



DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting at 10:00 hours on 12 June 2024.

Members present

Cllr Cameron Adams	Cllr Abdul Amin	Cllr Laura Beddow
Cllr Richard Biggs*	Cllr Daniel Cave**	Cllr Matthew Courtliff
Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Richard Herrett	Cllr Paul Hilliard
Cllr Kelvin Nash	Cllr Lisa Northover	Cllr Paul Oatway
Cllr Byron Quayle	Cllr Pip Ridout	Cllr Paul Sample
Cllr Kevin Small	Cllr Duncan Sowry-House	Cllr Clare Weight

*Cllr Richard Biggs was present in the meeting for consideration of items up to 24/35 and not present for all subsequent items.

**Cllr Daniel Cave was present in the meeting for consideration of items up to 24/36 and not present for all subsequent items.

Officer attendance:

Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Ben Ansell
Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Jonathan Mair
Head of Financial Services & Treasurer, Ryan Maslen
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Community Safety, Andy Cole
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of People Services, Jenny Long
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of Service Support, Jill McCrae
Head of Corporate Support, Vikki Shearing
Corporate Communications & Engagement Manager, Emily Cheeseman
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

24/16 Welcome

- 24/16.1 The Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Jonathan Mair, opened the annual meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority and welcomed Members, including new Members, Cllr Laura Beddow and Cllr Duncan Sowry-House.

24/17 Apologies

- 24/17.1 No apologies were received.

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24/18 Election of Chair

24/18.1 Jonathan Mair asked for nominations for the role of Chair of the Authority for 2024-25. Cllr Paul Oatway was nominated by Cllr Pip Ridout and seconded by Cllr Kelvin Nash. Cllr Paul Hilliard was nominated by Cllr Richard Biggs and seconded by Cllr Duncan Sowry-House. Following a vote, Cllr Paul Oatway was duly elected.

24/18.2 RESOLVED: That Cllr Paul Oatway be elected as Chair of the Authority for the year 2024-25.

24/19 Election of Vice Chair

24/19.1 Cllr Paul Oatway asked for nominations for the role of Vice Chair of the Authority. Cllr Clare Weight was nominated by Cllr Lisa Northover and seconded by Cllr Richard Biggs. Members unanimously agreed this nomination, and Cllr Clare Weight was duly elected.

24/19.3 RESOLVED: That Cllr Clare Weight be elected as Vice Chair of the Authority for the year 2024-25.

24/20 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

24/20.1 The Chair asked Members for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. No disclosures were made.

24/21 Review minutes of Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 8 February 2024 and any matters arising

24/21.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

24/21.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

24/22 Receive the approved minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting on 6 December 2023 and a verbal update on the meeting held on 7 March 2024

24/22.1 The Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee, Cllr Kevin Small, presented the approved minutes of the 6 December 2023 meeting to Members and provided a general overview of the meeting held on 7 March 2024.

24/22.2 RESOLVED: Members received the minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meeting of 6 December 2023 and noted the Chair's verbal update from the 7 March 2024 meeting.

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24/23 Public Questions

24/23.1 No questions were received from members of the public.

24/24 Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority Appointments 2024-25

24/24.1 Jonathan Mair, introduced the paper and reminded Members that appointments were based on the political proportionality of Members on the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority. The party groups comprised of eight Conservatives, seven Liberal Democrats Alliance, two Labour and one Independent.

24/24.2 Members from the Conservative Group to be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee were:

Cllr Cameron Adams
Cllr Matthew Courtliff
Cllr Paul Oatway
Cllr Byron Quayle

24/24.3 Members from the Liberal Democrats Alliance Group to be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee were:

Cllr Paul Hilliard
Cllr Duncan Sowry-House
Cllr Clare Weight

24/24.4 Member from the Labour Group to be appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee was:

Cllr Kevin Small

24/24.5 Jonathan Mair consulted with Members and confirmed the following appointments to further committees, groups, and additional bodies.

24/24.6 Local Pension Board

Cllr Richard Biggs and Cllr Paul Hilliard were unanimously appointed to the Local Pension Board and Cllr Clare Weight was unanimously appointed as a substitute.

24/24.7 Local Government Association (LGA)

Cllr Paul Oatway, Cllr Clare Weight and Cllr Paul Hilliard were unanimously appointed to the Local Government Association.

24/24.8 LGA Fire Commission

Cllr Paul Oatway and Cllr Clare Weight were unanimously appointed to the LGA Fire Commission and Cllr Kevin Small was unanimously appointed as a substitute.

