

The Institute of Fire Safety Managers

Minutes of the Council Meeting

Venue: Dun Cow Conference Centre, Dunchurch, Rugby

Date: 4 August 2010

Time: 1100hrs.

Members Present:-

J Williamson (JW)	Chairman
M Husseyin (MH)	Council Member
Kevin Scarth (KS)	Council Member
R Docherty (RD)	Secretary General and Vice President
Peter Cowland (PC)	Honorary Treasurer
A Stoker (AS)	Membership Administrator
Stuart Cocking (SC)	Examinations Secretary
Ray Colyer (RC)	Council Member and Vice President
John Cowie (JC)	Accreditation Secretary
K Day (KD)	Membership Secretary
Neil Cripps (NC)	Council Member
Chris Smith (CS)	Council Member

Apologies for absence received from:-

Dave Price (DP)	President
Gary Whitworth (GW)	Immediate Past President and Vice President

1. Agenda Item 1. Introduction and Welcome

Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and apologies for absence were accepted (see list above).

2. Agenda Item 2. Minutes of Last Council Meeting 27 July 2009

Chairman asked for matters of fact and matters arising:-

RD reminded Council re Item 15 'Next President of the Institute' that Ken day will be proposed by Council at the AGM but nominations could be received from members prior to the AGM (notification by letter) and also on the day of the AGM from the floor.

It was agreed by all Council that the minutes were a true record.

3. Agenda Item 3. Correspondence In and Out

RD reported on a number of letters and emails but the only one for Council to note was the continuing registration of the Institute with the Information Commissioner re data control. PC reminded Council that this fee (£35) was now paid annually by standing order.

4. Agenda Item 4. Reports of Council Officers

President

President had sent his apologies but also submitted a paper setting out his views on Daedalus (dealt with Item 12/13 below) and risk assessors register Item 5 below. President also mentioned further liaison with the IFPO and proposed opening up dialogue with them for mutual benefits. Council members discussed this and in the absence of the President were unable to determine what mutual benefits were being thought of. It was proposed by RD, seconded PC that we leave further discussion until President could outline his views in person. **(Action President)**.

Secretary General

Nothing to report other than a further reminder that action points in the minutes should be dealt with by those nominated and reported back on. **(Action All Council Members)**.

Honorary Treasurer

PC had circulated his report prior to the meeting and gave a verbal report regarding monies. The annual accounts were now complete. PC stated that the accounts at the moment show a healthy balance of just over £13000. All Council agreed that this was a good working balance which would be needed in the year ahead to move forward on a number of issues.

Membership Secretary

AS reported on membership matters. At present we have a total active membership of 379 members. Outstanding items were some members late payment of fees but this was being

dealt with by Sharon Lawrence. Following a final letter, those members who haven't paid will have their membership cancelled and privileges of the Institute withdrawn. We also have members in Holland, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, UAE, Oman, Malta and Singapore. AS felt that we should encourage non UK based membership. RD stated that he along with AS and SC would be in Singapore later in the year and hope to meet up with members out there to encourage more recruitment in this area. It was reported that 38 members pay by standing order and AS proposed that there should be a drive to encourage more members to pay this way a significant amount of time is being spent on subscription chasing and processing. It was agreed by all Council that this should be carried out. **(Action AS and PC).**

AS reiterated the point he had made at the last meeting re too many data bases. As stated that he would keep the definitive one as new members were being added all the time and that he would then liaise with Sharon should keep the completed version but any queries on membership register should go through Sharon. AS would supply the most up to date list when necessary for email or postal distributions. AS also mentioned that there needs to be a review of the membership administrative process as it is now becoming, through our own success, a larger and more significant operation. It was agreed that AS and RD should discuss this further with proposals brought back to Council. RD said that he would mention a link to this item under AOB. **(Action AS).**

Accreditation Secretary

JC had circulated a report for Council previously to note. Council duly noted and JC outlined some features from his report. The latest accreditation was for GEXCON fire and explosion course. JC also informed Council that there had been recent enquiries from a University and companies in the North of England as well as Northern Ireland. The finished report would go into the next edition of Daedalus.

5. Agenda Item 5. National Risk Assessors Register

RD referred to his previous report he had circulated to Council. Following the unanimous decision of Council to proceed with FRACs, there had been a change of mind by JW followed by NC and it had been agreed via email that JW and NC should proceed with a draft UKAS submission, costings and any relevant papers to present to this Council meeting. Meanwhile RD would follow through on lead assessors for the scheme. RD reported at this point that he had carried out this with 35 enquiries and 6 having gone ahead and applied. RC and KD thought the criteria was restrictive for lead assessors and RD pointed out that the qualities they referred to were only stated as 'desirable' in the application details and not essential. RD also informed Council that up until the challenge by JW and NC, he had been negotiating with WCL for lead assessors to go onto the FRACs scheme first so that there would be no conflict of interests. Just prior to Council, and at Council, JW informed members that he and NC had 'abandoned' talks with UKAS after there was no other support from Council members. No report had been produced for Council to inform them of this.

