

**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 EBRILL 2008**

**MINUTES  
OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**21 APRIL 2008**

**11.00am – 11.45am**

**PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: C J Crowley

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: T E Evans

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: J S Allen-Mirehouse,  
J J J Davies, K Harris, D R James,  
T Theophilus, J D A Thompson,  
Mrs F M Jones, D C Prothero,  
Mrs J Dudley, P James, C Morgan

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: Mrs C Philpott, M Williams,  
G Phillips, G Seabourne, T Devichand,  
K Becton

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: D Mackay, E Aitken, A Howells, K Jones

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

None were declared

**2 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair welcomed Councillors J Thompson and P James back to the Authority following a short period of illness.

**3 TO CONFIRM AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETINGS HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY AND 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2008**

The minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008 were received and approved as a true record.

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

- i The Performance Review and Audit Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> April**
- ii The Personnel Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED*

*That the above minutes be received and noted*

**5 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2008**

The minutes of the above Committee were received and noted. Consideration was given to the specific recommendations of the meeting in relation to approval of the increases in tender limits and the wording in relation to the use of contract “frameworks” within Contract Standing Orders pending a full review being undertaken, as these were matters that were reserved to the Authority.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The specific recommendations of the Resources Committee held on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 in relation to Contract Standing Orders be received and approved*

**6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> APRIL 2008**

The Clerk reported that Members of the Standards Committee had considered

two key items relating to the Code of Conduct, that of the requirements of the existing code following the Livingstone case, and the major changes contained within the new draft Code.

It was noted that Members remaining as Members of the Fire Authority following the Local Elections would be required to sign the New Code by 4<sup>th</sup> July but that new members would have to sign up to the New Code before they were able to act in that office. .

It was further noted that the Standards Committee had recommended that the upper limit for the Registration of Gifts and Hospitality be increased as an interim measure from £10 to £25 until such time as the six unitary authorities had set their own levels.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i) the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008 be received and noted*

## **7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT) (WALES) ORDER 2008**

The Welsh Assembly Government had been carrying out a review of the existing Member's Code of Conduct for some time. During the process the Standards Committee had made detailed representations on behalf of this Authority.

Members were aware that the Welsh Assembly Government had now made the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008 which revoked the current Conduct of Members (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2001 and previous amending statutory instruments and imposed a revised Model Code. The Clerk reported that the new Model Code would come into force on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2008 and would apply to all County and County Borough Councils in Wales, Community Councils, Fire and Rescue Authorities and National Park Authorities.

It was important to note that the provisions of the code were mandatory for all Authorities to adopt. It was possible for additions to be inserted locally which went beyond the statutory requirements but none of the mandatory provisions could be excluded. At its meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008, the Standards Committee had resolved to recommend to the Authority that the Model Code be adopted.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i) The Authority adopts the new Model Code of Conduct as set out in the Appendix to the Report and that the provisions of the Code are*

***brought into force on 5th May 2008.***

- ii) That for the purposes of paragraph 17 of the Code, the value to be specified in relation to any gift, hospitality material benefit or advantage shall be £25.***
- iii) That the threshold set out above be reviewed when details of the level set by constituent authorities is known.***

## **8 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE DRAFT RISK REDUCTION PLAN 2009/2010**

Members were aware that the RRP Member Working Group had now completed their deliberations on the shape of the draft 2009/10 RRP action plan. This built on the strategic intentions of the main Risk Reduction Plan 2007/10 approved by the Authority in October 2006 and was the last action plan for the three year period.

The Membership of the Authority's (RRP) Working Group are:

Councillor J J J Davies	Carmarthenshire
Councillor P James	Ceredigion
Councillor D R James	Swansea
Councillor C Crowley	Neath Port Talbot
Councillor J Allen-Mirehouse	Pembrokeshire
Councillor M Williams	Powys

As this was the last draft action plan in the 2007/10 reporting period the majority of the document was taken with reporting progress on the Authority's significant achievements on all the strategic intentions to reduce risk that were outlined in the original plan.

