



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am on 29 February 2024 at the Training & Development Centre, Hopton Industrial Estate, London Road, Devizes.**

Members present:

Cllr Pip Ridout (Chair)  
Cllr Daniel Cave  
Cllr Brian Dalton  
Cllr Kelvin Nash  
Cllr Paul Oatway  
Cllr Paul Sample

Officer attendance:

Temporary Deputy Assistant Chief Fire Officer (TDACFO), Darren Langdown  
Group Manager (GM), Neil Tidball  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw  
Communications Administrator, Jackie Greene

**24/01 Welcome**

- 24/01.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and officers. The Chair and the Committee paid tribute to Cllr Bob Jones, who has sadly passed away in January. It was noted that Cllr Paul Sample had been appointed to the Authority by Wiltshire Council in place of Cllr Jones and the Chair also welcomed Cllr Sample to the meeting.

**24/02 Apologies**

- 24/02.1 Apologies were received from Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole.

**24/03 Code of Conduct and Declarations 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 Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee (LPS) meeting on 30 November 2023**
- 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 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 24/06 Action Progress Report**
- 24/06.1 The Chair provided an update to the Committee on the following action:
- 24/06.2 Action 366: 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. It was noted that this action would be covered in the performance monitoring and briefing quarterly report within the prevention section. It was noted therefore that this action remained in progress.
- 24/06.3 Group Manager (GM), Neil Tidball outlined the prevention action that had been taken recently, including crews visiting food banks and baby banks promoting safe and well and fire prevention methods. In addition, in conjunction with a local charity, food had been provided at a fire station with in-excess of 50 homeless people in attendance where prevention work on deliberate fires and suicide through mental health concerns were discussed. It was the intention that if successful this work be extended to other stations.
- 24/06.4 Members discussed the distinctions between the homeless and rough sleepers and suggested other community groups that the officers may wish to contact as part of this initiative. The officers explained that the stations to participate in the scheme were identified through the stations risk profiles and through joint partner working with relevant charities.
- 24/06.5 Cllr Daniel Cave asked how success was measured. Temporary Deputy Assistant Chief Fire Officer (TDACFO), Darren Langdown explained that this was through fire prevention and making a difference to people's lives, a reduction in alarms at houses in multiple occupation and resultant incident data to analyse trends and also from feedback from crews and via questionnaires. Cases of arson would be identified through multi agency work and the fire setting programme.

- 24/06.6 Cllr Paul Sample spoke of an incident involving rough sleepers within his Council Ward area in Salisbury and enquired if the Service intervention came from fire crews or senior officers. GM Tidball replied that the intervention came from the risk data gathered by fire crews; the risk was studied and the action required to reduce the impact of any incident was taken. The partnership working with local charities was important in this respect and the initiative would continue to the end of the winter period when the success of the intervention would be reviewed.
- 24/06.7 The officers were thanked for their work on this initiative and the Chair encouraged Members to put forward to officers local organisations within their areas that would benefit from working in conjunction with the prevention service.
- 24/06.8 TDACFO Langdown stated that crew identification of risks was helpful and there was also the Community Safety Team which had a strategic objective for the reduction of incidents, although financial resources were limited.
- 24/06.09 In conclusion, the Committee agreed to keep this action open and in progress.
- 24/06.10 RESOLVED: Members noted that action number 366 remained in progress.**
- 24/07 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 3**
- 24/07.1 TDACFO Langdown presented to Members the Performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 3, which covered the three priority areas overseen by this Committee.
- 24/07.2 **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](#).
- 24/07.3 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 24/07.4 TDACFO Langdown highlighted the value of partnership working, including the Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership, the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership, the Prevent Board, the Clear, Hold, Build Partnership, the Chippenham Community Hub and the Local Resilience Forums. Mention was made of the station risk profiles which considered service demands for each station to assist in priorities in prevention and improvement.
- 24/07.5 In reply to Members' questions, the officers explained the work of the Clear, Hold, Build Partnership, which was multi agency work in areas of deprivation and had focused to date on the Broadgreen area in Swindon. The Chair

requested that it be an action that the rollout of the Clear, Hold, Build Partnership to other areas be monitored.

**24/07.6 ACTION: That the rollout of the Clear, Hold, Build Partnership to other areas be monitored.**

24/07.7 GM Tidball reported on the success of road safety promotion with the military and also that fire station open days with a quiet time for visitors benefiting from a more relaxed environment had been a success and would continue.

