



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

Working together for a safer Scotland

**PUBLIC MEETING – PEOPLE COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 3 OCTOBER 2022 @ 1330 HOURS**

**BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES**

**PRESENT:**

Mhairi Wylie (Chair) (MW)  
Malcolm Payton (MP)

Steve Barron (Deputy Chair) (SBa)  
Paul Stollard (PSt)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Andrew Watt (AW)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Garry MacKay (GMack)	Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, Head of Operations
Bruce Farquharson (BF)	Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, Head of Training
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)	Head of People and Organisational Development
Jim Holden (JHo)	Head of Safety and Assurance
Geri Thomson (GT)	Deputy Head of People and Organisational Development
Ross Robison (RR)	Area Commander, Staffing Solutions Team (Item 7.3)
Greig Hastie (GH)	Lead Health and Wellbeing Practitioner (Item 10)
Fiona McOmish (FMcO)	HROD Manager (Item 14.2)
Mary Corry (MC)	People and Organisational Development Business Manager (Item 15.1)
Kevin Murphy (KM)	Group Commander, Board Support
Debbie Haddow (DH)	Board Support/Minutes

**OBSERVERS**

Teresa Kelly, Deputy Head of Health and Safety

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

- 1.1 The Committee Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present, in particular Group Commander Kevin Murphy, in his new role as Board Support Manager.
- 1.2 The Committee were reminded to keep their microphones on mute unless speaking and use the hand raising function on MS Teams, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 2.1 Fiona Thorburn, Board Member  
Liz Barnes, Director of People and Organisational Development  
David Farries, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery

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

- 3.1 The Committee discussed and agreed that the Key Case Summary Report would be heard in private session due to the small number of individuals involved and confidentiality in line with Standing Orders (Item 9D). The draft minutes/verbal update of the Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub Committee and the verbal update on the Employee Partnership Forum and Partnership Advisory Group would also be taken in private due to the confidential nature of business taken to this meeting. The Recent Employment Tribunal Case Lessons Learnt report would also be taken in private as this is subject to restrictions relating to confidentiality, in line with Standing Orders (Item 9D).
- 3.2 No further items were identified.

**4 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

- 4.1 No conflict of interests were declared.

**5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 21 JUNE 2022**

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2022 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

**5.2 Matters Arising**

- 5.2.1 No matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

**6 ACTION LOG**

- 6.1 The Committee considered the Action Log, noted the updates and approved the removal of the closed items.
- 6.2 In regard to Action 7.2.19, AW provided a brief update and confirmed that the timescale for presenting the options was Q2 within the current financial year. It was agreed that the due date would be further extended to the end of Q4 to allow better alignment with the performance management framework.

**7 PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT QUARTER 1 2022/23**

**7.1 People and Organisational Development (POD)**

- 7.1.1 LG presented the POD Progress and Performance Report Quarter 1 2022/23 to the Committee. The following key areas were highlighted from the Executive Summary:
- Continued increase in retirements (wholetime), due to pension remedy.
  - Increased level of support staff turnover noting the current competitive labour markets.
  - Small decrease in absence rates, particularly within operational control personnel. Ongoing engagement programme to understand how to support attendance and wellbeing for this staffing group.
  - Since May 2022, Covid absences were no longer being captured separately.
- 7.1.2 In regard to turnover of staff, LG advised the Committee that there were different challenges and initiatives associated with each staffing group. LG indicated that it may be 18-24 months before there was a change to the retirement profile. LG highlighted the changes to On Call attraction and engagement initiative which was already reporting some success. Due to the competitive labour market, workshops were held with Heads of Function to review approach to job evaluations, remuneration and rewards/benefits for support staff.
- 7.1.3 The Committee commented on the potential for the current retirement trend to mask other trends for staff turnover. LG offered to have an off-table discussion to gain a better understanding of the ask for potential further analysis of trends.
- 7.1.4 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

