

**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  
6 CHWEFROR 2012**

**MINUTES  
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**

**The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
6 FEBRUARY 2012**

**11.00 – 12.25PM**

**52 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

**Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:**

<b>GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN:</b>	C Philpott
<b>IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:</b>	R Llewellyn
<b>AELODAU/MEMBERS:</b>	Cyng/Cllrs:T E Evans, N Holley, D Davies M Pepper, M Williams, G Ratcliffe, D Howells, G Thomas, A Woolcock, J Dudley, J Holmes
<b>YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:</b>	Cyng/Cllrs: Dyfrig Thomas, P James, P Smith, P Llewellyn, A Davies, H Morris, S Lloyd-Janes, Des Thomas, T Tudor, J Newbury
<b>YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	R Smith, P Bates, D Daycock, E Aitken, D Masson, C Davies, K J Jones, C Margetts, J Maunder

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Smith, T Tudor, J Newbury, Des Thomas, Dyfrig Thomas, P Llewellyn, P James, A Davies, H Morris and S Lloyd-Janes.

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

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

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 13, namely the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2011.

Officers declared an interest under the Officer's Code of Conduct in Agenda item 14, namely the report on the Pay Policy Statement

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

The Chair made reference to the passing of Mr David Schuneman, the Services' Head of Transport and also of the passing of Councillor Hazel Morris' son. Members stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect.

Councillor Don Davies announced that this would be his last meeting of the Fire Authority as he would be retiring at the end of the Municipal Year. On behalf of Members the Chair thanked Councillor Davies for his contribution to the Fire Authority and wished him a long and happy retirement.

## **4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2011**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following amendments:

**Item 15:** Resolution to be amended to read 'The **majority** of Members preferred the option...'

### **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

#### **Item 11 – To receive a presentation from the Chief Executive Officer of Firebrake Wales**

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that following a Board Meeting held in December 2011, two Members of staff from Firebrake Wales had been made redundant and an update report would be presented to Members in due course.

#### **Item 15 – To receive a report on the Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales**

The Chief Fire Officer reported that a meeting had been held with the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities and the Minister in order to discuss the National Options Committee. A report would be presented to the April meeting of the Fire Authority.

**5 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2011**

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

**6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012**

The minutes of the Resources Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 were confirmed 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 23<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2012**

The minutes of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 were received and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following amendments:

**Item 13 – Verbal Update from Internal Audit**

To add that ‘The Internal Auditor’s were asked to consider reviewing the Service’s ICT Service as part of their next Internal Audit review’

**Item 16 – Annual Audit Letter**

To delete the final sentence in paragraph 16.5

**8 TO RECEIVE THE MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/13**

The Treasurer reported that the Authority was required to set aside funds from revenue each year to meet future liabilities to repay the principal element of loans and finance leases. The amount set aside is called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and by Regulation, a policy on the method of calculation had to be approved by the Authority prior to the start of the year that the method would be applied to. The report laid out a recommended calculation method and showed the estimated charge to revenue if the method was adopted. It was noted that the method recommended was the same as used in 2011/12 and followed the guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The Resources Committee had considered the policy on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 and had resolved to recommend that the Fire and Rescue Authority adopt the Policy Statement.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- 1) The “Regulatory Method” be adopted for expenditure incurred before or on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.***
- 2) The “Asset Life Method with Equal Instalments” be adopted for***

***expenditure on or after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, with the Minimum Revenue Provision first being charged in the year after the asset comes in to use when funded by loan, or in the same year as the first lease rental payment if funded by finance lease.***

**9 TO RECEIVE THE TREASURERS REPORT ON THE PRUDENTIAL CODE AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/13**

The Treasurer reported that when considering the capital programme the Authority was required to test that:

the capital plans were affordable;  
that all external borrowing and other long term liabilities were within prudent and sustainable levels; and  
that treasury management decisions were taken in accordance with good practice.

This was achieved by the calculation and approval of a suite of Prudential Indicators, some of which showed the financial impact of capital expenditure decisions, whilst others provided constraints on treasury management decisions. The report presented the 2012/13 Prudential Indicators for approval.

