

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



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**COFNODION CYFARFOD Y CYD BWYLLGOR
YMGYNGHOROL**

MINUTES OF THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

DYDD MERCHER, 18 HYDREF 2006

WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2006

**PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN,
HEOL LLWYN PISGWYDD, CAERFYRDDIN
FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,
LIME GROVE AVENUE, CARMARTHEN**

PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: R Perry

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cllr D R James, Cllr P James,
Cllr B Hall, Cllr Mrs P Llewellyn,
R Smith, K Jones, P Bates,
W Edwards, C Howells, I Woods,
R Curran, A Hughes

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cllr Mrs C Philpott , R Martin,
R Sheehan

1. DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS

None were declared

2. TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH JULY 2006

The following amendments were agreed: ADO Hughes to read Adrian Hughes and moral to read 'morale'

Subject to the above amendments, ***it was resolved that the minutes be approved as a true record***

3. MATTERS ARISING

Councillor P James made reference to the concerns raised at the last meeting of incorrect and misleading information being deliberately fed to the public and press in relation to the future of Haverfordwest Fire Station. Members of the RRP Working Group had seen the results of this false reporting in responses received as part of the consultation process, from which it was evident that misconceptions and false rumours had been circulated which would heighten fears within local communities.

Roger Perry responded that the FBU had advised all their Members, and indeed representatives of other Union bodies, of the importance of only factual and accurate information being given to the public and press. He continued that stories in the press were misinterpreted as they were often written for their dramatic value rather than for accuracy. However, Mr Perry noted the comments made by Councillor James.

Councillor P Llewellyn referred to comments made in the press concerning the three Fire Authority Members from Pembrokeshire and wished to emphasise that she had not been put under any pressure from fellow Councillors in her deliberations of the RRP and had made her own decisions.

4. TO CONSULT ON THE PHASING OUT OF THE LONG SERVICE INCREMENT PAYMENTS (LSI)

Mr Perry reported that the purpose of calling the meeting was to raise concerns that prior to the discussion of the phasing out of the Long Service Increment (LSI) payments by the Personnel Committee on 25th September, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) had not been offered an opportunity to consult and discuss this with Senior Management and Members. He indicated that staff had been informed that payment of LSI from 1st October would be in contravention of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 but did not consider that to be entirely true: he made reference to Regulation 32 of the Act which allowed for the exception for the provision of certain benefits based on length of service. He further drew Members attention to the exceptions referred to in the ACAS document 'Age and the Workplace' and made reference to Employers Circular EMP/13/03 which related to the 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement. He also cited the Cadman case which ruled that the employer had the right to reward an

employee for length of service and experience.

In conclusion Mr Perry indicated that the Union were of the opinion that the LSI Payments should continue to be paid until an agreement had been reached by the National Joint Council. He understood, however, that as the Personnel Committee had already taken a decision on this matter, that this decision was unlikely to be reversed, but was glad the opportunity had been given for the Trade Unions to express their views.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer responded that as part of the June 2003 Pay and Conditions Agreement it had always been the intention to phase out LSI payments. He also emphasised that the introduction of Continual Professional Development (CPD) Payments were not developed to simply be seen as a financial replacement for LSI Payments.

The Corporate Head of Human Resources indicated that employees may have placed their own interpretation on the phasing out of LSI payments, but clearly the Pay and Conditions Agreement 2003 had always contained the intention to phase out these payments and introduce a fairer process of rewarding all employees dependent on a commitment to CPD. Such a process would, of course not disadvantage younger employees or Trade Union Members (unlike the current LSI payments) which he assumed everyone present would support. He continued that although the money saved by the phasing out of the LSI would be used to fund the CPD payments, one would not replace the other.

Mr Woods expressed his concerns that the implementation of the CPD Scheme could place added pressures on Managers by increasing their workload.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that individual grievances in relation to LSI payments had been received which were in the process of being dealt with. Mr Perry indicated that under the terms of the Grey Book, these could be heard collectively as a joint grievance and the Corporate Head of Personnel confirmed that he would respond to the grievances in these terms.

Councillor D R James, as Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee, offered his apologies that the Trade Unions had not been offered an opportunity to discuss this issue prior to it being considered by the Personnel Committee, and confirmed that the minutes of this JCC meeting would be included on the agenda of the next Fire Authority meeting on 30th October.

5. TO CONSIDER THE FBU RESPONSE TO THE AUTHORITY'S RISK REDUCTION PLAN

It was reported that the Members RRP Working Group had convened earlier in the day to consider the responses received following the public consultation of the RRP. It was confirmed that these responses would be published alongside the final plan in due course.

In response to a query from the FBU, Members of the RRP Group confirmed that there would be no compulsory redundancies during the lifetime of the plan and that this could be confirmed in the final document if required.