



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE  
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 February 2025, 10.00am at the Conference Room at the Poundbury offices, Peverell Avenue West, Poundbury, Dorset, DT1 3SU.**

Members present:

Cllr Duncan Sowry-House (Chair)  
Cllr Laura Beddow  
Cllr Richard Biggs

Officer attendance:

Area Manager (AM) Response, Darren Langdown  
Democratic Services Officer, David Shaw

**25/01 Welcome**

25/01.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Members and officers.

**25/02 Apologies**

25/02.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Byron Quayle.

**25/03 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests**

25/03.1 The Chair asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures.

**25/04 Public questions**

25/04.1 There were no members of the public present and no public questions had been received.

**25/04.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no public questions.**  
**25/05 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) Committee meeting held on 29 August 2024**

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- 25/05.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting. The meeting scheduled for 21 November 2024 had been postponed due to inclement weather.
- 25/05.2 RESOLVED: That the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**
- 25/06 Action progress report**
- 25/06.1 The Democratic Services Officer reported that no actions had been taken at the meeting on 29 August 2024 and that there were none outstanding from previous meetings.
- 25/06.2 RESOLVED: Members noted that there were no actions outstanding.**
- 25/07 Performance monitoring and briefing quarter 3**
- 25/07.1 Area Manager (AM) Response, Darren Langdown presented to Members the performance monitoring and briefing for quarter 3, 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](#).
- 25/07.2 **Priority 1 - Help you to make safer and healthier choices.**
- 25/07.3 AM Langdown referred to the ceasing of use and removal of the Bibby Stockholm barge from Portland Port, the Afghan resettlement programme and the road safety partnership. It was noted that success had been achieved for the Afghan resettlement programme by using translators that were more integrated with the Afghan community.
- 25/07.4 AM Langdown reported that the availability of on-call appliances was 74.90% and 97.50% for wholtime. The officers explained that there were a number of initiatives to improve on-call availability. These included a review of current on-call staff contracts of availability; succession planning to maintain availability and support recruitment and targeted recruitment campaigns. The introduction of the new approach had taken longer than anticipated as further improvements had been implemented as part of the learning process and the overall result would be of added benefit.
- 25/07.5 The operational competencies of staff were good and in line with corporate targets.
- 25/07.6 AM Langdown drew attention to the social media activity which was aligned to the National Fire Chiefs Council campaigns, for example regarding

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Christmas, smoke alarm testing and electrical items. The key prevention safety messages were shared across various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor.com. A total of 512,743 engagements were seen across all platforms. The most seen post on Facebook was regarding air fryers and was viewed by 121,926 people. Other popular posts were on wheat bags and e-bike safety messages. The Chair commented that the work of the communications social media team was commendable and was excellent in raising local awareness with community groups. AM Langdown thanked the Chair for his comments and added that the work on social media could be extended further, for example in aiding recruitment to the Service.

- 25/07.7 Details were provided on the number of road safety and education inputs in quarter 3. In the quarter, 1,531 children and young people had received educational input, comprising 1,512 via their main education provider and 19 via other education. This quarter had seen the start of the new education offerings to schools whereby Education Officers would only visit 'Rank 1' (most vulnerable) schools. These were now ranked based upon the number of accidental dwelling fires with children living at home within the station's area, the response time and the index of deprivation data. Many 'Rank 1' schools were in urban areas which resulted in less visits to the rural areas covered by Dorset. There were seven new firesetter referrals in the quarter and there were four other cases currently open.
- 25/07.8 Cllr Richard Biggs enquired about education for gypsy and traveller sites. Cllr Laura Beddow explained that through the Kushtibokdorset organisation contact could be made with community leaders. AM Langdown welcomed information on this contact to strengthen the Service's community liaison.
- 25/07.9 AM Langdown highlighted that the Safe Drive Stay Alive road safety campaign was being replaced by the Go Drive programme, which was a national campaign.
- 25/07.10 There were 525 safe and well visits carried out in quarter 3, which was a decrease from 573 in the same quarter in the previous year. Safe and well visits were now more targeted. A total of 29 Safeguarding referrals were also submitted within the Dorset Area.
- 25/07.11 The number of accidental dwelling fires in quarter 3 was 41. This was higher than anticipated following the introduction new procedures and the situation would be monitored to identify trends, which would be reported to future meetings of the Committee.
- 25/07.12 **Priority 2 - Protect you and the environment from harm**
- 25/07.13 Wholetime operational crews had completed 166 business fire safety checks in the quarter across the Service relating to risk based low level fire safety activity.
- 25/07.14 AM Langdown reported on the automatic fire alarms strategy at non-domestic premises across the Dorset Group area. In quarter 3, 85 automatic fire alarms

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(AFAs) were attended in non-domestic premises in Dorset, compared with 84 in the previous quarter. A reduction was anticipated following the extension of the call challenge to 24 hours (from 8:00am to 6:00pm) from 1 April 2024, however, this had not been demonstrated to date and the reasons for this would be analysed.

