

**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
Siambr Y Cyngor
Neuadd Y Sir, Caerfyddin
24 HYDREF 2011**

**MINUTES
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING
Council Chamber,
County Hall, Carmarthen
24 OCTOBER 2011**

11.00 – 13.30PM

80 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN: C Philpott
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: R Llewellyn

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: Dyfrig Thomas, T E Evans,
J Newbury, J Dinham, N Holley,
S Lloyd-Janes, P James, J Holmes,
M Williams, G Ratcliffe, D Howells,
G Thomas, Des Thomas, J J J Davies,
A Woolcock, A Davies, D Davies,
T Tudor

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: P Smith, J Dudley,
P Llewellyn, H Morris, M Pepper

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: R Smith, P Bates, D Daycock, E Aitken,
J Cameron, C Davies, D Masson,
K J Jones, K Jones, C Margetts, J
Maunder

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Smith, J Dudley, P Llewellyn, H Morris and M Pepper

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 informed Members of the recent passing of former Councillor Basil Woodruff who had been Chair of the Fire Authority for 1998 - 99. It was noted that a letter of condolence had been sent to Mr Woodruff's family on behalf of the Authority and a minutes silence was held as a mark of respect.

The Chair welcomed members of the press and public to the meeting

4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 26th SEPTEMBER 2011

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 26th September 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following being inserted:

Item 15 – Firebrake Wales

15.12 to read: On being put, the amendment was carried

To consider matters arising from the Minutes:

4 – Report on the Marine Incident Response Group (MIRG)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that he had attended a meeting on 4th October in Kent where the national position on the future of the Marine Incident Response Group (MIRG) had been agreed.

It was noted that a report on both the national and local position would be presented to the December meeting of the Fire Authority.

5 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2012 - 2013

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced the report on the Annual Action Plan 2012-2013 which had been developed under the direction of the Risk Reduction Planning (RRP) Member Working Group. The Plan was accompanied by a report on the year's consultation on the Draft Annual Action Plan which had run from 16th May to 19th August 2011.

It was noted that objectives relating to improvement and performance had been

considered and approved by the Performance Review and Audit Committee on the 10th October 2011. The Annual Action Plan combined the formal requirements for reporting on risk reduction planning, and performance and improvement which was required under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to be published by the 31st October.

The Head of Performance and Planning presented the Annual Action Plan 2012-2013 and made reference to the Service's achievements during 2010 - 2011. The Plan provided a summary of risks and activity within each Command area together with detail of the Welsh Assembly Government introduced Performance Indicators for the Welsh Fire and Rescue Services. These required the Services to report on their performance in areas of risk reduction, community safety, workforce and financial health.

The improvement proposals for the Draft Annual Action Plan had been approved by the Fire Authority in May 2011 and had been subject to a public consultation between 16th May and 19th August 2011. Comments had been sought on five areas of improvement for 2012-2013 which had included Managing Risk, Managing People, Working Together, Managing Resources and Managing Performance. Reference was made to the Consultation Report which outlined how the consultation had been undertaken, who the key stakeholders were, a summary of the responses received and how they had been analysed.

The Head of Performance and Planning reported that although there had been enthusiasm and agreement generally about the improvement proposals, much interest and media speculation had arisen from the proposal to introduce a more efficient crewing system at Llanelli Fire Station. It was noted that no detail had been provided with this proposal as the Service were open to ideas and suggestions from staff and stakeholders as to how the proposal could be taken forward. The media message put out by the Service had emphasised that any changes to the crewing system at Llanelli Fire Station would have no detrimental impact on public safety and that the station would continue to be crewed 24 hours, 7 days a week with the same number of crew and response times. The Risk Reduction Planning Member Working Group had taken a keen interest in the issues surrounding the proposed changes at Llanelli Fire Station and, although fully understanding the concerns of the local community, were confident that an efficient system without any reduction in the level of service could be provided for Llanelli.

The recommendation that the Authority approve publication of both the Annual Action Plan 2012 – 2013 and the Consultation Report on the Annual Action Plan 2012 – 13 was moved by the Chair and seconded by Councillor T E Evans.

Members from the Llanelli area spoke of the concerns of the local communities in regard to the proposed changes in the crewing system at Llanelli Fire Station and of the need to provide the community with the reassurance that any changes would not subject the area to greater risk in terms of response times or fire cover. Following the unwarranted concerns unjustifiably raised by recent articles in the local press, Members asked that reassurance be provided to the local community in Llanelli that a first class service would be provided to them with no reduction in cover.

The Chief Fire Officer responded that as Head of Paid Service he was personally responsible for the safety of the whole of the Mid and West Wales area and that as such would not put anyone's lives at risk. He made reference to the Service's Five year Strategy 2010 – 15 and of the challenges faced by the Service in providing a range of services against a back drop of public spending cuts. Although the Service had a public duty to provide value for money by making the best use of resources, the Chief Fire Officer made the assurance that any reorganisation of staff would have no effect on the level of 24 hour cover currently provided at Llanelli. He confirmed that no decision as to the detail of the change in crewing system had yet been made and that Officers would be working closely with staff and stakeholders to determine the best option for that area.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that there had been a misconception that the crewing system at Llanelli would mirror that currently in place in Pontardawe. It was confirmed that this was not the case as both areas had differing requirements in terms of population and risk profile.

