

**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, 6 HYDREF 2008**

**MONDAY, 6 OCTOBER 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: P James

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: J Dudley

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: C Philpott, J Holmes,  
C Crowley, R Lewis

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES C Morgan, G Phillips, P Llewellyn,

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: R Smith, L Aitken, A Howells,  
P Coleman, W Edwards,

**1. DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTEREST**

None were declared

**2. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> JULY 2008**

The Chair wished to record his thanks to Councillor J J J Davies who had taken the Chair at the last meeting in the absence of both himself and the Vice Chair Councillor J Dudley

The minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008 were received and approved as a true record.

**3. TO CONSIDER THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN ELEMENT OF THE RISK REDUCTION PLAN**

Members were informed that the Improvement Plan for 2008/2009 was reported jointly along with the Risk Reduction Action Plan for 2009/2010. The RRP Member Working Group had completed their consideration of the Risk Reduction Action Plan and both documents would be presented to the Fire Authority on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

A printed copy of the document was being designed by the Corporate Communications and Member Support department, and this would be produced in colour. The printed version would display the text provided in the draft document including maps and charts where appropriate.

Performance Information for 2007/2008 had been reported upon for the first time by means of the new Welsh Performance Indicators. The Authority was required to report on Strategic Indicators but Core indicators were also included in the plan in order to fully report on the Authority's performance.

Improvement information would be reported by means of Operational Assurance Assessment, Joint Risk Assessment, the Financial Summary and Efficiency Gains summary.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

The Improvement Plan 2008-2009 be approved for consideration by the Fire Authority alongside the Risk Reduction Action Plan 2009-2010 on the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

**4. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE 2008/09 SELF ASSESSMENT**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer P Coleman introduced a report which provided details on the Operational Assurance process for 2008/09 and the Service Self-Assessment for submission for 2008/09.

## **Self Assessment**

The Welsh Assembly Government introduced new arrangements for the assessment of Fire and Rescue Authorities' operational performance in November 2006 as part of the Wales Programme for Improvement. Each Fire and Rescue Authorities carried out a self assessment, followed by peer assessment by the other two Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Members were aware that the first year's self assessment focussed on all areas of the Authority's Operational processes and that the second year focus was for arrangements to deal with major disruptive challenges, with a focus on flooding incidents. The theme for this year's review was "an examination of the Authority's "Direction of Travel" on operational risks identified in the previous two years' assessment processes".

The self assessment process had two reporting deadlines. A list of risks to be reported in the self assessment had been provided by 10 September 2008 to the Welsh Assembly Government and Wales Audit Office. The completed self assessments were to be returned to the Assembly Government by the 17th October 2008 and each Authority was expected to produce a portfolio of evidence to support their narrative.

## **Peer Assessment**

The Peer Assessment of the Service would be undertaken in the week beginning 24 November 2008, by a Peer Team lead by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and supported by North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The site assessments would take two days, with additional feedback time.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be noted and approved and the process be supported by Members as required*

### **6. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PRAC TASK AND FINISH GROUP – ICT AND TELEPHONY**

A Task and Finish Group to scrutinise the Information and Communications Technology function within the Service had been arranged together with specific training for Members on the scrutiny process.

Meetings had been scheduled for two days as follows:

- 7<sup>th</sup> July – a.m Scrutiny Training session with the Clerk;
- 7<sup>th</sup> July - p.m Explanation of the ICT Department and its activities
- 15<sup>th</sup> July – ICT & Telephony specific Scrutiny meeting

The Task and Finish group was attended by Cllr Cheryl Philpott and Cllr Jeff

Holmes. Areas considered included telephony (fixed and mobile telephone systems), front line operational systems such as Command & Control, mobile data and mobilising as well as the administrative computer systems in use within the Service.

There were a number of non-cashable efficiencies discussed relating to technological enhancements and methods of operating, but there were also significant cash savings identified attributable to current telephone systems expenditure and potentially releasing £20,000 - £30,000.