RD explained to Council that this hiatus had now put the Institute back around three months in the process with FRACs and had caused him considerable embarrassment both personally and professionally. RD then informed Council that because of this he was not prepared to represent the Institute any more in these matters as he could not be confident that he would be representing the true decisions of Council. It was important that Council was able to hold a unanimous and corporate decision and be unified in its approach at all times. RD also informed Council that as part of the 'fallout' from this debate, as and from the AGM 2010, he would no longer run and administer the Institute's risk assessors register.

A number of views were expressed by various Council members and SC felt that this was not the way to proceed and lessons should be learnt for future business decision making. Chairman asked the meeting to hold further debate on this item as lunch was approaching and that we would return to it after lunch.

6. Agenda Items 6, 7 and 8. Mailing List, Bulk Emails and Website Statistics.

KS introduced these three items which were taken together. KS stated that the website with information regarding members, activities etc were starting to come right although he did report the constant case of bounced emails. It was proposed by JW, seconded by AS that there should be no more chasing bounced emails as this was time consuming. It was up to members to report any changes in their circumstances and this was clear on all forms and parts of the website. KS mentioned and Council noted that out of all hits on the website, 56% were from new visitors. It was also agreed to provide a page for Daedalus and the format for the risk assessors register had now been changed to what had been agreed at the last Council meeting. KS suggested that an addition of possible 'message' board to the web site would be an advantage. Members could request advice on fire safety queries. They would have to register to be

able to post a message. Only registered members could then reply on the board to offer advice. KS had obtained a price from Dynanti who suggested £350 that would include 1 days training on how to use the forum, set up users and any security aspects that need to be considered. Following a discussion about this, owing to possible legal repercussions it was decided by Council not to proceed with this suggestion.

KS suggested that there should be a FAQ line on the website and JC asked if CS would be prepared to write these and AS suggested that all Council members should think up some FAQs and send to KS to coordinate with CS. **(Action KS, CS and all Council).**

7. Agenda Item 9. Formation of Sub Committees

SC had circulated a report re this item prior to the meeting. Following a discussion it was proposed by AS, seconded by RD that Council members should individually form a list of what they think should be the subject areas and sub committees needed and send to SC. SC to co-ordinate and report back to next Council. **(Action SC and all Council).**

8. Agenda Item 10. Accreditation

JC circulated a report prior to the meeting for Council to note. Successful applicants for accreditation were the Resources Group, Oxford and GexCon UK Ltd based in Skelmersdale. JC mentioned that a full report would be available in Daedalus but also stated that there were resent enquiries from University of Central Lancashire and a number of companies in England and Northern Ireland. **(Action JC).**

9. Agenda Item 11. Examinations sub Committee

SC introduced this item. He informed Council that the cross mapping was now complete but the time frame had slipped slightly due to Bill Cox being away in South Africa. The Sub Committee had decided that there would be three levels of examination, Technician Level, Associate Level and Membership Level. It was hoped that the first tranche would be Technician and Associate Level examinations with Membership following on later once the demand had been forecasted. It was also proposed by SC that there would be pilot examinations run to establish levels and uptake and JC suggested that private firms who were accredited could deliver the pilot examinations. SC noted this. JC also asked about potential uptake and workload. SC and RD mentioned that at present this had not been calculated although there was now an upsurge in demand for IFE examinations especially from fire and rescue services. It was proposed by SC, seconded by RD and agreed that the sub committee carried on with this task and report to the next Council meeting for a final decision about how best to go ahead, or not, with examinations. **(Action SC, RD and Examinations Sub Committee).**

10. Agenda Item 12. Daedalus Circulation and Distribution

SC and KS spoke to this item following a member who complained at receiving two copies of Daedalus and suggested we send it electronically. KS felt that this could not be done electronically and sent via email at this time. President had sent a paper in supporting the view of sending Daedalus electronically. RD stated that in view of email bounces, at least with hard copy and post there was a better chance that members received their copy. RD also pointed out that we send a lot of copies to interested parties as well as advertisers and new members. Also advertising last year and the current year paid from two copies outright so expenses were not the issue at the moment. RD stated that the real issues were to be outlined in the next agenda item. A number of Council including JW, KD and NC stated that they would place advertising in as we had done this in the past and NC asked for the costs (note from RD these were not available at the meeting but set out here for information – Annual half page £500, Annual quarter page £260, one off advert normally eighth of a page £50, quarter page one of £100 and half page one off £250. RD had asked Pro Vision Insurance to advertise for one year and they had agreed, he had also checked with them and they have had business from the membership. RD asked all Council members to pursue anyone who they think would advertise although Council had already agreed to limit adverts in each edition. RD stated that he had also invited Pro Vision to attend the AGM. **(Action RD and All Council Members).**