24/24.9 South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) Board

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Cllr Kevin Small was unanimously appointed to South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) Board.

24/24.10 South West Councils

Cllr Paul Oatway was unanimously appointed to South West Councils.

24/24.11 South West Councils Employers' Panel

Cllr Paul Oatway was unanimously appointed to South West Councils Employers' Panel.

24/24.12 Wiltshire Public Service Board

Cllr Paul Oatway was unanimously appointed to the Wiltshire Public Service Board and Cllr Clare Weight was unanimously appointed as a substitute.

24/24.13 Constituent Authority Community Safety Partnerships were unanimously agreed as follows:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole – Cllr Lisa Northover
Dorset - Cllr Laura Beddow
Swindon – Cllr Abdul Amin
Wiltshire – Cllr Pip Ridout

24/24.14 RESOLVED: Eight Members were appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee.

24/24.15 RESOLVED: Members made appointments to the Local Pensions Board, the Local Government Association, the LGA Fire Commission, South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) Board, South West Councils, South West Councils Employers' Panel, Wiltshire Public Service Board and the four constituent authority Community Safety Partnerships.

24/25 Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees – (verbal)

24/25.1 The Chair reported that following an informal meeting of the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee Chairs, it had been agreed to retain the LPSs in their present format, to be reviewed at a later date.

24/25.2 RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

24/26 Fire and Rescue Services Minimum Service Levels (MSL) Regulations

24/26.1 Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Ben Ansell reported that the MSL regulations were now in force for the fire and rescue service in England. They provided a mechanism for the Fire and Rescue Authority (as the employer) to issue work notices. The decision as to whether to issue work notices would be a matter for the Fire and Rescue Authority and would need to be considered, at the time, based upon the specific circumstances of announced strike action.

24/26.2 In reply to a question from Cllr Brian Dalton, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of People Services, Jenny Long explained that, if a work notice was

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to be used, the employer would issue the work notice to the trade union, following the outcome of the ballot, specifying the employees required to work. The employer would also contact staff regarding the deduction of pay for their actions. Jonathan Mair added that there would be sufficient time within the process of notification of strike action for the Authority to meet to decide as to whether to issue work notices.

24/26.3 RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

24/27 Community Safety Plan 2024-28 consultation outcomes

24/27.1 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of Service Support, ACO McCrae reported that following the conclusion of the consultation programme, the Community Safety Plan had been updated to include the key themes raised by those responding to the consultation exercise. The Community Safety Plan was provided within Appendix A and Members reviewed and approved it, to be published on the Service's website.

24/27.2 CFO Ansell thanked Members for their input during the consultation exercise.

24/27.3 RESOLVED: That the Community Safety Plan 2024-28 be approved.

24/28 Service annual performance review 2023-24 - presentation

24/28.1 Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Andy Cole introduced the presentation and provided narrative and context to the performance slides.

24/28.2 ACFO Cole gave an overview of the previous year and referenced the five priorities of the Service and explained how these aligned to the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees and the Finance & Audit Committee.

24/28.3 In summary, it had been a busy and challenging year, with positive outputs and outcomes, including the Service being a strong and valued partner. Challenges remained, particularly relating to finance and the sustainability of the on-call duty system.

24/28.4 Reference was made to Priority 1 - making safer and healthier choices. Points highlighted included that 7,730 safe and well visits had been completed; that an assumed 1% reduction in accidental dwelling fires resulting from safe and well visits equated to a societal saving of £4,697,080, which for the Service was a non-cashable saving of £49,507 and cost avoidance of £40,018; the Service was now using Nextdoor.com as a platform to engage on a local level to issue safety messages and advice; that there were 561 safeguarding referrals which represented a 2% increase; that there were five unconfirmed fire related deaths in the period and one confirmed; that there was a 8.4% reduction against the five-year average in deliberate fires (850 against a target of 928), which was largely down to improved data quality; and that the societal savings on deliberate fires was £572,715, which for the Service was non-cashable savings of £8,269 and cost avoidance of £6,015.

