About the Authority

The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is constituted in accordance with The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument No 435). The membership of the Authority was varied (with effect from 6 June 2018) by the Fire and Rescue Authority (Membership) Order 2017 (Statutory Instrument 1165).

The Authority consists of 18 Members:

- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council 5 Members
- Dorset Council 4 Members
- Swindon Borough Council 3 Members
- Wiltshire Council 6 Members

The Authority has three statutory officers:

- Head of Paid Service - Chief Fire Officer, Andy Cole
- Chief Finance Officer – Assistant Chief Officer & Treasurer, Ryan Maslen
- Monitoring Officer – Lisa Kirkman who works closely with the Clerk to the Authority, Vikki Shearing

Full Fire Authority meetings will normally be held in June (the annual meeting) September, December and February each year and will be convened by the Clerk to the Authority.

The Authority has delegated a number of its functions to committees and to statutory officers, but the following have **not** been delegated:

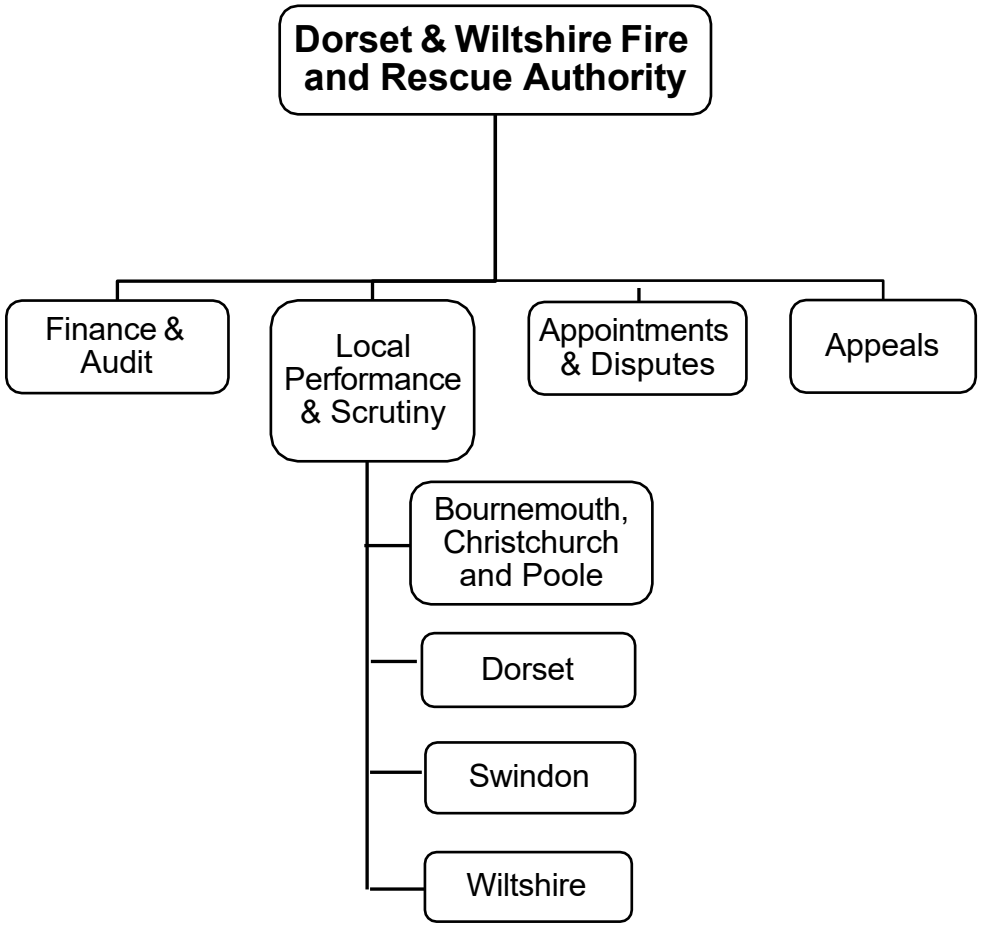
1. Establish and maintain high standards and arrangements to support good governance including approving the annual Statement of Assurance
2. Approve and maintain the Members handbook including scheme of standing orders and financial regulations
3. Approve the Community Safety Plan
4. Approve associated policies and significant changes to service delivery that have policy implications
5. Approve the annual budget and fire precept
6. Approve the Medium-Term Finance Plan
7. Approve significant changes to the agreed revenue and capital programme

8. Approve and monitor the Treasury Management Policy

9. Establish and maintain a comprehensive performance management system to ensure that the Authority's objectives are being met

The Authority has established the following committees:

- Finance & Audit Committee
- Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees (x4)
- Appointments and Disputes Committee
- Appeals Committee



Further information is available from Democratic Services.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Members' Contact Details

Name	Contact Details	Political Group	Nominating Council & Constituency
Boaz Barry 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** boaz.barry@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** 07597926111	Reform UK	**Wiltshire** Westbury North
Laura Beddow 	c/o County Hall Colliton Park Dorchester Dorset DT1 1XJ **Email:** cllrlaura.beddow@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 07814 569563	Conservative	**Dorset** West Purbeck
Richard Biggs 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** cllrrichard.biggs@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 01305 260156, 07810 503457	Liberal Democrats	**Dorset** Dorchester Poundbury
Matt Bragg 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** matt.bragg@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** 07983428806	Liberal Democrats	**Wiltshire** Chippenham Cepen Park & Hunters Moon

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Members' Contact Details

Name	Contact Details	Political Group	Nominating Council & Constituency
Olivia Brown 	c/o BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY **Email:** olivia.brown4@bcpcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 01202 123561	Liberal Democrats	**BCP** Wallisdown & Winton West
Matthew Courtliff 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** mcourtliff2@swindon.gov.uk **Tel:** 07770 787458	Conservative	**Swindon** Wroughton & Wichelstowe
Brian Dalton 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** brian.dalton@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** 01722323801	Liberal Democrats	**Wiltshire** Salisbury Harnham West
Andrew Davis 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** andrew.davis@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** 07703 163716	Conservative	**Wiltshire** Warminster East

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Members' Contact Details

Name	Contact Details	Political Group	Nominating Council & Constituency
Michelle Dower 	c/o BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY **Email:** michelledower@bcpcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** N/A	BCP Independent Group	**BCP** Kinson
Paul Hilliard 	c/o BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY **Email:** paul.hilliard@bcpcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 01425 271322	Independent (Christchurch independents Group)	**BCP** Mudeford, Stanpit & West Highcliffe
Peter Miles 	c/o BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY **Email:** Peter.Miles@bcpcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 07843613802	Poole People – Independent & Local	**BCP** Oakdale
Paul Oatway 	c/o Democratic Services Wiltshire Council County Hall Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 8JN **Email:** paul.oatway@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** N/A	Conservative	**Wiltshire** Pewsey Vale West

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Members' Contact Details

Name	Contact Details	Political Group	Nominating Council & Constituency
Mike Parkes 	c/o County Hall Colliton Park Dorchester Dorset DT1 1XJ **Email:** cllrmike.parkes@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 01202 805857	Conservative	**Dorset** Ferndown North
Paul Sample 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** paul.sample@wiltshire.gov.uk **Tel:** 07718 185039	Liberal Democrats	**Wiltshire** Salisbury St Edmund's
Gordon Slade 	c/o Swindon Borough Council Euclid Street Swindon SN1 2JH **Email:** GSlade2@swindon.gov.uk **Tel:** N/A	Reform UK	**Swindon** Upper Stratton
Kevin Small 	An address in the area of the Authority withheld from publication with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer. **Email:** ksmall@swindon.gov.uk **Tel:** 01793 495220, 07979 770130	Labour & Co-operative	**Swindon** Rodbourne & Ferndale

