

**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, 3 EBRILL 2017

MONDAY, 3 APRIL 2017

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

10.00 – 11.25

73% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

**CADEIRYDD/CHAIRPERSON: S Paddison
IS-GADEIRYDD/ DEPUTY**

**AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: C Anderson, P Black, C Evans,
L Frayling, J Hale, R Llewellyn, K Pearson,
R Rees-Evans, G Thomas, E Williams**

**YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: J Curtice, W Evans, P Pritchard (Deputy
Chairperson), J Warman**

**YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: C Davies, M Crennell, K Jones, C Jackson,
S Bryant, S Jenkins, M Harries, D Daycock,
C Williams, Cllr J Dudley (non voting
committee member/observer)**

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Curtice, W Evans, P Pritchard (Deputy Chairperson) and J Warman.

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. Councillor J Hale declared a personal interest as a member of UNISON, for which he had a dispensation to speak, but not vote, and Councillor G Thomas declared a personal interest as a Fire Authority representative on the Pension Board.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Members for what would be the final meeting of the Resource Management Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year. The Chair took the opportunity to thank Members and Officers for their contribution and support in ensuring the effective management of the resources of the Fire Authority throughout the year. In response, Councillor G Thomas, on behalf of the Committee, extended her gratitude for the effective leadership provided by the Chair during her term of office.

4 TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2017 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings. There were no matters arising.

5 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2016/17

The Temporary Head of Finance presented the Budget Monitoring Report for the financial year 2016/17 to Members.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report which projected an underspend of £664k (1.49% of the approved budget) by the end of the financial year. It was explained to Members that several areas of under expenditure had been offset by over expenditure on various budget headings and that this issue was currently being reviewed to ensure accurate allocation of budgets in future.

The Temporary Head of Finance reported that the areas of under expenditure could, in the main, be attributed to the firefighters staff budget, although a recent recruitment campaign had resulted in the appointment of 24 firefighters to allow the Service to operate close to establishment levels. It was explained that the newly recruited firefighters were employed in two phases, during mid-year and in the final quarter, and the budget reflected this, accordingly resulting in an underspend due to the employment for only part of the year of 24 firefighters.

Members were provided with an overview of expenditure within the budget headings of support staff costs, pensions and insurance and it was noted that the income budget had achieved a surplus of £220k through a number of collaborative initiatives with partner agencies which included site sharing and co responder services.

Councillor K Pearson requested clarification in respect of the whole time and on-call employee expenditure on the revenue budget, which appeared to show a significant amount of expenditure during the previous month. Furthermore, Councillor Pearson indicated that she had difficulty in understanding the Authority's resolution to increase its budget for 2017/18 while an underspend remained in the budget for the current year.

The Temporary Head of Finance provided the Committee with an overview of the calculation methodology for the revenue budget and it was explained that the underspend in employee expenditure was also partly attributable to the phased process (which was applied across the whole of the operational sector) where individuals who gained promotion were reimbursed on a development rate of pay until competency was achieved within the new role. Members were also informed that new firefighters were initially appointed on a trainee firefighter rate of pay and would then move onto a development rate of pay upon completion of training, prior to reaching competent salary. The Chief Fire Officer clarified that this was further exacerbated by the fact that the Service was no longer able to predict retirements accurately and factor this feature into future recruitment and resourcing plans due to the removal of the compulsory retirement age for operational employees.

Reference was made to Appendix 2 of the report which showed that the gross operational cost of grant funded activity was estimated at £2,525,549 by the end of the financial year. It was noted that the forecast overspend of £30k would be funded from operational cost savings and efficiencies.

Committee Members were provided with an overview of the expenditure on capital projects to 31 March 2017, compared against the Approved Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix 3 of the report. It was explained that an overall underspend of £2.4m had been recorded for the capital programme, of which £1.4m related to Land and Buildings, £679k related to vehicles and equipment and £185k was attributable to intangible assets.

