# COMMISSIONERS FOR FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

**Papers for the Board of Commissioners Committee to be held on:**

## Thursday 13 February 2025, 1000hrs

**In person at South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Forest View Business Park, Llantrisant, CF72 8LX**

**Or**

**Remotely via MS Teams**
**Please ensure you join the meeting 15 minutes prior to meeting time**

**Meeting Link: https://bit.ly/4fO6CLL**

**Any issues please contact**
**01443 232000 and ask for Governance Support**

## A G E N D A

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

   Attendees are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024 and the Local Government Act 2000.

3. Chairperson's Announcements

4. To receive the minutes of;

   a. Board of Commissioners of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Committee Meeting held on Thursday 19 December 2024                    5

Signature of Monitoring Officer:

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Commissioners:**

| C | Foulkes |
|---|---|
| V | Randeniya |
| Baroness | Wilcox |
| K | Williams |

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**COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

**MINUTES OF THE COMMISSIONERS FOR
SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER AT 09:30
IN MEETING ROOM 08 AND REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**
Kirsty Williams, Chair
Vij Randeniya
Baroness Wilcox of Newport
Carl Foulkes

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** ACO Alison Reed – Director of People Services, ACFO Dean Loader – Director of Service Delivery, ACFO Brian Thompson - Director of Technical Services, T/ACFO Christian Hadfield – Director of Corporate Services, Lisa Mullan – Head of Finance, Procurement and Property, Dominic Mika – Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, Gabrielle Greathead – Interim Monitoring Officer, T/AM Mike Wyatt – Head of Risk Reduction, T/AM Matt Jones – Head of Operations, AM Neil Davies – Head of Training, Rhian Moore – Head of Communications and Engagement, GM Mike Evans, SM David Crews, Wayne Thomas – T/Head of Corporate Support, Christian Landeg-John – Advisor to Commissioners, Laura Grogan – Media and Communications Lead

1.      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were noted Chief Fire Officer Fin Monahan and Lisa Shroll. The Committee would like to pass on their condolences to the Chief Fire Officer on his recent bereavement and extended their condolences to Assistant Chief Fire Officer Dean Loader on his recent family bereavement.

2.      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

3.      **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair would like to congratulate Dean Loader and Brian Thompson for their appointments as Assistant Chief Fire Officers and are pleased that a permanent leadership structure has emerged.

**4. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF:**

**a. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER 2024**

The Commissioners agreed the minutes from Friday 25 October 2024 as a true record of discussion and no matters arising.

**b. PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25 JULY 2024**

The Commissioners agreed the minutes from Thursday 25 July 2024 as a true record of discussion and no matters arising.

**5. UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The current actions on the log will be discussed today and these will be closed off by Secretariat.

**6. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

**6.1 INTRODUCTION OF MARKET SUPPLEMENTS FOR CORPORATE ROLES TO ADDRESS RECRUITMENT PRESSURES.**

Alison Reed, Director of People Services presented a report and requested the Commissioners to introduce a payment supplement to support business critical areas that the Service is facing and an ask to amend our pay policy statement due to recent recruitment exercises where we have failed to recruit in business critical areas i.e. finance. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has undertaken research whereby employers are facing unprecedented pressures in the current market and stated the top 2 actions employers have taken to improve are an introduction of market supplements and increase of flexible opportunities. Our current work around flexible working will support this going forward.

Alison Reed advised market supplements is good practice, and if we proceed there will be strict governance around it. It has been taken to the accredited representatives and a conversation was had surrounding the practicalities, funding and how this was going to happen. A technical note was issued by the Local Government Association which states that we need to have clear governance arrangements around introducing market supplements to ensure compliance in terms of the law on equal pay.

Alison Reed drew the Committee's attention to Appendix 1 contained in the report papers which shows an application that would be made by the recruiting manager and require a robust business case which is assessed by senior leaders. Alison Reed would like to look further into retention and bring this back to the Committee in the future. An updated Pay Policy Statement will be updated and brought to the Board of Commissioners in March for sign off and will be presented to the People Committee prior.

For transparency, Lady Wilcox declared that she is a Vice President of the Local Government Association as an honorary post and does not take interest in any policies that is referred to in this report. Lady Wilcox commented that this is a thorough piece of work and acknowledges the pressures the Finance team has faced and counsel that the Unions are fully informed, so they have no issues in what we are trying to do. Carl Foulkes is interested in views on when we review the policy and if we would look to review after 12 months to see the impact and the costs and to bring it back to this environment for review to see what the impact has been. Carl Foulkes also highlighted that generally people do look for jobs in the Bristol area and looking at the market in England feels important. Carl Foulkes also raised that we need to think about the Conflict of Interest on the panel, and to consider the make up of the panel for transparency. Alison Reed would like to bring the policy back for review through the People Committee and then up to the Board of Commissioners so there is transparency on what we implemented and when we review the policy. Vij Randeniya queried if we have a mandatory review date of policies when implemented and to consider the timeframe. The Pay Policy Statement will be the annual look but as a People Committee piece, it will be an annual review of the framework and the transparency element.

**RESOLVED THAT**

6.1.1    The Commissioners agreed that the policy will be taken forward.

6.2.1    Alison Reed to bring a supplementary paper to the Board of Commissioners in March with an emphasis on retention strategy within the Pay Policy Statement and further updates will go through the People Committee.

## 7.    REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

## 7.1    YOUR HEALTH DELIVERY GROUP UPDATE

David Crews, Vice Chair of the Your Health Delivery Group provided a presentation on our mental health and wellbeing working group which sits

under Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee. The group has a core membership and a governance structure and is focused on making improvements in the Service as well as enhancing the national picture. David Crews outlined the groups' progress so far and their future priorities; one being is to create booklets to hand out at passing out parades for personnel's families to understand what firefighters could experience; this initiative is being supported by the Fire Fighters Charity. The NFCC has a wellbeing framework but this is not published yet. David Crews will be looking at child and young persons death, and with this understanding, we can better support our staff on what incidents they are attending and our communities.

Kirsty Williams was pleased to hear of the work and passion that goes into this. Vij Randeniya queried the comparative data and would like to understand more about this. Dean Loader, Director or Service Delivery has put a separate for the comparative data, however only 4-5 Services had responded to their Freedom of Information request, however there are improvements for us to make. Dean Loader suggests a mid-year report on the recommendations and actions.

Carl Foulkes thought that the booklets are a really good idea and commented there are initiatives with Welsh Government that we can use; David Crews stated he is linked with Welsh Government with looking at data sets. Welsh Government will be publishing their suicide prevention strategy in the new year. Lady Wilcox expressed she was pleased to see this initiative and suggested to look at The Princes Trust for grant funding. Kirsty Williams commented that this is an integral part of the retention strategy for people to be well looked after in the workplace.

## RESOLVED THAT

7.1.1    The Commissioners noted the Your Health Delivery Group update.

7.1.2    ACFO Dean Loader to provide a mid-year report on the recommendations and actions for our comparative data on near misses and trend data.

## 7.2    SWFRS AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM (AFA) RESPONSE CHANGE UPDATE

Mike Wyatt, Head of Risk Reduction provided an update on the progress of the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Response Change. There has been a significant amount of work and we are on track for our go live date on 6 January 2025. Feedback from alarm receiving senders such as extra care and sheltered housing has led to a change request where the

Service will visit at all times. The group has re-evaluated their approach and now aligned with Mid and West Wales due to Joint Fire Control having different procedures. Training has been ongoing with Control.

We have updated our go live date for hospitals to 7 April 2025 to allow time for staff training, procedural updates and amendments and any exemption requests. The Service will monitor and evaluate in January. It was agreed that one final letter will be sent to all stakeholders before the go live date.

Kirsty Williams is reassured that our Joint Fire Control are able to handle calls appropriately with different policies in place. Brian Thompson reiterated the point of listening to concerns and adapting policies appropriately and we will move into the monitor and review phase and listen to feedback on where we can make improvements. The Commissioners acknowledged the work that Mike Wyatt and his team has put into this over the months.

**RESOLVED THAT**

7.2.1    The Commissioners noted the report.

**7.3    THEMATIC REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL TRAINING**

Following the Thematic Review report published by the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor a delivery group for Training was formed. Neil Davies, Head of Training provided an update on all the recommendations under the Training thematic. The aim of the team and operational leads is to rewrite the training calendars for all locations in the Service which will be bespoke to their community which is pertinent to them. There is a paper going to the Commissioners in early new year with further detail. Neil Davies is leading on recommendation 2A and B and they are 65% complete on this with a view to publish this in 2025. The team are on their way on producing recommendation 4 and are around 70% on their development of micro teachings; some of the more intricate teachings will take longer to develop as there are different techniques to consider. Recommendation 4 and 5 link in with Operational Effectiveness and Cardiff Gate Training and Development Centre are testing new hoses. Our Operational Risk Management team will provide some financial data to upgrade all our fleet and training. Recommendation 5 and 6 are around 40% complete.

Carl Foulkes queried if we are likely to see capacity issues in certain station with training; Neil Davies has already identified insufficient hours and will be looking to strip some training out of rural areas; there will also be simplified calendars for our On Call stations.  A discussion

was had on the impact of micro teachings and how we will monitor this. Neil Davies advised the feedback they had was that the maintenance of skills videos were too onerous and difficult to keep concentration. Micro teachings need to be more inclusive for everyone's learning style. We will look to monitor the impact by completing staff surveys and discussing these with the end users for feedback. Lady Wilcox applauded that we are moving to micro teachings and agrees this learning method is more effective and requested financial details on this which Neil will supply in his next report for the hoses.

**RESOLVED THAT**

7.3.1      The Commissioners noted the report.

## 7.4.    GRENFELL THEMATIC REVIEW

Mike Wyatt, Head of Risk Reduction reported concerns with capacity in progressing the work with the Grenfell review. There is a small team working on this but progress is limited due to the team working on this outside of their day to day role. The work has been ongoing since 2019 and has only made 49% progress. Mike Wyatt is requesting that a team is created with the sole aim to achieve the actions and objectives of recommendation 1 and 2.

Kirsty Williams appreciated the honesty that progression is slow and that support is required to move forward. Vij Randeniya would like to understand more of the challenges that we are facing; Mike Wyatt has a live tracker that he can provide which monitors progress to date. Brian Thompson explained there will be 3 people dedicated to this team who will be proactive in progressing the actions once they are released in capacity. There will be an update at the next Board of Commissioners meeting with timelines and what has been achieved so far.

**RESOLVED THAT**

7.4.1      The Commissioners note the report and support the request for a dedicated team to be set up to progress the Grenfell recommendations.

7.4.2      Brian Thompson to bring forward at the next Board of Commissioners Committee additional information to outline, and for Commissioners to receive assurance that resources have been linked to the work and a timeline to monitor how performance is improving.

**7.5    BROADENING THE ROLE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN WALES UPDATE**

Matt Jones, Head of Operations provided an update on broadening the role, focusing on wholetime firefighters. There are elements of the training review in this. There has been engagement with staff to ensure they are taken on the journey and are informed. Matt Jones noted that the Chair of the FBU is a part of the board and work is done in social partnership. A draft proposal for time blocking has been set up to enhance station based activity and we are looking to initiate this on a trial basis to 10 wholetime stations in February 2025 for a period of 6 months. The key focus is the blocks of time. Matt Jones is mindful of the concerns and the impact on morale if we go for all 4 recommendations and is confident that we will be able to deliver on recommendation 1, 3 and 4 by summer 2025 and this will allow us the flexibility to accommodate the work that Neil Davies is doing in the training review. We will be using the monthly updates to operational crews as an opportunity to communicate changes and concerns and communicate in collaboration with the FBU that we are looking to develop an operation that is future fit. Vij Randeniya observed if this can be lined up with the training report as it will be pertinent to look at future reporting with the reviews all meshing together.

**RESOLVED THAT**

7.5.1      The Commissioners noted the report.

**7.6    OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW UPDATE**

Mike Evans, Group Manager is leading on the operational effectiveness thematic and provided the Commissioners with a full briefing on the work last week. The review is intertwined with the other 3 reviews. The overview of this report is to put timeframes and direction on how we are dealing with the recommendations from this report. Mike Evans has already made progress on recommendation 2 and 3 he is working on producing a document that provides a level of structure of the activities that are being undertaken and the document is in draft format and is being reviewed at the moment. There is training planned for Q1 of 2025 to give the operation crews and tactical officers our approach to this and once this is underway then recommendation 4 and 5 can be progressed. The report outlines the timeframe from when all the recommendations started as we are under tight deadlines since the report was produced and he has put in a similar reporting structure to Mike Wyatt which enables them to see the progress percentage as they are working through them and he will feed this into future updates.

Carl Foulkes observed as there is a lot of cross over and so we will

need to consider how we are going to manage the different work streams with limited resource. Vij Randeniya noted that we will need to look at the resource and look at if its normal business or a BAU and we are cognizant of the budget. Mike Evans hopes to have this submitted by the budget date so he will have a clearer direction.

**RESOLVED THAT**

7.6.1    The Commissioners noted the report.

7.6.2    Wayne Thomas to consider an appropriate reporting mechanism for all the thematics.

**7.7    SERVICE CULTURE STATEMENT**

Our Culture Statement has been developed with SLT, Commissioners and Trade Unions and on 2 December 2024 we launched Our Values, Our Mission workshop to the Middle Leaders in the Service. We have received a high rate of responses and we will follow this up when we release our Value, Misson and Vision. Lady Wilcox is pleased to hear that the responses have come from staff both operationally and from corporate and wanted assurance on how we will implement this across the Service. Per the Middle Leaders engagement sessions, the managers will be expected to cascade the information and talking with their teams on their responsibilities on the Core Code of Ethics and we are asking staff to provide examples how it relates to them when they have done that to reconfirm their understanding.

Carl Foulkes raised we have our 10KV session on 20 January and asked if we are considering how this will build in to support this work. Carl Foulkes asked for us to consider how we re-engage with the partnerships that distanced themselves from us once we have published our Culture Statement and Our Vision, Values and Mission. Kirsty Williams questioned how we recruit to the code, introduce new recruits to the code and how do we use the code as a part of our appraisal process. Dominic Mika stated this will be included in the Leadership project under the leadership development piece and will cross-reference into our Talent Management project that covers appraisal, promotion and development. Our Training department are looking to increase our initial recruit course to cover leadership, value, ethics and the benchmark behaviours. In terms of recruitment, Kirsty Williams is interested in recruiting people into the Service with the right values and wanted to understand how we plan to do this. Alison Reed is bringing back to SLT a review of our recruitment process in 2025 and we can flip how we are recruiting from technical upfront to values and behaviours. A conversation will be had at SLT with starting points on what we are

looking for from our new future firefighters. Kirsty Williams concluded that recruiting to the right values is fundamental to the technical performance of the Service.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> 7.7.1    The Commissioners noted and affirmed their support for the Culture Statement.

> 7.7.2    The Commissioners noted the plans to promote and embed the Statement and its aspirations in the review of the Service's vision, mission and values, and in policies, procedures and guidance.

## 7.8. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES' DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Gabrielle Greathead, Interim Monitoring Officer wanted to formally have the paper noted. The draft annual report has been shared and the changes for the 2025-26 financial years and the proposed salaries has been outlined.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> 7.8.1    The Commissioners noted the report.

## 7.9 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE 2024/2025

The February Board of Commissioners Committee has a busy schedule. We also have our first Strategic Change, Culture and Transformation Board in February. Vij Randeniya observed that there will be a lot of work with HMI and for us to consider how we feed this into the Board of Commissioners.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> 7.9.1    The Commissioners noted the Forward Work Programme with the caveat that this is subject to change.

## 8. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no items that the Chairperson deemed urgent.

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**COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
HELD ON FRIDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 2024
IN MEETING ROOM 8, SWFRS HQ OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**
Baroness Wilcox of Newport (Chair)

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** CFO Stuart Millington, ACO Alison Reed – Director of People Services, T/ACFO Brian Thompson – Director of Technical Services, Dominic Mika - Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, Lisa Mullan – Head of Finance, Procurement and Property, T/AM Matt Jones – Head of Operations, Wayne Thomas – Temporary Head of Corporate Support, Gabrielle Greathead – Interim Monitoring Officer, Mr S Gourley – TIAA Internal Auditor

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**2. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chair announcements.

**3. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 JULY 2024**

Lady Wilcox agreed the minutes from 26 July 2024 as a true record of discussions and no matters arising.

Lady Wilcox wanted to note the Commissioners were pleased with the number of applicants for the Head of Communications and Engagement role and interviews will be commencing on Monday 23 September.

**4. UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

There were no outstanding actions to be discussed.

## 5    REPORTS FOR DECISION

### 5.1    REVENUE MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

The Head of Finance, Procurement and Property provided an overview of the revenue monitoring report which provides details of the annual revenue budget and associated information for the year ending 31 March 2025. This is the first monitoring report we have received this financial year and the first update since budget setting in February.

Lisa Mullan presented the main pieces of the spends outlined in the report. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the budget  and what the underspend position is. The report is presenting there is a £1.7m overspend on the annual budget. There was a discussion around the On-Call budget and retention and the work needed to re-shape the team within the current establishment and looking at the positions. Matt Jones explained that there is work to be done around the future of on-call around South Wales and how it aligns with national changes. Lady Wilcox stated this is a really good position for us and keen to follow national practice. Lisa Mullan explained that they won't be adding to the costs at this time.

Lisa Mullan explained most of the corporate variances are included within appendix 4 which is a new request from the Commissioners in terms of presenting an overview on what the unbudgeted spend is relating to the Commissioners decisions and the Transformation Programme and extra on improving the organisation. Lisa Mullan noted that the pay awards haven't been agreed and may affect the forecasting. Lady Wilcox expressed it is important to note that there is a lot of changes going on for the Service with intervention, we have had to bear the costs of these without any grant funding unlike with other interventions.

Lisa Mullan further highlighted points within the report. Appendix 3 provides a grant overview and Lisa Mullan drew Lady Wilcox's attention to overspends on national work for National Resilience and USAR. Lisa Mullan hopes this will alter when this is brought back to the Committee next time. CFO Millington provided clarity around the National Resilience position and the fixed budget we receive from Welsh Government. We should be managing our assets within the budget that we are given by Welsh Government. CFO Millington will look at this further to bring this back in line by the end of the financial year.

**RESOLVED THAT**

**5.1.1** The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service noted the content and agreed the report.

## 5.2    CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

The Head of Finance, Procurement and Property provided an overview of the capital monitoring report which provides details of the capital budget, transactions to date and the forecast year end position for the year ending 31 March 2025. Appendix 1 provides the budget information and funding analysis how we pay for it. In summary we have £19m budget for the year which is set against the outturn. Appendix 2 provides information on the grant funding that we have secured this year. The biggest element is the property such as New Inn refurbishment.  We are in the similar position with the Penarth station with a major project going on after Christmas. Lady Wilcox is not overly concerned about slippage as she understands that timescales take longer. CFO Millington provided an update on the Monmouth co-location with WAST. After having a recent conversation with the CEO of WAST, they have decided to go with a refurbishment of their site and so we will have to include a refurbishment of this into our future budget.

This is a new project aimed at managing contamination risks. Brian Thompson thanked the Property team for supporting the project and the work they have done so far. It is an ongoing project and we need to think about drill towers. CFO Millington stated that drill towers are an expensive structure, multipurpose towers would be a beneficial asset and fit for future purposes. We will have an inspection to weigh the cost of remedial works. It was discussed that the Fleet and Engineering work will be done by Chris Temby and that will inform our annual budget. There is a 6 month wait to get a new fleet and this can be difficult when it comes to a new financial year to the time we accept the delivery. Lisa Mullan touched on our ICT budget. CFO Millington raised that there are systems we have that operate independently and are often generic. We are looking to develop our systems across the Service that will be picked up as a part of the Digital Transformation piece.

Lady Wilcox added that she expects moving forward that when a new facility has opened, then an invite to the Council Leader of that area should be sent to attend the opening.

**RESOLVED THAT**

**5.1.2** The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service noted the budget and progress of capital schemes,

and approved the alterations identified in appendix 1 and associated movements in funding.

## 5.3    2023/24 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The Head of Finance, Procurement and Property presented the results of treasury management activities for the year ending 31 March 2024, in accordance with the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24. The report is one of three statutory reports that is brought to the Board and provides information on the borrowing outturn. Lisa Mullan explained that the new borrowing will be at a higher rate next year. Lisa directed the Board to the indicator report in appendix 1 and explained we have limits on borrowing as well as a CFR limit which we are under by £13m. Lady Wilcox noted that the report gives a detailed account and follows all the statutory aspects of running a public service to ensure we are in line with Welsh Government and wider government activities.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> **5.1.3** The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service note the annual treasury management review for 2023/24 and approve the prudential and treasury indicators set therein.

## 5.4    FINANCE TEAM RESTRUCTURE

CFO Stuart Millington provided an overview of the plan to restructure the finance team to realign capacity and expertise with Service needs. It is proposed a £33k increase to support additional salary costs to support the structure of the Finance team, to enable us to meet statutory deadlines for reporting and resilience. CFO Millington wishes to pay tribute to the Finance team for their highly complex work that is being produced. Lady Wilcox agreed that and is pleased to see the report and hopes this begins to help address issues in a small team that has produced a significant amount of work. Lady Wilcox expressed that if the proposal does not work that it is revisited quickly to find another solution.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> **5.4.1** The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service agreed a £33k increase to the base budget to support additional salary costs.

**5.4.2** The Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service approve the immediate implementation of the plan to restructure the team.

**5.4.3** Lady Wilcox added a further revision that there needs to be a revision quickly if the proposal is not working.

## 6. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

## 6.1 AUDIT WALES CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Wayne Thomas, Temporary Head of Corporate Support explained that the certificate of compliance has come from Audit Wales as a result of the Annual Improvement Plan that we published on 31 October 2023. It is to demonstrate that the plan is in line and compliant with the act, where we discuss continuous improvement, significant arrangement to undertake improvement objectives and we look at our performance standards that we are committed to going forward. The 2024 Annual Improvement Plan will be brought to the October Board of Commissioners for approval to be published.

**RESOLVED THAT**

**6.1.1** The Commissioners note the certificate of compliance.

## 6.2 PERFORMANCE REPORT – STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 2023/2024

Matt Jones, Temporary Area Manager presented the Strategic Performance Indicators for Q1 2023/24. The purpose of the report is to consider the organisation's performance against the indicators to support performance monitoring and continuous improvement within the Service.

Matt Jones provided a brief explanation of the indicators where we measure activity and statistics around the performance and the projected outcome of 2023/24. Some main points to highlight were that we have a lower rate of fires which demonstrates the positive work that is being done across the organisation in our Community Safety and Risk Reduction teams. CFO Millington added that whilst we have had a lower rate of fires, the seasonal weather has played a part due to less wildlife fires and flash flooding we have experienced this year, although we continue with our prevention work.

We have seen an increase in our Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) of 2% which is down to faulty apparatus. There has been a good reduction in Road Traffic Collisions and there is ongoing collaborative work that our operational staff are doing with education in schools and with our partner agencies.

The number of Other Special Service Calls were lower which is positive. There has been 12% increase of calls to assist with WAST. CFO Millington has met with the CEO of WAST regarding the number of calls crews are attending. CFO Millington expressed that it is not that we don't want to assist, however crews need to be prepared mentally when they attend the calls. Matt Jones is working on a piece of work for CFO Millington to present to the CEO of WAST on these challenges. Matt Jones advised the number of deaths arising from all fires and accidental fires were higher. We are always trying to get up to date information when working with those greatest at risk in our communities. There has been a higher percentage with dwelling fires which were confined within the room of origin. Matt Jones and Dean Loader will create a report to bring to the Board of Commissioners will work with our Statistics team to develop a piece of work to understand the spreading of fires better and to re-engage and train our crews when recording the outcomes of these incidents.

**RESOLVED THAT**

> **6.2.1** Commissioners note the Service's Strategic Performance Indicator totals for Q1 2024/2025.

## 7. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE 2024/2025

CFO Millington advised we are on track with the Forward Work Programme and it gives an accurate reflection of what items are to come next.

## 8. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no further items of business to consider that Lady Wilcox deemed urgent.

| UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS |
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| Minute No | Item | Action | Leading Officer | Current Status: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 08/24 6.1 | Your Health Delivery Group | ACFO Dean Loader to present an update on Your Health to the Board of Commissioners in 3 months. | ACFO Dean Loader | This has been included in the agenda for the December 2024 Board of Commissioners meeting. **19/01/2024 ACTION COMPLETED. CLOSED** |
| 08/24 6.1 | Health and Safety comparison data | ACFO Dean Loader and Head of Corporate Services Wayne Thomas to look at comparison Health and Safety data between SWFRS and other Wales Fire and Rescue Services. | Wayne Thomas | The data will be brought back to the Board of Commissioners meeting in December 2024 to be presented as a part of the Your Health Delivery Group update. **19/01/2024 ACTION COMPLETED. CLOSED** |

| 12/19 6.1 | Market Supplements For Corporate Roles To Address Recruitment Pressures | ACO Alison Reed to provide a supplementary paper for the Board of Commissioners in March on retention strategy. | ACO Alison Reed | On Agenda for March 2025 Meeting. |
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| | | ACO Alison Reed to review the make up of approval panels for market supplements to avoid conflict of interest. | ACO Alison Reed | |
| 12/19 6.1 | Pay Policy Statement | ACO Alison Reed to update the Pay Policy Statement and to bring this to the Board of Commissioners Committee in March, following the People Committee for sign off | ACO Alison Reed | On Agenda for March 2025 Meeting. |
| 12/19 6.2 | Health and Safety comparative data | ACFO Dean Loader to provide a mid-year report on progress giving the statistics on Health and Safety comparative data in the March Board of Commissioners Committee. | ACFO Dean Loader | Will be included in Forward Work Programme for Board of Commissioners in Financial Year 2025/26. |

| 12/19 7.4 | Request for additional support for Grenfell review | ACFO Brian Thompson to bring additional information to outline and provide reassurance that resources have been aligned to the work and a timeline to monitor how performance is improving. | ACFO Brian Thompson | Paper to be presented to Strategic Change, Transformation and Culture Committee on 16 May 2025 before being brought back to Board of Commissioners if required. |
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| 12/19 7.6 | Thematic Review reporting mechanism | Wayne Thomas to consider the uniformity of reporting and to discuss with ACFO Brian Thompson and Area Managers the best way to provide the information and assurance via report papers to the Board of Commissioners. | Wayne Thomas | New report template is being presented to ELT in February 2025 and will be implemented from 01 April 2025. |

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AGENDA ITEM NO 6

**Reports for Decision**

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**　　　　AGENDA ITEM NO 6.i
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　13 FEBRUARY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

**REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET DETERMINATION FOR 2025/26**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE TREASURER, LISA MULLAN
REPORT PRESENTED BY THE TREASURER, LISA MULLAN

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**SUMMARY**

The report includes the recommended revenue and capital budgets for 2025/26 together with the responses to the consultation exercise undertaken.

Commissioners are asked to approve the proposed revenue budget of £101,349,438 representing an average 5.75% increase over that set for 2024/25. This increase assumes that the Welsh Government will transfer additional National Insurance Contribution (NIC) funding to constituent councils in the final local government settlement. Commissioners should note that without this change, the underlying like for like increase in the revenue budget would be 4.08%.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Commissioners approve the proposed revenue and capital budgets included within the report.

2. That the Commissioners delegate authority to the Treasurer to make appropriate adjustments to the revenue budget and fire levies if NIC funding is paid directly to Commissioners by specific grant.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1　The lead Commissioner for the Finance & Audit Committee (FAC) approved a draft budget for consultation at its 19 December 2024 meeting. This was the basis for consultation with councils who were invited to meet and discuss finances and delivery of fire services. Additionally, a formal letter setting out the budget increase and the impact for individual councils was forwarded to Chief Executives and S151 officers, who were invited to formally respond.

## 2.  ISSUE / PROPOSAL

## Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Historical Context

2.1     The MTFS provides historical context to the budget and will be updated with cost projections when service plans become clear.

2.2     For the current financial year, Commissioners set a budget of £95.8m and are mindful of the resources available to its constituent councils both from the Welsh Government and local taxpayers.

2.3     The following chart shows the historical trend of increases / reductions in the revenue budget compared to the resources available to councils from the Welsh Government and Council Tax.  The impact of the cost-of-living crisis and problems forecasting pay and price inflation, has caused significant turbulence in the last three financial years with the Fire Authority setting a budget significantly lower than comparable funding increases in local councils in 2022/23, resulting in the need to catch up in subsequent years, and the added complication of Welsh Government grant withdrawal and redirection.



**Comparison of Annual Percentage UA and SWFRA Budget Changes**
Note - 2023-24 includes £3m Scape Grant Funding change to UAs

■ Annual UA Budget Change    ■ Annual SWFRA Budget Change

Cumulatively, increases in fire budgets remain lower than comparative levels in constituent councils over the same period, i.e. fire 37.33%, councils 45.38%.

**Comparison of Cumulative Percentage UA and SWFRA Budget Changes**

■ Cumulative UA Budget Change    ■ Cumulative SWFRA Budget Change

## Local Government Settlement

2.4     The provisional Local Government settlement for the next financial year indicates an increase of an average of 4.3% on a like for like basis.

2.5     Along with the resources the Welsh Government provides to constituent councils from revenue support grants (RSG) and non-domestic rates (NNDR), the councils also raise council tax to meet the demands on their budgets.  There is a historical pattern of increasing the yield from council tax of 4% to 5% and there is no indication that this broad trend will discontinue.  In 2024/25 this had the effect of adding 1% to the average aggregate external funding (AEF) provided by the Welsh Government.  If replicated in 2025/26, combined council yields will average 5.3% which does not include additional NIC funding.

## Population Change

2.6     Total population data agreed by the Welsh Government Distribution Subgroup for use in the Welsh Government Settlement is the basis on which the Fire budget is distributed and funded by the ten constituent councils in the South Wales area.  Commissioners have no power to use anything other than population as the basis of the distribution as this is set out in legislation.

