

**Agenda item: 4(i)**

**NORTH WALES FIRE AUTHORITY**

These are the minutes of the North Wales Fire Authority meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2003 at Siambr Dafydd Orwig, Council Offices, Caernarfon. Meeting commenced at 10:30am.

**Present:**

Councillor

Representing

T Roberts (Chairman)  
M LI Davies (Vice-Chairman)

Gwynedd Council  
Denbighshire County Council

J R Hughes  
W E Jones  
J A MacLennan  
N Hugh-Jones  
D Jones MBE  
D M Morris  
A Davies (substitute)  
R Hill  
R P MacFarlane  
D G Parry  
C Shone  
D B Evans  
M Griffith  
E Morgan Jones  
W T Owen  
W J Chorlton  
J A Roberts  
W T Roberts  
E C George  
J G S Roberts  
M Williams  
H T Williams

Conwy County Borough Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Denbighshire County Council  
Denbighshire County Council  
Denbighshire County Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Gwynedd Council  
Gwynedd Council  
Gwynedd Council  
Gwynedd Council  
Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Isle of Anglesey County Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council

**Also present:**

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); I R Miller (Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority); K W Finch (Treasurer to the Authority); P S Coles (Deputy Chief Fire Officer); C Hanks (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Service Support); P S Claydon (Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Service Delivery); P L Slee (Assistant Chief Officer, Corporate Services), H Jones (Treasurer's Department, Conwy County Borough Council) and Rh Evans (Member Liaison Officer).

## **PART I**

### **1) Apologies**

#### Councillor

P C Evans JP  
S C Jones  
A R Cattermoul  
E F Evans  
F A Nichols

#### Representing

Conwy County Borough Council  
Conwy County Borough Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Flintshire County Council  
Wrexham County Borough Council

### **2) Notice of Urgent Matters**

The following items had been submitted for consideration:

- i. Proposed Scheme for provision of allowances for members of fire authorities in Wales
- ii. A discussion on the Wales Fire Services' Forum
- iii. The publication of the "Draft National Framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities" applicable to English authorities, and "The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales"

The Chairman advised that it had been decided to vary the order of business in order that these items be discussed under business item number 6.

### **3) Chairman's Announcements**

- i. The Chairman extended the Authority's condolences to Councillor W T Owen on the recent loss of his father
- ii. Mr Chris Bretherton-Watt, recently elected Chairman of the Authority's Standards Committee, was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to members
- iii. Following the Authority's meeting in September a letter was sent to the North Wales Fire Service's Extrication Team to wish them well in the World Championship in Ottawa. Members were informed that a letter of acknowledgement had been received which also advised that the Team were amongst the competition's runners up. Members congratulated them on their achievement
- iv. A visit, for all members, to the Fire Service's International Training Centre at Chorley has been arranged for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004
- v. Members were reminded that the joint emergency services annual Carol Service would be held that evening at St. Asaph Cathedral
- vi. The dates of future committee meetings were announced: the Executive Panel would meet on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004 at 10:30am; the Standards Committee would meet on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2004 at 2pm and the Best Value Committee would next

- meet on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2004 at 2pm; all meetings to be held at the Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Rhyl
- vii. the next meeting of the Fire Authority was scheduled for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2004 at Anglesey County Council's Headquarters, Llangefni, meeting to commence at 10:30am
  - viii. Congratulations were extended to the Vice-Chairman, Councillor M Ll Davies and Councillor E Morgan Jones, both of whom were celebrating their birthday

#### **4) Minutes**

The following minutes were submitted:

- i. Fire Authority meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2003
- ii. Special Fire Authority meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2003

**Resolved: - that the minutes be approved as a true and correct record of proceedings**

The following minutes were submitted for information purposes:

- iii. Best Value Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2003
- iv. Executive Panel meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2003
- v. Standards Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2003

#### **5) Matters Arising**

No matters arose.

#### **6) Urgent Matters**

Discussion of items already submitted under business item 2.

