


Report to	North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	
Date	20 January 2025	
Lead Officer	Stewart Forshaw, Deputy Chief Fire Officer	
Contact Officer	Sandra Williams, Head of Planning, Performance and Transformation	
Subject	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Performance Assessment 2023 -2024	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 This paper is presented for Members' approval of the annual assessment of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) performance during 2023/24 in relation to:
 - i) Its progress towards achieving its long-term Strategic Equality Action Plan 2020-2024; and
 - ii) its compliance with The Equality Act (2010).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Equality Act (2010) requires the Authority to write an equality plan every four years. The Authority's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 identifies five priorities. These priorities are broken down into six equality objectives that the Authority wants to help bring about to make Wales a fairer place to live.
- 3 Having identified these objectives, the Authority has a duty to take all reasonable steps to pursue them and to report publicly after the end of each financial year on the progress it has made.
- 4 The Annual Performance Assessment 2023/24 further demonstrates how the Authority has continued to make good progress against all five priorities.

RECOMMENDATION

- 5 **That Members:**
 - i) **Approve the annual assessment of the Authority's performance in 2023/24 for publication on the Authority's website; and**
 - ii) **Note the Service's intention to publish a simple summary version of the key elements of the assessment report.**

BACKGROUND

- 6 The Authority is required under various pieces of legislation to give a public account of its performance, progress and compliance. These include the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 which requires the Authority to produce a Strategic Equality Plan every four years and to report annually on the progress that it has made towards fulfilling its equality objectives.
- 7 In previous years the Authority has included the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Performance Assessment, along with compliance against Welsh Language Standards, as part of the publication of the Annual Performance Assessment. However, this year these have been separated into separate reports.
- 8 The standalone EDI Annual Performance Assessment 2023/24 details evidence of how each of the five priorities in the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 have been progressed during the final year of the current plan.

INFORMATION

- 9 The five priorities within the Authority's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 are broken down into six equality objectives that the Authority wants to help bring about to make Wales a fairer place to live. The aim of the Equality Act is to ensure that everyone has the right to:
 - Promote the equality of opportunity;
 - Foster good relations; and
 - Eliminate discrimination
- 10 Starting with Priority 1, which focuses on Life and Health and covers Equality Objective 1, the report describes how prevention and protection teams continue to offer a consistent and inclusive service and how by developing new personal data and data sharing agreements, the Authority has been able to adapt its approach to using protected characteristics to identify groups of people that are at increased risk of fire in the home and work to tailor safety messages.
- 11 With Priority 2, which relates to Employment and covers Equality Objective 2, the assessment covers the range of initiatives that have been progressed aimed at increasing the employment prospects of people who might otherwise find it difficult to gain equal access to the world of work and advance gender equality in North Wales. This section gives examples of how roles have been advertised with breakdowns of the responses.

- 12 Priority 3 relates to Education and covers how the Authority has continued to develop an inclusive culture where leaders and staff demonstrate their commitment to promoting equality and support for a fair and inclusive workforce. This section also includes how there has been a continued delivery of specific EDI training for leaders across all levels of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) with this provision informing best practice and acknowledges that various policies and procedures have been updated throughout 2023/24. This encompasses Equality Objective 3.
- 13 Priority 4 covers personal safety and the work around reducing the risk of death and injury through the provision of effective prevention and protection services and emergency response. Examples of how Welsh Language has been further embedded into the delivery of key safety messages is also included within this section. Other examples of how this priority has been met include work the Service has delivered within the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities during key safety campaigns. Details of a community event in February 2024 by the Services Firepride Staff Network also enhances the evidence against Equality Objectives 4 and 5.
- 14 Priority 5 is focused on participation and communication and Equality Objective 6, detailing how important it is to be open and accountable about what we do and what the plans are to encourage more people to involve themselves in the process of determining the way Fire and Rescue Services are delivered in North Wales. The engagement work undertaken during the consultation for the Emergency Cover Review gave good evidence against this priority, as Equality Impact Assessments were conducted at different stages of the project and a full Equality Analysis Report was produced following the consultation.
- 15 The Assessment also refers to the variety of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by the Service in relation to its EDI work. Some requests related to gender equality, LGBTQ+ communities, harassment cases and some that were specific to the expenditure on EDI activities.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This report links to the Authority's Improvement and Well-being Goals/Ways of working by providing examples of how these have been met through the delivery of The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 and its priorities and Equality Objectives.
Budget	Priorities for the EDI budget is based on the delivery of the objectives
Legal	The Equality Act (2010) requires the Authority to write a Strategic Equality Plan every four years and to report annually on its performance. 2023/2024 is the final year of the current plan.
Staffing	The Authority employs an EDI Officer to oversee the delivery of the Strategic Equality Plan and to monitor progress by reporting through the governance structure and by producing the annual performance assessment.
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	These are all included in the monitoring reports to the EDI committee and in the annual performance assessment.
Risks	Any risks are included in the risk register.