

REPORT TO THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE AUTHORITYDATE: 1ST OCTOBER 2007**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/2008****SUMMARY:**

Members are asked to consider the performance and improvement plan information for 2007/2008. This information will provide part of the combined Performance and Improvement and Risk Reduction Planning Action Plan. It should be noted that in its current format the information shows only text and some tables; when it is incorporated into the final document it will be supplemented with photographs, maps and graphs and the tables will be re-formated. The Best Value Performance Indicators contain information on performance for 2006/2007 and shows our targets for 2007/2008. The indicators are awaiting audit by the Wales Audit Office.

Performance

- All the performance indicators associated with accidental dwelling fires have shown an improvement, evidencing the success of the Authority's investment in Community Safety strategies.
- Vehicle arson continues to reduce.
- The number of False alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus has increased from the previous year. A new reporting process has been adopted to enable problem premises to be identified and targeted.
- The indicators for Smoke alarm ownership have shown an improvement in the number of dwellings where smoke alarm are fitted and where smoke alarms activate. Challenging long-term targets have been set for these indicators.
- Operational Assurance Assessment provided a good report

Improvement

The key issues for improvement, raised as part of the Joint Risk Assessment have been prioritised and reported in the plan along with the necessary action the Authority intends to take or has taken to address these issues.

OBJECTIVES		IMPLICATIONS	
Trusted & Respect	x	Operational Risk Management	x
More than Emergencies		Community Risk Reduction	x
Saving Lives, Protecting Communities		Training & Development	x
Managing within Budget		Civil Contingencies	x
Improving Efficiency		Finance & Procurement	x
Resources to Priorities		H.R.	
Alternative Resources		ICT	
Managing People		Corporate Services	
Integrated Management Planning	x	Transport	
Partnership Working		Health & Safety	
Effective & Empowered People		Premises	
Sustainability & the Environment		Welsh Language	
Governance	x	Legal	

COMMENTS/OBSERVATIONS:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Members accept the performance and improvement information provided in the document as part of the combined Risk Reduction Action Plan and Performance and Improvement Plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT:

Statistics from Strategic Planning & Performance Department
W-FRSC (06) 41 Guidance on BVPI 2006-2007
WPI Draft Guidance for Fire & Rescue Authorities March 2007

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Draft

Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority

“Making Our Community Safer” Risk Reduction Plan 07/10

Risk Reduction Action Plan 08/09 Improvement Plan 2007/2008

NOT FOR CIRCULATION

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Foreword - Chairman and the Chief Fire Officer

Our vision for Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is one of increased performance and improved services. We are already good at what we do, but we want to be better. We have been planning our services for some years on the basis of assessing risk. In October 2006 the Authority produced its first Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) developed to the Welsh Assembly Government guidance - "Wales a Safer Country" and the "Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for Wales". This led to the production of a strategic Risk Reduction Plan covering a 3 year period until 2010. This document is the strategic "blueprint" of how we will develop the service over the next 3 years. Our aim is to continue to improve what we do, and the way that we do it, to make Mid & West Wales safer.

The Wales Programme for Improvement has provided a framework for the Fire Authorities in Wales to publish information on Performance, Improvement and Risk Reduction in one comprehensive document and this has been achieved in this plan.

2007/08 has been a rewarding year for the Authority. We have made many improvements to the Service we provide for our Communities and these are described within this action plan. These achievements have been made during a period of unprecedented change for the Fire & Rescue Service nationally. We aim to continue to work hard to reduce risk in our communities and provide a better, more responsive service. We are extremely proud of the achievements of our staff in reducing risk from fires in the home which has seen a considerable reduction in deaths and injuries from accidental fires in the home in our area.

We continue to do things differently and it is rewarding to see that the professional and political commitment shown at all levels of the Service is paying off in improved performance making a real difference to overall community safety. That commitment has been matched and supported by the Welsh Assembly Government. That said, we must not become complacent. There is still a lot of hard work to be done by both staff and Members alike and we still need to convince some of our stakeholders that the pace and extent of change we have, and continue to experience in recent years is both right and worth the effort.

The Authority has taken the opportunity to also use this document to provide information on our performance and improvement achievements. This allows us to report in one convenient location the results of the consultation on the draft risk reduction action plan, specific information on our performance achievements and where we intend to make improvements. We continue to improve by having the determination to put into place imaginative plans for prevention, protection and emergency response all aimed at supporting "front end" service delivery.

