

**10 September, 2013.**

**LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL**

**Minute Nos: 177 – 191**

At a **COUNCIL** Meeting of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Tuesday, 10 September, 2013, at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** Cllr. L. J. Butler (Vice Chairman (in the Chair))

**Cllrs.**

L. A. Beer	S. M. Donoghue
T. Bowen	G. N. R. Edwards
S. M. Caiach	H. J. Evans
D. M. Cundy	M. L. Evans
M. V. Davies	R. E. Evans
S. L. Davies	S. N. Lewis
T. Devichand	W. V. Thomas

**177. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. F. Akhtar, T. J. Jones, A. G. Morgan, C. A. Rees and A. J. Rogers.

**178. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**179. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman referred to the recent demise of Mr Lewis 'Lewi' Jones (a well known and popular Llanelli resident). As a mark of respect Members and Officers stood in silent tribute.

Thereupon the Chairman supported Cllr. W. V. Thomas who on behalf of Members conveyed best wishes to Cllr. T. J. Jones following his recent indisposition.

**180. MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Further to Minute No. 19(1), Members considered a letter dated 22 July, 2013, and an accompanying report received from Cllr. Roy Llewellyn, Chair of Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Authority. The documents referred to the changes to the crewing systems at Llanelli Fire and Rescue Station. The report concluded the changes had resulted in an improved service to communities, whilst at the same time making a much better use of resources. On the face of the report, the findings presented a favourable and positive

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outcome to the changes made to the crewing system, with it now being a Self-Rostered Crewing (SRC) system at Llanelli.

To provide a balanced view of the report, the Chairman welcomed Mr Barrie Davies, Brigade Secretary, Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Mid and West Wales to the meeting and invited him to address Members.

Members were informed the SRC was introduced at Llanelli Fire Station on 8 April, 2013, with the intention of improving service delivery, community safety and the use of resources. The system was intended to allow for maximum resources during hours of high activity but also to provide operational cover equivalent to that provided by the shift duty system during hours of lower activity. The system required a station establishment of 14 personnel (to provide a crewing level of five personnel to safely operate a fire engine at all times). This was half the number of the former traditional wholetime duty system (WDS) which required 28 employees to cover the shift pattern.

Mr Davies commented that the report contained factual inaccuracies. He disputed that SRC provided WDS level cover at Day Crewing (DCS) costs. This was not correct. According to Mr Davies' figures there had been a 20% increase in costs.

The SRC system required a station establishment of 14 personnel to provide a crewing level of five personnel working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The shift system that individuals were required to work was split into two contracts. The primary contract was a WDS contract where the individual worked an average of four day shifts of 12 hours each and then four days off. The second contract was an On Call contract where personnel were required to provide cover for an average of four night shifts comprising 12 hours each per week. The two contracts run concurrently where each shift would be considered to be 24 hours. Mr Davies stated the personnel working the SRC system work four consecutive periods of 24 hours per week without an 11 hour daily rest period in between each shift. Therefore the FBU contended the system was operating illegally with it contravening the Working Time Directive. Personnel would have no rest away from work. Members expressed concern about the new contractual arrangements and the impact on front line services in terms of the crews' level of fatigue when dealing with emergencies and also increased levels of sickness which had a knock on effect on crew cover and detachments. Mr Davies revealed that, since the SRC system had been introduced at Pontardawe Fire Station, sickness levels were recorded at 21.14%, the highest of any full time station. There was a direct correlation to the number of detachments from other stations. He confirmed in 2011 that there were 345 detachments covering Pontardawe and this had risen to 592 in 2012, yet there was no mention of this in the report. Mr Davies believed that Llanelli Fire Station would suffer a similar experience over the fullness of time.

Mr Davies commented the key element in the implementation of SRC was to ensure that the level of service delivery did not change whilst ensuring that optimum crewing was maintained wherever possible and instances of over provision were significantly reduced. He claimed that the statistics quoted in the report about the crewing levels was misleading. The report claimed that over the last three months, Llanelli maintained optimum crewing of five riders (on vehicles) for 98.6% of the time compared to an average of 71.4% for all WDS stations between the reference period 8 April, 2013, to 30 June, 2013. When comparing Llanelli pre SRC and post SRC the improvement stood at 98.6% on SRC compared to 75% pre SRC. In response to this claim Mr Davies stated the service at Llanelli was deliberately

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running short with personnel being moved out thus making it look more efficient. According to Mr Davies pre SRC Llanelli Fire Station was running well below its full staffing levels.

