



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee  
held on 18 May 2021 at 9.30am in the Poundbury Support Offices, Dorchester.**

Members present:

Cllr Pete Barrow (Chair)  
Cllr Richard Biggs  
Cllr Rebecca Knox  
Cllr Byron Quayle

Officer attendance:

Director of Community Safety, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole  
Area Manager (AM), Seth Why  
Group Manager (GM), Darren Langdown  
Head of Corporate Support, Vikki Shearing

**21/09      Welcome**

21/09.1      The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members.

**21/10      Apologies**

21/10.1      No apologies were received.

**21/11      Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business**

21/11.1      The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

**21/12      Review and approve minutes of the Dorset LPS meeting on 16 February 2021**

21/12.1      The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

*Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

21/12.2 **RESOLVED: that the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

**21/13 Action progress report**

21/13.1 Area Manager (AM) Why took Members through the Action Progress report. He explained that action number 297 was still in progress and being monitored. He advised that action 310 in relation to the SPARC referral process with regards to the Dorset Youth Community Centre was complete and that action 312 to amend the minutes of 17 November 2020 was also now complete.

21/13.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted the actions and comments.**

**21/14 Performance monitoring and briefing**

21/14.1 Group Manager (GM) Langdown took Members through the Performance report for quarter 4 by way of a presentation, giving an overview of each Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) under priorities 1, 2 and 3.

**21/14.2 Priority one - making safer and healthier choices**

21/14.3 GM Langdown provided an update on the multi-agency partnerships the Service continues to contribute to. He confirmed that the Service attend the following: Dorset Together, the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board, the Community Safety Partnership and Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board. He reported the key role the Service has had in delivering partner initiatives such as DRIVE, Keeping Dorset Safe and the consultation for the strategy for homelessness and rough sleeping.

21/14.4 GM Langdown reported that partner safe and well referrals are increasing from hospitals and health care organisations. With 160 partnerships established, he reported that there has been a 2% increase in referrals service wide in the last quarter, but for Dorset this has increased from 222 to 228.

21/14.5 Cllr Biggs queried the Services involvement in care leavers and AM Why confirmed that the Services prevention work identifies vulnerable groups and works with partners to provide training in recognising risks.

21/14.6 GM Langdown provided a summary of the national social media campaigns the Service supported in the last quarter and the positive numbers of reaches achieved for each campaign post. He also reported that 2 schools had received virtual fire safety education lessons and a new online course was delivered to 9 young people with the Princes Trust team programme called 'Achieve'.

*Initials* \_\_\_\_\_

21/14.7 Cllr Barrow, whilst speaking positively about the social media engagement, prompted a discussion between Members about targeted campaigns and understanding the difference this engagement makes, with a focus on outcomes. ACFO Cole explained to Members that the local community risk profile work underway will support the Service in better understanding local risks and carrying out targeted messaging through social media and other engagement channels. Members asked to continue to be updated through the quarterly performance report.

21/14.8 GM Langdown advised Members of road safety activity which is aligned to the local and national campaigns including the National Roads Partnership calendar, THINK, Highways England, Road Safety Partnerships and NFCC Campaigns. This quarters activity included involvement in the driving whilst using a mobile phone campaign, which attracted over 11,000 impressions on twitter as well as national campaign such as Commercial Vehicle Week, Highways England "Go Left" campaign and Project Edward (every day without a road death).

21/14.9 GM Langdown reported the work undertaken in the last quarter in relation to Safe Drive Stay Alive. The programme has been delivered to 9 schools, over 900 students. Online resources have been downloaded 700 times by teaching professionals and the Survive the drive programme has reached over 2,000 military personnel nationally.

21/14.10 GM Langdown advised Members that Firesetter numbers were low, with 3 cases, all resolved successfully. He highlighted that the Service's integrated approach to fire setting behaviour is centred on key risk groups and with regular local monitoring of deliberate fires, we continue to have one of the lowest occurrences of deliberate fires across all FRS' in England.

21/14.11 **Priority 2 - protecting you and the environment from harm**

21/14.12 GM Langdown provided an update on the impact of the Automatic fire alarms strategy at commercial premises during the last quarter. Across the Dorset Group this has delivered cashable savings of £7,150 for on-call attendance and 6 WDS hours saved.

21/14.13 He also reported that, due to the downturn in proactive audits, progress is being monitored against the corporate target to audit 100% of known sleeping accommodation identified as high risk where the Fire Safety Order applies.

21/14.14 Members queried the approach being taken by the Service with regards to AirBnB properties. AM Why clarified that there were no trends indicating an issue, but that work to standardise fire safety requirements in short-term letting is being progressed.

21/14.15 With regards the Services response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, GM Langdown highlighted the areas of focus:

- Working with building owners to jointly understand the building construction and how the fire safety measures are maintained.
- Liaising with the NFCC Building Safety Team to influence future legislative changes, including changes to Building Regulations and Fire Safety legislation.
- Fire Safety continues to work with operational colleagues to share building information, and with the Prevention Team to include the occupants of tall buildings in our Safe & Well work.

21/14.16 **Priority 3 - being there when you need us**

21/14.17 GM Langdown reported that the availability of wholetime appliances remains very strong. On-call appliances were available to respond to incidents 81.8% of the time and wholetime appliances over 99% of the time. Ongoing action is being taken to ensure on-call availability improves and this includes a Service wide review of on-call contracts of availability and succession planning to maintain availability and support recruitment.

