

**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, 13 TACHWEDD 2017**

**MONDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2017**

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

**10.00 – 11.35**

**60% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

**Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:**

**CADEIRYDD/CHAIRPERSON:** E Thomas  
**IS-GADEIRYDD/ DEPUTY** M Crowley

**AELODAU/MEMBERS:** Cyng/Cllrs: M Charles, C Evans, K Madge,  
C Mills, R Rees-Evans, J Warman,  
E Williams

**YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:** A Brinn, J Hale, S Joseph, K Laurie-Parry, A  
Woolcock, T Van-Rees

**YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:** C Davies, R Thomas, K Jones, I Cray, C  
Jackson, S Jenkins, M Harries, C Williams,  
S Mansbridge, R Edgecombe

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Brinn, J Hale, S Joseph, K Laurie-Parry, T Van-Rees (received post meeting) and A Woolcock.

## **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.

All Members present declared that they had a personal interest in agenda item 10, namely the draft report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2018/19.

## **3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Chair reported that Mr D Daycock, Clerk/Monitoring Officer was recuperating following a recent operation. Members extended their best wishes to Mr D Daycock for a speedy recovery.

A warm welcome was extended to Mr Robert Edgecombe of Carmarthenshire County Council who would be undertaking the role of Clerk/Monitoring Officer for the meeting.

The Chair reminded Members that a visit to the Earlswood Training Centre had been arranged for the Fire Authority on Tuesday 14 November 2017 whereby all Members were encouraged to attend.

Reference was made to Remembrance Sunday whereby Members stood in silence to commemorate the UK's wartime fallen. Members further observed a minute's silence in the light of the tragic fire incident in Llangammarch Wells, Powys, which occurred on Monday 30th October 2017.

The Chief Fire Officer provided an overview of the Service's activity level during the recent half-term period which had unfortunately resulted in an unprecedented total of 12 fatalities.

## **4 TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 JULY 2017**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 were received and confirmed as a true record of the proceedings.

### Matters Arising

The Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer provided a synopsis of the fire which had occurred to the Rural Response Pump (RRP) on 17 June 2017. Members were assured that a fire investigation had taken place to determine the cause of fire and appropriate action had been implemented to prevent a recurrence of such an incident.

## **5 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18**

The Head of Finance presented the Budget Monitoring report for the financial year 2017/18 to Members.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report which showed an overall forecast underspend of £247k (0.54%) of the approved budget for the financial year. It was explained to Members that the main variations on revenue related to an underspend of £684k on employee costs due to vacancies and salary scales being set at the top of salary bands, a forecast overspend of £212k within Service Control which was attributable to the delay in the go live date for the Joint Public Service Centre and a forecast underspend of £221k within the support services because of vacancies. It was reported to Members that the significant overspend of £451k within the supplies and services budget was attributable to the National Airwave project, additional costs for temporary staff and increased occupational health services.

Members received a breakdown of the revenue grants allocated for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and it was noted that the gross operational cost of grant funded activity, inclusive of those shared with North and South Wales Fire Authorities was £5,180,291.

Committee Members were provided with an overview of the expenditure on capital projects to 31 March 2018, compared against the Approved Capital Programme, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report. It was reported that an overall overspend of £334k was currently projected for the capital programme, however it was explained that £385k in grant funding was attributed to vehicles, therefore resulting in an overall underspend of £51k.

The Head of Finance further provided a synopsis of expenditure incurred and projected for the Joint Public Service Centre Project, set out at Appendix 3 of the report. It was reported that a total cost of £4.590m was estimated for the project which represented an overspend of £406k, caused due to delays with the implementation of the Command and Control system. It was noted that this delay would also have implications on the timing of when the savings would be achieved and therefore further work would be carried out to determine the actual savings to be achieved within the 2017/18 financial year. The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Authority had negotiated compensation from Capita in the form of additional enhanced hardware and software packages to offset the delays between July 2016 and February 2017. Furthermore, given that the project had been further delayed beyond February 2017, the Authority was seeking financial compensation for the costs incurred, and negotiations were ongoing in this regard.

### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the budget monitoring report for the Financial Year 2017/18 be noted.***

**6 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND THE INTERIM TREASURER ON THE BUDGET INDICATIONS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2018/19**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report on the budget indications for the financial year 2018/19 which had been informed and directed by the Budget Corporate Planning days held in July and September 2017, whereby Members provided informal indication on the budget levels to be considered for the forthcoming year. Following those meetings, and in the context of the financial implications surrounding the 2018/19 settlement, the Fire Authority had supported a proposed 2.8% increase to the budget at its meeting on 18 September 2017. The Chief Fire Officer was pleased to report that a further review of the budget had resulted in a minor adjustment to the budget which equated to a 2.7% increase falling on the Constituent Authorities, and represented a 'standstill' service level based upon assumptions of known budget pressures, inflation increases and the provisional pay award under negotiation. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the budget would be further reviewed once further information in respect of the ongoing negotiations on the national pay award was available.

