



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance & Scrutiny Committee meeting held remotely on 25 August 2020 at 9.30 hours.

Members present:

Cllr Pete Barrow (Chair)
Cllr Richard Biggs
Cllr Rebecca Knox
Cllr Byron Quayle

Officer attendance:

Director of Community Services, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Jim Mahoney Area Manager (AM), Seth Why
Group Manager (GM) Darren Langdown
Corporate Governance Manager, Nicki Whitehouse
Democratic Services Support, Steph Howard

20/11 Welcome

20/11.1 The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and explained that the meeting was being recorded and streamed to the public.

20/12 Apologies

20/12.1 No apologies were received.

20/13 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business

20/13.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

20/14 Public Questions

20/14.1 No public questions had been received prior to the meeting.

20/15 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset LPS meeting on 19 February

20/15.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

20/15.2 **RESOLVED: that the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

20/16 Action Progress

20/16.1 Corporate Governance Manager, Nicki Whitehouse advised Members that since the last meeting four actions were in progress.

20/16.2 Nicki Whitehouse reminded Members about action number 278 and that an example of the data, the Dorset Highways Performance Quarter 1-Quarter 2 (2019-20) information, had been forwarded to them via email.

20/16.3 GM Darren Langdown reported progress against action number 296, regarding the Locality Hub Partnership. He gave an in-depth update on the types of work the Service has been carrying out through the partnership. This was predominately in relation to gaining access to contact and check on those people who were shielding.

20/16.4 AM Seth Why gave an update regarding the SPARC course held in October 2019 (action 297). He explained that a significant increase in school attendance had been observed in attendees three months following the course. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has limited any further follow up with the individuals, but this will recommence once the schools are back in September. Cllr Quayle added that the Dorset Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had recently discussed SPARC courses and would be interested in obtaining further information and possibly supporting these courses. He asked Officers to liaise with the partnership following the meeting.

20.16.5 AM Seth Why updated Members on action number 298 and he confirmed that no SPARC courses are expected to run until the new year. The priority is to complete the Fire Cadets courses first. Members discussed how children are identified who benefit from attending these courses and whether any recommendations come via Dorset Children's Services.

20/16.6 **ACTION: GM Darren Langdown to liaise with Dorset CSP to discuss the SPARC courses.**

20/16.7 **ACTION: AM Seth Why to liaise with the Youth Intervention Manager to ensure there are links with the Dorset Children's Services Department at Dorset Council.**

- 20/16.8 **RESOLVED: Members noted the actions and comments.**
- 20/17 Performance monitoring and briefing**
- 20/17.1 GM Darren Langdown took Members through the performance report, with an accompanying presentation.
- 20/17.2 **Priority 1** Making safer and healthier choices
- 20/17.3 GM Langdown reported that this quarter saw on-call appliances available to respond to incidents 91.65% of the time. He advised that Dorset had good on-call and wholetime appliance availability.
- 20/17.4 GM Langdown noted that the Service is reviewing the on-call contracts to identify any potential gaps in crew availability and explained that this will enable the Service to recruit more effectively.
- 20/17.5 GM Langdown reported that on-call support officers (OCSO) are in the process of looking at how to organise coronavirus safe 'have a go' events to support recruitment.
- 20/17.6 GM Langdown advised that the new strategy for non-attendance to automatic fire alarms at commercial premises, between the hours of 8am and 6pm, has saved the Service £12,035 in terms of on-call call outs. He went on to explain that this initiative has also provided more capacity for the wholetime crews to carry out prevention work and training.
- 20/17.7 GM Langdown explained that the Training team has been using a risk assessed approach for how training on Maintenance of Skills and Operational Licences has been delivered during the coronavirus pandemic. To comply with social distancing remote assessments have been put in place and course numbers have been reduced, with some being delivered using large appliance bays in stations instead of within a small classroom environment. Some courses have also been run virtually via Teams online.
- 20/17.8 **Priority 2** Protecting you and the environment from harm
- 20/17.9 GM Langdown explained that social distancing measures have impacted the ability to deliver face to face prevention activities. The Safe & Well team have adapted their delivery by carrying out telephone consultations using a risk assessed approach. Those who were spoken to will have physical visits when the coronavirus guidelines allow. He highlighted that the teams have also used social media to promote the Service's fire safety messages and those of our partners.
- 20/17.10 GM Langdown advised Members that the Prevention team has been managing a busy programme of activity. This has included promoting and heightening awareness for Child Safety week, heathland fires, the Royal

Life Saving Society's seaside safety, and the Service's Road Safety coronavirus education modules, which has gained national coverage.

