



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting held at 10.00 hours on 3 September 2020. This was a remote meeting held in Microsoft Teams.**

Members present:

CLlr Paul Oatway (Chair)  
CLlr Ernie Clark  
CLlr Peter Hutton  
CLlr Bob Jones  
CLlr Christopher Newbury  
CLlr Pip Ridout

Officer attendance:

Director of Community Safety, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), James Mahoney  
Group Manager (GM), Greg Izon  
Corporate Governance Manager, Nicki Whitehouse  
Democratic Service Support, Steph Howard  
Head of Information, Knowledge & Communication, Vikki Shearing (observing)

**20/11 Welcome**

20/11.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

**20/12 Apologies**

20/12.1 Apologies were received from Area Manager Seth Why.

**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.

**20/15 Review and approve minutes of the Wiltshire LPS Committee meeting on 14 February 2020.**

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 report**

20/16.1 Nicki Whitehouse, Corporate Governance Manager presented the report. She reported that action numbers 274, 284, 285, 289 and 293 had been completed. GM Izon gave an update on action 290 concerning the Fire Cadet scheme at Cricklade. Nicki Whitehouse explained that the remaining actions related to inviting Members to events. In the period since the last meeting, due to the coronavirus pandemic, there had been no events, but as these start resuming, Democratic Services would make sure that Members were invited to all appropriate events.

20/16.2 Cllr Hutton asked about how mayors could thank the work of the Service. ACFO Mahoney explained that he would look at accommodating visits, but that we would need to make arrangements enabling compliance with the strict rules regarding the coronavirus to ensure that our buildings remain 'Covid secure'.  
*Post meeting note: a visit has been arranged for The Mayor of Chippenham to Chippenham Fire Station and Cllr Hutton on 25 September.*

20/16.3 **RESOLVED: Members noted the actions and comments.**

20/16.4 **RESOLVED: Members agreed the closure of action numbers 274, 284, 285, 289, 290 and 293.**

**20/17 Performance monitoring and briefing**

20/17.1 GM Greg Izon took Members through the quarter 1 Performance Report for Wiltshire Local Performance & Scrutiny (Appendix A).

20/17.2 **Priority 1 - Making safer and healthier choices.**

20/17.3 GM Izon reported that availability and attendance times of wholetime appliances remains good. In this quarter, on-call appliances were

available to respond to incidents 77.10% which was an increase. He explained some of the actions the Service was taking to ensure that on-call availability improves, including the on-call pay model (due to go live in October), a review of current contract availability to target our recruitment and succession planning to support recruitment and staff development.

- 20/17.4 Cllr Oatway asked whether there were any areas in the Group that were of concern with regards to recruiting. GM explained that there the following were priority stations: Amesbury, Marlborough, Melksham, Ramsbury and Westbury. These are the stations the Service is pushing hard in recruiting to. He explained the Service was using Experion data to help determine the best way to market itself to prospective candidates.
- 20/17.5 In answer to a Member's question, ACFO Mahoney assured the Committee that the Service was taking advantage of technology to deliver training where possible to reduce travel and time, and to maintain training during the pandemic.
- 20/17.6 GM Izon explained the multi-agency work the Group had been doing. They had been involved in the Wiltshire Safeguarding Hub and the Prevent Safeguarding Hub. They had also worked with the Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub which was set up as a response to the pandemic which had really helped the Service's brand to be understood across different departments within Wiltshire Council. The Service had supported the Food Hub at Five Rivers in Salisbury. Crews from Salisbury Fire Station helped load food parcels to go to food banks and vulnerable people. The on-call support team at Salisbury also assisted by using the support unit to unload lorries.
- 20/17.7 The Service also worked to generate referrals to ensure the most vulnerable were protected. The Safe & Well team knocked on the doors of over 120 of the vulnerable who were shielded but had not responded to Wiltshire Council's requests, to make sure they were ok. The Service had a question inserted into Wiltshire Council's telephones script to ask, 'do you have a working smoke alarm?'. The call centre set up by the Hub also asked this question. The Service received 16 calls into Safe & Well from this. GM Izon explained that the coronavirus pandemic has changed the way we work with our partners and the way they work with us, providing more opportunities.
- 20/17.8 GM Izon reported that the Wiltshire Neighbourhood Resilience Group has brought a number of agencies together who understand each other's objectives. He explained that between us, we are looking at what the vulnerabilities there are in the 'new normal' and where the gaps are that we need to fill. This work will help us map our risks to enable us to focus our resources. He explained that Lucy Townsend and Jess Gibbons have done a fantastic job to bring together to protect our communities at a critical time. This work will continue.