2.7     The table below illustrates the change in council contributions based on the new population data and without budget uplift.  It is important to note

that councils which see increases in population generally benefit from a proportionately more favourable Welsh Government settlement and vice versa.

| | Name | A<br>2024/25<br>Cont'n<br>Budget<br>£ | E (D-C)<br>Chg in<br>Pop | G<br>Cont'<br>Budget<br>2024/25<br>(update pop)<br>£ | I (H-B)<br>Proport'n<br>Change<br>% | J (G-A)<br>Cont'n<br>Change<br>(update pop)<br>£ | K<br>Cont'n<br>Change<br>(update<br>pop)<br>% | L<br>Cont'n<br>Budget<br>2025/26<br>£ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Cardiff | 23,141,321 | 11,447 | 23,559,992 | 0.44% | 418,671 | 1.81% | 24,914,295 |
| 2 | Newport | 10,044,538 | 2,122 | 10,051,402 | 0.01% | 6,864 | 0.07% | 10,629,188 |
| 3 | Vale of Glamorgan | 8,302,264 | 1,241 | 8,276,429 | -0.03% | -25,835 | -0.31% | 8,752,184 |
| 4 | Rhondda Cynon Taf | 14,865,240 | 2,160 | 14,815,172 | -0.05% | -50,068 | -0.34% | 15,666,795 |
| 5 | Monmouthshire | 5,839,049 | 686 | 5,809,404 | -0.03% | -29,645 | -0.51% | 6,143,347 |
| 6 | Torfaen | 5,775,239 | 559 | 5,738,577 | -0.04% | -36,662 | -0.63% | 6,068,449 |
| 7 | Blaenau Gwent | 4,167,800 | 342 | 4,137,569 | -0.03% | -30,231 | -0.73% | 4,375,410 |
| 8 | Bridgend | 9,088,632 | 607 | 9,014,184 | -0.08% | -74,448 | -0.82% | 9,532,347 |
| 9 | Caerphilly | 10,954,048 | 307 | 10,838,238 | -0.12% | -115,810 | -1.06% | 11,461,254 |
| 10 | Merthyr Tydfil | 3,662,109 | -290 | 3,599,273 | -0.07% | -62,836 | -1.72% | 3,806,170 |
| | Total | 95,840,240 | 19,181 | 95,840,240 | 0.00% | -0 | | 101,349,438 |

2.8 These changes at council level will be reflected in the overall average increase in contributions set by Commissioners.
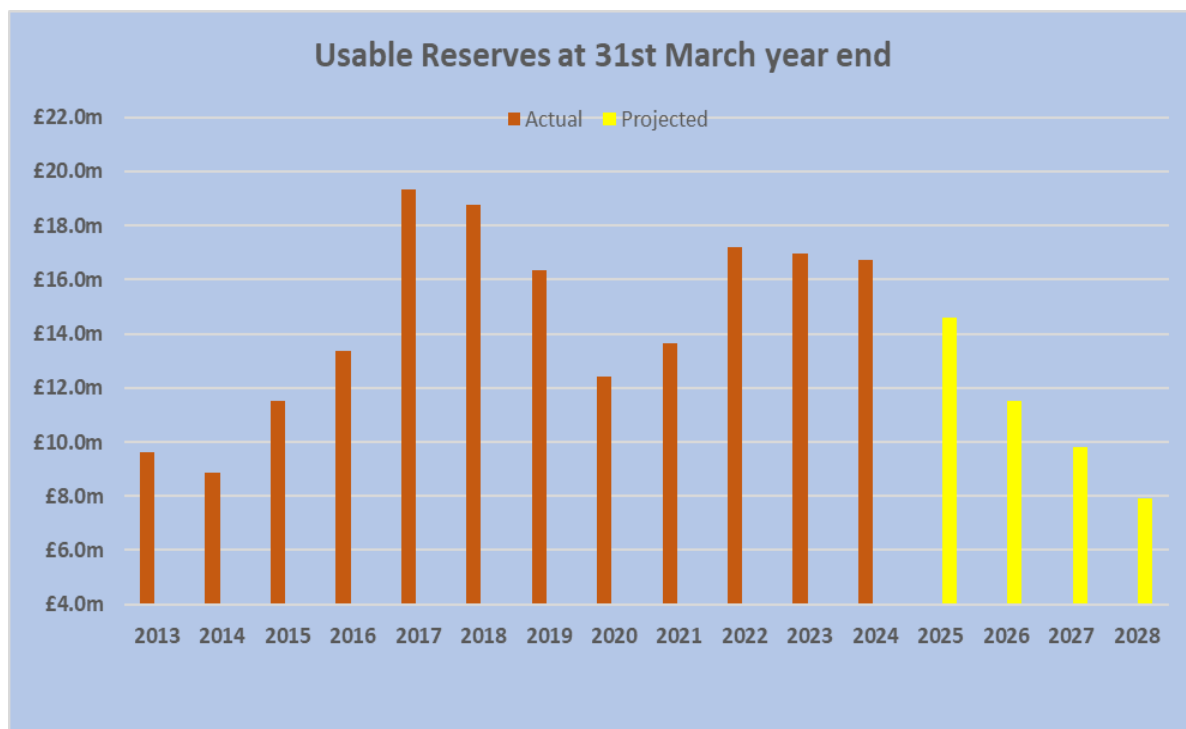
**Budget Planning Considerations**

2.9 These are discussed in detail in the budget consultation report presented 19 December 2024 to the Finance & Audit Committee.

2.10 The organisation is in a period of flux and is working to stabilise its functions amid an extraordinary period of change. Consequently, the 2025/26 budget is set on a business-as-usual basis current crewing, that is staffing and models of delivery, whilst the Service journeys through its transition. Welsh Government thematic reviews are ongoing and yet to complete, with the focus of these on firefighter training, broadening the role of the firefighter, high-rise - following the Grenfell tragedy, and operational effectiveness. Completion of the reviews will bring further change and no doubt, a requirement for investment as we work to improve and reconfigure services. Several project structures are in place to deliver outcomes from the reviews, the confines of the Morris Report and the development of wider transformation and efficiency plans.

2.11 The temporary cost of the above structures will be serviced from reserves for 2024/25 and 2025/26 with an estimated revenue overspend of £1.1m and £732k respectively. This approach is unsustainable and the establishment of an achievable and sufficiently detailed efficiency

programme that clearly links with various change and transformations projects and the MTFS is absolutely necessary.

2.12   In deliberations on the budget, Commissioners have considered the level of its current and future reserves which are outlined below.



Usable Reserves at 31st March year end

2.13   The downward trajectory includes business-as-usual deployment, the temporary cost of improvement and capital investments to achieve longer term sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion, and fire fighter health, priorities.   As funding is not provided to Commissioners for capital investment, deployment of reserves will assist in reducing the capital financing budget over the longer term.

| Reserve | Balance 31/3/24 | Use/Tfr 24/25 | Balance 31/3/25 | Use/Trf 25/26 | Balance 31/3/26 | Use/Trf 26/27 | Balance 31/3/27 | Use/Trf 27/28 | Balance 31/3/28 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| General | 3,000 | | 3,000 | | 3,000 | | 3,000 | | 3,000 |
| General reserves equate to 3.14% of 24-25 revenue budget | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Change Management | 3,438 | -1,101 | 2,337 | -1,432 | 905 | -366 | 539 | | 539 |
| Required to fund forecast overspend in 23/24 plus budget reductions in 24/25 | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Carbon Reduction | 3,000 | | 3,000 | -3,000 | 0 | | 0 | | 0 |
| Reserve maintained to fund projects as identified | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Contamination Facility | | | 0 | 2,900 | 2,900 | -1,000 | 1,900 | -1,500 | 400 |
| Committed to complete the contamination facility @ CG | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Equality, Diversity & Inclusion | 2,000 | | 2,000 | -577 | 1,423 | | 1,423 | | 1,423 |
| Reserve maintained to fund projects as identified | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Equipment Renewals | 1,982 | -140 | 1,842 | -559 | 1,283 | 100 | 1,383 | 100 | 1,483 |
| Reserve used to fund equipment renewals and one off costs avoiding impact on revenue budget | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| PFI Equalisation | 2,727 | -321 | 2,406 | -381 | 2,025 | -442 | 1,583 | -503 | 1,080 |
| Fully committed to match reductions in grant v expenditure to mitigate impact on revenue budget | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| FireLink CMA | 425 | -425 | 0 | | 0 | | | | 0 |
| Fully committed to fund the repayment of service credit, subject to national dispute | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Managed Underspends | 44 | -44 | 0 | | 0 | | | | 0 |
| Fully committed to meet known liabilities | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Joint Control Lease | 100 | -100 | 0 | | 0 | | | | 0 |
| Fully committed to meet known liabilities | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| Total | 16,716 | -2,131 | 14,585 | -3,049 | 11,536 | -1,708 | 9,828 | -1,903 | 7,925 |

2.14 Commissioners must be particularly mindful of the availability, commitment and sustainability of usable reserves in accordance with the Financial Management Code. The above table shows that £2.1m of reserves are committed in the current year;

- £1.1m cost of improvement and pay award differences,
- £1m business-as-usual use of PFI equalisation, Equipment Renewal, Joint Public Service Control reserves.

A further £3m is estimated in 2025/26;

- £0.7m cost of improvement,
- £1.4m capital investment (as above),
- £0.9m business as usual use of PFI equalisation and Equipment Renewal.

The planning assumption for 2026/27 is for projects to cease, as they will have delivered or become business as usual, with costs being met through the annual budget setting process.

The introduction of a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), on which work has already commenced, will provide a roadmap for future investment and will be the lynchpin for meaningful, longer term financial planning.

**Welsh Government Grant Funding Announcements**

2.15  The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government indicated in her Provisional Local Government settlement letter, that the 4.3% average council settlement, does not include additional NIC funding and this will be payable during the year.  The indications are funding will be paid from the Welsh Government to councils and Fire Authorities in Wales should access this via the fire levy funding mechanism.  This is a consistent approach which has been adopted by fire finance professionals across Wales.

2.16  NIC funding will have the effect of reducing the fire levy if fully funded as follows.

| Name | A<br>2024/25<br>Cont'n<br>Budget<br>£ | N<br>Fire Levy<br>Change<br>% | O<br>Without<br>NIC<br>% |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cardiff | 23,141,321 | 7.66% | 5.96% |
| Newport | 10,044,538 | 5.82% | 4.15% |
| Vale of Glamorgan | 8,302,264 | 5.42% | 3.75% |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | 14,865,240 | 5.39% | 3.73% |
| Monmouthshire | 5,839,049 | 5.21% | 3.55% |
| Torfaen | 5,775,239 | 5.08% | 3.42% |
| Blaenau Gwent | 4,167,800 | 4.98% | 3.32% |
| Bridgend | 9,088,632 | 4.88% | 3.23% |
| Caerphilly | 10,954,048 | 4.63% | 2.98% |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 3,662,109 | 3.93% | 2.29% |
| | | | |
| **Total** | **95,840,240** | **5.75%** | **4.08%** |

2.17  If NIC funding is paid direct to Fire Authorities, the below redistribution can take place.

| Council | Re-distributed NIC Funding |
|---|---|
| Bridgend | 148,209 |
| Vale of Glamorgan | 136,079 |
| Cardiff | 387,367 |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | 243,587 |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 59,178 |
| Caerphilly | 178,199 |
| Blaenau Gwent | 68,029 |
| Torfaen | 94,352 |
| Monmouthshire | 95,517 |
| Newport | 165,262 |

**Proposed Budget 2025/26**

2.18   As discussed earlier, population changes impact directly on the level of budget contributions from individual councils.  The proposed budget if approved will result in the following contributions. The supporting budget is set out in Appendix 1.

| Name | A  2024/25 Cont'n Budget £ | E (D-C)  Chg in Pop | G  Cont' Budget 2024/25 (update pop) £ | J (G-A)  Cont'n Change (update pop) £ | L  Cont'n Budget 2025/26 £ | M (K-A)  Increase £ | N  Fire Levy Change % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cardiff | 23,141,321 | 11,447 | 23,559,992 | 418,671 | 24,914,295 | 1,772,974 | 7.66% |
| Newport | 10,044,538 | 2,122 | 10,051,402 | 6,864 | 10,629,188 | 584,650 | 5.82% |
| Vale of Glamorgan | 8,302,264 | 1,241 | 8,276,429 | -25,835 | 8,752,184 | 449,920 | 5.42% |
| Rhondda Cynon Taf | 14,865,240 | 2,160 | 14,815,172 | -50,068 | 15,666,795 | 801,555 | 5.39% |
| Monmouthshire | 5,839,049 | 686 | 5,809,404 | -29,645 | 6,143,347 | 304,298 | 5.21% |
| Torfaen | 5,775,239 | 559 | 5,738,577 | -36,662 | 6,068,449 | 293,210 | 5.08% |
| Blaenau Gwent | 4,167,800 | 342 | 4,137,569 | -30,231 | 4,375,410 | 207,610 | 4.98% |
| Bridgend | 9,088,632 | 607 | 9,014,184 | -74,448 | 9,532,347 | 443,715 | 4.88% |
| Caerphilly | 10,954,048 | 307 | 10,838,238 | -115,810 | 11,461,254 | 507,206 | 4.63% |
| Merthyr Tydfil | 3,662,109 | -290 | 3,599,273 | -62,836 | 3,806,170 | 144,061 | 3.93% |
| | | | | | | | |
| Total | 95,840,240 | 19,181 | 95,840,240 | -0 | 101,349,438 | 5,509,198 | 5.75% |

*The red line denotes those councils falling either side of the 5.75% average

2.19   In consideration of the current uncertainty surrounding NIC funding, Commissioners are asked to delegate powers to the Treasurer to vary the approved budget if for any reason, additional grant funding is paid directly to the Commissioners.

**Consultation**

2.20 Since January, the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and operational Assistant Chief Fire Officers, have met with constituent councils to share as much information about the budget position as possible together with the Service's plans and operations.  At the time of report writing, eight council meetings had taken place.

2.21 We have also written to the ten constituent councils asking for formal feedback on the draft budget to be included as part of this report.

2.22 Formal consultation responses are included in Appendix 3 to the report.

## 3.  IMPLICATIONS

3.1 **Community and Environment**

    3.1.1 Where specific projects or proposals impact the revenue budget, those decisions are reflected in appropriate assessments undertaken and reported at the time of consideration.

3.2 **Regulatory, Strategy and Policy**

    3.2.1 Commissioners must comply with the regulatory requirements around budget setting and approval including the timescales set out in legislation.

3.3 **Resources, Assets and Delivery**

    3.3.1 The budget underpins the Service's asset and resource base and its Service Delivery.

## 4.  EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Financial projections and assumptions are included within budget reports.

4.2 Non-financial risks will be included and monitored through the Service's risk management system and will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and F&A Committee.

4.3 The main financial risks to the organisation include:

    o    The level of inflation for the coming year, in particular pay increases,
    o    The uncertainty of Welsh Government grant funding,
    o    Overspending and budget management,
    o    Identification and delivery of efficiency savings,

- o   Managing capital investment,
- o   Meeting liabilities that may be identified and / or fall due, and
- o   The cost and risk of utilising agency personnel to deliver meaningful/statutory financial services

4.4   The last two years have introduced much change and the last twelve months have introduced an increased level of instability through loss of resource, loss of corporate memory and increased temporary staffing arrangements.  Informed decision making by parties with the ability to make and influence spending decisions, is essential in ensuring the continued financial health of the organisation.

## 5.  RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   That Commissioners approve the proposed revenue and capital budgets included within the report.

5.2   That the Commissioners delegate authority to the Treasurer to make appropriate adjustments to the revenue budget and fire levies if NIC funding is paid directly to Commissioners by specific grant.

| Contact Officer: | Lisa Mullan Treasurer |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |

| Appendices | |
| --- | --- |
| Appendix 1 | Revenue Budget 2025/26 |
| Appendix 2 | Capital Programme 2025/26 |
| Appendix 3 | Consultation Responses |

# REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET DETERMINATION FOR 2025/26
## Appendix 1
## REVENUE BUDGET 2025/26

| | 2024/25 Total Budget | 2025/26 Total Budget | £ Growth/ Savings | % Growth Savings |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Employee Costs** | | | | |
| Salaries, NI & superann. | | | | |
| Whole time uniformed staff | 36,532,110 | 38,907,861 | 2,375,751 | 6.5% |
| On Call fire fighters | 7,109,730 | 7,549,276 | 439,546 | 6.2% |
| Auxillary Reserve | 311,548 | 334,485 | 22,937 | 7.4% |
| Control staff | 1,593,613 | 1,695,340 | 101,727 | 6.4% |
| Non-uniformed staff | 10,668,165 | 11,739,113 | 1,070,948 | 10.0% |
| Members expenses | 86,380 | 87,793 | 1,413 | 1.6% |
| Overtime & Other Allowances | 2,347,903 | 2,449,028 | 101,125 | 4.3% |
| Apprenticeship Levy | 260,000 | 260,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| | **58,909,450** | **63,022,897** | **4,113,447** | **7.0%** |
| **Pensions** | | | | |
| FF Scheme - employers contibutions | 11,542,491 | 11,784,042 | 241,550 | 2.1% |
| LGP Scheme - employers contributions | 1,724,007 | 1,750,868 | 26,861 | 1.6% |
| LGPS strain costs | 38,281 | 40,908 | 2,627 | 6.9% |
| FF Ill health pensions | 962,724 | 1,053,201 | 90,477 | 9.4% |
| | | | | |
| NHS Reimbursements, Class 1 NI, Scheme Admin | 65,160 | 65,160 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Eye Tests | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Travel & Subsistence | 426,000 | 426,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| | **73,669,113** | **78,144,076** | **4,474,963** | **6.1%** |
| **Premises Related Expenses** | | | | |
| Repair & maintenance | 1,250,972 | 1,244,972 | -6,000 | -0.5% |
| Grounds maintenance | 42,000 | 42,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Cleaning | 738,180 | 788,360 | 50,180 | 6.8% |
| Rates etc. | 1,207,500 | 1,298,062 | 90,562 | 7.5% |
| Lease/Rent | 18,000 | 18,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Water | 43,992 | 43,992 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Energy | 2,102,000 | 2,435,049 | 333,049 | 15.8% |
| Security | 115,200 | 115,200 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Telephones/Communications | 1,656,613 | 1,209,780 | -446,833 | -27.0% |
| | **7,174,457** | **7,195,415** | **20,958** | **0.3%** |
| **Training Expenses** | | | | |
| Training | 1,812,299 | 1,919,022 | 106,723 | 5.9% |
| Seminars/Conferences | 22,300 | 22,800 | 500 | 2.2% |
| | **1,834,599** | **1,941,822** | **107,223** | **5.8%** |
| **Supplies & services** | | | | |
| Furniture | 141,099 | 124,099 | -17,000 | -12.0% |
| Operational equipment | 509,205 | 509,205 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Other equipment | 312,960 | 315,900 | 2,940 | 0.9% |
| RTC (Scrap Vehicles) | 68,500 | 68,500 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Fitness/training equipment | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Equipment repair & maintenance | 119,900 | 177,025 | 57,125 | 47.6% |
| Fire Ground consumables (foam) | 20,000 | 28,000 | 8,000 | 40.0% |
| I.C.T. | 2,056,654 | 2,152,192 | 95,538 | 4.6% |
| Clothing & Uniforms | 721,694 | 709,071 | -12,623 | -1.7% |
| Stationery | 22,640 | 25,940 | 3,300 | 14.6% |
| Printer & print consumables | 13,000 | 13,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Postage & freight | 26,222 | 26,222 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Advertising (vacancies, etc.) | 181,400 | 177,900 | -3,500 | -1.9% |
| Text books, Reference | 11,800 | 11,800 | 0 | 0.0% |
| T.V. Licences | 7,600 | 7,600 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Licences | 99,607 | 100,607 | 1,001 | 1.0% |
| Literature / subscriptions | 218,293 | 218,493 | 200 | 0.1% |
| Competition entry fees | 15,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Spoilt meals | 1,200 | 1,200 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Fire ground provisions | 12,300 | 12,800 | 500 | 4.1% |
| Catering supplies (canteen) | 43,270 | 43,350 | 80 | 0.2% |
| Presentations & awards | 14,800 | 15,148 | 348 | 2.4% |
| Insurances | 1,178,380 | 1,353,130 | 174,750 | 14.8% |
| | **5,845,524** | **6,156,182** | **310,658** | **5.3%** |
| | | | | |
| **Transport** | **1,724,590** | **1,666,590** | **-58,000** | **-3.4%** |
| | | | | |
| **Contracted Services** | **1,352,970** | **1,377,270** | **24,300** | **1.8%** |
| | | | | |
| **Capital costs / leasing** | **5,305,190** | **5,870,981** | **565,791** | **10.7%** |
| | | | | |
| | **96,906,443** | **102,352,337** | **5,445,894** | **5.6%** |
| | | | | |
| **Income** | **-1,066,203** | **-1,002,899** | **63,304** | **-5.9%** |
| | | | | |
| **NET EXPENDITURE** | **95,840,240** | **101,349,438** | **5,509,198** | **5.75%** |

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**REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET DETERMINATION FOR 2025/26**
**Appendix 2**
**CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

| | Total £000 |
|---|---|
| **PROPERTY** | |
| *STATION REFURBISHMENTS* | |
| NEW INN | 6,100 |
| PENARTH | 1,000 |
| MALPAS | 100 |
| CWMBRAN | 30 |
| TOWER WORKS PACKAGE | 200 |
| ON-CALL (OCDS) STATION PROJECT | 2,400 |
| EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION | 577 |
| CARDIFF GATE DECONTAMINATION PROJECT | 100 |
| | **10,507** |
| **VEHICLES** | |
| WATER LADDERS | 2,289 |
| WATER CARRIER | 700 |
| FORKTRUCK | 58 |
| SPECIAL RESCUE UNIT | 675 |
| | **3,722** |
| **ICT** | |
| Station Mobilising | 220 |
| HQ Switch stacks | 200 |
| | **420** |
| | |
| JOINT CONTROL SYSTEM (joint scheme MWWFRS) | 500 |
| **TOTAL** | **15,149** |
| | |
| Borrowing | 13,272 |
| Earmarked Reseerves | 1,377 |
| Joint Funding | 250 |
| Capital receipt | 50 |
| CERA | 200 |
| | **15,149** |

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**South Wales Fire and Resue Service Headquarters.**

**Date :** 29 January 2025

**Lisa Mullan**

**<u>SWFRA – Budget and Contributions 2025/26 Consultation Feedback from Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC</u>**

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your proposed budget and levy for 2025/26, we would like to provide the following observations for your consideration.

1. **Additional Costs associated with increased National Insurance Contributions (NIC's)**

   Your letter dated 30th December 2024 did not make it clear that your proposed levy included the costs associated with increased NIC's. As you are aware there is a commitment for such costs to the public sector to be funded by UK Government and WG have undertaken to provide onward the funding which they receive for this purpose.
   It would be helpful if you could set out in your future correspondence the level of levy both including and excluding these costs. This will enable more transparency.
   With regard to the mechanism for the funding to be provided (either to LA's or directly to Fire Authorities) it would be helpful if this could be confirmed with WG. I have also raised directly with WG. In the event of any change to the assumed mechanism for the levy setting purposes then we would clearly expect that to be adjusted for in-year.
   As you will be aware there does remain some uncertainty as to the level at which funding will be provided and in the event of any shortfall then we would expect SWFRA to deal with this yourselves and not look to local government to subsidise any shortfall.

2. **The Local Government Settlement**

   Your report and presentation to us provided context around how your levy is set having regard to local government settlement levels. Whilst this is a helpful comparator, I would emphasise that the headline level of the settlement does not give regard to the significant funding pressures which local government is facing, most notably in social care and across our schools

**Dewiswch iaith a diwyg eich dogfen | Available in alternative formats and languages**

Croesawn ohebu yn Gymraeg a fydd gohebu yn y Gymraeg ddim yn arwain at oedi. Rhowch wybod inni beth yw'ch dewis iaith e.e Cymraeg neu'n ddwyieithog.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh and corresponding with us in Welsh will not lead to a delay. Let us know your language choice if Welsh or bilingual.

.uk/dataprotection

hyderus o ran anabledd CYFLOGWR

disability confident EMPLOYER

For example this Council's draft budget for 2025/26 will see an increase £37M, of which £32M is allocated to pressures within social care and our schools.

3. **Efficiency and Budget Reduction Options**

Your budget report (19th December 2024) included a section "Work on Mitigation" *which resulted in* :
- the assumptions underpinning the budget -£839k vacancy factor.
- the bids submitted by service areas -£1.2m rationalisation.
- options for funding costs other than from the base budget -£565k.
- savings that can be secured both this and next year -£100k.

This does not give a sense of focused efforts being made to identify and deliver efficiency and budget reduction options. Your presentation helpfully provided more substance in this regard but it would be helpful if this could be incorporated into your public reporting to provide that assurance.
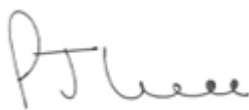
4. **Medium Term Financial Plan and Reserves**

We note that you do not have an up to date MTFP.
We also note that a number of reserves have no movement projected for 2024/25 but do note that there are planned uses in 2025/26 and 2026/27. Your report comments that "some reprioritisation can be achieved" but does not explain further.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Mee
Chief Executive, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

**South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS)  Budget and Contributions 2025/26**

**Consultation Response - MTCBC**

**Increased National Insurance Contributions -** Your letter dated 30th December 2024 did not make it clear that your proposed levy included the costs associated with increased NIC's.  Going forward, and to aid transparency it would be helpful if future correspondence and presentation to Council explicitly breaks down the levy and clearly reports costs both including and excluding the additional costs associated with the increased National Insurance Contributions.

Section 4.1 of the report of the Treasurer to [Finance and Audit Committee held on the 19th December 2024](#) states

> *"Financial support for NIC will be forthcoming to councils as part of the supplementary budget with advice to Fire Authorities to include in the annual fire levy".*

South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority response to MTCBC Director of Finance e-mail dated 21st January 2025 is welcomed and we now expect that any changes to this position will be reflected via an in-year adjustment to the levy.

**Comparison – Fire Levy v Local Government Settlement -** Presentation delivered to Council provided useful performance data and context.

Comparing the increase in fire levy with local government settlement levels should be caveated as there are significant cost pressures, particularly across services such as Education and Social Services (Adults and Children).

**Medium Term Financial Plan** – Note that no MTFP has yet been published.  It would be useful if this can be published to aid local authority forward financial planning.

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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**                AGENDA ITEM NO 6.ii
                                                                          13 FEBRUARY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

**APPROVAL OF SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE'S DRAFT GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR DECISION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION
REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT, WAYNE THOMAS.

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**SUMMARY**

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Draft Governance Framework sets out the committee structures and ethical principles for how decisions that affect the organisation are made at the appropriate levels, and how this structure will support the delivery of the Service's vision and improvement objectives.

The framework will be reviewed periodically and promoted across the Service as part of the organisation's commitment to transparency and collaboration.
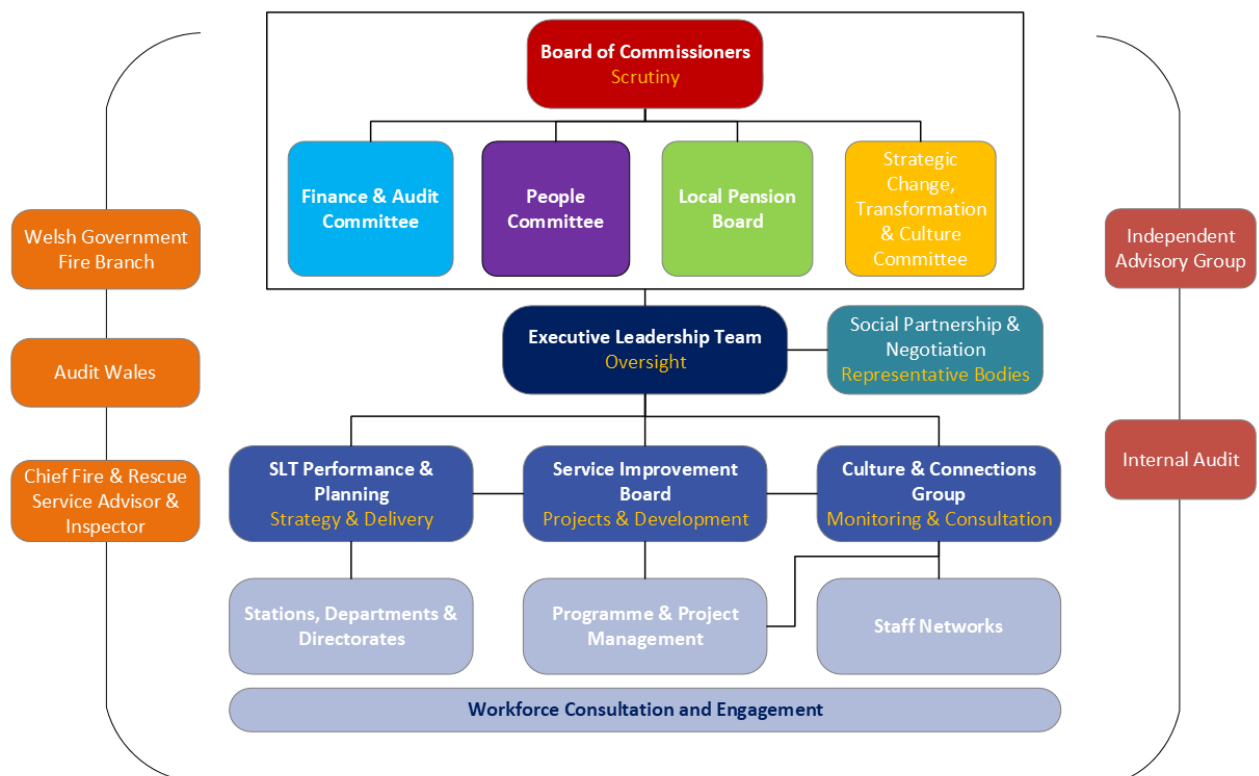
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Commissioners review and approve South Wales Fire and Rescue
   Service's Draft Governance Framework (Appendix 1).

---

## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1    Governance is the system that ensures proper and legitimate functioning of an organisation. This includes the practices, processes, policies, and procedures that guide activities and hold organisations to account. Good governance ensures that decisions and activities are driven by a framework of authority and accountability, to deliver the best outcomes for communities and stakeholders. The organisation's Draft Governance Framework (Appendix 1) sets out the structure for the Service and how it supports delivery of the Service's vision and improvement activities. Although focussed at a strategic level, governance impacts activities at all levels for:

- Effective risk management
- Better decision making
- Transparency and accountability
- Assuring the interests of stakeholders
- Responsible management of resources

1.2　The framework provides an overview of key legislation that the organisation must consider when making decisions before highlighting the importance of accountability to the Service – Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales are not directly elected nor accountable to Welsh Government or the National Assembly for Wales, therefore FRAs need to establish and sustain independent accountability mechanisms.

1.3　The Service has adopted the NFCC Core Code of Ethics, which sets out five ethical principles that supports ethical decision-making.

1.4　The Draft Governance Framework highlights how the Service is committed to involving and engaging all stakeholders in planning to ensure decisions taken are in the best interests of staff, communities, partners and other interested parties. A range of consultation activities are undertaken internally and externally which continue to be developed and will be documented in the Service's upcoming Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

1.5　A new and robust governance structure has been proposed within the document, which has been developed in collaboration with the Commissioners for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the Monitoring Officer – this supports the Service at all levels in demonstrating effectiveness, accountability and drive for improvement at all levels and across all activities. There is a "golden thread" that runs from our stations and teams through all levels of leadership to the scrutiny provided by the Board of Commissioners.

