

**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

Ystafell Caer,

Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyddin

9 FEBRUARY 2015

MINUTES

OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING

The Caer Suite,

Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen

9 FEBRUARY 2015

11.00 – 13:20

79% 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: J Bayliss, K Curry, J Dudley, L Frayling, C Higgins, P James, G Jones, R Llewellyn, S Paddison, K Pearson, P Pritchard, R Rees-Evans, G Walker, J Warman, A Wilcox, DE Williams, J Williams
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: J Curtice, R Lewis, T Hennegan, G Tanner
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	C Davies, E Aitken, D Daycock, A Francis, C Margetts, K Jones, C Jackson, S Flather, S McLinden, H W Jones

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Curtice, T Hennegan, R Lewis and G Tanner.

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 Officers present declared that they had a personal interest in relation to item 8 of the agenda, namely the Pay Policy Statement. The Clerk / Monitoring Officer explained that, as this matter only required the Authority to agree the policy as reflecting the existing pay structure, they were not required to leave.

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer reported that any Officers with a declared personal and prejudicial interest in matters relating to items 18, 20 and 21 of the agenda would be required to depart the meeting during their discussion.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

Following the announcement of the Queens New Year's Honours List the Chair wished to congratulate Mr Richard Smith, former Chief Fire Officer of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, who would be receiving a Queens Fire Service Medal (QFSM). The Chair also congratulated Mr Mel Jehu, Member of the Standards Committee who would be receiving an MBE.

The Chair welcomed Mr Hywel Jones, Chair of the Authority's Standards Committee, who was in attendance at the meeting to present the Standards Committee Annual Report 2013/14, in order to deal with item 8 first. This was agreed by Members.

The Chair requested that the order of business for items 7 and 8 of the agenda would be reconfigured.

4. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2014

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 15 December 2014 were approved as a true record of proceedings.

There were no matters arising from the meeting.

5 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2015

The minutes of the Resource Management Committee held on 19 January 2015 were received and noted.

6 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 2 DECEMBER 2014

The minutes of the Standards Committee held on 2 December 2014 were received and noted. It was highlighted that it be reported to the next Standards Committee that page 4, Item 7, paragraph 4 be amended as follows:

'made aware of *complaints* made against the Service'.

7. TO RECEIVE THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14
(formerly item 8)

The Chair of the Standards Committee, Mr H 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 during the year.

Members were provided with a brief synopsis of the business transacted during the three meetings of the Standards Committee which had been convened during the reporting period.

Mr 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.

Reference was made to the remit of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) whereby a clear message had been conveyed by the Office of the PSOW in that a 'hard line' approach would be taken regarding the unacceptably high number of complaints being received which did not warrant investigation.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the work of the Standards Committee be noted.

8. TO RECEIVE THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16 *(formerly item 7)*

All Officers present declared that they had a personal interest in relation to item 8 of the agenda, namely the Pay Policy Statement. The Clerk / Monitoring Officer explained that, as this matter only required the Authority to agree the policy as reflecting the existing pay structure, they were not required to leave.

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer presented the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 which was required to be published by 31 March annually under section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011. Attention was drawn to Appendix A of the report which articulated the Authority's policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce.

In response to a query from Councillor S Paddison, the Clerk / Monitoring Officer clarified that the pay policy portrayed an accurate reflection of the Authority's current remuneration for its employees, in line with the Authority's good governance arrangements for demonstrating openness and transparency.

Following a query from Councillor J Bayliss, the Chief Fire Officer declared a further personal interest in relation to the vehicle provision for Chief Officers. The Chief Fire Officer then clarified the current protocol in place within the Authority. Cllr Paul James and reported that the pertinent information relating to the provision of vehicles for Chief Officers, ~~which~~ had previously been considered in detail at a meeting of the Democratic Services Forum and the protocol had been subsequently reviewed by the Remuneration Committee. The Chief Fire Officer offered to meet with Cllr Bayliss, ; would be provided to all Members. should he require further information on this matter.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 be approved.

9. TO RECEIVE THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2015/16

Members then considered a report which set out the proposed Treasury Management Policy which would underpin the treasury management activities undertaken by Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority in 2015/16, together with the accompanying proposed Strategy. The report had been considered in detail by the Resource Management Committee at its meeting on 19 January 2015.

