



AGENDA ITEM: 11

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL

6th February 2012

FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR 2012 ONWARDS

Report by Dawn Docx, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Purpose of Report

- 1 To inform Members of the Welsh Government's consultation on a proposed new Fire and Rescue National Framework for 2012 onwards.

Introduction

- 2 Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the Welsh Ministers must prepare and consult on a Fire and Rescue National Framework setting out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities.
- 3 The Welsh Government is consulting until 17 February 2012 on a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for 2012 onwards. This is available on the Welsh Government website (<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/housingcommunity/frsframework12/?lang=en>).

Information

- 4 The proposed new National Framework is divided into five chapters:
"Chapter 1 - Vision, Governance and Relations - Welsh Government's vision for FRAs, working with others.
Chapter 2 -Planning and Performance – improving services and seeking better outcomes without any more resources.

Chapter 3 - Service Delivery – mitigating the effects of identified risks; providing effective response and prevention.

Chapter 4 - Resilience – UK-wide resilience and responding to major threats.

Chapter 5 -Resources - leadership; workforce planning, development and training; staff safety; equality and diversity and Welsh language; sharing facilities.”

- 5 The Framework’s close alignment to the Programme for Government and the public sector reform agenda is reflected in the emphasis it places on collaboration/working together and securing better outcomes for citizens and communities.
- 6 These two themes feature strongly throughout the framework which otherwise:
 - confirms many of the FRA’s existing duties, obligations and strategies
 - emphasises the need to prioritise, innovate, engage and share
 - confirms the importance of good workforce development, management and safety
 - places a heavy emphasis on the adoption of results based accountability methodology as part of the planning, measurement and reporting of outcome-focussed performance
 - reiterates the need to target services at those most in need, whilst generally seeking to drive down demand.
- 7 Two matters are highlighted as “ongoing issues” – dwelling fire response standards and the development of single integrated plans through Local Service Boards - which are not covered in detail because of the timing of the consultation. The final issued framework will reflect the most up to date position.
- 8 The framework identifies six priorities for FRAs (paragraph 1.6):
 - to actively implement opportunities to work together, and with other emergency services and the wider public sector to deliver measurable improvements including greater efficiency and more citizen focussed services;
 - to identify and implement opportunities for shared services;

- to review their existing and new collaborations and partnerships to ensure that they are achieving the required outcomes, improved service delivery and increased value for money;
 - to maintain service levels, striving for greater improvements at a time when budgets will come under even greater pressure. This means an emphasis on greater planning by placing resources against priorities to show how they are making a difference;
 - to clearly identify outcomes and actively manage performance;
 - to seek innovation and new ways of working to make the most of the talents, expertise and resources that the FRAs possess.
- 9 The framework also sets out the three results that the Welsh Government expects FRAs to achieve (paragraph 1.3):
- to further reduce the incidence of fires, deaths and injuries resulting from fire, and the resultant cost/impact of fires to the economy and society;
 - to further reduce deaths and injuries from road traffic collisions;
 - to be recognised by partners (including local authorities, police authorities and the health service) and the community as being key stakeholders in delivering wider improvements for environmental and societal change.
- 10 The consultation questions seek views on: the two key drivers (collaboration and improved outcomes), the main priorities, the expected results, roles and responsibilities, the content of individual chapters and any other matters not already covered.

Recommendation

- 11 That Members:
- (i) note the information provided, and
 - (ii) delegate authority to the Chair, in conjunction with the Chief Fire Officer, to submit a response to the consultation on behalf of the Authority.