



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the  
Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee  
held at 10:00 hours on Thursday 24 November 2016 at the  
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Westlea Fire Station, Swindon

Members present: Cllr Nick Martin, Cllr Abdul Amin; Cllr Joe Tray (Chairman);

Officer attendance: ACFO Nigel Shearing; Craig Baker, Area Manager; Glyn Moody, Group Manager; Bob Ford, Head of Strategic Planning and Knowledge Management; Ms Jane Barnes, Performance Manager; Mrs Marianne Taylor, Democratic Services Officer.

**1 Welcome**

1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

**2 Apologies**

2.2 Apologies were received from Cllr John Haines and Cllr Garry Perkins

**3 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business**

3.1 The Chairman asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the localism act.

3.2 There were none

**4 Public Questions**

4.1 No public questions had been received and there were no members of the public present.

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- 5 Minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2 September 2016**
- 5.1 The chairman asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- 5.2 Members confirmed their approval of minutes with no amendments. There were no matters arising
- 5.3 **Resolved: Minutes for the meeting on 2 September 2016 were confirmed as accurate.**
- 6 Performance monitoring for preceding quarter (taken with item 8)**
- 6.1 Performance information was approved by members.
- 6.2 **Resolved: Performance for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter was approved.**
- 7 Verbal update on Averies Fire (taken during item 8)**
- 7.1 The Averies brothers were prosecuted by Environmental Agency (EA), there is an outstanding 'proceeds of crime' order to be heard, which is due in June 2017. This may allow the Service to reclaim some of its costs.
- 7.2 Following on from the fire there was an internal debrief; organisation and individual failings were identified and addressed; policies and procedures have been reviewed and, where identified, amended; welfare arrangements have improved and staff training undertaken.
- 7.3 Local Resilience Forum (LRF) commissioned a strategic debrief; and a working group established through Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA).
- 7.4 The Service is working collaborative with the EA on a programme of 21 inspections. All 21 sites have received a risk assessment.
- 8 Briefing from Area Commander**
- 8.1 **Priority 1**
- 8.1.1 KLOE1: Education programmes
- 8.1.2 A range of safety education programmes were delivered. The Service engaged with 1089 year 2 & year 6 school children. He added that there was a 'pass out' parade with a group of Downs syndrome people.
- 8.1.3 Overall the direction of travel for education programme is good and AM Baker was happy with performance.

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- 8.1.4 The Chairman asked for any comments.
- 8.1.5 Members were interested in understanding the selection for Salamander. AM Baker explained that Salamander is about building self-esteem. He added that contact is made through main stream schools who refer young people with self-esteem issues, Salamander is open to young Job Seeker plus applicants too; AM Baker explained that 'families first' refer young people who are experiencing challenges; and Special needs and carers are also included in the programme.
- 8.1.6 The AM outlined the funding issues and what is required. He added that support for on-going funding would be beneficial. AM Baker also added that it is good for fire fighters to work with a range of young people and their families.
- 8.1.7 AM Baker said he is aware of a person who was on a Salamander course for young carers a number of years ago who has now gone on to become an instructor and is an apprentice firefighter with the Service.
- 8.1.8 GM Moody was asked to provide a schedule of Salamander events to Members
- 8.1.9 Mr Ford advised Members that there will be a fire prevention presentation at the next Fire Authority meeting.
- 8.2 KLOE 2: Vulnerable People
- 8.2.1 There are two Safe and Well (S&W) advisors covering Swindon, and operational crews also undertake S&W visits. Safe And Independent Living (SAIL) is to be re-launched to ensure it is reaching the most vulnerable people.
- 8.2.2 Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is an area the Service is focussing on in Swindon as they are often populated with vulnerable individuals. The Service is working with the local authority. A Member suggested Sub-letting may be an issue too and the AM agreed this is sometimes the case.
- 8.2.3 A Member asked if sheltered accommodation was under the gaze of the Service. GM Moody advised that the Service may be alerted for S&W visits there but usually find they are well managed because they tend to belong to regulated companies.
- 8.2.4 Members raised concerns about the number of false alarms. They were advised that the Service keeps a log of alarms sounding and will carry out extra visits where a need is highlighted. A watch in Swindon has been charged with covering false alarm investigations as part of their work in the community.
- 8.2.5 A Member asked about training for S&W visits and was assured that whilst there were some challenges initially around procedures, crews are well

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versed in visiting people in their homes. He added that where Oxygen is used medically in homes the Service is alerted to this and carry out a S&W visit.

### 8.3 KLOE 3: Working with Partners

8.3.1 Previous work (in KLOEs 2 & 3 above) relies on working with partners like the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Dementia Project.

8.3.2 In the future, and for those individuals who are immobile, there is a portable misting unit which not only alerts the Service if there is a fire, but also puts out a localised (eg: armchair or bed) fire. The system will be linked to local fire stations.

8.3.3 The Service works with CCG to help return vulnerable people to their homes from hospital. The Service is also working to support reduce hospital admissions through S&W.

### 8.4 KLOE 4: Road Safety

8.4.1 Safe Drive Stay Alive roadshows have been completed in the Swindon area, engaging with 2400 local school children. The Road Safety Manager will follow up on those schools who have not participated and GM Moody is content with the reasons given for not participating.

### 8.5 **Priority 2**

### 8.6 KLOE 1: Vulnerable People

8.6.1 AM Baker outlined the Safeguarding procedure and added that Safeguarding gives the Service strong and responsible roles to support robust arrangements for identifying those at risk. There is a dedicated phone contact arrangement with the Safeguarding lead or a nominated Officer. Crews are able to use the number to contact if they have a concern when they visit homes. Currently hoarding is a priority due to the fire risk and mental health concerns for the individual. This kind of concern may be picked up following an incident or a S&W visit.

