

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the Executive Panel Meeting of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on 11th May 2009 at the Fire and Rescue Headquarters, St Asaph. Meeting commenced at 2pm.

PRESENT

Cllr T Roberts (Chairman)	Gwynedd Council
Cllr S Frobisher (Vice-Chairman)	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr M Ll Davies	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr B Dunn	Flintshire County Council
Cllr G C Evans	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr T Evans	Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr A M Jones	Anglesey County Council
Cllr W T Owen	Gwynedd Council
Cllr W P Roberts	Conwy County Borough Council
Cllr M Thomas	Conwy County Borough Council

ALSO PRESENT:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); D Docx (Deputy Chief Fire Officer); K Finch (Treasurer); C Everett (Clerk); C Hanks, P Claydon and R Simmons (Assistant Chief Fire Officers); G Griffiths (Senior Operations Manager); G Brandrick (Service Development Manager); L Roberts (Control Room Manager); S Morris (Corporate Planning Manager); T Williams (Corporate Communications Manager); I Williams (Executive Support Manager); A Davies (Member Liaison Officer); Joanne West, KPMG.

Apologies:

Cllr G James	Flintshire County Council
Cllr P Jeffares	Wrexham County Borough Council
Cllr E M Jones	Gwynedd County Council
Cllr J V Owen	Anglesey County Council
R Fairhead	Senior Fire Safety Manager

1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2009 were approved as a true and correct record.

2 MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 3.2 – Fortek Rappel – ACFO Hanks had received a letter from Fortek Rappel regarding paragraph 3.2 of the report submitted. **RESOLVED to delete the last sentence of paragraph 3.2 in the report in the interests of dispute avoidance.**

3 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RISK REDUCTION PLAN WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 The paper was presented to inform Members of the Risk Reduction Plan (RRP) working group's proposals for the draft Risk Reduction Planning consultation document.
- 3.2 The DCFO explained that the RRP working group had discussed the consultation document in detail at an earlier meeting. The document had been written in a different style with no specific action plans. It was hoped that the new format would enable a discussion with the public about the services they would like to see provided by the NWFRS.
- 3.3 There were four key areas in the consultation document, namely: working with young people; retained duty system; co-responding; efficiencies. The RRP working group had recommended the following amendments to the document:
- Page 7 – emphasise that road traffic collisions are now a statutory duty.
 - Working with young people section – additional detail on costs of courses and how they are currently funded. Add slogan 'prevention costs less than punishment'. Amend consultation question 'if external funding is withdrawn should the Fire and Rescue Authority direct resources to continue to deliver this work'.
 - Retained Duty System (RDS) – page 19 – need to re-word last few paragraphs. Need to emphasise support to the RDS. Consultation question on page 20 to read 'do you agree that we redirect resources from other areas of budget and increase flexibility to increase availability in rural areas?'.
 - Co-responding – currently provide first aid training (including refresher) to personnel as a health and safety requirement. Separately the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (NWFRS) does provide co-responding training for another organisation but not for NWFRS employees. Consultation question should be around public opinion on whether the Authority should introduce co-responding given the potential financial and employee difficulties.

- Efficiencies – table on page 25 – consultation question to be more direct and ask which option from the table should the Authority pursue.

3.4 RESOLVED

- (i) to agree the amendments made by the RRP working group;**
- (ii) that the document would be sent to members of the Executive Panel requesting any comments to be submitted within 7 days;**
- (iii) to note that the document would be presented to the full Authority on 15th June for approval with the public consultation starting soon after.**

4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

4.1 Shân Morris gave members a brief presentation on the provisional performance figures for 2008-09.

4.2 Compared to the previous year the number of:

- all calls received had increased. This was due to figures being measured more precisely following changes in the control mobilising system;
- fires overall had reduced, however, there had been a small increase in chimney fires, possibly due to people trying to save money by having wood/coal fires last winter;
- road traffic collisions, not involving fire, had increased - a result of changes in the mobilising procedures to road traffic collisions rather than an increase in RTCs;
- deliberate fires had reduced.

4.3 Other figures such as those relating to fire in the home displayed a similar profile to last year.

4.4 It was noted that 31,180 home fire safety checks had been carried out. Members wished to put on record their thanks and congratulations to all staff involved.

4.5 In response to a Member's question it was confirmed that high risk premises and business premises would receive regular return visits. The smoke alarms fitted in domestic properties had a 10-year battery and it was anticipated that the new Records Management System would help with the programme of return visits.

- 4.6 The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that 30,000 home fire safety checks would not be sustainable in future years and that this would be part of the work in the RRP.
- 4.7 It was noted that the Chief Officer's Task Group had been recalled. Part of its remit was to review agreements established with Local Authorities and various agencies for referrals from them.
- 4.8 **RESOLVED to note the presentation and information received.**

Part II

5 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009-10

- 5.1 The report was presented to provide Members with an update on the Facilities Management Department's capital programme.
- 5.2 Modernisation and compliance works have been completed at Beaumaris, Buckley and Chirk. Work on Llangefni fire station is due to begin in the summer and a response is awaited from Gwynedd County Council on a suitable plot for a new fire station in Nefyn. Rhyl Community Fire Station had been completed but funds had been set aside within the project budget to convert the garages into additional storage facilities and this small project would be tendered in mid-May 2009. Betws y Coed project was due to be completed by March 2010.
- 5.3.1 Wrexham Tripartite (police, ambulance and fire) Resource Centre – the outline business case had been submitted to the Assembly. Once approved, a full business case would be drawn up for submission to the Assembly by February 2010 with a view to commencing construction thereafter.
- 5.3.2 The Treasurer informed Members that due to the economic climate, the capital programme would have to be reviewed to meet the costs for the tripartite centre. It was anticipated that the Local Government finance settlement would affect capital funding as much as revenue.
- 5.4 Work on fire stations and premises that needed to be upgraded to comply with the disability and equality legislation would be undertaken during 2009/10 to meet requirements as far as reasonably practicable.
- 5.5 Deeside Fire Station – a feasibility study and report had concluded that the most cost effective solution would be to modernise and extend the existing fire station. However, in accordance with the capital investment matrix the fire station at Wrexham was currently a priority.
- 5.6 **RESOLVED to note the update.**