Mr Davies then referred to 'turnout times': the key objective of SRC was to maintain the time it took the appliance to respond to an incident from the time of being alerted to being mobile. The turnout table in the report did not give the time period the figures were calculated over. Also, six other full time stations were not on the list and three of those stations could boast quicker turnout times. The FBU claimed the real test was actual attendance times not turnout times. Mr Davies felt attendance times were now worse and would suffer under the SRC system.

The FBU had submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for the attendance times but thus far no response had been received.

Mr Davies then went on to talk about community fire safety focusing on home fire safety checks, again he disputed the figures in the report. He stated compared to the former crewing system there had been a 65% decrease on the actual number of checks performed.

Mr Davies continued to present an alternative view of the changes by quoting statistics he had compiled from his various sources which suggested the arrangements at Llanelli were not what they seem. The figures which he provided did not portray the new crewing system in a positive light, especially based on the FBU's experience with the same change having been made to the crewing system at Pontardawe Fire Station a while ago.

Moreover, when the new crewing arrangements were introduced in April, 2013, the former WDS crew had been asked to leave the Llanelli Fire Station at short notice at midnight on the eve of the new crewing system being introduced. Therefore, Mr Davies did not accept the transition from WDS to SRC (as according to the report) was a smooth transition. The change of contracts and the relocation of displaced staff was still an issue.

During the ensuing discussion, Members referred to the Fire and Rescue Authority decision to vote through the crewing changes at Llanelli and to the Notice of Motion subsequently tabled at the June 2013, Council meeting which read as follows:

*"Llanelli Rural Council expresses its disappointment that Mid and West Wales Fire Authority cut the number of Fire Fighters in Llanelli by half and voted against the motion to renegotiate a compromise with Unions".*

The Clerk reminded Members they were generally supportive of the motion but were mindful of pending actions confirmed at previous Council meetings namely: to meet with the FBU to receive its views about the changes to the crewing arrangements in Llanelli and the subsequent impact on the front line service; also the desire to meet ACFO Masson once again following the receipt of written confirmation he would return to the Council in the autumn to review with Members the impact of the changes and to discuss how the new crewing arrangements had bedded in.

In view of these pending actions and notwithstanding the decision made by the Fire and Rescue Authority at the time, the motion was deferred whereby it would be kept in abeyance until such time as the two courses of action outlined above had been resolved to the Council's satisfaction. The Council would then take it upon itself to reconsider the matter based upon

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information garnered from those meetings with the FBU and ACFO Masson, following which, the Notice of Motion would be re-presented for the Council's determination (to which Minute No. 87 refers).

Notwithstanding the Clerk's comments regarding the Council's previous deliberations Members were keen to demonstrate support for the former crew at Llanelli Station and importantly the impact on front line services. In view of this and having taken the findings of the report into consideration but then having listened to the opposing view proffered by Mr Davies of the FBU, and despite not yet receiving ACFO Masson at a future Council meeting; Members brought forward the Council's earlier decision to re-consider the original Notice of Motion tabled in June, 2013. Accordingly, it was

**RESOLVED** that:

(1) The original Notice of Motion tabled in June 2013 be approved and adopted, namely:

“Llanelli Rural Council expresses its disappointment that Mid and West Wales Fire Authority cut the number of Fire Fighters in Llanelli by half, and voted against the motion to renegotiate a compromise with unions”.

(2) In adopting the original motion, it be supported with additional concerns in relation to the FBU's allegations that the new contractual arrangements at Llanelli Fire Station are in direct contravention of the Working Time Directive. Furthermore, the subsequent impact on front line services is a major concern including the general safety implications for the crew at Llanelli Fire Station and moreover, members of the public.

(3) The Fire and Rescue Authority be requested to fully consider and take on board these concerns in support of the Notice of Motion.

Thereupon, the Chairman thanked Mr Davies for attending and he withdrew from the meeting.

*Cllrs. T. Bowen and S. M. Donoghue withdrew from the meeting.*

## **181. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the following Minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated to Members) be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings:-

Council	9 July, 2013
Planning and Liaison Committee	15 July, 2013
Policy and Resources Committee	17 July, 2013
Special Recreation and Welfare Committee	24 July, 2013
Learning and Development Consultative Committee	25 July, 2013
Planning and Liaison Committee	5 August, 2013
Planning and Liaison Committee	27 August, 2013
Special Recreation and Welfare Committee	28 August, 2013

(subject to the words 'an assurance' contained in the second recommendation of Minute No. 176 being changed to 'a guarantee').

