

**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 PEOPLE
& ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING ON
12th SEPTEMBER 2011**

**COFNODION Y PWYLLGOR DATBLYGU POBL A'R GYFUNDREFN
MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**

DYDD LLUN, 13 MEHEFIN 2011

MONDAY, 13 JUNE 2011

***PENCADLYS Y GWASANAETH TÂN,
HEOL LLWYN PISGWYDD, CAERFYRDDIN***

***FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,
LIME GROVE AVENUE, CARMARTHEN***

11.00 – 12.45

60% PRESENOLDEB/ATTENDANCE

Presennol yn y Cyfarfod/Present at Meeting:

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| CADEIRYDD/CHAIRMAN: | J Holmes |
| IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN: | S Lloyd - Janes |
| AELODAU/MEMBERS: | Cyng/Cllrs: R Llewellyn, C Philpott, D Howells, P James |
| YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: | Cyng/Cllrs: M Williams, P Llewellyn |
| YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: | P Bates, E Aitken, D Daycock, K Jones, J Maunder, R Thomas, C Margetts |

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Williams and Councillor Pearl Llewellyn

2 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

All Members present declared that that they had a personal interest regarding any matters that related to or were likely to affect their own constituent authorities.

3 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PERSONAL MATTERS

Councillors Jeff Holmes and Stephen Lloyd-Janes were congratulated on their recent appointments as Chair and Vice Chair of the People and Organisational Development Committee respectively.

4 TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7th MARCH 2011

The minutes of the People and Organisational Development Committee held on 7th March 2011 were received and approved as a true record apart from the following addition:

Item 8 – To receive a report on the Improvements to Training Facilities at Earlswood

To include the sentence that “Councillor Philpott congratulated the Estates Department for their excellent work in completing the new facilities at Earlswood”

To Consider matters arising from the Minutes:

3 – Report on Health and Well Being: In providing a verbal update on the Service Communication Strategy, in advance of a paper being presented to the Fire Authority meeting on 27th June 2011, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that the Service continued to fully engage with staff who continued to be slotted into posts, and that the Fire Brigades Union had returned to ongoing negotiations with Service Management. All other trade unions were also part of on going consultative meetings where appropriate.

8 – Report on the Improvements to Training Facilities at Earlswood

Members noted that the new accommodation block at the Earlswood training facility would be officially opened by the Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, Carl Sargeant on 7th July 2011.

The next meeting of the People and Organisational Development Committee would be held at Earlswood allowing Members the opportunity to view the new facilities.

11 – Report on the Marine Incident Response Group (MIRG)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that since the last report to Members, MIRG continued to operate and that the outcome of a final report from the Transport Select Committee was awaited as to whether funding would continue to be provided. Members would be informed as to the outcome in due course.

14 – Secondment Opportunity

The Director of Resources reported that the secondment opportunity by a Service Manager to undertake a fundamental review of the Abu Dhabi Fire and Rescue Service and Civil Defence Department (ADFRS&CDD) had not yet commenced due to political unrest within the Region and that Members would be updated at the next meeting.

5 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Corporate Head of People and Organisational Development reported that the final overall average for 2010-11 was 7.6 shifts lost which was outside of the Service target of 5.52. The final overall figure was attributed, in the main, to a number of long-term sickness absences which could not be managed through phased returns or restricted duties, together with a period of short-term absences during the winter months.

Consideration was given to the current accounting period of 2011-12, where the sickness absence statistics for April 2011 indicated a current overall average of 0.52 shifts lost against a projected end of year figure of 6.25. It was emphasised that every effort would be made to identify sickness absence trends early and provide as much support as possible to employees with the intention of either preventing absences or facilitating an early return to duties.

Members requested that in future further detail be included in the graphs contained within the report including the number of staff who made up each category of sickness and how many staff were employed within each discipline in order to provide a wider understanding of the figures involved.

In response to a request for sickness figures relating to Retained Duty System (RDS) staff, it was noted that the availability for RDS staff was managed on a daily basis within each Command area, therefore the data required to prepare detailed sickness reports similar to those for whole time staff was not readily available and that no formula was available to provide sickness absence statistics for this employee category. However it would be possible to provide further information on RDS availability and resilience similar to that presented to the Performance Review and Audit Committee and that this would be presented to a future meeting.

Members noted that a number of staff were off sick with anxiety and depression and asked if there was a link to this and any work related issues such as a change in their working conditions. Members were reassured that the Service did everything possible to assist all staff whatever the cause of their illness and

that anxiety and depression was usually associated with a variety of personal difficulties and not always associated with one event related to work in isolation.

With regard to the ill-health retirement profile within the Service for 2011-12, Members noted that the numbers of employees retiring on the grounds of ill-health remained low.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Head of People Development reported that the Individual Development Review (IDR) had been designed to replace the existing Personal Performance and Development Review policy following a number of concerns about the previous system being slightly time consuming. The IDR process had been designed following extensive consultation to provide a streamlined and scalable process to manage performance appraisal and the identification of professional and personal development opportunities.

