20 August 2026

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board as follows:

Date: Thursday 27 August 2026

Time: 1000 hours

Venue: Braidwood Suite, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Westburn Drive, Cambuslang, G72 7NA / Virtual (MS Teams)

The business for the meeting is detailed overleaf.

Should you require any other information, please contact Group Commander Chrisopher Casey on 07970 968479, Heather Greig on 07824 307616 or Debbie Haddow on 07341 880523.

Yours sincerely

MHAIRI WYLIE
Chair

Please note that the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes only.

PUBLIC MEETING - THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

THURSDAY 27 AUGUST 2026 @ 1000 HOURS

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

AGENDA

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members should declare any financial and non-financial interest they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item, and the nature of their interest.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S): *M Wylie*
5.1 Monday 22 June 2026 (Special) *(attached)*
5.2 Thursday 9 July 2026 (Special) *(attached)*

The Board is asked to approve the minute of the previous meeting(s).

6 ACTION LOG *(attached)* *Board Support*

The Board is asked to note the updated Action Log and approve the closed actions.

7 DECISION LOG *(attached)* *Board Support*

The Board is asked to note the Decision Log.

8 CHAIR'S REPORT *(attached)* *M Wylie*

The Board is asked to note the Chair's Report.

Please note that the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes only.

9	**CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT** *(attached)*	*S Stevens*
	The Board is asked to note the Chief Officer's Report.	
10	**COMMITTEE REPORTS**	
	The Board is asked to note the following updates:	
	10.1 ***Strategic Planning and Change Committee***	*T O'Donnell*
	- *Verbal Update of Meeting: 6 August 2026 (verbal)*	
	10.2 ***Audit & Risk Assurance Committee***	*B Baverstock*
	- *Verbal Update of Meeting: 16 July 2026 (verbal)*	
	- *Committee Annual Report to Accountable Officer (attached)*	
	10.3 ***People Committee:***	*M Smith*
	- *Draft Minutes of Meeting: 18 June 2026 (attached)*	
	10.4 ***Service Delivery Committee****:*	*T Wright*
	- *Draft Minutes of Meeting: 4 June 2026 (attached)*	
	10.5 ***Reform Collaboration Group***	
	- *Reform Collaboration Group Main Board (verbal)*	*M Wylie*
11	**THREE-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN 2025-28: QUARTER 1 2026-27 PROGRESS REPORT** *(attached)*	*M McAteer*
	The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.	
12	**RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT** *(attached)*	*J Wallace*
	The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.	
13	**CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT** *(attached)*	*J Wallace*
	The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.	
14	**ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTCOMES OF ANNUAL REVIEW – EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOARD** *(attached)*	*M McAteer*
	The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.	
15	**RISK THEMES** *(verbal)*	*M Wylie*
	The Board is asked to reflect on any risk themes identified during this meeting.	
16	**FORWARD PLAN** *(attached)*	*Board Support*
	The Board is asked to note the update.	
17	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**	
	A Special Public meeting will be held on Thursday 24 September 2026.	
	The next formal meeting will be held on Thursday 29 October 2026.	

Please note that the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes only.

PRIVATE SESSION

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING(s): *M Wylie*
18.1 Thursday 9 July 2026 (Special) *(attached)*
18.2 Thursday 30 July 2026 (Special) *(attached)*

The Board is asked to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

19 PRIVATE ACTION LOG *(attached)* *Board Support*

The Board is asked to note the updated Action Log and approve the closed actions.

20 SFRS BOARD INSURANCE REPORT *(attached)* *D Johnston*

The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.

Please note that the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes only.

Agenda Item 5.1

PUBLIC SPECIAL MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MONDAY 22 JUNE 2026 @ 0930 HRS

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

PRESENT:

Mhairi Wylie, Chair (MW)	Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair (AF)
Stuart Ballingall (SJB)	Brian Baverstock (BB)
Neil Mapes (NM)	Therese O'Donnell (TO'D)
Malcolm Payton (MP)	Andrew Smith (AS)
Madeline Smith (MS)	Tim Wright (TW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Stuart Stevens (SS)	Chief Officer
David Farries (DF)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational Delivery
Jon Henderson (JH)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Prevention
Craig McGoldrick (CMcG)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Governance, Strategy and Change
Deborah Stanfield (DS)	Interim Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)	Head of People
Asha Narsapur (AN)	Legal Services Manager
Christopher Casey (CC)	Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Heather Greig (HG)	Executive Officer Board Support
Debbie Haddow (DJH)	Board Support/Minutes

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting welcoming those in attendance and observing via MS Teams. On behalf of the Board, congratulations were extended to Watch Commander Ian Nicholson and Area Commander Chris Getty on being awarded the King's Fire Service Medal.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Paul Stollard, Board Member
Andy Watt, Deputy Chief Officer

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

3.1 No items were identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 For transparency, the following declarations of interests were recorded during the meeting:

- Madeline Smith, Board Member of Scottish Ambulance Service
- Therese O'Donnell, Non-Executive Advisor, Forestry & Land Scotland

4.2 There were no further declarations or conflict of interests made.

5 SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEW (SDR) RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Opening Remarks

5.1.1 The Chair outlined the approach noting that the 3 recommendations would be taken in turn and at each stage Board Members would be encouraged to seek sufficient assurance and undertake scrutiny to reach a decision. The first recommendation would consider the case for change and whether the Service Delivery Review (SDR) process remained the appropriate mechanism to deliver that change. The second recommendation would consider whether the SDR process had been legally compliant and had followed the required governance procedures. The third recommendation would consider the recurring/common themes identified throughout the process as well as the individual cases for change.

5.1.2 It was noted that the recurring/common themes included, but were not limited to, response times, community safety and prevention, recruitment, retention and training of On-Call firefighters, firefighter safety, wellbeing and welfare, and development within local communities in relation to risk and demand and seeking further assurance on the Community Risk Index Model (CRIM).

5.1.3 The Board were offered the opportunity to raise any general questions, which did not pertain to the first two recommendations or relate to individual options, to ensure appropriate scrutiny and assurance across the wider national programme. The Board were reminded that questions or comments should be focussed and concise to support the efficient running of the meeting.

5.1.4 The Board were reminded that the preferred approach would be to reach decisions by consensus, however given the range of options under consideration this may not be possible. As per SFRS Standing Orders, should a vote be required, this would be conducted by a show of hands, with each member's vote recorded in the minute for transparency and public record. It was noted that reaching consensus would not prevent individual members from recording a question, query or concern, provided they were content to support the overall position. Should any vote deviate from the proposed recommendation, the reason for that decision would also be recorded to ensure a clear and transparent public record.

5.1.5 The Board were reminded of their wider responsibilities which included ensuring that all consultation responses, particularly those raising new ideas/challenges/information not previously considered had been properly reviewed and taken into account. The Board should also ensure that they were satisfied that the hurdle criteria had been met and that the options were viable and safe. The Board should also ensure that they were content that any decisions reached could withstand scrutiny from staff and the communities served.

5.1.6 The Chair acknowledged and thanked everyone who responded to the consultation, noting that their input had helped shape the questions, thinking and considerations brought to this meeting. Thanks were also extended to elected members for ensuring their constituents' voices were heard, and to staff for both developing the options and providing constructive challenge throughout the process.

5.2 **Case for Change and Deliverability**

5.2.1 SS offered his congratulations to Watch Commander Nicholson and Area Commander Getty on their being awarded the King's Fire Service Medal and welcomed colleagues and observers to the meeting.

