



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING – SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022 @ 1000 HRS

BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES

PRESENT:

Nick Barr, Chair (NB)
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)
Malcolm Payton (MP)

Tim Wright, Deputy Chair (TW)
Angiolina Foster (AF)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ross Haggart (RH)	Deputy Chief Officer
John Dickie (JD)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Stuart Stevens (SS)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance
Gregor Welsh (GW)	Data Team Leader (Item 8.1 only)
Scott Symons (SSy)	Group Commander Project, P&P (Item 8.3 only)
Bruce Farquharson (BF)	Head of Training (Item 10.1 only)
Robert Scott (RS)	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
Alasdair Cameron (AC)	Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Debbie Haddow (DJH)	Board Support Team/Minutes

OBSERVERS

Rick Taylor, HM Assistant Chief Inspector

1 WELCOME

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present and reminded the Committee to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.
- 1.2 This meeting would be recorded and published on the public website.

2 APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Chris Fitzpatrick, Business Intelligence and Data Services Manager

3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

- 3.1 The Committee agreed the Operations Control Resilience Management item meeting would also be taken in private due to the confidential nature of the issue in line with Standing Orders (Item 9G).
- 3.2 No further items were identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 4.1 There were no declarations made.

4.2 For transparency, RS advised the Committee of his previous consultancy role for London Fire Brigade, undertaking an independent review of training following the Grenfell Tower Incident (Item 9.2). The outcomes of this review had been used during the inquiry.

4.3 For transparency, during the presentation of the Wildfire Strategy Update (Item 10) LBI advised the Committee that a family member worked for Cairngorm National Park Authority. There was no conflict of interest.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 24 NOVEMBER 2021

5.1 The following amendments were noted and agreed:

Paragraph 7.3 to be amended to read "*In regard to the recent power outages within Johnston and Edinburgh Operations Controls, SS provided assurance to the Committee ...*" instead of "*In regard to the recent power outages within Johnston and Edinburgh Operations Controls, SS assured the Committee ...*".

Paragraph 8.1.8 to be amended to read "... *mindful of potentially driving negative behaviours by robustly focusing on response times ...*" instead of "... *the potential negative impact of robust focus ...*".

Paragraph 12.1 to be amended to read "*Firefighting in High Rise Buildings ...*" instead of "*Firefighting in High Risk Buildings ...*".

5.2 **Subject to these amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

6 ACTION LOG

6.1 There were no outstanding actions.

7 SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE

7.1 RH presented the update report detailing relevant matters from a SFRS service delivery perspective, which comprises Service Delivery and Training, Safety and Assurance Directorates, for the period 4 November 2021 to 4 February 2022, albeit some actions may precede and extend beyond these dates. The following key points were highlights:

- Operational Strategy continues to progress through the appropriate governance route and remains on track for publishing on 1 April 2022.
- Conference of Parties 26 (COP 26) was successful event and thanks were extended to the dedicated project team involved in the planning and delivery of the event. The dedicated team have now been disbanded apart from Area Commander Jim Quinn, who would undertake a full debrief and lessons learned report.
- Publication of the Glasgow School of Art Fire Investigation Report which received some media attention.
- Youth Volunteer Scheme evaluation report has been prepared and would be presented to a future Change Committee and Board meeting to highlight the excellent work undertaken.
- Completion of dignified facilities at Inverness Community Fire Station which highlights the excellent work of the Property Team and the Service's ambition to provide these facilities across Scotland.
- Significant activity and response to Storm Arwen and any lessons learnt have been shared with Scottish Government.
- Revised Trainee Foundation Programme delivery model was now running at the National Training Centre. The four days on, four days off model allows 2 concurrent cohorts to be processed at the same time. This would aid the Service's Covid training recovery plans and had been well received by those involved.

7.2

The Committee commented on the comprehensive but succinct information contained within the report.

7.3

The Committee welcomed the completion of dignified facilities at Inverness Community Fire Station and commented on the need to continue to progress this work across the wider estate.

7.4

The Committee sought clarification on the penetration (PEN) testing referenced in regard to the Command and Control Futures (CCF) project. JD confirmed that the PEN testing was specific to CCF project and was provided by Systel.

7.5

With regard to covid recovery plans, the Committee noted that a holistic overview/master plan on recovery activities would be helpful. RH reminded the Committee that a Reset, Recovery and Renew session was scheduled to be delivered at the Board Strategy Day on 24 February 2022. This session would provide a strategic overview on the Services approach to reset and renew and provide the opportunity to discuss the oversight and scrutiny of the next steps towards recovery.

