



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Draft 2024-2028
Community Risk
Management Plan

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Introduction

By undertaking Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) the Service will have a better understanding of the risks presented to its workforce and communities, with specific emphasis on the consideration of those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This will then inform any necessary changes to policies and practices, working arrangements and will also ensure that there are no unintended consequences in terms of discrimination relating to any new working arrangements, activities, policy changes and/or reasonable adjustments.

Process

It is essential that where working practices and/or service delivery methods change, the Service can provide assurance by reflecting on the potential impacts of the changes and demonstrating that it has done the due diligence to promote equality and inclusion.

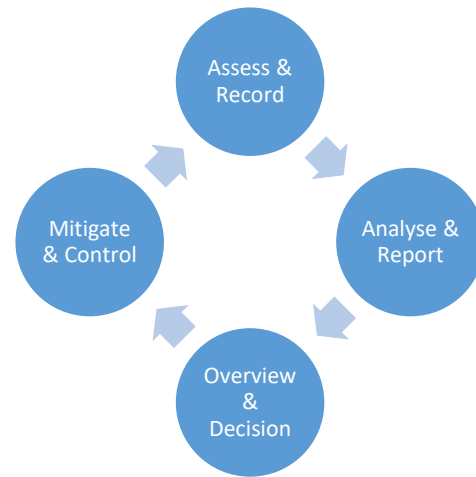
Assessing the impact of changes is a continuous process not only to ensure that mitigating actions are effective and being carried out, but also to identify any consequences or likelihood of risks evolving or changing over time. The EIAs will also help to inform future decisions on the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the changes.

The following process should be followed for the production and sign-off of EIAs and the monitoring of the risks and associated mitigating actions and proposed changes contained within them.

Stage 1 – Assess & Record

Where required, each service area should carry out an EIA to identify and record any changes that have been implemented or will be implemented.

The EIA template within this document has been developed to help structure the assessment. This is not a tick box exercise so professional judgement will be required to ensure that assessments are comprehensive and relevant.



Assessments should be co-produced with staff involved in the delivery of the activity, policy or procedure to ensure that experience and knowledge is shared and included in any mitigation plans. Completion of the EIA template does not end the process. Further assessments will be required to ensure the scale, likelihood and level of impact is not increasing and that the mitigating actions/changes are making a positive impact. The output of Stage 1 is the completion of a comprehensive impact assessment with the level of risk and impact measured for review by the Head of Department.

Stage 2 – Analyse & Report

The Head of Department reviews draft assessments and analyses the totality of the impact risks across their services/function.

This will:

- Enable a robust peer review and scrutiny on the assessment and mitigation plans.
- Provide direction and decisions within the remit of the Head of Department's resources.
- Identify actions or interdependencies with other areas of the business.

Stage 3 – Overview & Decision

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisor will review the EIAs in conjunction with the relevant Head of Department and maintain an overview of the impact risk across the wider organisation.

The level of risk and likelihood of occurrence will help to identify themes and potential solutions and will confirm the level of oversight needed for implementation of actions and mitigation plans – Service or departmental level.

This will also prompt direction where required in respect of any necessary escalation to SMT for decision or investment.

Stage 4 – Mitigate & Control

Mitigation actions/changes should be developed/implemented with monitoring and review processes in place.

The frequency of the monitoring and review process should be considered in line with the assessed level of risk. i.e. if risk was deemed to be high then more frequent checks and balances need to be put in place to monitor the result of implementation of the changes.

Consideration should be given to the following questions:

- Are the changes/mitigating actions happening and working?
- Has the consequence/impact changed since the last review?
- Has the likelihood of the impact changed since the last review?
- What additional support/resource/action is required to manage the risk?

Impact Assessment Form

Once completed, please store on Corporate Docs, Cheshire Planning System and return to equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk

Name of policy / initiative / service to be impact assessed	2024-2028 Community Risk Management Plan – Draft for Consultation
Core Value being addressed	Doing the right thing, by offering more cover to the residents of Cheshire in the daytime when there is the most risk.
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor and the Engagement and Public Affairs Manager
Who is responsible for the implementation of the policy / initiative / service? (function head /department manager)	To be determined once the CRMP is approved
Who is involved in the impact assessment?	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon), Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worrall)
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement the outcomes of a review into our Prevention Department.• Continue to refine our targeting methodology to ensure our Safe and Well visits target those most at risk; and work with partners to improve the referral process for vulnerable people.