We both hope that you find this document to be an important insight into how the Authority believes the Service should develop. We are confident that the approach outlined in this document will continue a process of improvement which will make a real difference to the safety of communities within Mid & West Wales.

Chairman - Councillor Collin Crowley
Douglas Mackay – Chief Fire Officer

Our mission and key objectives

Our mission is: ***To build safer communities***

Our core objectives are:

- To save lives and protect communities.
To be trusted and respected by our community.
- To be seen as more than an emergency service
- To manage within budget.
- To make efficiencies year on year.
- To match resources to priorities.
- To seek out and utilise alternative resources.
- To manage our people effectively.
- To fully develop risk reduction planning.
- To develop effective partnership working.
- To develop effective and empowered people who work for us.

Equality and Diversity

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service wishes to secure genuine equality of opportunity, whether required by legislation or not, in all aspects of its activities as an employer.

Attraction of under represented groups to employment opportunities within the service is a priority and a key objective in the recruitment campaigns for all types of employees. This is being achieved through targeted advertising and the provision of accurate information to the target groups which address any misconceptions which may be held regarding the role of a firefighter, and the range of opportunities within the service. A Cultural Audit has just been completed of existing staff covering fairness in the workplace; fairness in management; discrimination, bullying and harassment; equal opportunities; work life balance and personal and organisational development. The results of this audit will be used to identify specific issues to address and as a result inform future training and policy development for employees.

Service delivery issues are being addressed through a review of performance indicators to ensure that information is being gathered which is relevant to equality and diversity in order that this data can be used to identify any areas which have a disproportionate impact on specific groups. Existing statutory equality schemes, Race, Disability and Gender will be expanded to encompass the other strands of diversity, Age, Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation, with a view to creating an all encompassing equality scheme for the Service.

Wales Programme for Improvement

Background

This is the first year that the Fire Authority has operated within the 'Wales Programme for Improvement Framework for Fire & Rescue Authorities in Wales'. This framework helps us to achieve our Best Value obligations within the shared vision of public sector improvement and assesses the Authority on core elements.. Fire Authority Members drive this process through the recently created Policy Review and Audit Committee.

Combined Reporting

The Assembly Government designed this framework to allow the Authority to report on performance, improvement and risk reduction in a single comprehensive document. This removes the need to provide a separate Annual Performance and Improvement Plan. Now that the consultation on the Risk Reduction Plan is complete the results of the consultation are included within this document to provide information on all performance and planned activities in one convenient location..

The information required as part of Annual Improvement reporting consists of:

Our strategic objectives – [What we want to achieve are shown on Page 4](#)

Our performance in the previous year – [How well we did in 2006/2007](#)

Performance statistics for the previous year – [The actual figures](#)

Our Operational Assurance Assessment – [How other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services view our service](#)

The Joint Risk Assessment agreed with the Wales Audit Office – [What we need to do](#)

The key issues for improvement that will be delivered in the current year – [What we will do this year](#)

Our performance in the previous year - how we did in 2006/2007

Corporate Health Indicators are used by all public sector organisations to measure their overall performance. Service Delivery Indicators are used by Fire and Rescue Services to show how well we perform in fire service activities. Considerable work has been undertaken in improving our performance in both sets of indicators as can be seen in section 3.

As part of the Welsh Public Service it is important that we are as efficient as possible in corporate issues to ensure that we are delivering the best service we can with the resources available to us. In addition to corporate indicators as you would expect we also strive to perform against challenging targets in our core activity of service delivery. Overall we have shown an improvement in our performance with some notable successes:

Accidental Fires in the Home – The number of accidental fires in the home and subsequent injuries continue to fall year on year which demonstrates our commitment to community fire safety and home fire safety audits in particular, it shows communities are taking on board our message and living in safer homes. Where fires do occur, it is reported that there are more homes where smoke alarms have been fitted and operate and less homes where no smoke alarm was fitted. This shows that the public have responded to the ‘thumbs up on Monday’ campaign

Vehicle Arson - The joint vehicle arson partnership continues to drive down the number of deliberate car fires, vehicle arson has reduced by 60% since 2000. This is an excellent example of how the Authority has embraced the Welsh Assembly Government’s direction to work ‘Beyond the Boundaries.’

