

**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
17 MEDI 2012

**MINUTES
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen
17 SEPTEMBER 2012

11.00 – 12.40

79 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIR:	R Llewellyn
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIR:	G Thomas
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs.: C J Crowley, K W Curry, J Curtice, J Dudley, W E Evans, A Harrington, T J Hennegan, C Higgins, P James, R Lewis, B Mills, K Pearson, D R Rees-Evans, T J Richards, W D Thomas, D E Williams, A Woolcock

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: J Baylis, P Harris, C Lloyd, K Thomas, G Woodham
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YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	R Smith, D Daycock, C Davies, D Masson, A Francis, S McLinden, J Maunder, Victoria De Zouche, H Jones
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1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Baylis, P Harris, C Lloyd, K Thomas and G Woodham.

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.

Councillor Llewellyn declared a personal interest in relation to item 3, namely 'Election of Chair of the Fire Authority for the municipal year 2012/13'.

All Members declared a personal interest in relation to item 10, namely 'To receive a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report 2013/14'.

3 ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012/13

Councillor R Llewellyn was proposed and duly seconded. There were no other nominations.

Upon being put to the vote,

It was RESOLVED that Councillor R Llewellyn be elected Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for the municipal year 2012/2013.

In response, Councillor Llewellyn noted it was a privilege to be elected as Chairperson and thanked Members for the confidence shown in him. Tribute was also paid to Councillor C Philpott for the contribution and dedication provided in her role as the former Chair of the Fire Authority.

4 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012/13

Councillor G Thomas was proposed and duly seconded. There were no other nominations.

Upon being put to the vote,

It was RESOLVED that Councillor G Thomas be elected Deputy Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for the municipal year 2012/2013.

The Deputy Chair offered the Chairperson her full support during her term of office for the benefit of the Fire Authority in its entirety in ensuring the safety of the public.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and drew attention to the improved facilities in the recently refurbished conference room.

The Chair extended a very warm welcome to Mr Hywel Wyn Jones, Chair of the Standards Committee who was at the meeting to present item 7 of the agenda and Ms De Zouche of KPMG who was at the meeting to present item 14 of the agenda.

Members were reminded that 'Investigating and Disciplinary Procedure' training had been arranged for 2pm on 17 September 2012 and 'Firefighter Pension Procedure' training had been arranged for 12 noon on 24 September 2012.

The Chair reminded Members to submit their completed pro formas to confirm their attendance or otherwise at the All Wales Member Development Conference scheduled for 12 October 2012.

Deepest sympathies and condolences were extended on behalf of the Fire Authority to Councillors Woolcock and Crowley following their recent bereavements.

6 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2012

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 25 June 2012 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

Members were also presented with the minutes of the Resource Management Committee held on 16 July 2012 and Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 30 July 2012 for information only and informed that they were subject to approval at the next Committee meetings.

7 TO RECEIVE THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011/12

The Chair of the Standards Committee, Mr Hywel Wyn Jones presented the report and explained that the remit of the Committee was to oversee, maintain and strengthen high standards of conduct in public office and as part of its governance arrangements produced an annual report setting out the work it had carried out in the year. Members were informed that the Standards Committee comprised of four independent Members and three Authority Members and was required to meet at least once a year, though as a matter of good practice the Committee had convened three meetings during the reporting period. Mr Wyn Jones stated that it was pleasing to note that no complaints had been made against Members in respect of their role as members of the Fire and Rescue Authority. Accordingly, no matters had been referred to the Committee for investigation or decision. Furthermore no requests for dispensations to speak and or vote in respect of any declarations of interest had been considered by the Committee.

Despite not having to consider any breaches of the code of conduct or requests for dispensation, the Committee had continued to be very proactive in promoting good governance and the ethical framework within the Authority. Accordingly, Members were provided with an overview of the work carried out during 2011/12, which included a review of the Committee's Terms of Reference, relevant Authority policies and amendments to the constitution in accord with the various statutory requirements and best practice.

Standards Committee members were also kept abreast of good practice arising throughout Wales in the important areas of standards and probity via attendance at the Annual Wales Standards Committee Conference.

