


Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	
Date	16 January 2023	
Lead Officer	Stewart Forshaw, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Corporate Policy and Planning)	
Contact Officer	Pippa Hardwick, Head of Corporate Planning	
Subject	Review of Improvement and Well-being Objectives in the Authority's Corporate Plan 2021-24	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To review the Fire and Rescue Authority's long-term objectives that are contained in its Corporate Plan 2021-24.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Every March the Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) publishes a Plan for the following financial year, setting out its agreed improvement and well-being objectives and outlining the actions it proposes to take towards achieving those objectives during the year. The Authority published its most recent update against Corporate Plan 2021-24 earlier this year.
3. Although the relevant legislation does not stipulate how often a public body must change its objectives, there is a requirement to undertake an annual review of its well-being objectives to assess whether or not they are still relevant and appropriate.
4. Over the coming months Officers will be revisiting the content of the Authority's Corporate Plan 2021-24 in order to update the lists of planned actions underpinning each strategic objective. To this end, the Authority is asked to consider whether it wishes to continue to pursue the same long-term objectives next year, or alternatively to suggest changes that can be written into next year's updated version of the Corporate Plan 2021-24.

RECOMMENDATION

5. Members are asked to:
 - i) confirm the Authority's intention to continue to pursue its existing seven long-term objectives in 2023/24; and
 - ii) request that an updated version of the Corporate Plan 2021-24 be prepared by Officers for approval in April 2023.

BACKGROUND

6. Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in Wales are required to publish improvement objectives in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, and well-being objectives in compliance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. For the purposes of the Authority's planning processes these are treated as one and the same.
7. Part 2 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (the Act) places a duty on the Authority to carry out sustainable development, which must include:
 - a) setting and publishing well-being objectives that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals set for the whole of Wales; and
 - b) taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.
8. In the normal run of the planning cycle, the Authority outlines proposed objectives for the forthcoming year during the autumn/winter, and in March it approves a plan detailing shorter-term actions that support its longer-term objectives.
9. In 2023-24 Officers will be engaging with the Authority in relation to the next iteration of the corporate Plan for 2024 onwards with a view to it evolving into a 5 year plan for 2024-29.

INFORMATION

10. In March 2021 the Authority published seven long-term well-being objectives in its Corporate Plan for 2021-24. The objectives are:
 - **Objective 1:** To work towards making improvements to the health, safety and well-being of people in North Wales.
 - **Objective 2:** To continue to work collaboratively to help communities improve their resilience.
 - **Objective 3:** To operate as effectively and efficiently as possible, making the best use of the resources available.
 - **Objective 4:** To continue to identify opportunities to encourage greater engagement with people, communities, staff and stakeholders.
 - **Objective 5:** To maintain a suitably resilient, skilled, professional and flexible workforce.
 - **Objective 6:** To develop ways of becoming more environmentally conscious in order to minimise the impact of our activity on the environment.
 - **Objective 7:** To ensure that social value and sustainability are considered, including during procurement processes.

11. Further to an annual review in March 2022, the previous Fire and Rescue Authority approved a revised and updated Corporate Plan for 2021-24 which recognised the continuance of some actions into future years due to external factors influencing the rate of progress in some areas and the impact of embedding internal governance changes which were due to take effect from April 2022.
12. Under the Act the Authority is required to review its objectives at least once a year, but it does not have to change them. In assessing whether its objectives continue to be appropriate, the Authority must consider to what extent:
 - they contribute to achieving the well-being goals for Wales;
 - they are consistent with the sustainable development principle – i.e. that they help to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; and
 - the Authority is taking all reasonable steps to meet those objectives.
13. If the assessment indicates a need to change any objectives, the Authority would be expected to explain what has changed, and why the change has happened.
14. At its meeting in October 2022 the Authority approved the Annual Performance Assessment 2021/22 for publication on its website. This Assessment describes progress and achievements last year in support of the Authority's objectives. It also explains how each of the Authority's objectives contributes to achieving the well-being goals for Wales and is consistent with the sustainable development principle.
15. The Annual Performance Assessment did not indicate a need to revise or change the existing set of seven long-term objectives.
16. Many of the actions in support of the objectives evidence the fact that the Authority continues to take a long term view through its community-based prevention role, helping to inform, educate and equip people to live safe and fulfilling lives. It also acts responsibly in relation to protecting natural habitats and the Environment more generally.
17. Some of the underpinning actions will necessarily be different in 2023/24 as cost saving efficiencies continue to be pursued and the Authority seeks to react to internal and external influences, but these will be included in the revised Corporate Plan 2021-24 for approval by the Authority in April 2023.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	Direct implication for confirming or revising the Authority's long-term well-being objectives.
Budget	There is a clear relationship between the Authority's plans for delivering the objectives within the 2021/24 Corporate Plan and the level of financial resources available.
Legal	Supports compliance with improvement planning and well-being legislation.
Staffing	No known impact on staffing levels at this time.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	The impact of specific actions on these aspects will be assessed at the appropriate point in their development.
Risks	Reduces the risks of legal non-compliance and of failing to budget and plan appropriately.