5.2.2 SS advised that he would outline the process and the case for change before discussions focussed on individual recommendations. SS commented on the approach taken to develop evidence-based recommendations for the future delivery of services across Scotland. It was noted that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the recommendations presented and to provide assurance to the Board.

5.2.3 SS noted that the process underpinning the recommendations had been robust, transparent, and aligned with the Service's statutory responsibilities, strategic priorities, and commitment to public safety. SS acknowledged that there were elements of the review that had caused concern for staff, representative bodies, communities and stakeholders. SS further noted that any change within emergency services had to be carefully considered, properly managed, grounded in operational assurance and focused on maintaining public confidence.

5.2.4 SS stated that his intention from the outset had been for the process to be open, transparent and for individual voices to be heard, fully considered and reflected in the outcomes. SS offered his thanks to communities, stakeholders and staff for their engagement and contribution throughout the consultation. SS offered his assurance that the feedback received had been valuable and had directly influenced the final recommendations.

5.2.5 SS reminded the Board that the Service's purpose was to protect the communities it serves and to ensure the safety of its staff. As Chief Officer, SS offered his assurance that he would not compromise on this.

5.2.6 SS outlined the context and strategic drivers for the SDR noting that the Service's operating environment continues to evolve with changing operational demand, complex community risks, financial pressures, workforce challenges and increased expectations around prevention, resilience and partnership working.

5.2.7 SS noted that the SDR had been commissioned to assess whether the current delivery model remained sustainable, effective and fit for the future and was not a purely financial exercise. The recommendations were intended to strengthen and modernise service delivery incrementally, to respond to future risk and demand. The review aligned with public service reform, the Fire Framework, continuous improvement, best value, prevention, partnership and fiscal sustainability. SS further noted that difficult decisions were required to ensure the Service had the right capacity and capability in the right place at the right time to respond to emerging risks.

5.2.8 SS noted that a key benefit from SDR related to prevention activities and the need to build on this further to support wider national outcomes and focussing on protecting vulnerable people, reducing inequalities, and helping young people to thrive. Strengthening fire safety enforcement capability and resources, and a safer built environment was essential for communities and firefighter safety. It was noted that changing operational demand had increased the need for more specialist training as firefighter roles become more complex and technical due to emerging risks related to climate change, terrorism and wildfire requiring enhanced preparedness. To ensure the effective delivery of training, the appropriate infrastructure, resources and capability were required. Due to the success of prevention activities, exposure to experiential learning was limited, therefore the Service had to ensure that firefighters were appropriately trained and prepared. Increasing off-station resources would help to improve community and firefighter safety across Scotland.

5.2.9 SS noted that another key benefit from SDR related to strengthening support for On-Call colleagues, who cover most of Scotland's landmass and were essential in protecting communities. SS commented on the need for more flexible and dynamic solutions, including a broader range of shift systems, to improve resilience, support diversity ambitions and make better use of resources. SS further noted that the proposed options could help address the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) position, support progress on the capital backlog, and mitigate organisational risks. The wider fiscal context, particularly the Spending Review and the need for public service reform, reinforced the importance of change, while recognising that deliverability, capacity and financial impact must be carefully managed.

5.2.10 The Board, noting the reinvestment opportunities within prevention, sought clarification on what additional prevention activities could be delivered or enhanced. JH advised that additional prevention resources would directly support community activity, including youth engagement, increased fire safety audits and planning for major events. JH noted that legislation was a key part of prevention work, and with additional capacity the Service could help influence and shape legislation in areas such as battery energy storage systems. The Service would also have more capacity to respond to recommendations arising from significant fire-related incidents. JH reminded the Board that the Service had been effective in prevention over several years and had developed strong learning and partnerships as a result. However, the Service had to continue to adapt to new risks and changing demand and the work of the New and Emerging Risks Group was highlighted. JH noted that any increase in prevention capacity would make a significant difference.

5.2.11 The Board sought clarity on how lessons learned, and benefits realised, from any decisions made would be assessed, in order to maximise the value of those decisions and to inform future service change processes. In addition, the Board queried, given the changes that had taken place over the two-year process, whether there may be scope in future for smaller scale or local periodic review processes.

5.2.12 MMcA advised that the standard SFRS benefits management process had been applied to the SDR programme. This process operated at both project and programme level, with oversight through established governance routes, including the Change, Performance and Improvement Group and the Strategic Planning and Change Committee. MMcA further advised that benefits would be defined, monitored and reviewed at each stage of the programme with progress captured through the benefits realisation process. Reviews would take place at key stage gates, with a post-implementation review capturing benefits realised and lessons learned. Findings would then be reported through the appropriate governance channels, providing regular updates over the coming years.

5.2.13 The Board agreed that, due to the breadth of the recommendations and potential impact across the organisation, the Integrated Governance Forum would discuss and consider the appropriate governance route(s) through the relevant committees to avoid any duplications.

5.2.14 The Board queried whether the same process would be appropriate for any future service changes. SS advised that the process would be subject to a detailed and structured debrief involving a range of stakeholders, including the Board and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). SS noted that the scale and interdependencies of this programme required the approach taken, future changes may be better suited to more localised or smaller scale processes. SS commented on the significant learning that had already been gained and that consideration would be given to the most appropriate approach for future change activity.

5.2.15 The Board sought clarity on how the Service would track benefits from reinvestment, particularly the outcomes and impacts delivered, within the context of a national Service delivered locally. MMcA advised that the specific change programmes would include benefits realisation plans, supported by wider performance management arrangements for assessing benefits and impact across the Service. MMcA noted that the Performance Management Framework would be used to track impacts on prevention activity and outcomes for communities.

5.2.16 The Board asked whether SS, as Accountable Officer, was confident that the proposals presented would help the Service progress towards a more sustainable operating model and improve the level of best value delivered to communities across Scotland. SS confirmed that he was confident the proposals would support these objectives. SS reminded the Board that the Service had demonstrated best value since its inception, which had been recognised every year by Scottish Government. SS advised that the proposals would help drive the continued commitment to change, reform and best value whilst supporting the effective use of capital and other resources and establishing the building blocks for a more sustainable operating model.

5.2.17 Referring to the capacity metric table (paragraph 3.1.1 within the covering report), the Board sought clarification that there would be no reduction in full time firefighter posts and that there would be an increase of one wholetime pumping appliance when compared to the 2023/24 baseline figure following the proposed implementation. SS confirmed that this was correct.

5.2.18 The Board noted that the Service had remained largely unchanged for a considerable period and that the issue was wider than establishing a case for change. The Board further noted that the Service had a responsibility to better align risk and demand, as well as continuing to deliver public service reform and best value. It was noted that the case for change was compelling and described the proposals as a measured, data-driven and responsible process for moving incrementally in that direction.

5.3 The Board agreed that there was a need for change and that the principles of the SDR process provided the mechanism for those changes. The Board approved the first recommendation.

5.4 Service Delivery Review (SDR) Process

5.4.1 SS extended his thanks to all colleagues across the Service who had contributed to the delivery of this process, in particular the SDR team, and acknowledged that the process had been significant and challenging.

5.4.2 DF advised that a full overview of the SDR process, including the 2024 pre-consultation stage, had been provided within the covering report (paragraph 2.18) and noted that the Board had been kept updated throughout.

