

**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**

**COFNODION  
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD TAN**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,  
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyddin  
**9 MAI 2011**

**MINUTES  
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**9 MAY 2011**

**11.00 – 12.30**

**88 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN: T E Evans  
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: C Philpott

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: Dyfrig Thomas, N Holley,  
S Lloyd-Janes, P James, M Pepper,  
A Davies, J Dudley, J Dinham,  
M Williams, F Torrens, D Howells,  
P Llewellyn, G Thomas, Des Thomas,  
H Morris, J J J Davies, J Newbury,  
P Smith, R Llewellyn, A Woolcock,

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: J Holmes, D Davies

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: R Smith, P Bates, D Daycock,  
J Maunder, Kevin Jones, J Cameron,  
C Davies, S Flather, Karen Jones,  
C Jackson, C Margetts

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Holmes and D Davies

**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**

The Chair announced that in accordance with a resolution made at the last meeting of the Fire Authority that this meeting would be recorded as part of a six months pilot study following which a further report would be made to Members.

The Chair was pleased to welcome Councillor Pearl Llewellyn to the meeting following a period of absence due to ill health.

Councillor Francis Torrens reported that this would be his last meeting of the Fire Authority and that a new Member from Powys County Council would be appointed prior to the Authority's Annual General Meeting. Councillor Torrens thanked Members and Officers for their support and friendship during his tenure of Office. Members wished Councillor Torrens all the best for the future and thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Fire Authority.

**4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2011**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following amendment:

***To amend the minutes to reflect that Cllr J Davies was present at the meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011***

**5 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 MARCH 2011**

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 7th March 2011 were received and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

**Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

**Item 11 – To receive a Report on the Marine Incident Response Group**

It was noted that the results of the review of the Marine Incident Response Group fire provision and the implications for the Service were not yet available, but that a report would be provided to Members at a future meeting.

**6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

The minutes of the Standards Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2011 were received and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

**7 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2011**

The minutes of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011 were received and approved as a true record of proceedings.

**8 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2012 - 2013**

At the Fire Authority meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the five main areas of focus for the Service's Draft Annual Action Plan for 2012-2013 had been approved and the Member Working Group had been directed to develop these areas and make recommendations for strategic planning.

Group Manager Karen Jones reported that the Member Working Group had recommended that views should be sought on the following five areas of work for 2012-2013:

**1. Managing Risk** - This area focused on reducing the risk from arson and developing children and young people into safer citizens.

**2. Managing people** – the area focussed on promoting a multi-skilled, competent, safe and flexible workforce by ensuring that employees continued to be provided with the most effective training and skills. The Service would ensure that its policies reflected those contained within the all Wales Diversity and Equality Strategy.

**3. Working Together** – the Service would continue to work closely with other public and private organisations, partners and communities to ensure that citizens most at risk received help and support, with particular emphasis on Community Safety. Reference was made to the national Target Hardening Funding initiative which could be drawn down by local authorities and used to protect properties such as schools, for example, against arson attacks by paying for security fencing.

Working with others meant a sharing of resources, which was recognised as being particularly important during the current financial climate. In response to a query the Chief Fire Officer emphasised that the practice of partnership working was rigorously controlled with the Service's contribution on an equal level to the benefit it received back from its partners.

Members referred to the valuable contribution made by local employers of retained duty system personnel and it was noted that within the new style Annual Awards ceremony there would be a category to recognise the best employer of retained duty staff.

**4. Managing Resources**

The Authority had seen a reduction in its funding for 2011/12 and would see further

reductions for 2012/13 and beyond. However, the Authority needed to continue to deliver against demanding expectations for efficiency and value for money and still drive improvement by implementing new ways of working

One of the areas for resource management in 2012-2013 would be the introduction of a more efficient crewing system at Llanelli Community Fire Station which would continue to provide full-time 24 hour cover. Members of the Working Group had debated this area in great detail, taking into account the effectiveness of the alternative crewing system already used in Pontardawe.

**5. Managing Performance** in order to provide a more efficient collection, analysis and sharing of data to help the Service identify risk and target resources in the areas of greatest need.

### **Communication and Consultation**

The Member Working Group had reviewed the arrangements for consultation and engagement at its initial meeting and made a number of recommendations to ensure that stakeholders had appropriate opportunities to provide their views on improvement priorities. A comprehensive Communication and Consultation Strategy had been provided by the Media and Communications Manager to reflect these recommendations and to maximise positive engagement with the Service's stakeholders and local communities.

Subject to approval the Draft Annual Action Plan 2012-2013 would be consulted upon for a three month period between 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011. The Member Working Group would then have the opportunity to consider the responses received and Performance and Improvement data would be used to produce a comprehensive Annual Action Plan for consideration by the Authority in October 2011.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- *The Draft Annual Action Plan 2012-2013 be approved*
- *The Communications and Consultation Strategy for the Draft Annual Action Plan including public consultation between 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011 be approved*

## **9 TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

The Clerk reported that in April 2008 the 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*".

As part of that process the Authority would annually produce a "Statement of Assurance" to show compliance with the Code.

An internal review had been carried out in 2008/09 by the Authority's senior management team, reinforced by work carried out by Internal Audit, to determine how well the Authority met the demands of the adopted framework. The review concluded that corporate governance within the Authority was well managed and in line with the CIPFA / SOLACE framework with many examples of good governance arrangements in place.