21/14.18 Cllr Quayle recognised the difficulties in maintaining cover at Maiden Newton fire station and GM Langdown summarised the work being undertaken to improve this position, which included a repeat of the targeted recruitment campaign which has resulted in several new on call firefighters being taken through the recruitment process and reviewing on call contracts with a view to increasing contracted hours.

21/14.19 Cllr Knox queried whether the Service continues to maximise the use of on-call firefighters, being available to respond from a station where availability is low. AM Why confirmed that this is happening, in addition to On Call Support Officers being able to increase availability by working at these stations and having a more robust process for forecasting availability through the dedicated resourcing team, managing all duty systems service wide.

21/14.20 Cllr Biggs queried if it were appropriate to have more detail for the availability at each station. Members discussed and agreed that they were satisfied that their scrutiny of the overview information provided was appropriate, with assurances from Officers of a visible management process where any operational interventions in areas of concerns would be highlighted in the performance report.

21/14.21 **ACTION: Officers to include an explanation on the Members' dashboard with regards to overview data.**

21/14.22 GM Langdown highlighted the figures reported in quarter 3 in terms of response times:

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

- 89.5% of incidents at sleeping risk properties where the first appliance met the response standard within the travel-time isochrone (34/49 – of 15 fails, 11 were outside of the travel time isochrone)
- 100% of incidents to other properties where the first appliance met the response standard within the travel-time isochrone (9/11 - of two fails, both were outside of the travel time isochrone)
- 85.7% of road traffic collisions where the first appliance met the response standard within the travel-time isochrone. (24/31 - of seven fails, three were outside of the travel time isochrone).

21/14.23 GM Langdown explained that where response times fall out of the isochrone, in these areas safe and well visits are prioritised. He reported that a cautious eye is being kept on these figures but there are no significant concerns on the small drop in performance.

21/14.24 Cllr Knox queried how the Service consider new risks and the need to match resources to these risks. Cllr Barrow reference the Dorset Local Plan seeking assurance that the Service were being consulted and influencing the plan. ACFO Cole suggested that the Service could strengthen its input into this infrastructure but assured members that a PESTELo is now carried out annually at a local level to inform the development of the Community Safety Plan, linked to strategic risk.

21/14.25 GM Langdown reported that operational competence was at a good level with slightly lower figures for on-call BA training which has been impacted by the coronavirus restrictions and continues to be monitored.

21/14.26 GM Langdown reported that 2 Coroners hearings have taken place for the Dorset Group relating to the incident in Portesham in September, heard on 9 April 2021 and the incident in Dorchester in February 2020. Across Dorset, there remain three potential fire deaths that are awaiting a Coroner's verdict, these relate to incidents in Shaftesbury in January 2021, Holton Heath in March 2021 and near Blandford in September 2020.

21/14.27 GM Langdown updated Members on some key incidents that the Dorset Group attended in quarter 4. This included a technical rescue at Portland Port, Portland on 26 March 2021 and a house fire in Wollaston Road, Dorchester on 5 January 2021.

21/14.28 GM Langdown reported that the Service actively participates in all multi-agency and Local Resilience Forum (LRF) activities in response to the coronavirus pandemic with representation at strategic, tactical and operational levels. He confirmed there were four control of major accident hazards (COMAH) sites within the Dorset area. All COMAH sites have 'in date' site-specific risk information (SSRI) which is readily available to crews through mobile data terminals, with more detailed plans available to the Flexi Duty Officers within the Resilience Direct system.

21/14.29 The Service had weekly meetings during the last quarter with Dorset Police where topics discussed included: the latest threat from terrorism, VIP visits, new operational guidance and training opportunities, followed by debriefs of significant incidents for shared understanding. The most significant learning points are raised nationally using the Joint Organisational Learning system.

21/14.30 **Demand summary**

21/14.31 Lastly, GM Langdown provided comparable year to date figures in relation to the number of fires Dorset area had attended, a slight increase to 1004 in 2020-2021 from 908 in 2019-20; the number of incidents attended that were false alarms, a slight increase from 1540 in 2019-2020 to 1571 in 2020-2021; and the number of special service incidents attended, a decrease from 1068 in 2019-2020 to 927 in 2020-21.

21/14.32 Cllr Knox highlighted the need for the Service to monitor the number of false alarms to identify trends and persistent offenders. AM Why confirmed this was happening and that an integrated approach was in place for protection and prevention activity in these areas. The Fire Authority policy was discussed with no requirement for review. Members were advised that the Service are revisiting chargeable incidents for the Fire Authority to consider a revised position.

21/14.33 **ACTION: Provide Members at the next LPS, with an updated position on the Recharge Policy within the quarterly performance report.**

21/14.34 **ACTION: AM Why to write to the Chairman to identify how an introduction to Cllr Graham Karr Jones may support the work of the Service.**

21/14.35 **ACTION: Include Top 10 Offenders in the quarterly performance report**

21/14.36 The Chair thanked GM Langdown for his presentation and Officers for their open and thorough assurance.

21/14.37 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and commented upon the performance for period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021.**

**21/15 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**

21/15.1 Cllr Knox advised Members that a meeting has been established in June between the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset, Cllr Knox and CFO Ben Ansell.

21/15.2 **ACTION: Cllr Knox requested that David Sidwick be invited to the August LPS meeting.**

**21/16      Date of Next meeting**

21/16.1    The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 26 August 2021 from 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.19.

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