7.6

The Committee scrutinised the report.

8 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE REPORTING

8.1 Quarterly Performance Report for Q3 2021-22

8.1.1 SS introduced GW to the Committee, who presented the performance report for quarter 3 and in addition presented data from the live system. GW highlighted with following key areas:

- The Effecting Entry/Exit narrative (first page) related to a one-off analysis exercise and was not statistically comparable to data presented further in the report.
- Increased number of Deliberate Fires in comparison to previous year.
- Increased number of Assistance to other agencies incidents during this year.
- False alarms reported continue to remain high with Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) being a significant component.
- Number of refuse and vehicle fires remain consistent with previous year.
- Number of fire fatalities remain consistent with previous years.
- Retained Duty System Appliance availability were returning to normal levels, following a period of increased availability during lockdown.
- Number of Road Traffic Collisions were return to normal levels following a period of reduction during lockdown.
- Increased number of Home Fire Safety Visits and enforcement activity compared to previous year. Increased focus and number of visits to high risk/vulnerable premises.
- Reduction in Accidental Dwelling Fires, primarily low to medium severity.
- Increase in Call Handling Times and Response Times. Further investigation to be undertaken to understand the reasons behind the increase.

8.1.2 The Committee commented on the data presented within the written report and welcomed the ability to review the live data.

8.1.3 With regard to Non-Refuse Secondary Fires, GW noted that these incidents were typically small outdoor fires and were affected by seasonal changes. Due to the large fluctuation in the numbers of incidents, it is difficult to set meaningful targets.

8.1.4 With regard to PI 1.08 Number of fire casualties (excluding precautionary checks) and PI 1.09 Number of fire casualties, GW provided an explanation of the difference between these indicators and the justification for recording them separately.

8.1.5

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The Committee commented on the reduction in Fire Casualties exceeding the reduction in Accidental Dwelling Fires. SS indicated that this could be attributed to early detection by householders and it was hoped that the new legislation would continue to improve fire safety measures with premises. SS further noted that approx. 25% of fire fatalities occurred in premises with no fire detection and supported the importance of targeting the high risk/vulnerable groups.

8.1.6

GW confirmed that the target for the completion of fire safety audits in accordance with the Fire Safety Enforcement Framework had been met.

8.1.7

With regard to the effecting entry/exit incidents, it was noted that the increase could be attributed to the greater awareness of our capability by partner agencies, increased pressure being placed on partner agencies and a general increase in the number of incidents. SS noted that these incidents were primarily classified as emergencies (blue light journeys).

8.1.8

The Committee commented on the increases in response times over previous years and queried whether this would be further impacted by the introduction of the preferred UFAS response. SS reminded the Committee that the intention was to reduce UFAS calls, however the level of call challenging would likely increase. As a result, it is anticipated the call handling times could increase, however this would be monitored accordingly.

8.1.9

8.1.10

It was confirmed that vehicle fires figures related to both deliberate and accidental incidents.

8.1.11

Following the introduction of the new legislation, the Committee queried whether the Service were capturing any data relating to the installation of new alarms during HFSV or attendance at incidents. SS noted that the data capture with the current system was limited, however the new Safe and Well system would provide enhanced recording facilities. SS reminded the Committee of the limitations to record additional data within the Incident Recording System (IRS).

8.1.12

It was agreed that a further analysis on HFSV would be beneficial. NB to contact SS to commence discussions on a potential deep dive into HSFV.

ACTION: NB

The Committee scrutinised the report.

8.2

Action Plan and Closing Reports Updates

Deferred to later on the agenda.

8.3

UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF WORK PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE PREFERRED UFAS RESPONSE OPTION

8.3.1

SS introduced Group Commander (GC) Scott Symons, who would be replacing GC Roy Dunsire on his retirement, to the Committee. SS formally recorded his thanks to GC Dunsire for his work throughout the duration of this project.

8.3.2

SS informed the Committee that following approval from the Board, an implementation plan which takes full account of both the Board and consultation feedback, had been developed for the preferred UFAS response model. SS outlined the 6 key workstreams contained within the implementation plan.

8.3.3

The Committee noted its thanks to GC Dunsire for his excellent work on this project and also for his contributions during his previous role within the Board Support Team.

8.3.4

The Committee requested clarification on the process for monitoring the impact against intended benefits which were identified through the consultation process. SSy confirmed

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that, in conjunction with the performance and data services team, this area was currently being developed and confirmed that the appropriate governance route would be identified.

