

**NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY  
EXECUTIVE PANEL**

Minutes of the Executive Panel Meeting of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on 24 October 2016 at Fire and Rescue Headquarters, St Asaph. Meeting commenced at 10am.

PRESENT

Cllr M Ll Davies (Chair)	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr B Cowie	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr L W Davies	Anglesey County Council
Cllr B Dunn	Flintshire County Council
Cllr M Holland	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr R O Jones	Anglesey County Council
Cllr G Lowe	Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr H McGuill	Flintshire County Council
Cllr W R Owen	Gwynedd Council
Cllr W T Owen	Gwynedd Council
Cllr R E Parry	Conwy County Borough Council
Cllr P Pemberton	Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr A Tansley	Conwy County Borough Council

ALSO PRESENT:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); D Docx (Deputy Chief Fire Officer); R Fairhead (Assistant Chief Fire Officer); P Davis (Head of Control); S Millington (Senior Fire Safety Manager); C Nott (Temporary Senior Training and Development Manager); S Morris (Corporate Planning Manager); T Williams (Corporate Communications Manager); A Davies (Member Liaison Officer).

APOLOGIES

Cllr P R Lewis          Conwy County Borough Council

1          DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

1.1        None

2          NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

2.1        None

3          MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2016

3.1        The minutes of the last meeting were submitted for approval.

3.2        **RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true and correct record.**

#### 4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 There were no matters arising.

#### 5 BUDGET OPTIONS

5.1 The DCFO presented the report which updated Members on the progress made in developing the FRA's draft revenue budget for 2017-18. Since the report had been written the WG had published its draft provisional local government revenue and capital settlement and it was noted that the settlement for local authorities in North Wales, on average, was slightly better than predicted with a 0.28% increase across the region.

5.2 Through the work of the IP working group, it had been recognised that no further significant savings could be found in the FRA's budget and that any further large scale savings would need to be found from reduction in service provision. Based on the work of the IP working group, the FRA's improvement objectives were currently subject to a public consultation.

5.3 Members were reminded of the risks facing the FRA in terms of the current 'unknowns' including a higher than anticipated pay award being granted, increased activity levels and the reduction or removal of WG direct grants. However, based on known anticipated costs including the apprenticeship levy, the non-discretionary price inflation and an anticipated pay award of 1%, an estimate of the difference between the cost of a continuation budget and a frozen budget showed that an increase of £1.7 million was needed for there to be a balanced budget in 2017-18. Although the FRA has general reserves of £2.6 million, this is part of the strategy to delay service cuts as late as possible and therefore as Members had previously discussed it would be prudent to defer using those reserves until 2018-19. Therefore, in line with the financial strategy, Members were advised to consider increasing local authority contributions to support the 2017-18 budget.

5.4 Members discussed the information provided and the method in which the WG distributes grants; it was agreed to send Members further information about the grants that the FRA receives. Members were also reminded that the FRA had previously agreed to cease any grant funded programmes such as Phoenix should the grant cease.

#### 5.5 **RESOLVED to**

- (i) note the assumptions upon which the draft revenue budget has been set for 2017-18;**
- (ii) confirm the recommendation to the Authority that the 2017-18 budget be constructed on the basis of the current level of service provision;**
- (iii) recommend to the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority in December 2016 that, in line with the three year financial strategy, it approves an increase in the contributions of the constituent councils for 2017-18.**

## 6 PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2016-17

- 6.1 The DCFO presented the performance monitoring report for the first half of the year, April – September 2016.
- 6.2 Overall, the performance figures were considered positive with the majority of categories showing an improvement or staying very similar when compared to the same period in the previous year. However, there had been a slight increase in the number of accidental fires in dwellings and unfortunately there had been three fatalities due to accidental fires in dwellings, pending confirmation from the Coroner.
- 6.3 There had been a reduction, down from 33% to 28%, in the number of home safety checks referrals by a partner organisation and it was confirmed that the community safety department is currently in the process of reviewing partnership agreements.
- 6.4 The number of special service incidents had increased from 307 in the same period in 2015 to 424 in the current performance period; this was a positive increase due to the various pilot projects such as the co-responding and community assistance team; Members asked that this be made clear in the report as it is a success story. The increase in false alarms from AFAs in properties other than non-domestic was due to more people having the Careline system and therefore this increase was also considered a positive.
- 6.5 **RESOLVED to note the contents of the performance monitoring report.**

