

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 JULY 2015 AT SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

16. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
D T Davies (Chair)		Caerphilly
S Bradwick (Deputy Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
P Drake		Vale of Glamorgan
C Elsbury		Caerphilly
E Galsworthy (arrived 10:50 hrs)		Merthyr Tydfil
E Hacker		Vale of Glamorgan
C Hawker		Caerphilly
P Hannon		Newport
A Jones		Torfaen
S J Jones		Rhondda Cynon Taff
R McKerlich		Cardiff
B Morgan		Rhondda Cynon Taff
S Pickering		Rhondda Cynon Taff
M Rahman		Newport
P Seabourne		Torfaen

APOLOGIES:

D Ali	Cardiff
K Hyde	Cardiff
C James	Bridgend
M Javed	Cardiff
J Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
G Phillips	Cardiff
M Powell	Monmouthshire
C Smith	Bridgend
V Smith	Monmouthshire.

ABSENT:

OFFICERS PRESENT:- CFO H Jakeway, DCO S Chapman – Monitoring Officer, ACFO R Prendergast – Director of Technical Services, AM D Rose – Head of Operations, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, A/AM I Greenman – Acting Head of Training & Development, Mr G Thomas – Head of Finance & Procurement

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

18. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPONSORSHIP MONIES OWED FOR CHARITY CYCLE RIDE

Members were reminded to pay any outstanding sponsorship monies owed to Officers who had successfully completed the recent Firefighters Charity Cycle Ride during May 2015.

MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee were requested to stay behind at the end of the meeting for an informal discussion relating to changes to the 2015/2016 Internal Audit Programme.

FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL SERVICE, LONDON

The Chair informed Members that the Firefighters Memorial Service would take place in London on Sunday, 13 September 2015. Any Members who were interested in attending should inform Admin Officers within the Business Support team, and suitable transport arrangements would be provided to attend the event.

WELSH BACCALAUREATE

The Chair was pleased to inform Members that on Friday, 10 July, 2015, he and a number of Officers had attended the launch of the Welsh Baccalaureate at Merthyr College. The campaign was a joint project between the WJEC, the three Welsh Fire & Rescue Services, and Merthyr College.

The Welsh Baccalaureate covered 4 Challenges:-

- Road Safety (Aimed at A Level students post 16 years)
- Accidental Fires in The Home (Aimed at post 16 year old students)
- Keeping Your Community Safe (Aimed at post 16 year old students)
- Educating Young People on the Devastation of Deliberately Set Fires (Aimed at Key Stage 4 students - 10 and 11 year olds)

The Chair took the opportunity to thank crews at Merthyr Fire Station for all their hard work and assistance in supporting the campaign.

19. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The following minutes were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings:-

- HR & Equalities meeting held on 26 January 2015, subject to the following amendment:-
 - Councillor Seabourne had submitted his apologies and was not absent as recorded
- Standards Committee meeting held on 2 March 2015
- Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee meeting held on 9 March 2015
- Fire & Rescue Authority meeting held on 16 March 2015
- Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee meeting held on 11 May 2015
- Annual General Meeting held on 8 June 2015
- Fire & Rescue Authority meeting held on 8 June 2015

20. UPDATE ON ACTIONS

The Deputy Chief Officer informed Members of actions undertaken since the last meeting, and provided updates on minute numbers:- 13/14 – 18.1 & 18.2, 13/14 – 62, 13/14 – 78.12, 15/16 – 15.1.

Following a suggestion by the Deputy Chief Officer, Members agreed to close action 13/14 – 18.1 & 18.2.

Councillor Galsworthy arrived at 10:50 hours.

21. REPORTS FOR DECISION

21.1 PORTH FIRE & RESCUE STATION PROPOSED DISPOSAL STRATEGY

The Deputy Chief Officer presented a report which sought approval from Members to declare Porth Fire & Rescue Station (following its

closure) a surplus asset. Further approval was sought to proceed with the Station's disposal upon terms that reflected the best value achievable.

RESOLVED THAT

21.1.1 Members declared Porth Fire & Rescue Station surplus to requirements following its closure on 21 July 2015.

21.1.2 Members approved the disposal strategy outlined within the report.

21.2 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016/2021 & BUDGET 2016/2017

The Treasurer presented a report for Members to consider the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the basis of planning the 2016/2017 Revenue Budget within its context.

The Fire & Rescue Authority had to address the challenges posed by Central Government's austerity programme and last year again matched the budget reductions imposed on its constituent Councils by setting a net budget which reduced by 1.54% in cash terms.

Financial planning projects remained difficult through to the end of the decade and this was made more problematic with the lack of firm financial data from the Welsh Government at this time. The Authority made significant real term reductions over the period of its last Medium Term Financial Strategy, and this trend would need to be maintained throughout the current planning period.

The report included the latest projections of inflation, budget pressures, reserves, and currently planned savings, together with estimates of the likely reductions in funding faced by constituent Authorities. In light of the information, it outlined the challenge for 2016/2017 and beyond.

Further work would be necessary in developing the budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy as more information became available.

RESOLVED THAT

21.2.1 Following consideration of the strategic approach and identified budget issues, Members approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- 21.2.2 Members authorised the Treasurer to adjust the Medium Term Financial Strategy during the current budget cycle as newer and better information became available.
- 21.2.3 Members agreed the budget timetable shown at paragraph 6.7 within the report.

21.3 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2014/2015

On behalf of the ACFO Service Delivery, the Head of Operations presented a report for Members to review the performance information and recorded incident statistics from January to March 2015.

Following discussion on indicator stats for 'Dwelling Fires Where No Smoke Alarms were Fitted' following Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee scrutiny, the Head of Operations assured Members that Officers used historical data to identify high risk groups and to target vulnerable people within communities.

