

**Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 8th June 2011 at
North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, St Asaph**

Present

Simon Fysh (Chair)
Celia Blomeley
David Morris

Also in attendance

Dawn Docx, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Colin Everett, Clerk
Alwen Davies, Member Liaison Officer

Apologies

Jane A Eyton-Jones (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Merfyn Thomas
Cllr Glyn Williams

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 None.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31st January 2011

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 31st January were approved as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Change to constitution of stage 3 complaints procedure - the Authority had accepted the amendment and therefore next time a stage 3 complaint hearing will be held an independent member of the Standards Committee will be invited to sit on the panel.

3.2 Ombudsman Complaints Policy - it was noted that the policy had not been published to date.

3.3 The Chair asked whether there was a document containing examples of complaints against members from other Authorities availability. The Clerk replied that he was unaware of such a document and that the Ombudsman's Annual Report reported on cases of significance but as far as the Clerk was aware there had been no complaints against members.

4 REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

4.1 The Clerk had sent members a letter replying to queries asked at a previous meeting. Celia Blomeley had found the information useful and it had clarified some issues for new members. The suggestions that had been raised at previous meetings about the complaints/whistleblowing policies will be dealt with by ACFO Colin Hanks.

4.2 In relation to code of conduct training (which is provided by each council), it was noted that the Fire and Rescue Authority had provided basic information

at the induction day for Members in 2008. A similar event will be held following the 2012 local elections and independent members will be invited to attend.

5 REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORT

5.1 Members had received a copy of the annual report of the Standards Committee which had been presented to the full Fire and Rescue Authority meeting in March 2011. It was noted that independent members' allowances were taken into consideration when the budget was being set.

6 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

6.1 As noted above, independent members will be invited to attend the induction for new Members after the 2012 elections.

6.2 Clerk to ascertain when the Ombudsman Complaints policy will be published.

7 NORTH WALES STANDARDS COMMITTEE FORUM

7.1 Notification had been received from Conwy County Borough Council about the North Wales Standards Committee Forum recently established to share practice and intelligence. The Forum had decided to invite the Chair and monitoring officer of the Fire and Rescue Standards Committee to become members of the forum. The next meeting was scheduled for 10th June 2011.

7.2 The Clerk confirmed that Barry Davies, Monitoring Officer, would be attending and Simon Fysh confirmed that he was also available to attend on 10th June. Mr Fysh confirmed he would report back to members after the meeting.

8 AUTHORITY UPDATE

8.1 Members were informed that the Authority is now able to hold reserves due to legislative changes. A Reserve is defined as a voluntary action by the Authority to set resources aside for future schemes.

8.2 The Annual Governance Statement which forms part of the statement of accounts was approved by the Audit Committee and will be recommended for approval to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

8.3 The Executive Panel had received a presentation on the performance statistics of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service for 2010/11, a copy of this presentation would be sent to members for information.

9 TERM OF OFFICE

9.1 It was noted that Simon Fysh's term of office is due to finish in September 2011. As this is Mr Fysh's second term he is ineligible to be reappointed to the Committee.

9.2 The Clerk thanked Mr Fysh for his work as member and Chair of the Committee.