



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 November 2022, 10.00am at Dorchester Fire Station Meeting/Lecture room, South Building, Peverell Avenue West, Poundbury, Dorset, DT1 3SU.

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), Darren Langdown
Group Manager (GM), Charlie Pack
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

22/29 Welcome

22/29.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members.

22/30 Apologies

22/30.1 No apologies were received.

22/31 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

22/31.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

22/32 Public questions

22/32.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

22/32.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions.**

22/33 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) Committee meeting held on 25 August 2022

22/33.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

22/33.2 **RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

22/34 Action progress report

22/34.1 Group Manager (GM), Charlie Pack provided an update to the Committee on the following actions:

22/34.2 Action 355 - In consultation with Cllr Rebecca Knox and the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee Chairs, review Officer attendance at constituent councils with Local Area Board meetings. Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Andy Cole reported that the Officers had been gathering information on all meeting attendances by the Service and these were being reviewed to establish their value. This would lead to coordinated attendance at key locations, for example Blandford, Weymouth and Bridport. In answer to a question from the Chair, ACFO Cole stated that the review included whether there was a business need to attend a meeting, for example a statutory duty such as the safeguarding board, or whether attendance could be on an exception basis, for example if there was a number of repeat incidents in a certain area that required intervention. For meetings that might not be supported in the future, the corporate video would continue to be provided. Area Manager (AM) Darren Langdown added that the review was also red, amber, green (RAG) risk rated. In reply to a further question from Cllr Byron Quayle, ACFO Cole explained the role of the Partnership Officer in obtaining funding from external bodies, including funding from some Wiltshire Area Boards for matching funding for youth intervention. Cllr Knox suggested that the circulation of the corporate video be supported by an e-mail explaining that the Service could attend meetings on an exception basis. This action remained in progress.

22/34.3 Action 362 - That the effectiveness of the Anti-Social Behaviour Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) for barbecues in public spaces be reviewed. AM Langdown explained that contact has been made with the Urban Heath Partnership and Dorset Council in collating information of PSPO effectiveness. Dorset Council had reported that it was able to issue fixed penalty notices for offences referred to them, and none were received over the summer period. A review of the measure would take place with Forestry England to inform the ongoing approach and the issue of including further open land susceptible to fire would be considered. The PSPO programme would be taken forward again in April 2023. Following comments by the Chair, the Committee discussed ideas proposed to introduce a ban on portable barbecues and Chinese lanterns. Cllr Knox drew attention of the

information provided by the Service to the Local Government Association to consider introducing a ban on their sale. The Committee noted that the favoured approach was to seek a deterrent rather than prosecution. It was agreed that this action was complete.

22/34.4 **RESOLVED: Members noted that action 355 remained in progress and that action 362 was complete.**

22/35 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 2

22/35.1 GM Pack presented to Members the Performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 2, which covered the three priority areas overseen by this Committee:

Priority 1 Help you to make safer and healthier choices

Priority 2 Protect you and the environment from harm, and

Priority 3 Be there when you need us.

A link to the presentation can be found [here](#).

22/35.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**

22/35.3 GM Pack informed Members that the number of Safe and Well visits was 174, with 54 attempted interventions during the quarter. Operational crews were now carrying out visits in addition to Safe and Well Advisors. Work was being undertaken to consider how Safe and Well visits could be targeted to high-risk venues to ensure that a quality visit took place. In answer to a question from the Chair, ACFO Cole explained that this was being achieved by using improved quality of data on, for example, local and seasonal risks, and data sharing with partners, to improve station risk profiling.

22/35.4 Cllr Quayle enquired about Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) 1 and that the key performance indicator (KPI) for response times was lower than previous and asked if this was this a cause for concern. GM Pack referred to attendance fails and stated that it did not have a significant impact. ACFO Cole added that the numbers involved were small based on a few incidents which would not change the status of the KPI. Group Managers considered failures, which could be as a result of roadworks or due to appliances attending other incidents in busy periods; response times were generally improving, and the situation was not a Service-wide theme The situation would continue to be monitored.

35.5 The Chair commented on on-call availability, and ACFO Cole detailed the initiatives that were being taken to improve availability. It was explained that if a whole-time crew was reallocated to an alternative station to improve availability, the crew would still undertake training and their usual daytime activities.

- 22/35.6 In reply to a question from Cllr Richard Biggs, regarding the KPI which showed a 30% increase in road traffic collisions, although the overall trend was on the decrease, ACFO Cole explained that for Dorset, the rise in road traffic collisions was seasonal coinciding with the summer and tourist visits. Cllr Quayle referred to the number of downloads that was made of road safety information for key stage three and four pupils and asked whether a cost benefit analysis could be undertaken. GM Pack stated that there was evidence that a death on the road had a societal cost in the region of £1m and there were other quantifiable outcomes, for example in relation to firesetters (of which there had been no referrals in the last quarter). ACFO Cole observed that this activity was not centrally funded, and in reply to a question from Cllr Biggs explained that a multi-agency approach was taken to road safety through the Strategic Road Safety Board, which avoided the duplication of activity.
- 22/35.7 GM Pack referred to the Safe and Well work that was being carried out in response to the cost-of-living crisis, including educating people to 'heat yourself not the house'. The Committee discussed a number of the potential hazards arising from the situation, including using washing machines and dishwashers at night.
- 22/35.8 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 22/35.9 GM Pack reported that in quarter 2 there had been 88 attendances for automatic fire alarms at non-domestic premises. The call challenge of automatic fire alarms was continuing, and further consideration was being given to improve the robustness of the challenge, including consideration of amending the times of non-attendance. Whole time crews were also undertaking fire safety checks at at-risk properties.
- 22/35.10 **Priority 3 – Be there when you need us**
- 22/35.11 GM Pack informed the meeting that appliance availability was at 99.5% for wholetime and 78% for on-call, which were good figures.
- 22/35.12 The Committee further debated on-call availability. ACFO Cole explained that on-call recruitment was being geographically targeted, and that Maiden Newton had been a success for new recruits. Review of contracts, the on-call duty system and targeted recruitment, with qualification being achievable within three months (rather than six months), had all been considered to improve recruitment and retention. In reply to a question from Cllr Quayle, the Officers explained in detail some of the changes to processes to aid recruitment that were being implemented but did not put unnecessary pressure on the individuals. These included changing the nature of the fitness test, clearly setting out to the individual and their families the expectations of the Service, improving the IT software, and supporting individuals through the application process. A modular and flexible approach was being undertaken.

22/35.13 Demand summary

22/35.14 The Committee noted that in in the year to date the Service had attended 626 fires (506 last year to date); 490 automatic fire alarm incidents (401) and 591 special services (586).

22/35.15 The Chair thanked GM Pack for his presentation.

22/35.16 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 2 2022**

22/36 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)

22/36.1 There were no matters raised by Members.

22/37 Date of Next meeting

22/37.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 23 February 2023 from 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.40

Signed: _____