



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru

Mid and West Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

STRATEGIC EQUALITY

2024 | 2028

www.mawwfire.gov.uk



Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (MAWWFRS) Strategic Equality Plan which seeks to address both the legislative requirements and spirit of our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The plan is designed to outline the continued commitment of both the Fire Authority and the Service, to promote equality of opportunity across all our policies, practices and procedures and set out how we aim to fulfil this commitment.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are critical and essential elements of the Service's work. We endeavour to better understand our communities and reduce risk amongst the most vulnerable, by building a Service that is fully inclusive and truly representative.

We acknowledge that there is a significant amount of work to do, to ensure we eliminate discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity for all. I believe that, as an organisation, we will continue to move forward positively in this area to achieve positive outcomes for our staff and the communities we serve.

Roger Thomas

Chief Fire Officer

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service welcomes comments on all aspects of this plan, both in what it contains and what it may not make clear enough about the work we intend to do.

If you have any comments or want to know more about the objectives contained within this Plan please contact:

Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service,
Service Headquarters, Lime Grove Avenue, Carmarthen, SA31 1SP

Tel: 01267 226839 | **E-mail:** humanresources@mawwfire.gov.uk

This Plan is available in Welsh and can also be made available in alternative formats and languages. If you would like a copy of this Plan in an alternative language or format please use the contact details noted above.

Our previous Strategic Equality Plan and associated Annual Equality Reports are available on our website, or can be requested in hard copy in whichever format is required.

Contents

Introduction	5
The Authority and Service	6
Our Vision	7
How did we develop our Objectives?	8
How we will deliver and monitor the Strategic Equality	9
Objective 1	10
Actions	
Measure of Success	
Objective 2	11
Actions	
Measure of Success	
Objective 3	12
Actions	
Measure of Success	
How to Contact	14

Introduction

This document broadly outlines the way in which the Service intends to approach our work in terms of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) from 01 April 2024 – 31 March 2028. It summarises the continuing work towards embedding ED&I at the heart of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue service and seeks to consolidate and build upon the significant progress that has already been achieved during recent years.

We recognise that ED&I runs through every aspect of the Service and is of utmost importance in both our outward facing service delivery activities and inward facing responsibilities as an employer. Our efforts to diversify our workforce and become more and inclusive do not take place in isolation, they are part and parcel of us achieving wider cultural transformation across the Service – supported by our vision, strategic priorities and organisational strategies.

Legal Framework and Public Duty

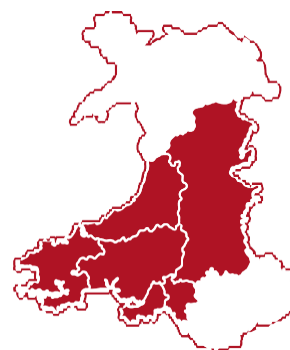
The Equality Act 2010 is the key piece of legislation which underpins this strategy and summarises a series of duties which are designed to protect employees and our service users against any form of discrimination. These duties are further supplemented by the Public-Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Wales.

In summary, MAWWFRS must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Having due regard for advancing equality involves;
 - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
 - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Compliance with the General Equality Duty is a legal obligation, but it also makes good business sense. We believe that if we are able to provide services to meet the diverse needs of our communities, we will flex and shape our services more efficiently. Furthermore, a workforce that has a supportive working environment is more



The Authority and Service

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority consists of 25 elected members who represent individual wards within six constituent Unitary Authorities, which make up our service area.

The Unitary Authorities are:



The Service is responsible for providing public safety information, prevention and protection programmes, and emergency response cover for the mid and west Wales area.

The organisation employs over 1,300 members of staff within the various employment categories i.e. Operational, Control and Support Staff, and covers around 4,500 square miles – almost two thirds of Wales, serving a wide range of communities within its coastal, urban and rural areas.

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 Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – which came into force on 01 October 2006;
- To agree the Annual Improvement Plans, the revenue and capital budgets and the contribution for the constituent authorities;
- 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, and is the Head of Paid Service.



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COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN - AT A GLANCE.

Vision

To deliver the best possible Fire and Rescue Service for the communities of mid and west Wales.

Behaviours

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Ethical
- Respectful
- Impartiality

Enablers

- Our people
- Leadership and Management: Governance, decision making and continuous improvement.
- Financial Resilience
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Digital and Information Communications Technologies Strategy
- Partnerships and Collaboration

Improvement and Well-being Objectives

- We will evolve our organisational culture to ensure we operate within the standards expected of a modern-day Fire and Rescue Service.
- We will make improvements to our On-Call Duty system to support the needs of our communities.
- We will review the risks within our communities.
- We will review and implement changes to the way in which we respond to emergencies to meet the changing demands of our community.
- We will continually review our Prevention (Community Safety) and Protection (Business Fire Safety) strategies to target and support the most vulnerable in our communities.
- We will engage and consult with our communities to understand their expectations of us.
- We will aim to become Net Zero by 2030.
- We will evolve our fleet and equipment requirements so we can effectively respond to emergencies.