Members were provided with an overview of the substantial real cash efficiencies made over the last 10 years from a combination of operational and corporate initiatives. An overview of the Service Review Team commissioned in October 2015, including its remit and progress to date, was also provided to Members.

Consideration was given to Appendix A of the report which set out the Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Requirement for 2018/19, together with Appendix B of the report which outlined the proposed capital programme 2018-2022.

It was reported that 5 of the 6 Constituent Authorities had postponed the Chief Fire Officer's annual presentation to the full Council meeting until the new year, which may have been an indication that Treasurers were not concerned regarding the Authority's budget proposal.

Members commended Officers in further reducing the budget requirement which demonstrated the Authority's commitment to achieving efficiency savings without compromising frontline services.

In response to a query from a Member, the Interim Section 151 Officer confirmed that a balanced budget would be assumed for 2017/18 budgeting purposes.

Whilst Members raised concerns that their Constituent Authority position in terms of the budget settlement had not yet been confirmed, Committee expressed their support for a 2.7% budget increase for the Authority.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the Resource Management Committee***

- I. Agree the assumptions for inflation, estimated pay awards and other commitments set out in the report. Appendix A.***

- II. Agree the Capital Programme for the period to 2021/22. Appendix B.***
- III. Agree that this would result in an increase of 2.7% on the Constituent Authorities.***
- IV. Agree that the additional insurance costs continue to be paid for by supporting the budget by £150k from reserves.***
- V. Agree that there is no further funding of the revenue budget from reserves.***
- VI. Agree that the resulting budget would be a minimum of £46,808,670 with £46,658,670 falling on the Constituent Authorities (an increase of £1,222,830 or 2.7%) and £150,000 falling on reserves. Appendix A.***

## **7 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 July to October 2017.

Committee Members were provided with a summary of the information contained within the report, which comprised various collaboration initiatives, progress made in the area of Equality and Diversity, an update on the Service's Establishment figures, retirement and recruitment profiling, the Service's Occupational Health facility together with new legislative and regulatory factors relating to the Firefighters' pension scheme matters.

Members' attention was drawn to section 2.1.1 of the report relating to the integrated HR/Payroll System whereby the Temporary Director of Resources was pleased to report that the payroll element of the system was now operating satisfactorily which would enable greater progress to be made with the resolution of other outstanding matters. It was reported that the Service was also exploring the possible implementation of other modules such as recruitment and onboarding which would provide an electronic or automated solution to the Service in these areas.

Members were particularly interested to note the array of equality and diversity initiatives undertaken during the reporting period, including the female awareness days, gender identity procedure, the survey undertaken in respect of unsuccessful female applicants, Inclusive Fire Service Group questionnaire response, Stonewall Allies and Role-Model Programme and the Disability Toolkit, all of which were designed to encourage under-represented groups to the Fire and Rescue Service. A discussion ensued regarding the role of Equality Champion at Elected Member level to assist the Service in raising awareness of equality and inclusion issues. It was agreed that Cllr C Mills would undertake this role.

In respect of Firefighters' Pension Scheme matters, the Temporary Director of Resources provided a synopsis of the previous Local Pension Board meeting and an update in terms of the auto enrolment of employees into a pension scheme. In response to a query from a Member in respect of pension opt outs, the Temporary Director of Resources clarified

that all members of staff were advised to seek professional advice. Committee also noted that the Annual Benefit Statements for 2016/17 had been published within the statutory timescales.

## **RESOLUTION**

**It was *RESOLVED* that**

- i. the Human Resources Quarterly Update and Establishment Report be noted;***
- ii. Councillor C Mills be appointed as the Authority's Member Equality Champion.***

### **8 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 2017 – 30 September 2017 which showed an overall sickness rate of 4.72 shifts per employee and equated to a projected overall figure of 9.44 shifts per employee for 2017/18. The Committee was provided with comparison absence monitoring figures for the same period in 2016/17 (4.27 shifts lost). The Temporary Director of Resources noted that the long-term absence (3.12 shifts lost) had adversely impacted the overall statistics and represented a slightly distorted effect on the figures presented.

In addressing a number of queries relating to the absence figures, the 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. The Temporary Director of Resources reported that the Service would focus on ensuring that managers were provided with the appropriate training to ensure a consistent application of the Service's sickness management procedures which would mitigate the length of employee sickness absence as far as practicably possible.