8.3.5 The Committee sought clarification on the sequence of preparing stakeholders for implementation in advance of the policy being revised. SSy reminded the Committee that the policy was a concept of operations for internal processes on how the Service would respond, from call handling through to post incident stages. SSy informed the Committee that the stakeholder engagement would be undertaken to educate and prepare dutyholders to ensure they were aware of their role, responsibilities and the changes to how the Service would respond.

8.3.6 **The Committee noted the report.**

(SSy left the meeting at 1100 hrs)

9 OPERATIONAL LEARNING

9.1 SFRS Operational Clinical Governance Framework Update

9.1.1 JD presented a report to the Committee providing an update on progress made to implement arrangements to deliver the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Operational Clinical Governance Framework. The following key points were highlighted:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be signed by both the SFRS Chief Officer and Chief Executive of Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) in February 2022.
- Clinical Governance Technical Working Group (TWG) inaugural meeting held and would continue to progress improvements to the clinical interventions.
- Both Training and Operations directorates would continue to progress as part of business as usual.

9.1.2 The Committee thanked ACO Dickie and his team for progressing this work, especially during the particularly challenging few years.

9.1.3 JD informed the Committee that the Service Level Agreement had also been completed.

9.1.4 Brief discussion took place on a potential closing report, the format for update reports and governance route. It was agreed that further discussions would be held off table to discuss how best to progress any future updates.

ACTION: NB/RH/JD

9.1.5 **The Committee noted the report.**

9.2 Grenfell Tower Fire – Update Report

9.2.1 SS presented a report to the Committee to provide an update on the progress against the recommendations contained with the Grenfell Tower action plan. The following key points were highlighted:

- Further update since preparation of the report, noting that eight actions have now been closed within this reporting report. There were no live actions outstanding.
- Successful delivery of a large scale live training/exercise in December 2021.
- Closing report to be presented to the next Committee meeting and would set out all the actions put in place and supporting evidence.
- HMFSI Thematic Report on High Rise Buildings was still ongoing.
- Focus and direction of Phase 2 and assurance that the Service continues to work closely with Scottish Governance and other partners.

9.2.2 The Committee enquired as to the benefits of having Operational Control (OC) staff present on the incident ground and how this could become incorporated into common practice. SS informed the Committee that, prior to Grenfell, this was an aspiration of the Service, due to the benefits of enhanced communications between OC Incident Support

Room and personnel on site, enhanced knowledge and understanding of procedures and systems. SS noted that this remained an aspiration and would continue to be progressed.

9.2.3 RS reminded the Committee that he observed both live exercises due to the thematic inspection on high rise buildings. RS recorded his recognition of the high standard of performance at both exercises and welcomed the implementation of lessons learned/policy revisions prior to the second exercise with notable improvement evident during his observations.

9.2.4 **The Committee scrutinised the report and supported the recommendations.**

(B Farquharson joined the meeting at 1115 hrs)

(The meeting broke at 1115 hrs and reconvened at 1120hrs.)

10 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Wildfire Strategy Update

10.1.1 SS introduced BF, the Service's subject matter expert and national representative on various Wildfire forums. BF presented a report to the Committee providing an update on the progress being made to deliver the SFRS Wildfire Strategy. The following key points were highlighted:

- Climate change has resulted in milder winters which extend the growing period for vegetation (fuel).
- Frequent significant storms result in fallen (wind blown) trees which are left to waste and adds fuel for wildfires.
- Wildfire cyclical patterns peak between 6-9 years.
- Wildfire Strategy features prevention, response and partnership themes.
- Significant work undertaken with partners as part of the Scottish Government Visitor Management Strategy which has raised the profile of the fire prevention initiative and good quality messaging being shared with partners/public.
- Response strategy – identified locations for Tier 2 (support) and Tier 3 (response) specialist response stations across Scotland. Procurement of equipment/vehicles is ongoing and arrangements are in place for the storage/transport of equipment. Ongoing engagement with stations impacted by the strategy.
- Support from rural communities were essential, however this requires to be co-ordinated to ensure that it was both effective and safely undertaken.
- NatureScot was the licensing authority for all Muirburn activities in Scotland. In partnership with NatureScot and the Scottish Gamekeepers Association, the Service were leading on the development of a muirburn training package. This has received positive interest from partners and also HRH Prince of Wales.
- Research undertaken with James Hutton Institute, University of Manchester and University College London to develop a fire danger rating for Scotland. The current system is based on a Canadian model.

