



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2023 @ 1000 HRS

CONFERENCE FACILITIES

PRESENT:

Kirsty Darwent, Chair (KD)
Stuart Ballingall (SJB)
Steve Barron (SB)
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)
Malcolm Payton (MP)
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

Fiona Thorburn, Deputy Chair (FT)
Nick Barr (NB)
Brian Baverstock (BB)
Angiolina Foster (AF)
Tim Wright (TW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Stuart Stevens (SS)
Liz Barnes (LBa)
David Farries (DF)
Andy Watt (AW)
Mark McAteer (MMcA)
John Thomson (JT)
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)
Louise Patrick (LP)
Kevin Murphy (KM)
Heather Greig (HG)
Debbie Haddow (DJH)

Deputy Chief Officer
Interim Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)
Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery
Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Acting Director of Finance and Procurement
Head of People and Organisational Development
Strategic Planning and Performance Co-ordinator (Items 12 & 13 only)
Group Commander Board Support
Executive Officer Board Support
Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS:

Iain Cameron, HMFSI

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

- 1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those present and observing via MS Team. On behalf of the Board, KD offered her congratulations to Stuart Stevens on his successful appointment as Deputy Chief Officer.
- 1.2 KD also offered her congratulations to David Farries and David Lockhart, on their recent substantive appointments as Director of Service Delivery and Director of Service Development, respectively.
- 1.3 Attendees were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.

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2 APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Paul Stollard, Board Member
Ross Haggart, Chief Officer
David Lockhart, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development
Iain Morris, Acting Director of Asset Management

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

- 3.1 The Board agreed that the *Employer's Liability Claim, Financial Compensation Update* and *Minimum Service Levels Bill* items would be taken in private due to matters subject to legal proceedings and the confidential nature of the issue (Standing Order 9D and 9G), respectively.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 4.1 There were no declarations of conflict of interests made.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

5.1 Thursday 30 March 2023

- 5.1.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5.2 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

5.3 Matters Arising

- 5.3.1 There were no matters arising.

6 ACTION LOG

- 6.1 The Board considered the action log and noted the updates.

6.2 Members noted the updated Action Log and approved the removal of completed actions.

7 DECISION LOG

- 7.1 The Board considered the Decision Log noting the impact assessments provided for decisions made 12 months ago.

7.2 Members noted the updated Decision Log.

8 CHAIR'S REPORT

- 8.1 KD presented the Chair's Update report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 March 2023. In addition to the written report, the Chair provided a verbal update on the following key areas:

- Successful Deputy Chief Officer interview and operational assessment process.
- Several Reform Collaboration meetings resulting in a stronger and clearer position. Broad agreement with Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service on how to progress with collaboration and potential changes within blue light services and also potential broader reform and working with other parts of the public sector.
- Eid celebration at HQ on Tuesday 25 April 2023.

8.2 The Board noted the report.

9 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

- 9.1 SS acknowledged and thanked the Chair, and Board, for their kind messages following his recent appointment to the role of Deputy Chief Officer.

- 9.2 SS presented the Chief Officer's report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 March 2023.

9.3 The Board noted the report.

10 COMMITTEE UPDATES

10.1 Change Committee (CC)

10.1.1 FT reported that the Committee's next public meeting would be held on 11 May 2023.

10.1.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

10.2 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

10.2.1 BB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 6 April 2023 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following.

- Three internal audit reports were presented:
 - Final Report Protective Personal Equipment (PPE): General positive conclusion although some weaknesses identified.
 - Final Report Capital Investment Strategy: Report highlighted gap of funding received and required and encouraged the Service to review how they prioritise investment.
 - Final Report Training: Overall positive although some weakness identified particularly around the backlog in the provision of training. Committee discussed the associated risks and control measures and identified the requirement for 2 different types of assurance. These were an immediate assurance on whether or not the Service deployed firefighters who were not deemed competent. BB met with SS and AW and received assurance verbally with the detailed consideration being taken forward by the People Committee. The 2nd area related to the provision of training and the systematic overhaul of the system ie different type of framework (People Committee to oversee).
- Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 was discussed and recommended for approval by the Committee. The Plan would be brought to the Special Board meeting (May 2023).
- New External Auditors, Audit Scotland, attended their first formal meeting and presented the Audit Plan 2022/23. Overall positive first meeting with the encouraging emphasis on collaborative approach to audit work and continuous improvement. Increase in fees to £141,000.

