

**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
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING**

**CYFARFOD O'R PWYLLGOR RHEOLI ADNODDAU
MEETING OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

DYDD LLUN, 20 JULY 2015

MONDAY, 20 GORFFENNAF 2015

**PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN AC ACHUB
HEOL LLWYN PISGWYDD, CAERFYRDDIN
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,
LIME GROVE AVENUE, CARMARTHEN**

11.00 – 12:35

73% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRPERSON: E Williams
IS-GADEIRYDD/ DEPUTY S Paddison

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: J Bayliss, J Curtice,
L Frayling, J Hale,
C Higgins, R Lewis, P Pritchard,
G Thomas, J Warman

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: W Evans, R Llewellyn, K Pearson,
R Rees-Evans

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:
E Aitken, R Quin, K Jones, I Cray,
C Jackson, D Daycock

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors W Evans, R Llewellyn, K Pearson and R Rees-Evans.

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.

Cllr J A Hale declared a personal interest by way of membership of the UNISON Trade Union, for which a dispensation to speak had been granted by the Standards Committee.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair informed Committee that an induction session would be held for Chairs and Deputy Chairs on conclusion of the meeting.

4 TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 APRIL 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2015 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising.

5 TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 JUNE 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2015 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising.

6 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Director of Operational Support and Improvement presented Committee with the Health and Safety Performance Management Update for the reporting period 1st April 2015 to 31st May 2015. ~~Consideration was given~~ Members were referred to the 12 on-duty injuries recorded during the reporting period in terms of location, employee type, cause, activity and body part. It was noted that a total of 123 duty days had been lost due to on-duty injuries during the reporting period, which represented an increase of 22% compared with the same reporting period in 2014.

Committee were provided with details of the three injuries which had been reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

Members were pleased to note that no attacks on firefighters had been recorded during the reporting period and were assured that the Service would continue to

monitor the personal safety of its staff to keep such occurrences to a minimum.

Members were provided with an overview of the Service's occupational road risks, including an update on the electronic vehicle driving licence checks and vehicle accident performance data for the reporting period which demonstrated a continual reduction in vehicle accidents from 2010/11.

The Director of Operational Support and Improvement provided specific details of a Road Traffic Collision which highlighted the advantages of having tracking systems fitted to some of the Service's grey fleet in terms of assisting police investigations. Furthermore, the incident had also resulted in a review of the medical equipment stowed within the Service's grey fleet vehicles. In response to a query from Councillor J Bayliss, it was confirmed that all grey fleet were appropriately marked as Service vehicles.

In response to a query from Councillor G Thomas, the Director of Operational Support and Improvement confirmed that the number of vehicle accidents were proportionate to the number of vehicles and distance travelled within the Service's Red and Grey Fleet.

In response to a query from Councillor Paddison, the Director of Operational Support and Improvement reported that work would continue to raise awareness of vehicle accidents at low speeds and the Service was currently exploring the introduction of in-car camera devices which would monitor such incidents and assist in providing evidence for investigations, as required. Councillor P Pritchard suggested that, for the protection of employees, the Service should purchase devices capable of providing a forward and rear facing view. It was agreed that a report outlining options and costings would be considered at the next meeting of the Resource Management Committee.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Resource Management Committee note the information contained within the Report.

7 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement introduced a report which centred upon health, wellbeing and sickness absence performance in line with the Welsh Government's aim of enabling people to be healthy citizens.

Members were informed that a baseline assessment programme of fitness assessments for operational employees was currently underway until 2017, prior to the introduction of formal fitness testing thereafter. The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement reported that approximately 520 fitness assessments had been undertaken since November 2014, with a 91% success rate thus far. A tailored training programme would be provided to assist those members of staff who did not meet the required fitness criteria.

Committee were informed that the overall average sickness absence figure for the Service for the period 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015 was 8.47 shifts lost, which compared favourably with the 9.59 shifts lost recorded for the 2013/14 reporting period and represented an improvement of over 1 shift per employee in terms of days gained in an attendance at work context. Committee were assured that effective attendance management policies were in place, including a robust support infrastructure which incorporated referrals to occupational health services to assist employees in returning to work.

Reference was made to Appendix 1 of the report which showed that the sickness absence statistics for the period 1 April – 31 May 2015 was 1.17 shifts lost, which represented a current projected end of year figure of 7.02 shifts lost. Members were provided with an overview of the sickness absence within Service Control and acknowledged that the statistics could be attributed to a limited number of long term absences which had consequently skewed the overall sickness absence figure within that category.

