

Report to	Executive Panel	
Date	14 May 2018	
Lead Officer	Shân Morris, Assistant Chief Officer (Corporate Policy and Planning)	
Contact Officer	Tracey Williams, Corporate Communications Manager	
Subject	Public engagement and consultation strategy to support the development of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019/20	

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To outline proposals for the Authority's 2018 consultation with the public and other stakeholders as part of the process of developing its Improvement and Wellbeing Plan 2019/20.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) is required to publish improvement objectives and to have involved the public and other stakeholders in the process of developing those objectives.
- 3 This public engagement and consultation strategy outlines the means by which the FRA can invite comments and views about the development of its Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019/20 prior to its formal adoption and publication in March 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4 That Members endorse the public engagement and consultation strategy outlined in this report for delivery between July and October 2018.

BACKGROUND

- 5 The FRA is required under relevant legislation to set itself improvement objectives. As part of the development of those objectives, and whilst they are still at a formative stage, the FRA is expected to allow time for anyone with an interest to submit their views on the matter. The engagement and consultation process is considered to be an important element in shaping the draft objectives before they are adopted.

- 6 Although there are no strict rules about the duration of consultation periods, 12 weeks is considered to be sufficient in most cases.
- 7 Public consultations must be done fairly and with an open mind, with sufficient explanation being provided to allow for intelligent consideration and response.
- 8 The product of the consultation must then be conscientiously taken into account by the FRA before proposals are formally adopted.

INFORMATION

- 9 This strategy is aimed at consulting publicly between July and October 2018. This will be after the FRA has considered its intention for 2019/20 at its meeting in June 2018.
- 10 This strategy comprises the following aspects:
 - a stakeholder analysis to identify who to engage with and to help decide on the most appropriate means of engaging with the people identified;
 - adopting a variety of communication methods to encourage participation and response from stakeholders;
 - adopting approaches that encourage both qualitative and quantitative responses;
 - avoiding language that is difficult to understand, explaining clearly and avoiding over-complication.
- 11 It is anticipated that this strategy will include the following elements:
 - engagement through an online questionnaire signposted via the Service website, a media release and social media;
 - a bilingual video aimed at a broad audience to highlight the role of the fire and rescue service;
 - an easier read leaflet for distribution through libraries, and by service personnel e.g. during safe and well checks;
 - encouragement of partner organisations and other emergency services to help with sharing the FRA's information.
- 12 Where feasible, qualitative responses will be encouraged via face to face engagement at relevant meetings.

- 13 The use of social media will be extended to include signposting to the online questionnaire and to focus on particular objectives over specific periods, prompting a direct response from existing Service Facebook fans and Twitter followers via simple polls.
- 14 The outcome of the consultation will be presented to the Executive Panel in October 2018 with a view to giving due regard to the response when setting the budget for 2019/20 in December 2018 and again when drafting the FRA's 2019/20 Plan for publication before the end of March 2019.

IMPLICATIONS

Wellbeing Objectives	Public consultation will have a direct implication for agreeing the Authority's long-term well-being objectives.
Budget	The cost of this strategy will be met from this year's corporate communications budget.
Legal	Supports compliance with improvement planning and well-being legislation.
Staffing	No direct implications on staffing levels identified.
Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language	In communicating – bilingually, in Welsh and English - with the public, all protected characteristics are considered with e.g. an easier read version of the consultation document, information produced in hard copy as well as digitally, the ability to 'listen' to bilingual information on the Service website. Groups representing all the protected characteristics are included in the circulation list of consultation stakeholders.
Risks	Failure to consult in accordance with the Gunning Principles would risk eventual decisions by the FRA being the subject of a legal challenge.