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**182. MATTERS ARISING  
PARKS, PLAY AREAS AND OTHER  
COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Pursuant to Minute No. 135, the Clerk provided Members with an update on matters. He reported that he had held a meeting with Carmarthenshire County Council Officers, Mr Richard Workman and Mr Paul Murray. A basic plan for taking matters forward had been agreed. The County Council had it in mind to apply for grant support to bring up to an acceptable standard its parks at Cilsaig, Dafen, Heol Llanelli, Pontyates and Heol Nant, Swiss Valley prior to transfer. Hopefully this would reduce the financial outlay on both Councils capital budgets. The remedial work at Bryngolau Play Area, Dafen was virtually complete and a safety inspection certificate was awaited. When this was received the play area could be formally transferred. Progress over Pwll Pavilion was going well and a draft lease was being prepared.

Members were informed that the asset transfers were being treated with high priority and Officers were in frequent communication with their counterparts at Carmarthenshire County Council. A further meeting had also been arranged for 23 September, 2013, with Cllr. K. Madge (Leader, Carmarthenshire County Council) and Mr M. James (Chief Executive) where the said transfers would be further discussed.

The Clerk then referred to the possibility of procuring surplus ground maintenance equipment from the County Council and that meetings had been held to establish the principle and to identify potential equipment. As a by product of the meeting, the Clerk confirmed the Council would be able to use the County Council's maintenance service at Trostre Depot to repair and maintain its equipment. This was irrespective of any potential procurement opportunity and would result in considerable budget savings in some instances.

Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted and to await further developments.

**183. FELINFOEL COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE**

**RESOLVED** that the following recommendation of the Special Recreation and Welfare Committee be accepted, subject to the amendment as specified in Minute No. 181 above:

- (1) The 2250 litre cold water tank booster set and associated works be the preferred option subject to costs being confirmed by the Consultant Architect and presented to the Council meeting to be held on 10 September, 2013;
- (2) a guarantee be given by the Consultant Architect that the proposal detailed in (1) above would provide a sufficient water supply to allow all shower heads within the changing rooms to operate concurrently;
- (3) a fixed contract price be received with costs being kept as low as possible without compromising the specification; and
- (4) Welsh Water be reported to Ofwat for failing to give appropriate advice when originally consulted at tender stage for the water supply to the Felinfoel Community Resource Centre with a reimbursement of abortive costs being requested.

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**FURTHER RESOLVED** that further to recommendations (1), (2) and (3) above the information tabled at the meeting which had been prepared by the Consultant Architect for meeting the cost of the works be approved at a cost of £12,935 + VAT.

*During discussion of the above, Cllr. S. N. Lewis withdrew from the meeting.*

**184. YOUR HEALTH YOUR FUTURE – PRINCE PHILIP HOSPITAL**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 134, the Clerk provided Members with a brief progress report on events and matters since the last meeting.

Members were informed that an oral appeal hearing for an application for Judicial Review against Hywel Dda Health Board's healthcare plans was heard on 19 July, 2013, in Cardiff whereby the Judge found in favour of the claimant's arguments. The Judge had set a date for a High Court hearing scheduled for 12 November, 2013, where the case for Judicial Review would be considered alongside the Health Board plans for the reconfiguration of health care services as one rolled up case. Ultimately this could lead to the Health Board's decisions being quashed.

Members were also informed that it was anticipated the Health Minister, Welsh Government, would make his recommendation over the Community Health Council's referral probably towards the end of September 2013.

Cllr. W. V. Thomas informed Members that an announcement had been made this week stating that Mynydd Mawr hospital would be closing in November, 2013.

**RESOLVED** that the progress report be noted.

*During discussion of the above, Cllr. R. E. Evans withdrew from the meeting.*

**185. COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEMBER OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Members received a letter from the Head of Administration and Law, Carmarthenshire County Council, advising that Councillor Wyn Edwards, the current Community Council representative on Carmarthenshire County Council Standards Committee had tendered his resignation.

By law, the Standards Committee must have one member who represents Community Councils within the County Council. The Council was consulting with all Community Councils in the area as well as associations representing those Councils for nominations.

Members were informed that One Voice Wales (OVW) had nominated Cllr. J. Gilasby of Kidwelly Town Council as its preferred candidate to replace Cllr. Edwards. During discussion, Members raised no objection to OVW's nomination and it was

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**RESOLVED** that the letter be noted.