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Members' Contact Details

Name	Contact Details	Political Group	Nominating Council & Constituency
Duncan Sowry-House 	c/o County Hall Colliton Park Dorchester Dorset DT1 1XJ **Email:** cllrdash@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 07968 140586	Liberal Democrats	**Dorset** Corfe Mullen
Clare Weight 	c/o BCP Council Civic Centre Bourne Avenue Bournemouth BH2 6DY **Email:** clare.weight@bcpcouncil.gov.uk **Tel:** 01202127548	Liberal Democrats	**BCP** Canford Heath

1. The Legislative Framework

1.1 Like all public-sector bodies, fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) and the fire and rescue services (FRSs) for which they are responsible, are required to operate in accordance with a wide range of legislation. Much of the legislation in question applies across all public services, but there are some aspects of the legislative landscape that are particularly relevant to the fire and rescue service.

2. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

2.1 This is the main piece of legislation under which fire and rescue services operate. The 2004 Act (amended in 2018) provides the legal basis establishing fire and rescue authorities, the political bodies responsible for overseeing the work of fire and rescue services. It also sets out details of the statutory community safety-orientated duties that fire authorities have. These are referred to as 'core functions' and can be summarised as follows:

- Promoting fire safety
- Extinguishing fires, and protecting life and property when fires do occur
- Minimising damage to property arising from firefighting operations
- Rescuing people involved in road traffic collisions
- Dealing with other types of emergencies, as specified by the Secretary of State in Statutory Instruments (Orders). Currently, a single Order has been issued, requiring fire authorities to make provision to attend the following types of incidents:
  - Chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear emergencies
  - Emergencies involving the collapse of a building or other structure
  - Emergencies involving trains, trams or aircraft
- Ensuring the provision of the resources necessary to meet all normal requirements (the 2004 Act does not define what constitutes 'normal', it is a matter for local determination)
- Ensuring necessary training for firefighters
- Ensuring that (999) calls for assistance can be dealt with effectively
- Obtaining information needed to respond safely and effectively to emergencies

2.2 As well as the duties outlined above, the 2004 Act provides FRAs with a power to exercise their discretion in responding to other emergencies that constitute a risk to life and/or the environment. It is under this power, for example, that fire and rescue services respond to flooding emergencies.

2.3 Beyond legislating for the duties and powers of fire and rescue authorities, the 2004 Act also introduced the Fire and Rescue National Framework. This framework sets out Government's expectations and requirements for FRAs in England. The Secretary of State must keep the document under review, and reports to parliament every two years on the extent to which it is being complied with.

2.4 Whilst there is no absolute legal requirement to adhere to the contents of the framework, the legislation states that FRAs 'must have regard' to it in carrying out their functions. In practice, this means that a compelling case would need to be made to justify any departure from the requirements laid out in the framework.

The priorities specified for FRAs in the current version of the national framework are to:

- *make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;*
- *identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;*
- *collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide*
- *be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and*
- *develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.*

2.5 In terms of how FRAs are expected to address these priorities, there are two mechanisms incorporated in the national framework that are central to the process of their doing so. The first is integrated risk management planning (IRMP), and the second involves the preparation of an annual Statement of Assurance.

3. Integrated Risk Management Planning

3.1 Integrated risk management planning is a cyclical process that involves assessing community risk; deciding on steps that need to be taken to manage it efficiently and effectively; implementing the steps in question; and then reviewing their impact before commencing the cycle again. Details associated with each element of this process are required to be published by FRAs in an Integrated Risk Management Plan. Our plan is called the Community Safety Plan.

3.2 The term 'integrated' is used to reflect the fact that community risk is managed by balancing service delivery interventions across three disciplines.

- **Prevention** - the practice of trying to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place
- **Protection** - the practice of ensuring that fire safety standards in buildings are appropriate
- **Response** - the practice of minimising the impact of emergencies through well-trained, well-equipped firefighters responding to them quickly and effectively.

3.3 Where the IRMP process leads FRAs to contemplate making material changes to prevention, protection and/or response service provision, there is a requirement to undertake a public consultation on options. FRA members must then 'conscientiously consider' consultation responses before deciding on any changes that will be made.

4. Statements of Assurance

4.1 Statements of Assurance are produced annually by FRAs and published after having been subject to the authority's scrutiny arrangements. In accordance with the national framework, the statements "…must provide assurance [to government, members of the public and other stakeholders] on financial, governance and operational matters."

5. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

5.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) is the legislation under which fire safety standards in almost all buildings are controlled. 'Single private dwellings,' i.e., people's homes, are specifically excluded, although the common areas (access corridors, staircases, etc) in blocks of flats do fall within the scope of the RRO.

5.2 The RRO replaced previous legislative fire safety requirements with a 'self-compliant' regime. This is based on the principle that those responsible for the day-to-day management of buildings should also be responsible for ensuring that necessary fire safety arrangements are in place. The 'responsible person' is required to undertake a fire risk assessment. They must then use the findings from the assessment to decide on the steps necessary to manage fire risk down to a reasonable level.

5.3 FRAs are responsible for enforcing the RRO and do so by undertaking risk-based inspection programmes. These involve carrying out audits of fire safety arrangements in premises that fire officers consider to present the greatest risk.

6. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004

6.1 The Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) was introduced to establish a coherent framework within which organisations would work together to plan for dealing effectively with major emergencies.

6.2 Under the CCA, fire and rescue authorities are designated as 'category 1 responders'. As such, they are members of multi-agency groups known as Local Resilience Forums (LRF). These LRFs - which cover geographical areas matching the boundaries of police forces - are required to collaborate in undertaking a range of functions:

- Assessing the risk of emergencies occurring, and using this risk assessment to compile a community risk register, and inform contingency planning activity
- Putting in place emergency plans
- Putting in place business continuity management arrangements
- Putting in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters, and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency
- Sharing information with other local responders to enhance co-ordination
- Co-operating with other local responders to enhance co-ordination and efficiency
- Providing advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management (this applies to local authorities only).

7. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (CDA)

7.1 Fire and rescue authorities are designated as 'responsible authorities' under the CDA. This means that they are required to work alongside other responsible authorities (police, local authorities, the probation service and clinical commissioning groups) on community safety partnerships (CSP). CSPs are defined as "an alliance of organisations which generate strategies and policies, and implement actions and interventions concerning crime and disorder within their partnership area." In this capacity, they hold a collective, statutory responsibility for reducing crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in each local authority area.

7.2 In exercising their functions under the CDA, responsible authorities must have regard to the police and crime objectives set out in the police and crime plan for the police area which comprises, or includes, that local government area.

8. The Policing and Crime Act 2017

8.1 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 sets out a number of provisions that will impact on the way in which FRSs operate and are governed. The 2017 Act introduced a statutory requirement for fire, police and ambulance services to collaborate if it is in the interests of each of their efficiency and effectiveness to do so. Where a collaboration agreement would negatively impact efficiency, effectiveness or public safety, the duty to enter into it is set aside.

