

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



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE FIRE AUTHORITY AT ITS
NEXT MEETING ON 28 JUNE 2010**

**COFNODION
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyrddin
10 MAI 2010

**MINUTES
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen
10 MAY 2010

11.00 – 12.20

60% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: C Philpott

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: A Davies, D Davies,
J J J Davies, J Dinham, J Dudley,
R Llewellyn, D Thomas, F Torrens,
T Tudor, S Lloyd-Janes, M Williams,
WEA Jones, D Howells, J Newbury

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: T E Evans, E Kirchner,
J Holmes, G Thomas, A Woolcock,
P James, P Llewellyn, R Lewis, B Hynes,
D Fellows

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: R Smith, P Coleman, E Aitken, D
Daycock, W Edwards, P Bates, D
Masson, C Davies, K Jones

1 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair welcomed the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, Mr David Daycock, to his first meeting of the Fire Authority and wished him every success in his new post. Congratulations were extended to the Chair, Councillor Eurfyl Evans, on recently receiving the MBE from the Queen for Services to Local Government in Ceredigion.

2 DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS

Members collectively declared membership of their own Constituent Authority and signed the proforma sheet accordingly.

3 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS HELD ON 8TH FEBRUARY 2010

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 8th February 2010 were confirmed and approved as a true record apart from the addition of Councillor Andrea Davies' name to those declaring an interest as members of their local Community Councils.

4 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 MARCH 2010

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 15th March 2010 and the following item was highlighted:

Item 4 – To receive a report on Employment of Members of Police Forces by Fire & Rescue Authorities

It was noted that no response had yet been received from South Wales Police Force and the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that a further reminder would be sent.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the People and Organisational Committee held on 15th March 2010 be received and noted

5 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS PANEL HELD ON 12TH APRIL 2010

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Appointments Panel held on 12th April 2010

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Appointments Panel held on 12th April 2010 be received and noted

6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH APRIL 2010

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 26th April 2010.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 12th April 2010 be received and noted

7 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH FEBRUARY 2010

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 4th February 2010.

The Clerk made reference to the agenda item on the draft guidance on the Code of Conduct from the Public Services Ombudsman and reported that the final Guidance document had now been received and that he would arrange a training session for all Fire Authority Members in due course.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 4th February were received and noted

8 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE DRAFT RISK REDUCTION ACTION PLAN 2011/2012

Area Manager Derek Masson reminded Committee that at its February meeting the Fire Authority had approved the key themes for the Draft Annual Action Plan 2011-2012, and directed its Member Working Group to work with Officers to develop these themes for consultation.

Accordingly the Draft Annual Action Plan 2011-2012 had been developed over a number of meetings between Officers and the Member Working Group, who consisted of one Member from each Unitary Authority, which, as well as providing areas for consultation, contained reports on the Fire Authority's achievements and progress on last year's plan. It was noted that the document had been designed in house by the Corporate Communications and Member Services department and was produced in line with the Authority's commitment to equality and diversity and sustainability.

Subject to approval the Draft Annual Action Plan 2011-2012 would be consulted upon for 12 weeks between 11th May 2010 and 3rd August 2010. The Member Working Group would then consider the responses received and Performance and Improvement data would be used to produce the combined Annual Action Plan 2011-2012 and the Improvement Plan 2010-2011. Once approved the Plan would be distributed for consultation as a bilingual document in accordance with the Authority's Welsh Language Policy and would also be available on request in a variety of alternative languages and formats. It was noted that in addition to the usual means of consultation that the Service would be attending various key events throughout the Service area in

order to provide a wider opportunity for stakeholders to respond including the Home Fire Safety Check generation day in Swansea City Centre, the Urdd Eisteddfod, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire Fish Week in Milford Haven.

Councillor Lloyd-Janes expressed concerns that the 12 week consultation period was potentially not long enough for Community Councils to be able to provide a timely response given that meetings were held monthly and taking into account the August recess.

