



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting at 10:00 hours
on 14 December 2022 held at the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters, Salisbury.**

Members present:

Cllr Paul Oatway (Vice Chair)	Cllr Pete Barrow	Cllr Richard Biggs
Cllr Malcolm Davies	Cllr Millie Earl	Cllr Brian Ford
Cllr Paul Hilliard	Cllr Russell Holland	Cllr Kelvin Nash
Cllr Byron Quayle	Cllr Pip Ridout	Cllr Kevin Small

Officer attendance:

Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Ben Ansell
Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), Derek James
Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Jonathan Mair
Head of Financial Services & Treasurer, Ian Cotter
Director of Community Safety, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole
Director of People Services, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Jenny Long
Director of Service Support, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Jill McCrae
Head of Corporate Support, Vikki Shearing
Group Manager - Fire Safety Delivery, Graham Kewley
Corporate Communications & Engagement Manager, Emily Cheeseman
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw
Executive and Democratic Services Administrator, Steph Howard

22/48 Welcome

22/48.1 In the absence of the Chair who was unwell, Cllr Oatway (Vice Chair), chaired the meeting and welcomed attendees.

22/49 Apologies

22/49.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Steve Baron, Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Bob Jones, Cllr Rebecca Knox (Chair) and Cllr Ashley O'Neill.

22/50 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

22/50.1 The Vice Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. No disclosures were made.

22/51 Review minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 29 September 2022 and any matters arising

22/51.1 The Vice Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

22/51.2 Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Ben Ansell reported on minute 22/42.1 which referred to the Annual Report 2021-22. CFO Ansell had reported at the September Authority meeting on the circumstances of the two deaths as determined by His Majesty's Coroner, which were caused by fire as reported at the time of publication of the Annual Report, with two other cases awaiting consideration by the coroner. The Coroner had now confirmed a third death was caused by fire with one death remaining to be determined. This remained the lowest annual figure since creation of the combined fire authority in 2016.

22/51.3 **RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 29 September 2022 meeting be confirmed and signed by the Vice Chair as a correct record.**

22/52 Receive a verbal update from the Finance & Audit Committee 7 December 2022 meeting.

22/52.1 Cllr Byron Quayle gave a verbal update on the 7 December 2022 meeting. Cllr Quayle highlighted key outcomes from the meeting and concluded that it had been a good meeting with no issues to report.

22/52.2 **RESOLVED: Members received the verbal update of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting of 7 December 2022.**

22/53 Public questions

22/53.1 No questions were received from members of the public.

22/54 Capital Programme 2022-23 and 2023-24.

22/54.1 The Head of Financial Services & Treasurer, Ian Cotter presented the report.

22/54.2 Ian Cotter replied to Cllr Richard Bigg's questions referring to the scale of revenue funded from capital and whether framework contracts were used. Ian Cotter explained that the £200k funded through the revenue budget for the Estates Programme in 2023-24 related to repairs and maintenance to extend the life of buildings and was to the satisfaction of the auditors. Framework procurement contracts were used where possible.

22/54.3 In reply to a question from Cllr Brian Ford, Ian Cotter explained the rules relating to the spending on capital and revenue and in reply to a question from Cllr Paul Hilliard, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Jill McCrae, explained that environmental enhancements were made to capital schemes where possible in accordance with the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and that potential external grants for such works were given consideration.

22/54.4 **RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the changes to the 2022-23 Capital Programme be noted.**
- 2. That the indicative Estates Programme for 2023-24 at £1.9m and the Revised Prudential Indicators 2022-23 be approved.**

22/55 Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022-23

22/55.1 Ian Cotter presented the report. He explained that further to the publication of the report, a correction was identified in paragraph 3.2 where the Capital Financing Requirement should read £32.9m rather than £36.9m as stated.

22/55.2 In reply to a question from Cllr Russell Holland, it was clarified that the borrowing from SMBC as stated on page 9 of the report was from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation.

22/55.3 In reply to a further question from Cllr Holland, Ian Cotter explained that all current investments held by the Authority were with UK registered banks and from an approved list of counterparties provided by the Authority's external advisor. This approach was in accordance with the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Ian Cotter advised Members that if the Authority wished to invest with an overseas counterparty it would require the approval of the Treasurer in consultation with the Chair of the Authority before proceeding. Following debate, it was agreed to review this delegation, for example by widening the number of Members to be consulted before investments were made with overseas banks. Note: subsequent to the meeting it was clarified that approval to invest with an overseas bank was by the Treasurer in consultation with the Chair of the Authority and the Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee and that this would be made explicit in the Treasury Management Strategy.

22/55.4 **RESOLVED: That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022-23 be noted.**

22/56 Service performance six monthly review 2022-23

22/56.1 Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), Derek James, provided a summary of the past six months' performance against the Authority's strategic priorities set out in the Community Safety Plan. A link to the presentation slides was

provided within the covering report. It was explained that the review provided a quarter 1 and quarter 2 annual comparison and considered seasonal trends.

