

# STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

2016 / 2020

Appendix 1

*Engaging, Connecting, and Inspiring  
People to deliver an Excellent Service*



# Contents

Introduction	3
Our Commitment	4
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Our Organisational Message	5
Our Vision, Mission, Values and Priorities	6
Profile of the Service	7
Identifying the Service's Relevant Functions	7

## Equality Objectives

Objective 1	11
Objective 2	12
Objective 3	13
Objective 4	14
Objective 5	15
Objective 6	16
Objective 7	17
Objective 8	16



**75% recycled**

This publication is printed  
on 75% recycled paper

# Chief Fire Officer and Chair of the Fire Authority Introduction to the Strategic Equality Plan



We are pleased to be able to introduce this Strategic Equality Plan which seeks to meet, on behalf of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, both the requirements and the spirit of the current legislation related to equality and diversity in Wales as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.



It is the intention of this plan to convey the continued commitment of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to promote equality of opportunity across all Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service's [MAWWFRS] functions, policies, practices and procedures and set out how the Service will seek to fulfill this commitment.

MAWWFRS has firmly positioned equality and diversity at the heart of its Corporate Strategy and Annual Improvement Plan. When our communities begin to see evidence of organisations such as ours driving forward the equality and diversity agenda with real demonstrable change, this undoubtedly enhances the public support for those organisations both as an employer and service provider.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Davies'.

**Chris Davies**  
Chief Fire Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wynne Evans'.

**Councillor Wynne Evans**  
Chair, Mid and West Wales Fire Authority

# Our Commitment

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is committed to furthering Equality of Opportunity for all, and will not tolerate processes, attitudes and behaviors that amount to discrimination, including harassment, victimisation and bullying through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping.

We recognise and value the breadth and diversity of the traditions, beliefs and cultures of the communities whom we serve, and of our Elected Members and employees, and this Plan provides an overarching framework for advancing equality and diversity in Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

We know that our communities have a vital role in helping us to improve our services, reduce risk and develop safer communities. We do hope that you will support our second Strategic Equality Plan for Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The nine protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Lesbian, Gay and Bi-Sexual People
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religious belief and preference and the right not to hold a belief or preference
- Transgender

We are working towards an environment that gives everyone an equal chance to work, learn and live, free from discrimination and prejudice.

# Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority

Mid and West Wales Fire Authority consists of twenty-five elected members (County Councilor's) who represent individual wards within six constituent Unitary Authorities which make up the Mid and West Wales area.

The unitary Authorities are:



The role of the Fire Authority is:

- To perform all the duties and responsibilities of a Fire Authority in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations, in particular the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) Order 2005 - which came into force on 1 October 2006.
- To agree the Annual Improvement Plans, the revenue and capital budgets and the contribution for the constituent councils.
- To monitor the revenue and capital budgets and deal with any significant variations, including decisions on any supplementary contributions.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is headed by the Chief Fire Officer, who has overall corporate management and operational responsibility for the Service. He also provides professional advice to the Fire Authority.