1.6   The "Scrutiny" functions are provided by Committees, which are chaired by the Commissioners, while "Delivery Oversight" is provided by the Senior Leadership Team and through internal meetings and delivery groups.

## 2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL

2.1   Good governance is essential to ensuring the Service operates as an effective organisation. It is essential that effective decision making can be demonstrated, and the underpinning policies and processes are considered, responsible and ethical. This is distinct from day-to-day management and deployment of resources where these regulations and policies are applied.

2.2   The Draft Governance Framework sets out the mechanisms which are used to assure good governance at all levels and planned areas for development, as the organisation continues its journey to excellence. References to other frameworks and plans have been included as the governance structure and activities are built on positive practice in other areas, particularly regarding consultation and engagement.

2.3   Following the approval of Appendix 1, the Service's Performance Management Framework, Project Management Framework, and Internal Corporate Governance Structure will be drafted and/or reviewed.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1   **Community and Environment**

3.1.1   Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act – Strengthening the governance arrangements of the Service will ensure that there are effective mechanisms to measure and scrutinise whether resources are used efficiently and proportionally, which will contribute to "A Prosperous Wales".

3.2   **Regulatory, Strategy and Policy**

3.2.1   Legal – The Draft Governance Framework highlights various areas of key legislation that support the need for a published governance framework to be agreed and implemented by the Service.

3.2.2   Financial – Effective governance will result in more effective scrutiny and accountability for decisions around expenditure.

3.3   **Resources, Assets and Delivery**

Delivery – The Draft Governance Framework will assist in more effective decision making at all levels in the service, which in turn will support service delivery.

## 4  EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1    Publishing a governance framework for the Service will ensure that all decisions and planned activities are driven by a framework of authority and accountability, to deliver the best outcomes for communities and stakeholders.

4.2    The Service's Draft Governance Framework (Appendix 1) sets out the mechanisms used to assure good governance at all levels and planned areas for development as the organisation continues its journey to excellence.

4.3    The Governance Framework highlights how the Service is committed to involving and engaging all stakeholders in planning to ensure decisions taken are in the best interests of staff, communities, partners and other interested parties.

4.4    Following the approval of the Draft Governance Framework, the terms of reference for each of the committees referenced within the document will be finalised.

## 5  RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1    That Commissioners review and approve South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Governance Framework (Appendix 1).

| Contact Officer: | Wayne Thomas Temporary Head of Corporate Support | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | | |
| **Background Papers** | **Date** | **Source / Contact** |
| None | | |

| Appendices | |
| --- | --- |
| Appendix 1 | South Wales Fire and Rescue Service's Draft Governance Framework |

## Draft Governance Framework

Publication date:          xx/xx/2025

Review frequency:          Annual

Document owner:

**Version control:**

| Version No | Details | Approved by |
|---|---|---|
| 0.1 | Draft document – author SA 17/07/2024 | |
| 0.2 | Updates to governance structure – SA 12/11/24 | |
| 0.3 | Updates to meeting administration – WT 19/12/24 | |

# Contents

References to SWFRS documents and frameworks are underlined

- Scheme of Delegations
- Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Strategic Planning Framework
- Risk Management Framework
- Project Management Framework – *in draft*
- Performance Management Framework – *in draft*
- Internal corporate governance structure – *in draft*

# Introduction

Good governance is essential to ensuring South Wales Fire and Rescue Service operates as an effective Service that our staff, communities, and stakeholders can have confidence in. We must be able to demonstrate that our decision making and the underpinning policies and processes that guide us are considered, responsible and ethical. This is distinct from day-to-day management and deployment of resources where these regulations and policies are applied. Simply put, good governance is about doing the right thing while good management ensures we do things right.

Our Governance Framework sets out the mechanisms we use to assure good governance at all levels and the areas we plan to develop as we continue our journey to excellence. It is a reference to our procedures, their purpose, and the difference they make, always built on our values and referencing our objectives. References to other frameworks and plans have been included as our governance structure and activities are built on positive practice in other areas, particularly with regard to consultation and engagement to underpin participation and transparency in decision making, and our work to ensure equity through our Strategic Equality Plan and inclusion actions.

The framework will be regularly reviewed and promoted across the Service as part of our commitment to transparency and collaboration.

Dominic Mika
Director of Strategic Change and Transformation

# The context and purpose of this framework

## What is governance?

Governance is the system that ensures proper and legitimate functioning of an organisation. This includes the practices, processes, policies, and procedures that guide activities and hold us to account.

Good governance ensures that decisions and activities are driven by a framework of authority and accountability, to deliver the best outcomes for our communities and stakeholders. This document sets out the structure for South Wales Fire and Rescue Service ("the Service") and how it supports delivery of our vision and improvement across the Service. Although focussed on a strategic level, governance impacts activities at all levels for:

- Effective risk management
- Better decision making
- Transparency and accountability
- Assuring the interests of stakeholders
- Responsible management of resources

## Key legislation

Responsibility for fire and rescue services in Wales was devolved to the National Assembly for Wales by the **Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004** which required the preparation of a Fire and Rescue National Framework setting out strategic priorities.

The **Fire and Rescue National Framework 2016** ("the Framework") was brought into effect by the Fire and Rescue Services (National Framework) (Wales) Order 2015 and sets out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in Wales together with guidance on discharge of their functions. The overriding aim of FRAs is stated as "To keep people, communities, businesses and the environment in Wales safe from fires and other hazards as effectively and efficiently as possible."

FRAs are responsible for:

- delivering their core functions, as set out in legislation, in an efficient and effective manner, and based on a sound analysis of risk;
- having regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework in carrying out their functions;
- making arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of their functions;
- having regard to the safety, welfare and development of their staff;
- providing information, reports and returns to the Welsh Government on their functions as required.

Governance and accountability are stressed in the Framework, identifying the importance of communication, transparency, scrutiny and the separation of leadership and scrutiny to ensure the Service and FRA are appropriately held to account, and identifying that there is no formal separation between executive and scrutiny functions as all decisions are formally taken in the name of the FRA. Detailing roles and relationships, the Framework confirms Welsh Government will maintain dialogue with FRAs and other parties, principally by the Fire and Rescue

Consultative Forum and the Improvement Planning Steering Group, both of which will meet three times a year.

The **Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009** – Part 1 Guidance to Fire and Rescue Authorities (Sept 2015) sets out the improvement planning duties for FRAs.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** specifies seven well-being goals and requires public bodies, including FRAs, to set objectives for meeting these goals in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The **Socio-Economic Duty 2021** requires public bodies in Wales to consider how strategic decisions affect those who live in less favourable social and economic circumstances.

For public bodies in scope, including FRAs, the **Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023** complements the WFGA and Socio-Economic Duty in four key principles:

- Social Partnership – consulting and working with trade unions or, where there is no recognised trade union, other staff representatives when setting well-being objectives and taking strategic decisions on their delivery.
- Socially Responsible Procurement – requires publication of a procurement strategy that ensures consideration of factors other than cost in public spending, including supply chain management.
- Fair Work – substituting 'fair work' for 'decent work' in the Prosperous Wales well-being goal focuses on providing conditions that enable a healthy, inclusive environment that is attentive to well-being.
- Sustainable Development – taking account of the impact of decisions taken today for the future.

On 6th February 2024, the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership made an oral statement to the Senedd confirming direction that the functions of South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority were to be exercised by four named Commissioners, ending on a date to be directed by Welsh Ministers, as set out in **The South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024**, made 5th February 2024.

## Accountability

The Framework notes that FRAs are autonomous bodies with an expectation for clear vision in medium to long term planning informed by "honest and objective self-assessment." There is no formal separation between executive and scrutiny functions within an FRA, internal structures must clearly separate members' leadership and scrutiny roles and effectiveness in these roles must be developed and supported.

FRAs in Wales are not directly elected nor accountable to Welsh Government or the National Assembly for Wales, therefore FRAs need to establish and sustain their own accountability mechanisms. This includes with local communities to understand risk and scope for future progress.

As FRAs are funded by requiring Local Authorities to pay contributions towards their full next expects (set out in FRS (Fire and Rescue Service) Combination Orders), the Framework notes the importance for constituent authorities to fully understand the FRA's objectives and performance

and have opportunity to scrutinise them. This extends to public accountability, ensuring citizens can make informed contributions to plans.

## Governance and decision making

## Constitution

The Welsh Government under the direction of the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership used powers under Section 29(5) and (6) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to remove the governance functions of the Fire Authority and transfer them to four appointed Commissioners.[1] Archived documents can be viewed here.

In addition to discharging the duties of the FRA, the Commissioners terms of reference, set by Welsh Government, are to:

- Implement of all the recommendations of the review of SWFRS culture and values within deadlines stipulated in it.
- Establish and oversee a new senior management team and related processes that are untainted by the failings identified in the report. As a first step, they will appoint a Chief Fire Officer and, as necessary, other senior staff necessary to contribute fully and effectively to the FRA's recovery.
- Establish and implement a process to identify grievance cases arising during the period covered by the report which may have been improperly and/or unfairly dealt with. They will also ensure those cases are reopened and re-examined, leading to a fair and just outcome.
- Implement all of the recommendations made in the Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser's thematic reviews on:
  - o **learning from Grenfell Tower Inquiry**
  - o **fire and rescue service capacity**
  - o **fire and rescue service operational training**
- Make arrangements for a significant and sustained reduction in SWFRS's attendance at false alarms.
- Develop proposals for the future governance of FRA to minimise the risk of further such failings.
- Discharge other functions of the FRA and its members as set out in statute and the FRA's standing orders.
- Advise the Welsh Government on progress with the above, and on the potential for ending intervention.
- Undertake all their work in the full spirit of social partnership, and through continual and effective engagement with SWFRS staff and representative bodies.

Section 37 of the Local Government Act 2000 requires an FRA to maintain and publish their Constitution.

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[1] WG24-05 FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES, WALES The South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024, Made 5 February 2024 Coming into force at 5.00 p.m. on 6 February 2024 https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-02/the-south-wales-fire-and-rescue-authority-exercise-of-functions-wales-directions-2024.pdf

## Scheme of Delegations

The Service operates by a <u>Scheme of Delegations</u> which ensures decisions are made in an open and transparent way. Decisions must be made in accordance with legal obligations and requirements, and policies and procedures that are in place.

Responsibility for carrying out the Commissioners' exercise of statutory functions is delegated to Principal Officers and Heads of Service, who are authorised to do so on behalf of the Authority, subject to the Commissioners' instructions. This was approved by the Board of Commissioners on 6th June 2024.

In setting out the powers and responsibilities delegated within the Service, the Scheme of Delegations is a key point of reference for decision making to ensure decisions are made and actions taken with appropriate authority.

However, while responsibility for decision making is defined and adhered to in our governance structure and practices, we are committed to engaging fully with those who will be affected by decisions made through processes of consultation and collaboration, both internally and externally.

## Sound decision making

Decisions should not only be taken within agreed powers but also on an informed and timely basis. Forward work programmes are under constant review to ensure decisions are made and ratified at the correct level and within relevant deadlines. These are managed by the Monitoring Officer for the Board of Commissioners meetings and their committees.

Welsh Government's guidance <u>Making Good Decisions</u>, published 2016, assists public authorities in Wales to make decisions that are lawful and comply with the Rule of Law with case studies and tips to give insight into good decision-making.

The <u>Judge Over Your Shoulder</u> (JOYS) guidance, 6th edition published 2022, is published by UK Government to assist civil servants when advising ministers and government on decision making. While it should not be relied upon as legal advice, it explores general principles for consideration in respect of public sector decision making.

Throughout the planning and decision-making process, the checks and balances of scrutiny structures and processes helps deliver efficiency, better decisions and transparency. To ensure effective scrutiny, we promote the principles already described and work to continually improve through developing skills, challenging processes and monitoring outcomes.

## Ethical decision making

The Service has adopted the **NFCC Core Code of Ethics** which sets out five ethical principles:

- **Putting our communities first** – we put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.
- **Integrity** – we act with integrity, including being open, honest, and consistent in everything we do.
- **Dignity and respect** – making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.

- **Leadership** – we are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexibility and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.
- **Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)** – We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI both within the Service and the wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

These principles are integral to our governance framework, providing a foundation for ethical decision making. The NFCC publish guidance for staff at all levels, including senior leaders and FRA members on decision making.

## Consultation and engagement

The Service is committed to involvement and engagement of all stakeholders in planning to ensure decisions taken are in the best interests of our staff, communities, partners and other interested parties.

- The Measure requires FRAs to make information available including evidence of performance and progress on stated improvement objectives, and to seek feedback on proposals for future improvement objectives.
- The Framework states that FRAs should take account of the views of citizens and communities based on fair and balanced consultation and engagement in medium to long term planning.

A range of consultation activities are undertaken internally and externally which continue to be developed and will be documented in the Service's Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

We continue to develop and mature processes to ensure our staff have an effective voice through staff networks and working groups, as well as ensuring systems are in place to enable involvement, eg, ICT facilities on stations.

## Working with others and Social Partnership

The importance of effective collaboration is set out in the Framework and the Measure, identifying benefits such as streamlined services and minimising duplication to deliver effective services and maximise capacity. This is further developed by the WFGA with collaborating identified as one of the five ways of working.

The Service has a range of strategic and delivery partners as well as close working relationships with various organisations within the emergency service sector, wider public services and third sector. Where required, eg, in relation to data sharing or service delivery, we will enter into a formal agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved.

With close working relationships between the three FRSs in Wales, a number of all-Wales working groups collaborate and coordinate to ensure equitable approaches are taken. Decisions taken in these working groups is reported to the appropriate committee or group within the Service.

The principle of Social Partnership introduced in 2023 requires the Service to consult and work with trade unions or other staff representatives when setting well-being objectives and taking strategic decisions on their delivery. We continue to build on existing relationships to develop and deliver effective social partnership, ensuring involvement of representative bodies in our planning processes.

# Governance in action

## Planning and prioritisation

The Service's 10-year Strategic Plan 2020-2030 set out eight Strategic Themes with underlying Objectives to be achieved in our commitment to reducing risk for our communities. The Planning, Performance and Risk team lead on the annual review of our Strategic Themes and Objectives with assessment of demands on the Service, potential threats and risks, both existing or emerging, demographic changes and changes to the environment (both natural and built). The process uses tools such as PESTELO and SWOT analysis, future trends scanning and predictive analysis. For full details, refer to our Strategic Planning Framework.



Two strategic documents are published each year: The Annual Improvement Plan reviews performance in the previous financial year and anticipates demand in the coming financial year, considering aspects including demand trends, identified and emerging risks, demographic and community risks, partner assessments and resources available. This is published by 31st October and is the subject to public consultation.

Feedback from consultation and further assessment inform the process of strategic review with and final agreement of priorities to be resourced in the coming year, published in the Strategic Plan annual update by 31st March once approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Plans are monitored quarterly with performance reports submitted to the Board of Commissioners. Service delivery reports are also reviewed quarterly to monitor demand and identify any emerging trends.

Throughout this process there is regular engagement with stakeholders and partners as we work to the principles of Social Partnership and the WFGA ways of working.

These strategic plans sit within a hierarchy of development, decision and delivery to generate improvement at all levels and across the Service. The diagram below illustrates this structure.



# Risk management

Establishing sound and reliable governance processes is necessary for effective risk management, ensuring we can take pre-emptive action to mitigate and control organisational and community risks. Assessment of risk is central to our purpose and integral to our decisions and activities. We maintain risk registers at departmental and corporate levels which are regularly reviewed and reported in accordance with our Risk Management Framework. Community risks are assessed in our Annual Improvement Plan and considered by working groups and escalated where necessary.
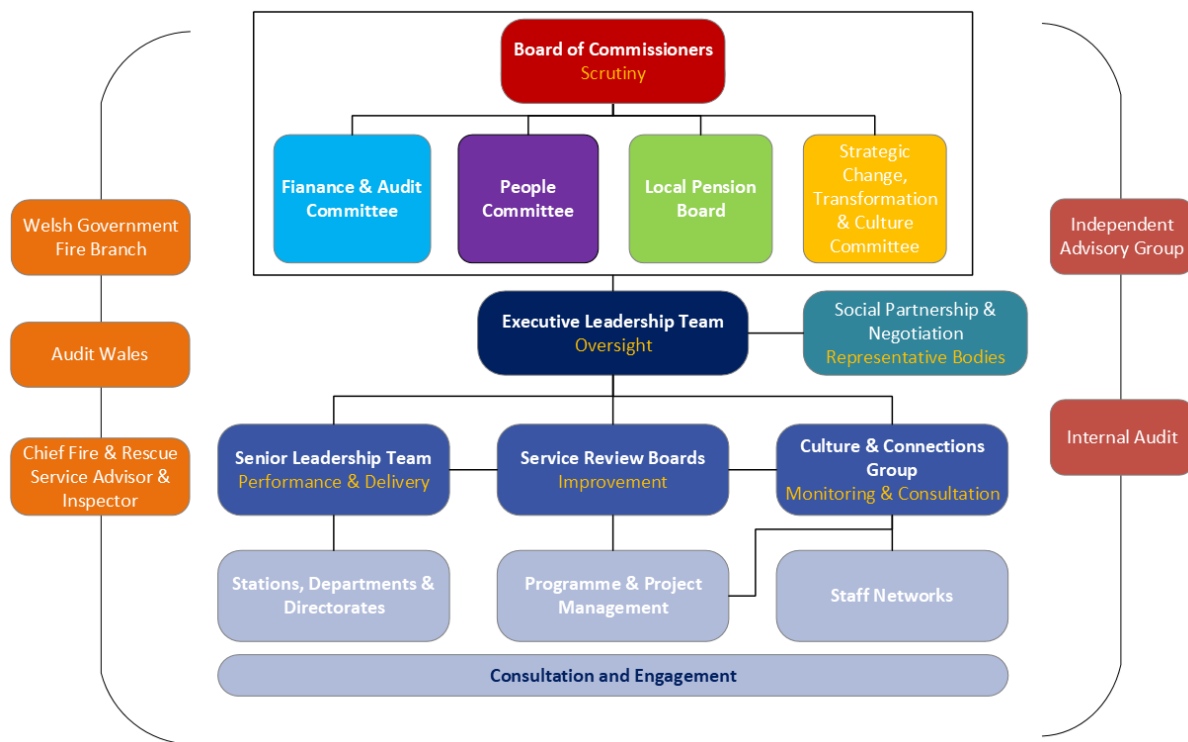
# Project management

Major improvement and development activities should be identified by the Strategic and Business Planning process and built into our objectives. This ensures resources are directed towards evidence-based priorities that are owned, monitored and scrutinised at an appropriate level. A Project Management Framework is in development as we develop this function.

# Our governance structure

Having a robust governance structure supports the Service at all levels in demonstrating effectiveness, accountability and drive for improvement at all levels and across all activities. There is a "golden thread" that runs from our stations and teams through all levels of leadership to the scrutiny provided by the Board of Commissioners. The Commissioners, having replaced the FRA, are responsible for the Service and, while delegating day-to-day activities in accordance with the agreed Scheme of Delegations, are required to ratify and approve certain decisions as well as scrutinising the performance of the Service.

The Chief Officer is responsible for oversight of the Service, supported by the Executive Leadership Team. They are informed by the Senior Leadership Team who manage the Service's functions, as detailed in the diagram below. As shown, the foundation of this governance is

consultation and engagement to advise our direction for development. This closes the loop of governance, providing a voice for stakeholders to whom the Service is ultimately responsible – the communities of South Wales, our partners and Welsh Government.



## Scrutiny

**The Board of Commissioners** – Consists of four Commissioners who approve the constitution (based on the all-Wales Local Authority model constitution), the annual budget, the policy framework, establish committees and discharge executive functions and implement the actions outlined in the terms of reference set by Welsh Government. The meetings of the Board of Commissioners will be Chaired by one of the Commissioners on a rolling basis.

**Finance & Audit Committee** – Responsible for the planning and management of financial resources, including authorising expenditure, virement of funds and donations of equipment or other property within the remit of the Financial Regulations. It oversees the financial reporting process and provides a detailed examination of financial performance, including the extent that this affects exposure to risk and weakens the control environment. The Committee also provides assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment.

**People Committee** - Demonstrates the commitment to ensuring that the Service has a well-equipped, skilled and motivated workforce that is able to work safely and whose composition reflects the diverse communities it serves.

**Local Pensions Board** – Assists the board as Scheme Manager to secure compliance with the Firefighters' Pension Scheme(s) regulations and any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Firefighters' Pensions Scheme(s).

Strategic Change, Transformation & Culture Committee – Ensures that there is a robust and effective process for evaluating the progress against the recommendations of the Culture Review Report and the implementation of the Welsh Government Thematic Reviews.

## Delivery Oversight

Executive Leadership Team – Oversees the Service's corporate objectives, improvement plan, monitors strategic risks and day to day functions of the Service.

Senior Leadership Team Planning & Performance – Developing, maintaining, and turning strategic policy into operational practice. The SLT, comprising ELT plus Heads of Service, monitors performance and, by bringing together senior leads from all areas of the Service, ensures cross-cutting activities are developed and opportunities realised.

Service Improvement Boards – Chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, the Boards oversee delivery of the programme established to implement the recommendations of the Independent Culture Review, Welsh Government's Chief Fire Advisor's thematic reviews and other improvement projects. The Thematic Review Board focusses on operational projects, the Service Review Board focusses on all other projects. The Boards will ensure workstreams are aligned with the terms of reference for each area and report to ELT, liaising with other groups as necessary for decision making, allocation of resources and coordination of activities.

Culture & Connections Group – Chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, this is a consultative and advisory group comprising members of SLT, trade union representatives and staff network representatives. The group provides oversight of the Service's activities with a focus on delivery culture change and ensuring a safe and positive environment for all.

These groups will be supported by a corporate committee and working group structure, and specialist working groups focussed on operational specialisms.

## Meetings

Meetings that support to the Service's governance structure are administered, scheduled and documented in accordance with this Framework and as detailed in the Meeting and Administration overview, see page 16.

## Terms of Reference

All regular meetings must have an agreed Terms of Reference document which is regularly reviewed and published for reference on the Service intranet. A template Terms of Reference can be found in the appendix to this framework.

## Membership

It is important to have the right representation at every level of the governance structure to deliver robust decision making, with topics being fully explored. Membership will be detailed in the Terms of Reference, listed by role to ensure continuity. This will identify the roles responsible for organising/chairing the meeting where appropriate (unless this is by agreement of the group), and any specific reporting expected from these roles.

Consideration should be given to inviting additional representation, on a temporary basis to address specific topics or decisions, or, where appropriate, on a permanent basis for stakeholder representation. These additional members may be drawn from within the Service or from partners or the wider community.

## Culture and values

While discussions and decisions will focus on the observations of those in the room at any meeting, there must be consideration of cultural impact and the views of those who will be impacted by decisions made. Using an "empty chair" to represent stakeholders not present can be useful but requires the taking of other perspectives. This should be supported by considering empirical evidence, emerging trends and observations to ensure that discussions are not led by anecdotal evidence. The cultural implications of any decision or action should be considered, as a specific agenda item.

## Making meetings matter

Effective meetings are essential to good governance – they ensure all voices are heard and support better decision making. Groups that meet regularly will develop their own ways of working but for new groups or those looking to refresh, key considerations for those organising or attending include:

- **Is the meeting necessary?** If a meeting is scheduled but there is no business requiring decision or discussion, consider postponing or cancelling.
- **Meeting format** Is it possible for everyone to contribute via an online meeting or would discussions benefit from meeting in person. Consider a cycle of in-person and online meetings.
- **Set a clear agenda** Identify the topics to be discussed, who will lead on each and decisions to be made. This will help everyone understand why they have been involved – see template.
- **Circulate papers in advance** This ensures participants have time to prepare.
- **Set a schedule, be punctual and strict** This ensures efficiency and focus on topics to be discussed – start the meeting at the schedule time and finish on time or earlier.
- **Record decisions taken and actions agreed** Not all meetings require full minutes, but details of decisions taken and actions agreed should be recorded – see template.
- **Begin by confirming purpose, end by confirming actions** This will ensure discussions are focused and directed towards outcomes. If the meeting has not delivered on its purpose or if there are no actions, has it been effective? This should be considered by the group and specifically address impact on:
  - Culture
  - Sustainability and the environment
  - Efficiency
  - Performance

All regularly scheduled meetings, and all meetings identified in this framework, should develop a Terms of Reference document setting out key aspects which will be regularly reviewed and published internally for reference to minimise overlap of responsibilities and aid transparency of decision making. See template.

## Training and skills

Robust governance requires a range of skills for those participating in and supporting activities. These include:

- Communication skills
- Understanding data
- Presentation skills
- Collaboration and partnership working
- Chairing a meeting
- Time management
- Strategic thinking and decision making

Many of these meeting skills are built into our training and development programmes at all levels, available as masterclasses which are developed by our Learning and Development Team or supported by advice and guidance notes. We will continue to develop these to ensure those involved in our governance processes are equipped for their roles. These materials will be regularly reviewed and delivered to ensure they are embedded into training programmes and refreshed.

## Communicating decisions and actions

Terms of reference will set out arrangements for publication of meeting papers, including agendas, reports, minutes or notes, action logs and decisions taken. Papers relating to the Board of Commissioners meetings and their committees are in the public domain, available via the Service's website with video recordings of all sessions for transparency.

Internal mechanisms are via meeting participants and based on cascading of information via management lines. However, work to explore new reporting lines and systems, including use of briefing sessions, intranet delivery and engagement forums, is underway.

## Assurance

Current assurance processes rely on giving and receiving feedback in meetings, highlighting the importance of open and honest communication. There is also recognition of feedback received from other sources, including regular consultation exercises on our improvement objectives. The need for open and transparent governance and decision making has been recognised in recent processes, including the Independent Culture Review. Methods to evaluate the effectiveness of our governance arrangements will be developed to ensure they contribute to a positive culture change.

As part of regular review of Terms of Reference, meeting chairs will encourage discussion and reflection on the effectiveness of the meeting, considering both meeting arrangements and value to the Service in terms of actions taken and decisions agreed.

## Future development

This framework will be reviewed and updated annually or as required by development of processes or changes to supporting documents and frameworks.

## Meeting administration and reporting

| Meeting | Frequency | Supported by | Chaired by | Terms of Reference | Agenda | Papers (circulation) | Minutes | Attendance, Action, Decision Log | Publication | Report to |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Board of Commissioners** | | Business Support | Lead Commissioner | Y | Fwd work programme | One week prior | Y | Y | Papers / internet video | Public facing |
| **BoC Committees** | | Business Support | Lead Commissioner | Y | Fwd work programme | One week prior | Y | Y | Papers / video - internet | Public facing |
| **ELT** | Weekly | Business Support | CFO | Y | As agreed ToR | | Y | Y | n/a | |
| **SLT – Planning & Performance** | 6-weekly | Business Support | CFO | Y | As agreed ToR | One week prior | Y | Y | Decision log - intranet | ELT |
| **SLT - Development** | Fortnightly | Business Support | CFO | Y | As agreed ToR | N/A Informal | N | N | N/A | ELT |
| **Improvement Boards** | 6-weekly | Business Support | CFO | Y | As agreed ToR | One week prior | Y | Y | Decision log - intranet | ELT |
| **Culture & Connections** | 6-weekly | Business Support | CFO | Y | As agreed ToR | One week prior | Y | Y | Decision log - intranet | ELT |
| **Heads of Service** | Monthly | HoS Corporate Support | As agreed ToR | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | N | Y | As agreed ToR | SLT |
| **Committees** | As agreed ToR | Secretariat | ELT Lead Officer | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | Y | Y | Decision log - intranet | SLT |
| **Committee Working Groups** | As agreed ToR | Chair or Group Lead | As agreed ToR – subject lead | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | N | Y | As agreed ToR | Relevant Committee |
| **Ops Working Groups** | As agreed ToR | Chair or Group Lead | As agreed ToR – subject lead | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | N | Y | As agreed ToR | Relevant Committee |
| **Project Groups/ Meetings** | As agreed ToR | Project Lead | Project Manager | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | N | Y | As agreed ToR | Project Executive |

| Department Meetings | As agreed ToR | Department admin | HoS / Dept Head | Y | As agreed ToR | As agreed ToR | N | Y | As agreed ToR | HoS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

## Templates

Standard templates have been produced to provide consistency across our governance structure. If any group or meeting has recording requirements not met by these templates, this must be addressed in the group's Terms of Reference. The standard templates are based on minimum recording requirements, therefore it should not be necessary for any changes to reduce the templates.

Latest versions of templates can be found on the intranet under Libraries – Corporate Templates.

- Terms of Reference
- Meeting Notes
- Meeting Minutes
- Meeting Actions Log

AGENDA ITEM NO 7

**Reports for Information and Assurance**

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**         AGENDA ITEM NO 7.i
                                              13 FEBRUAY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY

**CARBON REDUCTION PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION AND ASSURANCE**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN
REPORT PRESENTED BY THE HEAD OF FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY, LISA MULLAN

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**SUMMARY**

This report sets out the progress made on the Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) 2020 – 2023 in financial year 23-24 ahead of the new CRP 2024-2030

**RECOMMENDATIONS**
1. That Commissioners note the progress made on the CRP 2020-2023.
2. That Commissioners take assurance that a new CRP is being drafted and will be presented at a future BOC.

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## 1.   BACKGROUND

1.1   This report provides Commissioners with the annual update of progress on South Wales Fire and Rescue Services' (SWFRS) Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) 2022-23. The plans outline our commitment to carbon reduction, and we are supporting the Welsh Government (WG) ambition to achieve a carbon neutral public sector by 2030.  Details are contained in appendix 1.

1.2   Additionally, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced a duty to plan and report on how we will meet biodiversity challenges from 2019 and every three years thereafter. The biodiversity and nature recovery action plans (BNRAP) were reported to Fire Authority, September 2022 and are not required again until 2025.

1.3   A new CRP and Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) will be drafted and submitted for approval in the coming months.  These plans will provide a roadmap for improvement up to 2030.

## 2. ISSUES

2.1 We are in the planning stage of developing and implementing an environmental training package for staff which entails working in partnership to establish a NFCC approved Carbon Literacy Toolkit (CLT) for fire and rescue services (FRS) across the UK. SWFRS' own training package will be available to staff from April 2025.

2.2 We have continued to improve our green spaces with a biodiversity project at Cowbridge Fire Station and working in collaboration with Keep Wales Tidy (KWT). Grant funding was accessed for the design and implementation phase of this project. Additionally, our partners have assisted with the installation of green roofs and wildflower areas on several sites.

