

**AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN  
CYMRU**



**MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COFNODION  
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD TAN**  
Ystafell Caer,  
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyddin  
**29 MEDI 2014**

**MINUTES  
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**  
The Caer Suite,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**29 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**10.30 – 1:55**

**68% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIR:	Councillor G Thomas
IS-GADEIRYDD/ DEPUTY CHAIR:	Councillor W E Evans
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: D Cole, R Llewellyn, L Frayling, T Hennegan, K Curry, S Paddison, R Rees-Evans, A Wilcox, D E Williams, J Curtice, J Dudley, R Lewis C Higgins, G Walker, J Bayliss, K Pearson
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: P Pritchard, W D Thomas, P James, J Warman, G Tanner, G Jones, J Williams
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	C Davies, E Aitken, D Daycock, D Masson, R Quin, C Margetts, R Thomas, S McLinden, S Flather, K Jones, C Jackson, V DeZouche (item 11)

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Pritchard, W D Thomas, P James, J Warman, G Tanner, J Williams and G Jones.

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

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

All Members present declared that they had a personal interest in any matters relating to the budget.

The Principal Officers declared an interest in Agenda Items 20, 21, 22 and 24.

The Clerk informed Members that the Chief Fire Officer would present Agenda Items 24 and 26, answer any questions but would leave the room along with ACFO R Quin and AM C Margetts prior to any decisions being made.

Councillor J Curtice declared an interest in Agenda Item 24.

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

The Chair welcomed two new Members to the Fire Authority, Councillors J Bayliss and G Tanner. The Chair wished took the opportunity to thank both Councillor C Lloyd and A Lewis for their sterling contribution to the Fire Authority.

Councillor Bayliss spoke on behalf of both Councillor C Lloyd and A Lewis who wished to convey their thanks and appreciation to the Fire Authority.

The Chair reported that she had attended the Firefighters Memorial Service which was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in London.

The Chair stated that she had attended many Fire Station Open Days throughout the Service area where she had taken the opportunity to meet and talk with staff.

The Clerk apologised for the large agenda presented to the meeting and stated that it would be considered to arrange more Fire Authority meetings in future to ensure a more manageable Agenda. The Clerk informed Members that Councillor Pearson had suggested that Fire Authority meetings could be made bi-monthly which would also be considered.

Councillor Dudley stated that Members should receive the papers earlier allowing Members to digest the information in advance of the meeting. Furthermore, Councillor Dudley added that the font was too small to read in some of the papers. Councillor Paddison agreed that the Agenda was too large and requested that papers be sent to Members earlier.

Councillor Hennegan stated he had raised this issue at previous meetings and was disappointed to see it happen again.

In response, the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) stated that Officers were conscious about the size of the Agenda, however, it was necessary in relation to this meeting to adhere to statutory timelines. Furthermore, the CFO informed Members of the proposed electronic system which would hopefully provide a more streamlined distribution of future Agenda's and supporting papers.

The Chair thanked Members for their comments and informed them that they had been noted.

The Chair stated that she had received a request to bring forward Agenda Items 23 and 24 to after Agenda Item 11 and asked whether Members agreed to this. All Members agreed.

**4. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2014**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

Matters Arising

Councillor Hennegan referred to page 2, Item 2 where it was highlighted that he had previously commented on the lengthy meeting agendas.

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer referred to page 15 and stated that he had received a response from the Wales Audit Office (WAO) which sought advice regarding personal interests. The response had confirmed that the WAO were satisfied that Members and Officers had approached the matter correctly.

In response to Councillor Dudley's query regarding the Fire Suppression System (Page 12, Agenda Item 15), the Director of Risk stated that the installation of the system relied upon the number of referrals being received. However, the Service continued to strive to improve partnership working in order to identify the vulnerable within communities. At the request of Councillor W Evans the Director of Risk briefly explained how the Fire Suppression system worked and how it differed from the standard domestic sprinkler system.

**5 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2014**

Councillor J Curtice highlighted an error on page 3, Item 5, paragraph 3 which should be corrected to read 'At this point Councillor J Curtice declared a personal interest as a Member of Swansea City Council.....'