## 7.2 Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA)

- 7.2.1 BF presented the Training, Safety and Assurance Progress and Performance Q1 Report 2022/23 and highlighted the following key issues for the Training Function within this quarter:
- Work of the Tri Service Driver Training Collaborative Working Group which has resulted in increased efficiency and capacity across driver training, ability to benchmark and shared delivery of training.
  - Due to the revised delivery of Operational Competency Framework (implemented in Q1), direct comparison to previous quarters had been affected. Discussions were ongoing regarding a potential workshop to aid understanding and awareness for the Committee.
- 7.2.2 The Committee were reminded that a joint workshop with the Service Delivery Committee has been scheduled for 9 March 2023. The Committee requested that a brief overview of the core competencies be provided at the start of the workshop to aid understanding and awareness.
- 7.2.3 In regard to the anticipated increased driver assessment/training, BF noted that once the programme had been rolled out fully it would be the intention to capture and report measurable data.
- 7.2.4 AW assured the Committee that areas of underperformance had been identified and were being addressed. These areas were Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Flexi Duty Officers (FDO) Training for Operational Competence (TFoC).
- 7.2.5 In regard to On Call/Volunteer personnel, BF updated the Committee on the positive impact the changes to the TFoC have made i.e. group training records, etc and noted the positive impact of the pre-recruitment engagement.
- 7.2.6 In regard to the Health and Safety Management Information System, JH provided a brief update on the progress being made. However, JH commented on the ongoing capacity challenges with support from ICT and noted that options were being reviewed and considered.
- 7.2.4 JHo presented the Training, Safety and Assurance Progress and Performance Q1 Report 2022/23 and highlighted the following key areas within Safety and Assurance Annual Improvement Plan:
- Update on Improvement Plan progress noting a decrease in completion rates within Q1, however, early indications in Q2 were showing an improvement.
  - Slight increase in Accident/Injuries incidents. Work continues on the completion of Service Delivery Area handbooks which would help address minor routine injuries.
  - No reportable RIDDOR incidents for the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive quarter.
  - Working days lost levels, common causations and the work being done to address these.
  - Decrease in Near Misses Incidents however focus would remain on promotion of reporting near misses. Development and trialling of a hazard reporting system to help support this area.
  - Increase in Acts of Violence incidents.
  - Increase in vehicle accidents particularly low speed manoeuvres. Sub Group had been convened to focus on low speed manoeuvres to identify a standard approach to management of these types of events. Interactive training for operational competence module had also been developed.
  - Recent significant events include subsequent next steps/actions and the ongoing trial of joint investigations with Operational Assurance teams to help expedite learning/actions.
- 7.2.5 The Committee acknowledged and congratulated the team on zero RIDDOR's for the 2<sup>nd</sup> consecutive quarter.

7.2.6 In regards to low speed manoeuvres, JHo agreed to provide further details on actions arising from the Sub Group in future reports. JHo noted the remit of the Sub Group was to review existing practises/culture and identify potential improvements.

**ACTION: JHo**

7.2.7 In regard to acts of violence, the Committee noted that whilst these were unacceptable, it remained outwith the control of the Service. The Committee noted that the Service were continuing to raise awareness and providing appropriate training for personnel on how to report and respond to these types of incidents.

7.2.8 The Committee were given a brief summary of the recent road traffic collision at Tollcross and subsequent internal investigation.

7.2.9 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

### **7.3 Staffing Solutions Team (SST) Work Packages Update**

7.3.1 RR presented a report and provided an update on the progress of the six work packages currently forming the work of the SST, as directed by the Staffing Tactical Action Group, for information. The following key points were highlighted:

- Work Package 1 Staff and Skill Rebalancing: Main themes include liaison between Central Staffing and Training to improve use of out of pattern roster reserve (OPRR) hours and planned workshop for Central Staffing and Local Senior Officer (LSO) Resourcing SPOCs.
- Work Package 2 Staffing Business Continuity: Development of Operational Availability Management Guidance (OAMG) document which incorporates appliance and specialist appliance withdrawal strategies, staffing hierarchies, etc and is supported by the Community Risk Index Model (CRIM) data. Final drafting stage of OAMG prior to consultation phase.
- Work Package 3 Day Duty Capability: Phase 1 and 2 were nearing completion with approx. 80 (day duty) personnel now being available for operational duties. Phase 3 would support regular planned return of day duty staff to operational duties, resulting in an additional 1400 days per annum.
- Work Package 4 On Call Migration & Pathways to Competence: Pilot migration initiated to support on call to wholetime, selection centres and transition course planned. Working with Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to aid the pathway to competency and develop a framework to enable recognition of prior learning, skills and experience.
- Work Package 5 Re-employment and Maximising Availability: Re-employment register was now active. Potential scope to extend scope of detached duty policy and introduction of detached duty volunteers' database.
- Work Package 6 Pre-Arranged Overtime (PAO) Management Arrangements: Pilot programme ongoing to streamline processes, support managers, etc, with full roll out in the new year.

