

# FINANCE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2009-10

## *Department Description*

The Finance Department work falls within the remit of the ACO - the Director of Resources and Procurement. It is a key central support service for the Authority playing an important role in ensuring propriety and the efficient use of public funds. However it also has an important role in the strategic forward planning of the Authority and Service, guiding both members and colleagues. The Department plays its full part in the National framework, leading on Finance within the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) workstreams. The Authority represents Fire Services in Wales on the National Consultative Forum on Finance (CFF), - an all Wales Assembly /WLGA forum at Ministerial level across all services in Welsh Local Government and involving the Secretary of State, and on the Local Authority Technical Accounting Panel – a Panel which feeds into the Accounting Standards setting and interpretation bodies including the Assembly, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the Wales Audit Office.

The Department is located at Headquarters in Lime Grove Avenue, Carmarthen. There are 12 employees and a part-time VAT consultant. Staff development and professional training is fully supported by the Department, on behalf of the whole Service the Department has successfully applied for and become a Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Accredited Employer (level 2) and an Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) Accredited Employer. The Finance department has also been awarded status of a silver Approved Employer for training and an approved Employer for professional development by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). The services it provides can be summarised as follows:

The integration of Finance in the strategic planning and policy-making process to ensure efficient and effective use of resources in line with the Local Government Acts and Best Value initiatives to achieve best value in the performance of the Authority's functions.

Preparation of the revenue and capital budgets of the Authority, ensuring these are fully funded and that proper procedures are followed in the annual budget setting process

Liaison with the Assembly and WLGA in order to maximise resources for the Fire Services in Wales

Communicating with and maintaining good relationships with the constituent authorities, particularly the Treasurers, in relation to the financial implication of fire service activities potentially affecting them.

Contribute in the transition period and subsequent to full implementation to the development of the Wales Programme for Improvement principles within the Authority and lead on the efficiencies programme expected by the Welsh Assembly Government.

Provision of advice to members and colleagues on the optimum use of available resources and on the management of Capital and Revenue budgets.

Provision of financial management information.

Preparation of statutory and other accounts, together with supporting documentation, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, CIPFA Code of Practice and Best Value Accounting Code of Practice, ensuring that the accounts are free from material misstatement and follow the relevant accounting standards and guidelines.

Co-ordination and processing of the monthly payroll service for approximately 1,500 employees, balancing of payroll control accounts, accounting for deductions made on behalf of the Inland Revenue, the Local Government Pension Fund and other bodies. Processing of payments for staff travelling and subsistence allowances.

Provision of an effective creditor system which involves payment of invoices to suppliers of goods and services to the Authority, in line with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998. Monitoring of performance against BVPI 8 (percentage of invoices paid within 30 days).

Banking, recording and processing of all income received by the Authority, control and issue of receipts, provision of invoice-raising facilities, with the consequential control and monitoring of recoveries.

Administration and monitoring of the Bank accounts of the Authority. Advising on treasury and cash flow management, thereby ensuring that the Authority's cash assets are fully utilised.

Maintain a full understanding of, and advise accordingly on, the Assembly's Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) distribution mechanism and consequent Revenue Support Grant Settlement in order to ensure that the Fire Service in Wales is not disadvantaged.

## Objectives.

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### Customer.

Trusted and respected  
by the people we serve.

Seen as more  
than an Emergency

Helping to save lives  
and protect communities.  
Service

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### Finance & Resources.

Managing activity  
within budget.

Reducing costs  
Year on year.

Allocating  
Resources to  
priorities.

Supporting activity  
through alternative  
Funding & resources.

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### Business Process.

Managing  
People.

Integrated Risk  
Management  
Planning.

Partnership  
Work.

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### Learning & Growth.

Effective  
People.

Empowered  
People.