8.2 The Policing and Crime Act also established distinct routes by which Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) can become directly involved in the governance of FRS:

a) By making a business case demonstrating that it would be in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, or public safety, for a PCC to replace an existing fire and rescue authority as a 'PCC-style FRA'. These PCC-style FRAs can be constituted using either a 'governance model' (where employment responsibility for FRS and police employees remains separate), or a 'single employer model' (where employment responsibility for all employees is combined). Such changes in governance require approval of the Home Secretary and would lead to PCCs being re-designated as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners.

b) By PCCs being appointed as voting members of existing fire and rescue authorities. Such appointments will be subject to agreement by FRA Members, in response to a formal request from a PCC.

Governance & funding arrangements

9. Fire and Rescue Authority Structures

9.1 There are currently 45 FRAs in England.

9.2 Where fire and rescue services share a boundary with a single upper tier council, the council is the authority. In this scenario, the FRS is an integral part of that council, alongside other services such as social care, education, public health and highways. There are currently 15 FRAs of this type in England (13 county councils, the unitary authority in Cornwall and the Council of the Isles of Scilly).

9.3 In non-metropolitan areas where the FRS's boundary incorporates more than one upper tier council, a stand-alone combined fire authority (CFA) is responsible for its governance. CFAs are comprised elected councillors appointed by the leaders of each constituent council, with the number of members from each being based on relative electorate population size. The requirement to reflect this, and the need to achieve political balance, informs a

calculation on the overall size of CFAs, with the largest having around 25 members. There are currently 23 CFAs in England.

9.4 In metropolitan areas (with the exception of London and Manchester), arrangements are similar to those in areas where CFAs exist, with members being appointed from constituent metropolitan councils. Five FRAs of this type currently exist in England.

9.5 London has a unique governance structure in comparison to other fire and rescue authorities. The London Fire Commissioner is a corporation sole and the fire and rescue authority for London. It is a functional body of the Greater London Authority. The Mayor of London sets its budget, approves the London Safety Plan, and can direct it to act. There is a Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience.

9.6 Greater Manchester fire service also now comes under the control of a mayor, although unlike in London the mayor is the fire and rescue authority. The mayor is responsible for discharging the duties of the fire and rescue authority, and is supported in this role by a Fire Committee, comprising 15 members – all of whom are appointed from the ten local authorities in the Greater Manchester area.

10. The Governance Role of Fire and Rescue Authorities

10.1 The governance role of FRAs generally reflects that found in local authorities. Essentially, FRA members are responsible for determining the policy direction of their FRS; setting a budget to fund delivery of that policy direction; and undertaking scrutiny to ensure that intended outcomes are being achieved economically, efficiently, effectively and in accordance with statutory requirements. This is with the professional support and advice from their officer colleagues.

10.2 In contrast to the police service, where both chief constables and PCCs can be responsible for employing staff, FRAs are employing authorities that employ all FRS staff – both uniformed (operational staff) and non-uniformed (support staff).

10.3 In practice, many of the FRAs' legal responsibilities and other functions are assigned to sub-committees of the authority, or to officers via formal schemes of delegation.

10.4 FRAs must appoint the following statutory officers who, in combination, are required to ensure that the authority conducts its affairs appropriately:

A head of paid service, who is responsible for:

- Overall corporate management and operational activity of the FRS
- Provision of professional advice to the FRA and its committees

- Ensuring a system for recording and reporting FRA decisions, together with the Clerk.

A Chief Finance Officer, who is responsible for:

- Establishing a framework for the proper administration of the FRA's financial affairs
- Setting and monitoring compliance with financial management standards
- Establishing an adequate and effective system of internal audit
- Advising on the corporate financial position, and key controls necessary for sound financial management
- Giving accurate, impartial advice and information on financial issues to the FRA, and the FRS's senior management team.

A Monitoring Officer who is responsible for:

- Ensuring that no action of the FRA contravenes any legislation or code of practice, or may lead to a charge of maladministration.
- Preparing a formal report for the FRA, after consultation with the Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer and Clerk where they consider that any proposal, decision or omission will give rise to unlawfulness or maladministration.
- Appointment of a Deputy Monitoring Officer

In addition to the above statutory roles the Clerk to the FRA is responsible for:

- Standards of conduct for members of the FRA in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer
- Maintaining the FRA's handbook which contains the FRA Standing Orders
- Ensuring a system for recording and reporting FRA decisions, together with the head of paid service
- Together with the Chief Finance Officer and in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, if needed, advising the FRA when their decisions are not in accordance with the policy and budget framework

10.5 Where PCC-style FRAs are formed in the future, in accordance with provisions contained in the Policing and Crime Act 2017, PCCs will also be required to appoint individuals into each of the above statutory roles; however, they can be shared between the PCC style FRA and PCC's office.

11. Handling of Complaints

11.1 The Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on relevant Authorities to maintain high standards of conduct by Members. The expected standards are outlined in the code of conduct in section 2.6. A process for dealing with complaints related to Members' conduct is detailed in Appendix A.

12. National Leadership and Representation for Fire and Rescue Authorities

12.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) plays a central role in co-ordinating the efforts of, and providing representation for, FRAs in England. The LGA's Fire Commission provides a forum to discuss and develop policy positions on matters of common interest and concern to FRAs. The Fire Commission has a Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) which acts on behalf of the commission.

12.2 Members of the FSMC also represent their Fire Commission colleagues on a recently formed Fire Reform Board (England). This board brings these political leaders from the LGA together with representatives from the Home Office and the National Fire Chiefs Council (formerly known as the Chief Fire Officers' Association) to collectively and strategically shape the national FRS reform agenda.

13. Funding Arrangements

13.1 The vast majority of the financial resources available to FRAs are provided by a combination of council tax and funding from central government. Government funding is provided through the local government finance settlement in the form of revenue support grant (a general grant to meet revenue costs) and business rate retention. Other ring-fenced grants are also provided for specific purposes. Beyond these main sources of funding, FRAs raise funds through charging for some non-emergency services, and a number also generate income from commercial trading activities.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Terms of Reference

The Authority - Main purpose

The main purpose of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is to oversee the policy and service delivery of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service). The Authority consists of elected members from each of the four constituent Authorities and collectively they ensure the Service supports communities, local partners and comply with a range of statutory requirements and frameworks including:

- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (May 2018)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations
- Policing and Crime Act 2017
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Fire and Rescue Services ((Emergencies) (England) Order 2007)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Climate Change Act 2008
- Data Protection Legislation including:
    - Freedom of Information Act 2000
    - Data Protection Act 2018 and associated regulations

The Authority is the statutory body constituted in accordance with The Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument No 435). The membership of the Authority was varied (with effect from 6 June 2018) by the Fire and Rescue Authority (Membership) Order 2017 (Statutory Instrument 1165).

The Authority has agreed to establish the following committees:

- Finance & Audit Committee
- Local Performance and Scrutiny Committee (x4)
- Appointments and Disputes Committee
- Appeals Committee

Terms of Reference

The Authority has delegated a number of its functions to committees and to statutory officers, but the following have **not** been delegated:

1. Establish and maintain high standards and arrangements to support good governance including approving the annual Statement of Assurance

2. Approve and maintain the Members handbook which contains the standing orders and financial regulations

3. Approve the Community Safety Plan

4. Approve associated policies and significant changes to service delivery that have policy implications

5. Approve the annual budget and fire precept

6. Approve the Medium-Term Finance Plan

7. Approve significant changes to the agreed revenue and capital programme

8. Approve and monitor the Treasury Management Policy

9. Establish and maintain a comprehensive performance management system to ensure that the Authority's objectives are being met

The Authority has appointed three statutory officers (Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer and Treasurer) as well as the Clerk to the Authority. Specific delegations have also been given by the Authority to each of these officers.

