

# Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority

## Consultation Report Draft Annual Action Plan 2010/2011

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### Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Annual Action Plan 2010-2011

#### 'Have your say'

Our Draft Annual Action Plan identifies a number of areas where we want to make improvements in 2010-2011. We want you to play a part in shaping your Fire and Rescue Service and hope that you will take the time to provide us with your views by completing the following questionnaire.

We are seeking your views over a twelve week period from **12th May 2009** and all comments should be submitted by **04th August 2009**.

#### Contact Details

Please complete your details below, you may also complete this form electronically via our website [www.mawwfire.gov.uk](http://www.mawwfire.gov.uk)

*Data Protection Act: We will use your information solely for administration purposes. We will keep your details secure and will not disclose them to other organisations or third parties without your consent unless we are legally required to do so.*

September 2009  
Strategic Planning and Performance Department  
Service Headquarters

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

The Authority published its Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 in May 2009, outlining the strategic vision for Mid and West Wales for the next five years. The plan has a clear focus on improving the safety of our communities and our employees and sets out the corporate strategies for service improvements and reducing risk.

Annual Action Plans will be provided to identify specific areas that the Authority wishes to improve upon during the life of the Strategic Plan. Areas for improvement for the first year were outlined in the Draft Annual Action Plan for 2010-2011.

The Draft Action Plan asked for views from our stakeholders on suggested improvements. A total of 66 responses were received, which is fewer than some previous consultations. It is acknowledged that the reduction in responses from staff reflected the fact that there were no specific proposals directly affecting their conditions of service. There was, however, an increase in the percentage of overall response from members of the public. The positive and comprehensive responses provided as part of the consultation demonstrate that our communities consider the areas we consulted upon to be of importance and welcomed the opportunity to provide their views.

The Authority is extremely grateful to all those who took the time and effort to comment and is very pleased to report on these responses. This report outlines how the responses have been considered and how this information will influence strategy for 2010-2011 and beyond. Comments were invited on the following areas.

- Improving the way we reach vulnerable members of society
- Sharing our facilities with our communities
- Engaging with communities
- Improving road safety
- Delivering Home Fire Safety Checks
- Reducing deliberate grassland fires

A full breakdown of the comments provided for each focus area is provided in Section 7. Analysis of the comments provided showed that there were common themes in many of the responses.

- **Support for our existing work** – The Authority was pleased by the positive comments provided on its existing work, as many of the recommendations for improvements are already embedded into the delivery of service. This confirmed that the Authority's strategies broadly reflect what our public expects of us.
- **Working collaboratively with partners** – Positive responses were made on the partnerships already in place and on achievements of collaborative working. Good quality suggestions were provided on developing potential opportunities with new partners.
- **Raising awareness of our work and our services** – Suggestions were provided on how the Authority should increase its profile and make communities more aware of the range of services provided and the initiatives that are already in place.

The Authority will ensure that all the responses received are considered by the appropriate Directors and their teams, and that relevant information should be shared with our partners.

Progress on each of the areas of improvement will be reported periodically to the Fire Authority and its relevant committees. Details of the developments will be reported in subsequent Annual Action Plans. The final Annual Action Plan 2010-2011 will be presented to the Fire Authority for approval on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2009 and reported upon in a combined document along with Performance and Improvement information, which will be published on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009

## **2. Introduction and purpose of this report**

At its meeting held on 11th May 2009 the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority approved its Draft Annual Action Plan for 2010-2011. The draft plan outlined how the Authority's Fire and Rescue Service will focus its activities for the coming year on the principles of its Strategic Plan 2010-2015. A number of areas, as outlined in Section 7, were identified, where it was considered that specific improvements could be made, and stakeholders were asked for the views.

As part of the Risk Reduction Planning process the Authority carried out a wide-scale consultation process to gather the views of the public, key stakeholders and staff on these focus areas. The consultation was undertaken in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government and Risk Reduction Planning requirements and good practice models.

This report outlines how consultation was undertaken, how the responses were considered and the decisions made by the Fire Authority as a result of the consultation.

### **3. Consultation strategy and methodology**

#### **3.1 Consultation**

The Draft Annual Action Plan was released on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and there followed a twelve week consultation period until the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2009. A comprehensive communications plan was developed in order to reach as many stakeholders as possible.

Consultation was undertaken in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government's Risk Reduction Planning guidance and the Cabinet Office model code. Welsh good practice models were also used. Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is a partner in a Consultation, Involvement and Engagement Framework that promotes good practice for consultation events and this framework was used to support the process.

