

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE PANEL

Minutes of the Executive Panel Meeting of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on 11 February 2019 at Fire and Rescue Headquarters, St Asaph. Meeting commenced at 10am.

PRESENT

Councillors:

M Ll Davies (Chair)	Denbighshire County Council
M Bateman	Flintshire County Council
B Blakeley	Denbighshire County Council
M Dixon	Wrexham County Borough Council
V Gay	Flintshire County Council
R Griffiths	Anglesey County Council
J B Hughes	Gwynedd Council
E W Jones	Anglesey County Council
P R Lewis	Conwy County Borough Council
R E Parry	Conwy County Borough Council

ALSO PRESENT:

S A Smith (Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive); K Finch (Treasurer); C Everett (Clerk); R Fairhead and K Roberts (Assistant Chief Fire Officers); S Morris (Assistant Chief Officer); T Williams (Corporate Communications Manager); A Davies (Members Liaison Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

A Tansley Conwy County Borough Council

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

2.1 None.

3. NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 There were no urgent matters.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2018

4.1 The minutes of the last meeting were submitted for approval.

4.2 **RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true and correct record.**

5 MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 Firefighters' pay – the CFO informed members that discussions are still ongoing.
- 5.2 Provision of the clerk/monitoring officer role – it was noted that the interviews will be undertaken on 22 February with a view to asking the Authority to confirm the award of the contract at its March meeting.
- 5.3 White Paper - the Authority's response to the White Paper had been submitted to the Welsh Government; the CFO thanked all members and their respective county councils for their individual responses.
- 5.4 HSE Inspection – the inspection had been undertaken in October 2018; it was confirmed that no major issues had been identified. The HSE will not be issuing an official report, but all FRs inspected have been invited to send a representative to a meeting where good practice that was identified will be shared.

6 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 6.1 The report was presented to inform members about the Service's activity and performance against improvement objectives.
- 6.2 ACO Morris led members through the report and highlighted the following points relating to the months of April-December 2018:
 - 4,209 fires, false alarms and special service incidents attended in North Wales;
 - 1,019 secondary fires were attended, which was 42% higher than the average number attended in the preceding three years; it is recognised that the number of secondary fires attended by the Service does fluctuate;
 - the number of accidental fires in dwellings reduced by 16% compared with the same period in 2017 (291 to 244);
 - in terms of grassland, woodland and crop fires, the Service had attended 407 *accidental* fires and 181 *deliberate* fires;
 - the number of calls for assistance that later turned out to be false alarms increased by 8% to 1,760 compared with 1,625 during the same period in 2017;
 - there had been 5 fatalities at accidental dwelling fires in North Wales;
 - in terms of injuries, 11 people were recorded as having sustained a slight injury and 2 people as having sustained a serious injury in accidental dwelling fires.

6.3 Members were grateful for the detailed report and were given the opportunity to ask questions which were duly answered by officers.

6.4 **RESOLVED to note the contents of the performance monitoring report.**

7 RESPONSE TO THE REPLIES RECEIVED TO THE AUTHORITY'S PUBLIC CONSULTATION 2018

7.1 The report was presented to ask members to approve a draft response to the written replies submitted to the Authority during its 2018 public consultation.

7.2 At the December Authority meeting, Members had received information about the response to the public consultation and as a result of this and additional information provided, the Authority decided to increase its revenue budget by £1.7 million and to continue to pursue its two existing improvement and wellbeing objectives in 2019/20.

7.3 Members noted that publishing a response from the Authority to acknowledge the key points contained within written responses and how they informed decision-making is considered good practice.

7.4 **RESOLVED to approve the publication of the draft response from the Authority to the comments received during the public consultation 2018.**

8 FINAL DRAFT IMPROVEMENT AND WELL-BEING PLAN 2019-20

8.1 ACO Morris presented the final draft of the Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019/20 for approval by the full Authority at its next meeting on 18 March 2019.

8.2 It was noted that the Authority is required to publish improvement and well-being objectives and to have involved the public and other stakeholders in the process of developing those objectives.

8.3 Members were reminded of the two long-term objectives which were agreed by the Authority in 2017/18 and these have been agreed to be continued. The objectives are:

A: To support people to prevent accidental dwelling fires and stay safe if they do occur; and

B: To facilitate high quality, responsive and better integrated fire and rescue services so that prevention activity and emergency response continue to be available when and where required, affordably, equitably and on the basis of risk.

8.4 Members felt that the document was well written and thanked ACO Morris and the team who had been involved in its development.

8.5 **RESOLVED to approve the final draft Improvement and Well-being Plan 2019-20 for submission to the full Authority meeting on 18 March 2019.**

9 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROVISION OF NATIONAL RESILIENCE ASSETS IN NORTH WALES

9.1 The report was presented to inform Members of changes to the provision of national resilience assets in North Wales.

9.2 ACFO Fairhead explained that the national resilience assets were introduced following the 9/11 terrorist attack; the UK Government provided funding to develop a number of national resilience assets to deal with potential terrorist attacks in the UK. Those assets included Incident Response Units (IRUs) which were developed to decontaminate large numbers of people following any large scale chemical or biological releases.

9.3 Following a recent review the planning assumptions and methodology for providing mass decontamination has identified that smaller, more agile units would be more effective than IRUs as they would take less time to set up and start to decontaminate people. Consequently, the IRU based in Bangor will be replaced with a Mass Decontamination Unit (MDU) during 2019/20. It was noted that this change will have no financial impact on the Authority as the assets and ongoing revenue costs are funded in Wales through a grant from the Welsh Government.

9.4 **RESOLVED to note:**

- (i) **the result of the UK Government's revised planning assumptions and methodology for determining requirements for National Resilience assets in the UK; and**
- (ii) **the decision to replace the Incident Response Unit based in Bangor with a Mass Decontamination Unit during 2019/20.**