In response, the Head of Planning and Performance, Karen Jones, confirmed that these issues had already been identified and that all Community Councils had been given prior notice of the consultation period and the date by which the Annual Action Plan would be received by them in order to allow for future meeting planning.

Councillor Newbury noted the photograph of the rescue boat which had been included in the Plan and queried whether the Service had a statutory responsibility to attend flooding incidents. The Chief Fire Officer, Richard Smith, responded that although the Service had no statutory responsibility to attend such incidents, it had a moral and community expectation to respond. The Director of Risk, Paul Bates, added that funding had been received from the Welsh Assembly Government which had been used to assist in the purchase of equipment for first responders to attend minor flooding incidents.

Members were aware that Fire and Rescue Authorities were required to discuss their proposals and options relating to improvement with the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government prior to the publication of the final document and therefore a meeting with the Minister had been arranged for 22nd September 2010. The Fire Authority would then consider the final version of the combined document at its meeting on the 25th October 2010.

Members commended the Draft Annual Action Plan as an attractive, clear and concise document and applauded the hard work and expertise of the Officers who had produced it.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The Draft Annual Action Plan 2011-2012 be approved subject to public consultation***
- 2. The 12 week public consultation on the draft plan between the 11th May 2010 and 3rd August 2010 be approved***

9 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2009/10

The Director of Resources, Liz Aitken, presented the Budget Monitoring Report which showed the estimated revenue and capital net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2010 and compared those estimated positions with the 2009/2010 working

budget. The estimated net expenditure had been calculated by adding the actual figure shown in the financial records plus known commitments not yet accounted for at 30 April 2010. The final balances and end of year adjustments were still in the process of being calculated, therefore it was noted that the figures reported were still subject to change before the accounts were finally closed for the financial year.

The Director of Resources reported that a current under spend of £958k (approximately 2.2% of the working budget) had been estimated at 31 March 2010 and that the three main reasons for the variances were:

1. The actual pay increase in 2009/10 being less than budgeted for by £296k.
2. An under spend of £388k recorded in the report as 'Leasing' which was due to the vehicle replacement programme slipping so that new lease rentals were delayed to a later financial year. In addition some vehicles included in the leasing budget had been purchased instead of leased. This had resulted in an under spend in the leasing budget in 2009/10, but an increase in capital charges in 2010/11.
3. A provision of £376k had been made in 2008/09 to meet the expected costs of paying additional retirement lump sums to retired fire fighters as a result of retrospective changes in the Fire Fighters pension scheme. Subsequently the Welsh Assembly Government agreed to meet the cost of the additional payments. This provision was no longer required and had been released back into the budget, resulting in an under spend of £376k in 'pensions'.

It was reported that the under spend would be taken to a number of earmarked reserves to help fund identified pressures on future budgets.

Making reference to the Capital Monitoring report, Councillor Williams requested an update at the next Resources Committee on the current position of the Llandrindod Wells Fire Station project and the new Fire Station at Amman Valley.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and the content noted

10 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – ASSURANCE STATEMENT

The Director of Resources reported that in April 2008 the Fire Authority had approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which was consistent with the principles and reflected the requirements of the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) / SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) framework: "*Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*". The Code of Corporate Governance being a public statement to upholding the principles of openness and inclusivity, integrity and accountability.

As part of that process the Authority would produce an annual "Statement of

Assurance” to show compliance with the Code and it was noted that the Statement had been approved by the Performance Review and Audit Committee at their last meeting. Councillor Philpott drew Committee’s attention to the section contained within the Annual Governance Statement which stated that following ‘Examination by external and internal audit of the management information, financial procedure rules and financial instructions, contract standing orders, administrative arrangements (including segregation of duties) and management supervision had all given general assurance regarding the control and proper administration of the Authority’s financial affairs. In addition the Wales Audit Office reported during the year that Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority resources were being used economically, efficiently and effectively.’

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Statement of Assurance be approved for signature by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer and for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.