11. Agenda Item No. 13. Daedalus Next Edition and Future Editions

RD introduced this item. He stated that he had been running the magazine for some time now and he felt that with other Council and IFSM commitments, he was not going to do this after the September issue had been put to bed. He also mentioned that more Council members needed to be active and that this was an opportunity for a Council member to contribute as well as spread the load of the work of Council. This was important as the Institute was becoming more active in many areas and increasing membership. Chair asked if anyone was interested and there was little response from Council at this time. JW asked

that if it was not taken up by anyone it would be 'dead in the water'. JC asked that JW give a lead and consider approaching any members that he knew who might be willing to do it, JW replied that he was not willing to do this. **(Action All Council Members)**.

12. Agenda Item 14. AGM 2010

RD reported to Council that the venue was the Jaguar Centre and all speakers for the technical papers had been programmed. RD had got a sponsor for lunch (Belimo) and confirmed that the AGM will see Council propose Ken Day as the next President. Members will also be asked prior to the meeting as well as on the day for any further nominations. RD mentioned that all other arrangements were in hand and notifications would go out before the statutory 21 days notice to members. These notices will be in printed copy although we will email a full programme to all members as well as hard copy. KS, SC and Sharon will do the mail shots once the printer has printed all papers. KD asked if the BFC could have a stand at the AGM and it was agreed. It was also noted that KD asked for more reciprocal arrangements in future with BFC. **(Action SC, KS, RD and Council Members)**.

13. Agenda Item 15. Future Events and Venues

RD informed Council that due to recent events within Council and other commitments, he would not in future be organising events and meetings other than his duty as Secretary General to organise Council and the AGM itself. He asked that anyone from Council who was willing to take this function over could contact him and he would be willing to help. CS said that he would be willing to help and NC suggested a sub committee should be formed (Events and Meetings Sub Committee). CS, RC, NC and RD put themselves forward and it was agreed that these Council members would form a sub committee to organise future events. PC asked that he be kept informed and offered his support although he mentioned that he will be taking up his office as Master Firefighter with the Worshipful Company on 1 July 2011. **(Action RD, RC, NC, CS, PC)**.

14. Agenda Item 16. Any Other Business

1. RD mentioned that he would be addressing the National Association of Hospital Fire Officers on 13 August 2010 regarding the Institute and Membership.
2. RD informed Council that the fire risk assessors register was now up to 81 applicants with 75 being accepted onto the register.
3. RD informed Council of a meeting he had had with John Williams who was a former member of the IFE staff some time ago as well as General Secretary for a professional Institute before joining the Society of Operational Engineers. This society administered a number of professional bodies and RD wished Council to note that a meeting with John Williams might be useful to see if we could link up in the future with any administrative functions. It was agreed that RD and PC would arrange to meet John Williams and start exploratory talks. RD reminded Council that after the last Council meeting there had been a discussion on succession within Council and also debate had touched on administration in the future if the Institute continued to grow at such a rate. **(Action RD and PC)**.
4. SC asked if there had been any progress with the business plan. KD and DP had been tasked with producing the plan and in the absence of DP, KD informed Council that he and DP were still sorting out expectations and this would be dealt with once the AGM and the Presidential succession had been decided. **(Action DP and KD)**.
5. SC asked Council about replacement of Council members. He had intimated that he would stand down in the near future but was willing to carry on for the time being. He mentioned that the previous Council meeting had discussed succession but it had not been mentioned at this meeting. SC also felt there may be a case for increasing Council members. RD stated that it could be an item on the next Council meeting agenda with special emphasis on it to discuss in great detail as he was concerned to ensure we encourage members to come onto the Council. AS, RD and KD all added that they felt that increasing Council numbers on its own would not work and RD mentioned that we may have to change our Articles of Association if we increase these numbers. There was leverage in the Articles for co-option onto Council and also the use of sub committees with co-opted members would ease the workloads and give us greater flexibility to respond.
6. SC reminded Council of the previous debate regarding membership cards. He informed Council that he had recently met with a colleague who may be able to supply them. SC stated that he only raised this for Council to review its previous decision. It was agreed that this item would not be pursued further.

7. RD gave Council an overview of the recent spate of meetings regarding the national fire risk assessors register. SC would represent the Institute at the next meeting in London on 17th September 2010.
8. RD reminded Chair and Council members that the debate on Item 5 above, National Fire Risk Assessors, WCL FRACs scheme etc. had not been returned to and that Council needed to take decisions quickly on this. There was insufficient time left at the meeting to return to the debate and it was suggested by RD and agreed that he would circulate a position paper with a number of decisions for Council members to focus and take. RD would then collate and send out the results to Council. Paper and results attached (**Action JW, RD and Council Members**).