In response to a query it was further explained that over the next few years similar consideration would be given to crewing systems at all Stations throughout the Mid and West Wales area in order to provide the most efficient service without reducing the level of service provided

Reference was made to the last meeting of the Risk Reduction Planning Member Working Group held on 24th August 2011 where the Annual Action Plan had been recommended to the full Fire Authority for approval. The Member Working Group had supported the intention to identify a range of options for a more efficient duty system for Llanelli that met the needs of the community and reflected its risk profile. Subject to Fire Authority approval, they had recommended that officers work with staff and representative bodies to develop a range of options taking into account the specific risk factors relevant to the area and the needs of that community. Although Members were happy to listen to the professional advice of Officers, a number considered that further consultation should have taken place prior to the Fire Authority meeting and expressed concerns that this had not taken place.

In response to a query raised about the shortage of cover at Llanelli Fire Station during a very brief period recently, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that the dynamic mobilising of resources was a routine daily occurrence and that Stations not available for short periods of time for varying reasons were covered by their neighbouring Fire Stations.

Councillor P James proposed an amendment which was seconded. The proposed amendment read as follows:

That the Risk Reduction Planning Member Working Group continue to monitor through regular reporting and robust scrutiny, progress of on going changes regarding Llanelli Fire Station

On being put, the amendment was carried

Councillor S Lloyd-Janes proposed a further amendment which was seconded. The amendment read as follows:

That full consultation with the various Trade Unions takes place regarding the change in shift patterns at Llanelli Fire Station in order to achieve efficiency saving. In the interests of transparency five Members of the Fire Authority be invited to attend as observers to witness these negotiations. These Members to consist of the three Llanelli Members together with two Members from the People and Organisational Development Committee. The minutes arising from these meetings to be made available to all Fire Authority Members as soon as possible.

On being put, the amendment was carried

The Chair commented that in her view a robust process was already in place in terms of Member information and involvement in issues relating to staff. Members were kept fully informed through receipt of the Service Improvement Implementation Group and the Service Management and Fire Brigades Union minutes and through attendance at the Joint Consultative Committee meeting. It was clear from these minutes that no final decision had been made as to the duty system in Llanelli and that staff were involved in the on going discussions.

Councillor A Woolcock proposed an amendment which was seconded. This amendment read as follows:

That the Authority defer approval of the Annual Action Plan 2012/13 to allow all Members of the Fire Authority to meet with staff and Trade Union representatives recognised by the Fire Authority to discuss the proposed changes to the crewing system at Llanelli Fire Station prior to 31st October 2011.

Councillor T. Tudor requisitioned that this vote be recorded in the minutes under Authority Procedure Rule 1.18;

The votes cast were as follows:

For the amendment:

Councillors A Woolcock, S Lloyd-Janes, Des Thomas, A Davies, T Tudor, G Ratcliffe, D Davies, Dyfrig Thomas, J Dinham

Against the amendment:

Councillors C Philpott, J Davies, T Evans, N Holley, J Holmes, P James, D Howells, R Llewellyn, J Newbury, G Thomas, M Williams

On being put, the amendment was lost

The substantive motion thus amended was then put and was carried.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The full Fire Authority approve the Consultation Report on the Draft Annual Action Plan 2012-2013**
- 2. The full Fire Authority approve the Annual Action Plan 2012-2013**
- 3. The full Fire Authority approve publication of both documents before 31st October 2011**
- 4. The Risk Reduction Planning Member Working Group continue to monitor through regular reporting and robust scrutiny, progress of on going changes regarding Llanelli Fire Station**
- 5. Full consultation with the various Trade Unions take place regarding the change in shift patterns at Llanelli Fire Station in order to achieve efficiency saving . In the interests of transparency five Members of the Fire Authority be invited to attend as observers to witness these negotiations. These Members to consist of the three Llanelli Members together with two Members from the People and Organisational Development Committee. The minutes arising from these meetings to be made available to all Fire Authority Members as soon as possible.**

6 TO RECEIVE A PROGRESS REPORT ON SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCIES

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a report on the progress made by the Service Improvement Implementation Group (SIIG) which had been set up earlier in the year. The primary function of SIIG had been to drive forward the agreed improvement actions required for 2011/12 to achieve the £1.23m savings whilst driving forward wider Service improvements. The paper provided Members with an update on the progress made on the 15 action points agreed at the Fire Authority meeting in February 2011 and it was noted that many of the actions had already been completed.

The introduction of the Rural Response Units was discussed and it was noted that the Service would be taking delivery of the first nine vehicles early in the New Year, when the saving associated with the project would then be realised. Members would have the opportunity to view the pumps once they had been delivered.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The report be noted

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE STANDARDS CONFERENCE WALES

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority attended the Standards Wales Conference held at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells on the 5 October 2011, together with Fire Authority Standards Committee Members Councillor R Llewellyn and Councillor A Davies and Mr Merion Howells, lay member and Chair of the Authority's Standards Committee.

The Conference also enabled the delegates to meet and discuss matters relating to the Code with delegates from other Authorities and, through this facility to identify and benefit from good practice arising throughout Wales in the important areas of Standards and Probity

It was considered that attendance at future conferences at a cost of approximately £60 per delegate would represent good value, and would clearly be of benefit to Members and Officers.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The report be noted