



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING – PEOPLE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025 @ 1300 HRS

**BRAIDWOOD SUITE, SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,
WESTBURN DRIVE, CAMBUSLANG, G72 7NA / VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)**

PRESENT:

Mhairi Wylie (Chair) (MW)
Neil Mapes (NM)
Madeline Smith (MS)

Andrew Smith (Deputy Chair) (AS)
Malcolm Payton (MP)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Craig McGoldrick (CMcG)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Liz Barnes (LB)	Interim Deputy Chief Officer Corporate Services
Ross Robison (RR)	Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, Head of Training
Jim Holden (JH)	Head of Safety and Assurance
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)	Head of People
Fiona Munro (FM)	Head of People
Gillian Clark (GC)	People Manager Reward, (Item 8.2 only)
Les Mason (LM)	Group Commander Operations (Item 8.2 only)
Kenny McCartney (KM)	Group Commander Operations Control (Item 13.2 only)
Kirsty Darwent (KD)	Chair of SFRS Board
Chris Casey (CC)	Group Commander Board Support
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Debbie Haddow (DJH)	Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS

Colin Brown, Fire Brigades Union

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

- 1.1 The Committee Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present and attending 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.
- 1.3 On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Lyndsey Gaja for her input and support during her tenure as Interim Director of People.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 David Farries, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational 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 Updates* verbal report would be heard in private session due to the small number of individuals involved and confidentiality and in line with Standing Orders (Item 9D). The *Wellbeing Recovery Plan* report and draft minutes/verbal update of the *Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub Committee* would be taken in private due to the confidential nature of the issue (Item 9G).

3.2 No further items were identified.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

4.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2024

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

5.2 **The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

5.3 Matters Arising

5.3.1 No matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

6 ACTION LOG

6.1 The Committee considered the Action Log noting the updates and agreed the closure of completed items.

6.2 The Committee noted the costs/benefits arising from previous migration courses and queried whether this process would be considered again. LG advised that arrangements for the next wholetime firefighter intake were in progress and potential migration would be explored.

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

7 PEOPLE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING

7.1 People Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25

7.1.1 LG presented the People Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25 to the Committee for scrutiny of the People KPIs from the Performance Management Framework and the further details within the People Performance Report. The following key areas were highlighted from the Executive Summary:

- Significant senior management recruitment processes conducted during this quarter.
- Significant uniformed promotional activities primarily driven by high retirement levels.
- Trainee Firefighters who commenced in August 2024 had concluded their training and were now deployed to identified stations. The next Trainee Firefighter course would commence in Quarter 4 and would include On Call migration and external transfers groups.
- Successful recruitment of Operations Control (OC) personnel resulting in high numbers of applicants and conversion rates.
- Outline of the steps being taken to progress the pending changes to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme.
- Update on future employment law changes to be brought to the next meeting.

7.1.2 The Committee questioned how the Service reconciles the Target Operating Model (TOM) with duty systems, Service Delivery Review (SDR) and the limited knowledge of daily working activities. LG stated that it was inaccurate to say that there was limited knowledge on daily working activities. Due to the nature of emergency response of frontline personnel, there was a limited ability to programme activities for specific periods. However, there were clear station routines and activities, including community engagement, safety and enforcement and operational intelligence activities undertaken. LG noted that any changes to the TOM or

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disposition of personnel as a result to SDR would only be understood following appropriate public consultation and agreement of changes. It was further noted that the current disposition of personnel and resources were based on providing emergency response and legacy provisions. CMcG noted that the risk and demand drives the number of firefighters required, the nature of the station activities and training requirements. CMcG highlighted the use of the 7 week cycle tool that would help stations programme additional training based on their individual capacities, risks and levels of community engagement. This tool would provide an oversight of how individual stations utilised their time.

