

The Institute of Fire Safety Managers

Minutes of the Council Meeting

Venue: Staffordshire Fire and Rescue HQ, Pirehill, Staffs.

Date: 27 July 2009

Time: 1100hrs.

Members Present:-

J Williamson (JW)	Chairman
Dave Price (DP)	President (arrived at 1200hrs)
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)	Accreditation Secretary
Ray Colyer (RC)	Council Member and Vice President
John Cowie (JC)	Council Member

Apologies for absence received from:-

M Husseyin (MH)

Neil Cripps (NC)

K Day (KD) Membership Secretary

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 5 January 2009

Chairman asked for matters of fact and matters arising:-

There were no matters of fact or matters arising other than Item 4 RD report that we had a stand at FIREX and thanks were recorded to all Council members who manned the stand and President for organising and it was noted that we now have two banner stands as well as advertising flyers and material. Agenda Item 6, RD reported on the administrative assistant and all Council members were impressed by the service from Sharon of Flying Changes PA and Council agreed that we would continue to use these services for the main administrative functions of the Institute. The costs up to present were £702 and all agreed this was excellent value for money. All actions had been completed and signed off other than those carried forward to the current agenda.

3. Agenda Item 3. Correspondence In and Out

RD reported letter received from the Information Commissioner regarding renewal of data Registration (renewal now complete for the next 12 months). Also letter received from the UK Firefighters Memorial Trust asking for letter of support (RD replied with total support from the Institute for this worthy cause). Letters of reply were received from CFOA, Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor, The Scottish Government, and FIA regarding Fire Risk Assessors Council. Among letters sent out was one to the widow of Member Rod Pearce who passed away suddenly giving the Institute's condolences.

4. Agenda Item 4. Reports of Council Officers

Secretary General

RD informed Council that there would be two visitors from lunch onwards from Belimo. RD also asked if all Council members had the new letterheads.

There was a debate about having the letterhead electronically. RD stated that he would circulate letterheads to members of Council who wanted them and KS would scan the letterhead in or research the electronic format. **(Action RD and KS).**

Honorary Treasurer

PC gave a verbal report regarding monies. He stated that we had a healthy balance at present and needed to wind up the 'old' account. Council agreed that this should be done as soon as possible once those who still have standing orders with that account have been informed. JC asked if PC would let him know each time accreditation fees had been paid in so that he could issue the accreditation certificates. JW asked if we still had the ties with the old logo on them. SC stated that there were about 15 left and it was proposed by JW, seconded by JC and agreed that these should be scrapped and written off. **(Action PC and SC).**

Membership Secretary

AS reported that membership was up to 273 and that final letters had been sent out to those few members who had not yet paid their annual fees. AS also mentioned that we now had members in Europe as well as the Middle East and he proposed that the Institute should agree a CPD option is established to upgrade members when applicable by forwarding details to assist and encourage their personal development plans. This proposal was seconded by PC and agreed by Council. **(Action AS).**

Accreditation Secretary

JC had sent in a written report and RD had circulated to Council prior to the meeting. It was noted that the accreditation team consisted of JC, SC, KS and RD when needed. JC reported that Safesite Ltd had had their fire risk assessment training course accredited and that many enquiries had been received recently and further visits were envisaged.

President

President reported on a number of activities he had been involved in including a meeting with Nick Gibb (MP) at the Houses of Parliament and as an invited guest to the annual Fire Fighters service of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum.

5. Agenda Item 5. Meeting with FIA and Risk Assessors Register

RD revisited the e-report he had circulated to Council following the meeting with the FIA which was held on 29 May 2009 with FIA representatives (Martin Duggan and Ben Bradford) and RC and RD. RD had also sent the e-report to Martin Duggan of the FIA and the contents were agreed by both parties. RD stated that it was an excellent meeting and pointed out that the FIA were only interested in developing professionalism amongst their member's employees and to this ends would encourage, through their efforts, members staff and employees to be enrolled as individuals on a professional register if they were going to deliver fire risk assessments. RD mentioned that the Institute's register would be ideally placed to enrol those eligible as it appeared to be the most effective, efficient and cost conscious register that was in existence at the present time. FIA agreed to circulate details to their members. There were further discussions at the meeting about extending this co-operation between the two organisations and FIA put forward a suggestion about working together on future activities such as conferencing and technical meetings etc. President mentioned again his meeting with MP re the register and there followed a further discussion about competency of fire risk assessors. **(Action RD and Council as required).**

6. Agenda Item 6 2009 Fee Levels and Membership Cards

RD informed Council that the decision from the last Council meeting was to not pursue at this time membership cards because of cost and logistics. RD and AS started the debate

regarding membership fees for the next year of 2010, any changes would need to be decided prior to putting proposals to the membership at the AGM. A number of Council members were in favour of a moderate rise in fees but following discussions about the current finances and the state of the economy at the present, it was felt that the risk register and membership fees should be held at the current level for the year 2010. RD mentioned that this action would not affect the current activities of the Institute. This was proposed by JW and seconded by PC and agreed by Council. SC proposed that the accreditation fees should be increased due to administrative workload involved. JC mentioned that although it was done purely voluntarily, there were large amounts of paperwork, postage etc involved and an increase would offset these expenses. It was proposed by SC, seconded by JC that the fees be increased to: Accredited courses application fees, member £50, non members £125, and annual fees members £75 and non members £150. Council agreed and RD reminded Council that this would have to be put to the membership for their decision at the 2009 AGM. (**Action RD, PC, JC and Council Members**).

