



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at  
10:00am on 1 March 2023 at Westlea Fire Station, The Chesters, Stonehill Green,  
Westlea, SN5 7DB**

Members present:

ClIr Russell Holland (Chair)  
ClIr Brian Ford  
ClIr Kevin Small

Officer attendance:

Director of Community Safety, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole  
Area Manager (AM), Darren Langdown  
Group Manager (GM), Neil Tidball  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

**23/01 Welcome**

23/01.1 ClIr Russell Holland welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.

**23/02 Apologies**

23/02.1 No apologies were received.

**23/03 Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interests**

23/03.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

**23/04 Public Questions**

23/04.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

**23/05 Review and approve minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 November 2022**

23/05.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

- 23/05.2 **RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as an accurate record.**
- 23/06 Action Progress Report**
- 23/06.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting on 30 November 2022 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.
- 23/06.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**
- 23/07 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 3**
- 23/07.1 GM Neil Tidball presented to Members the performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 3, which covered the three priority areas overseen by this Committee.
- 23/07.2 **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](#).
- 23/07.3 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 23/07.4 GM Tidball referred to the various boards and partnerships that the Service contributed to, including the Swindon combatting drug's partnership and the Great Western Hospital emergency planning engagement groups. Mention was made of the Serious Violence Duty and also emergency preparedness at Swindon Town Football Club, including how matchdays were supported by the Service.
- 23/07.5 In reply to Members' question regarding the use of drones by the Service, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole explained that the Service had agreement with both Dorset and Wiltshire Police and the voluntary sector to use their drones if required.
- 23/07.6 GM Tidball continued that Operation Stay Safe for road safety was continuing with additional online activity to support the police. The Service and its partners were also seeking to target anti-social behaviour and knife crime. Cllr Kevin Small commented that prevention work outside of the statutory agencies, for example working with supermarkets to help reduce unsociable car gatherings by installing entrance barriers, might be of benefit. ACFO Cole explained that such suggestions were fed into the engineering sector of the Strategic Road Safety Partnership.

- 23/07.7 Regrading on-call recruitment, eight new joiners at Swindon and seven at Stratton; three were in the final stages of the recruitment process and an on-call 'have a go day' was being planned at Westlea, Swindon. In reply to a question from Cllr Brian Ford, it was confirmed that the number joining the Service had exceeded the number of leavers. In response to Members' observations, it was noted that publicity photographs of the new joiners would be welcomed and that the date of the 'have a go day' at Westlea would be provided to Members for their attendance and local promotion through their social media accounts. The Committee recorded its thanks to GM Tidball for the additional on-call recruitment.
- 23/07.8 Measures were also being undertaken to improve on-call retention. These included development hubs and development nights, to support firefighters through their development phase and improve competence and standards. The Officers added that the initiative had proved successful and had been extended to Devizes. The hubs also provided support to on-call supervisory managers. A benefit of more on-call recruitment was that on-call appliances were available to respond to incidents, which in turn assisted retention.
- 23/07.9 In respect of education and youth intervention, 30 schools had been visited in the quarter with 3775 children and young people receiving fire safety education. Schools were now visited on a risk-based approach, where the potential for fire or anti-social behaviour was assessed to require a visit. It was noted that the SPECTRA course was concluding.
- 23/07.10 In terms of road safety, there had been a significant increase in the number of visits to the website and it was noted that the road safety team and the Swindon based partners, Arval, were highly commended in the Road Safety in the Community category at the Global Fleet Champions Awards.
- 23/07.11 There had been seven firesetters referrals in Swindon, with five cases currently open, and no re-referrals during the quarter.
- 23/07.12 There had been 1257 Safe and Well visits completed year to date, which represented a 44% increase compared to the same period last year. Across the Service, there had been 1,289 referrals to date, which represented a 25.6% increase in the same period last year. The Service had received an increase in referrals for Safe and Well visits from Thames Water. Reference was made to the funding received from Electrical Safety First to support households with the cost of living by providing assistance with their cooking facilities.

- 23/07.13 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 23/07.14 In the quarter there were three Prohibition Notices, with no enforcement or prosecutions.
- 23/07.15 There had been 81 automatic fire alarms attended in non-domestic premises. Non-attendance as a result of call challenge had showed savings of 818.6 hours for wholetime stations. In reply to Members' questions, the Officers explained the mechanisms for call challenge. Reference was also made to the Demand Analysis Group, which was also looking to reduce further attendance at automatic fire alarms.
- 23/07.16 **Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**
- 23/07.17 The Committee noted that first appliance average response times were well within standards and that Wholetime appliance availability was near 100%. On-call appliance availability was 63% in the quarter and would show an improving trend moving forwards. Operational competencies in date for both Wholetime and on-call exceeded 90%.
- 23/07.18 In reply to Members' questions, the Officers explained some aspects of technical rescue, including bariatric rescue working in conjunction with South West Ambulance Service and other agencies. A description of the risk information that was also provide to firefighters attending incidents at Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites was also provided.
- 23/07.19 Members were informed of a multi-agency exercise to take place on Sunday 26 March 2023 to test new procedures and operational guidance on high rise buildings, to which Members were invited to observe.
- 23/07.20 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 3.**
- 23/08 Matters raised by Members (agreed with Chair)**
- 23/08.1 There were no matters raised by Members.
- 23/09 Date of Next Meeting**
- 23/09.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as Wednesday 31 May 2023 at 10:00am.

The meeting closed at 10:50 am

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_