

# 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, 28 IONAWR 2019  
MONDAY, 28 JANUARY 2019**

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

**10.00 – 12.13**

### **73% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CHAIR	Cllr D E Williams
IS-GADEIRYDD/DEPUTY CHAIR:	Cllr C Anderson
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: G Breeze, K Broom, M Crowley, K Curry, J Curtice, L Frayling, P James, G Walker, J Warman
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: R Lewis (received post meeting), A Llewelyn, T Van-Rees
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	D Daycock (Clerk/Monitoring Officer), C Moore (Section 151 Officer), R Quin (T/DCFO), R Thomas (T/ACFO), K Jones (ACO), S Jenkins (AM), M Harries (AM), I Cray (AM), P Greenslade (T/AM), C Jackson (Head of CCBD), S Mansbridge (Head of Finance), C James (WAO representative), E Bowdler (WAO representative), H Pugh (Internal Auditor – Carmarthenshire County Council), Cllr R Rees-Evans (observer), Cllr S Joseph (observer).

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Lewis (received post meeting), A Llewelyn and T Van-Rees.

## **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**

The Deputy Chair referred to an incident within the Swansea area and extended his gratitude for the prompt response of the Service in this regard.

## **4 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2018**

The minutes of the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 November 2018 were confirmed as a true record of proceedings.

### Matters Arising

P3, Paragraph 2: Cllr P James requested an update in respect of the allegations made by Cllr Walker that large settlements had been made by the Fire Authority to employees over a number of years following cases of bullying and harassment. Cllr Walker confirmed that he had not provided the supporting evidence to Officers to substantiate these claims, however he indicated that he would be submitting a letter for consideration by Senior Officers in due course. The Clerk/Monitoring Officer reminded Committee that any information received would be addressed in the appropriate manner, in line with Data Protection legislation.

In response to a query from Cllr C Anderson, it was claimed by Cllr Walker that the Officers had withheld the information referred to above from Members over a number of years. The Section 151 Officer duly assured Committee that any financial settlements in this regard would, by default, be reported in the Statement of Accounts.

## **5 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS REPORT – QUARTER 3 2018/19**

The T/DCFO presented the Performance and Improvement Progress Report for the reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 – 31 December 2018 in respect of the number of fire incidents attended, hoax calls received, false alarms, road traffic collisions, flooding, medical response and fire deaths and injuries, as set out at Appendix 1 (Part 1) to the report.

The T/DCFO addressed a number of Member queries, as follows:

Cllr P James expressed his concern regarding the increase in accidental fires despite the significant preventative community safety work undertaken by the Service. The T/DCFO

stated that fire safety prevention education continued to occur particularly in respect of the risks associated with controlled burning/garden fires.

The Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection provided an overview of the Strategic Arson Reduction Board which provided a collective approach from a wide range of agencies to promote greater ownership and partnership working to address the range of factors that could impact upon deliberate fires.

In response to a query by Cllr Breeze, the T/DCFO reported that work was ongoing by the Strategic Arson Reduction Board to determine whether there was a correlation between the number of refuse fires and the reduction in the number of refuse collections by Local Authorities

A discussion ensued on an initiative led by the Service and Police in respect of the development of enhanced data sharing protocols between key partners. In response to a query by Cllr Rees-Evans, it was confirmed that the Public Service Boards were represented on the development board and had a key role in driving the initiative forward. Cllr Rees-Evans commented that the sharing of information with the Health Board in particular was imperative given the correlation between health and social factors and the risk of fire. The Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection assured Committee that the General Data Protection Regulations would be used as an enabler to further strengthen the established connections with key agencies in respect of vulnerable individuals. Committee endorsed the establishment of a framework for service-providing organisations directly concerned with the well-being of citizens to enable information to be shared in a lawful, secure and intelligent manner.

Following a query by Cllr P James, the Committee was assured that the Service had robust procedures in place for responding to Automatic Fire Alarm activations which it included working with key premises owners and partners.

In response to comments made by Cllr P James in relation to road traffic collisions, the Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection confirmed that the figure presented on page 7 of Appendix 1 was inclusive of all vehicle types and severity of collisions. It was explained to the Committee that there was not a projected decrease in motorcycle injuries and fatalities across Wales to date, and therefore this area had become a particular focus for the Welsh Government and the Road Safety Board, which sought to influence road conditions, speed reduction techniques and driver behaviour.

A discussion ensued regarding police enforcement on the road networks. The Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection explained that the Police were making effective use of finite resources through the introduction of traffic calming measures within identified areas of need and subsequently negated the requirement for increased presence on roads. Members were informed that this, in turn, enabled a greater focus on preventative measures and in particular education of young drivers where the Police, Local Authorities and FRS often work collaboratively on road safety prevention matters.