#### **Stakeholders**

A comprehensive list, which is consistent with Assembly Guidelines is maintained and updated with contact details for a wide and diverse range of stakeholders. The Authority considered the following organisations to be its key stakeholders and they were asked for their views on the proposals contained within the draft plan either as individuals or as a representative group or association:-

- Members of the Public
- Members of Staff
- Constituent Unitary Authorities and their Chief Executives
- Town and Community Councils
- Assembly Members
- Members of Parliament
- Brecon Beacon and Pembrokeshire National Parks Authority
- Bordering Fire Authorities
- Representative Bodies
- South Wales Police, North Wales Police and Dyfed Powys Police
- Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
- H M Coastguard and other groups
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Voluntary Organisations within the Fire Authority's area
- Ethnic minority groups within the Fire Authority's area
- Chamber of Commerce and Trade organisations
- Environment Agency
- Dental and GP Surgeries
- 50+ Forum

Almost 1500 copies of the Draft Annual Action Plan were distributed to our stakeholders, either as part of the initial circulation, at public events and meetings or to any group or individual on request.

#### **3.1.2 Web Site**

The Authority has a Risk Reduction section on its website and the Draft Annual Action Plan was prominently posted on this site to allow responses to be made electronically. Stakeholders have been encouraged to access the documents and respond electronically, in order to comply with the Authority's sustainable policies. Background information on the process and previous plans and responses were also included on the site, which also gave access to press releases on the plan.

### **3.1.3 Distribution of the plan**

In April 2009, the Authority informed stakeholders that the Draft Annual Action Plan 2010-2011 would be available for viewing on the website from 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009, ahead of the distribution of printed copies. This was to allow as much notice as possible and to avoid any shortening of the consultation period due to Council meeting schedules.

The existing key stakeholder contact database was updated in accordance with Assembly guidance and the Authority distributed printed hard copies of the draft document to all identified groups. The document included a consultation response questionnaire in order to submit their comments.

Copies of the plan were delivered to all libraries within the Authority's area, in order to provide widespread public access. This year, in an effort to reach more members of the general public, we extended our distribution list to include GP and Dental Surgeries and are grateful to the Local Health Board for their assistance and support in this development.

This year for the first time we produced leaflets to publicise the consultation and sent these leaflets along with the plan to organisations with access to notice boards. These leaflets were also widely distributed at public events such as the Royal Welsh Show.

### **3.1.4 Internal stakeholders, Staff and Representative Bodies**

At the beginning of the consultation process a Chief Fire Officer's Memoranda was provided to staff outlining the proposals and encouraging staff to respond. Each fire station, support department and senior manager was provided with a copy of the Plan and staff were advised that the document could also be viewed electronically via the internal Business Information Server network.

All representative bodies within Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service were formally consulted on the proposals.

### **3.1.5 Partnership consultation**

Partnerships have been formed with other organisations, who can promote our consultations. We are members of the Swansea Consultation Partnership and a partnership website has been created to promote consultation activities across a number of organisations in the Swansea area. Unitary authority websites within our area have also been used to publicise and promote our work.

### **3.1.6 Media strategy**

The Media was used as much as possible, in order to provide a link to the public and to ensure that communities were kept informed of the publication of the Plan, the key proposals, and associated community safety benefits. It was also used to detail the consultation process and how the public could contribute to the preparation of the final plan.

- A press statement was issued in order to launch the start of the public consultation and the consultation was prominently displayed on the Service's web-site. A series of themed press releases were distributed to the media during consultation, in order to encourage responses and maintain the profile of the consultation.
- The Communications Officer was responsible for monitoring the media throughout the consultation process, advising Members and officers of reports and any emerging issues. A media release will be made when the Authority has agreed and published the final plan, to report on the outcomes of the consultation.

