

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

CONSULTATION

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION RUNNING FROM
June 21st to September 10th 2010**

[Additional background information is available from the
Authority's website www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk.]

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INTRODUCTION

Why does the Fire and Rescue Authority conduct this annual public consultation exercise?

We like to think that however good we are at what we do, we should always aim to do even better. We also like to think that what we're planning to do is in line with public expectations. After all, it's public money that pays for the Service.

We have put together a draft Improvement and Risk Reduction Plan 2009-12 but before we finalise our objectives for 2011-12, we would like to hear from residents, business people, service users, potential service users and anyone else with an interest in what we do. This document is an invitation to tell us what you think of fire and rescue services in North Wales.

Shouldn't we leave those decisions to the experts?

We don't ask you to make decisions about technical matters, but we do ask you about more general aspects that don't require specialist knowledge.

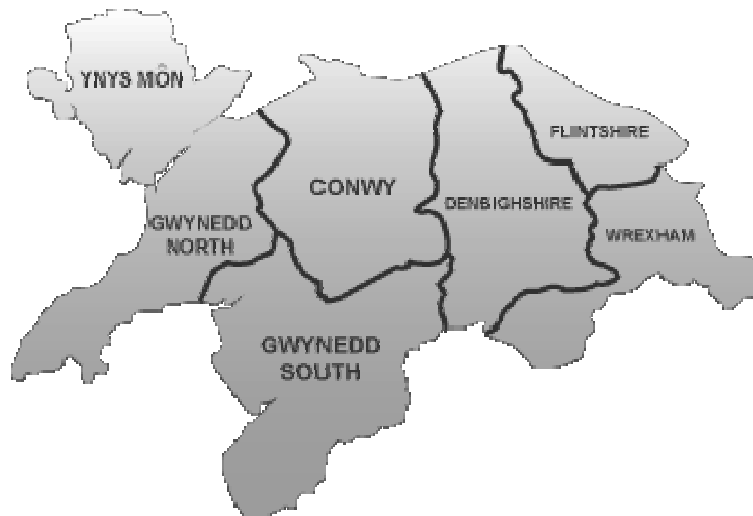
Everyone living, working or travelling in North Wales has an interest in the fire and rescue service's ability to deliver. So when we develop our plans we want to be confident that we're thinking along broadly the same lines as you are.

Big decisions about the Service will eventually come down to affordability and what the main priorities are— so we really do want to know what you expect to receive for the money we have available.

But don't people need to know a bit about the Service first?

That's true. There's a wealth of information on our website – www.nwales-fireservice.org.uk - but here is some basic information as a quick reference.

INFORMATION



Population	677,971
Domestic properties	304,412
Non-domestic properties	27,284

Free Home Fire Safety Checks delivered in 2009-10	32,093,400
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Resources

Fire stations open 24 hours	3
Day crewed ¹ fire stations	5
Retained fire stations	36
Employees	1,017
Fire engines	54
Annual budget 2010-11	£32,093,400

Incidents in North Wales in 2009-10

Fires	3,370
Non-fire special services	1,499
of which were road traffic collisions	769
People killed in fires	8
People injured in fires	69

¹ Day crewed fire stations are open between 12:00 midday and 10:00 p.m. and operate as retained fire stations outside these hours.

SECTION 1.

Is the Authority right to feel confident that it can improve?

Under current requirements², the Authority has a general duty to keep on improving what it does. This means making proper arrangements to enhance the services it delivers in terms of either their effectiveness, quality, availability, fairness, sustainability, efficiency, innovation or any combination of those things.

The Authority has numerous ways of making sure that it can achieve this. For example:

The Authority gets involved in:

- working closely with other organisations, in consulting groups of people and communities, and in engaging in new ways of working;
- its own annual processes of reviewing performance and developing detailed action plans to improve;
- national processes where other fire and rescue services are invited to assess particular Service functions;
- internal audits of specific areas; and
- external audits by the Wales Audit Office that look ahead at the start of the year at the likelihood that the Service will improve and look back at the end of the year at what progress was actually made.

The Authority has:

- formal planning and reporting procedures
- proper monitoring arrangements to oversee performance and spending throughout the year;

² The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, Section 2 and Section 5.

- robust reporting arrangements involving numerous committees, the Welsh Assembly Government and the public; and
- effective working relationships with sources of professional advice.

The Authority has:

- clearly defined responsibilities, training and codes of conduct for members;
- committees and structures that promote continuous improvement;
- policies and procedures to deal with failures (e.g. for reacting to complaints).

SECTION 2.

How is the Authority intending to improve and reduce risk as part of its strategy for 2011-12?