Ref	Corporate Objectives Links	Target Date	Interim Target	Objective	Action	Manager Responsible	Cost / Savings £	Budget/Fund Source
1	Managing activity within budget	Sept 09		Closure of accounts to meet statutory deadlines, with an unqualified audit	Early reconciliations / documentation production and liaison with External Auditor.	Director of Resources and Procurement / Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
2	Managing activity within budget Allocating resources to priorities,	Nov 09		To link the budget and business planning process in readiness for the 2010/11 budgets.	Discussion with senior managers on plans and preparation of draft departmental budgets.	Director of Resources and Procurement/Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
3	All objectives	June 10		Convert UK GAAP compliant accounts to IFRS compliant accounts.	A project team has been set up tasked with ensuring that the necessary changes are made within the statutory deadlines.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
4	Managing activity within budget	June 10		Review our budget monitoring format to ensure it provides good quality information that the Authority can rely on when making decisions, ensuring that the format meets IFRS segmental reporting requirements.	This objective will be included in the IFRS project.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
5	Managing activity within budget	July 10 (Dependent on Agresso 5.5 being implemented)		Develop automated budget reports for Resources Committee that are compatible with IFRS requirements.	Budget report formats will be reviewed as part of the IFRS project. On successful completion of the move to Agresso 5.5 agree an automated process with	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10

		nted by its target date.			Carmarthenshire County Council			
6	<b>Managing activity within budget, Allocating resources to priorities, supporting activity through alternative funding and resources</b>	Ongoing		Finance training for budget holders and other interested parties.	To identify training needs with budget holders and deliver the required training individually or in groups.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
7	<b>Supporting activity through alternative funding and resources</b>	Mar 10		Develop the asset register to ensure it meets the IFRS accounting requirements.	A SORP compliant asset register was sourced and installed in 2008/09, the use of this register will be developed to provide the additional information required under IFRS.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
8	<b>Managing activity within budget, Allocating resources to priorities, supporting activity through alternative funding and resources</b>	Feb 10		Ensure the Authority is advised so that it can set a budget for 2010/13	Annual budget setting exercise within timetable, including consultation with Constituent authorities  Maintain contact with Constituent Authority Treasurers  Update members on the budget construction, including internal and external influences  Horizon scanning,	Director of Resources and Procurement		In budget 2009/10

					prioritisation, national negotiations, constituent authority negotiations, corporate involvement			
9	<b>Allocating resources to priorities, supporting activity through alternative funding and resources</b>	Ongoing		Full involvement in the national budget negotiation process	Liaise with Assembly and Welsh Local Government Association and take part in process as much as possible to influence level of Fire and Rescue Resources	Director of Resources and Procurement		In budget 2009/10
10	<b>All objectives</b>	Ongoing		Full involvement in the CFOA national framework	Lead Treasurer/Authority for CFOA Wales (and Procurement)	Director of Resources and Procurement		In budget 2009/10
11	<b>All objectives</b>	Ongoing		Involvement in the national financial reporting and accounting standards setting process, particularly in the process of moving to International Financial Reporting Standards.	Sitting on the: LA Wales Technical Accounting Panel, the LA Wales Chief Accountants Group, the Fire Finance Network and the CIPFA Fire and Rescue Working Party. Leading the newly formed Welsh Fire Finance Group.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
12	<b>All objectives</b>	Ongoing		Develop and maintain external relationships - WAG, WLGA, Constituent authorities, other FRS's , agencies etc		Director of Resources and Procurement / Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
13	<b>Making efficiencies year on year</b>	Ongoing		Lead on efficiency statements as part of the WAG/WAO requirements	Part of the WPI Improvement Planning process with appropriate deadlines	Director of Resources and Procurement		In budget 2009/10
14	<b>Managing people</b>	Ongoing		Ensure Audit recommendations are implemented as agreed	Part of reporting to the new Performance Review and Audit Committee.	Director of Resources and Procurement / Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10

15	<b>Managing activity within budget</b>	Ongoing		Maintain performance on Performance Indicators	Timely Creditor Payments and Expenditure per head of population	Director of Resources and Procurement / Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
16	<b>Managing activity within budget. Allocating resources to priorities. Integrated Risk Management Planning.</b>	Feb 10		Up date Financial Orders and Business Continuity plans.	Up date Financial Orders to ensure they are consistent with the Financial Regulations amended in 2008/09.  To develop a Business Continuity plan for the department containing process maps and system operation notes for key financial processes.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
17	<b>All objectives</b>	March 10		Transfer to Agresso 5.5 with minimal disruption to procurement, payment and reporting processes.	Liaise closely with both the ITC Department and Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC). This project is being led by CCC who host the Agresso system and who may amend the target date.	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10
18	<b>Supporting activity through alternative funding and resources</b>	Ongoing		To further develop the payment system to enable e-procurement.	To extend the use of the current payment system functions. To examine and use, if appropriate, any added functions as they become available,	Head of Finance		In budget 2009/10