

**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, 20 MEHEFIN 2005  
MONDAY, 20 JUNE 2005**

***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:

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: D R James

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

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Cyng/Cllrs: Mrs C Philpott

## **1 PERSONAL MATTERS**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to the Service Chaplains, the Very Reverend Geraint Hughes, Archdeacon Randolph Thomas, Reverend Colin Amos, Reverend Illtyd Protheroe and Reverend Jonathan Davies.

A welcome was also extended to Councillor C Waller on her first meeting of the Personnel Committee

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

None were declared

## **3 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2005**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005 were received and approved.

## **4 TO COMMISSION THE NEW BRIGADE CHAPLAIN, THE REVEREND JONATHAN DAVIES**

Members recalled the untimely death of the Service Chaplain, the Reverend Robert Morgan, earlier in the year. The Reverend Morgan had been commissioned as a Chaplain in 1997 and had embraced the role with great dignity providing much valued support to many individuals throughout the service and his contribution would be greatly missed.

Committee were pleased to hear that a new appointment had now been made, however, for the County Command of Swansea and welcomed Reverend Jonathan Davies who would be undertaking the role of Chaplain for that area. The Chairman and Chief Fire Officer both praised the valuable work carried out by the Service Chaplains and spoke of the high esteem in which they were held by colleagues within the service.

The Very Reverend Hughes thanked everyone for the support they had offered earlier in the year and spoke of his delight that Reverend Jonathan Davies had accepted his new role within the Service. Reverend Hughes offered a prayer of dedication welcoming Reverend Davies to the Team.

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

Consideration was given to figures relating to sickness absence for the period March-April 2005, and the end of year statistics for 2005-4. In addition attached were details of the profile of ill-health retirements within the Service for the first two months of 2005-6.

In regard to the sickness absence statistics for the current year, the overall average of 1.55 shifts lost equated to an overall annual figure of 9.30 shifts lost. Whilst it was extremely early to establish an end of year figure, based on current performance, managers were aware that current trends were not acceptable and effects would be made to improve the situation.

Committee noted that the Service was just outside its overall annual target of 7 shifts lost for the year 2004-5 (actual end of year figure was 7.75 shifts lost), which equated favourably to sickness absence rates within fire and rescue services, and public sector organisations in general.

With regard to ill-health retirements, Committee noted that the percentage of ill-health retirements continued to be relatively low, demonstrating that managers were committed to maintaining improvements wherever possible, within the constraints of the Firefighters Pension Scheme Arrangements.

The County Commander for Carmarthen, Gethin Davies, attended the meeting in response to a previous request by Members to discuss issues relating to attendance and ill-health management within each County Command.

D.O. Davies reported that a careful watch was kept on sickness management on each Station Members and that overall the situation was being well managed.

## **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i) The report on attendance and ill-health be received and noted*
- ii) Comparable sickness figures for North and South Wales Fire Service be available for comparison purposes at the next meeting.*

## **5 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE 2005 RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN**

Members were aware that the Service had not undertaken a full wholetime firefighter recruitment campaign for sometime as the number of vacancies arising had not warranted such an approach.

Any vacancies which had arisen had been filled from within the list of firefighters who had applied to transfer to the Service from other fire and rescue services within the United Kingdom.

However, it was estimated that 15 trainee firefighters would be required during 2005-6 and accordingly, a recruitment campaign would be necessary this year to maintain optimum crewing levels at some of the Service's fire stations.

Depending on where the vacancies fell, it could be appropriate to undertake localised recruitment, advertising vacancies at specific stations, however, this would depend on internal staffing movements which would not be finalised for some time yet.

If a more widespread recruitment campaign was appropriate, then it could be possible to undertake at least some of the stages on an all Wales basis, as current indications were that South Wales Fire and Rescue Service would be recruiting in September 2005 and North Wales Fire and Rescue Service would also need to recruit this year.

A tripartite meeting had been arranged for Friday, 24 June 2005 between the three fire and rescue services in Wales to explore the potential for any collaborative measures which would be appropriate within a joint recruitment campaign.

In addition the revised fire service point of entry selection tests were scheduled to go live this summer, and this could well be available in time for the proposed

campaign.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

***Members note for information the requirement for a firefighter recruitment campaign in 2005/06, and that a detailed report be submitted to the next meeting of the Personnel committee.***

### **6 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE TEMPORARY POST OF WEB PROJECT TECHNICIAN**

In September 2003 a Web Project Technician had been temporarily appointed for a period of two years principally in order to augment and mainstream the Service's web publishing expertise. The fundamental rationale justifying this requirement was the Service's obligations in meeting the e-Government targets that were then being set for the fire service throughout England and Wales by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Subsequent to the appointment, the Service's Internet website had been completely overhauled and considerable progress had also been made in addressing some wider e-Government goals. Examples of these being the centralisation of administrative telephone arrangements to improve responses to calls from the public and also the development of an in-house European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) training programme to raise IT competency levels of Service personnel. Specialists of the National Audit office had undertaken an e-Government review of all these works and a particularly complimentary report had been received from them in December 2004.

Additional IT projects had since arisen and the Web Project Technician's remit had consequently broadened and now included a number of those new projects in addition to ongoing website maintenance duties and the administration of the in-house ECDL programme. Members were informed that there was now a need to substantiate this temporary appointment which would otherwise be terminated at the end of August. Whilst this post had so far been funded by an e-Government grant received from the ODPM it would in future be maintained from within current pay provisions, including some additional that were specifically identified to support the training elements of the IPDS programme.

## **RESOLUTION**

***It was RESOLVED that***

**The substantiation of the current temporary post of Web Project Technician on the current 4/5 scale be approved but with an amended title to that of IT Project Engineer**

## **7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT**

Committee were asked to consider applications from four wholetime uniformed employees who wished to engage in Secondary Employment within the terms of the Fire Authority's Policy as it related to the relevant provisions in the Scheme and Conditions of Service for Local Authorities Fire and Rescue Services. It was noted that satisfactory reports had been received from the respective Area Commanders.

### **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

- i) The requests for secondary employment within the terms of the Authority's Policy be approved*
- ii) A reminder to be sent out to all relevant staff reminding them of the requirement to declare any secondary employment*

## **8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE CFOA RESPONSE TO THE WORKING TIME REGULATIONS**

A copy of CFOA's Response to the UK Government's case to retain the "opt out" clause to the Working Time Directive allowing stand-by time not be included as working time was received by Members for information.

### **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The correspondence from CFOA to Government Ministers be received and noted*

## **9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE**

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 in order to improve the management of health, safety and welfare of employees within the Service. Members were particularly pleased to note that the end of year On Duty injury occurrence continued to fall showing a 50% reduction in overall occurrence against the same period during 2004, and commended Mr Harries, the Service Health & Safety Advisor for his efforts in achieving this.

### **RESOLUTION**

*It was RESOLVED that*

*The report be received and noted*

