

Frequently Asked Questions For Prospective Board Members



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

Q. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE (SFRS) BOARD?

The SFRS Board ensures the effective governance and financial management of the SFRS within the context of public service delivery and reform for the benefit of improving the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland. As a Member of the SFRS Board your responsibilities in support of this role will include:

- providing strategic leadership and direction through, for example, approving an SFRS Strategic Plan every three years, produced by the Strategic Leadership Team and providing recommendations and guidance on the provision of fire and rescue services across Scotland;
- securing best value for its own functions and holding the Chief Officer to account for securing best value for the SFRS;
- promoting and supporting, through the use of best practice, continuous improvement in the delivery of its functions;
- through application of strategic corporate governance, ensuring high standards of governance and conduct throughout the SFRS;
- having responsibility for the appointment of the Chief Officer and other Senior Leaders of the SFRS;

Q. WHO SHOULD APPLY?

For the SFRS Board to be truly effective, we are looking for people from all walks of life and with wide ranging talents, skills and experiences. As a public body, we are committed to attracting a strong and diverse field of candidates to the appointments and we have a specific aspiration to attract a broader range of candidates from ethnic minorities, women, disabled people and people aged under 50. We also welcome people from all parts of Scotland. The information pack for applicants explains exactly what skills/experiences and personal qualities we are looking for and can be found on the [Appointed for Scotland website](#).

Q. WHAT ARE THE TERMS OF APPOINTMENT?

Board Members are part-time non-executive directors. The role attracts a remuneration of £295 per day which is non-pensionable. All essential travel and subsistence costs incurred while carrying out a Board Member's duties will be reimbursed.

Q. WHAT ARE THE TIME COMMITMENTS?

Board Members will devote up to five days per month to performing their role. The SFRS Board typically meets in public six times per year. These meetings are usually between three to four hours long. The Board also schedules informal meetings to discuss strategy and other Service related matters at least six times per year, and there will generally be a need to spend some time during the week to review documents and prepare for meetings. Additionally, Board Members are expected to serve on Committees as needed, which typically meet in public four times per year.

Q. WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF APPOINTMENT?

The length of appointments will vary between two and four years, depending upon the specific needs of the Board balancing the continuity and renewal of the membership of the Board. There may be the possibility of being re-appointed for a further term, subject to evidence of effective performance.

Q. WHO APPOINTS MEMBERS OF THE SFRS BOARD?

This is a Ministerial appointment. The Minister for Community Safety therefore appoints members to the SFRS Board, including the Chair.

Frequently Asked Questions For Prospective Board Members



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Q. HOW IS THE MINISTER SUPPORTED DURING THIS PROCESS?

The appointment process is led by a selection panel consisting of:

- Tom Hardy – Head of Fire and Rescue Unit, Scottish Government
- Kirsty Darwent – Chair of SFRS
- Mary Pitcaithly – Member, Scottish Police Authority
- Ali Jarvis, Public Appointments Adviser, Ethical Standards Commissioner

Present at both the shortlisting meeting and at interviews will also be:

- Karen Piaskowski, Public Appointments Manager, Scottish Government (as secretariat)

The appointment process will be monitored by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland. It's the Commissioner's role to ensure that appointments are made fairly and openly and are based on how well people match the skills needed for the role. At the end of the interview process the panel will make their recommendations on the outcome. However, new appointments are made by Scottish Ministers and ultimately the decision lies with the Minister for Community Safety.

Q. HOW LONG DOES THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS TAKE?

A robust process is undertaken to appoint SFRS Board Members. This will take approximately 3 months from the time of submitting the application to notification of the outcome. Over this period, shortlisting is carried out, interviews are conducted, fit and proper person tests are undertaken and the skill requirements of the Board are matched with potential candidates. Shortlisting is typically concluded during the month after applications close. Applicants who are not short-listed will be notified.

Q. WHO IS ON THE BOARD NOW?

The Board currently consists of 12 members in total, 11 members and a Chair. Two Members' appointments expire in July this year and one in October 2022 while the Chair's appointment has been extended until December 2025. [Information on current members.](#)

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU'RE APPOINTED?

