



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

Appendix 4

*Report to:*

## **Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee**

***SUBJECT: BRIEFING REPORT ON SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
FUTURES PROJECTS***

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report provides the Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee with an overview of key projects the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are currently undertaking.
- 1.2 Where relevant and appropriate, specific implications for the Falkirk Council area communities, partners and stakeholders have been included in this report.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The creation of the SFRS, which replaced eight antecedent Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs), has provided an opportunity for the new service to review legacy service delivery arrangements, working practices and all aspects of how an efficient emergency service is delivered to the whole of Scotland.
- 2.2 Whilst there are many drivers for change the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and the Scottish Government's Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013, provide a legislative framework around how the SFRS designs and delivers its services.

- 2.3 As part of the ongoing journey that the SFRS is on in bringing together eight legacy FRSs arrangements, a vast range of transformational and transactional projects and initiatives are currently being designed, developed and implemented which support the SFRS Strategic Plan 2013-16 and the SFRSs annual Operational Plans.
- 2.4 In addition to delivering projects that support the current Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan/s, the SFRS is currently looking to the future to develop projects and initiatives that will support future Strategic Plans and Operating Plans. This ensures the Service is a forward thinking organisation that continues to deliver an efficient and effective emergency service that is fit for purpose, secures best value and delivers a world-class fire and rescue service to all communities, partners and stakeholders across Scotland.

### **3. SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURE**

- 3.1 The SFRS has made significant strides in developing a management structure that supports a single, national organisation. To ensure the SFRS continues to demonstrate that it is effectively operating as a national organisation that delivers at a local level, a review of the structure of the Strategic Leadership Team and the role of Service Delivery Directors has taken place. This review led to a cost neutral restructure will allows the SFRS to continue to focus on the consolidation of the fire reform aims and objectives as well as the integration of the Service.
- 3.2 The coterminous approach remains the same with the three service delivery areas reflecting their local authority and ward areas. Embedded Local Senior Officers will continue to drive down risk through prevention and protection activities and emergency response in their areas.
- 3.3 However, at service delivery level the SFRS will introduce a new senior management level of Deputy Assistant Chief Officers or DACOs. Once the new structure is in place, Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) Dave Boyle, currently Director of the West Service Delivery Area (SDA) will become Director of Service Delivery for the whole of Scotland. ACO Robert Scott, currently Director of Service Delivery for the North SDA, will become Director of

Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications. ACO Peter Murray, currently Director of Service delivery for the East SDA, will take on the role of Director of Service Transformation.

- 3.4 These changes will release capacity for the Directors and the Deputy Chief Officer to focus on future planning and implementation to ensure the SFRS reform journey remains on course to deliver the benefits of fire reform and that the Service can respond effectively to the inevitable challenges that will occur during that process.

### **3.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

- 3.5.1 A newly appointed Deputy to Assistant Chief Officer (DACO) who reports to the Director of Service Delivery for Scotland will be the most senior officer directly responsible for the East Service Delivery Area, and in addition to the Local Senior Officer, Area Manager Gary Laing, will be a key contact point for key partners and stakeholders in the Falkirk Council area. A structural diagram has been included in Appendix 1 of this report that details the National / East SDA / Falkirk & West Lothian area Senior Management structure.

## **4. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT REVIEW**

- 4.1 The SFRS delivers an emergency service within a complex framework of law, regulation and operational guidance. As the role of the fire service has developed over the years, beyond just firefighting, the range of activities undertaken has continued to expand and widen. Correspondingly, the range of equipment and skills training required to meet this developing role has increased greatly.
- 4.2 This historical deployment of specialist resources (appliances and equipment) required to be reviewed to ensure it conforms to the needs of community and firefighter safety across Scotland now that the historical geographical boundaries have been removed.

4.3 This review commenced in May 2013, with the aims of delivering on the SFRS' key objectives of delivering operational services efficiently and equitably across the communities of Scotland.

4.4 In undertaking the review a number of key principles were acknowledged, notably:

- The underlying expectation was of delivering improved outcomes for Scotland's communities, with greater equity of access to a standardised range of resources.
- Recognition of the fact that 'Resilience' assets (Urban Search & Rescue, High Volume Pump, Mass Decontamination and Detection, Identification & Monitoring) are not devolved matters to Scottish Government, therefore cognisance was required to be taken of our contribution to UK security.
- An imperative to assure competency in our crews by reducing the present overburdening of certain specialist resources at fire stations.
- In this regard, wherever possible only whole-time crews will be utilised due to the availability of sufficient training time.
- In addition to the restrictions encountered through training requirements, stations were selected based on their strategic locations and the surrounding risk profile.
- Where services are or can be delivered by partner agencies, this is reflected in future approaches.
- Capital costs for appliance and equipment replacement will be factors in the final delivery timeline of these changes.