2.3 We have made significant data improvements since last year, including monthly waste metrics i.e. weight and categorisation of waste streams according to location. Data on paper usage has been collated and solar energy data will become available online in the coming months to enable improved tracking of gains and savings.

2.4 Our preparations to accommodate the new waste regulations, i.e. Wales Workplace Recycling Regulations (2023), have paved the way for this year's immutable deadline of 6 April 2024 which mandates the segregation of key recyclable materials. The legislations' goal is to enhance the quality and quantity of recycling across workplaces in Wales. Teething issues are ongoing as a significant change in behaviour is needed for success. These issues are being identified and resolved by analysis of waste data and contamination trends across the estate.

2.5 We have plans in place to undergo an Environmental Management System (EMS) accreditation by May 2025.

2.6 We have made significant improvements to our electric vehicle charging infrastructure (EVCI) with the implementation of a further four double unit rapid chargers at Bridgend, Maindee, Whitchurch and Abercynon. All sites now have EV charging capability, apart from those with planned construction.

2.7 Plans have been shared regarding the investment in a new operational fire station at New Inn with sustainability as a key objective. New Inn will be the first net zero carbon fire station built in Wales and an exemplar project for the SWFRS estate.

2.8  We have submitted our WG Emissions report for the fourth consecutive year, embedding sustainability reporting within the Service. September's submission indicated a 0.53% reduction on the carbon footprint on the previous year. The development of a data dashboard comparing annual metrics will highlight our need for widespread action if we are to achieve our target of a 50% reduction by 2030, and work in the spirit of WG's public sector ambition to exceed this.

2.9  Staff turnover and sickness, in addition to a lack of dedicated, skilled and knowledgeable resource, has been a hinderance in progressing and developing plans, and galvanising the workforce.

Total Emissions 22-23

| *Total emissions* | Units of kgCO$_2$e | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Indirect | Indirect | Total | Estimated range | Estimated range | Outside of scopes |
| | Scope 1 | Scope 2 | Scope 3 | | High | Low | |
| South Wales Fire & Rescue Financial year 2022/23 | 2,431,417 | 576,148 | 7,043,222 | 10,050,788 | 11,383,981 | 8,717,595 | 394,623 |

Total Emissions 23-24

| *Total emissions* | Units of kgCO$_2$e | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Indirect | Indirect | Total | Estimated range | Estimated range | Outside of scopes |
| | Scope 1 | Scope 2 | Scope 3 | | High | Low | |
| Total emissions | 2,141,756 | 662,557 | 7,194,353 | 9,998,666 | 10,105,473 | 7,506,200 | 446,981 |

Scope 1, 2 and 3 are categorisations of various carbon emissions an organisation creates during its operations, and in its wider value chain.

• Scope 1 – direct emissions that are owned or can be controlled, e.g. burning fuel in the organisations fleet.
• Scope 2 – indirect emissions i.e., the purchase of energy for heating / cooling buildings.
• Scope 3 – Indirect emissions from the supply chain, e.g., buying, using, and disposing of products from suppliers. If spend goes up, so will scope 3 emissions under current methodologies.  More stringent methods are being developed to assess the carbon emissions of supply chains as the current methodology is a point of contention.

**3.    IMPLICATIONS**

3.1   **Community and Environment**

     3.1.1  All elements of the CRP link to our strategic themes, objectives and the Four well-being goals of a globally responsible, healthier, resilient Wales and a Wales of cohesive communities.

3.2   **Regulatory, Strategy and Policy**

     3.2.1  These aspects are addressed within the body of the report.

3.3   **Resources, Assets and Delivery**

     3.3.1 These aspects are addressed within the body of the report.

**4.    EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS**

4.1   Some positive action has taken place in the last twelve months albeit limited by staff availability.  A focused effort is required to formalise policies and processes in addition to developing a monitoring and performance system based on measurable metrics that is routinely quality assessed. This will improve the planning process and inform financial investment..

**5.    RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1   That Commissioners note the progress made on the CRP 2020- 2023.

That Commissioners take assurance that a new CRP is being drafted and will be presented at a future BOC.

| Contact Officer: | Lisa Mullan, Head of Finance, Procurement and Property |
| --- | --- |
| **Background Papers** | Carbon Reduction Plan 2020-23 <br> **Appendix 1: CRP Updates** |

| | Objective | Business Plan | Status | Action | Update 22-23 | Update 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Reduce our use of single materials** | **Procurement** | **In progress - almost complete** | **Remove the use of blue paper towels on all owned sites** | This work commenced several years ago although not adopted across the property portfolio and reviewed for effectiveness. An internal survey will be undertaken to identify where these are in use with a view to replacing with air dryers or suitable alternative. | Blue towels only used on sites where a hand dryer is not available |
| 2 | **Expand use of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV)** | **Fleet** | **In progress** | **Explore the use of electric vehicles for the service light vehicle fleet** | We currently have 39 Electric Vehicles, 2 Plug in Hybrids, 20 self-charging hybrids and these collectively make up 17% of the fleet. | We currently have 49 electric vehicles, 52 self-charging hybrids, and 3 plug-in hybrids which collectively make up 25 % of the fleet. We aim to have 70% of the light fleet EVs by 2030 but first have to establish stronger charging infrastructure |
| 3 | **Provide electric vehicle (EV) charging points where possible on our sites** | | **In progress** | | 1) EV charging points have now been installed on 38 of our sites charging | 1) EV charging now installed on 42 sites with rapid chargers installed this FY on 4 sites and 6 further sites by end of FY 24/25. |
| | | | **In progress** | **Explore the concept of allowing staff to use charge** | The Head of Fleet is drafting documentation to present to | Draft policy has been out to consultation |

| | | | | points for personal vehicles | SSG and then to SMT for approval | and is in the process of being written up. |
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| | | | | **Explore the need and feasibility of super-fast charging** | | Will depend on success of staff charging and rapid chargers. Power capacity is an issue across sites with gaining additional supply a lengthy and sometimes complicated process. |
| 4 | **Reduce and decarbonise our energy usage** | **Property** | **In progress** | **Complete the programme of LED light installation across all sites** | 33 out of 50 sites have been actioned although not in every area of each building. A review is required to identify gaps and record where it is not feasible. Remaining sites will be addressed through major refurbishment/ rebuild capital projects | 35 out of 50 sites now have LED lighting with remaining sites to be addressed through refurbishment/ rebuild. |
| | | | | **Work with the Carbon Trust to undertake energy audits on our site to identify most suitable alternative power supplies e.g. solar panels** | We are currently working with Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) to access low-cost financing to support this work. Following disappointing outcomes from structural surveys on the feasibility of both SWFRS Headquarters and Barry Station sites, a | We continue to work with WGES and Carbon Trust on sourcing grant funding for renewable generation projects. We are due to begin in-house energy audits across the |

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| | | | | | second opinion was sought and work on Barry can be progressed | estate week commencing 12/2. |
| | | | **In progress** | **Complete the programme of smart meters for all of our sites** | Meter upgrade programme is required to support. This area has suffered in past year due to the departure of key personnel i.e., Facilities Manager | Work on this continues and has faced limitations with staff turnover in sustainability and facilities and changes to meter operators.  All sites are to be turned to AMRs (Automatic Meter readings) and HH (half hourly readings) where appropriate for more detailed energy data. |
| | | | | **Extend the trial for drying rooms technology to reduce energy on station** | Comparison of new and old drying rooms gives clear indication that the new tech is worthwhile and so will be installed across the estate when refurbishment work is undertaken, i.e., OCDS project | Currently installed at 19 sites and will be installed across the estate when refurbishment work is undertaken. |
| | | | **In progress** | **Revise our asset strategy for estates to include greater energy efficiency and CO2 reductions** | 1) Heating strategy needs to be developed to include considerations such as boiler condition and heating demand 2) PV strategy needs to be developed to include considerations such as roof | Heating and PV Strategies to be created following approval of new CRP. |

| | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | condition and electricity demand.<br>3) The Sustainable Procurement toolkit should facilitate the consideration of low carbon options | |
| **5** | **Reduce our carbon footprint by monitoring environmental data** | **Technology** | **In progress** | **Improve recording, monitoring and reporting of all carbon impacts across the service** | 1) Data collection process has been streamlined by setting up some automatic data collection methods such as the use of half-hourly electricity use data.<br>2) Areas of improvement still exist and there is a need for a meter upgrade programme for gas and electric meters which has begun.<br>3) Carbon footprint scope has widened once again to now include fugitive gases (refrigerants in AC).<br>4) Data can now be collected for waste/recycling by the new waste contractor, Biffa.<br>5) Commuting survey has been conducted to gather up to date info on commuting behaviour.<br>6) The business planning via BMIS has been used for cross organisation actions<br>7) A suite of metrics is being | 1) Same data collection process have been implemented to monitor energy use<br>2) Meter upgrade programme for gas and electric meters is still underway with options for procurement of energy management software to streamline this process to be put forward<br>3) Reporting requirements have not widened since last update<br>4) Waste data now received by weight and waste type (general, plastic, cardboard, organic, glass where applicable) across sites<br>5) A new commuting survey will have to be |

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| | | | | developed on BMIS to identify trends and focus action<br>8) This is the third year of successfully completing the developing | created and disseminated or a new method of colleting commuting data ahead of next returns as previous one is no longer current.<br>6) BMIS tasks are updated and data fed to present sustainability data<br>7) BMIS metrics to identify trends and focus action live but needs some refinement in what is presented and the process of moving that data from sustainability to statistics departments<br>8) This is the fourth year of successfully completing the Welsh Government Emissions reporting returns |
| | | | | **Evaluate further use of technology to support efficient processes which will reduce the Services' carbon footprint** | As discussed submetering will not be progressed however analysis of electricity metered for building at HQ and Pontyclun will be able to | Working with WGES to implement technologies at highest consuming sites including where our data servers are located.  Also |

| | | | | | provide insight to the level of electricity usage by servers | exploring the use of energy management software. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | In progress | **Develop a workplace travel plan** | Connect with Sustrans as they are able to undertake a workplace travel plan | Connections made with Sustrans with plans to provide active and public transport options to visitors via website and receive all available support via them and the Healthy Travel Charters |
| 6 | **Procurement/ waste** | | Started 2023 | **Draft sustainable procurement policy/ guidance to support budget holders to make ethical choices in their purchasing practice** | The Senior Procurement Officer is consulting on the draft document and the organisation is debating whether this is a policy or guidance | This has been drafted as a set of principles and needs to be approved internally as guidance. |
| | | | In progress | **Move toward a paper-free environment** | 1) A report has been written on the use of paper across the service. 2) New printers have been set up however metrics are still being set up in order to capture data on paper used for printing. 3) There is a need to explore the procurement of recycled paper | Paper usage report is available from sites where there is good printer data. These can be monitored to reduce usage however few public sector orgs have targets to go completely paperless. Paper usage can be monitored as part of Environmental Risk Assessment to be |

| | | | | | | conducted for each site and electrification of paper forms be progressed where appropriate. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | **Water** | | **In progress** | **Implement grey water harvesting system at HQ fleet for vehicle wash facility** | A quote has been obtained on new design concept. Designs are with M&E consultants to flex for options based on observations made during site visit. Outcomes of this will determine whether this project is feasible regarding cost, energy use for pumps and amount of water saved | Quote mentioned in last update was not deemed to be cost effective. This can be explored further as part of next CRP. |
| | | **Behaviour change/ collaborative** | **In progress** | **Seek Green Dragon accreditation to improve our sustainable governance processes and to ensure our efforts are well informed and focussed** | This will be something the new Sustainable Officer will progress as a priority in the next 12 months | There is now a workplan in place to complete work for Level 3 accreditation and relevant audit by May 25 and progress up to the highest level as soon as possible thereafter. |
| 8 | **Reduce our waste and improve our waste management processes** | **Waste** | **In progress** | **Review and improve our current waste/recycling collection provisions** | 1) Biffa has been appointed as the winning contractor and onboarding of stations is underway on a phased approach. Phasing will complete in April 2024 when the new legislation comes into force. | 1) Biffa were appointed as waste contractor ahead of Workplace Recycling Regulations (Wales) coming in in April 24. All sites now onboarded. |

| | | | | | 2) Early indicators identify the teething problems that will be resolved in the coming year via contract management, station liaison and training<br>3) Waste Management Policy (WMP) to be drafted by new Sustainability Officer | 2) Early teething problems with collection schedules were resolved but contractors underperforming on data and supportive services.<br>3) Waste Management Policy has been drafted by new Sustainability Officer in response to contamination trends and identified problem areas.<br>4) Specific waste training will also form part of environmental training package. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | **Engage with our stakeholders on our carbon journey and challenge** | **Behaviour Change** | **In progress** | **Service wide engagement and communications to raise awareness and encourage ideas for carbon reduction** | 1) Sustainability Engagement Strategy has been drafted and includes the different communication channels and intended targets<br>2) Engagement has continued with station personnel through site visits and discussions on energy use, waste, travel, biodiversity etc.<br>3) Plans drafted for the (voluntary) Sustainability Champion Group (SCG) | 1) Sustainability Engagement Strategy needs to be reviewed and published<br>2) Informal engagement has continued<br>3) Plans drafted for the (voluntary) Sustainability Champion Group (SCG) with the aim of meeting with |

| | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | with the aim of meeting with passionate individuals on a quarterly basis<br>4) Sustainability intranet page is up and running and providing information and awareness on our sustainable projects, processes and people<br>5) Sustainability BMIS page is currently being developed<br>6) Further to the Sustainability internet page, the content is being curated with a view to being posted on the external website | passionate individuals on a quarterly basis. This will be launched with training package and wider offering to encourage further take-up.<br>4) Sustainability intranet page is up and running and diversifying the information it shares. Monthly updates can be scheduled.<br>5) Sustainability BMIS page is still being developed with EV charging map, fleet profile comparisons, waste data (needing refinement) and low carbon tech register to be added.<br>6) Sustainability information can be posted internally when data is in a more digestible format and annual environmental reports can be published as part of EMS. |
| | | | In progress | **Establish environmental champions for all** | 1) Individuals have put themselves forward on a handful of stations but | This will have to be re-launched as a scheme/ group to be |

| | | | | departments and stations. | this is not widespread at this point and no regular meeting have been set up yet<br>2) Plans have been drafted for voluntary SCG as above | strengthened by new training package |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | In progress | Introduce environmental impact awareness on induction and development programmes | Discussions have been held with Learning & Development team (People Services) to schedule this in on relevant programmes, but no progress made to date | Sustainability intranet page is up and running and staff signposted on waste and other issues. Sustainability and Environment now has a slot in corporate inductions sessions to introduce the department and the importance of environmental consideration in all work. More in-depth environmental impact training would be a bigger piece of work and could sit within environmental training package. |
| | | | Not started | Introduce an annual award to recognise and reward greatest positive impact and most innovative solution | No change since last year | No change since last year. Sustainability improvements are brought forward as part of Innovation and Improvement meetings with the potential for financial |

| | | | | | | | reward so this would be a duplication of work/ functions. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | **Look for collaborative opportunities in identifying/ progressing green projects** | **Collaborative Opportunities** | **In progress** | **Develop partnerships with Wales Energy Service, Cynnal Cymru and Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformation Centre (CAST) to raise awareness and develop further schemes to support the plan** | Partnerships are numerous and meeting are regular. All projects with external partners and the PSB subgroups. | These partnerships are firmly developed and utilised in addition to using the professional networks of an all Wales and all UK FRS sustainability group for sharing of best practice across industry specific issues and includes environmental/ climate related PSB work where appropriate. |

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**          AGENDA ITEM NO 7.ii
                                             13 FEBRUARY 2025


BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE AREA MANAGER, RISK REDUCTION - PREVENTION

**COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY UPDATE (PREVENTION)**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION AND ASSURANCE**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, BRIAN
THOMPSON
REPORT PRESENTED BY AREA MANAGER, MIKE WYATT

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**SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on the current and future activities of the Community Safety Department of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as providing an update on progress and take assurance that the department is working on a number of improvement streams.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 **Current and Future Risks**

1.1.1 Within the Community Safety department, as with other departments, it is important to recruit personnel with the appropriate skills, experience, and attitudes to perform effectively in their role. Currently, the department is experiencing a limited number of applicants for both specialist and non-specialist roles. Conversation with applicants during the recruitment process have revealed that the main reasons for this include the pay rates offered by the Service and the conditions of service, particularly the lack of a flexible working options.

1.1.2 At the time of the last Job evaluation, some of the teams within Community Safety were subdivided into different pay grades, dictated by their score on the system. This disparity of pay across

the department creates a degree of difficulty for managers to cross pollinate and move practitioners into the roles of their colleagues, when the need arises due to sickness.

1.1.3 Previously, Community Safety used inefficient methods for recording and monitoring individual and team performance, relying on multiple separate systems that made monitoring and management challenging.  As a result, it was difficult to effectively evidence the team's achievements and good work. Recently we have implemented an activity tracker across all teams, with the exception of Fire Cadets and Safeguarding as a statistical recording method is not suitable for their work. In addition to this quantitative recording system, all teams within Community Safety have been asked to develop action plans to illustrate aims, objectives and achievements.

1.1.4 Qualitative achievements are now managed by the newly appointed Events and Partnership Station Manager. This dedicated role enables us to monitor, record and showcase performance more efficiently.

1.1.5 The new activity trackers are effective in the short term, but we are in discussion with Service Performance and Communication Team and ICT to develop a more permanent electronic solution. The goal is to reduce the number of data entry points and implement a suitable host system for performance information, with appropriate managerial access. The systems currently developed by Community Safety serve as a temporary measure to record and illustrate performance until a permanent solution is in place.  The expectation is that the system that will suit our quantitative and qualitative requirements is CFRMIS.

1.2 **Is our approach working, are we industry standard, innovative or behind the curve?**

1.2.1 Our team of industry professionals is continually seeking ways to work more efficiently and innovatively. Through various meeting structures, such as Community Risk Reduction (CRR), and Children and Young People (CYP), we collaborate with neighbouring Services. These meetings focus on service provision and providing a collective service across Wales.

1.2.2 During the meetings, we present on progress, barriers and innovations. One recent innovation is the redevelopment of our Engagement and Education vehicle (EEV). The EEV provides a mobile presence at community events helping us to address local

risks. The vehicle has already been put to great effect in our 999 day in Cardiff Bay, and we intend to maximise the value of this asset in the events planned for 2025.

1.2.3 Within the Phoenix programme, participants currently receive an Agored qualification at the end of the five-day intervention. While the current method and outcome are industry standard, we are working to enhance and improve the experience, qualification and recording system. Following an evaluation process, all Services within Wales have agreed on an Early Intervention framework (EI) linked to the Kings Trust. The Agored is connected wholly to the challenges and tasks participants will experience in the course. The EI encompasses this, but also links to the wider experience following the course. Additionally, the Impactasaurus evaluation method provides a more accurate way to measure and illustrate outcome.

## 1.3 Do we have the right number of staff to deal with challenges, have we got the right skill sets, e.g. what about our capabilities in fire engineering?

1.3.1 The Community Safety team lacks resilience within its individual teams. In the event of staff absence due to sickness or time off, we often need to reassign individuals from one team to work in another, dependant on workload. As previously mentioned, there are a range of pay grades within the department, particularly at the practitioner level. This sometimes results in two or more members of staff performing the same job, yet each being paid a different rate. Establishing a more consistent pay structure would make management easier and improve morale.

## 1.4 Do we have a pan Wales approach to this or does each Service try and do this independently?

1.4.1 All Wales Children and Young People working Group (CYP) – SWFRS, NWFRS, MWWFRS. This group chaired by AM Kay NWFRS brings together service leads to coordinate service delivery and discuss future improvements.

1.4.2 All-Wales Community Risk Reduction (CRR) – A delivery plan is in place across all three Welsh Services. This group encompasses all strands of Community Safety and Business Fire Safety.

1.4.3 We have an all-Wales approach for Road, Water, Education and Fire Safety Intervention (FSI) which is aligned with the NFCC framework. We sit on several working groups to ensure our activities are coordinated and supported by a joint media approach. The all-Wales

Road Safety group is chaired by an Area Manager from Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS).

1.4.4 Our Home Safety Manager is a member of an all-Wales group focussed on home safety matters, and we adhere to the recommended NFCC persons-centred risk assessment.

1.4.5 The safeguarding process follows NFCC guidelines and maintains links with MAWWFRS and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS). Where possible, an All-Wales approach is adopted. Training adheres to the National Training Safeguarding Standards (Wales), as this differs from the NFCC Training framework. The NFCC Training Framework has included the Welsh standards in an appendix.

## 1.5 How does Fire Investigation feed into the above?

1.5.1 The outcomes from Fire Investigation reports and Incident Recording System (IRS) data should inform the plans of the Prevention department. While there is limited evidence of this occurring previously, we are now working closely with the Service Performance and Communication department to enhance a risk-based approach to our prevention activities.

## 1.6 How do incidents feed in the targeting of both facilities and communities at risk?

1.6.1 All incidents are documented in the IRS, which acts as a comprehensive database containing all relevant data and information collected post-incident. This data can be used independently or in conjunction with other sources to analyse incidents, identify trends, and inform the Service's strategic activities.

## 1.7 Our approach to data

1.7.1 Bi-monthly meetings between the Statistics and Community Safety teams foster ongoing discussions regarding optimal methods for integrating and utilising data in current and future workstreams. This collaborative approach improves data sharing and its effective application by Community Safety teams. For example, by analysing IRS data, we have mapped water rescue incidents in our Service area over the past few years, allowing us to identify hotspots where these incidents are most prevalent. Consequently, this information informs targeted water safety events and activities aimed at

surrounding communities, thereby increasing the effectiveness of our initiatives.

1.7.2 The Arson Reduction Team uses statistical data to prepare for seasonal activities, such as Operation Bang (focused on bonfire and firework safety) and Dawns Glaw (addressing wildfire prevention). This data-driven approach allows us to highlight high-risk areas and support the most vulnerable communities. We also share this data with community partners to foster a collaborative response.

1.7.3 Additionally, the Home Safety Team uses a variety of internal and external data sources to assign risk scores to households within our area. This includes incident data related to accidental dwelling fires, allowing us to identify households most at risk of fire incidents. The resulting directed list enables our crews to focus their community safety efforts on these properties, conducting home fire safety checks to reduce fire risk in the community.

1.7.4 Our approach to data analysis enables us to effectively identify trends and problem areas in Road Safety and Water Safety while accurately targeting our interventions. In both road and water safety, we focus our efforts on regions where incidents occur most frequently. However, our ability to do so is influenced by the availability of suitable venues.

## 2. IMPLICATIONS

### 2.1 Community and Environment

2.1.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
Our approach to prevention activities prioritises safety and well-being for all, regardless of background, through promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion. By respecting and providing equal opportunities to everyone, regardless of factors like race or gender, they foster a more equitable and inclusive society.

2.1.2 Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act:
The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act prioritises the long-term well-being of future generations by considering the social, economic, environmental, and cultural impacts of our approach to prevention activities. This approach aligns with principles of sustainability, ensuring that current actions do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. By promoting a holistic view of well-being and encouraging collaboration across sectors, the Act aims to create a more resilient and prosperous future for all in Wales.

2.1.3 Socio Economic Duty
The recommendations prioritise the safety and well-being of all individuals, regardless of background, aligning with equality, diversity, and inclusion principles. By treating everyone with respect and providing equal opportunities, regardless of factors like race or gender, these recommendations foster a more equitable and inclusive society. Emphasising diversity allows for a range of perspectives to be valued, creating an environment where all individuals feel respected and supported. Overall, these recommendations work towards building a fair, diverse, and welcoming society.

2.1.4 Equality Impact Assessment
An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for a range of activities undertaken within the department.

## 2.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

The recommendations align with regulatory, strategic, and policy frameworks. Our approach supports compliance with regulations, strategic objectives, and policy goals.

## 2.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

2.3.1 Human Resources and People Development
The department is managed by a Group Manager B with two Group Manager As, each overseeing one of the two specific areas of the department. Community Safety is a diverse department with a range of both grey and green book staff. People development forms part of our strategy with days held in Mid Wales as part of an all-Wales strategy for developing personnel. This contributes to creating a motivated and engaged workforce, leading to increased retention rates and a positive work culture.

2.3.2 Assets and Resources
There are dedicated budgets within Prevention which are enhanced by Welsh Governments grants which are divided between the three Fire and Rescues Services of Wales.

## 3 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The Community Safety Department has made notable strides in innovation and collaboration, yet faces challenges in recruitment, staff flexibility, and data management. Efforts to improve performance tracking and a unified approach across Wales are promising. Addressing internal resource issues,

including pay disparities, and refining data systems will be key to sustaining and enhancing the department's effectiveness.

3.2 **Next Steps**

3.2.1 The department has written a department strategy which establishes our aims, objective and priorities for the next three years. This strategy is currently in draft and will be presented at a Senior Leadership meeting for approval.

3.2.2 The department has written an annual summary report in line with Business Fire Safety. This publication is currently in draft form.

3.2.3 To implement and embed an auditing and operational intelligence system to identify, manage and prioritise risks effectively.

3.2.4 To ensure our Community Safety activities are providing maximum benefit to the people of South Wales, we are in the process of developing a Risk Based Prevention Programme using all available internal and data sources.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as providing an update on progress and take assurance that the department is working on a number of improvement streams.

| Contact Officer: | Brian Thompson ACFO Technical Services | |
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| | | |
| **Background Papers** | **Date** | **Source / Contact** |
| | | |

| **Appendices** | |
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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**         AGENDA ITEM NO 7.iii
                                              13 FEBRUARY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE AREA MANAGER, RISK REDUCTION - PROTECTION

**BUSINESS FIRE SAFETY UPDATE (PROTECTION)**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION AND ASSURANCE**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, BRIAN
THOMPSON
REPORT PRESENTED BY AREA MANAGER, MIKE WYATT

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**SUMMARY**
This report provides an update on the current and future activities of the Business
Fire Safety Department of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS).

**RECOMMENDATIONS**
The recommendation is that the Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as
providing an update on progress and assurance of current work streams.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 **Current and Future Risks**

1.1.1 The current risk facing the department is the lack of an Operational
Intelligence System, following the decision not to renew the
agreement with West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) for their Risk
Information Data Gathering Engine (RIDGE). As a result, we are in
the process of purchasing a new system to support Business Fire
Safety (BFS) as a priority.

1.1.2 Inspecting Officer competency – Succession planning has become
a key focus for the department due to the significant impact of
retirements, transfers, and promotions on BFS. The need to train
officers to a Level 4 Diploma, in line with the National Fire Chiefs
Council (NFCC) Competency Framework, has highlighted the
importance of structured staff development. To achieve this, we have
created a dedicated training and development arm to support new
entrants from day one through to achieving their qualification to level

4, which encompasses a workbook completion and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) process.

1.1.3 Maintaining a competent workforce capable of inspecting high-risk premises, as deemed necessary from our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP), is essential. Under the NFCC competency framework, these high-risk premises should be audited by officer with a Level 4 Diploma. To address these potential constraints, we are collaborating with Steve Norman and Adreena Parkin Coats of the NFCC on an innovative 'passport' style solution to train officers. This solution, whilst still in development, aims to ensure officer can effectively conduct audits on high-risk premises, as determined by our own definition.

1.1.4 South Wales Fire & Rescue Service (SWFRS) defines high-risk premises based on several factors, including the presence of vulnerable occupants and the complexity of risk management and evacuation strategies. These premises include hospitals, hospices, care homes, sheltered housing, supported living, and high-rise residential blocks with interim safety measures. Key risk factors include the vulnerability of occupants, reliance on complex evacuation plans, building size and design, and the quality of fire safety features such as compartmentation and external walls. Our focus is on premises with sleeping risks, where large numbers of people live, sleep, or require care and cannot easily evacuate in a fire emergency. While life safety remains the primary concern, we also assess the risks to property, business continuity, and potential community impact.

1.1.5 Additional risks, such as changes in response to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs), high-rise living, and legislative changes in Wales, are detailed in the three-year strategy document. Each of these risks is accompanied by firm plans to mitigate their impact and ensure continued effective service delivery.

1.2 **Is our approach working, are we industry standard, innovative or behind the curve?**

1.2.1 Our current approach is effective, and we are innovative in thought, to ensure a strong service for our communities as we address our technological needs. While our current methods rely on manual inputs, which are time consuming and prone to human error, the acquisition of an Operational Intelligence System (OIS) will

streamline processes and enable the department to progress as outlined in the departments plans.

1.3 **Do we have the right number of staff to deal with challenges, have we got the right skill sets, e.g. what about our capabilities in fire engineering?**

1.3.1 As previously outlined, achieving a fully competent staff base under the current structure is challenging. However, we have plans in place to address this and support the development of our workforce..

1.3.2 We currently do not have a fire engineer in Service, although we have trained officers to Level 5 Diploma. However, the Competency Framework required a Level 6 Diploma for recognition as a fire engineer. This formed part of the All-Wales deliverable for Community Risk Reduction (CRR) a few years ago, resulting in an options paper. Given the infrequency of the need, a collective decision was made to 'buy in' an engineer on an ad hoc basis.

1.3.3 The cost of training an officer from Level 4 to Level 5 is approximately £3k, following an initial investment of £3k to attain a Level 4 Diploma. We have recently assessed the cost of then progressing to Level 6, which has been identified as costing in the respect of £15k. Considering the staffing issues highlighted, there would be little return on investment with the added possibility of losing these highly qualified individuals to the private sector. One potential solution is to integrate an engineer's position into BFS as a corporate role, ensure long-term sustainability and expertise within the department.

1.3.4 To mitigate these risks, we have considered this through the BFS budget, consulted with the NFCC, Welsh Government Joint Inspection Team (they has a fire engineer), and other Fire and Rescue Services for support. Despite this effort, external support has been minimal, and we have not been needed to purchase the services of a fire engineering consultant.

1.4 **Do we have a pan Wales approach to this or does each brigade try and do this independently?**

1.4.1 We currently have a pan-Wales approach, established through an options paper created a few years ago. As an all-Wales BFS group, chaired by SWFRS Head of Protection, meets quarterly and feeds into CRR. For your reference, I have attached our 5-year plan for.

1.5 **How does Fire Investigation feed into the above?**

    1.5.1 There is also an all-Wales FI group, chaired by MWWFRS, that meets quarterly and feeds into the departmental plans.

1.6 **How do incidents feed in the targeting of both facilities and communities at risk?**

    1.6.1 Our Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) considers incident data as part of our wider strategy.  A duty officer is assigned daily to review and monitor incidents from the previous 24-hour period. From this we prioritise post-fire enquiries, identify alleged fire risks and conduct thematic audits derived from analysed trends. Within the department we have a Station Manager responsible for assurance, ensuring that audits are prioritised affectively.

1.7 **Our approach to data**

    1.7.1 With regards to the above duty officer process, we also work closely with our analysts to ensure our actions are backed up by data.