#### **4.0 Welsh Assembly Government - Informal Discussion**

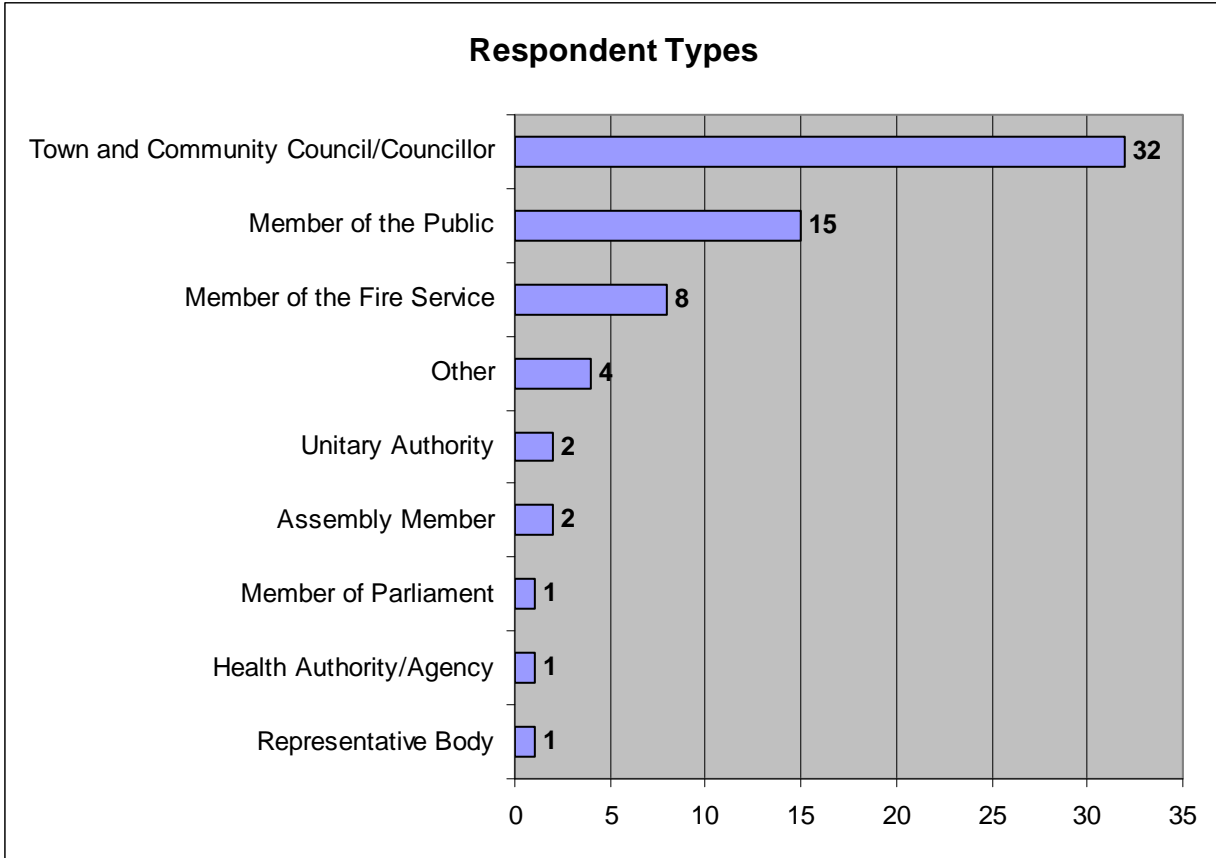
As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Risk Reduction Planning guidance, the Authority is required to informally discuss its plan with the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government prior to formal adoption. A meeting was held on 7 September 2009 between the Minister, the Chairman of the Authority, Members of the RRP Working Group, and senior officers. The meeting with the Minister allowed for a two way discussion of the Authority's achievements and the outcomes of the public consultation.

## 5.0 Profile of Respondents

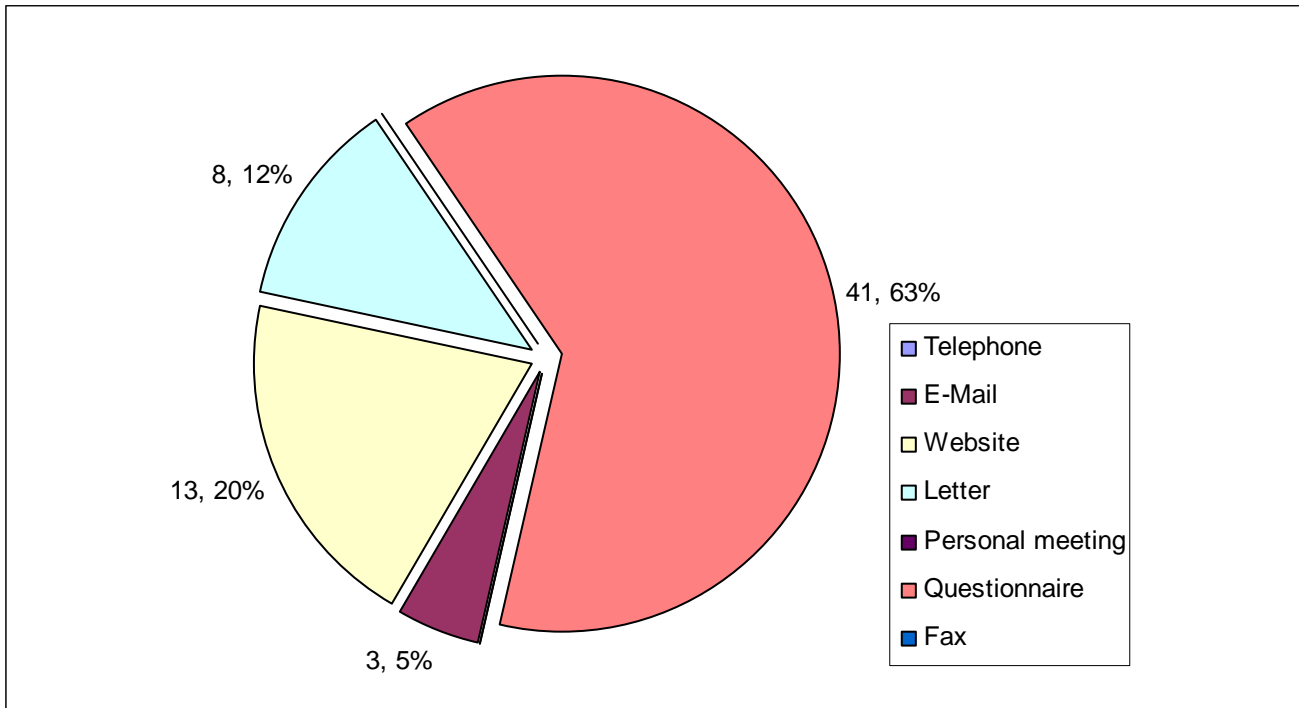
To record responses to the Authority's proposals on risk reduction, questionnaires were distributed with the plan, which allowed respondents to provide their comments. The majority of responses were received by means of completed questionnaires, but electronic options were also available and promoted.

