

**IFE SW BRANCH
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
18 MAY 2009
DSFRS HEADQUARTERS, CLYST ST GEORGE**

<p>Present:</p> <p>Neil Gibbins – President SW Branch Jan Sturges – Vice President Malcolm Carmichael – Secretary Paul Richardson – International President Lee Howell Tony Heywood Adam Course Pete Lee Willie Wilson Gillies Crichton Pete Bond John Grellier John Unwin Andy Hallam Ashley Raddon Sean Taylor Glen Askew Jon Castleden Jan Sturges Phil Martin</p> <p>1. <u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING DATED 21 May 2008</u></p> <p>These were accepted as a true record.</p> <p>2. <u>BRANCH PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS</u></p> <p>Neil Gibbins thanked International President Paul Richardson for joining the meeting. Neil was pleased to report that 3 SW committee members, Malcolm Carmichael, Jan Sturges and Pete Robinson, have been nominated and accepted as Companion Members of the Institution. He acknowledged the amount of work done for the branch by a relatively small amount of people which has to be carried out on top of their day jobs.</p> <p>Neil represents the branch on the General Assembly and informed the meeting that he has recently been elected as Leader of the General Assembly. In this capacity he also attends the IFE Board meetings twice a year and is therefore able to reflect the work of the SW branch at Board level.</p>	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>Ally MacDonald Malcolm Rawnsley Chris Bridgeman Mike Burroughs Tony Stanley Pete Robinson Steve Widnell</p>
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He informed the meeting that Louise Craig is the new Chief Executive of the Institution and also that the IFE is now the awarding body for any examinations in the English and Welsh Fire Services.

Neil announced that Jan Sturges is retiring from the Fire Service and is thus standing down from his role as Vice-President of the Branch. He thanked him for all his hard work over the years in supporting the branch and wished him all the best for the future.

3. ADOPTION OF SECRETARY'S AND TREASURERS REPORTS 2008/09

Malcolm Carmichael handed out a copy of his report covering membership, which has increased by 19 members since last year, Committee Meetings and Events over the last year, the IFE AGM and the General Assembly, the Study Week and Examinations. He thanked Pete Robinson, Phil Martin, Tony Heywood and Willie Wilson for their help with the examinations and asked people to keep their diaries free for next year's round of exams as more help will be needed due to the likely increase in those sitting exams next year.

The Secretary's report was adopted.

The branch accounts were handed out which show a balance of £7499.69 which reflected the profit made from the Fire Safety Order Seminar held last year. Neil Gibbins thanked Pete Robinson for his work as Treasurer of the branch and although Pete has retired he is still working in Cornwall Fire Brigade. Neil stated that further committee meetings, CPD events and a study week will be organised for the forthcoming year.

The Treasurer's report was adopted.

4. INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Paul Richardson addressed the meeting and reported how impressed he was when visiting the branches with the hard work being done by the people on the ground. He stated that the SW branch has always been well run and supported and is known for the good events that it organises.

Over the last 2 years the membership of the Institution has increased by 7% which is, in part, due to the fact that IFE now has OFQUAL accreditation and can set exams within the National Qualifications Framework. Several Services are now using the IFE exams as part of the promotion process which is therefore increasing the membership. The increase in those sitting exams, together with staff savings, has also helped to turn last year's loss of £100,000 into a profit.

Louise Craig, as the new Chief Executive, has been instrumental in driving through changes and he has received feedback from many branches that Head Office staff are now more responsive.

The application process for membership of the IFE has been simplified without reducing standards, and this has also helped with the increase in membership.

Travelling schools were discussed and the fact that £3000 is set aside by the Institution for a Service member to travel abroad in order to deliver training. Paul Richardson reported that not many branches are taking up this opportunity.

The IFE has been acknowledged as an important partner in national organisations such as the Operational Guidance Board, and branches are being looked at to provide people to help with these.

Climate change and the economic climate are the main challenges at the present time.

Finally, Paul Richardson paid tribute to the SW branch which he acknowledged is one of the more successful branches and thanked them for their support in the past and the future and for the opportunity to attend the AGM today.

Neil Gibbins thanked Paul Richardson for his attendance at the meeting.

The non availability of study material on line was discussed. There are issues around the amount of material involved and that due to copyright issues, a link cannot be provided to the Merseyside information.

Lee Howell thanked Paul Richardson for coming and talked about the fact that a Task & Finish group has been set up to look at the high rate of Firefighter deaths in America and whether the IFE could influence this and how learning is shared. Paul Richardson responded by stating that there is no national co-ordinating body in America and therefore they do not have national guidance. However, the US branch of the IFE now has more than 300 members, so it is hoped progress can be made.

5. ELECTION OF BRANCH COUNCIL OFFERS

The officers are alternated between Devon & Somerset and Cornwall but Jan Sturges is standing down part way through his tenure as Vice-President. As no nominations have been received for the post, Malcolm Carmichael has volunteered to act as Vice-President as an interim arrangement until a Principal Officer comes forward from Cornwall. This was agreed.

6. ELECTION OF G.A. REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE

Neil Gibbins was re-elected for a further 3 years as GA representative – unopposed.

Pete Robinson was re-elected for a further 3 years as Alternate – unopposed.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBER ELECTION

As Pete Redbourn has now emigrated, Willie Wilson was elected as Area Representative for DSFRS in his place.

The meeting concluded at 1215 and was followed in the afternoon by a 2 hour IFE CPD lecture on Aero-Fire Studies. The first speaker was Gillies Crichton, Director and Compliance Manager, Glasgow Airport, followed by Stephen Ayers, Communications Manager, Exeter Airport.