#### **4.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

4.5.1 On completion of the review, the 'Review of Specialist Equipment Report' was developed by the Response and Resilience Department of the SFRS. The report is currently in a final draft format and has been circulated for comment from relevant stakeholders in the Falkirk Council area, which include Elected Members, Members of the Scottish Parliament and member of the Falkirk Council Community Planning Partnership.

Following completion of this engagement process the Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee will be advised of the outcomes and the final report will be put to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board (SFRB) for their approval. On approval by the SFRB, a detailed implementation plan will be developed to implement the recommendations contained within the report. A copy of the Review of Specialist Equipment Report is attached to Appendix 2 of this report.

4.5.2 In recognising that the 'end state' of the Review of Specialist Equipment may take up to 3 years to implement, and that there may be changes in the final status of some of the recommendations due to the dynamic nature of the environment the SFRS works in, the implications for the Falkirk Council area are;

- The mass decontamination assets (which are all contained with demountable units) based at Falkirk fire station will be removed and the equipment re-distributed to the stations that are allocated to have mass decontamination assets in Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- The line rescue assets and recall to duty team based at Falkirk fire station will be removed and cease to operate. Assets and teams from Lochgelly fire station in Fife, Tollcross fire station in Edinburgh and East Kilbride fire station in East Kilbride will provide specialist rope rescue teams in the event of an incident in the central belt of Scotland.
- The environmental protection assets (which are all contained with demountable units) based at Falkirk fire station will be removed and relocated to Dunfermline Fire Station.
- The specialist appliances based at Falkirk and Bo'ness fire stations will be staffed by whole-time firefighters as opposed to retained duty firefighters. (Note that as part of preparatory work, this part of the Specialist Appliance Review implementation project has been completed under the terms of the SFRS Resource Based Crewing project).
- The water bowser currently based at Larbert fire station and the fire-fogging unit based at Bo'ness fire station are out of scope of the Review of Specialist Equipment Report, and as such remain unchanged at this time.

## **5. EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW**

- 5.1 The SFRS delivers a core emergency service of responding to, and dealing with fire incidents through the historical disposition of fire stations and fire appliance (fire tenders). The disposition of fire stations and fire appliance is based on antecedent Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) Integrated Risk Management Plans that were largely designed around the historical locations of resources and took cognisance of antecedent FRS boundaries.
- 5.2 With the introduction of the SFRS antecedent FRS boundaries no longer exist and to ensure the SFRS is able to respond appropriately to the risk of fire in Scotland, whilst ensuring the service that is delivered is effective and efficient, an Emergency Fire Cover Review has commenced.
- 5.3 In developing the Emergency Cover Review cognisance will be taken of the reduction of fire activity across Scotland in the last few years. However, cognisance will also be taken of the need to ensure communities, stakeholders and partners across Scotland have ready access to core SFRS services when they are need of them.
- 5.4 The principles of the review are;
- Undertake a national strategic assessment of current Emergency Fire Cover.
  - Utilise a variety of risk modelling tools to design future Emergency Fire Cover modelling.
  - Develop options and options appraisals on future Emergency Fire Cover modelling.
  - Incorporate agreed options into the SFRS Strategic Plan 2017-19.

## **5.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

- 5.5.1 The Emergency Cover Review is currently at the early stages of development and at present, there are no indications of the outcomes of the review. However, from a practical perspective, and to give an example, when considering legacy Lothian Borders Fire and Rescue Service and Central Scotland Fire and Rescue Service resource provision, these two legacy services have two fire stations that are approximately 2.3 miles apart.

These stations are likely to be considered under the Emergency Cover Review with options for the long-term future of these resources being developed. It is stressed that at this time, no decisions have been made in relations to the example given above and no work is currently underway to develop future options.

## **6. EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE AND THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

6.1 In October 2014 Her Majesties Chief Inspector (HMCI) of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service laid a report before the Scottish Parliament in relation to a recent inspection of SFRS which focussed on the opportunities for the SFRS to undertake additional activities in the field of emergency medical response and promoted an enhanced level of partnership working with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). A copy of the HMCI report is attached to Appendix 3 of the report.

6.2 The main concept outlined within the report was that a significant number of Scottish citizens suffer fatal cardiac arrests each year and SFRS resources could be used to assist and augment the resources of the SAS.

6.3 The report contained a number of recommendations that the HMCI has urged the SFRS to consider.

6.4 The SFRS is currently considering the HMCI report and initial indications are that the Service recognises the potential to increase their holistic role in building safer communities through activities such as delivering an enhanced level of care to citizens whose life is in danger due to cardiac arrests.

## **6.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

6.5.1 In recognising that the delivery of enhanced level of medical care to citizens in the Falkirk Council area can be regarded as a relatively new concept and a move away from the traditional role of the SFRS and that of firefighters, initiatives such as this can be seen to support the Falkirk Council Community Planning partnership, Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2015 outcome of 'we will be healthier and live longer'.

