



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING – STRATEGIC PLANNING AND CHANGE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 1 MAY 2025 @ 1000 HRS

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

PRESENT:

Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair (AF)
Therese O'Donnell (TOD)
Tim Wright (TW)

Stuart Ballingall, Chair (SJB)
Paul Stollard (PS)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Watt (AW)	Deputy Chief Officer
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Deborah Stanfield (DS)	Director of Finance and Contractual Services
Curtis Montgomery (CM)	Head of Portfolio Office
Lynne McGeough (LMcG)	Head of Finance and Procurement
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance
Heather Martin (HM)	Centre of Excellence Manager
Louise Patrick (LP)	Strategic Planning and Partnership Co-ordinator (Item 8 only)
Paul McGovern (PMcG)	Programme Manager (Item 13 only)
Kirsty Darwent (KD)	Chair of the Board
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Debbie Hadow (DJH)	Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS

N/A

1 WELCOME

- 1.1 The Deputy Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance and those 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

There were no apologies received.

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

- 3.1 With the exception of the draft minutes from the previous private meeting and private action log, there were no other items identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest noted.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PUBLIC MEETING: 6 FEBRUARY 2025

- 5.1 Subject to one typographical error, the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

- 5.1.1 **The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

5.2 Matters Arising

- 5.2.1 There were no matters arising.

6 ACTION LOG

- 6.1 RW presented the Strategic Planning and Change Committee Rolling Action Log for consideration, and actions were agreed and removed.

Action 10.8 SFRS Change Maturity, Capacity and Capability January 2025 – Closure (06/02/2025): Agreed to close, however, the Committee sought assurance that the four elements had been fully embedded. CM confirmed that the risk reporting and highlight dashboard approach were fully embedded across all programmes/projects. CM advised that the mechanisms were in place to support the ongoing management of capacity and capability within the Portfolio Office. Further development work was still required within the wider organisation.

The Committee requested a report as to how dedicated change management capacity, as well as broader organisational capacity, was being deployed to support the delivery change activity (captured under Item 14.1 Forward Plan).

Action 8.23 Update of SFRS Strategy and Planning Process (06/02/2025): The Committee were asked to consider whether the schematic (to be presented under Item 8.1) reflected and addressed their expectations.

- 6.2 **The Committee noted the Action Log, and the closure of actions were agreed.**

7 COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2024/25

- 7.1 SJB presented the Committee with the annual Statement of Assurance for 2024/25, which outlined evidence of how the Committee supports the effective functioning of the Board, for approval. The Committee noted and were content with the priorities outlined in Section 4.

- 7.2 **The Committee approved the Committee Statement of Assurance 2024/25.**

8 PLANNING/STRATEGY

8.1 Strategy Planning Cycle and Update

- 8.1.1 RW gave a presentation to the Committee which provided an overview of the development of the current Strategy and the Strategy Planning Cycle for scrutiny. The following key points were highlighted:

- Strategy consultation period concluded after 8 weeks with 155 responses received, of which a high percentage were staff members.
- Overview of the themes identified from different response groups ie staff, local authorities, other external responses, Fire Brigades Union.
- Overall support for proposed outcomes and objectives.
- Finalised Strategy to be presented to the SFRS Board for approval on 29 May 2025.

- 8.1.2 In regard to the comments on strengthening partnership working, the Committee were

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advised that these were made by staff/public who inferred that the importance of partnership work was not clear enough within the Strategy.

- 8.1.3 In regard to staff comments on the Strategy being too ambitious, the Committee were reminded that the Service needed to be ambitious and that the 3-year delivery plan would consider capacity and resource needs. The Committee were further reminded that there was uncertainty relating to SSRP outcomes therefore these comments would not be dismissed but considered proportionally and within the wider context. The Committee noted previous discussions relating to how the Strategy would take the Service on a path to greater sustainability and therefore there was a measure of change required.
- 8.1.4 RW updated the Committee on the development of the 3-year delivery plan noting that the main public facing document would provide high level information on the Service's commitment to deliver the Strategy. The main plan will be outcome focussed and aligned to the Chief Officer's immediate priorities. The Committee asked for consideration to be given whether the word "immediate" was necessary and if not, if it should be removed.
- 8.1.5 RW presented an overview of the 3-year planning cycle noting the Service's ambition to review and align the business cycle. Future discussions were required with Scottish Government due to the proposed differences in the planning cycle and the ambition to align the planning cycle with the financial year. Scheduling of the Committee cycle would also have to be adjusted to align with the planning cycle.
- 8.1.6 In regard to the local plans, RW noted that most of these plans were out of date/non-compliant and were being reviewed and prepared for consultation in October 2025. RW noted that the Service's aspiration was to be compliant in this area by March 2026. Brief discussion took place on the potential challenges arising from the local plans and proposed timescales.
- 8.1.7 The Committee noted the consultation results presented and the need for the Board to be thoughtful when considering the final Strategy at their next meeting.
- 8.1.8 The Committee noted the ongoing development of the 3-year delivery plan and noted it would be presented to the June Board meeting.
- 8.1.9 The Committee noted the alignment of the Committee cycle with relevant milestones, with consideration being given to more flexibility around local plans.
- 8.1.10 Brief discussion took place relating to the Committee's scrutiny of the plan, on behalf of the Board, which would be expected in future years, however, due to timings, this was not possible within the current year.
- 8.1.11 The Committee requested that further detail be provided around the key areas/pieces of work (as part of the developing business planning cycle) that will require Committee scrutiny, including forward planning of Committee dates that best align with the pieces of work.