5.4.3 DF highlighted that areas of assurance had been provided at different stages and referenced the strong emphasis on public consultation and the detailed feedback received through that process. It was noted that the public consultation generated 3,700 online survey responses, around 840 attendees at 40 community engagement events, and a further 51 staff engagement sessions. DF stated that the level of interaction and engagement had been significant and thanked the teams involved in supporting this activity throughout the process. DF noted that in preparation for consultation, several partners and independent external organisations had been engaged to support the process. This helped to ensure the Service had given due consideration to the Gunning Principles in relation to public consultation. DF further noted that Operational Research in Health Ltd (ORH) were also engaged to provide modelling and independent analytical expertise.

5.4.4 DF advised that the Board had been kept informed as relationships with these partners developed. He noted that the SDR team, SDR Programme Board and internal governance structures referred to by MMcA provided confidence in the process, supported by the extensive Board pack and associated information.

5.4.5 DF advised that the final stage before Board consideration had been a review by the SDR Board and then the SLT, which provided a further layer of assurance on each option for change and the recommendations brought forward.

5.4.6 The Board recognised the contributions of the external organisations involved in the process and expressed particular thanks to the Health and Social Care Alliance, who facilitated the community-based events.

5.4.7 With reference to the risk appetite, the Board questioned how the recommendations had balanced national and local stakeholder views, recognised the contrast between feedback received from the wider Scottish public and views expressed locally, and how this had informed the balance between risk and opportunity. SS advised that the process had considered the relevant risk factors and the Service's risk appetite, and the overarching need to balance risk, demand and improvements in determining the right course of action for the Service. SS stated that the process had demonstrated that community views and other relevant considerations had been taken into account and that appropriate cognisance had been given to the areas of risk appetite identified. SS invited the Board to reflect on whether the proposals aligned with their own risk appetite and whether Board Members were assured that the relevant risks had been fully considered.

5.4.8 The Board acknowledged that the risks faced by the Service had changed since its inception. The Board noted that the Service would continue to face additional risks and challenges and that required a balance as work continued to respond as circumstances changed. It was noted that the recommendations represented progress, but consideration of risk appetite should also include how this continues to develop beyond the decisions being made.

5.4.9 The Board sought clarification that the ORH technical modelling and CRIM had taken account of projected climate change impacts, particularly in relation to flood and wildfire high-risk areas. SS advised that DF would respond on the CRIM element and JH would provide details on preparatory activity relating to flooding and wildfire, including relevant academic work and wider organisational intelligence.

5.4.10 DF noted that some of these points would be covered later under recurring themes, but agreed it was appropriate to address the question in the context of the current recommendation and process. DF advised that the ORH model used historic geographical data from flood, wildfire and other incidents to generate simulated incidents. The CRIM used a specific flood risk layer, using SEPA information, on flood plains and risk areas. DF confirmed that the modelling was primarily based on historic and current risk, and that further approaches would be required to assess future climate-related risk. DF noted that further information would be provided under the recurring themes agenda item.

5.4.11 JH advised the Board that the New and Emerging Risks Group had specific sub groups focused on flooding and wildfire. JH highlighted the work in relation to wildfire, which included multi agency contributions in forecasting future risk, strengthening preparedness across both the Service and Scotland more widely and learning from previous incidents. JH provided a brief overview of the Service's work with academic partners, including University of Edinburgh, in relation to both flooding and wildfire to learn from past events, assess potential future developments and plan for future incidents.

5.4.12 The Board sought assurance across the full process, including the pre-consultation exercise that informed the overall approach. The Board queried how specific and/or emerging risks which had been identified through the consultation process had been reflected on and how additional feedback received during consultation had been considered. DF advised that information from the public consultation, including new developments within communities and risk intelligence, CRIM and modelling outputs had been considered together as part of the assessment process. DF noted that the recurring themes section outlined how assessments had been made and the factors that informed them. DF noted that further information would be provided under the recurring themes agenda item.

5.4.13 The Board sought assurance that the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) were complete and up to date for the purposes of the decision being made, while recognising that further work would continue during implementation. LG advised that the EHRIA had continually been updated throughout the process and could be considered complete and up to date for the purposes of the Board's decision. The assessments would continue to be reviewed and updated throughout any implementation period for options approved by the Board.

5.4.14 The Board sought clarity of the methodology used in the Diffley report, particularly how a large volume of online and face-to-face responses had been reduced to 18 substantive options and sought assurance that no significant or alternative points had been missed. DF explained that SDR related correspondence had been analysed using the same approach as the Diffley work, including sentiment and thematic analysis, and confirmed he was confident that nothing had been missed.

5.4.15 The Board questioned how the Service had ensured that the views of individuals and communities who took part in the consultation had been reflected in the review, and what changes demonstrated that their voices had been heard. It was noted that this reflected an earlier question raised and would be addressed through the discussion on feedback and specific options.

5.4.16 The Board noted concerns about timescales, prioritisation and the potential impact of delayed delivery particularly as this could leave communities and staff with uncertainty for a prolonged period. DF advised that deliverability within five years had been built into the assessment criteria, alongside factors such as benefit, affordability, etc. DF noted that some options would require significant capital investment or multiple dependencies before they could be delivered, whilst others could be implemented more quickly. DF further noted that once decisions had been made, clear communication and engagement with communities and staff would be essential, particularly where delivery may take longer due to these additional factors. SS acknowledged the concern regarding longer timescales but reiterated the reasons for this noting that engagement would be essential to keep staff and communities informed and reassured throughout the process.

5.4.17 The Board sought reassurance that the SLT had applied common sense checks and professional judgement throughout the extensive process. SS advised that the Programme Board had reviewed a substantial volume of information before presentation to the SLT for scrutiny. SS further advised how the SLT had scrutinised the material through several workshops and sessions, how they had applied strategic oversight, professional judgement and common sense checks before agreeing on the final recommendations. SS noted that the SLT had considered the strategic fit, risk mitigation, deliverability, organisational capacity and workforce implications and had sought additional assurance in some areas, including stakeholder feedback and specific options.

5.4.18 The Board sought clarity on the governance route which would be used to consider the outcomes of further pre-implementation assessment and review against economic, social, technological and related factors. DF advised that this work would be undertaken by the SDR team and be overseen by the SDR Programme Board. MMcA noted that this work would now form part of the wider programme of change, which would be reported to the SLT, Strategic Planning and Change Committee and the Board. Should any material change be required this would follow the normal change request process which would be taken to the Strategic Planning and Change Committee.

5.4.19 The Board acknowledged the quality and depth of the information provided and were assured that themes and summaries had reflected individual comments. The Board queried how implementation would be de-risked and managed, particularly in relation to concerns such as recruiting On-Call staff. DF advised that following the decisions made, Local Senior Officers and their teams would be involved in detailed implementation planning. DF noted that this would link with wider Service initiatives, including the On-Call improvement programme, and that implementation would move from being led primarily by the Programme team to becoming a shared responsibility across functions.

5.5 The Board agreed and were assured that the overall process undertaken had been evidence-based, legally compliant, and adhered to the Gunning principles. The Board approved the second recommendation.

(The meeting broke at 1042 hrs and reconvened at 1050 hrs)

5.6 Recurring Themes

5.6.1 DF explained that the intention was to cover recurring themes from the public consultation, public meetings and staff engagement sessions. DF noted that specific issues would be considered later under each individual option for change. However, this section provided an opportunity to discuss general areas of concern and the Service's overall position on the SDR.