The form included an optional section to record details on the respondent and, if appropriate, the organisation they represented. This allowed for analysis of the number and type of respondents, and also whether they were making personal comments or responding on behalf of an organisation. Summarised below is the profile of the respondents and how they made their comments.

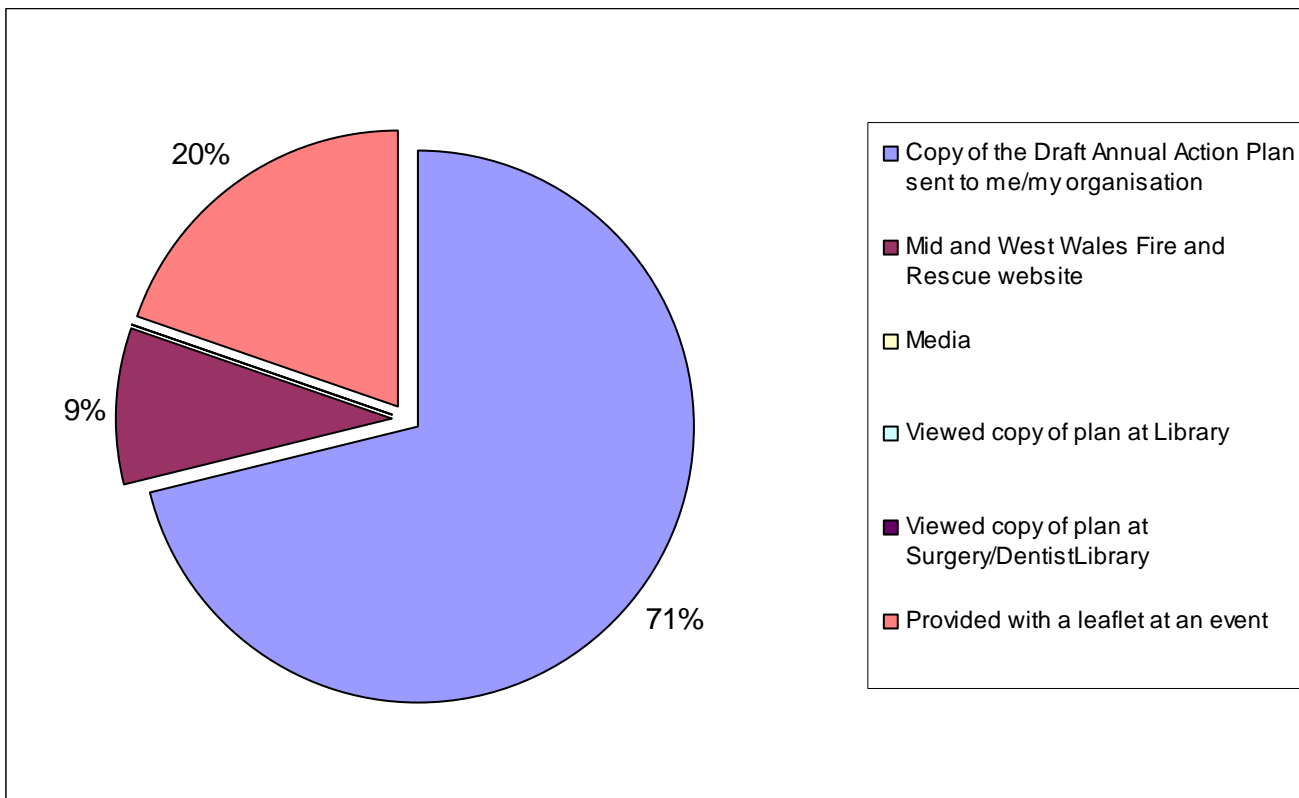
### Number of respondents by type:-



**Method of response**



**Where respondents viewed the plan:-**



## 5.1 Respondents by authority areas

The majority of respondents gave their addresses and the table below shows their origins by unitary authority area. Some respondents did not provide this information and the respondent addresses outside the area were for an Assembly Member and the Countryside Council for Wales.

