

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



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**COFNODION
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyrddin
21 MAI 2007

**MINUTES
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen
21 MAY 2007

11.00am – 12.05pm

PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN:	B J Hall
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:	C J Crowley
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: J S Allen-Mirehouse, J J J Davies, Mrs T Devichand, Mrs J Dudley, T E Evans, K Harris, D R James, P James, Mrs F M Jones, R Lewis, C Morgan, G Phillips, Mrs C Philpott, D Prothero, Mrs Spender, T Theophilus, J D A Thompson, C Waller, M Williams
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: Mrs K Becton,
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	D Mackay, R Smith, P Bailey, E Aitken, A Howells, P Bates, W Edwards

1 **DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS**

None were declared

2 **PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Richard Lewis to his first meeting since his reappointment as a Member of the Fire Authority. Councillor Ray James was congratulated on his recent appointment as Mayor of Loughor.

3 **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

The Minutes of the Fire Authority meetings held on 5th February and 12th March 2007 were confirmed and approved as a true record.

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

The minutes of the following Committees were received and considered:

- i Personnel Committee held on:
 - 5th February 2007
 - 5th March 2007
- ii Performance and Policy Review Committee held on:
 - 19 February 2007
 - 8th May 2007
- iii Resources Committee held on 23rd April 2007
- iv Industrial Relations Committee held on 23rd April 2007
- v Standards Committee held on 30th April 2007
- vi Modernisation Working Group held on 26th February 2007

5 **TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

i ***Personnel Committee held on 5th March 2007***

It was noted that the Authority's revised Welsh Language Scheme had recently been approved by the Welsh Language Board and Members wished to pay tribute to Judith Morris, former Corporate Head of Policy and Member Support for her work in forwarding the Scheme.

ii ***Modernisation Group held on 26th February 2007***

Councillor C Morgan made reference to the recommendation to replace the Performance and Policy Review Committee with a Performance Review and Audit Committee which emanated from a review of the original terms of reference. Councillor Morgan expressed concerns that greater emphasis should be placed on issues of overview and scrutiny within the terms of reference of the new Committee. The Clerk responded that the proposed terms of reference

specifically included the development of the Authority's scrutiny role in looking at areas of performance in need of improvement. He would however prepare a report to be considered at the next meeting of the Performance Review and Audit Committee on 30th July 2007 to explore how this aspect could be developed and whether the terms of reference needed to be amended accordingly.

6 TO RECEIVE THE DRAFT RISK REDUCTION ACTION PLAN 08/09

Area Manager Paul Bates provided Members with a presentation on the Authority's Draft Risk Reduction Plan 2008/09, which built on the strategic intentions of the main Risk Reduction Plan 2007/10 which had been approved by the Authority in October 2006.

In developing the 2008/09 action plan, Officers had met with County Commanders and staff who would be directly affected by the major proposals along with extensive input from the respective Directors and key departmental managers.

Following a number of meetings, the Member Working Group had recommended that the areas the Authority should consult upon were specifically risk reduction activities in the upper Swansea Valley and duty systems. In relation to the Swansea Valley area. The Member Working Group had considered a range of options, before recommending the one incorporated within the draft plan.

It was noted that as specified under the RRP guidance, the Authority were also required to report upon the progress already made in relation to objectives contained within the 2007/10 RRP.

Public consultation would commence on the 22nd May 2007 and end on 14th August 2007 following which a report would be brought to the Authority in September 2007 after the Member Working Group had considered the outcomes and responses received. The Authority would consider and direct on the content of the final plan for the 2008/09 period at the end of October 2007. The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Framework document made it clear that the Authority had to consult with the Minister both before and after the Consultation period and that he would request a meeting in due course.

