



## DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

### **Minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting at 10:00 hours on 30 September 2025 held at the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Salisbury.**

#### Members present:

Cllr Clare Weight (Chair)	Cllr Paul Oatway (Vice Chair)	Cllr Abdul Amin
Cllr Boaz Barry	Cllr Richard Biggs	Cllr Matt Bragg
Cllr Olivia Brown	Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Andrew Davis
Cllr Paul Hilliard	Cllr Peter Miles	Cllr Byron Quayle
Cllr Paul Sample	Cllr Kevin Small	Cllr Duncan Sowry-House

#### Officer attendance:

Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Andy Cole  
Deputy Assistant Chief Officer (DACO), Financial Services & Treasurer, Ryan Maslen  
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Director of Corporate Services and Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority, Vikki Shearing  
Monitoring Officer, Lisa Kirkman  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Response, Darren Langdown  
Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) - Director of Safety and Compliance, Dave Waters  
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of People Services, Jenny Long  
Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of Service Support, Jill McCrae  
Head of Corporate Communications & Engagement, Emily Cheeseman  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

#### **25/31 Welcome**

25/31.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, including new Member Cllr Boaz Barry.

#### **25/32 Apologies**

25/32.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Cameron Adams, Cllr Laura Beddow and Cllr Matthew Courtliff.

#### **25/33 Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interests**

25/33.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. No disclosures were made.

**25/34 Review minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 11 June 2025 and any matters arising**

25/34.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

**25/34.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 11 June 2025 meeting be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

**25/35 Receive minutes from the Finance & Audit Committee meeting of the 24 February 2025, the meeting of the 23 July 2025 and verbal update from the Finance & Audit Committee 10 September 2025 meeting.**

25/35.1 Cllr Kevin Small (Finance & Audit Committee Chair) presented the minutes of the meetings of the Finance & Audit Committee held on 24 February 2025 and 23 July 2025. An update was also provided on the meeting of the Committee held on 10 September 2025.

**25/35.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance & Audit Committee meetings of 24 February 2025 and the meeting of 23 July 2025 be received and the verbal update for the 10 September 2025 meeting be noted.**

**25/36 Public questions**

25/36.1 No public questions were received in advance of the meeting.

**25/37 Annual report 2024-25 and Annual Workforce Equality Report 2024-25**

25/37.1 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of Service Support, Jill McCrae introduced the report and highlighted to Members the headlines within Appendix A – Annual Report 2024-25.

25/37.2 In respect of the Annual Report, Cllr Paul Hilliard commented that pages 45-46 regarding making every penny count, would benefit from explaining where funding had been reduced, for example in reduced government grant contributions. In addition, regarding equalities, the stepped changed improvements that had been achieved could be illustrated in the cases where His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had highlighted these as action points. CFO Andy Cole replied that these points could be addressed in future Annual Reports. HMICFRS actions were monitored by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Heads of Department and progress was being made on all action points.