Of particular interest to Committee was the anxiety/depression sickness category which, at 21%, represented the single largest sickness absence reason within the Service. Members were acutely mindful of the possible correlation between co-responder incidents and anxiety/depression given the increased exposure to traumatic events and were reassured to note the Service's policies and procedures in this regard, including the provision of critical diffusion officers and pastoral care, where appropriate.

In response to a Member's query regarding the level of support provided to the Service's employees from the Health Service, the Temporary Director of Resources explained that the Service provided complimentary therapies, such as physiotherapy, remedial surgery and counselling to employees to expedite a quicker return to work when it was considered cost efficient to do so.

Committee Members were referred to the Appendices attached to the report which provided the details of the absence performance for the Service. Members were also

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. Furthermore, the Temporary Director of Resources provided Members with an update on the Fitness Assessment Programme which had commenced on 1 March 2017 and was pleased to report a 98% pass rate to date. In response to a query, Members were informed that appropriate support by way of development plans and access to fitness equipment would continue to be provided to employees as required, and employees would be provided with a total of 3 attempts, over a 9 month period, to improve their fitness levels to a satisfactory level.

## **RESOLUTION**

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

### **9 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Temporary Director of Operational Support and Improvement presented Committee with the Health, Safety and Welfare Performance Management Report for the period 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2017. Members were informed that 39 On-Duty Injuries had occurred during the reporting period, all of which had been fully investigated and as a result, actions implemented to prevent a recurrence. It was reported that the highest number of on-duty injuries occurred to support staff during routine activities and to wholetime staff during operational incidents; these tended to be minor in nature.

In considering the number of injuries per command, the Temporary Director of Operational Support and Improvement explained that the causes of off-duty injuries would be captured and recorded by Service Control at the time of booking sick.

Members were provided with details of the 9 on-duty 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 classed as major.

The Temporary Director of Operational Support and Improvement provided Members with a synopsis of the 9 reported attacks on firefighters, 4 of which had been categorised as verbal abuse, 1 as 'other act of aggression' and 4 as Physical attacks. Members were assured that every assistance was provided to the Police during the course of an investigation, where appropriate.

Reference was made to the Corporate Risk Audits, which were commended by the Authority's Health and Safety Champion who assured Members that this area of work was being monitored appropriately, and took account of sustainability and environmental issues.

Members were informed that 16 reports of unsafe/unhealthy conditions and 23 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.

The Temporary Director of Operational Support and Improvement reported that a total of 56 vehicle accidents had occurred, which represented a reduction of 6 vehicle accidents when compared with the same reporting period for the previous year. Detailed consideration was given to the vehicle accidents in terms of cause by cost, speed and activity.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.*

### **10 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2018/19**

The Acting Clerk / Monitoring Officer presented a report to Members which summarised the findings contained within the draft annual report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2018/19, regarding Members' allowances and remuneration.

It was reported to Members that the IRPW had determined that there was to be an increase of £30.00 on the basic salary for Members of Fire and Rescue Authorities, which would equate to £1,745 per basic salary, made payable from the date of the Authority's Annual General Meeting.

Members were also reminded that the Fire Authority had formerly resolved to continue with its previous determination that the Authority would not adopt senior salaries for Committee Chairs or the Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority. The Acting Clerk / Monitoring Officer explained to Members that the Democratic Services Forum considered the draft IRPW report for 2018/19 at its meeting on 16 October 2017 and had referred the matter to the Resource Management Committee for further consideration, with a view to reinstating a senior salary to the Deputy Chair but that no senior salaries be paid to the Chairs of Committees. It was reported should the Authority resolve to adopt a senior salary for the Deputy Chair, this would incur an additional cost of £3,700 for 2018/19. Members of the Committee were invited to consider matter and make a recommendation to the Fire Authority.

Members considered and debated the implications of reinstating a senior salary to the Deputy Chair. A number of Members expressed the view that a senior salary for the Deputy Chair of the Authority should be reinstated to reflect the additional workload and responsibilities allocated to that role.

Some Members noted their disappointment that the IRPW's salary determinations were not reflective of the role of Members.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i The IRPW's draft determinations in relation to members' allowances and remuneration, for implementation in the 2018/19 municipal year be noted.*
- ii Members send their individual comments directly to the IRPW by 29 November 2017.*
- iii The Committee recommend that the Fire Authority adopts a senior salary for the Deputy Chair of the Authority.*

**11 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE A REPORT ON THE CIPFA CONFERENCE 12<sup>TH</sup> TO 13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2017**

The Chair provided an overview of the CIPFA Conference attended 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017, which he felt had been both informative and thoroughly interesting. It was therefore recommended that the CIPFA Conference be maintained on the standing list of conferences.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the CIPFA Conference be maintained on the standing list of conferences.*

**11 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 11.35.