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- 24/28.5 Regarding road safety, the long-term trend was upwards for road traffic collisions with a 17% increase against the five-year average (752 against a target of 642). The societal savings from road safety education was £13,256,631, which for the Service was non-cashable savings of £40,327 and cost avoidance of £56,846.
- 24/28.6 Reference was made to priority 2 – protecting you and the environment from harm. Changes to fire safety legislation and the work of the fire safety department were highlighted. The trend was also upwards for unwanted automatic fire alarms attended (5,779 against a target of 4,923) showing an 17.4% increase against the five-year average presenting a non-cashable saving of £61,712 and cost avoidance of £21,150.
- 24/28.7 Reference was made to priority 3 – being there when you need us. Details were provided on Service response times and the number of incidents/fires/non-fire related incidents and false alarms attended and performance was on track. The average attendance time of the first appliance to a sleeping risk premises was nine minutes and 31 seconds, against the target of 10 minutes. Reference was also made to recruitment and retention of on-call firefighters, which continued to be a challenge, with reasons for on-call firefighters leaving presented.
- 24/28.8 Reference was made to priority 4 – making every penny count. There had been good performance in the various audit and inspection regimes. The Service had achieved British Standards Institution ISO 55001 in Asset Management. There were challenges regarding financial management over the forthcoming years and grant income from partners for prevention activities was good. Over £55m had been saved by the Service since combination in 2016. The information on the carbon footprint and electricity and gas consumption were also highlighted. There had been good overall performance regarding information governance in meeting legal requirements.
- 24/28.9 Reference was made to priority 5 – supporting and developing our people. The key lines of enquiry were on track and it was noted that workforce diversity had a 5.8% increase against the five-year average (23.1% against a target of 21.9%) and that the number of working days lost to non-physical sickness had increased to 782 days against a target of 388 days, principally due to seven members of staff who were absent in both quarter 3 and 4 due to work related stressors. The number of shifts lost to sickness was 9.45 against a target of 9.32 shifts, which was a 1.4% increase against the five-year target. Details on discipline, grievance, bullying and harassment investigations were also provided.
- 24/28.10 At the conclusion of the presentation, the Officers replied to questions from Members on the calendar of prevention campaigns, to be shared with Members, the use of electric and smaller vehicles to respond to incidents, the reasons behind the increase in demand to assist the ambulance service and the details in the changes in diversity of the workforce, which it was explained would be included in the Annual Workforce Equality report. It was suggested by a Member that future presentations also include details on the

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whistleblowing procedure.

- 24/28.11 The Officers answered further questions from Members on the costs to the Service in responding to special service incidents, whether attendance timings were comparable with other 'significantly rural' categorised services, and the nature of the memorandum of understanding with South Western Ambulance Service and the cluster points for road traffic collisions, which it was explained was part of the work of the road safety partnerships.

24/28.12 RESOLVED: Members noted the Service annual performance review.

24/29 Local Performance & Scrutiny feedback (verbal)

- 24/29.1 The Committee Chairs of the Local Performance Scrutiny Committees (LPSs) provided an update on the Committees' work. Cllr Biggs reported on the work of the Dorset LPS as its Chair, Pete Barrow, was no longer a member of the Authority.

24/29.2 RESOLVED: That the verbal reports be noted.

24/30 Amended People Policy Statement

- 24/30.1 ACO Long reported that the People Policy had been comprehensively reviewed to ensure good governance and alignment to relevant Fire Standards and good practice. The revised policy statement was set out in Appendix A and was approved.

24/30.2 RESOLVED: That the amended People Policy Statement set out in Appendix A be reviewed and approved.

24/31 Service Highlights - public video

- 24/31.1 Head of Corporate Support, Vikki Shearing, introduced the in-house video which was available on the Service's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/nOIJ2XCy6ho>. The video continues to be made available to local councils and others.

24/32 Date of next meeting

- 24/32.1 The Chair confirmed the next meeting of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority would take place on 26 September 2024 at 10.00am.

24/33 To consider passing the following resolution:

- 24/33.1 In accordance with Section 100A (2, 3 & 4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public for the business specified below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1

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of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public

24/33.2 RESOLVED: To close the meeting to the press and public

PART 2

24/34 Clerk and Monitoring Officer arrangements

24/34.1 The Committee considered an exempt report that detailed options for the provision of Clerking and Monitoring Officer services to the Authority, highlighting the benefits and risks associated with each option.

24/34.2 RESOLVED: That the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

24/35 Members Working Group

24/35.1 The Committee considered an exempt report that proposed the establishment of a Members' Working Group to consider the outcomes of one of the workstreams, within the Service's Resourcing and Savings programme. It was anticipated that meetings of the Group would commence from October 2024.

24/35.2 RESOLVED: That the membership and proposed terms of reference for the Members Working Group as set out in the report be approved.

24/36 Resourcing and Savings Programme - People Management Principles

24/36.1 The Committee considered an exempt report that detailed an approach to people management principles that would need to be in place to successfully manage organisational change.

24/36.2 RESOLVED: That the recommendation as set out in the report be approved.

Meeting closed at 12:20hrs

Signed: _____

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