

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM – MATRICES AND PROMPTS

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

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

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

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

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

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

### Purpose

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

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

Title	Community Risk Management Implementation Plan (CRMiP) 2026/27 – Pre-consultation (Initial mapping and engagement plan).
Corporate Principles being addressed	<p><b>Our People Principle:</b> Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right skills.</p> <p><b>Our Prevention Principle:</b> Working with partners to help make communities safer.</p> <p><b>Our Protection Principle:</b> Making businesses safer together.</p> <p><b>Our Response Principle:</b> Providing an effective emergency response.</p> <p><b>Our Environment Principle:</b> Protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations.</p>
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Planning Performance and Transformation.
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy?	Project Sponsor – ACFO Anthony Jones
Who is involved in the impact assessment process?	<p>Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation</p> <p>Corporate Planning and Performance Manager</p> <p>Senior Corporate Planning and Performance Analyst</p> <p>Deputy Head of Corporate Communications</p> <p>Head of Corporate Communications</p>

	Welsh Language Officer Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	<p>The pre-consultation mapping exercise aims to identify relevant equality interest groups and wider community members that represent the diverse population of North Wales. By identifying these specific groups of people across different protected characteristics, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service will be able to adopt a targeted approach to ensure comprehensive feedback is captured regarding the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan priorities and proposed activity throughout 2026 to 2027.</p> <p>Through a targeted approach, suitable communication methodologies can be adopted that enable different communities to provide feedback through their preferred method(s). While some people enjoy speaking in a group setting, others prefer to provide personal and individualised feedback via other means.</p>
Who is intended to benefit from the project?	Internal and external stakeholders.
Is the policy / initiative / service for external or internal purposes?	Internal and external.
Does this policy / initiative / service have an impact upon the On-Call duty service?	Yes, all stakeholders are directly involved in this consultation.
Are other organisations involved in the delivery? If so, please state which these may be.	There is a full list of stakeholders that will assist our Service to engage effectively with the North Wales Community.
What information / previous experience does the Service have, i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (information can be demographic data, i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other Services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises).	<p>Our Service will use the most recent demographic and population data which provides intelligence on the diverse groups across North Wales. This includes the Office for National Statistics, Welsh Government data sources, Stonewall, MIND, Gingerbread and many other sources.</p> <p>Following similar consultations where extensive engagement took place with the North Wales community, the Service will benefit from an established community risk profile methodology. A comprehensive mapping exercise will help identify stakeholders which include equality interest groups and individuals</p>

	that can be defined as seldom heard, which often include some of the most 'at-risk' people in our society.
Has a similar impact assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy? If so – is it possible to adapt / incorporate their findings?	Various EqIAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EqIAs help us identify risk and the Service is able to implement suitable interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EqIAs help the Service reflect on learning of previous experiences of their own practices, but other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.
Date of next review (if applicable)	This EqIA will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process. A separate EqIA will be developed with regards to the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan document and all associated activities that have been proposed between 2026 and 2027.

# Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Protected Characteristics or Equality Theme</b>	<b>Rationale for your decision (include / refer to evidence)</b>  <b>How might this have an impact?</b>
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<b>Age (band)</b>	Description of age band:		
<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Overall</b>	

4	1	4	<p>The total population across North Wales is 697,115 (ONS, 2025). The trend of population ageing has continued, with more people than ever before in the older age groups. The ONS (2023a) states that 22.3% of the population were aged 65 years and over. Out of all local authorities in Wales, Conwy and Isle of Anglesey have two of the highest proportions of the population aged 65 or over, and Conwy has the highest percentage of people aged 90 years in Wales.</p> <p>With intersectionality in mind, it is useful to explore disability and age due to a notable difference in the data between 2011 and 2021, particularly in the younger and older age groups (ONS, 2023b). Between 2011 and 2021, the proportion of North Wales who were female, aged 15-24 and who were limited by long term health conditions or disabilities, showed an increase of <b>0.5</b> percentage points, and for males in this age bracket an increase of <b>0.3</b> percentage points was reported. A reduction was also seen for all age bands &gt;54 years old, in both males and females, of the general population who are limited by long term health conditions or disabilities (2011 census) to those who have a disability under the Equality act 2010 (2021 census).</p> <p>North Wales Fire and Rescue Service have conducted a comprehensive mapping exercise to ensure people across all age groups provide feedback and have a voice during the consultation. This process helps to identify and contact key partners that connect the Service with young people, people of working age and older people. With intersectionality in mind, the service will benefit from working with existing partners and also develop new connections during the pre-consultation phase. Through partnerships, the Service will engage with people across different age categories across all geographical locations, ethnicities, genders, socioeconomic status, disabilities and health conditions.</p>
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Disability			The 2021 census data shows that 20.1% of the population of North Wales have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Gwynedd and Flintshire are two of the local authorities with the
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	