**186. MINOR AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE ON  
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY  
FURNACE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**RESOLVED** that Cllr. M. V. Davies be re-affirmed as this Authority's representative on the Governing Body of Furnace Primary School.

**187. BATTLE OF BRITAIN  
THANKS GIVING SERVICE**

Correspondence was received from the Secretary, Royal Air Forces Association inviting Members to attend the Thanks Giving Service to be held on Sunday, 15 September, 2013 at the Old Church, Llanelli.

**RESOLVED** that interested Members attend.

**188. WELSH GUARDS AFGHANISTAN APPEAL**

Members received correspondence from the Appeal Secretary, Welsh Guards Afghanistan Appeal/Combat Stress, inviting male Councillors to attend the Welsh Guards Rugby Reunion Club's dinner to be held on Friday, 15 November, 2013 at the Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli.

During discussion and notwithstanding the excellent work performed by the organisation, Members commented it was inappropriate to invite public representatives to an event with no regard to equal opportunities whereby females were excluded. Members concurred this would be taken up with the event organiser, following which it was

**RESOLVED** that the invitation be noted but should any Member wish to attend the event, they may do so in a personal capacity.

**189. MATTERS REPORTED**

**RESOLVED** that the schedule of matters reported be noted.

**190. LLANELLI JOINT BURIAL AUTHORITY**

Members received the following Minutes of a meeting of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held on 12 June, 2013:-

“At the Annual Meeting of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held at Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 12 June 2013 at 4:00 pm.

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Present: P. J. Edmunds (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs.

F. Akhtar	R. M. Davies
T. Bowen	V. J. Johns
L. J. Butler	T. J. Jones
M. J. P. Burns	C. J. Reed MBE

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Members proceeded to appoint a Chairman and following the motion of Cllr. C. J. Reed MBE, seconded by Cllr. R. M. Davies, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr. P. J. Edmunds be appointed Chairman.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Cllr. P. J. Edmunds thanked Members for appointing her as Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Following the motion of Cllr. L. J. Butler, seconded by Cllr. T. Bowen, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr. T. J. Jones be appointed Vice Chairman.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

5. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated) be confirmed and signed as a true record of proceedings.

Ordinary Meeting - 8 May 2013

7. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS



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RESOLVED that the income and expenditure report for April 2013 and the provisional report for May 2013 be noted.

**8. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS**

Consideration was given to the schedule of payments for May 2013, which revealed expenditure for the month, amounted to £19,175.59.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

**9. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING  
31 MARCH 2013**

Consideration was given to the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2013, (copies of which had been previously circulated) and it was

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts be accepted.

**10. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2012/2013 – FINAL REPORT**

Further to Minute No. 59 (12 December 2012), Members considered the final internal audit report, compiled by Auditing Solutions Ltd.

The report did not differ from the interim report (to which Minute No. 59 refers) and no matters needed addressing.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted.

**11. AUDIT ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2013**

Members considered the Audit Annual Return document for the financial year ending 31 March 2013 and it was

RESOLVED that the general preparation of the document which included a summary of the Statement of Accounts in Section 1 and the Annual Governance Statement provided in Section 2 be approved accordingly.

**12. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960**

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the following matters be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

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**13. MEMORIAL MASON REGISTRATION POLICY**

Members considered the Cemetery Manager’s report on the current memorial mason registration policy. After a lengthy discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that the Cemetery Manager’s report be accepted and the proposed changes to the registration policy be implemented with immediate effect.

**14. CEMETERY SECURITY**

Members considered the Cemetery Manager’s report on security arrangements at the cemetery together with three quotations received for the provision of a new alarm system and CCTV provision for coverage of various cemetery buildings. After a lengthy discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that the Cemetery Manager’s report be accepted and the quotation received from Dyfed Alarms, Security House, St Clears Road, Johnstown, Carmarthen in the amount of £2954 plus annual maintenance costs of £120 be accepted. Additional costs of £284 for installation of a telephone line and broadband equipment from Pisys.net be accepted and the total cost of £3238 be met from general reserves.

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The meeting concluded at 4:35 pm

.....”

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes be accepted.

**191. LETTERS OF APPRECIATION**

**RESOLVED** that the letters of appreciation for the Council’s assistance received from the following, be noted with pleasure:

- (1) Sandy Water Park Residents’ Association;
- (2) St. John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School;
- (3) Tabernacle Chapel, Llwynhendy;
- (4) Ysgol Bryn Teg.

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The Meeting concluded at 7.15 p.m.

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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 8 October, 2013, adopted by the Council.