



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

Item 26/25

MEETING	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority
DATE OF MEETING	30 June 2026
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority Appointments 2026-27
STATUS OF REPORT	For open publication
PURPOSE OF REPORT	For approval
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2015 set out the entitlement of the original five constituent councils to places on the Authority. A variation order was made in 2018 reducing the number of Members appointed to the Authority from 30 to 18 Members. From 1 April 2019 local government reorganisation in Dorset reduced the number of constituent councils to four. This report provides confirmation of the 18 appointed Members and details of the committees, boards, groups and other bodies requiring appointments for the year 2026-27. Prior to the Authority meeting, political groups have been asked to confirm nominations for these appointments. A full list will be provided at the meeting for approval.
RISK ASSESSMENT	Failure to appoint Members to the identified committees, groups, boards and other bodies will negatively impact upon the governance and decision - making arrangements of the Authority and the Service.
COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT	None for the purposes of this report.
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	There are no new budget implications arising from the appointments in the report.
RECOMMENDATIONS	Members are asked to: 1. Appoint Members to serve on the Finance & Audit Committee for 2026-27. 2. Elect from amongst those Members appointed to the Finance & Audit Committee a Chair and a Vice-Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee for 2026-27. 3. Appoint Members to all boards, groups and other bodies for 2026-27, and any named substitutes as detailed within Table 2. 4.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Links are embedded in the report to relevant orders and regulations.
APPENDIX	None
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Name: Vikki Shearing, Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority Email: vikki.shearing@dwfire.org.uk Tel no: 01722 691000

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2015 sets out the entitlement of the constituent councils to places on the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).
- 1.2 Membership of the Authority was varied (with effect from 6 June 2018) by the Fire and Rescue Authority (Membership) Order 2017 (Statutory Instrument 1165), whereby membership was reduced to 18 Authority Members.
- 1.3 Local government reorganisation in Dorset (through the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (Structural Changes Order 2018) resulted in the abolition of Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council and the Borough of Poole and the creation of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and Dorset Council as two new constituent councils of the Authority.
- 1.4 On 7 May 2026 Swindon Borough Council held all out elections. During their Annual Meetings, the four constituent councils have made the following appointments to the Authority:

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (five places):

Cllr Olivia Brown
Cllr Michelle Dower
Cllr Paul Hilliard
Cllr Peter Miles
Cllr Clare Weight

Dorset Council (four places):

Cllr Laura Beddow
Cllr Richard Biggs
Cllr Mike Parkes
Cllr Duncan Sowry-House

Swindon Borough Council (three places):

Cllr Matthew Courtliff
Cllr Gordon Slade
Cllr Kevin Small

Wiltshire Council (six places):

Cllr Boaz Barry
Cllr Matt Bragg
Cllr Brian Dalton
Cllr Andrew Davis
Cllr Paul Oatway
Cllr Paul Sample

2. Representation on the Authority

2.1 The rules on political proportionality, under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, apply to committees of the Authority other than the Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees that are appointed to on a geographical basis. Assuming that Members group themselves as they do in their constituent councils the political balance calculation for the Authority's political groups is:

- Liberal Democrat - 7 members– 39%
- Conservative - 5 members – 28%
- Reform – 2 members – 11%
- Labour – 1 member - 6%

Total = 15 – there are in addition three ungrouped members.

2.2 If an Alliance Group is formed, for example in previous years independent members have formed alliance with Liberal Democrats, their share of the Authority's membership will be 44%. The resulting change to political proportionality would mean the Alliance Group would be entitled to 4 places on the Finance & Audit Committee, Conservative would be entitled to 2 places, Reform would be entitled to 1 place and the last place could be allocated to Cllr Small as the only Labour member. This would be in consideration of the custom and practice in the past where the Authority has waived strict proportionality in order to enable Members with a particular knowledge and interest to serve on the Finance & Audit Committee irrespective of their political grouping.

2.3 The Clerk will update Members on the position at the Annual Meeting and the decision is a matter for Fire Authority approval.

2.4 The Authority has established the committees and membership requirements, detailed in Table 1 below:

Committee name	Number of members	Appointments
Finance & Audit	8	Appointed in accordance with political proportionality (please also see para 2.2 above)
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Local Performance & Scrutiny	5	All local Members appointed to the Authority by the constituent council
Dorset, Local Performance & Scrutiny	4	All local Members appointed to the Authority by the constituent council

Swindon, Local Performance & Scrutiny	3	All local Members appointed to the Authority by the constituent council
Wiltshire, Local Performance & Scrutiny	6	All local Members appointed to the Authority by the constituent council
Appointments and Disputes	4	Drawn from all Members of the Authority when required (appointed in accordance with political proportionality)
Appeals	4	Drawn from all Members of the Authority when required (appointed in accordance with political proportionality)

2.5 The only standing committee to which political proportionality applies is the Finance & Audit Committee.

2.6 The rules of political proportionality apply to both the Appeals and the Appointment & Disputes committees but as these are not standing committees Members will be appointed as required.

3. Political Group Leaders

3.1 Any changes to Group Leaders will be confirmed at the meeting.

4. The Authority committee memberships

4.1 As is protocol, the political groups have been asked to agree nominations of Members for the Finance & Audit Committee. These nominations will be provided for approval at the meeting.

5. Finance & Audit Committee Chair and Vice Chair

5.1 Following appointment of Members to the Finance & Audit Committee, the Authority will elect the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair during the meeting from amongst those Members appointed to the Committee. Only those appointed to the Committee are eligible to be elected to the Chair or Vice-Chair.

6. Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee Chairs

6.1 The Chair of each of the four Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees will be appointed by Members of the Committee at their first meeting in August.

7. Appointments to committees, groups and additional bodies

- 7.1 Members are asked to consider and appoint Members to serve on the Committees, groups and additional bodies, as detailed in Table 2, for the year 2026-27. Where a continuing member of the Authority serves on any of these bodies, they are listed in the third column.
- 7.2 Group Leaders have been asked to agree nominations with Members for confirmation and approval during the meeting.

Table 2

Other related groups and bodies		2025/26 representatives
Local Pension Board	2 Members, 1 Member Substitute and 2 Officers	Cllr Biggs Cllr Hilliard Cllr Weight (Deputy)
Local Government Association (LGA)	3 Members	Cllr Weight Cllr Oatway Cllr Hilliard
LGA Fire Commission	2 Members and 1 deputy	Cllr Weight Cllr Oatway Cllr Small (Deputy)
South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) Board - to appoint a Member to serve on the SWAP Board. It is recommended that this is a Member of the Finance & Audit Committee.	1 Member	Cllr Small
South West Councils	1 Member	Cllr Weight
South West Councils Employers' Panel	1 Member	Cllr Weight
Wiltshire Public Service Board	1 Member and Chief Fire Officer	Cllr Oatway Cllr Weight (Deputy)
Appointment to constituent authority Community Safety Partnerships		
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	1 Member	Cllr Miles
Dorset	1 Member	Cllr Beddow
Swindon	1 Member	Cllr Amin
Wiltshire	1 Member	Cllr Dalton

8. Summary and key points

- 8.1 The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2015, as since varied, sets out the proportions in which the constituent councils are each entitled to appoint councillors to serve as Members of the Authority.
- 8.2 The Authority must then appoint Members to serve on its Committees, to a range of other positions and to outside bodies. Some, but not all, appointments are made in accordance with political proportionality.
- 8.3 Members are asked to confirm the appointments to the Committees, boards, groups and other bodies detailed within this paper.