- 20/17.9 GM Izon explained the joint working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, mapping the health vulnerabilities to tie in with the Resilience Board to help target vulnerable people. He reported that this was flagship work being done at a Group level.
- 20/17.10 The Maintenance of Skills and the Operational Licence is improving, in a healthy place and on track for on-call staff to achieve the corporate target of 80%.
- 20/17.11 GM Izon reported that an update on partnership referrals from Andrew Woods will be shared with Members. The Service has continued to deliver Safe & Well checks to the most vulnerable. Most of the checks have been conducted over the phone, but advisors have been visiting where there is a high-risk with the appropriate personal protective equipment. GM Izon advised that all those carried out by telephone will be visited in the future. Throughout quarter 1, there was a focus on the reduction of BBQ and bonfire related fires as there had been an increase in these. The Service carried out social media campaigns and press releases. In terms of water safety, the Service aligned its programme to the National Fire Chiefs Council's Fire Safety campaign calendar. In response to a comment from a Member, ACFO Mahoney assured the Committee that there is a focus on inland water safety as well as coastal.
- 20/17.12 GM Izon reported that he had attended a 'pre event' teleconference regarding wildfires during the hot and dry season. The Service carried out messaging and campaigns including on mobile Highways Messaging Boards regarding fire risk in the dry weather when there was a high-risk of wildfire. The police and ambulance had also been asked for assistance in calling in any sightings of fires in the open.
- 20/17.13 All teams have pulled together to keep messages going regarding road safety. The teams have aligned to local and national campaigns for example, the #takeextracare campaign, MOT exemption campaign, and 'my red thumb' and fatal 4. The Road Safety team have developed interactive workbooks which have included public health messages.
- 20/17.14 Cllr Clark asked about the Older Drivers Forum and GM Izon confirmed that he would ask a member of the team to contact him with information
- 20/17.15 **ACTION: A member of the Prevention team to contact Cllr Clark with information about the Older Drivers Forum.**
- 20/17.16 GM Izon reported that the delivery of Safe Drive Stay Alive courses had been impacted by the pandemic and that new virtual reality technology had been developed to support future delivery which will be launched soon.

- 20/17.17 The Chair asked about the welfare of staff who had attended the recent fatal road traffic collision in Calne. GM Izon explained the work the crews had done at the incident and to assist the police with the work they had to do. He reported that the staff had worked with utmost professionalism. GM Izon explained the support and follow up provided to staff, including that of the TRiM Lead. Ongoing support, welfare and monitoring continues.
- 20/17.18 GM Izon reported that there had been a reduction in deliberate fires Salisbury since the last report through targeted partnership work. Data relating to firesetting is continually monitored to identify emerging risks and trends.
- 20/17.19 The Youth Intervention team have been building partnerships with Area Boards, schools and community groups that have identified risks to young people to provide courses tailored to reduce risks. They are also developing a relationship with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to fund courses based on reducing the demand on the police.
- 20/17.20 The Chair asked that a focus be maintained on the funding from the OPCC. GM Izon confirmed that he would ask for regular updates to be provided to the Chair.
- 20/17.21 **ACTION: Regular updates to be provided to the Chair regarding funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to fund courses based on reducing demand on the police.**
- 20/17.22 Cllr Ridout reminded GM Izon to submit any bids to the Area Boards now for Salamander courses running from January.
- 20/17.23 The Education Team has developed online courses during the period when schools were closed down. A number of stories have been written and illustrated, each with a safety theme, which have then been read out loud on camera by a number of special guests, for example, Zoe Wannamaker and Sharron davies.
- 20/17.24 **Priority Two - Protecting you & the environment from harm**
- 20/17.25 GM Izon reported that the risk inspection programme for non-domestic buildings is on track to be delivered in time to start in April 2021. In April, the new strategy for responding to automatic fire alarms was implemented. This is showing a 94% reduction in the number of unwanted AFA's compare to as at the end of quarter 1. Importantly this has released time for wholtime staff to do more community safety work and training.
- 20/17.26 GM Izon reported the fire safety activity on page 20 of the report. One prohibition notice had been served in Trowbridge. The Fire Safety team are beginning to recommence fire safety audits.

- 20/17.27 In answer to a Member's question, ACFO Mahoney explained the lobbying that communication the Service had been having with the four constituent authorities regarding bonfires and controlled burns which had the result of a reduction in the numbers that had become out of control.
- 20/17.28 **ACTION: GM Izon to look at the ways we work with local authority Environmental Health teams to promote messages about bonfires and controlled burns.**
- 20/17.29 GM Izon reported that there had been 18 fires in non-domestic properties, an increase of two against last year.
- 20/17.30 **Priority three - be there when you need us**
- 20/17.31 GM Izon reported that 75% of incidents at sleeping risk properties met the response standard within the travel-time isochrone. This was 27 out of 36 occasions. He explained that any that are not met are investigated. The Group works with Safe and Well teams to increase prevention activity in areas where response times are longer.
- 20/17.32 There was an increase in deliberate fires, largely down to bonfires and an increase in accidental dwelling fires of five against last year. This latter increase was fewer than expected, but possibly due to the number of safety messages that were released during the period of lockdown.
- 20/17.33 Cllr Hutton asked whether the Service was consulted where towns were widening pavements and narrowing roads as a result of social distancing as this could impact on response times. ACFO Mahoney explained that the Service should be consulted on any of these changes and that he would look into whether it had received the relevant consultations.
- 20/17.34 **ACTION: ACFO Mahoney to investigate whether the Service was being consulted on alterations being made to pavements and roads as a result of social distancing. Cllr Oatway will also take this up with the Highways department at Wiltshire Council.**
- 20/17.35 Availability had improved during quarter 1 and the trend for actual availability is upward as is the contractual availability. Contractual changes have also improved weekend availability as managers had reviewed all contracts with on-call staff.
- 20/17.36 GM Izon went through operational competence, stating that emergency response driving was at 100% for wholetime and 99.1% for on-call. For breathing apparatus, it was 90.3% for wholetime and 78.6% and for casualty care 94.1% for wholetime and 80.7% for on-call. GM Izon confirmed to Members that the target for breathing apparatus is 90%.

