

**AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN  
CYMRU**



**MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COFNODION  
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,  
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyrddin  
**24 MEDI 2007**

**MINUTES  
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**24 SEPTEMBER 2007**

**11.00am – 12.15pm**

**PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: C J Crowley  
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: T E Evans

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: J S Allen-Mirehouse, Mrs K Becton, J J J Davies, Mrs T Devichand, K Harris, D R James, P James, Mrs F M Jones, R Lewis, Mrs P Llewellyn, C Morgan, G Phillips, Mrs C Philpott, D Prothero, G Seabourne, T Theophilus, J D A Thompson, M Williams, Mrs Spender

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: C Waller, Mrs J Dudley

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: D Mackay, R Smith, E Aitken, A Howells, P Bailey, S Flather, C Stradling, J Blewitt

## **1 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS**

None were declared

## **2 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair reported that the planned All Wales Member's Seminar which had been arranged for 5<sup>th</sup> November had been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. However, as Members already had this date in their diaries, it was proposed that a local Seminar be held instead and a letter detailing the arrangements would be sent to Members in due course.

It was also reported that the Members RRP Working Group had met with Dr Brian Gibbons on 6<sup>th</sup> September in order to hold the post consultation RRP meeting, which was a feature of the RRP process and also to discuss the Control Room Review.

It was noted that although the Minister listened carefully to a presentation on the RRP Proposals, and asked a number of questions, he offered no strong views either way on the key elements of the plan. Dr Gibbons also indicated that he had received a request from the FBU asking for a meeting to discuss the Control Room Review but that this meeting had not yet taken place. Members had also taken the opportunity to raise the outcomes of Sir Graham Meldrum's 'health check' review of the Haverfordwest crewing changes, and although this had not yet been formally released, informal discussions had indicated that the review had endorsed the changes and the review process.

## **3 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2007**

The Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 25th June 2007 were confirmed and approved as a true record.

## **4 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:**

- Resources Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2007
- Performance, Review and Audit Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2007
- Personnel Committee held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2007

The minutes of the above Committees were received and noted

## **5 TO APPROVE THE 2006/07 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

### **i) TO APPROVE A REVISED STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL (SIC)**

The Director of Finance reported that the production of the SIC was a requirement of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005, as amended.

Following conclusion of the audit it had been necessary to make an amendment to the previously approved draft statement

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Revised Statement on Internal Control for 2006/07 be approved*

- ii) **TO APPROVE THE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS DOCUMENT PRESENTED TO MEMBERS IN JUNE 2007 AND THUS APPROVE THE FINAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2006/2007**

The Draft Statement of Accounts (Financial Statements) for 2006/07 had been approved at the Authority meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2007 but following the audit of these accounts, the Wales Audit Office had requested that certain amendments be made. These amendments had now been made and the Authority was requested to approve the resulting final financial statements for 2006/07. These were required to be signed by both the Chairman and the Director of Finance and Procurement.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The adjustments to the draft Statement of Accounts be approved and that as a result the Final Statement of Accounts for the Financial Year 2006 – 2007 be approved and duly signed and dated by the Chair of the Authority and the Director of Finance and Procurement.*

- 6 **TO APPROVE THE LETTER OF REPRESENTATION REGARDING THE 2006/07 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Director of Finance and Procurement reported that the Wales Audit Office required a letter of representation regarding the 2006/2007 Financial Statements before they could complete their audit of the Financial Statements. The letter was required to be considered by the Authority and be signed by both the Director of Finance and Procurement and the Chair of the meeting considering the letter.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The letter be approved and signed by the Chair and the Director of Finance and Procurement*

**7 TO RECEIVE THE ISA 260 REPORT FOR 2006/07 AND A PRESENTATION THEREON BY THE WALES AUDIT OFFICE**

Mr Ceri Stradling and Mr Jason Blewitt attended the meeting to present the ISA 260 Report for 2006/07 to Committee and in doing so commended the Authority on the fair and accurate reporting of its financial statements. Mr Stradling indicated that he had no concerns about the qualitative aspects of the accounting practices and found no uncorrected misstatements. He continued that it was his intention to issue an unqualified auditor's report on the financial statement once he had received the signed Letter of Representation approved within the previous agenda item.

Mr Stradling thanked the Director of Finance and Procurement and her team for the cooperation and assistance they had provided to the Auditors and for the high standard of work they had produced.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The ISA 260 Report be received and noted*

**8 TO RECEIVE A LETTER IN RESPONSE TO THE 3 YEAR SETTLEMENT CONSULTATION FROM THE ASSEMBLY**

The Director of Finance and Procurement presented a letter which had been sent to the Welsh Assembly in response to a letter received on the proposed arrangements for 3 year revenue and capital settlements for local authorities in Wales.

The response letter emphasised the difficulties that the Authority would be facing in setting its budget for the forthcoming year, in order to ensure that the Welsh Assembly were fully aware of the constraints that the Authority were working under.

