

**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 FIRE AUTHORITY AT ITS
NEXT MEETING ON 14TH DECEMBER 2009**

**COFNODION
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD**

**Ganolfan Gynadledda,
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyrddin
26 HYDREF 2009**

**MINUTES
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

**The Conference Centre,
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen
26 OCTOBER 2009**

11.00 – 11.45

56% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

**CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN:
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:**

**E Evans
C Philpott**

AELODAU/MEMBERS:

**Cyng/Cllrs: D Davies, J J J Davies,
J Dinham, J Dudley, J Holmes, R Lewis,
R Llewellyn, S Lloyd-Janes, J Newbury, G
Thomas, M Williams, A Woolcock**

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:

**Cyng/Cllrs: B Hynes, E Kirchner,
P James, WEA Jones, P Llewellyn,
D Thomas, F Torrens, T Tudor**

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:

**R Smith, P Coleman, A Howells, P Bates,
E Aitken, K Jones, C Davies, B Bassett,
K.M Jones, S Bryant**

1 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS

None were declared.

2 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/PERSONAL MATTERS

None were declared.

3 TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS HELD ON 28th SEPTEMBER 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2009 were confirmed and approved as a true record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Fire Authority Meeting held on 28th September 2009

Reference was made to page 5, item 7 of the minutes relating to the presentation received by the Chief Executive of Firebrake Wales. The Vice Chair suggested that it would be beneficial for Members to have an increased awareness of Firebrake Wales in order to gain an understanding of the background and objectives of the charity, together with an overview of the work undertaken within communities in order to alleviate any concerns that Members may have. It was further noted that any discussions or concerns regarding the work of the charity should be raised within the appropriate forum.

The Chief Fire Officer reiterated to Members that Firebrake Wales was a registered charity that had been established in partnership by the three Services in Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government. Furthermore, the Chief Fire Officer and Chair of each Authority sat on the Board of Trustees in order to oversee the management of the organisation, ensuring that the core values and purposes of the organisation were reflected in day to day operations. Members were informed that Helen Prior had recently been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of Firebrake Wales and it was agreed that she would be invited to a future Authority meeting to provide a more detailed account of the work of the organisation.

In relation to page 8, item 11, the Director of Resources provided Members with a brief update on the successful launch of the concept plans at Powys County Hall on 21st October.

4 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES:

- I. Modernisation Working Group held 24th September 2009
- II. Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 12th October 2009

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Modernisation Working Group held 24th September 2009

The Head of Corporate Communications and Member Support informed Members that 23 out of 25 Personal Development Interviews had been undertaken to date.

Reference was made to page 3, item 7 of the minutes relating to a report on Member Attendance. Councillor J Dudley raised concerns that member attendance at Authority and Committee meetings had declined significantly in recent months. She indicated that attendance appeared to be at its lowest level since her membership on the Fire Authority, and today's attendance level of 56% reinforced such concerns.

The Chair noted that a variety of factors could hinder Member attendance e.g. ill health or conflicting personal or constituent authority commitments. It was stressed, however, that Members were expected to use their reasonable endeavours to attend all meetings of which they were a member and should at all times tender an apology if they were unable to attend a meeting, together with a reason for such non attendance.

Reference was made to the Annual Medal Ceremony whereby the Chair expressed his disappointment that 8 Members of the Authority had confirmed that they would be attending, however they were not present at the event and they had not tendered their apologies.

Councillor M Williams highlighted the protocol for the management of Member attendance within Powys County Council. The Clerk confirmed that the Modernisation Working Group had recommended adoption of a similar protocol stipulating an attendance level of at least 66% for meetings of the Authority, Committees of which they were a member and any Training and Development events.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 12th October 2009

The Chief Fire Officer referred to item 4 of the minutes and confirmed that all revisions had been incorporated into the Improvement Plan 2009-2010.

5 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON REPRESENTATION OFN THE AUTHORITY'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Members were reminded that the Authority's Standards Committee was made up of four Independent Members and three Authority Members. The Clerk reported that the term of office of Authority Members would be no more than an initial term of either four to six years or the period until that Member's appointment as a Member of the Authority ceased, whichever was the shorter. It was further noted that additionally, Members could be reappointed for one further consecutive term.

Members were informed that Councillor JJJ Davies' was serving his second term which ran to the 9th December 2009. Accordingly the Authority was required to appoint a replacement for Cllr JJJ Davies for a 4 year period effective from the 10th December 2009.

The Clerk, on behalf of the Chair of the Standards Committee, wished to formally record his appreciation to the contribution made by Cllr Davies to the work of the Committee during his 8 year term of office. In response, Councillor Davies expressed his gratitude for all the support provided by Members and was pleased to note that no complaints had been made against Members in respect of their role as members of the Fire and Rescue Authority since the inception of the Standards Committee in December 2001.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that:

Councillor R Llewellyn be appointed onto the Standards Committee, effective from the 10th December 2009, for a four year term of office.

