

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the Executive Panel meeting of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Thursday, 21st September 2006 at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, St. Asaph. Meeting commenced at 10am.

Present:

Councillor

Representing

T Roberts (Chairman)
EC George (Vice-Chairman)

Gwynedd Council
Wrexham County Borough Council

J M Vaughan
S Frobisher
J A Smith
J Ovens (substitute)
E F Evans
E Morgan Jones
W T Owen
M Williams
J A Roberts

Conwy County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Denbighshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Flintshire County Council
Gwynedd Council
Gwynedd Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Ynys Môn County Council

Also present:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); I R Miller (Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority); S Forrest (Treasurer's Department, Conwy County Borough Council); C Enness (Deputy Chief Fire Officer); P S Claydon (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Service Delivery); C Hanks (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Service Support); D Docx (Assistant Chief Officer, Finance and Procurement); S Morris (Corporate Planning Manager); W A Murphy (Senior Operations Manager); D G Roberts (Senior Fire Safety Manager); L Roberts (Fire Control Manager); H Angel (Chief Officer's Advisory Team Support Officer); H Ellis (Human Resources Manager); G Watson (Corporate Communications Manager) and Rh Evans (Member Liaison Officer).

PART I

1) Apologies

Councillor

Representing

S C Jones
D Barratt
G M Craddock
W J Chorlton

Conwy County Borough Council
Flintshire County Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Ynys Môn County Council

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Sharon Frobisher to her first meeting of the Executive Panel. In the light of Councillor David Jones' extended absence from the Authority Denbighshire County Council had appointed Councillor Frobisher as one of its representatives on the Panel. A welcome was also extended to Mr David Johnson, Chief Fire Officer of Essex Fire and Rescue Service, who was attending as an observer.

2) Notice of Urgent Matters

Members were informed by the Chairman that no items had been submitted to him or the Clerk for consideration.

3) Minutes

The following minutes were submitted:

- i. Executive Panel meeting held on 18th May 2006.

Resolved: - to approve the minutes as a true and correct record of proceedings

4) Matters Arising

The following matter arose from the minutes:

Page 9, Item 12 – Co-responding – update on National situation: Members were informed by the Chief Fire Officer that the High Court hearings in relation to co-responding and the contractual arrangements of the 2003 Pay and Conditions of Service Agreement were due to commence on 16th October 2006. Both cases were expected to be heard consecutively. It was anticipated that the decisions on both cases would be announced on the same day. Dependent on the outcome of the hearings the Chief Fire Officer advised that officers were hopeful of being in a position to progress co-responding pilots in North Wales by the end of October.

5) Audit Strategy 2005/06

The Chairman welcomed Mr Matthew Edwards, Assignment Manager, Wales Audit Office (WAO) to the meeting to present members with the Authority's Audit Strategy for 2005/06. Prior to detailing various aspects of the Strategy listed in the report Mr Edwards explained the WAO's statutory duties and its roles and responsibilities in relation to auditing the Authority's accounts and financial arrangements. In relation to the Financial Audit, members were advised that the audit process was nearing completion and that the WAO should be in a position to issue its audit opinion on the 2005/06 Statement of Accounts by the end of October 2006.

The Performance Audit was also progressing well with the audit work on the Performance Management Framework (PMF) expected to be finalised within a matter of weeks. A meeting was to be held in the near future to progress the assessment of Information Management and Technology (IM&T) arrangements and the 2005/06 Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) was to be audited as in previous years. It was anticipated that the new audit requirement which necessitated a Use of Resources Conclusion to be issued, would be finalised before the end of December 2006.

It was the WAO's intention to present the Communication of Audit Matters to Those Charged with Governance – ISA (UK and Ireland) 260 report (previously known as an SAS 610 report) to the Authority at its next meeting on 23rd October 2006. Mr Edwards advised members that he did not envisage any change to the WAO's audit fees, as quoted in the report. Members agreed with Councillor E C George's view that the Chairman, in addition to the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer, should also be consulted in future when drawing up audit strategies. Mr Edwards agreed to this request. It was:

Resolved: - to note the report and that, in addition to the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer, the Chairman should also be included in the discussions when drawing up future audit strategies.