## 2. IMPLICATIONS

2.1 **Community and Environment**

    2.1.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
    We are dedicated to equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair treatment and opportunities for all staff and communities. We foster an inclusive workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. Our strategies prioritise the safety and well-being of vulnerable groups, particularly in high-risk premises. We continue to ensure our services meet the needs of all individuals, with a focus on providing equal opportunities for development and support.

    2.1.2 Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act:
    The goals of the department aligns with the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act by prioritising long-term social, economic, and environmental impacts. We focus on sustainability and resilience, ensuring actions today support future community well-being. Our strategies foster collaboration to build a prosperous future for all.

2.1.3 Socio Economic Duty
As a Service we fulfil the Socio-Economic Duty by prioritising safety and well-being for all individuals, regardless of background. Our services aim to reduce inequalities and promote fairness, ensuring that our actions support a more inclusive and equitable society for everyone.

2.1.4 Equality Impact Assessment
An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for various aspects of our activities or initiatives within BFS.

## 2.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

2.2.1 The Service aligns its approach with regulatory, strategic, and policy frameworks to ensure compliance and effective service delivery. Our actions support the achievement of national and local objectives, ensuring that we meet legislative requirements while delivering a high-quality service to our communities.

## 2.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

2.3.1 Human Resources and People Development
The BFS department is managed by a Group Manager B, supported by four Group Manager A's. Currently, all auditing officers are Grey Book staff. However, ongoing work is in progress on a paper for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which explores the potential appointment and development of Green Book (Corporate staff) auditors within the department. There is a comprehensive development plan for its personnel, which includes incident command training to maintain competence as well as training in such as legislation, fire investigation and case studies.

2.3.2 Assets and Resources
The BFS team have a dedicated budget which is overseen by the Head of Business Fire Safety.

## 3. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

3.1 In conclusion, the BFS department is making significant strides in addressing current challenges, including staffing, technological advancements, and maintaining a competent workforce. Through collaboration with key stakeholders the department is well-positioned to deliver high-quality services. The focus on innovation, regulatory compliance, and long-term sustainability ensures that we are equipped to meet the evolving needs of our communities, supporting both current and future objectives.

3.2    **Next Steps**

3.2.1  The department has written a department strategy which establishes our aims, objective and priorities for the next three years. This strategy is currently in draft and will be presented at a Senior Leadership meeting for approval.

3.2.2  To implement and embed an auditing and operational intelligence system to identify, manage and prioritise risks effectively.

3.2.3  To further support the above staffing risk, we are in the process of finalising an options paper to recruit 'Green Book' Corporate BFS Inspecting Officers. This initiative aims to enhance our workforce capacity and ensure adequate staffing for Business Fire Safety inspections.

**4    RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1    The recommendation is that the Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as providing an update on progress and assurance of current work streams.

| Contact Officer: | Brian Thompson ACFO Technical Services | |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **Background Papers** | **Date** | **Source / Contact** |
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| **Appendices** | |
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**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**  AGENDA ITEM NO 7.iv
13 FEBRUARY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE AREA MANAGER, HEAD OF OPERATIONS

**ON CALL STRATEGY / IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES QUARTER 2 REPORT 2024/25**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION OR ASSURANCE**

REPORT APPROVED BY AREA MANAGER, MATT JONES
REPORT PRESENTED BY AREA MANAGER, MATT JONES

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**SUMMARY**

This report will provide the Commissioners with an update on the progress of the 10 objectives set out by the on-call strategy and transformation team to improve on-call effectiveness and adaptability.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Commissioners note the progress made for the on-call improvement objectives Q3 as set out in this report.

---

1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 The on-call strategy and transformation team have 10 improvement objectives as listed below.  The objectives aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of on-call stations across South Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

1.2 OCDS amended trial contract – Implementation of 12-month, station wide contract trial. Available hours based on size of contract undertaken – bringing the removal of maximum flexibility from existing contracts.  The changes are expected to enhance both recruitment and retention.

1.3 Reduce on-call support (OCST) spend – Investigate options to reduce and removes OCST by utilising day duty personnel and corporate OCDS personnel.

1.4 Initial Training Courses – Design and implement alternative initial on-call firefighting course in collaboration with the training departments. The aim is to incorporate additional skills, offer more flexibility, reduce workload of individuals during initial phases of employment.

1.5     Alternative OCDS crewing systems – Investigate alternative crewing systems options for OCDS, working alongside stakeholders from fire control, ICT, MWWFRS and SWFRS stations.

1.6     Key Station Policy Review – Investigate alternative options to our current key station policy model, including new systems or updating existing policy with function to maintain adequate fire cover across service area.

1.7     Review station turn-in time and impact of 30-20 policy – Investigate options to extend turn in times at stations where, recruitment options are limited due to demographics of area and all other recruitment options have been exhausted.  Review impact of 30-20 policy change for turn in/out times of on-call appliances.

1.8     Investigate alternative OCDS crewing models – Investigate crewing model options for on-call to enhance recruitment and retention.

1.9     Initial pre course learning – Implement pre course inductions, learning and assessments to PDR Pro system.  Aligning OC with WT, capturing and recording trainee firefighter training records for their initial training phase of development.

1.10    Review OCDS recruitment pathway – Review of current OCDS recruitment process pathway to ensure best practice.

1.11    On-call firefighter retention – Identify issues and implement strategy for improving retention of on-call firefighters within the service.

**2.      ISSUE / PROPOSAL**

Detailed progress made against each of the objectives is set out below:

Improvement Objective 1: OCDS amended trial contract

The working group met in September to discuss progress of the trial and to review the first 3 months of data (see below) including availability, establishment, leave of absence (LOA's), starters and leavers.

An update was given to AM Matt Jones and all Station GM's by GM Mark Kift and WM Karen Levett from the On Call Strategy and Transformation Team  (OSATT).

The working group agreed due to the drop in overall On-call appliance availability for the first 3 months of the trial, June – August, and felt it would be beneficial to host online update sessions for station management teams to communicate this information.  The update sessions took place at the

beginning of October.

The OSATT along with the working group continue to monitor On-call appliance availability and establishment during Q3, which has seen an uplift in availability for December increasing from 63.1% in August to 68.9%.

Improvement Objective 2: Reduce On-call support (OCST) spend

Following the sign off by the SLT during Q2 the key station status for Abergavenny fire station transferred to Monmouth fire station at the beginning of September 2024. Monmouth fire station regularly provide 100% availability of their first appliance.

Abergavenny initially had a significant impact on the OCST monthly spend which totalled £37,300 in July. This was reduced to £3,800 in October, a decrease in OCST spend of over £33,500 a month. Q3 has seen a slight increase in monthly spend.

The OSATT reviewed the priority OCST allocation list in September and continue to use spare WDS firefighters on both day and night shifts (after optimal WDS crewing) to further support On-call appliance availability. From 1st January 2025 to date, we have utilised WDS personnel at On Call stations 18-day shifts and 42-night shifts totalling 751.33 hours.

Improvement Objective 3: Initial training courses

Following de-briefs of the new three-week courses it was agreed by GM Mark Kift to implement the three-week initial On-call course, consisting of five days core skills course followed by a two-week initial BA course, as the standard for On-call. This will be implemented with immediate effect for future courses.

A pre-planned trial weekend core skills course, made up of two consecutive weekends (Saturday & Sundays), a Saturday followed by a two-week initial BA course will commence 16th November at Abercarn Fire Station. A de-brief of key stake holders including trainees, the training team and the OSATT will take place in December and the findings reported back to AM Matt Jones for consultation.
SM Shain Redman has met with the training team to programme six On-call Initial three-week courses dates for 2024/25.

Improvement Objective 4: Alternative OCDS crewing systems

Due to a system overhaul in fire control the objectives quarters have been pushed back.

A working group has been set up led by GM Gareth Evans (Operations) and includes key stakeholders from joint fire control, ICT, OSATT and M&WWFRS.

GM Darren Cleaves, SM Shain Redman and WM Jen Riddiford from the OSATT have now joined the working groups with MAWWFRS.

Presentations from external companies took place week commencing 4 November 2024, with three companies progressing to the next round. A wish list has been collated and added to the working groups specification.

Improvement Objective 5: Key station policy review

After consultation and agreement by the SLT, the key station status for Abergavenny Fire Station has been amended to Monmouth Fire Station and implemented at the beginning of September 2024.

The SLT are scheduled to discuss the contract and procurement of ORH Dynamic cover tool system during a meeting in January. The lead time from procurement to implementation is approximately 12 weeks with a view of going live during Q4.

Improvement Objective 6: Review station turn-in times and impact of 30-20 policy

Station Managers planning to increase station turn out times will create business plans outlining findings, options, and recruitment objectives achieved and planned for the coming year.  This will be on-going throughout the year for various stations.  The OSATT will continue to support Station Managers exploring this option.

A 12-month impact analysis of the 30-20 policy took place at the end of September 2024, analysing the impact of delayed to respond (DTR) to incidents by our On-Call appliances pre and post policy implementation.

Since 2019-20 there has been a gradual increase in On-call appliances DTR to incidents, an increase of 17.9% between 2019 - 2024.

2023/24 to the current (YTD) 2024-25 has seen an increase of 6.4%, with the introduction of the 30-20 policy implemented during September 2023. The OSATT will continue to monitor and provide regular updates to the On-Call Station Management Teams.

Improvement Objective 7: Investigate alternative OCDS crewing models

The team is currently conducting research across the UK to look at other crewing models. Crewing models already identified that are being explored:

- MOU with other organisation to use home workers to become On Call firefighters.
- Using stations as hub for other organisation to work from whilst being available for emergency calls.
- Using current day duty staff to work remotely from stations to maximise appliance availability.
- Increasing WDS establishment to use personnel to maintain OC appliances availability.

Contract and Payment Review

Work is currently underway alongside the People Services department to assess the current On Call contract with the hope to make it more attractive and to aid retention. Possible changes include:

- Removing community fire safety obligations so that they are paid at overtime when duties are carried out
- Review of the role of an On Call Firefighter, is the current role aligned with obligations.
- Review of administrative role on station

Improvement Objective 8: Initial pre course learning

Following a period of testing, the On-call Trainee Firefighter pre course learning (active pathway) was launched on PDR Pro in August. It is currently being used by all trainees attending initial courses in November. Active pathways are verified and signed off by the Station Management team prior to individuals attending initial courses.

Feedback and a review of the live system from key stakeholders including trainees, Station Management teams and the training team will take place in Q4.

Improvement Objective 9: Review OCDS recruitment pathway

A Review has been carried out and the team have identified ways in which the pathways can become more efficient. Altering the order of stages in

the process will streamline the process and prepare candidates for assessment day more quickly.

Improvement Objective 10: On-call firefighter retention

A survey has been conducted, and data has been collated over a five-year period. The biggest reason for leaving is due to family/caring commitments, which stands at 20%.

During 2024/25 20% of OCDS Firefighters left the service due to Family/Caring commitments, 14% for other work commitments and 7% of leavers retired. Interestingly, 39% of leavers were WDS/OCD.

Due to capacity issues within the team, additional work will be completed when the team is at full strength.

## 3.    IMPLICATIONS

### 3.1  Community and Environment

3.1.1  Introduction of additional initial on-call training courses may impact on Cardiff Gate Training centre and instructor workloads.

3.1.2  Introduction of alternative recruitment process may impact on HR working times.

### 3.2  Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

3.2.1  HSE Guidance (HSG 256): Managing shift work and its implications for fatigue and safety, particularly regarding the statutory minimum rest periods and acceptable shift durations.

3.2.2  Service Policy and Procedures- OP-02.002 On-call personnel Working the Retained Duty System

### 3.3  Resources, Assets and Delivery

3.3.1  Procurement and delivery of staffing systems to replace and enhance WDS, OCDS and officer availability.  This will be conducted through an all-Wales procurement process in consultation with Operations, IT, JSFC and Central Staffing.

3.3.2  Procurement of Dynamic Cover Tool system to enhance fire cover across the service area is in progress.  We have 3 interested parties who have registered interest, and the process is on-going.  The aim is to have the system implemented and functional by October 2025.

3.3.3 Delivery of any recommended crewing and contract models will be delivered through Operations, Central Staffing, HR and On-call management team.

## 4. EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Undertake feedback following the contract trial.

4.2 Undertake feedback from new recruits on pre-course learning.

4.3 Undertake feedback from stakeholders on the one-week initial course and weekend course.

4.4 Investigate and implement possible crewing systems through working groups and assessments.

4.5 Continually monitor and review key station status alterations and provide feedback.

4.6 Assess station turn in times and continue to monitor 30 to 20 mph policy through trial period.

4.7 Continue to investigate alternative crewing models and assess suitability for South Wales FRS.

4.8 Undertake feedback from stakeholders and review in Q4.

4.9 Continue to monitor the recruitment pathway and streamline the process.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That the Commissioners note the progress made for the on-call improvement objectives Q3 as set out in this report.

| Contact Officer: | Darren Cleaves<br>Group Manager | |
|---|---|---|
| **Background Papers** | | |
| None | **Date** | **Source /<br>Contact** |
| Appendix 1 - Improvement Objectives Report | | |
| Appendix 2 - Demographic data | | |

# Improvement Objectives
# Quarter 2 Report
# 2024/25

# Contents

## Introduction

The On-call Strategy And Transformation Team (OSATT) are responsible for several key functions which contribute to the overall effectiveness and adaptability of our On Call Duty System (OCDS).

**Crewing and availability**: The team will support and collaborate with station management teams in maintaining availability of on-call firefighters and appliances across the service area.

**Recruitment and retention**: A critical aspect of the OCDS strategy is attracting and retaining personnel. The team will work on initiatives to engage the community, promote careers within the service, identify issues and tap into a wealth of innovative suggestions in collaboration with other fire and rescue services that will drive transformation and improvement.

**Training**: The team aim to provide access to a range of training resources and opportunities offering flexible solutions based on the on-going commitment needs of our on call firefighters.

**Organisational change management**: The team will focus on adapting to new systems and drive change in processes and structure to ensure the OCDS remains effective.

**Technology innovation**: The team will evaluate and implement new technologies that improve efficiency and effectiveness of our OCDS.

**Policy development and compliance**: The team will review and develop policies to align with best practices.

**Data analysis and decision support**: The team will use data to inform decision-makers and identify areas for improvement to optimise effectiveness.

Overall, the On-call strategy and transformation team are responsible for maintaining the operational response of our OCDS whilst driving continuous improvement and transformation to meet future challenges.

# On-call Strategy and Transformation Team Improvement Objectives

| Improvement Objective 1 | | OCDS amended contract trial (Business plan task OPS24.01)<br><br>Implementation of 12-month, station wide contract trial. Available hours based on size of contract undertaken - bringing about the removal of maximum availability from existing contracts.  These changes are expected to enhance both recruitment and retention. |
|---|---|---|
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) Preparation of briefing documentation, engagement with watches and station managers including on-line seminars and station commander meetings.<br><br>ii) Distribution of briefing documentation and engagement with station management teams, throughout implementation and initial phases.<br><br>iii) Communication with on-call firefighter who have left the service over the past 3 years.<br><br>iv) Creation and completion of new Appendix 1's, authorised, signed off and submitted prior to trial start date.<br><br>v) Commencement of trial w/c 3rd June 2024. |
| | **Q2** | i) Interim analysis and evaluate effectiveness of trial by OSATT and working group. |
| | **Q3** | i) Interim analysis and evaluate effectiveness of trial by OSATT and working group. |
| | **Q4** | i) Feedback and engagement with stations.<br><br>ii) End of trial analysis, review and de-brief.  Full report created by OSATT.<br><br>iii) Decision-making consultation with senior management on permanent installation of new contracts, reversion to previous contracts or development of new contract formulars using data provided by the trial. |

| Improvement Objective 2 | Reduce on-call support team (OCST) spend |
|---|---|
| | Investigate options to reduce and remove OCST by. |
| | a) Phase I - utilising day duty (DD) operational personnel from internal departments including Operations, CS, ORM, training and BFS.<br>b) Phase II – use of corporate OCDS personnel. |
| | Review strategic fire cover of supported appliances. |

| Quarterly Milestone | Q1 | i) | Conduct audit report of OCST expenditures and availability contribution 2019-2024. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ii) | Provide evidence to Area Manager Operations on system options including use of operational DD/corporate OCDS personnel supporting OCDS availability shortfalls, proposed impact on OCST spend, expectations of crews and guidelines of system. |
| | | iii) | Creation of agreed working system for DD personnel supporting OCDS appliances. |
| | Q2 | i) | Consultation with heads of Service management reference expectations of personnel, proposed guidelines, impact on individual roles and fire cover improvements. |
| | Q3 | i) | Design new crewing system in consultation with admin support responsible for management of the system. |
| | | ii) | Review of on-call stations proposed for cover. |
| | | iii) | Engagement with personnel including expectations and guidance of system. |
| | | iv) | Implementation and go-live. |
| | Q4 | i) | Regular feedback from personnel. |
| | | ii) | Monitor impact of cost saving measures. |
| | | iii) | Produce monthly updates to heads of service management and Group Managers. |
| | | iv) | Discussions with stakeholders, formal permanent implementation of system. |
| | | v) | Commence phase II implementation plan. |

| Improvement Objective 3 | | Initial training courses (Business plan task OPS24.01)<br><br>Design and implement alternative initial On-call firefighting courses in collaboration with the training department.<br><br>The aim is to incorporate additional skills, offer more flexibility, reduce workload of individuals during initial phases of employment. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Using objectives and desired outcomes, collaborate with training department developing 3-week course profile including pre-course learning, mid-term and end of pre course assessments. |
| | | ii) | Trial course March 2024 (1 week core skills & 2 weeks BA) and May 2024 (1 week core skills & 1 weeks RTC/Trauma), in collaboration with training and operation departments. |
| | | iii) | De-brief and feedback courses with key stakeholders and confirm findings via report. Implement any necessary adjustments in subsequent courses throughout 2024/25. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Investigate options for more flexible course options i.e. weekends |
| | | ii) | Collaboration with training department integrating new courses onto the training calendar for year 2025/26. |
| | | iii) | Continuation of course de-brief and feedback with key stakeholders, including training and station management teams. |
| | **Q3** | i) | Schedule 2025/26 courses onto training diary and update HR. |
| | | ii) | Engagement with training administrators ref. implementation of new courses. |
| | | iii) | Engagement with station personnel and management on implementation of new course profiles and aligned pre-course learning, as standard practice. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Implementation of new initial training courses as standard within the service. |
| | | ii) | Continuously review pre course and course content in collaborate with the training department and station management teams. |

| Improvement Objective 4 | Alternative OCDS crewing systems<br><br>Investigate alternative crewing system options for the OCDS, working alongside stakeholders from Fire control, ICT, MWWFRS, and stations. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Initial set up of working group in collaboration with Fire control, ICT and MWWFRS. |
| | | ii) | Explore and review alternative systems used by other UK fire and rescue services and collate data on systems in use. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Engagement and fact fining with other UK fire and rescue services using alternative systems, to obtain intel on definitive improvements, challenges and/or barriers, and results. |
| | **Q3** | i) | Engagement with station personnel and creation of working group including personnel from the OSATT and on-call station personnel. |
| | | ii) | Create objectives and wish list after engagement with Operations teams and station personnel. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Engagement with external companies crewing systems including functionality, installation, system compatibility with vision and reporting functions, and report findings for each system to the Area Manager of Operations. |
| Improvement Objective 5 | Key station policy review (business plan task OPS24.05 & OPS26.06)<br><br>Investigate alternative options to our current key station policy model, including new systems or updating existing policy with function to maintain adequate fire cover across service area. | | |
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Create a working group with main stakeholders including - Operations, Fire control, ICT and MWWFRS. |
| | | ii) | Gather intel on alternative models or systems available and/or being used by other UK fire and rescue services. |
| | | iii) | Research systems used by other services with pros and cons of systems and report findings. |
| | | iv) | Investigate updating existing SWFRS key station policy incorporating updated risk data from BMIS. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Q2** | i) | Enter negotiations with any external systems companies, with all main stakeholders. |
| | | ii) | Working group consultation with the SLT detailing preferred system/s or policy including infrastructure/technology, functionality, timelines, implementation, implementation, and ongoing costs. |
| | **Q3** | i) | Negotiations with preferred systems (companies) reference functionality, data import and transfer, and implementation timelines. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Implementation of alternative fire cover tool/updated key station policy within SWFRS. |
| **Improvement Objective 6** | | | **Review station turn-in times and impact of 30-20 policy (Business plan task OPS24.02)**<br><br>a) Investigate options to extend turn in times at stations where, recruitment options are limited due to demographics of area and all other recruitment options have been exhausted.<br><br>b) Review impact of 30-20 mph policy change for turn in/out times of on-call appliances. |
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Identify and consult with stations where recruitment opportunities have been exhausted and establishment levels remain low. |
| | | ii) | Station management provide evidence on recruitment options undertaken over the past 24 months. |
| | | iii) | OSATT provide information to service performance and communications team and Fire control team to create reports on station profiling, demographics of extended areas and impact of PDAs on risks within station area. |
| | | iv) | Consultation between OSATT, AM Operations, station GM and SM to review findings. |
| | | v) | 6-month analysis on impact of 30-20 scheme, including increases in delayed responses to incidents. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Open recruitment of agreed extended turn in period. Inform HR and media for updating SWFRS Internet, media and communications strategy. |
| | | ii) | HR contact previous refused applicants to see if they fall within new turn in area. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | iii) | OSATT report to Area Manager Operations detailing impact of 30-20 on on-call appliances. |
| | **Q3** | i) | On-going station recruitment and media campaigns highlighting new station specific turn in times. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Fire control "go-live" with amend turn in time on successful completion of a BA course by individual responding from within the extended turn in time. |
| | | ii) | Station continuously reviews watch members responding turn in location and times. |
| | | iii) | Continuously review On-call appliance turn in/out times to identify any issues. |

| **Improvement Objective 7** | **Investigate alternative OCDS crewing models (business plan task OPS24.01)** |
|---|---|
| | Investigate alternative crewing model options for on-call to enhance recruitment and retention. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Gather data on current crewing models and alternatives from UK fire and rescue services. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Continuation of gathering date alongside visits and communications with other UK fire services using alternative crewing models. |
| | | ii) | Analyse collected data to identify trends, strengths, and weaknesses of different crewing models. |
| | | iii) | Create report identifying all alternative system with benefits and disadvantages and submit to AM Operations for review. |
| | **Q3** | i) | Present primary findings and consult with stakeholders including firefighters, AM Operations, and rep bodies. |
| | | ii) | Gather feedback and suggestions. |
| | | iii) | Record research finding, methodology and recommendations into a comprehensive report. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Pilot implementation of crewing model |
| | | ii) | Evaluate effectiveness of crewing model and review. |

| | Initial courses, pre-course learning |
|---|---|
| **Improvement Objective 8** | Implement pre course inductions, learnings and assessments to PDR Pro system. Aligning OC with WT, capturing and recording trainee firefighter training records from their initial training phase of development. |

| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Conduct a needs analysis for pre course training module within PDR Pro system. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ii) | Develop content for on-call firefighters pre course learning. |
| | | iii) | Consultation with training on development, effectiveness, and implementation plan for module. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Creation of pre course learning module within PDR Pro by training including training notes. |
| | | ii) | Engagement and training with station management teams. |
| | | iii) | Test module with OCDS initial course. |
| | | iv) | Review and feedback test course data. |
| | **Q3** | i) | Implementation of module for all on-call firefighters. |
| | | ii) | Review and engagement with on-call station management teams. |
| | **Q4** | i) | Continuous evaluation of module |

| | Review of OCDS recruitment pathway |
|---|---|
| **Improvement Objective 9** | Review of current OCDS recruitment process pathway to ensure best practice. |

| **Quarterly Milestone** | **Q1** | i) | Identify aim of changes OCDS recruitment process. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | ii) | Review of current OCDS recruitment pathway in consultation with HR and occupational health departments identifying challenges, barriers and areas causing delays or inefficiencies. |
| | | iii) | Gather data on alternative processes used by other UK fire and rescue services including associated challenges, barriers and outcomes. |
| | **Q2** | i) | Report on recruitment pathways used by other UK fire and rescue services including timelines, improvements, desired changes, and challenges. |
| | | ii) | Access candidate experience through feedback of individuals attending our OCAD's. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | iii) | Consultation with HR and Occupational health reference findings of reports and development of system. |
| | Q3 | i) | Mapping of recruitment pathway and develop action plan with proposed changes. |
| | | ii) | Communication of proposed changes to relevant departments and station management teams. |
| | | iii) | Implementation and monitoring of changes. |
| | | iv) | Feedback and review of implemented changes. |
| | Q4 | i) | Continuous evaluation, review, and improvements to OCDS recruitment pathway |

| Improvement Objective 10 | On-call firefighter retention<br><br>Identify issues and implement strategy for improving retention of on-call firefighters within the service. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Quarterly Milestone** | Q1 | i) | Planning meeting to set aims and objective for project. |
| | Q2 | i) | Identify challenges, issues, and needs of on-call firefighters through surveys and forums including one to one and group sessions. |
| | | ii) | Analysis of data identifying patterns including reasons for leaving timeframes and changes in these over the past years. |
| | Q3 | i) | Engagement with on-call firefighters including those recently leaving the service to obtain specific intel which may not be captured in the exit interview. |
| | | ii) | Engagement with station management teams to gather their perspective on reasons on-call firefighters leave. |
| | | iii) | Review impact of all changes implemented to enhance firefighter retention, including removal of maximum flexibility contracts. |
| | | iv) | Recognise resources required to implement retention strategy. |
| | Q4 | i) | Implementation of on-call firefighter strategies. |
| | | ii) | Monitor and review improvements strategies and report. |

## Risks

**Availability & retention**

We continue to engage with other UK fire and rescue services across many forums, sharing ideas and experiences along with best practices from recruitment initiatives all the way through to training course profiles, on-going training requirements and retention solutions, however, on-call firefighter recruitment and retention remains a significant challenge for all UK fire and rescue services.

There has been a steady decline in on-call availability, and establishment over the past 5 years (excluding 2020 which saw uplift due to covid restrictions) dropping from 80.4% availability in 2019/20 to 68.7% 2023/24.

**OCDS Overview 2024/25**

| Date | Availability | Est hrs | Est actual | Est % actual | No. OCDS personnel |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YTD 2023-24 | 68.7 | | | 79.7 | 601 |
| April 2024 | 76.1 | 44,268 | 34,220 | 77.3 | 586 |
| May 2024 | 72.9 | 44,268 | 34,283 | 77.5 | 589 |
| June 2024 | 71.2 | 44,268 | 33,748 | 76.2 | 580 |
| July 2024 | 69 | 44,268 | 33,853 | 76.5 | 578 |
| August 2024 | 63.1 | 44,268 | 33,433 | 75.5 | 568 |
| September 2024 | 67.1 | 44,268 | 33,391 | 75.4 | 577 |

*End of year No. OCDS personnel 2023/24 based on March 2024 figures

**OCDS availability and establishment 2019 – 2023/24**

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Availability | 80.4 | 90.5 | 80.8 | 71.3 | 68.7 |
| Establishment % | 84.0 | 92.8 | 89.9 | 79.7 | 77.7 |

Retention of our on-call firefighter also remains a challenge.  On-call firefighters face challenges that can impact their decision to stay including, work life balance, pay, change of primary employment, training requirements and career progression opportunities.

In 2023 the RMT implemented a phased increased pay structure for development firefighters where, on successful completion of an initial BA course, and/or Trauma and RTC courses, results in an increase in development firefighter pay, by up to 80% (40% for BA, 40% for Trauma and RTC).

**OCDS firefighter starters and leavers 2019-2023/24**

|  | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **New starters** | 79 | 80 | 50 | 84 | 86 | 379 |
| **WDS starters** | 10 | 35 | 13 | 12 | 22 | 92 |
| **Total starters** | 89 | 115 | 63 | 96 | 108 | 471 |
| **Leavers total** | 103 | 71 | 134 | 106 | 70 | 484 |

**Response times**

With the introduction, by the Welsh government, of the policy change 30 to 20 on roads in built up areas, along with continuous changes to road layouts and networks including one way systems and major road upgrade projects, crews face significant difficulties maintaining the required turn in/out time of fire appliances.

# Progress against objectives

Improvement Objective 1

OCDS amended contract trial (Business plan task OPS24.01)

Implementation of 12-month, station wide contract trial. Available hours based on size of contract undertaken - bringing about the removal of maximum availability from existing contracts.  These changes are expected to enhance both recruitment and retention.

**Q3)**
    i)       Interim analysis and evaluate effectiveness of trial by OSATT and working group.

The working group met in September to discuss progress of the trial and review the first 3 months of data (see below) including availability, establishment, LOA's, starters and leavers.

An update was given to AM Matt Jones and all Station GM's by GM Mark Kift and WM Karen Levett from the OSATT.

The working group agreed due to the drop in overall On-call appliance availability for the first 3 months of the trial, June – August, it would be beneficial to host online update session for station management teams to communicate this information.  The update sessions took place at the beginning of October.

The OSATT along with the working group continue to monitor On-call appliance availability and establishment during Q3, which has seen an uplift in availability for December increasing from 63.1% in August to 68.9%.

| | Date | Availabilty | Establishment (44,268) Hours | Establishment 42160 (%) | Establishment Head Count | WDS | Leavers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre-trial | May-24 | 72.9 | 34283.5 | 32612 | 589 | 202 | 10 |
| Trial | Jun-24 | 71.3 | 33748 | 32102 | 580 | 199 | 7 |
| Trial | Jul-24 | 69.1 | 33853 | 32202 | 578 | 197 | 4 |
| Trial | Aug-24 | 63.1 | 33433 | 31805 | 568 | 194 | 5 |
| Trial | Sep-24 | 67.1 | 33391 | 31750 | 577 | 192 | 8 |
| Trial | Oct-24 | 65.7 | 33033 | 31410 | 572 | 192 | 7 |
| Trial | Nov-24 | 67.7 | 33432 | 31790 | 581 | 192 | 6 |
| Trial | Dec-24 | 68.9 | 33463.5 | 31830 | 576 | 210 | 2 |
| Trial | Jan-25 | | | | | | |
| Trial | Feb-25 | | | | | | |
| Trial | Mar-25 | | | | | | |
| Trial | Apr-25 | | | | | | |
| Trial | May-25 | | | | | | |
| TOTAL + or -Pre Trial | | -4 | -820 | -782 | -13 | | 49 |

*Overview figures include totals from Stn 26 HP/Bowser establishment

## Improvement Objective 2

### Reduce on-call support team (OCST) spend

Investigate options to reduce and remove OCST by.

a)  Phase I - utilising day duty (DD) operational personnel from internal departments including Operations, CS, ORM, training and BFS.

b)  Phase II – use of corporate OCDS personnel.

