



AGENDA ITEM: 15

NORTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

19th March 2007

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

**Report by Ian Miller,
Clerk to the Authority**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the number of independent members of the Standards Committee and arrangements for filling any vacancies.

Introduction

2. When the Standards Committee was appointed in 2003, two of the three independent members were appointed for six years and one for four years. This was to help provide for continuity because, at that time, an independent member of a standards committee could serve for only one term.
3. As a consequence of the Standards Committees (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, it is now possible for an independent member to be reappointed for a maximum of one further term of up to four years. There is no legal requirement to advertise a vacancy if it is intended to make a reappointment.



Introduction *(continued)*

4. The Standards Committee's view is that:
 - (a) if an independent member is willing to be reappointed, the Authority should be prepared to consider that:
 - (b) the number of independent members should be increased to four, to ensure that the quorum for meetings can be achieved more easily;
 - (c) if the Authority agrees with (b), the vacancy has to be advertised in accordance with the requirements of the regulations.

5. The response to advertisements in 2003 was low. However I have already been approached by an individual who has expressed an interest in being considered for appointment. With the possibility of an allowance becoming payable to independent members of standards committees under regulations that are due to be made shortly, it may be that there would be a stronger response to an advertisement on this occasion.

6. If the vacancy is advertised, the process for filling it requires an advisory panel to be convened consisting of not more than five members, one of whom must be an independent lay panel member. The advisory panel then considers the applications and makes a recommendation to the Authority on who should be appointed. In order to simplify the process given the gaps between full meetings of the Fire Authority, I propose below that the appointment of the lay panel member should be delegated to the Chair, Chief Fire Officer and me.

7. The independent member whose term of office comes to an end in September 2007 (Mr Simon Fysh) has indicated that he is willing to be reappointed.



Advice

8. In line with the Standards Committee's views, I recommend that Mr Fysh should be reappointed for a term of four years and that the number of independent members should be increased to four, with the vacancy being advertised. There are cost implications associated with advertising, advisory panel, etc., which are not expected to exceed £1,000 and can be absorbed within existing committee administration budgets.

Recommendations

9. I recommend that:
 - 9.1 Mr Simon Fysh be reappointed as an independent member of the Standards Committee with effect from September 2007 for a term of four years;
 - 9.2 the Standards Committee should have four independent members and the vacancy should be advertised;
 - 9.3 the appointment of the lay panel member for the advisory panel should be delegated to the Chair, Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk; and
 - 9.4 not more than four members of the Authority should be appointed to serve on the advisory panel, their identities to be agreed at today's meeting.