The minutes of the Standards Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were considered and noted.

**6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCE MANGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2014**

The Chair highlighted an error on page 2, Item 3, paragraph 2 which should read 'The Chair wished to extend **her**....'

The minutes of the Resource Management Committee held on 14th July 2014 were considered and noted.

**7. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 21<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2014**

The minutes of the Performance Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2014 were considered and noted.

**8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ASSURANCE STATEMENT**

The Director of Resources presented the report on the Corporate Governance Assurance Statement to Members. Members were informed that the report had been presented to Members of the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014 where it had been deliberated in detail and approved.

The Director of Resources informed Members that the annual review of Corporate Governance was considered to be good practice and the Authority had been quick to respond to the framework, developing improvements each year. Furthermore, the recommendations from the Wales Audit Office audit (a national (Wales) thematic review), had been incorporated into this Authority's Code.

It was proposed that the Fire Authority, having reviewed the Corporate Governance positive audits, approve the Statement of Assurance for signature by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that Members approve the Statement of Assurance for signature by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer, for inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.***

**9. TO APPROVE THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

The Director of Resources presented the final audited Statement of Account for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 (Appendix 1) to Members.

Members were referred to the list of reserves on page 46 of Appendix 1 of the report and it was explained to Members that the balance of the reserves had increased to

£7.817million. The Director of Resources further explained that the reason why the reserves had increased which was mainly due to the addition of the following key elements:-

- Invest-to-save fund
- Risk Management Reserve
- Managing Change – Employees and Pensions
- Major Incidents/Buildings and Adaptions

The Director of Resources referred Members to page 66 of Appendix 1 and explained to Members that some of the reserves had been allocated to fund early retirements.

In response to Councillor S Paddison's query, Mr Steven Flather the Head of Finance explained to Members that due to the fact that this was the first time the Authority had come across this element of the accounting rules, a misunderstanding had occurred resulting in an error in transactions being located within the previous reporting year, which had now been rectified.

Councillor W Evans queried the figure relating to the Airwave Reserve. The Director of Resources informed Members that the figure of £240m included the residue of the last contract which itself consisted of an underspend of the first years and an overspend of the next few years and that funds had been set aside within reserves to meet this.

Councillor J Bayliss expressed his disappointment that the Authority had paid £182,000 for early retirement/voluntary redundancy. Mr Flather informed Members that the majority of the money went to the pension fund and not directly to the individual.

Councillor Hennegan stated that it was pleasing to note that no compulsory redundancies were made within 2012/13.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Authority approved the Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2014.***

### **10. TO APPROVE THE LETTERS OF REPRESENTATION REGARDING THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014**

The Director of Resources explained to Members that the Wales Audit Office, as the Appointed Auditor, and KPMG LLP, who carried out the Audit, each required a separate letter of representation regarding the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts before the audit of the Financial Statements could be completed. Furthermore, Members were informed that the letters attached at Appendix 1 had to be approved by the Authority and then signed by both the Director of Resources and the Chair of the Fire Authority.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that the Authority approves the two Letters of Representation which were accordingly signed by the Chair of the meeting and the Director of Resources.*

### 11. TO APPROVE THE AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REPORT 2013/14

KPMG Auditor Victoria DeZouche was welcomed to the meeting and presented to Members the joint report on the Audit of Financial Statements report 2013/14 following the completion of the audit by the Appointed Auditor (Wales Audit Office) and the Auditor responsible for carrying out the audit (KPMG). Ms DeZouche informed Members that 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 DeZouche then commended the Head of Finance and his team on the high standard of their work explained that there were no significant issues which required reporting to Members. However, Ms DeZouche referred to the summary of corrections laid out within Appendix 3 of the report and highlighted the nature of the corrections and the reason for them to Members.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that Members note the Audit of Financial Statements Report 2013/14.*

### 12. Formerly Agenda Item No 23 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON DEVOLUTION, DEMOCRACY AND DELIVERY: WHITE PAPER CONSULTATION - REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the report on Devolution, Democracy And Delivery: White Paper Consultation - Reforming Local Government to Members. The CFO informed Members that in April 2013 the First Minister for Wales had established the Commission for Public Service Governance and Delivery (known as The Williams Commission). The Commission had been tasked with examining all aspects of governance and delivery in the devolved public sector in Wales.