- 7.1.3 The Committee noted that it would be helpful to gain a wider understanding of the process in relation to the TOM. The Committee referenced previous discussions in relation to the Performance Management Framework review and how the Committee's involvement would be beneficial to aid their understanding and assurances being taken.
- 7.1.4 In regard to change in contractual hours for On Call personnel, the Committee queried how the Service would now calculate the Full Time Equivalent (FTE). LG outlined how the Service had previously calculated the FTE and noted that the same logic would be applied to the new bandings. It was noted that consideration would also have to be given to the appliance availability within individual stations.
- 7.1.5 In regard to disciplinary investigations, the Committee queried the Service's capacity to undertake these processes. LG commented on the challenges relating to capacity and other factors that impact on timescales. LG noted that the Service continues to monitor, review and mitigate where possible.
- 7.1.6 The Committee commented on the increased vacancy levels within OC and queried whether this was due to individuals leaving to pursue other opportunities or relatively new starts leaving for other reasons. CMcG noted that there was increasing recognition of competency/skill sets within OC personnel, nearing retirement, which were desirable to other organisations
- 7.1.7 In regard to future trainee courses, LG advised that the Service were still progressing the current pool of applicants. LG further advised that a cross functional working group was looking at the attraction and selection processes for wholetime personnel and targeted recruitment campaigns would commence in summer 2025.
- 7.1.8 In relation to the evaluation of the Crew Commander promotional process, FM briefly outlined the main issues highlighted from candidates and managers involved in the process. This included providing information ahead of the process to allow individual to prepare, ensuring consistency and calibration particularly if there is a large widespread volume of applicants, and providing in person feedback following interviews.
- 7.1.9 The Committee commented on the potential for further updates, learning and opportunities to extend the migration process from On Call to Wholetime to be provided at the next meeting. Brief discussion took place on the potential migration of personnel into other functions ie training.
- 7.1.10 The Committee noted and took assurance from the low level of activity on the confidential phone lines.
- 7.1.11 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

(L Mason joined the meeting at 1330 hrs)

7.2 Standardisation of RDS Terms and Conditions

7.2.1 On behalf of the Service, LG extended her thanks to all colleagues across the Service and Trade Unions for their efforts and hard work throughout the process. The Committee also noted their thanks and recognised the staff affected by these changes.

7.2.2 GC and LM presented a report providing an update on the implementation of the standardisation of Retained Duty System (RDS) Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) of employment. The following key points were highlighted:

- Timescale from commencement to implementation date of 1 January 2025.
- Policies relating to Payment for Work Activities and Annual Leave & Public Holiday were implemented on 1 January 2025. A further policy relating to Dual Contracts was deferred to allow further clarity, development of support guidance, etc. This revised policy was currently out for familiarisation prior to going live on 1 April 2025.
- Series of staff engagement workshops were scheduled to help address queries and embedding of the policies.
- Ongoing monitoring of appliance availability and performance trends.
- Improved ability to realise various benefits and efficiencies.
- Positive impact on the rostering system for On Call, launching in November 2025 and SDR.
- Potential re-engagement/recruitment opportunities.
- Outline of the governance and oversight arrangements. Proposed update to be presented to the Committee in approximately 6 months.

7.2.3 In regard to appliance available, it was noted that the revised dual contract policy may impact on the availability levels which could take some time to stabilise, and the Committee should remain aware of this. LM advised the Committee that the recent reduction in availability was partially due to personnel taking their entitled rest periods. It was noted that the new rostering system would provide greater oversight and management of rest periods.

7.2.4 In regard to recruitment, LG noted any recruitment decisions would be targeted and based on local needs, challenges with appliances availability, etc.

7.2.5 The Committee noted that updates would be submitted to future meetings, approximately 6 and 12 months' time. It was noted that this Committee would focus on the performance indicators relating to recruitment and the Service Delivery Committee would oversee the appliance availability data.

7.2.6 The Committee questioned the financial implications of increased recruitment and the overall impact on the budget. It was noted that the On Call Improvement Programme/local management would continue to have oversight of any recruitment and the Strategic Leadership Team would continue to monitor and report any potential financial risks.

7.2.7 The Committee noted that going forward they would look for assurances on the impact and success around the dual contracts process, rostering project and recruitment including attraction, turnover, contract profile types and colleague experience.