5.6.2 <u>Response Times</u>

DF advised that response times had been a recurring theme throughout the consultation and explained that this section would cover how response times had been considered during the planning stages of the SDR. DF noted that it was important to recognise the wider context when discussing response times as part of the review. DF noted that average response times had generally increased over recent years across the UK. However, there had been reductions in fire fatalities, fire casualties and accidental dwelling fires which indicated that the effectiveness of a modern fire and rescue service could not be determined by response times alone. Prevention, protection, community safety activity, building standards and risk-based deployment of resources had all contributed to improved outcomes for the communities. DF reiterated that the most important response time was the time between the fire starting, its discovery and the alarm being raised, which underlined the importance of prevention activity.

5.6.3 DF acknowledged that response times remain a key performance indicator and measure of emergency response capability. Where changes to stations, appliances or crewing arrangements were being considered, it was reasonable to understand the potential impact on the response time. DF advised that Scotland does not operate nationally prescribed response standards and therefore the approach taken had been to compare likely response times from proposed options with those in similar communities elsewhere in Scotland. This had provided comparable response times in communities with similar populations, geography, risk profiles and demand levels to provide an evidence-based way to assess whether a proposed change was fair, proportionate and aligned to risk. DF stated that the aim had not been to meet an arbitrary target time, merely to demonstrate that the proposed service delivery model would provide an appropriate level of emergency response when compared with other communities facing similar risks.

5.6.4 DF advised that independent modelling had shown that the proposed changes would have only localised impacts on initial appliance response times and station workloads, with no wider regional or national impact on operational resilience. DF noted that the modelling had been supported by operational evidence from the temporary appliance withdrawals in September 2023, which had been reviewed and evaluated. The evaluation had found no evidence of any detrimental impact on the Service's ability to deliver an effective operational response. This provided additional confidence that the SDR change options could be implemented without materially compromising operational performance.

5.6.5 DF noted that rising response times remains a focus for the UK wide fire sector and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) were considering commissioning work in this area. DF further noted that, due to the concerns raised within the process, the Service had already commissioned academic work with Northumbria University.

5.6.6 MMcA advised that SFRS had engaged Northumbria University to develop a model examining the travel-time element of response times and the external factors contributing to increases over the past decade. Factors such as traffic calming, low-emission zones, congestion and weather conditions, etc affected appliance travel even under blue-light conditions. The work had been subject to information governance and university ethics processes. Modelling was now underway with an initial update to be provided to the SLT and a subsequent fuller update to be presented to the Board in due course. Once finalised the model would be handed over to the Service to maintain and use to better understand response time pressures and inform future contingency planning.

5.6.7 The Board sought confirmation that the local authority level data showed no significant increase for most options and therefore reflected the dispersed regional impact of the proposed changes, supporting equitable service provision across Scotland. DF confirmed that the interpretation of the regional data was accurate but recognised that localised response time variations were associated with the individual options. DF explained that appliance placement, workload distribution and the effect on neighbouring stations had been central considerations in the SDR programme.

5.6.8 The Board sought assurance on prevention activity and that firefighting training standards had been maintained alongside incident outcomes throughout the 2023 temporary appliance withdrawals. DF recognised concerns regarding maintaining commitment and statutory responsibilities in areas where resources had been withdrawn. DF advised that the evaluation of the temporary withdrawals had shown that surrounding stations had sufficient capacity to continue prevention, community safety and training activities. These areas had been closely monitored during the temporary withdrawal period with other resources used to maintain performance.

5.6.9 The Board queried whether the academic work would consider response times and future forecasting. MMcA noted that response times were made up of several elements, including call handling, crew mobilisation and travel time, and that better understanding of the factors affecting travel time could support future planning. MMcA further noted that the base model needed to be stabilised before further forecasting work could be explored and advised that an update would be brought to the Board in due course. JH highlighted that the new mobilising system was a key development and once fully embedded would improve mobilisation of appliances. SS reminded the Board of the importance of prevention and its role in reducing the time between ignition and discovery. Over the last 10 years, despite a population increase, there had been a reduction in accidental dwelling fires (28%), dwelling fire casualties (47%), and dwelling fire fatalities (48%).

5.6.10 The Board acknowledged that response times had generated significant interest and concern during the public consultation. The Board noted that in addition to the analysis summary provided, they had undertaken more detailed consideration of the factors influencing response times. The Board were reassured that the Service had prioritised this issue in responding to the feedback and were seeking to optimise resource deployment to better align demand and risk.

5.6.11 The Board were reminded that response times would remain subject to quarterly scrutiny by the Service Delivery Committee and would continue to be monitored as proposals moved into business as usual. It was highlighted that the accuracy and resilience of the Service's modelling since the temporary withdrawal of appliances had provided assurance in the professional judgement being applied to factors affecting response times.

5.6.12 <u>Community Safety and Prevention</u>
DF advised that another concern raised through the consultation related to whether changes to the model would affect the Service's ability to maintain a strong community presence and continue effective community safety and prevention activity. DF noted that the proposed changes were intended to strengthen this area of work albeit they may be delivered in a different way.

5.6.13 DF noted that proposals to introduce a Day Shift Duty System (DSDS) in specific areas would maintain a wholetime resource and day shift crews would be involved in community safety, prevention and preparedness work with local communities. It was noted that in some cases, the existing Risk, Demand and operational modelling had indicated that an On-Call resource would be the appropriate configuration however based on the ability to interface with Communities more readily in a non-operational sense, a DSDS was being proposed.

5.6.14 DF noted that the liberated posts through the introduction of the duty system would be reinvested to strengthen support structures, including the off-station structure previously described. This would include prevention teams who could deliver targeted prevention activities. DF stated that the Service was committed to ensuring communities understood the changes within their area, including what engagement, prevention, fire safety and community safety support was available to them.

5.6.15 DF noted that the proposed models and liberated posts would help the Service to adapt and effectively respond to future developments in community safety and prevention.

5.6.16 JH noted that the Prevention Strategy was based on universal proportionalism and providing a proportionate and consistent response across Scotland whilst targeting support according to need. JH confirmed that this approach would continue with any future changes considered in the round and proportionate action taken in affected areas. JH advised that any additional prevention resources would be a significant benefit for the Service.

5.6.17 The Board sought assurance that communities affected by the closure of long-term dormant stations would remain fully included in community engagement, safety and prevention activities. JH confirmed that this was the intention and that any changes as a result of the proposal would result in direct engagement with affected communities with targeted action taken to meet local needs.

5.6.18 The Board queried the anticipated timescales for putting individual plans in place should the recommendations be approved. JH noted that the timescales would be specific to each recommendation however the team were ready to commence this activity. JH stated that he did not anticipate any delay as this linked to the overall deliverability and phasing previously discussed.

5.6.19 In relation to long-term dormant stations, DF advised that community safety and prevention activities had already been provided in those communities for an extended period of time. Existing response and prevention plans were in place for all of those locations and provided equitable access to resources. DF noted that there was not an increased risk or demand in these communities rather the focus was to offer reassurance and support.

5.6.20 Recruitment, Retention and Training of On-Call Firefighters
DF advised that another concern raised through the consultation related to the use of On-Call firefighters and the recognised challenge of On-Call availability across Scotland and the wider UK. DF reminded the Board of the Scottish developments through the On-Call Improvement Programme and wider UK developments through the NFCC's strategic work on improving On-Call provision. DF noted that these challenges were routinely monitored and scrutinised by the Service Delivery Committee.

