



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held remotely
on 17 November 2020 at 9.30 in Microsoft Teams.**

Members present:

Cllr Pete Barrow (Chair)

Cllr Richard Biggs

Cllr Rebecca Knox

Cllr Byron Quayle

Officer attendance:

Director of Community Services, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Jim Mahoney
Prevention and Protection, Area Manager (AM), Marc House

Group Manager (GM), Darren Langdown

Democratic Services Support, Steph Howard

Strategic Planning Coordinator, Clare Hawker

Strategic Planning Manager, Clare Morgan

Corporate Governance Manager, Nicki Whitehouse

Information Systems Manager, Mark Woodfield

20/21 Welcome

20/21.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members who introduced themselves.

20/22 Apologies

20/22.1 Apologies were received from Area Manager, Seth Why.

20/23 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business

20/23.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

20/24 Public Questions

20/24.1 No public questions had been received.

20/25 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset LPS meeting on 25 August 2020

20/25.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

20/25.2 **RESOLVED: that the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

20/26 Action Progress Report

20/26.1 Corporate Governance Manager, Nicki Whitehouse took Members through the Action Progress report. She explained that action number 297 was still in progress, to allow time from when the schools had reopened in September to gather sufficient data to provide information on the feedback and outcomes of the Safer People and Responsible Communities (SPARC) course run at Weymouth and Portland Heath. She advised that an update would be provided to the Committee at the next meeting in February.

20/26.2 Group Manager (GM) Darren Langdown provided an update from his liaison with the Dorset Community Safety Partnership regarding SPARC courses and confirmed that no courses would be run until next year.

20/26.3 Referring to action number 300, Cllr Biggs pointed out that liaison should be made with the Dorchester Youth and Community Centre as well as Dorset Children Services to get referral for individuals who would benefit from attending a SPARC course.

20/26.4 Nicki Whitehouse referred to the three closed actions on page 3 of the report, explaining that it had been confirmed that the previous Dorset County Council policy in relation to sprinklers in council buildings and accommodation for vulnerable persons continues as a policy for Dorset Council.

20/26.5 **RESOLVED: Members noted the actions and comments.**

20/26.6 **RESOLVED: Members approved the removal of completed actions**

20/26.7 **ACTION: Group Manager Darren Langdown to liaise with the Dorchester Youth and Community Centre to receive recommendations from them re individuals who would benefit attending a SPARC course.**

20/27 Performance monitoring and briefing

20/27.1 GM Darren Langdown took Members through the Performance report for quarter 2 with the aid of the dashboard which was shared with the meeting.

20/27.2 GM Langdown went through each Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) under the three priorities, including the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) List for each.

20/27.3 **Priority one - making safer and healthier choices**

20/27.4 On-call appliances had been available over 90% of the time during quarter 2. GM Langdown explained some of the initiatives the Service had to further improve this performance, including the on-call pay model, introduced in October 2020, a review of on-call staff contract availability and proactive recruitment in local communities by on-call support officers.

20/27.5 In response to a Member's question about the impact of the on-call pay model at Dorchester Fire Station, GM Langdown explained how cover was being monitored and managed at a local level.

20/27.6 GM Langdown reported that the first pump achieved the attendance target 71.4% of the time in quarter 2 and that performance against response standards remains on track for all incident types.

20/27.7 The Maintenance of Skills and Operational licence for operational staff is being monitored, as elements of it had been limited due to coronavirus pandemic restrictions. GM Langdown explained that a risk based approach is being taken to prioritise training to ensure the safety of firefighters and that there had been no impact on availability.

20/27.8 GM Langdown explained that the data reported on the dashboard for the percentage of incidents to other properties where the response standard was met in quarter 2 for the previous year should state 46.3% rather than 33.3%.