### 8.7 KLOE 2: Legislative Fire Safety

8.7.1 The Service supports local businesses to reduce the burden on business by educating through Better Regulation Delivery Office (BDRO). There are some common areas where businesses are failing: no risk assessment in place; not instructing staff on fire safety; and out of date extinguishers. Homes in multiple occupancy (HMO) are included for their common areas (halls, landings, accessibility). AM Baker advised that following any fires there will be a post-fire visit and the Service will provide advice to owners/landlords.

### 8.8 KLOE 3: Identifying risks

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- 8.8.1 There have been some issues raised and concerns about unused and empty buildings, including domestic dwellings. The Service works with Local Authorities (LAs) and owners around securing the buildings. AM Baker advised that crews have inspected some empty buildings to check on water supply and to plans or risk assess locations.
- 8.8.2 The chairman asked if Swindon Borough Council (SBC) keeps a list of empty properties, this was confirmed. Incidents of deliberate fire setting have fallen following a peak in July, AM Baker is content this is travelling in the right direction. Working locally with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
- 8.9 KLOE 4: Local Resilience Partnerships
- 8.9.1 Service has links with Local Resilience Forum (LRF), which is relevant this week because of adverse weather conditions currently being experienced. Flooding can be an issue but teams work locally to resolve this.
- 8.10 **Priority 3**
- 8.11 KLOE 1: Appliance Availability
- 8.11.1 Sleeping risk (including prisons, hospitals and nursing/care homes) the first appliance arrives within 10 min on 94.12% of occasions and only there are 4 occasions when the target was missed. This was due to crews out on training or due to already attending a fire which caused a response to be 11 secs outside the target time.
- 8.12 KLOE 2: Response arrangements
- 8.12.1 Most fires take place in the built up areas and this is where we know we can respond well. Members were concerned that Swindon Crews are attending many incidents in Wootton Bassett, however AM Baker assured Members this is due to staffing issues which are being resolved.
- 8.13 KLOE 3 - Competence
- 8.13.1 Operational competence for Swindon WTD 97% and 84% for RDS which AM Baker is content with. Swindon & Stratton were involved in a number of exercises which have been carried out recently and performed well.
- 8.14 KLOE 4: Learn from Risks
- 8.14.1 Deputy Commanders are undertaking station performance and competency audits, as well as debriefs. Across the 3 fire stations in Swindon area 12 audits have been carried out. Members asked if the Service still carry out operational audits. This was confirmed by GM Moody and he added that this is part of the Quality Assurance process.

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- 8.14.2 AM Baker was pleased overall with the direction of travel for learning from risks.
- 8.14.3 The Averies Fire: see item 7
- 8.14.4 AM Baker talked Members through the recent Manchester Road incident adding that three pumps were in attendance with response times of between 4 and 9 minutes. AM Baker commended the actions of the responding crews at this tragic incident
- 8.14.5 All HMOs and new build housing have hard wired smoke detectors fitted. The Service was active in arranging for some distressing footage being removed from Facebook. AM Baker was comfortable with the way the events were tackled and how the crew performed.
- 8.14.6 There were a range of positive outcomes starting with leaflets drops and door knocking about S&W visits, followed by multi-agency working. The fire has allowed crews to access homes that would have been closed to them before the fire took place. Householders were pleased to see the Service personnel and were actively engaged in learning from what happened locally to them.
- 8.14.7 Crews & S&W teams fitted 100 detectors and received 50 referrals for S&W visits; GM Moody attended the local mosque to engage with leaders there. Messages about fire safety and how people could access advice and support went in the local press, to social media and to community groups to encourage safety visits. As a result 288 S&W visits have been arranged with 197 completed to date.
- 8.14.8 Members asked what changes had taken place and how often Crews attend house fires of this nature. GM Moody and AM Bakers said crews don't attend fires like that in Manchester Road too often. Legislation for the manufacture of furniture; changes in culture (healthy diets, less use of chip pans); and not so many free standing fires (Calor gas, paraffin etc) are used.
- 8.14.9 Some work with landlords has resulted in them undertaking swift action to ensure there are working detectors in HMOs etc; closer working with SBC housing teams and business owners has been instigated. There is a possibility that working together with SBC may result in the opportunity of tapping into some funding under migration grants from central government to help with fire prevention. Multi agency working has resulted in meetings with community group leaders, sharing information through meetings and through social media. Teams will work hard to respond to new contacts.
- 8.14.10 Chairman recorded thanks on behalf of all Members to all Service personnel for all their hard work and the efforts which are still on going to help make the community safe, following this incident.

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- 8.14.11 The Service held a successful recruiting event for at Swindon RDS with over 50 people through the doors. 26 individuals have been highlighted as living within the response time (5 mins). It is hoped to fill gaps in RDS quickly.
- 8.14.12 Members agreed this was a comprehensive report.
- 8.14.13 Members approved performance. (see action above at 6. )
- 8.14.14 **Action: GM Moody to provide a schedule of Salamander events for Members**

### 9 Issues raised by Members

- 9.1 Members asked what they could do to help promote the Authority & the Service to firefighters. GM Moody said he would like to hold an evening event at Pewsey to help fire fighters understand the role of the LPS. Members felt that they would prefer coffee and chat individually. However Cllr Amin would appreciate GM Moody inviting him to attend Swindon FS.
- 9.1.2 **Action: GM Moody to invite Cllr Amin to Swindon FS**

### 10 Date of Next Meeting

- 10.1 The chairman confirmed with Members the date of the next Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 2 March 2016 at Westlea Fire Station

Closed at 12:00

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