# Our Vision, Mission, Values & Priorities



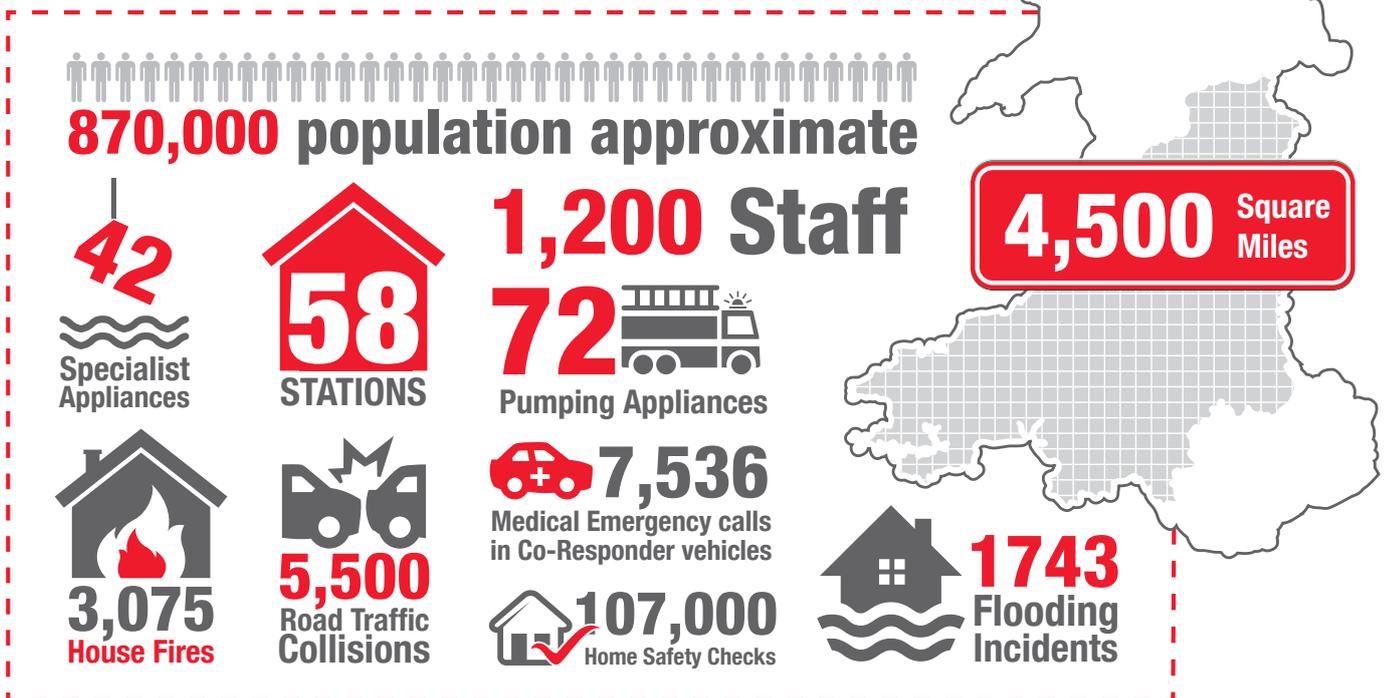
# Our Fire and Rescue Service

The Service has a mix of full time and part time operational Fire Fighters; together with control room employees and a range of support staff. We all contribute to how we deliver the Service for the Organisation. Additionally we have two volunteer units at Borth and Caldey Island as part of our emergency fire and rescue services.

## Our Geographical Area

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service covers almost two thirds of the area of Wales serving Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea. Service Headquarters is based in Carmarthen.

## Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service profile



We also provide a wide range of Community Safety and Co-Responder related activities in conjunction with other stakeholders working with young children, the elderly and those considered vulnerable within our society.







# Regulation 3: Set Equality Objectives

The Strategic Equality Plan provides an overarching framework for taking forward equality and diversity both within Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and reaching out to our communities.

The Plan encompasses Fire Authority Members and employees and covers all of our functions and services.

Our stakeholders and partners who work with us are also expected to embrace the spirit of the Plan which sets out objectives to help us mainstream equality and diversity throughout our work with others.

The Plan draws upon a host of strategic planning and day to day activities already in existence which we will monitor and review to ensure their effectiveness.

# Objective 1



To ensure that we have the necessary mechanisms in place to capture and process the data we require.

## Reason

The target of our preventative work is based on a well recognised set of assumptions on which groups within our communities are most at risk. As both the communities we serve and the nature of these risks evolves, it is important that we collect and analyse the appropriate data which will allow us to test these long standing assumptions and ensure that we continuously evaluate who is most at risk, in order that we may target our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible.

## Planned Actions

To enter into data sharing arrangements where possible, in order to ensure that those who are identified by other services as being vulnerable receive the appropriate support.

