

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority
Date	20 October 2025
Lead Officer	Justin Evans, Assistant Chief Fire Officer,
Contact Officer	Lee Bourne, Project Manager
Subject	Training Centre Project Update



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with a progress update following the September meeting of the Training Centre Project Board, and to outline key developments, risks and next steps.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The project remains broadly within scope and quality expectations; however, there are ongoing uncertainties around the timeline and budget, primarily due to ecological constraints and the need for finalised costings. The Outline Business Case (OBC) is scheduled to be completed and available for ratification by North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) in January 2026. Ground clearance works will begin in October 2025. The Communications and Engagement Strategy has been approved by the Project Board, and a public consultation website is being prepared for launch early next year.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Note the current progress of the Training Centre project.**

BACKGROUND

- 4 The Project Board met on 2 September 2025, following the previous session held on 22 July 2025. The revised Terms of Reference and Communications Strategy were approved. The programme timeline was reviewed considering contractor feedback and ecological constraints.

INFORMATION

5 **Budget and Costings**

The design of the Training Centre has evolved since the concept shared with Members in December 2024. This reflects feedback gathered through staff engagement, as well as the need to align the site layout with environmental and sustainability priorities. The revised plan will incorporate improved access, updated training configurations, and spaces for multi-agency use. These changes have been informed by workshops held earlier this year and are intended to future-proof the facility.

- 6 The revised designs will be presented to the next Project Board meeting for consideration. Detailed financial modelling is now underway to support the Outline Business Case which will be presented to Members at the Authority meeting in January 2026.

7 **Ecology**

Ecological work continues on site with current activity focused on the management of Great Crested Newts. It has been confirmed that the Little Ringed Plover has left the site.

8 **Contractor Agreements**

Subcontractor agreements are being finalised. The ground clearance contract has been awarded and will be delivered under ecological supervision.

9 **Communications and Engagement**

The Communications and Engagement Strategy has been approved. It includes a phased approach to stakeholder engagement and consultation, with a dedicated public website planned for launch in January 2026.

10 **Project Status and Timeline**

Construction is scheduled to complete by May 2029, with formal closure and handover expected six months later. The Outline Business Case is being expedited for submission to the Authority in January 2026. Delays to the OBC have been added to the risk register due to their potential impact on funding and decision-making.

11 **Social Value**

Social value targets have been embedded in contractor agreements, with a focus on local engagement and measurable outcomes. These will be monitored and reported to the Project Board.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	The project supports organisational objectives for improvement, well-being, and community safety, as outlined in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2025–29. Social value, local engagement, and bilingual communication are embedded in project delivery.
Budget	Capital funding remains subject to business case approval. Cost options are under development and will be presented at the next project board.
Legal	Legal considerations continue to be monitored across all phases of the project. This includes compliance with planning regulations, construction safety standards, and environmental legislation. The project team is working closely with legal advisors and contractors to ensure that all statutory obligations are met and that risks are appropriately managed as the programme progresses.
Staffing	Staff from across all groups have been actively engaged throughout the development process. Their input has shaped the design principles, informed layout decisions, and helped ensure the facility reflects operational needs and future service delivery. Further engagement is planned as the programme progresses, with additional support being scoped to maintain delivery capacity.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Community engagement has begun. Bilingual materials will be provided at future consultation events.
Risks	The project team continues to monitor and manage key risks. These include the dependency on external capital funding, which remains unresolved at this stage. Staff turnover and capacity pressures have also been identified as potential risks to continuity, and steps have been taken to strengthen governance and clarify delivery roles. Financial oversight has been improved with the appointment of a dedicated budget holder and the development of a financial dashboard. A formal estate strategy is being developed as part of the business case development. These risks are being actively mitigated to ensure the project remains deliverable within the expected parameters.