10.1.2 The Committee thanked BF and his team for their continued work in this important area.

10.1.3 The Committee were reminded that one single wildfire incident in 2019 released double the UK's annual carbon release target within 6 days, with most of this coming from windblown trees.

10.1.4 The Committee noted the cyclical pattern (peaks between every 6-9 years) of Scottish Wildfires and asked whether this was a reliable trend. BF confirmed that this was a reliable trend which was based on global weather conditions, fuel growth patterns, historical data and other related issues.

10.1.5 The Committee enquired about the aspirations and hopes for the Service to be able to influence and support wildfire management beyond Scotland. BF informed the

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Committee that the Service have good relations with the Pau Costa Foundation, who are European leaders in wildfire development training and fire analysis. The Service are also part of the EU consortium, under the Project Horizon 2020 banner, looking at natural events predication and management systems and also to develop relationships with other EU countries facing similar issues. BF noted that the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) are working to align with the International Search and Rescue Team (ISAR) to develop a national wildfire response which could be deployed overseas.

- 10.1.6 The Committee queried how the Service would assess how effectively the prevention messaging was being received. BF noted that under the banner of the Wildfire Forum, the Service would provide consistent and supportive messaging which would be tailored appropriate for the audience, ie crofters, gamekeepers, public, etc. The Service would also undertake a self-audit on how effectively the message was being received and understood.
- 10.1.7 BF confirmed that the training package, developed in partnership with NatureScot and the Scottish Gamekeepers Association, would be delivered in Scotland. A training provider had still to be identified. Following accreditation from Lantra, their accredited trainers would be able to deliver the training. BF outlined how the Muirburn licencing process would be introduced and the potential impact on Muirburn incidents/practices. BF highlighted the benefits of engaging with communities, as the Cairngorm National Park Authority who were previously resistant to prescribed burning were now seeking assistance to reduce incidents.
- 10.1.8 The Committee commented on the financial implications/opportunities and the enhanced political interest in this area of work. It was noted that it may be beneficial to proactively engage/brief other political parties to highlight the progress being made and this would be discussed further off table. SS informed the Committee that a business case was being prepared to request additional support from Scottish Government to continue this work.
- 10.1.9 BF confirmed that this area of work was linked with the Service Delivery Model Programme to avoid any conflict or challenge.
- 10.1.10 BF advised the Committee that 3% of wildfires incidents were caused by Muirburn and the main cause was attributable to the general public (accidental).
- 10.1.11 **The Committee noted the report.**

((BF left the meeting at 1205 hrs))

11 SERVICE DELIVERY RISK REGISTER

11.1 Committee Aligned Directorate Risks

- 11.1.1 RH presented the Service Delivery Aligned Risks noting that the Directorate risk register was reviewed to ensure the probability, impact of the action and control measures in place were appropriate.
- 11.1.2 The Committee sought clarification on the difference between SD001 (Command and Control Mobilising Systems) and SD003 (Operational Availability Systems). SS confirmed that SD001 related to operations control mobilising systems and SD003 related to the supporting systems which monitoring Retained/Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) appliance availability.
- 11.1.3 With reference to the interim Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) response, SS noted that the current interim response was in place until 31 March 2022, engagement was ongoing to extend this interim response and negotiations were ongoing to identify a permanent resource.

11.1.4 With reference to SD004 (Standardisation of Service Delivery), SS commented on the ongoing challenges with the mobile delivery platform and provided assurance that work was ongoing to identify a solution.

11.1.5 **The Committee noted the report.**

11.2 **Risk Spotlight - Omicron: Emerging Risk and Impact on Operational Availability**

11.2.1 SS presented the risk spotlight briefing note and highlighted the following:

- Key themes focus on ongoing impact of Covid on service delivery, setting out actions and control measures in place and being deployed in response.
- Significant impact of Omicron variant over the festive period which fully tested the Service's business continuity planning arrangements.
- During the emergence of the Omicron variant, Scottish Government requested the Service model a 25% absence level projection to provide assurance on continue provision of statutory duties.
- Tactical Action Group, Gold Command and Community Resilience Assistance Group were stood up in preparation.
- Learning over the previous 2 years were drawn upon.
- Peak absence level was 28%, averaging 22% throughout December 2021/January 2022. Normal business as usual level average 10%.
- Due to restrictions on training, a further 5% shortfall of the current TOM had to be factored in.
- Examples of actual and required attendance levels for Wholetime personnel.
- Absence levels were not even across staffing groups, watches or locations.
- Flexi Duty Officers and Operation Control (OC) staff were significantly impacted. Grateful for the support of existing OC staff, former OC staff and Central Staffing Team during this particularly challenging period.
- Structured debrief, evaluate existing measures and further development of business continuity plan.

