



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

Item 22/59

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	14 December 2022
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Serious Violence Duty
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For information
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Serious Violence Duty is due to come into force in January 2023 under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022. It will require local authorities, the police, fire and rescue authorities, specified criminal justice agencies and health authorities to work together to collectively understand the causes and consequences of serious violence with a focus on prevention. This Duty will be achieved through existing multi-agency partnerships. At the time of writing, the Government have yet to finalise their statutory guidance on how this Duty is to be discharged.
RISK ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None for the purposes of this report
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are asked to note this report.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-duty">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/serious-violence-duty</a>
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Name: Assistant Chief Fire Officer Andy Cole Email: <a href="mailto:andy.cole@dwfire.org.uk">andy.cole@dwfire.org.uk</a> Tel no: 01722 691235

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. As Members may be aware, incidents of serious violence have increased in England and Wales since 2014. For example, offences involving knives or sharp instruments increased by 84 percent between June 2014 and June 2020.
- 1.2. The Serious Violence Duty (the Duty) is a key part of the Government's programme of work to prevent and reduce serious violence.
- 1.3. The main themes for the Government's strategy for tackling serious violence are:
  - tackling county lines and misuse of drugs;
  - early intervention and prevention;
  - supporting communities and local partnerships; and
  - effective law enforcement and criminal justice response.
- 1.4. The Duty will require local authorities, the police, fire and rescue authorities, specified authorities, youth offending teams, Clinical Commissioning Groups in England to work together to formulate an evidence-based analysis of the problems associated with serious violence in a local area. They will then be required to produce and implement a strategy detailing how they will respond to those particular issues.

## 2. Impacts for fire and rescue

- 2.1. As Members are aware, the Authority is already subject to a statutory duty to collaborate, and the Service is active in a wide range of prevention focused partnerships. The new Duty does not require the creation of new multi-agency structures. Instead, these organisations are encouraged to use existing local structures where possible.
- 2.2. The Duty does not specify a lead organisation or person whose responsibility it is to coordinate activity. It is for the specified authorities to come together to decide on the appropriate lead and structure of collaboration for their area. Some localities may choose their local Community Safety Partnership, whilst others may use other partnerships such as the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, Criminal Justice boards or Health and Wellbeing boards. It may also be the case that collaboration via a number of different partnership structures is preferred depending on the local context. Partnerships are expected to self-monitor and annually review their strategy.

- 2.3. At the time of writing, the Government has finalised their consultation over the statutory guidance for responsible authorities but have not yet issued it. This new Duty will therefore need to be the subject of local debate within key partnerships as to how best to take it forward. Although not precisely determined, it is not envisaged at this point in time that there will be significant change to the Service's activities or resourcing requirements as these are largely being met from work undertaken within the scope of safe and well checks, educational visits, arson reduction and safeguarding.

### **3. Summary**

- 3.1. Although the new Duty will soon come into force, it will take time for the local partnerships to decide how best to implement it. The Service is an active member of a large number of prevention focused partnerships. The precise mechanisms for discharging this Duty will therefore take some time to precisely determine. At this juncture is not envisaged that there will be significant change to the Service's activities or resourcing requirements.