

**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
16 EBRILL 2012

**MINUTES
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen
16 APRIL 2012

11.00 – 13.05

60 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN:
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:

C Philpott
R Llewellyn

AELODAU/MEMBERS:

Cyng/Cllrs: J Davies, J Dudley, T E
Evans, N Holley, J Holmes, P James,
S Lloyd-Janes, H Morris, J Newbury, G
Ratcliffe, G Thomas, M Williams, Dyfrig
Thomas

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:

Cyng/Cllrs: D Davies, J Dinham, D
Howells, M Pepper and A Woolcock

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:

R Smith, P Bates, D Daycock, E Aitken,
D Masson, C Davies, K Jones,
J Cameron, A Francis, J Maunder

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Davies, J Dinham, D Howells, M Pepper and A Woolcock.

2 DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

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

All Members declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11, namely the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2011.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair made reference to the recent passing of former Fire Authority Member Councillor Billy Jones. Members stood for a minutes silence as a mark of respect.

The Chair announced that that this would be the last meeting of the Fire Authority for Councillor Jim Davies as he would be retiring at the end of the Municipal Year. Members thanked Councillor Davies for his sterling contribution to the Fire Authority and wished him a long and happy retirement. Best wishes were also extended to Councillor D Davies who had previously noted his intention to retire at the end of the Municipal Year.

4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 6th FEBRUARY 2012

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 6th February 2012 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

5 TO RECEIVE, CONSIDER AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 12TH MARCH 2012

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 12th March 2012 were received and noted as a true record of the proceedings, subject to confirmation by the appropriate committee, apart from the following amendment:

Item 7: Resolution to be amended to read '*That the People and Organisational Development Committee approve the Draft Strategic Equality Action Plan including the objectives and action plans contained within it.*'

6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26TH MARCH 2012

The minutes of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 26th March 2012 were received and noted as a true record of the proceedings, subject to confirmation by the appropriate committee, apart from the following amendment:

That the order of business recorded be amended to reflect that Internal Audit Reports were received and considered as Item 12 of business and that the Code of Corporate Governance – Assurance Statement was received and considered as item 13 of business.

7 TO RECEIVE THE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Treasurer introduced the report of the Asset Management Plan (AMP) which was a living document and would develop on a five-year planning cycle, being reviewed and updated annually. It defined the good practice aims, objectives and principles for the Fire Authority's use of assets.

The Treasurer reported that in recent years there had been increasing pressure on Fire and Rescue Authorities, together with all public bodies, to put in place proper asset management and capital planning decision making processes and for a full audit of such systems to be arranged. It was expected that the need for asset management plans would be rigorously pursued by auditors seeking evidence of good value from all investment decisions.

It was noted that the Asset Management Plan did not exist in isolation but was set within the context provided by other strategic plans such as the Medium-Term Financial Plan, Corporate Five Year Plan and individual Service Strategies which were inextricably linked to the Asset Management Plan through the corporate objectives and priorities of the organisation, culminating each year in the Annual Improvement Plan. The Asset Management Plan had been designed to support and integrate with the other plans by reflecting how the portfolio and its management needed to change over time to ensure the Service's priorities were delivered, and in line with the consultation that had taken place with stakeholders.

The Chair commended Officers for producing a comprehensive document and extended the Authority's appreciation for the hard work and efforts of all members of staff involved in the development of the plan. Members requested that the all-encompassing Asset Management Plan form part of the Members' Induction Training scheduled for 6th June 2012.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

Members approve the Asset Management Plan.

8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE 2012

The Director of Delivery, together with the Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority, attended the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Fire Conference held in Bournemouth on the 20th and 21st March 2012 and that the conference enabled delegates to debate key issues and consider national good practice on current and future issues affecting

the Fire and Rescue Service.

It was considered that attendance at future conferences at a cost of approximately £360 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.

9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – ASSURANCE STATEMENT

The Treasurer 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 were required to annually produce a “Statement of Assurance” to show compliance with the Code.