20/27.9 GM Langdown explained that a programme of fire safety activity is aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) fire safety campaign calendar and gave some examples such as disposable barbecue awareness, the RNLI Respect the Water campaign and chimney and gas safety weeks that were supported by the Service's social media channels. He went on to report that the Service also aligns its activities to local and national road safety campaigns, including the National Roads Partnership calendar, THINK, Highways England, Road Safety Partnerships, and NFCC campaigns. During this quarter, these had included:

- Social Media support of "One Road, One Week" between 14-20th September 2020 and of Project EDWARD on and around 16th September 2020
- Project "Every Day Without a Road Death", which was run in association with police forces across the UK
- Highways England through their Driving for Better Business Campaign.

20/27.10 GM Langdown reported that the Service works with Dorset Police, Dorset Council and South Western Ambulance Service to jointly deliver the Safe Drive Stay Alive (SDSA) programme to young people in Dorset. In light of coronavirus restrictions, a digital version of this programme has been developed. The Service continues to work in partnership with the Ministry of Defence to deliver the Survive the Drive programme to military personnel and is being consulted on to assist the Ministry of Defence to deliver a digital version of the programme.

20/27.11 The Service's Arson Reduction Coordinator represents the Service at partnership meetings concerning fire-related anti-social behaviour. Operation Heathland has continued to meet fortnightly during this period via web meetings, to continue to support and implement the arson strategy where appropriate. Data on the number of deliberate fires in Dorset is provided on a quarterly basis for stations to monitor. Operational crews can react to trends and implement prevention activity with support from prevention teams as required. Stations have supported the BBQ campaign via social media provided by Litter Free Dorset. 15 volunteers have provided heath patrols at high risk times, delivering 143 sessions, covering 347 hours.

20/27.12 The Service has a good flow of referrals from partners and continues to work with organisations to further strengthen and develop new referrals streams. Discussions are ongoing with Dorset NHS, E-Zec medical and AGE UK. There is an extensive partner referral system to assist with the identification of occupancies at high-risk of fire, with 160 partnerships established Service wide currently. This year to date 881 referrals have been received compared with 1,017 last year.

20/27.13 **Priority 2 - protecting you and the environment from harm**

20/27.14 GM Langdown reported that there were no significant issues to raise with the Committee. There had been a downturn in the number of proactive audits due to the coronavirus restrictions, but Fire Safety teams are adapting new ways of working to prioritise and inspect care homes and other sleeping accommodation to ensure fire regulations are maintained to a high standard. The department is actively contacting care homes that would have formed part of the high-risk premises within the Risk Based Inspection Programme to undertake a telephone audit in line with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance.

20/27.15 The Service has a Service Delivery Plan action for 2020-21 to deliver a risk-based inspection programme for non-domestic buildings. This will include assessing the premises inspected compared to premises where incidents are occurring to ensure effective targeting. This project is on track to be delivered in time to start on 1 April 2021.

20/27.16 The new strategy for responding to automatic fire alarms was showing positive results and this year to date, has resulted in an 80% reduction in the number of unwanted automatic fire alarms compared to the previous year across the Service, representing cashable savings to the Service of £32,175 and 210 hours returned to wholetime operational crews to carry out prevention and training activities.

20/27.17 GM Langdown reported that the Service facilitates events to proactively engage with local businesses or large organisations in Dorset. In this quarter, due to coronavirus, there were no physical events held however we actively liaised with local authority healthcare and care premises to assist with amended procedures and guidance as a result of the pandemic. The Service has also produced improved web-based information for businesses tailored to fit the current restrictions.

20/27.18 A key area of focus will stem from the outcomes and recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The Service has worked hard with Government and the NFCC to implement the outcomes of the Hackitt report and the recommendations of the current Public Inquiry. This involves working with building owners to jointly understand the building construction and how the fire safety measures are maintained. We work with our operational colleagues to share building information and work with our Prevention team to include the occupants of tall buildings in our safe and well work. We continue to work very closely with our local authority housing and building control partners to ensure that the current overlapping housing and fire safety legislation is understood well and that our actions are proportionate and consistent. Our relationship with the Local Resilience Forum colleagues allows a greater understanding of each other's role in the event of an emergency to work more effectively.