It was noted that the report had been considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 where it had been resolved to recommend the Prudential Indicators to the Fire and Rescue Authority for approval.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- 1) The 2012/13 Prudential Indicators be approved.***
- 2) Delegated authority be given to the Director of Resources 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.***

**10 TO RECEIVE THE JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES ON THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2012/13**

The Treasurer introduced the report requesting Fire and Rescue Authority approval for the budget requirement for 2012/13 and the capital programme for 2012-2015. The report also sought approval to reduce the call on the Constituent Authorities for 2011/12.

The report was an update on the earlier report which had been presented to the Fire Authority on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011, which had been based on the Provisional Revenue Support Grant Settlement. The Final Revenue Support Grant Settlement had been announced on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and the average change from the 2011/12 final Settlement on a like for like basis for the Constituent Authorities had increased

slightly since the Provisional Settlement. It was reported that the impact of this on the Fire Authority's proposed budget was an additional £21,000.

As had been agreed by the Fire Authority on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the potential increase had been indicated to the Constituent Authorities and had been included in the budget proposals within the report. It was reported that no responses had been received from the Constituent Authorities as a result of the potential increase.

Members were informed that it was the intention that the additional £21,000 would be utilised for Mechanical and Electrical work to undertake an assessment of the Service's heating systems as part of the sustainability agenda and this had now been included as part of the Efficiencies table (Appendix C) and subsequently in the build up of the budget at Appendix A. The proposed Capital Programme (Appendix B) and the proposed Vehicle Replacement Programme (Appendix D) remained unchanged from that agreed at the December Fire Authority meeting.

It was noted that the proposal for reducing the Constituent Authorities' contributions by £1 million for 2011/12 and replacing this with an additional funding of £1 million from Reserves on a 'one off' basis remained the same.

The Treasurer informed Members that the Authority was obliged, in accordance with the requirements of the Combination Scheme Order, to submit an estimate of its net expenses for the following year to its constituent Unitary Authorities by the 31st December annually, before determining the final budget by 15th February prior to the relevant financial year. All Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales were required to approve their revenue and capital budgets in the same timescale

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED:***

- 1) That for 2012/13, the net budget at £43,470,259 (-0.18% like for like, -0.5% cash reduction) be approved as set out in Appendix A***
- 2) That the budget of £43,470,259 for 2012/13 be part funded by £380k from reserves***
- 3) That the Constituent Authorities be requested for the balance of £43,090,259 as their contribution for the 2012/13 year.(0.05% like for like change, -0.27% cash reduction on their revenue account)***
- 4) That the Capital Programme attached at Appendix B be approved, leading to the capital financing charges shown as additional in Appendix A.***
- 5) That the vehicle replacement programme attached at Appendix D be approved***
- 6) That the Director of Resources be authorised to decide on the appropriate method of financing of vehicles (be it leasing or otherwise) at the time of procurement.***

**7) That for 2011/12, there would be a reduction in the Constituent Authorities' contributions of £1 million on the figures notified to them as part of the original budget process for 2011/12 ( i.e. £43,207,259 less £1 million, new contribution level £42,207,259) and that this would be reduced pro rata on the same population figures as the original 2011/12 contributions. This would be replaced by an additional £1 million funding of the 11/12 budget from Reserves as a 'one off' arrangement.**

**11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE DETAILED REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2012/13**

The Treasurer reported that at the Fire Authority meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 the revenue budget for 2012/13, subject to any changes required on announcement of the final settlement figures from the Welsh Government, had been agreed. The break down of that budget was presented to Members for consideration.

It was noted that the detailed revenue budget had been considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012 where it had been resolved to recommend the budget for approval by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

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

**12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2012/13 AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The Treasurer presented the report which set out the proposed policy and strategy which would underpin the treasury management activities undertaken by Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority in 2012/13.

The policy and strategy, which had to be approved by the Authority each year, remained unchanged from the 2011/12 policy and strategy. It was reported that the Treasury Management Practices only had to be approved if they had been changed from those already approved and it was noted that there had been no changes.