Members were pleased that the Authority had been given the opportunity to put forward its views at the start of the 3 year process in order that a clearer picture of the long term settlements from individual authorities could be made.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The letter be received and noted*

**9 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE BUDGET PROCESS**

The Chief Fire Officer and Director of Finance and Procurement provided an update on the budget report that had been considered by the Fire Authority on

25<sup>th</sup> June. It outlined the issues that would affect the budget setting process for 2008-11, the next 3 year budgeting period for the Authority.

It was noted that the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was a key piece in the budget setting jigsaw and this year had been delayed from the usual July to a mid October announcement. This would possibly delay the WAG Revenue Support Grant (RSG) provisional settlement to mid November and subsequently affect the budget timetable. In any event the Constituent Authorities had to be formally consulted on the Authority's proposed budget before the end of December 2007, even though the final settlement was unlikely to be announced before the New Year.

Early indications from the WLGA were that the CSR would include increases in the settlement for local authorities of between 1.5% and 2.7%, after certain specifics had been deducted.

It was reported that the Fire Service Pressures Report had now been presented to the national WAG/WLGA Consultative Forum on Finance (CFF) which included the Local Government Minister at the time, and a further meeting of this forum was scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> October 2007. It was noted that the Director of Finance and Procurement represented the FRA Treasurers on this forum.

Senior officers had met with the Constituent Authority Treasurers and were due to meet them again in early October to provide an update.

Members were aware that there would be a requirement this year to budget for the 3 years 2008-2011. It was likely that year 2 and 3 would remain as indicative budgets as the data and formula for the settlements for these 2 years would be changing and it was not clear what would happen to grants. A new CSR would be announced for the 3 years from 2010-11, and again this would have implications for available resources. There were also uncertainties as to new responsibilities and changes in service delivery requirements currently not known. It was clear therefore that there should be a 'health warning' regarding the level of these budgets which would be discussed with the Treasurers at the October meeting.

Members indicated that they would welcome a fuller discussion and explanation of the items contained within the budget in order to allow them a greater understanding, and it was agreed that these be discussed in detail at the Member Seminar on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- ***the report be received***
- ***Members receive a presentation on the items featured within the report at the Member Seminar on 5<sup>th</sup> November***

**10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE REMOVAL OF THE CARMARTHEN EMERGENCY TENDER**

It was reported that the roll out of rescue pumps in the Carmarthenshire area had rendered the Emergency Tender at W2 surplus to requirements. The age, condition and maintenance requirements had required its removal from the operational fleet sooner rather than later and the vehicle was now beyond economic repair.

It was noted that the removal of the W2 Emergency Tender was consistent with the Authority's rescue pump roll out strategy.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

***Members note the W2 – Carmarthen Emergency Tender had been removed from the operational fleet and been disposed of with the equipment in accordance with Authority procedures.***

**11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE MISSING PERSONS PROTOCOL**

Consideration was given to the draft protocol for Missing Persons which was intended to provide a framework for Police and Fire and Rescue Services to enable development of local operating procedures under which firefighters supported police operations in the search for certain categories of missing persons. The protocol would also provide a procedure for Police Forces to access support from Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and United Kingdom Fire Service Search and Rescue teams (UKFSSART). This protocol would not affect the every day deployment of Fire and Rescue Service personnel in the rescue or recovery of injured persons or persons at risk.

Members were also asked to consider supporting a review of this protocol in one year, to assess the impact of any activity within the year on budget and resources.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- ***The draft protocol be approved***
- ***Members support a review of the protocol in one year, to assess the impact of any activity within the year on budget and resources.***

**12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE: 9<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007**

The Chair and Vice Chair had attended the International Firefighters day of Remembrance in London on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2007 accompanied by ACFO P Bailey. The Chair had the opportunity to lay a wreath on behalf of the

Fire Authority and Service.

Members were also aware that over the years the Authority had supported the Cardiff Firemen's Memorial Service held at Llanreath in Pembrokeshire. Correspondence had been received from the National Association of Retired Firefighters indicating that this service would now cease, as the dates were close to that of the International Firefighters Day of Remembrance and also that those who lost their lives at Llanreath would be remembered in the Armistice Remembrance Day.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be noted and that Members endorse future attendance at the International Firefighters Day of Remembrance in London.*

### **13 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE INTRODUCTION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

Members received a report on environmental management which was an integral part of good governance and was used widely in both the public and private sector to understand and manage impacts on the environment. Promoting environmental management was a key part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Sustainable Development Strategy and Modernising Government agenda.

In preparation for a 12 month programme of sustainable and environmental analysis a statement had been produced which outlined the services and the Authority's commitment. It was noted that "Sustainability & the Environment" had been added to the meetings proforma to ensure it was considered in all business decisions.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Environmental Statement be received and noted*

### **14 TO RECEIVE ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

The following reports were received for information:

- Service Delivery Reports from the County Commands
- Fire at Penhallow Hotel, Newquay
- Deployments to South Yorkshire Flooding Incidents
- Special Youth Training Team
- Community Safety Open Day

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*Members wished to congratulate Staff who had assisted with the flooding incidents in South Yorkshire*