

**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**

**COFNODION  
CYFARFOD YR AWDURDOD TAN**

Ganolfan Gynadledda,  
Pencadlys Y Gwasanaeth Tân Ac Achub, Caerfyddin  
**27 MEHEFIN 2011**

**MINUTES  
OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING**

The Conference Centre,  
Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carmarthen  
**27 JUNE 2011**

**11.00 – 1.25PM**

**80 % PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

GADEIRYDD/ CHAIRMAN:	C Philpott
IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:	R Llewellyn
AELODAU/MEMBERS:	Cyng/Cllrs: Dyfrig Thomas, N Holley, S Lloyd-Janes, P James, M Pepper, J Dudley, J Dinham, J Holmes, M Williams, G Ratcliffe, D Howells, P Llewellyn, G Thomas, Des Thomas, H Morris, J J J Davies, A Woolcock, T E Evans
YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES:	Cyng/Cllrs: A Davies, D Davies, J Newbury, P Smith, T Tudor
YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE:	R Smith, D Daycock, E Aitken, J Maunder, J Cameron, C Davies, D Masson, C Margetts

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Davies, J Newbury, P Smith, T Tudor and D Davies

## **2 DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

All Members present declared that they had a personal interest in any matters affecting or relating to their own Constituent Authority.

In addition, Councillor T E Evans and Richard Smith, Chief Fire Officer, declared an interest in Agenda Item 15, namely, 'To receive a report on a request for funding to Firebrake Wales' and retired from the meeting during the discussion of that item.

## **3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair acknowledged the pressure that the Service had faced over the past few weeks with major incidents occurring at Chevron and Fforestfach and joined with all Members in acknowledging the professionalism of the firefighters who had been working at these incidents.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Jim Cameron provided an update on the on-going incident at Fforestfach from which it was noted that the Service continued to work closely with the Environmental agencies and other partners in order to ensure that local residents and businesses were kept fully informed. The Chief Fire Officer reported that a letter of thanks had been sent to crews at Pembrokeshire Command concerning the Chevron incident and that a similar letter would be sent to those involved with the fires in the Swansea area.

In respect of the resource implications of tackling the recent protracted incidents, Welsh Assembly Government Officials had attended recent Gold Command meetings and it was hoped that any requests for additional funding would be looked at sympathetically.

Members were delighted to learn that Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service had recently won first place at the Inspire Wales Awards for its innovative work in promoting the use of Welsh in the workplace. The service had been victorious in the 'Welsh in the Workplace' category at the awards ceremony run by the Institute of Welsh Affairs at Cardiff City Hall on Friday 17 June 2011. The award had been presented by S4C presenter Angharad Mair in front of over 400 guests, after the service beat 29 entrants from across Wales and placed on a shortlist of three finalists.

Vice Chair Councillor Roy Llewellyn, who was at the Awards Ceremony, said that the Award provided national recognition for the Service's innovative work to promote the use of Welsh in the workplace and paid tribute to the Officers who had contributed to the Service winning the Award, in particular, Corporate Governance and Information Manager, Julie Owens.

#### **4 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> MAY 2011**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

#### **To consider matters arising from the Minutes:**

##### **5 – Report on the Marine Incident Response Group (MIRG)**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Chris Davies reported that following a meeting of the Transport Select Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 an agreement had been made to retain MIRG but as a scaled down version. A paper with further details would be presented to the next Fire Authority meeting.

##### **8 – Draft Annual Action Plan 2012 – 2013**

Members made reference to the proposal to introduce a more efficient crewing system at Llanelli Community Fire Station as part of the Service's Draft Annual Action Plan 2012-2013 and which was subject to public consultation for a three month period between 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

The Llanelli Star newspaper was leading a campaign against the proposed changes to the crewing system and a number of public meetings had been held with a further meeting planned for 28<sup>th</sup> June.

The Chief Fire Officer, Richard Smith, said that in respect of the Consultation Process the Service welcomed information and comments received back from the local communities in response to the Draft Annual Action Plan, as all comments received informed the Authority's decision making process.

A full response had been made to the Llanelli Star by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Mr Smith and the Chair, Councillor Philpott, would be attending a meeting of Llanelli Town Council on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011, where they would address concerns and outline the Service's proposals in order to allay any misunderstandings.