## 7 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

- 7.1 The DCFO presented the summary report which highlights the main strategic risks for the Authority. Members were reminded that they have previously approved the strategic risk management policy which defines a strategic risk as 'an event that, should it occur, would impact on the achievement of the Authority's planned outcomes and/or the delivery of its core functions'.
- 7.2 At the February 2016 meeting, Members had been informed that the two highest risks at that time related to: attack on the Service's computer systems and the Service's level of resilience to a sudden loss of staff with specialist knowledge and/or experience of NWFRA business; both risks remain in the 'very high' category of risk. It was noted that officers regularly review and update the risk register and re-score risks as appropriate.
- 7.3 **RESOLVED to note the information provided about the strategic risks that the Authority faces.**

- 8 ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT REPORT AND FIRE SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS IN WELSH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES
- 8.1 The CFO presented the reports issued by the Wales Audit Office and explained that Andy Bruce from WAO was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.
- 8.2 **RESOLVED to defer discussion of the reports and invite Andy Bruce to the next meeting of the Executive Panel in February 2017.**
- 9 WYLFA NEWYDD
- 9.1 The DCFO presented the report which informed Members about the resourcing implications placed on NWFRS as a direct result of plans to develop a new nuclear power station at Wylfa, as well as the associated developments.
- 9.2 It was noted that this was the first of many reports and gave Members an overview of the project and all the connected developments. It is acknowledged that a project of this scale is unprecedented in North Wales and will impact all public services across the region. In terms of NWFRS, it is necessary to work with the developers to highlight any concerns during the planning phase and thereafter undertake business fire safety activity and community safety advice and education with the workforce. There will also be a significant amount of operational emergency planning and training involved.
- 9.3 Members agreed that it was essential that NWFRS correctly resources the project and therefore supported the plan to have a Group Manager to work full time on the Wylfa project acting as single point of access and able to represent the Service's interests at all times. Initially, the role will be for twelve months, with a possibility for further extensions following annual reviews. During peak periods in the Wylfa Newydd timeline, additional staff members will also be seconded to the project as and when required.
- 9.4 Members were concerned about the cost involved and although a business case has been made to Horizon to request the recovery of costs associated, Members felt that the WG should also realise the significance of the project and contribute towards NWFRS' resource costs for the project.
- 9.5 Members discussed the project at length including the impact on the road network and how this in turn could affect emergency vehicles reaching incidents in a timely manner.
- 9.6 **RESOLVED to note the implications of the Wylfa Newydd development for NWFRS and support the approach taken to correctly resource this important work.**

- 10 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (WALES) ACT 2015
- 10.1 The CFO presented the report which informed members about the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 and the requirements for NWFRS.
- 10.2 It was noted that a training plan for staff must be submitted to the Welsh Ministers by 31 March 2017 and published on the NWFRS' website within 12 weeks of that date. All staff will be trained by March 2018 as per requirement.
- 10.3 Members were very supportive of the Act and the training plan for staff. However, they were keen to see the cost element included in the report and felt that this would demonstrate the additional preventative work that is ongoing within NWFRS.
- 10.4 **RESOLVED to note the requirements of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 and in particular the training requirements for staff as laid down in the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.**

PART II - Pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public were asked to leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s) of business because it is likely that there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraph(s) 12 to 18 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

All members of staff apart from the Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Clerk left the meeting room prior to this item being discussed.

- 11 BUSINESS CONTINUITY UPDATE
- 11.1 The Chief Fire Officer gave Members an update about business continuity issues in the Service.
- 11.2 **RESOLVED to note the update.**