

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



MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**CYFARFOD O'R PWYLLGOR ADNODDAU
MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

DYDD LLUN, 24 EBRILL 2006

MONDAY, 24 APRIL 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: T E Evans

IS-GADEIRYDD/VICE CHAIRMAN:

AELODAU/MEMBERS: Cyng/Cllrs: Mrs J Dudley, C Morgan,
T Theophilus, G Phillips, D Price,
J J J Davies,

YMDDIHEURIADAU/APOLOGIES: Mrs T Devichand, D C Prothero,
J D A Thompson

YN BRESENNOL /IN ATTENDANCE: Cyng/Cllr: B J Hall

1 DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL INTEREST

None were declared

2 TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2006

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2006 were received and confirmed as a true record.

3 TO RECEIVE THE TREASURER'S BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2005/06

Revenue Monitoring Report for the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006

The Treasurer's Budget Monitoring report showed the expected outturn for 2005/06, based on expenditure and income recorded to 31st March 2006 and incorporating estimated commitments and closure adjustments.

The Pensions expenditure for the year had been reduced by a transfer from the Elective Pensioners Provision of £1.301m, representing the expenditure in excess of budget due to the increased number of firefighter retirements during 2005/06.

Savings had been made in the leasing budget, as a result of delays in the Vehicle Replacement Programme and a decision not to finance the first eight appliance upgrades by lease. A virement of £302,218 from the Leasing budget to the Capital Financing budget had been approved by the Treasurer to finance the upgrading of eight fire appliances in 2005/06 entirely from Revenue.

Capital Monitoring Report for the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006

The Treasurer informed Members that the provisional expenditure incurred to 31st March 2006 on Capital Projects was reported against the Approved Capital Programme. It had been possible to fund additional capital expenditure from grants and capital receipts received in the year and from savings in the Revenue budget.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

4 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUTHORITY'S RISK REDUCTION PLAN FOR 2007/2008

Members were reminded that the Minister had launched the Welsh Assembly Government's long awaited guidance on risk reduction planning in Swansea on 21st March 2006.

The RRP guidance replaced in its entirety the ODPM guidance used in England on the development of Integrated Risk Management Plans, which the Authority had previously used to good effect in the preparation of its IRMP's for 2004/05 and 2005/06. At the request of the Minister the Authority had agreed not to produce an IRMP for 2006/07 until the publication of the Wales specific guidance on RRP.

Now that the guidance had been formally produced, work could commence in earnest on the Authority's first Risk Reduction Plan that would come into effect on 1st April 2007 for the 2007/08 fiscal year. A paper outlining the processes the Authority would need to consider as part of production of the RRP had been submitted to the Resources Committee on 16th January 2006 and to the Fire Authority on 8th February.

It was noted that the opportunity had been taken to "re-badge" the process as Risk Reduction Planning, which was an appropriate and important change in terminology. The aim was also to bring together all aspects of community and corporate risk into a single risk-planning framework, an aspect that had never been clear in the English guidance.

The Authority's RRP presented a challenging time scale for production as the final plan had to be in place by 31st October 2006 in order to meet WAG guidelines and to fit into the business and budget planning process for 2007/08. In response to concerns expressed by Members concerning the problems associated with the consultation process in previous years, the Chief Fire Officer indicated that following consultation with the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration, the Authority had the option to amend or alter parts of the RRP should they wish to do so.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that

i) Members note the RRP development process.

ii) Members approve the make up of the current RRP Working Group and ensure that each Member arranges attendance of a substitute member from the same Constituent Authority should they be unable to attend a meeting of the Group.

iii) Members note and approve the proposed time-line for the production of the 2007/08 RRP

5 TO CONSIDER A REPORT ON THE FIREFIGHTER'S PENSION SCHEME

The Director of Finance reported that new legislation would be introduced during 2006, and applied retrospectively to April, which would amend the pension scheme for existing firefighters and introduce a new scheme for firefighters joining the service after April 2006. New compensation scheme regulations would also be introduced, as well as changes to the ill health retirement

scheme. The new scheme would also include pensions for retained staff and for volunteers.

Although the Authority had received circulars from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister regarding the situation in England, in terms of practical application it was not clear what arrangements the Assembly had in mind regarding these issues in Wales. Members would be further updated once these became clear.

Members were informed that officers would monitor the situation and would seek reimbursement from the Assembly of any additional costs falling on the Authority as a result of central policy changes, an expectation of which the Assembly were already aware.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

6 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES

A request had been received from Llanelli Town Council inviting the Authority to consider extending its membership to include co-opted Town and Community Council and Fire and Rescue Authority employee representatives.

Prior to submitting this request to the Authority, Llanelli Town Council had sought advice from the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration as to the feasibility and legality of such a proposal. It was noted that the Minister's response was in line with the Authority's interpretation of the position. Under the Combination Scheme made in 1995 there was no specific provision in the scheme permitting a Fire and Rescue Authority to appoint co-opted members but the order did apply section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 to Fire and Rescue Authorities; and that section permitted authorities to appoint co-opted members to committees (but not to a committee which controlled or regulated the authority's finances) and sub committees. If the committees / sub committees discharged functions (as opposed to being advisory) the co-opted members could not vote.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the Clerk word a suitable response indicating that the Authority membership would not be extended at the current time due to governance issues

7 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON INSURANCE RENEWAL

A report was received which outlined the terms agreed with the Authority's brokers, Marsh UK, for the portfolio of insurance policies for the 2006/07 financial year. This was the first year of the three-year long Term Agreement agreed in 2005 between Marsh UK on behalf of the Authority and the Insurers. Members were pleased to note that the cost of the year's premium represented a total premium reduction of 2.6% against the 2005/06 premia. The Authority's

approach to managing strategic risks continued to enhance overall performance and this excellent work coupled by Marsh UK placed the Service in a strong position when negotiating renewal terms.