Mr Smith had attended a meeting with Llanelli MP, Nia Griffith to discuss the proposals where he had addressed her concerns and gave assurances that no one would lose their jobs or be subjected to pay cuts. He indicated that he was more than happy to meet with any interested body in relation to this matter and had earlier that day signed off a further letter to the editor of the Llanelli Star which provided additional information in respect of the proposal. Members noted that should the proposed changes to the crewing system be introduced, then all the specific detail would be negotiated with the relevant Trade Unions.

##### **14 – Report on the Provision of Legal Services to the Authority**

The Clerk, Dave Daycock, indicated that he would provide an update for Members on this matter later in the meeting when it had been resolved to exclude the press and public.

**5 TO CONFIRM AS A TRUE RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>ST</sup> June 2011**

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2011 were confirmed and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following amendment:

**6 – Composition of the Authority’s Committees and to Appoint Members to Serve upon them**

To delete TE Evans from the Shortlisting Panel

Councillor P James who had been unable to attend the Annual General Meeting congratulated all those who had been appointed Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees and thanked all those who had previously held office for their support over the last few years.

**6 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 were received and approved as a true record of the proceedings.

**7 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011**

The minutes of the Standards Committee held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 were received and approved as a true record of the proceedings apart from the following amendments:

**5 – To Consider matters arising from the minutes**

Second line to read ‘intentions to abolish Standards for England’

First line , second paragraph to read ‘the Police Authorities in Wales’

**8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE PROPOSED INCREASE TO MEMBERS TRAVELLING EXPENSES**

The Clerk reported that the Authority’s existing Scheme of Members’ Allowances had been approved by the Fire Authority on the 20th December 2010 and set the rate payable for Members mileage allowance for cars and vans at 40p per mile.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced in the March 2011 Budget that the maximum approved Mileage Allowance payments rate for cars and vans used by public authorities be increased from 40p to 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles of business travel, effective from the 6th April 2011.

Fire Authority Members were requested to consider whether to amend the existing Scheme of Members Allowances to incorporate the increase and to back date it from 6th April 2011.

Members noted that of the six Constituent Authorities, five had increased their mileage allowance to 45p per mile whilst Neath Port Talbot had remained at 40p.

The majority of Members present considered that the 5p increase was fair taking into account the increase in the cost of fuel and the general increase in vehicle running costs and the small increase would assist in covering the expenses incurred by Members when travelling to undertake Fire Authority business.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that an increase of 5p in the travelling allowance be incorporated into the existing scheme of Members Allowances and that it be backdated from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011.***

### **9 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE SERVICE REVIEW PROGRAMME – IMPLEMENTATION PHASE**

At the Fire Authority meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011, Members had asked for regular updates on the Service Review Programme process and consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the implementation of the 15 key improvement areas within the Service Review outcomes.

The Chief Fire Officer presented the paper to Members and the following areas were highlighted:

#### **Improvement Area 3 – Reduce conference and seminar budgets by 50%**

A significant 50% reduction had been made in reducing the conference and seminar budgets and Members suggested the possibility of making even greater reductions, and the need to reduce the number of journeys made throughout the Service for meeting attendance. The Head of Corporate Communications and Member Support reported that the use of video conferencing for appropriate Fire Authority meetings was currently being discussed by the Member Development Working Group and that Members would be kept informed of progress.

#### **Improvement Area 5 – Changes to the Car Lease Scheme**

The Chief Fire Officer reported that a new lease scheme had been introduced and was being rolled out. The first tranche of lease car removals had been made and new pool cars had been ordered which were available to all staff when not being used by operational officers. It was noted that the new policy encouraged car sharing and the economic use of vehicles within the Service and the Treasurer reported that a survey had been undertaken recently by the Service's Environment and Sustainability Department, the results of which would shortly be available.

#### **Improvement Area 10 – Changes to Service Departments**

The Chief Fire Officer reported that it was anticipated that all the revised structures would be in place by the end of Summer. The revised structures both within

Commands and Departments required some reconfiguration of the HQ and Morriston estate to make better use of existing resources, examples being the relocation of Head Quarters (HQ) staff from Morriston to Carmarthen and the relocation of Training staff from Morriston to the new facilities at Earlswood.