24/07.8 In reply to a question from Cllr Paul Oatway, the officers stated that they would obtain details of the road traffic collisions involving the military for the information of the Member.

24/07.9 GM Tidball continued that the Service was now building on the learning from Operation Hercules in Manchester, where those committing deliberate car fires were enrolled onto an education course. Members debated the potential success of placing known car firesetters on educational courses rather than incurring a penalty. GM Tidball observed that it was analogous with speed awareness courses which had which illustrated the impact of an individual's actions on both the individual and others and was a proven success.

24/07.10 TDACFO Langdown reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 55.9% with optimal availability at 64.7%. Wholtime appliance availability was at 99%. Operational competence of staff was good and in line with corporate targets. Low risk safety inspections were being completed by wholtime crews and the Fire Safety team was inspecting high risk properties.

24/07.11 Reference was made to the HR72 on-call contract review that would consider where value could be added to fire stations by providing flexibility in on call availability. It would also help assess the requirements of the fire stations, including the skill sets needed, for example those qualified and available to drive an appliance.

24/07.12 TDACFO Langdown 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. A focus in the winter had been on keeping warm safely. 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.

24/07.13 Details were provided on the number of road safety inputs, including five Safe Drive Stay Alive courses delivered and seven Survive the Drive events delivered at Wiltshire Military of Defence bases reaching 1311 Wiltshire military personnel. Education inputs in quarter 3 totalled 1206 children and young people; 719 via their main form of education, with 13 schools visited, 170 via pre-school nurseries, 220 via children's groups and 97 ad hoc. engagements.

- 24/07.14 There were 554 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 3, which was a reduction of 6.9% on the same quarter in the previous year. This was due to the restructuring of Prevention and was anticipated. A total of 52 Safeguarding referrals were raised by staff. There were also 768 partner referrals in the quarter, which was a 27% increase on the on the same quarter in the previous year. There were two Fire Safety Intervention (previously Firesetters) referrals in the quarter from partners.
- 24/07.15 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 24/07.16 Wholetime operational crews had carried out 275 business fire safety checks in the quarter across the Service area relating to risk based low level fire safety activity. There had been one prohibition notice and one enforcement notice served in the quarter and there had been no prosecutions. In reply to a question from Cllr Kelvin Nash, the officers explained that business fire safety checks were carried out in response to Service and national data trends, for example targeting fast food outlets or product recalls on white goods, and from alerts from members of the public. These visits also helped crews to increase their knowledge.
- 24/07.17 TDACFO Langdown reported the automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the Wiltshire Group area. There had been 203 automatic fire alarm calls in the quarter. The automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the Service area had delivered cashable savings of £6,905 for on-call non-attendance and returned 60 hours to wholetime crews.
- 24/07.18 In reply to Members' questions, the officers explained that the risk rating of schools for educational visits was undertaken by the education team; that prohibition notices were public notices, but enforcement notices were not and the criteria for making safe and well visits was provided to Members.
- 24/07.19 **Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**
- 24/07.20 The average response times were 11.50 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 12.16 minutes for other buildings first pump and 13.28 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.
- 24/07.21 There had been no potential fire deaths in the quarter 3 period, with two remaining with the potential for fire deaths that were awaiting a Coroner's verdict.
- 24/07.22 Members discussed the summary of incidents presented at the meeting, including the issues arising from flooding. It was noted that improved risk planning and work at Fire Control led to a triage approach in responding to calls regarding flooding, with those presenting risk to life being prioritised.
- 24/07.23 Tributes were paid to Watch Manager Mark Hilliar, who had been killed in a road traffic collision on 12 October 2023 whilst responding to a fire call at Pewsey fire station.

24/07.24     **Demand Summary**

24/07.25     The Key Performance Indicators for the quarter were explained to the Committee. Year to date, attendance was for 1190 automatic fire alarms which resulted in a false alarm; 123 accidental dwelling fires; 154 deliberate fires (primary and secondary) and 1134 special service incidents attended.

24/07.26     The Chair thanked the officers for the presentation.

24/07.27     **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 3.**

**24/08        Matters raised by Members (agreed with 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 Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 5 September 2024 at 10:00am.

24/09.2     This being the last meeting of the Wiltshire LPS in the 2023/24 year, Members expressed their thanks and best wishes to Cllr Pip Ridout (Chair).

The meeting closed at 11:50

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