10.2.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

10.3 People Committee (PC)

10.3.1 MW reported the Committee held a public meeting on 2 March 2023 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes, noting that a full verbal update had been provided at the previous meeting.

10.3.2 **The Board noted the verbal update and approved minutes.**

10.4 Service Delivery Committee (SDC)

10.4.1 NB reported that the Committee's next public meeting would be held on 30 May 2023, noting the following items scheduled to be presented:

- Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV)
- First SFRS Annual Clinical Governance Report
- Response times and targets.
- Operational learning - Manchester Arena Inquiry
- Resilience of operations control rooms
- Demonstration on GETAC tablets would now be given at a future Strategy Day (July 2023).

10.4.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

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11 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE RELATED ITEMS

11.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the Annual Governance Review of Board and Committee related items thereby ensuring the continued effectiveness of the governance arrangements within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). The following key points were highlighted:

- Summary of all key amendments listed within Appendix A.
- Further review to be undertaken on the Change Committee's Terms of Reference.
- Corporate Template updated to reintroduce the Key Strategic Implications section.
- Rep Bodies were consulted on the review of the Partnership Advisory Group and Employee Partnership Forum's Terms of Reference.

11.2 Within the Good Governance Framework, Section 7 Integrated Assurance Mapping and Section 8 Committee Assurance Statements, formatting issues were identified within the levels of assurance tables and would be rectified.

11.3 In regard to the Scheme of Delegation, the Board commented on the lack of clarity or visibility on the level of delegation to the Chief Officer around expenditure on contracts. It was noted that the Board had raised the same issue during previous reviews. JT advised the Board that this information was contained within a series of documents which sit underneath the Scheme of Delegations but acknowledged the Board's request for greater visibility. JT reminded the Board that there were processes established regarding significant strategic, novel or contentious contracts and Board oversight and/or approval. JT offered BB the opportunity to discuss further outwith the meeting. The Board requested that additional narrative or a flowchart be added to provide more clarity and visibility on delegated authority. Revised Scheme of Delegations to be brought back to the next meeting (June 2023).

ACTION: JT

11.4 A Board member questioned the level of assurance provided on the report and stated that they had taken a reasonable level of assurance rather than substantial. One specific issue raised related to the conciseness of Board/Committee papers being presented and the potential implementation gap on the application of the guidance.

11.5 The Board noted the overarching nature of the paper due to the various documents being presented and the issues this may cause. It was generally accepted that the assurance level related to the overall process of governance arrangements within the Service, rather than the application of individual guidance/documents.

11.6 The Board recognised the new process and introduction of assurance levels and that assurance levels should be challenged and considered within Board meetings. The Board recognised that the overall process of review had been rigorous, individual governance processes were sound and accepted the weighted assessment on the level of assurance was substantial with some weaknesses identified. The Board asked for work to continue on addressing the implementation gap and conciseness in relation to Board/Committee papers.

11.7 **The Board approved the suite of papers, subject to the further amendments to the Scheme of Delegations.**

(L Patrick joined at 1050 hrs)

12 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2023/24

12.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the Performance Management Framework (PMF) 2023/24. MMcA noted his thanks to all those involved in the review of the PMF. The following key points were highlighted:

- Collaborative cross-directorate review process focusing on narrative, performance measures and assurance levels.

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- Narrative and measures aligned to the Strategic Plan 2022-25.
- Previous Delivery Map replaced with Additional Sources of Assurance.
- Performance measures reviewed individually and targets set, if deemed appropriate.
- Outline of iterative process for setting targets on previous 3 year average targets.
- Direction of travel term 'Monitor' to be replaced with 'tracked' in order to convey the more dynamic nature of this process.
- Inclusion of annual Corporate Performance Measures.
- Removal of 11 Corporate Performance Measures due to limited value or no longer being relevant.
- Addition of 23 new Corporate Performance Measures including percentage of accidental dwelling fires (high severity) and suite of training indicators.

12.2 The Board commented on targets for Outcomes 60 and 61 and requested that further information be provided on the aims of the target ie increased by X%, status quo, etc.

