

**AWDURDOD TÂN AC ACHUB CANOLBARTH A GORLLEWIN  
CYMRU**



**MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COFNODION CYFARFOD Y PWYLLGOR  
ADOLYGU AC ARCHWILIO PERFFORMIAD  
MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND  
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**DYDD LLUN, 18 CHWEFROR 2008  
MONDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2008**

**PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN  
HEOL LLWYN PISGWYDD, CAERFYRDDIN**

**FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,  
LIME GROVE AVENUE, CARMARTHEN**

**10.00AM – 11.45PM**

**PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: C Waller

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: Mrs F M Jones, C Morgan,  
D R James

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES P James, J J J Davies,  
J D A Thompson

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: R Smith, L Aitken, A Howells, P Bates,  
R Rees, Huw Thomas, Rob Powell,  
Gilbert Lloyd, Catherine Griffiths

## 1. PERSONAL MATTERS

Members wished a speedy recovery to Councillor Paul James following his recent operation

## 2. DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTEREST

None were declared

## 3. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 were received and approved as a true record.

## 4. TO RECEIVE THE INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS ON THE MAIN ACCOUNTING REVIEW AND THE PROCUREMENT REVIEW 2007/08

Mr Huw Thomas from Carmarthenshire County Councils Internal Audit Department presented the Internal Audit Report on the review of both the Services main accounting system and procurement 2007/08.

Mr Thomas said that the outcome of both reports was positive with very strong controls in the accounting system being in place. Members made reference to the potential introduction of a procurement card through the Value Wales Procurement Card scheme and asked what type of controls the Service intended to put in place. The Director of Finance responded that a robust system of control and monitoring would be put in place before the card scheme was introduced and that she would be working closely with the Internal Audit department throughout the implementation of the scheme.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Internal Audit reports be received and that the sterling work of Service staff in the Accounts and Procurement departments be noted*

## 5. TO RECEIVE THE EXTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW ON THE REGULATORY PLAN 2007/08

The Chair welcomed Rob Powell, Gilbert Lloyd and Catherine Griffiths from the Wales Audit Office. Mr Powell and Mr Lloyd jointly presented the Regulatory Plan 2007/2008 which provided an overview of the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office within the Authority.

It was noted that the Auditors fee for 2007/2008 would be £52796 plus VAT, which represented a 2.8% increase on last years fee due to one-off accounting issues.

The Clerk indicated that work was being carried out under the Good

Governance Standards in England in order to review existing Governance arrangements against the Local Government Framework including Audit Regulations. He queried whether this would impact on the Audit Regulations in Wales and Mr Lloyd agreed to look into this.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The Regulatory Plan 2007/2008 be received and noted*

### **6. TO CONSIDER THE BVI PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT APRIL – DECEMBER 2007**

Members gave consideration to the report on Best Value Performance Indicators which formed part of the Service's Performance Management reporting methodology

Attention was drawn to the following areas:-

- Accidental dwelling fires (BVPI 143 i) which reflected the tragic loss of life in 4 separate property fires during Q3. Members were aware, however, that the Service was continuing to take every measure possible in order to prevent fire deaths including targeting those at high risk in low risk areas.
- False alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus (BVPI 149). It was noted that performance against this challenging target had improved in general from the previous year which evidenced the success of Command policies for targeting problem premises
- Deliberate secondary fires (excluding vehicle fires) continued to move towards its target despite the high incidence of calls during Q1

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The BVI Performance Management report be received and noted.*

### **6. TO RECEIVE THE SERVICE JOINT RISK ASSESSMENT PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to the Service Joint Risk Assessment report which had been populated with all departmental returns received. It was noted that the Strategic Planning and Performance Department would shortly be requesting stakeholders to provide an update on their performance towards the Risk Assessment and that this would then be presented to a meeting of the Performance Board in April 2008.

Officers were aware that although the report presented to Members contained a

wealth of information, it had been condensed into an A3 sheet, which made it difficult to read and consideration would be given as to how the data could be presented in a more user friendly format in future.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

### **7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PRAC TASK AND FINISH GROUPS**

At their meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 Members had resolved to set up Task & Finish Groups to scrutinise individual departmental Business Plans which would form part of the Committees overall scrutiny work for the coming year.

The following departmental business plans were considered:

- Strategic Planning & Performance Department
- Human Resources Department
- Community Safety Department
- Pembrokeshire County Command
- Learning & Development Department
- Carmarthenshire County Command

Three meetings had been arranged, each attended by the following Members:

25<sup>th</sup> January 2008 - attended by Cllr D R James and Cllr C Morgan.

29<sup>th</sup> January 2008 - attended by Cllr P James, Cllr F M Jones and Cllr J J J Davies.

5<sup>th</sup> February 2008 - attended by Cllr J D A Thompson and Cllr C Waller.