During 2011/12 internal audits had been undertaken to ensure that systems and processes were working effectively and being properly monitored. Particular emphasis was placed on the Partnership Risk Management processes and governance issues, the publishing and operation of the Code of Conduct for Members and Officers, the maintenance of up to date Financial Procedure rules and protocols, the maintenance of a register of interests for Members and senior managers and the delivery of the Corporate Equality Plan to achieve level 3 of the Equality Standard. The overall conclusion on these reports was that the monitoring and reporting procedures were effective. Members noted that further detailed audits on all aspects of the Code of Corporate Governance would be undertaken annually, on a rolling basis.

The Treasurer reported that further external audits had been undertaken by the Wales Audit Office (WAO) during the year on the Local Government Measure Corporate Assessment and the Annual Improvement Report. These audits had all been positive and well received. The WAO thematic reviews on ICT and Information Management had also received significant scrutiny and many recommendations had already been addressed by the Authority. The Peer Assessment Team audits were also well received. Members were assured that any remaining recommendations for improvement from all the above audits were being addressed through detailed action plans.

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 been 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.

It was the view of Officers that the review of the governance arrangements for the financial year 2011/12 had not highlighted any areas of major concern and that the existing arrangements were fit for purpose and 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 26th March 2012.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Statement of Assurance be approved for signature by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.

10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SERVICE IMPROVEMENT IMPLEMENTATION GROUP – WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that the Service had introduced a Service Improvement Implementation Group (SIIG) during 2010/11 to drive forward significant improvements across the Service whilst achieving the efficiency savings required to meet budgetary challenges. Members were pleased to note that all targets for 2011/12 had been met, with regular reporting of progress being provided by way of circulation of comprehensive minutes.

Members considered the SIIG Work Programme for 2012/13 which ensured that the Service continued to improve its ability to provide an excellent service whilst tackling the financial challenges. Members were informed that implementation plans were being finalised and work streams coordinated in order to ensure timely achievement of the key improvement areas, as follows:

1. Introduction of new Crewing System at Llanelli Community Fire Station.

Following recent press coverage relating to changes in the Llanelli crewing system, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that operational members of staff were contracted to work anywhere within the Service area. The Chief Fire Officer further reaffirmed the Service's commitment to relocate any member of staff who did not wish to work the new crewing system to the Swansea Bay area, in due course.

A discussion ensued regarding recent correspondence received by the Fire Authority from individuals based within Llanelli Fire Station, expressing concerns over proposed changes to the current crewing system.

The Chair highlighted numerous inaccuracies contained within the correspondence and reminded Members to take cognisance of any correspondence issued during the Purdah period. Members highlighted that all employees within Llanelli fire station had been encouraged to submit suggestions on the development of a bespoke crewing arrangement for Llanelli, however no proposals had been submitted.

The Chair, in agreement with all members present, agreed to issue a response to the individuals concerned on behalf of the Fire Authority.

- 2. Relocation of Carmarthenshire Command Team to Llanelli Community Station.**
- 3. Enhancement of Llanelli Community Fire Station site to accommodate new crewing systems, if appropriate, and Command HQ.** Members were informed that negotiations with Trade Unions as to the specification of the new crewing system would inform the extent of refurbishment required. Members requested that, should a new accommodation block be required, this aspect should be considered as soon as possible.
- 4. Introduction of a Small Fires Unit in the Swansea Bay area.**
- 5. Increased training budget for Retained Duty Staff (RDS).**
- 6. Reduction in the overall budget for casual overtime by £100,000.**
- 7. Re-fit of Aberystwyth Community Fire Station.** The Treasurer confirmed that following a feasibility study, reconsideration of the way forward would need to be given in terms of whether to refurbish or relocate the Aberystwyth Community Fire Station. Members were assured that extensive collaboration with Ceredigion Council would continue to take place in order to identify potential grant funding streams.
- 8. Improved Central Training Capability.** Members were pleased to note the progress already made and scheduled for the Earlswood training facility in order to meet the needs of the Service. The Corporate Head of Operational Risk Management confirmed that the facility was extensively utilised by a number of agencies, including Police Forces, collaborative training with other Fire and Rescue Services and the Urban Search and Rescue Teams. Members acknowledged such effective collaborations, and requested a press release to be issued.
- 9. Introduction of a new HFSC Policy to enable one person assessments to take place.** The Director of Risk confirmed that extensive collaboration with the Health Board had been undertaken and the Service had implemented a Lone Working Policy and panic devices to ensure the protection of Officers.
- 10. Closing of Pembrokeshire Headquarters Building and relocation of**

Command staff to Haverfordwest Fire Station main building.

