

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 11 JULY 2022 AT 1000 HRS IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

16. PRESENT:

Councillor	Left	Authority
S Bradwick (Chair)		Rhondda Cynon Taff
P Drake (Deputy Chair)		Vale of Glamorgan
I Buckley		Vale of Glamorgan
K Carr		Cardiff
S Evans		Torfaen
P Ford		Bridgend
G Holmes		Rhondda Cynon Taff
M Hughes		Bridgend
D Isaac		Merthyr Tydfil
S Malson		Torfaen
S McConnel		Monmouthshire
D Naughton		Cardiff
M Al-Nuaimi		Newport
D Parkin		Rhondda Cynon Taff
M Powell		Monmouthshire
B Proctor		Cardiff
A Roberts	11:15 hrs	Rhondda Cynon Taff
T Watkins		Newport

APOLOGIES:

D Ali	Cardiff
C Elsbury	Caerphilly
A Hussey	Caerphilly
S Melbourne	Cardiff
J Morgan	Blaenau Gwent
C Wright	Caerphilly
ACFO R Prendergast	Dir of Technical Services
Mrs S Watkins	Deputy Monitoring Officer

ABSENT:

OFFICERS PRESENT:- CFO H Jakeway, T/DCFO D Rose – Director of Service Delivery, T/ACFO N Williams – Director of Technical Services, ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, T/ACO G Thomas – Monitoring Officer & Temp. Director of Corporate Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Mr A Jones – Head of HR., Mr M Fry – TPR Independent Remuneration Consultant (Agenda Item 8.iv only)

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillors Evans and Malson declared a personal interest in Action No. 20/21-32 which related to New Inn Fire Station.

On behalf of Officers, the Chief Fire Officer declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda items 8.ii and 8.iv.

The T/ACO Corporate Services declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8.iii.

18. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **WELCOME ADDRESS**

The Chair welcomed Members to the first full meeting of South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority meeting for the Municipal Year 2022/2023. A special warm welcome was also extended to the new Members from Bridgend, Councillors Ford and Hughes, and to the new Member from Cardiff, Councillor Proctor.

- **RECRUITS PASSING OUT PARADE**

The Chair was pleased to report that along with several other Members he attended the latest Recruits Passing out Parade on 16 June, 2022. He advised it was a wonderful occasion to see the newest firefighters displaying their skills in front of family and friends.

- **THE NATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE**

The Chair informed Members that the National Firefighters Service of Remembrance takes place on Sunday, 4 September 2022, in London. He stressed that this was an important event in the Fire Service calendar which he would be attending, and would like to invite two other Members to join him and one of the Service's senior officers.

- **MEMBERS INDUCTION**

The Chair reported that Members Induction took place on Tuesday, 5 July, where officers outlined the roles and responsibilities of Members. Officers also showcased the expansive array of services and functions which the Fire & Rescue Service provided on behalf of the communities of South Wales.

The Chair reminded Members that they had received electronic copies of the Members Handbook and PowerPoint slides, and hopefully an e-learning version of the induction would be circulated to support Members who were unable to attend on the day.

- **MEMBERS ATTENDANCE**

The Chair reminded Members of the importance of their attendance at Fire & Rescue Authority meetings and all Committees to ensure commitment to the role, and to meet the requirements set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

- **EMAILS RELATING TO OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS**

The Chair reminded Members that emails issued regarding operational incidents were for Fire & Rescue Authority Members information only and should not be circulated wider than the intended audience.

- **UPDATING THE CONFERENCE ROOM**

The Chair informed Members that work was scheduled to commence in the Conference Room within the next week which would improve the acoustic issues currently caused by the air

handling system and ceiling design. Video conferencing facilities would also be fitted which would enable Members to hold future Fire & Rescue Authority meetings.

- **MEMBERS EXPENSES**

The Chair informed Members that expenses forms currently submitted in paper format would cease as from 1 August, 2022, and would move to the Core HR Payroll System. He reassured Members that appropriate training and guidance would be provided following the HR & Equalities Committee and Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee meetings taking place later in the month.