The Chairman thanked Mr Edwards for attending and for presenting his report.

6) Fire and Rescue Service Funding

The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) introduced her report (previously circulated) which informed members of recent correspondence from the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) regarding possible alterations to the current funding arrangement for fire and rescue authorities in Wales. Prior to commencing the discussion on this item of business copies of Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's letter of response to the Minister's letter were circulated to members for information purposes. The Panel was informed by the Chief Fire Officer that as far as he was aware South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority were in a similar position to North Wales in that they had submitted a letter of acknowledgement to the Minister and were waiting to discuss their response at a meeting of the full Authority.

Members were informed by the Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) that the Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration's letter, dated 12th June 2006, sought the Authority's view on the proposal to limit any annual increase in its budget to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) increase awarded to its constituent unitary authorities. The letter had been totally unexpected and the proposal seemed to take away local determination and decision making and increase central control of public funding. A change of this nature would require the combination orders of the three Welsh fire authorities to be amended. Members were informed by the Chairman that the Minister's proposal had been totally unforeseen. She had not once alluded to the subject

at any of the Wales Fire and Rescue Liaison Group (WF&RSLG) meetings. Mrs Docx proceeded to explain that North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority had a healthy working relationship with its constituent authorities. This in turn paid dividends with the authorities agreeing to above average increases in their contributions to the North Wales Combined Fire Service Fund. As a result the Authority had been able to undertake additional Community Fire Safety (CFS) work, the success of which was reported in the Performance Monitoring report to be discussed later on the business agenda.

Councillor E C George was of the view that the current funding system had worked well over the past ten years. Due to the system's flexibility the Authority not only had the option to go back to the constituent authorities to request additional contributions if required, but also had the option to return any unspent or unallocated contributions to the authorities. As the RSG settlements for North Wales local authorities varied considerably from one authority to another, the award of an average of the increases to the Fire and Rescue Authority had the potential to have a detrimental effect on its capacity and flexibility to deliver services that met identified local needs. The Panel was of the view that the Minister's letter proposed a funding system that would effectively cap fire and rescue authorities; capping was a measure fervently opposed by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). Members were of the view that the Authority should write a letter to the Minister, similar to the one submitted by Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, rejecting her proposals. It was:

Resolved: - *that a letter be sent to the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration*

- i. expressing the Authority's general contentment for the current funding system; and*
- ii. rejecting her proposal to amend the Combination Orders so that the annual uplift in net expenses could not exceed the annual uplift in the Revenue Support Grant as determined annually by the Welsh Assembly Government.*

7) The Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced his report (previously circulated) which updated members on the introduction of the new Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006, the amendments to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 and the relaxation in the pension tax regime in respect of providing an opportunity for a person to draw a pension and continue in employment. He explained that the Firefighters' Pension (Wales) Scheme (Amendment) Order 2006, which came into force on 23rd June 2006 with retrospective effect from 6th April 2006, amended and consolidated the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992. Authorities were still awaiting the enactment of the new Firefighters Pension Scheme (Wales) Order 2006. The Panel was then given a detailed explanation by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer of the amendments to the 1992 Scheme including: the closure of the

Scheme to new recruits from 6th April 2006, the transfer of the current death and injury benefits to a free-standing Firefighters' Compensation Scheme, new arrangements for ill-health awards; and following the relaxation of tax rules, for the first time, the opportunities that now existed, dependent on certain criteria being met, for personnel to take some or all of their benefits whilst at the same time being re-employed by the Authority. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer then proceeded to detail the new Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 to members. He advised the Panel that, when established, the Scheme would be open to all firefighters, including personnel working the retained duty system (RDS). As the previous Scheme had been closed to all new entrants since 6th April 2006 and the new Scheme had not yet been enacted, bridging arrangements had been made so that new whole-time and part-time recruits could be placed in the old Scheme temporarily until the new Scheme was up and running. In answer to members' questions the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that, following the changes to income tax rules which allowed retiring personnel to be re-employed, he envisaged that the majority of employees wishing to take this opportunity would be re-employed in their current roles. Members:

Resolved: - to

- i. note the information presented on the Firefighters' Pension Schemes; and*
- ii. delegate to the Chief Fire Officer the responsibility to formulate a policy taking into account the legislative changes to the pension scheme, to include the re-employment of staff following retirement.*

8) Determination of efficiency savings within 2006/07 to cover rank to role assimilation

The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) presented members with her progress report (previously circulated) regarding the rank to role assimilation process and its potential costs. She explained that the report had been prepared in response to members' request when setting the 2006/07 budget that any increase in expenditure due to the move from rank to role should be financed from efficiency savings arising from the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The Panel was advised that due to the fact that the all-Wales approach for the substantive move from rank to role had not been ratified until June 2006, with a commencement date of 1st July 2006, it would be difficult at present to determine accurately the increased costs and the savings necessary to cover them. The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) informed members of the appeals process that was underway and advised that current cost indications were as detailed in the report. She was also confident that the budgetary implications for 2006/07 could be met from managed underspends and that any back pay could be financed from the rank to role provision. It would be from 2007/08 onwards that efficiency savings would be required to finance recurring costs. Once the appeals had been heard and the extent of these costs were known the Panel would be presented with a further report which would include options on how to deal with any additional costs. The Panel:

Resolved: - to note the content of the report.

9) “Beyond Boundaries” – Beecham Report

The Clerk introduced his report (previously circulated) which detailed the main recommendations of the Beecham Report and sought the Panel to consider what steps the Fire and Rescue Authority might take in response. He informed the Panel of the background that led to the establishment of the Review Team and the remit they had been given. The Review Team had concluded that public sector service delivery in a small country the size of Wales should be based on the common principles of being citizen-centred, efficient and accountable. These could be achieved by a combination of different approaches and factors including more joint/partnership working and greater use of scrutiny at both national and local level. North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority had already been involved in a number of collaborative and joint working ventures. It had also, through the modernisation process, demonstrated its willingness to engage with the public – one of the Review’s key messages - through its Risk Reduction Planning (RRP) and CFS work. Councillor J Vaughan agreed with the Clerk’s suggestion that local authorities’ scrutiny committees could in future play a far greater role in scrutinising fire and rescue authorities’ decisions. The same principle could also be applied vice versa.

Councillor E C George felt that the Authority should in future engage far more with its constituent authorities on a number of issues. He was of the view that the proposed Partnership Action Contracts (PACTs) may provide ideal opportunities for fire and rescue authorities to push forward issues and initiatives on which they had been constantly lobbying. He cited the installation of sprinkler systems in all new and refurbished schools as a prime example of an issue on which the Authority had persistently lobbied, and which may benefit from a PACT to drive it forward. He indicated to the Panel that he intended to raise the issue of school sprinklers at the national Community Fire Safety Committee’s (CFSC) meeting on 25th September 2006. In his view the Assembly should earmark an amount of money within the funding provided for new or refurbished school buildings specifically for the provision of sprinkler systems. The Chairman said that in his view the Fire and Rescue Authority should be visiting all the constituent authorities to stress the importance and the benefits of installing such systems.

Members were reminded by the Chief Fire Officer that the Service had been persistently pushing for the installation of sprinkler systems in new and refurbished schools for a number of years, but to no avail. He requested members’ assistance to drive this matter forward within their own authorities as the effects of school fires were devastating, both economically and socially. A number of authorities had in the past cited the cost of sprinkler installation as the main factor which mitigated against their inclusion in building plans. Education authorities were of the opinion that the ability to provide an additional classroom far outweighed the benefits of installing sprinklers. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the most effective way in which authorities would be compelled to install

sprinkler systems would be if Building Regulations were changed. At present Building Regulations was not a devolved matter although it was believed that, under the powers of the Government of Wales Act, which would come into force in May 2007, the Welsh Assembly Government had highlighted this area as one area it may seek to apply to have the powers transferred to the National Assembly. According to the Chief Fire Officer the cost of installing a sprinkler system in a new build school would add approximately an extra 1% to the cost of the project. The cost would be slightly higher in the case of a refurbished school. Overall this cost would be minimal compared to the loss of a school, or more importantly a life. Members were of the view that education authorities also needed to take into account the economies they would reap in the form of lower insurance premiums if they invested in sprinklers. The Chief Fire Officer congratulated Denbighshire County Council and the Assembly on securing additional funding which meant that the new school due to be built in Prestatyn in the near future would include the installation of a sprinkler system. Following a detailed discussion it was:

Resolved: - *to note the main recommendations of the Beecham Report and that further discussion on how the Authority can incorporate the Report's recommendations into fire and rescue service strategies and policies, and integrated into future RRP's be undertaken at the RRP Working Group/Executive Panel meeting on 9th October 2006.*

10) Representation on the Fire and Rescue Authority's Standards Committee

The Clerk introduced his report (previously circulated) seeking the Panel to appoint a member of the Authority to serve on the Standards Committee in place of Councillor Sharon Frobisher. He explained that there was no legal bar on Councillor Frobisher continuing to serve on the Standards Committee now that she was a member of the Executive Panel, but it had been the Authority's practice in the past not to have members serving on both the Executive Panel and the Standards Committee. Following the Clerk's letter to members requesting expressions of interest to serve on the Standards Committee two members had registered their interest. Both Councillors Margaret Griffith and Cliff Shone were eligible for appointment, but as the Authority's other member on the Committee was one of Gwynedd Council's representatives it may therefore be preferable to appoint Councillor Shone to the Standards Committee. It was:

Resolved: - *that Councillor Cliff Shone be appointed to the Standards Committee until the next ordinary elections in 2008, and to invite the Authority to ratify his appointment at its meeting on 23rd October.*

11) "Fire 1st" – Rhyl Community Fire Station Project

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support) introduced his report (previously circulated) providing the Panel with a preliminary update on the Rhyl FireFirst project. Copies of the "Space for everyone" leaflet, the public consultation document containing the plans for the new station, were distributed to all

present. Prior to detailing the contents of his report the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support) introduced Mr Stephen Roberts, Head of the joint North Wales Police and Fire and Rescue Service Facilities Management Department, to members.

Councillor J A Smith was advised by the Clerk that the fact that he sat on the Project Board did not constitute a personal interest which would preclude him from participating in the discussion. Members were briefed on the background to the project, the research work that had taken place, the facilities that would be available at the station and the anticipated timetable for the building work now that the county council had granted planning permission. Ann Jones AM would be hosting a reception at the Senedd in Cardiff Bay on Tuesday 26th September at which an exhibition detailing the project would be staged. Members of the Rhyl Firefirst project team, Principal Officers and the Authority Chairman would be on hand to answer Assembly Members' questions. It was hoped that the WAG would, prior to the reception, announce the level of funding it was going to allocate towards the project. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Hanks informed the Panel that it was his intention, following the announcement of the grant allocation, to submit a more detailed report to the Panel's meeting on 9th October 2006 containing detailed costs and funding options for the project. In reply to a question from Councillor J A Roberts the Chief Fire Officer advised that the WAG had given an indication of the grant amount to be awarded but, as this figure was yet to be confirmed, it would have to be reported under Part II business.

Councillor J Vaughan, whilst welcoming the initiative and the concept, expressed her reservations about the long term sustainability of the project. In her experience of similar community based projects there was a tendency, after a few years, for them to struggle to secure continued funding. In her view the Authority needed to be certain that the partnerships involved with the project were robust and long-term ones. In reply to Councillor Vaughan's fears the Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed members that the Service's County Safety Manager for Denbighshire, Mr Alyn Edwards, had done a great deal of work with outside organisations and agencies, including Social Services, to warrant the viability of the project.