Membership: 18

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (5), Dorset Council (4), Swindon Borough Council (3), Wiltshire Council (6)

Quorum: **6**

Chair: To be elected annually at the June meeting of the Authority.

Meetings: June (annual meeting), September, December and February.

Where urgent decisions are required an extraordinary meeting of the Authority will be called.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Terms of Reference

Finance & Audit Committee

Main purpose

The main purpose of the Committee can be broadly defined in four key areas:

1. ensuring that sound systems of internal control are in place including establishing, developing and overseeing audit programmes and the delivery of key findings

2. providing an oversight of current Service performance in relation to all aspects of Priority 4: Making every penny count and Priority 5: Supporting and developing our people of the Community Safety Plan (CSP) as well as scrutinising any matters referred to it by the Authority

3. ensuring sound day to day financial management arrangements are in place and overseeing financial expenditure

4. ensuring sound risk and business continuity management arrangements are in place

Terms of Reference

1. to oversee the internal and external audit arrangements and to approve the audit plans, strategy, programmes and annual letters/reports, and to secure effective co-ordination between internal and external audit, in consultation with the relevant officers

2. to review proposals made in relation to the appointment of external auditors and internal audit services and to make recommendations as to their appointment

3. to receive the reports of internal and external audit and to ensure that their recommendations and findings are adequately addressed and implemented by the Authority and its officers

4. to consider reports from internal auditors on the internal audit's performance during the year in accordance with public sector internal audit standards

5. to monitor financial spend against budget

6. to oversee financial monitoring and reprogramming of the agreed budget

7. to keep under review, the effectiveness of the internal financial control systems of the Authority. This should include the adequacy of financial policies and practices to ensure compliance with relevant statutes, guidance, policies, standards and codes of corporate governance

8. to consider procedural issues relating to the Accounts and Audit Regulations

9. to monitor the anti-fraud and corruption strategy, bribery policy, actions and resources

10. to scrutinise and approve the Authority's Statement of Accounts, including the Annual Governance Statement required under the National Fire and Rescue Service Framework. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Authority

11. to consider the Authority's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements

12. to consider and recommend to the Authority the annual programme for Member seminars

13. to monitor the risk management and business continuity arrangements and make recommendations to the full Authority as necessary.

14. to monitor the oversight of the future training centre project.

Membership: 8

Quorum: 3

Chair: To be elected annually

Meetings: July, September, December, and March

Reporting arrangements: To the Authority

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Terms of Reference

Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees

Main purpose

The main purpose of the area-based committees is to reduce community and firefighter risks by developing, overseeing and assuring the delivery of activities associated with prevention, and response. The key focus of the committee is to scrutinise performance and improvement at a local level against the priorities 1, 2 and 3 set out in the Authority's Community Safety Plan and to make any recommendations to the Authority.

There are four committees associated with the administrative areas of the following Constituent Authorities: Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council.

Terms of reference

1. To monitor the effectiveness and use of local information to best target prevention, protection and response activities and resources to the needs of local communities

2. to monitor the effectiveness and improvement of local response emergency arrangements appropriate to its area

3. to monitor the effectiveness of the discharge of fire safety statutory duties and wider fire protection initiatives appropriate to the build environment

4. to monitor and periodically review the effectiveness of the approach and initiatives associated with fire safety education and prevention

5 to monitor the outcomes of partnership working and the effectiveness of engagement with local partners

6. to monitor the effectiveness of planning, preparedness and local community resilience plans appropriate to their area, developed by the Local Resilience Forum

7. to monitor and scrutinise performance reports in respect of the key statutory duties within the administrative area overseen by the Committee

8. to recommend to the Authority proposals for the whole Authority performance monitoring or scrutiny.

Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Terms of Reference

Membership: Varies and aligned to the four administrative areas. See below.

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole LPS: 5

Dorset LPS: 4

Swindon LPS: 3

Wiltshire LPS: 6

In addition, any member of a Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) Committee may arrange, after consultation with the Chair of that LPS Committee, for a member of another LPS Committee to attend in their place as a substitute. Any substitute's attendance shall count towards achieving quorum for the meeting and they shall be entitled to speak and vote as if they were a full member of the committee.

The majority of those in attendance at the meeting must be Members for the administrative area of that LPS Committee.

Quorum: 3

Chair: A chair for each LPS administrative area is elected at the first LPS committee meeting to be convened after the Authority annual meeting.

Meetings: August or September, November, February or March

Reporting arrangements: To the Authority

Appointments and Disputes Committee

Terms of Reference

1. To make the appointments of the Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer to determine the terms and conditions on which they hold office, including remuneration, and to deal with any related issues concerning their employment.

2. To deal with the investigation of complaints against the Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer and to take action on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) under the appropriate discipline regulations prescribed for those officers.

3. To consider and decide on disputes referred to the Authority when there is a recorded 'failure to agree' between the Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer and a nationally recognised representative body.

4. To consider and decide on grievances between an employee and the Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

5. To consider code of conduct complaints, referred to by the Monitoring Officer where an informal resolution is not appropriate or cannot be achieved. To decide at a Summary Hearing whether the Member has failed to comply with the code of conduct and if so whether to take any action in respect of the Member or alternatively if the complaint is not suitable for Summary Hearing, to direct that a Formal Investigation takes place.

6. To consider the investigation report of any formal investigation relating to the potential breach of a code of conduct by a Member. Where the panel finds that a Member has failed to comply with the code of conduct, the panel has delegated powers to take action in respect of individual Members as may be necessary to promote high standards of conduct.

7. To consider a complaint where the complainant is not satisfied that the complaint has been dealt with satisfactorily.

8. To authorise, following their retirement, the re-appointment of any Brigade Manager or Area Manager to their previous or a similar post, only in exceptional circumstances; when this is necessary in the interests of public safety, having regard to openness, justification and duration of the re-appointment.

Membership: Number of Members: any four members appointed on a politically proportionate basis and where appropriate and possible is gender balanced. The Appointments and Disputes Committee has no standing membership. Instead, members will be appointed from amongst the whole membership of the Authority as the need to meet arises.

Quorum: 3

Chair: To be appointed on each occasion from amongst the membership of the

Committee

Meetings: No standing meetings

Reporting arrangements: To the Authority where needed

Appeals Committee

Terms of Reference

Where the policies of the Authority provide for any member of staff conditioned to the Grey Book or the Green book, to appeal to elected members against dismissal or termination, the role of the Appeals Committee is to hear and determine the appeal whether the dismissal or termination is for a disciplinary matter, ill health, redundancy, or some other substantial reason.

Note: Issues related to the employment of the Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer. If an employee (covered by the Gold Book) has the right under the Authority's policies to appeal a disciplinary or grievance decision to elected Members — including decisions made by the Appointments and Disputes Committee — that appeal must be made to the Appeals Committee.

Membership: Number of Members: any four members appointed on a politically proportionate basis and where appropriate and possible is gender balanced. The Appeals Committee has no standing membership. Instead, members will be appointed from amongst the whole membership of the Authority as the need to meet arises.

Quorum: 3

Chair: To be appointed on each occasion from amongst the membership of the Committee

Meetings: No standing meetings

Reporting arrangements: To the Authority where needed

Members' Allowances Scheme

1. General

1.1 The payment of allowances to elected Members of local authorities is governed by the Local Government (Members' Allowances England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations).

