

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Monday 19 June 2017 at Denbighshire County Council Chamber, Ruthin. Meeting commenced at 11am

Councillor

B Apsley
B Blakeley
M Bateman
A Davies
M Ll Davies
A I Dunbar
P Evans
V Gay
R Griffiths
P R Lewis
G Lowe
R E Parry
P H Pemberton
D Rees
R Roberts
P Shotton
J R Skelland
A Tansley
W O Thomas
D Wisinger
G G Williams

Representing

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

Also present:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); C P Everett (Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority); K W Finch (Treasurer to the Authority); D Docx (Deputy Chief Fire Officer); R Fairhead and G Brandrick (Assistant Chief Fire Officers); S Morris (Corporate Planning Manager); T Williams (Corporate Communications Manager); S Forrest (Accountant, Treasurer's Department, Conwy County Borough Council); A Davies (Member Liaison Officer).

APOLOGIES

Councillor

A Daniels
S Glyn
J B Hughes
E W Jones
I D Lloyd
S Lloyd-Williams
N Smith

Representing

Gwynedd Council
Gwynedd Council
Gwynedd Council
Anglesey County Council
Gwynedd Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Conwy County Borough Council

The meeting commenced following a minute's silence for the victims of the Grenfell Tower fire in London.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 There were no declarations of interest.

2 URGENT MATTERS

2.1 The Clerk had received notice of an urgent matter from Cllr Dylan Rees "Implications of the Grenfell Tower disaster".

2.2 The Chief Fire Officer informed members that steps had been taken within the Service to reassure personnel and the community that should a similar incident occur in North Wales, the Service would be adequately prepared to deal with it. It was noted that the three high-rise buildings in North Wales are located in Flintshire and regular exercises are undertaken at those buildings. It was confirmed that the Service continues to advise occupants to stay in their flat should there be a fire in the building.

2.3 The Clerk confirmed that, in 2016, external and internal works had been undertaken at the high-rise buildings to bring them up to the national standard of safety including fitting sprinkler systems. A statement of assurance had been sent to all Flintshire County Councillors following the tragic incident in London. It was noted that the Council has made contact with all residents via visits and letters and this had had a positive reaction from them. Members were grateful for the reassurance provided.

2.5 **RESOLVED to note the information.**

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2017

3.1 The minutes of the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting held on 20 March 2017 were submitted for approval.

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

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 There were no matters arising.

5 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2016-17

5.1 The Treasurer presented the report which gave Members information on the Authority's financial performance for 2016-17. Members were also asked to approve the rollover of earmarked reserves as detailed in the report.

5.2 The Treasurer led members through the report in detail explaining the use of reserves, various overspends and underspends and how the budget is managed. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Treasurer about the report.

5.3 In terms of the grant funding for community safety activities including Phoenix, the CFO reminded members of the Authority's decision that should the WG cease this grant funding then the funded activities would also cease.

5.4 It was noted that the rollover of earmarked reserves was in relation to the following projects:

- New national contract for radio communication – ongoing project and considered prudent to set aside money to cover any additional costs that may be incurred due to delayed timescales at a national level. £300k
- The WG has reduced the community safety grant by 50% therefore considered prudent to carry over this reserve to fund future expenditure £194k
- Replacement of transporter vehicle for the Fleet department – this vehicle was not ready to be purchased in 2016-17 therefore earmarked reserve requested to be set aside for this specific purchase in 2017-18. £54k

5.5 **RESOLVED to**

- (i) note the financial position of the Authority;**
- (ii) approve the rollover of the earmarked reserves as detailed above;**
- (iii) approve the new earmarked reserve as detailed above.**

6 2016-17 PROVISIONAL UNAUDITED PERFORMANCE KEY POINTS

- 6.1 The Corporate Planning Manager delivered a presentation on the provisional unaudited performance figures for 2016-17. This gave Members an early opportunity to see the Service's performance for the last financial year and it was noted that the information will be formally reported through the performance assessment which will be published by 31 October 2017.
- 6.2 The performance figures demonstrated that there continues to be a downward trend in the number of incidents across the majority of performance areas. However, there had been a significant increase in special service calls due to the newly-introduced co-responding scheme and the community assistance team and it was pleasing to note that these initiatives were proving to be valuable to the public.
- 6.3 There had been a reduction in the total number of fires compared to 2015-16 and a reduction in the number of casualties being injured as a result of accidental dwelling fires. Members expressed concern about the number of malicious false alarm calls received and the CFO reassured members that the Service's call challenge policy works exceptionally well and that 48 is far fewer compared to the number of false calls being attended prior to the introduction of the policy.
- 6.4 **RESOLVED to note the information provided and that the audited performance report will be published by 31 October 2017.**

7 ANNUAL REPORT OF BAD DEBTS WRITTEN OFF

- 7.1 At the request of the Authority, the Treasurer submits an annual report by the 30 June following the end of the financial year listing all the debts under £5,000 that had been written off and stating the reasons for write off.
- 7.2 The Treasurer explained that this report had been routinely presented for a number of years. However, in moving forward he proposed that the report should be submitted to the Audit Committee and that any debt written off which was over £1,000 should be reported in accordance with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules.
- 7.3 **RESOLVED to**
- (i) note that the Service has not written off any bad debts between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017;**
 - (ii) agree that future reports should be submitted to the Audit Committee and should include details of any bad debt over £1,000 in accordance with the Authority's Financial Procedure Rules.**

8 APPRECIATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

- 8.1 ACFO Brandrick presented the report which informed Members of the number of complaints and letters of appreciation received from the public for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.
- 8.2 Complaints are recorded as those issues brought to the attention of the Service when members of staff are participating in or carrying out the legitimate business of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service. It was noted that having investigated the 30 complaints received, 9 were upheld. In the same period 129 messages of appreciation through letters, cards, e-mails and social media messages were received expressing appreciation and satisfaction with the Service and its staff.
- 8.3 **RESOLVED to note the number of complaints and expressions of appreciation received.**

9 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES

- 9.1 The Clerk presented the annual report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) which sets out changes to members remuneration which will come into effect on the date of the annual meeting on 19 June 2017.
- 9.2 **RESOLVED to**
- (i) **note the IRPW's determinations in relation to members' allowances and remuneration, for implementation as of 19 June 2017;**
 - (ii) **give delegated authority to the Clerk to update the schedule of member remuneration within the Authority's constitution and to make any necessary amendments to the 2017/18 schedule from time to time during the municipal year, in order to reflect any changes in membership of the Authority, or as a result of any supplementary reports issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.**

10 FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEMES LOCAL PENSION BOARD – ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

- 10.1 The DCFO presented the annual report of the Local Pension Board which detailed the work of the board during the last financial year.
- 10.2 **RESOLVED to approve the local pension board annual report 2016-17 for publication on the Authority's website.**