7. Agenda Item 7. Members Questionnaire Analysis

President introduced this item with JW. The questionnaire had been completed by 133 members of all grades which was an excellent return for this type. Council earmarked all of the responses to each of the questions and discussed in detail those that appeared to have a significant impact on the Institute and on what Council was, and should be. Some of the more significant answers were reasons for joining the Institute – for continued professional development, delivering. 69% felt that the Institute was good value for money and 56% felt that Daedalus should be a quarterly magazine. Not many members had sought to benefit from discounts on insurance that the Institute had negotiated for them and only 17% of members were registered on the risk assessors register with the most frequent reason being that they hadn't got round to it. RD stated that this clearly was a message to get information and encouragement to members to join where appropriate. 94% of members had visited the website and 52% wanted the Institute to be involved with other agencies in creating a national risk assessors register. Surprisingly, 42% of respondents had never attended a technical/meeting day whilst those that had, rated the content extremely good to excellent. JW mentioned that this needed to be worked on as well to persuade as many members as possible to come to meetings not only for the technical input but also to network. 47% thought that the current level of activities was satisfactory but there was a significant number who would like regional meetings and technical workshops. RD commented that finances would be a problem unless we charged for each event and also organisation, finding speakers and subjects for the workshops, given there was always a lack of volunteers to organise such events and also we would need to encourage more members to attend. However Council agreed that this was worth looking at for the future and maybe those members in various regions could organise their own events and advertise them for support via the general membership. There was a further discussion on all the results and it was agreed that the result should be posted on the website DP and KS to action on current website and encourage members to respond at the next meeting. It was agreed by all council that the results were very positive and provided great feedback for the organisation. (**Action DP and KS**).

8. Agenda Item 8. New Website

DP updated Council about the new website. It was still in developmental stage but could be visited at the evaluation site can be reviewed at <http://evaluationsite.co.uk/ifsm/> KS would take up the webmaster position once the website was live and also be the 'emailer' for the Institute and be responsible for emailing members when required.

Further to discussions regarding content for the new website, the following actions were required, Council members to inform President once they had discharged their particular item:-

- **Dave Price - Home page** - 2 latest news stories, 2 latest industry news, a few words about the IFSM and any other information required, on the right side bar a list of the latest events or other information you wish to stand out.
- **Dr Bob - Events page** - the Google calendar will be placed on this page, on the right side bar any information you might want to highlight.
- **Dr Bob - Minutes page** - as far as I am aware this is up to date with the content from the old site, please check and advise any additions or changes.
- **Dave Price - Committee page** - Pictures required for Peter Cowland (received), Gary Whitworth, John Cowie, Neil Cripps, Kevin Scarth, Ray Colyer, May Husseyin
- **Dr Bob - Constitution page** - as far as I am aware this is up to date with the content from the old site.
- **Dr Bob - R A Register page** - a paragraph of text explain what the register is, aiming this at the general public, database of those on the register will be added here by Dynanti.
- **Dave Price - To be removed and replaced with members page Merchandise page** - content taken off the news page from the old site, on the right side bar any information you might want to highlight.
- **Kevin Scarth Links Page** – New links relating to reference material, RRO, HSE, other bodies such as JOIFF, FPA etc content taken off the links page from the old site, on the right side bar any information you might want to highlight.
- **John Cowie / Stuart Cocking Accreditation page** - content taken off the accreditation page from the old site, paragraph introducing the page required and any other info.
- **Kevin Scarth - Technical Papers page** - content taken off the technical papers page from the old site, paragraph introducing the page.
- **Alan Stoker - Join Us Page** - online forms to be added to this page for membership and affiliate membership to allow users to fill in and print off.
- **Kevin Scarth - News Page** - news items required for this page, plus four additional news pages will be available.
- **Dave Price** – Contact form to be replaced with links to email addresses, such as secretarygeneral@IFSM.org.uk

AS asked how the website would be promoted, DP and KS to oversee this. JC asked about updating the present website and RD mentioned that this was still being done, and had to be until the new one goes on line. In the meantime Dynanti would keep up dating the current website but this was at a cost. **(Action KS, DP and Council Members).**

9. Agenda Item 9. Formalising Travel Expenses for Council and others who are on Approved Institute Business.

RD spoke to this item and outlined that the expenses had been set at the last Council meeting but introduced the proposal of increasing the mileage allowance to the proper accepted business rate of 40p per mile. It was seconded by JC and agreed by Council that this should be the rate from 1 August 2009. **(Action PC and All Council Members).**