1.2 Following consideration of recommendations made by the local independent remuneration panel, Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) at their meeting on 14 June 2023 approved the making of a Members' Allowances Scheme, which came into effect on 14 June 2023.

1.3 This revised scheme is for the financial years 2023-27.

2. Entitlement to Allowances

2.1 This scheme provides for the payment of:

- a basic flat rate allowance, payable to each elected Member
- special responsibility allowances, payable to specified office holders with additional significant responsibilities
- travel allowances for duties undertaken within the areas of the four constituent councils
- a dependent carers' allowance
- travel and subsistence allowances for duties undertaken outside the counties of Dorset and Wiltshire.

3. Basic Allowance

3.1 The basic allowance (£4,590.00) is payable in monthly instalments. The Basic Allowance will be increased annually, from 2024, by reference to the annual pay award to Green Book conditioned staff. It is intended to recognise the time devoted by Members to carrying out their work as members of the Authority, including preparation for and attendance at meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as subsistence and use of Members' homes and ICT devices, including telephones.

3.2 Where a Member is suspended or partially suspended from their duties as a Member, the part of their basic allowance, any special responsibility allowance and any other allowance or reimbursement otherwise payable to them in respect of the period for which they may be suspended or partially suspended shall be withheld. Similarly, if as a result of a decision of a Member's constituent council they cease to be a member of the Authority, then the payment of all allowances shall cease from the date of that decision.

4. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) (NOTE: No Member may receive more than one SRA)

4.1 SRAs are payable in addition to the basic allowance and are also paid in equal monthly instalments.

4.2 The Authority has authorised the payment of SRAs as follows:

Chair of the Authority	£13,400@14 June 2026
Vice-Chair of the Authority	£6700@14 June 2026
Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee	£7,500
Chair of Local Performance and Scrutiny Committees (4 x Committee Chairs)	£1,600

Notes:

Chair of the Authority – The SRA was increased by equal instalments of £500 on each anniversary of the Commencement Date (14 June 2023) until 2026 when it was fixed at £13,400.

Vice-Chair of the Authority – The SRA was increased by equal instalments of £250 on each anniversary of the Commencement Date (14 June 2023) until 2026 when it was fixed at £6,700.

5. Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

5.1 Members may claim a single-rate travelling allowance of 55p per mile for undertaking approved duties (in future the rate will be adjusted automatically in line with the HMRC approved minimum).

5.2 The rates for travelling and subsistence allowances are set out on the reverse of the Members' claim forms, a copy of which is available from Democratic Services or can be found on our website under the useful information section in the Members' Handbook.

5.3 Travelling allowance (and subsistence allowances for out of the Authority area duties) is claimable for the following duties:

a) Attendance at meetings of the Authority, and of those committees, sub-committees, panels and working groups of which the claimant is a member, or has a right to attend, under the Authority's Standing Orders

b) Attendance at committees, sub committees, panels and working groups of which the claimant is not a Member, but if expressly invited to attend by the Clerk
c) Duties undertaken by Members appointed by the Authority to serve on outside bodies
d) Attendance at authorised conferences, seminars and training events
e) Attendance at briefing meetings and other events for Members convened by the Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk or the Monitoring Officer
f) Exhibitions, official openings and visits to premises, or similar events, to which Members have been invited by the Chief Fire Officer or the Clerk
g) Attendance at consultation meetings with the public or other organisations arranged by the Chief Fire Officer, or the Clerk.

5.4 Travelling allowances may not be claimed for political group meetings.

5.5 If any Member is in any doubt about a particular duty, please check with Democratic Services.

5.6 Members who claim subsistence allowances for out of the Authority's area duties are required to certify that the amounts claimed (up to the permitted maximum) have actually been incurred. A declaration to this effect is included on the bottom of the claim form.

6. Dependent Carer's Allowance

6.1 A Dependent Carers' Allowance will be paid for care of dependents, whether children, elderly people or people with disabilities, while a Member is on the Authority's business and where travelling allowances are payable. The allowance will not be payable to a member of the claimant's own household. Members who claim a carers' allowance are required to certify that the amounts claimed (up to the permitted maximum) have actually been incurred by signing the declaration on the reverse of the claim form.

6.2 The rate of the Dependents' Carer's Allowance is the actual cost expended, subject to the hourly rate not exceeding £30.00 per hour and no allowance is payable to a connected person unless providing care through a Care Quality Commission approved third party entity.

Councillor Code of Conduct

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a "councillor" means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A "co-opted member" is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as "a person who is not a member of the authority but who

a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub- committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee".

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, "local authority" includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public

services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from either your Clerk or Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. **Respect As a councillor:**

   1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

   1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's members officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination as a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the council as a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the fire and rescue service.

Officers work for the fire and rescue service as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information as a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- **a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- **b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
  - **i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
  - **ii. I am required by law to do so;**
  - **iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
  - **iv. the disclosure is:**
    1. **reasonable and in the public interest; and**
    2. **made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
    3. **I have consulted the Clerk prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

We must work openly and transparently, and our proceedings andprinted materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by us must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute as a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or fire and rescue Authority (FRA) or Service (FRS) into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your FRA/FRS and may lower the public's confidence in your or FRA/FRS's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your FRA/FRS into disrepute.

You are able to hold the FRA/FRS and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position as a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the FRA provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of FRA/FRS resources and facilities as a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse FRA/FRS resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the FRA/FRS or authorising their use by others:

a. act in accordance with the FRA/FRS's requirements; and

b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the FRS or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the FRA/FRS to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the FRSs own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct as a Councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my FRS.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the FRA/FRS or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the these processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Clerk or Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the FRA/FRS

9. Interests as a councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires a register of interests to be maintained of members of the FRA.

You need to register your interests so that the public, employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Clerk or Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality as a councillor:

10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the FRA/FRS or from persons who may apply to the FRA/FRS for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

10.2 I register with the Clerk any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

10.3 I register with the Clerk any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the FRA/FRS, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Clerk for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Clerk the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1** (**Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**) which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2** (**Other Registerable Interests**).

"**Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Clerk.

2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.

3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Clerk with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Clerk agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***directly relates*** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which ***affects*** –
    a. your own financial interest or well-being;
    b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
    c. a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

    you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

8. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above*)* ***affects*** the financial interest or well-being:
    a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the

majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;

b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner or an incorporated body of which such person is a director or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the FRA. (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be excuted and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Authority. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licenses	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the FRA for a month or longer

Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the FRA/FRS and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i)) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councilor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest :

a) any unpaid directorships

b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority

c) any body
- (i) exercising functions of a public nature
- (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
- (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Member Development

1 Introduction

1.1 The Authority's Member Development arrangements provide opportunities to further support Members in their fundamental role in shaping and delivering fire and rescue services across the area covered by the Authority.

1.2 It is a personalised opportunity for individual Members to raise any specific areas of clarity; additional support; or thoughts about strengthening the workings of the Authority.

1.3 The arrangements are complementary to Member roles in respective local Authorities and will be both an individual and collective experience.

1.4 Where appropriate, development will be individually targeted to Members who have so requested, but where it is beneficial to do so, these needs may influence the content of wider seminars or training events.