It was noted that the IDR would initially be available as a paper-based process with an online facility to be introduced in 2012. The new IDR policy had been widely circulated to staff in order to gain user feedback and support prior to implementation and was applicable to all employee sectors.

Members expressed concerns that the new system wasn't already available electronically and it was noted that once the Service was able to adopt a data sharing system an electronic version of the form would be fully available.

The new IDR form, of which Members had a copy, was commended as being simpler to follow, allowing staff to focus on the essential skills required to carry out their individual roles.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM RECRUITMENT

The Corporate Head of People and Organisational Development reported that the Service had embarked on a series of awareness events to promote the role of a Retained Duty System Firefighter and had also established a formal support process for prospective candidates in terms of the assessment process as part of the National Firefighter Selection Tests (NFS)

The Service had adopted the NFS for all firefighters, irrespective of duty system, over the past few years which had resulted in a far greater degree of initial awareness raising and support to candidates prior to embarking on the formal assessment process. The approach had been designed to provide a consistent

and fair approach to all candidates and supported the National position of assessing candidates on their potential not only to be operational firefighters, but also the ability to interact with local communities in terms of community safety.

During the past six months or so, the Service had embarked upon a major recruitment campaign for Retained Firefighters, designed to attract prospective candidates and raise awareness of local employers to the benefits they could gain by releasing their full time employees to be part-time firefighters at local fire stations.

120 candidates had been assessed which had resulted in approximately 12 new recruits being employed as Retained Firefighters and ready to undertake Initial Training in June and July at Newtown and Murrleston. A further programme of Assessments would be taking place during June 2011 with approximately 110 prospective candidates to be tested and it was envisaged that a further 12 RDS Firefighters would be recruited for Initial Training in October 2011.

As part of the Service's commitment to promoting the RDS role it was noted that a new Employer Leaflet had been produced which was specifically designed to encourage local employers to consider releasing employees for the role of a locally based community firefighter.

In response to a query in relation to the amount of compensation paid to RDS staff following injuries sustained within that role which prevented them from undertaking their full time employment, these figures would be available at the next meeting.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

That the current arrangements in place for the recruitment of RDS staff be approved

8 TO RECEIVE AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON RISK CRITICAL TRAINING

The Corporate Head of People and Organisational Development reported that the Service was involved in a number of activities associated with Risk Critical Training of frontline operational employees and the report, which had been requested by Members at the last People and Organisational Development Committee meeting, was designed to provide Committee with an awareness of the nature of the skills required necessary for competence and compliance.

Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service had a duty of care to ensure that staff were not exposed to unnecessary risk and if they were exposed to such risk, that the effects were mitigated and minimised. The Service was therefore committed to delivering high quality training to ensure that staff were suitably and sufficiently equipped to deal with the demanding and ever changing nature

of Fire and Rescue activities.

The Service had identified six key, risk critical skills areas which were mandatory and essential for every member of operational staff regardless (Members requested that the word 'regardless' to be replaced by the word 'commensurate' within the report) of their position within the organisation or their location of service.

These risk critical skills areas were:

- Breathing Apparatus & Fire Behaviour
- Critical Incident Management
- Road Traffic Collision
- Working On Or Near Water
- Working at Height
- First Aid

It was noted that the levels to which personnel were trained would change depending upon specialisms within their areas of work. All personnel, however, would receive the agreed minimum level of training in all the risk critical areas.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9 TO RECEIVE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Area Manager Chris Margetts presented the Health and Safety Performance Management Update where it was stated that there had been 82 On Duty injuries reported for the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011. This was a 6% reduction in total injuries reported for the same period last year which was 87.

Scrutiny of the injury reports had shown that the top three greatest causes of on duty injuries were slips, trips and falls, handling, lifting and carrying and sprains and strains.

On the 19th May 2011, the Executive and Policy Board Members along with Fire Authority Members, Cheryl Philpott and Roy Llewellyn, had attended an IOSH health and safety training course designed for Senior Executives which had been facilitated by the Service Insurance Broker, MARSH. The training focussed on the legal duties placed upon employers by the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and its supporting legislation. Both Fire Authority Members who attended the course commended it as being very interesting and worthwhile and put forward the suggestion that all Fire Authority members attend a similar course in the future with the main emphasis concentrating on Corporate Governance matters.

Members were pleased to note that reports of attacks on Fire-fighters remained extremely low however, it was imperative that the Service monitored such events to ensure that all aspects of a firefighters personal safety was closely monitored. In response to a query it was reported that to date no prosecutions had been brought following abuse of firefighters, and that even with CCTV cameras fitted, it was not always possible to identify individuals.

Further to the last report, the Corporate Health Team had been preparing for a 'mock-assessment' which would take place at the beginning of June with a formal assessment by external assessors scheduled for 15th June. Members wished the team well in their assessment and would be informed of the outcome from the formal assessment in due course.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

The Report be noted