EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

2024-2028 CRMP Proposal – Reorganising daytime fire cover in Warrington

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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.
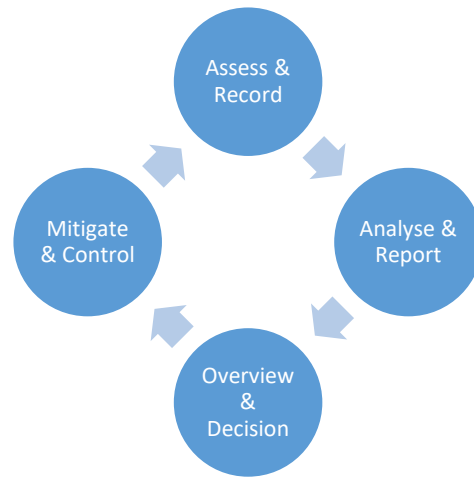
Assessments should be co-produced with staff involved in the delivery of the activity, policy or procedure to ensure that experience and knowledge is shared and included in any mitigation plans. Completion of the EIA template does not end the process. Further assessments will be required to ensure the 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 CRMP Proposal – Reorganising daytime fire cover in Warrington
Core Value being addressed	Doing the right thing and making a difference will be addressed, as more cover will be available for the people of Cheshire.
Department / function carrying out the assessment	Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worral) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon)
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?	Engagement and Public Affairs Manager (Graeme Worral) and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor (Rosie Saxon)
What are the aims / objectives / expected outcomes of the policy / initiative / service?	Improve response times Reduce our reliance on On-Call fire engines, particularly during the day More Wholetime fire engines in On Call Station areas, resulting in increased capacity to deliver prevention and protection activity Look after our people & mitigate the impact of any changes No fire station closures or building of new stations

	Maintain the same cost base, whilst improving service, outputs and value for money
Who is intended to benefit from the policy?	Communities across Cheshire, primarily those in station areas covered by a fully on-call fire engine.
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? If yes please state who:	No
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
		1	2	3	4	5
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

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	continue to manage locally
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.	

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)			**External Risk** Regarding age, the communities of Birchwood and Stockton Heath station areas have a similar profile: Under 18's: Birchwood – 18.27% Stockton Heath – 19.49% 18-64: Birchwood – 58.35% Stockton Heath – 57.00% 65+: Birchwood – 23.38% Stockton Heath – 23.52%
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	4	12	Older people are often retired and therefore more likely to be at home in the day to receive visits, or to be home alone and have an accident where crews are required to attend. Older people are also known to be more socially vulnerable and the target of criminals who could impersonate Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service staff in order to gain entry to their homes. **External Control** All of our staff carry warrant cards and wear uniform. We have security measures in place to ensure that our uniforms are returned when somebody leaves and that only legitimate staff have access to these items. **Internal Risk** There are a small number of staff who provide on-call cover at Stockton Heath who have retired from their previous wholetime operational role. Due to employment regulations they may not be able to enter a redeployment process for an operational role. **Internal Control** Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.

Disability (physical, sensory, long-term illness, hidden, neurodiversity)			**External Risk** 16.91% of the population in Warrington borough council area is classified as disabled under the Equality Act. **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. **Internal Risk** The proposal involves a major change in routine which has the potential to cause distress to those with neurodiverse conditions who are used to a certain structure. **Internal Control** Keep staff informed on what is going to be happening, timescales, what it will look like etc. in order to minimise any unexpected changes. Support any individuals with neurodiversity by identifying it early and linking in with L&D to discuss resilience training and support.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	2	6	

Mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, bipolar, serious mental illness)			**External Risk** The changes may cause confusion and potential distress to the public if not communicated properly. **External Control** The Service has created a detailed document which is accessible and available on our website. We have sought consultation from the public and advertised this to try to make as many people as possible aware. We have also created a video in order to explain the changes fully. **Internal Risk** Those with underlying conditions such as anxiety may be triggered by changes to working conditions and the uncertainty which comes along with this.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
3	2	6	

			Internal Control
			We have a dedicated mental health advisor who is on hand to visit stations and gauge the morale of individuals, providing support to those who need it, and signposting anyone who may need further support to our Occupational Health Unit where they can access counselling sessions. Regular visits should be scheduled in order to ensure that everyone is given opportunity to seek that support. We also have individuals throughout the Service who are trained in providing mental health support, such as mental health first aiders and TRIM practitioners. These are identified by name and a photo on posters which are on the notice board of every station and Service building.

Gender re-assignment / identity (someone in transition or who has transitioned from one gender to another)			**External Risk** No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender identity or transitioning. **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.
Likelihood	**Impact**	**Overall**	**Internal Risk** This change should not be disruptive to anyone who is transitioning, as they should be given sufficient time off in order to recover from any surgeries, as per the trans policy.
1	**1**	**1**	**Internal Control** As a very small number of staff members will be affected by these changes, we can deal with them on an individual basis. We are not currently aware of anybody who is affected by changes in crewing also happening to be transitioning. If we were to be made aware of this, we would be able to signpost with the support of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, the Firepride network, and other resources as we would with any other staff member to offer support and signpost them as per our Trans policy.