Area	Number of responses
Carmarthenshire	14
Powys	13
Pembrokeshire	12
Swansea	12
Ceredigion	7
Neath Port Talbot	1
Not specified	5
Outside Mid and West Wales	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

## 5.2 Ratio of responses received

In order to show the ratio of responses received from stakeholders in comparison to the number of documents that were circulated, the table below provides information on the main respondent groups. In addition to being sent directly to stakeholders, the plan was also widely publicised and was available on the Authority's website.

Respondent Type	Number of responses	% of total responses
Member of Fire Service	8	12%
Town and Community Councils	32	48%
Member of Public	15	23%
Assembly Member	2	3%
Member of Parliament	1	2%
Unitary Authority	2	3%
Representative Body	1	2%
Other (Community Safety Partners, Health Board, National Parks)	5	7%

## **6.0 How responses were analysed**

The majority of responses to the consultation were provided by completing the questionnaire provided with each plan. The questionnaire provided a free text section for each of the proposals so that respondents could make their comments.

Some respondents did not complete a questionnaire, but submitted an e-mail, letter or report containing their response. Comments were also recorded at a meeting of a 50+ Forum. The Authority used an online survey system to independently host the electronic responses.

All the responses were considered by the Risk Reduction Planning Member Working Group. This group evaluated the comments and made recommendations to the Fire Authority on the content of the final plan and how the work should progress.

Responses to these proposals have been analysed and the points raised have been reported by grouping together the main themes of the responses, reflecting the particular area of concern along with the profile of the respondent.

As some of the proposals related to identifying vulnerable members of the community, delivering our safety initiatives and engaging with communities, many of the respondents made the same recommendations across several proposals.

This report seeks to accurately and fairly summarise the responses and the strength of feeling for each of the areas of concern, in order to fully reflect the response to the consultation process. Where necessary an Authority comment has been added, in order to provide additional information on the points raised. The final Annual Action Plan has been carefully developed as a result of the Authority's consideration of the consultation responses.

## 7.0 Results from consultation

### Strategic Plan

The Draft Annual Action Plan 2010-2011 was circulated with the Authority's Strategic Plan for 2010-2015. Only a small number of respondents provided comment on the Strategic Plan with the main focus being on the six areas of improvement in the Draft Annual Action Plan.

### Draft Annual Action Plan 2010/2011

As well as providing specific responses to the areas for improvement, some respondents took the opportunity to compliment the Authority on the level of Service provided and gave their general support for the actions proposed in the Plan.

Responses to the six areas for improvement are summarised below.

### 7.1 Improving the way we reach vulnerable members of society

The Authority's community safety work is targeted at the most vulnerable members within communities, but we know that we do not reach everyone. Other organisations work with vulnerable and excluded people and may be able to improve our access to them. We want to strengthen our links with partners and provide them with training and further expertise to identify and report fire risk. We asked for views on how we could improve the way we reach vulnerable members of society.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Strengthening links with partners</b> The Authority should strengthen links with organisations that have regular contact with vulnerable people and can help us identify those at risk.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – We already have close links with partners, but will use the information provided to extend this network.</i></p>	The Public, Staff Town & Community Councils, Member of Parliament NHS Trust,
<p><b>Identify places where vulnerable people meet and visit</b> A number of suggestions were provided on the best places to meet different types of vulnerable people and the type of contact different groups will best respond to, such as events at day centres</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – Some of the places suggested are already targeted, but the information will be used to improve this targeting.</i></p>	The public Town & Community Councils
<p><b>Use local knowledge of retained duty staff</b></p> <p><i>Authority Comment - Local fire-fighters already play a part in identifying and engaging with their local communities, and this is recognised as being an important part of their role.</i></p>	Town & Community Council Retained Fire Fighters Union
<p><b>Publicise the fact that we are trying to identify vulnerable people in order to make them safer.</b> A number of suggestions on how to raise the profile of the services we provide to our communities were made, including using schools and hospitals to raise awareness.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – This information will be used to improve the way we publicise our Services.</i></p>	Town & Community Councils, Staff, Assembly Member NHS Trust

<p><b>Data Protection</b> Concern was raised regarding the sharing of personal information with our partner organisations.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment - Where personal information is shared, it will only be provided in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.</i></p>	Town & Community Councils
<p><b>Direct Contact with vulnerable people</b> Concern was raised regarding 'cold calling' on vulnerable residents as this could cause alarm.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – The Authority does not employ “cold calling”. Initial contact is normally undertaken by telephone or other referral prior to making a personal visit.</i></p>	Town & Community Council

## Response analysis

Respondents were very supportive of our efforts to improve in this area of work and the comments received regarding identifying vulnerable people confirmed that the Service's strategy in this area was generally what our stakeholders expected of us. However, they did provide a range of valuable and innovative suggestions on how we could expand and improve in this area.

