

**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  
**2 CHWEFROR 2009**

**MINUTES  
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**2 FEBRUARY 2009**

**11.00am – 12.30pm**

**PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN:  
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:

T E Evans

AELODAU/MEMBERS:

Cyng/Cllrs: J J J Davies, C Philpott,  
R Ll. Smith, D Thomas, R Lewis,  
G Seabourne, G Thomas, P James,  
D Fellows, A Jopling, P Llewellyn,  
R Llewellyn, J Dudley, T Devichand,  
J Holmes,

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:

Cyng/Cllrs: C J Crowley, D Davies,  
J Newbury, F Torrens, M Williams,  
C Morgan, J Dinham

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:

R Smith, E Aitken, A Howells, P Bates, W  
Edwards, K Jones, Steve McLinden

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

None were declared

**2 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Vice Chair thanked Members for attending the meeting despite the inclement weather and reported that the Resilience Training which had been due to have taken place that afternoon had been cancelled in order to allow Members to return home before any further predicted snow arrived. A further date would be arranged in due course.

Members were sorry to hear that former Member Ray James was currently in hospital and noted that a letter had already been sent on their behalf expressing their good wishes for a return to better health.

**3 TO CONFIRM AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2008**

The minutes of the meetings held on 1 December 2008 were confirmed and approved as a true record.

**4 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2009**

The minutes of the Resources Committee held on 12 January 2009 were received and noted.

The Director of Resources and Procurement drew attention to the final item in the minutes of that meeting where it had been reported that £350,000 of Capital funds had been made available from the Welsh Assembly Government for Capital Works to be spent before 20<sup>th</sup> March 2009. Since the meeting the amount of funding available had been increased and a list of priority works was currently being drawn up for approval.

**5 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND PROCUREMENT ON THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT FOR 2009/10.**

The Director of Resources and Procurement reported that the final Revenue Support Grant Settlement for 2009/10 had been received on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and had been considered in detail and approved by the Resources Committee at their meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009. The settlement received was not substantially different to the Provisional Settlement and therefore the budget recommendations remained unchanged. It was noted that no comments had as yet been received from the Constituent Authorities following the Authority's budget notification letter.

**RESOLUTION**

***Following consideration it was RESOLVED that:***

- 1) For 2009/10, the net budget requirement at £43,644,053 (+4.4%) be approved.
- 2) The Capital Programme be approved, leading to the capital financing charges discussed
- 3) The updated vehicle replacement programme be approved
- 4) Whilst it had been assumed that the majority of vehicles would be leased in the budget build up, it was recommended that the Director of Resources and Procurement be authorised to decide on the appropriate method of financing of vehicles (be it leasing or otherwise) at the time of procurement.
- 5) For 2008/09, that the amount of the contribution to be paid by the Constituent Authorities be revised upwards by £1,395,000 following consultation.

**6 TO RECEIVE THE TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE PRUDENTIAL CODE AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2009/10**

Consideration was given to the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Prudential Indicators for 2009/10, based on the 2009/10 proposed Capital Programme and Revenue Budget which required the approval of the full Fire Authority. The Report had been approved by the Resources Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- 1) The 2009/10 Prudential Indicators be approved***
- 2) Delegated authority be given to the Director of Resources and Procurement to change the balance between borrowing and other long term liabilities within the Authorised Limit for external debt and within the Operational Boundary while keeping within the overall limits.***

**7 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP) POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2009/10**

Each year the Authority was required to approve a policy outlining how the Minimum Revenue Provision (funds set aside to repay loans and other long term liabilities) was to be calculated in the next financial year. The policy statement set out the proposed MRP calculations for 2009/10 and had been approved by the Resources Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009. The proposed calculations were based on the recommended options set out in regulations

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***The 2009/10 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement be approved***

**8 TO RECEIVE THE DETAILED REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2009/10**

At the last meeting of the Resources Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009, the revenue budget for 2009/10 had been recommended for approval by the Fire Authority. The Director of Resources and Procurement provided Members with a detailed breakdown of the budget and it was noted that no comments had been received from the Constituent Authorities following the Authority's budget notification letter.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***The detailed revenue budget be approved***

**9 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2009**

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 19 January were received and approved.