Furthermore, Members were informed that in July 2014, the Welsh Government published a consultation White Paper – Reforming Local Government, which asked questions regarding Local Government structures as well as specific questions relating to the future structure of the Fire Authority (Q.7 – Q.9) set out in Appendix 1 of the report. The Chief Fire Officer had drafted a number of responses to the questions contained in Appendix 1 but feedback from the Authority was required specifically for Q7 – 9.

The Chair informed Members that the Minister, Mrs Lesley Griffiths had set up a project board were it had been agreed that the 3 CFO's in Wales would attend the project board as observers.

The Chair commended the CFO and Director of Risk for their hard work in relation to this matter.

In response to Councillor Bayliss' query the Chief Fire Officer stated that with regard to the setting of the remuneration of the Chief Fire Officer and Executive Officers there had been a nationally agreed pay rise together with a local agreement which would be implemented.

Councillor K Pearson stated that whilst Members of the Fire Authority were directed towards questions 7-9, Councillor Pearson felt that question 12 was equally as important and believed that the Fire Authority should promote it's successes more frequently.

Councillor Walker referred to question 12, paragraph 2 which stated that 'fire related deaths had reduced by 60% over the last 10 years', Councillor Walker felt that the statement was misleading and believed that fire deaths in Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service were on the increase. The Director of Risk explained to Members that whilst it was difficult to directly measure the effect that Community Safety work was having on communities, the paper had drawn upon a direct comparison from the last 10yrs before and after the introduction of preventative measures this showed a 60% reduction of casualties.

Councillor Cole commended the Fire Services pro-active culture and emphasised that the Authority should continue to promote the excellent work being carried out.

The Chair informed Members that any individual responses must be made by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that Members agreed the attached response (at Appendix 1) to be returned to Welsh Government by 1 October 2014, in particular Q.7 - Q.9 which are Fire Authority specific.***

13. ***Formerly Agenda Item 24***  
**TO RECEIVE THE A REPORT ON THE INCORPORATION OF A RESCUE 365 C.I.C (COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY) FOR THE BENEFIT OF MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY.**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report to Members, however, CFO Davies, R Quin - Director of Risk and Corporate Head of Risk - Area Manager C Margetts declared an interest in this matter. The Clerk clarified to Members that the 3 Officers would present the report and answer any questions, but would then leave the meeting prior to any discussion and decision being made. Members were content with this.

The CFO informed Members that in order to offset the impact on further reductions in the Authority's budget, it had been recognised that it would be prudent to explore the opportunities for income generation. In particular, Members were informed that work had been undertaken to incorporate a community interest company (CIC), limited by guarantee called "Rescue 365" and that the beneficiary of any profits/assets of Rescue 365 would be granted back to Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

Furthermore, the Chief Fire Officer emphasised that Rescue 365 would be set up to operate in a fully transparent and ethical way that value the environment, local business, its employees and customers and would fully inform its stakeholders regarding performance and strategic direction.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that there were 6 other companies throughout the UK who operated in a similar manner, however, this was the first of its kind in Wales. Members were informed that any profits generated by Rescue 365 would be granted back to Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

The CFO further stated that extensive legal discussions had taken place regarding this matter and wished to express his gratitude to the Director of Resources and the Head of Finance, Director of Risk and Corporate Head of Risk for their commitment in this respect.

Members were informed that Rescue 365 was now registered with Companies House, and that Rescue 365 had secured the appropriate domain names in both Welsh (365 Achub) and English to operate successfully and to market its services.

The CFO referred to paragraph 1.3 of the report which outlined the opportunities for income generation and emphasised that the company could not undertake any business that the Fire Authority had a statutory duty to provide.

Members were also informed that the Service was aware of significant contracts that were due to go to the market place in the autumn of 2014 and that accordingly the Company had to be in a position to operate legally by September 2014 if it wished to tender for any potential contracts.