Regularly review the data collected in order to ensure that it is collated and processed in a manner which enables us to make more informed decisions on how to improve the services we provide.

Provide information to the Equality and Human Rights Commission [EHRC] on the development of services across communities illustrating a holistic approach to community safety and wellbeing.

Undertake a comprehensive Risk Review based on both changing socio-economic and demographic data, together with Local Authority development plans, to ensure our services continue to be effective.

## Measure of Success

Being in possession of all the data required in order to ensure that the Service is continuing to target its resources towards those who require it within our communities.

## Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement / Corporate Head of Risk Reduction / Corporate Head of Response.

## Objective 2



Continue to enhance understanding of Equality and Diversity issues across the workforce.

### Reason

The Service currently provides basic induction training for all personnel in order to provide an initial awareness in terms of Equality and Diversity issues. In addition to this, all personnel are provided with three yearly refresher training. However, as a public sector service provider it's important that our personnel are provided with more in-depth training which will allow them to fully appreciate the wide variety of issues they may face when managing workplace relationships and recruiting and responding within their communities.

### Planned Actions

- Design and roll out a programme of unconscious bias training.
- Develop an e-learning training package for Dignity @ Work and Equality Impact Assessment Training.
- Provide regular Equality and Diversity training to the Authority's Elected Members in order to ensure that they are aware of the legislative and organisational requirements placed upon public bodies as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Provide additional materials and reference guides for all supervisory managers in order to enhance their skills in terms of managing diverse teams.
- Improved communications around notable dates from the Diversity Calendar.
- Evaluate all materials available to personnel in order to ensure consistency and continued appropriateness of messaging.

### Measure of Success

Having a workforce which embraces is with Equality and Diversity issues, and as such, is better able to manage workplace issues, encourage recruitment from all parts of our communities, and engage appropriately with all groups.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement / Corporate Head of Response / Corporate Head of Risk Reduction.

## Objective 3



Ensure that all external communications produced by the organisation are easily accessible by all.

### Reason

Feedback obtained as part of the Service's recent consultation exercise established that the information published by the Service required greater effort to reach all interested parties.

As such a concerted effort is required in order to ensure that we tailor our publications in order to ensure that they are accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

### Planned Actions

Review all externally published materials in order to ensure that it is available in a variety of formats as standard e.g. audiotape, braille and easy-read.

Review the language used when communicating with the public in order to ensure that all our information is easily understood. Ensure that personnel involved in the production of information leaflets, strategy documents, minutes, reports etc. are provided with the necessary training to convert these documents to an Easy Read format.

Commission an external body to review our website and make recommendations as appropriate in terms of enhancing accessibility.

### Measure of Success

The Service will continue to attend local forums and routinely gather further feedback from attendees regarding the accessibility of our published information.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Head of Corporate Communications and Business Development.

## Objective 4



Work to secure the very best workforce by ensuring that all sectors of the community consider MAWWFRS as an employer of choice.

### Reason

Having a more diverse workforce profile will enable the Service to further enhance service provision and be more reflective of local communities.

### Planned Actions

- Ensure that the Service is represented at as many local forums as possible in order to maximize interaction with underrepresented groups.
- Evaluate how effective the media we use to advertise our vacancies is in terms of reaching diverse audiences.
- Ensure that all information regarding careers with the Service is produced in a variety of formats as a matter of course for ease of accessibility.
- Holding targeted awareness events for under-represented groups \* Promote employment opportunities via our established community networks.
- Continued participation in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index, improving our ranking year on year.
- Gaining 'two ticks' accreditation.
- Reviewing the Equality Impact Assessments for all recruitment and selection processes.
- Equality Impact Assessing the Employee Induction / Initial Training processes.
- Undertaking more in-depth Equality and Diversity Training with Line Managers.

### Measure of Success

A more diverse workforce profile.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement.

## Objective 5



Integrate the Service into the heart of our local communities, and take that opportunity to promote tolerance and respect within those communities.