Councillor J A Roberts enquired whether, under future plans, Holyhead which had four Communities First areas would be chosen as a site for a community fire station. In replying the Chief Fire Officer reminded members that the concept of community fire stations had featured in the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), the development of the stations would be a long term project undertaken on a rolling basis, dependent on refurbishment and local needs. Rhyl had been chosen as the site for the first one solely because the station was in need of refurbishment and the site had presented itself for redevelopment following the relocation of the Service's Headquarters to St. Asaph. The long-term ambition would be for all stations to become community fire stations. The Vice-Chairman congratulated all involved with the project and said that, in his view, rural fire stations might benefit greatly from becoming

community stations but cautioned the Authority against duplicating local services. It was:

Resolved: - to note the contents of the report.

12) Performance Monitoring

The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) introduced her report (previously circulated) providing members with information relating to the Service's performance against various performance indicators (PIs) during the first quarter, from 1st April to 30th June, of the 2006/07 reporting year. Before summarising areas of significance she explained that the presentation of the quarterly report, and an update sheet detailing the statistics for the months of July and August distributed at the meeting, was an essential component of good corporate governance. Panel members were advised that even though the Authority was performing well in areas such as the number of fires in dwellings, it was disappointing to report that the number of deliberate fires was on the increase. Further work was therefore necessary with partner organisations through joint working groups such as the Arson Reduction Team. It was disappointing to report that the Authority would not meet its target this year in relation to deaths from accidental fires in dwellings. But, to the contrary, injuries from accidental fires in dwellings were on the decrease; whilst the number of malicious false alarms and false alarms from automated fire alarms (AFAs) were either on target or below last year's figures. The Assistant Chief Officer (Finance and Procurement) informed members that, for the first time since the performance measurement had been recorded, 50% of dwellings to which the Service had attended a fire call had been fitted with smoke alarms which had activated. This proved that the Authority's CFS work was working and people were taking heed of the advice given. In relation to sickness absences it was pleasing to report that the Authority's sickness management procedure seemed to be paying dividends as both Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) in this area were showing an improvement in comparison to the same period last year, albeit the targets set were not being met. It was also important to bear in mind that the targets the Authority had set itself in this particular area were extremely challenging ones. In reply to a question on whether the change in shift at day-crewed stations had impacted on the sickness absence rate officers advised that this was not the case, the sickness absence rate had actually decreased immediately following the change but had increased lately due to long term sickness caused by an injury. Due to staff shortages and additional workload the target for the payment of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days had not been met.

In answer to members' questions the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Delivery) advised that the number of successful prosecutions brought in relation to deliberate fires had increased over the past two years. He also stressed that the level of evidence required by the police to secure a successful prosecution was far greater than would be required by the fire and rescue service to classify a fire as a case of deliberate ignition. On the issue of the types of dwellings at which

fire alarms had been fitted but had not activated in the course of a fire, the Panel was advised that local authorities and housing associations had been proactive in fitting smoke alarms in their properties but, once fitted, the onus was on the tenant to check the device's working order on a regular basis and not to remove batteries for other purposes. Officers undertook to supply with the next quarterly report a breakdown, per unitary authority area, of the ownership type of dwellings at which, although fitted, smoke alarms had not activated during a fire.

Councillor J Vaughan enquired whether fires in static caravans posed a greater threat to life than house fires. She was advised by officers that static caravans were no more of a life risk than any other dwelling. Sadly, it was almost invariably the individuals' lifestyles that led to fires igniting. These types of dwellings would benefit from the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 that was due to come into force on 1st October 2006.

The Panel was advised that the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Delivery) was now the chair of a committee which had been set up for the purpose of addressing the problem of false alarms from AFAs in establishments such as hospitals and universities. The committee was currently developing a strategy, based on the Chief Fire Officers' Association's (CFOA) policy, on how to deal with false AFA activations in these kinds of establishments. Although the appointment of "fire champions" as introduced in English universities by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG,) had not been considered, it had transpired that certain universities did impose financial penalties on students involved in mischief making which included the activation of fire alarms. The Clerk reminded members that the Authority had on numerous occasions made representations to the Assembly for it to include the ability to charge for responding to repeated false alarms from AFAs in its recent Fire and Rescue Services (Charging) (Wales) Order 2006, but the Assembly had refused to take this on board. It therefore seemed that some institutions had secured an additional source of funding by fining pranksters for activating alarms, whilst the Service was attending these incidents at the taxpayers cost. The fact that these establishments were operating fining regimes from which they benefited financially may therefore be a disincentive for them to reduce the number of false alarm activations. During the above discussion Councillor E C George declared an interest as a member of the Court of University of Wales. Prior to the conclusion of the discussion the Chief Fire Officer offered to furnish members with a copy of a report discussed at the WF&RSLG meeting on 18th September on the subject of AFAs in health premises. The Panel:

Resolved: -

- i. to note the contents of the performance monitoring report;*
- ii. that a supplementary paper be included with the next scheduled quarterly Performance Monitoring report giving a breakdown of the number of local authority, housing association owned houses and privately owned houses attributable per each unitary authority area for*

- BV209ii (the percentage of fires in dwellings where a smoke alarm was fitted, but did not activate) so that members may determine if a specific course of action is required to deal with the problem; and*
- iii. that a copy of the report discussed by the WF&RSLG at its meeting on 18th September 2006 on AFAs in health premises be copied to all members.*

13) Extensions of Sick Pay

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced his report (previously circulated) informing members of the decisions taken by the Chief Fire Officer following consultation with the Chairman in respect of the granting of extensions of sick pay. Members:

Resolved: - *to note the report*

14) Urgent Matters

None.

15) Date(s) of future meetings

Following a discussion members:

Resolved: - *that the next Executive Panel meeting, scheduled for Monday 9th October 2006 at Fire and Rescue Service's Headquarters, St. Asaph, commence at 11.30am.*

The Chairman informed members that it was recommended that the remaining items of business on the meeting's agenda be discussed without the public or Press present. It was:

Resolved: - *pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because it was likely that there would be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 8, 9 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.*

PART II

16) Estates Matters

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support) introduced his report (previously circulated) informing members of two matters relating to the Authority's estate. Prior to commencing the discussion Councillors E C George and M Williams declared an interest as Wrexham County Borough Council representatives on the Authority in the matter relating to Wrexham fire station. They were advised by the Clerk that they would be allowed to speak on the matter at this meeting as the report presented was for information purposes and no decision was being

sought at this stage. He agreed to research further whether Wrexham County Borough Council representatives would be permitted to take part in the debate and vote when a decision was required on the matter. Councillor J A Roberts, as an employee of the Welsh Ambulance Service, was informed that he did not need to declare an interest in the matter. Panel members were advised by officers that the reports presented to them contained all the relevant information pertaining to both matters. The Chief Fire Officer advised that before any decision would be taken on the Wrexham issue he would recommend that Panel members undertake a site visit to acquaint themselves with the issues surrounding the project.

Prior to discussing the matter relating to Llandudno fire station Councillor J Vaughan was advised by the Clerk that there was no reason for her to declare an interest as a Conwy County Borough councillor as the council was not involved with the matter under discussion. Councillor Vaughan enquired whether the new shopping complex that was due to open near the fire station during October 2006 would impede the Service's access to and exit from the station. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Hanks advised her that officers had been in contact with the council's Highways Department regarding signage and road markings in that area. The Panel:

Resolved: - to

- i. note the information regarding the Wrexham fire station site and that a site visit be arranged prior to any decision being taken on the matter; and*
- ii. authorised the Chief Fire Officer to delete from the capital programme, the purchase of additional land and construction of a new access road at Llandudno Fire Station, representing a credit of £36,535.*

17) Update on Capital Programme

Prior to the commencement of this item of business Councillor J A Roberts declared an interest as the Chairman of Ynys Môn County Council's Planning Committee and withdrew from the discussion and the vote.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Service Support) then introduced his report (previously circulated) updating members on the Facilities Management Department's capital programme. He explained that the purpose of this regular report was to keep members informed of the Authority's capital programme and the progress of various projects. He also informed members of the anticipated amount of grant allocation the WAG was expected to announce it would award the Rhyl FireFirst community fire station project. It was:

Resolved: - to note the contents of this report.

Meeting concluded at 12 noon.

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

Signed: T Roberts

Dated: 12 December, 2006