The Authority had approved improvements in two areas in last year's plan for 2008/09 and the opportunity had been taken to report on progress so far. The project to reduce risk in the Upper Amman and Upper Swansea Valleys had been titled the 'Safer Valleys Project' and although the work was in its early stages, a brief report on developments in this area was provided in order to meet the Authority's wish to communicate the changes to all stakeholders. A project to implement shift changes at whole time stations was also underway and this was also covered in the action plan

In developing the 2009/10 action plan, there has been input from County Commanders and the respective Directors and key departmental managers. This input had been considered by the Member Working Group and the draft action plan had been amended as required. The document had been considered from an Officer perspective by the Policy Board and the Performance Board earlier in the month.

The draft plan was now essentially complete and was in the final stages of design and translation. The document had been designed in house by the Corporate Communications and Member Services department and this draft version would be produced without colour to reflect the Authority's commitment to sustainability. The final document would be produced in colour and would include performance and improvement information.

Members were aware that it was a requirement for FRAs to informally discuss its proposals and options relating to its RRP and associated RRP annual action plans with the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government before consultation commenced, and again following consultation and prior to formal FRA approval. A letter had been sent to the Minister inviting him to informally discuss the Draft RRP action plan for 2009/10 but to date no response had been received from the Minister.

Subject to Members' approval, public consultation would start on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and end on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and a further report would be brought to the Authority in October 2008 after the Member Working Group consider the responses received and make their recommendations.

Members commended Officers and the Member Working Group on their achievements in producing the final report.

#### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- 1. the draft risk reduction action plan 2009/10 be approved***
- 2. a 12 week public consultation exercise on the draft action plan be undertaken between the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and 29<sup>th</sup> July 2008***

#### **9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Clerk reported that the Authority needed to approve and adopt a Code of Corporate Governance, which was consistent with the principles and reflected the requirements of the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) / SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) Framework: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* together with the associated guidance.

The draft Code of Corporate Governance was attached for the Authority's consideration.

#### **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***The Code of Corporate Governance be approved and implemented***

**10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE ANNUAL PUBLIC SECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2008**

Members were aware of the excellent work done in relation to Member engagement and development and that Members were working very closely with officers on a range of complex issues such as scrutiny, budget efficiencies and the Risk Reduction Plan.

In view of this, the Clerk and Head of Operational Risk Management had submitted an entry into the 2008 Annual Public Sector Excellence Awards in the Best Member Development category on the Authority's behalf. The entries would be judged over the Summer of 2008 and Members would be made aware of the outcome with the results will being announced in September 2008.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*Members note the APSE 2008 Awards entry made on the Authority's behalf*

**11 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE WALES CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT**

Further to reports previously presented to Personnel Committee and the Authority y, the Modernisation Group on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2008 had agreed to pursue the Authority's application to attain the Wales Charter for Member Support & Development for Fire Authorities.

The Charter had been developed collaboratively by the Welsh Local Government Association and Member Support Officers including representatives from the Fire and Rescue Authorities through the Member Support Officer Network.

It was noted that the Modernisation Group had welcomed the opportunity for new Members, in particular, to receive access to regular training and to undertake a comprehensive induction programme.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*the Authority endorse the intention to apply for the Charter and that the Chairman of the Fire Authority signs the declaration of intent in the presence of elected members.*

**12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON CUSTOMER FEEDBACK – OCTOBER 2007 – MARCH 2008**

It was noted that the 6 monthly update on complaints and compliments between the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 had been presented to the Standards Committee, Performance Review & Audit Committee and the Performance Board.

In total 13 official complaints were received, two anonymous complaints (anonymous complaints are only recorded for monitoring purposes); and 45 compliments.

A new “We are Listening” compliments and complaints handbook had been designed that outlined the new “3 step complaints process” that complied with the Welsh Local Government Ombudsman standards. This had been discussed by the Standards Committee and approved by Policy board and was now being presented to the Fire Authority for approval.

**RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

the Fire Authority receives the 6 monthly report and approves the new 3 step complaints handling process and the “We Are Listening” guidance.

**13 TO RECEIVE ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

A number of items were received for members information including the WLGA Excellence Awards, statistics on road casualties and the Service Delivery Report.