



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

Working together for a safer Scotland

**PUBLIC MEETING – SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY 22 AUGUST 2024 @ 1000 HRS**

**LECTURE ROOM (1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR), PERTH FIRE STATION,  
401 OLD HIGH STREET, PERTH, PH1 1PL/ VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)**

**PRESENT:**

Tim Wright, Chair (TW)  
Madeline Smith (MS)  
Angiolina Foster (AF)

Paul Stollard, Deputy Chair (PS)  
Andrew Smith (AS)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Stuart Stevens (SS)	Deputy Chief Officer
David Farries (DF)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational Delivery
Andy Watt (AW)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
David Lockhart (DL)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Prevention, Protection and Preparedness
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance
Chris Fitzpatrick (CF)	Business Intelligence and Data Services Manager (Item 9.1 only)
Robert Scott (RS)	HMFSI
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Iona Milne	Business Support Executive / Minutes

**1 WELCOME**

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present and participating via MS Teams.
- 1.2 Those participating via MS Teams were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question. This meeting would be recorded for minute taking purposes only.

**2 APOLOGIES**

- 2.1 None.

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

- 3.1 The Committee agreed there were no agenda items to be taken in private.

**4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

**5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 29 MAY 2024**

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- 5.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 May 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 5.2 **Matters Arising**
- 5.2.1 There were no matters arising.
- 5.3 **The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**
- 6 ACTION LOG**
- 6.1 There were no outstanding actions on the action log.
- 7 SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE**
- 7.1 SS introduced the update report detailing relevant matters from a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Service Delivery perspective, which comprises of Operational Delivery, Prevention, Protection and Preparedness (PPP) and Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA) Directorates. The report covered the period from May 2024 to August 2024, albeit some issues may precede and extend beyond this period.
- 7.2 The Committee enquired what impact the use of drones had and how it integrated with other aerial technologies. DF advised that currently the use of drones was quite sporadic and as SFRS did not have their own drones or drone pilots access to them was presently through partners and the Community Asset Register. DF noted there was ongoing work with the operations function and asset management research and development team to research the topic and a paper had recently been produced. DF suggested the research paper be considered as a horizon scanning topic for a future meeting. The Committee noted the experimental work being carried out in Cornwall and Devon regarding the use of drones. DF advised the research paper produced covers other sectors and agencies. RW noted there was an innovative piece of work involving drones currently looking at improving situational awareness on the fire ground and also in multi-agency operations.
- 7.3 The Committee agreed that drones would be added as an agenda item to a future meeting.
- 7.4 The Committee noted that operational learning from the multi-agency electric vehicle fire exercise had been forwarded to operational assurance and asked what this meant and if SFRS actively engaged with other partners. DF advised the operational learning from the debrief would be passed on to the operational assurance team with lessons learned, good practice, unusual events and any other relevant information that may enhance organisational learning, policies and procedures. Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland management team are in dialogue with ferry providers with regards to dealing with incidents on board the vessel. Most of the operator's plans were to return to port if there was an incident on board. The Committee enquired how operational assurance shares lessons learned internally and externally with relevant partners. AW advised exercise learning is fed back into operational assurance which then informs future decisions, policy, practices and training. Operational assurance is tied in with operational learning across the UK.
- 7.5 The Committee enquired how older people were engaged in regard to the publication of Ageing Safely Living Well and how SFRS intends to evaluate its impact. DL advised that older people were engaged through Age Scotland but in addition SFRS have received feedback from peer review through the Scottish Government Cross Party Group on older people and Health Improvement Scotland. The PPP Directorate will evaluate this engagement and feedback in line with its evaluation policy while LSO's will also evaluate processes at a local level. There will also be a direct review on an annual basis to see how LSO areas are performing.
- 7.6 Regarding On Call wellbeing, the Committee enquired what was bespoke about this. DF noted that the Fire Fighter's Charity presented at the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC)

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On Call Strategic Group as they were finding there was a smaller uptake from On Call staff, which suggested that they were either unaware of, or not taking up, the services provided. On Call wellbeing now tied in with other elements such as the remote physiotherapy service and has been packaged together alongside the mental health awareness work.