- 25/37.3 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) - Director of People Services, Jenny Long, introduced the Annual Workforce Equality Report 2024-25 (Appendix B of report 25/37 refers). A presentation was provided to highlight key areas to the meeting.
- 25/37.4 Cllr Abdul Amin stated that he had been impressed with the work on diversity and inclusion that he had witnessed at the Service's Power of Inclusion event held on 17 September 2025 that he had attended and added that this important work should be continued. One issue arising had been feedback that the one-day induction for new recruits to the Service might be held over two days. CFO Cole thanked Cllr Amin for his attendance and observed that staff induction was being reviewed to be more comprehensive.
- 25/37.5 Cllr Matt Bragg and Cllr Paul Sample referred to the on-call recruitment pages on the Authority's website and commented that these had few images of female firefighters and that the general social media profile of female firefighters could be enhanced to assist in increasing diversity. Cllr Small gave the example of the promotion in the media of women and girl's football and refereeing by the English Football Association, which had significantly increased its profile. The report would also benefit from comparison against local and national trends. ACO Long responded that the firefighter recruitment and assessment campaigns were currently being reviewed and highlighted that the photography used in all corporate material sought to reflect diversity across the Service.
- 25/37.6 Cllr Barry enquired if the recruitment process took into consideration the needs of those with dyslexia. ACO Long explained the support given by HR People Partners to Managers for the interview process and ACO McCrae stated that as SLT lead for the Neurodiversity network, themes were studied to make improvements, for example by introducing pastel colours to assist with visual stress and candidates being allowed 15 minutes before an interview began to review the questions and make brief handwritten notes to support them during the interview. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Dave Waters added that approaches used for national operational guidance was intended to be inclusive, including short videos for operational staff, recaps, and group discussions. Cllr Richard Biggs stated that the legends to the pie charts in the report could be made clearer in future reports.
- 25/37.7 Cllr Olivia Brown enquired about disciplinaries and grievances and the actions that were being taken to reduce these. ACO Long provided information on the local management actions taken and the work with individuals including leadership development courses and continual professional development. Managers were also supported to deal with the situation. There was no specific demographic for disciplinary and grievance cases and the outcomes were improved through leadership development.
- 25/37.8 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Annual Report as set out in Appendix A and noted the Annual Workforce Equality Report 2024-25 as set out in Appendix B.**

**25/38 Statement of Assurance 2024-25 and Modern Slavery Statement 2024-25**

- 25/38.1 ACO McCrae, presented the Statement of Assurance and Deputy Assistant Chief Officer (DACO), Financial Services & Treasurer, Ryan Maslen presented the Modern Slavery Statement.
- 25/38.2 ACO McCrae replied to a question from Cllr Biggs regarding the corporate response targets (page 24 para 244 refers) and whether other fire and rescue services used the same key performance indicators (KPIs). The officers explained that the targets were considered against other services in the sector and that HMICFRS were considering a model to allow figures to be more comparable nationally.
- 25/38.3 Cllr Small enquired how the supply chain was monitored to prevent modern slavery. DACO Maslen stated that the contracts were monitored and options would be explored within individual contracts where necessary to ensure that the Authority was compliant with the Act. Further, under the new procurement act rules, there was a national debarring list to exclude suppliers that were unethical and suppliers could be reported to the Cabinet Office where deemed applicable.
- 25/38.4 In reply to a question from Cllr Sample, ACFO Waters provided details on the internal work of the Safeguarding team and the sharing of information with partner agencies, including the role of National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers, to provide action on vulnerabilities, including cases of modern slavery.
- 25/38.5 DACO Maslen replied to Cllr Hillard's question as to why the KPI targets were in some cases 95% rather than 100% for safeguarding training. It was explained that this was because the training did not have the same date of renewal for all employees and that the training data was regularly reviewed with the respective managers to chase outstanding completion.
- 25/38.6 RESOLVED: That the Statement of Assurance 2024-25 and the Modern Slavery Statement 2024-25 be approved.**

**25/39 Service highlights – public video**

- 25/39.1 Assistant Chief Officer (ACO), Director of Corporate Services and Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority, Vikki Shearing introduced the in-house video which was available on the Service's YouTube channel: [https://youtu.be/RtYPGZLvVvg?si=f5\\_5vYT8dV4zxo81](https://youtu.be/RtYPGZLvVvg?si=f5_5vYT8dV4zxo81). The video continues to be made available to local councils and others.
- 25/39.2 Arising out of consideration of a question from Cllr Andrew Davis regarding the major incident and also a grassland fire in Warminster in the summer, CFO Cole stated that a report would be submitted to Members when the learning from the major incident and other wildfires had been collated and outcomes determined.
- 25/39.3 RESOLVED: Members noted the Service highlights – public video.**

**25/40 Date of next meeting**

25/40.1 The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority would take place on 9 December 2025 at 10.00am.

Meeting ended at 11.30 hrs

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