



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am
on 31 August 2023 at the Training and Development Centre, Hopton Industrial
Estate, London Road, Devizes**

Members present:

Cllr Bob Jones
Cllr Paul Oatway
Cllr Pip Ridout

Officer attendance:

Area Manager (AM), Darren Langdown
Group Manager (GM), Neil Tidball
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

23/10 Election of Chair

23/10.1 Area Manager (AM), Darren Langdown opened the meeting. He asked for nominations for the role of Chair. Cllr Pip Ridout was nominated by Cllr Paul Oatway. This was seconded by Cllr Bob Jones. With unanimous approval Cllr Ridout was elected Chair.

23/10.2 The Chair asked for nominations for the role of Vice Chair. Cllr Oatway was nominated by Cllr Ridout. This was seconded by Cllr Jones. With unanimous approval Cllr Oatway was elected Vice Chair.

23/10.3 **RESOLVED: Cllr Ridout be elected Chair of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee and Cllr Oatway be elected Vice Chair.**

23/11 Welcome

23/11.1 Cllr Ridout welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting. The Committee asked that the low attendance of Members at the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee be recorded in the Minutes.

23/12 Apologies

23/12.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Kelvin Nash, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole and Group Manager (GM), Jim Weston.

23/13 Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interests

23/13.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

23/14 Public Questions

23/14.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

23/14.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions.**

23/15 Review and approve minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 2 March 2023

23/15.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

23/15.2 **RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

23/16 Action Progress report

23/16.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting on 2 March 2023 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.

23/16.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**

23/17 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 1

23/17.1 GM Neil Tidball presented to Members the performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 1, 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](#)

23/17.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**

- 23/17.3 GM Tidball reported that the Service worked with 25 partners in the local area, assisting members of the community that were most at risk. In answer to the Chair's question, the officers confirmed that Wiltshire Local Area Boards were attended by officers on an exception basis. An event that added value, for example a Community Safety event, would be supported. It was also confirmed that the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) at Wiltshire was included in the Service's scope of work.
- 23/17.4 It was noted that on-call availability stood at 55.62%. The officers provided information on the actions being taken to improve on-call recruitment and retention. These included development hub events and 'Have a Go' events. It was also noted that criteria changes to bluelight drivers' registration and the availability of incident commanders had impacted overall availability. AM Langdown explained that to address the shortfall in incident commanders, the Service was providing the opportunity to act-up as a Senior Fire Officer and to receive training at the Fire Service College. Members requested information on on-call availability at stations and trends to help in identifying deficiencies and issues and that these be reported to future meetings of the Committee.
- 23/17.5 ACTION: That information on on-call availability at Wiltshire stations and trends be reported to future meetings of the Committee.**
- 23/17.6 GM Tidball reported that there had been 17 new recruits in the quarter. AM Langdown provided detail on the development hubs that had been established to aid rapid qualification, including assistance in learning the role and obtaining physical fitness. It was noted that the firefighter qualification was obtained within approximately one year and that qualified firefighters needed to be retained in the Service for approximately three years to provide a return on the training investment. The average length of service was approximately seven years.
- 23/17.7 GM Tidball reported that social media was an effective method in assisting in preventing fires. In the quarter the Service's Social Media message had reached 502,832 people and the campaign message on thatch fires had reached 175,790 users. The Service also ran local campaigns in association with National Fire Chiefs Council national campaigns.
- 23/17.8 In respect of road safety, the Safe Drive Stay Alive roadshow events had been attended by 100 participants and in education 2731 children and young people had received educational input, with 40 schools visited together with youth groups. Year to date there had been six firesetter referrals.
- 23/17.9 GM Tidball reported that 1409 Safe and Well visits had been completed in the quarter, which was a 34.2% decrease on the same period in the previous year. However, visits had been focussed on those most at risk. There were also 488 referrals from partners in the quarter, which was a 78.7% increase over the same period. In reply to Members' questions, AM Langdown explained that the Service was currently reviewing the criteria for identifying those deemed to be at high risk and requiring a Safe and Well visit. The Committee discussed referrals for those deemed to be at risk. The Chair enquired if foodbanks,

Cornerstone and the Citizens Advice Bureau in Warminster were included to capture the correct information. The officers stated that this could be considered to recognise those most in need. Cllr Jones suggested that this could also include users of canal boats to promote boat safety.

23/17.10 ACTION: That the officers report to the next Committee meeting on methods to identify those most at risk, including possible users of foodbanks and providing Safe and Well information to users of canal boats.

23/17.11 Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm

23/17.12 GM Tidball reported that one Prohibition Notice had been served in the quarter and that operational crews had made 131 Business Fire Safety Checks across the Service.

23/17.13 GM Tidball highlighted that the 123 automatic fire alarms attended in non-domestic premises was an increase on the previous quarter. The Service's revised approach to challenge attendance had saved £3,317 cashable savings for on-call attendance and 16.4 hours for wholetime stations.

23/17.14 Cllr Jones observed that the changes to planning permitted development provided challenges for protection during building regulation consultations, including those for commercial premises.

23/17.15 The Committee noted that response times had increased and the reasons for this were explained by the officers. Appliance availability was also discussed, which was 99.9% for wholetime and 55.6% for on-call for quarter 1. The background to on-call availability and response times was discussed further.

23/17.16 GM Tidball reported on incidents attended during the quarter and that there had been no fire deaths during the period, with three incidents with the potential for further fire deaths awaiting a coroner's verdict. Information was also provided on the multi-agency training exercises attended.

23/17.17 The Chair thanked the officers for the presentation.

23/17.18 RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 1.

23/18 Matters raised by Members (agreed with Chair)

23/18.1 No matters were raised.

23/19 Date of Next Meeting

23/19.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 30 November 2023 at 10:00am at the Training and Development Centre, Hopton Industrial Estate, London Road, Devizes.

The meeting closed at 11:15

Signed: _____