- 7.7 With regards identifying the data for the partnership working Road Safety, Older Drivers Initiative, DL advised that the statistics were collated by Police Scotland (PS) in collaboration with local authorities. SFRS only record individuals that have become a casualty or fatality where SFRS have had direct involvement. SFRS support initiatives through the Community Safety Partnership Arrangements which are part of the community planning structure within each local authority area.
- 7.8 In regard to the Orkney NorthLink ferry exercise the Committee noted the innovative fogging system and enquired if this was applicable to other electric vehicle (EV) fires. DF advised that tactics for fighting EV fires are still in development and all technologies are being explored in the fire sector.
- 7.9 The Committee noted the improvement in relation to water safety and asked if there would be further reporting about the changes and outcomes and SFRS's contribution towards the improved statistics. DL advised this was the first review of SFRS's contribution towards Water Safety Scotland's action plan. SFRS have identified it as a good success story in terms of prevention, however cannot directly correlate that as to whether or not it has made a positive impact but believe it has contributed to it.
- 7.10 Following a request from the Public Bodies Unit, SFRS is currently considering submitting this work as an example of partnership working with other public sector organisations to reform the way we work and to improve safety across Scotland.
- 7.11 With regards partnership working and the Older Drivers Event the Committee asked at what age a person was classed as an older driver and if other public agencies worked on the same definition. RW advised that the official age for DVLA was 70 years however there was an increase in incidents from age 55 and typically more likely in males and driving motorcycles.
- 7.12 The Committee noted potential future meetings with other public service partners to talk about some of the broader preventative work around the cost-of-living crisis. This was an excellent example of preventative non fire safety activity which the Committee suggested was the type of work that required more analysis and KPI work. SS thanked the Committee for the feedback and advised that there was a lot of preventative activity across the organisation which needed to be captured so both crews and organisation received recognition for the work undertaken.
- 7.13 In regard to the Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) pilot, DL advised that the pilot was of the revised HFSV system following the work in relation to safe and well and would conclude at the end of August 2024. Training would be rolled out in the last quarter of the calendar year with the new system being implemented in the New Year. An update report would be provided to the November meeting.
- 7.14 The Committee noted that Jenners was not included in the list of ongoing fire investigations and asked if this was due to the investigative work being concluded. AW advised that the investigation was still ongoing.
- 7.15 In regard to British Standards Institute (BSI) the Committee asked what aspect of training was being certified. AW advised that it was the administrative process of delivering training rather than the practical delivery of training that was being looked at. The Committee enquired if other parts of the organisation should be assigned the same certification process. AW advised that, historically, the People directorate were but unsure if this was

still the case. The Committee considered it would be worthwhile to understand which external agencies were used to quality assure/certify different areas of business across the organisation. This would be raised at the next IGF meeting.

7.16 With regards the North Crew Commander recruitment process the Committee queried the level of success achieved by having 43 of the 54 candidates being progressed to the interview stage and if the outcome satisfied the number of resources required. SS would confirm this off table.

7.17 The Committee noted that 800 firefighters had completed the BA course and queried the current situation with regards the recovery process. AW advised this had been rolled out in the East Service Delivery Area (SDA) and would now be rolled out in the West and North SDA's. It was anticipated that by quarter 3 there would be a significant impact in BA recovery.