2 Member Induction

2.1 All new Members to the Authority will be offered core induction development specific to their role. Thereafter induction is tailored according to the committees and groups on which they serve. The induction will include the following:

- Duties under the Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004
- Composition, powers and duties of committees
- Standing Orders, procurement rules, financial regulations & delegations
- Member/Officer protocol
- Code of conduct

3 Member development meetings

3.1 Every two years all Members should attend a development meeting, held on an individual basis.

3.2 Member development meetings are not aligned to any form of appraisal or performance process and is not a test.

3.3 Member development meetings are an informal conversation, providing an opportunity for Members to meet individually and in confidence, with the Members Group Leader or the Chair and a representative of the Strategic Leadership Team to raise any issues of concern; areas where further clarity might be discussed; or areas of personal development.

3.4 The conversation at the meeting may be framed by questions aligned to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Good Governance Standard for Public Services, which the Authority has agreed to follow.

3.5 Typical questions to help guide the informal conversation might include:

Are there specific areas where you would like to provide more information; or have better support; or an improved approach towards:

- *what the Service is trying to achieve or the values that it has adopted*
- *the workings of the Authority or role and responsibilities of Members and Senior Officers*
- *the code of conduct and the Member/Officer protocol*
- *the sufficiency of information provided to enable Members to make informed decisions and manage risk*
- *the effectiveness of communications with Members and with the public*
- *support in partnership working*
- *the value of seminars and learning events provided and suggestions for future seminars*
- *any other particular areas of frustration or improvement to support your role*
- *any personal development ambitions*

3.6 In order to capture the key points and actions, a brief note will be agreed with each Member and kept confidential. This note will be used to reflect development needs and ensure progress has been made for addressing these needs.

3.7 The Clerk will develop a consolidated action plan and seminar schedule that seeks to address common themes, which will be formally discussed at the Finance & Audit Committee. In this way a more efficient process of Authority wide learning may take place.

4 Additional Member Development Opportunities

4.1 From time to time Members are encouraged to attend and observe the other committees and working groups that ordinarily they are not members of.

4.2 ***Specific training or awareness***

4.2.1 Committee Chairs will consider the development needs of new and existing Members and, where appropriate, hold specific training events for the

committees for which they are responsible to steer, providing Members with training specific to their role.

4.2.2 These events will be put on by the Service or their constituent Authorities through external meetings, seminar and conference attendance. In some cases this is a requirement of the Authority (e.g. Appeals) and in other cases, is a demonstration of good governance.

4.2.3 Where role appropriate conferences/seminars are identified, Members can request attendance via the Democratic Services Manager who, in consultation with the Chair will confirm approval.

4.3 ***Seminars and workshops***

4.3.1 In certain circumstances, it is necessary to include items of specific interest within the annual seminar schedule. These may be in response to changing pressures or expectations and can include:

- National policy changes specific to public services
- Local issues associated to key partners
- Legislative change specifically aimed at the Fire and Rescue Service
- Awareness raising of key consultation issues
- Emerging issues identified within the strategic assessment

4.3.2 Where appropriate, relevant partners are invited and encouraged to attend development seminars to both learn from and contribute to the discussions.

5 Training and Development records

5.1 The Service's Democratic Services Manager will capture, and hold centrally, a record of training and development undertaken individually for each Member of the Authority.

Member - Officer Protocol

1. Introduction

1.1 An effective and professional relationship between Members and Officers in which both understand the other's role is essential to the success of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority). The purpose of this Protocol is to assist by giving guidance on that relationship so as to ensure the smooth running of the Authority.

1.2 The Protocol has been approved by the Authority which will review it as part of a wider review of governance arrangements.

1.3 This Protocol is not prescriptive, and it does not cover every situation. The intention is to give guidance on some of the issues which most commonly arise. It is hoped that the approach adopted will serve as a guide to dealing with other issues and will be a useful reference point in maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct.

1.4 Members and Officers must at all times observe this Protocol.

1.5 There are approved codes of conduct for both Members and Officers. The Members' code requires Members to have regard to the principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Breaches of this protocol by a Member may result in a complaint if it appears the Members' code of conduct has also been breached. Breaches by an Officer may lead to disciplinary action.

2. Definitions

2.1 Unless the context indicates otherwise, references to the term *Authority* include committees, panels and joint committees.

2.2 The terms *Member* and *Members* include co-opted members, unless the context indicates otherwise.

2.3 *Officers* and *staff* mean all persons in the employment of the Authority and the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service).

2.4 *Senior Officer* means the Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk and the Monitoring Officer, Treasurer, together with those Officers comprising the Strategic Leadership Team.

2.5 The term *constituent authorities* mean the local authorities which have the right to appoint members to the Authority.

3. The Role of Members and Officers

3.1 This Protocol seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective codes of conduct which apply to Members and Officers. The shared objective of these codes is to enhance and maintain the integrity of local government and they therefore demand very high standards of personal conduct.

3.2 The conduct of Members and Officers should be such as to instill mutual confidence, trust and respect. Dealings between Members and Officers should observe high standards of courtesy. Neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position. Members should not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of Officers.

3.3 Whilst Members and Officers are indispensable to one another, their responsibilities are distinct. Through their membership of the constituent authorities, Members are accountable to the electorate and can serve only as long as their term of office lasts in their constituent authority. The role of Members includes developing and setting policies that will then be implemented by Officers and monitor how those policies are implemented.

3.4 Officers are responsible for giving advice to Members to enable them to fulfil their roles. In doing so, Officers will take into account all available relevant factors. Informal and collaborative two-way contact between Members and Officers is encouraged but close personal familiarity can damage the relationship, as might a family or business connection.

3.5 Members and Officers should inform the Clerk of any relationship which might be seen as unduly influencing their work in their respective roles.

3.6 It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. Members and Officers should always be open about their relationships to avoid any reason for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct. Where a close personal relationship has been disclosed, those concerned should avoid a situation where conflict could be perceived. Specifically, a Member should not sit on a body or participate in any decision which directly affects the Officer on a personal basis.

3.7 Officers serve the Authority as a whole. They have a duty to advise Members collectively and individually and implement the properly authorised decisions of the Authority. Senior Officers in particular will be responsible for instructing staff to implement the Authority's decisions.

3.8 Officers taking decisions under their delegated powers must consider the advisability of informing the Authority of their intentions in advance when the matter to which the decisions relates is likely to be sensitive or contentious or has wider policy implications.

3.9 In any event, Senior Officers will establish regular informal contact at mutually convenient times with the Chair and Vice-Chair and with the workstreams as a means of Officers briefing Members on sensitive or otherwise important issues, and vice versa.

3.10 Officers work to the instructions of their Senior Officers, not individual Members. It follows that, whilst such Officers will always seek to assist a Member, they must not be asked to exceed the bounds of authority they have been given by their managers. Except when the purpose of an enquiry is purely to seek factual information, Members should normally direct their requests and concerns to a Senior Officer, at least in the first instance.

3.11 At a meeting of the Authority, a resolution may be passed which authorises a named Officer to take action between meetings in consultation with the Chair. In these circumstances it is the Officer, not the Chair, who takes the action and is responsible for it. The Chair has no legal power to take decisions on behalf of the Authority.

3.12 Members and Officers should respect each other's free (i.e., non-Authority) time.

4. Dual Role

4.1 As councillors, Members may express the values and aspirations of the party political groups to which they belong, recognising that in their role as Members they have a duty always to act in the public interest.

4.2 Similarly, Members may express the values and aspirations of the constituent authorities, though they are not delegates and cannot be mandated by those authorities.

4.3 Members have a number of roles: collectively, they are the ultimate policy-makers determining the core values of the Authority and approving its budget and strategic plans. They also monitor service delivery against approved plans and targets.

4.4 Members represent their community and promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the community often in partnership with other agencies.