- Reduce the occurrence of deliberate fires in partnership with Cheshire Police.
- Implement a new Road Safety Strategic Plan with our partners, increasing road safety activity.
- Increase the number of Safe and Well visits by the end of this CRMP, from the current 20,000.
- Increase our water safety education activity.
- Improve the way we work with partners to safeguard and support people.
- Provide training to our Prevention team and firefighters to increase our effectiveness in delivering safety messages.
- Incorporate information relating to lithium-ion batteries into our fire safety advice delivered to homes and communities.

Protection

- Review our Protection Department to ensure it remains efficient and effective.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our risk based inspection programme to ensure we are targeting inspection activity at the right premises.
- Review how we undertake our primary authority responsibilities to ensure they are effective and self-funding.
- Ensure our Protection activities align to the outcomes of the Building Safety Review.
- Upskill our operational managers with Protection qualifications to enhance firefighter safety and allow for more effective inspection of non-domestic premises.
- Continue to lobby and campaign for the installation of sprinklers in the built environment.
- Work with the NFCC to become a statutory consultee for planning on BESS facilities.
- Appoint a specialist BESS officer role in the Protection team.

	<p>Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review how we respond to flood and water related incidents. • Research and develop operational procedures to deal with BESSs. • Change the way we measure response times. • Convert four on-call fire engines to daytime weekday fire engines. • Convert Knutsford’s on-call fire engine to day crewing. • Reorganise daytime fire cover in Warrington. • Strengthen the on-call system. <p>Objectives carried forward from the 2023/24 risk management plan include: implementing the outcomes from our review of specialist vehicles and resources; implementing an emergency cardiac response capability; and implementing outcomes from our review of the wholetime duty system at fire stations that operate 24/7.</p>
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	Communities across Cheshire should see a more efficient Service, making best use of funding and providing more cover. The public in Cheshire should benefit from more community engagement and safety visits, better response times and a higher level of cover.
Is the policy/initiative/service for external or internal purposes?	External and internal
Does this policy/initiative/service affect the on-call duty service?	Yes
Are other organisations involved in the delivery?	No

If yes please state who:	
What information / past experience do we have i.e. a similar initiative and what did this information tell us? (info can be demographic data i.e. census findings, research findings, comparisons between similar policies in our Service and other services, survey data, equality monitoring data, ad hoc data gathering exercises)	There is a range of data available on local areas within Cheshire that can be accessed via Business Intelligence. This will help to build a profile of the local community and the presence of any particular groups within the community, or any issues/trends that may require particular attention or consideration at specific local events.
Has a similar assessment been conducted by other Fire and Rescue Services or local authorities in respect of a similar policy / initiative / service? If yes – is it possible to adapt / incorporate findings	Various EIAs from other fire and rescue consultations have been shared with our service as a way of adopting best practice. Previous EIAs help us identify risk and we are then able to implement interventions that mitigate this risk. Previous EIAs help us reflect on learning of experiences of other similar organisations that have consulted with their communities.
Date of next policy / initiative / service review (if applicable)	Date of EIA: April 2023 Date of Review: April 2024 – on commencement of 2024 CRMP and to be reviewed by project lead(s)

Impact Assessment

The impact assessments will be based on the red, amber, green (RAG) risk scoring as follows:

LIKELIHOOD				
Unlikely	Low probability	Possible	High probability	Almost Certain
1	2	3	4	5
VL	L	M	H	VH

IMPACT		
5	VH	Catastrophic – legal action (discrimination claim)
4	H	Major – serious matter that may lead to negative publicity and disciplinary action within service context
3	M	Moderate – external complaint or internal grievance
2	L	Minor – Additional small amendment or changes to policy, initiative or service.
1	VL	Little impact – minor considerations only required.

		IMPACT					
		VL	L	M	H	VH	
LIKELIHOOD	VH	5	5	10	15	20	25
	H	4	4	8	12	16	20
	M	3	3	6	9	12	15
	L	2	2	4	6	8	10
	VL	1	1	2	3	4	5