22/56.2 The detailed presentation covered the topic areas comprehensively. These included that the Service was on track to achieve over 10,000 safe and well visits this year; that the number of deliberate fires over the hot summer had exceed targets and this trend was continuing upward; that the number of road traffic collisions attended was 355; that the number of unwanted fire alarms was slightly above target at 2379 in quarter 2; that the saving from non-attendance at non-domestic automatic fire alarms provided a non-cashable saving for wholetime at £125,225 and in cost avoidance for on-call £76,757; July experienced an increase of 120% in fires in the open, compared to the same period last year, with 339 incidents compared to 120 last year and the first 10 days of August had 180 fires in the open, an increase of 429%; there had been an increase in demand to support partners with special services with the number of responses to all incidents increasing from 7,371 to 7,824 (including providing additional assistance to the ambulance and police services); the challenges faced with on-call recruitment and the Service's response, and that they were only five Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) incidents which was low in comparison to the number on incidents attended.

22/56.3 In reply to Members' questions, Officers explained that His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report on the Service was due in January 2023; that there was a spike in deliberate fires in the summer and that data quality was being considered by HMICFRS to give improved consistency in reporting; that the Service was continuing to support the ambulance service, for example with persons collapsed behind a closed door; that there was no specific reason why on-call firefighters may choose to leave the Service after an average of 10-11 years and that leavers were monitored to gather reasons why they had left employment, and the Service was as flexible as it could be to balance the personal requirements of on-call firefighters with Service need.

22/56.4 In answer to a question from the Vice Chair, DCFO James outlined the multi-agency partner work that was undertaken surrounding safe and well visits to protect people, many of whom would be known to several the agencies.

22/56.5 **RESOLVED: That the performance of the Service over the past six months be noted.**

22/57 Verbal update from Local Performance & Scrutiny Committees

22/57.1 The Committee Chairs of the Local Performance Scrutiny Committees (LPSs) provided an update on the Committees' work. Cllr Malcolm Davies reported on the work of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole LPS in the absence of its Chair, Cllr Johnson.

22/57.2 CFO Ansell observed that an issue arising in one LPS area might apply across the Service, and this demonstrated the value of the LPS meetings and that these Service wide matters were monitored.

22/57.3 RESOLVED: That the update from the Committee Chairs be noted.

22/58 Building Safety Regulator

22/58.1 The Director of Community Safety, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole, presented the report.

22/58.2 In reply to a question from Cllr Kelvin Nash, ACFO Cole explained that the allocation of Fire Protection Officers to support the Health and Safety Executive in its duty as the new Building Safety Regulator was regionally based (the south west), with the Service having most staff as it had the highest number of buildings in scope within the region. CFO Ansell added that Fire Protection Officers would move around the south west region to provide the service.

22/58.3 Cllr Hilliard enquired about the New Burdens funding and whether it would be on-going. Ian Cotter replied that the re-charging mechanisms were not fully known, nor how it related to the Service's existing costs. In reply to a further question from Cllr Hilliard, ACFO Cole explained how residents of buildings within scope with mobility issues had Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), which were the responsibility of the building's owner/management company to prepare.

22/58.4 In response to comments by Cllr Pete Barrow on the salary levels of the Fire Protection Officers and whether they would be competitive in comparison to working for private providers, ACFO Cole recognised the potential challenges in retaining these Officers, but also outlined the reasons why Officers might wish to choose working for fire and rescue services.

22/58.5 RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

22/59 Serious Violence Duty

22/59.1 ACFO Cole introduced the report. He added that the Service was in continuing discussion with existing partners to deliver the new duty through multi-agency work. The Home Office had awarded Crest Advisory with the contract to support the policing bodies to have suitable plans and partnerships in place to support the new duty. ACFO Cole explained that the Government had concluded a consultation process, but that finalised statutory guidance outlining how the Duty would be discharged had not yet been published.

22/59.2 CFO Ansell outlined that the new duty was significant and was aligned to work already conducted by the Service through safe and well visits and safeguarding to assist with public safety.

22/59.3 Cllr Kevin Small highlighted the need to educate young people about knife crime and Cllr Holland observed that there was already good partnership working in place and that the new duty would build on it.

22/59.4 **RESOLVED: That the report be noted.**

22/60 Service highlights – public video

22/60.1 CFO Ansell introduced the in-house video which was available on the Service's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/6aLZv-GMRBA> . The video continues to be made available to local councils and others.

22/60.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted the Service highlights – public video.**

22/61 Date of next meeting

22/61.1 The Vice Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority would take place on 8 February 2023 at 10.00am.

Meeting ended at 12.15 hrs

Signed: _____