



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held at 10:00am  
on 28 August 2025 at the Training and Development Centre, Hopton Industrial  
Estate, London Road, Devizes**

Members present:

CLlr Paul Sample (Chair)  
CLlr Boaz Barry  
CLlr Matt Bragg  
CLlr Andrew Davis

Officer attendance:

Area Manager (AM), Bradley Stevens  
Temporary Group Manager (T/GM), Shaun Milton  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

Others in attendance:

Peter Davison – Local Democracy Reporting Service

**25/11 Welcome**

25/11.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and officers.

**25/12 Apologies**

25/12.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Brian Dalton and Cllr Paul Oatway.

**25/13 Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interests**

25/13.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

**25/14 Public Questions**

25/14.1 No public questions had been received.

25/14.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions.**

**25/15 Review and approve minutes of the Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 27 February 2025**

25/15.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

**25/15.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

**25/16 Action Progress report**

25/16.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting on 27 February 2025 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.

**25/16.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**

**25/17 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 1**

25/17.1 Area Manager (AM) Bradley Stevens and Temporary Group Manager (T/GM) Shaun Milton 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](#)

It was explained to the Committee that Performance Monitoring and Briefing would be in future presented to Members in a new format. A performance dashboard for each of the priority areas would be presented supported by a presentation of the highlights of the service provision for the quarter. The data for year to date referred to quarter 1 – 1 April to 1 June and was compared with the corresponding quarter in the previous year. When necessary, officers would provide additional detail to the Committee on an exception basis. The quarterly data was discussed as set out in the dashboard.

25/17.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**

25/17.3

Title	Current Year-to-Date	Last Year-to-Date
Number of accidental dwelling fires – Wiltshire Council	45	39
Number of safe and well visits Quarterly – Wiltshire Council	509	Not Applicable

Number of safeguarding referrals from DWFRS- Wiltshire Council	57	Not Applicable
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- 25/17.4 Arising out of consideration of the dashboard data for Priority 1, Members asked the following questions which were answered by the officers.
- 25/17.5 In reply to a question from Cllr Matt Bragg in respect of the increase in the average response time to sleeping risk properties by the first appliance – Wiltshire Council from 11.33 minutes to 14.01 minutes, the officers outlined some of the difficulties encountered in providing an on-call service, including recruitment and employers being able to release staff. Cllr Bragg commented that a trend to work from home might present recruitment opportunities. Other factors might include traffic delays for on-call staff to reach stations following a pager call. The Service had recently appointed an officer to study demand data and the reasons affecting it. The officers explained that service provision was risked based with areas with the highest risk provided with wholetime stations.
- 25/17.6 It was noted that the number of accidental dwelling fires had increased. Cllr Bragg enquired if kitchen fires still represented the highest number of accidental dwelling fires. The officers added that this was the case and that fires from lithium-ion batteries were increasing and that the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) were identifying trends and providing analysis for this. The NFCC were working with trading standards and local authorities to provide mitigation for lithium-ion battery fires.
- 25/17.7 The number of deliberate fires had also increased and these were primarily related to heathland and grass related fires. The Service was working with the police on this topic.
- 25/17.8 In reply to a question from Cllr Bragg regarding the number of Safe and Well visits, the officers explained that targets were being met and that a triage system had been introduced to target as a priority those at highest risk (level 1 cases), with the lowest risk categories (level 5) being included in the 56-day target. The Service also worked closely with Wiltshire Council and the Community Safety Partnership on safeguarding.
- 25/17.9 The officers continued that it was an objective to include wholetime and on-call firefighters in community engagement to deliver the Community Safety Plan, which would assist in prevention and recruitment. An example was provided of work being carried out at Guy’s Marsh Prison, Shaftesbury, on prevention, both to reduce fires within the prison and to reduce reoffending. The course provided was accredited with Portsmouth University and for prisoners that participated it would count towards their parole.
- 25/17.10 AM Stevens stated that for future reports, the point of crossover of the data from being highlighted as green to amber would be defined.
- 25/17.11 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**

25/17.12

Title	Current Year-to-Date	Last Year-to-Date
Automatic fire alarms which result in a false alarm - non domestic premises – Wiltshire Council (year to date)	76	118
Automatic fire alarms which result in a false alarm Quarterly – Wiltshire Council	254	283
Number of business fire safety checks undertaken crews – Wiltshire Council	45	Not Applicable

25/17.13

Arising out of consideration for the dashboard data for Priority 2, the officers replied to Cllr Boaz Barry’s observation that a five-year provision of data would be beneficial for the Committee to understand trends. The officers agreed and would investigate if there was the recording of data to cover this period.