Members were wholly supportive of the recommendations contained within the report and commended Officers on the clear and positive way in which it was presented. Members of the Working Group emphasised that the decisions contained within the Plan had not been taken lightly and much debate and deliberation had taken place before a decision had been reached.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

i) The draft Risk Reduction Action Plan for 2008/09 be approved

ii) The commencement of a 12 week public consultation on the draft plan

commencing 22 May 2007 be approved

7 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Annual Report of the Standards Committee provided a summary of the work of the Committee for 2006/07 and had been considered and approved by the Standards Committee at their last meeting on 30th April 2007.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The report be received and noted

8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL INCREASE IN ALLOWANCES FOR FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS

The Clerk reported that payment of allowances to Members of Fire and Rescue Authorities was governed by the Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of Fire Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2004. The regulations enabled Authorities from the year commencing 1st April 2005 to make an annual adjustment to allowances payable under their schemes, such adjustment being restricted to the average of any adjustments made by the Authority's constituent councils. The constituent authorities had been advised by the Welsh Assembly Government of the maximum annual increases to their allowances effective from 1st April 2007 as follows :

Special Responsibility Allowances	0.66%
Basic Allowances	3.30%
Care Allowances	3.30%

The constituent authorities had all confirmed that they will be applying the maximum increases noted above with the exception of Powys County Council who are applying a 2.5% increase in respect of the basic allowance only. Applying the average of the above increases, (SRA 0.55%, Basic 3.17% and Care Allowances 2.75%) the Allowances for Fire & Rescue Authority Members for 2007/08 would be as follows:

Fire & Rescue Authority Allowance	£1,129
Chair's Allowance	£9,603
Vice Chair's Allowance	£7,380
Care Allowances (Max. amounts):	
> Chair	£1,507
> Vice Chair	£1,178
>Other Members	£ 410

The travelling rate for 2007/08 had been retained at 40p per mile, which is

linked to that payable to Assembly Members. Whilst travelling rates payable by constituent authorities are similarly linked to those of Assembly Members, the level of travelling payable by constituent authorities for 2007/08 ranges from 40p to 50.1p per mile. Constituent authorities were able to freeze their rates at the level prevailing prior to the new arrangements coming into place and until such time as those payable to Assembly Members caught up.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

- i) The revised rates set out in the report for 2007/08 be approved***
- ii) The necessary amendments be made to the Authority's "Scheme of Member Allowances"***

9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON PROJECT FIREGUARD – CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR MAJOR STAFF ABSENCE

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004), and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA 2004) placed duties on Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to plan for and respond to emergencies and to maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as was reasonably practicable, that should an emergency occur it was able to continue to perform its functions. FRAs were, therefore, expected to play an increasing role in contingency provision, including the supply of all appliances and equipment required and the effective deployment of available personnel at all times, even those when a large number of staff may be absent through illness or industrial action.

In relation to industrial action, there was some lack of legal clarity as to what requirement this placed on FRAs, but it was extremely unlikely that military aid would be provided to FRAs to provide contingency cover during industrial action.

CFOA and the LGA had sponsored Project Fireguard, a project to provide participating FRAs with contractual arrangements with an external service provider for contingency cover in the event of major staff absence. The Head of Civil Contingencies and Resilience has participated in the early elements of this project, however, the point had now been reached where the Service needed to determine whether or not to continue with its participation in the Project. The costs of the final contingency package will not be available until the award of the contract with the preferred bidder in June 2008. There should however be an indication of costs available later this year, which would allow the Authority to consider its participation in the final contingency cover contract,

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

Continued participation in Project Fireguard be approved

10 TO RECEIVE THE PEER ASSESSMENT REPORT

It was reported that the Peer Assessment Team, made up of Officers from North and South Wales Fire and Rescue Services, supported by Officers from the Wales Audit Office and Welsh Assembly Government, had visited the Service in March this year. The visit had been conducted to verify the information supplied in the Service's Self Assessment Document. The final report had now been produced by the Lead Assessor, from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, in which the Service had received positive and favourable comments.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED

That the Report be received and noted

10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON COUNCILLOR MRS P SPENDER'S ATTENDANCE AT THE LGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2007

A report on the attendance of Councillor Mrs P Spender at the LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition on 13/14 March 2007 was received and noted.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The report be received and noted

11 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Service Delivery Report from the County Commands and a report on an LNG visit to Korea were received for information