

**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 PERFORMANCE, AUDIT
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING**

**COFNODION CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR
ADOLYGU AC ARCHWILIO PERFFORMIAD
MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DYDD LLUN, 26 IONAWR 2015
MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2015**

**YSTAFELL CAER, PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN, CAERFYRDDIN
CAER SUITE, FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, CARMARTHEN**

11.00 – 13:00

71% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennolyn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CHAIR	Councillor K Curry
IS-GADEIRYDD/DEPUTY CHAIR:	Councillor K Pearson
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: J Curtice, J Dudley, W Evans, T Hennegan, G Jones, R Rees-Evans, G Walker, J Warman.
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	J Dudley, P James, J Williams
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	E Aitken, D Daycock, D Masson, R Quin, K Jones, C Margetts, R Thomas, A Francis, S McLinden, C Jackson, K Davies, H Pugh (Carmarthenshire County Council – item 5), M Arthur (KPMG – item 6), Cllr G Thomas (observer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P James and J Williams.

2 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

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

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PERSONAL MATTERS

A warm welcome was extended to Helen Pugh from Carmarthenshire Audit Office and Matt Arthur from KPMG. The Chair, on behalf of all Members, wished to record his gratitude to Victoria De Zouche, for all assistance provided in her former role as KPMG Auditor.

Members were requested to reconfigure the business on the agenda to allow the external representatives to depart the meeting on conclusion of the items relating to the Internal Audit Plan and the Appointed Auditor's Annual Audit Letter. Members agreed to this request.

The Chair reported that a briefing would be held for Members on conclusion of the meeting regarding a recent fire incident.

4 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2014

The minutes of the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 October 2014 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings.

Matters Arising from the meeting held on the 20 October 2014

The Director of Resources drew Members' attention to Page 1, Item 4, Paragraph 3 of the minutes and stated that the report on the Annual Audit Letter 2012-13 would be submitted to the Fire Authority meeting scheduled for 9 February 2015.

The Director of Resources referred to Page 2, Item 4, Paragraph 1 of the minutes and confirmed that Mr Barry would attend a future meeting to present additional information, including a detailed breakdown of costs, which would provide reassurance to Members that they were receiving value for money from the Wales Audit Office.

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance highlighted Page 4, Item 6, Paragraph 5 of the minutes and provided an update to Members regarding an objective within the Neath Port Talbot Command Action Plan 2014-15.

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance drew Members' attention to Page 5, Item 6, Paragraph 1 of the minutes and reported that both five and ten year figures had been provided to Members in order to provide a longer term trend of performance.

Following a query from Councillor R Rees-Evans in relation to Page 5, Item 6, Paragraph 4 of the minutes, the Head of Corporate Communication and Democratic Services confirmed that the Democratic Services Forum would be provided with a presentation at its meeting scheduled for 16 February 2015, with a view to introducing a new e-democracy system.

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance referred to Page 6, Item 7, Paragraph 5 of the minutes and confirmed that the Comments, Complaints and Compliments system had been refined to allow Members to receive a more detailed flavour of complaints, without compromising data protection issues.

In response to queries from Councillors T Hennegan and G Walker concerning an article in a local newspaper relating to the Authority's expenditure on legal fees, the Director of Development clarified that figures had been provided in response to a Freedom of Information Request which incorporated compensation payments.

5 TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2014-15 *(formerly item 11)*

Ms H Pugh from Carmarthenshire County Council presented Committee with the Internal Audit Plan for 2014-2015 financial year. Members were provided with an overview of the audit approach, timetable and reporting arrangements for 2014-15.

Ms H Pugh reported that the review of the suite of Central Financial Management Systems including Payroll, Creditors and Debtors audits outlined in Appendices 2-4 of the report had been completed and it was confirmed that no significant issues had been found.

In response to a query from Councillor J Dudley, the Director of Resources reassured Members that appropriate procedures were in place within the Authority with regard to debt recovery and noted that the wording within the report could be misconstrued.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee note the report.

6 TO RECEIVE THE APPOINTED AUDITOR'S ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2013-14 *(formerly item 12)*

Mr M Arthur of KPMG presented Committee with the Annual Audit Letter 2013-14 on behalf of the Appointed Auditor in line with the statutory responsibilities under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and the Code of Audit Practice. It was reported that the Authority had complied with its responsibilities relating to financial reporting

and use of resources. Furthermore, Committee 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.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee note the report.

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE JOINT PUBLIC SERVICE CENTRE PROJECT (JPSCP) (formerly item 5)

The Director of Delivery presented the progress report on the Joint Public Service Centre Project (JPSCP).

