



What is being assessed: Scenario 1 of the Consultation - Strengthening Our Fire & Rescue Service. Wiltshire Fire Authority to remain independent and increase collaboration with Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council.

Date commenced: 04 September 2014

(1) What's it about?

Refer to Equality Duties: [Click to view](#)

Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority to remain independent and increase collaboration with Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council:

Should Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service remain separate and independent, as they are now? In Wiltshire this will also mean increased collaboration with local partners such as Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council.

Within scenario 1 the two fire authorities would continue as separate organisations. Both would be governed by their respective fire authority of elected Wiltshire and Swindon Borough councillors; both would have a Chief Fire Officer and a team of senior officers; and both would have their own corporate teams (such as Human Resources, Finance, ICT and other functions). Their independence would not prevent them from co-operating on specific projects. Under this scenario, critical decisions, such as those on service reductions, would continue to be taken locally within Wiltshire and Swindon.

Increased collaboration with Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and other partners would need to make substantial savings for Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority by 2018. Initial work already indicates savings in the region of £0.7 million a year from sharing teams and corporate costs, and further savings remain to be explored and quantified.

We will be sharing information with our partners to develop our estimates and this work will be considered by the fire authority alongside the feedback from this consultation at their November meeting. Legal agreements and contracts covering liabilities and risks may need to be put in place to achieve some of the savings.

If as indicated funding for the Combined Fire Authority continues to reduce and increases in Fire Authority precepts remains capped, then under this scenario further savings of up to £3.1 million may still need to be achieved on top of the £0.7 million. This would require significant changes in working arrangements and probable front-line service reductions, potentially resulting in longer response times.

Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups: [Choose an item.](#)

Although not for any particular protected characteristic those with protected characteristics will be included in those listed below.

Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority
Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service
Wiltshire F&RS staff
Wiltshire & Swindon communities

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Business community of Wiltshire & Swindon

How will this proposal meet the equality duties?

Irrespective of the size of the service there will be an emphasis on maintaining service values and behaviours e.g. To value diversity and promote equal opportunity for staff and members of the public.

However, significant budget cuts will necessitate a reduction in the amount of community engagement which is possible - this will have a detrimental effect of the ability for the service to foster good relations in the community.

There will all be a detrimental effect on certain sections of the community (see section 3).

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

If the following were to occur there would be significant barriers to achieving the aims of this proposal:

- Significant reduction in budget over future years will lead to an inevitable reduction in service.
- Lack of resources within local councils.
- Lack of information for people to make a reasoned judgement.

(2) Who's using it?

Refer to equality groups: Choose an item.

Although no specific protected characteristic will be using the service, people with protected characteristics will be included in those listed below:

Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service

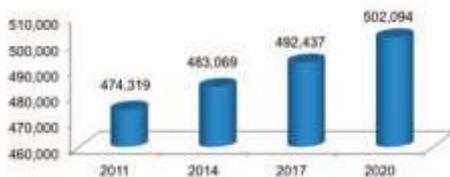
Wiltshire F&RS staff

Members of the community in Wiltshire & Swindon.

Business community of Wiltshire & Swindon

What data evidence do you have about who is or could be affected?

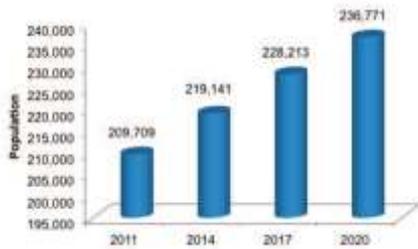
The current population of Wiltshire & Swindon is 684,028. The "Safer 2020" document details the trends in population and other areas which will impact upon Wiltshire & Swindon between now and 2020. It is estimated that the population will increase to 738,865 by 2020.



Population forecast for
Wiltshire from page 13 of
"Safer 2020."

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Population forecast for
Swindon from page 13 of
"Safer 2020."

The population of Wiltshire & Swindon includes people from all sections of protected characteristics; the proportion of these is evidenced in the 2011 Census.