4.5 Members concerned about a possible conflict of interest should always take advice from the Clerk.

5. The Authority as an Employer

5.1 Officers are employed by the Authority as a whole.

5.2 Members' roles in relation to the Authority as an employer are limited to:

- the appointment of specified senior posts
- determining human resources policies and conditions of employment, and
- hearing and determining appeals.

Members shall not act outside these roles.

5.3 If participating in the appointment of Officers, Members should:

- remember that the sole criterion is merit
- never canvass support for a particular candidate
- not take part where one of the candidates is a close friend or relative
- not be influenced by personal preferences, and
- not favour a candidate by giving them information not available to the other candidates.

5.4 A Member should not sit on an appeal hearing if the appellant is a friend, a relative, or an Officer with whom the Member has had a close working relationship.

6. Officer/Chair/Lead Member Relationships

6.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Monitoring Officer and Clerk will always be fully responsible for the contents of any report submitted in their names. Even if the Chair or Lead Member is unhappy with its contents, a report should never be amended other than with the approval of the relevant responsible Officer.

6.2 It is important to remember that the law only allows for decisions on Fire & Rescue Authority business to be taken by the Authority itself, a Committee or an Officer with delegated powers. The law does not allow for decisions to be taken by individual members of the Authority or party groups.

6.3 Members must not take any actions which are unlawful, financially improper or likely to give rise to maladministration.

6.4 Members are not authorised to initiate or certify financial transactions, or to enter into a contract on behalf of the Authority.

6.5 Members are not authorised to instruct Officers other than:

- through the formal decision-making process
- to request the provision of consumable resources provided by the Authority for Members' use; or
- where staff have been specifically allocated to give support to a Member or group of Members.

6.6 Within the approved plans and policies of the Authority (including as appropriate, the committees, panels and joint committees), Officers manage and provide the services for which the Authority has a statutory duty within the framework of responsibilities delegated to them. Specifically, the Chief Fire Officer is responsible for all operational issues and for the management of all resources including staff.

6.7 Officers have a duty to implement decisions of the Authority which are lawful, and which have been properly approved in accordance with the requirements of the law and the Authority's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, etc, and duly minuted.

6.8 Officers have a contractual and legal duty to be impartial. They must not allow their professional judgement and advice to be influenced by their own personal views.

6.9 Officers must be alert to issues which are, or are likely to be, contentious or politically sensitive, and be aware of the implications for Members, the media or other sections of the public.

7. Officer Advice to Party Groups

7.1 It must be recognised that Officers serve the whole Authority and not exclusively any one political group, combination of groups or individual Member.

7.2 Party group meetings are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Authority, and conclusions reached at such meetings do not rank as formal decisions. The presence of an Officer confers no formal status on such meetings in terms of Authority business and must not be interpreted as doing so.

7.3 In their dealings with party groups, Officers must treat each group in a fair and even handed manner. Senior Officers may properly be asked to contribute to deliberations of matters concerning Authority business by party groups, whether meeting separately or jointly.

7.4 Officers have the right to refuse such requests and will normally not attend a meeting of a party group where some of those attending are not members of the Authority.

7.5 An Officer, who is not a Senior Officer, shall not be invited to attend a party group meeting, but a Senior Officer may nominate another Officer to attend on their behalf.

7.6 An Officer should be given the opportunity of verifying comments and advice attributed to them in any written record of a party group meeting.

7.7 Certain key points must be clearly understood by Members and Officers when advice is being given to a political group:

- Officers must not be involved in advising on party business
- Party group meetings are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Authority
- Advising a group meeting is not a substitute for providing all necessary information and advice to the Authority or relevant committee
- Officers must not attend group meetings where those involved include persons who are not members of the Authority (such persons are not bound by the Member code of conduct, in particular as to confidentiality)
- Officers must respect party group confidentiality and not repeat the content of any discussion to any other party group.

7.8 Any particular cases of difficulty or uncertainty in relation to this part of the protocol should be raised with the Clerk and the relevant party group leader.

8. Resources for Members

8.1 The only basis upon which the Authority may lawfully provide resources by way of support services (e.g., stationery and photocopying) to Members is to assist them in discharging their role as Members of the Authority, as set out in any Member Role Profile or Job Description. Such support should not be used to support Members in their roles as Members of other authorities and bodies. They should never be used in connection with party political or campaigning activity, or for private purposes.

8.2 Members should ensure they understand and comply with the Authority's own rules about the use of such resources, particularly:

- in relation to any locally agreed arrangements, e.g., payment for private photocopying; and
- regarding ICT security.

9. Members' Access to Information

9.1 Members are free to approach the Authority to provide them with such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need to assist them in discharging their role as Members of the Authority. Such approaches should normally be directed to the appropriate Senior Officer or, in cases of doubt, to the Chief Fire Officer. Members should not put undue pressure on Officers to release information and documents to which they are not entitled to have access.

9.2 Where information is requested on behalf of a third party, it will only be provided if:

- it is in the public domain, and
- it is not barred by the General Data Protection Regulation or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 from being given.

9.3 Every Member of a committee, panel or joint committee has a right to inspect documents about the business of that committee, panel or joint committee. A Member who is not a Member of a specific committee, panel or joint committee, may have access to any document about the business of that specific part of the Authority provided:

- they can demonstrate a reasonable need to see the documents in order to carry out their role as a Member (the "need to know" principle), and
- the documents do not contain "confidential" or "exempt" information as defined by the law.

9.4 Disputes as to the validity of a Member's request to see a document on a need to know basis will be determined by the Clerk. Officers should seek their advice if in any doubt about the reasonableness of a Member's request.

9.5 A Member should obtain advice from the Clerk in circumstances where their wishes to have access to documents or information:

- where to do so is likely to be in breach of the General Data Protection Regulation or
- where the subject matter is one in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct.

10. Access to Premises

10.1 Officers have the right to enter Authority land and premises to carry out their work. Some Officers have the legal power to enter property in the ownership of others.

10.2 Members have a right of access to Authority land and premises to fulfil their duties.

10.3 When making visits as individual Members, Members should:

- whenever practicable, notify and make advance arrangements with the appropriate manager or Officer in charge
- comply with health and safety, security and other workplace rules; and
- not interfere with the services or activities being provided at the time of the visit.

11. Correspondence

11.1 Correspondence between an individual Member and an Officer should not be copied to another Member unless the author expressly intends and states that this is the case or consents. Where correspondence is copied, this should always be made explicit, i.e., there should be no 'blind' copies.

11.2 Official letters written on behalf of the Authority should normally be in the name of the relevant Officer, however, the Chair may initiate correspondence in their own name.

11.3 Letters which convene meetings, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Authority should never be sent in the name of a Member.

12. Public Relations and Press Releases

12.1 All formal relations with the media must be conducted in accordance with the Authority's agreed procedures and the law on local authority publicity.

12.2. Press releases or statements made by Officers must promote or give information on Authority policy or services. They will be factual and consistent with Authority policy. They cannot be used to promote a party group.

12.3 Officers will keep relevant Members informed of media interest in the Authority's activities, especially regarding strategic or contentious matters.