Tribute was also paid to the former Chair of the Standards Committee, Mr M Howells, whose ten year term of office had come to an end in 2011. It was noted that Mr Howells had been in Office since 2001 when the Standards Committee had been formed and he was thanked for the dedication, professionalism and common sense approach he had brought to the role.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The work of the Standards Committee be noted.

8 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE DRAFT ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2013/14

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Authority, in common with other Improvement Authorities, was required to make arrangements for continuous improvement in terms of community and corporate risk in line with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

At its meeting on 25 June 2012 the Authority had approved the key themes for its Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2013-2014 and directed its Member Working Group to work with Officers to develop the areas for consultation from the key themes within the Authority's five year Strategic Plan. The Group had now concluded this work and, in line with the Welsh Government's collaborative agenda, a Results Based Accountability approach had been incorporated into the Plan which focussed on meaningful outcomes that had a direct or indirect improvement for the communities and citizens within Wales, as follows:

Managing Risk – reflecting community needs in terms of Asset and Fleet Management, risk profiling, allocating appropriate resources, collaborative working and supporting community recovery post incident.

Managing People – improving internal working arrangements in terms of establishing career pathways for staff; strengthening the Service's back to work programme and improving the Service's flexible working arrangements.

Working Together – assisting vulnerable citizens by improving targeting of Home Fire Safety advice, extending existing partnership working and sharing of resources with Local Health Boards across the Service area.

Managing Resources - providing a service to meet the needs of communities in Neath Port Talbot and Swansea by developing crewing systems that would offer a more efficient use of resources, reflect the profile of the local communities, maintain 24 hour cover provided by full time staff and maintain response times.

Managing Performance - Introducing a 'Dwelling Fire Charter' in line with Welsh Government recommendations, to identify the level of prevention, protection and response that communities could expect on dwelling fire risk. The Charter would be implemented in April 2013.

Attention was drawn to the statistics provided regarding Road Traffic Collisions and the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that since the Service had in recent years been given a statutory duty to respond to such incidents, partnership working with other agencies including the Police and Local Authorities had increased.

A number of slight amendments were suggested by Members which would be incorporated into the Plan.

Members were informed that in previous years the Authority had been required to publish its improvement objectives by the end of October in readiness for the following year, however the Welsh Government had now amended the publication date to 'as soon as practicable after 31 December'. This streamlined approach would allow the Authority to better align its publication timetable with financial planning as follows:

Date	Action
24 Sept 2012	Fire Authority approve Draft Plan for consultation
25 Sept – 10 Dec 2012	Consultation
13 Nov 2012	Update to Service Improvement Forum
7 January 2013	Annual Action Planning Working Group Meeting and Policy Board consider Final Plan
11 Feb 2013	Fire Authority consider and approve Final Plan
March 2013	Publish Final Plan by 31 March

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2013-2014 be approved for consultation between the 25th September 2012 and 10th December 2012.

9 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE ALL WALES DWELLING FIRE RESPONSE CHARTER

The Chief Fire Officer reported that a review of the 2006 Service Standard to Fires in the Home had led the Welsh Government to develop an alternative approach whereby each Fire and Rescue Authority was required to develop and consult locally on its own dwelling fire response criteria, subject to a single set of 'guiding principles' issued by the Welsh Government.

Members were informed that Officers from the three Fire and Rescue Services had subsequently jointly prepared a draft 'All Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter' which detailed the expectations communities and citizens could expect from the Service with regard to its responsibility in preventing, protecting and responding to dwelling fire incidents. The Charter ensured a level of consistency across Wales without restricting each Authority's discretion to determine what was appropriate for their own area.

In response to a query from Members the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that a comprehensive consultation process was in place which was refined on an annual basis and designed to be as inclusive as possible.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Draft All Wales Dwelling Fire Response Charter be approved for consultation, alongside the Annual Improvement Plan between 25th September and 10th December 2012.

10 TO RECEIVE THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer reported that the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) had been established to regulate and determine Members' allowances and payments. The Clerk / Monitoring Officer stated that following consideration of the first annual report of the IRPW at its meeting on 16 April 2012, Members had resolved to not adopt senior salaries for committee chairs at that time, however the option of remunerating Committee Chairs with a senior salary should be re-visited in 12 months' time.