##### **i. Proposed Scheme for provision of allowances for members of fire authorities in**

**Wales:** Councillor D M Morris asked for the Authority to support his proposal that a strongly worded letter be sent to the relevant Minister at the National Assembly for Wales (NAfW) emphasising the Authority's disappointment at the Assembly's delay in implementing a scheme of remuneration for members of fire authorities in Wales, including the provision for payment of special responsibilities allowances to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He stressed that the letter should stipulate that these allowances, once the regulations had been laid, be backdated to April 2003 as the Fire Authority had made provision for payment within the current year's budget. Members were reminded by the Clerk that the NAfW had initially consulted upon the proposals during March 2003 and North Wales Fire Authority had responded to the consultation in May; the latest information available from the Assembly indicated that the Local Government and Public Services Committee were due to consider the matter at their first meeting in the new year. The Clerk was also of the opinion that the

letter should stress the point that any allowances paid should be given equal treatment as allowances paid to county and county borough councillors which would become pensionable from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004, a point on which the Authority had already lobbied the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) upon. Members agreed and:

**Resolved:** -

- i. that a letter be sent to the Minister for Local Government and Public Services stressing the Authority's disappointment at the delay in implementing a Scheme of Allowances for Members of Fire Authorities in Wales and insisting that a scheme be set up without further delay and that the scheme also provide for retrospective payments of the allowances from April 2003; and***
- ii. that any allowances paid should be subject to the same principle as allowances paid to county and county borough councillors and therefore become pensionable from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004***

**ii. A discussion on the Wales Fire Services' Forum:** Councillor E C George requested that the Authority consider whether representations should be made to the Wales Fire Services' Forum, of which the Chief Fire Officers, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of all Welsh fire authorities were members, that its membership be strengthened. Details were still unclear, following the publication of the White Paper, as to when devolution of fire service policy to the NAFW would actually take place. The recently published Draft Fire and Rescue Authorities National Framework document for English authorities, like the White Paper, referred to Regional Management Boards (RMBs); fire authorities in Wales and the National Assembly had made it known that they did not wish to follow the RMB route. Councillor George was therefore of the view that it was essential for the fire authorities to act first and strengthen the Wales Fire Services Forum, possibly by increasing its membership from the current number to possibly 6 elected members representing each of the Welsh fire authorities. The Chairman advised that this option had already received the support of Mid and West Wales Fire Authority who had discussed the proposal the previous week. Councillor George informed members that he sought their support for the proposal in order that the Chairman may present it, on the Authority's behalf, to the next meeting of the Wales Fire Services Forum due to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2003. Members were supportive of the proposal in principle but were of the view that North Wales' representation should be a total of 8 elected members, to include the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and six other members' representing each of the constituent authorities. They were also of the view that the representatives should reflect a broad cross section of the region. The Clerk reminded members that political balance rules would apply to the Authority when it nominated more than 3 representatives to sit on any body; if it wished to exercise a non-political approach it could delegate the task of appointing representatives to sit on the Forum to each constituent authority, who in turn could nominate a representative from amongst their representatives on the Authority to sit on the Forum. Following a discussion members:

**Resolved: - that**

- i. the Chairman, on behalf of North Wales Fire Authority, recommend to the meeting of the Wales Fire Services' Forum on 22<sup>nd</sup> December, that the Forum membership of elected representatives from each of the Welsh fire authorities be strengthened;***
- ii. that North Wales Fire Authority's membership be increased to eight representatives to include the Chairman and Vice-Chairman; and***
- iii. if the recommendation is accepted, that the Executive Panel at its meeting in January 2004 decide on the most appropriate way forward in nominating representatives from the North Wales Fire Authority to sit on the Wales Fire Services' Forum or its replacement body***

**iii Publication of "The Draft National Framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities" and "The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales"**: The Chief Fire Officer informed members that both these documents had been published by the ODPM at the end of the previous week. He was of the view that they should be brought to members' attention as soon as possible, hence the decision to distribute copies of both documents prior to the commencement of the meeting. He proceeded to explain that the Draft National Framework document specified quite clearly that it only applied to English fire and rescue authorities; a framework document for fire authorities in Wales was currently being drafted and was due to be published in the new year. The Chief Fire Officer was of the view that many of the provisions in the English document would be reflected in the Welsh version.