4	2	8	<p>lowest proportion of disabled people in Wales. With intersectionality in mind, across the population of North Wales, the proportion who were Female and had a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010, was 11% and the proportion who were male and had a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 was 9.1%. The proportion of those who reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot by their disability, across both males and females, was higher than the proportions who reported that their day to day activities were limited a little.</p> <p>Disabled people are some of most disadvantaged people in our society, so we acknowledge the importance of capturing their needs, aspirations and expectations of a modern-day fire and rescue service. To capture the needs of people that meet the definition of 'disabled' (including those with long term health conditions) during the consultation, the Service will maximise their partnerships with Vale of Clwyd MIND, Dementia Actif Gwynedd, Dementia North Wales, Chole's and Sophie's Special Ear Fund (CSSEF) and community groups that cater for disabled people.</p> <p>The Service has developed excellent contacts with community groups that include disabled people and people living with long term health conditions. Specific focus groups and other methods will be used to capture feedback with community groups, charities, disability networks and support groups which will enable our service to seek the views of disabled people. A comprehensive list of community contacts from across North Wales has been collated.</p>
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Mental Health and Wellbeing			
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
4	2	8	

			connect directly with this target audience. See the community engagement contact list for full details.
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Gender		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	1	4

According to ONS (2021a), the North Wales population is evenly split across females (51.1%) and males (48.9%). Although engagement with males and females will occur organically through contact with different equality interest groups, some specific gender-based organisations enable us to connect with gender groups with specific needs (e.g. older people, unemployed, parents).

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service work closely with North Wales Women’s Centre and other gender equality organisations that support hundreds of local women who experience domestic violence, poverty and unemployment. The Service has well established relationships with various gender specific sports teams and leisure providers which provide an effective avenue to connect with thousands of males and females across different age groups, particularly people of working age. Our prevention team have long standing relationships with Dementia Friends Support Groups which have been an effective way to engage with some older people previously.

Pregnancy and Maternity		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

To ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service reach out and capture the needs of people that are pregnant and those within their maternity phase, a comprehensive mapping exercise has identified key partners to help connect with this target audience.

Key partners include women only groups, local and regional parent support groups, LGBTQ+ and pride groups, childcare providers and baby support groups. The Service has a well-established relationship with many partner organisations to ensure that these groups are able to provide feedback.



<b>Gender Re-assignment / Identity</b>		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	2	6

Stonewall (2022) estimates between 0.5% and 1% of the population is Trans and/or non-binary. The data from the census 2021 shows that 0.3% (1,828 people) aged 16 or over, within the North Wales population, either identify as Trans, non-binary, or a gender identity other than their sex at birth, which is lower than Stonewall's general population estimate.

Comprehensive feedback from trans and/or non-binary people will be captured through the extensive contacts with various local LGBTQ+ networks and pride groups. Partners includes Pride Cymru, North Wales Pride, Unique Transgender and other LGBTQ+ networks across North Wales. Targeted engagement with trans and non-binary people will be achieved through focus groups that will be organised in partnership with our partners, and this has been successfully achieved in previous consultations.

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

Stonewall estimate between 5-7% of the population are lesbian, gay, bisexual or another sexual orientation which is other than heterosexual (See NHS, 2015), however, data from the census 2021 reports that 2.5% of the population of North Wales, aged 16 or over, identified as a sexuality other than heterosexual. Stonewall (2022) have published more recent reports which suggest younger people are more likely to be open about sexual orientation and gender identity. North Wales has a growing LGB+ community and the emergence of new pride events, support groups and staff networks in the workplace means that engagement with this audience is more meaningful than previous years.

With intersectionality in mind, when exploring the age profile of those who identified with sexualities other than heterosexual, the highest proportion were in the 16-24 years age band, representing 0.8% of the population of North Wales aged 16 or over. As the age bands increase, the proportion of the population who did not identify as heterosexual decreases. This data helps our service know how to engage.

To ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service reach out and capture the needs of people with different sexual orientations, a comprehensive mapping exercise has identified key partners to help connect with this target audience. Key partners including Pride Cymru, Colwyn Bay Pride, North

			Wales Pride, LGBTQ+ charities, LGBTQ+ sport teams, LGBTQ+ staff networks across the region and local LGBTQ+ support groups will help us connect with people across different age groups.
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<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b>		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	1	3

According to Census 2021, of the population aged 16 or over in North Wales, 44.8% are married or in a civil partnership. Generally, this protected characteristic does not present any particular risks. Although, it is important to stress, some people that live alone are deemed more at risk because of a reduced inability to call for assistance or call for help in an emergency. Within North Wales, one in every three households were reported in the 2021 census data as being “one person households”, with one in every six households in North Wales being reported as “one person households” aged over 65.

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service will connect with people that are married or in a civil partnership through our interaction with different equality interest groups during the pre-consultation phase. As a protected characteristic, it is useful to understand households which include two or more people who are accessing services, mainly because single occupants can be at an increase risk of some incident types (i.e. domestic dwelling fires).

Religion and/or Belief		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

The Service acknowledges there is some diversity regarding people’s religious affiliations and belief systems across North Wales. Equally, it must be acknowledged that 41.6% of the population of North Wales reported “No religion”. Roughly half of the North Wales population, 49.8% reported their religion as Christianity, however, in total 52% of the population of North Wales reported as having belief systems aligned, split across 44 other religions and belief system categories. This data indicates approximately half the North Wales population have religious affiliations. Therefore, places of worship and faith-based organisations are a logical avenue to engage with this audience.

To ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service reach out and capture the needs of religious people and those who observe a particular belief system, a mapping exercise has identified key partners to the Service connect. Key partners include some well-established places of worship across North Wales, faith-based organisations, charities, local community and some support groups that work closely with religious groups. Some religious groups have been more challenging to connect with in the past, mainly because there is no particular hub or venue where some of the minority religions meet. As members of the North Wales Interfaith Forum, the Service can benefit from the connections and rapport that has been developed with different religious, faith-based and humanist groups in recent years.

Race		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

North Wales has become more ethnically diverse in the past decade. According to the census data in 2021, the proportion of North Wales population who are from ethnic minority backgrounds increased from 5% in 2011, to 6.7% in 2021, which is a lower rate of increase than has been seen across the whole of Wales (WG, 2022b). For clarity, ethnic minority is any ethnic group outside of white ‘Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish and British’.

The largest ethnic minority group in every local authority in North Wales was “Other White”. The proportion of the population identifying with this ethnic group was highest in Wrexham and Flintshire. Within the high-level “White” ethnic group, Conwy was the local authority with the highest proportion of those identifying as “Irish” in Wales. Interestingly, 4.3% of households in North Wales were multiple ethnic group households, which is an increase from 3.6% in 2011 (WG, 2022b).

	<p>With intersectionality in mind, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service acknowledge potential language, communication and cultural barriers. Nationally in Wales, 2.9 million usual residents aged three years and over spoke English or Welsh as their main language (96.7% of the population, down from 97.1% in 2011).</p> <p>According to the 2021 Census, residents in Wales that did not select English or Welsh as a main language, 78% said they could speak English well or very well, while 22% could not speak English very well or at all. Polish was the most common language spoken after English and Welsh as the preferred language for 1% of the population of North Wales, followed by Romanian and then Bulgarian. British Sign Language (BSL) was the preferred language of 169 people (which equates to 0.03%) usual residents aged three years and over across North Wales.</p> <p>To mitigate any potential communication barriers, the service will adopt inclusive practices by making key information readily available in physical formats and via the Service’s website. In addition, the Service’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer can help organise translation and interpretation if required. To ensure NWFRS capture the needs of different ethnic minority groups and individuals, a mapping exercise has identified specific new partners such as Bowso, EYST Wales, Wrexham African Community, Race Council Cymru, North Wales Race Equality Network, Northeast Wales Multi-Cultural Hub and various places of worship across the region.</p>
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Socio-Economic Duty		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	3	12
<p>The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on March 31st 2021 and requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions (such as deciding priorities and setting objectives), to consider how their decisions might help reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Whilst local authorities in the North Wales area have lower rates of household deprivation than the average for Wales (WG, 2021), some of the most deprived areas are concentrated in north Wales coastal and border towns Working does not preclude experiencing poverty. To explain further, in-work poverty has risen over the last 5 years and a total of 12.7 per cent of workers live in poverty due to low pay or limited hours (JRF, 2020).</p>		