7.2.8 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

(G Clark and L Mason left the meeting at 1355 hrs)

7.3 Talent Pathways

7.3.1 LG presented a report to the Committee to provide an overview of the Service's current approach to talent identification, development, and succession planning along with potential future developments for scrutiny. The following key issues were highlighted:

- Less formalised or established approach to talent pathways and succession planning within the support staff group.

- Overview of the approach taken through the organisational change activity when reviewing operating model within functions. This includes clearer articulation of development pathways and reviewing structures to address single points of failure.
- Overview of the model used by the Finance function and Workforce Planning to predict the uniformed leaver's profile. This informs the recruitment, promotion and succession planning over the coming 12 month period.
- Positive progress and feedback from the Supervisory Management Development programmes.

7.3.2 In regard to secondments, LG noted that there were various development opportunities, both internally and externally, for individuals to broaden their skills beyond their substantive roles.

7.3.3 The Committee queried how the talent strategy addressed disability and neurodiversity. LG stated that the development programme was designed with accessibility in mind. Similarly, any recruitment and promotional process had similar arrangements to provide additional support, if required. FM advised that the Service were currently a Level 2 Employer for Disability Confident and were currently reviewing all processes to ensure that these guidelines were being met.

7.3.4 The Committee questioned how the pace and reach of the management and leadership development training could be increased. LG reminded the Committee of the scale of the supervisory management cadre which would take a significant amount of time to progress. LG noted that consideration was being given to different approaches to release individuals for training, but the Service had to remain mindful of capacity to facilitate the programme and individuals' ability to consume the learning.

7.3.5 In regard to coaching, LG noted the important role that this played in developing talent, however, there was no formal network established. LG further noted that informal coaching/mentoring was taking place within the Service. Discussion took place on the different approaches that could be undertaken and the potential challenges with capacity/capability.

7.3.6 The Committee commented on the Service's corporate volunteering policy and the potential for further information to be brought to a future meeting.

7.3.7 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

7.4 SVQ External Verification Update

7.4.1 LG provided a verbal update in relation to the SVQ external verification. LG advised that the Scottish Qualifications Authority had recently undertaken a further verification audit. All elements were found to be satisfactory, and areas of good practice were identified. Additional areas for further improvements were highlighted during the audit.

7.4.2 The Committee noted and welcomed the improving position. Consideration should be given for future updates to be provided to the Committee for assurance purposes.

7.4.3 **The Committee noted the verbal report.**

8 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, CULTURE AND FAIR WORK

8.1 Culture Action Plan – Update Paper

8.1.1 LB presented the report providing an update to the Committee on the progress of future pathway activities detailed within the Culture Action Plan and delivered via the Culture Development Group (CDG) and associated subgroups. The following key points were highlighted:

- Correction to the covering report, it was noted that the Strategic Leadership Team had not reviewed the Free Text Report at the 5 March 2025 meeting. This had been deferred to a future meeting.

- Launch of Focus Groups had been delayed due to the lack of volunteers.

- 8.1.2 In regard to the priority action, the Committee commented on the use of the word candidates rather than colleagues. LB noted that this had been discussed and that candidates was preferred for any external focus.
- 8.1.3 The Committee commented on the potential risks from a non-diverse or representative workforce. It was noted that a meeting had been scheduled to discuss this issue, and any outcomes would be fed back into the Committee.
- 8.1.4 In regard to future planned activities, the Committee requested that realistic but demanding timescales be identified. LB commented on the capacity within the Comms functions which was impacting on the planned activities and noted that work was ongoing to resolve the issues. At the recent CDG meeting, LB noted that Comms were tasked to develop a delivery plan, and that the assignment of a Project Manager within the Portfolio Office would help focus activities. The Committee requested that the realistic timeline for future planned activity, including how the value of innovation can be incorporated within our culture, be presented at the next meeting.

