SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING**

**HELD ON MONDAY 16 DECEMBER 2019, 10:30HRS AT**

**SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS**

**30. PRESENT:**

**Councillor Arrived Left Authority**

S Bradwick (Chair) Rhondda Cynon Taff

D Ali 11:44 Cardiff

L Brown Monmouthshire

P Drake Vale of Glamorgan

S Ebrahim 11:30 Cardiff

C Elsbury Caerphilly

S Evans Torfaen

J Harries Rhondda Cynon Taff

J Holt Blaenau Gwent

A Hussey Caerphilly

H Jarvie Vale of Glamorgan

D Naughton Cardiff

S Pickering Rhondda Cynon Taff

H Thomas Newport

J Williams 11:10 Cardiff

D White Bridgend

M Spencer Newport

V Smith 12:05 Monmouthshire

A Roberts Rhondda Cynon Taff

A Jones 11:37 Torfaen

**APOLOGIES:**

D T Davies Caerphilly

R Shaw Bridgend

A Lister Cardiff

**ABSENT:**

L Davies Merthyr Tydfil

**OFFICERS PRESENT:-** CFO H Jakeway, DCO S Chapman – Deputy Chief Officer & 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, Mr G Thomas – Head of Finance & Procurement, Mr M Hole – Health, Safety & Wellbeing Officer, Ms S Ford – Learning & Development Manager

**31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

All Members declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 7.iii, ‘Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report – February 2020’.

**32. CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**BLUE LIGHT CAROLSERVICE**

The Chair reminded Members of the Blue Light Carol Service taking place at Llandaff Cathedral on Thursday, 19 December at 19:00hrs.

**OFFICIAL OPENING OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT**

The Chair also reminded Members of the Official Opening of the Occupational Health Unit which was scheduled to take place immediately after the Fire Authority meeting.

**FIRE CADET PASSING OUT PARADE – PARC PRISON**

Councillor Harries advised Members of his recent attendance at the successful Fire Cadet Passing Out Parade held at Parc Prison, and praised the work of fire service staff.

**WELCOME**

The Chair extended a warm welcome to Councillor Spencer to his first meeting of the Fire Authority.

**BIRTHDAY WISHES**

The Chair, on behalf of all Members, wished Councillor Jones a very happy birthday.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY BUDGET MEETINGS**

The Chair advised Members of the positive response received from the meetings held to date. The meetings will conclude in early January.

**33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The following minutes were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings, following slight amendment to the attendees list contained within the minutes of the Fire & Rescue Authority meeting on 16 September 2019:-

* Finance, Asset & Performance Management Scrutiny Group on 25 March 2019.
* Local Pension Board Committee on 24 June 2019.
* HR & Equalities Committee on 8 July 2019.
* Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee on 9 September 2019.
* Fire & Rescue Authority meeting on 16 September 2019, subject to an amendment being made to show that Councillor Colin Elsbury was present.

**34. UPDATE ON ACTIONS**

The Deputy Chief Officer advised that all outstanding actions had now been completed.

**35. REPORTS FOR DECISION**

**35.1 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

The Director of Technical Services provided Members with a summary of the key activities undertaken and the performance of South Wales Fire and Rescue Service in the area of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

It was noted that mental health issues are likely to increase due to the fact that there is less of a stigma attached to mental health and more awareness is being raised through the Service. Additional resources have been made available in this regard.

In relation to the figures for accidents reported from the three Welsh FRS’s, it was noted that each service has a different reporting method, for instance Mid & West Wales record attacks on crews as near misses whereas South Wales keep numbers of attacks on crews separate. The way in which the Service reports on such instances will be considered. The Health and Safety Team have been in discussions with other Service’s in Wales and across the UK in relation to incident reporting.

A discussion arose around the number of vehicle claims and it was noted that the Service requires operational staff to wear seatbelts on appliances. It was stressed however that this is not a legal requirement.

In relation to a question on stand up tables, Members were advised that the tables were requested by staff members and a meeting room identified for them. Positive feedback has been received in this regard.

It was noted that Newport City Council have introduced a ‘Positive Safety Behaviour’ system whereby staff Members record actions taken. Positive feedback has been received following the adoption of the system. It was confirmed that the Service will give consideration to the system.

In relation to Medical Surveillance, it was confirmed that medicals are undertaken every 3 years and fitness assessments take place every 2 years for all operational staff.

**RESOLVED THAT**

35.1.1 Members accepted the report on the performance of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service in the area of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

35.1.2 Members noted the overall success achieved during 2018/19 in the delivery of an environment that is supportive of the Health, Safety and Welfare of staff.

35.1.3 Members endorsed and supported the range of initiatives underway to proactively and reactively support the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of staff employed by South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.

**35.2 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT 2019/20**

The Treasurer presented the Treasury Management Mid-Term Review Report and provided an update on the Authority’s treasury activities for the period 1 April-30 September 2019.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted and approved the report and the treasury activity for 2019/20.

**35.3 REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21**

The Treasurer updated Members on the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2020/21 and recommended the Fire Authority consult with its ten constituent councils on its contribution budget for that year.

The Treasurer also advised Members that Welsh Government have deferred their budget announcement until today. As a consequence, the Treasurer requested delegated authority to make a final determination on the consultation budget following Welsh Government’s budget announcements as the level of pension grant funding was a critical determining factor. An update will be provided at the next FA&PM Scrutiny Committee meeting taking place on 13 January followed by an update at the next full Fire Authority meeting scheduled to take place on 10 February.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the current situation update and agreed that the Treasurer make a final determination on the basis of the consultation budget following Welsh Government’s budget announcement.