Councillor J Warman commended the report which set out the Authority's investment strategy in a clear and concise manner.

Councillor D E Williams declared a personal interest in matters relating to the Rescue 365 community interest company. In response to a query from Councillor D E Williams, the Treasurer /Director of Resources reported that the Authority did not envisage a situation which would require an investment period of over 364 days.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2015/16 be approved.

10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PRUDENTIAL CODE AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2015/16

The Treasurer /Director of Resources presented the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's prudential code and indicators for 2015/16, some of which showed the financial impact of capital expenditure decisions, whilst others provided constraints on treasury management decisions.

It was noted that the report had been considered in detail by the Resource Management Committee at its meeting on 19 January 2015 where it had been

resolved to recommend the Prudential Indicators to the Fire and Rescue Authority for approval.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Prudential Code and Indicators for 2015/16 be approved.

11. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16

Members considered the report on the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement which outlined the calculation for setting aside funds to repay loans and other long term liabilities for the 2015/16 financial year. It was noted that the proposed calculations were based on the recommended options set out in regulations. It was also reported that at their last meeting held on 19 January 2015, the Resource Management Committee had resolved to recommend the adoption of the report to the Fire Authority.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the following Minimum Revenue Provision calculation methods be adopted for the year 2015/16:

- 1. That the "Regulatory Method" be adopted for expenditure incurred before or on 31st March 2009.***
- 2. That the "Asset Life Method with Equal Instalments" be adopted for expenditure on or after 1st 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.***

12. TO RECEIVE THE JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES ON THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2015/16

The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that the Budget requirement for 2015/16 had been considered in detail at the Fire Authority meeting held on 15 December 2014.

Members were provided with a brief synopsis of the key achievements made within each of the Service's Improvement Objectives for 2013/14 in terms of Managing Risk, Managing People, Working Together, Managing Resources and Managing Performance. The Chief Fire Officer stated that he felt it was particularly pleasing to note that the Service, as a risk management organisation, had achieved a 58% reduction in the total number of fires over a ten year period.

The Treasurer /Director of Resources reported that the final Revenue Support Grant settlement received was not substantially different to the Provisional Settlement and therefore the budget recommendations remained unchanged. It was noted that no comments had been received from the Constituent Authorities following the Authority's budget notification letter. Members were informed that approval of the budget requirement for 2015/16 would require the Authority to identify savings of over £1m from its revenue budget.

In response to a query from Councillor K Pearson, the Chief Fire Officer clarified that a review was being undertaken in order to mainstream some Community Safety posts into the establishment which had been temporarily grant funded for some time. The Chief Fire Officer emphasised that the Service was working in conjunction with relevant Representative Bodies in order to reduce the number of temporary vacancies whilst also taking cognisance of the requirement of managing within reduced budgets.

Councillor S Paddison, supported by a number of other Members, cautioned that whilst Members were supportive of the community safety work undertaken by the Service, future support of the prevention element of the budget may not be possible during times of austerity.

Following a query from Councillor C Higgins, the Chief Fire Officer informed Members that a review of the corporate core (non-uniformed) structure would be undertaken in line with the strategic vision of the Service and budgetary constraints.

In response to a query from Councillor J Warman, the Treasurer/Director of Resources clarified that maintenance of the Authority's property portfolio was determined on a basis of priority in line with the Authority's condition surveys and spent from the revenue maintenance or 'capital works' and 'minor works' budget. At the request of Councillor J Dudley, the Treasurer/Director of Resources agreed to forward Neath Port Talbot Members an update regarding to the maintenance programme for Cimla Fire Station.

