

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of **North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority** held on **Monday 19 January 2026** virtually via **Teams**. Meeting commenced at **09.00**.

Councillor

Dylan Rees (Chair)
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)
Bryan Apsley
Tina Claydon
Paul Cunningham
Ann Davies
Chrissy Gee
Ian Hodge
Chris Hughes
John Brynmor Hughes (left 09:48)
Gareth R Jones
John Ifan Jones (left 09:53)
Charlie McCoubrey
Gwynfor Owen (left 09:47)
Beverley Parry-Jones
Arwyn Herald Roberts
Rondo Roberts
Gareth Sandilands
Dale Selvester
Gareth Williams
Antony Wren

Representing

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

Also present:

Dawn Docx	Chief Fire Officer (CFO)
Helen MacArthur	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Justin Evans	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Anthony Jones	Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)
Dafydd Edwards	Treasurer
Gareth Owens	Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Matt Powell	Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Elgan Roberts	Head of Finance and Procurement
Steve Morris	Head of ICT
Llinos Evans	Head of Corporate Communications
Lee Bourne	Area Manager Training and Development
Elin Hughes	Culture Champion
Tom Weston	Culture Champion
Tim Owen	Service Transformation Manager
Heledd Davies	Atebol Translation Services
Lisa Allington	Members' Services

The meeting commenced at 09:00 with a training session around wildfires.

1 APOLOGIES

Councillor

Carol Beard
Alan Hughes
Austin Roberts
Gareth A Roberts
Paul Rogers

Representing

Conwy County Borough Council
Denbighshire County Council
Conwy County Borough Council
Gwynedd Council
Wrexham County Borough Council

ABSENT

Councillor

Jeff Evans
Marc Jones

Representing

Anglesey County Council
Wrexham County Borough Council

The above apologies were offered and accepted.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1. There were no declarations of interest to record.

3 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 There were no notices of urgent matters.

4 MINUTES OF THE NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2025

4.1 The minutes of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) meeting held on 20 October 2025 were submitted for approval.

4.2 The Chair advised Members that a Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee had now been appointed, Cllr Tina Claydon. A new EDI Champion had also been appointed, Cllr Arwyn Roberts.

4.3 Following the recent consultation on the review of governance of fire and rescue authorities in Wales, the Cabinet Secretary had now proposed that future fire and rescue authorities would be made up of one member from each local authority, with a third of the membership consisting of independent members. This would require changes to secondary legislation which the Senedd had 40 days to pass. It was unknown whether this would be passed prior to the elections due to be held in 2026.

4.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) **approve the FRA minutes from 20 October 2025 as a true and correct record of the meeting held.**

5 CHAIR'S REPORT

5.1 It was noted that a written paper had been provided to Members to inform them on the meetings and events attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Authority in their official capacities between October and December 2025.

5.2 The Chair gave thanks to the Deputy Chair, Cllr Mark Young, for his work whilst the Chair was away. It was noted that the Deputy Chair had visited the Control Room and the Rhyl crew on Christmas Day which had been omitted from the report.

5.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the information provided within the paper.**

6 FIRE FAMILY SURVEY AND CULTURAL CHAMPIONS UPDATE REPORT

6.1 CFO Docx summarised the content of the Fire Family Survey and Cultural Champions Update Report. This paper gave an update on the Fire Family Staff Survey results, together with an overview of recent activity and workstreams led by the Culture Champions.

6.2 The Chair noted that a 68% response rate for the Fire Family Staff Survey was encouraging.

6.3 A Member thanked the Culture Champions for their contributions to date. It was asked what the long-term vision was in relation to the culture of North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) and the CFO responded that structures were being put in place to ensure that both previously raised issues and new matters were dealt with in a constructive manner.

6.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the initial findings of the Fire Family Staff Survey, acknowledging both the positive progress made and the key areas requiring further focus, and support next steps; and**
- ii) Note the ongoing programme of improvements and support the next steps outlined in this report by the culture champions.**

7 EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW

7.1 ACFO Anthony Jones delivered the Emergency Cover Review paper which provided Members of the Authority with an update on the work of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) working group set up in response to the recommendation from the 20 January 2025 meeting for officers to continue to devise and test alternative solutions with representative bodies, within the agreed budget, to address emergency cover in rural locations.

7.2 The CFO noted that the earlier presentation on wildfires had demonstrated how vital it was that the Service had fire engines available in rural areas. Members thanked officers for their hard work in this area.

7.3 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note that officers have continued to work with representative bodies in social partnership to develop a way forward with the ECR.**
- ii) Note that the collective agreement pilot signed off by the CFO and the Fire Brigades Union is now in full operation from 1 January 2026; and**
- iii) Note that the collective agreement is being continually monitored and reviewed, and further data will be presented on its performance.**

8 BUDGET SETTING 2026/27

8.1 Elgan Roberts presented the Budget Setting 2026/27 paper which provided Members with the financial planning assessment to set a balanced budget for 2026/27 and sought approval to communicate the final agreed levy to constituent local authorities.