## 7.2 - Sharing our facilities with our communities

We have buildings throughout Mid and West Wales and already share some of these facilities with the local community and other emergency services. This allows us to work collaboratively and maximise the available resources. These buildings are a valuable resource within the community and help promote our services, safety awareness programmes and the work of others. We want our fire stations to be open and accessible to the public, but this requires us to develop our premises, in order to make them suitable for shared use, and so we asked for views on extending and further developing the shared use of our facilities with communities.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Very supportive of sharing our facilities</b>            There was a great deal of positive comment and support for the Authority's policy of opening up fire stations for use by the local community as it was felt that it:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved awareness of safety messages</li> <li>• Improved integration within the community</li> <li>• Opened up a valuable facility within the community</li> <li>• Allowed for improved working with other emergency services</li> </ul>	NHS Trust, Town & Community Councils, The Public, Community Safety Partnerships, Staff, Assembly Members, Retained Fire fighters Union, Swansea 50+ Group
<p><b>Publicise the availability of these facilities</b>            Many respondents were unaware that the Authority had shared facilities and felt that this should be widely publicised</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – We will provide information on shared facilities on our website and in the local communities.</i></p>	Town & Community Councils, The Public
<p><b>Sharing facilities should not interfere with the running of the station</b>            Any sharing of facilities should not impact upon the smooth running of the Service and the operational efficiency of fire stations</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – Operational efficiency will continue to be the primary consideration and staff will benefit from inter-agency working.</i></p>	Town Council Assembly Member
<p><b>Health and Safety and Security</b>            Any health and safety, insurance and security issues of allowing members of the public access to sites should be fully considered.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – Health and Safety and Security will continue to be a primary consideration.</i></p>	Town & Community Council Staff

### Response Analysis

There was overwhelming support for the Authority's policy of sharing our facilities with communities and with other emergency services. This confirmed that the Authority is working in areas that are expected of us and will allow us to further develop our links with other services and extend our range of community facilities.

### 7.3 - Engaging with communities

We already engage with communities to ensure our services are accountable and form part of the local decision making process. We are active in promoting community safety and in raising public awareness of all aspects of our work. We want to strengthen links with communities and place our citizens at centre stage, so as to increase the voice they have in shaping the services we provide.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Good level of Community Engagement</b> Respondents felt that the Authority's level of engagement and profile in the community was already good and that local crews were already known in the community through their community safety activities.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – This reflects what is expected of the Service by the framework document and as outlined in other shared agendas such as 'Making the Connections'.</i></p>	<p>Community Councils The Public</p>
<p><b>Direct Engagement</b> The majority of respondents recommended direct contact with the public such as Young Firefighter schemes, attendance at schools, community events and local and community council meetings. They were complimentary about existing levels of engagement and felt that this should be built upon. Suggestions were provided on a range of organisations we should work with to improve engagement.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment –This will continue to be at the heart of our activities, and we will build on this through further community working.</i></p>	<p>Staff, Town &amp; Community Councils, The Public, Assembly Member, Retained Fire fighters Union, Community Safety Partnerships</p>
<p><b>Partnership Working</b> Continue valuable work with partners, such as other emergency services, National Health Service, voluntary organisations, Communities First, Community Safety Partnerships and Police and Communities Together (PACT)</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – We will continue to work with our partners and extend partnership working as recommended.</i></p>	<p>Staff, Community Safety Partnerships Retained Fire fighters Union 50+ Group</p>
<p><b>Identify places where vulnerable people meet and visit</b> Suggestions on the best places to meet a wide variety of people were provided as well as the type of contact they may respond to.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – Some of the places suggested are already targeted, but the information will be used to improve on this</i></p>	<p>Community Councils 50+ Group</p>
<p><b>Publicise the fact that we are trying to improve our community engagement</b></p> <p>Raise the profile of the Service by using local newsletters, notice boards etc. Continue to provide a means of consulting with communities in order that they have a process to make their views known.</p>	<p>Community Councils The Public</p>

#### Response Analysis

There was considerable support for the Service's wish to improve engagement with communities and a number of suggestions were made on how this could be achieved. Many of the activities suggested are already part of our core work, but this demonstrated the willingness of our communities to become engaged with the Service.

