



## **DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

### **Minutes of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 November 2023, 10.00am at Christchurch Fire Station, Fairmile Road, Christchurch.**

#### Members present:

Cllr Paul Hilliard (Chair)  
Cllr Cameron Adams  
Cllr Richard Herrett  
Cllr Lisa Northover  
Cllr Clare Weight

#### Officer attendance:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole  
Area Manager (AM), Darren Langdown  
Group Manager (GM), Stuart Gillion  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

#### **23/20 Welcome**

23/20.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and officers.

#### **23/21 Apologies**

23/21.1 No apologies were received.

#### **23/22 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business**

23/22.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

#### **23/23 Public questions**

23/23.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.



- 23/23.2 RESOLVED: Members noted there were no public questions.**
- 23/24 Review and approve minutes of the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 August 2023**
- 23/24.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- 23/24.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 23/25 Action progress report**
- 23/25.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting held on 23 August 2023 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.
- 23/25.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**
- 23/26 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 2**
- 23/26.1 Area Manager (AM) Darren Langdown 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](#).
- 23/26.2 Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 23/26.3 By way of introduction, AM Langdown provided detail on the restructuring of the Service into three groups. Group Manager (GM) Stuart Gillion was the manager of an area including Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, which extended to the Salisbury, Amesbury and the Ludgershall area. Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Andy Cole added that an objective of the restructuring was in response to the Independent Review to increase the visibility of managers. The reporting lines of the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees was unaltered.
- 23/26.4 AM Langdown highlighted the value of partnership working, including the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Community Safety Partnership, the Road Safety Partnerships and the Local Resilience Forums. Mention was



made of the local risk reviews which considered service demands for each station to assist in priorities in prevention and improvement.

- 23/26.5 AM Langdown reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 80.09%, and for wholetime appliances 97.6%, which was a strong figure. An example was provided of an on-call Watch Manager within the Group area that had progressed to be a wholetime Station Manager. This was beneficial to demonstrate that career progression was available in the Service, but it did have a short-term effect on the on-call availability figures. AM Langdown continued that there were a number of initiatives to improve on-call availability. These included a review of on-call staff current contract availability; succession planning to maintain availability and support recruitment; targeted recruitment campaigns and the creation of development hubs to support firefighters through development stages and support appliance availability. Within the second quarter there had been three new on-call recruits within the BCP area.
- 23/26.6 The percentage of operational competence in date of staff was good and in line with corporate targets, with all exceeded 90%, including those for new starters. In answer to questions from Members, the officers explained the revalidation process to ensure that competences remained up to date. This included feedback from actual incidents obtained from information provided by body worn cameras.
- 23/26.7 AM Langdown drew attention to the social media activity which was aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council campaigns, for example regarding chimney safety, cooking, smoke alarm purchasing, home fire safety and use of air fryers. In quarter 2, Student Fire Safety Week had been held as there were some 26,000 students in the BCP area. Reference was also made to an exercise that had been held at Oxford Point, Bournemouth, in October when 600 students had been evacuated from a high-rise student accommodation unit where muster points and traffic control could be tested and dialogue held with private student accommodation providers.
- 23/26.8 In reply to a question from Cllr Lisa Northover, the officers explained that, following changes in building regulations, the Authority was consulted on proposed new buildings. If a change in responder vehicle mix was required to address emergent risks, for example an arial ladder platform for high-rise student accommodation, this would need to be funded through existing budgets. This situation also extended to responding to flooding, which was not a statutory duty of the fire authorities at present.
- 23/26.9 Details were provided on the number of education inputs in quarter 2 (1103); and that there were seven firesetter referrals in the quarter and 12 firesetter cases remained open.



- 23/26.10 There were 633 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 2, which was a decrease of 35.7% on the same quarter in the previous year. Of these visits, 555 were undertaken by operational crews. There were also 362 partner referrals in the quarter, which was a 25% increase on the same period in the previous year.
- 23/26.11 The number of accidental dwelling fires in quarter 2 was 55 compared with 52 in the same period in the previous quarter.
- 23/26.12 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 23/26.13 Wholetime operational crews had carried out 211 business fire safety checks in the quarter relating to risk based low level fire safety activity. In reply to a question from Cllr Cameron Adams, the officers explained that the majority of changes suggested for fire safety were easily identified and rectified in consultation with the premises owner.
- 23/26.14 AM Langdown reported that in respect of the for 151 automatic fire alarm calls in the quarter, the automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the BCP Group area had delivered cashable savings of £598 for on-call non-attendance and returned 16.8 hours to wholetime crews. The call challenge procedure would be extended to 24 hours (from 8:00am to 6:00pm at present) to reduce further unwanted automatic fire alarm calls and provide savings.
- 23/26.15 In reply to a question from Cllr Northover, the officers explained that the Authority was a statutory consultee on licence applications, including licences for temporary events, to ensure that the event met the Service's requirements.
- 23/26.16 **Priority 3 – Be there when you need us**
- 23/26.17 The average response times were 06.53 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 08.04 minutes for other buildings first pump and 07.22 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.
- 23/26.18 There had been no potential fire deaths in the quarter 2 period, with three remaining with the potential for fire deaths that were awaiting a Coroner's verdict.
- 23/26.19 Members discussed the summary of incidents presented at the meeting, including the issues arising from animal rescue and recharging for the Service's costs and also the wildfire at Studland Heath in July 2023 and the challenges faced in obtaining access for fire appliances.
- 23/26.20 **Demand Summary**
- 23/26.21 The Key Performance Indicators for the quarter were explained to the Committee. Attendance was for 898 automatic fire alarms which resulted in a false alarm; 108 accidental dwelling fires; 235 deliberate fires (primary and secondary) and 581 special service incidents attended.



23/26.22 The Chair thanked AM Langdown for the presentation.

**23/26.23 RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 2 2023**

**23/27 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**

23/27.1 The officers drew to the attention of Members the increase in the number of attempted suicides attended by the Service. The Service was working with the Safeguarding Lead and with external charities to provide guidance to crews attending such incidents. The Demand Management Team was also analysing figures to identify if this was an increasing trend.

23/27.2 The Chair requested that the dates of training events be circulated to BCP Members for their attendance.

**23/28 Date of Next meeting**

23/28.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next BCP Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 21 February 2024 from 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.45

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