Co-Responding – Our co-responder crews supporting the NHS Wales Ambulance Trust have seen their call activity increase this year by 65% and 1650 incidents have been attended by the 14 co-responder units now established in the predominantly rural areas of our Service. This is another example of your fire and rescue service working together with other public services to build safer communities, which shows a real commitment to improvement.

Road Traffic Collisions – There has been a reduction in the number of road traffic accidents we attended and the injuries sustained at these incidents. However many more incidents are attended by the other emergency services and we know that road safety is a problem for all the Services and Community Safety Partnerships. A Road Safety Officer has been appointed to work with our partners to jointly develop a road safety strategy. Improved rescue equipment have also been provided on fire engines in some of our most rural areas to help reduce the time taken to release casualties when accidents do occur.

All incidents – We attended over 17,500 incidents last year a 10% increase on the previous year. Much of this increase can be attributed to the increase in co-responder calls we attend as part of our partnership working but is also due to the increase in the number of deliberate grass fires that were experienced during the dry periods in the spring and summer months. Arson reduction initiatives that engage with children and young people are programmed in the areas where most of these incidents occur.

The number of incidents where automatic alarm systems have operated where there is no fire have increased. The premises where these false alarms occur are being visited by local officers to help improve the management of their alarm systems and their fire safety procedures.

Performance statistics for 2006/2007

The Welsh Assembly Government are working with the Welsh Fire & Rescue Services to develop a suite of strategic and core indicators to monitor our performance. In the meantime the existing Best Value Performance Indicators will continue to be used to report on corporate and service delivery performance. The impact of changes in service delivery and management arrangements can be seen in this document. In addition to reporting on our own performance we also compare ourselves against our Family Group and the top performing quarter of fire authorities.

Family Group is the name given to the group of Fire Authorities against which our performance can be compared on a 'like for like' basis. Members of our family group have similar populations, urban/rural balance, industrial/residential risk, etc. Our Family Group is made up of Cumbria, Devon, Hereford & Worcester, Lincolnshire, North Wales and North Yorkshire. The top performing quarter provides information on top performing Authorities for each indicator, which provides a very demanding benchmark to compare ourselves against.

The Authority sets a target for each indicator for the coming year and the performance of the indicator against this target is monitored and reported throughout the year. We can therefore measure ourselves against our own target and against the performance of our Family Group and the top fire services in the UK.

The Best Value Performance Indicator results are shown here reflecting our performance for 2006/2007 in comparison with our family group and the top performing UK Fire Services. Each indicator has been coloured to show:-


- green if they are on or above target
- amber if they are slightly off target
- red if they are off target

Where no data available, usually because of the delay in publishing national data this will be shown in grey













A brief summary is provided to report on the performance for each indicator group.


















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Key

	On or Above Target		Slightly off Target		Off Target		No data available
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

















Corporate Health Indicators

























	Indicator Definition	Did we meet our target?	How do we compare to our Family Group?	How do we compare to the top 25% Brigades?
2a	The level (if any) of the Commission for Racial Equalities (CRE) Standard for Local Government to which the Authority conforms			
2b	The duty to promote race			
The targets for these indicators have been achieved. Performance has improved and further initiatives are planned to make further progress.				
8	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the Authority			
A new procurement system has been purchased which will improve performance in this area in future years. This year's result is slightly off target but the Service shows a better performance than the Family Group.				
11i	Percentage of top 5% of earners that are women			



















11ii)	The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities			
Performance for these indicators is off target but is better than our Family Group average.				
12i)	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence. Whole-time Uniformed Staff			
12ii)	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence. All staff			
The target for these indicators has not been achieved but the number of days lost to sickness has fallen on previous years. The Service is however, out performing the Family Group average and the average of the top 25% of Fire Services in England & Wales in this area.				
15i)	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce. Fire-fighter's Pension Scheme			
15ii)	The percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce. Local Government Pension Scheme			
The number of staff retiring on ill health has fallen overall but the target set for staff on the Fire Fighter pension Scheme has not been achieved. The Service is out performing the Family Group average.				
17i)	The percentage of Local Authority employees from minority ethnic communities			

Performance for this indicator is off target. The Service will continue with its initiatives to encourage applications from under represented groups.				
157	The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery			
Performance for this indicator is slightly off target but the Service is out performing the Family Group average and the average of the top 25% of Fire Services in England and Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government has issued a directive that this indicator will not be reported on in future.				
210	The percentage of women fire-fighters			
Performance for this indicator is slightly off target but the Service is out performing the Family Group average. The number of women fire fighters employed by the Authority has increased year on year. The Service will continue with its initiatives to encourage applications from under represented groups. No data is available to compare the Service against the top quartile.				