12.3 With regard to the Business Planning Structure, the Board commented on the lack of clarity on the alignment of the strategic planning process. Similarly, within the Annual Operating Plan it was not clear which projects were business as usual, managed by Portfolio Office, etc. It would be helpful to have some narrative to provide some clarity to better understand the golden thread running through.

ACTION: RH

12.4 With regard to Corporate Performance Measures Indicators 6 and 7 (HFSV), the Board noted the work being done in this area and queried whether there was scope for amendments to be made to the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) during the coming year. DF advised that discussions had been held regarding these targets and recognised that future changes may be made to these targets within this performance year.

12.5 With regard to Indicator 7, the Board commented on the benefits of setting numerical targets rather than a direction of travel statement ie increase on previous year as this would cascade throughout the Service down to individuals, identify priorities and help drive results. MMcA reminded the Board that run charts would be introduced and would allow more dynamic performance reporting and scrutiny. The Board asked for consideration to be given to identify a reasonable expectation on the increase over the coming 3 months and for this figure to be captured within an amendment to the PMF.

12.6 With regard to Outcome 7, the Board noted that Indicators 55 and 56 were reliant on narrative rather than a numerical value and questioned what assurances could be taken from them. The Board noted the benefits of capturing this data as they track partnership working within the Service but queried whether they provided assurance on achieving Outcome 7. MMcA to review and consider the placement of these indicators.

ACTION: MMcA

12.7 The Board requested a clearer understanding of what measures would be brought to the Board for scrutiny. It was noted that the Additional Scrutiny Roles for the individual Committees were set out in Appendix 3. MMcA to review and ensure greater clarity on Board oversight of performance within the final version of the plan.

ACTION: MMcA

12.8 MMcA advised the Board that all indicators were presented to the Strategic Leadership Teams on a quarterly basis. DF explained how the measures were scrutinised within his Directorate and how there were used to identify trends, performance and allocate resources appropriately.

12.9 The Board commented on the voluminous nature and structure of the plan ie, too much preamble on the process and not enough on the measurement of success.

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- 12.10 With regard to achieving strategic outcomes, the Board sought to understand the vital links between indicators/activities and outcomes. With particular reference to Outcome 5 (Progressive organisation etc), the Board commented on the need to understand how the identified indicators would deliver success and the need to review/develop this further. LBA and MMCA to discuss further outwith the meeting.
- 12.11 The Board acknowledged the efforts and improvements in the PMF presented. However, to enable the Board to more effectively scrutinise and have confidence in the targets, the document should contain all objectives and outcomes including 2/3 big projects/achievements for the previous year and the current year, provide details on what work would be done under each outcome, what was business as usual under each outcome, previous year's performance and targets for the coming year and narrative to explain the outcome and how the indicators/measures would achieve it.
- 12.12 The Board commented on the need to understand the effectiveness of our prevention work by identifying the link between what we do and the outcome measures. For example, behaviours changed followed HFSV, this would be a critical perception measure.
- 12.13 The Board also noted the importance of understanding equality in relation to HFSV carried out and how effective they are.
- 12.14 The Board recorded their disappointment regarding the staff survey being delayed.
- 12.15 Proposed changes to language within the report:
- Within the Legal Key Strategy Implications section (5.11) in the covering report, the Board suggested that the word “meets” be amended to “contributes to”.
 - Within the National Strategy Planning section in the AOP (Page 6), the sentence beginning “*Rigorous project management ...*” should be reviewed and be more reflective of the current position and ongoing journey rather than the end destination.
- ACTION: MMCA**
- 12.16 The Board reiterated earlier discussions on the need for a clearer “golden thread” for outcomes and restated the benefits of a single plan.
- 12.17 The Board reiterated their appreciation for the work undertaken to get to this position, however, it was noted that there was still further improvement required in performance monitoring.
- 12.18 The Board noted assurances from LBA regarding corporate targets/indicators and these would be reviewed for next year with the potential for an addendum/supplement to be added this year.
- 12.19 The Board committed to have further discussions on the ambition, risks and benefits on a potential single plan.
- 12.20 Five Board Members questioned the level of assurance provided on the report and stated that they have taken a reasonable level of assurance rather than substantial.
- 12.21 **The Board did not approve the Performance Management Framework for 2023/24. A revised Performance Management Framework to be brought back for approval.**

(The meeting broke at 1200 hrs and reconvened at 1210 hrs)

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13 ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN 2023/24

13.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) 2023/24. The following key points were highlighted:

- Activities of the Portfolio Office notably the People, Payroll, Training and Finance project and Rostering project and the wider Strategy Review programme included.
- 19 Actions with key milestones (focusing on 2023/24).