11 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE CFOA CIRCULAR ‘FIRE SAFETY GUIDE FOR COUNCILLORS’

The Director of Risk informed Members that the Chief Fire Officers Association had recently published ‘*Extinguishing the Risk: A Councillor’s Guide to Fire Safety*’. The document outlined the strategic responsibilities of Councillors in relation to Fire Safety matters both within their own Authorities and as Fire & Rescue Authority Members.

The guide was intended for all Councillors and designed to provide Members with the information needed to be confident that their respective Authority was doing all it could to comply with the legal requirements and safeguarding people in their own homes. If things were to go wrong, Members would need to be assured that the respective Authority’s systems could withstand scrutiny.

Detailed consideration was given to a range of key messages contained within the Guide. It was particularly stressed that the reputation of the Fire Authority could be at risk if effective enforcement of Fire Safety law was not in place, so performance needed to be measured and reviewed by way of a local statistics, such as the reduction in fire deaths, the percentage of high risk premises visited or the number of fire safety visits which were reported to the Authority through the Performance Review and Audit Committee.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that local Members were always informed of significant fires within their own areas and would also be informed well in advance should the Service intend prosecuting a Local Authority. In response to a query from Members, it was confirmed that each Unitary Authority had a dedicated Fire Officer.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer commended the report as a means of providing members with practical guidance by giving them a greater understanding of their role and that of their Unitary Authorities.

The Guide generated much debate and discussion and it was suggested that further guidance with a presentation be provided for Members at a future meeting.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The CFOA Guide be received and noted*
- 2. Members receive a presentation with further guidance at a future meeting*

12 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE REVISED WELSH LANGUAGE SCHEME 2010-2013

Members were aware that it was a statutory requirement under the Welsh Language Act 1993 for all public sector organisations in Wales to have a Welsh Language Scheme that outlined how they would provide a bilingual service to the public they served.

Consultation on the Service's document had been undertaken for a six week period during 15th March – 26th April 2010 and the final Scheme had been developed and refined following analysis of the results of the consultation on the draft Scheme.

It was noted that Policy Board had considered and approved the final Welsh Language Scheme at its meeting on 6th May 2010 together with the report on the Linguistic Skills Strategy

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. the Welsh Language Scheme 2010-13 be approved*
- 2. the Linguistic Skills Strategy underpinning the Welsh Language Scheme be endorsed*
- 3. the Proposed Welsh Language (Wales) Measure be noted*

13 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Clerk, Dave Daycock, presented the Annual Report of the Standards Committee, which provided a summary of the work of the Committee for 2009/10, and had been approved by the Standards Committee at their last meeting on 4th February 2010.

Despite there being no breaches of the code of conduct or requests for dispensation being brought before the Standards Committee, they continued to be very pro active in promoting good governance and the ethical framework within the Authority. This had been achieved in part by ensuring that the Authority's Constitution and Policies were kept up to date, relevant and in accord with statutory requirements and best practice.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Report of the Standards Committee be approved

14 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ATTENDANCE AT THE LGA FIRE CONFERENCE IN MANCHESTER ON 9TH & 10TH MARCH 2010

The conference in Manchester was attended by Cllr C. Philpott, Cllr R. Llewellyn, CFO Richard Smith and AM Derek Masson.

The two days were filled with topical subjects to debate whilst providing an opportunity for Members and Officers to share good practice with other Fire Authorities from around the UK. The event was supported by a selection of fire related companies displaying and promoting their products and services. Lion Apparel, the provider of the Service's new personal protective equipment was in attendance and were the main Conference sponsors.

Councillor Philpott reported that although the Conference had been interesting and attendance had been worthwhile much of the discussion was weighted towards the English Fire & Rescue Service and so was not always relevant.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that although the Conference should remain as one of the Fire Authority's Standing Conference's, the agenda would be scrutinised before a final decision on Authority attendance was made.

15 TO RECEIVE THE SERVICE DELIVERY REPORT

The Service Delivery Report was received for information