Service Delivery Indicators

	Indicator Definition	Did we meet our target?	How do we compare to our Family Group?	How do we compare to the top 25% Brigades?
142ii	Primary Fires per 10,000 population			
The number of primary fires has fallen consistently year on year and the target set has been achieved. Efforts are continuing to reduce the number of fires still further to reflect the Family Group and Top Quarter Service's performance.				
142iii	Accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings			
143i	Number of deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 population.			
143ii	Injuries arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 population			
144	Accidental fires in dwellings confined to room of origin (%)			
208	The % of people in accidental dwelling fires who escape unharmed without FRA assistance			
The indicators for Accidental Dwelling Fires all show an improvement, with notable successes in the reduction in the number of deaths and injuries for the year. Only the indicator monitoring the confinement of fire to the room of origin is slightly off target.				

146i	Number of calls to malicious false alarms not attended per 1,000 population			
146ii	Number of calls to malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population			
The number of potential hoax calls made to the Service has reduced with the majority of calls being successfully challenged. The number of calls attended, though reduced, is slightly off target				
149i	False alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus per 1,000 non-domestic properties			
149ii	Number of those properties with more than 1 attendance			
149iii	% of Calls to a property with more than 1 attendance			
The number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection equipment has increased. Premises where repeat activation occur are being targeted locally and a policy to drive down the number of unwanted fire signals is in place.				
206i	Deliberate primary fires (excl vehicle fires) per 10,000 population			
206ii	Deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population			
206iii	Deliberate secondary fires (excl vehicle fires) per 10,000 population			

206iv	Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population			
<p>The number of deliberate fires has increased overall, with a large number of grass fires occurring in spring and summer, resulting from periods of dry weather. The Family Group and the Top Quarter of Fire Services performed better in these areas. Arson reduction initiatives have been implemented to address the areas with the highest number of fires. Vehicle arson however continues to fall and these 2 indicators are on target. This evidences the success of the Services policy to actively target this problem resulting in a reduction of almost 60% in vehicle arson since its implementation.</p>				
207	Fires in non-domestic premises per 1,000 non-domestic premises			
<p>The number of fires in non domestic premises has increased. Universities have been targeted locally in an effort to improve their fire safety as a number of these calls are a result of small fires in their premises</p>				
209i	The % of fires attended in dwellings where a smoke alarm activated			
209ii	The % of fires attended in dwellings where a smoke alarm was fitted but did not activate			
209iii	The % of fires attended in dwellings where no smoke alarm was fitted			
<p>Overall performance on smoke alarm ownership has improved but has not met the challenging targets set.</p>				
150	Expenditure per head of population on the provision of fire and rescue services			
<p>Spending per head of population is on target but the Service spend profile is higher than the Family Group and the Top Quarter of Fire Services.</p>				

BVPI Comparison and Target Setting

This table shows our performance in 2006/07 and for the previous three years. It also shows our performance target for 2006/07 and the target that has been set for 2007/2008.

Service Delivery Indicators		Performance indicator	Targets for 2006/07 and for 2007/2008				
			2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	MAW TARGET 2006/07	TARGET 2007/08
142 ii	Primary Fires per 10,000 population	MAWW	32.7	31.1	28.8	29.0	27.5

Progress indicator
Green – on target
Red – off target
Amber – slightly off target

This year and previous year's performance

BVPI OUT TURN DATA 2006/2007 & TARGET SETTING FOR 2007/08

Corporate Health Indicators		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	MAWW TARGET	
					2006/07	2007/08
2a	The level of the Commission for Racial Equalities (CRE) Standard for Local Government to which the Authority conforms	1.0	1.0	2	2	3
2b	The duty to promote race	58%	58%	68%	68%	79%
3	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided	Data for this indicator will be provided by the Annual Living in Wales Survey			Target setting not applicable	
8	Percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the Authority	93.0%	96.0%	96%	98%	98%
11i	Percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	11.80%	13.20%	13.95%	14.00%	14.00%
11 ii	The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities.	2.90%	2.60%	2.30%	3.00%	3.00%
11 iii	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are disabled.	Introduced 2005/2006	0.00%	0.00%	Data for this indicator will be provided by Employee Survey	
12 i	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence. Wholetime Uniformed Staff	7.15	8.92	7.61	7.0	6.5
12 ii	The number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence. All staff	7.75	9.22	8.05	7.0	6.5
15 i	Percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce. Fire-fighter's Pension Scheme.	1.00%	1.91%	1.06%	0.80%	0.75%
15 ii	Percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce. Local Government Pension Scheme	0.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.0%	0.0%