20/27.19 In response to a Member's question, GM Darren Langdown explained the cross-agency and Service work which was being carried out on fire survival guidance, including the processes that the London Fire Brigade had developed. He reported that improvements were being made in the new role of the Evacuation Officer and the lines of communication between the caller/occupier and the incident ground to ensure crews could be deployed where required and Fire Control could provide the best guidance. An App developed by the London Fire Brigade was being looked at that could provide a quick and effective record of the evacuation of flats.

20/27.20 ACFO Jim Mahoney further explained that the Fire Control team was working with the Networked Fire Service Partnership to ensure consistency of practice and that fire survival guidance had been developed and tested, including where 'stay put' advice was changed. He confirmed that the Service was in a good position and that the same principles could be applied in smaller buildings.

20/27.21 **Priority 3 - being there when you need us**

20/27.22 GM Langdown explained that the Service's Operational Effectiveness Database (OED) is used to share learning across the organisation. To improve and increase the capture of learning across the Service, work is ongoing to build engagement with this process to ensure a consistent response level and standard across the Dorset Group.

20/27.23 GM Langdown reported that Her Majesty's Coroner has, to date, confirmed no fire related deaths in 2020-21. There remain three potential fire related deaths that are awaiting a Coroner's verdict, an incident in Portesham on 30 September 2019, an incident in Fordington, Dorchester on 9 February 2020 and in Shroton on 9 September 2020. Each death is investigated at a fatal fire case conference to explore Service and multi-agency learning and improvement.

20/27.24 The Service actively participates in all multi-agency and Local Resilience Forum (LRF) activities in response to coronavirus with representation at strategic, tactical and operational levels. Some aspects of routine LRF activity were paused during the quarter. as the response to the pandemic continued. The effective planning and preparation work undertaken by the Service and the LRF to maintain and exercise its plans laid the good foundations to allow them to step up and respond together to this major incident and public health crisis.

20/27.25 The annual exercise plan is in place and group managers are planning Group, Area and Service exercises throughout the remainder of the year. As on-call staff have returned to weekly drill nights, the on-call training planner has been amended to reflect this and the station exercises are starting to take place at a local level, bearing in mind the current coronavirus restrictions. Dorset crews had recently been involved in a 'high-rise' exercise in the Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Group area.

20/27.26 **Demand summary**

20/27.27 GM Langdown took the Committee through the demand summary, explaining that the number of fires and the number of incidents attended which turned out to be false alarms were being monitored. The number of special service incidents attended had decreased when compared to the same period last year. Analysis was being undertaken to determine whether the reason for this was due to the pandemic or risk reduction initiatives.

20/27.28 GM Langdown took the Committee through a presentation, explaining that firefighters had supported South West Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWAST) in attending 1,450 incidents. They had carried out 1,126 face fittings and working closely with the police on four deliberate fires, explaining a positive impact on one perpetrator due to the commitment of a station manager.

20/27.29 Primary and secondary schools were being provided with online virtual lessons which had received very positive feedback. The Education team had been working on a package of fire safety presentations for university students and working with student unions and the communication team.

20/27.30 13 schools across Dorset had signed up to Safe Drive Stay Alive courses and the Service was now delivering Survive the Drive to the Ministry of Defence at 17 locations nationally.

20/27.31 GM Langdown explained the complexities of a rescue from height of a 'base-jumper' at the transmitter station in Rampisham which was attended by several crew and resources, supported by the ambulance service. and a wildfire at Briantspuddle which had been challenging for crews.

20/27.32 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and approved the performance for quarter 2.**

20/28 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)

20/28.1 No issues were raised by Members.

20/29 Date of Next meeting

20/29.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 16 February 2021 from 9:30am.

The meeting closed at 11.24

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