## 7.4 - Improving Road Safety

We are already working with our partners to make people more aware of the dangers on our roads and to improve safety. We have also provided improved equipment on all of our front line fire appliances. We asked for feedback from our stakeholders on what more we could do.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Commended on the work already undertaken</b> Compliments were received on the level of service and the improvements already made in the area of road safety.</p>	Town & Community Councils
<p><b>Continue with existing education strategies</b> Education work with schools, colleges, and other agencies was considered to be vitally important in publicising road safety issues and the Authority was encouraged to continue with this work.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment - Educating risk groups is a key part of our work and we will continue to deliver the All Wales RTC Strategy and work with key partners.</i></p>	Staff, Town & Community Councils, The Public
<p><b>Partnership Working</b> Partnership working with other emergency services and with a wide range of agencies was recommended. A wide range of suggestions on the delivery of services, exchanging information about road safety hazards, and influencing driving and road safety legislation were provided</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – We know that we can achieve more by working collaboratively and will share the information provided with our partners.</i></p>	NHS Trust Town & Community Council The Public Assembly Member Member of Parliament Retained Fire Fighters Union 50+ Group Community Safety Partnership

### Response Analysis

There was considerable support for the work that the Authority is already undertaking in improving the way we equip our staff to deal with road traffic collisions and confirmation that our work with partners was what was expected. The range of joint working and awareness raising initiatives will be taken forward to the forums that the Service plays a part in, both locally and nationally.

## 7.5 - Delivering Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC)

Currently home fire safety checks are carried out by fire fighters, partner agencies and dedicated community safety staff. We believe that there may be opportunities for improvement in this area and asked our stakeholders for their comments.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Commended on the work already undertaken</b> This was an area of work that generated a very positive response, demonstrating the value that our stakeholders place on Home Fire Safety Checks.</p>	<p>Town &amp; Community Councils The Public 50+ Group Swansea</p>
<p><b>Resources should be invested in this area</b> It was commented that more resources needed to be invested in this vitally important area, to provide dedicated resources and additional funding for retained duty staff.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – We will continue to investigate further funding opportunities and are grateful to the Assembly for its considerable support in this area.</i></p>	<p>Staff, NHS Trust, Town &amp; Community Council Retained Fire Fighters Union</p>
<p><b>Work with partners</b> Use a wide range of partners to provide better information and work with other agencies, such as estate agents and hospitals, to publicise that this service is available.</p> <p>Better use should be made of our partners, who visit the vulnerable in their homes and could be trained to undertake HFSC on our behalf.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – Existing arrangements are in place with some agencies, but there may well be opportunities to extend these arrangements even further.</i></p>	<p>The Public, Town &amp; Community Council Assembly Member Retained Fire Fighters Union Community Safety Partnerships Member of Parliament Swansea 50+ Group</p>
<p><b>Recording process needs to be automated</b> The HFSC process requires that information is recorded and this can be a time consuming process, this needs to be automated</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – An electronic system for streamlining the HFSC process is being introduced and this will improve the targeting, delivery and recording of this work.</i></p>	<p>Staff</p>
<p><b>Direct Contact with vulnerable people</b> Concern was raised regarding ‘cold calling’ on vulnerable residents as this could cause alarm.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment - Initial contact with residents is normally undertaken by telephone or other referral and by leaflet targeting in areas where fires have recently occurred.</i></p>	<p>The Public</p>

### Response analysis

The benefit of providing Home Fire Safety Checks was emphasised, as was the need to continue our investment in this area. Valuable comments were provided on how our stakeholders felt that we could improve the delivery of Home Fire Safety Checks. Using our partners to publicise, identify and undertake the checks on our behalf was also suggested.

The comments confirmed that the Authority’s strategy in this area has the support of our stakeholders and that we should continue to invest and work closely with partners to achieve even more in home safety.

## 7.6 - Reducing deliberate grassland fires

Deliberate grassland and forestry fires are a drain on our resources and a danger to our firefighters, so we asked our stakeholders for their views on what more we could do to reduce these fires.

