

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 29 JULY 2019 AT SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

13. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
D T Davies (Chair)		Caerphilly
S Bradwick (Deputy Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
D Ali		Cardiff
L Brown		Monmouthshire
M Colbran		Merthyr Tydfil
P Drake		Vale of Glamorgan
S Ebrahim		Cardiff
C Elsbury		Caerphilly
S Evans		Torfaen
J Gauden		Torfaen
J Harries		Rhondda Cynon Taff
J Holt		Blaenau Gwent
A Hussey		Caerphilly
H Jarvie		Vale of Glamorgan
A Lister		Cardiff
D Naughton		Cardiff
S Pickering		Rhondda Cynon Taff
A Roberts		Rhondda Cynon Taff
R Shaw		Bridgend
H Thomas		Newport
J Williams		Cardiff

APOLOGIES:

K Critchley	Newport
V Smith	Monmouthshire
D White	Bridgend

ABSENT:

OFFICERS PRESENT:- CFO H Jakeway, DCO S Chapman – Monitoring Officer, ACFO D Rose – Director of Service Delivery, ACFO R Prendergast – Director of Technical Services, Ms A Reed – Director of People Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Ms S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer, Ms A Butler – Wales Audit Officer

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Ms A Butler who was representing the Wales Audit Office.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

15. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMBERS ABSENT DUE TO SICKNESS

The Chair informed Members that unfortunately Councillors Critchley and Smith were both unwell, and were currently recovering at home. He confirmed that on behalf of Members and Officers he had sent a letter and Get Well card wishing them both a speedy recovery.

MEETING WITH MINISTER

The Chair advised Members that he had recently attended a meeting with the Minister and he was disappointed to report that the stance by the Minister regarding the consultation to the White Paper was identical to the previous Minister. It had been decided, therefore, that the Fire Authority would wait for the publication of all of the responses to the consultation in full before determining a response which would be evidence based.

ROYAL VISIT TO JOINT FIRE CONTROL

The Chair was pleased to inform Members that it had been a pleasure to represent the Fire & Rescue Authority at South Wales Police Headquarters, where he met His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on the Royal Visit to Joint Fire Control.

PASS OUT PARADE

The Chair took the opportunity to thank all Members who attended the recent Pass Out Parade for 20 Wholetime recruits, at the Service's Training & Development Centre. He also thanked Councillor Joel Williams for providing the opening address at the ceremony on behalf of the Chair and the Deputy Chair, who were both unavailable to attend.

CADET AND STAFF PRESENTATION EVENINGS

The Chair informed Members that he had attended a number of presentation evenings for the Fire Cadets. He confirmed it was very pleasing to see the younger generations embracing the opportunities of the Fire Cadet Programme, which would hopefully assist in diversifying the Service's recruitment and staffing profile.

The Chair also reported that he had attended a very successful staff Presentation Evening at the beginning of July. The event highlighted some of the outstanding work being achieved by staff for the benefit of the communities they served. The date would be circulated shortly for next year's event, and he encouraged Members to diarise the date as soon as possible.

STATION 20

The Chair reminded Members that the first of three episodes following Station 20, Barry, was aired recently, and the second episode was being aired this evening. The programme followed Station personnel as they attended incidents within their community, and highlighted the breadth of work undertaken. The Chair was pleased to report that feedback on the programme had been very positive.

MEMBER SALARIES

The Chair advised Members that their recent pay had not been adjusted to take account of the Independent Remuneration Panels uplift from the date of the Annual General Meeting. He assured Members that this would be rectified in next month's payment.

MEMBER TRAINING

The Chair advised Members that a 'Member Training Session' would be arranged for after the summer holiday period for all Members of the Fire & Rescue Authority. All Members would be expected to attend the training which would cover an overview of the responsibilities of the Authority, and how it currently discharged those responsibilities through the Service.

EMERGENCY SERVICES WEEKEND

The Chair informed Members that following on from the success of the UK Organisation Championships held in Cardiff in 2018, it had been agreed to organise a combined Emergency Services weekend which would be held in Cardiff Bay on 21 and 22 September, 2019. On Saturday, 21 September, there would be a family engagement and activities event, and on Sunday, 22 September there would be a family fun run in aid of the Stephen Siller Foundation and the Firefighters Charity. All ages were welcome to run, jog or leisurely walk the 5km route.

PLASTIC DRINKING BOTTLES

The Chair advised Members that in order to save costs and reduce our impact on the environment on continually replacing disposable plastic water cups, plastic drinking bottles were now available.

FATALITY IN TORFAEN

Councillor Stephen Evans took the opportunity to thank all the operational personnel who attended the recent fatal incident in the Torfaen area. He wished to thank staff for their professionalism and for providing local Members with regular updates and information throughout the incident.

16. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

- Local Pension Board Committee meeting held on 21 January, 2019

- HR & Equalities Committee meeting held on 18 February, 2019
- Fire & Rescue Authority meeting held on 29 April, 2019
- Annual General meeting held on 10 June, 2019
- Finance, Audit & Performance Management meeting held on 8 April, 2019

17. UPDATE ON ACTIONS

For the benefit of new Members, the Deputy Chief Officer provided a brief overview and update on each of the following outstanding actions, which included minute numbers:- 17/18-55.4, 18/19-28.1, 19/19-54.1 and 18/19-54.2.

18. REPORTS FOR DECISION

18.1 REPORT ON DRAFT PROPOSED STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES 2020/2021

The Deputy Chief Officer presented a report which updated Members on the pre-consultation and engagement that was conducted with the Service's stakeholder panel, staff, and key partners, and to approve the draft proposed objectives for 2020/2021 and long term Strategic Themes for publication in the Service's Annual Improvement Plan Stage 2 for formal consultation.