7.3.2 In regards to staffing business continuity, RR briefed the Committee on some of the wide-ranging circumstances this would apply to i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> pandemic, severe weather, etc. The OAMG would provide a structured framework and guidance which covers the full spectrum of availability from business as usual to decreased level of personnel/skills.

7.3.3 In regard to recognising prior learning, RR noted that this is not unique to the Service and the framework was based on best practice and work previously undertaken by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

7.3.4 **The Committee noted the report.**

*(R Robison left the meeting at 1425 hrs)*

## **8 INDEPENDENT AUDIT / INSPECTION ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

### **8.1 Training of RDS Personnel**

8.1.1 BF presented the report, updating the Committee on the progress against the action plan developed in response to the HMFSI report relating to the Training of RDS Personnel. BF noted the good overall progress and where delays have been identified and appropriate mitigations put in place.

8.1.2 AW informed the Committee that the HMFSI (Wales) have undertaken a review of RDS Training and the draft report has been shared with Scottish Government. Taking cognisance of this report and the potential renewed focus in this area, AW advised that the Service would review the narrative and evidence prior to closing any future actions.

8.1.3 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

## **9 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22: DATA SUMMARY**

9.1 JH presented the report which provided the Committee with a summary of progress against the Annual Health and Safety Improvement Plan 2021-22 and an overview of the agreed suite of performance indicators. The following key points were highlighted:

- Trends relating to low speed manoeuvres and acts of violence (as per earlier discussions).
- Absences attributable to Covid-19 were displaying an increase, however this was due to this statistic being calculated over a 2-year average. Anticipated to continue to decrease.
- On schedule for presenting the full Health and Safety Report in December 2022 for scrutiny prior to submission to the Board for information.

9.2 The Committee were reminded that this report had been presented to provide an overview of past performance and flag any new issues emerging.

9.3 The Committee commented on the potential misinterpretation of the data being presented within the summary, should it be read in isolation as this could detract from the overall positive work in regards to health and safety. The impact on 2020/21 statistics due to Covid was also noted. Whilst acknowledging the potential for misinterpretation, AW reiterated the purpose of the data summary, noting that no new issues had been identified and that the full report would provide additional details to support the data.

9.4 **The Committee scrutinised the report and thanked all those involved in producing the report.**

*(G Hastie joined at 1438 hrs)*

## **10 PROVISION OF REHABILITATION AND PHYSIOTHERAPY ARRANGEMENTS**

10.1 GH presented the report to the Committee providing a cost/benefit analysis and options appraisal for physiotherapy and rehabilitation services within the Service. GH highlighted the following areas:

- Overview of the current provision and identified areas for improvement.
- Increasing levels of musculoskeletal (MSK) sickness absences.
- Approved by the Strategic Leadership Team to progress with Option 2 (in-house physiotherapy services supported by external provision).

10.2 In regard to potential additional travel distances, GH informed the Committee that there was a framework of external providers, including rural communities, to support in-house services.

10.3 GH advised the Committee that the intention would be to measure performance in order to evidence the impact.

10.4 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

(G Hastie left at 1442 hrs)

## 11 PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (POD) VISION

11.1 LG gave a presentation to the Committee relating to the POD operating model to identify how the Directorate could deliver the services required to support SFRS's vision. The following areas were highlighted:

- Identified activities undertaken over the last 12 months to enable work to start on the future operating model.
- Held full Directorate and breakout engagement sessions to work on SWOT analysis and review customer feedback.
- Discussions relating to career development and progression pathways to attract and retain professional staff.
- Discussions relating to systems and processes to help deliver work/services of the Directorate, some links to the People, Training, Finance and Assets Systems (PTFAS) project.
- Early engagement with Representative Bodies to discuss potential changes in roles, capabilities and Directorate structure.
- Identify purpose of Directorate along with POD specific mission and vision.
- Development of design principles and themes that should inform decisions on proposals for POD.
- Development of POD high level model.
- Next steps include road testing with SMB/SLT colleagues for feedback, progressing next level (roles and responsibilities) and continued engagement with teams/Representative Bodies.