Members expressed their appreciation to the work of the Service's Risk Manager, Mr Mydrian Harries and his team for their efforts in securing a reduction in the Insurance premia for 2006/2007.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted and approved

8 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE LNG FAMILIARISATION VISIT TO QATAR

Members were aware of the development of two Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) storage facilities that were being built at Milford Haven and the LNG pipeline that would connect the LNG sites to the National Gas Grid.

Officers in Pembrokeshire had carried out considerable work preparing and delivering training materials, to ensure that first strike Pembrokeshire firefighters were aware of the hazards likely to be encountered during the construction phase of the projects. There had also been considerable public interest in the LNG developments, in particular the concern about the hazards posed by LNG to the communities near the LNG sites.

A working group of officers in Pembrokeshire were currently developing the detailed operational procedures for LNG incidents and plans and procedures would be tested by a series of exercises that followed the completion of training in new skills and awareness of how to deal with a LNG incident.

The South Hook LNG company had established a close working relationship with the Pembrokeshire operations working group and the Company were keen to ensure that MAWWFRS officers were fully conversant with the processes involved in the production, storage and shipping of LNG. To this end South Hook LNG had invited two Pembrokeshire officers to visit their production facility in Qatar which was the largest source of LNG in the world, and also had the greatest depth of technical knowledge of how to successfully manage the risks and hazards posed by LNG. The proposed visit would involve detailed instruction on the behaviour of LNG in an emergency, a thorough briefing on the industrial processes involved in LNG production and practical experience in dealing with LNG emergencies.

It was noted that the invitation from South Hook LNG was without charge to the Authority and that all costs of the visit of 6 days would be met by South Hook LNG.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the visit to Qatar be approved

9 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON MARITIME RESILIENCE – FUNDING OF THE FIRE LIASON MANAGER

Members were aware that the Authority was a member of the Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) and as such, had a declared Offshore Response Team. The Service Team formed part of a national response for dealing with incidents offshore, known as the Sea of Change project.

A request had been received from CFOA requesting pro-rata funding by the Authority towards the salary of the National Fire Liaison Manager to continue co-ordinating the Sea of Change Project. It was noted that the small revenue implication could be contained within existing budgets and had been agreed with CFOA.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be noted for information

10 TO RECEIVE A REPORT ON THE MARITIME COASTGUARD AGENCY - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Authority was a member of the Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) and therefore had a declared Offshore Incident Response Team which formed part of a national response for dealing with incidents at sea known as the "Sea of Change" project.

The Ministerial launch of the project by the Secretary of State for Transport (Westminster) Alistair Darling was held in Dover on the 20th April and was attended by the Chairman, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Head of ORM. Discussions regarding the development of a memorandum of understanding between MIRG Authorities and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency had now been completed and the MOU had now been signed and came into effect on the 1st April 2006.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that the report be received and noted

11 TO CONSIDER ANY COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

i The Welsh Conservative Party Group

A letter had been received by the Authority from the Welsh Conservative Party's group who were in the process of initiating a policy review which would cover all areas devolved to the Assembly. The letter invited the Authority to contribute to the review by indicating areas of interest and concern and policy responses.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that a non-political and factual response be made in respect of the proposed policy review.

ii Attendance at the LGA Annual Conference

The LGA Annual Conference, historically one of the Authority's Standing Conferences, was due to take place in Bournemouth in July 2006. Following sight of the Conference Programme, Members were of the view that it contained nothing of relevance to the Fire Authority and it was proposed that Members did not attend this year and that a review of the Authority's Standing Conferences take place at the AGM on 7th June 2006.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED that a review of the Authority's Standing Conferences take place at the AGM on 7th June 2006.

12 MAN RESCUE PUMPS

As part of the Fire Authority's strategy for dealing with Road Traffic Collisions, six new Man Rescue Pumps were ordered in 2005 and the Service took delivery late that year. It was the intention to have a rescue pump at every station by the end of 2008, which would either be new builds or retro-fit vehicles. The six appliances were scheduled to be located at Llanelli, Aberystwyth, Lampeter, New Quay, Cardigan and Machynlleth.

During initial training it had been identified that the new build vehicles had a steering / brake defect and all six vehicles were taken off the run whilst the fault was rectified. One was returned to MAN and the other five were currently in storage throughout the Service area.

In January MAN ERF UK began to attempt to correct the vehicle faults with changes made to the steering, braking and suspension components however the fault remained. In mid-March engineers from the parent company in Germany visited the UK to inspect the vehicles and arrangements made to ship one vehicle to their Research and Development plant in Austria for further investigative inspection. Last week the Service were informed that the issue had been corrected and a Service representative attended Austria to test the vehicle, at their cost. The determined fault was still prevalent however and rendered the vehicle still not suitable for use.

MAN ERF UK has been proactive throughout in attempting to solve the defect and have kept the Service updated on a regular basis. A further meeting is planned for this week when Officers would be updated and informed of MAN's proposals.

RESOLUTION

It was RESOLVED the report be noted and Members continue to be updated of progress.