#### **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

7.18

### **8 INSPECTIONS/AUDITS**

#### **8.1 Update from HM Fire Service Inspectorate**

8.1.1 RS presented the report to the Committee to provide an update on HMFSI inspection and reporting activity. The following key points were highlighted:

- East and West SDA inspection reports are completed and published.
- The ongoing North inspection was originally planned to span over two financial years however, since discussions at the last meeting HMFSI had identified some funding from other areas of business which would now be allocated to this inspection. It was subsequently anticipated to conclude the inspection by April 2025 with the report laid in parliament in May/June 2025.
- Following discussion and feedback received from the Service, RS advised that an inspection to look at the strategic level of business within the Service would be carried out next year which would look at service delivery from a corporate perspective. Following that process the recommendations and actions from the SDA inspections would be reviewed, thus allowing sufficient time for the recommendations to be addressed and any subsequent measures put in place.
- The Organisational Culture inspection had commenced with 365 documents having been identified as part of the initial review. The next stage would be to conduct limited field work. RS reiterated that two external assistants had been appointed with colleagues from Audit Scotland also involved in undertaking the inspection. The first report would be around policy and procedure and whether the corporate documents are valid and understood by the end user.
- Operational Assurance inspection has commenced with the data request being satisfied. Field work would commence shortly.
- Chief Inspector three-year plan is up for review. RS would share the next version of the plan with the Service before it goes to consultation.

8.1.2 The Committee noted the appointment of a new member to the Inspectorate and asked if the team was now at maximum capacity. RS confirmed the team was now at full capacity and anticipated it remaining that way in order for the Inspectorate to perform its full duties. RS thanked SFRS for releasing staff to HMFSI on secondment.

8.1.3 Now that the West SDA inspection report had been produced the Committee enquired if the recommendations were overlapping with the East SDA inspection. RS advised that some were overlapping however RW confirmed the actions would be captured under a theme within an action plan in order to prevent any duplication.

8.1.4

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The Committee queried the governance route for HMFSI reports. RW advised that they are currently submitted to SDC with the action plan. RS confirmed that the action plan was not produced before the report was published. The Committee requested that future reports be provided to them once they become available and before the action plan is produced either through adding them to the agenda or via email circulation once they become available.

8.1.5

Regarding SDA inspections and the geographical challenges in the North with remote and rural areas, the Committee enquired how HMFSI would be assured that the inspection was effective. RS advised that HMFSI would be proportionate and reasonable with the inspection regime. When conducting the East inspection, HMFSI set the target of 51% of properties to be visited and 50% within the West. It was anticipated that a higher percentage of the time would be spent in remote rural areas rather than the mainland during the North inspection.

8.1.6

The Committee enquired if there was a sample size in mind for the field work regarding the Culture Inspection interviews, what format the interviews might take and if the interviews would be structured or partly structured. RS advised at this stage it was looking at corporate policy and procedures. The interviews would be tailored to match the audience and there would be a different set of questions when meeting with different staff groups. The questions would be determined by the inspection team with input from external colleagues and signed off by RS.

8.1.7

RS confirmed that the structure of the report would assess the journey of a staff member from joining the organisation and throughout their career and that staff would have the opportunity to speak about areas of importance to them that they might not have previously been able to say. Processes were in place for withdrawing any staff member or inspectors who showed signs of being stressed by the information being conveyed.

8.1.8

RS advised of the likely approach to be taken in terms of interviews being one to one or in a group setting. The Committee enquired if HMFSI actively encouraged or forbid people to approach them. RS confirmed that they did not encourage nor forbid.

8.1.9

Regarding the potential inspection around the corporate element of service delivery, the Committee asked if HMFSI would be looking at making the SFRS affordable now and in the future as was being undertaken by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). RS advised that it would likely look at the same themes as in the East, West and North SDA inspections. HMFSI focused on the operational element while any financial elements fell to Audit Scotland.

8.1.10

**The Committee noted the report.**

## 8.2 Independent Audits/Inspection Action Plan

8.2.1 RW provided the Committee with a brief update on audit and inspection action plans and closing reports. The following were highlighted.