**35.4 BIO-DIVERSITY FORWARD PLAN**

The Head of Finance and Procurement presented the Biodiversity Forward Plan which addressed the statutory requirements of the Service under Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, to demonstrate how we will ‘seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the proper exercise of our functions, and in doing so promote the resilience of ecosystems’. Part one (the appended document) set out the background, legislative context, and identified challenges and opportunities.

The Biodiversity Forward Plan looks at how South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority manages and improves natural resources to ensure that biodiversity is considered in all Service areas, and are core themes in service delivery, becoming an integral part of the decision making processes throughout the Fire & Rescue Authority.

The actions in the Biodiversity Forward Plan will be reviewed and updated at the end of each 3-year reporting period.

It was noted that engagement has been undertaken with all members of the service including fire cadets.

The purchase of electric vehicles is being considered by the Transport and Engineering Department.

In relation to the Service’s attendance at fires at large recycling plants, the costs incurred for the attendance at such incidents is met by the Service as the Service has a statutory obligation to attend. It was noted however, that a substantial amount of work is being undertaken by the Service in this area in collaboration with Natural Resources Wales.

In relation to clean air/pollution it was noted that the Service has no control of where residential developments are placed however, the Service does have the opportunity to raise any issues at Public Service Board meetings and feed into any development plans, when required.

In relation to a Member Champion, it was agreed that Councillor David White take up the role.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members approved the Biodiversity Forward Plan (Part 1) as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

**35.5 GENDER PAY GAP STATEMENT – 31 MARCH 2019**

The Director of People Services advised Members that under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, all public authorities are required to publish gender pay gap information by reporting the percentage differences in pay between their male and female employees.

Public authorities must publish the required information based on data captured on the snapshot date of 31 March, within 12 months. Accordingly, the deadline for publication is 30 March 2020 for the Service’s Gender Pay Gap report based on figures as at 31 March 2019.

The Gender Pay Gap Statement was presented in the report attached at Appendix 1.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members approved the 2019 Gender Pay Gap report and Statement to be published by 30 March 2020, following slight amendment to the Chair’s title in the report.

**35.6 SERVICE WIDE JOB EVALUATION EXERCISE**

The Director of People Services provided a summary of the proposed service Wide Job Evaluation Exercise.

The results of the exercise will be presented to Members in approximately 12 months’ time.

It was noted that an appeal process will be in place and will include a representative from HR.

Members raised concerns with staff morale and stressed the importance of helping them understand they will not lose their positions, however it will be a worrying time for all. A similar process was undertaken at Caerphilly County Borough Council where support was provided to staff. The Director of People Services agreed to make contact with them to discuss their experiences of the process.

**RESOLVED THAT**

35.6.1 Members noted the contents of the report.

35.6.2 Members agreed to proceed with the proposed Job Evaluation Exercise.

35.6.3 Members agreed to the associated costs listed within the report.

**36. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

**36.1 COST OF WELSH LANGUAGE PROVISION**

Following a request by Members, the Deputy Chief Officer provided details on the costs to the Service of complying with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards.

The amount of correspondence the Service receives in Welsh will be reported at the next HR & Equalities Committee meeting.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the content of the report.

**36.2 BUSINESS PLAN ACTIONS REPORT – HEALTH CHECK –**

**2019-20 QUARTER 2**

The Deputy Chief Officer presented the Business Plan Actions report Health Check for Quarter 2 2019-20.

In relation to Fire Medical Response (FMR), the Director of Service Delivery confirmed that the crew at Chepstow continue to provide FMR, on a voluntary basis. He also stressed that all firefighters would provide support at an incident, if required. Councillor Smith was pleased to advise how much residents of Monmouthshire have benefitted from the crew at Chepstow continuing with FMR.

Members discussed the benefits of an App that was being utilised to dispatch the nearest first responder pending arrival of an ambulance and the Service confirmed awareness of the App and that we continue to work positively with WAST.

In relation to Cadet Programmes at Prisons, Councillor Smith expressed an interest in attending a future programme. It is hoped that the programme will expand to additional prisons in future.

The Director of Service Delivery outlined progress against the statutory performance indicators which included Special Appliance Calls, Fatalities, False Alarms and Dwelling Fires, electronic copies will be provided for Members.

In relation to false alarms, the Service has undertaken a significant amount of work with hospitals, University Hospital of Wales in particular, which has resulted in a reduction in false alarms. Hospital sites now have their own procedures in place to enable them to deal with instances of false alarms in-house.

The Director of Service Delivery stressed the highest number of false alarm calls are received from health and educational premises and that a substantial amount of work is being undertaken by the Service to reduce the number of calls received.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the content of the report.

**36.3 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES’ DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT – FEBRUARY 2020**

The Deputy Chief Officer brought Members’ attention to the relevant sections of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales’ Draft Annual Report that related to payments to Members of Welsh Fire & Rescue Authorities.

**RESOLVED THAT**

Members noted the extract of the Independent Remuneration Panel’s Draft Annual Report, attached at Appendix 1, which provided details of payments to Members of Welsh Fire & Rescue Authorities.

**36.4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

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.

**37. 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.

At the close of the meeting the Chief Fire Officer thanked Members for their continued support throughout a very busy and varied year and stressed the work undertaken by staff could not be done without the governance and robust scrutiny and support that Members provide. On behalf of all officers, the Chief Fire Officer wished Members a happy Christmas and healthy New Year.

The Chair also wished to thank Members and officers for their support throughout the year and wished everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year.