5.6.21 DF highlighted that the options for change identify the preferred model however further work would be required to confirm that the Service could deliver those models effectively. Any changes would be subject to appropriate phasing, sequencing and implementation planning. DF noted that availability varied significantly between stations with some achieving high levels of cover and others facing challenges linked to staffing numbers and firefighters' primary employment commitments.

5.6.22 DF advised that the proposed day shift duty systems were intended to support On-Call provision by placing wholetime firefighters in specific areas to support On-Call provision. New contract bandings introduced to provide greater flexibility for staff provides challenges for the Service to clearly articulate staffing requirements in full-time equivalent terms and to state a fixed number to ensure appliance availability. A new On-Call resource was proposed and targeted recruitment within communities would help to create an On-Call establishment for each individual station. DF noted that creating new On-Call crews from scratch would present challenges, particularly around competence, as trainee firefighters take around three years to become competent.

5.6.23 CMcG advised that any development of an On-Call team would continue to prioritise people with a strong focus on health, safety, wellbeing and all aspects of training that support and build competence. He noted that timescales would vary depending on circumstances, such as whether dual-contract firefighters were already in place or whether recruitment was starting from scratch. CMcG further noted that there was no fixed timeframe as each process would follow existing standards and the full process for acquiring, maintaining and confirming competence.

5.6.24 DF noted that the On-Call Improvement Programme had supported and delivered the recruitment of 54 On-Call support Watch Commanders, introduced bank working arrangements and localised modular training to help recruitment and retention. As a result, the On-Call target operating model was becoming less effective as a reference point for the Service.

5.6.25 The Board queried how and when the viability of proposed On-Call arrangements would be assessed and whether gateway reviews, defined timeframes or what governance oversight would be used if progress was not achieved. DF advised that review points and parameters would be set out in the business case for each proposal once authority to proceed had been granted. He noted that while the options had been assessed against agreed criteria and identified as the most appropriate for the areas concerned, further work was needed to test wider employability and assess each case on its own merits before moving forward.

5.6.26 The Board queried whether the recent On-Call contract banding changes had affected availability or recruitment. DF advised that the expected improvement in availability had not yet been seen and that appropriate contract management at station level remained important. LG noted that the new arrangements had provided existing staff with greater flexibility to move to lower contract levels due to changes in personal circumstances which had helped to retain some individuals. The changes had also allowed local managers to target community members who could offer more limited availability, as previously this had been difficult under the former contractual requirements.

5.6.27 The Board recognised that the new contract model had helped sustain On-Call employment and that further benefits from the On-Call Improvement Programme may emerge over time. DF confirmed that the new contract arrangements allowed for more targeted discussions with potential recruits around the specific hours needed, or they could provide. DF noted that local managers should make full use of the different contract types and consider how they could be blended across stations and areas. The Board suggested that the Service could approach former staff who left due to previous contractual requirements. DF noted and agreed that this could be considered.

5.6.28 The Board queried whether demographic data had been used to consider locating stations/appliances based on improved recruitment prospects of On-Call firefighters rather than response times. DF advised that the On-Call Improvement Programme had examined strategic mobilising locations and potential hub and satellite stations alongside the ability to crew them. He noted that the strength and location of available personnel and mixed crewing options had been considered.

5.6.29 The Board commented on the ability to recruit On-Call firefighters in areas with high housing costs, specifically Helensburgh, Milngavie and Hawick, and asked whether any assurance or learning could be taken from other fire and rescue services. DF advised that two of the locations mentioned had existing On-Call crews and the focus would be to supplement them where needed. He noted that no firm conclusions could be drawn on a link between housing costs and recruitment until the approach had been tested. SS reminded the Board that the Service had introduced and established new On-Call systems, with Livingston being the example.

5.6.30 <u>Firefighter Safety, Wellbeing and Welfare</u>
DF advised that another concern raised during the consultation related to firefighter safety, welfare and wellbeing. In particular, concerns were raised that increased response times for second and third pumps could affect firefighter safety by making it harder to maintain safe systems of work or apply standard operating procedures. DF noted that the temporary appliance withdrawals had provided useful insight into how this would work and demonstrated the Service's ability to maintain safe systems of work and standard operating procedures with reduced resources. Evaluation and assessment of these areas had not identified any direct correlation between the changes and firefighter safety concerns. There had been no increase in health and safety events, accidents or injuries reported as a result of the changes and operational assurance processes had not identified evidence of any compromise to firefighter safety. DF noted that the reinvestment of released posts would support firefighter safety by strengthening the training provision to ensure a well-trained, well-equipped workforce. As part of the SDR programme, advice and input had been sought from health, safety and wellbeing subject matter experts.

5.6.31 The Board sought assurance that the recommendations would not restrict promotional opportunities. DF confirmed that there were no proposed reductions in supervisory management roles. DF noted that while some individual stations may have fewer local opportunities for promotion, the wider change programme would create more varied pathways nationally across a range of posts.

5.6.32 <u>New Developments and Risk and Demand</u>
DF advised that another concern raised during the consultation related to new developments and risk and demand. DF confirmed that the Service would consider new developments, local risk and operational demand when implementing SDR options. He advised that consultation concerns related to hazardous sites, housing growth, population

change, non-domestic development and land-use changes. The Service had reviewed these matters in collaboration with external partner agencies including the relevant local authorities planning departments. It was noted that on their own, new developments/change of use could not reliably predict future incident demand. The Service would continue to use national and local evidence, CRIM refreshes and learning to ensure changes in built environment and community risks were captured and considered during any option implementation planning phase. DF highlighted the need to distinguish between perceived risk and actual service demand, noting that overall demand had reduced over the last decade, albeit the nature of demand had shifted. Prevention activity remained central to reducing risks supported by home fire safety visits, non-domestic fire safety audits, and Scotland's strengthened domestic fire safety standards. Should the SDR options progress, local engagement, risk-based prevention activity and further feasibility work would support implementation.

5.6.33 The Board sought clarification on how the New and Emerging Risks Group's work would ensure up to date relevant information would be made available as the Service moved into the delivery phase of the options. JH advised that overall trends and figures were positive, however the Service had to continue to anticipate and respond to changing risk. He explained that the New and Emerging Risks Group, wider partnership working and prevention governance arrangements would help to ensure emerging information feeds into established processes. Intelligence from community safety visits, fire safety audits and other sources was shared with preparedness teams and translated into practical guidance for frontline crews. JH noted that these embedded processes would continue to evolve as further learning develops and that partnership working remained central to supporting communities.

5.6.34 The Board sought clarification on when/if future developments would impact on increased operational demand. DF advised that it would be difficult to assign a numerical value for when developments would materially increase risk as there were several factors that would have to be considered. He emphasised the need to distinguish between risk and demand, noting that risk assessments considered both likelihood and impact, whilst demand related to the Service's ability to respond effectively within available capacity. The Service had considered the communities and local authorities concerns; however wider factors would continue to influence the overall risk assessment. JH noted the population had increased over the past decade, however incident demand, dwelling fires, casualties and fatalities had reduced. He emphasised that despite these positive trends, the Service does not rely solely on modelling and would continue to identify and support high-risk individuals within communities. He noted that the prevention strategy had shifted from broad numerical targets towards a more targeted approach with a focus on most at risk/in need of advice.

5.6.35 The Board questioned whether the proposals would strengthen the Service's ability to respond to the growing number of high-risk, high-demand households. JH advised that targeted prevention activity relied heavily on partnership working and that advancing age was one of the several risk factors considered. DF noted that the Service's active role in community planning aided its understanding of changing risk and demand, helped to monitor incident trends and ensured that it could retain appropriate capacity to respond effectively within communities.