10. Agenda Item 10. Examinations Final Decision

SC and RD brought this subject to Council. There had been many discussions at other Council meetings but no final decision had been taken. SC supported the view that we should explore in detail and seriously the provision of examinations, especially focussed on fire safety. All of Council agreed that we should set up a committee to look at this with a proper timetable, syllabuses and subject mapping to a standard. JC suggested it

should be knowledge based system and SC and JC recommended that we approach Bill Cox and ask him to be an advisor to an examinations sub committee. It was also suggested that Dr Andrew Platten be approached to contribute and AS asked that a student member based examination be considered as well. SC proposed and was seconded by JW and agreed that a sub committee should be formed to report back to Council at the earliest opportunity. **(Action SC and RD)**

11. Agenda Item No. 11. Daedalus

RD informed Council that the next edition was at the printers in proof form. It was agreed that RD should send the electronic proof to Council members before printing to look over the document. RD reiterated that he was always on the lookout for copy and asked Council members to be more proactive in finding and writing pieces. RD also would ask members to write in either letters or articles to add to the Journal. It was also put forward that a small amount of income could be earned by advertising and President felt that this was something that would need to be regulated. RD proposed that 20% of any one edition would be maximum. This was agreed by Council and left to RD to control when putting the copy together. RD stated that there would hopefully be three editions in 1009 and hopefully this would go to a quarterly in 2010 in line with member's wishes. However, it was reiterated that members would have to become more active in order to have sufficient copy for 4 editions per year. It was hoped that in future, Daedalus would not only be printed in hard copy but also available on the new website and the webmaster KS would deal with this. **(Action RD, KS and Council Members).**

12. Agenda Item 12. Technical Committees

SC introduced this item. It appeared that there was a growing need to become active at various levels in the technical side of fire safety management and in order to be able to respond as well as use member's special experience and knowledge in a timely way there needed to be a technical committee(s) formed so that decisions and responses could be co-ordinated. RD explained that at the moment he dealt with all queries and answered these and consultation documents having consulted with Council first. A number of Council members felt that there was a need to be proactive in this area but that at present there were other priorities that were pressing and that the current system was working and we were being recognised for our contribution. However, it was acknowledged that this subject should be kept under review by SC and reported at future Council meetings. **(Action SC, RD and Council Members).**

13. Agenda Item 13. KAC Request for a Meeting with Members

RD presented this as he had had a request from Mark Thomson from KAC to present a paper and have a discussion on various ideas he had about fire alarm and warning systems. RD suggested that Mark to present a paper at the forthcoming AGM and Council agreed that this was an ideal opportunity. SC also proposed that a discussion could take place with members of the technical committee when and if one is formed. (See also Item 14 below). **(Action RD and SC).**

14. Agenda Item 14. Activities for the Rest of the Year

RD mentioned that we had not formally arranged a conference this year as he had done one of the RRFSO with Institute's approval through his own and AS's own companies. He reported that the take up by members had been poor but should not detract Council from organising future events. He stated that there was room in the calendar for a technical meeting in August and the AGM in October. Members felt that August was not a good month to hold an event because of holidays and it was proposed by President, seconded by JW that the next event for the year would be the AGM in October, RD to arrange date and venue. **(Action RD).**

15. Agenda Item 15. Appreciation for Previous Webmaster George Tyrrell

KS introduced this item and asked Council if it could agree to present a gift of some sort to George for his work on the website. A number of members recalled the set up of the website and George had carried this out together with constant updating ever since. It was proposed by KS, seconded by RC that a suitable gift be obtained by KS and that George would be invited to the AGM for a formal presentation (if not RD and KS would arrange a suitable date to do this). Chair asked that a formal vote of thanks be recorded in the minutes in recognition of the work that George had done for the Institute and this was unanimously agreed. **(Action RD and KS).**

16. Agenda Item 16. Any Other Business

1. RD mentioned the fact that both he and AS would be travelling to Birmingham the next day to carry out an exercise with Bureau Veritas to process 17 of their personnel for membership and also for the risk assessors register.
2. SC asked that Council should consider nominating Graham Holloway for Fellowship of the Institute to recognise the work Graham had done in bringing new members into the organisation as well as being a very active and supportive member. It was unanimously agreed that Council should recommended to members at the next AGM, the upgrading of Graham to the prestigious grade of Fellow of the Institute. **(Action RD and SC).**

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked all for attending the meeting. The meeting ended at 1510hrs.

Note:

1. Guests Bill Clee and Andy Bartlett (Belimo) manufacturers of fire dampers etc for ducting, were invited to Council at lunchtime re presentations at the next technical meeting/AGM.
2. The date has now been set for the AGM 6 October 2009 at Staffordshire Fire and Rescue HQ, Conference suite.