



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 February 2024, 10.00am at the Conference Room at the Poundbury offices, Peverell Avenue West, Poundbury, Dorset, DT1 3SU.

Members present:

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

Officer attendance:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole
Group Manager (GM) Operations, White Group, Antony Bholah
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

24/01 Welcome

24/01.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and officers.

24/02 Apologies

24/02.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Byron Quayle and Area Manager (AM) Darren Langdown.

24/03 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

24/03.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

24/04 Public questions

24/04.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

24/04.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions.

24/05 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) Committee meeting held on 23 November 2023.

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24/05.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

24/05.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

24/06 Action progress report

24/06.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting held on 23 November 2023 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.

24/06.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**

24/07 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 3

24/07.1 Group Manager (GM) Operations, White Group, Antony Bholah presented to Members the performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 3, 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](#).

24/07.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**

24/07.3 GM Bholah highlighted the value of partnership working, including the Community Safety Partnership, the Road Safety Partnership and the Local Resilience Forums. In reply to questions about the Bibby Stockholm and the Afghan resettlement programme at Chickerell Camp, Weymouth, GM Bholah explained the positive communications that had been used by partner agencies to allay concerns raised by local residents.

24/07.4 GM Bholah reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 74.80% and 98.90% for wholetime. In reply to a question from the Chair, the officers explained that there were a number of initiatives to improve on-call availability. These included a review of current on-call staff contracts of availability; succession planning to maintain availability and support recruitment and targeted recruitment campaigns. Within the third quarter there had been eight new recruits within the Dorset area. Members also discussed the present and future operational arrangements for the Dorchester fire station and how low on-call appliance availability at a small number of stations affected the overall performance figures.

24/07.5 The operational competence of staff was good and in line with corporate targets. In the case of breathing apparatus, the competence level was 85.8%,

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which was satisfactory.

24/07.6 GM Bholah drew attention to the social media activity which was aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council campaigns, for example regarding smoke alarm testing, electrical safety and Christmas. The key prevention safety messages were shared across various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor.com. A total of 188,757 engagements were seen across all platforms. Nextdoor.com was reaching far more users than other platforms. The most seen and engaged post was for Bonfire Safety on Nextdoor.com and was viewed by 56,679 users. In reply to a question from Cllr Rebecca Knox, the officers informed the meeting that a number of publicity campaigns were seasonal, for example those relating to barbeques.

24/07.7 Details were provided on the number of road safety and education inputs in quarter 3. In the quarter, 1,649 children and young people had received educational input, comprising 1478 children in eleven school visits, 88 children in fire station visits and 83 ad-hoc engagements, for example children who were home educated. There was one firesetter referral in the quarter.

24/07.8 There were 573 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 3, which was a decrease from 615 in the same quarter in the previous year. Safe and well visits were now more targeted. A total of 39 Safeguarding referrals were also submitted within the Dorset Area.

24/07.9 The number of accidental dwelling fires in quarter 3 was 32, compared to 45 in the same period in the previous year.

24/07.10 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**

24/07.11 Wholetime operational crews had completed 275 business fire safety checks in the quarter across the Service relating to risk based low level fire safety activity.

24/07.12 GM Bholah reported on the automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the Dorset Group area. In quarter 3, 144 automatic fire alarms (AFAs) were attended in non-domestic premises in Dorset. Across the Service, non-attendance at AFA's resulting from call challenge, showed, cashable savings of £6,905 had been delivered for on-call stations and 60 hours for wholetime. The call challenge would be extended to 24 hours (from 8:00am to 6:00pm at present) from 1 April 2024 to further reduce unwanted automatic fire alarm calls and provide savings.

24/07.13 GM Bholah highlighted that the Authority was a statutory consultee in building regulation and licensing consultations.

24/07.14 **Priority 3 – Be there when you need us**

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24/07.15 The average response times were 10.34 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 12.31 minutes for other buildings first pump and 12.29 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.

24/07.16 Cllr Richard Biggs commented on the 27% rise in road traffic accidents and enquired if this was a long-term increasing trend. ACFO Cole explained that the long-term trend for road traffic accidents was decreasing, but the Service was attending more road traffic accidents as a result of requests from partner agencies due to the capabilities it could deliver. There were also requests to attend due to delays in mobilising ambulances. The corporate target had been amended to reflect the increase in requests to assist other agencies. Cllr Biggs suggested that the narrative in the performance report should reflect this. The Chair observed that similarly the information submitted to the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee should reflect corporate targets and ACFO Cole added that an objective was for it to be presented as a Members' dashboard.

24/07.17 There had been no potential fire deaths in the quarter 3 period, with none remaining with the potential for fire deaths that were awaiting a Coroner's verdict.

24/07.18 Members observed the summary of notable incidents attended in the quarter and the multi-agency exercises that the Service had participated in. Cllr Biggs asked if the number of incidents with animals trapped in slurry pits was discussed with farmers. GM Bholah reported that the circumstances were considered after an incident and the Service worked with Farmers' Forums.

24/07.19 Demand summary

24/07.20 The Key Performance Indicators for the quarter were explained to the Committee. Attendance was for 1057 automatic fire alarms which resulted in a false alarm; 92 accidental dwelling fires; 198 deliberate fires (primary and secondary) and 1011 special service incidents attended. The Chair suggested that future performance reports contain a breakdown of special service incidents by category.

24/07.21 The Chair thanked GM Bholah for the presentation.

24/07.22 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 3 2024.**

24/08 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)

24/08.1 There were no matters raised by Members.

24/09 Date of Next meeting

24/09.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 29 August 2024 from 10.00am.

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24/09.2 This being the last meeting of the LPS in the 2023/24 year, the meeting expressed its thanks and best wishes to the Chair, Cllr Pete Barrow and Cllr Rebecca Knox as this would be the last LPS meeting they would be attending prior to stepping down in representing the Authority.

The meeting closed at 11.10

Signed: _____

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