- **THANK YOU ADDRESS TO OPERATIONAL CREWS**

The Chair and Councillor Malson took the opportunity to thank operational crews for their professionalism and courage in dealing with the recent tragic fire incidents which had occurred within their local Unitary Authority areas.

The Chief Fire Officer thanked Members for their kind words, observations, and praises, which he would pass on to the crews who attended the incidents.

19. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

- Fire & Rescue Authority meeting held on 28 March 2022
- Annual General Meeting held on 13 June, 2022
- Local Pension Board Committee meeting held on 31 January, 2022
- Finance, Asset & Performance Management Scrutiny Group meeting held on 7 February, 2022
- HR & Equalities Committee meeting held on 28 February, 2022

- Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee held on 7 March, 2022

20. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2022/2023

The Monitoring Officer provided a brief overview of the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the Forward Work Programme for 2022/2023.

21. UPDATE ON ACTIONS

The Monitoring Officer provided a brief overview and update on outstanding actions:- 20/21-32, 20/21-56.6.

For the benefit of new Members, the Monitoring Officer provided a detailed report on the upgrading of New Inn Fire Station,

The ACO People Services also provided a brief overview and update on the following outstanding actions:- 21/22-17.3.2, 21/22-17.3.3, 21/22-32.3.3, and 21/22-48.7

22. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

22.1. BROADENING THE ROLE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN WALES – FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CAPACITY – THEMATIC REVIEW

The CFO advised Members that the presented report was an overview of the Thematic Review of the Fire & Rescue Services' capacity and capability to assume a broader role for firefighters in Wales, produced by Mr Dan Stevens, Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser, Welsh Government.

RESOLVED THAT

- 22.1.1 Members agreed to acknowledge the Thematic Review of the Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser into the Welsh Fire & Rescue Services' capacity to carry out work arising from broadening the role of firefighters in Wales.

- 22.1.2 Following a lengthy question and answer session, Members agreed to note the report and that the Chief Fire & Rescue Adviser's recommendations were being actioned through a Chief Fire Officer commissioned 'Working Group' under the governance of the Service's Operational Co-ordination Group.
- 22.1.3 Members agreed to note the update on progress made by the Service.
- 22.1.4 Following a request by the Chair, the Chief Fire Officer agreed to arrange a meeting with the Fire Brigades Union to discuss the Thematic Review. He also agreed to arrange a separate meeting with officers from the other two Welsh Fire & Rescue Services to discuss the specific deadline date set by the Welsh Government to respond to the Thematic Review.

22.2 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND THE FINANCE, ASSET & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY GROUP

The T/ACO Corporate Services advised Members of the annual report on the work of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee and its Scrutiny Group for the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the work undertaken by the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee, and the Finance, Asset & Performance Management Scrutiny Group during the Municipal Year 2021/2022.

22.3. BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS REPORT, HEALTH CHECK 2021/2022 – QUARTER 4

The T/ACO Corporate Services and Director of Service Delivery presented a report informing Members of the Business Plan Actions report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4.

RESOLVED THAT

- 22.3.1 Following a lengthy question and answer session, Members agreed to note the Business Plan Actions report, Health Check 2021/2022, for Quarter 4.
- 22.3.2 Following a request by Members, for comparison purposes Officers agreed to circulate data relating to 2019.

Councillor Roberts left the meeting at 11:15 hrs.

22.4 WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS UPDATE – JULY 2022

The Head of HR presented a report which provided Members with an overview of the current position with regards to meeting the legal requirements contained within the Welsh Language Standards Compliance Notice issued to the Fire & Rescue Authority by the Welsh Language Commissioner on 30 September, 2016.

RESOLVED THAT

- 22.4.1 Members agreed to note the information contained within the report.
- 22.4.2 Following a question and answer session on the provision of simultaneous translation, Officers agreed to provide Members with a costings programme in due course.

22.5 EMERGENCY USE OF DELEGATED POWERS

The T/ACO Corporate Services advised Members of the emergency use of delegated powers since the last Fire & Rescue Authority meeting in March 2022.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the emergency use of delegated powers for the contract awarded to Terberg DTS UK (Holmatro) Limited.