The Chief Fire Officer clarified to Members that the capital works programme had been put on hold pending the outcomes of the Service Risk Review Programme in order to ensure that any expenditure was allocated appropriately.

The Temporary Head of Finance further provided a synopsis of expenditure incurred and projected for the Joint Public Service Centre Project, set out at Appendix 4 of the report. In response to a query, the Chief Fire Officer clarified that no overspend had been incurred on the legal fees element of the budget to date, however, the Authority had negotiated compensation from Capita, the scheme managers, in the form of additional enhanced hardware and software packages and financial compensation to offset the delays between July 2016 and February 2017. Furthermore, the Temporary

Head of Finance explained that given that the project had been further delayed beyond February 2017, a business case was being compiled to seek further financial compensation for the costs incurred as a result of the significant delays to the go-live date. It was also clarified that the overspend on staffing costs would continue to rise until the project was concluded.

The Chief Fire Officer clarified to Councillor P Black that the budget for on-call costings was demand-led, therefore any variances could be attributable to spate conditions and resulting increased levels of activity.

In response to comments made by Councillor K Pearson, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that future budget monitoring reports would be presented in a revised format which would provide greater clarity on the planned areas of expenditure.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report on the current financial position of the Fire Authority be noted.

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

The Temporary Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement presented Committee with the Health, Safety and Welfare Performance Management Report for the period 1 April 2016 to 28 February 2017.

Members were informed that 59 On-Duty Injuries had occurred during the reporting period, all of which had been fully investigated and actions implemented to prevent a recurrence. Members were provided with details of the 14 injuries which had been reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), 2 of which had been categorised as major injuries.

The Temporary Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement provided Members with a synopsis of the 7 attacks on fire-fighters, 2 of which were categorised as physical and 5 of which were verbal abuse.

Members were informed that 20 reports of unsafe/unhealthy conditions and 41 reports of 'Near-Miss Events' had been reported to the Corporate Risk Department, all of which had been investigated and monitored at the Health, Safety and Welfare Consultative Committee meetings. Members were pleased to note that the Service's robust Health and Safety policies were being utilised by members of staff, who were encouraged to report such issues which, in turn, ensured that any unsafe/unhealthy working conditions were addressed promptly.

The Temporary Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement reported that a total of 119 vehicle accidents had occurred and consideration was given to the vehicle accident costings, which showed a reduction of 57% when compared with the same reporting period for the previous year.

It was clarified to Members that a number of the unsafe/unhealthy conditions could be attributed to the storage of equipment. Furthermore, the Temporary Corporate Head of Operational Support and Improvement addressed a number of Members' queries in relation to the training, initiatives and mechanisms in place to promote health and safety and minimise injuries within the workplace.

Councillor R Llewellyn reported that this would be his last meeting of the Resource Management Committee and, as such, took the opportunity to reflect upon his tenure as the Authority's Health and Safety Champion. Councillor R Llewellyn wished the Service's Health, Safety and Welfare Group well in its endeavours to ensure high standards of health and safety across the organisation.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

The Temporary Director of Resources presented the Health and Wellbeing quarterly update report to Members. Attention was drawn to the sickness absence figures for the reporting period 1 April 2016 – 28 February 2017 which showed a current average sickness rate of 8.87 shifts per employee and equated to a projected overall figure of 9.67 shifts per employee for 2016/17. The Committee were provided with comparison absence monitoring figures for 2014/15 (8.47 shifts lost) and 2015/16 (8.00 shifts lost).

In addressing a number of queries relating to the absence figures, the Temporary Director of Resources noted that the upward trend in absence figures was predominately attributable to long term absence, with a relatively small number of employees incurring absences of between 6-12 months. These absences had impacted on the overall statistics and represented a slightly distorted effect on the statistics. Committee was also provided with an overview of the intervention strategies implemented within the Service to assist employees in remaining in work, or assisting in their return to work as part of its robust support infrastructure.