This would involve:

1. The refurbishment of the small bungalow at HQ to accommodate the Estates department.
2. The refurbishment and better use of the (former) Cartref y Gelli part of HQ to accommodate HQ staff from Morriston, by making it more open plan and fit for purpose.
3. Some additional car parking to cater for the increased number of staff at Service HQ, Carmarthen.
4. Some improvements at the former training bungalow at Morriston to accommodate the Swansea Command staff now that it was unoccupied following training staff relocating to Earlswood.
5. The top up of the grant received for Houses 3 and 4 at HQ to maximise utilisation.
6. Conversion of the Houses 1 and 2 at HQ into an occupational health unit.
7. Some adaptations to Morriston Fire Station to make full use of surplus space on site.
8. The above would maximise the use of buildings and allow the potential sale of the current Morriston Command building.

The intention was to fund the above works, expected to cost less than £500k, from the resources set aside for Earlswood, now released by early completion of the works and the resulting ability to claim the full grant.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

- i) The progress report be noted
- ii) The use of reserves to make the estates improvements outlined within the report, in order to make better use of existing premises and accommodate staffing structure changes at both Carmarthen and Morriston be approved

## **10 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REPORT ON THE SPRINKLER BILL PROGRESS**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Chris Davies reminded Members of the long running and extensive lobbying that the Fire & Rescue Service had carried out over many years in

relation to the promotion of the benefits of sprinklers.

Over the last twelve months, the Fire & Rescue Services in Wales had lobbied for a change in legislation requiring the installation of simple residential sprinkler systems in domestic properties.

Following a complex process the Assembly had been notified that the Domestic Fire Safety (Wales) Measure 2011 had been approved by Her Majesty in Council on 7 April 2011. Once the law had been passed it would set out the framework within which detailed regulations could be drafted, and it was understood that Welsh Assembly Government officials had now started working on drafting the new regulations to ensure that all new domestic builds would have sprinklers fitted.

Members would be kept advised as the Measure progressed.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED:***

***The report be noted***

### **11 TO RECEIVE THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011**

The Clerk presented the Annual Report of the Standards Committee, which provided a summary of the work of the Committee for 2010/11, and which had been approved by the Standards Committee at their last meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

He was pleased to report that there were no breaches of the code of conduct or requests for dispensation brought before the Standards Committee during this period, and that the Committee continued to be pro active in promoting good governance and the ethical framework within the Authority.

The Clerk brought to Members attention the appointment of three new Independent members of the Standards Committee, namely Mr Hywel Wyn Jones, Ms Gail Storr and Mr Richard Jenkins and commented that the Standards Committee were well equipped to safeguard the probity and ethics of the Authority.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED:***

***That the work of the Standards Committee be noted.***

### **12 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Clerk presented Members with updates and amendments to the Constitution relating to the terms of reference of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee, the Chief Fire Officers Remuneration Panel and the Appointments Committee.

It was noted that the amendments were being made as part of a general update and review of the Constitution and that further reports as part of this process would be brought to future Fire Authority meetings as necessary.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***That the terms of reference to the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee, the Chief Fire Officers Remuneration Panel and the Appointments Committee be approved***

### **13 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE RURAL RESPONSE VEHICLE**

Area Manager Derek Masson made a presentation to Members on the new Rural Response Unit and indicated that it had been developed in order to improve Service Delivery and as part of the Service Review Programme.

Members were aware that the vehicle specification had been drawn up by a Working Group of Technical and Engineering colleagues as well as operational firefighters and Members of the FBU. This Working Group continued to carry out a wide range of equipment evaluations and over time the Service would be replacing selected second appliances on 2 appliance stations with Rural Response Units which were better suited to rural areas.

The main features of the vehicle were that it was able to crew five personnel, it had a 4 x 4 capacity and was equipped with two fire pumps and rescue cutting equipment. The tender process had been completed and a preferred supplier established with the project being on target and under budget. Operational procedures and a training programme would be developed and Members and Service personnel would continue to be kept informed of progress.

Members were pleased to be provided with the details of the new vehicle, which was unique to the Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service. The suggestion was made that a future Fire Authority meeting could be held in a rural area in order that members could be given a practical demonstration of the vehicle.

It was agreed that if individual members required further information on the Rural Response Unit that they make such a request directly to Area Manager Derek Masson.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that:***

***The presentation be noted***