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all for attending the meeting. The meeting ended at 1530hrs

Institute of Fire Safety Managers – Council Paper – For Decision

Risk Assessors Register, Internal and National

Recap

Council members attending the Council meeting will recall that the debate on item 5 was delayed for lunch and timed out prior to the end of the meeting. I reminded Council that a decision had to be taken fairly soon due to the consequences of what had happened re this subject and I also informed Council that I would produce this paper from a decision(s) to be taken.

Debate up to and Including Council Meeting

Council had made a unanimous decision at the previous Council meeting to join in with the FRACs scheme (run by WCL) for the benefit of the future of those of our members who would wish to carry out fire risk assessments. I was asked by Council to complete this, which I did, and then unanimity was broken with JW who felt that this was not the way forward and we should do this internally. NC also agreed that this should be the way. Even though we had committed to WCL at the time, it was agreed by all that I would continue to deal with lead assessors and that JW and NC should approach UKAS and provide a draft submission with costings and other papers and this would be presented to the next Council meeting (4 August 2010). I then had to inform WCL that the decision of Council was not quite as unanimous as first appeared and that we would have to delay any further actions, although I would continue with the lead assessor's process. I would also honour the IFSM's commitment to attend national meetings on the risk assessors register up until Council meeting. My report to Council for the Council meeting and agenda item 5 refers to my actions. Just prior to Council, and at Council, JW informed members that he and NC had 'abandoned' talks with UKAS after there was no other support from Council members. No report was produced for Council to inform them of this.

I mentioned to Council that this hiatus had now put us back around three months in the process with FRACs and had caused myself considerable embarrassment both personally and professionally. I informed Council that because of this I was not prepared to represent the Institute any more in these matters as I could not be confident that I would be representing the true decisions of Council if we could not hold a unanimous and corporate decision or be unified in our approach at all times. I also informed Council that as part of the 'fallout' from this debate, as and from the AGM 2010, I would no longer run and administer the Institute's risk assessor register.

Decisions

Because we were unable to take a decision on these matters at Council, I have placed a number of alternatives and decisions I feel Council needs to make quickly to ensure we have a clear direction and also that we can inform various 'interested' parties of these decisions. These decisions are:-

1. Do we resume negotiations with WCL and the FRACs scheme?

If the answer to this is yes, then:-

Council needs to appoint someone from Council to approach WCL firstly to apologise for our prevarication and secondly to represent the Institute and lead talks with them to set up the final parts of the process.

If the answer is no, then Council needs to decide:-

2. Is there any need for a national register or does it continue with its own internal register only?

If the answer is yes to the first part of this question, then Council need to start to produce a policy on where it stands vis a vis a national register (although we do have a committed aim for this we need to have total and unbroken unanimity for this).

If the answer is no, but that we should continue with our own register then Council needs to decide:-

3. Who is going to run and administer the register from the 2010 AGM onwards (this person must be a member of Council)? (Note:- I am prepared to help in this task with the appointed person until the new register year starting January 2011).
4. Do we continue to take part in the national debate on a national fire risk assessors register?

If the answer is yes, Council need to appoint a representative to attend and represent any coherent Council views (I stated at Council that I will be attending these meetings in a personal capacity but that I would be happy to report proceedings back to Council if no one volunteered to attend. However the views I expressed would be my own and not necessarily the views of Council on these committees). If the answer is no then no action need be taken other than to record that fact.

Conclusion

I have tried to be brief in this report but needed to include some information for those Council members who were not at the meeting so that they are informed as much as possible before they show their decision. Council need to take these decisions quickly as time constraints are fairly pressing.

Can I suggest that Council members send their decisions, comments and suggestions for appointments to the roles to me to collate but also circulate comments if desired around other Council members (as per Bobs Blog!) I will send the collation around Council.

I need to point out to Council as well that in the light of no one volunteering or being volunteered for the roles, precedent in these circumstances is that the Chair carries out these functions until people are found for these roles.

Bob Docherty
Secretary General
7th August 2010

Collation of Results from Council Members

Q1 all answered yes (we now need appoint Council member to approach and discuss/negotiate and represent us with WCL)

Q2 all answered yes (decision now do we produce a further policy or stay with our committed aim?)

Q3 No person yet has 'volunteered' although SC and NC have expressed an interest. If we have no firm interest can I confirm agreement that precedent in these circumstances is that Chair carries out these functions until people are found for these roles.

Q4 all answered yes, SC will be representing us at the next meeting (arranged prior to Council meeting and this debate), decision accept my reports or appoint another rep, otherwise again refer to precedent until someone can be found.