6.5.2 Taking cognisance that any decisions to engage in the provision of enhanced levels of medical care will be taken by SFRS at a national level and will be agreed upon by key strategic partners, from a local perspective local implementation plans and service delivery plans will require to be developed with key local community planning partners and stakeholders.

## **7. RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM PROJECT**

- 7.1 The SFRS has commissioned a project to review all aspects of the current Retained Duty System (RDS) delivery model. The SFRS recognises that a wide range of factors have led to difficulties in attracting citizens to become RDS firefighters and then retaining them. It is also recognised that in situations where staff can be retained, external pressures such as primary employer commitments, availability of staff to allocate time to be available to respond to incidents and the pursuit of a work life balance can all have a detrimental effect on the ability of the Service to deliver a consistent service to local communities. This service includes both prevention and intervention activities.
- 7.2 To address these concerns a root and branch review of the RDS delivery model is currently underway. The project has been divided into two main themes the first being 'consolidation and standardisation'. This part of the project will look at identifying areas of best practice in how things are done throughout the eight antecedent FRSs and seeks to standardise and harmonise working practices based on best practice and organisational and individual imperatives.
- 7.3 The second part of the project will consider "Future Options". This element of the project will involve an innovative look forward to identify the best way that the SFRS can continue to perform in the future. This piece of work will ensure that contributions are made towards shaping every aspect of being a RDS firefighter; from initial recruitment and training through to remuneration and duty systems.

## **7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

- 7.4.1 The six fire stations located within the Falkirk Council area are either wholly or partially staffed by RDS firefighters. It is likely that the outcomes of the project will have an effect on these staff members and on the delivery model used to provide prevention and intervention activities to the communities in the area.
- 7.4.2 At this time it is too early to predict with any certainty the outcomes and recommendations of the RDS project.

## **8. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**

- 8.1 The SFRS recognises that organisations can make better decisions and can provide improved service design and delivery, if key stakeholders are involved in the decision making process. The SFRS also recognises that there are legal and moral imperatives in seeking user's views on the services it provides.
- 8.2 To this end, the Service is currently drafting a Consultation and Engagement Framework and Consultation and Engagement Guidance that will be used to inform staff within the service on the requirements to consult and engage with key stakeholders and how to adopt best practice in consultation and engagement.
- 8.3 With specific reference to the Consultation and Engagement Framework, the framework will provide a focus for the SFRS establishing the principles of good consultation and engagement, establish methods to properly evaluate the effectiveness of these activities and provide SFRS's partners and communities a better understanding of what SFRS is trying to achieve.
- 8.4 With reference to the Consultation and Engagement Guidance, the guidance will support the framework and aims to support staff responsible for designing and delivering public consultations at both national and local levels. The application of the guidance will demonstrate that when SFRS intends to consult with partners, stakeholders or communities it is committed to ensuring that its processes are fit for purpose, enhance its reputation as a listening organisation and provides evidence that its discussions are informed because of its consultations.

8.5 The SFRB approved the Consultation and Engagement Framework and Guidance at their meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

## **8.6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FALKIRK COUNCIL AREA**

8.6.1 Once the Consultation and Engagement Framework and Guidance are approved by the SFRB, it will become the duty of all staff within the SFRS to determine, through the application of the guidance, which issues or initiatives would benefit from consultation or engagement. In some cases consultation or engagement may be undertaken at a national level whilst others may benefit from a local process.

8.6.2 Where it is determined that local consultation or engagement is the most appropriate methodology to inform local decision-making or to influence strategic decision-making, it will fall to the Local Senior Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian to undertake local consultation or engagement processes.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

9.1 A wide range of future projects and initiatives have been outlined in this report that currently do not have definitive outcomes, end products or options for consideration or debate. The primary purpose of this report is to provide members of the Scrutiny Committee with an awareness of issues that the SFRS is actively progressing.

9.2 It is the intention of the Local Senior Officer for Falkirk and West Lothian will keep members of the Scrutiny Committee updated on the progress of the projects and initiatives outlined in the report.

9.3 It is the intention of the Local Senior Officer to circulate this report to Community Councils in the area (and to elected members in wards where Community Councils are inactive) to keep the members of these communities and community groups aware of the future activities and plans of the SFRS.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 The Falkirk Council Scrutiny Committee is invited to;

- Note the contents of this report
- Make comment on this report

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Falkirk and West Lothian

Appendix 1 SFRS Management Structure (National/East SDA/Falkirk & West Lothian).

Appendix 2 SFRS Review Of Specialist Equipment, Draft Report.

Appendix 3 HM Fire Service Inspectorate, Emergency Medical Response and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Report.