The CFO stated that Rescue 365 had been initially incorporated with three Directors - CFO Davies, ACFO Quin and AM Margetts and informed Members that for legal reasons it may be appropriate for a Fire Authority Member to become a Director/Member of Rescue 365 Community Interest Company, in which case the Chair of Resources committee was suggested to undertake that role.

Members were also informed that subject to the decision of the Authority today the company would have an independent press launch in order to market the company.

In response to Councillor Bayliss' query the CFO informed Members that the activities of the company would be able to operate internationally. In response to a further query from Councillor Bayliss the CFO reported that there were no other Fire Authorities in Wales that had created a similar company, however, there were 6 others throughout England.

Councillor Higgins queried how the accounts would be dealt with in future? The Director of Resources stated that due to the company being set up as a controlled company the accounts would be kept separately.

The CFO concluded his presentation.

At this point the CFO, Director of Risk and Corporate Head of Risk left the room.

Councillor Higgins referred to the wording within Recommendation 2 and queried why it should be necessary to nominate a Fire Authority Member to sit on the Board of Directors?

The Clerk stated that this was a potential step that was predicated upon the legal advice received from Veale Wasborough Vizards (VWV) solicitors which recommended that Members should not commit to one particular option and it was accordingly a contingent resolution.

The Chair stated that Recommendation 3 be changed to read '*Delegate to the CFO the power to make any further amendments to the company's structure that may become necessary following discussions with the Fire Authority's legal advisors.*'

This was supported by Members.

Councillor Rees-Evans stated that if Members accepted the recommendations as it stood there may be a possibility that there would be no Fire Authority members on the board and felt that this would not be acceptable. Furthermore the resolution should read that there will be a Fire Authority Member on the board.

The Clerk re-iterated that the advice received from VWV stated that at this stage, the Authority should not commit to placing a Fire Authority Member on the board and keep it to an open resolution. The Clerk suggested that another Fire Authority meeting could be arranged specifically to act upon advice in this regard any specific future.

Councillor Hennegan expressed concern and stated that the articles should be viewed prior to any decision. The Clerk informed Members that the Company had already been formed and that the articles were in existence, however, they could be circulated to Members for information and if necessary, the articles could be changed by a request to the CFO.

In response to Councillor Walker's query regarding Rescue 365 undertaking the work that the Fire Service already carried out, the Director of Resources stated that legislation only allowed Public Authorities to trade in non-statutory functions to cover costs. However, the setting up of a Trading Arm would enable a profit to be made in discretionary areas.

Councillor Bayliss proposed an amendment to the recommendation 2 which was seconded as follows:-

*Should it be necessary, or not, to nominate a Fire Authority Member to sit on the board of Directors of Rescue 365, then the matter will be reported back to the Fire Authority for decision that the Chair of Resources Committee fulfil that role.*

By a show of hands the amendment was approved.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:-***

- 1. Members ratify the actions undertaken to date to incorporate Rescue 365***
- 2. Should it be necessary, or not, to nominate a Fire Authority Member to sit on the board of Directors of Rescue 365, then the matter will be reported back to the Fire Authority for decision and that the Chair of Resources Committee fulfil that role.***
- 3. The Fire Authority delegates to the CFO the power to make any further amendments to the company's structure that may become necessary following discussions with the Fire Authority's legal advisors.***

**15. Formerly Agenda Item 25**

**IT WAS RESOLVED, THAT PURSUANT TO SECTION 100A (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 IN RELATION TO ITEM 16 (FORMERLY ITEM 26), 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 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, NAMELY PARAGRAPH 12, INFORMATION RELATING TO A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL AND PARAGRAPH 14, 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 DO SO.**

**16 Formerly Agenda Item 26  
TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE APPROVAL OF A COMMERCIAL LOAN TO  
RESCUE 365**

At this point the CFO, Director of Risk and Corporate Head of Risk returned to the meeting.

The CFO presented the report on the Approval of a commercial loan to Rescue 365 to Members which requested that the Fire Authority approve an unsecured commercial loan to deliver the initial business plan of Rescue 365.

Members considered and discussed the contents of the report and asked questions regarding the loan, which the CFO answered accordingly.