Regarding the document entitled "The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales", members were advised that this was an updated version of the Mott MacDonald report "The Future of Fire Service Control Rooms and Communications in England and Wales", published originally in April 2000. This document stated categorically that the optimum scenario for Wales was to be serviced by a single fire service control room; although it also acknowledged that any decision on the issue now lay with the NAFW. Councillor E C George reminded members that the Welsh fire authorities had already rationalised in 1996 when the previous 8 authorities and control centres had merged into 3 controls; he was also of the view that it would be wise if the Executive Panel discussed both documents at their next meeting as this would give members an opportunity to read both reports beforehand. The closing date for responses to the consultation on the Draft National Framework document was 12<sup>th</sup> March 2004; this would be before the next full Authority meeting. Members were advised by the Chief Fire Officer that he had doubts whether the Draft National Framework document for Wales will have been published in time to be discussed at the Executive Panel meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January and that it may be necessary to convene a special meeting of the Executive Panel or of the Fire Authority to consider its implications and formulate a response. Councillor W J Chorlton was of the view that it would be prudent to respond to both the English and Welsh Draft Framework documents.

Regarding the revised report on the future of fire and rescue service control rooms Councillor N Hugh-Jones felt it was important that North Wales Fire Authority reiterated its position on the viability of a single control room for Wales and in particular to the location of any such control room; the Chairman informed members that the Assembly were already well aware of the Authority's position on this matter. In reply to a question raised by Councillor J A MacLennan regarding the current position on the progress of exploring the viability of joint estates with the other emergency services within in Wales; the Chief Fire Officer advised that all the emergency services' chief officers were actively exploring the feasibility of a joint control room for North Wales, as discussed at the Executive Panel meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2003. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the publication of this report had contributed to shortening the timescale on this specific issue as the "Firelink" contract was due to be let in the spring of 2004 and the issue of the number of control centres required to be resolved before then. The Chairman advised that both these reports were scheduled for discussion at the Wales Fire Services' Forum on 22<sup>nd</sup> December and any decisions, along with the other Welsh fire authorities' views upon the reports, would be reported back to the Authority in due course. Following a discussion it was:

**Resolved: - to note the publication of both documents and that the Executive Panel at its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004:**

- i. discuss the "Draft Fire and Rescue Authorities National Framework" and "The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales" documents and decide whether to formulate a response to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the National Assembly for Wales on the Authority's behalf; and***
- ii. decide whether a special meeting of the Executive Panel or the Fire Authority should be held once the "Draft Fire and Rescue Authorities National Framework" document for Wales is published for consultation***

## **7) Communication concerning Financial Statements to those charged with governance**

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Jones from the Audit Commission in Wales to the meeting to present his report (previously circulated) on the "Statement of Auditing Standards (SAS) 610", which was applicable this year for the first time to the audit of the Authority's accounts. Mr Jones informed the Authority that he was pleased to report that there were no significant issues arising from the accounts which gave the Commission any grave cause for concern. Nor were there any areas of material weaknesses relating to the accounting or the internal control systems which he wished draw to members' attention. Members:

**Resolved: - to accept the report**

## **8) Letter of Representation**

The Treasurer introduced his report (previously circulated) along with copies of the correspondence between the External Auditor and himself in respect of the Letter of Representation relating to the 2002/03 Statement of Accounts. He explained that the Authority, when it approved the Statement of Accounts, under Regulation 8 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996, was required to formally acknowledge the Letter of Representation sent to the External Auditor. The Treasurer advised that he had nothing further to add to what was contained in the report. The Vice-Chairman registered his appreciation that both Welsh and English versions of the letters between the External Auditor and the Treasurer had been annexed to the report. The Chairman and members thanked Mr Jones for attending and presenting his report, and:

**Resolved: - to formally acknowledge the Letter of Representation sent to the District Auditor in relation to the 2002/03 accounts**