Marriage/civil partnership (applies to same-sex as well as opposite sex couples)	External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status. External Control N/A Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's marriage or civil partnership status. Internal Control N/A

Likelihood	Impact	Overall
2	1	2

Pregnancy and maternity (Pregnancy, maternity leave, breast-feeding)	External Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. External Control N/A Internal Risk No specific risks are identified in relation to pregnancy or maternity. Staff working at the effected stations who become pregnant or require maternity provision can seek advice from their HR advisor or the EDI advisor. Internal Control The Service has an established maternity policy and a range of guidance to support individuals through their pregnancy via specific risk assessments and amendments as necessary.

Likelihood	Impact	Overall
2	1	2

Race (Ethnic origin, nationality, colour, including gypsies and travellers)	External Risk Both Birchwood and Stockton Heath areas are predominantly White British (92.28% and 92.54% respectively). At ward level, there is a higher than average percentage of Asian/Asian British residents in Appleton (Stockton Heath), at 3.4% of population. In Birchwood there is a higher than average percentage (4.9%) of those whose ethnicity is classed as 'Other White'

Likelihood	Impact	Overall
2	3	6

External Control
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.

Internal Risk
As the proposal increases capacity for more home and business safety visits to take place, there will be more contact between our staff and the public in Stockton Heath. This creates greater opportunity for both positive and negative interactions, and unfortunately will slightly increase the risk that a member of our staff could come into contact with racially motivated harassment from members of the communities they are working in.

Internal Control
Crews will not be working alone, and will try to stay together when making visits as much as possible. Conflict training is available to all staff, as well as support from our Racial Equality and Cultural Heritage network. All managers receive training on race and should be equipped to deal with any incidents.

Religion/Belief System
(Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist etc.)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall
2	2	4

External Risk
Christianity is the majority religion across Warrington (56.87%). There are also sizeable populations of those who do not follow a religious belief (average of 36% across Cheshire). There are few large concentrations of other religious groups, with one group of note being the Muslim population in Warrington (1.71% of population).

No specific risks are identified as a result of the proposal due to someone's religion.

External 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.

Internal Risk
Religious activities which are done at certain times of the day such as prayer during Ramadan may be affected by the change to weekday cover.

			Internal Control Watches with colleagues who observe such religious practices may make workplace adjustments such as doing more strenuous activities earlier in the day during Ramadan if somebody is fasting, or changing the timings of tasks in order to fit in with their prayer times.

Gender (male, female or gender non-binary or fluid)			**External Risk** The gender profile differs slightly in regard to each station area: Birchwood – 49.83% male, 50.17% female Stockton Heath – 51.24% male, 48.76% female 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.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	
2	2	4	**External Control** Safe and well visits and other safety interventions in the community **Internal Risk** No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's gender. **Internal Control** N/A

Sexual Orientation (Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual)			**External Risk** 91.8% of the Warrington population aged over 16 identify as straight/heterosexual; 1.3% identify as gay or lesbian and 1% identify as bisexual. A further 0.2% of the population are of a different sexual orientation (pansexual, asexual etc).

Likelihood	Impact	Overall	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 from this proposal in relation to someone's sexual orientation. **External Control** The provision of increased daytime cover in Stockton Heath provides more opportunity for community engagement with LGBT+ residents and an improved emergency response. 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. **Internal Risk** No specific risks are identified in relation to someone's sexual orientation. **Internal Control** N/A
1	2	2	

Geography and Deprivation (does the service or policy affect lower income people or those who live in areas of disadvantage?)			**External Risk** The ward areas of Stockton Heath (deprivation score 7.4), Appleton (7.6) and Grappenhall (4.8) are comparatively less deprived compared to the Warrington Borough average (19.1, source 2021 ward profiles, Warrington Borough Council). In comparison, the Birchwood ward is slightly more deprived than the average in the Warrington area (22.8); although the Culceth, Glazebury and Croft ward is less deprived than the borough average (11.5). **External Control** Safe and well visits are targeted according to fire risk and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation are accounted for within the methodology.
Likelihood	Impact	Overall	**Internal Risk** The disestablishment of on-call posts at Stockton Heath and sale of housing is likely to mean either a loss of role or the requirement to vacate Authority housing as the proposal is implemented. Depending on the individual circumstances this could lead to:
3	4	12	

			• A reduction in household income, through loss of post if solely on-call (although the Service would offer redeployment opportunities where possible to offset this), or reduced income through loss of earnings from a secondary on-call role. • A potential increase in household expenditure as staff affected source alternative, unsubsidised accommodation Conversely, the sharing of daytime cover could provide on-call firefighters at Birchwood with more opportunities to respond, and therefore, earn more through their on-call provision. Internal Control Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.
Occupation (internal – shift systems, working patterns etc. External – shifts, retired etc.)			External Risk No specific risks are identified as a result of an individual's particular shift pattern or occupation. External Control N/A Internal Risk The proposal to share wholetime daytime cover between Birchwood and Stockton Heath involves the on-call duty system. The proposal would see the disestablishment of on-call posts at Stockton Heath, while enabling on-call firefighters at Birchwood with more opportunities to provide cover than present.
Likelihood	**Impact**	**Overall**	
3	4	12	Internal Controls Early engagement is being undertaken with staff most directly affected. The Service has existing redeployment policies which will be used and will work with staff and rep bodies to manage the impact of any changes.

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

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