### Reason

The Fire and Rescue Service is well respected within local communities, and as such, is well positioned to influence those who live within its area in a positive way. As such, it is important that we take every opportunity to promote the message of tolerance and respect during our interactions with various groups.

### Planned Actions

- Regularly contribute to local events.
- Maintain close links with local groups and forums.
- Increase awareness of hate crime, abuse and harassment, and ensure that reporting links are clear and well communicated.
- Roll out training to appropriate staff around Violence and Domestic Abuse Against Women.
- Develop key messages of tolerance and respect in conjunction with partners at local community events. e.g. Swansea Pride, Recruitment events, Equalities Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire Voices for Equality.

### Measure of Success

All sectors of communities feeling engaged and involved.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Response / Corporate Head of Risk Reduction.

## Objective 6



To make vulnerable people safer through targeted home safety visits.

### Reason

The Service is committed to a holistic approach of community safety to improve the Health and Wellbeing of citizens.

Safe and healthy communities improve the socio-economic fabric of local areas as part of the Welsh Governments' aspirations within the Wellbeing and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

### Planned Actions

- Work in collaboration with our Third Sector partners to target those who are vulnerable within our communities, and ensure that they have access to our services.
- Roll out Co-Responder support at local Fire Stations
- Develop and assess the success of Safe, Well and independent living projects within the Neath and Port Talbot area.
- Home Safety Checks will include a more holistic assessment of potential hazards within the home to include the prevention of slips, trips and falls.

### Measure of Success

Reduction in referrals for Care Plans and for dwelling fires and emergencies within the area.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Risk Reduction / Corporate Head of Response / corporate Head of Operational Support and Development.

# Objective 7



Develop engagement opportunities with our workforce in order to ensure that they continue to feel valued and involved, and ensure equality of opportunity across all areas is promoted.

## Reason

The Service is committed to fostering a culture which allows all personnel to be themselves in the workplace. Employees who feel valued and involved can only enhance the Service's reputation as an employer of choice among all sectors of society, and enhance our service provision.

## Planned Actions

- Evaluate various working pattern options which will allow our staff more flexibility to manage their work / life balance.
- Continue to extend the current programme of staff networks in order to ensure that personnel have the opportunity to contribute meaningfully and influence policy in certain areas.
- Conduct regular staff surveys / cultural audits in order to identify any issues or areas for improvement and/or development.
- Ensure that opportunities are available for personnel to represent the organization at Equality and Diversity related events.

## Measure of Success

A workforce which feels engaged and empowered and feel able to be themselves in the workplace.

## Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement / Corporate Head of Response / Corporate Head of Community Risk Reduction.

## Objective 8



To embed the principles of Equality and Diversity across key decision making and policy to mainstream into day to day work.

### Reason

In order to fulfil its ongoing commitment to Equality and Diversity, the Service must ensure that all internal policy formulation and decision making is aligned with its strategic decision making.

### Planned Actions

Requesting the Chair of each decision making / policy approving forum with monitoring the E&D impact on all action points and decisions made.

Ensure, through the provision of the appropriate training that all Executive Board Members have a sufficient knowledge and awareness of Equality and Diversity issues to enable them to scrutinize and, where necessary, challenge the Service's decisions and actions.

### Measure of Success

Policy production and decision making which has been fully Impact Assessed and aligns with the Service's commitment to social inclusion and improved health and wellbeing.

### Who will be responsible for ensuring that this objective is met?

All Heads of Department and Strategic Leads.

# How to contact

If you wish to give feedback or make a suggestion or if you wish to obtain a copy in an alternative format please contact:

Human Resources Department  
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service  
Headquarters  
Lime Grove Avenue Carmarthen  
Carmarthenshire  
SA31 1SP

Telephone: 0370 6060699

Email: [personnel@mawwfire.gov.uk](mailto:personnel@mawwfire.gov.uk)

## Social Media

We encourage you to keep an eye on our social media channels for updates



# **Strategic Equality Plan**

2016 / 2020