11. Continue with improvements to the Service's IT and Information Management systems in line with the Wales Audit Office recommendations.

12. Introduction of Rural Response Vehicles (Year 2).

13. Change the car leasing scheme policy over a three year period based on an increase in personal and a decrease in Service contributions (Year 2).

14. Implement a change to County Command Structures (Year 2).

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that a series of consultations and negotiations with all Representative Bodies had already commenced in order to ensure that any changes to staff conditions would be taken into consideration. Members were further informed that update reports and meeting minutes would be provided to the Fire Authority throughout the year.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The report be noted.

11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2011

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer to the Fire Authority introduced the report on recommendations relating to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2011.

The report was an update on the earlier report which had been presented to the Fire Authority on 6th February 2012, outlining various options for reconfiguration of the structure of the Fire Authority to enable Members to accommodate the findings of the Panel.

Members were informed that, at the request of the Fire Authority for further work to be undertaken, the Member Development Working Group (MDWG) commissioned a feasibility study into the practicalities of amalgamating two of the three Authority committees and the payment of senior salaries.

Members gave consideration to the options available to the Fire Authority, and noted that the MDWG, at its meeting on 19th March 2012, had resolved to recommend that the Fire Authority adopted option c of the Monitoring Officer's report.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED:

1. ***To amalgamate two of the three main committees of the Fire Authority, to create a new committee, namely “Resource Management Committee” (an amalgamation of the Resources Committee and the People & Organisational Development Committee) and to maintain the existing Performance Review and Audit Committee, but to rename it the “Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee”.***
2. ***To maintain the Fire Authority Chair’s existing role, and to add an additional responsibility of attending the National Issues Committee (NIC) as a representative from MAWWFRA (subject to the NIC being set up) and that the Deputy Chair keep the existing role, plus to attend the NIC (with the Chair) and also to Chair the Member Development Working Group (to be renamed), Annual Action Plan Group and any other body as deemed appropriate, except for the other main committees.***
3. ***That the Fire Authority does not adopt senior salaries for committee chairs at this time, but that the option be re-visited in 12 months’ time. The Resource Management committee and Performance, Audit and Scrutiny committee would continue to be Chaired by Chairs who would not receive a senior salary.***
4. ***That all changes to the names and structures of the committees and any other consequential administrative changes be incorporated into the amended constitution to be adopted by the Fire Authority on the 16th April 2012, as set out later in the Agenda.***

12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer presented the report concerning the review of the Fire Authority Committee Structure which sought to ensure that the Authority’s committee business was conducted in the most efficient and effective way. It was reported that the review had taken cognisance of the views of Officers and Members, the prescriptions within the Welsh Government’s draft statutory guidance on the Local Government Wales Measure and also the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report 2011.

Following the Authority’s approval of the reconfiguration of the Committee Structure, the Clerk referred to the Local Government Wales Measure which advised Fire and Rescue Authorities to take cognisance of the guidance and adopt practices where feasible to ensure compliance with the Measure. It was therefore recommended that the Member Development Group (MDGW) maintained its working group status to provide recommendations to the Fire Authority and that the name of the working group be changed to the “Democratic Services Forum (DSF)”. It was also recommended that the DSF take responsibility for quarterly forward agenda planning.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Member Development Working Group change its name to the “Democratic Services Forum” to reflect MAWWFRA’s commitment to harmonise its decision making processes with the requirements of the Local Government Wales Measure, and that it take responsibility for quarterly forward agenda planning.***

Members also noted:

- 1. The Merging of the People and Organisational Development and Resources Committee to create a “Resource Management Committee”.***
- 2. Changing the name of the Performance, Review and Audit Committee to “Performance Audit and Scrutiny (PAS) committee”, which would be supported by the Annual Action Plan working group and the Scrutiny Working Group.***

13 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer reported that the Constitution set out how the Authority operated, how decisions were made and the procedures which were to be followed. He stated that whilst some of those processes were required by the law, others were a matter for the Authority to choose. It was noted that the Authority had formally adopted its Constitution in 2003 and that it had been periodically reviewed and amended by the Clerk/Monitoring Officer as necessary. The Constitution was last reviewed in 2008 particularly in relation to its governance arrangements.