Reference was made to the Joint Control Room project outlined on page 7, paragraph 2 of Appendix 1 whereby Councillor J Dudley wished to record her sincere thanks, on behalf of all Members, to Assistant Chief Fire Officer Derek Masson for his sterling contribution to the project and wished him well in his forthcoming retirement. Members were informed that Area Manager R Thomas had been nominated as this Authority's Project lead officer. In response to a query from Councillor P James, the Chief Fire Officer clarified that a number of temporary contracts would continue in Service Control until 2016, at which time a review of the staffing structure would take place.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED:

- 1) That for 2015/16, the net budget at £43,768,859 (1.99% increase on the Constituent Authorities) be approved (Appendix A);***

- 2) *That the above budget requirement would not be funded from reserves;*
- 3) *That the Capital Programme outlined at Appendix B be approved, leading to the capital financing charges shown as additional in Appendix A;*
- 4) *That the efficiencies laid out in Appendix C be approved;*
- 5) *That the vehicle replacement programme attached at Appendix D be approved.*

13. TO RECEIVE THE DETAILED BUDGET REPORT FOR 2015/16

The Treasurer/Director of Resources provided Members with a detailed breakdown of the estimated revenue budget recommended in the previous agenda item 12, and set out at Appendix 1, which would form the basis for budget monitoring at the Resource Management Committee during the coming year.

It was RESOLVED that the detailed revenue budget for 2015/16 be approved.

14. TO RECEIVE THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020, ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015-16 AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTATION REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report on the Strategic Plan 2015-20, Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 and the associated consultation report, which had been developed under the direction of the Annual Improvement Planning Member Working Group and recommended for approval by the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 January 2015.

Members were provided with an overview of the consultation process in relation to this matter which was set out in Appendix 3 and which indicated that stakeholders were supportive of the Authority's priorities and objectives.

Consideration was given to the 7 priority areas within the Strategic Plan 2015-20 set out at Appendix 1 which outlined the Service's direction and vision for the next five years, along with the 3 improvement objectives within the Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 (set out at Appendix 2) which detailed the benefits that would be delivered to staff, communities and stakeholders over the coming year.

Councillor K Curry reiterated his support for a previous suggestion that consultation and engagement with stakeholders could be further improved by increasing the Authority's presence and role at various community events including fetes, carnivals and agricultural shows.

The Chair, on behalf of all Members, extended her gratitude for all staff involved in the development of the Strategic Plan 2015-20 and Annual Improvement Plan 2015/16.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The Strategic Plan 2015-20 be approved;*
- 2. The Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 be approved.*
- 3. The Strategic Plan 2015-20 and Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 consultation report be approved for publication.*

15. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF THE INTRODUCTION OF WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS ON MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Head of Corporate Communication and Business Development presented a report which outlined the base line position of the Authority against the Welsh Language Standards proposed by the Welsh Language Commissioner. Members' attention were drawn to Appendix A of the report which provided a mapping exercise undertaken jointly by the three Welsh Fire and Rescue Services, to determine whether each of the proposed 179 Standards were reasonable and proportionate. The Head of Corporate Communication and Business Development informed Members that the information contained within the mapping exercise had then been used to support the completion of the Standards Investigation Questionnaire which was currently being considered by the Welsh Language Commissioner. Members acknowledged the potential substantial implications for the Authority if it were required to adhere fully with the proposals.

In response to a query from Councillor J Dudley, the Head of Corporate Communication and Business Development confirmed that it was the Authority's current practice to provide copies of bilingual internal documentation upon request.

Councillor K Pearson expressed the opinion that the Welsh Government should provide financial support to assist in implementing the Standards imposed on the Authority.

Following a query from Councillor DE Williams the Chief Fire Officer reported that the senior management team were trialling the use of electronic devices at meetings in an effort to establish smarter ways of working whilst simultaneously reducing printing costs. Councillor S Paddison suggested that Members should only receive duplicate copies of documents upon request.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16 TO RECEIVE THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013

The Treasurer/Director of Resources reported that the Fire Authority had previously approved the 2012/13 Statement of Accounts at its meeting on 23 September 2013, however at that time the Appointed Auditor could not report that his audit had been completed due to outstanding work not directly related to the accounts. It was reported that this work had now been completed and the Appointed Auditor had issued a report which would replace the original Audit Report in the Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013. This was set out at Appendix 1 to the report. Members were informed that no other changes had been made to the accounts.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts, with the amended Auditors Report, for the year ended 31 March 2013 be approved.