Review strategic fire cover of supported appliances.

**Q3)**

i)  Design new crewing system in consultation with admin support responsible for management of the system.

ii)  Review of on-call stations proposed for cover.

iii)  Engagement with personnel including expectations and guidance of system.

iv)  Implementation and go-live.

Following the sign off by the SLT during Q2 the key station status for Abergavenny fire station transferred to Monmouth fire station at the beginning of September 2024.

Monmouth fire station regularly provide 100% availability of their first appliance, which initially

had a significant impact on the OCST monthly spend from £37,300 in July to £3,800 in October, a decrease in OCST spend of over £33,600 a month. Q3 has seen a slight increase in monthly spend.

**On-call support team spend 2024/25**

| MONTHLY COST - STRAT RES | |
|---|---|
| **Month** | **COST** |
| Apr | £ 29,724.21 |
| May | £ 28,577.72 |
| Jun | £ 31,395.43 |
| Jul | £ 37,347.62 |
| Aug | £ 32,785.83 |
| Sep | £ 11,815.21 |
| Oct | £ 3,735.59 |
| Nov | £ 5,423.98 |
| Dec | £ 5,445.68 |
| Jan | £ 7,183.01 |
| Feb | |
| Mar | |
| **YTD** | **£ 193,434.27** |

*January figures as of 20/01/25

The OSATT reviewed the priority OCST allocation list in September and continue to use spare WDS firefighters both days and night shifts (after optimal WDS crewing) to further support On-call appliance availability.

## Improvement Objective 3

## Initial training courses (Business plan task OPS24.01)

Design and implement alternative initial On-call firefighting courses in collaboration with the training department.

The aim is to incorporate additional skills, offer more flexibility, reduce workload of individuals during initial phases of employment.

**Q3)**
   i)        Schedule 2025/26 courses onto training diary and update HR.

   ii)       Engagement with training administrators ref. implementation of new courses.

iii) Engagement with station personnel and management on implementation of new course profiles and aligned pre-course learning, as standard practice.

Following de-briefs of the new 3 week courses it was agreed by GM Mark Kift to implement the 3 week initial On-call course, consisting of 5 days core skills course followed by a 2 week initial BA course, as the standard for On-call. This will be implemented with immediate effect for future courses.

A pre-planned trial weekend core skills course, made up of 2 consecutive weekends (Saturday & Sundays), a Saturday followed by a 2 week initial BA course will commence 16th November at Abercarn Fire Station. A de-brief of key stake holders including trainee's, the training team and the OSATT will take place in December and the findings reported back to AM Matt Jones for consultation.

SM Shain Redman has met with the training team to programme 6 On-call initial 3-week courses dates for 2024/25.

## Improvement Objective 4

### Alternative OCDS crewing systems

Investigate alternative crewing system options for the OCDS, working alongside stakeholders from Fire control, ICT, MWWFRS, and stations.

**Q3)**
   i) Engagement with station personnel and creation of working group including personnel from the OSATT and on-call station personnel.
   ii) Create objectives and wish list after engagement with Operations teams and station personnel.

Due to a system overhaul in fire control the objectives quarters have been pushed back.

A working group has been set up led by GM Gareth Evans (Operations) and includes key stakeholders from joint fire control, ICT, OSATT and M&WWFRS.

GM Darren Cleaves, SM Shain Redman and WM Jen Riddiford from the OSATT have now joined the working groups with MAWWFRS.

Presentations from external companies to took place week commencing 04/11/24 with 3 companies progressing to the next round. Wish list has been collated and added to the working groups specification.

## Improvement Objective 5

## Key station policy review (business plan task OPS24.05 & OPS26.06)

Investigate alternative options to our current key station policy model, including new systems or updating existing policy with function to maintain adequate fire cover across service area.

**Q3)**

  i)      Negotiations with preferred systems (companies) reference functionality, data import and transfer, and implementation timelines.

---

After consultation and agreement by the SLT the key station status for Abergavenny Fire Station has been amended to Monmouth Fire Station and implemented at the beginning of September 2024.

The SLT are scheduled to discuss the contract and procurement of ORH Dynamic cover tool system during a meeting in January.  The lead time from procurement to implementation is approximately 12 weeks with a view of going live during Q4.

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## Improvement Objective 6

## Review station turn-in times and impact of 30-20 policy (Business plan task OPS24.02)

a) Investigate options to extend turn in times at stations where, recruitment options are limited due to demographics of area and all other recruitment options have been exhausted.

b) Review impact of 30-20 mph policy change for turn in/out times of on-call appliances.

**Q3)**

  i)      On-going station recruitment and media campaigns highlighting new station specific turn in times.

---

Station Managers planning to increase station turn out times will create business plans outlining findings, options, recruitment objectives achieved and planned for the coming year.  This will be on-going throughout the year for various stations.  The OSATT will continue to support Station Managers exploring this option.

A 12-month impact analysis of the 30-20 policy took place at the end of September 2024, analysing the impact of delayed to respond (DTR) to incidents by our On-Call appliances pre and post policy implementation;

**12 month Pre and Post 30-20 policy DTR to incidents**

| Month | Overall % DTR to incidents | Month | Overall % DTR to incidents | % Monthly increase 22-23 v 23-24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sep-22 | 40 | Sep-23 | 48.7 | 8.7 |
| Oct-22 | 44 | Oct-23 | 45.1 | 1.1 |
| Nov-22 | 44.1 | Nov-23 | 48.4 | 4.3 |
| Dec-22 | 44.6 | Dec-23 | 50.2 | 5.6 |
| Jan-23 | 42.8 | Jan-24 | 46.2 | 3.4 |
| Feb-23 | 39.1 | Feb-24 | 46.7 | 7.6 |
| Mar-23 | 44.7 | Mar-24 | 47.7 | 3.0 |
| Apr-23 | 39.4 | Apr-24 | 50.7 | 11.3 |
| May-23 | 35.9 | May-24 | 49.1 | 13.2 |
| Jun-23 | 40.9 | Jun-24 | 50.3 | 9.4 |
| Jul-23 | 41 | Jul-24 | 49.6 | 8.6 |
| Aug-23 | 44.8 | Aug-24 | 50.4 | 5.6 |

**On-Call DTR to incidents yearly overview**

| | Overall % DTR to incidents |
|---|---|
| 2019-20 | 32.7 |
| *2020-21 | 31.2 |
| 2021-22 | 36.7 |
| 2022-23 | 39.2 |
| 2023-24 | 44.2 |
| 2024-25 (YTD) | 50.6 |
| **% increase 2020-21 – 2024-25** | **17.9** |

*Covid-19

Since 2019-20 there has been a gradual increase in On-call appliances DTR to incidents, an increase of 17.9% between 2019 - 2024.

2023/24 to the current (YTD) 2024-25 has seen an increase of 6.4%, with the introduction of the 30-20 policy implemented during September 2023. The OSATT will continue to monitor and provide regular updates to the On-Call Station Management Teams.

Improvement Objective 7

Investigate alternative OCDS crewing models (business plan task OPS24.01)

Investigate alternative crewing model options for On-call to enhance recruitment and retention.

**Q3)**
i) Present primary findings and consult with stakeholders including firefighters, AM Operations, and rep bodies.

ii)     Gather feedback and suggestions.

Record research finding, methodology and recommendations into a comprehensive report.

---

Work has been initiated by WM Jenni Riddiford attending a national On-Call seminar in Norfolk looking at crewing models.

---

## Improvement Objective 8

### Initial courses, pre-course learning

Implement pre course inductions, learnings and assessments to PDR Pro system.  Aligning OC with WT, capturing and recording trainee firefighter training records from their initial training phase of development.

Q3)
    i)      Implementation of module for all on-call firefighters.

    ii)     Review and engagement with on-call station management teams.

---

Following a period of testing the On-call Trainee Firefighter pre course learning (active pathway) was launched on pdrPro in August.  It is currently being used by all trainees attending initial courses in November.  Active pathways are verified and signed off by the Station Management team prior to individuals attending initial courses.

Feedback and a review of the live system from key stakeholders including trainees, Station Management teams and the training team will take place in Q4.

---

## Improvement Objective 9

### Review of OCDS recruitment pathway

Review of current OCDS recruitment process pathway to ensure best practice.

Q3)
    i)      Mapping of recruitment pathway and develop action plan with proposed changes.

    ii)     Communication of proposed changes to relevant departments and station management teams.

    iii)    Implementation and monitoring of changes.

    iv)     Feedback and review of implemented changes.

A Review has been carried out and the team have identified ways in which the pathways can become more efficient. By altering the order of stages in the process will streamline the process and prepare candidates for assessment day more quickly.

## Improvement Objective 10

## On-call firefighter retention

Identify issues and implement strategy for improving retention of on-call firefighters within the service.

Q3)
- i) Engagement with on-call firefighters including those recently leaving the service to obtain specific intel which may not be captured in the exit interview.

- ii) Engagement with station management teams to gather their perspective on reasons on-call firefighters leave.

- iii) Review impact of all changes implemented to enhance firefighter retention, including removal of maximum flexibility contracts.

- iv) Recognise resources required to implement retention strategy.

Survey has been conducted and data has been collated over a five-year period. The biggest reason for leaving is due to family/caring commitments, which stands at 20%.

| Year | Wellbeing/Health | Family/Caring | Inflexible working | Retired | Study | Didn't return from LOA | Other employment | Moving | Contract terminated | Other work commitments | Withdrawn from process | Other/unknown | TOTAL | WDS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019-20 | 0 | 20 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 26 | 26 | 27 | 127 | 22 |
| 2020-21 | 3 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 17 | 81 | 28 |
| 2021-22 | 8 | 41 | 12 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 16 | 3 | 16 | 18 | 11 | 152 | 61 |
| 2022-23 | 11 | 29 | 10 | 12 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 13 | 3 | 7 | 109 | 35 |
| 2023-24 | 9 | 32 | 11 | 16 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 112 | 33 |
| 2024-25 | 4 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 55 | 21 |
| TOTAL | 35 | 127 | 39 | 46 | 4 | 22 | 39 | 36 | 20 | 59 | 64 | 44 | 636 | 178 |
| % | 6 | 20 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 10 | 7 | | 28 |

Reasons given for leaving the OCDS 2019-25

**OCDS 2024 leavers**

| Month | Wellbeing/Health | Family/Caring | Inflexible working | Retired | Study | Didn't return from LOA | Other employment | Moving | Contract terminated | Other work commitments | Withdrawn from process | Other/unknown | TOTAL | WDS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Reasons given for leaving the OCDS 2024-25 | | | | | | | | | |
| April | 1 | 2 | | | | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | | | 11 | 4 |
| May | | 1 | | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | 2 | 10 | 3 |
| June | | 3 | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 7 | 4 |
| July | | 1 | | | | | | | | 2 | | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| August | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | 5 | 3 |
| September | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | 9 | 2 |
| October | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 7 | 2 |
| November | | 1 | 3 | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | | 7 | 4 |
| December | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 2 | 1 |
| January | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 3 | | | 7 | 1 |
| February | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| March | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | |
| **TOTAL** | 4 | 14 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 14 | | 4 | 69 | 27 |
| % | 6 | 20 | 10 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 20 | | 6 | | 39 |

During 2024/25 20% of OCDS Firefighters left the service due to Family/Caring commitments, 14% for other work commitments and 7% of leavers retired. Interestingly, 39% of leavers were WDS/OCD.

Due to capacity issues within the team, additional work will be completed when the team is at full strength.

## Activities overview Q4

| Planned activities Q3 | | |
|---|---|---|
| January 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| March 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| April 2025 | JO/SM mid-term Seminar Updates | 2 Locations |
| June 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| July 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| September 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| October 2025 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| January 2026 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |
| March 2026 | 3-week initial course | Course profile = 1 week core skills, 2 weeks BA initial course |

**OCDS Demographic Data**

Total - 576

Sex

| Male | 529 |
|---|---|
| Female | 47 |

Gender Identity

| Blank Response | 319 |
|---|---|
| Different from Birth | 1 |
| Same as Birth | 253 |
| Prefer Not to Say | 3 |

Ethnic Origin

| Blank Response | 510 |
|---|---|
| Black | 2 |
| Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups | 3 |
| White | 56 |
| Prefer Not to Say | 5 |

Disability

| Blank Response | 358 |
|---|---|
| No | 211 |
| Yes | 4 |
| Prefer Not to Say | 3 |

Sexual Orientation

| Blank Response | 310 |
|---|---|
| Heterosexual | 159 |
| Prefer Not to Say | 107 |

Religion or Belief

| Blank Response | 321 |
|---|---|
| Buddhism | 1 |
| Christianity (All Denominations) | 52 |
| Islam | 1 |
| Religion Not Listed | 3 |
| No Religion or Belief | 74 |
| Prefer Not to Say | 124 |

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**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**        AGENDA ITEM NO 7.v
                                              13 FEBRUARY 2025


BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE AREA MANAGER, RISK REDUCTION

**SWFRS AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM (AFA) RESPONSE CHANGE UPDATE**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, BRIAN
THOMPSON
REPORT PRESENTED BY AREA MANAGER, MIKE WYATT

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**SUMMARY**

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) launched its revised Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) response model on January 6, 2025, expanding coverage to residential premises, specialised housing, schools, and heritage sites, day and night. We will continue to monitor and assess the impact of the change moving forward.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendation is that the Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as providing an update on progress.

---

## 1. BACKGROUND

### 1.1  Update on Progress

1.1.1  A substantial amount of work has been accomplished to fulfil all necessary tasks in order to ensure that the Service was ready for the go-live date of January 6, 2025.

1.1.2  While the communication and engagement period has concluded, the AFA webpage continues to provide ongoing information and guidance on the changes. Throughout the process, we have provided stakeholders with the opportunity to raise any questions and ensured that a response was provided to all enquiries.

1.1.3 This period of engagement resulted in changes to our response model. The new AFA response model removes the night-time response strategy, as we will now be attending all residential premises, including specialised housing such as sheltered accommodation and extra care facilities, both during the day and night-time. This fully aligns with Mid and West Wales Fire and Fire Service (MWWFRS). Additionally, we will also be attending schools, including education facilities and heritage sites, at all hours.

1.1.4 Following this change, our media campaign was updated to reflect our revised response strategy, which included a radio advertising campaign which was aired in December 2024

1.1.5 In December 2024 members of Business Fire Safety delivered training for Fire Control Operators in preparation for the go-live date. This training has been simplified with the move towards the MWWFRS model.

1.1.6 The go-live date for NHS premises will be delayed until the 7th April 2025. This is to allow sufficient time for these premises to revise policies and review their fire response procedures.

## 2. ISSUES

2.1 The response change to heritage sites has resulted in the requirement to develop a database of buildings within the 10 Unitary Authorities. We currently have a list of approximately 6,000 heritage sites (as opposed to buildings), which we are working through internally.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 **Community and Environment**

3.1.1 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
There will be no impact to faiths or beliefs including sensitive times of day or year. This change in procedure neither benefits nor disadvantages anyone with any protected characteristic.

3.1.2 Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act:
This change positively contributes to the Act by continuing to provide a response to schools and heritage sites.

3.1.3 Socio Economic Duty
The changes to our AFA response strategy will ensure that all domestic residences continue to receive an emergency response at all times.

3.1.4 Equality Impact Assessment
An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

## 3.2 Regulatory, Strategy and Policy

3.2.1 The British Standard for Fire Alarms, in Clause 19 and subclause 35.2.7 the need to avoid delay in summoning the fire and rescue service when the fire detection and fire alarm system of a residential care premises operates.

3.2.2 The proposed response change to AFA's includes a Continued unfiltered or unchallenged 24-hour response to residential care premises and therefore the proposed model has no impact on the British Standards.

3.2.3 Service Policy – Updates are being made to CM-04 mobilising procedures, OP-09.008 - Unwanted Fire Signal Reduction, SOP 6.18.

3.2.4 National Policy. The majority of UKFRS are currently updating their AFA response policies. National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) are in the process of creating a national guidance working group for UwFS reduction. SWFRS has representation on this NFCC working group.

## 3.3 Resources, Assets and Delivery

3.3.1 Human Resources and People Development
A project team has been established and consists of members from the Operations department, Business Fire Safety (BFS), Control, Service Performance and Communication (SPC), and Media and Communications.

3.3.2 Assets and Resources
An education and engagement campaign will incur promotion and media costs. A budget has been agreed.

## 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 A change in response to AFA's within SWFRS went live as scheduled on January 6th, 2025.

4.2 **Next Steps**

4.2.2 From the 6th of January, for a one-week period, two lead representatives from Business Fire Safety have been positioned in JPSC to provide assistance and guidance to Control Operators.

4.2.3 As of January 28th, there has been a 42% decrease in AFAs attended, based on 231 missed calls from a total of 396, rising to 49% when including 28 hospital AFAs, which will no longer be attended from April the 7th.

4.2.4 We are continuing to respond to enquiries from members of our communities and stakeholders as required.

4.2.5 We will look to transition to a monitor and review phase of the project where we will evaluate the impact of the changes on the community, stakeholders and the Service.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The recommendation is that the Commissioners for SWFRS note this report as providing an update on progress.

| Contact Officer: | Brian Thompson ACFO Technical Services | |
|---|---|---|
| **Background Papers** | **Date** | **Source / Contact** |
| Time for Action. A report exploring the impact of false alarms in Wales. | 2015 | Welsh Gov. |
| Fire False Alarm Reduction – South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority. | May 2023 | Audit Wales. |
| NFCC – Developing a risk methodology, other building fire, draft report version 3 | March 2023 | NFCC |

| **Appendices** | |
|---|---|
| | |

**THIS REPORT IS NOT EXEMPT AND IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**     AGENDA ITEM NO 7.vi
                                          13 FEBRUARY 2025

BOARD OF THE COMMISSIONERS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

**REPORT ON THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION REGARDING THE ORGANISATION'S ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR 2025/2026**

**THIS REPORT IS FOR INFORMATION**

REPORT APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION
REPORT PRESENTED BY TEMPORARY HEAD OF CORPORATE SUPPORT, WAYNE THOMAS

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**SUMMARY**

The Service recently consulted with the public on the proposed Annual Improvement Objectives for 2025/2026. Commissioners are to consider the responses received during the consultation that ran from October 31st, 2024, to January 24th, 2025.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Commissioners review the consultation evaluation in Appendix 1.

2. That Commissioners note the responses to the public consultation detailed in Appendix 1, which will be considered as the Service reviews the current Strategic Themes and Objectives in addition to creating a new Vision, Mission and Values Strategy.

---

**1. BACKGROUND**

1.1   Commissioners will be aware of the publication of the Service's Annual Improvement Plan on October 31st, 2024, in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. As part of the Measure, the Service has a duty to consult on the proposed annual improvement objectives that support a long-term strategic vision.

1.2   The objectives in Appendix 1 (referred to as strategic themes and objectives), which help support the well-being objectives identified within the Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and have a clear link with the National Fire Framework produced by Welsh Government, are

contained within the Service's Annual Improvement Plan document "How did we do in 2023/2024 and what do we plan to do in 2025/2026".

1.3 Proposed Annual Improvement Objectives, which are categorised within Strategic Themes, were approved for public consultation by the Board of Commissioners on 25th October 2024. Following the approval, a communication and engagement plan was developed.

1.4 The plan was to:

- Launch the consultation on publication of the Annual Improvement Plan on October 31st, 2024.

- Initiate invitations to all constituent Local Authorities, Town Councils, Community Councils, South Wales Police, Gwent Police, Health Boards, Public Service Boards, Welsh Government contacts, third party and voluntary organisations on the Service's Stakeholder Register to respond.

- Promote and share the plan widely on South Wales Fire and Rescue' social media platforms including X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook through a 'teaser' launch video, and a series of regular update videos highlighting each individual strategic theme to encourage engagement and feedback.

- Design a programme of feedback sessions with staff groups and stations. Subsequently visits and meetings were undertaken at the following locations:

  o Pontypridd, Whitchurch, Cwmbran and Kenfig Hill Stations (including day, night, wholetime, and on-call watches),
  o All watches based at Joint Fire Control in Bridgend.
  o Cardiff Gate Training Centre
  o Malpas Station - Cadets Training Evening

## 2. ISSUE / PROPOSAL

2.1 128 people engaged with the online consultation, of which 65 provided feedback, three in Welsh. Nine face-to-face consultation sessions with staff from our stations, Joint Fire Control and Cardiff Gate Training and Development Centre involved fourteen crews and approximately 80 people. Combining this to the 65 people who completed the online survey, the findings within Appendix 1 are based on feedback from approximately 145 people.

2.2 Responses indicated substantial agreement with our proposed 2025/2026 Improvement Objectives, with 77% either Strongly or Somewhat Agreeing with our proposed objectives. This is 4% lower (81%) than last year's response to our proposed 2023/2024 Objectives and 4% higher (73%) than the previous year.

2.3 Of those who responded to the demographic section of the survey, results are noted in an appendix to the Consultation Evaluation Report.

2.4 Following the recommendations from the Independent Culture Review, the implementation of the Step Forward Transformation Programme, and the arrival of the new Chief Fire Officer, the Service is currently reviewing its Strategic Vision, Mission, and Values. The outcomes and findings contained within this consultation feedback will be reviewed and considered during the process to formulate the new Vision, Mission, and Values.

## 3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 **Community and Environment**

3.1.1 Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equity - Equalities outcomes were considered in the development of the current Strategic Themes within the Annual Improvement Plan. In determining relevant departmental actions to deliver the objectives, there will be consideration of diversity, inclusion, equalities and well-being outcomes.

3.1.2 Well-Being Of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – Publishing, Consulting and monitoring our progress in meeting our objectives, and effectively implementing planned improvement strategies as necessary, enable the Service to ensure that the long-term impacts of decisions and actions on future generations are considered. This contributes to the seven well-being goals that will help address global problems such as poverty, health inequalities and the impacts of climate change.

3.1.3 Consultation and Communications: Public consultation influences the Service's planning activities for the upcoming financial year. These activities are then used to demonstrate compliance with the various laws, regulations, and standards as required.

3.2 **Regulatory, Strategy and Policy**

    3.2.1 Legal - Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires Fire and Rescue Authorities to consult citizens and communities about their general duty to improve and their improvement objectives.

    3.2.2 Financial - Delivery of these strategic themes are primarily addressed within the commitments of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy or will be met as part of the financial planning for subsequent years.

3.3 **Resources, Assets and Delivery**

    3.3.1 Consultation feedback is considered while setting the Service's objectives and priorities, but resources are not directly allocated or impacted.

## 4 EVALUATION & CONCLUSIONS

4.1 In conclusion, the Commissioners will note that to fulfil its duties under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, the Service must consult on proposed annual improvement objectives that support the long-term strategic vision.

4.2 The Service must also publish an annual report on its achievement and performance by March 31st that also contains details of planned activities for 2025/2026.

4.3 These activities must consider the feedback received from consultation that is provided for Commissioners to review, to ensure that the Service is meeting the obligations above.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That Commissioners review the consultation evaluation in Appendix 1.

5.2 That Commissioners note the responses to the public consultation detailed in Appendix 1, which will be considered as the Service reviews the current Strategic Themes and Annual Improvement Objectives in addition to creating a new Vision, Mission, Values and Strategy.

| Contact Officer: | David Canning<br>Planning, Performance and Risk Manager | |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| **Background Papers** | **Date** | **Source / Contact** |
| None | | |

| **Appendices** | |
|---|---|
| Appendix 1 | Annual Improvement Plan - Proposed Objectives for 2025/2026: Have Your Say Consultation Evaluation |

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# Annual Improvement Plan - Proposed Objectives for 2025-2026
# Have Your Say Consultation Evaluation

Consultation period 31st October 2024 to 24th January 2025

## Contents

## Strategic Themes and Objectives considered by the Consultation for 2025-2026

| Strategic Theme | Proposed Objectives and Priorities |
|---|---|
| **Keeping You Safe** | • Reducing the impact of false alarms on our resources.<br>• Reducing the number of fires in the home and understanding the causes and behaviours of them.<br>• Reducing the number of road traffic collisions (RTCs).<br>• Reducing the number of deliberate fires.<br>• Improving safety in and around water.<br>• Improving fire safety in high-rise buildings in our communities.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Embedding and assessing the change to our AFA response strategy, due to be implemented in January 2025. This will focus on sleeping risk; reducing our attendance to alarms at commercial premises unless a fire is confirmed. The additional resource available from this change will support training and risk reduction activities.<br>• Evaluate and consider extending our trial of commercial safety checks, offering advice and signposting business owners to appropriate information.<br>• Developing our Risk Based Inspection Programme with procurement and implementation of a new recording system.<br>• Establishing reporting and monitoring channels to assess community-based risk, feeding into local station plans and Service-wide activities. This will utilise a wide range of data to inform our strategic planning.<br>• Implement the final phase of our Water Rescue Strategy so that the people who use our waterways are safer. |

| Strategic Theme | Proposed Objectives and Priorities |
|---|---|
| **Responding To Your Emergency** | • Responding effectively when you need us.<br>• Doing all we can to make sure that our On-Call Duty System (OCDS) crews are available.<br>• Training our Firefighters, Joint Fire Control staff and other staff to respond to current and future risks in our communities.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Increasing use of data to monitor performance, measuring improvement against key metrics.<br>• Reviewing pre-determined attendance (PDA) models to ensure their alignment with community risk.<br>• Creating a structured post-incident review framework that captures learning from incidents and exercises, using data and insights to inform training, improve operational procedures, and share best practices Service-wide.<br>• Ensuring adequate on-call Firefighter availability with a target of all stations maintaining 70% On-Call Firefighter availability.<br>• Ensuring all operational Firefighters have timely access to current risk-based information for every incident they attend, fully aligned with our risk management frameworks.<br>• Completing work to address the recommendations of the thematic reviews:<br>    ○ Learning from Grenfell<br>    ○ Broadening the role of Firefighters in Wales<br>    ○ Fire and Rescue Service operational training<br>• Align our exercise programme to risk, also formalising our cross-border exercise programme. |
| **Working With Our Partners** | • Working with Public Service Boards (PSBs) to support our communities.<br>• Working with our partners to deliver our services where they are needed.<br>• Continually reviewing and building on our existing partnerships, embedding principles of social partnership.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Working with the NFCC on embedding Fire Standards as a performance tool.<br>• Identifying opportunities to work with partners in support of our leadership development programme.<br>• Working with trade unions to ensure the principles of social partnership are reflected in our processes: cooperation, respect, trust, voice and participation, and mutual gains. |

| Strategic Theme | Proposed Objectives and Priorities |
|---|---|
| **Involving and Communicating** | • Involving our communities, making sure they have their say in what we do.<br>• Ensuring that we engage with our staff and make sure they are engaged with the Service and have their say in what we do.<br>• Helping to keep our communities safe by delivering safety education and attending community events.<br>• Ensuring we develop and promote communication channels within the Service.<br>• Recognising the role of social partnership, further developing open and transparent relationships with stakeholders.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Developing a communication and engagement strategy that supports internal and external engagement.<br>• Developing ways for stakeholders, including staff, partners and communities, to have a say and be involved in our plans for improvement.<br>• Updating and upgrading the Service's internet and intranet systems to deliver effective platforms for external and internal users to find the information they need.<br>• Improving transparency by sharing information, explaining our processes and promoting our values.<br>• Embedding the structure of staff meetings and briefings, building the Shout internal communication brand.<br>• Evaluating the reach and effectiveness of our communications. |
| **Protecting and Enhancing Our Environment** | • Implementing, embedding, and centralising sustainability policies and procedures.<br>• Decarbonising our fleet and providing sufficient charging infrastructure to staff and visitors.<br>• Reducing our energy usage and carbon footprint.<br>• Implementing an accredited Environmental Management System.<br>• Reducing the amount of waste produced and improving recycling rates.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Reducing waste produced and increase recycling efficiency.<br>• Beginning development of our first carbon neutral fire station.<br>• Implementing an accredited environmental management system and work with partners to protect the environment.<br>• Climate risk assessing estate, assets and services and develop adaptation strategies.<br>• Identifying ways to enhance and develop our wellbeing areas and green spaces.<br>• Preparing for an electrified fleet by improvements to our charging infrastructure.<br>• Trialling use of biofuels to reduce impact of diesel miles.<br>• Installing energy generation at appropriate sites. |

| Strategic Theme | Proposed Objectives and Priorities |
|---|---|
| **Using Technology Well** | • Using the most suitable technology and equipment to improve our services.<br>• Reviewing the standard and use of technology and equipment across the Service via the Digital Transformation Programme.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Developing digital leadership to guide strategic use of our digital assets and new or emerging technologies.<br>• Ensuring digital literacy is incorporated into our training plans, ensuring our staff have skills appropriate to their roles to create, evaluate and share information.<br>• Reviewing existing People Services system considering recent restructure and changing requirements.<br>• Implementing a new Operational Intelligence System, enabling sharing of information between teams and improved reporting.<br>• Exploring the concept of the digital fireground, ensuring effective communications and up to date information are available to our crews and commanders at incidents.<br>• Completing our trial of aerial and water drones to enhance our incident command and rescue capabilities.<br>• Implementing a dynamic cover tool that will improve our availability, supporting us in moving from a static degradation plan. |
| **Valuing Our People** | • Delivering fundamental change in our culture, responding to the recommendations of the Independent Culture Review.<br>• Attracting a workforce that reflects and represents our communities<br>• Developing our people by identifying training and development opportunities.<br>• Supporting our people to feel well, healthy, and valued at work.<br>• Encouraging and supporting a bilingual culture across the Service.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Improving our workforce planning to ensure we have the right skills to deliver our services, with improved resilience and succession planning.<br>• Developing our culture of learning and improving with new training opportunities delivered in a variety of formats, including leadership skills at all levels.<br>• Embedding recent improvements to our recruitment and promotion procedures, using feedback to evaluate future cycles.<br>• Developing robust reporting to inform our DICE (Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equity) activities.<br>• Reviewing operational Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and improve our processes for cleaning contaminated PPE to improve the health of our Firefighters and those involved in handling kit, including a long-term infrastructure project. |

| Strategic Theme | Proposed Objectives and Priorities |
|---|---|
| Continuing To Work Effectively | • Being clear and publicly accountable by reviewing the organisation's governance structures.<br>• Maximising value for money while improving our service.<br>• Developing new ways of working.<br>• Undertaking a wholesale review of the organisation's performance.<br><br>To meet these Objectives our priorities in 2025-2026 will include:<br><br>• Developing new governance and performance frameworks that will support Service wide improvement.<br>• Ensuring policies and procedures are effective in documenting Service processes and are regularly reviewed.<br>• Implementing effective project management processes and evaluation strategies.<br>• Ensuring all business areas are resilient through business continuity tests and exercises.<br>• Acting on new National Framework and performance indicators expected to be published by Welsh Government (Sound the Alarm report, Recommendation 4). |

# Executive Summary

- There is agreement for the 2025-2026 objectives proposed (77% of responses were positive, answering either 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree')
- Support for the objectives is slightly lower than last yest (-4%)
- Support is weakest for Valuing our People (66% positive)
- Online survey responses are lower than last year (-40%). There is a sharp decline in staff responses to the survey this year (-50%)
- Positive feedback focusses on the supportive influence of colleagues. There is praise for CFO Fin Monahan since his arrival. Response and Prevention activities are highlighted as key strengths of the Service
- People and Culture is the main feedback theme, closely linked to morale, transparency, communication and engagement, use of technology, working conditions, and effective working practices
- Control staff voiced more concern than other staff groups, about their working conditions, technology, and disconnection from the rest of the Service
- Several suggestions for improvement are provided by staff and external stakeholders ([here](#))
- Staff view successful change as an improvement in morale, more collaborative working towards common goals, more transparency, improved retention and a more diverse workforce
- The Welsh language is not deemed to be adversely impacted by the 2025-2026 objectives. Staff and external stakeholders have offered suggestions of ways to promote Welsh language and culture ([here](#))

## Report Information

The findings are based on responses to the "Have Your Say" Annual Improvement Plan public consultation online survey from 31st October 2024 to 24th January 2025 and face-to-face consultation sessions with Stations, Joint Fire Control and Cardiff Gate; nine consultation sessions involving 14 crews and approximately 80 people. Combining this to the 65 people who have completed the survey, these findings are based on approximately 145 people.

