NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
EXECUTIVE PANEL

Minutes of the **Executive Panel** of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority held on Monday 15 June 2026, virtually via Zoom. Meeting commenced at 14.00hrs.

Councillor	**Representing**
Dylan Rees (Chair)	Anglesey County Council
Mark Young (Deputy Chair)	Denbighshire County Council
Rondo Roberts	Wrexham County Council
Chris Hughes	Conwy County Borough Council
John Ifan Jones	Anglesey County Council
Gareth Williams (from14:32)	Gwynedd County Council
Antony Wren	Flintshire County Council
Alan Hughes	Denbighshire County Council
Paul Rogers	Wrexham County Council

Also present:

Dawn Docx	Chief Fire Officer
Helen MacArthur	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Anthony Jones	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Justin Evans	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Mike Plant	Head of Planning Performance and Transformation
Lee Bourne	Head of Training and Development
Dafydd Edwards	Advisor
Gareth Owens	Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Steve Morris	Head of ICT
Heledd Davies	Atebol - Translator
Ffion Evans	Executive Assistant – minute taker

1.0 APOLOGIES

Councillor	**Representing**
Carol Beard	Conwy County Borough Council
Paul Cunningham	Flintshire County Council
Charlie McCoubrey	Conwy County Borough Council

ABSENT

Councillor	**Representing**
Gareth A Roberts	Gwynedd County Council
Dale Selvester	Flintshire County Council

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3.0 NOTICE OF URGENT MATTERS

3.1 There were no notices of urgent matters.

4.0 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2026

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2026 were submitted for approval. A proposal was made that they were a true and accurate record of proceedings. This was seconded and passed with all in favour.

4.2 **RESOLVED to:**

i) approve the minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting held.

5.0 RISKS AND MITIGATIONS AROUND HWB AWEN TRAINING CENTRE PROJECT

5.1 ACFO Justin Evans presented the risks and mitigations around the Hwb Awen Training Centre project to Members. The purpose of the report was to update Members on the key risks associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project, the mitigations in place, and the actions underway to secure funding and maintain appropriate programme control.

5.2 A Member noted that the Hwb Awen Training Centre project was critical to future firefighter safety. The Member also highlighted concerns regarding the implications of funding, including its potential impact on firefighters, risk to facilities and the financial pressures already faced by Local Authorities.

5.3 ACFO Justin Evans provided Members with assurance that the strategic outline case and the outline business case had previously been presented to the Executive Panel, where options, risks, and legal compliance were fully considered and discussed.

5.4 ACFO Helen MacArthur provided further assurance to Members that funding work streams would be considered and overseen through the governance of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

5.5 A Member asked whether the anticipated pressures associated with establishing a training centre had been considered and requested details of expenditure to date. ACFO Justin Evans provided assurance that spending remained within the parameters agreed by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).
Details of expenditure to date was provided to Members after the meeting.

5.6 A Member asked whether Ambition North Wales had been approached to seek a strategic, regional perspective across the authorities. The Chief Fire Officer provided assurance that she and ACFO Anthony Jones had already met with Ambition North Wales, reviewed the funding criteria, and noted that securing private sector investment would be challenging for North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service), work is being undertaken in collaboration with partner organisations to explore the potential for a joint funding bid.

5.7 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Note the current risks and mitigations associated with the Hwb Awen Training Centre project;

ii) Note the proposed adjustment to the programme to allow additional time for funding and stakeholder engagement; and

iii) Note that no funding commitment is sought at this stage, but that future proposals may be brought for Member consideration if external funding routes cannot be secured.

6.0 DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

6.1 ACFO Anthony Jones delivered the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 which provided Members with assurance that the Authority had effective governance, risk management and internal control arrangements in place, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, relating to the financial year 2025-26.

6.2 The Chair noted the draft Annual Governance Statement had been reviewed in the morning by the Audit Committee and asked whether there was anything further the Executive Panel should be made aware of. ACFO Anthony Jones provided Members with a summary of the topics discussed.

6.3 A Member asked, given the positive internal audit outcome and recognition that the Programme Management Office (PMO) requires strengthening, if there were any plans in place to address this. ACFO Anthony Jones informed Members that the Service had appointed a Project Support Officer, who had undertaken an audit of the Service's current position. In addition, a job evaluation was underway for a dedicated Project Management Officer role.