16		The % of employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition compared with the % of economically active disabled people in the authority area	Introduced 2005/2006		0.00%	Data for this indicator will be provided by Employee Survey	
17 i		The percentage of Local Authority employees from minority ethnic communities	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%
17 ii		The percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the Authority area.	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	Target setting not applicable	
157		% of interactions enabled for electronic delivery	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	100%	Indicator Removed
210		The percentage of women fire-fighters	Introduced 2005/2006	3.9%	4.2%	4.5%	4.5%

Service Delivery Indicators		2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	MAWW TARGET	
					2006/07	2007/08
142 ii	Primary Fires per 10,000 population	32.7	31.1	28.8	29.0	27.5
142 iii	Accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	18.3	19.2	16.5	18.0	15.7
143 i	Number of Deaths from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.47	0.46	0.12	0.35	0.35
143 ii	Injuries arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	12.11	14.57	8.19	12.00	7.50
144	Accidental fires in dwellings confined to room of origin (%)	92.0%	91.5%	94.0%	95.0%	95.0%
146 i	Number of calls to malicious false alarms not attended per 1,000 population	Introduced 2005/2006	0.70	0.69	0.70	0.7
146 ii	Number of calls to malicious false alarms attended per 1,000 population	0.63	0.61	0.58	0.57	0.55
149 i	False alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus per 1,000 non-domestic properties	86.4	71.4	74.0	70.0	65.0
149 ii	Number of those properties with more than 1 attendance	Introduced 2005/2006	330	347	300	300
149 iii	% of Calls to a Property with more than 1 attendance	Introduced 2005/2006	79.0%	77.8%	72.0%	72.0%
206i	Deliberate primary fires (excl vehicle fires) per 10,000 population	Introduced 2005/2006	3.6	4.2	3.4	4.0

206ii		Deliberate primary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	Introduced 2005/2006	9.0	7.6	8.5	8.4
206iii		Deliberate secondary fires (excl vehicle fires) per 10,000 population	Introduced 2005/2006	34.3	40.0	32.6	35.0
206iv		Deliberate secondary fires in vehicles per 10,000 population	Introduced 2005/2006	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6
207		Fires in non-domestic premises per 1,000 non-domestic premises	15.4	12.8	13.2	12.2	12.2
208		The % of people in accidental dwelling fires who escape unharmed without FRA assistance	Introduced 2005/2006	94.2%	95.5%	95.0%	96.0%
209i		The % of fires attended in dwellings where a smoke alarm activated	Introduced 2005/2006	49.0%	50.4%	60.0%	53.0%
209ii		The % of fires attended in dwellings where a smoke alarm was fitted but did not activate	Introduced 2005/2006	12.0%	14.0%	10.0%	13.0%
209iii		The % of fires attended in dwellings where no smoke alarm was fitted	Introduced 2005/2006	39.0%	35.6%	30.0%	34.0%
150		Expenditure per head of population on the provision of fire and rescue services	£ 45.10	£ 46.40	£ 47.60	£47.60	£49.18

Operational Assurance Assessment – How other Welsh Fire and Rescue Services view our service

In March 2007 we had our first Operational Assurance Assessment under the new Welsh Assembly framework. This involved experienced fire service officers from our fellow Welsh fire and rescue services along with Wales Audit Office and Welsh Assembly advisors carrying out a detailed review of our operational process, to ensure that we can deliver the services we are tasked by our communities to perform. We received a good report, the summary from which is printed below.

