



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am on 4 September 2024 at Westlea Fire Station, The Chesters, Stonehill Green, Westlea, SN5 7DB

Members present:

CLlr Abdul Amin (Chair)
CLlr Matthew Courtliff
CLlr Kevin Small

Officer attendance:

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

24/15 Welcome

24/15.1 CLlr Abdul Amin welcomed Members and officers to the meeting.

24/16 Apologies

24/16.1 No apologies were received.

24/17 Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interests

24/17.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

24/18 Public Questions

24/18.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

24/18.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions

24/19 Review and approve minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 28 February 2024

- 24/19.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the previous meeting.
- 24/19.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 24/20 Review and approve minutes of the Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 12 June 2024**
- 24/20.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- 24/20.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 24/21 Action Progress Report**
- 24/21.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meetings on 28 February 2024 and 12 June 2024 that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.
- 24/21.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**
- 24/22 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 1**
- 24/22.1 Area Manager (AM) Stuart Gillion 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](#)
- 24/22.2 Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 24/22.3 AM Gillion highlighted the value of partnership working, including the Swindon Community Safety Partnership, the Harbour Project, The Prevent Board, Channel, Clear, Hold, Build, the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership and the Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). Mention was made of the station risk profiles used by operational crews to better support communities by providing an understanding of the demands, risks, and challenges at a local level.
- 24/22.4 AM Gillion reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 75.80%, and for wholetime appliances 100%, which was a good figure. In reply to a question from Cllr Kevin Small, the officers detailed that the previous quarters' availability for on-call appliances were 64%, 67% and 69% which

demonstrated an improving trend. The figures for previous quarters would be included in future performance reports.

24/22.5 The percentage of operational competence in date of staff was good and in line with corporate targets.

24/22.6 AM Gillion drew attention to the social media activity which was aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council campaigns, for example regarding smoking, escape routes and outdoor fire safety. The key prevention safety messages were shared across various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor.com. A total of 130,973 engagements were seen across all platforms. The most viewed post on Facebook was regarding Deaf Alarm Systems, which reached 9,219 people.

24/22.7 Details were provided on the number of road safety inputs (reaching 228 students and 75 students by digital inputs) and education inputs (2539) in quarter 1. There were two new Fire Safety Intervention referrals (previously Firesetters) in the quarter with two cases remaining open and two cases had been closed. The educational input comprised 1659 children in their main form of education, 218 pre-school nursery children when visiting stations, 607 children in fire station visits and 55 ad-hoc engagements. It was highlighted that the Ministry of Defence had altered its delivery and funding for 'Survive the Drive' for military personnel and no courses had been delivered this quarter. This situation was being given consideration. Cllr Small commented that education inputs were a key area for prevention and in reply to a question from the Chair, the officers explained that funding was provided from revenue budgets and that fire safety was not a statutory function.

24/22.8 There were 269 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 1, which was a decrease of 26% on the same quarter in the previous year, with visits being more targeted. The reasons for the decrease were being studied. A total of 18 safeguarding referrals were raised by staff within the Swindon area. There were also 251 partner referrals in the quarter, which was a 31.4% decrease on the same period in the previous year. Cllr Small asked that a disused property identified as being of risk of fire be brought to the attention of Swindon Borough Council property services via the Swindon Station Manager.

24/22.09 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**

24/22.10 Wholetime operational crews had carried out 186 business fire safety checks in the quarter across the Service area relating to risk based low level fire safety activity. In reply to a question from the Chair, the officers explained the types of business checked by wholetime crews and the higher-level inspections that were carried out by the Fire Safety Team. Building interventions were categorised by risk with wholetime operational crews inspecting, for example, smaller retailers and coffee shops. Inspections were unannounced and inspections would be referred to the Fire Safety Team for a higher-level inspection as required.

24/22.11 AM Gillion reported that there had been 41 automatic fire alarm calls at non-domestic premises in the quarter in Swindon, which was down from 74 in the previous quarter.

24/22.12 **Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**

24/22.13 The average response times were 08.11 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 08.01 minutes for other buildings first pump and 09.18 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.

24/22.14 The Committee debated the possible reasons for an increase in response times. This might be related to, for example: on-call staff availability, incident location, road traffic works, time of day of the incident and numbers of incidents in the quarter. The Chair requested that additional data be included in future performance reports to ascertain the context of the information provided and to identify trends. The officers added that service response times were analysed to seek improvement through the 'How's my Team Doing' platform.

24/22.15 There had been no potential fire deaths in the quarter 1 period, with the Coroner confirming no fire deaths in 2022 - 2023. In reply to a question from Cllr Small, it was noted that the length of time for confirmation of fire deaths by the Coroner's Office varied with the complexity of the case.

24/22.16 Members discussed the summary of incidents presented at the meeting, including a fire in the plant room at Swindon's Crown Court on 10 April 2024. The Chair commented that the Crown Court was a key community building and would benefit from a response to the first activation of an automatic fire alarm rather than being subject to call challenge. The officers would share with the Chair the criteria for attending an automatic fire alarm first call and the status of the Crown Court would be reviewed.

24/22.17 The Chair thanked AM Gillion for the presentation

24/22.18 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 1.**

24/23 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)

24/23.1 No matters were raised.

24/24 Date of Next Meeting

24/24.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Swindon Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 27 November 2024 at 10:00am at Westlea Fire Station, The Chesters, Stonehill Green, Westlea, SN5 7DB.

The meeting closed at 11:15

Signed: _____