



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru

Mid and West Wales
Fire and Rescue Service

STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN

2020 | 2024

www.mawwfire.gov.uk



Foreword

We are pleased to be able to introduce this Strategic Equality Plan which seeks to meet, on behalf of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, both the requirements and the spirit of the current legislation related to equality and diversity in Wales, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. It is the intention of this plan to convey the continued commitment of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to promote equality of opportunity across all Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service's (MAWWFRS) functions, policies, practices and procedures and set out how the Service will seek to fulfill this commitment.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are essential elements of the Service's work. Building a workforce that is truly representative will support us to better understand our communities so that we can ensure our services are fully inclusive and targeted, in the most cost-effective manner, to reduce risk amongst the most vulnerable.



Chris Davies QFSM MBA

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:

Mrs Alison Thomas

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Adviser

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

Tel: 01267 226839 | **E-mail:** al.thomas@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.

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Introduction

This document broadly outlines the way in which the Service intends to approach our work in terms of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) from 01 April 2020 – 31 March 2024. It summarises the continuing work towards embedding ED&I at the heart of all our activities 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 become more diverse and inclusive do not take place in isolation, they are part and parcel of us achieving wider cultural transformation across the whole 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 productive.



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 councils;
- To monitor the revenue and capital budgets and deal with any significant variations, including decisions on any supplementary contributions.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service is headed by the Chief Fire Officer, who has overall corporate management and operational responsibility for the Service, and is the Head of Paid Service.

Our Vision:

**To be a World Leader in
Emergency Response and
Community Safety**

Our Mission:

**To Engage, Connect,
Develop and Inspire people
to deliver an excellent
Service**

Our Values:

- **Do the Right Thing**
- **Treat People with Respect**
- **Perform with Excellence**

We will achieve our Vision, Mission and Values by
by Working towards our four Strategic Aims and
Improvement & Well-being Objectives in 2020/2021



**OUR
PEOPLE**



**OUR
COMMUNITIES**



**OUR
ENVIRONMENT**



**OUR
FUTURE**

How did we develop our objectives?

To develop the equality objectives we have engaged with both our residents and our workforce and 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?

Quarterly Reporting

Heads of Department will prepare quarterly reports detailing progress against the actions associated with their area of work which will be submitted to the Authority's Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee for review.

These reports enable Senior Officers and Fire Authority Members to monitor and scrutinise the progress of all priorities and services.

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 includes its progress in delivering 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

To examine all aspects of the employee lifecycle, ensuring that the Service is able to attract, appoint, promote and retain as diverse a workforce as possible.

Actions

- Ensure that we reach out to groups that are currently under-represented within our wider workforce as part of future volunteer recruitment drives.
- Broaden our programme of positive action events aimed at groups that are currently under-represented within our operational workforce.
- Continue to support, and progress through the levels of, the Disability Confident Employer scheme.
- To increase awareness among staff of the existing coaching and mentoring programmes and how to access support.
- To engage with employees from under-represented groups with the aim of identifying any potential or perceived barriers to progression within the Service.
- Be mindful of the differing needs of our staff, and in particular of those who have specific learning needs, when designing and implementing processes relating to internal development and progression.
- Provide a broader suite of training around management skills which will better equip our staff to manage diverse teams and promote an inclusive culture.
- Work towards reducing the Gender Pay Gap, as outlined within the action plan contained within the annual Gender Pay Gap Report.
- Engage with groups that are under-represented within the operational workforce and encourage feedback in terms of any improvements which can be made to our current provisions in terms of uniform and equipment.
- Continue to work closely with Trade Union representatives around the introduction and revision of policies and procedures ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are given the appropriate consideration at all times.
- Continue to review the support systems we have in place for our staff and amend as required to meet their ever-changing needs.
- Maximise opportunities to influence the public perception of the role of a firefighter as being one which is open to all sectors of society.

Measure of Success

1. A more diverse and inclusive workforce, who feel valued and able to be themselves whilst at work.
2. Broad and diverse cross sections of our communities considering us as an employer of choice.

Objective 2

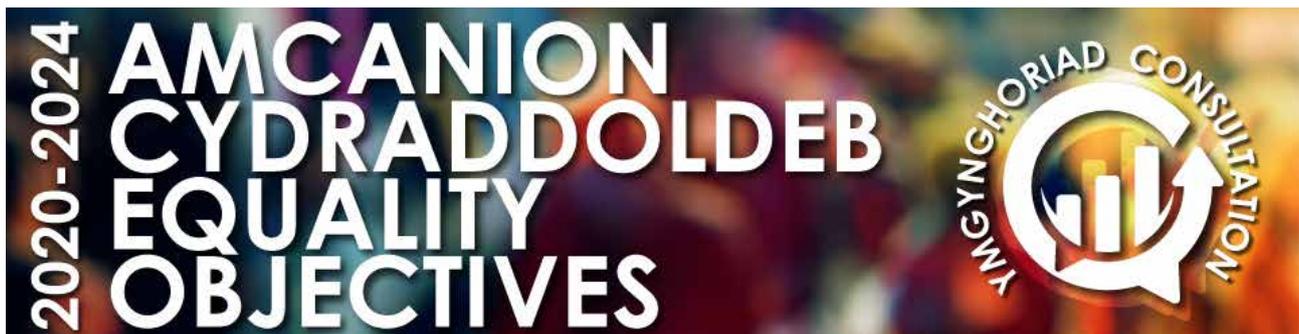
To design and deliver services which meet the needs of everyone within our communities.

Actions

- Prioritise our services at those most vulnerable in our community and continue to gather information on the people we serve in order that we are able to review and amend our targeting strategy as necessary.
- Continue to evolve the Safe and Well model of delivery to ensure that we target messages to address the vulnerabilities that are identified.
- Provide interpreters and translators as appropriate so that we can communicate effectively with individuals and our communities according to their needs.
- To ensure that our schools engagement materials are accessible to all children and that our schools programme is inclusive of all schools within our area.
- To ensure that all materials used within the school setting are available in the appropriate format for use with children who have additional learning needs and that our staff are sufficiently trained to be able to deliver in these formats.
- To review the way in which we support local businesses to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation to ensure that all the information we provide is appropriate and accessible.
- To ensure that our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to enable them to understand and respond to the needs of everyone within our communities.

Measure of Success

Services which meet the needs of everyone within our communities and a workforce who are equipped with the required skills to deliver them.



Objective 3

To ensure that our information and services are fully accessible, both for our staff and the communities we serve.

Actions

- Ensure that the Service's digital communication channels are fully accessible by all groups, including those with disabilities and those with English as a second language.
- Ensure that through our use of language and provision of key information in alternative formats, including Easy Read, all our communities understand what services MAWWFRS delivers and know how to access them.
- Review our current stakeholder list to ensure an appropriate level of representation of groups from each of the protected characteristics.
- Explore the options available for those who are hearing impaired or have issues with their speech to report fire emergencies and incidents as well as request Community Safety interventions.
- Be aware of the pockets of digital exclusion within our area and ensure that we reach those areas in terms of preventative work and ensure that our messages are available in formats which will meet the needs of those individuals.
- Undertake a comprehensive review into the accessibility of our Estate both for our staff and for members of the public.

Measure of Success

Everyone within our communities, being able to and knowing how to, access our buildings, information and services.



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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 mail@mawwfire.gov.uk

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: mail@mawwfire.gov.uk

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.

HOFFI DILYN RHANNU

LIKE FOLLOW SHARE

**Ein Negeseuon
Diogelwch**
Our Safety
Messages



Adnoddau Dynol
Human Resources