- There were a number of updates in the report which were slightly out of date due to timescales of receiving formal updates. However, RW had meetings with the specific leads and up to date position statements were provided for each of these.
- The High-Rise Inspection report published in September 2022 has 3 out of the four actions completed with one outstanding. This related to a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the SOP was now live. The overall rating is amber, red but it is almost complete with an expected full completion by the end of September.
- Contingency Planning for Industrial Action was published in May 2023. There are 3 actions reported as complete with one action as green. The business area had notified SDC of slippage however action 1.22 and 2.2 have now been completed. The outstanding action is the tabletop exercise supported by the Scottish Multi

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Agency Resilience Training and Exercise Unit (SMARTEU) and is on course to be completed by December as planned.

- East Service Delivery report was published in September 2023. There are 8 actions reported complete, one marked green which relates to the permanent solutions for the reinforced autoclave aerated concrete (RAAC). The capital programme is progressing against this in a number of these in the East but the RAAC roofing issue will take longer to resolve.
- Climate Change report was published in September 2023 and the majority of the actions are complete. There are three outstanding actions. Action 2 relates to the undertaking of a review of operational intelligence information gathering processes to develop standardised processes to record water related hazards and is expected to be completed by the end of August. Action 5.2 has a delay due to finalising the delivery of new wildfire vehicles. Operations are providing additional support in terms of updating standard operating procedures and risk assessments for wildfire. The new lead Area Commander (AC) Humphreys expects it to be completed in January 2025. Action 8.1 has a full statement ready in terms of suggested improvements relating to capturing the approach, analysis, and reporting around weather related phenomenon. RW's team will engage with stakeholders as requested by HMFSI. RW suggested this will be completed by October 2024. RW advised there was a partnership working element relating to the action and this would be reflected in future updates.

### 8.2. **The Committee noted the report and the extension dates for the actions.**

*(C Fitzpatrick joined the meeting at 1116hrs and RS left the meeting at 1122hrs)  
(The meeting broke at 1122hrs and reconvened at 1130hrs)*

## 9 **SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

### 9.1 **Quarterly Performance Report for Q1 2024-25**

9.1.1 SS provided a brief update on the performance report for Quarter 1 2024/25.

9.1.2 The Committee discussed response times and associated KPI's and noted the upcoming workshop where KPI's would be discussed. If necessary, a briefing note would be produced following the outcome of the workshop.

9.1.3 The Committee noted the increase in call handling times. DF advised this was linked to the 15 new trainees who recently started within operations control however this was expected to come down.

9.1.4 Regarding KPI30 assist other agency's, the Committee noted a higher level over the last 8 quarters and asked what the implications were for SFRS resources. DF advised that it has been discussed at SDC before in terms of the change in incident types and forms part of discussions around Service Delivery and SSRP work and matching operational resource to risk and demand appropriately. The Committee suggested discussing this at the upcoming workshop.

9.1.5 The Committee noted the data pipeline for KPI's 7 and 8 had been reviewed and corrected but did not resolve source data and asked what the issue was. CF advised it was the source system and how the information had previously been received and SFRS's understanding of what data was required to measure the KPI's. Work was required with the data owner to better understand what checks there are in place to ensure the accuracy of data being reported on.

9.1.6 CF noted the assurance provided by the Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications (SPPC) to SLT that an executive group being established would bring the Heads of Functions (HoFs) together to give them an opportunity to discuss their systems

that are critical for measuring SFRS success and also the areas highlighted within previous QPR reports in order to start to put a data resolution in place.

9.1.7 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

*(C Fitzpatrick left the meeting at 1148hrs)*

9.2 **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Update**

9.2.1 DL provided a brief update and highlighted the following.

- Q1 of 2024/2025 has seen a similar trend to Q4 2023/2024 against KPI 21 with just under 3,000 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) calls attended.
- Overall, for the 12-month period there has been 19,000 non attended incidents and just under 13,000 attended which is a 55% reduction.
- The team are currently working on the 12-month review which will be brought forward at the next meeting.