Themes

- Prevention and Protection
- Response
- Corporate

How did we develop our objectives?

To develop the equality objectives we have engaged with both our communities and our workforce a used relevant information, including Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) reports, Welsh Government reports, internal strategies and results from internal staff engagement exercises.

We began by collaborating with some of our public sector partners as part of a multi-agency consultation exercise which looked at the main areas of perceived inequality within our area.

Alongside the results from that exercise we looked at areas in which we felt improvements could be made within the organisation, and also considered relevant external research and internal surveys prior to completing a draft set of objectives.

We undertook a further consultation on those draft objectives, which we invited our workforce, key stakeholders, partner organisations and members of the public to contribute, the results of which helped us to re-draft and develop those contained within this Plan.



How we will deliver and monitor the Strategic Equality Plan?

Publication of the Annual Equality Monitoring Report

The main purposes of an Annual Equality Report is to fulfil the Service's legal duties and obligations to report on its progress in delivering the General and Specific Equality Duties which the Equality Objectives.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities covered under the specific duties in Wales should produce an Annual Equality Report by 31 March each year.

Secondly, in preparing a 4 year Strategic Equality Plan, the organisation is able to be satisfied that it's basing it's Service provision on the requirements and expectations of the public, and is able to periodically scrutinise how the Service meets their requirements.

Objective 1 – Advocate for Diversity and Inclusion

We want to create a work environment where everyone, no matter their background, feels welcome and valued. We'll make sure our employees have the necessary knowledge and skills they need to be advocates for diversity and inclusion and ensure fairness in their work.

Actions

1. Make sure every employee participates in mandatory training about treating everyone fairly, being inclusive and embracing differences.
2. Create a safe and welcoming environment where people feel comfortable expressing themselves.
3. Pay attention to and address any worries or complaints about fairness, diversity and inclusion.
4. Strengthen our connections with the people and organisations who provide our training to ensure it remains up-to-date and matches the diversity of our communities.

How we'll know if we're succeeding

1. We will see more people participating in training and giving feedback to improve future training.
2. We will have evidence to show that people's actions and attitudes are changing in relation to how they express themselves.
3. We will see an increase in people sharing their concerns or complaints, and have more evidence to show that their concerns have been appropriately resolved.

Objective 2 – Build a diverse and inviting workplace with opportunities to grow

Our goal is to hire, nurture and keep a talented, diverse and multi-lingual team that reflects the communities we work with.

Actions

1. Look into and implement the most effective ways to advertise our job openings, so they reach a wide range of people, including those from different backgrounds.
2. Create opportunities for internships and apprenticeships, specifically for groups that are not well-represented.
3. Review and improve our recruitment and employment processes to make sure they welcome applications from diverse candidates.
4. Develop our employee groups that focus on diversity and help them expand.
5. Check how flexible working arrangements are used across the organisation to ensure fairness in how they're applied.

How we'll know if we're succeeding

1. Every job posting encourages applications from a variety of people.
2. More applicants are coming from groups that haven't been well-represented before.
3. More opportunities for people from under-represented groups to gain positions within organisation.
4. Getting input from internal groups about all parts of the organisation.

Objective 3 – Make sure everyone can use our services and facilities

We will make sure that our services and facilities are accessible and inclusive to anyone who needs to use them.

Actions

1. Check our online channels are easy to use for everyone, including people with disabilities and those who don't speak English or Welsh.
2. Make sure that the people and groups we engage and communicate with are representative of our communities.
3. Look for better ways to gather more information about the diverse backgrounds of the people who use our services.
4. Make changes to our facilities if needed, so those who have need to use them can get in without any problems.

How we'll know if we're succeeding

1. More people from our communities are getting involved and participating.
2. We're having regular talks with different groups in our communities about the changes we're making.
3. We're working with and getting input from even more people and organisations.



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2024 | 2028

Find out more

To provide your feedback, you can contact us via our website www.mawwfire.gov.uk telephone us on **0370 60 60 699** or write to us at Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service HQ, Lime Grove Avenue, Carmarthen, SA31 1SP.

Alternatively, you can email us at

Alternative Versions

This document is also available in accessible formats. If you would like this information in an alternative language or format, including audio, please contact us on: **0370 60 60 699** or e-mail:

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. We will respond equally to both and will reply in your language of choice without delay.

We welcome calls in Welsh and English.