Overall Rating	Description	Monitoring
1 – 5 Manageable Risk	The risk may be so low that we choose to accept it and instead simply record that the risk has been identified and that due to its low likelihood or impact no further action will be required. Alternatively, minor considerations may be needed on implementation.	Department will maintain oversight and continue to manage locally
6 -10 Medium	The EIA owner will need to consider slight amendments or further controls to the substance of the policy/initiative/service to take account of any issues identified OR GM to confirm that all reasonable steps have been taken to mitigate the risk and no further reasonable action is possible	
12 – 15 High	The policy / initiative / service cannot be rolled out until detailed external and/or internal consultation has taken place with those that the policy / initiative / service affects.	Updates provided to the EDI Advisor
16 – 25 Very High	Take immediate action. If legal action is certain to occur then we cannot go ahead with the policy / initiative / service, without fundamentally changing it. If even with	

	this mitigation, the impact remains severe, then consultation with internal and/or external groups will need to go ahead.	
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Outlined below are relevant groups who or factors that may be affected by the policy / initiative / service and suggested impacts (please note that these suggestions are not exhaustive and you will need to consider whether there are any further impacts). Enter a commentary explaining the potential risks/impacts both on employees and external community groups. Specify any controls which are currently in place or that will be put in place to address and mitigate these impacts. Please document all impacts, both negative and positive.

Protected Characteristics or EDI theme			Impact/risk
Age (younger, older or particular age group)			<p>Risk Across Cheshire, 20.9% of the population is 65+ (229,088 people, Census 2021). This is an increase of 25.1% over the last census, suggesting Cheshire is becoming an increasingly older county. Research into deaths and injuries from fire has shown that those over 65 are at greater risk of death and/or serious injury in the event of a fire.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Control The introduction of the fire cover proposals and the implementation of the prevention review would provide additional capacity across the Service to undertake Safe and Well visits, particularly in on-call station areas. The CRMP also commits the service to increasing the number of Safe and well visits delivered by the end of the Plan. These are targeted using a risk-based methodology, which factors in the age of an individual. The visits help to reduce the risk of fire.</p>
3	3	9	
Disability (physical, sensory, long-term illness, hidden, neurodiversity)			<p>Risk An average of 18.26% of the population of Cheshire is classified as disabled under the Equality Act 2010. Disability can increase the individual's risk of harm in the event of a fire and some disabilities or learning differences may require staff to provide advice in different or alternative ways.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	<p>Mobility issues stemming from obesity are an increasing demand on fire and rescue services, with 2,326 incidents of assisting other agencies with a bariatric rescue in England during 2022/2023; compared to 429 in during 2012/13.</p>
3	3	9	

			<p>As the fire station buildings will have the same level of accessibility to visitors, there is no perceived risk to those with disabilities accessing the station as a result of the proposed changes. However, several of our stations are undergoing modernisation which will make them more accessible once completed.</p> <p>External Control Provision of safe and well activity, targeted according to risk. Provision of fire safety education via Key Stage 2 visits and other community engagement.</p>
<p>Mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, bipolar, serious mental illness)</p>			<p>Risk All areas of Cheshire (average of 650.1 people per million(ppm)) have recorded a higher figure than the England average (440.1 ppm) for young people (under 25) requiring hospital admissions due to self-harm. This trend is more pronounced in Halton (806.1 ppm) and Warrington (712.4 ppm) compared to Cheshire East (563.2 ppm) and Cheshire West and Chester (520.1 ppm). For those over 25, the rate of hospital admission for self-harm is also higher in Cheshire (309.3 ppm across Cheshire and Merseyside STP area, 2022 Healthwatch) than the England average (231.8ppm)</p> <p>Control The Service works with partners and has an established safeguarding and referral process to support the most vulnerable. The implementation of the outcomes of the prevention review (documented within the CRMP) is aimed at strengthening the Service's referral pathways and work with partners in this regard.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	2	6	
<p>Gender re-assignment / identity (someone in transition or who has transitioned from one gender to another)</p>			<p>External Risk According to the 2021 census, 0.39% (1,942 people) of the 16+ population in Cheshire identify as trans or as a non-cisgender identity. No specific risks are identified from the CRMP in relation to someone's gender identity or transitioning.</p> <p>External Control The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication, they are an LGBT+ ally.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	

1	1	1	
Marriage/civil partnership (applies to same-sex as well as opposite sex couples)			Risk A total of 427,034 individuals aged 16+ in Cheshire are either married or in a registered civil partnership (an average of 46.4% of population). No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status. Control N/A
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
1	1	1	
Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding)			Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. Control N/A
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
1	1	1	

Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)			<p>Risk Across Cheshire, 5.2% (57,187 people) of the population identify as a minority ethnic group. No specific risks are identified due to the proposed changes. This is an 80.3% increase on the proportion of the population who identified as BAME within the 2011 census.</p> <p>Control The increase in cover during the daytime will give crews more opportunity to engage with those in their communities who can be difficult to reach, such as the traveller community, who often encounter the Service in passing at community engagement and positive action events. The increase in this type of work may help to form stronger bonds with these communities and may even help in diversifying our workforce. In addition, the increase in prevention will lead to an increase in opportunities to engage with the BAME community. Community prevention activity is supported by a host of resources including alternative language material, access to language line and a dedicated Equality and Diversity Advisor.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	
Religion/Belief System (Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist etc.)			<p>Risk Across Cheshire, the majority religion is Christianity (55.3%, or 606,253 individuals). However, over the past decade fewer people have identified as being Christian (55.3% in 2021 Census compared to 70.5% in 2011 Census). A sizeable portion of the population (36.8% or 403,585 people) do not follow any religious belief and this is a growing share of the population (up from 21.5% of population in 2011). There are small populations of followers of other religions, most notably Muslims (1.1% of population), Hindus (0.5%) and Buddhists (0.3%).</p> <p>No risks are identified as a result of the proposed changes within the CRMP due to someone's religion.</p> <p>Control Staff are already active in the community and attend a range of religious events as per their respective community action plans. Home fire safety advice is provided to the community, which is tailored to times of year which feature major religious festivals.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
1	2	2	

Gender (male, female or gender non-binary or fluid)			<p>Risk 50.95% of residents in Cheshire (558,113 people) are female, compared to 49.05% who are male (537,261 people). No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender in isolation. However, when coupled with other characteristics there are identifiable risks. Older males, particularly those living alone, are at most risk of death and injury from fire.</p> <p>Control The provision of a weekday resource within the affected areas would provide greater capacity to undertake prevention work within the community. This work is carried out using the Service's targeting methodology to prioritise those most at risk. Where older males living alone are identified, these would be prioritised accordingly, and a home safety visit would be arranged to minimise risk.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	
Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual)			<p>Risk While the fire risk facing LGBT+ individuals can be higher than average, including the risk of arson related hate crime, there are no specific risks are identified through the CRMP proposals in relation to someone's sexual orientation.</p> <p>Across Cheshire, 91.5% of the population identify as straight or heterosexual. A further 1.4% (12,304 people) identify as gay or lesbian and 1% (8,900 people) identify as bisexual. An additional 0.3% (2,297) specify a different sexual orientation.</p> <p>Control The provision of increased weekday cover provides more opportunity for community engagement with LGBT+ residents and an improved emergency response. The Service is a visibly LGBT+ friendly organisation and supports a host of local pride activities and LGBT+ networks across the county. Staff are encouraged to wear items such as lanyards which provide an indication they are an LGBT+ ally.</p>
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	
Geography and Deprivation (does the service or policy affect lower income people or those			<p>Risk While there are many areas of affluence across Cheshire, there are also pockets of deprivation. Within Cheshire East, 4 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are within the top 10% most deprived nationally,</p>

<p>who live in areas of disadvantage?)</p>			<p>concentrated in areas of Crewe and Macclesfield. By comparison, 62 LSOAs are within the 10% least deprived. Within Cheshire West and Chester, 16 LSOAs are in the top 10% most deprived (areas of Chester, Ellesmere Port and Winsford) and 25 are within the 10% least deprived. Within Warrington, there are 10 LSOAs in the 10% most deprived (focused in the centre of Warrington) and 18 within the 10% least deprived (largely in areas of outer Warrington such as Stockton Heath and Lymm). More widespread areas of deprivation are found in Halton (27 of 81 LSOAs are in the top 10% most deprived, across areas of both Runcorn and Widnes)</p>
<p>Likelihood</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Overall</p>	<p>Control</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>The impact of the proposed changes should be positive for communities across Cheshire as a whole, as guaranteed daytime cover will be improved, the capacity to provide more prevention and protection work in the community will be introduced.</p>
<p>Occupation (internal – shift systems, working patterns etc. External – shifts, retired etc.)</p>			<p>External Risk</p>
			<p>The impact of the proposed changes should be positive for the communities as fire cover will be improved, and more capacity to undertake prevention and protection work will be introduced.</p>
			<p>External Control</p>
			<p>N/A</p>
<p>Likelihood</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Overall</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	

What other positive outcomes or changes will need to be taken as a result of any points identified by this impact assessment?

The proposal will provide an increase in guaranteed daytime weekday fire cover and the introduction of additional capacity to undertake risk-reducing prevention and protection work in the community.

Increased capacity for prevention and protection community work within the Stockton Heath area.

The provision of day crewing at Knutsford will provide additional capacity for firefighters to provide community safety interventions in the area, as well as improve the average emergency response times.