Reference was made to operation SNAP, which provided a streamlined process developed by the police to enable members of the public to submit digital footage showing unsafe driving behaviours and potential traffic offences. In response to a request made by Cllr K Curry, the

Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection agreed to circulate further information to Members regarding this initiative.

Members' attention was drawn to Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the report, whereby the T/DCFO provided Committee with a synopsis of progress made against 12 improvement objectives. Members were pleased to note that progress had been made within the majority of improvement objectives, 9 of which had been allocated green status, 2 amber status and 1 red status. Members' queries were addressed as follows:

Reference was made to Objective 3 relating to the Service's contribution to the Welsh Government Road Safety Framework. In response to comments made by Cllr K Broom, the Corporate Head of Prevention and Protection explained to Members that road safety education was the responsibility of Local Authorities, supported by a number of partners including the Service, Police, road safety teams and charities in order to deliver improvement. Members were informed that the Service recognised its unique role in sharing its knowledge and experience on road risk and would continue to raise awareness of the impact of Road Traffic Collisions with the community and in particular young drivers. Cllr Rees-Evans suggested that road safety information could be provided to Driving Instructor to be promulgated to learner drivers. It was agreed that this issue be further explored.

Members' attention was drawn to the Emergency Services Network (ESN) objective 5 which would provide an innovative and unique solution to the provision of emergency service communications in the United Kingdom. It was explained to Members that a complete restructure and deep review of the programme had been undertaken and subsequently programme reset (incremental delivery) had been formally announced. It was reported that Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG) had formally written to the programme board to outline areas of concern with the business plan and a response was awaited in this regard. In response to a query from Cllr P James, the Corporate Head of Resources confirmed that the delayed timeline continued to be an area of concern for the Service and the resultant financial impact was discussed by the Committee. An update on the renewal of equipment and network coverage testing was also provided to Members.

Cllr G Breeze drew attention to Objective 7 relating to medical response and referred to an incident attended by Welshpool Fire Station on Christmas Day. Cllr G Breeze commended the fire crews for their sterling efforts in this regard and hoped that the station would be supported in providing a co-responder service in recognition of their commitment and dedication to the local community. The T/DCFO explained that co-responder location requirements were determined by the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust and support would be provided by the Service wherever possible. The Temporary Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement was pleased to report that a bid for funding to the Welsh Government for lifting equipment had been successful. Members were informed that the equipment would be placed on co-responder stations and would be utilised for non-injury falls.

Committee Members were provided with a synopsis of the progress made against the Service's corporate projects for the Northern Area Development Site, Integrated Software Platform and Structural Personal Protective Equipment, as set out in Part 3 of Appendix 1 of the report.

In response to a query by Cllr G Walker, the Corporate Head of Response explained that the trials for the compact appliance had been extended until March 2019 to ensure a full evaluation of the vehicle in the light of some identified issues with the vehicle.

In response to a query from Cllr K Curry in relation to the Northern Area Development, the T/DCFO reported that the Service had exhausted all possible partnership working opportunities, and it was unfortunate that there were no feasible joint initiatives to be pursued without further delaying the project.

Cllr K Curry referred the Integrated Software Platform Project and congratulated the Project Team in attaining significant funding from the Govtech Catalyst scheme to research and develop existing and new technologies to enable real-time tracking of firefighters, within buildings and structures, and encourage different companies and organisations to work collaboratively to deliver potential solutions to this challenge.

### ***RESOLUTION***

***It was RESOLVED that the report and progress made to date be noted.***

## **6 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE BUSINESS RISK REGISTER UPDATE REPORT TO DECEMBER 2018**

The T/ACFO presented the Business Risk Update Report to December 2018 to the Committee.

Members were referred to the Business Risk Register Overview set out at Appendix A, Risk Assessment Matrix for Risk Register at Appendix B, the Business Risk Register Decision Log set out at Appendix C and the eight identified risks set out therein.

A summary of the latest considerations by the Business Risk Management Group (BRMG) for each of the risks contained within the Business Risk Register Decision Log was given to Members. It was noted that 7 areas relating to Regulatory Body Compliance, Industrial Relations, Change/Risk Management, Attendance Management, Procurement and Security had been categorised as medium risk, and that 1 area relating to Business Continuity/Interruption had been allocated as low risk. Members discussed and acknowledged the issues emanating from each risk as set out in the report.

Members were interested to note that BREXIT had recently been allocated as a separate risk. A task and finish group had been set up to evaluate the impact of BREXIT in terms of the future uncertainty of budget funding implications and its effect on Service Level Agreements with current and future suppliers.