ACTION: RW

- 8.1.12 **The Committee scrutinised the presentation.**

9 CHANGE PORTFOLIO/MAJOR PROJECTS

9.1 Portfolio Summary Report

- 9.1.1 HM presented the revised Portfolio Summary Report to the Committee which provided an overview of the Strategic Change Portfolio in the areas of risks, interdependencies, costs and capacity to deliver. The following key points were highlighted:
- Service Delivery Review (SDR): Both hurdle criteria and balanced room workshops have been held with 23 options being identified. Approval to progress to public

consultation to be submitted to the Special Board meeting on 29 May 2025. Progress to public consultation remains on track, albeit with tight timelines, for a decision to be made by the end of 2025.

- Corporate Services Review (CSR): Work continues on the vision/scope of the review with workshops being held. In tandem, a business support review was also being carried out. People, Payroll, Finance and Training (PPFT) continues to progress well with a fuller update later on the agenda.
- Enabling Infrastructure: Workshops to be held to define the scope of the programme which will include New Mobilising System (NMS) and Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP).
- Portfolio dashboard provides an overview of the RAG status for individual projects within the portfolio.
- Portfolio level risks identified relating to optimism bias around planning and volume of change scheduled within the coming year. To be discussed further under Item 11.1.

9.1.2 The Committee noted and welcomed the revised format of the summary report.

9.1.3 Brief discussion took place on the tight timescales for the SDR public consultation, potential impact of the upcoming election and purdah period. The Service would continue to monitor the situation, however the current timetable would remain unchanged.

9.1.4 Since the production of the report (24 March 2025), the following updates were provided:

- Discovery phase of PPFT had concluded and the report was still awaited. Drafting of the business case had commenced.
- Impact on CSR, due to resource challenges within PPFT, have been mitigated by Business Analysis Support to help develop the business case.
- NMS project plan has been rebaselined and connectivity issues have been resolved.

9.1.5 In regard to SDR, AW outlined the engagement undertaken with all potentially affected personnel/stations, and feedback received, prior to the Service wide announcement. AW noted that Comms and Engagement would address all local media stories/enquiries. AW reminded the Committee that the SDR marked the start of a continual review of the Service and the services delivered to communities across Scotland.

9.1.6 The Committee requested an update report be provided on the Rostering project.

ACTION: CM

9.1.7 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

10 PORTFOLIO FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

10.1 CM presented a report to the Committee providing an update on the key performance indicators (KPIs) of the Change Portfolio. The following key points were highlighted:

- NMS was currently reporting Amber on Costs, forecasting an overall underspend against the business case and anticipating one cashable benefit late 2025.
- ESMCP/In-Vehicle System was forecasting an underspend partly due to recruitment challenges.
- Rostering was reporting an underspend and cashable benefits would be enabled via a policy discovery workstream.
- Temporary Appliance Withdrawal delivered the forecasted budget savings in 2023/24 with further forecasted savings anticipated in 2024/25.
- SDR was reporting an underspend due to challenges in recruitment of specialist roles.
- Overall in-year project costs and timescales remain within the tolerance levels except for an underspend on SDR.

10.2 The Committee requested a general improvement in the expression of and reporting of

benefits.

ACTION: CM

10.3 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

11 **RISK**

11.1 **Portfolio Risk Summary**

11.1.1 CM presented the Committee with an overview of the portfolio risk register and spotlight key risks within the portfolio and its constituent project and programmes. The following key points were highlighted:

- Risk NMS062 New Mobilising System – 999 lines: This issue had now been resolved.
- Risk PPFT012 People, Payroll, Finance and Training: Risk relating to affordability, to be covered under Item 13 on the agenda.
- Risk SDR011 Service Delivery Review Benefits Realisation: Significant risk relating to benefits realisation, overview of work to identify benefits and proactive management.
- Portfolio Office risk of optimism bias relating to planning and the work being undertaken.
- Portfolio Office risk relating to volume of organisational change scheduled for winter 2025 and the work being undertaken to understand any implications and dependencies across the portfolio.