Committee Members were referred to the Appendices attached to the report which provided the details of the absence performance for the Service. Members were provided with an overview of the measures taken within the scope of the Service's Sickness Absence Monitoring Procedure, which included the provision of appropriate support arrangements to ensure that individuals returned to full health and duties, as soon as possible. In response to a query, the Chief Fire Officer clarified that the Service could manage a high level of sickness absence within an on-call station by means of the temporary relocation of operational community safety staff to that station, which allowed those employees to continue with their daily work but also enabled them to be available to respond to incidents, as required.

The Temporary Director of Resources also provided Members with an update on the

Fitness Assessment Programme which had commenced on 1 March 2017 and was pleased to report a 99% pass rate to date. Committee were informed that appropriate support by way of development plans and access to fitness equipment would continue to be provided to employees as required, however the Service's capability policy could be invoked if necessary.

Councillor G Thomas commented that the percentile figures within Appendix 15 of the report did not add any meaningful information to the report and as such, it was suggested that they be removed in future and future reports utilise consistent terminology regarding on-call employees. This was agreed.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Health and Wellbeing report be noted.

8 TO RECEIVE THE HUMAN RESOURCES QUARTERLY UPDATE AND ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

The Temporary Director of Resources presented a report on various Human Resources work-streams for the period of January to March 2016.

Committee Members were provided with a summary of the information contained within the report, which comprised various collaboration initiatives, progress made on the Service's Annual Equality Plan 2016-2020, an update on the Service's Establishment figures, retirement and recruitment profiling, together with new legislative and regulatory factors relating to the recording of Trade Union facility time.

In respect of Firefighters' Pension Scheme matters, the Temporary Director of Resources reported that the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Wales) (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Order 2016 had amended the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992, with the introduction of the pension contributions holiday provision and that this would be applied retrospectively to 01 December 2006. It was confirmed that the Welsh Government would meet the costs of the refunds, the majority of which had already been received.

Members' attention was drawn to section 2.1.1 of the report relating to the HR/Payroll System whereby the Temporary Director of Resources reported that whilst an upgrade to version 23 of the software had been completed, existing issues remained unresolved and continued to delay the implementation of further modules. Members were reassured that the Authority's concerns regarding the project had been relayed to the meeting held with the Representatives of CoreHR on 22 February 2017. It was also noted that compensation by way of enhanced software packages had been received due to the system not functioning as required. A discussion ensued regarding the procurement process whereby the Committee was informed that the contract's terms and conditions were currently being reviewed.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Human Resources Quarterly Update and

Establishment Report be noted.

9 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2016/17

The Temporary Director of Resources introduced the Annual Equality Report for 2016/17, which outlined the first year's progress made with the Strategic Equality Plan 2016/2020.

Members gave consideration to Appendix 1 of the report which provided information on Service activities in terms of engagement with the diverse communities served, together with a range of key equality data which would assist in shaping the strategic direction of the Service. It was reported to Committee Members that the Service aimed to ensure equality of opportunity in service provision and also access to services and information, inclusion within decision making processes and policies in order to strive towards the elimination of discrimination against any group(s) or individuals.

In response to a query regarding scrutiny and auditing of the Annual Equality Report, the Temporary Director of Resources confirmed that the Annual Equality Report would be published on the website and sent to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission and Welsh Government.

Suggestions were made by Members in respect of the presentation of figures relating to Home Fire Safety Checks on page 32 of the document and the 'People We Serve' Questionnaire on page 34 of the document and it was agreed that these would be revised accordingly.

Reference was made to Objective 4 in the report which aimed to make the Service an employer of choice. Committee expressed the view that school visits at primary school age, in addition to attendance at various career events, with appropriate representation, were required to facilitate a workforce that was representative of the communities served.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.

10 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 was no other business. The meeting closed at 11.25.