



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

Working together for a safer Scotland

**SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD**

**THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023 @ 0900 HRS**

**BRAIDWOOD SUITE, SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,  
WESTBURN DRIVE, CAMBUSLANG, G72 7NA / CONFERENCE FACILITIES**

**PRESENT:**

Kirsty Darwent, Chair (KD)  
Stuart Ballingall (SJB)  
Steve Barron (SB)  
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)  
Malcolm Payton (MP)  
Tim Wright (TW)

Fiona Thorburn, Deputy Chair (FT)  
Nick Barr (NB)  
Brian Baverstock (BB)  
Angiolina Foster (AF)  
Paul Stollard (PS)  
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ross Haggart (RH)  
Stuart Stevens (SS)  
Liz Barnes (LBa)  
David Farries (DF)  
David Lockhart (DL)  
Mark McAteer (MMcA)  
Iain Morris (IM)  
John Thomson (JT)  
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)  
Richard Whetton (RW)  
Kevin Murphy (KM)  
Heather Greig (HG)  
Debbie Hadow (DJH)

Interim Chief Officer  
Interim Deputy Chief Officer  
Interim Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)  
T/Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery  
T/Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development  
Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications  
Acting Director of Asset Management  
Acting Director of Finance and Procurement  
Head of People and Organisational Development  
Head of Strategy, Governance and Performance  
Group Commander, Board Support Manager  
Executive Officer, Board Support  
Board Support/Minutes

**OBSERVERS:**

None

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

- 1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those present and those joining via MS Teams. On behalf of the Board, KD offered her sympathies and thoughts to Firefighter Barry Martin's family, friends and colleagues, following the tragic incident at Jenners, Edinburgh. Additionally, on behalf of the Board, KD expressed her thoughts and thanks to the injured firefighters and their colleagues who attended the incident and for the compassionate support being provided to all those affected.
- 1.2 Attendees were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.

**2 APOLOGIES**

2.1 Andy Watt, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance

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

3.1 The Board agreed that the *Jenners Investigation (verbal)* would be taken in private due to confidential issues (Standing Orders 9G, respectively).

**4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 There were no declarations of conflict of interests made.

**5 BUDGET APPROACH 2023/24**

5.1 JT presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the updated version of the proposed budget approach for 2023/24, which outlines the approach to developing both the Resource and Capital budgets, within the context of Scottish Government's (SG) budget proposals.

5.2 JT provided a brief update on the issues raised by the Board at their meeting on 15 December 2022 and highlighted the following key changes:

- Acknowledgment of Board's concerns regarding magnitude and deliverability of savings. Following SG's budget announcement and subsequent funding, the risk of deliverability of savings had reduced but would remain challenging.
- Additional information on Resource Spending Review (RSR) programme would be provided at the Strategy Day following this meeting.
- Long Term Financial Strategy would be reviewed in 2023 as deemed no longer relevant.
- Reduction in inflation rate (10.5%).
- Financial budget updated to reflect the additional funding from SG.
- Medium term financial model amended to reflect the additional resource funding from SG (£10.0m), potential savings (£5.5m) and further savings (£31.5m) in terms of the RSR.
- Inclusion of revised uniformed pay award offer.

5.3 In regard to pay award, JT advised that the funding for 2023/24 had been offered from SG and further support would be required for 2024/25. To be discussed further within the Strategy Day.

5.4 The Board commented on the repetition of information within the report and that consideration be given to include information on the financial assumptions over the RSR period. JT noted the comments and outlined the reasons for presenting the information in this manner.

5.5 In regard to the overall budget approach, JT noted that the approach was to deliver a balanced budget whilst addressing both the inflationary and pay pressures elements through savings and the RSR programme. At this time, it was not deemed appropriate to include information on the RSR programme within a public forum.

5.6 The Board asked for consideration to be given to adopt a multi-year budget format of reporting. JT reminded the Board that the Service were restricted by an annual year financial cycle but recognised the Service's need to understand the multi-year position.

5.7 The Board queried whether consideration had been given to creating an investment fund to address financial challenges within the current year. JT reminded the Board that the Service were not allowed to accumulate or carry reserves. JT noted the comments and would discuss further within the Strategy Day.

## OFFICIAL

- 5.8 In regard to the support staff attrition rate, JT advised the Board that the current rate was 10%.
- 5.9 **The Board approved the updated budget approach for 2023/24.**
- 6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- 6.1 The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 30 March 2023 at 1000 hrs.
- 6.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 0915 hours.

### **PRIVATE SESSION**

- 7 JENNERS INVESTIGATION**
- 7.1 On behalf of the Service, RH stated that the Service's thoughts remained with FF Martin's family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time. RH formally thanked all those involved in the planning and delivery of FF Martin's funeral on Friday 17 February 2023, particularly ACO David Lockhart, Blue Watch at McDonald Road Fire Station and all SFRS personnel who lined the Royal Mile. RH noted his personal thanks to GC Willie Pollard, Family Liaison Officer for his support to FF Martin's wife, Shelley and wider family since the day of the incident.
- 7.2 RH informed the Board of the investigation processes including the lead organisation, purpose and focus of each investigation.
- 7.3 **The Board noted the verbal update.**