A summary of the principal items debated were:

- **Ordnance Survey** – concern was raised in relation to the cost of paying OS for map data. Expenditure under the agreement introduced in 2004 totalled £150k per annum. There could be some duplication of payment as constituent authorities also paid the charges or at least scope to review the apportionment of costs. A letter had been issued to OS Local Group requesting a meeting to discuss possible savings in relation to the 6 Local Authorities and MWWFRS and discussions were on going.
- **Leasing** – the possibility of leasing computer equipment on a 3 year rolling basis or a reduced number of larger capital based procurements could be advantageous. This would reduce procurement activities and also the associated disposal obligations.
- **Telephone Systems, Mobile phones & Blackberries** – Members requested an investigation be undertaken into mobile phone and Blackberry use. Consideration could be given to the use of other technologies also, for example 3G phones. The telephone contract was shortly to be re- tendered and savings will emanate from this review. (Some of these savings being utilised for a lower tariff alternative to the current 0870 6060 699 administrative telephone number)
- **Printing** – discussion revolved around the progress in reviewing printing within the Service. This was being considered within the Supplies & Services efficiency review but was deferred due to association with ICT. This would be finalised before by the Procurement Manager.
- **E-accessibility** – more needed to be done to reduce paper usage within the organisation, including at Authority meetings. Additionally, consideration would be given to developing ‘paper free’ meetings, issuing Authority documents via CD Rom etc. Members were to be surveyed to determine their preferences.
- **Bilingual Authority documents** – consideration given to reducing the amount of paper used when issuing Fire Authority Documents by asking Members if they required Welsh versions.

Councillor Philpott commended the work carried out by the ICT Manager in

providing the report, and asked that more Members become involved in the Task and Finish groups.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

### **7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON FORWARD WORK PLANS – SCRUTINY OF DEPARTMENTAL PLANS**

Members had previously resolved to set up Task and Finish Groups to scrutinise individual Departmental Business Plans and this work formed part of the Committee's overall scrutiny work for this coming year.

Members had previously resolved to scrutinise the following Departmental Business Plans, and the meetings were facilitated by the Clerk, the Head of Operational Risk Management and the Strategic Planning and Performance Department.

1. Strategic Planning and Performance Department
2. Human Resources Department
3. Community Safety Department
4. Pembrokeshire County Command
5. Learning and Development Department
6. Carmarthenshire County Command

Three meetings had been arranged, each with a group of three Members and were held on:-

25 January 2008 - attended by Cllr D R James and Cllr C Morgan

29 January 2008 - attended by Cllr P James, Cllr F M Jones and Cllr J J J Davies

5 February 2008 - attended by Cllr J D A Thompson and Cllr C Waller

The outcomes from these groups had been reported to the Performance Review and Audit Committee on 18 February 2008. The work had been considered extremely useful and Members were asked to consider the next six business plans they wished to scrutinise.

The departmental plans not scrutinised to date were:

Ceredigion County Command

Neath Port Talbot County Command

Powys County Command

Swansea County Command

Information and Communications Technology Department (ICT)

Fire Control

Corporate Services  
Finance  
Corporate Risk  
ORM – Technical Services  
ORM – Water  
Premises/Estates  
Civil Contingencies and Resilience  
Transport

In order to secure a balance between operational and support areas, the following six plans were suggested for Members' consideration.

- Neath Port Talbot County Command
- Ceredigion County Command
- Corporate Risk Department
- Estates Department
- Technical Services Department – Water
- Transport Department

Councillor Philpott requested, because of the ongoing Audit work on Fleet Management Good Practice, that the scrutiny of the Transport Department be deferred and that this be replaced by a review of the Civil Contingencies and Resilience department.

In order for Members to scrutinise the plans, the Clerk would be seeking to set up small Task and Finish Groups during the weeks of 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October, which would allow for reports to be provided to the next scheduled PRAC meeting on 17 November 2008.

It has been past practice for Committee to nominate two or three Members per Task and Finish Group, each group reviewing two departmental plans each.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- *Three Task and Finish Groups be formed consisting of two or three Members each to undertake scrutiny of two business plans per group during October 2008.*
- *Members would provide nominations to sit on the business plan groups.*
- *The scrutiny of the Transport Department be deferred for the time being and the Civil Contingencies and Resilience be substituted in its place.*

## **8. TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON CUSTOMER FEEDBACK ANALYSIS: MARCH – SEPTEMBER 2008**

Members received the six monthly update on complaints and compliments received during the period 1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

It was noted that 10 complaints were received, a reduction on the previous half year, one of which was anonymous. It was noted that anonymous complaints were not officially recorded but they are monitored.

It was noted that 2 of the complaints were upheld

76 compliments had been received between April-September 2008, compared with 45 received in the previous 6 months. The increase could be attributed to the Customer Focus Awareness Seminar held 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008 where staff were reminded of the importance of notifying Corporate Communication and Member Support department of all complaints and compliments.

## **RESOLUTION**

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