

**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 20 DECEMBER 2010**

**COFNODION  
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,  
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyrddin  
**25 HYDREF 2010**

**MINUTES  
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**25 OCTOBER 2010**

**11.00 – 1.15PM**

**64 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN:  
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:

T E Evans  
C Philpott

AELODAU/MEMBERS:

Cyng/Cllrs: A Davies, J Dudley,  
R Llewellyn, Dyfrig Thomas, N Holley  
S Lloyd-Janes, M Williams, J Holmes,  
G Thomas, A Woolcock, P James,  
Des Thomas, M Pepper J J J Davies,

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:

Cyng/Cllrs: J Dinham, D Davies,  
F Torrens, T Tudor, D Howells, J Newbury  
P Llewellyn, P Smith

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:

P Coleman, P Bates, D Daycock,  
D Masson, J Cameron, J Maunder,  
S Flather, C Davies, K Jones

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dinham, D. Davies, Torrens, Tudor, Howells, Newbury, P. Llewellyn and Smith

## **2 DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

All Members present declared that they had a personal interest in any matters affecting or relating to their own Constituent Authority

## **3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Chair welcomed both Councillors Jim Davies and Nicola Holley to their first meeting following a period of ill health.

It was noted that from the previous week Members would be receiving by e mail a weekly copy of the Service Circular for information.

## **4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2010**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2010 were confirmed and approved as a true record.

## **5 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **Item 9 – To receive a report on the Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Measure and Sprinkler Update**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Paul Bates provided Members with an update following his appearing before the Assembly Legislation Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 where he had given evidence in support of the introduction of a Legislative Competence Order (LCO) requiring the installation of Automatic Fire Suppression Systems in all new residential premises. ACFO Bates reported that the process had been extremely challenging and robust but that the presentation had been well received. He was aware, however, that a strong lobby against the LCO had been made by the housing industry on the grounds of the additional costs such a measure would potentially add to new build properties. It was agreed that in order to promote the Measure the public needed to be educated in the fact that sprinklers were only activated in the actual room of the fire and that furthermore insurance premiums would more than likely be reduced in those properties having sprinkler systems.

***It was requested that a letter from the Fire Authority be sent to the Welsh Assembly in strongly supporting the LCO.***

## **6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2010**

The Chair of the Performance Review and Audit Committee, Councillor P James,

commended the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>TH</sup> October 2010 as being a true and accurate record of the proceedings and asked that his thanks be extended to Councillor J Dudley who had chaired the meeting in his absence due to a family commitment.

Councillor James congratulated the Service for recently receiving recognition by means of becoming finalists of two Excellence Wales Awards given in the category of Our Services: Collaboration and delivering high quality, citizen-centred services.

## **7 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Members discussed the improved data sharing protocols which would be of value in proactively reducing Accidental Fire Deaths and examples of these protocols were given from Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Powys.

It was noted that the Service was already working in partnership with Local Authorities to clarify the link between social factors and risk of fire, and also to explain the importance of releasing data concerning vulnerable members of society. The Service was also represented on the Welsh Assembly Government's Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) project, which had been established to provide a framework for service-providing organisations directly concerned with the well being of an individual in order to share information between them in a lawful and intelligent way.

Members were accordingly encouraged to promote information exchange and data sharing between their own Authorities and the Fire and Rescue Service for the overall health and wellbeing of local communities and an email would again be sent out to all Members following the meeting with further information to assist them in doing so.

***It was requested that following the meeting further information relating to data sharing protocols would be sent to all Members***

## **8 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2011 - 2012**

Area Manager Derek Masson presented the Annual Action Plan 2011 – 2012 together with a report on the outcome of the 12 week consultation process.

As part of the Welsh Assembly's Government's Risk Reduction Planning Guidance a meeting with the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government had been arranged for 20<sup>th</sup> October, but unfortunately this had been cancelled by the Minister due to the Government's CSR announcement on that day. He had however sent a letter to the Chair in which he provided his views on the Service's Risk Reduction Plan and requested to be kept informed of the outcome of the Service Review Programme.

Giving consideration to the consultation process Members were pleased to note that a total of 115 responses had been received, almost double the amount that had been received last year although it was noted that no responses had been received from either Members of Parliament or Assembly Members. It was suggested by Councillor Pepper that in order to elicit some sort of a response from stakeholders that a simple tick box be offered which could be ticked if the responder was happy with the service

provided. Mr Masson agreed that this idea would be considered for next year's consultation.

Councillor Woolcock said that it was unfortunate that the meeting with the Minister had been cancelled as he had a number of points he had wished to raise with him, in particular whether the Review could be carried out less often than on an annual basis. The Acting Chief Fire Officer, P Coleman responded that this question had been asked in a letter to the Minister but that it would be something for the National Framework Working Group to decide. It was further noted that the result of the Peer Review assessment during which the Chair and Councillor Woolcock had been interviewed would be available as a draft next week.

Members wished to express their thanks for the hard work and efforts of the Team who had produced the successful Annual Action Plan.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that :***

- ***The Annual Action Plan 2011/2012 be approved***
- ***The report on the consultation outcome be noted and approved***
- ***The publication of both documents on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2010 be approved***

## **9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TRANSFER OF NEW DIMENSIONS ASSETS**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Paul Bates, presented a report seeking the Authority's agreement of the transfer of the New Dimensions (ND) Assets from the Welsh Assembly Government to Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority at a date to be agreed.