Report of the Peer Assessment Team into the Operational Assurance Self-Assessment by Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. Friday, 09 March 2007

*“The process of Operational Assurance has been fully embraced by the management of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service. This is evident from the comprehensive self-assessment document, and was reinforced by **the positive approach taken by all staff** involved in the Peer Assessment process.*

*Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service benefits from **clear direction** and is working towards driving down risk throughout their service community. Progress in this respect is demonstrated by the **significant reductions in the number of dwelling fires**, injuries in dwelling fires, arson and malicious false alarms.*

*The Authority faces the challenge of service delivery across an area of 4,500 square miles, within an annual budget of £39,664,902. Service delivery is coordinated by six County Commands that ensure, where possible, services are provided taking into account the diverse needs of each County Command area. Managers across the Service appear **dedicated to the ethos of continuous improvement** and this is reflected by the open approach of all those interviewed during the Peer Assessment visit.*

*The Peer Assessment Team [PAT] felt that given the topography of Mid and West Wales, the County Command structure together with a new performance management system enables Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service to deliver effective prevention and response services. It is commendable that work conducted over the past five years has **enabled the organisation to drive down accidental fire deaths in the current year.***

Through the business planning process and the current Risk Reduction Plan [RRP] it is evident that the organisation is aware of the challenges that the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 poses to Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service as a Category 1 responder. This is reflected in the development of the Civil Contingencies and Resilience Department.

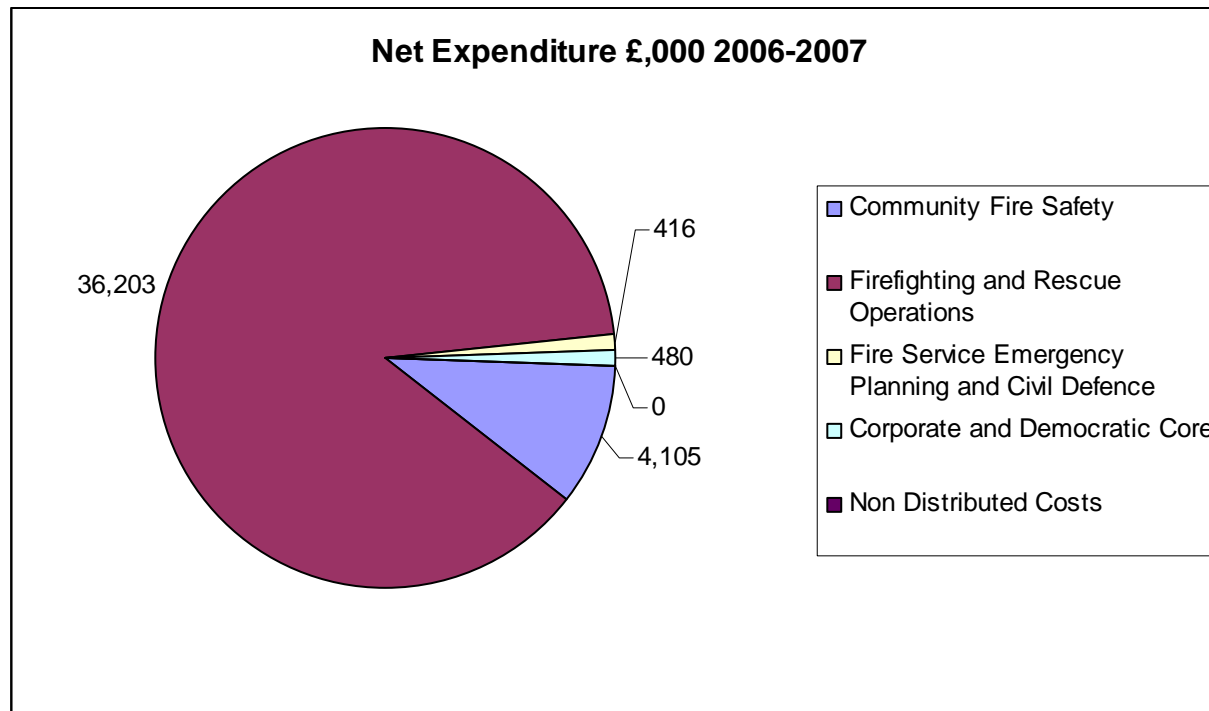
*Of particular note during the visit was the **organisation’s commitment to reduce community risk** in all its forms through various local initiatives. This is illustrated by the effective use of the 14 co-responder schemes. The organisation responded to 1,600 medical emergencies in 2006-2007.”*

Financial Summary - How we spend your money

Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority covers an area of 4,500 square miles and makes up almost two thirds of the area of Wales and serving a population of almost 900,000. The Authority faces significant financial challenges in providing a range of services within an annual budget of approximately £40 million pounds.