At this point CFO, Director of Risk and Corporate Head of Risk left the room.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that;*

- 1) Members approve the amendment to the Authority's Treasury Management Policy, allowing the lending of start-up costs to Rescue 365 as a one off change.*
- 2) Members approve a commercial loan of £200k to Rescue 365 in line with the financial arrangements detailed within the report, the details of which would be delegated to the Treasurer.*

*Exemption lifted – Members of the public were now free to re-join the meeting.*

**17. Formerly Agenda Item 12  
TO APPROVE THE JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND THE  
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES ON BUDGET INDICATIONS FOR THE FINANCIAL  
YEAR 2015/16**

The CFO presented the Joint Report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Director of Resources on the Budget Indications for the Financial Year 2015/16 report to Members.

The Director of Resources referred to the Financial Challenges within the report and reminded Members of the Corporate Planning day held in May 2014. The purpose of the day was to ensure that Members understood the severity of the financial implications for the 2015/16 settlement and coming years, the significant efficiencies already achieved and also to provide Officers with a clear informal direction on the level of cuts to be considered for the construction of the 2015-16 budget.

The Director of Resources informed Members that in a recent public survey which attempted to seek views on various aspects of the Fire and Rescue Service out of 100 respondents, one of the key outcomes was that 82% stated that they would prefer to pay more to stop any further cuts in service delivery.

The Director of Resources informed Members that the Welsh Government would be announcing its overall budget on 30th September 2014 and the detailed Local Authority Settlements on or near the 8th October 2014.

Members were informed that should the average settlement be targeted in 2015/16, exemplifications of the need for Fire Authority reductions are as follows:

<b>Target budget</b>	<b>Approx. £'s reduction required</b>
Standstill budget..... (i.e. exactly the same figure falling on the Constituent Authorities in total for the FRA area)	1,400,000
-1.5%.....	2,050,000
-3%.....	2,660,000
-4.5%.....	3,280,000

The Director of Resources explained to Members the impact of each reduction on the Authority and reminded Members that at the Corporate Planning day they found the options not only unpalatable but also unacceptable. However, at a previous Fire Authority meeting Members expressed the view that safety in the Community **WOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED**. It was therefore suggested that members should consider 3 options for reductions;

- 1) Standstill budget contributions falling on the Constituent Authorities, meaning savings to be made by the Fire and Rescue Authority of approximately £1.4m
- 2) An small increase in the Constituent Authorities' contributions, (1.32%) resulting in savings to be made by the Fire and Rescue Authority of approximately £800k
- 3) A bigger increase in the Constituent Authorities' contributions (3.18%) resulting in no savings to be made by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Members were reminded that in 2011/12 the Fire Authority reduced the contributions of the Constituent Authorities by £1million as a one-off gesture, as budget savings were made earlier than anticipated.

The Director of Resources highlighted key elements of the report to Members and emphasised that the decision today would not be finalised until the Fire Authority Meeting in December 2014.

Councillor W Evans stated that he would like to approve option 2 as he felt that the other options would cause loss of lives and affect the morale of personnel.

The Clerk advised Members that a vote should take place by show of hands and that each Member should vote on their preferred recommendation.

Councillor J Dudley proposed Recommendation 2 which was seconded.

By show of hands 9 Members voted in favour of Recommendation 2.

Councillor Bayliss requested that his vote to be recorded that he voted against recommendation 2.

At this point Councillors Bayliss, R Lewis and D Cole left the meeting.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Authority approved the following recommendation:-***

***That subject to the final determination by the Fire Authority, savings of £800,000 are made from the budget, adjusted for inflation, pay awards and other commitments ie not making the savings equating to the use of reserves in 2014/15, This would mean an increase of 1.32 % on the Constituent Authorities.***

### **17. Formerly Agenda Item 13**

#### **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE REDUCTION IN THE SOCIETAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY'S PREVENTION INITIATIVES**

The Director of Risk presented the report on the Reduction in the Societal and Economic Costs of Fire Authority's Prevention Initiatives.