In view of the fact that a new Fire Authority would be created following the Local Government Elections in 2012, the decision had been made to review the Constitution in its entirety to ensure effective governance, a task which had been undertaken by the Clerk and the Deputy Monitoring Officer. Significant consultation had also taken place with Officers, Standards Committee Members and the Democratic Services Forum (formerly Member Development Working Group).

This process had resulted in nine re-drafts of the Constitution, resulting in the annotated draft version set out as Appendix 2 of the report for adoption.

Members were advised that additional minor amendments were also required, however the new Fire Authority could review and revisit the document, as appropriate, under the remit of the Democratic Services Forum.

Given the complexity of the document, a summary providing an overview of the amendments made had been provided for ease of reference at Appendix 1, and these briefly set out the changes made in the topic areas of legislation, terminology, layout and numbering, committees, responsibility for functions, Authority procedure rules, financial procedure rules, codes and protocols and Democratic and Management

structures.

Reference was made to Article 8 of the constitution, relating to the Appointments committee whereby Members raised concerns that removing the Panel's responsibility for the appointment of Principal Officers could result in the lessening of Members' input into the appointment of Principal Officers, and which could be perceived as diminishing the Authority's democratic accountability. The Chief Fire Officer clarified that, at present, the Panel had responsibility for the appointment of Principal Officers, however it was the Head of Paid Services who held accountability for those individuals throughout the life of the employment contract. The proposed amendment to the constitution simply attempted to achieve the placing of both the legal responsibility and the accountability of Principal Officers with the Head of Paid Services. It was emphasised that such roles inevitably involved close interaction with Fire Authority Members and as such it would remain imperative for Members to continue to have an input within the appointments process.

Councillor J Dudley proposed an amendment which was seconded. The proposed amendment read as follows:

That Members approve the proposed amendments to the Authority's constitution, with the exception of changes to Article 8: the appointments committee, which was to be reconsidered by the Democratic Services Forum.

On being put, the amendment was carried.

Councillor P James proposed an amendment, which read as follows:

That the Constitution be reviewed in its entirety by the Democratic Services Forum prior to re-submission to the Fire Authority.

The proposed amendment was not seconded and was therefore lost.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

Members approve the proposed amendments to the Authority's constitution, with the exception of changes to Article 8: the appointments committee, which was to be reconsidered by the Democratic Services Forum. The existing provisions of the Constitution would continue to apply.

14 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW INDEPENDENT STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEMBER

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer reported that following the cessation of the term of office of the previous Chair and Independent Member of the Standards Committee, the Authority had set up an Appointments Panel on 27th March 2012 to facilitate the appointment of new Independent Member to the Standards Committee.

The Deputy Chair reported that The Panel had interviewed five high caliber applicants and unanimously agreed the best candidate, though as a formality The Panel was required to recommend the appointment of the successful candidate to the Fire Authority.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

Mr Melvin Jehu be appointed as Independent Member of the Standards Committee to the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

- 15 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.**

No items of business were received that were considered to be a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100(B) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 16 It was resolved 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 was likely that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within the description of Schedule 12A 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) and that it was in the public interest to exclude the public from the meeting**

- 17 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY**

The Treasurer presented the report on the disposal of property, which was deemed surplus to the estate requirements of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

The recommendations contained within the report be approved.

- 18 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SET UP OF THE WELSH FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEE**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report on the set up of the Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities' National Issues Committee, which would be dedicated to the furtherance of collaboration to enhance efficiency and ensure consistency of approach across Wales.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

The recommendations contained within the report be approved.