11.1.2 The Committee noted and welcomed the Risk NMS062 had been resolved.

11.1.3 The Committee commented positively on the revised style of reports noting that they were both clearer and more informative.

11.1.4 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

12 **GENERAL REPORTS:**

12.1 **HMFSI INSPECTION ACTION PLANS AND CLOSING REPORTS UPDATE: SFRS COMMAND AND CONTROL MOBILISING SYSTEM**

12.1.1 AW presented the Committee with an update on relevant audit and inspection action plans for scrutiny. AW noted that all 6 actions had been completed, closing statements were presented for scrutiny and the Corporate Board had approved the closure of the action plan.

12.1.2 **The Committee scrutinised the report and supported the closure of the action plan.**

(Meeting broke at 1140 hrs and reconvened at 1148 hrs)

13 **EVOLUTION, CURRENT SCOPE AND STRATEGIC BENEFITS OF PEOPLE, PAYROLL, FINANCE AND TRAINING (PPFT)**

13.1 PMcG gave a presentation to the Committee which provided an overview of the evolution, current scope and strategic benefits of the PPFT project for scrutiny. The following key points were highlighted:

- Background on the original scope for People, Training, Finance and Asset Systems (PTFAS) programme and subsequent revisions made to it.
 - Health and Wellbeing element had gone live.
 - Property and Fleet elements had been descoped.
 - Rostering project was split from the original scope and was scheduled to go live this year.
 - Training, HR and Finance projects were merged into the PPFT programme.
- Recap of PPFT progress since 2023, which included notice of interest process, development of outline business case, consideration of a potential joint project with Police Scotland and Scottish Government (SG).
- Entered into Discovery Lite phase with SG's Shared Services Programme in 2024

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resulting in a high level of functional fit (80%) being identified. Deep dive exercise undertaken to understand costs, timescales, etc.

- Approved to proceed to full Discovery Phase commencing in January to March 2025. Final report was still awaited and was currently with the Minister for Public Finance for review.
- Overview of the initial observations from the Discovery Phase.
- Overview of potential contingency considerations.
- Clarity was still required on PPFT's position in relation to the CSR Programme.
- Outline of the potential benefits, risk and funding implications.

13.2 The Committee sought clarity on whether there was a critical need for this change. SO'D noted that currently systems were out of contract and would require a procurement process to be undertaken. Progressing with SG's Shared Services Programme aligned with the public service reform agenda and the Service's Strategy.

13.3 SO'D briefed the Committee on recent discussions with the Minister for Public Finance which included the financial aspects of funding.

13.4 AW briefed the Committee on the Training element and the criticality of renewing the scheduling system which would support and improve training for firefighter safety. It was noted that SG's Shared Services Programme may not be able to support it at this stage, however, this was still to be confirmed.

13.5 In regard to the lack of project management, it was noted that until there was clarity on the direction, this could not be progressed.

13.6 The Committee noted their concerns in regard to the 20% missing from the functional fit, the volume of change facing/required by the Service, and the relationship between CSR and PPFT. The Committee suggested that the Service should request an evaluation report on the success or otherwise of the implementation process within SG.

13.7 The Committee welcomed the update but were not yet assured on the position. The Committee requested a formal report to provide further assurance about the PPFT project detail, planning and governance and recommended next steps. If available, the Committee also requested some independent assurance regarding the implementation of the same system by SG.

ACTION: CM

13.8 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

(P McGovern left the meeting at 1234 hrs)

14 COMMITTEE ROLLING FORWARD PLAN

14.1 Committee Forward Plan

14.1.1 The Committee noted the Forward Plan and added the following item:

- Report as to how dedicated change management capacity as well as broader organisational capacity was being deployed to support the delivery of change activity.

14.2 Items for consideration at Future IGF, Board and Strategy Day Meetings

14.2.1 There were no items identified.

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

15 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

15.1 RW summarised the formal actions raised during the meeting.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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16.1 The next full public meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 29 July 2025.

16.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1236 hrs.

(The meeting broke at 1236 hrs and reconvened in private at 1242 hrs)

PRIVATE SESSION

17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING:

17.1 Thursday 6 February 2025

17.1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

17.2 **The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

18 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

18.1 The Strategic Planning and Change Committee Rolling Action Log was considered, and actions were agreed and removed or re-opened as appropriate.

18.2 **The Committee noted the Action Log, and the closure of the actions were agreed.**

There being no further matters to discuss, the private meeting closed at 1245 hrs.