## **9) Statement of Accounts 2002/03**

The Treasurer introduced his report (previously circulated) to members and explained that the Authority had already approved the accounts at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2003 but the Audit Commission in Wales, as part of their audit of the Statement of Accounts, had raised some minor presentational issues with the accounts as detailed in the report. The report informed the Authority that these weaknesses had been redressed and quoted from the Head of Audit and Procurement's statement of response to the Audit Commission in Wales. It was:

**Resolved: - to**

- i. approve the amended Statement of Accounts for 2002/03; and***
- ii. note the Statement on the System of Internal Control***

## **10) Treasury Management**

The Treasurer introduced his report (previously circulated) detailing background information on the Treasury Management function, the Code of Practice and the Treasury Management Practices relevant to the Fire Authority; he also gave an overview of each function. He explained that the Authority was now required to adopt the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Service; in the past it had not seemed necessary for the Authority to adopt the Code independently, as Conwy County Borough Council who managed the Authority's finances had already adopted the Code. It had since transpired at Conwy County Borough Council that the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services should be adopted by both authorities independently of one another. Therefore it was:

**Resolved: - to:**

- i. adopt the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Public Services (2002) with immediate effect***
- ii. adopt the four clauses in Section 3 of Appendix A to the report into its Financial Regulations***
- iii. adopt the three clauses in Section 4 of Appendix A to the report as its Treasury Management Policy Statement; and***
- iv. adopt the Treasury Management Practices relevant to the Fire Authority as outlined in Appendix B to the report***

## **11) Budget 2004/05 and forecast for 2005/06 and 2006/07**

The Treasurer introduced his report (previously circulated) containing a number of proposals for the Authority to consider in respect of the draft budget for 2004/05, along with the forecasts for 2005/06 and 2006/07. Included as appendices to his report were details of the draft revenue budget, the draft capital programme, the provisional contributions required by the constituent authorities, a statement detailing the budget increases, a list of prudential indicators and the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Plan for 2004/05. The Treasurer explained that the Authority, was required by statute, to consider its draft budget before 31<sup>st</sup> December in any year in order to submit to each constituent authority an estimate of its net expenditure for the following year; subsequently before the 15<sup>th</sup> February the Authority was required to furnish each constituent authority with the amount of contribution they were required to contribute to the Authority. Members were advised by the Treasurer that the draft budget included the full implications of the pay and conditions agreement, along with the anticipated savings under the IRMP, but it did not take into account any transitional funding that may be available from central government for the Fire and Rescue Service Pay and Modernisation deal. It was still unclear whether or not any transitional funding would be forthcoming, and if it was available, whether it would be in grant or loan form, and if in the form of a loan its duration period. The Treasurer advised that in all probability any loan would be repayable within three years; the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Draft Fire and Rescue National Framework document, discussed earlier, seemed to indicate that no funding would be available until after the Audit Commission had finished its national study on modernisation, which would probably be in March 2004, this would be too late for the budget setting process. The Clerk added that the National Framework document indicated that any transitional funding granted would be recouped within the Spending Review (SR2002) period, by way of a reduction in the Revenue Support Grant for 2005/06.

Members were advised by the Treasurer of the risk elements attached to each of the options detailed in the report for reducing the overall budget, and that the options listed would not affect service levels in any way. If members were of the view that the budget should be reduced further the level of service provided would be affected. The Treasurer informed members that if any further savings came to light before 15<sup>th</sup> February which would further reduce the draft budget the Authority could delegate the task of setting the final contribution level from the constituent authorities to the Executive Panel, which already had a meeting

scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004; if savings came to light after this date the Authority could then delegate the task of varying the contributions requested from the constituent authorities to the Treasurer in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer, Chairman and Vice-Chairman. However, if at any time it transpired that the contribution from the constituent authorities would be higher than the amount decided upon at the current meeting, a special meeting of the Authority would have to be convened before 15<sup>th</sup> February to agree the revised budget and determine the contributions required.