11.2 AW noted that the Training, Safety and Assurance Directorate would be sharing their vision and would be keen to link with LG to discuss further off table.

11.3 Presentation to be circulated to the Committee for reference purposes.

**ACTION: BST**

11.4 **The Committee noted the presentation and verbal update.**

## 12 PEOPLE COMMITTEE RISK REGISTER

### 12.1 Committee Aligned Directorate Risk

12.1.1 LG and BF presented the Risk Report, identifying Directorate risks and controls pertinent to the business of the Board and highlighted the following risks:

- Closure of risks POD008 (Medical Restrictions) due to progress in this area and POD009 (Employment Tribunals) due to conclusion of the majority of work/no further claims.
- Closure of 3 risks due to change in Covid restrictions, TSA001 (Training Resources – Continuous Improvement) due to actions being transferred into business as usual/dedicated task and finish group stood down, and TSA008 (Training Resources – Section 19 Road Safety Act) due to further delays/de-escalation to functional level.

12.1.2 The Committee commented on the potential risk of industrial action/impact on service delivery. AW advised that the SLT had discussed this recently and it was agreed that this was already captured within an existing overarching risk.

12.1.3 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

### 12.2 Risk Spotlight: SD006 On Call Retained / Volunteer Duty System People Specific and around Recruitment / Training

12.2.1 GMack presented the Risk Spotlight Briefing note to the Committee and noted the following key points:

- Focus on risk to service delivery and capabilities, to deliver statutory duties through failure to attract, train and retain new and existing personnel.

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- Reasons for attrition of personnel include remuneration and lack of flexibility in working patterns.
- Risk of insufficient qualified personnel within Operations Control (OC) which in turn would directly impact on ability to respond to emergencies effectively.
- Impact of reduced staffing within OC on existing personnel.
- Awareness and concerns relating to OC personnel's morale, wellbeing and mental health.
- Focus on recruitment, succession planning, development of an active recruitment strategy sitting alongside the wholetime firefighter recruitment, social media campaign and awareness days to raise profile and knowledge of OCs, opportunities to increase retention i.e. flexibility, pay, etc.
- Key focus to ensure OC personnel feel valued, supported and have the opportunity to develop.
- Consideration of flexibility relating to role, working patterns and contractual arrangements to attract and retain personnel.

12.2.2 The Committee asked whether feedback was provided to OC personnel to help maximise job satisfaction. GMack noted that the Service in general do not garner praise and there was no obvious route for feedback to OC personnel in place at this time. GMack further noted that there was a lack of understanding within the Service and the wider public on the important role of OC personnel.

12.2.3 Brief discussion re the potential for a joint recruitment campaign (Wholetime and OC), potential dual roles, flexibility etc.

12.2.4 The Committee commented on the high level of absences within OC and requested an update on the work in this area. GMack advised the Committee that visits were ongoing to OC to engage with personnel to discuss both the positive aspects and challenges, ensure existing personnel are aware of their importance, understand reasons for leaving and what would attract new personnel to join the Service.

12.2.5 GMack reiterated the ongoing challenges within OC and noted that there was no quick or easy solution however, there was optimism to stabilise and improve the long-term position.

12.2.6 The Committee fully acknowledged, supported and valued the key role of OC within the Service. The Committee acknowledged it would be helpful to receive a further update, at the appropriate time, either at this Committee or a Board Strategy Day.

**12.2.7 The Committee scrutinised the report.**

*(G MacKay left the meeting at 1522 hrs)*

*(The meeting broke at 1522 hrs and reconvened at 1527 hrs)*

*(F McOmish joined the meeting at 1527 hrs)*

## **13 PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

### **13.1 Employee Partnership Forum**

13.1.1 SBa provided the Committee with a verbal update detailing the content of EPF meeting on 18 August 2022, noting the following key points:

- Focus on diversity and recruitment with open and constructive discussions from all attendees.
- For future meetings, agreed to summarise key points and transfer to mainstream activities to avoid any duplication.
- Short life working group convened to focus on gender diversity and inclusion.
- Continuing to share information on policy and practises and escalation of issues.