The Committee were informed that both contractual matters and the collaboration agreement were progressing well, and furthermore, Members gave consideration to the detailed financial breakdown of costings outlined in Appendix 1 of the report, which provided figures for the current financial year in addition to the overall projected costs.

It was reported that efficiencies surrounding staffing would continue to be monitored, and assurances were provided that service delivery would be maintained throughout the migration process, which was currently on schedule to commence in September 2015.

It was also reported that a comprehensive programme of works had been developed by South Wales Police, which consisted of two scenarios, pending a definitive decision from the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust by March 2015 as to whether or not they would be joining the project. Members were informed that the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust had been provided with every reasonable opportunity to participate within the multi-agency partnership in recognition that they were currently under a level of review and would require Ministerial support prior to joining.

Reference was made to the procurement of the command and control system and Members were reminded that North Wales Fire and Rescue Service would no longer be progressing with the all-Wales procurement. Members were however assured that North Wales Fire and Rescue Service remained committed to the project and that the existing levels of resilience would not be compromised in any way; rather, alternative continuity arrangements would be explored in due course which would ensure compatibility of systems between the Services. The Director of Delivery reiterated that any changes to costings arising from their withdrawal from the procurement process could not be quantified as they related to changes in economies of scale. It was noted that the procurement process was currently on schedule to be completed by June 2015.

The Director of Delivery updated Members with regard to the ongoing project communication arrangements in terms of the website, briefing days and trade

union discussions to ensure openness and transparency.

Members gave consideration to the seven key task areas contained within the report and made a number observations. In response to comments raised by Councillor J Dudley, the Director of Delivery assured Committee that a comprehensive external communications plan would be implemented which would ensure that relevant information would be well publicised within local communities.

In response to a query from Councillor W Evans, Members were informed that all relevant Local Authorities would be made aware of the project via Local Resilience Forums. Furthermore, any concerns could be alleviated by means of site visits to each Local Authority in due course, if required.

Following a query from Councillor W Evans, the Director of Delivery confirmed that processes would be put in place to ensure that Welsh speakers would be available at all times within the Control Centre in order to allow members of the public to communicate with staff using their preferred language.

A number of Members commended the sterling work of all involved with the project and looked forward to receiving further updates in due course.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee note the report.

8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CERTIFICATE FOR THE AUDIT OF MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY'S ASSESSMENT 2013-14 PERFORMANCE (formerly item 7)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance provided Committee with an overview of the certificate of compliance, issued by the Auditor General for Wales, relating to the Audit of the Authority's assessment of 2013-14 performance.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Performance Audit and Scrutiny Committee note the report on the Audit of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Assessment of 2013-14 performance.

9 TO RECEIVE THE PERFORMANCE AND BUSINESS ASSURANCE REPORTS TO DECEMBER 2014 (formerly item 6)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance presented a quarterly suite of reports which had been developed to capture the Service's performance. Four documents were provided as Appendices to the report and included updates on performance up to December 2014. The Committee gave consideration to the updates provided on each Appendix, and the following observations were made:

Appendix 1 - Departmental/Command Action Plans 2014-15 (Committee were provided with updated information which replaced pages 2 and 3 of the document).

Members were referred to the strategic overview of performance outlined on page 3 of the document whereby departments were required to report against matters directly relating to the Authority's Improvement Objectives. Members were pleased to note that every department was on target.

Appendix 2 - Performance Report

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that of the 34 statutory and core performance indicators which measured performance on corporate health and service delivery, the Service was on target or within target tolerance on 17 of the indicators. The 17 indicators that were not within target tolerance related to sickness, number of accidental dwelling fires, fire deaths and injuries, hoax calls attended and smoke alarms that had not been activated.

Members were aware that the figures fluctuated during the course of the year and recognised that a small number of incidents could present a skewed effect on the statistics presented. The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance therefore duly presented Members with data spanning 10 years to enable Members to focus on overall trends.

A discussion ensued regarding the Service's prevention strategy whereby Committee emphasised the importance of community safety initiatives in reducing the number of incidents. Members were assured that the information emanating from the performance indicators were utilised to focus the Service's efforts in relation to areas of need.

Appendix 3 - Business Assurance Progress Report

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that five of the 7 actions captured were currently on target.

Councillor K Pearson raised concerns that action 6 was off target which presented a risk to the Authority of not complying with the Better Regulation Delivery Office Regulators Code 2014. The Director of Risk clarified that the delay in progressing with the action could be attributed to matters relating to an all-Wales approach. Committee were assured that the action had moved forward in recent weeks and up to date data indicated that the activity had now been allocated an amber status, which was within overall progress tolerance.