ACTION: LB/S O'Donnell

- 8.1.5 The Committee suggested that future reports should include reference to identifying and sharing good practice. LB welcomed this suggestion and would take this back to the CDG for consideration.
- 8.1.6 Brief discussion took place on events such as Women in the Fire Service, work with ethnic minority groups, etc to raise awareness of the Service and their role in local communities and recruitment opportunities.
- 8.1.7 The Committee noted that reference to maternity returners should be expanded to include paternity and adoption leave, etc.
- 8.1.8 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

9 TRAINING

9.1 Training Function Update and Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25

- 9.1.1 CMcG, introduced RR who presented the high-level overview of the Training function activity and performance over Quarter 3 2024/25 and highlighted the following key points:
- Recent audit on the ISO 9001 Quality Management System where zero non-conformities were reported.
 - Update on progress of capital investment in line with the Training Service Asset Management Plan.
 - Intention to review training standards under continuous improvement work. This would involve benchmarking exercises, ensuring compliance with legislative requirements, improved planning arrangements and strategic alignment.
 - KPI22 and KPI23 (core skills) were reporting an overall increase across all duty groups.
 - KPI24 (FDO Module Completion) was reporting a slight decrease during this quarter.
 - KPI25 (Incident Command Course Currency) was reporting a slight decrease, and future courses were scheduled in April 2025.
 - KPI26 (Core Skills Currency) was reporting an increase.
 - KPI27 (Specialist Rescue Currency) reported an overall increase with the exception of one element, Mass Decontamination but this remained above set targets.
 - KPI28 (Training Function Currency) was reporting a decrease in completion rates and alternative methods of delivery were being investigated and would be piloted in April 2025.
 - KPI29 (Customer Satisfaction Rates) continues to report an increase and customer comments being taken on board.

- 9.1.2 CMcG gave a presentation to provide a comprehensive overview of the development and competency roadmap for both wholetime and on call firefighters. This would assist in understanding and correlating the roadmap to the People Committee Performance Management Framework (PMF) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The following key points were highlighted:
- Misleading terminology of currency and competency which needs to be revised.
 - Wholetime Roadmap journey from entry to Service through to competence over a 3-year period.
 - Explanation of the 5 phases on the training journey to become a competent firefighter including the additional layers required to ensure whole crews were competent.
 - On Call Roadmap had the same standards and timescales with some adjustments to the delivery methods.
 - Outline of additional training/skills required to underpin firefighters competence including how they are obtained, maintained and monitored.
 - The current KPI for specialist skills provide data on performance against the programme of events that individuals are expected to undertake. Personnel movements between stations impact on this data due to the individual's skills set.
- 9.1.3 The Committee commented on the overuse of the term competency and the need to focus on using the correct language.
- 9.1.4 The Committee queried how the Service planned and maintained appropriate skills across crews and stations. CMcG noted that resilience was built into the system which was evident from specialist skills reporting at 130%.
- 9.1.5 In regard to the SVQ, LG advised that there were comparable qualifications within the other UK fire and rescue services.
- 9.1.6 In regard to the timescale required to achieve competency, CMcG noted that the 3-years were appropriate due to the volume of material/learning required, practical and observational elements. RR further noted the co-dependence with the completion of the training for operational competence framework which is progressed over a 3-year period.
- 9.1.7 It was noted that On Call personnel were not offered the opportunity to undertake this qualification due to the challenges involved in achievement. LG noted that On Call migrating into Wholetime could potentially achieve the qualification quicker due to their previous experience.
- 9.1.8 Brief discussion took place on the Training function capacity to flex to meet the needs of the Service and the advantages of training instructors being multi disciplined.
- 9.1.9 LG advised that there was a small number of reservists registered within the Service.
- 9.1.10 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

9.2 Training Function Presentation – FF Currency/Competency

- 9.2.1 This item was presented and discussed under Agenda item 9.1.