RESOLVED THAT

- 21.3.1 Members agreed to review the performance details and statistical data for Quarter 4 and 2014/2015 year end contained within the report.
- 21.3.2 Members approved its publication onto the South Wales Fire & Rescue internet site.

21.4 HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT 2014/2015

The ACFO Technical Services informed Members that the annual Health & Safety report for 2014/2015 presented statistics and activities which provided data on performance within South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

The report continued to identify the downward trend in accidents and injuries from the base line date of 1997/1998 in line with the Service's Health & Safety Strategy, and for ease of reading showed graphical images over a 10 year period.

RESOLVED THAT

- 21.4.1 Members accepted the report on the performance of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service in the area of Health & Safety.

- 21.4.2 Members noted the overall success achieved in the area of Health & Safety across the Service area.
- 21.4.3 Members endorsed and supported the range of initiatives underway to proactively and reactively support Health & Safety for South Wales Fire & Rescue Service.
- 21.4.4 Members agreed that Members of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee scrutinise the performance of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service in comparison to other appropriate Fire & Rescue Services, using suitable comparable data, benchmarking and performance indicators.

The Chief Fire Officer took the opportunity to thank Members for their support in helping the Service to focus on keeping Communities and Crews safe across the South Wales area.

21.5 REPORT ON PROGRESS OF ACHIEVEMENT OF IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES AS AT THE END OF FINANCIAL YEAR 2014/2015

The Deputy Chief Officer presented a report which would give assurance to Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority and Senior Management within South Wales Fire & Rescue Service on progress towards achievement of the Improvement Objectives agreed for 2014/2015 as at the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED THAT

- 21.5.1 Members agreed to accept the progress that had been achieved in delivering the improvement objectives for 2014/2015.
- 21.5.2 Members agreed to endorse the carrying forward or transfer of work detailed within Appendix 2 attached to the report to 2015/2016.
- 21.5.3 Members agreed to endorse the cancellation of one engagement action as detailed within Appendix 2 attached to the report.

21.6 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT TO WELSH LANGUAGE COMMISSIONER 2014/2015 – BRIEFING PAPER

On behalf of the ACO People Services, the Deputy Chief Officer provided Members with an overview of performance against the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme 2010/2013, which was still in force pending the introduction of Welsh Language Standards.

Following discussion on concerns regarding the cost implications to translate all documents into Welsh throughout the organisation, and the Service's statutory duties, the Deputy Chief Officer informed Members that discussions were ongoing concerning the sharing of a part-time translator's post with Mid & West Wales Fire & Rescue Service.

RESOLVED THAT

- 21.6.1 Members agreed to accept the Annual Welsh Language Monitoring report for 2014/2015.
- 21.6.2 Members agreed to note the need to continue to implement and monitor the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme in order to provide the Welsh Language Commissioner with the evidence required to prove that the Authority was meeting its legal responsibilities with regard to the Welsh Language.
- 21.6.3 Following a question and answer session, Officers agreed to provide Members with an update report on the correspondence and enquiries or contact the Service received in Welsh from members of the public, and to also provide information on the cost implications for the Fire & Rescue Authority.

22. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

22.1 SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL ISSUES COMMITTEE MEETING

The Deputy Chief Officer updated Members on the outcomes of the April 2015 meeting of the Fire & Rescue Services' All Wales National Issues Committee.

The Chief Fire Officer also took the opportunity to provide Members with a progress report on the Joint Public Services Centre Command & Control Project. He was pleased to report that planning permission had been granted for the extension in Bridgend, and the Planning Team

were currently exploring opportunities to also share the premises with the Welsh Ambulance Trust.

RESOLVED THAT

- 22.1.1 Members agreed to note the content of the National Issues Committee summary report.
- 22.1.2 Members agreed to note that the Joint Public Services Centre Command & Control Project was on schedule, and a further update report on the work-streams would be presented during the Autumn period.

22.2 FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION DISPUTE UPDATE ON INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The ACFO Technical Services provided Members with a verbal update on the industrial action due to the Firefighters' Pension Dispute.

The ACFO Technical Services was pleased to report that strike action had not occurred since the last Fire & Rescue Authority meeting. A new Pension Scheme had been put in place on 1 April 2015, and the dispute was continuing with a mandate in place for the Fire Brigades Union to call strike action within 7 days. Members were also informed that 'Action Short Of Strike' was ongoing across two key areas. Members noted that representatives of the Fire Brigades Union were in the process of carrying out negotiations on legal issues, and Officers would continue to monitor the situation closely.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the verbal update on the industrial action due to the Firefighters' Pension Dispute.

22.3 USE OF EMERGENCY POWERS: JOINT PUBLIC SERVICES CENTRE PROJECT (JPSCP): COMMAND & CONTROL SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

The Deputy Chief Officer presented a report which updated Members on the use of emergency powers to secure the joint procurement of the Command and Control system, part of the Joint Public Service Centre Project. This followed the evaluation of the tender returns from Company A and Company B.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the use of emergency powers for the award of the Command and Control System contract to Company A.

22.4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Deputy Chief Officer presented Members with the Forward Work Programme for 2015/2016.

RESOLVED THAT

Members accepted the Forward Work Programme for 2015/2016.

23. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BY VIRTUE OF SECTION 100A AND PARAGRAPH 12 OF PART 4 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED)

A resolution to exclude the press and public by virtue of Section 100A and paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

23.1 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Deputy Chief Officer informed Members of the outcome of the selection process that was recently held to select Independent Members of the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to appoint three of the candidates, MK, AJ, and BH, to the role of Independent Member of the Standards Committee for an initial period of six years.

24. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no items of urgent business.