This report provides a quantitative evaluation of the online survey responses to our 2025-2026 objectives and lists feedback and suggestions mentioned in both the survey responses and consultation sessions which have been grouped into themes. Language used and tone has been modified where necessary.

### Levels of engagement with the online consultation

- Engagement indicates interaction with the survey but without responding to consultation core questions.
- Response indicates individual has responded to one or more of the consultation core questions.
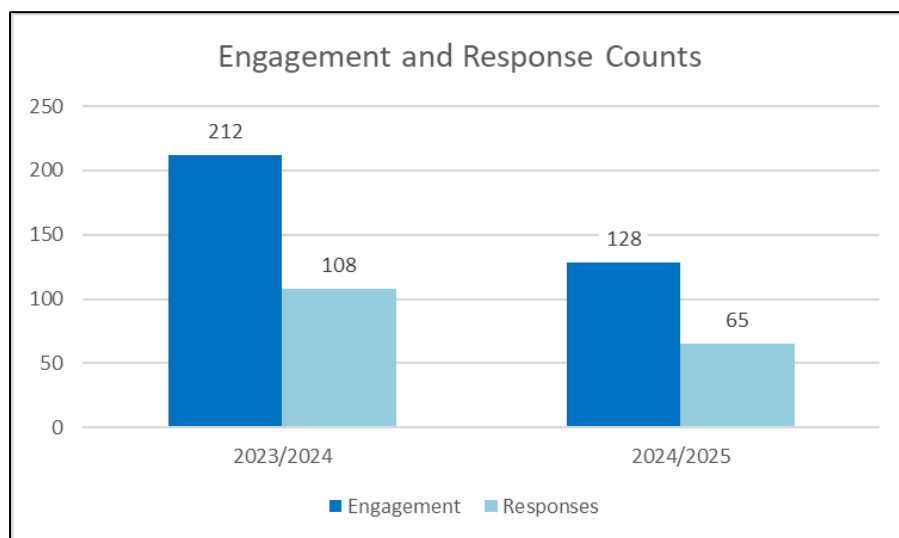


Engagement and response numbers for the 2024-2025 online consultation are lower than last year.

128 people have engaged with this year's online consultation. Three people responded to the Welsh survey. Of those 128 people who engaged with the survey directly, 65 (51%) people provided feedback on the proposed objectives and plans in 2025-2026. This is the same feedback response percentage as last year's consultation.

All 65 people who provided feedback answered all the proposed objectives and plans feedback questions. 54 also answered our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) questions. A review of those EDI responses can be found in the Appendix at the end of this report.

**Figure 1: Engagement and Response Counts 2023-2024 vs 2024-2025**

The questions asked of people before providing feedback on our proposed objectives and plans were to identify their relationship with SWFRS, e.g. Wholetime Firefighter / Operational Staff or Member of the Public, and whether they had read the Annual Improvement Plan - either the full version or the

new summarised version. 68 people read the summarised version, 37 read the full version, and 23 responded that they had not read the plan. The 63 people who did not provide feedback about our proposed objectives exited the survey at this stage.

## Public Consultation Online Survey - Summary of Findings

- Overall, there is agreement for the 2025-2026 objectives proposed. 77% of responses were positive ('strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree').  This is 4% lower than last year's consultation.
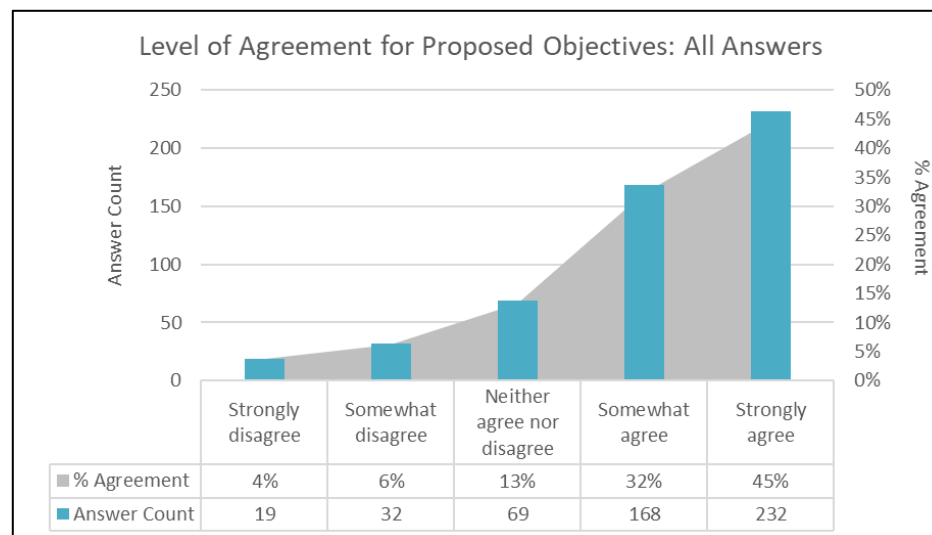


**Figure 2: Levels of agreement across all 2025-2026 proposed objectives**

- There is broad agreement for strategic theme objectives, however agreement has not strengthened for any set of objectives since the previous annual consultation.
- Agreement for Responding to Your Emergency, Using Technology Well and Continuing to Work Effectively objectives remained the same or similar to last year's consultation.
- Agreement decreased for the other five strategic theme objectives compared to last year's consultation.
- Agreement is lowest for Valuing our People (66%).
- Working with Partners had the largest reduction in levels of agreement compared to the previous annual consultation (-13%).
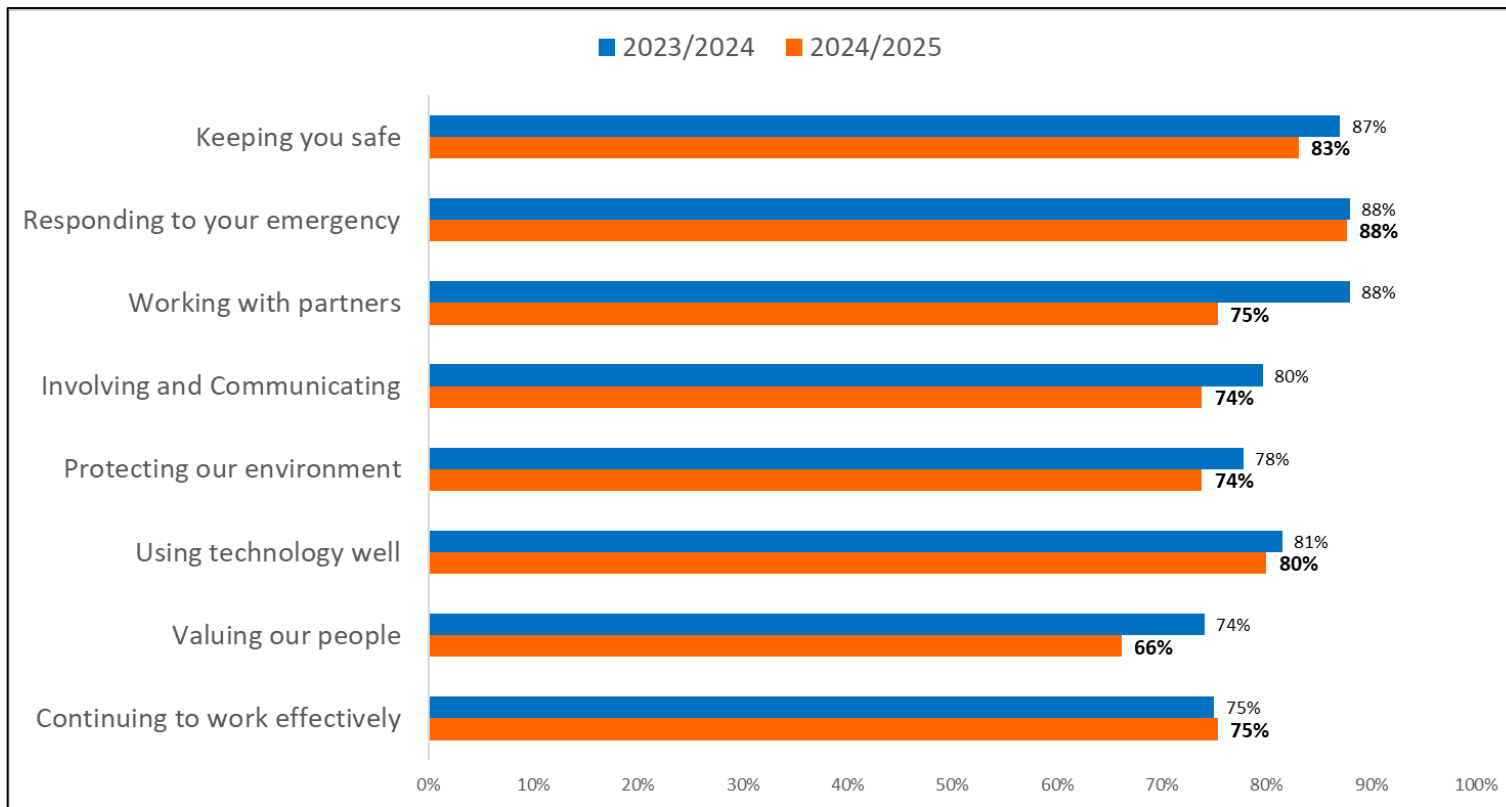
**Figure 3: Percentage of Strongly/Somewhat Agree responses for the objectives of each Strategic Theme – year-on-year consultation comparison**

Below is a breakdown of the levels of agreement for the objectives of each Strategic Theme, from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.
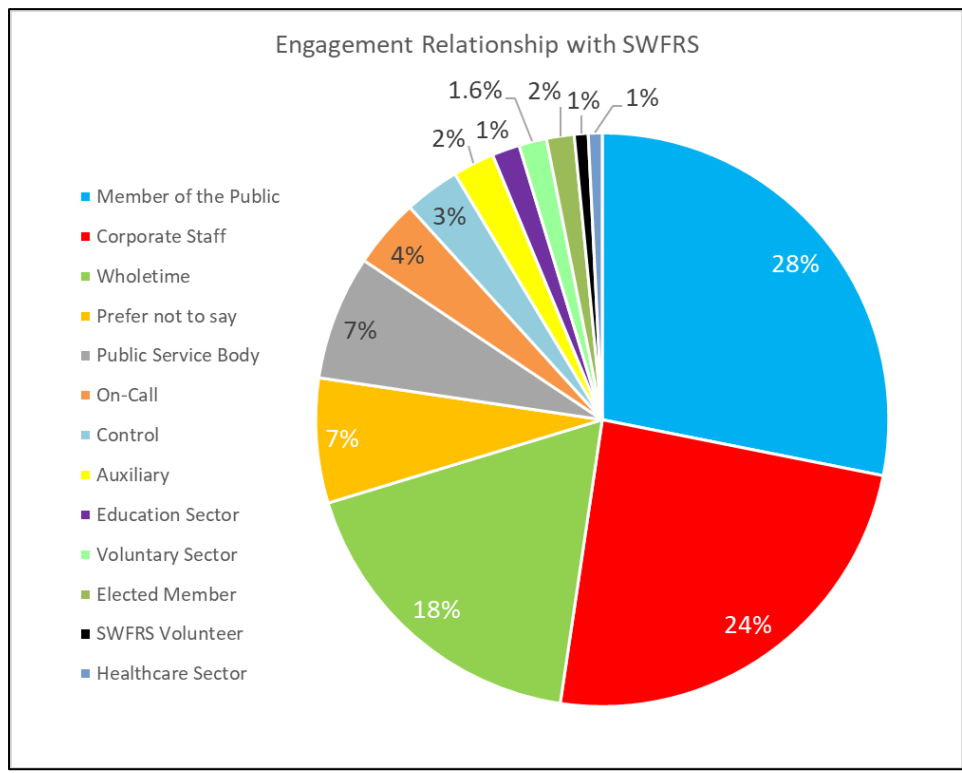
- The 2025-2026 Valuing our People objectives were most polarised, with 66% agreement and 20% disagreement – the most disagreement for any Strategic Theme objectives.
- There was 14% disagreement for the 2025-2026 Involving and Communicating objectives.

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | # Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Keeping you safe** | 46% | 37% | 11% | 5% | 2% | 65 |
| **Responding to your emergency** | 57% | 31% | 6% | 5% | 2% | 65 |
| **Working with our partners** | 40% | 35% | 17% | 5% | 3% | 65 |
| **Involving and Communicating** | 49% | 25% | 12% | 11% | 3% | 65 |
| **Protecting our environment** | 45% | 29% | 18% | 8% | 0% | 65 |
| **Using technology well** | 37% | 43% | 11% | 6% | 3% | 65 |
| **Valuing our people** | 37% | 29% | 14% | 8% | 12% | 65 |
| **Continuing to work effectively** | 46% | 29% | 17% | 3% | 5% | 65 |

**Table 1: Percentage levels of agreement for the objectives of each Strategic Theme in the 2024-2025 consultation**

Below is a breakdown of who engaged with the survey, and of those who engaged how many responded to the specific feedback questions about the objectives and plans for 2025-2026.

- The response count from members of the public and other external stakeholders was 10% lower than last year.
- The response count from SWFRS staff was 50% lower than last year.



| | Engagement Count | Response Count |
|---|---|---|
| Member of the Public | 36 | 20 |
| Corporate Staff | 31 | 16 |
| Wholetime | 23 | 8 |
| Prefer not to say | 9 | 4 |
| Public Service Body | 9 | 4 |
| On-Call | 5 | 3 |
| Control | 4 | 2 |
| Auxiliary | 3 | 3 |
| Education Sector | 2 | 0 |
| Voluntary Sector | 2 | 1 |
| Elected Member | 2 | 2 |
| SWFRS Volunteer | 1 | 1 |
| Healthcare Sector | 1 | 1 |

**Figure 1*: Engagement by respondents' relationship with SWFRS in the 2024-2025 consultation**

- Of respondent cohorts with more than four people (Members of the Public, Wholetime Firefighters and Corporate Staff - please note that response counts for other cohorts charted below are small) the highest levels of agreement came from Members of the Public (83%).
- Disagreement from Wholetime Firefighters came primarily from a single individual.
- Disagreement from Corporate Staff centred on the 2025-2026 Valuing our People objectives.
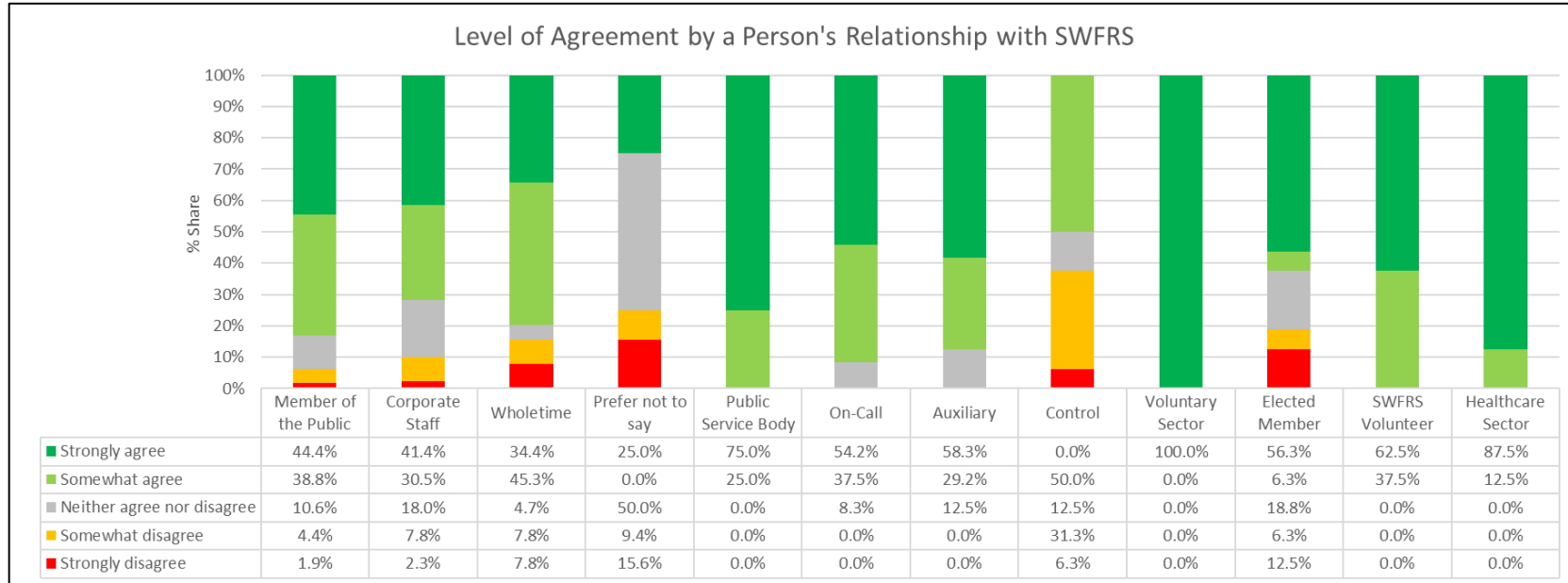- Disagreement from Elected Members came from a single individual.



| | Member of the Public | Corporate Staff | Wholetime | Prefer not to say | Public Service Body | On-Call | Auxiliary | Control | Voluntary Sector | Elected Member | SWFRS Volunteer | Healthcare Sector |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strongly agree | 44.4% | 41.4% | 34.4% | 25.0% | 75.0% | 54.2% | 58.3% | 0.0% | 100.0% | 56.3% | 62.5% | 87.5% |
| Somewhat agree | 38.8% | 30.5% | 45.3% | 0.0% | 25.0% | 37.5% | 29.2% | 50.0% | 0.0% | 6.3% | 37.5% | 12.5% |
| Neither agree nor disagree | 10.6% | 18.0% | 4.7% | 50.0% | 0.0% | 8.3% | 12.5% | 12.5% | 0.0% | 18.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Somewhat disagree | 4.4% | 7.8% | 7.8% | 9.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 31.3% | 0.0% | 6.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Strongly disagree | 1.9% | 2.3% | 7.8% | 15.6% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 6.3% | 0.0% | 12.5% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

**Figure 2: Level of agreement by respondents' relationship with SWFRS in the 2024-2025 consultation**

# Feedback Themes

**<u>Positive feedback</u>**

- CFO Fin Monahan
  - Every shift and team involved in the face-to-face consultation sessions, and several comments from the online survey, expressed positive feedback for the new Chief. His visits and contact with different areas of the Service have been commended and staff feel more positive about the future since his arrival.
  - Joint Fire Control and Stations are pleased the CFO acknowledges their work in different communications, and his contact with crews after difficult incidents has also been praised. His dedication to completing his training has also been commended.
  - Several comments noted that his arrival has begun to lift staff morale.

- Keeping you Safe and Responding to Your Emergency
  - Themes were mentioned by several people as areas we excel in.

- Colleagues
  - Every shift and team involved in the face-to-face consultation sessions mentioned that their colleagues help them to work through challenging times. The staff are what makes the Service a good place to work. A few comments also praised their immediate line managers / crew or watch manager etc., as a positive influence.

- Testimonial from a member of the public
  - "I think the firefighters do a great job and help charities too. They do a lot here for the community…and should be celebrated."
  - "You are excellent value for money in my town thank you."
  - "Our station near us is clean and tidy. It is a smart building now."

**Culture Change – how to make progress and what successful change looks like:**

- A workforce that acts collaboratively to achieve organisational goals and understand how their role helps meet the goals of the organisation
- Employees feeling happier and more valued. Create a cohort of employees who enjoy working for the Service
- More transparency
- Better staff retention
- Create a more diverse workforce at all levels and areas of the Service
- Improved Service performance with more effective systems and processes
- More efficient use of Service budget by achieving better value for money investments
- The adoption of new ways of working
- Progress should be measured

**Welsh Language – what effects will our proposals have on the Welsh language and how could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated:**

- There is a difference of opinion, with some people stating that our proposals will carefully consider and be respectful of the Welsh language and will not treat it any less favourably than English, whilst others are concerned the Service is not doing enough to promote Welsh language and culture
- There are no tangible actions showing how the Service will increase the use of Welsh language. Thera are very few Welsh speakers in Service and not enough opportunities, or time provided to learn
- There are some concerns about the cost of prioritising Welsh
- To promote the Welsh language, the Service could do the following:
  - Liaise with education services for support
  - Develop more opportunities to learn Welsh
  - Run more Welsh events and activities in the Service
  - Have a Welsh helpline
  - Staff lanyards could identify Welsh speakers
  - Fly the Welsh flag outside all SWFRS locations

**Recurring feedback themes**

Below are the main recurring feedback themes from the public online consultation and face-to-face consultation sessions with staff. These feedback themes are taken from comments people have made about the Service's objectives and plans, including anything they would like the Service to prioritise, and any other feedback they wanted to provide.

| Feedback Theme | Comments | Suggestions |
|---|---|---|
| **People, Culture and Working Conditions** | - Several comments noted that "Valuing Our People" is the most important strategic theme, getting this right will impact everything else (Control, Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Watch culture doesn't need to change because FFs are in the job for the right reasons and using appropriate behaviours (Wholetime)<br><br>- Staff morale is low, and trust needs to be rebuilt (Wholetime / Control / On-Call)<br><br>- Majority of comments state nothing has changed since Culture Review and there is a lack of transparency (Wholetime / Control / On-Call / Member of Public)<br><br>- Staff do not feel valued (Volunteer / Control / Wholetime / On-Call / Healthcare Sector worker / Member of Public)<br><br>- "Boys' club", nepotism and favouritism still exist (Prefer not to say)<br><br>- Strong leadership is essential at all levels, but not currently apparent (Wholetime / Member of Public)<br><br>- The suitability of certain leaders, from middle management, newly created roles up to and including Commissioners, is questioned (Wholetime / Corporate) | - Ensure all leaders model desired behaviours<br><br>- Be open and transparent, admit mistakes and failings when they happen<br><br>- Use non-managerial or independent external people for investigations<br><br>- Ensure there are no negative repercussions to challenging others both generally and in relation to grievances (including counter accusations)<br><br>- Make the updating of policies and procedures a priority and ensure they are reviewed regularly<br><br>- Develop a new hybrid working policy that applies to all Corporate staff, removing line manager discretion. Align this to other FRSs, public sector organisations and NFCC allowing 2 days per week working from somewhere other than the normal office location<br><br>- Increase diversity and inclusion and engage more with specific communities and groups<br><br>- Improve transparency of the recruitment and promotion processes/decision making |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | - Poorly behaved staff have not been held accountable for their actions and that the failings of a few have tarnished everyone (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Some staff feel there is a reluctance to question and challenge behaviours for fear of repercussions (Wholetime / Corporate)<br><br>- There is a diversity of opinion regarding EDI. Some people feel that more work is needed to increase diversity and inclusion, whilst others suggested our focus on diversity is misplaced, and we should recruit the most appropriate people, rather than focus on targets (Corporate / Member of Public / Prefer not to say / Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Staff feel that People Services are no longer transparent and there are barriers to speaking with them and in accessing services from them (Wholetime / Corporate)<br><br>- Firefighters cannot book PH days, due to staff absence (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br> - Drill nights for On-Call FFs should not be undervalued by being superseded by CS or other work – FF safety should be the priority and there is an appetite for more frequent practical training and fewer online lectures (On-Call)<br><br>- Personal Review process for On-Call is not fit for purpose because of time spent, shoehorning process into online framework when a more flexible conversational approach would be more useful (On-Call)<br><br>- Control staff feel undervalued, do not feel empowered nor have a sense of belonging in their own workplace (Control)<br><br>- Poor working conditions and facilities in JFC. No designated facilities for Control staff and the facilities in place are basic and need refurbishing. Staff feel like second class citizens compared to FFs on station. The pods are not fit for purpose with some JFC staff taking rest breaks in their cars. | - Improve retention, create a staff retention plan<br><br>- Challenge current thinking, focus on value added activities and processes and focus on driving and implementing the change agenda forward<br><br>- Staff engagement/involvement is essential. A more positive culture includes redress or incorporation of all the feedback and communication from staff<br><br>- Provide regular training to all levels across the Service regarding DICE, wellbeing, respect etc., to ensure individuals understand what is expected of them<br><br>- More work in the communities to encourage women to apply to become FFs<br><br>- Create SWFRS women's sports teams<br><br>- Focus change in key areas, rather than attempting to change the entire Service, and demonstrate tangible progress<br><br>- Staff are not averse to change, it is the way it is communicated and implemented that some have issues with<br><br>- More immediate recognition of good work<br><br>- On-Call pay review<br><br>- Improve facilities in JFC - Control staff need their own space and be able to control their own working environment e.g. heating, lighting, what goes on the walls. Create a break room and separate kitchen for Control staff. This would improve team morale, working efficiency and training. One existing room has been suggested |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | - Inappropriate disabled facilities in JFC e.g. the toilet in basement of building is five floors below where JFC are based, and no suitable storage for medications / equipment (Control)<br><br>- JFC not able to procure their own chairs, procuring or fixing other items is also problematic as it outside of their control and remit (Control)<br><br>- Current working conditions in JFC have led to higher than normal staff turnover, which has in turn led to a loss of local knowledge and Service knowledge (Control)<br><br>- Control staff do not feel connected with the rest of the Service, and they feel underappreciated. They have been told conditions would change/improve for years but nothing has improved (Control)<br><br>- SWFRS and MAWWFRS policies, procedures and working conditions are not aligned, causing disenchantment and sometimes confusion e.g. entitlement to different leave such as CDL, sickness policy, trigger point system (Control) | - Senior management, stations, and staff from other departments should visit JFC more frequently to better understand ways of working and working conditions<br><br>- It could be useful if SWP and JFC had more of an understanding of each other's roles. Better understanding of each other's roles may help relations |
| **Communication & Engagement** | - Survey/feedback fatigue; too much recently, especially as no action/changes are apparent (Wholetime / Control / On-Call)<br><br>- Staff communication is lacking; only certain departments receive information. Communications from HQ to Control should improve. Internal communication needs to improve, which would in turn improve staff awareness, morale and motivation (Wholetime / Control / On-Call / Corporate)<br><br>- No transparency (Wholetime / Control / On-Call / Corporate)<br><br>- Too much focus on social media (Wholetime / Member of the Public) | - Face-to-face consultation is essential (do not just use online avenues)<br><br>- More good news stories about the Service and staff<br><br>- Clear consistent communication with absolute transparency about processes and decision making, including admitting failures when they occur<br><br>- Improve effective communication of information down from line managers to staff |

| | - School engagement and other community work is valued. Sometimes schools can be demanding in terms of when they want us to attend (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- There are too many comms channels. The intranet is poor (Wholetime / Control / On-Call / Corporate)<br><br>- Routine Notice is very useful and read by FFs, SHOUT is not (On-Call)<br><br>- FFs want to see new, visible On-Call recruitment campaigns (On-Call) | |
|---|---|---|
| **Technology & Equipment & Property** | - Outdated systems cause significant problems. The importance of efficient and effective technology has grown in importance, cited by some operational watches (Wholetime / Control / On-Call)<br><br>- Basic inefficient systems need updating, better integrated and interoperable (Wholetime / Control / On-Call / Corporate)<br><br>- Lack of staff availability on Fridays and out of hours (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Use of three different systems in JFC is problematic harming access to the SWFRS intranet, links and Teams meeting, and in getting IT issues resolved (Control)<br><br>- Vision is not fully functional in JFC, workarounds are needed, this impacts ability to take calls (Control)<br><br>- MDTs often crash. SATNAV on MDTs often slow or doesn't work and Firefighters often use their mobiles instead - FF's want smartphones on appliances (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Not all stations have adequate storage space or conditions that facilitate effective sleep (Wholetime)<br><br>- Equipment is good, but new uniform/kit is wanted (On-Call) | - Explore use of AI<br><br>- Improvements should prioritise emergency response technologies, primarily improving MDTs, before making enhancements in other areas<br><br>- Make the internet more intuitive when looking for information e.g. policies and procedures<br><br>- The updating of RTC battery operated tools – "battery operated tools made everything better"<br><br>- Appliance stowage can be improved e.g. more efficient use of space and stow commonly used equipment e.g. not gas-tight suits<br><br>- Assessment of sleeping conditions on stations e.g. beds, mattresses<br><br>- Review FF uniform e.g. choice of boot length, type of shirt, cargo trousers and fleece |