Members acknowledged that the number of ill-health retirements continued to be low as an average of all retirements, with very few employees retiring on ill-health related medical conditions.

In response to a query from Councillor J Warman, the Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement provided an overview of the Fitness Assessment Programme and clarified that the Service was undertaking a baseline assessment programme as a means of familiarising staff with the process and gauging fitness levels, prior to the formal introduction of the Fitness Testing ~~in~~ during 2016/2017.

Some Members raised concerns regarding those members of staff who would be unable to meet the required fitness criteria. The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement explained that all Fire and Rescue Services in the UK would be required to implement mechanisms to deal with such cases, and these may incorporate various avenues such as potential redeployment, or invoking -capability procedures or ill-health retirement, all would be considered on a case by case basis. Policies to deal with any continual failure of the fitness assessment programme would be introduced in due course. ~~It was, h~~ However, it was emphasised that the Service would provide assistance and support to employees via tailored fitness improvement programmes, which would be monitored on a regular basis, as required: and this would be the main focus of the Fitness Assessment Programme going forward.

Councillor S Paddison highlighted the importance of incorporating sufficient warm-up routines as a means of injury prevention, which would subsequently minimise sickness absence rates. The Director of Operational Support and Improvement agreed to update the Fitness Assessment packs with a section to that effect.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Resource Management Committee note the report on Health and Wellbeing.

8 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE HUMAN RESOURCES QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement presented a report on various Human Resources work-streams during for the period April to June 2015. Members were provided with an update on the ongoing collaboration initiatives, including the implementation of an integrated HR/Payroll system, Control Room Project and the possibility of thea joint procurement of an online firefighter application sifting tool, across the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales.

Consideration was given to the Service's establishment figures up to 23 June 2015 and Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report which provided a detailed breakdown of the number and distribution of all organisational posts.

Members' attention was drawn to the retirement profile of the Service and the Head of Human Resources report highlighted the difficulties in producing accurate succession planning due to the removal of the compulsory retirement age for operational employees. It was noted that 10 wholtime employees were currently eligible for retirement, with a further 46 operational employees due to become eligible by 31 March 2018. Furthermore, a number of vacancies were currently being filled by on-call staff on a temporary basis and as such, the Service would be seeking to undertake a firefighter recruitment process during the coming months to cover existing vacancies and also to deliver a holding list to meet future needs over the next 2-3 years. In respect of the on-call recruitment profile, Members noted that 32 appointments had been made during the reporting period, with a further 96 applicants being subject to the the National Firefighter Selection tests during 2015 prior to enrolment.

A legislative update on holiday pay and prevention of less favourable treatment to part time workers regulations was also provided to Members. With regard to Retained Firefighters' Pension Settlement (Modified Scheme) matters, it was noted that of the 1097 employees eligible to join the Modified scheme, 330 members of staff had requested further information to date, which was currently being processed by the Human Resources department. The Director of Resources reported that whilst £500,000 had been set aside to cover the costs of employers' contributions associated with the buy-back of pension rights, early indication was that the Treasury would reimburse all costs through the Welsh Government.

Members were informed that Mr G Moore had been appointed as the Independent Chair of the Authority's Local Pension Board and its first meeting was held on 13 July 2015.

In response to a query from Councillor J Bayliss regarding firefighter recruitment, the Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement confirmed that whilst every applicant would receive a response from the Service, it may not be possible to provide individual feedback upon request to those who were not successful at various stages of the process, due to the volume of applications expected.

Following a query from Cllr J Bayliss, the Director of Resources clarified that the

introduction of the National Living Wage, which had been implemented by the Authority in the previous year, had minimal impact on the Authority's budget.

In response to a query from Cllr C Higgins in relation to wholetime vacancies, the Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement clarified that on-call staff were currently provided with temporary six month contracts, which were then rotated amongst staff in an attempt to provide fair progression and training opportunities amongst on-call colleagues, and also afforded a degree of consistency for the Service.

The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement provided an overview of the training and development required for operational roles and it was noted that the perceived skills gap between wholetime and on-call staff ~~had~~ was gradually ~~reduc~~ ed ~~ing~~ over time. Members were assured that every operational member of staff, whether wholetime or on-call, were required to ~~maintain~~ obtain the risk critical skills required to undertake their roles.

In response to a query from Councillor S Paddison the Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement agreed to enquire whether sampling testing would be undertaken in relation to the online firefighter application sifting tool and report back to Committee.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Resources Management Committee note the Resources Quarterly Update Report and organisational establishment update

9 TO RECEIVE THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2014/15

The Director of Resources presented the Budget Monitoring Report for the financial year 2014/15 to Members. The report showed the estimated revenue and capital net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2015 and compared those estimated positions with the 2014/2015 working budget.