			<p>To ensure North Wales Fire and Rescue Service reach out and capture the needs of people who meet the criteria for low economic status and deprivation, a comprehensive mapping exercise has identified key partners to help connect with this target audience. Key partners include local authorities, charities, foodbanks, places of worship, faith-based organisations and local support groups.</p> <p>Specific actions during the consultation phase will see the Service organise focus group sessions using a wide range of methodologies. The Service acknowledges some people have little or no means to travel to attend organised focus groups, while some people don't have the financial capacity to use private or public transport. To mitigate risk, the Service will organise focus groups in different locations to help widen access for local people to meet face-to-face in accessible venues. As a way of widening access, the Service will organise virtual focus groups (i.e. via Teams) if there is a demand. There was not much demand for virtual sessions during the previous public consultation, but the Service will explore whether this option is required through the initial engagement. Feedback will be captured via physical feedback forms, email, telephone and the Service website to enable people to voice their views without attending focus groups.</p>
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Welsh Language		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
3	3	9

All materials relating to the Community Risk Management Implementation Plan consultation will be produced (written and verbal) in Welsh and English. The proportion of the population who reported that they could speak Welsh in North Wales is 29.1%, with a very slightly lower proportion (showing as 27.4% of the North Wales population) reporting that they can read Welsh. Our Service is extremely proud to communicate in Welsh and we ensure we meet (and where possible exceed) the Welsh Language Standards.

Every effort is taken to ensure the consultation sample is representative of Welsh speakers through active and weekly monitoring. Through specific partnership, the Service will ensure it engages effectively with groups that include people that speak Welsh as a primary language.

The most recent data published by the Welsh Government suggests 29.1% of people aged three and over were able to speak Welsh. This figure equates to 883,600 people and there is evidence that the Welsh language is growing in popularity as a spoken language and as a first spoken language. With intersectionality in mind, we recognise that areas with the highest percentages of Welsh speakers, such as Gwynedd (77%) and Ynys Môn (67%), also tend to have distinct cultural, economic, and demographic characteristics that shape people's lived experiences.

Geography and Location		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	3	12

North Wales covers a large area with a mix of densely populated urban centres and sparsely populated rural communities.

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

Some areas have well established community groups which enable our Service to engage and connect. However, some areas don't have well established community groups and social hubs that

			will enable the Service to connect with people easily. Therefore, the Service will need to maximise partnerships, community contacts and online platforms to connect. Equally, Community Risk Management Implementation Plan consultation will engage people across all parts of North Wales which will ensure the feedback captured is representative of the region.
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<b>On-Call System or Considerations for Part-Time Staff</b>		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	2	8

On-call staff are directly involved in this project. On-call teams have been involved with the design and development of the Services Community Risk Management Plan through Heads of Departments and middle leaders seminars. Naturally, on-call staff that work the retained system will be able to provide feedback that will help shape the Community Risk Management Plan and strategic direction of the Service for 2026/27.

<b>Other Equality Interest Groups</b>		
Likelihood	Impact	Overall
4	1	4

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

The recent independent culture reviews amongst fire and rescue service in England and Wales have highlighted cultural issues in the sector. This means there is risk there may be a reduction of trust and confidence towards the fire and rescue services within the community.

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

Yes

No

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

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

Some sections have a score of 12 and over. The scores in the EqIA represent the current risk of the Service engaging with different sections of the North Wales community. A communications and engagement plan has been devised to engage with all geographical areas during the consultation to capture comprehensive feedback.

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

This EqIA demonstrates how the Service have shown due regard for the diversity of the North Wales community. There is consideration for how the Service will engage and communicate with its community. Intersectionality has been considered in various sections of this EqIA which enables the service to carefully plan its approach, in terms of engagement and adopt suitable communication methodologies to meet the needs of different equality interest groups.

There are some low scores which demonstrate how suitable methodology is being adopted to capture feedback with some community groups. The medium scores in some sections of the EqIA highlights some risk and how engagement with different groups of people can be challenging or at least acknowledges challenges engaging with certain groups in previous consultations.

Engagement will be achieved with most equality interest groups through effective planning. There is a requirement for the Service to adopt a team approach where different staff will need to be involved to overcome language, communication and logistical challenges.

### **Post-initiative evaluation**



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

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

Once completed please return to [benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales](mailto:benji.evans@northwalesfire.gov.wales)

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