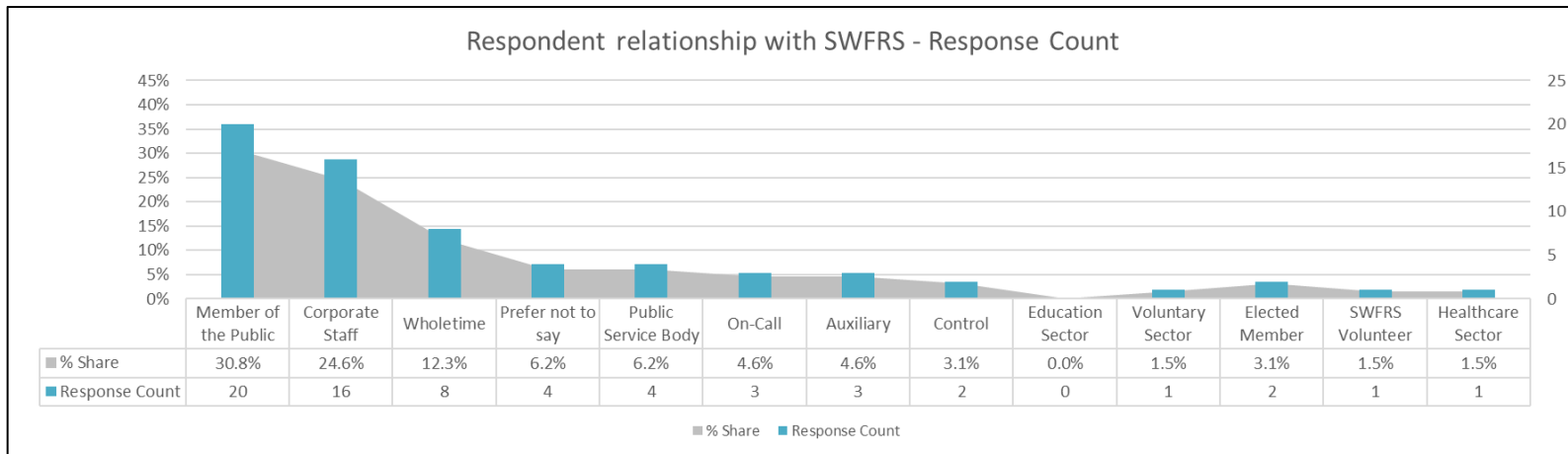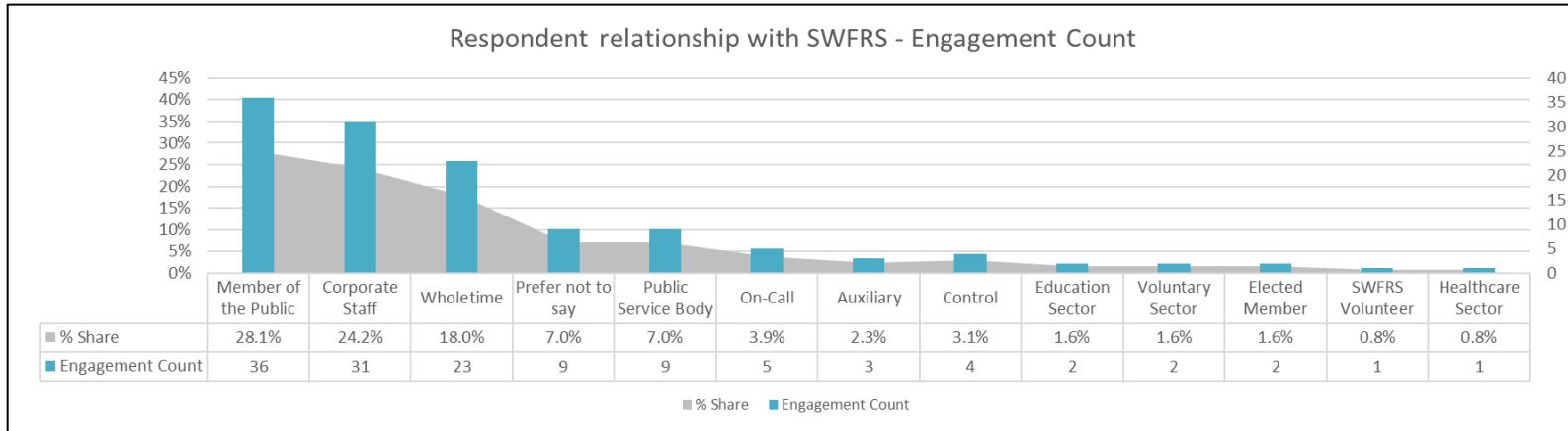| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Training** | - JFC cannot access PDRpro. Cardiff Gate staff must visit and download information to their systems (Control)<br><br>- Control staff want to have protected time or office space for training, maintaining/updating General Indexes, conducting personal reviews or debriefs after a traumatic incident. Training is a priority but time to do it is limited. Manager promotion not seen as being desirable because the extra responsibilities are not incentivised appropriately, and staff do not have time to do the Pathway process. Some training is being done while call handling. There are concerns that too many managers and crews will be in Development roles, therefore not enough competent staff on watch. Two supervisors per crew would be okay if crew are competent, but it can be a risk if staff are in development. There are also concerns that new recruits are 'buddying' people who are undergoing the development to competent pathway process because of minimum staffing levels. With the number of calls and amount of admin work to do all at the same time, it is unreasonable to expect the development to competent pathway to work. New recruits are not being retained (Control) | - Stations need more computers so that more FF's can do PDRPro and online training work simultaneously instead of sharing devices<br><br>- Ensure IT training is in place for all FFs to use all systems they need access to |
| **Effective Working** | - Significant monetary spend since the publication of the Culture Review in February 2023, but no tangible outcomes (Wholetime / Corporate)<br><br>- Staff resourcing needs reviewing, employing new staff when there are existing skills and resources covered, while many teams are under-resourced (Wholetime)<br><br>- Money is paid for ineffective systems (Wholetime / Corporate)<br><br>- Station, pump and equipment upgrades were acknowledged and praised by some but noted as lacking and necessary by others (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- The JFC move to Bridgend has not resulted in the expected benefits originally envisaged, especially through a lack of close effective partnership working (Wholetime / Control)<br><br>- Too many detachments (Wholetime / On-Call) | - Explain how spending since the publication of the Culture Review has been effective, what changes have happened<br><br>- Explore procuring pumps and equipment from other countries when they have proven efficacy and value |

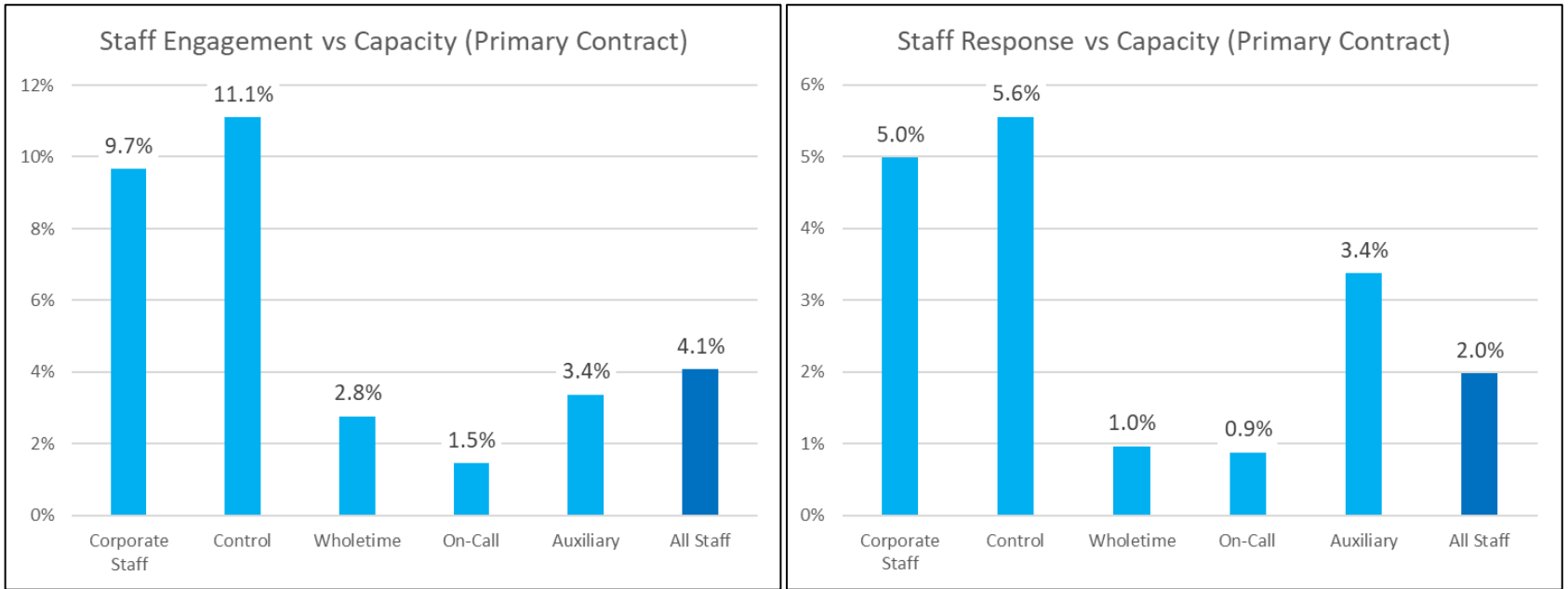| | - Noise in the JFC building, especially at night, is off-putting and makes call handling more difficult than it should be. Sometimes the same call (from different people) is answered more than once, because staff can't hear what colleagues are dealing with (Control) | |
|---|---|---|
| **Response / Operations** | - The working conditions in JFC are impacting our ability to respond effectively (Control)<br><br>- Control staffing levels have been a problem for a long time, this impacts the ability to take leave, complete training, and means crews have no continuity with managers (Control)<br><br>- Staff who have not completed competency training are buddying new recruits in JFC (Control)<br><br>- PDRpro not suitable for JFC roles and there is not adequate time for training to be completed (Control)<br><br>- Poor On-Call availability (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- On-Call station pumps being regularly off the run requiring Wholetime to respond to more On-Call areas and therefore impacting call-out times (Wholetime)<br><br>- Call-handlers not advising caller if a pump is coming from a different area (Wholetime)<br><br>- Water training is not being maintained (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Temporary promotions cause problems for stations, especially in relation to equipment, because people do not remain in post (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Insufficient decontamination processes, especially at incidents. (Wholetime / On-Call) | - Review crewing models and turnout times to maximise effective response<br><br>- Off-Station Ops staff to cover On-Call availability<br><br>- Allow SWFRS multi-contract On-Call staff to be available during their other SWFRS employment hours<br><br>- More involvement with Auxiliary including to cover sickness, and major events. A conversion course for Auxiliary to On-Call<br><br>- Keep equipment team out of temporary promotion process or have a Product Development Team made up of permanent staff<br><br>- Include time at JFC as mandatory for Ops staff, especially when they are promoted to a certain level (e.g. SM)<br><br>- Implement practice for isolating and securing contaminated kits at scene of incident and in transport to station<br><br>- Publicise our response strategies more internally as well as externally |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | - Some stations haven't had Safehaven training (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Lack of drivers due to no incentives and problems with personal insurance, impacting availability (Wholetime / On-Call) | |
| **Prevention** | - AFA response change seen as positive and negative: some comments welcomed additional time for training (etc.) but others state it is a risk. The policy between MAWWFRS and SWFRS should align. Not all Control staff have been trained on AFA policy (Control / Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- More constructive prevention engagement is needed, building on existing good work (Member of the Public) | - Further training and standards for lithium-ion batteries including engagement with developers and UAs<br><br>- More education for public, including more HFSCs and follow-up visits<br><br>- Mandatory fire prevention training for people in certain roles e.g. teachers<br><br>- Data driven and targeted prevention strategies<br><br>- Publicise our prevention strategies more internally as well as externally |
| **Partnerships** | - Partnerships bring value for money and allow for shared knowledge and resources to improve effectiveness. Operationally, some watches stated how this theme has grown in importance to them (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Queries around if the Service is doing the work of other agencies e.g. our involvement in Bariatric incidents (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Focus of partnerships misplaced, inclined towards NFCC, politicians and inspectorates (Wholetime)<br><br>- Collaborative working between emergency services in the JFC building is not happening (Control) | - Focus more on local, long-term partnerships<br><br>- Knowledge sharing and understanding sessions between emergency services at JFC |

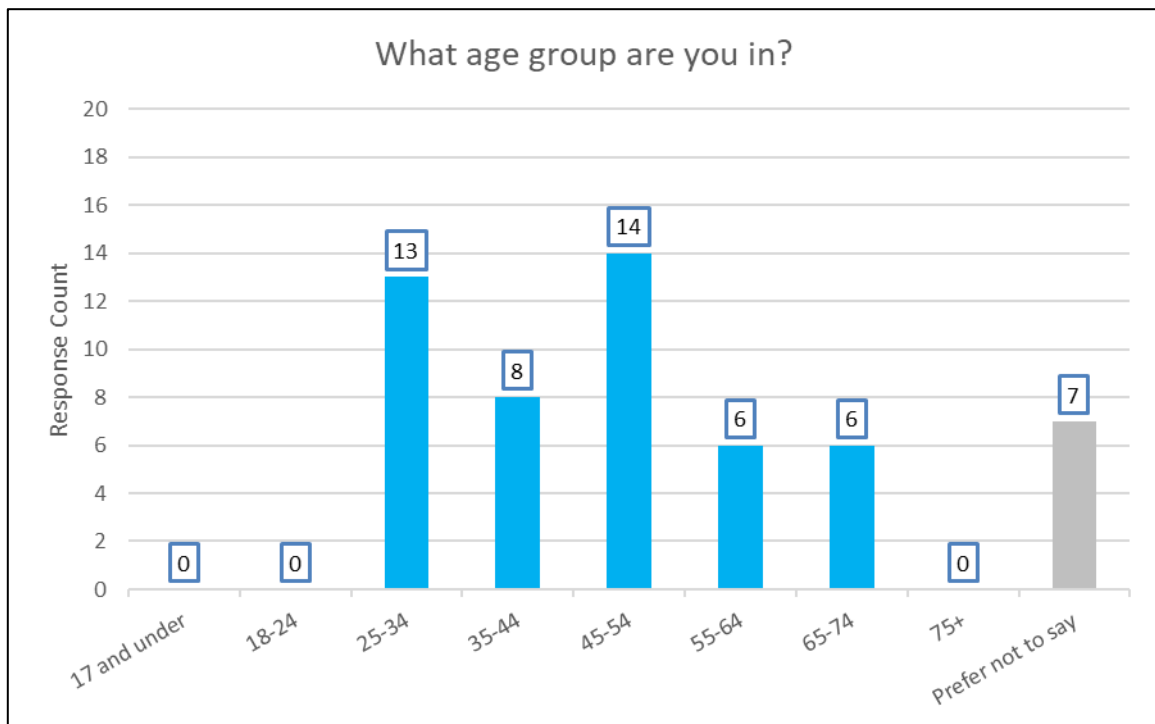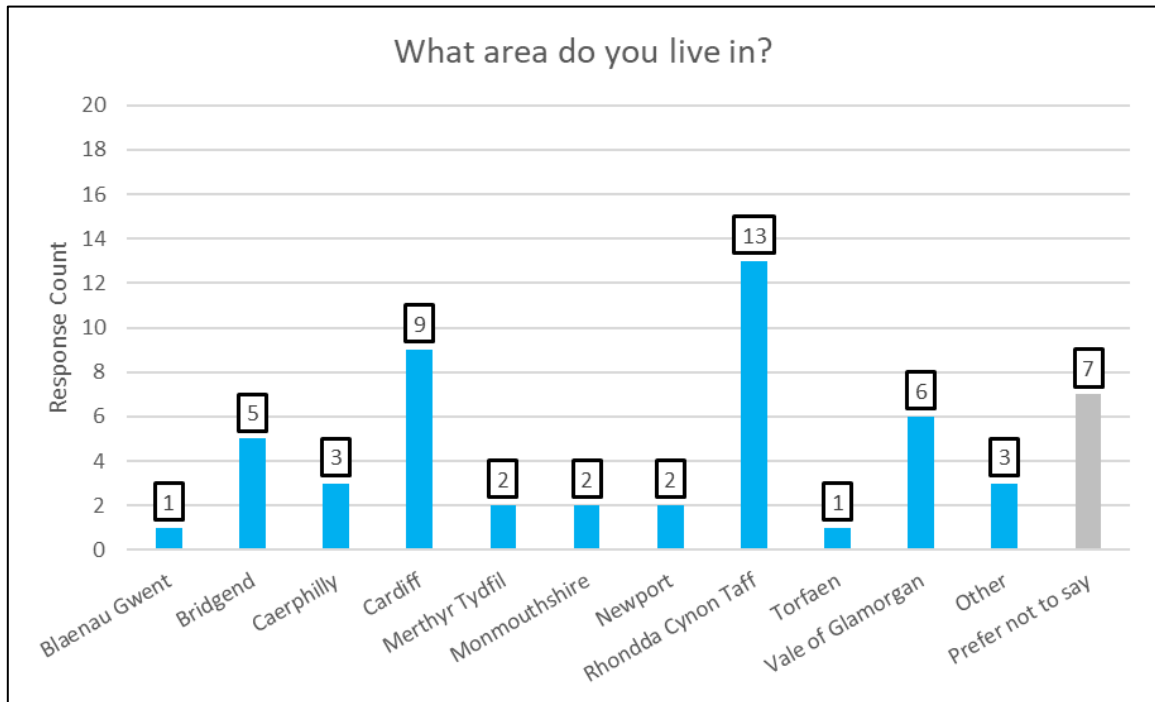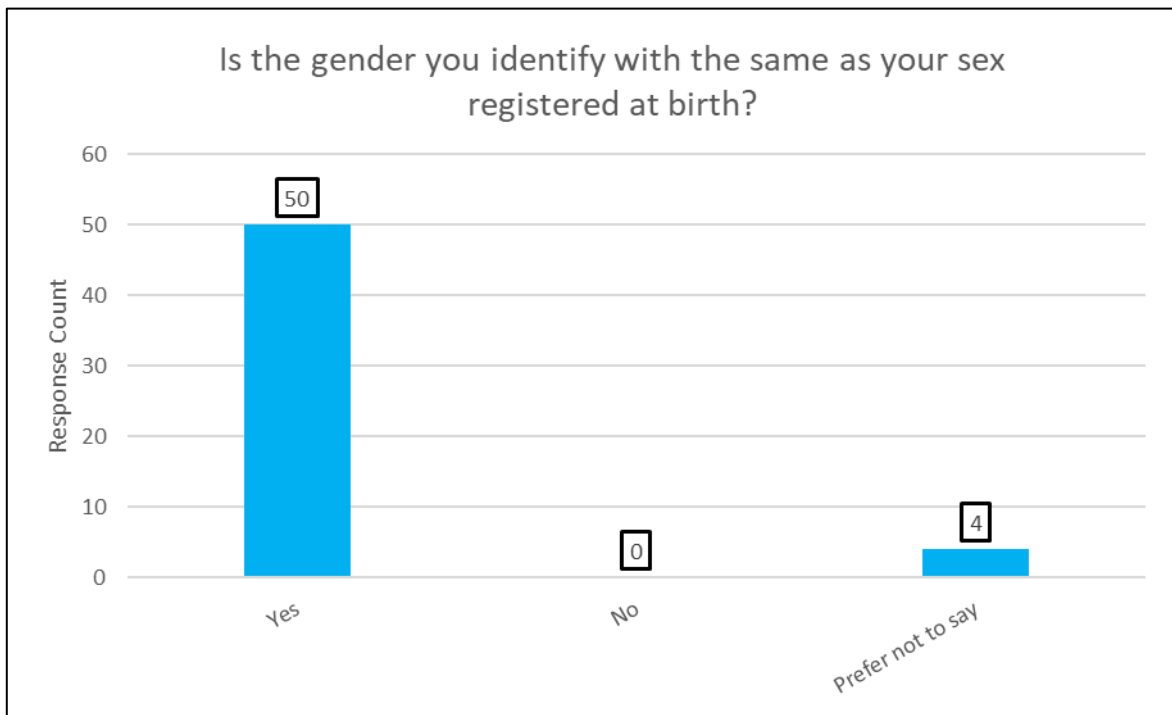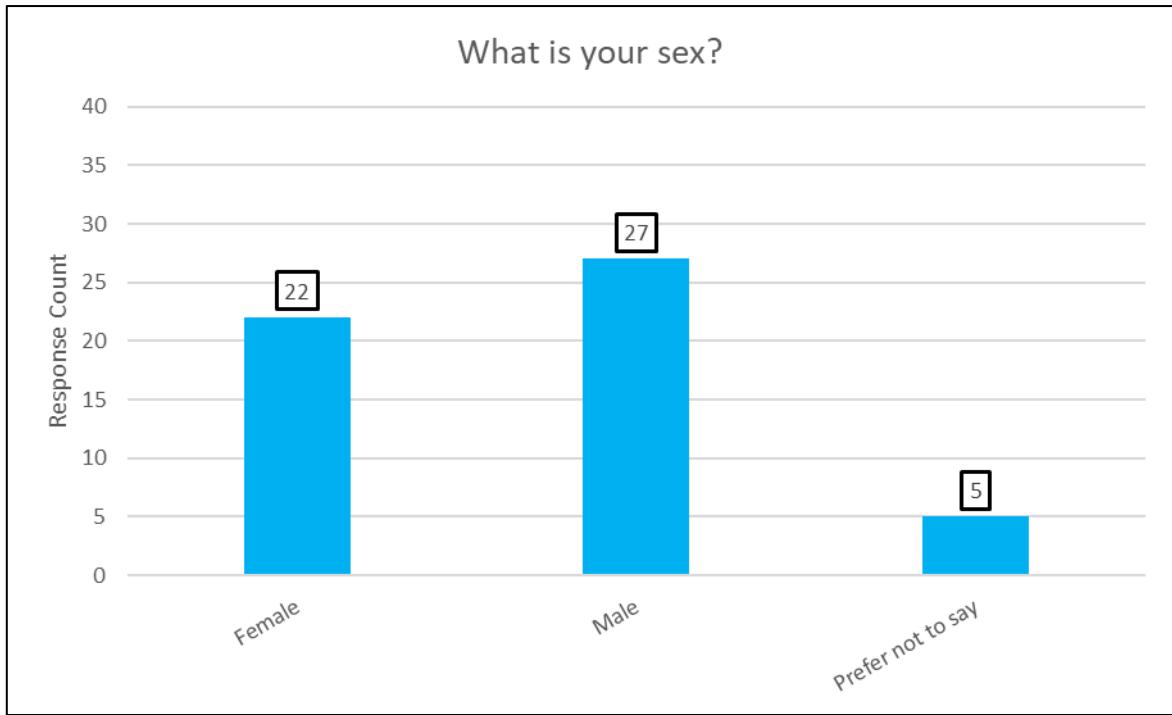| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Environment / Sustainability** | - A priority that some people are pleased we address. Operationally, some watches stated how this theme has grown in importance to them (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Others state there is significant need for improvement (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Fuel waste e.g. ineffective pumps and use of pumps for travel to training, and some FF detachments causing extra travel, sometimes with a domino effect of FF movement between stations (Wholetime)<br><br>- Too much water run-off from appliances (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Decontaminating kit is a problem when some stations do not have adequate space (Wholetime / On-Call) | - A review of our carbon reduction plan should be a priority<br><br>- Use more solar energy<br><br>- More appropriate use of vehicles – review appliance movements (to events and training)<br><br>- Try to upgrade or improve older buildings<br><br>- Focus on life-cycle analysis<br><br>- More promotion of Fleet EV changes / strategy |
| **Planning, Priorities and Progress** | - Objectives/priorities are too high level or vague (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- No clear understanding or detail of how we will achieve certain objectives, including measures for objectives (Wholetime)<br><br>- Lack of obvious relationship between risk analysis and our objectives, including how we utilise data to target our approach (Wholetime)<br><br>- Some priorities appear ambitious given our current position (Wholetime)<br><br>- Similarities to previous plans suggest a lack of progress (Member of the Public)<br><br>- Full plan is too long (Wholetime / On-Call)<br><br>- Focus should be on getting things right now, rather than continually planning (Wholetime / On-Call) | - Publish response times<br><br>- More details about risk analysis and how this informs our objectives.<br><br>- More specific details about how we intend to meet objectives (e.g. what, how, when, why) and reporting measures used to track progress |

# Appendix

**Relationship with SWFRS**



Respondent relationship with SWFRS - Engagement Count

| | Member of the Public | Corporate Staff | Wholetime | Prefer not to say | Public Service Body | On-Call | Auxiliary | Control | Education Sector | Voluntary Sector | Elected Member | SWFRS Volunteer | Healthcare Sector |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % Share | 28.1% | 24.2% | 18.0% | 7.0% | 7.0% | 3.9% | 2.3% | 3.1% | 1.6% | 1.6% | 1.6% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| Engagement Count | 36 | 31 | 23 | 9 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |



Respondent relationship with SWFRS - Response Count

| | Member of the Public | Corporate Staff | Wholetime | Prefer not to say | Public Service Body | On-Call | Auxiliary | Control | Education Sector | Voluntary Sector | Elected Member | SWFRS Volunteer | Healthcare Sector |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % Share | 30.8% | 24.6% | 12.3% | 6.2% | 6.2% | 4.6% | 4.6% | 3.1% | 0.0% | 1.5% | 3.1% | 1.5% | 1.5% |
| Response Count | 20 | 16 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

**Staff Engagement vs Capacity (Primary Contract)**

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| Corporate Staff | 9.7% |
| Control | 11.1% |
| Wholetime | 2.8% |
| On-Call | 1.5% |
| Auxiliary | 3.4% |
| All Staff | 4.1% |

**Staff Response vs Capacity (Primary Contract)**

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| Corporate Staff | 5.0% |
| Control | 5.6% |
| Wholetime | 1.0% |
| On-Call | 0.9% |
| Auxiliary | 3.4% |
| All Staff | 2.0% |

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**



What area do you live in?



What age group are you in?

What is your sex?



Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?



What is your legal marital or registered civil partnership status?

## What is your ethnic group?



## What is your religion?

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

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| FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE 2024/25 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Expected Date of Report** | **Report Name** | **Purpose of Piece of Work** | **Information or Decision** | **Lead Director/ Contact Officer** | **Progress** |
| Feb 2025 | Annual Budget Setting report 2025/26 | 15 February is the statutory date to set the annual net, revenue budget. This report will update Commissioners on information arising from Local Authority budget consultation process. | D | Treasurer\n\nContact Officer: Lisa Mullan | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | Approval of SWFRS's Governance Framework | To review the Governance framework and consider the role and responsibility of ELT and SLT. Ensure that the Governance framework provides for strategic decisions to be properly recorded and communicated. | D | T/Head of Corporate Support\n\nContact Officer: Wayne Thomas | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | Carbon Reduction Plan and Progress Reports | To advise Commissioners on the progress towards the actions set out in the Carbon Reduction and Biodiversity Plans | I | Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | Audit Wales Thematic Reviews Report (2024/2025 Targeted High Risk Prevention) | To consider the recommendations made by Audit Wales following their review of targeted high risk prevention. | I | ACFO TS\n\nContact Officer: Brian Thompson | 'Deferred' item moved to March 2025 |
| Feb 2025 | Community Fire Safety Update | To provide Commissioners with an update on the Community Safety Department. | I | ACFO SD\n\nContact Officer: Mike Wyatt | On Agenda |

| | FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE 2024/25 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Expected Date of Report** | **Report Name** | **Purpose of Piece of Work** | **Information or Decision** | **Lead Director/ Contact Officer** | **Progress** |
| Feb 2025 | Business Fire Safety Update | To provide Commissioners with an update on the Business Fire Safety Department. | I | ACFO SD<br><br>Contact Officer: Mike Wyatt | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | On call Strategy | To provide Commissioners with an update on SWFRS on call strategy | I | Contact officer:<br><br>GM Operations Darren Cleaves | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | Unwanted Fire Signal Response Update | To present the outcome of changes to the Service response model for unwanted fire signals prior to a public consultation process. | I | ACFO SD<br><br>Contact Officer Mike Wyatt. | On Agenda |
| Feb 2025 | Report on Responses to the Statutory Consultation on our Annual Improvement Objectives for 2025/26 | To provide an update to Commissioners on feedback received from the Statutory Consultation on the services' Annual Improvement Objectives for 2025/26. | I | T/Head of Corporate Support<br><br>Contact Officer: Wayne Thomas | On Agenda |
| Mar 2025 | Pay Policy 2025/26 | To consider the Service's Pay Policy Statement in compliance with the Localism Act 2011 and associated guidance. | D | ACO PS<br><br>Contact Officer: Alison Reed | |
| Mar 2025 | Gender Pay Gap Report 2024 | To update on the analysis of the gender pay gap across the Service. | D | ACO PS<br><br>Contact Officer: Alison Reed | |

| FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE 2024/25 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Expected Date of Report | Report Name | Purpose of Piece of Work | Information or Decision | Lead Director/ Contact Officer | Progress |
| Mar 2025 | Strategic Themes and Objectives for 2024/25 – Plan Publication | Commissioners to approve the proposed strategic themes and objectives for 2024/25 | D | ACO CS  Contact Officer: Wayne Thomas | |
| Mar 2025 | Setting Statutory Strategic Performance Indicators and Strategic Objectives | To set the targets for the following financial year. | D | ACFO SD  Contact Officer: Dean Loader | |
| Mar 2025 | Internal Audit - Annual Plan Report 2025/26 | To provide an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes based on the internal audit work undertaken during the financial year. This will support the statement of internal control. | D | Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan | |
| Mar 2025 | Supplementary paper on retention pressures. | The report advises Commissioners on processes to address retention pressures. | D | ACO PS  Contact Officer: Alison Reed | |
| Mar 2025 | ELT roles and responsibilities and departmental structures. | To present to Commissioners a Organisational Structure. | D | ACFO Christian Hadfield | |
| Mar 2025 | Review of Estates Strategy | To provide Commissioners with an update on our estates strategy with due consideration of ongoing works with CRMP. | D | Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan | |

| FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE 2024/25 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Expected Date of Report** | **Report Name** | **Purpose of Piece of Work** | **Information or Decision** | **Lead Director/ Contact Officer** | **Progress** |
| Mar 2025 | Carbon Reduction Plan | For Commissioners approval of the new Carbon Reduction Plan. | D | Contact Officer: Lisa Mullan and Bethan Harvey Sustainability Officer | |
| Mar 2025 | CRMP | | D | Chris Hadfield | |
| Mar 2025 | Establishment of a Programme Management Team | | D | Director of Strategic Change and Transformation, Dominic Mika. | |
| Mar 2025 | Calendar of Meetings for next municipal year 2025/26 | To present Commissioners proposed dates of Board & Committee meetings for the next municipal year. | D | Gabrielle Greathead | |
| Mar 2025 (if available) | Audit Wales Thematic Reviews Report (2024/2025 Targeted High Risk Prevention) | To consider the recommendations made by Audit Wales following their review of targeted high risk prevention. | I | ACFO SD Contact Officer: Dean Loader | |
| Mar 2025 | NFCC Code of Conduct | To provide Commissioners with an update and assessment of impact | I | Director of Strategic Change and Transformation | |

AGENDA ITEM NO 8

**To consider any items of business that the Chairperson deems urgent (Part 1 or 2)**

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1.	Apologies for Absence

2.	Declarations of Interest

	Attendees are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare both orally and in writing any personal and/or prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (Exercise of Functions) (Wales) Directions 2024 and the Local Government Act 2000.

3.	Chairperson's Announcements

4.	To receive the minutes of;

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