11.2.2 The Committee complimented the staff and management on their dedication, efforts and ability to continue to meet their statutory duties during this unprecedented challenging period.

11.2.3 With regards to future activity reports, SS noted that the HFSV stats may be reduced during this period. However, SS did not anticipate any impact on responses times, operational duties, which highlighted the professionalism and dedication of the staff.

11.2.4 **The Committee noted the risk spotlight report.**

(R Whetton joined the meeting at 1225 hrs)

8.2 Action Plan and Closing Reports Updates

8.2.1 RW presented the report to the Committee providing an update on the following audit and inspection action plans:

8.2.2 Fleet and Equipment Action Plan

Complete and formal closure report to be presented to the next meeting.

8.2.3 Provision of Operational Risk Information Action Plan

Total of 25 actions with 5 live actions outstanding. Progress has been limited due to the postponement of the UK-wide Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP). Overall RAG rating was red, due to original timescale not being met and was noted as 90% complete.

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- 8.2.4 Brief discussion took place on the implications and confidence levels of integration with Airwave post CCF, the suitability of the current tablet and the Service continued involved in the larger EMSCP project.
- 8.2.5 Planning and Preparedness for Covid-19 Update Action Plan
Total of 16 actions with 8 live actions outstanding and 8 actions were complete. Overall RAG rating was green and was noted as 86% complete.
- 8.2.6 Command and Control: Aspects of the Incident Command System Action Plan
Total of 25 actions with 5 live actions outstanding and 20 actions completed. Overall RAG rating was amber due to slippage in timescales and was noted as 93% complete.
- 8.2.7 Fire Safety and Enforcement Action Plan
Total of 20 actions with one live action outstanding and 2 actions deferred. Overall RAG rating was red due to slippage from the original timescales and was noted as 99% complete.
- 8.2.8 Local Area Inspections (LAI) National Recommendation Action Plan
Total of 10 actions with one live action outstanding. Overall RAG rating was green and was noted as 92% complete.
- 8.2.9 RW noted the Committee's comment relating to the presentation of In Progress/Completed actions on the dashboard and how this could potentially be misinterpreted.
- 8.2.10 **The Committee noted and scrutinised the report.**

12 UPDATE FROM HM FIRE SERVICE INSPECTORATE

- 12.1 RS presented his report to the Committee to provide an update on HMFSI inspection and reporting activity. The following key points were highlighted:
- Argyle and Bute Local Area Inspection (LAI) was published in December 2021.
 - Angus Local Area Inspection: Fieldwork complete, draft report which is out for consultation contained 2 local recommendations.
 - New Service Delivery Area Inspection (SDAI) processes and aims were outlined. The first SDAI would be carried out on the East Service Delivery Area.
 - Thematic Inspection Health and Safety – An Operational Focus: Initial draft reported has been shared with the Service. Formal consultation to commence (March 2022) and the final report will be laid before Parliament in April 2022.
 - Thematic Inspection Firefighting in High Rise Buildings: Fieldwork was ongoing. Final report expected to be laid before Parliament in May 2022.
 - Future thematic inspections were Operational Impact of Climate Change and Mental Health and Wellbeing.
 - Update on HMFSI Personnel: Pending retirement of Steve Harkins and resignation of Richard Gorst, who has taken up a post at the Fire Services College. Recruitment processes underway to backfill these positions.

12.2 The Committee welcomed the Inspector's approach to review and highlight best practice.

12.3 **The Committee noted the report.**

13 FORWARD PLANNING

13.1 Committee Forward Plan

- 13.1.1 The Committee noted the forward plan and confirmed no additional items.
- 13.1.2 For the next meeting, it was confirmed that the Climate Change item would be Electric Vehicles and Fleet and a report on Response Times would also be presented.

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13.2 **Items for Consideration at Future IGF, Board and Strategy/Information and Development Day Meetings**

13.2.1 There were no items for consideration.

14 **REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

14.1 AC confirmed that there were 2 formal actions recorded during the meeting.

15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

15.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 31 May 2022.

15.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1300 hours.

PRIVATE SESSION

16 **OPERATIONS CONTROL RESILIENCE MANAGEMENT**

16.1 SS introduced David Farries, Head of Operations and Area Commander Libby Logan, who would be presenting an overview on the impact on OC staff due to the current circumstances, the management of the legacy systems beyond the 31 March 2022 and the resilience measures in place.