RESOLVED THAT

- 18.1.1 Following a question and answer session on the possibility of reducing the number of objectives, Members agreed to note the contents of the report on the pre-consultation and engagement undertaken to shape the Service's Strategic Themes and Objectives.
- 18.1.2 Members agreed to approve the proposed draft Strategic Themes and Objectives for engagement events and publication in the 'Consultation Document' – Stage 2 of the Annual Improvement Plan on the

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service internet site by 31 October, 2019.

- 18.1.3 Members agreed to approve delegations to the Deputy Chief Officer and Head of Corporate Support to review and refine the draft Strategic Themes and Objectives as necessary for the public consultation.
- 18.1.4 With reference to increasing the number of Fire Cadet Branches within local city areas, the Chief Fire Officer agreed to send Members further detailed information on the Fire Cadet Programme.

18.2 REFURBISHMENT OF PONTYCLUN

The ACO People Services informed Members that the £150,000 refurbishment budget for the Occupational Health Unit to occupy Pontyclun for a limited period of two years had changed. The Occupational Health Unit would now occupy Pontyclun for a minimum of seven plus years. The refurbishment brief was amended to reflect the extended occupation period, and the cost of the refurbishment had increased to £250,000.

RESOLVED THAT

Following consideration, and a question and answer session on costs and the potential for collaboration in the future, Members agreed to approve the increase in the Capital Programme to refurbish Pontyclun from £150,000 to £250,000.

19. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

19.1 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER REPORT – HEALTH CHECK 2018-19 QUARTER 4

The Deputy Chief Officer presented to Members the Strategic Risk Register Report Health Check 2018-2019 Quarter 4.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the information contained within the report on the Strategic Risk Register Report – Health Check 2018-2019 Quarter 4.

19.2 WALES AUDIT OFFICE ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2018/2019

The Deputy Chief Officer informed Members that the presented report concluded the Wales Audit Office review of the Authority's delivery and evaluation of services in relation to 2018/2019, and whether it believed that the Authority was likely to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement for 2019/2020.

RESOLVED THAT

Following a question and answer session on the cost of the Wales Audit Office fees, Members agreed to accept the Wales Audit Office Annual Improvement Report 2018/2019 for the Authority.

The Chair also took the opportunity to thank staff for all their hard work in completing the Wales Audit Office reviews on behalf of the Fire & Rescue Authority.

19.3. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS REPORT – HEALTH CHECK 2018-2019 QUARTER 4

The Deputy Chief Officer presented to Members the Business Plan Actions Report – Health Check 2018-2019 Quarter 4.

RESOLVED THAT

19.3.1 Following a question and answer session and discussion on implementing an electrical vehicle infrastructure within the Service, Members agreed to note the information contained within the report on the Business Plan Actions - Health Check 2018-2019 Quarter 4.

19.3.2 Officers agreed to send Members a copy of the stats which applied to each of their respective Unitary Authorities.

19.4 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS UPDATE – JULY 2019

The ACO People Services presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the current position with regard to meeting the legal requirements contained within the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30 September, 2016.

RESOLVED THAT

- 19.4.1 Members agreed to note the information contained within the report.
- 19.4.2 Following lengthy debate, Officers agreed to provide Members with the arbitrary costs for the Service on the provision of Welsh Language Standards.

19.5 OPERATION ATEGOL

The ACFO Technical Services informed Members that pay and the Conditions of Service for Grey Book staff was determined by the National Joint Council. Despite a pay rise being due on 1 July, no agreement had yet been reached. The Fire Brigades Union had indicated that due to this they were preparing for a trade dispute.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 established a range of duties for specified 'Category 1 responders'. These included the duty of Fire & Rescue Authorities to assess, plan and prepare for impacts that may affect the business continuity of service delivery. One such foreseeable business continuity event was the loss of staff. 'Operation Ategol' was the Service's plan to respond to Industrial Action.

RESOLVED THAT

- 19.5.1 Members agreed to note the content of the report and the principles of the plan for loss of staff.
- 19.5.2 Members also agreed to note the update from the Chair and the Chief Fire Officer confirming that on 1 July, 2019, no offer had been received from Employees regarding an increase in the 'Cost of Living' award.

19.6. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2018/2019

The Treasurer and Wales Audit Officer informed Members that the Appointed Auditor was required to give an opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March, 2019. The presented report considered the statutory ISA260 report, the final statement of accounts, and the letter of representation.

As the audit continued to the end of July, the documents were circulated to Members electronically prior to the Fire Authority meeting, and hard copies were available prior to the meeting.

The Treasurer also requested the delegation of those tasks to the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee in future.

It was noted that the report was for Members decision and not for information as detailed on the agenda.

RESOLVED THAT

- 19.6.1 Members agreed to receive the ISA260 report of the Appointed Auditor, and noted the letter of representation contained therein (provided electronically).
- 19.6.2 Members agreed to note the audited Statement of Accounts provided electronically and in hard copy at the meeting.
- 19.6.3 Members agreed the delegation of the approval of the Statement of Accounts and associated reports to the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee for future years.

The Chair, Treasurer, and Wales Audit Officer took the opportunity to thank all members of the Finance team for their efforts in meeting the tight timescales and deadline, and finalising the Statement of Accounts by 31 May 2019.

19.7 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

For the benefit of new Members, the Deputy Chief Officer provided a brief overview of the Forward Work Programme for 2019/2020.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the Forward Work Programme for 2019/2020.

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

There were no items of business that the Chair deemed urgent.

The Chair closed the meeting by wishing Members and Officers an enjoyable summer holiday period.