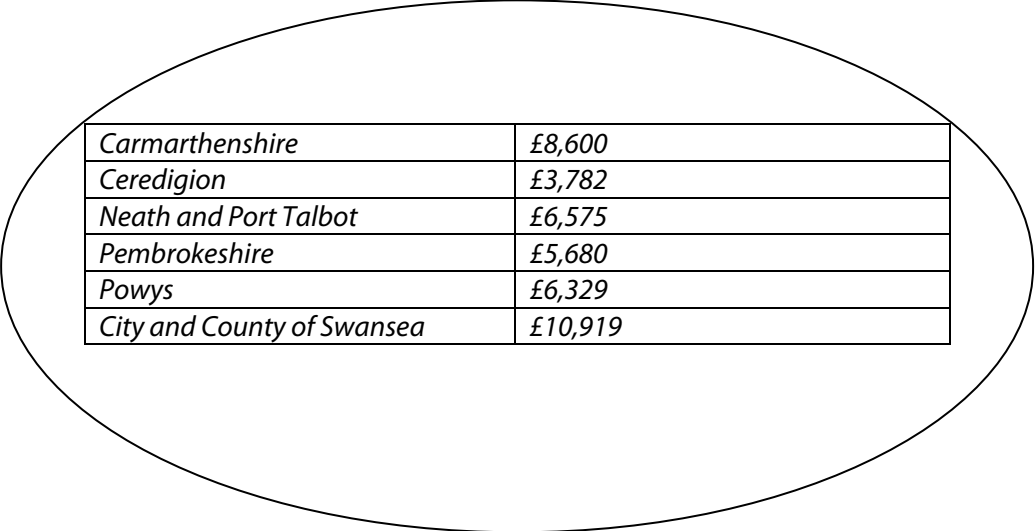
These resources are used to provide the capability that is necessary to deal with incidents when they do occur and to plan for resilience in the event of terrorist attacks or major events. One of our key objectives, as can be evidenced by our investment in this area is to drive down the number of fires and other life risk incidents that we attend. We already commit considerable investment to community safety in order to reduce the risks to communities within Mid & West Wales and our objective is to increase this amount by redirecting our resources to this key area.

A breakdown of the key areas of our spending is shown below.

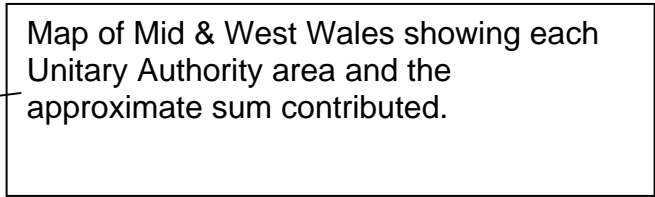


There are six Unitary Authorities within Mid & West Wales and these authority areas contain a combination of heavily populated towns and cities, areas of heavy industry, small market towns and large agricultural rural areas. The Authority has to provide for the individual needs of each of these areas and receives finance from the six constituent local authorities. These contributions will be used to fund the Authority's activities in providing an effective response and in reducing risk in the areas of greatest priority throughout Mid & West Wales.

The contribution provided by each of the Unitary Authorities is proportionate to the population of their individual authority area and the map below shows the contributions made by all the Authority areas.



<i>Carmarthenshire</i>	<i>£8,600</i>
<i>Ceredigion</i>	<i>£3,782</i>
<i>Neath and Port Talbot</i>	<i>£6,575</i>
<i>Pembrokeshire</i>	<i>£5,680</i>
<i>Powys</i>	<i>£6,329</i>
<i>City and County of Swansea</i>	<i>£10,919</i>



Map of Mid & West Wales showing each Unitary Authority area and the approximate sum contributed.

Joint Risk Assessment agreed with the Wales Audit Office— [what we need to do](#)

The process of agreeing the Joint Risk Assessment with the Wales Audit Office commenced in March 2007. Key department heads had the opportunity to review guidance from the Wales Audit Office and identify any key risks in accordance with that guidance. This process will continue to be developed in future years to ensure all areas of risk are addressed in a balanced way.

