

AWDURDOD TÂN CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN CYMRU



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AUTHORITY

**COFNODION
CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR SAFONAU**

Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân, Heol Llwyn Pisgwydd
Caerfyrddin
16 Ebrill 2009

**MINUTES
OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

held at Fire Service Headquarters, Lime Grove Avenue,
Carmarthen
16 April 2009

10.00 – 12.20

PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIR: G Morgan

AELODAU/MEMBERS: M Howells, R Martin
Cyng/Cllrs: G Seabourne

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: J J J Davies, P James

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: A Howells, L Aitken, B Bassett

1 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS

None were declared.

2 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS / PERSONAL MATTERS

Committee welcomed Mrs Bridget Bassett to the meeting who is undertaking the role of Head of Corporate Communication and Member Support whilst Miss Jacqueline Maunder is on maternity leave. Miss Julie Kruczynski is undertaking the role of Member Support Officer.

Committee congratulated Mr M Howells on his appointment as a Member of the Standards Committee within Swansea City and Borough Council.

3 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2008 were received and approved as a true record.

4 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION AND WHISTLEBLOWING POLICIES.

Given that the Authority's Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy is closely linked to other policies that the Committee are responsible for, Members considered it appropriate to review both the Anti Fraud and Corruption and the Whistle Blowing policies together.

Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy

The Director of Resources and Procurement introduced the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy handbook, detailing the arrangements for preventing and deterring fraud and corruption and detecting and investigating any actual suspected cases. The strategy covers Culture, Prevention, Detection and Investigation, Training, Response Plan and Codes of Conduct.

Members were informed that the policy is given to every employee as part of their induction programme and is referenced in the Conditions of Employment. Training is also provided for station personnel.

Whistleblowing Policy

The Clerk to the Fire Authority presented the Authority's Whistleblowing policy which is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise concerns within the Service. The policy is designed to reassure staff that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for raising concerns in good faith and is in keeping with legislation. It also provides support if guidance is requested to raise a concern and ensures a consistent and sensitive handling of concerns raised.

Upon review of the document, Committee agreed to remove the word 'serious' from sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.5 as it could be open to misinterpretation.

Members emphasised the need for robust procedures which must be followed at all times.

Committee then considered the Wales Audit Office publication on whistleblowing which provides information on the role of the auditor, the process in which concerns can be raised, contact details and details for obtaining further guidance. Members were informed that the leaflet will be placed on the Business Information Server, alongside the other policies, in order to raise the profile of whistleblowing and its consequences.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

It be recommended that the Fire and Rescue Authority endorse the Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.

5 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Following a review of departmental structures within the Authority, the Human Resources and Learning & Development departments have been merged to form the People and Organisational Development Department. Accordingly the terms of reference of the People and Organisational Development Committee and the Modernisation Working Group were amended to reflect this change.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Committee recommends to the Fire and Rescue Authority the proposed changes to the People and Organisational Development Committee's terms of reference.

6 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC TRUST

Members were advised that the Committee on Standards in Public Life are currently undertaking a review on how decisions are being made in local government under the governance arrangements introduced by the Local Government Act. The review will determine whether the standards of openness and accountability embodied in the Seven Principles of Public Life are being met. It was noted that although the Fire and Rescue Authority still operates under the traditional committee system of making decisions, any findings or recommendations emanating from the review will help inform governance arrangements within the Authority in order to draw on good practice.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

The consultation document, together with the response from ACSeS be received and noted.

7 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE 2008/2009

Consideration was given to a report which provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Committee for 2008/09.

It was noted that a significant portion of the Committee's work had been in relation to the consideration and implementation of a new code of conduct. This also resulted in specific training requirements being highlighted and consequently fulfilled. The Clerk reported that the Model Code of Conduct is standardised and therefore ensures a consistency of approach between the Fire & Rescue Authority and its Constituent Authorities.

A full review of the constitution was also undertaken, with specific areas such as the Code of Corporate Governance and Form of Indemnity for Members and Officers having been added.

Committee noted that no complaints have been made against Members in respect of their role as members of the Fire and Rescue Authority. Accordingly, no matters have been referred to the committee for investigation or decision. The Committee hopes this position will continue.

RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that
The report be received and approved.*

8 TO RECEIVE THE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK ANALYSIS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OCTOBER 2008 – MARCH 2009

Consideration was given to the 6 monthly update on complaints and compliments received during the period 1st October 2008 to 31st March 2009.

A total of 9 complaints (including 1 anonymous complaint which are not monitored officially, however are included for information) and a total of 57 compliments were received. The previous 6 month reporting period April 2008- September 2008 reported 10 complaints and 60 compliments.

RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that
The report be received and noted*