



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am on 31 August 2022 at Westlea Fire Station, The Chesters, Stonehill Green, Westlea, SN5 7DB

Members present:

Cllr Russell Holland (Chair)
Cllr Brian Ford
Cllr 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

22/20 Election of Chair

22/20.1 Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Andy Cole opened the meeting. He asked for nominations for the role of Chair. Cllr Holland was nominated by Cllr Ford. This was seconded by Cllr Small. With unanimous approval Cllr Holland was elected Chair.

22/20.2 **RESOLVED: Cllr Holland be elected Chair of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee.**

22/21 Welcome

22/21.1 Cllr Russell Holland welcomed Members and officers to the meeting. It was noted that this was Cllr Brian Ford's first Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee (LPS) meeting since joining the Authority.

22/22 Apologies

22/22.1 No apologies were received.

22/23 Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interests

22/23.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

22/24 Public Questions

22/24.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

22/24.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions**

22/25 Review and approve minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 1 June 2022

22/25.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

22/25.2 **RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

22/26 Action Progress Report

22/26.1 Group Manager (GM), Neil Tidball provided an update to the Committee on the following actions:

22/26.2 Action 356: That the risk profiles for the stations be shared with Members for them to be used in their councillor role to assist in raising the profile of the Service. It was agreed that the risk profiles be shared with Members by Democratic Services, and this action was therefore complete.

22/26.3 Actions 357 and 358 had been completed and action 359 was in progress.

22/26.4 **RESOLVED: Members noted the pending action on number 359 and that actions 356, 357 and 358 were complete.**

22/27 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 1

22/27.1 GM Tidball 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](#).

- 22/27.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 22/27.3 GM Tidball referred to the work that was being undertaken by the Service to reduce anti-social behaviour arising from car gatherings. This multiagency work involved the Road Safety Manager who had designed education courses for those that had received fixed penalty notices. Cllr Kevin Small commented that car gatherings in Swindon consumed considerable Police resources and car fires to be dealt with by the Service. In reply to a question from Cllr Ford, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole explained that the Service's involvement in the Road Safety Partnership and its Boards led to a wider understanding of the issues arising from car gatherings.
- 22/27.4 In reply to a question from Cllr Small, ACFO Cole stated that consideration was being given to the risks arising from the possible increased use of alternative fuel sources to heat buildings due to the large increases in fuel prices over the Winter. The Departmental Risk Register was being updated to reflect the increased risk and education packages were being prepared. Area Manager (AM), Marc House – Prevention and Protection would report further on this subject at the LPS's next meeting.
- 22/27.5 In respect of the area schools that had declined the request for a visit by the Service to promote its safety messages, the Chair requested that these be relayed to Members so that they could bring these to the attention of the relevant Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member and Officers.
- 22/27.6 GM Tidball highlighted that 412 safe and well visits had been undertaken in the year, which was a 72.3% increase, largely explained by a return to normal business following the pandemic. Partner referrals, from organisations including Thames Water, had increased by 101% to reach 214, which reflected the added concentration on partnership working.
- 22/27.7 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 22/27.8 GM Tidball reported that one enforcement notice had been served in the quarter to rectify deficiencies and this case was ongoing. Reference was also made to an upcoming safety exercise at Swindon Town Football Club in September 2022 to which Members were invited.
- 22/27.9 **Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**
- 22/27.10 The Committee discussed response times and appliance availability. ACFO Cole stated that there was education for crews designed to bring improvements to response times and that considerable work was being undertaken to recruit and retain on-call firefighters, including a recruitment roadshow and a development hub to promote retention. There were 17 new starters who were being trained as quickly as possible. The data did not raise any points of operational concern.

22/27.11 Following a question by Cllr Ford, ACFO Cole confirmed that home workers were also targeted for on-call recruitment via social media and groups that supported home workers, including offers to work from stations. Further to Cllr Small's question, ACFO Cole continued that special consideration was being given to the contracts surrounding transferability, when on-call firefighters became wholetime, to aid retention.

22/27.12 The Committee also discussed the training for operational competence, where the Officers explained that, following national guidance, the present two-week driving course would be extended to three weeks. A modular approach to driver training would be taken to stagger the time commitment for on-call firefighters.

22/27.13 The Chair thanked the Officers for the presentation.

22/27.14 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 1.**

22/28 Matters raised by Members (agreed with Chair)

22/28.1 No matters were raised.

22/29 Date of Next Meeting

22/29.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 30 November 2022 at 10:00am at Westlea Fire Station, The Chesters, Stonehill Green, Westlea, SN5 7DB.

The meeting closed at 11:15

Signed: _____