Members were informed that the report outlined the trend regarding significant reductions in fires, casualties from fires and appliance mobilisations which could be attributed to the prevention work which the Service has undertaken.

The Director of Risk informed Members that the Service's ability to manage down risk had significantly improved which was evidenced in the reduction of incidents whilst the risk within the community had increased. Members were referred to the tables on page 5 of the report which illustrated how the reduction in the amount of incidents over the last ten years had delivered an ongoing financial saving on the Service's 'On Call' revenue budget of £226k per year.

Members were informed that with regard to the economic and societal cost of fires there was a direct financial benefit to the Service's revenue budget through a reduction in fires however, and that furthermore, there was also a wider economic and societal benefit to be considered.

In addition, the Director of Risk informed Members that when considering the reduction in all primary fires and secondary fires across all stations within Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the societal costs attributed to those fires, it was possible to demonstrate that the Authority's fire prevention work had a direct financial saving of over £63m on the local economy each year as shown in tables 3 and 4 on page 6 of the report.

Members were reminded that Authority's legal and moral duty was to prevent death and injury wherever possible however, it was important to note the added economic and societal benefit in monetary terms of £20m per year specifically attributable to the Service's reduction in fire deaths and fire injuries. Furthermore, Members were informed that whilst the Service's preventative work had proved highly successful in reducing the amount and severity of fires.

Councillor Rees-Evans suggested that this paper be presented to the Welsh Government, which was supported by Councillor K Pearson.

The Chair stated that she had a meeting scheduled with the Minister where she would be happy to present this report to demonstrate the importance of preventative work.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that Members note the significant economic and societal cost benefits of the Authority's preventative initiatives.***

### **18. Formerly Agenda Item 14**

#### **TO APPROVE AND THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2013/14**

The CFO presented the Annual Performance Assessment 2013/14 to Members.

Members were informed that the Annual Performance Assessment attached as Appendix 1 to the report had been drafted in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 whereby all Welsh Improvement Authorities are required to produce a performance assessment on their achievements against the previous year's Annual Improvement plan.

The statement of performance assessment incorporates all of the recommendations identified by Wales Audit Office with an aim of achieving full compliance against the Local Government Measure guidance.

Councillor K Pearson commended the design of the document and stated that the graphs were an improvement on previous documents.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that Members noted the report and the progress made to date and approve publication of the Annual Performance Assessment 2013/14.***

**19** *Formerly Agenda Item 15*  
**TO APPROVE THE DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2015- 2020**

The CFO presented the Draft Strategic Plan 2015- 2020 to Members.

The CFO informed Members that the Draft Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020 attached to the report as Appendix 1 had been developed over the last 18 months using information and strategic direction determined through the Elected Members, Officers and Trade Union development workshops; Welsh Government and UK guidance and the Services asset management vision project undertaken in 2013.

Members were informed that the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020 sets seven strategic priorities for the organisation:-

- Priority 1 – Collaboration
- Priority 2 – Innovation
- Priority 3 - Improving our Service Delivery
- Priority 4 - Empowering our Staff
- Priority 5 – Making better use of our Assets and Resources
- Priority 6 - Caring for our Environment
- Priority 7 – Communication and Engagement

The CFO stated that the Draft Strategic Plan sets challenging performance targets for the next five years and that the plan would be consulted upon between 30th September to 28th November 2014. Furthermore, the consultation will run concurrently with the Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 consultation process, with the communication and consultation strategy being applicable for the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority approves the Draft Strategic Plan 2015-2020 for consultation.***

At this point Councillor Rees-Evans left the meeting.

**20** *Formerly Agenda Item 16*  
**TO APPROVE THE DRAFT ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – 2015-2016 & COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION PLAN**

The CFO presented to Members the Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2015-2016 and the Communication and Consultation Plan.

Members were informed that in July 2014 the Fire Authority Members Working Group convened to develop its Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The CFO stated that this plan was the first year of the Strategic Plan 2015/2020.