(Meeting broke at 1455 hrs and reconvened at 1500 hrs)

10 SAFETY AND ASSURANCE

10.1 Safety and Assurance Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25

- 10.1.1 JH presented the Safety and Assurance Performance Report Quarter 3 2024/25 to provide an update on key projects of works across the function to support Safety and Assurance KPIs. The following key areas were highlighted:

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- Recent operational assurance work including key learning and recommendations arising from this.
- Reviews of legal register and guidance.
- KPI50 (verbal attacks) and KPI51 (physical attacks) increased during Q3, which is not uncommon however, physical attacks increased significantly. Review to be undertaken to identify the reason for this.
- KPI52 (RIDDOR) remained consistent within Q2 with 3 incidents.
- KPI53 (Accident/Injuries) reported a decrease in Q3 which was similar to previous years and analysis was being undertaken to identify any reasons for this.
- Launch of LCMS Assessors Manual Handling training module
- KPI54 (near miss) reported a slight increase, and reporting would continue to be promoted through the Safety and Assurance Groups.
- KPI55 (vehicle events) reported a slight increase. Training equipment has now been published for each service delivery area and low speed manoeuvre training would be rolled out in the new financial year. Low Speed Manoeuvre handbook was nearing completion and would be published in due course.
- KPI56 (health and safety improvement plans) continued to report a decrease over the last 2 quarters.
- KPI19 (operational assurance) would be reviewed to assess the value of this indicator.
- Organisational Learning Group (OLG) update noting the closure of 12 actions.
- Health and Safety Executive 50th Anniversary and key message from HSE.
- Update on Event investigations and OA13 Outcomes.

10.1.2 The Committee noted and welcomed the format and information within the report.

10.1.3 In regard to increased physical attacks during Q3, the Committee queried whether these incidents were prevalent in certain areas and what learning could be taken from these incidents/other blue light services. JH noted that the Service recorded the lowest number of incidents across the blue light services and that the dual attendance with Police Scotland may have impacted negatively on the number of incidents. JH further noted the work undertaken by Local Senior Officers within their local area to raise awareness and reduce any incidents. CMcG advised the Committee that the Service were engaging with Dr Richardson, who was undertaking a UK wide study of attacks on firefighters.

10.1.4 In regard to operational learning, the Committee noted that several actions raised since 2019 were still outstanding. JH noted that the Service had changed since the initial recommendations were made. As such, some of the actions had evolved into a larger piece of work and had not directly been addressed. Brief discussion took place on the wider issue across the Service relating to the timescale for recommendations to be addressed. It was noted that the Service should show due regard to recommendations, and the ability to fully address and close them. The Committee requested an update to provide clarity on any outstanding actions raised between 2019-2022 to be featured within the next report.

ACTION: JH

10.1.5 The Committee commented on the benefit of raising public awareness of attacks and potential training opportunities. CMcG noted that due to the seasonal increase in attacks seen in Q3, there was a targeted and collaborative approach taken to messaging across the blue light services.

10.1.6 The Committee scrutinised the report.

(F Munro and R Robison left the meeting at 1515 hrs)

10.2 Contaminants Update

10.2.1 CMcG presented the report providing an update on the management of contaminants and highlighted the following key areas:

- Summary of work being carried out under the guidance of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).
- Fire Contaminants Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) had been issued for familiarisation. The collaborative approach taken within this area was noted and welcomed. It was recognised that the impact of the SOP would be continually monitored and evolved as appropriate.
- Thematic inspection to be undertaken after a suitable period to allow the SOP to be fully embedded.
- Related to the CivTech project, biological and physiological monitoring devices would help track exposure and effectiveness of control measures.

10.2.2 In regard to the CivTech monitoring devices, JH advised that volunteers would be sought from BA instructors and course participants due to the controlled environment of the training course. The exposure tracker would be offered, still on a voluntary basis, to a wider training courses/centre. It was noted that the equipment was a prototype and would be limited to controlled environments initially.

10.2.3 CMcG commented on the additional equipment which will be used to track physiological impact on individuals. It was noted that a display or demonstration would be given to the Service Delivery Committee in due course.

10.2.4 JH advised that CivTech were the main funders, however the Service had some initial investment. JH further advised that Legal Services were reviewing the intellectual property aspects.