Summary of Comments	Respondent Type
<p><b>Continue with existing education strategies</b> The work of the Authority in educating children through schools, colleges, youth groups etc. was commended and considered to be vitally important.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment - We will continue to develop our education strategies. The Service has developed lesson plans targeted at Key Stage 3 pupils (year 7 and 8) to raise the awareness and improve their understanding of the dangers of grass fires.</i></p>	<p>The Public, Unitary Authority, Town &amp; Community Council NHS Trust, Staff Community Safety Partnerships</p>
<p><b>Working with Partners</b> Working with partners was recommended, and a wide range of agencies were proposed as partners. Suggested activities for reducing deliberate grassland fires and dealing with their consequences were suggested.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – The Service has developed close links with Police educationalists and has a specialist Rural Arson Reduction Team (RAFT) that works closely with the Forestry Commission and Police to reduce environmental and wider arson related behaviour.</i></p>	<p>NHS Trust, Community Safety Partnership, Assembly Member, Staff, Town &amp; Community Councils, Retained Fire Fighters Union, Pembrokeshire National Park, Countryside Council for Wales</p>
<p><b>Publicise the dangers and damage by grass fires and change societal attitudes to grassland fires</b> Make the public aware of the dangers to the community and firefighters, and the damage to the environment. Encourage society to treat deliberate grassland fires more seriously and change attitudes to fire setting.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – An extensive schools education programme promotes the dangers and influence of anti social fire behaviour. Supported by the Assembly, the Service has produced a specific educational DVD which is delivered in schools as part of the curriculum.</i></p>	<p>Community Council The Public 50 + Group</p>
<p><b>Penalties for arson should act as a deterrent</b> Grass fires should be treated more seriously and penalties imposed should be designed to deter arsonists.</p> <p><i>Authority Comment – This Service treats grassland arson very seriously and we are working closely with the Police forces in Wales to ensure any penalties for convictions are proportionate, appropriate and effective. These comments will be shared with our partners.</i></p>	<p>Town &amp; Community Councils The Public</p>

### Response analysis

The work already undertaken by the Authority and their partners in reducing grassland fires was acknowledged, and there was confirmation that working with other agencies was the way forward, as this was recognised as being a problem that had an impact on communities.

## 8 Conclusions

The Draft Annual Action Plan 2010-2011 asked for views from our stakeholders on how they would wish us to improve in these areas. The consultation had a distinct focus on how it could improve its engagement with communities and how it could improve delivery of community safety services, such as HFSC, road safety and deliberate grassland fires. The focus areas were:-

- Improving the way we reach vulnerable members of society
- Sharing our facilities with our communities
- Engaging with communities
- Improving road safety
- Delivering Home Fire Safety Checks
- Reducing deliberate grassland fires

The positive and comprehensive responses provided to the consultation demonstrate that our communities also consider these areas of our work to be of major importance and welcomed a process to provide their views. Analysis of the comments provided showed that there were common themes in most of the responses and these are summarised here.

- **Support for our existing work**

Positive responses were provided on the work already undertaken by the Authority and many of the recommendations made for improvements are already embedded into the Service. The Authority were heartened by this confirmation that its strategies, policies and initiatives were supported by its communities and that it should continue to develop its work in all of these areas.

This demonstrated the value our stakeholders placed on targeting and delivering Home Fire Safety Checks, engaging with our communities, sharing our facilities, improving road safety and reducing grassland fires. Our work in these areas was recognised as being of vital importance in making our communities safer.

It is recommended that the existing strategies in the focus areas should be developed and that recommendations for improvement should be examined by the relevant Directors and their teams.

- **Working collaboratively with partners**

The respondents recognised the work already undertaken in partnership with other services and agencies and were supportive of this strategy for joint working. Recommendations were made to strengthen and extend existing partnerships and to forge new relationships, particularly in the targeting and delivering of Home Fire Safety Checks. A very wide range of suggested partners, including Communities First, public bodies and voluntary agencies, were made across the six areas of focus.

It is recommended that the relevant Directors should examine the development of partnership working as recommended by our stakeholders.

- **Raising awareness of our work and our services**

Stakeholders confirmed the need to ensure that the Authority continues to keep our communities aware of the work that we do and the wide range of services that we provide. A number of suggestions were made for increasing our profile by taking advantage of the networks provided by local newsletters and by increased engagement with local organisations.

It is recommended that the relevant Directors should examine the suggestions made for increasing our profile, in order to strengthen our engagement with the diverse communities that we serve.

## **9 Delivery of Improvements**

The Authority has directed that the responses received for each area should be considered by the relevant Directors with responsibility for the areas under focus. The Director of Risk has responsibility for the majority of focus areas and will work with his team in order to fully consider all the suggestions provided to enhance and improve current working arrangements.

Information provided and suggestions made through the consultation process will be shared with our partners. We will continue to work with agencies, such as Communities First who focus on improving living conditions and prospects for disadvantaged communities and we will develop new partnerships as appropriate.

Progress on each of the areas of improvement will be reported periodically to the Fire Authority and its relevant committees. Details of the developments will be reported in subsequent Annual Action Plans, in order that our stakeholders can see how their valuable contribution has enabled us to improve our service delivery.