prestatyn, St Asaph and Abergele);
- Longer attendance times at night (additional time for RDS crew to arrive at the station);
- Heavier reliance on maintaining full RDS cover in the area at night (recruitment and retention challenge);
- Slightly reduced Service capacity to undertake future (possibly new) duties/collaboration;
- Smaller pool of wholetime firefighters to progress into specialist/management roles.

Change one or more day crewed stations to retained duty system (RDS)

Day crewed stations are at Holyhead, Caernarfon, Bangor, Llandudno and Colwyn Bay. Each one has a day crewed appliance and a retained appliance. This calculation is based on removing the day crewed appliance and keeping the retained appliance as it is.

From:

	2 X 1 = 2 WM A	£101,435
One day crewed appliance, 2 shifts	2 X 2 = 4 CM	£193,838
Plus RDS appliance (not costed here)	2 X 4 = 8 FF	£352,273
		£647,546

To:

(RDS crew only, employment costs unchanged)

Savings per day crewed station:

	WM (2 fewer employed)	-£101,435
<i>Calculation does not take increased RDS</i>	CM (4 fewer employed)	-£193,838
<i>incident fees (paid per incident) into account</i>	FF (8 fewer employed)	-£352,273
		-£647,546

Estimated one-off cost of statutory redundancy payments (total) for each station:

£88,509 (excluding notice period)

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)**Associated savings:**

Staff (e.g. personal equipment, training, ICT and employment administration of 14 employees at each station).

Legal implications:

Need to ensure fair processes for making staff redundant (consultation, selection criteria, business grounds for redundancy, alternatives, etc).

Potential for:

- Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station);
- Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the change;
- Predicted savings not achieved – e.g. only part-year savings achieved while discussions/challenges continue, also retained incident fees (paid per incident attended) would increase;
- Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and pay/employment-related);
- Increased workloads associated with redundancy and pay negotiation processes;
- Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest;
- Increased use of/reliance on the retained crews at the station and/or at nearby fire stations;
- Longer attendance times than previously during day (additional time for RDS crew to arrive at the station);
- Heavier reliance on maintaining full RDS cover in the area during the day (recruitment and retention challenge, potentially more difficult during day when people are in primary employment);
- Reduced Service capacity to undertake future (possibly new) duties/collaboration;
- Smaller pool of wholetime firefighters to progress into specialist/management roles.

Remove day crewing allowances that are currently paid to day crewing firefighters

Day crewed stations are at Holyhead, Caernarfon, Bangor, Llandudno and Colwyn Bay. Wholetime day crewing pay rates and allowances are higher than wholetime 24-hour shift pay rates.

From:

	2 X 1 = 2 WM A	£101,435
One day crewed appliance, 2 shifts	2 X 2 = 4 CM	£193,838
Plus RDS appliance (not costed here)	2 X 4 = 8 FF	£352,273
		£647,546

To:

	2 X 1 = 2 WM A	£90,296
One day crewed appliance, 2 shifts	2 X 2 = 4 CM	£171,988
Plus RDS appliance (not costed here)	2 X 4 = 8 FF	£310,260
		£572,544

Savings per day crewed station:

	WM (allowances removed)	-£11,140
	CM (allowances removed)	-£21,849
	FF (allowances removed)	-£42,013
		£75,002

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)

Associated savings:

-

Legal implications:

Need to ensure fair processes for removing allowances. Impact assessments would be required to ensure no equality issues.

Potential for:

- Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station);
- Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the change;
- Predicted savings not achieved – e.g. only part-year savings achieved while discussions/challenges continued;
- Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and pay/employment-related);
- Increased workloads associated with pay negotiation processes;
- Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest.

Close a retained fire station and/or remove the RDS appliance from one of the eight wholetime stations			
There are 36 retained fire stations, and 8 wholetime fire stations that have a retained fire appliance in addition to a wholetime fire appliance. The wholetime fire stations are at Holyhead, Caernarfon, Bangor, Llandudno and Colwyn Bay (day crewed); Rhyl, Deeside and Wrexham (24-hour shift).			
From:	RDS	100% contract	75% contract
	1 X WM A	£6,960	£5,580
	2 X CM	£12,446	£10,628
	9 X FF	£50,517	£43,142
		£69,922	£59,391
To:	RDS	100% contract	75% contract
	0 X WM A	£0	£0
	0 X CM	£0	£0
	0 X FF	£0	£0
		£0	£0
Savings per RDS appliance removed/RDS station closed:			
In the region of £65,000 for retainer elements of pay (each would need individual calculation), but incident fees would still be payable to retained crews attending from elsewhere.			
OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER (EXAMPLES ONLY)			
Associated savings:			
Fleet (e.g. cost of maintenance and replacement of 1 fire appliance and on-board equipment for each one).			
Staff (e.g. personal equipment, training, ICT and employment administration of around 14 per RDS crew).			
Buildings (e.g. maintenance, heating and lighting, water and other rates).			
Legal implications:			
Need to ensure fair processes for making staff redundant (consultation, selection criteria, business grounds for redundancy, alternatives, etc. Impact assessments required to identify equality/Welsh language issues. Need clear criteria for selecting stations to close/crews to remove to avoid challenges to proposals.			
Potential for:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial action across whole area (not limited to affected station); • Local campaigning, press and social media interest in the closure/removal; • Differences of opinion about which RDS stations to close and which to keep; • Rural communities and large areas without a fire station; • Longer attendance times, including for incidents requiring more than one appliance to deal with the incident (effect on public safety and on safe systems of work for firefighters); • Predicted savings not achieved – perversely, because potential savings highest in RDS stations that are fully staffed and providing best rates of availability, they would need to be considered as part of the selection criteria to maximise the chances of actually achieving the predicted savings; • Legal costs associated with defending/implementing proposed changes (e.g. consultation-related and pay/employment-related); • Increased workloads associated with pay negotiation processes; • Increased workloads associated with managing public and media interest; • Increased workloads/costs associated with either selling off disused fire stations or maintaining the empty building in the meantime; • Reduced potential for local collaboration/community events in future and could end existing arrangements for sharing facilities with police and other partners; • Better retention rates as higher earnings for RDS crews attending more incidents OR worse retention rates as the increased activity more difficult to fit in with primary employment and other commitments. 			

Map of North Wales showing locations of fire stations