- 20/17.11 Members discussed the laws regarding the use of disposable BBQ's and trying to get the education correct. Cllr Quayle asked a question about the large superstores promoting these BBQ's and whether any conversations were being conducted with those retailers. ACFO Jim Mahoney confirmed that it is a national problem and that the National Fire Chiefs Council is already engaging with national retailers on this subject.
- 20/17.12 GM Langdown provided an update on Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) courses which have been on hold. He went on to advise that new virtual courses will be implemented in the next few weeks.
- 20/17.13 GM Langdown took Members through the performance indicators data on pages 13 and 14 of appendix A, confirming that these were all down from last year.
- 20/17.14 GM Langdown updated Members on the fire safety activity for the year to date and took them through the data on page 19 of appendix A.
- 20/17.15 GM Langdown advised that the Protection team had been made aware of plans to construct a new school on a site in Cologne Road, Wareham and he explained that the Service would like to request the support and influence of the Members to lobby for the inclusion of sprinklers within this building.
- 20/17.16 Cllr Knox commented that there was an agreement and commitment given by the former Dorset County Council to have sprinklers fitted to all new school developments and that she would take this up with the new Dorset Council.
- 20/17.17 All Members of the Committee agreed to support this. This was further discussed in item 20/19.
- 20/17.18 GM Langdown reported that the number of fires this year had risen to 348 compared with 243 last year. It is believed that this was due to the closures of recycling centres during lockdown and the increase in the number of garden bonfires members of the public were having.
- 20/17.19 Cllr Biggs asked whether the Service was looking at expanding the 'at risk' area where properties are bordering or are situated in heathland and if Forestry England were looking at patrolling these areas. GM Langdown advised Members that he is in the process of reviewing this with the Wildfire Tactical Advisor and that the Service is developing a wildfire calendar to implement tasks at certain times of the year, pinpointing when to liaise with land managers and owners.

- 20/17.20 **Priority 3** Being there when you need us
- 20/17.21 GM Langdown updated Members on the Operational Effectiveness Database which is a piece of software that allows the Service to evaluate feedback given from operational staff to improve performance and to share learning and good practice across the Service.
- 20/17.22 GM Langdown explained the joint working with the Dorset Local Resilience Forum during the coronavirus pandemic. He reported that the Service had invoked its internal pandemic plan to support the management of the Service during this time.
- 20/17.23 GM Langdown went on to advise that during this quarter the Service had also declared a major incident for the Wareham Forest fire. He advised that effective joint working arrangements were evidenced whilst working alongside partners, which included other fire and rescue services.
- 20/17.24 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and approved the performance for Quarter 1.**
- 20/18 Update on performance dashboard (verbal)**
- 20/18.1 ACFO Mahoney advised Members that the reporting dashboard was due to be available for the quarter 1 reporting period for 2020/21. He advised that the coronavirus pandemic had inhibited the readiness of the system to go live. He confirmed that it is expected that the dashboard will be utilised for quarter 2, reporting at the November LPS meeting.
- 20/19 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**
- 20/19.1 Following on from the conversation in item 20/17.17 all Members discussed and agreed that sprinklers should be installed in all new schools, due to the significant impact of fire on school education and the wider local community needs. It was therefore agreed that Cllr Barrow and Cllr Knox would write to the Leader of Dorset Council and MP's lobbying for the use of sprinklers in this kind of development.
- 20/19.2 **ACTION: Cllr Barrow as Chair of the Dorset LPS committee to write to Cllr Flower, Leader of Dorset Council to support the request that sprinklers should be installed in all new schools.**
- 20/19.3 **ACTION: Cllr Knox as Chair of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority to write to Cllr Flower, Leader of Dorset Council to support the request that sprinklers should be installed in all new schools.**

- 20/19.4 **ACTION: Cllr Knox as Chair of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority to write to all Dorset MP's to support the request that sprinklers should be installed in all new schools.**
- 20/19.5 **POST MEETING NOTES REGARDING ACTIONS 20/19.2, 20/19.3 and 20/19.4:**
Confirmation was received after the Dorset LPS Committee meeting that the previous Dorset County Council policy in relation to sprinklers in council buildings and accommodation for vulnerable persons, including Dorset County Schools will be continuing as policy for Dorset Council.
- The Service's Fire Safety teams will be working with Dorset Council's Estate Team to refresh the current agreement on the publication of the revision to '[Building Bulletin 100](#): the design for fire safety in schools'. Therefore, at this time letters are not required to be sent to the Leader of Dorset Council or Dorset MP's.*
- The Service will continue to encourage other developers of major projects which are not in Dorset Council's ownership to include sprinklers and will liaise with the Authority Members, as required, for support.*
- 20/19.6 ACFO Mahoney advised that the Service is in consultation with Dorchester County Hospital who are looking to build a multistorey carpark. He advised that the Service is pushing to have sprinklers included in the build. Cllr Knox suggested that as Chair of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority she write to the Chief Executive of Dorset Council Hospital to endorse this request.
- 20/19.7 **ACTION: Cllr Knox as Chair of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority to write to the Chief Executive of Dorset Council Hospital in support of sprinklers being fitted in the multistorey carpark.**
- 20/20 Date of Next Meeting
- 20/20.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 17 November 2020 09:30am.

The meeting closed at 10.55am.

Signed: _____