Members agreed that the Authority was in a fortunate position that it had been prudent in recent years. Questions were asked as to whether the targets set in the IRMP on reducing the number of responses to false alarm calls from automated fire alarm apparatus (AFAs) could be revised to a higher figure, and, as to whether the proposed aerial ladder platform appliance (ALP) could be cancelled in order to maximise the amount of potential savings and alleviate budgetary pressures; the Chief Fire Officer, Chairman and Treasurer advised that it would not be appropriate at present to change the IRMP as it was currently out for public consultation. Regarding the leasing of the ALP this decision had already been sanctioned by the Authority and an order had been placed for the appliance; both of these options had been discussed in detail by the IRMP Working Group. The Treasurer advised that the Authority, at present, was in a very fluid situation and needed to consider carefully the risk element when setting its budget; it may be better in the long term to request a higher contribution now and be in a position to refund the constituent authorities at a later date. Following a detailed discussion it was:

**Resolved:** -

- i. that the balance of the underspend from previous years and the balance of the Capital Provision be taken to mitigate the budgetary increase for 2004/05;***
- ii. to forego the £160,000 contribution to the Pension Provision for 2004/05 and increase the contribution by £20,000 over the next 8 years;***
- iii. to set the budget for 2004/05 at £27,234,633;***
- iv. to advise the constituent authorities of the provisional contributions as detailed in Appendix D to the report; and***
- v. that if any transitional funding becomes available or any other savings transpire before the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004, to delegate the powers of setting a lower budget level to the Executive Panel or, if any such announcements or savings transpire after this date but before 15<sup>th</sup> February that this power be delegated to the Treasurer in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer, Chairman and Vice-Chairman***

The Treasurer then drew members' attention to the capital programme detailed in his report. He informed the Authority that the Basic Credit Approval (BCA) system would cease to exist at the end of the current financial year, and be

replaced in 2004/05 by the Prudential Code. The Authority would benefit by being allowed to borrow instead of having to hold provisions for its capital expenditure. Members:

**Resolved: - to**

- vi. approve the draft capital programme and associated methods of financing as detailed in the report;***
- vii. approve the proposals contained in Appendix F to the report in relation to the Prudential Indicators; and***
- viii. approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Plan***

Members joined the Chairman in thanking the Treasurer and his staff on the preparation and presentation of what was in many aspects a very difficult budget.

## **12) Proposed changes to Standing Orders**

Prior to introducing his report the Clerk informed members that the First Minister had recently announced, following a consultation exercise, that the date for the local authority elections in 2004 was to be deferred in order to hold them on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2004 and combine them with the elections to the European Parliament. An order to combine the dates of both elections was expected to be laid before the Assembly in January. He informed members that once legislation had been passed the Authority would need to consider changing the date for its annual meeting, currently scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> June 2004, to a later date, probably during July.

The Clerk proceeded to introduce his report (previously circulated) which contained the proposed amendments to the Authority's Standing Orders following the Authority's decision at its last meeting that the minutes of the Authority's annual meeting should not be reported or approved until its next annual meeting. He explained that, if the amendments were proposed and seconded at the current meeting, any debate on them would be adjourned until the Fire Authority's next meeting in March 2004. The Chairman moved and the Vice-Chairman seconded the amendments, whereupon members:

**Resolved: - to note the amendments to the Standing Orders as detailed in the report and that they be adjourned for debate until the Authority's meeting in March 2004**

## **13) Implementation of the Management Structure Review**

The Chief Fire Officer introduced his report (previously circulated) informing members on the implementation of the Review of the Management Structure, and to confirm the progress made to date. Members were reminded that as part of the IRMP process they had already agreed to restructure the management of the Service, based on the Management Structure Review

document originally presented to the Authority in March 2002. Negotiations with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) on the Management Structure Review had resumed following the cessation of the industrial dispute and the Union had recommended acceptance of the proposals contained in the report; the net savings quoted in the report had also been incorporated into the Treasurer's Draft Budget report for 2004/05. Councillor E C George requested that the Authority be supplied with the rank to role/assimilation details that would be applicable under the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) as soon as they were available, he felt that this information would prove useful to members. The Chief Fire Officer informed members that work was still being carried out on this aspect and agreed to provide the Authority with the details once they were finalised. It was then:

**Resolved: - to:**

- i. confirm the reduction of two Senior Divisional Officers and one Divisional Officer Grade 1 posts; and***
- ii. supplement the principal management structure by one Assistant Chief Fire Officer***