Members considered that the Task and Finish Groups had been particularly useful and worthwhile and the following conclusions had been drawn from the three meetings:

- Members were satisfied overall with the business and strategic planning and performance framework.
- Members had reviewed the departmental business plans and confirmed that the departments which were scrutinised had followed the strategic planning and performance management framework.
- Members recognised the benefits of the sound performance management framework and noted the importance of getting the remaining seven departments into the PMF.
- Members recognised that a number of departmental managers had

identified skills gaps in their respective departments. These would be continually monitored and addressed on a priority basis as and when resources were available.

It was noted that the following specific recommendations had emanated from the Task and Finish Groups:

- That departmental business plan exception reports be reported on a quarterly basis to the Committee.
- That progress on linking the seven remaining departmental business plans to the strategic scorecard be reported to the Committee at a future date.
- That a report be made to a future meeting of the Committee on the level of external funding achieved by the Community Safety Department and the impact on service delivery if such funding should cease.
- That specific training be given to Members on scrutiny following the May 2008 elections.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The outcomes of the Departmental plan scrutiny carried out by the Task and Finish groups be noted and approved*

### **8. TO RECEIVE THE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT APRIL – DECEMBER 2007**

Members gave consideration to the Performance Management Report, which highlighted objectives in individual business plans that were currently off target. It was noted that the quarterly business plan returns provided a comprehensive report on the progress of the Department or Command on the objectives contained within their plan. A statement to indicate if an objective was 'on target', 'off target or completed' would be included in the return along with statistics to support the statement if applicable. Where an objective was off-target the steps being taken to address the issues would be included in the return.

The performance management system CorVu provided information for much of the target setting, and the Strategic Planning & Performance department would liaise with business plan owners where appropriate to ensure that the reporting of objectives and the information contained in CorVu was aligned.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

### 9. TO RECEIVE THE FORWARD WORK PLAN – SCRUTINY TOPIC AREA

Committee had earlier given consideration to the feedback from the Scrutiny Task & Finish groups which had been established to look at departmental business plans. The Clerk reported that the next topic area for Scrutiny consideration was Information Technology / Communications and given the breadth of the topic area to be considered it was suggested that two Task and Finish Groups be established, the first of which, it was anticipated, would be held before the May elections.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that*

*Arrangements be made to hold two Scrutiny Task and Finish Group meetings in order to consider Information Technology/Communications*

### 10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE FSEC REVIEW BY MOTT MACDONALD CONSULTANTS

Members gave consideration to the report on the FSEC toolkit review provided by Mott MacDonald Consultants at the Authority's request.

The review examined in detail the configuration of the FSEC model and was also directed to consider the use of FSEC in informing the strategies for risk reduction in the Upper Amman and Upper Swansea Valley areas.

The review concluded that good progress had been made and a sound approach adopted in the development of FSEC. It further reported that the use of FSEC to provide options for risk reduction in the Upper Amman and Upper Swansea valley areas was structured and sound, the information had been used in combination with professional judgment, and was aligned to the Welsh Standards of Fire Cover. The review had provided an independent testimony that the Authority's use of the model was appropriate and had been undertaken in a professional manner

The review provided recommendations on identified actions and on prioritising the development of the model which had been included in the project plan for FSEC.

## RESOLUTION

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and approved*

**11. TO RECEIVE THE WAO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE**

Members were asked to note the progress made against the recommendations by the Wales Audit Office on the Services Performance Management System in their report dated January 2006.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

**12. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE PEER ASSESSMENT TEAM VISIT**

In line with the Wales Programme for Improvement for Fire and Rescue Authorities, the Peer Assessment Team had visited the Service between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

The Assessment Team had conducted nine interviews over the two day period, covering the functions of Operations, New Dimensions, Civil Contingencies and Resilience, Risk Management, Training & Development, Control and Media. The interviews had included sessions with both RDS and WDS personnel at Carmarthen and Ammanford Fire Stations

The Assessment team's report had been very positive and recognised the excellent work that was being undertaken by all functions within the Service and it also identified areas for further development.

The key findings of the assessment were provided for Members along with comments and details of any actions planned to satisfy the areas requiring further development.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The findings of the Peer Assessment team be noted*

**13. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE WFRSC (07) 15 – THE WALES PROGRAMME FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Members had previously received a number of papers relating to the Wales Programme for Improvement process - (WPI Fire). Up until this point, the Authority had been operating under interim / draft guidance awaiting finalised guidance from WAG but the long awaited finalised guidance had now been produced and forwarded to Fire Services under the cover of WFRSC (07) 15.

The finalised guidance was not significantly different to the interim guidance on the process which had been successfully implemented last year and aligned completely with WPI arrangements already established in the PMF.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

**14. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP UPDATE**

The minutes of the meeting of the second Business Risk Management Group were received and it was noted that Councillor F M Jones had attended the meeting on behalf of Councillor P James.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The minutes be received and the content note.*