5.6.36 The Board sought clarification on the expected completion timescales for cladding remediation work and how the timescales aligned with the five-year SDR implementation timetable. DF confirmed that cladding remediation work had been treated as a current risk within the SDR process and that the timescales would be considered alongside implementation planning. JH advised that the Service continued to engage with Scottish Government and partners on legislative and prevention activity following Grenfell and all relevant information continued to be shared through operational systems to support frontline crews. He noted that remediation timescales varied by building, risk and location, and would remain under active consideration and review.

5.6.37 The Board sought assurance that specific implications of residential and commercial developments had been considered for each option and reflected in the supporting data and recommendations. DF confirmed that these factors had broadly been considered and advised that any areas requiring further work would be highlighted as the options were reviewed. He noted that levels of risk were influenced by a range of factors including new building standards, re-industrialisation and wider changes to Scotland's risk profile. All factors needed to be considered which added to the complexity of this area. He further noted that modern developments, processes and commercial premises were designed, constructed and managed to improved standards.

5.6.38 CRIM Modelling

For public record, it was acknowledged that the Board had received extensive assurance on CRIM over several years and had been provided with substantial information throughout its development. It was clarified that the Board had no concerns with the robustness of the CRIM. However, due to the recurring theme around CRIM throughout the consultation process, the Board had the opportunity to seek additional assurance.

5.6.39 DF advised that the consultation feedback had focused on scepticism about how the modelling, wider data and supporting assumptions/decision had been made. He confirmed that the Service used specialist operational modelling and community risk analysis to provide robust evidence in the assessment of potential changes to the distribution of fire stations, pumping appliances and duty systems. The operating model had used real SFRS incidents and appliance data to create a base model that reflected and simulated over 100 years of operational activity. This allowed scenarios to be compared against likely impacts on response times, workload and service delivery.

5.6.40 DF noted that the modelling provided valuable evidence for comparing options however it must be considered alongside its assumptions and limitations. The system could not fully predict future rare or unprecedented demand, short-term appliance availability, weather conditions or wider operational changes. The CRIM was a robust, peer-reviewed model that identified community risk at data-zone level and was annually refreshed using updated mapping, household classification and incident data. The CRIM was an iterative learning model and would continue to support prevention, preparedness and future SDR implementation. DF further noted that the CRIM was intended to support the appropriate redistribution of resources in line with risk and demand and not a tool to reduce the overall size of the Service.

5.6.41 The Board noted the feedback from staff and suggested that there would be value in further engagement to raise awareness of the CRIM outwith the SDR process.

5.6.42 The Board noted that the 2023 baseline reflected demand at that point in time but questioned whether the subsequent temporary appliance withdrawals and changes to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) attendance had changed demand levels in some areas. DF confirmed that the demand levels had changed however the risk remained the same.

5.6.43 The Board sought clarification on the additional value of the introduction of DSDS in areas where modelling had suggested the On-Call model would provide the best balance of resources. DF advised that whilst modelling had identified On-Call provision was appropriate in some areas, there remained clear benefits to maintaining a wholetime presence. These included improved daytime resilience, guaranteed availability during periods when incidents are more likely, enhanced community engagement and prevention activity, and stronger local relationships through consistent daily contact. He noted that the additional resources were considered justified as they would provide wider resilience benefits beyond those captured in the modelling.

5.6.44 The Board sought clarification whether the five-year timescale for addressing RAAC remediation works was an internal or external requirement. It was confirmed that this was an internal requirement.

(The meeting broke at 1225 hrs and reconvened at 1325 hrs.)

The Board were advised that individual options would be introduced by DF, who would highlight key details, recommendation and rationale and SS would confirm the SLT's recommendation.

5.7 **Long Term Dormant Stations without Employees**

5.7.1 **Nethy Bridge**

DF advised that the recommended option for Nethy Bridge was to close the long-term dormant station. Consultation feedback focused mainly on requests for equipment or enhanced local support. DF confirmed that the Service recognised the community's perception of loss, however, the station had made no operational contribution since 2014. The historic capability was limited and emergency cover was maintained by neighbouring fire stations. No disproportionate equality impacts had been identified, and no viable alternatives had been proposed through consultation that met the required legal or operational criteria.

5.7.2 SS advised that the option was recommended due to inability to provide a response and recruitment efforts having been exhausted. Retaining the station would place avoidable pressure on the capital investment backlog without delivering any corresponding operational benefit. The equality impact assessments identified no disproportionate impacts, and the consultation and operational analysis confirmed the associated risk and resource position. SLT reviewed all of the information in detail and supported the recommendation presented in the report.

5.7.3 A Board member, who attended the consultation event, felt reassured that the consultation feedback and the documented considerations accurately reflected their recollection. Whilst there had been acceptance of the proposed course of action, the main concern from the community focussed on seeking reassurance around continued local support, prevention work, basic equipment and maintaining a valued presence in the area.

5.7.4 The Board sought assurance regarding planning, prevention activities and deployment for surrounding stations/resources to maintain cover and support for the affected communities.

5.7.5 DF advised that this had formed part of the consideration and reiterated that since 2014, cover and prevention activity within this area had been provided by surrounding stations or dedicated resources, with similar arrangements considered across the other long-term dormant station options.

5.7.6 The Board noted that the Case for Change stated closure would remove the running costs associated with the Community Response Unit, however, the detail was not reflected within the financial information. The Board suggested that this information should be included within the original document and asked for clarity that the asset would be removed from the capital backlog. SO'D advised that the case for change referred to the capital impact, including £2.5 million in avoided costs, however, it did not detail the running costs as these were minimal. The additional information requested was therefore provided and noted during discussions.

5.7.7 **Ratagan**
DF advised that the recommended option for Ratagan was to close the long-term dormant station. Consultation feedback from the Ratagan community focused on provision of equipment and volunteer training, and these concerns were acknowledged. From an operational perspective, the station has made no contribution since 2013, with cover continuing to be maintained by neighbouring stations. The consultation had not identified any lawful or operationally viable alternative, and the equality impacts had been assessed as limited and manageable.

5.7.8 SS advised that the rationale was consistent with the Nethy Bridge option and that the mitigations had been assessed. SLT reviewed all information in detail and supported the recommendation presented in the report.

5.7.9 **Isle of Muck**
DF advised that the recommended option for Isle of Muck was to close the long-term dormant station. Consultation feedback from the community raised concerns about resilience and equipment. From an operational perspective, the station had made no recorded incidents since 2009/10 and had historically a very low demand. The closure of the long-term dormant station would not materially change the current service delivery provision.

5.7.10 SS advised that SLT supported the recommendation and had been assured that the relevant issues had been considered and appropriate mitigations identified.

5.7.11 The Board requested a future session to consider how the Service responds to island communities following implementation of the recommendations, including any additional assurance required in relation to mitigation plans. (Post meeting note: Added to Strategy Day Programme).

5.7.12 **Fetlar**
DF advised that the recommendation for Fetlar was to close the long-term dormant station. Strong community views had been expressed, including requests for equipment, volunteer arrangements and domestic extinguishers to be provided. These suggestions were considered but cannot be supported within the current legal and operational framework. Operationally, the station has made no contribution since 2011. Demand was very low and there was no realistic prospect of establishing a sustainable crew.

5.7.13 SS advised that the SLT supported the recommendation based on the facts outlined.

5.7.14 The Board commented on the constructive local engagement. The Board questioned whether visitor/tourist safety could be addressed as part of the assurance work.