10.2.5 The Committee scrutinised the report.

(R Robison left the meeting at 1525 hrs)

11 AUDIT/INSPECTIONS

11.1 HMFSI Inspection Action Plan Updates and Closing Reports

11.1.1 JH and LG presented the report updating the Committee on the progress against the action plans developed in response to the HMFSI Reports relating to Health and Safety: An Operational Focus and the Mental Health and Wellbeing.

11.1.2 JH advised the Committee that only one action remained outstanding for the Health and Safety action plan and remained on track for completion by the amended due date. JH outlined the reason for the delay.

11.1.3 CMcG reflected on earlier discussions in regard to how information was presented in order to provide greater understanding on the work being undertaken to achieve the recommendation.

11.1.4 With regard to the Mental Health and Wellbeing action plan, LG advised the Committee that due to prioritising the Wellbeing Recovery work, most of these actions have not been progressed. LG further advised that HMFSI were aware of the situation and were content that the action plan would be refreshed/rebaselined following stabilisation of the Wellbeing Recovery work. LG confirmed that the refreshed action plan would be available for the September 2025 meeting and that an update on indicative timings would be provided at the June 2025 meeting.

ACTION: LG/F Ross

11.1.5 LG outlined the challenges in securing a Chair for the Mental Health and Wellbeing Group and that this would be revisited as part of the refresh of the action plan.

11.1.6 The Committee scrutinised the report.

11.2 Internal Audit Updates

11.2.1 LG presented the report updating the Committee on the progress against the action plans relating to internal audit and inspections where the People Directorate is the lead area of the organisation. The following key points were highlighted:

- Sickness Absence Management: Action plan had been completed.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Evidence relating to the final outstanding action had been provided to Azets for review and closure.

11.2.2 In regard to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan, the Committee confirmed that, subject to Azets acceptance of the evidence and approving closure, there was no requirement for a formal report to be brought to the next meeting.

11.2.3 The Committee scrutinised the report.

(K McCartney joined the meeting at 1540 hrs)

12 PEOPLE COMMITTEE RISK REGISTER

12.1 Committee Aligned Directorate Risk

12.1.1 LG and CMcG presented the Risk Report, identifying Directorate risks and controls pertinent to the business of the Committee. It was noted that there were 5 risks reporting risk ratings of 15 or above. The following key points were highlighted:

- POD020 (Capacity to support high priority workstreams): Control actions were being considered to manage this risk.
- POD015 (Pensions): One control action was overdue due to being outwith the Service's control, however the Service continues to work closely with Scottish Public Pension Agency on this issue.
- FCS022 (finance/procurement recruitment/retention): Consideration to be given to improve awareness of benefits, wider work package, etc over and above base salaries. Market allowance would continue to be explored. Restructure within finance and procurement teams to address recruitment challenges.
- TSA019 (maintain/improve training delivery due to facilities): Recent reduction in risk rating to 16 due to the introduction of the Training SAMP. Control actions have been reviewed to better reflect the current position.
- FCS018 (maintain/improve training delivery due to capacity): Increased risk rating to 16 due to work being undertaken to move courses/learning online.

12.1.2 The Committee noted and welcomed reference to the prioritisation exercise undertaken in regard to business as usual/project activities within the People Directorate.

12.1.3 The Committee scrutinised the report.

12.2 Risk Spotlight: Operational Control Staffing

12.2.1 KM presented the risk spotlight to provide an update on the risk of a non-resilient Operations Control (OC) due to insufficient number of employees and an ineffective OC structure. The following key points were highlighted:

- OC TOM had recently increased to 174 plus an additional 15 temporary firefighters during the implementation of the new mobilising system. Staffing levels, when fully established, are 8, 9 and 11 at Dundee, Edinburgh and Johnstone, respectively. These levels reflect the operational demand within the 3 service delivery areas.

