

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

Minutes of the Executive Panel Meeting of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on 18th July 2011 at Welsh Government, Sarn Mynach, Llandudno Junction. Meeting commenced at 1.30pm.

PRESENT

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|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cllr S Frobisher (Chair) | Denbighshire County Council |
| Cllr A M Jones | Anglesey County Council |
| Cllr L W Davies | Anglesey County Council |
| Cllr M Ll Davies | Denbighshire County Council |
| Cllr P Jeffares | Wrexham County Borough Council |
| Cllr J V Owen | Anglesey County Council |
| Cllr T Roberts | Gwynedd Council |
| Cllr W P Roberts | Conwy County Borough Council |
| Cllr J R Skelland | Wrexham County Borough Council |
| Cllr M Thomas | Conwy County Borough Council |

ALSO PRESENT:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); P Claydon, C Hanks and R Simmons (Assistant Chief Fire Officers); A Jones (Monitoring Officer); G Griffiths (Senior Fire Safety Manager); G Brandrick (Senior Operations Manager); R Fairhead (Senior Development Manager); L Roberts (Control Manager); S Morris (Corporate Planning Manager); T Williams (Corporate Communications Manager); S Teal-Bromley (Executive Support Manager); C Dingle (Finance Manager); S Forrest (Principal Accountant - Conwy County Borough Council); A Davies (Member Liaison Officer).

Apologies:

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|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Cllr B Dunn | Flintshire County Council |
| Cllr G C Evans | Denbighshire County Council |
| Cllr G James | Flintshire County Council |
| Cllr W T Owen | Gwynedd Council |
| D Docx | Deputy Chief Fire Officer |

- 1 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS
 - 1.1 No urgent items had been submitted to the Chair or Clerk for consideration.
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
 - 2.1 None.
- 3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH MAY 2011

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 9th May were approved as a correct record subject to amending 7.8 in the Welsh version of the minutes.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 It was confirmed that a response to the Welsh Assembly Government's proposed Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service 2011-2016 consultation had been submitted.

5 BUDGET ISSUES

5.1 The Chief Fire Officer gave an update about budget issues and reminded Members of the need to save £2.4 million over three years. The £800,000 saving required in the first year was on target to be achieved primarily through the implementation of the new officer structure. In terms of the savings needed in years 2 and 3, the RRP Working Group was meeting on a regular basis to discuss various options as presented to Members in the Budget Options Booklet. The Working Group's proposals will be submitted to the Executive Panel in September with formal proposals being presented to the full Authority meeting in October so that the decision can be incorporated into the budget setting process for 2012/13.

5.2 **RESOLVED to note the update and that proposals will be presented to the Executive Panel in September.**

6 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

6.1 The report was presented to inform Members of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service's performance and activity for 2010-11; it was noted that the figures had not yet been audited. The Corporate Planning Manager led Members through the report.

6.2 Although the total number of calls received had increased by 2% there had been a reduction of 3% in the number of calls which the Service had actually attended.

6.3 There had been a slight decrease of 2% in the total number of fires attended, but an increase in the secondary fires. There had also been a reduction of 7% in deliberate fires. It was pleasing to note that 61% of households where a fire had occurred had a working smoke alarm, compared to 52% in the previous year.

6.4 There had been a 10% decrease in the number of emergency special service incidents, with road traffic collisions representing just under half of the special service calls.

6.5 The reduction in malicious calls attended was due to the expertise of control staff in interrogating callers and also due to sharing facilities with the police control room and therefore having access to more technological systems. Members congratulated staff on being able to identify malicious callers and their ability to analyse the calls successfully.

6.6 **RESOLVED to approve the performance monitoring report covering the period April 2010-March 2011.**

7 FIRE SAFE CIGARETTES

7.1 The Senior Fire Safety Manager informed Members that an EU-compliant standard known as fire safe cigarettes will be introduced in November 2011.

7.2 The Chief Fire Officer's Task Group Report 2007 had highlighted that over 40% of dwelling fires were attributed to smoking materials and therefore the introduction of fire safe cigarettes was welcomed. However, illegal cigarettes which may not meet the Standard will still be a problem and it will take time for the new Standard to have the desired impact.

7.3 **RESOLVED to note that fire safe cigarettes will be introduced in November 2011.**

8 IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT: INCLUDING CORPORATE ASSESSMENT UPDATE

8.1 Alan Morris from the Wales Audit Office was welcomed to the meeting to present the letter from the Auditor General for Wales detailing the work undertaken as required under the Local Government Measure (2009). The letter was overall positive and states that 'the Authority is discharging its duties under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, and is likely to comply with its requirements during this financial year'.

8.2 Mr Morris explained that having undertaken an initial comprehensive report in the first year, a light touch approach will be used in future with comprehensive reports only being undertaken if the Wales Audit Office has concerns.

8.3 Emerging issues which will be considered during the year include reviewing how well the Authority uses ICT to support improvement and how people management activities support improvement. Also, the Wales Audit Office will be monitoring the development of the Authority's financial strategy.

8.4 In terms of public engagement, work will be done with public bodies to share good practice on how to communicate services to the public. Workshops will be held later in the year to help Authorities set objectives and monitor delivery against targets.

8.5 The Vice-Chair thanked the officers who had co-operated with the Wales Audit Office and was pleased to see a report that gave the Authority confidence in how it dealt with issues and he felt the report was a good point of reference for the Authority.

8.6 **RESOLVED to approve the contents of the letter.**

PART II

9 WREXHAM FIRE AND AMBULANCE PROJECT

- 9.1 ACFO Hanks presented the report which gave Members an update on the proposed joint fire and ambulance station development in Wrexham.
- 9.2 Details about the only site available had been presented at the Authority meeting in June. A valuation report of the land was expected at the end of July and officers had sought, and received, reassurance that the cost to the Authority would not exceed the £5m capped.
- 9.3 Members thanked officers for their hard work and perseverance on the project and **RESOLVED to note that**
- (i) the cost report received from the project Supply Chain Partners confirms that the project can be delivered within the allocated budget;**
 - (ii) negotiations on purchasing the land are ongoing and subject to the District Valuer's report;**
 - (iii) the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of WAST will press Welsh Government officers and ministers for an early decision on the 'Final Business Case' after its submission to enable the project to proceed in a timely manner.**