9.2.2 **The Committee noted the update.**

9.3 **Incidents Involving Recycling Management and Battery Storage**

9.3.1 DF presented a report to the Committee to provide information regarding incidents involving recycling management and battery storage sites and SFRS approach to prevention and response to these types of incidents. The following was highlighted.

- There have been 51 lithium-ion related fires since 2022. Five have been in recycling centres with three of them being this year in April, May and June.
- The production of the report has been brought together by the operations team and the preparedness team and provides a lot of information regarding the challenges and operational considerations.

9.3.2 The Committee noted the regulatory environment and related challenges around battery management and storage. DL referenced the Private Member's Bill which was being proposed through the UK Government and a meeting he and DF were having with SEPA regarding a research piece relating to fires in waste facilities which could perhaps be an opportunity to influence future legislation. The Committee enquired about the preventative relationship with SEPA. DF advised it was not yet established however was looking forward to exploring this at the upcoming meeting.

9.3.3 The Committee noted the complexities involved in this area and the issues around how the Service responds, how it keeps firefighters safe and the wider issues for the community. DL noted that guidance had been developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) which provided information to the organisations that manage recycling sites, however SFRS needs to build on that and working with SEPA would be helpful.

9.3.4 The Committee asked how the risk governance element was addressed in such incidents. DL advised that it was an incident type that was responded to effectively and as part of daily business and that there was not a risk register for these incident types, albeit work continued to try and prevent them.

9.3.5 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

**10 SERVICE DELIVERY RISK REGISTER**

10.1 **Committee Aligned Directorate Risks**

10.1.1 SS presented a report to the Committee to provide an overview of current risks highlighted by Directorates rated at 15 or above. SS provided a brief update.

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- 10.1.2 The Committee enquired if the critical systems failure risk rating had been changed as it has been extremely high for a long time. SS advised it had not changed.
- 10.1.3 The Committee asked when risk appetite was being discussed. SS advised it has been through SLT and would be discussed at the Board Strategy Day in September.
- 10.1.4 With regards to cyber training the Committee asked which Committee would oversee this; SS advised that it was ARAC.

### 10.1.5 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

## 10.2 **Risk Spotlight: Fire Safety Enforcement**

- 10.2.1 DL presented the risk spotlight to the Committee to provide an update on the management of Fire Safety Enforcement (FSE). DL provided an overview of the issues and challenges faced and the actions being progressed by the organisation to address these in the short, medium and long term.
- 10.2.2 The Committee enquired as to the level of involvement received from firefighters in relation to this area. SS advised that this varied as some firefighters were keen to be involved while others preferred to be more operational. DF noted that the stage of an individual's career was also a factor.
- 10.2.3 RW advised that the legal team supported the investigation team in terms of progressing prosecutions and litigators were very interested in safety enforcement. SS advised that the operational learning from it was vast.
- 10.2.4 The Committee noted the expectancy of a uniformed member of SLT to have experience in the FSE role however the Fire Engineering (FE) and specialist Fire Investigation (FI) Officers roles were different and the number of staff in those roles with the appropriate skill sets was limited. The Committee suggested a short life working group be established to discuss the challenges around this.
- 10.2.5 The Committee enquired as to what extent the roles require to be uniformed as opposed to non-uniformed. SS advised there was currently a blend of uniformed and non-uniformed staff undertaking the FE roles.

### 10.2.6 **The Committee noted the report.**

## 11 **FORWARD PLANNING**

### 11.1 **Committee Forward Plan**

- 11.1.1 The Committee noted the forward plan and added the following items for the November meeting:

- Future Use of Drones
- Operational Learning Process
- Revised HFSV Pilot

### 11.2 **Items for Consideration at Future Integrated Governance Forum, Board and Strategy/Information and Development Day Meetings**

- 11.2.1 The undernoted item would be submitted to a future IGF meeting:

External Quality Assurance/Certification Across the Organisation

## 12 **REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

- 12.1 HG confirmed that there were no formal actions recorded.



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**13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

13.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 26 November 2024.

13.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1227 hrs.