It was noted that the Treasury Policy and Strategy for 2012/13 had been considered by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012, where it had been resolved to recommend the Treasury Policy and Strategy to the Fire and Rescue Authority for approval.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2012/13 be approved***

## 13 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2011

The Clerk presented the report which summarised the findings contained within the Final Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (The Panel) and sought Members' views upon changes they would wish to make to the Members' Payment Scheme 2012/13 as a consequence.

The Panel had decided that for 2012/13, a Basic Salary (formerly Allowance) of £1,350 should be paid to all Fire Authority Members and additionally Fire Authorities could also decide to pay a Senior Salary to members who carried out certain functions. If this was agreed then the Senior Salaries would be paid at the following levels:

- A Fire & Rescue Authority Senior Salary of £10,085 to be paid to the Fire & Rescue Authority Chairperson (£1,350 + £8,735).
- A Fire & Rescue Authority Senior Salary of £5,095 to be paid to the Fire & Rescue Authority Deputy Chairperson (previously Vice Chairperson) (£1,350 + £3,745) "where there is a distinct and sustained senior responsibility" (paragraph 5.4 of IPRW report). Advice had been received by the Panel that this meant that the Deputy Chairperson must have "demonstrable responsibilities in addition to simply chairing Authority meetings occasionally in the Chair's absence. Examples of this could be chairing an Authority Committee or managing the Member Development Working Group."
- A Fire & Rescue Authority Senior Salary of £5,095 could be paid for up to two Fire & Rescue Authority Committee Chairpersons (£1,350 + £3,745).

The Clerk reported that there were a considerable number of options in relation to the possible allocation of Senior Salary payments and format of committee structures. However he recommended that there were four main options available to the Authority in term of Panel's Senior Salary payments with regard to the Chair, Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority, and its main committee Chairs.

It would be assumed that all options would include a Senior Salary payment to the Chair of the Fire Authority, and that the Chair's role and duties would remain the same. Members were made aware that there was no discretion regarding lowering or varying the payments made as Senior Salaries.

The four main options were identified as :

1. Keep the existing Committee structure and have the Vice Chair to chair an existing Committee in addition to existing duties, together with two other Committee chairs all of whom would receive a Senior Salary
2. Retain the current Committee structure with no salary paid to Chairs of Committees, but with a salary paid to Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority of £10,095 (Chair); and £5,095 for Vice Chair, and the Vice Chair to take on all additional Chairing roles within the Constitution.
3. Retain the existing structure but do not pay a salary to one Chair of a main

Committee, but possibly remove the workload to allow for this, and pay a Senior Salary to Vice Chairs and other Chairs.

4. Reduce the number of main Committees from three to two, with a re allocation of responsibility between the Committees, with the payment of the Vice Chair's salary being linked to additional Chairing duties of other Committees/working groups, and pay the two main Committee Chairs £5,095 each.

The Report had previously been considered by the Member Development Working Group on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012 who were of the view that further time was needed before a final decision could be made, and that a special meeting of the Member Development Working Group should be convened in order to explore the options further. The Chair advised that Members of the Working Group did not feel that sufficient consideration could be given to the available options prior to the report being discussed by the Fire Authority and suggested that a full discussion of the paper be deferred to the April meeting of the Fire Authority.

In the light of these comments, Members were requested to forward their comments prior to the next Member Development Working Group on 20<sup>th</sup> February to either the Vice Chair of the Fire Authority, the Clerk or the Head of Corporate Communications and Member Support

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

- i) The Fire Authority note the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales***
- ii) The Monitoring Officer be authorised to make all necessary consequential amendments to the Constitution and Members Payment Scheme***
- iii) The Monitoring Officer liaise with Members further regarding their views concerning the options for the structure of the Authority, and a report to be brought to the next meeting of the Fire Authority***

## **14 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Clerk reported that relevant authorities were required by Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to prepare a Pay Policy Statements. The statement would articulate the Authority's policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff (or 'chief officers') and its lowest paid employees. Pay policy statements must be prepared for each financial year, beginning with 2012/13 and they had to be approved by the Fire Authority and published by 31 March 2012. A Pay Policy Statement for Mid and West Wales Fire Authority for the financial year 2012/13 was provided for Member approval.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

The Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13 be approved

**15 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Davies presented the report which summarised the progress towards the delivery of Mid and West Wales Fire Services' commitments under the Sustainability and Environment Strategy 2009.