The Joint Risk Assessment has now been agreed between Mid and West Wales Fire Authority and the Wales Audit Office. It will be used to shape our business process to ensure that we continue to improve our performance.

The areas classed as high risk are listed in the next section along with how we intend to address the risks and reduce them next year.

Key issues for improvement - What we will do this year

Business continuity management This could be hampered because of the limited resources available to the new Civil Contingencies and Resilience Department	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we going to do about it</i>
The day to day running of the Service could be affected in the event of an epidemic or large scale major incident.	The Service has created a new department with specific responsibility to identify potential problems and to create contingency plans to cover them.

Risk identification The Authority needs to develop FSEC, populating the model as planned with remaining information	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we going to do about it</i>
The Authority needs to finish putting information into the Fire Service Emergency Cover computer model used to predict risk in our area.	Information on dwellings is complete. Road network data is maintained. Five years of incident data has been entered on the system. As a priority, additional staff have been trained to progress the work on the system.

Fire prevention policies Positive findings but possible risk in ability to continue to deliver audits at this activity level	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we going to do about it</i>
Can we sustain our current activity level of Home Fire Safety Audits.	Home Fire Safety Audits will continue to be the cornerstone of our prevention activities to further reduce fires and fire casualties in the home. Supported by WAG grant funding and partnership working the target for 2007/2008 has been increased to almost 18,500 audits.

Good operational policies in place. Principal management recognise the difficulties associated with delivering these in a service, which is mainly comprised of fire fighters conditioned to the retained duty system	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we going to do about it</i>
Many of our firefighters are retained and work part time and this is operationally effective. However we need to be aware of the needs of the part time firefighters and the difficulties that can arise.	We already have a suite of safe systems of work based on risk, incident type and national guidance. The civil contingencies department will review the difficulties of service provision by retained service personnel.

Public engagement - The Authority recognise the need to engage with the general public to better 'sell' new proposals and changes to delivery	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
The Authority needs to maintain a good relationship with the public by effectively consulting and communicating changes within the organisation.	The Service is working on improving the way it collects and makes use of citizens' views with the Welsh Assembly Government. In addition it is committed to producing clear, open documents written in plain language.

Sustainability and Equalities – need to carry out assessments	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
We need to ensure that none of our activities harm the environment now or in the future or disadvantage any group of people.	Whilst initial equality impact assessments on policies have been carried out, managers will carry out more thorough assessments covering all the strands of equality. Our procurement policies have been reviewed to ensure sustainability.

Engaging the workforce – recognition of need to maintain and improve industrial relations within the current change programme	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
Staff need to feel that they are part of the changes occurring within the organisation and be aware of how their performance can drive and effect change.	Regular reporting on the progress of targets set in the risk reduction plan by means of our performance management framework and by staff bulletins. Staff are actively encouraged to take part in the risk reduction consultation process.

Financial management – implementation of audit reports on procurement and the development of a policy and audit review committee	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
The way the Authority buys in services and equipment needs to be fair. The Fire Authority should be able to audit this spending.	<p>The Authority continues to apply appropriate governance arrangements, though there is a need to review the arrangements for reporting audit work to the Authority.</p> <p>There is also a need to ensure that all procurement is fully compliant with standing orders for contracts and financial regulations. This will be achieved through training of staff and stricter monitoring.</p>

E-fire and rescue - recognised need to develop effective business continuity arrangements for its Information Technology function.	
<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
The computer systems within the Service need to be resilient and back up plans need to be in place in case of problems.	<p>The development of a written business continuity plan in accordance with best practice in the provision of IT services has commenced.</p> <p>This will be based upon a business impact analysis of key systems, a risk analysis of the</p>

	principal threats and actual testing of recovery arrangements.
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Making further improvements to scrutiny and Member engagement – an issue for all three Fire and Rescue Authorities.

<i>What does this mean</i>	<i>What are we doing about it</i>
Arrangements for reporting to Fire Authority Members need to be improved. The role of the Fire Authority to audit and scrutinise the Service needs to be strengthened.	A new committee entitled the 'The Policy Review and Audit Committee' has been established with the specific task to monitor and audit performance. In addition we have altered our internal reporting process to make audit by members easier.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue is committed to creating safer communities in partnership with the communities it serves, the changes we have made so far have reduced overall risk in our community. We are determined to improve our performance further using this plan and the Wales Programme for Improvement in order to secure continuous improvement and greater value for money.