



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am on 29 August 2024 at the Poundbury offices, Conference room, Peverell Avenue West, Poundbury, Dorset

Members present:

Cllr Duncan Sowry-House (Chair)
Cllr Laura Beddow
Cllr Byron Quayle

Officer attendance:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole
Area Manager (AM) Area Leadership Team, Darran Langdown
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

Two members of the public were in attendance.

24/15 Welcome

24/15.1 The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.

24/16 Apologies

24/16.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Richard Biggs.

24/17 Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interests

24/17.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

24/18 Public Questions

24/18.1 There were two members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

24/18.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions

24/19 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 22 February 2024

- 24/19.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the previous meeting.
- 24/19.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 24/20 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 12 June 2024**
- 24/20.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- 24/20.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 24/21 Action Progress Report**
- 24/21.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meetings on 22 February 2024 and 12 June 2024 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.
- 24/21.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**
- 24/22 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 1**
- 24/22.1 Area Manager (AM), Darren Langdown presented to Members the performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 1, which covered the three priority areas overseen by this Committee:
- Priority 1** Help you to make safer and healthier choices
Priority 2 Protect you and the environment from harm, and
Priority 3 Be there when you need us.
- A link to the presentation can be found [here](#).
- 24/22.2 Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 24/22.3 AM Langdown highlighted the various boards and partnerships to which the Service was a partner and also the contribution to multiagency work. Details were provided of the work to support those living in the Bibby Stockholm, support to the Afghan re-settlement programme, contributions to the Dorset Strategic Road Safety Partnership and the close working with partner agencies in the Local Resilience Forums. In reply to a question from Cllr Byron Quayle, the officers provided details on the design and delivery of road safety training packages for the military. It was noted that the delivery of road safety awareness training packages, such as 'survive the drive' resulted in societal savings of £160 for every £1 spent by the Service.

- 24/22.4 AM Langdown reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 72.00% and 99.10% for wholetime. The officers explained that there were a number of initiatives to improve on-call availability. These included a review of current on-call staff contracts of availability; succession planning to maintain availability and support recruitment and targeted recruitment campaigns.
- 24/22.5 The operational competencies of staff were good and in line with corporate targets.
- 24/22.6 AM Langdown drew attention to the social media activity which was aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council campaigns, for example regarding smoking, escape routes and outdoor fire safety. The key prevention safety messages were shared across various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor.com. A total of 130,973 engagements were seen across all platforms. The most seen post on Facebook was regarding Deaf Alarm System and was viewed by 9,219 people.
- 24/22.7 Details were provided on the number of road safety and education inputs in quarter 1. In the quarter, 3,013 children and young people had received educational input, comprising 2815 via their main education provider, 187 via pre-schools, nurseries, children's groups and ad-hoc engagements and 11 children attended a story session. Three visits by the education team delivered the heathland/wildfire lesson to 1560 students in Upper Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. There were four new firesetter referrals in the quarter and there were five other cases currently open. One case had been closed. A new Arson Coordinator had recently been recruited to provide education to firesetters.
- 24/22.8 There were 444 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 1, which was an increase from 389 in the same quarter in the previous year. Safe and well visits were now more targeted. Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Andy Cole added that with Dorchester station becoming wholetime, the number of safe and well visits could possibly increase. A total of 27 Safeguarding referrals were also submitted within the Dorset Area.
- 24/22.9 The number of accidental dwelling fires in quarter 1 was 33, compared to 32 in the same period in the previous year.
- 24/22.10 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 24/22.11 Wholetime operational crews had completed 186 business fire safety checks in the quarter across the Service relating to risk based low level fire safety activity.
- 24/22.12 AM Langdown reported on the automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the Dorset Group area. In quarter 1, 56 automatic fire alarms (AFAs) were attended in non-domestic premises in Dorset, compared with 84 in the previous quarter. The reduction was

anticipated following the extension of the call challenge to 24 hours (from 8:00am to 6:00pm) from 1 April 2024.

- 24/22.13 AM Langdown highlighted that the Authority was a statutory consultee in building regulation and licensing consultations.
- 24/22.14 **Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**
- 24/22.15 The average response times were 10.54 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 11.53 minutes for other buildings first pump and 12.38 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.
- 24/22.16 There had been no potential fire deaths in the quarter 1 period, with none remaining with the potential for fire deaths that were awaiting a Coroner's verdict. Details were provided on the Operational Effectiveness Database (OED), which was to evaluate and improve operational performance.
- 24/22.17 Members observed the summary of notable incidents attended in the quarter and the multi-agency exercises that the Service had participated in.
- 24/22.18 **Demand summary**
- 24/22.19 The Key Performance Indicators for the quarter were explained to the Committee. Attendance was for 261 automatic fire alarms which resulted in a false alarm; 33 accidental dwelling fires; 67 deliberate fires (primary and secondary) and 332 special service incidents attended.
- 24/22.20 The Chair thanked AM Langdown for the presentation.
- 24/22.21 Cllr Beddow sought clarification on the 72% on-call availability. The officers explained that at some stations on-call availability was 100% but at certain stations within Dorset it was difficult to recruit on-call staff. Therefore, to have the full skill sets available for an appliance was challenging, for example four firefighters including a driver and incident commander. In response to an incident call, one appliance could be provided but it could be the case that the second appliance could not be staffed. There was also a question of demand as if the second appliance was available would it be used. There was a cost to provide a second appliance which at some stations would be used sparingly during the year and incident attendance could be provided by an appliance from an alternative station.
- 24/22.22 The Chair asked whether the decrease in staffing in the prevention team to undertake business safety fire checks had been satisfactorily filled by crews from wholetime stations. The officers explained that by using partnership data the business safety checks for the highest risks identified were carried out by the prevention team with wholetime crews undertaking the vast numbers of the lower risk cases. The same approach was taken to safe and well visits with the highest risk categories being prioritised.
- 24/22.23 The Committee asked that Members be notified when a road safety event held at a school within their electoral ward area was being organised.

24/22.24 In reply to a question from the Chair, it was confirmed that the organisation Firewise was engaged in heath fires via the Wildfire Tactical Advisor.

24/22.25 The officers answered a question from Cllr Beddow on the type of persons that could be classified as a firesetter and whether the number at five new referrals were high compared with the average.

24/22.26 RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 1.

24/23 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)

24/23.1 There were no matters raised by Members.

24/24 Date of Next Meeting

24/24.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 21 November 2024 at 10:00am at Conference Room at the Poundbury offices, Peverell Avenue West, Poundbury, Dorset.

The meeting closed at 10:55

Signed: _____