**10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON SELF ROSTERED CREWING AT PONTARDAWE**

Following the Authority's decision in October 2007 to consider an '*improved system for crewing Pontardawe Fire Station to reflect the periods of greatest risk and activity*', Officers had been evaluating the crewing options for that location. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Wyn Edwards presented the results of the evaluation, reporting that the best possible option had been determined as Self Rostered Crewing (SRC), which allowed for the provision of maximum resources during hours of high activity, but also provided operational cover equivalent to that currently provided by the shift duty system during hours of low activity. It was reported that SRC delivered an equivalent to Shift Crewing response using Day Crewing Resources.

The SRC system required a station establishment of thirteen personnel to provide a crewing level of five personnel at all times. The shift system would comprise of a primary contract which would be a wholtime duty system contract where individuals would work four day shifts of twelve hours each followed by four days off. The second contract would be a Retained Duty System (RDS) contract where personnel would be required to provide cover for four night shifts comprising of twelve hours each. To ensure equity across the workforce and to enable personnel with child care considerations to apply for a post at Pontardawe, applicants for posts on SRC would be free to volunteer for any of the following duties: day duties only; the RDS duties only or both the day and RDS duties.

The Service would provide separate, high quality accommodation for staff conditioned to SRC for the periods that they were working to their respective RDS contracts. This accommodation would be located to enable the appliance to be mobile to an incident within 1.9 minutes. Until this accommodation was available, personnel would be paid a lodging allowance to enable them to rent property within a designated distance of the station, or alternatively, to stay in the existing accommodation on the fire station.

The difference between SRC and the existing Day Crewed Arrangements was noted as being that existing day crewed personnel were contracted to respond to the station within approximately five minutes but with SRC, the appliance would be mobile to an incident within 1.9 minutes.

Members noted that the implementation of SRC could potentially produce efficiency savings of over £60k per annum over current day crewing models, and over £400k against the existing wholetime shift duty system. Discussions with the representative bodies would be commencing as soon as possible with a proposed implementation date of 1st January 2010.

Members were generally pleased with the positive way in which the project was progressing and asked a number of pertinent questions relating to the options for staff accommodation, whether staff were supportive of the proposals and how the selection process would take place.

In conclusion it was considered that the SRC system would provide an effective and efficient solution for the provision of fire cover in Pontardawe and the surrounding area, and would negate the concerns expressed by stakeholders during the consultation process, in relation to the change from the current Shift Duty System. The System enabled the level of operational cover to be maintained to current standards, whilst also offering financial benefits to the organisation and tax payer.

The SRC would provide the following opportunities:

- Maintenance and possible improvement on the current response times
- Allocation of resources to the identified times of known activity
- Increase the available positive hours an individual was available to work.
- Removal of opposition arguments relating to 'downgrading' of the cover currently provided.
- A positive political outcome.
- Demonstration of the services commitment to providing the best possible service to our communities in the most efficient way.
- An attractive reward package for those entering onto the SRC system.
- Removal of all issues relating to the attraction, recruitment, development

- and retention of RDS personnel.
- Introduction of a self sustaining crewing mechanism reducing the instances of overtime payment.
- Sufficient available shifts to allow for enhanced Training and Community Protection Activities.
- The opportunity to reallocate resources to address other organisational risk critical issues such as the provision of Direct Trainers, Driving Instructors and Community Safety Officers

## **RESOLUTION**

***Following a vote by show of hands, with two abstentions, It was RESOLVED that:***

- i) The Fire Authority adopts the Self Rostered Crewing at Pontardawe***
- ii) Arrangements to implement SRC to be commenced with immediate effect, as per the project plan***

## **11 RISK REDUCTION PLANNING 2010 – 2015**

Members were informed that the Risk Reduction Planning process for the next five years would also combine reporting of the Service's Corporate Objectives to provide a holistic view of how risk reduction was managed within the service. The themes for inclusion in the five year plan would reflect the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for Fire and Rescue Authority's as reported in the National Framework 2008-2011 document.