25/17.14

In reply to a question from Cllr Bragg, the officers explained that in relation to the number of prosecutions, there was now an increased appetite both nationally and locally to take prohibition and enforcement action and that the Service had appointed a new prosecution team which would provide momentum. It was noted that prosecutions may also be taken by a partner agency and the figures on prosecutions would be provided to Cllr Bragg.

25/17.15

**Priority 3 - Be there when you need us**

25/17.16

The quarterly data for Priority 3 was discussed as set out in the dashboard. There were no Member questions arising.

25/17.17

**Demand Summary**

25/17.18

Title	Current Year-to-Date	Last Year-to-Date
Number of fires attended – Wiltshire Council	362	218
Number of incidents attended which turned out to be false alarms – Wiltshire Council	390	435
Number of special services incidents attended – Wiltshire Council	316	359

- 25/17.19 In reply to Members' questions, the officers explained that special services incidents included supporting the ambulance service with bariatric patients and also persons trapped behind closed doors. This was not a statutory duty and was at a cost to the Authority. The fire service possessed trained personnel and equipment that would be of assistance, but where life was not at risk, other options might be explored before the fire and rescue service was called to assist. The Chief Fire Officer was leading a regional collaboration group to discuss the situation with South Western Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust. The Committee also discussed the role of community responders who were volunteers in assisting the ambulance service. It was noted that the Service possessed data to identify gaps in provision in support of the ambulance service so that a strategic approach could be undertaken.
- 25/17.20 In reply to a question from Cllr Bragg, the officers stated that as part of the Fire Review, consideration was being given as to where specialist level 2 and level 3 wading teams were being located in order to provide an effective response to flooding incidents.
- 25/17.21 **Presentation**
- 25/17.22 The officers provided a presentation on the Service's engagement in quarter 1. This included community engagement, exercises attended, notable incidents attended, training exercises and multi-agency exercises.
- 25/17.23 The officers responded to Members' questions. It was explained that there had been no change in the policy for the Service attending Pride Events and that station open days were held in areas where the Service could focus on adding value and promoting the Service, for example for on-call recruitment. The Service was keen to promote attending events and open days through its on-call and wholetime crews and Cllr Bragg referred to the International Firefighter's Day which was held on 4 May.
- 25/17.24 With regard to incidents attended, Cllr Bragg requested that he be supplied with the number of times that the aerial ladder platform (31A1) was deployed outside of Salisbury.
- 25/17.25 The Chair thanked AM Stevens and T/GM Milton for the presentation.
- 25/17.26 RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 1, 2025.**
- 25/18 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**
- 25/18.1 Cllr Andrew Davis referred to a recent grassland fire at Warminster which had been in close proximity to housing and outbuildings. Councillor Davis enquired about the assets that could be applied to the response, including access to nearby water supplies. The officers provided details on the strategic risk approach that was undertaken to wildfires and also on the measures taken with landowners to provide, for example, fire breaks and education. Following debate, the Committee agreed to receive a presentation at its next meeting on the grassland fire at Warminster and also to request that a presentation be

made to the meeting of the Fire Authority to be held on the 30 September 2025 on the lessons learned from the recent outbreaks of wildfires.

25/18.2 Cllr Boaz Barry referred to lithium-ion batteries and whether additional equipment and training was required to deal with fires, which maybe at an additional cost to the Service. The officers replied that the NFCC was seeking national guidance to deal with outbreaks of fire within lithium-ion batteries and the Service was undertaking prevention work to help reduce the number of incidents. Issues relating to battery energy storage system sites and fires within recycling centres were also referred to.

**25/19 Date of Next Meeting**

25/19.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Wiltshire Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 27 November 2025 at 10:00am at the Training and Development Centre, Hopton Industrial Estate, London Road, Devizes.

The meeting closed at 11:30

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