23. REPORTS FOR DECISION

23.1 REPORT ON STRATEGIC THEMES AND PROPOSED OBJECTIVES 2023/2024

The T/ACO Corporate Services presented a report for Members to approve the proposed objectives for 2023/2024 to deliver the Service's long-term Strategic Themes for publication in the Service's Annual Improvement Plan Stage 2 for formal consultation.

RESOLVED THAT

- 23.1.1 Following discussion on issues with engaging with staff online, Members agreed to approve the proposed Strategic Themes and Objectives set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report, for engagement events and publication in the 'Consultation Document' – Stage 2 of the Annual Improvement Plan, on the South Wales Fire & Rescue Service's internet site by 31 October, 2022.
- 23.1.2 Members unanimously agreed to approve delegation to the ACO Corporate Services, and Head of Corporate Support, to review and refine the proposed Objectives as necessary, and to report back any amendments to the next Fire & Rescue Authority.

23.2 SCHEME PAYS REVIEW

The ACO People Services informed Members that the Local Pension Board at its meeting on 4 July, 2022, reviewed the current 'Scheme Pays' arrangements. The report shared the detail of the information considered by the Local Pension Board. The role of the Local Pension Board was to provide oversight and assistance to the Scheme Manager, it was not a decision making body in relation to scheme management and administration. Following discussion at the Local Pension Board Committee meeting on 4 July, the Chair of the Board was invited to make a recommendation to the Fire & Rescue Authority.

RESOLVED THAT

Following an update from the Chair of the Local Pension Board, Members unanimously agreed to accept the recommendations in relation to the Scheme Pays procedure.

The T/ACO Corporate Services withdrew from the meeting room before Members considered Agenda Item 8.iii 'Principal Officer Vacancy – Appointment Authorisation of Assistant Chief Officer Corporate Services'.

23.3. PRINCIPAL OFFICER VACANCY – APPOINTMENT AUTHORISATION OF ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER CORPORATE SERVICES

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that Fire Authority Standing Orders determined that a request to fill a post at Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) level on a permanent basis had to be brought before the Fire & Rescue Authority for approval.

The report sought Members approval to recruit on a permanent basis an ACO Corporate Services. Subject to Fire Authority approval it was proposed to commence the recruitment process at the earliest opportunity with the aim of making a permanent appointment by the end of October 2022.

RESOLVED THAT

23.3.1 Members unanimously agreed to approve the filling of the post of the role of ACO Corporate Services on a permanent basis.

23.3.2 Members unanimously agreed to approve the recruitment and selection process and timetable as laid out in the report.

All Officers withdrew from the meeting and left the room before Members considered the following report Agenda Item 8.iv 'Independent Pay Review – Principal Officers Remuneration'.

Mr M Fry, TRP Independent Remuneration Consultant, joined the meeting to provide Members with an electronic presentation, as well as advice and guidance on Principal Officers Remuneration.

23.4 INDEPENDENT PAY REVIEW – PRINCIPAL OFFICERS REMUNERATION

The ACO People Services informed Members that the review of Brigade Manager/Principal Officers' remuneration was requested by Fire Authority Members following the completion of the Job Evaluation exercise for Green Book employees, and a report to the Authority on 19 July, 2021. External consultants, TRP Consulting, were commissioned to undertake the review, and the report at Appendix 1 was submitted to the Fire Authority for consideration at its meeting on 28 March, 2022. At the meeting it was agreed that the discussion be deferred until the new Municipal Year to enable further information and budget implications to be collated and presented.

RESOLVED THAT

- 23.4.1 Members agreed to review the report attached at Appendix 1, and electronic presentation which had been prepared by TRP Consulting.
- 23.4.2 Members agreed to note that any recommended changes would need to be reported with associated information to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.
- 23.4.3 Following lengthy debate, and a question and answer session on a number of options and affordability issues, Members unanimously agreed that Principal Officers would be awarded a 4.5% pay increase in order to close the gap.
- 23.4.4 Members unanimously agreed that the HR & Equalities Committee would carry out an immediate review of Principal Officers pay, with a full review to be carried out on an annual basis.

24. 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.