Members were presented with the second draft annual report incorporating the proposals for the financial year 2013/14, which stipulated that there would be no change to existing Fire and Rescue Authority Members' payments.

Members were informed that the IRPW had requested that any representations or comments on the draft report would need to be provided prior to the end of the consultation period on 28 September 2012, and that members should make any representations or comments directly to the IRPW.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Fire Authority note the draft annual report and the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for Welsh Fire & Rescue Authorities for 2013/2014.

11 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 to be followed; some of which were required by law, while others were a matter for the Authority to choose. The Clerk/Monitoring officer explained that the report set two areas in which changes to the constitution were proposed;

Firstly, Members were informed that the Standards Committee, as part of its terms of reference, reviewed the Authority's Whistle Blowing Policy at its meeting on the 2nd April 2012 and made a recommendation that the policy be included within the Authority's constitution to ensure effective governance.

Secondly, Members had also requested that the Chairing of the Fire Authority, which was determined by the Authority annually, but by convention, as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the constitution was for a two year period, be changed to restrict the Chair and Deputy to a one year term of office commencing in 2014. It was also proposed that the Chair and Deputy Chair be allocated to a Member of each Constituent Authority by rotation over a six year period, with the most senior Member in terms of years served on the Fire Authority being the normal nomination from the Constituent Authority. It was noted that the rotation of Chairmanship of the authority would probably be as follows:

2013/14 – Carmarthenshire
2014/15 – Powys
2015/16 – Pembrokeshire
2016/17 – Neath Port Talbot

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer advised Members that the Democratic Services Forum would be the most appropriate forum to discuss such issues as the Forum could consider the issue in some depth, and then refine any recommendations to be made to the Fire Authority meeting on 17 December 2012.

Councillor P James moved an amendment to the report, namely that the Democratic Services Forum consider the issue of the Chair and Deputy Chair's term of Office and present its recommendations to the next Fire Authority meeting.

The amendment, being put, was unanimously carried, and added to the substantive motion.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The Whistleblowing policy be incorporated into the Authority's Constitution.*
- 2. The Democratic Services Forum consider the issue of the Chair and Deputy Chair's term of Office and present its recommendations to the next Fire Authority meeting scheduled for 17 December 2012.*

12 TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

The final audited Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2012 was presented for approval.

Members were informed that the Authority's accounting statements comprised the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, and the Cash Flow Statement which had been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.

The Head of Finance reported that the Government Actuary Department reviewed their calculations made in respect of Firefighter pension fund in 2010/11 and corrected the basis for the future liability calculation to reckonable service basis from qualifying service. This brought the 2010/11 calculations in line with all previous years and with the 2011/12 calculation and resulted in an increased actuarial loss of £10.86 million. The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 had therefore been restated for that item as a comparator.

Following a query from Members regarding the movement on tangible fixed assets the Head of Finance confirmed that an increase of £24million related to an increase in the valuation of the Authority's property and equipment. Members were further informed that the Authority operated a valuation programme.

It was RESOLVED that

THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2012 BE APPROVED

13 TO APPROVE THE LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION REGARDING THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2012

The Head of Finance reported that the Wales Audit Office, as the Appointed Auditor and KPMG LLP, who had carried out the Audit, each required a separate letter of representation regarding the 2011/12 Statement of Accounts before the audit of the Financial Statements could be completed. The letters had to be approved by the Authority and then be signed by both the Treasurer and the Chair of the meeting considering the letters.

It was RESOLVED that

THE TWO LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION BE APPROVED AND SIGNED BY THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING AND THE TREASURER

14 TO RECEIVE THE AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REPORT 2011/12

Victoria De Zouche of KPMG was welcomed to the meeting and presented a joint report on the Audit of Financial Statements following the completion of the audit by the Appointed Auditor (Wales Audit Office) and the Auditor responsible for carrying out the audit (KPMG). The Audit of Financial Statements report contained details of the draft Audit opinion to be published with the Statement of Accounts, and detailed any significant issues arising from the audit.

Ms De Zouche commended the Head of Finance and his Team on the high standard of their work and it was noted that there were no significant matters which required reporting to Members.

It was RESOLVED that

The Audit of Financial Statements Reports – Audit 2011–12 be noted.

END OF MEETING 12.40 PM