The Director of Resources referred to the revenue monitoring report for the year ended 31 March 2015 against the profiled working budget for that same period ~~located~~ at Appendix 1 of the report, and stated that there was a total underspend of £680k, which represented 1.56% of the approved budget.

It was highlighted to the Committee that the budget monitoring report had been prepared prior to making the end of year accounting adjustments required for the International Financial Reporting Standard compliant accounts.

Members were informed that the underspend was made up of a number of variations, the most significant of which could be attributed to the following categories:

- Employees –vacancies not being filled and employees retiring represented an underspend within the budget;

- Transport –expenditure costs associated with employees retiring and taking voluntary redundancies represented an overspend within the budget; however, it was noted that these costs would be transferred to the Reserves in due course, which would then represent an overall underspend on the transport line.
- Insurance –increased renewal premiums which had not been predicted during the budget setting process represented an overspend within the budget.
- Revenue Grants – Grants received during the year were higher than budgeted with the related expenditure recorded in the operational costs.
- Income – General Income was higher than budgeted mainly due to increased co-responder activity.

The Director of Resources reported that the surplus costings for the year had been placed in various reserves identified to mitigate future risks and reduce future revenue costs.

Attention was drawn to the grant monitoring report ~~located~~ at Appendix 2 which showed that the operational cost of grant funded activity for the year ended 31 March 2015 was £1,362,934 which would be covered by grant approvals from Welsh Government.

Members were also provided with a capital monitoring report set out at Appendix 3 which summarised the expenditure on capital projects to 31 March 2015 and compared the results against the approved capital programme. It was noted that the level of expenditure planned in the capital programme, including slippage from the previous year, amounted to £4,697k. The actual expenditure was £2,580k which resulted in an underspend of £2,116k which would be carried forward to 2015/16.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.

- 10** The Director of Resources presented the Budget Monitoring Report for the financial year 2015/16 to Members.

Members' attention were drawn to Appendix 1 of the report which compared the estimated net revenue expenditure for the two months ended 31 May 2015 against the profiled working budget for the same period. On that basis, a current overspend of £379k, equating to 3.5% of the profiled budget, was estimated at 31 May 2015. The Director of Resources reported that the estimated expenditure for the year when compared to the budget report showed that a forecast overspend of £243k, which equated to 0.56% of the approved budget, was projected at 31 March 2016. Members were assured that that the projected overspend would be appropriately managed throughout the year.

Reference was made to Appendix 2 of the report which showed that the gross operational cost of grant funded activity for the two months ended 31 May 2015 was £388,365, and it was estimated that this would increase to £693,057 by the end of the

year.

Committee were provided with an overview of the expenditure on capital projects to 31 March 2016 compared against the Approved Capital Programme which was set out at Appendix 3 of the report.

Councillor J Warman highlighted the importance of ensuring an adequate maintenance programme in respect of the Authority's property portfolio.

In response to a query from Councillor R Lewis, the Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement reported that a feasibility study, incorporating accessibility requirements, was currently underway in relation to the workshops **b**Building at BuiltH Wells to determine its commercial viability and this would then inform invest to save options for the Service.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.

11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE GROUP PERSONAL PENSION SCHEME FOR ON-CALL FIREFIGHTERS

The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement introduced the report on the Group Personal Pension scheme for on-call firefighters. Members were informed that there were currently five members of staff who had chosen to remain within a Group Personal Pension scheme provided by Aviva Life Services UK (Aviva) as an alternative to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) 2007. It was reported that the Service had recently been advised by Aviva of its intention to introduce an employer pension charge to cover the cost of running one of its schemes (TK031683) and therefore the Committee were asked to give consideration to the ongoing cost effectiveness of continuing to support the scheme.

The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement provided an overview of the options available to those staff within the Group Personal Pension Scheme should the Authority discontinue its support and informed Committee that the affected staff would be consulted with on the Committee's decision ,in order to set out the position fully and to clarify the situation.~~and therefore Committee gave consideration to the ongoing cost effectiveness of continuing to support the scheme.~~

~~The Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement provided an overview of the options available to those staff within the Group Personal Pension Scheme should the Authority discontinue its support and informed Committee that the affected staff would be consulted with to clarify the situation.~~

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Service discontinue support of the Aviva Life Services UK Group Personal Pension Scheme affected by the introduction of employer pension charge, subject to the outcome of consultation.

- 14 Any other items of business that by reason of special circumstance, the Chair decides should be considered as a matter of urgency, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.**

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 12:35.