5.7.15 DF confirmed that engagement on fire safety could specifically include visitor safety and noted that it was incumbent for businesses and individuals for maintaining appropriate fire safety arrangements. DF advised that the island response plans remain in place to respond, however, despite the identified risks, there has not been sustained operational demand for an extended period. DF noted that suggestions from Fetlar included providing equipment without training, however, the Service could not do that.

5.7.16 JH stated that there would be engagement with the local community and businesses and highlighted the national duty holder campaign which was due to commence across Scotland. The campaign would include seminars targeted at specific risks and geographic areas such as remote areas and that this would complement the targeted activity linked to SDR and its follow-up work.

5.7.17 If the recommendation was approved and the asset was to be disposed of in future, the Board noted that a community asset transfer should be considered if this would deliver better outcomes for the community rather than a potential capital receipt for the Service.

5.7.18 **Crianlarich**
DF advised that the recommended option for Crianlarich was to close the long-term dormant station. The consultation had highlighted co-location and partnership opportunities, as well as concerns relating to prevention activity. Operationally, the station had made no contribution since 2016 and sustained recruitment failure had prevented viability. No disproportionate equality impacts were identified, and service cover would be maintained by neighbouring resources.

5.7.19 The Board noted that feedback had identified forestry as a consideration in the area and sought assurance that both the Forestry and Land Scotland and the National Park Authority in the Trossachs had been specifically consulted on the proposals. DF confirmed that both Forestry and Land Scotland and the National Park Authority had been contacted and given the opportunity to respond to the consultation. There was no record of a response from either organisation through the online survey or in any substantive response outside that process. However, a separate meeting had been held with senior planning managers at the National Park Authority.

5.7.20 If the recommendation was approved and the asset was to be disposed of in future, the Board noted that a community asset transfer should be considered if this would deliver better outcomes for the community rather than a potential capital receipt for the Service. The Board acknowledged that, for some premises, this may be impractical or not suitable for community use.

5.7.21 **Having considered all Long Term Dormant Stations without Employees, the Board approved the overarching recommendation to close Nethy Bridge, Ratagan, Isle of Muck, Fetlar and Crianlarich**.

5.7.22 **Long Term Dormant Stations with Employees and No Applicants**
Colintraive
DF advised that the recommended option for Colintraive was to close the long term dormant station. However, the key distinction was that there was an existing employee in post; therefore, the recommendation was not for immediate closure. Consultation feedback had focused on equipment and local support. No legally or operationally viable alternatives had been identified. Operationally, the station had made no contribution since 2013, and evidence did not support maintaining the station with the response model.

5.7.23 SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommendation for this station.

5.7.24 The Board sought assurance that CalMac had been specifically consulted on the proposals. DF confirmed that CalMac had been contacted directly as a key stakeholder during the promotion of the consultation in June 2025. No response had been received from CalMac through the online survey or by any other substantive means.

5.7.25 **Corriecravie**
DF advised that the recommended option for Corriecravie was to close the long term dormant station. However, the key distinction was that there were two employees in post; therefore, the recommendation was not for immediate closure. Consultation feedback had focused on response cover and request for locally stationed equipment, however these cannot be supported within the current safety and duty of care requirements of the Service. Operationally, the station had made no contribution since 2022.

5.7.26 SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommendation for this station.

5.7.27 The Board noted the potential for redeployment through the transition from voluntary duty system terms to retained duty system. The Board queried whether there was any previous experience of this approach and if any significant challenges had been identified should this be considered. DF confirmed that there were no current examples, however, legacy services had previously amended terms and conditions as part of transitions between volunteer and On-Call arrangements. DF noted that there may be opportunities to retain and redeploy skills of affected personnel and indicated that the main challenges would relate to the application of the duty system and location requirements. DF advised that the Service remained open to transferring existing skills where this was appropriate and feasible.

5.7.28 SS clarified that the recommendation presented was to approve commencement of redundancy consultation for personnel at Colintraive and Corriecravie. Due to the novel and contentious nature of the matter, the outcome would be brought back to the Board for final consideration and approval.

5.7.29 **Having considered all Long-Term Dormant Stations with Employees and No Applicants, the Board approved the overarching recommendation to commence redundancy consultation with affected staff on the potential closure of Colintraive and Corriecravie.**

5.7.30 **Long Term Dormant Station with Employees and Applicants**
Isle of Kerrera
DF advised that the recommended option for Isle of Kerrera was to close the long term dormant station. Consultation feedback raised concerns about wildfire equipment, volunteer response and community resilience arrangements. It was queried whether the small appliance based at Oban was suitable for the single-vehicle ferry and confirmation had been provided. Operationally, there had been no response capability since April 2020, and only two incidents had been reported in the seven-year period from 2018/19 to 2024/25. The final report concluded that, despite having employees and applicants, there was insufficient potential for long-term sustainability.

5.7.31 The Board sought clarity on the proposed timeline for consultation on redundancy processes. LG advised that the timescale was variable and would depend on whether affected employees identified any alternatives to redundancy and the time required for these to be fully considered. LG noted that the process would be expected to conclude within a few months.

5.7.32 SS noted that SLT had carefully considered and challenged the proposal to proceed despite the presence of potential applicants. SS advised that SLT supported the assessment that the station had been dormant for several years, had no demand and would not be sustainable in future. SS advised that, in line with the rationale for the SDR review, the recommended approach was to proceed with redundancy consultation with existing members of staff. Similar to the previous options, the matter would return to the Board for final approval, due to its potentially novel and contentious nature.

5.7.33 **Having considered all Long-Term Dormant Stations with Employees and Applicants, the Board approved the recommendation to commence redundancy consultation with affected staff on the potential closure of Isle of Kerrera.**

5.7.34 **Perth & Kinross (Perth)**
DF advised that the recommended option was to replace Perth's third appliance, a Combined Aerial Rescue Pump (CARP) with a dedicated High Reach Appliance (HRA). DF reminded the Board that since September 2023, the third appliance (CARP) had been temporarily withdrawn and provided an interim dedicated high-reach capability. The recommended option would make this temporary arrangement permanent by replacing the CARP with a dedicated high-reach appliance. Consultation feedback questioned

whether the station could operate as a wider rescue hub and recognised its strategic importance due to its location. There was strong operational evidence to support making the temporary arrangement permanent, as actual response times had exceeded modelled expectations and provided confidence in the current configuration. The permanent transition from a CARP to a dedicated HRA was considered operationally appropriate and deliverable, with no disproportionate quality impacts identified.

5.7.35 Crews at Perth Fire Station expressed concerns over resilience, the reduction in training opportunities, climate related incidents and historical demand. Incident data did not support these assumptions. Crews, however, did recognise the benefit of a dedicated height appliance over a CARP and were keen to see this appliance being introduced into the station.

5.7.36 The Board queried whether support staff based in stations had been captured through the Corporate Services Review, or otherwise recorded within support staff structures, to ensure there was clarity on their location, role and headcount accountability. SO'D advised that, whilst this was not specific to Perth, support staff were able to work flexibly from stations, regional offices or national headquarters. If a building were no longer available, suitable alternative accommodation would be sought for affected staff.

5.7.37 It was confirmed that the proposal would formalise the earlier temporary withdrawal of pumping capability by moving to the preferred model of a dedicated height appliance. SS confirmed that SLT had considered the points set out by DF, alongside stakeholder and staff feedback and had also taken account of the evaluation of the temporary appliance withdrawal in operation since 2023. On that basis, SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommended option.