12.4 Before responding to enquiries from the media, Officers shall ensure they are authorised to do so.

12.5 If a Member is contacted by, or contacts, the media on an issue, they should:

- indicate in what capacity they are speaking (e.g., in a personal capacity, on behalf of the Authority, or on behalf of a party group)
- be sure of what they want to say or not to say
- consider the likely consequences for the Authority of their statement (e.g., commitment to a particular course of action, image, allegations of jumping to conclusions)
- notify the press office of any press engagement
- never give a commitment in relation to matters which may be subject to claims from third parties and/or are likely to be an insurance matter
- consider whether to consult other relevant members; and
- take particular care in what they say in the run-up to local or national elections to avoid giving the impression of electioneering, unless they have been contacted as an election candidate or political party activist.

13. Adherence to this Protocol

13.1 The key elements of this protocol are recognition of and a respect for each other's roles and responsibilities. These should be reflected in the behaviour and attitude of each to the other, both publicly and privately.

13.2 A Member who is unhappy about the actions taken by, or conduct of, an Officer should:

- avoid personal attacks on, or abuse of, the Officer at all times
- ensure that any criticism is well founded and constructive
- never make a criticism in public, and
- take up the concern with the Officer privately.

13.3 If direct discussion with the Officer is inappropriate (e.g., because of the seriousness of the concern) or fails to resolve the matter, the Member should raise the issue with the Officer's manager or the relevant Senior Officer.

13.4 Members or Officers with questions about the implementation or interpretation of any part of this protocol should seek the guidance of the Clerk.

13.5 An Officer who believes a Member may have acted other than in accordance with this protocol should raise their concern with the Clerk. The Clerk is the Officer responsible for the operation of this protocol and they will consider how the complaint or allegation should be dealt with by the Clerk or the Monitoring Officer as necessary.

13.6 Officers with complaints of alleged unethical conduct by Members should, through their line manager, refer such matters to the Chief Fire Officer. The Chief Fire Officer will raise such matters with the Clerk.

2.9 Role of Clerk

The Clerk is appointed by and is accountable to the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority). As designated Clerk, the post-holder has a duty to ensure that the Authority and the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) act in accordance with procedures. As Clerk, the post-holder also has responsibilities under the Localism Act to assist the Authority in promoting high standards of conduct amongst Members. They hold further responsibilities as proper officer in relation to the Authority's governance arrangements.

Main Responsibilities

1. Assist the Monitoring Officer in their duty to manage, oversee and be involved in the decision-making processes to assist the Members and Officers to discharge the Authority's strategic and operational responsibilities and ensuring good corporate governance that attains lawfulness and the highest standards of ethical behaviour, probity and propriety.

2. Ensure the production of the Annual Governance Statement and the Authority's Statement of Assurance through the Treasurer and Director of Service Support.

3. Procure timely and reliable legal advice as required by the Chief Fire Officer in preparation for negotiation meetings with representative bodies.

4. Provide assurance that the Authority carry out functions and address issues lawfully within codes of practice, dealing with standards and code of conduct issues including any learning and development needs.

5. Liaise with the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Directors to ensure they are kept up to date with matters relating to governance, public service policy and operation of the Service and that any areas of concern are reported.

6. Report to the Authority if at any time the Ombudsman investigates a complaint of maladministration or failure to provide a service or failure in a service, which it is the Authority's function to provide.

7. Ensure, in agreement with the Chief Fire Officer, the required resources to support the Monitoring Officer functions including nomination of a Deputy when the post-holder is unable to fulfil the role due to conflict of interest or planned absence.

8. Advise the Independent Remuneration Panel/s and implement the agreed scheme of Members' allowances.

2.10 Role of Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer is appointed by and is accountable to the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority).

As legal advisor, the designated Monitoring Officer, under section 5 of the 1989 Act, has a duty to ensure that the Authority and the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) act within and through the law. They have a duty to intervene if they become aware that any act or omission would result in the Authority or the Service acting unlawfully or being likely to act unlawfully.

As Legal Advisor to the Authority and to the Service the post-holder is responsible for providing or for arranging for the provision of independent, timely and reliable legal advice which includes guidance on corporate governance, public service policy and procedural matters relating to the Authority and the Service. This is in addition to specialised legal service and advice in relation to employment and workforce, commercial contracts and procurement, property, health and safety, data protection and freedom of information and other relevant areas of law.

Main responsibilities

1. Manage, oversee and be involved in the decision-making processes to assist the Members and Officers to discharge the Authority's strategic and operational responsibilities and ensuring good corporate governance that attains lawfulness and the highest standards of ethical behaviour, probity and propriety.

2. Be responsible for the production, maintenance, approval and monitoring of key corporate constitution and legal documents in association with the Authority, Chief Fire Officer and Directors.

3. Act as the designated Monitoring Officer providing assurance that the Authority carry out functions and address issues lawfully within codes of practice, dealing with standards and code of conduct issues including any learning and development needs.

4. Advise the Authority on duties, powers and procedures giving independent, timely and reliable information on matters which are not the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer or Directors.

5. Deliver horizon scanning and research critically interpreting relevant legislation and associated documents preparing reports on the potential impact, possible legal consequences and appropriate reflection in policies and plans.

6. Provide independent, timely and reliable legal guidance on matters relating to corporate governance, employment and workforce, commercial, contracts and procurement, property and estates, health and safety, and other areas such as data protection and freedom of information.

7. Advise on formation of contracts and post contracts issues as directed by the

Chief Fire Officer liaising with other appropriate senior officers.

8. Advise and deal with the conveyance of freehold and leasehold land as directed by the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

9. Prepare for and attend meetings as the Legal Advisor/ Monitoring Officer to provide advice, undertake matters, oversee procedures and take follow up action as required by the Authority and Chief Fire Officer.

10. Provide legal direction and procedural corporate and ethical advice on which the Authority/Service can base strategic plans and focus on key priorities within the resources available; in line with the vision, aims and values.

11. Ensure the Authority has appropriate representation in court, at public inquiries, hearing, arbitrations, medical panels and employment tribunals, etc. that represents good value for money whilst protecting the interests of the Authority

12. Authorise the prosecution and defence of both civil and criminal litigation in liaison with the Authority, the Clerk and the Chief Fire Officer.

13. Commission work, negotiate and agree terms of employment of counsel and external solicitors when required to do so by the Chief Fire Officer acting as an interface between the Service and external providers.

14. Act as the legal representative for the Authority on national, regional and local bodies as appropriate and as agreed with the Chief Fire Officer.

15. Report to the Authority if at any time there is a likelihood or contravention of any law by a proposal, decision or omission by the Authority or by any person employed by them.

2.11 Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for Elected Members

1. Introduction

1.1 The LGPS(Amendment) (Elected Member Pensions) Regulations 2026 enable elected Councillors to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) if they wish to.

1.2 Elected Councillors are able to join the LGPS as Members of both their Local Authority, and the Fire Authority. Membership of either or both schemes are distinct from one another and must be enrolled in separately.

2. Key Information

2.1 Members are not automatically enrolled in the in the LGPS as Members of the Fire Authority, or upon appointment to the Fire Authority. Members must opt-in to the Scheme if they wish to do so.

2.2 The LGPS is open to Councillors under the age of 75 year.

2.3 Members have the right to join the LGPS at any time during their membership of the Fire Authority.

2.4 The LGPS pension arrangements for the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority are administered by the Wiltshire Pension Fund. Members joining the Scheme will become members of the Wiltshire Pension Fund.

2.5 Members' contribution amounts are based on their pensionable allowance and will be deducted from Members' pensionable allowance before any tax is applied (if applicable)

2.6 Pensionable pay for Members consists of:

- Basic allowance
- Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)
- Other relevant allowances
- Salary (where applicable)

Travel and subsistence allowances are excluded.