

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



**MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**COFNODION Y PWYLLGOR PERSONÉL  
MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**DYDD LLUN, 12 RHAGFYR 2005  
MONDAY, 12 DECEMBER 2005**

***YSTAFELL TAF,  
CANOLFAN HALLIWELL, COLEG Y DRINDOD,  
CAERFYRDDIN***

***THE TAF SUITE, HALLIWELL CENTRE  
TRINITY COLLEGE  
CARMARTHEN***

**PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE**

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: Mrs C Philpott

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: D R James

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: C J Crowley, B J Hall,  
Mrs F M Jones, Miss C Waller,  
M Williams

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: P James, Mrs P Llewellyn,

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

Mr R Smith, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Mr Phillip Bailey, Assistant Chief Officer declared an interest in agenda item 11 and took no part in the discussions thereon.

## **2 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2005 were received and approved.

## **3 TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **5 – To receive a report on Secondary Employment**

It was reported that not all the information relating to applications for Secondary Employment had been received from the County Commands but that this would be available for the March meeting of the Personnel Committee

## **4 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AND ILL-HEALTH**

DO Wyn Edwards, County Commander for Swansea, was welcomed to the meeting and provided Members with an overview of the management of sickness absence within his Command. Consideration was then given to the latest available figures relating to sickness absence and to details of the profile of ill-health retirements within the Service to date. The sickness absence figures, representing the period 1 April to 31 October 2005, indicated that employees were currently incurring an average of 5.61 shifts lost and a projected overall end of year figure equating to 9.61 shifts lost against the Service target of 7. It was noted that all County Commanders and Heads of Department were aware of the sickness absence profiles within their areas of responsibility, and regular dialogue with Service Directors had taken place on issues of long-term absences and other issues. Members were concerned that it appeared that the Service target would not be met, and further discussions were currently taking place with individual line managers where sickness absences were proving problematic.

The latest available ill-health retirements across all employee sectors continued to be relatively low and was an aspect which was currently well-managed within the Service, albeit within the scope of the Firefighters Pension Scheme arrangements.

## **RESOLUTION**

### ***It was RESOLVED***

- i) that the report on attendance and ill-health be received and noted***
- ii) to write to County Commanders and Departmental Heads expressing concerns that sickness absence figures had increased and***

*requesting that appropriate steps be taken in order to reduce these figures*

## **5 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE JOB EVALUATION/PAY REVIEW**

Members were aware of the requirements under NJC Circular 04/04 for all local authorities to conduct Pay Reviews by no later than March 2007, with Members agreeing to a partnership approach between the Service and Carmarthenshire County Council's Job Analyst Team with regard to the job evaluation process. The Corporate Head of Human Resources had visited key sites during October 2005 to discuss with employees the outline details of the Job Evaluation Review, whilst the Team Leader of the Job Analyst Team at Carmarthenshire County Council had provided details on the process to be adopted under the Greater London Provincial Council job evaluation criteria. The visit had been followed by the despatch of individual questionnaires to all employees, unless they were deemed to fall into a generic group of posts, where meetings had been held with those concerned to establish an overall response on behalf of that employee category. Job Evaluation training had also been provided by Carmarthenshire County Council's representatives, in preparation for the Moderation Panel to meet in due course. At this stage, the Job Evaluation Questionnaires were still with individual members of staff, for return to the Job Analyst Team by no later than 31 December 2005, and a further update would be provided for Committee at the next meeting.

### **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that the report be received and noted*

## **6 TO RECEIVE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to the Health and Safety Performance Report which provided Members with an overview of the work which had been carried out within that Department over the past months. Members were pleased to note that to date figures for On Duty Service Injuries continued to show a 20% reduction against the same period last year and that Service personnel who incurred On Duty injuries continued to be referred to the Service Occupational Health provider for examination. This method worked effectively in identifying root causes of injuries at an early stage.

Members noted that Mr Ceri Beynon, HM Inspector of Health and Safety had visited the Service in order to review Service procedures for dealing with Breathing Apparatus (Distress to Wearer) incidents where five such occurrences had been reported in the past two years. It was pleasing to note that the Inspector was pleased with the Service's Procedures and Guidance for dealing with such Incidents and made two recommendations for improvement. A further inspection was planned for 2006.

A key element of effective health and safety management was the need to ensure that procedures and guides created to set safety standards within the organisation were adhered to by all Service employees. To this end, at a recent Health & Safety Consultative Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November, a

discussion took place on the lack of seatbelt wearing in Fire Service Vehicles. All members present agreed that this situation was untenable as the potential for serious harm to employees, as well as members of the public, was too significant to ignore and that a more stringent policy was needed to be adopted by Management in order to ensure consistency in safety standards. The Director responsible for Health & Safety had subsequently issued a letter to all Service employees highlighting the need to adhere to safe systems of work by the wearing of seatbelts.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the report be received and noted***

### **7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON NETWORKING WOMEN IN THE FIRE SERVICE**

Members were informed that Networking Women in the Fire Service (NWFS) was an organisation promoting the interests of women in the Fire and Rescue Service, providing opportunities for networking and personal and professional development through a series of seminars, conferences and other events. Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service was a corporate member of the network and a number of staff had participated in their events over the years. NWFS holds an annual conference, which attracts several hundred women (and men). It provides an opportunity for women staff, who generally operate in a predominantly male environment in their own Services to meet in a mutually supportive atmosphere and benefit from training, developmental and other opportunities.

An approach had been made to the three Fire and Rescue Services in Wales to sponsor next year's event which was being held at the Fire Service College at Moreton in Marsh. This was a longstanding arrangement, and the venue provides excellent training facilities and accommodation for such an event. The Fire Services in Wales would receive recognition for sponsorship of the event, similar to sponsorship that was provided last year by London and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services and the Chief Fire Officers Association. The Service would also receive a number of free delegate places in return for sponsorship. It was noted that the conference was open to all women associated with the Service, including Members, and that men were also welcome to attend the event.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the sponsorship of the event be approved and that suitable members be nominated to attend once the number of free delegate places was known.***

### **8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON RECOGNITION OF THE FIRE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION**

Consideration was given to a letter, which had been received from Station Officer Ian Woods requesting that the Authority recognised the Fire Officer's

Association for negotiating purposes.

**RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that the request for recognition be approved***