- Current OC establishment levels were 154 and staffing levels regularly fall to 6, 7 and 9 respectively. When levels may drop to critical level (3 per watch), this is managed through maintenance of skills, overtime and balancing of shifts.
- Workforce demographics are 82% female and 18% male. This increases the likelihood of personnel requiring adjustments via New and Expectant Mother Management Arrangements, etc. Level of OC staff currently on maternity level was 5% (8 individuals).
- Recent recruitment campaign reported a demographic split of 50% male and female. Demographics of successful candidates were 66% female and 33% male.
- OC service delivery was facilitated through the 5-watch duty system. Due to the geographical spread, OC were not able to access some staffing resilience options such as detached duties, transfers, etc. Existing resilience measures such as diverting calls, buddy arrangements, etc are stood up as required.
- Implementation of the new mobilising system would offer greater interoperability options.
- Absorption rates over the last 2 years remain high at 21.1% with regular analysis of absence rates being undertaken.
- Recognition of impact on staff due to shortages, etc and noted the various support mechanisms available.
- Recognition of impact staff to demonstrate continuous improvement, undertake training and development opportunities whilst maintaining operational delivery needs.
- Recognition of the importance of leadership development.
- Recognition of the learning to be gained from exit interviews to understand reasons for individuals leaving the Service.

12.2.2 The Committee queried whether the TOM was accurate and how the Service compared to other UK fire and rescue services (FRS) and other public services. KMcC noted that similar challenges were being seen across other UK FRS. CMcG advised the Committee that the TOM was appropriate for the existing 3 independent OC sites. However, the Service would remain mindful that this may change following the implementation of the new mobilising system.

12.2.3 KMcC commented on sharing/standardisation of learning across individual OC, exposure of OC personnel to wider parts of the organisation and representation on Service wide and national forums. KMcC noted that these opportunities had to be balanced with operational needs.

12.2.4 The Committee scrutinised the report.

(K McCartney left the meeting at 1600 hrs)

13 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

13.1 Employee Partnership Forum (EPF)

13.1.1 MW advised the Committee that the last scheduled meeting for 10 February 2025 had been stood down due to no items being tabled.

13.1.2 MW and LG attended a constructive meeting with Rep Bodies and a further meeting would be scheduled in due course.

13.1.3 The Committee noted the verbal update.

13.2 Partnership Advisory Group (PAG)

13.2.1 LG advised the Committee that the next scheduled meeting on 13 March 2025 had been stood down due to no items being tabled.

13.2.2 The Committee noted the verbal update.

14 FORWARD PLANNING

14.1 Committee Forward Plan Review

14.1.1 The Committee considered and noted the Forward Plan.

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

14.2 Items for Consideration at Future IGF, Board and Strategy Meetings

14.2.1 There were no items identified.

15 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

15.1 CC confirmed that there were 3 formal actions recorded during the meeting.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 5 June 2025.

16.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1600 hrs.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

The following reports were provided for information only and were taken as read.

- People Policy Review Update
- Training Continuous Improvement Programme – Update Report
- Training Function Policy Review Schedule
- Safety and Assurance Documents Forward Planning Schedule

(Public meeting broke at 1600 hrs and reconvened in Private session at 1605 hrs)

PRIVATE SESSION)

17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2024

17.1 The minutes of the private meeting held on 5 December 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

18 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

18.1 The Committee noted that there were no outstanding actions.

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

19.1 The draft minutes of the RANSc meeting on 5 December 2024 had been circulated to the Committee and a verbal update from the meeting on 6 March 2025 was provided.

19.2 **The Committee noted the draft minutes and verbal update.**

20 WELLBEING RECOVERY PLAN

20.1 LG presented a report to the Committee to update on the Wellbeing Recovery Plan being implemented to address the outcomes of the Wellbeing Audit. LG noted that JH was providing support and leading on engagement with the HSE.

20.2 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

21 KEY CASE UPDATES 2024/25 – QUARTER 3

21.1 LG provided a verbal update to the Committee providing an overview on employee relations cases which have resulted in claims to the Employment Tribunal.

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

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There being no further matters to discuss, the private meeting closed at 1625 hrs.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair extended her thanks to Liz Barnes for her support and hard work during her tenure and wished her well for her pending retirement.