Cllr P James commented that the report contained insufficient detail in respect of the rationale for each area of risk. The T/ACFO drew Members' attention to Appendix C of the report which provided a summary of considerations by the BRMG in the identification of each risk category and also contained a new supplementary section summarising the review undertaken by the BRMC at its most recent meeting. It was therefore felt that the level of

information was sufficient in order to provide Committee with assurances that relevant risks were being identified and managed within the Service.

### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee note the report and acknowledge the ongoing progress to both identify and manage matters of business risk affecting the Service.***

#### **7 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE FOR THE AUDIT OF MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY'S 2017/18 IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Head of CCBD presented the report on the Certificate of Compliance for the audit of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's 2017/18 Improvement Plan.

It was confirmed that the Auditor General for Wales had determined that the Authority had discharged its duties under sections 17 and 19 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, to prepare and publish an assessment of performance for 2017/18 in accordance with statutory requirements set out in section 15 and statutory guidance and that a certificate of compliance had been provided in this regard.

### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Wales Audit Office Certificate of Compliance for the Audit of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's Assessment of 2017/18 performance be noted.***

#### **8 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE A REPORT ON THE PROCUREMENT EXEMPTIONS GRANTED DURING 2018**

The Corporate Head of Resources presented a report for information on procurement exemptions.

Attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report which detailed the exemptions granted in the 2018 calendar year in terms of supplier information, contract value and the rationale for each exemption.

In response to a query by the Chair, it was agreed that the Democratic Services Forum would review the contract value reporting threshold to the Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, with a view to reducing the administration burden for the Procurement department.

Cllr K Curry commented that the information contained within Appendix 1 of the report appeared incomplete. The Corporate Head of Resources explained to the Committee that these referred to exemptions inputted directly by the Head of Procurement and Contracting; and it was agreed that this would be clarified within future reports.

In response to a query from Cllr Walker, the Corporate Head of Resources confirmed that the Service's stationery suppliers were selected by way of the National Procurement Service framework.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.*

**9 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – REVIEW OF BUDGET MONITORING AND BUDGET MANUAL COMPLIANCE 2018/19**

The Internal Auditor provided Committee with an outline of findings arising from the completed review for 2018/19 relating to Budget Monitoring and Budget Manual compliance as set out in Appendix 1 of the report. Consideration was given to the respective Action Plan which summarised the issues identified, together with the 2 recommendations made. The Committee was assured that all recommendations had been classified as minor issues, or areas to strengthen existing procedures, all of which had been agreed by the Executive Leadership Team and were being addressed by the Service.

Committee Members were also assured that the Audit Plan for 2018/19 was on target to be delivered within the timescales agreed with the Head of Finance.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.*

**10 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE 2018 AUDIT PLAN ADDENDUM – MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Ms C James presented the Wales Audit Office 2018 Audit Plan Addendum to Members. Committee's attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report where it was explained to Members that the document had been updated following the audit of the 2016/17 financial statements to include the work and fee for the audit of the Authority's 2017/18 financial statements. Members gave consideration to the audit work and fee required for the 2017-18 financial statements in order to meet the requirements of auditing standards and proper audit practices. Reference was made to the financial audit risk relating to 'management override' set out at exhibit 2 of the report, which was considered to be a standard risk which the Wales Audit Office were required to review and address.

It was envisaged that the financial statements for 2017/18 would be presented for approval by the Fire Authority at its meeting scheduled for 18 March 2019.

In response to a query by Cllr P James relating to the reimbursement of audit fees for previous audit work, the Section 151 Officer that the matter was progressing and assured Members that a reasonable appraisal of the issues had been provided by the Wales Audit Office.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the 2018 Audit Plan Addendum be noted.***

**11 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE A REPORT ON THE AUDIT ENQUIRIES TO THOSE CHARGED WITH GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The Section 151 Officer presented a report to Members on the Audit enquiries of Management and those charged with Governance and Management, and explained that the Auditor General for Wales (AGW) was responsible for obtaining assurance from the Authority that the 2017/18 financial statements were free from material misstatement or other factors which could influence their audit opinion.

Accordingly, Members were provided with an overview of Appendix 1, which set out the responses to the enquiries of management and the enquiries of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

In response to comments made by Cllr Rees-Evans, the Section 151 Officer acknowledged that the letter set out at Appendix 1 was addressed to the Deputy Chair of Performance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee (PASC) as oppose to the Chair of PASC; however, assurances were provided that approval of the document was required collectively by the Committee.

Cllr K Broom highlighted that PASC was responsible for overseeing management's processes for identifying and responding to the risks of fraud within the Authority, and accordingly it was requested that pertinent policies relating to whistleblowing and anti-fraud and corruption procedures be made available to Members. This was agreed.

***RESOLUTION***

***It was RESOLVED that the report be approved.***

**11 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 12:13.