17 TO RECEIVE THE APPOINTED AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER – 2012/13 CERTIFICATION

The Treasurer/Director of Resources reported that, further to the previous item on the agenda, the Appointed Auditor had issued an Annual Audit Letter confirming that he had completed his consideration of matters brought to his attention by various local authority electors. Members were informed that the Appointed Auditor was satisfied that the Authority had appropriate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources. Furthermore, the Appointed Auditor had issued a certificate confirming that the audit of the accounts had been completed. This was set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor J Dudley reported that it was unfortunate that a representative from KPMG had been unable to attend the Fire Authority meeting to present the report and to answer Members' questions. These sentiments were echoed by a number of other Members. The Treasurer/Director of Resources clarified that she had offered to present the report on KPMG's behalf due to a miscommunication of meeting dates.

The Chair of the Authority wished to record her disappointment that the Wales Audit Office had issued the Annual Audit Letter which contained many inaccuracies in relation to dates and responsible officers.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that Members note the report.

Councillor J Dudley departed the meeting.

18 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE GOVERNANCE OF RESCUE 365 COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY**

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer reported that Chief Fire Officer C Davies and Corporate Head of Risk C Margetts, had declared a personal interest in matters relating to the Rescue 365 Community Interest Company (CIC).

Councillor D E Williams also declared a personal interest in matters relating to the Rescue 365 CIC.

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer provided Members with an overview of the Rescue 365 CIC's remit and structure and informed Members that the company had been set up to deliver a range of fire related training and development services that would be of benefit to the community and also deliver income generation and other benefits for the Fire Authority.

The Clerk / Monitoring Officer reported that following the Fire Authority meeting on 29 September 2014, legal advice had been sought on a number of issues relating to the Rescue 365 CIC's legal structure and representation on the board. Members were requested to consider the appointment of the Chair of Resource Management Committee to the Board of Rescue 365 CIC which would provide a formal link between the CIC and the Authority. The Clerk / Monitoring Officer also requested that he and the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to take any appropriate steps to give effect to any changes to the constitution of the company.

Councillor J Warman highlighted accountability issues and in response the Clerk / Monitoring Officer explained that an optimum balance would be sought to enable Rescue 365 CIC to maintain control over its functions, and to enable appropriate monitoring to be undertaken by the Fire Authority. The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that the Rescue 365 CIC's accounts would be published, and be in the public domain.

In response to a query from Councillor K Pearson, the Clerk / Monitoring Officer clarified that the Chair of Resource Management Committee, as an ex-officio post, would be a named director of the Rescue 365 CIC, with voting rights, and as such would not be able to delegate their responsibilities to another member of the Fire Authority, without a formal replacement being made.

A number of Members commended Officers on the significant progress made in the establishment of the Rescue 365 Community Interest Company.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Chair of the Resource Management Committee be appointed as a member of the board of Rescue 365;***

2. ***That the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) be authorised and requested to implement any amendments to the company's governance structure to give effect to the appointment of the Chair of Resource Management Committee and the advice of the Fire Authority's legal advisors;***
3. ***That the Clerk/ Monitoring officer be authorised to make any consequential amendments to the constitution of the Fire Authority.***

- 19 **TO RESOLVE 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.**

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the above reasons.

Mr H W Jones, Treasurer/Director of Resources E Aitken, Director of Development K Jones, Corporate Head of Risk C Margetts, Corporate Head of Development A Francis and Head of Strategic Planning and Performance S McLinden departed the meeting at this point. It was noted that the Head of Finance would remain present at the meeting in his capacity as Deputy Section 151 Officer.

- 20 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

Redacted form – for publication

The Chief Fire Officer outlined for Members a report which indicated that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer had recently given formal notice of his retirement from the Service, and accordingly the Chief Fire Officer sought approval from the Authority to commence the recruitment and selection of a new Deputy Chief Fire Officer and any other posts consequent to such an appointment pursuant to Article 8 of the Constitution.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

21 TO AGREE THE REMUNERATION FOR ONE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS FOR 2014/15, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Consideration was given to the remuneration for one of the Assistant Chief Fire Officers for 2014/15, in line with the Chief Fire Officer's recommendations and as per the Authority's Pay Policy, Principal Officer Remuneration, Performance and Performance Appraisal Scheme for Directors and the new Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales guidance.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

Exclusion of the press and public lifted – Members of the press and public were now free to re-join the meeting.

22 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 13:20.