#### **14) Service Level Agreements**

The Chief Fire Officer introduced his report (previously circulated) recommending that the Fire Authority confirm the recommendations of the Executive Panel on the review of the statutory appointments and service level agreements which had been undertaken. The cost and duration of each service level agreement was as detailed in the report. It was:

**Resolved: - to confirm the Executive Panel's recommendations that:**

- i. the statutory appointment of Clerk/Monitoring Officer continue to be held by the Chief Executive of Denbighshire County Council and the Legal service level agreement remain with Denbighshire County Council;***
- ii. the statutory appointment of Treasurer continue to be held by the Director of Finance of Conwy County Borough Council and the Financial service level agreement remain with Conwy County Borough Council; and***
- iii. the Firefighters Pension provision service level agreement remains with Flintshire County Council***

#### **15) East Division Headquarters**

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report (previously circulated) with a view to seeking the Authority's approval, in principle, to dispose of the East Division Headquarters site in Maesgwyn Road, Wrexham. He explained that as part of the modernisation agenda and under the restructuring from the current three divisions to seven fire safety areas based on unitary authority areas as approved

in the IRMP, this building would become surplus to requirement. Members were advised by the Chief Fire Officer that discussions with the interested developer were at a very early stage and assured the Authority that the site would not be disposed of until suitable new premises had been secured. The ideal alternative premises would be a "one stop shop" in a town centre location on a shared facilities basis with other stakeholders.

The Vice-Chairman remarked that he had recently visited East Division Headquarters and had been impressed by the amount of "Mines Rescue Service" memorabilia that continued to be held there; he was of the view that it would be a fitting gesture for the Authority to contact the authorities at Wrexham's Museum to enquire whether they would be interested in any of the items available on the site before it was sold. Councillor Malcolm Williams agreed with this proposal, as he was of the view that these items represented part of Wrexham's industrial heritage. Members:

**Resolved: - to:**

- i. note the contents of the report and approve, in principle, the disposal of the site; and***
- ii. that prior to disposal of the site the authorities of Wrexham Museum be contacted with a view to establishing if there were any items which they may be interested in acquiring***

**16) Donation of a fire appliance to Bosnia**

The Chief Fire Officer introduced his report (previously circulated), along with a copy of a letter received from Mr Chad Hudson on behalf of the International Fire and Rescue association (IRFA), informing members of a request received for the Authority to donate a surplus fire appliance to Bosnia. An appliance which had been earmarked as surplus to requirement seemed to be suitable for the needs of the service in Bosnia; the other appliances that would come to the end of their operational lives during 2004 would be sold on the open market. Details of the appliance along with its suitability and of any outstanding liabilities had been included in the report. Members agreed that the Authority should support the principle of assisting developing countries and:

**Resolved: -**

- i. to approve the donation of one surplus fire appliance to the International Fire and Rescue Association via Mr Hudson; and***
- ii. that the donation of this asset should be made free of charge***

**17) Best Value**

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report (previously circulated) informing members of matters relating to Best Value. He explained that this was the standard update report and proceeded to seek members' opinion on the need

to produce this quarterly update, particularly in view of the fact that a Best Value Committee now existed, the minutes of which were distributed to each Authority member for information purposes. Members felt that they still valued the quarterly report and therefore:

**Resolved: - to note and approve the actions and proposed actions reported and to continue receiving a quarterly report on issues relating to Best Value**

### **18) Informative**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the latest issue of the “*Informative*” magazine to members and apologised for the delay in distributing the latest issue to them. The Chairman explained that a number of factors had contributed to this delay. He welcomed Miss Bethan Davies, the Service’s Press and Public Relations Officer, to the meeting and thanked her for preparing the publication. He also remarked that he was pleased to see that she was recovering satisfactorily following her recent accident. It was:

**Resolved: - to accept the publication**

### **PART II**

No business.

The Chairman wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Meeting concluded at 12:15pm

**The above minutes, pending any inclusions shown, are approved as a true and correct record of proceedings.**

**Signed:** T Roberts

**Dated:** 15 March, 2004