**13.1.2 The Committee noted the verbal update.**

**13.2 Partnership Advisory Group**

13.2.1 LG advised there were no new items of business put forward therefore the meeting was stood down.

13.2.2 **The Committee noted the verbal update.**

**14 REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**14.1 Health and Safety Policy and Policy Statement**

14.1.1 JHo presented an update on the 2022/23 Health and Safety Policy and Policy Statement to the Committee for information, noting the alignment of the policy with the Safety and Assurance Strategy.

14.1.2 **The Committee noted the report.**

**14.2 Recognition of Prior Learning**

14.2.1 FMcO presented a report informing the Committee of the introduction of the Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, which would ensure a fair and consistent approach to recognise knowledge, skills and experience previously gained.

14.2.2 The Committee commented on the potential to include recognition of flexible approaches to learning i.e. patterns of study. Consideration would be given to include this within the accompanying guidance document.

14.2.3 **The Committee noted the report.**

*(F McOmish left the meeting at 1533 hrs and M Corry joined the meeting at 1533 hrs)*

**15 FORWARD PLANNING**

**15.1 POD Policy Review Schedule Update**

15.1.1 MC presented the POD Policy Review Schedule Update report to the Committee for information, noting the following updates to the schedule since the publication of the report:

- Publication of Whistleblowing and Re-employment policies.
- Following engagement with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Working Together Framework would be presented to the SLT in October.
- Statutory Health Surveillance Policy pilot had commenced and completed during this quarter.
- Full business case to be prepared, for SLT approval, to support proposals within the Family Leave Policy.
- Policies issued for consultation were Flexi Time Scheme and Wholetime Day Duty Hours and Leave Policy.
- Policies scheduled to be issued for consultation in Q2 were Managing Employee Performance Policy and Secondary Employment Policy.

15.1.2 With regard to the Re-employment Policy, the Committee queried whether there were any time limitations on re-employment. LG noted that the time limitations on re-employment applied particularly to operational roles and whether individuals could still be deemed competent in that role/skills.

15.1.3 **The Committee noted the report.**

*(M Corry left the meeting at 1539 hrs)*

**15.2 Health and Safety Policy Management Arrangements Forward Planning Schedule**

15.2.1 JHo presented the Health and Safety Policy and Management Arrangements to the Committee for information, detailing that there were no new Management Arrangements (MAs) scheduled for development.



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15.2.2 JHo noted that there had been no significant changes, progress remained on target albeit with one exception (PUWER Management Arrangements) and a new review process had been developed to ensure reviews were undertaken at the appropriate time.

15.2.3 **The Committee noted the report.**

**15.3 Committee Forward Plan Review**

15.3.1 The Committee noted the Forward Plan.

15.3.2 MW noted the joint workshop with Service Delivery Committee, scheduled on 9 March 2023, to focus on competency and currency in relation to training.

15.3.3 **The Committee noted the Forward Plan.**

**15.4 Items for Consideration at Future IGF, Board and Strategy Meetings**

15.4.1 There were no new or emerging items noted.

**16 REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

16.1 KM confirmed that 2 formal actions were recorded during the meeting.

**17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

17.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 8 December 2022.

17.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1545 hrs.

**PRIVATE SESSION**

**18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: 21 JUNE 2022**

18.1 The minutes of the private meeting held on 21 June 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting, subject to Paul Stollard being added as present.

**19 REMUNERATION, APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS SUB COMMITTEE (RANSc) UPDATE**

19.1 The draft minutes of the RANSc meeting on 31 May 2022 had been circulated to the Committee.

19.2 **The Committee noted the draft minutes.**

**20 RECENT EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CASE – LESSONS LEARNED**

20.1 RS presented the report to the Committee providing background in relation to a recent employment tribunal (ET) case, lessons learned and actions being taken by the Service in response to this.

20.2 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

**21 KEY CASE UPDATES 2022/23 – QUARTER 1**

21.1 LG presented the report to the Committee providing an overview on employee relations cases which have resulted in claims to the ET.

21.2 **The Committee noted the report.**

21.3 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1615 hrs.