Considerable work has been carried out by both Wiltshire and Dorset Fire and Rescue Services examining the effects of a range of options for the future of both services. This has resulted in a number of documents being produced, some of the following have been published on the Dorset FRS website and some have not yet been released. These documents include:

1. Consultation leaflet for Wiltshire & Swindon
2. Consultation leaflet for Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole.
3. Safer 2020
4. Vision statement
5. Compliance register.
6. A new combined authority for Dorset and Wiltshire - business case for consultation.

These documents contain detailed evidence of the effect of each of the options outlined in the consultation document.

The evidence of the effect of Scenario 1 includes the following:

Evidence on Page 18 of the Draft business case for consultation July 2014:

Savings which will be achieved by implementing Option 1 will amount to approximately 0.7 million pounds - this will leave approximately 3.1 million further saving needed.

Each fire authority and service to stay independent and collaborate with their local authorities to make the most of savings made in corporate and support departments.

We work a lot with our local councils and must continue to do so. Some 'back-office' or corporate functions could be joined up, but as we have already reduced most of them, the amount of savings from corporate staff and spending would be limited. Preliminary work suggests that savings of £712,000 for Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority and £930,000 for Dorset Fire Authority could be achieved with this option. This could mean significant cuts to front-line services would still be needed. The significant funding gaps faced by councils and the pressures on budgets such as adult and children services would also continue to be a concern and could further threaten long-term financial stability.

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Wiltshire and Swindon CFA		Dorset Fire Authority		New combine fire authority		Safe	Strong	Sustainable
Savings	Remaining Deficit range	Savings	Remaining Deficit range	Savings	Remaining Deficit range			
£712K	£2.283 - £3.188 million	£930K	£1.37 - £2.27 million					

-  = Likely to meet all the aims of the vision
-  = Likely to meet some of the aims of the vision
-  = Will not meet most of the aims of the vision

The Vision referred to here is that included in the business case for combinations and makes reference to creating a Fire & Rescue Service which is “SAFE; STRONG and SUSTAINABLE”.

How can you involve customers/staff in developing the proposal?

A public/staff consultation exercise will run from 20 July to 20 October 2014.

Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority have employed Opinion Research Services (ORS), an independent social research organisation, to consult widely on their behalf about some key questions about the future direction of the Fire Authority.

The following specific equality question has been added to the consultation questionnaire:

“All public bodies have a duty to consider the impact of their decisions on people with ‘protected characteristics’ under the Equality Act 2010 (covering age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation) and the Human Rights Act.

Would any of the scenarios in Question 1 have particular positive or negative impacts for any of the people with “protected characteristics?”

Responses to this question will be validated by the response to questions 8 to 13 on the consultation form requesting equality information about respondents.

Responses to this question will be used to complete this People Impact Assessment.

Who is missing? Do you need to fill gaps in your data?

With the involvement of ORS the consultation will involve a representative element of the communities in Wiltshire and Dorset. All members of the community will have the opportunity to take part on-line or via hard copy consultation forms. All staff of Wiltshire & Dorset FRS have been encouraged to take part in the consultation and there have been staff briefings in both service areas.

ORS have also organised a number of residents, business and voluntary sector focus groups where a representative section of the community have been invited to attend and take part. These have taken place across the Dorset and Wiltshire areas.

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The consultation questionnaire includes equality and diversity questions numbered 8 to 13. These will identify those with protected characteristics who have taken part in the consultation. These responses will assist in identifying any people or groups who have been excluded from the consultation or who are under-represented.

[Pause PIA if necessary to collect data]

(3) Impact.

Refer to dimensions of equality> Click to view
Refer to equality groups: Choose an item.

Using the information in parts (1) & (2) does the proposal:

a) Create an adverse impact which may affect some groups or individuals? Is it clear what this is?