Since that time more detailed internal audits had been undertaken, examining some of the areas of higher risk, as prioritised by the Director of Resources. These audits had been positive, showing no fundamental weaknesses, and had been reported to the Authority's Policy Review and Audit Committee. It was the intention to undertake detailed audits on all aspects of the Code of Corporate Governance annually on a rolling basis. In addition the Corporate Communications and Member Support department were updating and monitoring the effectiveness, currency and ownership of the Corporate Governance Statement throughout the year, with emphasis on the areas not reviewed by either internal or external audit.

It was the view of the Authority's Statutory Officers that the review of the governance arrangements for the financial year 2010/11 could give general assurance and that they believed that the existing arrangements were fit for purpose and were adequate to meet the Authority's corporate aims.

Members noted that the Code of Corporate Governance had been approved by the Performance review and Audit Committee at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED:***

***To approve the Statement of Assurance for signature by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.***

### **10 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT TO THE WELSH LANGAUGE BOARD**

In the conduct of public business and administration the Authority was committed to treating the Welsh and English languages on an equal basis and the revised Welsh Language Scheme 2010 - 2013 set out how the Authority would deliver this commitment.

As part of the Welsh Language Scheme's monitoring process an annual progress report must be submitted to the Welsh Language Board by 30<sup>th</sup> June each year. The Annual Monitoring Report contained areas of achievements and areas for development measured against the commitments made in the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme.

The report provided the formal basis on which compliance with the Authority's statutory Welsh Language Scheme was monitored and provided a clear picture of the progress made in 2010/11. Members were pleased to note that the Authority had been making

excellent progress in its drive towards improving the bilingual services it delivered and the profile of the Welsh language within the Service had been raised considerably by means of the following areas of improvement:

- Establishment of the Welsh Language Forum, which included one representative from each service area, to discuss and deal with issues relating to the Welsh language as well as informing staff within their service areas of the Scheme's requirements.
- The establishment of a Corporate Governance and Information Manager with dedicated responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme implementation.
- The introduction of a Welsh Language monitoring system which had played a key role in ensuring the successful implementation and mainstreaming of the revised Welsh Language Scheme 2010-2013.
- The introduction of a Linguistic Skills Strategy which had provided a planned and strategic infrastructure for responding appropriately to the Service's commitments contained in the Welsh Language Scheme. This strategy would enable the Authority to co-ordinate the various elements involved in ensuring equality of language choice in service provision, frontline services, employee personal development and recruitment.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer commended the report and joined with Members in praising the achievements of the Head of Corporate Communications and Member Support and the Welsh Language and Governance Officer for their commitment in promoting the Welsh language throughout the Service.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED:***

***That the draft Welsh Language Scheme annual monitoring report 2010/11 be approved for presentation to the Welsh Language Board in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993.***

## **11 TO RECEIVE THE REPORT ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION**

A report was received for information on the Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition which was held at the Hilton Hotel, Gateshead between the 8 and 9 March. The title of the conference was 'The Future of Fire' and both the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer represented the Authority throughout the whole conference.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

*The report be noted*

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

The Chair agreed to accept a report on the Service Review Programme as an urgent item pursuant to paragraph 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it provided Members with an up to date analysis of the progress of the implementation of operational and management initiatives and provided the latest feedback on consultation with staff and their representatives to enable Members to be fully informed of progress in this complex and sensitive area.

*It was RESOLVED:*

To consider the item as an urgent report and further resolved that it be considered as an exempt item following item 14 on the Agenda.

- 13 **To resolve, that pursuant to section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the reason, that if they were present, it is likely that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within the description of Schedule 12(A)(1) to the Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to a particular individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)**

- 14 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES TO THE AUTHORITY**

The Clerk reported on the provision of Legal Services to the Fire Authority.

In order to demonstrate best value and robustness in the procurement of these specialist services, it had been recommended that the Monitoring Officer and the Director of Resources' procurement team be authorised to carry out a full procurement exercise in relation to specialist Fire Authority legal advice and or representation in the areas of Fire Safety Law and Services.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- *Any general legal advice/representation required by the Fire Authority to be accessed via the South Wales joint legal services procurement regime.*
- *A full tendering and procurement process be initiated as soon as possible for the provision of specialist Fire Authority legal services, preferably in conjunction with the other Welsh Fire Authorities.*

- ***Until the above process was completed, the existing providers be asked to continue to provide their services, on existing terms and conditions.***

## **15 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that the Service Review Programme had now moved into the implementation phase and that rapid progress was being made. This would turn the review into action to ensure that effective Service improvements were delivered and the challenges of budget reduction in 2011/12 and beyond were met.

Members were provided with an update on the process of implementation and consultation with staff and their representative bodies and noted that a considerable amount of effort had been put into consultation and negotiation with all bodies representing staff to ensure the implementation of budget reductions and the phasing in of structural changes whilst minimising the impact on affected staff.

Regular progress reports on the work being driven by the Service Improvement Implementation Group (SIIG) would be given to the Fire Authority along with the promulgation of minutes of appropriate meetings at regular intervals.

### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***The report be noted***