The detail of the plan would be developed under the direction of the Risk Reduction Plan Member Working Group and the general themes for the plan and the draft timetable for its delivery were provided for approval.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***The Authority approve the development of a five year plan together with the themes for development by the Member Working Group including the draft timetable for the process.***

## **12 THE SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members) (Wales) Regulations 2007 provided for the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales to determine the range and maximum levels of allowances that county and county borough councils may pay their elected members and certain co-opted members. The Regulations also required authorities to amend their schemes of allowances

within four months of the Welsh Assembly Government receiving the initial report i.e. by the 28<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

Members noted that although the Panel's remit did not extend to Fire and Rescue Authorities and National Park Authorities, when amending their schemes of allowances these authorities were required by the Regulations to have regard to the matters prescribed by the Panel in respect of the types and maximum levels of allowances paid by their constituent authorities.

Following discussion and despite a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales to increase allowances by 2.45% for 2008/09 and by a further 2.5% for 2009/10, Members unanimously voted to freeze the Authority's Members' Allowances at 2007/08 levels.

Members were of the view that the amount saved, whilst not large, would help contribute to the overall budget savings that had to be delivered and help protect frontline services, coupled with the general economic position which had influenced their decision not to accept the recommended increases.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i) The Basic Allowance for 2008/09 and 2009/10 be frozen at 2007/08 levels*
- ii) The Special Responsibility Allowances for 2008/09 and 2009/10, i.e. for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority be frozen at 2007/08 levels*
- iii) Care Allowances for the Chair, Vice Chair and other members be increased by 1.6% to £1,531, £1,197 and £417 respectively.*
- iv) Individual subsistence allowances to remain at current levels with a ceiling of £26 per day (£28 per day from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009)*
- v) Overnight Allowances to be in accord with the directions issued by the Panel of £105 for London and £95 for all other cases (£124 and £95 respectively from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009)*
- vi) That travelling rates remain as at present for 2008/09 and 2009/10*
- vii) A Co-optees Allowance be payable to the Chair and Independent Members of Standards Committee of £362.50 and £190 respectively.*
- viii) That the Allowances in paragraphs i) to iii) be retrospective from 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009.*
- ix) That the Co-optees' Allowance be effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009*
- x) That all other allowances (i.e. subsistence and overnight allowances) be effective from the day following the Authority meeting.*

**13 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AT THE LGA ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE**

It had been previously agreed to review Member attendance at this Conference on an annual basis, dependent on programme content. The Conference was being held on 10-11 March in Bristol and its theme was “Improving outcomes for communities through partnership working”. Following consideration of the programme it appeared to offer a benefit for Members.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*Two Members be nominated to attend the Conference*

### **14 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE UNITED KINGDOM FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL TRUST**

Members were aware of the United Kingdom Firefighters Memorial Trust set up over 20 years ago to honour Firefighters who had lost their lives whilst performing operational duties. Correspondence had been received from the Trust asking the Authority to consider becoming a Subscribing Member.

Following consideration of a paper which outlined the valuable work of the Trust, Members agreed the Authority should become a Subscribing Member at an annual subscription of £475 fixed for 5 years.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Authority become a Subscribing Member of the United Kingdom Firefighters Memorial Trust*

### **15 REPORT OF THE VISIT TO THE ARMISTICE DAY REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY AT THE MENIN GATE, YPRES, BELGIUM ON 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2008 BY COUNCILLORS J DAVIES, R LLEWELLYN, R SMITH AND F TORRENS**

Members were aware that Councillors J Davies, R Llewellyn, R LI. Smith and F Torrens represented the Fire Authority at the Armistice Remembrance Service at the Menin Gate on 11 November 2008.

Members reported that they felt honoured to be given the opportunity to represent the Authority at the Ceremony, and marched with the Service’s Colour Party from the Fire Station to the Menin Gate where they laid a wreath in remembrance of those who had lost their lives on the Salient during the Great War.

Members wished to extend their gratitude to the Authority for the opportunity and privilege of attending the Ceremony, and to the Colour Party, for its participation in the formal proceedings when it joined many other UK and European Fire Services

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Fire Authority is represented in Ypres in 2009 to attend the Armistice Day Remembrance Service at the Menin Gate.*