

Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	
Date	20 October 2025	
Lead Officer	Gareth Owens, Monitoring Officer	
Contact Officer	Gareth Owens	
Subject	Response to Welsh Government Consultation on the Reform of Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales 2025	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To provide Members with a draft response to the above consultation based upon the feedback from Members provided at the Governance Seminars held on 29 September 2025 and 2 October 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) **Notify officers of any amendments they wish to make to the contents of the draft response; and**
 - ii) **Approve the draft response for submission to the Welsh Government by the consultation deadline of 24 October 2024.**

BACKGROUND

- 3 The existing governance arrangements for Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in Wales were established through the three Combination Orders in 1996. These established the current Fire Authorities and the pooled funding mechanism via a levy from each constituent Local Authorities.
- 4 In 2018 Welsh Government published a white paper entitled "Reform of Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales" Some Members will recall that after a period of consultation it was decided to progress only the proposals around funding, but these did come to fruition due to the pandemic in 2020.
- 5 On 29 August 2025 Welsh Government published a consultation seeking views on proposals to reform how fire and rescue authorities (FRA) are governed and funded in Wales. All of these proposals can be implemented under the existing Combination Orders.

INFORMATION

- 6 Members were informed of the consultation and provided with a link to the document after the publication date of 29 August 2025. The consultation was an agenda item at the Audit Committee and Executive Panel on 15 September 2025 and Members were requested to attend a Governance Seminar to debate the options presented within the consultation document. This seminar took place in person on Monday 29 September 2025 and was repeated online on Thursday 2 October 2025.
- 7 At each seminar the proposals were discussed around the four themes:
 - a) Change of Membership of Fire and Rescue Authorities;
 - b) Scrutiny and Challenge;
 - c) Funding; and
 - d) Performance Management and Inspection of Fire and Rescue Services.
- 8 Members were also asked to respond to the consultation questions independently and these were collated and summarised in the attached response to each of the consultation questions.
- 9 Members are requested to scrutinise the draft response and suggest any amendments before approving the response for submission to Welsh Government in the name of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This paper presents the views of the consultation which seeks to improve governance arrangements around FRs in Wales.
Budget	The mechanisms for agreeing the budget for FRs may cause a reduction in funding.
Legal	These proposals can be actioned within the current combination orders and do not require primary legislation
Staffing	Any budget reductions could have staffing implications
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	N/A
Risks	The reduction of members appointed by local authorities could reduce the local scrutiny of FRs