The Authority is expected to consult each summer on its intentions for the following financial year and beyond. At the end of the consultation period, it considers the comments received before finalising its plans in October. The cost of running the service and delivering the plans then needs to be built into an annual pot of money that we receive from the six county councils in North Wales at the start of the new financial year.

The Authority's specific improvement objectives are shown below:

Improvement Objective 1

We want to help to keep people and communities safe by preventing deaths and injuries from accidental fires in living accommodation.

We propose to do this through:

- a targeted programme of prevention activity and advice, with a particular emphasis on homes occupied by people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. For this we will use our own sources of information and staff, but collaboration with key to our continuing success and we will increasingly encourage other agencies to share information with us where that helps to keep people safe;
- a swift and even more effective emergency response when fires do occur, to give the best opportunity for rescuing anyone who has not been able to escape and limiting the spread of the fire. For this we will increasingly use the records we hold to help us to anticipate levels, times and locations of demand.

Improvement Objective 2

We want to help to minimise the risk of fires starting accidentally in non-domestic properties, so that normal activities can continue and the lives of people visiting and working there are not put at risk.

We propose to do this through:

- a carefully targeted programme of inspections of fire safety arrangements in non-domestic properties, using local intelligence and special computer technology to help with this;
- a swift and even more effective response when fires do occur to give the best opportunity for rescuing anyone who has not been able to escape and limiting the spread of the fire. This will be achieved through effective management, technical procedures and communications systems, supporting a highly skilled workforce with the necessary information, equipment and appliances.

Improvement Objective 3

We want to help to minimise the danger and damage caused by non-fire emergencies, such as flooding, road traffic collisions, and chemical incidents.

We propose to do this through:

- a swift and even more effective response when these events do occur, especially where lives are at risk. This will be achieved through effective management, technical procedures and communications systems, supporting a highly skilled workforce with the necessary information, equipment and appliances.
- using the records we hold and any other relevant sources of information to help us to anticipate levels, times and locations of demand.
- continuing to work with other agencies (e.g. the Environment Agency) to find ways to improve further.

Improvement Objective 4

To help tackle problems of deliberate fire-setting so that people, communities, businesses, the environment and the area's heritage are not put at risk.

We propose to do this through:

- collaborating with North Wales Police and other agencies to prevent arson and acts of vandalism by fire;
- working with particular groups and individuals to influence behaviour away from deliberate fire-setting.

Improvement Objective 5 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To focus on improving the sustainable development of the Authority by finding the right balance between the environmental, economic and social impact of providing a fire and rescue service.

We propose to do this through:

- the roll-out of an agreed action plan centred on consumption, climate change and energy, enhancing the environment and promoting sustainable communities.

Improvement Objective 6 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To become better at identifying and engaging with people who could find themselves socially and/or economically disadvantaged, so that we can enhance their sense of wellbeing and reduce the level of risk to their personal safety.

We propose to do this through:

- the roll-out of an agreed Single Equality Scheme that helps to protect people from being disadvantaged unfairly on account of their age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or Welsh/English language preference.
- developing a deeper understanding of the diversity of people living within our service area so that we are better equipped to protect and support them to live long and productive lives in safe and vibrant communities.

Improvement Objective 7 (Risk Reduction Plan)

To ensure that the Service's Business Continuity Planning and Management arrangements are as comprehensive and secure as they can be.

We propose to do this through:

- undertaking a reappraisal of how Business Continuity Planning resources and responsibilities are allocated so that we can place renewed emphasis on progressing with existing plans and continuously developing new plans;
- assigning equal importance to corporate and operational business continuity management so that we can be sure that no area has been overlooked and that recovery plans are robust.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Question 1

Do you think that the Authority is right to have confidence in its ability to keep on improving what it does?

YES/NO

If not, why do you think that?

Question 2

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 1 – preventing deaths and injuries from accidental fires in living accommodation?

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions for achieving this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 3

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 2 – ensuring that non-domestic premises are safe to visit and work in?

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 4

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 3 – minimising the

risk from non-fire emergency incidents.

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 5

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 4 – tackling the problem of deliberate fire-setting?

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 6

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 5 – sustainable development?.

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 7

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 6 – Single Equality

Scheme?.

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Question 8

Do you agree with Improvement Objective 7 – Business Continuity Management?

YES/NO

Do you agree with our proposed actions to secure this improvement objective?

YES/NO

Any additional comments:

Information about you

To help us to analyse the responses we receive and to improve our future consultations, we would be grateful for some information about you.

[Insert standard questions re respondent.]

THANK YOU.

HOW TO SEND IN YOUR COMMENTS

[Insert contact details, postal address, etc.]