6.4 It was further asked whether preparations had been made for potential slippage in the timetable relating to the implementation of the new Governance Reform for Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales. The Chief Fire Officer provided assurance that this related in the main to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority and confirmed that these arrangements have not yet been implemented. The Chief reminded Members that concerns in relation to the Governance Reform could be submitted to the newly elected Welsh Government should Members wish.

6.5 The Chair noted that this lack of clarity was problematic and proposed that a letter be sent to the Welsh Government. This was seconded and passed by all.

6.6 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Note the content of the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26;
ii) Approve that the Annual Governance Statement 2025-26 be provided to Audit Wales in line with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; and
iii) Authorise the Chair to write to the Welsh Government to request clarity over the implementation process for the Governance Reform.

7.0 DRAFT ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2025/26

7.1 ACFO Helen MacArthur presented the draft Annual Statement of Accounts for 2025/26, including the revenue and capital outturn, balance sheet position, and key financial movements for the Authority. It was noted that the Authority had maintained a stable financial position despite ongoing financial pressures.

7.2 A Member asked whether the challenges relating to finances had been fully considered, including whether they were sufficient and able to support contributions towards the Training Centre. ACFO Helen MacArthur provided assurance that reserves were committed and managed within the general fund. Improvements in strategy and forecasting were also noted, and ACFO Helen MacArthur confirmed that they were satisfied with the current position.

7.3 The Chair commended the ACFO and the Finance Team for the work undertaken.

7.4 A Member asked about the resilience to potential shocks arising from fluctuating diesel and petrol costs and the impact on the Service's fleet. ACFO Helen MacArthur confirmed that these pressures had been effectively managed, with earmarked reserves in place to mitigate such risks.

7.5 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Note the unaudited revenue and capital outturn position;
ii) Note the unaudited balance sheet position;
iii) Note and endorse the movement to and from reserves; and
iv) Endorse the response to Audit Wales in relation to matters of governance relevant to the Statement of Accounts.

8.0 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 Mike Plant delivered the Strategic Risk Management report to Members. The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update in relation to the Risk Appetite Statement and an overview of the Authority's Strategic Risk Review.

8.2 It was noted that the report highlighted the risks associated with cyber security and the importance of proactively managing and mitigating these risks.

8.3 The Chief Fire Officer noted that the Service had invested significant time and effort in risk management, which was reflected in it being one of the two key questions considered at the end of every internal committee. This demonstrated the importance placed on risk management within the Service.

8.4 The Chair advised Members that he and the Deputy Chair met with relevant Officers in relation to the Strategic Risk Register every quarter, prior to the Executive Panel meetings

8.5 A Member raised concerns regarding cyber security and the need for greater assurance and detail on the actions being taken. ACFO Helen MacArthur provided assurance that this remained a key priority for the Service and highlighted the ongoing work of the ICT team.

8.6 It was agreed that an update on cyber security would be provided to Members ahead of the next Authority meeting in October.

8.7 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Note the Strategic Risk Register:
ii) Review and approve the risk appetite in paras 13-20 below: and
iii) Deliver a Cyber Security training session at the next October Authority meeting.

9.0 ANNUAL EDI PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT 2025/26

9.1 The Chief Fire Officer presented the Annual EDI Performance Assessment report 2025/26. The purpose of the report was to provide an overview of the progress against the Service's five-year Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

9.2 It was noted that the report 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.

9.3 It was noted that the gender pay gap was narrowing and compared well to the national average, supported by encouraging progress as staff are increasingly supported to pursue promotion opportunities within the organisation.

9.4 The Chair commended the work undertaken and highlighted it as an example of good practice.

9.5 A Member noted that achieving full gender pay parity may remain challenging. The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that progress was being made, with more women developing their careers within the Service and the importance of increasing female representation in senior roles was emphasised, to provide visible role models for colleagues.

9.6 **RESOLVED to:**

i) Recommend Authority approval for the publication of the annual EDI report 2025/26 on the Service's website.

10.0 URGENT MATTERS

10.1 There were no urgent matters to discuss.

Meeting concluded at 15:03hrs