Appendix 4 - Corporate Projects Update

The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that 20 of the 25 Projects reported against were on target. These included all 3 projects in the Feasibility Stage, all 4 projects within the remit of the National Issues Committee, 4 of the 5 non corporate projects and 9 of the 13 internal corporate projects. The remaining 5 being were slightly off target but within the agreed parameters.

In response to a query from Councillor K Curry, the Director of Risk provided Committee with an update on the Northern Workshop project and assured Members that facilities at Builth Wells had been utilised in the interim period.

Following a query from Councillor G Walker in relation to the All Wales Firefighting Media and Techniques review, the Director of Risk clarified that a specialist vehicle would be trialled by operational members of staff during the spring of 2015.

Councillor G Walker referred to three specific incidents attended by the Small Fires Unit (SFU), and also raised a number of issues in relation to cost and safety implications arising where additional On Call staff were being used, in situations where other appliances were closer to the incident than the SFU and accordingly the other appliances were available whilst the SFU was attending the incident. The Director of Delivery clarified that the Rural Response Pumps (RRPs) were used for incidents with restricted access, whereas the SFUs were deployed to minor incidents in order to maximise the availability of Rescue Pumps for risk critical incidents within the Swansea area. The Director of Delivery further informed Committee that the queries raised by Councillor G Walker would however be investigated and a response would be issued to all Members.

Following a query from Councillor K Pearson, the Head of Strategic Planning and Performance reported that the 'project end dates' within the report would be reviewed and updated as required.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that Members note the report and the progress made to date.

10 TO RECEIVE THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020, ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015-16 AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTATION REPORT (formerly item 8)

The Director of Development introduced the report which set out the Strategic Plan 2015-20, the 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.

The Committee gave consideration to the 7 priority areas within the Strategic Plan 2015-20 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 which detailed the benefits that would be delivered to staff, communities and stakeholders over the coming year.

Members were provided with an overview of the 8 week consultation process which had been undertaken, whereby a total of 35 community events had taken place across the six County Commands in order to publicise the Strategic Plan 2015-20 and Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 and which encouraged respondents to have their say. Members were informed that attendance at these events was

generally good, with a combined total of 750 stakeholders attending or responding to the consultation. Members were pleased to note that the attendees had been supportive of the Authority's priorities and objectives and welcomed further collaboration with the Service's emergency partners.

Councillor K Curry suggested that Members could attend local community events such as fetes, carnivals and Royal Welsh Shows in order to engage citizens and increase the number of consultation responses in future. The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance acknowledged the importance of customer feedback and assured Members that every opportunity would be sought to further enhance the consultation process in future, in line with the Authority's consultation and publication timescales.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that Members

- 1. Recommend the Strategic Plan 2015-20 for approval by the Fire Authority.***
- 2. Recommend the Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 for approval by Fire Authority.***
- 3. Approve the publication of the Strategic Plan 2015-20 and Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16 consultation report.***

11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE BUSINESS RISK REGISTER UPDATE REPORT TO DECEMBER 2014 (formerly item 9)

The Director of Risk presented the Business Risk Register Update Report to December 2014 to the Committee.

The Director of Risk informed Members that the Risk Register was updated on an annual basis and that there were 10 Business Risks captured by the Risk Register as at November 2014 and each one had been reviewed by the Group and allocated a definitive 'Risk Ranking' value, as follows: 1 Very High Risk, 4 High Risk, 4 Medium Risk, and 1 Low Risk.

Members were provided with an overview of Appendices A-C, which outlined the areas of risk, the methodology used, and the rationale and audit trail for the allocated risk ranking value. The Director of Risk informed Members that mitigating actions were then allocated against each risk in an attempt to reduce the risk ranking value to an acceptable risk tolerance level.

In response to a query from Councillor J Dudley, the Director of Risk highlighted the positive working relations established between Representative Bodies and the Management of the Authority, though it was recognised that Industrial Relations would continue to be considered a risk to the Service in view of the National Pension Dispute probably increasing the likelihood of Industrial Action, along with

shift change proposals.

Following a query from Councillor T Hennegan, the Corporate Head of Development confirmed that an All Wales Training Tender was in place for the procurement of training courses, in line with procurement protocols.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that Members note the content of the Report and acknowledge the ongoing progress to both identify and manage matters of business risk affecting the Service.

12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2015/16 (formerly item 10)

The Head of Corporate Communication and Democratic Services presented the five year scrutiny programme and explained that the programme continued to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the focus areas remained up to date and relevant. Accordingly, Members were requested to approve the scrutiny programme for 2015/16.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that Members approve the 2015/16 scrutiny exercises within the five year scrutiny programme.

TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER ITEM 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.

The meeting closed at 13:00.