Furthermore, Members were informed that the Working Group had developed three improvement objectives for 2015-16, those being;

1. Improve service delivery and safety through use of new technology and fire and rescue techniques.
2. Continue to support safer communities whilst managing reduced budgets
3. Further improve collaborative activities to reduce risks, costs and improve outcomes for our communities

Members were informed that the Group concluded this work at their meeting 15th September 2014 and were recommending that the Fire Authority accept the Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 and approve it for public consultation.

The CFO highlighted that in order to direct the consultation and communication elements of the Improvement Planning process, a comprehensive Communication and Consultation plan had also been developed which was attached to the report as Appendix 2.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority:***

- 1. Approve the Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 for consultation.***
- 2. Noted the Communication and Consultation Plan.***

## **21 Formerly Agenda Item 16 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE REGARDING THE MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-2015**

The Temporary Head of Corporate Communications and Democratic Services (CCDS) provided a verbal update to Members on the Member Training and Development Plan 2014-15. Members were informed that the plan was currently being developed in conjunction with the Democratic Services Forum and that the draft document would be e-mailed to Members. Members were asked to return any comments regarding the content of the plan along with additional training requirements as soon as possible.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority note the verbal update regarding the Member Training and Development Plan 2014-15***

**22** *Formerly Agenda Item 18*  
**TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE AUDIO RECORDING OF FIRE  
AUTHORITY COMMITTEES – PERFORMANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Following a proposal from the Democratic Services Forum, the Clerk/Monitoring Officer informed Members that the audio recording, following agreement by the Fire Authority, would be extended to other Authority Committees such as Performance Audit and Scrutiny Committee and the Resource Management Committee widening access to the public.

The Clerk stated that the provision of providing audio recordings would not incur any extra cost to the Authority.

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority note the verbal update regarding the audio recording of Fire Authority Committees and agree the extension of audio recording of meetings to the – Performance, Audit And Scrutiny Committee And Resource Management Committee***

**23** *Formerly Agenda Item 19*  
**TO APPROVE A REPORT REGARDING THE AMENDMENTS TO THE FIRE  
AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION - PROTOCOLS FOR VISITING AUTHORITY LAND  
AND PREMISES**

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer presented the report regarding the Amendments to the Fire Authority Constitution namely, Protocols or Visiting Authority Land and Premises to Members. Members were informed that during the Democratic Services Forum (DSF) on 24 February 2014, Councillor Walker raised a motion which would allow Members of the Fire Authority to be permitted to enter any Fire Station throughout the Services area without being accompanied by a Senior Officer.

In light of this request, the Chief Fire Officer had revised the Constitution and recommended that amendments be made to sections 2.3.6 and 19.33.2, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 which contained the changes made to the Constitution.

***It was RESOLVED that Fire Authority approve the changes set out in Appendix 1.***

**24**      ***Formerly Agenda Item 20***  
**TO RECEIVE A REPORT REGARDING THE CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**  
**RELATING TO THE CHIEF OFFICER PAY AWARD**

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer requested that all Chief Officers leave the room. All Chief Officers left the room.

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer presented the changes to the Constitution relating to the Chief Officer Pay Award to Members and stated that the Constitution was reviewed in its entirety in 2012, when the Authority approved a new revised version at its meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

Members were informed that proposed amendments to the constitution are presented to the full Fire Authority on a regular basis, following consideration at the Democratic Services Forum. However, the Clerk/Monitoring Officer had overall responsibility for ensuring the Constitution was fit for purpose and he was required to present periodical reports to Members outlining amendments for the Authority's approval.

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer informed Members that the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 have brought about a number of changes to the previous 2006 Regulations which were set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The Clerk/Monitoring Officer advised that whilst these Regulations were not binding on the Fire Authority, as a matter of good practice, it was recommended that the Fire and Rescue Authority amend the Constitution to embody the changes brought about by the above Legislation.

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer highlighted that the amendments to the Constitution where illustrated in red within Appendix 1 of the report and that the changes allow the Fire Authority to change the level of remuneration of Chief Officers. However, in order to facilitate and speed up this process, it was recommended that the Chief Officers Remuneration Committee would continue to consider any issues in detail but recommend to the Fire Authority for final decision.