6 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2010/2011 AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009/2010

Consideration was given to the Annual Action Plan 2010-2011, together with the consultation report, which had been developed and approved for consideration by the RRP Member Working Group. Members noted that the Improvement Plan for 2009/2010 had been incorporated within the Action Plan in line with regulatory guidance. The Improvement Plan element of the document had been approved for consideration by the Authority's Performance Review and Audit Committee on 12th October 2009.

ACFO Bates reported that comments had been sought on the following areas of work for 2010-2011:-

- Improving the way we reach vulnerable members of society
- Sharing our facilities with our communities
- Engaging with communities
- Improving road safety
- Delivering Home Fire Safety Checks
- Reducing deliberate grassland fires

The public consultation had closed on the 4th August 2009, with 66 responses; fewer than for some previous consultations but with an increase in the percentage of the overall response from members of the public. Members were pleased to note that this increase reflected the Authority's efforts to engage with the public at various events and through other agencies. Many positive and comprehensive responses had been provided, demonstrating that stakeholders valued the opportunity to provide their views on the focus areas. Members were pleased to note that the responses provided as part of the consultation process demonstrated that communities considered the areas consulted upon to be of importance and welcomed the opportunity to provide their views.

Analysis of the comments showed that there were some common themes, as follows:

- **Support for existing work** – There was strong support for the initiatives and activities that were already in place and this confirmed that the Authority's strategies met the expectations of the Authority's stakeholders.
- **Working collaboratively with partners** – Collaborative working with a wide range of partners was approved and promoted as a means of sharing knowledge and resources and improving communication. Suggestions for new partnership working were also provided.
- **Raising awareness of the range of services** – There was a desire to have more information about the range of services and initiatives provided by the Authority.

Members were assured that progress on each of the areas of improvement would be reported periodically to the Fire Authority and its relevant committees and would be detailed each year in the Annual Action Plans.

Members noted that the Improvement and Performance element of the plan provided the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic performance indicators for 2008/2009, along with a commentary on performance and a general summary of all incidents attended. In addition some of the core indicators were also provided to expand on the Authority's performance in areas of corporate health.

The plan also referred to the Operational Assurance Assessment of Service Delivery and Joint Risk Assessment undertaken with the Wales Audit Office. A financial summary was included in order to report on the Authority's funding for 2009/10. Efficiency gains achieved over previous years and up until 2010 were also summarised in this section of the document.

ACFO Bates reported that, in accordance with the Framework document guidance, a meeting with the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government between the Chair, other Members, the Chief Fire Officer and other officers took place on the 7th September 2009. This was an informal discussion on the Consultation Report and the Annual Action Plan 2010/11, and the Minister was in agreement with the Authority's strategy and direction for areas consulted upon.

ACFO Bates put forth the recommendation that the combined document and consultation report be approved in readiness for publication on the 31st October 2009.

The Chair, on behalf of all Members, commended Officers for producing a contemporary, informative and readable document. Members extended their appreciation for all the hard work and efforts of all members of staff who contributed to the plan.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. That the Annual Action Plan 2010 / 2011 and Improvement Plan 2009/2010 be approved for publication on 31st October 2009***
- 2. The report on the consultation outcomes be noted and approved for publication on 31st October 2009***

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ALL WALES PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PROCUREMENT

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the project to replace the Personal Protective Equipment in the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales was nearing completion, having been beset with difficulties from the outset. Members acknowledged that this had resulted in a number of significant changes in direction over the last twelve months, due in the main to factors outside of the three Services' direct control. It was noted that the ability in Wales to not follow the CLG directed national procurement route by way of the Integrated Clothing Project had provided significant opportunities for Wales to pursue a different procurement methodology and technically advanced solution for the purchase of PPE. A mini-competition and extensive all Wales PPE evaluations had therefore been undertaken and it had been identified that the best procurement route was via the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) framework with the outright purchase of the Lion Apparel Pro Max suit with Rosenbauer Heros helmet, with a managed care solution being provided by the same company. These changes in direction had all been necessary to protect the Services' commercial interests, to mitigate procurement risk, to provide best value and were all set against a genuine desire to provide the best possible protection for staff.

Members were assured that the Lion Apparel product was the most technically advanced currently available and offered the highest level of protection to frontline staff, without compromising thermal protection against flexibility and ergonomic features. Members were pleased to note that the product was also very popular with staff during the evaluations undertaken. Members were shown a sample of the PPE and were informed that the actual specification that had been agreed on an All Wales basis was slightly different and would be available for Members to view at a future Fire Authority meeting.

Following a question from Councillor Lewis Members were informed that the Lion Apparel Pro Max suit was manufactured in the United Kingdom whereas the Rosenbauer Heros helmet was produced in Germany.

Members acknowledged that the advanced product features would reduce revenue expenditure on repairs and care, and the fixed managed care cost over the course of a year would assist with budget planning.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that a sizing exercise was currently underway and it was expected that the kit would be introduced by the end of the financial year.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- 1. The report be noted*
- 2. The Fire Authority endorse the process outlined therein.*