8.2 The members of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group were thanked for their hard work supporting the finance team in putting this budget together.

8.3 A Member asked what the plan was to ensure that the use of reserves were kept to a minimum, and Elgan responded that the reserves were only utilised for one-off expenditure.

8.4 The Treasurer thanked the Finance Team for the hard work that had gone into producing the budget, noted that the budget presented was appropriate and recommended that it be approved.

8.5 RESOLVED to:

- i) Endorse the findings of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, including the planning assumptions being used to develop the revenue budget for 2026/27;**
- ii) Approve the current financial planning assessment of a revenue budget requirement of £54.375m and capital budget of £6.661m for 2026/27;**
- iii) Approve the proposal to utilise £0.271m of reserves for 2026/27; and**
- iv) Approve the communication of the final financial levy of 54.104m from the constituent local authorities.**

9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT Q2 2025/26

9.1 The Treasurer delivered the Treasury Management Report Q2 2025/26, the purpose of which was to provide Members of the Authority with an update on the treasury management activity and compliance with the treasury management prudential indicators for the period 1 June 2025 to 30 September 2025.

9.2 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the treasury management activities and prudential indicators for the period 1 June 2025 to 30 September 2025.**

10 HWB AWEN TRAINING CENTRE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

10.1 ACFO Evans presented the Hwb Awen Training Centre Outline Business Case to Members and sought approval to progress to the next stage of development, which would focus on securing funding and determining affordability.

10.2 The Chair thanked ACFO Evans for the provision of information sessions to ensure that Members were fully informed. They had been found to be beneficial.

10.3 Several Members felt that this development was essential and urged those present to approve progression as outlined in the recommendations.

10.4 The Member Champion for Hwb Awen stated that this was an amazing opportunity for a long-term investment into North Wales and urged Members to support and encourage this development moving forward.

10.5 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the content of the Outline Business Case;**
- ii) Approve progression to Full Business Case development; and**
- iii) Endorse continued engagement with Welsh Government to secure capital funding.**

11 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2024/25

11.1 ACFO Evans delivered the Gender Pay Gap Report 2024/25 which provided a snapshot of pay data as of 31 March 2025, in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. The report demonstrated continued progress in reducing the gender pay gap across the Service.

11.2 A Member asked how the statistics around female representation at 22% compared to other fire and rescue authorities, and ACFO Evans responded that whilst he did not have those figures to hand, anecdotally the Service compared well to others. It was agreed that the data would be collected and passed on to Members.

11.3 The CFO confirmed that the Service was one of the higher performing services in relation to the gender pay gap, but that there was still work to be done in this area.

11.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve the publication of the Gender Pay Gap Report 2024/25 on the Service's website, as required by legislation.**

12 ANNUAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT 2024/25

12.1 ACFO Evans presented the Annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Performance Assessment Report 2024/25 which provided an overview of progress against the Service's five-year EDI Strategy. It demonstrated how the Service has continued to embed inclusivity into its organisational culture, improve workforce diversity, and deliver inclusive services to communities.

12.2 The report also highlighted partnership work and actions taken in response to the Independent Culture Review, reinforcing the Service's commitment to creating a workplace where everyone can thrive.

12.3 A Member asked if officers had any thoughts on how to embed the work being carried out, and ACFO Evans responded that there had been significant changes in recruitment processes and engagement with the public demonstrating that the Service was committed to providing opportunities for everyone.

12.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Approve the publication of the Annual EDI Report 2024/25 on the Service's website.**

13 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2025-26

13.1 ACFO MacArthur delivered the Provisional Outturn 2025-26 paper which provided Members with an update on the revenue and capital expenditure forecast for 2025/26, as of 30 November 2025.

13.2 The Treasurer noted that there were several factors involved in maintaining a balanced outturn and thanked officers for the work dedicated to this area.

13.3 The Chair asked why North Wales Police were billing more than the cost of inflation in relation to the Service Level Agreement for the Facilities provision, and whether that would continue. ACFO MacArthur confirmed that this was a one-off incident relating in the main to pay awards and would not continue into future years.

13.4 RESOLVED to:

- i) Note the projected revenue outturn position and the projected capital slippage for the 2025/26 financial year, as detailed within the report;**
- ii) Note the risks associated with the provisional outturn and recognise that the figures forecasted in this report are prudent; and**
- iii) Note the proposed movement to reserves of £0.548m for LGPS pension rebate.**

14 URGENT MATTERS

14.1 There were no urgent matters to consider.

Members and Officers were thanked for their participation.

Meeting closed: 10:45