Adverse impact will be felt by a number of individuals and groups associated with particular protected characteristics due to the fact that Option 1 will not in itself achieve the required savings. In order to achieve the savings required there will need to be significant cuts to front-line Fire Fighters (both wholetime and on-call/retained), operational officers, corporate staff and possibly fire stations.

These cuts will result in a reduced capacity to carry out prevention work carried out by Whole-time/Retained Fire Fighters and Corporate Staff, which has contributed to a reduction in fires, fire deaths and road traffic collisions over the past years. There is scope to look at the possibility of increased partnership working on some prevention activities to mitigate the impact of staff cuts.

Age - reduced staff numbers will result in a reduction in the number of Home Fire Safety Checks the Service could provide. This will have an adverse effect of the over 65's, families with children under 5 and people living alone.

There will be a severely reduced or no capacity to run the Safe Drive, Stay Alive programme educating young people about road safety and the consequences of bad driving.

There will be a severely reduced or no capacity to run Salamander courses for young people and Troubled Families.

There will be a severely reduced or no capacity to undertake our schools programme and partake in the annual Junior Good Citizen programmes across the county.

Race/ethnicity - community engagement activity will reduce having an adverse effect on the work the Service does in diverse communities and impacting upon our ability to fulfil our public sector equality duty to foster good community relations.

Disability - a reduction in Home Fire Safety checks, Salamander programme (Downs Syndrome) and increased response times will have an adverse effect on those with disabilities. Reduced funding and cuts will also impact upon the Services ability to ensure that all Fire Service premises are compliant with the access requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

All protected characteristics (especially Age/Disability) and those living in vulnerable premises (thatched properties or areas prone to flooding) - a reduction in Front-line and back office staff will result in an increase in response times to fires and incidents. This will put the vulnerable within our

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society at greater risk. We will have a reduced ability to respond to spate conditions, particularly those for which we have no statutory duty.

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service Staff – with the need to reduce staff numbers there will possibly be enforced redundancies, increased workload for remaining staff and a lack of opportunity to progress within the organisation.

What can be done to change this impact?

Consideration should be given to the other Scenarios outlined in the Consultation Questionnaire to identify which options will eliminate the negative impact identified above.

b) Create a benefit for a particular group? Is it clear what this is? Can you maximise the benefits for other groups?

Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service will maintain its identity.

Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority will maintain full accountability for the fire & rescue service in the Wiltshire & Swindon area.

Does further consultation need to be done? How will assumptions made in this assessment be tested?

A full independent consultation is being carried out between 20 July 2014 and 20 October 2014. The result of the consultation will be analysed and provided to both Wiltshire & Dorset Fire Authorities for further consideration.

From an equality and diversity perspective response to Question 4 in the consultation questionnaire will assist in testing the assumption made in Section 3(a) above.

Is this an Equality Risk: Yes

Risk Register rating: 12

If a negative impact has been identified or you require further information list below what actions you will be taking next.

(4) So what?

What further needs to be done to identify or mitigate the full impact?

Await the results of the independent consultation which will run until 20 October 2014. Following this date review this impact assessment in the light of the responses to Question 4 in the questionnaire and the responses to the Equality & Diversity Questions 8 to 13.

Prior to the end of the consultation period to work with Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Police to explore possible savings through closer working relationships.

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[What is the result of the further actions above?](#)

Click here to enter text.

[What changes have been identified?](#)

Click here to enter text.

[What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?](#)

Click here to enter text.

Review date: 20 October 2014

Other information regarding the review:

Carry out a review of this impact assessment at the close of the independent consultation.

How will success be measured?

Click here to enter text.

For the record:

Name of person leading the PIA: Rex Webb, Equality & Diversity Advisor	Date completed: Click here to enter a date.
Names of people/groups involved in consideration of the impact.	Click here to enter text.
Name of Manager signing off PIA Barbara Owen, Brigade Manager People & Development	Signed & dated: 15 October 2014 Click here to enter text.
Final Check by E&D Advisor Click here to enter text.	Date filed: Click here to enter a date.

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