If you're appointed, some of the information that you've produced will be made public in a media release about your appointment. It will include:

- your name;
- a short description of SFRS;
- a brief summary of the skills, knowledge and abilities you bring to the role;
- how long you've been appointed for;
- any remuneration associated with the appointment;
- details of any other public appointments you hold and any related remuneration you receive for them;
- details of any political activity you declared;
- a statement that the appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (the Commissioner).

Arrangements will also be made for induction into the SFRS Board. The induction programme is designed to give you an initial overview and understanding of the organisation with an opportunity to meet with fellow Board Members and the Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team. This is normally delivered face-to-face over two to three days however dependent on COVID-19 safety measures in place at the time may be virtual or a combination of the two and may therefore extend to three or four shorter days split over a couple of weeks.

Frequently Asked Questions For Prospective Board Members



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

Q. HOW MANY COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD ARE THERE AND HOW OFTEN DO THEY MEET?

The Board is able to establish its own Committee structure and delegate responsibilities to such committees as it considers fit. In addition to giving leadership and strategic direction, a very important role for the Board is the scrutiny of risk, financial management and performance.

At the moment the Board has the following Committee structure which is reviewed annually. Each committee has a dedicated Chair, the Committees meet in public approximately 4 times per year.

- Service Delivery Committee
- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- Transformation and Major Projects Committee
- Staff Governance Committee

The Committees also conduct one or two dedicated workshops each throughout the year.

Q. WHAT IS THE CHIEF OFFICER'S ROLE?

The Chief Officer is accountable to the Board for the performance, management and staffing of the SFRS, and for ensuring that its functions are fulfilled and targets met through effective and properly controlled executive action.

The Chief Officer, as Accountable Officer for SFRS, is personally answerable to the Scottish Parliament for ensuring that SFRS resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Board/Chair should be aware of/have regard to these Accountable Officer responsibilities. The Board in turn is responsible to Parliament for its actions and conduct.

More information on the specific responsibilities of the Chief Officer can be found in the [Governance and Accountability Framework](#).

Q. WHO MANAGES THE SFRS?

The day to day management of the SFRS is undertaken by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and it is responsible for delivering the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the Board. [Information on the SLT](#).

Q. HOW IS THE SFRS FUNDED?

The SFRS receives its funding (grant in aid) from the Scottish Government. Details are published annually in the Scottish Government's Draft Budget document, and is then authorised by the Scottish Parliament in the annual Budget Act.

Q. HOW MINISTER'S SET OUT THEIR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE SFRS?

The Scottish Government is in the process of producing a new Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. The current Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 sets out the expectations of the SFRS and its strategic priorities for the Service. The Framework also provides high level guidance on how the SFRS is expected to contribute to a Safer and Stronger Scotland and the overarching purpose of the Scottish Government. [The 2016 Fire Framework](#).

This current Framework is due for a review by Scottish Government during 2021/22 which will therefore result in a SFRS Strategic Plan being developed by the SLT and being approved by the Board as a result.

The SFRS has a 3 year Strategic Plan (approved by the Board) which sets out how it will deliver on the Scottish Government's Fire Framework. This Strategic Plan outlines how the Framework is implemented in practice.

Frequently Asked Questions For Prospective Board Members



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Q. CAN I HOLD MORE THAN ONE PUBLIC BOARD APPOINTMENT?

It is possible to hold more than one public appointment, assuming that there is no conflict of interest and depending on whether there are any restrictions attached to your current post or for the body to which you are applying. However, Ministers are looking to ensure there is a diverse range of skills and experience on all the Boards.

Q. WHAT EXPENSES CAN I CLAIM?

You are entitled to be reimbursed for reasonable expenses that appear to the SFRS to be necessary or expedient for the proper discharge of your functions. In performing your functions, you are also entitled to receive from the SFRS such allowances as may be determined by the Scottish Ministers in accordance with Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

Q. WHO CAN APPLY?

Scotland's public bodies need skills, experience and understanding from every walk of life, so it's essential that there are no barriers to participating. As such, appointments are made on the basis of the skills, knowledge and qualities necessary to fill the role – and nothing else. The Scottish Ministers ask that a wide and diverse range of individuals apply for ministerial appointments to public bodies. Whatever the role, applications from everyone who meets the requirement of the posts are welcome.

Q. WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

For more [information on the appointment process.](#)

Further information on the [SFRS website.](#)