As part of his presentation and to give a clearer picture of the amount of equipment involved, ACFO Bates provided photographic images of the equipment, which had all originally been provided by the UK Government following the terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. The assets included Incident Response Units (IRUs), High Volume Pumps (HVP), Urban Search and Rescue capability, as well as an inventory of ancillary equipment associated with these vehicles and its value in Mid and West Wales was in excess of £3m. The Welsh Assembly Government had taken ownership of all the ND assets located in Wales from the UK Government on 1 April 2010. For some time prior to this Officers from the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Authority's (FRS's) had been working together to negotiate transfer terms for all the ND assets to ensure long term sustainability of not only the assets themselves but the FRS's ability to crew the assets with trained and competent operators, and to meet the associated revenue costs which went with the transfer. It was noted that the main focus of the negotiations had been the reduction of potential risks to the Fire and Rescue Authority on transfer should future funding be removed or reduced.

Following these protracted negotiations, a draft transfer agreement had been prepared. Members attention was particularly drawn to Section 8 of the agreement which included a number of different clauses including a provision in the transfer terms that

should future funding be reduced or cease the Welsh Assembly Government would be required to take back ownership of the Assets and all the associated costs.

A report covering this issue had been considered by South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority on the 27 September 2010 when that Authority accepted the transfer in principle at a time and date to be agreed and the matter had also been considered and approved by the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority on the 18 October 2010. Councillor A Davies asked that should the Welsh Assembly Government take back the Assets in the event of funding being reduced, what would happen to the residual costs of the USAR Team, for example, and also would the Fire Authority have had a greater benefit if they had drawn up the Contract themselves. ACFO Bates responded that all but four of the USAR team were employed in other roles within the Service anyway and in reality the remaining four could be absorbed within the Service should funding cease. The LTCM Contract had been drawn up on a National basis and was in nature very complex and it was highly unlikely that any other agency could compete in terms of cost, interoperability and quality.

In response to a query from Councillor P James relating to the clause on the deployment of the Service's equipment under the Mutual Aid Protocol, ACFO Bates confirmed that the Chief Fire Officer did have the power of veto in such situations should that particular equipment be required for use within the Mid and West Wales Service area.

ACFO Bates confirmed that apart from the list of equipment, the wording in the Draft Agreement for the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services was identical.

## **RESOLUTION**

### ***It was RESOLVED that***

- The contents of the report and the transfer agreement be noted
- The transfer of the New Dimensions Assets and the requirements listed in the paper be approved

## **10 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER A REPORT FROM THE WALES AUDIT OFFICE ON THE PRELIMINARY CORPORATE ASSESSMENT**

The Chair welcomed Lisa Williams from the Wales Audit Office to the meeting during which they presented the report on the Preliminary Corporate Assessment which had taken place in July of this year. The assessment formed part of the new Local Government Measure (scrutiny framework) which had been introduced for the first time in 2010.

The Fire Authority welcomed the extremely positive report and acknowledged the comments made by the Wales Audit Office. The report made it clear that the Wales Audit Office found that within the Authority's 'strong leadership and good corporate arrangements are in place' and 'the Authority has a robust approach to planning its

improvement activities that is based on clear priorities’.

The Chair and Acting Chief Fire Officer thanked all staff who had been involved in the work commended within the Report and Members asked that this excellent work be highlighted by means of a press release.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was AGREED that the very positive Preliminary Corporate Assessment Report be noted and asked that a press release be distributed highlighting the Authority’s achievement.***

### **11 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON FIREBRAKE WALES**

Helen Prior, Chief Executive Officer of Firebrake Wales, was welcomed to the meeting and gave a presentation to Members on how Firebrake Wales was able to support the work of the Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities. It was noted that those Members who had attended the All Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Conference had previously had the opportunity to find out more about the work of Firebrake Wales.

### **12 ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, THE CHAIR DECIDES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY PURSUANT TO SECTION 100(B)(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

***It was AGREED that the following item be discussed as an item of urgent business in order that the Service Review Programme be progressed as expeditiously as possible and with effective Member involvement as part of the Authority’s budgetary strategy pursuant to Section 100(B)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972***

### **13 THE SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME**

The Acting Chief Fire Officer made reference to the presentation which had been made to Members on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010 where an update had been made on matters relating to the Service Review Programme (SRP). The SRP Team were now in the process of finalising a full range of options for the Fire Authority to consider once the Welsh Assembly Government had made its budgetary announcement for local authorities on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2010, following on from the Comprehensive Spending Review of 20<sup>th</sup> October.

The Acting Chief Fire Officer reported that the detailed planning phase of the SRP Review work would commence from November onwards and it was suggested that considerable value would be gained by forming a small Member Working Group to provide Fire Authority support and direction for this work. It was therefore proposed that consideration be given to using the current Risk Reduction Member Working Group, which consisted of one Member from each Unitary Authority, to assist with the next stage of developing the SRP.

Although Members were very much in favour of setting up a working group to assist with the work of the SRP, they considered that in such unprecedented times a greater

Member representation was required and that all Fire Authority Members be members of the Working Group.

## **RESOLUTION**

***Following a vote by a show of hands it was RESOLVED that an SRP Working Group be formed as soon as possible consisting of all Members of the Fire Authority in order to give additional support and direction to the Service Review Programme.***