Members were aware that in 2008, the Service had embarked on a scoping project to review its position in relation to the delivery of its service against both local and national sustainability and environmental standards.

Subsequent work on this subject had led to the creation of a dedicated strategy document for the Service titled 'A Sustainability and Environmental Strategy for Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service' which had been published in June 2009.

The Strategy had been structured into several key areas, which had included community engagement, procurement, energy control, waste management, biodiversity as well as wildlife enhancement and protection, all of which were within the context of Sustainability and Environmental Management.

It was noted that in April 2011 following the outcomes of the Service Review Programme, a Sustainability Manager had been appointed to enable the Service to progress its Sustainability objectives.

Members were pleased to note the Service's progress against the key areas of the Sustainability and Environmental Strategy.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

The progress outlined within the report be noted

**16 TO RECEIVE THE WILDFIRE STRATEGY PROGRESS REPORT**

Area Manager Margetts presented a report to Members on the Service's combined preventative, protective and response plan that Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service would deliver in partnership with key agencies to reduce the environmental, ecological and financial impact resulting from grassland, heath land and forestry fires known as Wildfires.

It was noted that Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service attended on average over 2500 Wildfires a year and such fires had a significant impact on the communities of Wales both environmentally and economically. With an ever changing environment there was a growing consensus that it was likely that the number and size of Wildfires would increase over the years unless communities come together to tackle the issue.

The Wildfire Key Business Streams included areas of:

- Prevention where Command personnel, in conjunction with Community Safety staff continued to identify prospective partners, for example, landowners who were in a position to assist in the prevention of wildfires. Each Command was currently working to identify the types of wildfire they were experiencing in different areas
- Protective Measures - whereby Business Fire Safety Officers under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order were raising awareness to the Wildfire hazard and the disruption which could be caused to businesses as a result.
- Response - whereby the Service was embarking on a training program for its Operational personnel at three different levels.

It was reported that the Service was creating a framework to allow for the procurement of six small all terrain off road vehicles which could safely transport crews' water and equipment to isolated and remote locations with the capability of quickly suppressing fire lines and constructing and developing control lines. These vehicles would be positioned strategically in each of the six commands and would reduce the level of Wildfire risk to both crews and communities

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***The report be noted***

### **17 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SMART METER UPDATE**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Davies reported that in July 2010, 14 Smart Meters had been installed at a variety of locations across the Service area. Measuring electricity in half hourly units, the Smart Meter enabled the Service to pinpoint the exact utility consumption at these sites, allowing the planning of an effective energy reduction programme. The data could be analysed against various different forms of calculation enabling the Service to

- Calculate exact carbon emissions data
- Monitor seasonal variations
- Report on energy usage both inside and outside of business hours.

Members commended the proposals as a valuable money saving initiative and were pleased to note the positive results following the installation of the meters.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***The report be noted***

## **18 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS AND EFFICIENCIES**

The Director of Delivery reported that, as Members were aware, the Service was required to make efficiency savings totalling £1.23m from the 2011/12 budget. To move this forward a Service Improvement Implementation Group (SIIG) had been set up which was chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. The primary function of SIIG had been to drive forward the agreed improvement actions required for 2011/12 in order to achieve the £1.23m savings.

A report was provided for Members giving an update on the progress made on the 15 action points agreed at the Fire Authority meeting in February 2011.

Members were pleased to note that all 15 actions had been completed and the subsequent savings achieved.

The Chair reminded Members that they had received regular updates throughout the past year by receipt of copies of the minutes of the Service Improvement Implementation Group meetings which had kept them fully informed throughout the process.

### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***The report be noted***