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority approved the amendments to the Constitution set out in Appendix 1 and the Clerk / Monitoring Officer was authorised to make all approved and consequential amendments.***

**25**      ***Formerly Agenda Item 21***  
**TO APPROVE THE PAY SETTLEMENT 2014 – BRIGADE MANAGERS**

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer presented the Pay Settlement 2014 – Brigade Managers to Members and stated that the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services had reached an agreement in respect of a pay award for 2014 which was as follows:

- I. An increase of 1.0% on basic salary applicable to brigade managers earning a basic salary of £99,999 or lower (as at 31 December 2013)

- II. A flat rate increase of £1,000 on basic salary applicable to brigade managers earning a basic salary of £100,000 or more (as at 31 December 2013)

Members were informed that if the settlement was agreed each of the above awards would be made effective from 1 January 2014.

Councillor Dudley enquired if the settlement could be frozen bearing in mind the financial climate. The Clerk/Monitoring Officer stated that this would be difficult to achieve legally due to a potential breach of contract and therefore, it would not be advisable to do so until the matter had been definitively legally determined.

In light of austerity measures, Councillor Paddison commented that some Managers may be interested in surrendering their pay award in the spirit of assisting the Authority.

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority implement the nationally agreed pay settlement with effect from 1 January 2014 in accordance with the Authority's Pay Policy Statement.***

26

***Formerly Agenda Item 22***

**TO APPROVE THE REVISED PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2014/15**

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer presented the Revised Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 to Members. Members were informed that relevant authorities were required by the Localism Act 2011 to prepare Pay Policy Statements which must articulate an authority's policy 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 had to be prepared for each financial year and published by 31 March annually.

Members were informed that in February 2014 the Welsh Government issued revised guidance on the detail required within the Pay Policy Statement (Appendix A). Members were informed that unfortunately, the guidance arrived too late for the Mid and West Wales Fire Authority Statement to be amended prior to publication therefore a revised Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2014/15 had been brought before Members for their approval.

The Clerk/Monitoring Officer highlighted that the revised Pay Policy Statement set out the salaries and remuneration of the Authority's workforce, particularly its senior staff and its lowest paid employees in an open and transparent manner.

***It was RESOLVED that the Fire Authority approve the revised Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15.***

**27** *Formerly Agenda Item 25 (Repeated due to re-arrangement of the Agenda)*  
**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 IS LIKELY THAT THERE WOULD BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF EXEMPT INFORMATION WITHIN THE DESCRIPTION OF SCHEDULE 12A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, NAMELY PARAGRAPH 12, INFORMATION RELATING TO A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL AND PARAGRAPH 14, 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 DO SO.**

**28** *Formerly Agenda Item 27*  
**TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2014**

The minutes of the Extra-ordinary Fire Authority meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings, subject to amendments being made.

**29** *Formerly Agenda Item 28*  
**TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE SHORTLISTING PANEL HELD ON 23 APRIL 2014**

The minutes of the Shortlisting Panel held on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014 were considered and noted.

**30** *Formerly Agenda Item 29*  
**TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2014.**

The minutes of the Extra-ordinary Fire Authority meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings

**30** *Formerly Agenda Item 30*  
**TO RECEIVE A REPORT SEEKING AUTHORISATION OF ABSENCE FOR COUNCILLOR D W THOMAS**

The Clerk stated that under section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 and paragraph 2.5 of the Authority's Constitution a Member ceased to be a Member of an Authority if they did not attend a meeting of the Authority for a period of six months, unless the absence was approved by the Authority.

Members were informed that a Councillor from Carmarthenshire was currently unwell and therefore was not able to attend Fire Authority meetings since 10<sup>th</sup> February 2014. However, he still remained a Member of Carmarthen County Council and was likely to be allowed to remain a member notwithstanding difficulties he may have in attending meetings at present.

In the light of this, Members were asked to waive paragraph 2.5 of the Constitution and approve Councillor's non attendance at meetings of the Authority for a further 6 months from the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

***It was RESOLVED that Paragraph 2.5 of the Constitution be waived and that approval be given for the Councillor's absence from the Authority for a period of six months from the 29th September 2014.***

**31. 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**

There were no items of urgent business.

Meeting closed 13:55