- 20/17.37 GM Izon explained the Operational Effectiveness Database and how it is used to capture learning. He is looking to carry out a group exercise using the David Murray John Tower in Swindon to make sure the crews are fully familiar when they need to respond to an incident in Swindon. A potential regrade of high-rise may mean that there are a number of these in the Group in the future.
- 20/17.38 GM Izon reported that one death was currently going through the Coronial process and that Members will be kept up to date with this as the process progresses.
- 20/17.39 GM Izon reported the work crews had done to contain deal with a significant dwelling fire at Great Somerford.
- 20/17.40 The Resilience department continues to work closely with the local resilience forums (LRF) to capture community risks and ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. In particular the Service had assisted with the arrangements for the repatriation plane that had flown into Boscombe Down. It had worked closely with LRF's geographically across the country up to the convoy's destination in Merseyside to mitigate any risks should the plane or the convoy have had an incident.
- 20/17.41 The main priority COMAH site in the Group is Porton Down and the Group continues to work with that site. Virtual tabletop exercises are being planned with neighbouring fire and rescue services to ensure good cross border arrangements are in place. GM Izon confirmed that he would inform Members of any relevant exercises to which they could be invited in the future
- 20/17.42 **ACTION: Members to be updated on any multi-agency exercises and invited as appropriate.**
- 20/17.43 GM Izon reported that during the quarter, crews had driven ambulances, and explained an incident where an ambulance, crewed by a paramedic and a firefighter had saved a life.
- 20/17.44 He further reported that fire safety advisors had been working with partners in care settings to help with face fittings and the crews at Chippenham have supported the ambulance service by assembling respirators. Easter eggs had been distributed to vulnerable families via Operation Hopping Bunny.
- 20/17.45 The Chair thanked GM Izon for a professional and detailed presentation. He said 'we are all hugely proud of what you do, unbelievable what we have heard this morning. I would like on behalf of the Committee, to recognise and thank the Salisbury team for the food distribution, to thank the door knockers for what they have been doing and the amount of work that has gone on. I would like to recognise the professionalism of the Calne and Chippenham crews at the recent fatal road traffic collision. These are incredibly professional people and thank you so much'.

- 20/17.46 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and approved performance for the quarter 1 2020-21.**
- 20/17.47 **RESOLVED: The comments in paragraph 2/17.46 were proposed by Cllr Oatway and seconded by Cllr Ridout. All Members were in agreement.**  
*Post meeting note: the wording of the Committee's thanks to staff is attached in the addendum to these minutes.*
- 20/18 **Update on performance dashboard**
- 20/18.1 ACFO Mahoney reported that the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee dashboard was due to be available for the quarter 1 reporting period. However, the coronavirus pandemic had inhibited the readiness of the system to go live. He explained that the technical aspects are virtually complete now and it is expected that the dashboard will be utilised for quarter 2 reporting in November.
- 20/18.2 In answer to a question from Cllr Jones, ACFO Mahoney confirmed that a session would be arranged to demonstrate the dashboard to the Chairs of the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees and the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.
- 20/18.3 **ACTION: A demonstration to be arranged of the new performance dashboard to the Chairs of the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees and the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee.**
- 20/19 Issues raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**
- 20/19.1 No issues were raised.
- 20/20 Date of Next Meeting**
- 20/20.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 25 November 2020 10:00am.

The meeting closed at 11.42

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



## **ADDENDUM**

### **Message sent to staff on behalf of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee**

#### **Note of thanks from the Wiltshire Local Performance & Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee would like to thank staff for the incredible work that has gone on during the pandemic.

In particular, it would like to thank the Salisbury team and on-call support officers for the food distribution, the Safe & Well door knockers who checked on the vulnerable as part of the Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub, and the Chippenham crews who worked with the Ambulance Service to make respirators.

It would also like to recognise the professionalism of the Calne and Chippenham crews and Station Manager Dave Geddes at the tragic fatal road traffic collision that recently occurred in Derry Hill, Calne.

The Chair of the Committee remarked that these were all incredibly professional people, and we should all be proud of their contribution to the service in general and all our communities that they serve.