25/07.15 AM Langdown highlighted that the Authority was a statutory consultee in building regulation and licensing consultations.

25/07.16 **Priority 3 – Be there when you need us**

25/07.17 The average response times were 11.53 minutes for sleeping risk first pump, 13.21 minutes for other buildings first pump and 13.07 minutes for road traffic collisions first pump.

25/07.18 In reply to a question from Cllr Biggs, AM Langdown explained that in areas where response times might be raised, extra resources were introduced to increase protection.

25/07.19 There had been one potential fire deaths in the quarter 3 period, with none remaining with the potential for fire deaths that were awaiting a Coroner's verdict. Details were provided on the Operational Effectiveness Database (OED), which was to evaluate and improve operational performance.

25/07.20 Members observed the summary of notable incidents attended in the quarter and the multi-agency exercises that the Service had participated in.

25/07.21 **Demand summary**

25/07.21a ***Post meeting note. The appendix to these minutes was agreed to be added at the meeting of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 August 2025.***

25/07.22 The Key Performance Indicators for the quarter were explained to the Committee. Attendance was for 938 automatic fire alarms which resulted in a false alarm; 113 accidental dwelling fires; 203 deliberate fires (primary and secondary) and 950 special service incidents attended.

25/07.23 Members enquired about the Service's involvement in the Local Resilience Forums and joint exercises and how learning was captured and disseminated to partners. This included modelling for future possible wildfires.

25/07.24 The Chair thanked AM Langdown for the presentation.

25/07.25 **RESOLVED: Members scrutinised and noted the performance for quarter 3 2025.**

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**25/08 Matters raised by Members (agreed with the Chair)**

25/08.1 There were no matters raised by Members.

**25/09 Date of Next meeting**

25/09.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee meeting as 21 August 2025 from 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 11.05

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

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## Appendix

### **Extract from the meeting of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 August 2025 regarding Minute 25/07.21 of the meeting held on 20 February 2025 – addition of Minute 25/07.21a**

#### **25/14 Review and approve minutes of the Dorset Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) meeting on 20 February 2025**

- 25/14.1 The Chair asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the previous meeting.
- 25/14.2 The Chair drew attention to points he had raised at the meeting held on the 20 February 2025 where details for the top six incidents for the Service in Dorset and how did the Service assure itself that it could manage concurrent incidents and maintain business as usual response had been requested of the officers, which had not been minuted.
- 25/14.3 Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), Response, Darren Langdown provided a reply to these questions, as set out below:
- 25/14.4 The top 6 incident types that Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Services had attended in the year 2024-25 were Alarms (all types); Assist Other Agencies: fire in the open (small); Special Services; Fire Domestic and Road Traffic Collisions (other).
- 25/14.5 Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) assures itself through robust business continuity planning and strong collaborative arrangements. Our business continuity (BC) plans are specifically designed around the management of two concurrent major incidents, ensuring that we can continue to provide a proportionate response to all other incidents across the Service. These plans are scalable and flexible, with three tiers (BC1, BC2, BC3) that enable us to adjust our response according to the type, scale, and severity of incidents while maintaining core business-as-usual operations. Our officer rota is also structured to reflect the requirement to manage two major incidents simultaneously.
- 25/14.6 Alongside this, DWFRS benefits from strong partnership arrangements. As a member of the Networked Fire Services Partnership (NFSP), we operate borderless mobilising with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) and Devon & Somerset FRS. This means all three control rooms can mobilise each other's assets, enhancing resilience and providing seamless support during periods of high demand.
- 25/14.7 For FRSs outside the NFSP, we maintain 13/16 mutual support arrangements under the Fire and Rescue Services Act, which ensures assistance between neighbouring services when required. At a national

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level, we also access specialist capability through the National Resilience arrangements, as demonstrated recently at the Holt Heath incident. This includes support from the National Resilience Control Centre, which coordinates the mobilisation of assets across the country for as long as needed.

- 25/14.8 Arising out of consideration of ACFO Langdown's reply, the Chair asked for clarification for occasions when the Service would be deployed to assist other agencies. The officers stated that in the case of the ambulance service it would be when life was at risk and in the case of the police, to provide a rescue team to support an incident.
- 25/14.9 It was agreed that the minutes be amended to include the above questions and answers as minute 25/07.21a
- 25/14.10 RESOLVED: That subject to the inclusion of minute 25/07.21a, as set out above, the minutes be confirmed and be signed by the Chair as a correct record.**

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