13.2 The Board welcomed the simplicity of the plan, noting the reduction in detail and increased focus on priorities.

13.3 The Board requested the following amendments:

- Reference to Covid-19 to be removed, as deemed no longer relevant.
- Currency of the narrative to be reviewed to reflect the current position.
- Clarity on what the “current uncertainties surrounding our current operating landscape” referred to.
- Clarification on the timings of the Staff Survey.
- Potential additional item for Risk Management.

ACTION: MMcA

13.4 The Board commented and discussed the following issues:

13.5 With regard to the Staff Survey, LBa advised the Board that the intention was to undertake the staff survey this year despite the competing priorities and proposals on how this would be carried out would be brought forward in due course. LBa noted that the Safety and Culture survey should not impact on the Staff Survey, however, consideration would need to be given to the timings of both surveys. The Board requested that the AOP be updated to include this clarification on the Staff Survey.

13.6 With regard to the New Mobilising System, the Board noted their expectation that a due date should be recorded as it is currently ‘TBC’. SS reminded the Board that the procurement phase had still to conclude and until then a completion date could not be confirmed. SB expressed his disappointment in this response. SS agreed to review and offered to include an anticipated date range if this was deemed helpful. SS further noted that the scope and business case would be submitted to a future Change Committee and thereafter a more substantiated date could be identified.

13.7 With regard to the Operations Control resilience and staff, SS noted that these activities were considered business as usual and therefore not captured within the plan. However, this information could be extracted and included for greater visibility.

13.8 With regard to the development of Risk Management, JT agreed to review and add an specific item if appropriate. JT and BB to discuss further outwith the meeting.

13.9 Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that both the Performance Management Framework and the Annual Operating Plan 2023/24 would be brought back for final approval to the Special Board meeting on 25 May 2023.

13.10 The Board Members briefly discussed the level of assurance provided on the report and stated that they have taken a reasonable level of assurance rather than substantial.

13.11 **The Board did not approve the Annual Operating Plan 2023/24. A revised Annual Operating Plan 2023/24 to be brought back for approval.**

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14 REPORT FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

14.1 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Working in Partnership 2022

14.1.1 The SFRS Working in Partnership 2022 report was submitted for information. MMcA advised the Board that the plan would be published and promoted via media outlets/social media, local scrutiny committees and partners.

14.1.2 **This report was presented for information only.**

15 RISK THEMES

15.1 There were no other new or emerging risks identified during this meeting, however it was noted that some risks have progressed into issues.

16 FORWARD PLAN

16.1 The Forward Plan was noted and would be kept under review and subject to change.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 A special private meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 25 May 2023 at 1600 hrs.

17.2 The next public meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 29 June 2023 at 1000 hrs.

17.3 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1235 hours.

PRIVATE SESSION

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING:

18.1 Thursday 30 March 2023

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

18.2 **The minutes of the private meeting held on 30 March 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

19 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

19.1 The Board considered the private action log and noted the updates.

20 EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY CLAIM

20.1 JT presented the report to the Board for decision in relation to a legacy insurance claim intimated against the Service. JT provided a brief background on this claim and noted Clyde & Co (legal representatives) recommendations in relation to the settlement of the claim.

20.2 **The Board approved the recommendation to support the settlement of the claim.**

21 EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY CLAIM

21.1 JT presented the report to the Board for advance notice in relation to an insurance claim intimated against the Service.

21.2 **This report was presented for information only.**

22 FINANCIAL COMPENSATION UPDATE

22.1 JT provided a verbal update to the Board on the financial compensation and confirmed submission of the claim.

22.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

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23 MINIMUM SERVICE LEVELS BILL

23.1 MMcA presented a briefing note to the Board and a full discussion took place on Minimum Service Levels (MSL) Bill.

23.2 **This briefing note was presented for information only**