5.7.38 The Board sought confirmation that the three-year temporary arrangement had not resulted in any significant adverse impact as a result. DF confirmed that there had been no significant adverse impact.

5.7.39 **The Board approved the recommendation to replace the third appliance at Perth, currently a combined aerial rescue pump (CARP) with a dedicated high reach appliance (HRA).**

5.7.40 **Scottish Borders (Hawick, Galashiels)**
DF advised that, in the Scottish Borders, the option consulted on was to introduce DSDS crewing for the first pumping appliance at Hawick Station. This appliance would be crewed by wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (Monday to Friday 0800-1800 hrs) and by On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. The second pumping appliance would continue to be crewed by On-Call firefighters. In addition, a nucleus crew of wholetime firefighters would be introduced at Galashiels Station and tactically deployed across a defined cluster of stations during day shift hours, when On-Call availability was most challenging. This would supplement the two existing appliances, with one crewed by wholetime firefighters and the other by On-Call firefighters.

5.7.41 DF advised that Hawick was one of the Service's RAAC stations which was suitable for repair and refurbishment. Hawick had the second-lowest operational demand among stations of its type, with 1,927 mobilisations over the five-year period from 2018/19 to 2022/23. As a comparison, Bathgate, the highest-demand station of the same configuration, recorded 8,401 mobilisations over the same period. This equates to Hawick experiencing around 22% of Bathgate's mobilisation demand. Hawick's demand was more aligned to the busiest On-Call stations elsewhere in Scotland, less than the busiest one and two pump On-Call stations. There are eight solely On-Call stations with greater demand, three of which had only one appliance, than the existing one pump, wholetime and one pump On-Call model at Hawick.

5.7.42 Consultation feedback and public meeting responses were significant, strong and negative with community members perceiving the proposal as a loss of local resources. The main operational concern related to resilience, particularly second-pump resilience and water rescue capability. DF noted that operationally, the recommendation aligned resources more closely to risk and demand, whilst deliberately providing resilience beyond the modelling baseline and recognising local feedback through DSDS rather than a fully On-Call model. The current strong On-Call provision provided confidence that the proposed model would be effective.

5.7.43 Specific future risk concerns were raised in relation to the new Center Parcs development. Following research and engagement with Center Parcs senior management, the Service concluded that the site, in line with existing Center Parcs locations, would present low risk to the public, staff and emergency services due to robust fire safety infrastructure, comprehensive risk management arrangements and effective internal response systems. Incident numbers at current UK and Ireland sites are minimal and generally minor. The Hawick site would be smaller in guest capacity but would have enhanced safety standards and was expected to maintain this low risk profile. The Service would be able to provide a rapid response regardless of the station's crewing model. A useful comparison was drawn with the much larger Center Parcs site at Penrith in Cumbria where the local fire station had successfully operated the DSDS model since 2022.

5.7.44 Station crews raised practical considerations about how the DSDS would operate. Although this was a recognised UK model, the specific arrangements would be finalised with representative bodies in Scotland. Station personnel opposed the proposal and also sought clarity on how redeployment, transfers and wider staffing matters would be managed should the change proceed. Depending on the version of the DSDS adopted, the change was likely to release 12 to 17 posts, which could be redeployed to support the Scottish Borders more broadly.

5.7.45 The Board sought clarification on the scope of DSDS options being explored and the timescales for the process through to implementation. DF advised that the consultation had focussed on a Monday-Friday, 0800-1800 hrs model. However, feedback had prompted consideration of variations, including adjusting start and finish times to better align with activity patterns and a seven day model. JH advised that a formal offer had been submitted to the FBU for consideration requesting a formal response by 13 July 2026. The offer included two variations of the five-day system, one with 10-hour shifts starting at either 0800 hrs or 0900 hrs and the other being a seven-day system involving two watches working 12-hour shifts from 0700-1900 hrs.

5.7.46 The Board acknowledged that the consultation feedback had been carefully considered and had directly influenced the development of the proposals.

5.7.47 The Board sought clarity on the potential relocation support the Service would provide affected personnel. LG advised that the Service had an existing relocation policy and was regularly used for both existing employees relocating within the country and for external recruits moving to join the Service. It was noted that travel costs would also be considered.

5.7.48 The Board noted that Hawick was a RAAC station and had been identified as suitable for remediation. The Board sought clarification on whether this work would be progressed through the capital programme. DS confirmed that the associated remediation costs, estimated £3.65 million per station, had been included within the current capital programme of works and had been factored into the programme's affordability and deliverability.

5.7.49 The Board queried whether the DSDS options would provide sufficient additional wholetime resilience and whether the nucleus crewing option would be explored further. JH advised that the DSDS negotiations had not specifically included discussion of nucleus crewing, so that had not yet been explored in detail. JH noted that the purpose of nucleus crewing would be to provide additional support to On-Call stations across a wider region and indicated that there were several ways this could be achieved through a DSDS crew.

5.7.50 The Board sought assurance that the population and community risk analysis would be used to prioritise prevention and other support for affected communities who would experience increased response times and how this would be provided. JH noted that this would be monitored through existing governance arrangements, including scrutiny by the Service Delivery Committee and ongoing review and evaluation of the prevention strategy.

5.7.51 The Board sought assurance that should local circumstances change, particularly in relation to wholetime cover, the Service would retain the option to reinvest additional wholetime resources. SS confirmed that this was accurate and noted that the SDR was an ongoing process. Should risk and demand change, the Service must ensure that resources continue to be allocated according to impact, risk and demand.

5.7.52 SS noted that one point raised through the consultation responses indicated that Hawick was presented as one of the most industrialised areas within the Scottish Borders. The Board sought explicit assurance that all industrial risks associated with the area had been considered in developing the proposed options. DF confirmed that was the case and noted that the area has been compared with other parts of Scotland with similar levels of risk and demand, many of which are served by On-Call provision alone.

5.7.53 SS recognised the concerns raised by the communities affected and valued the engagement and suggestions provided throughout the process. SS noted that their feedback on the proposals had shaped the options presented today and concerns relating to nucleus crewing would inform the Service's thinking on how this could be taken forward. SS further noted that these decisions had not been taken lightly and the Service had considered evidence, the supporting materials, and site-specific analysis. On that basis, SS advised that the proposed recommendation was to proceed and commit to exploring a range of DSDS and On-Call support options.

5.7.54 The Board noted that the modelling had suggested a full On-Call model would have been appropriate but for reasons outlined, the recommendation was to move to a DSDS, the nature of which would be determined through negotiation.

5.7.55 **The Board approved the introduction of Day Shift Duty System crewing for the first pumping appliance at Hawick station with the second pumping appliance crewed by On-Call firefighters and as an amendment to the proposed nucleus crew at Galashiels, there was a commitment to explore arrangements for deploying additional wholetime employees in support of On-Call availability during day-shift hours when this is most challenging.**

5.7.56 **Argyll & Bute (Helensburgh)**
DF advised that the recommended option for Helensburgh was to introduce an alternative duty system for the first appliance, which was currently crewed by wholetime firefighters. The first appliance would be crewed by wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (0800-1800 hrs from Monday to Friday) and On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. The second On-Call appliance would remain unchanged. DF advised that Helensburgh was one of the Service's RAAC stations which was suitable for repair and refurbishment. Helensburgh had the lowest operational demand of all stations of its type, with 1,827 mobilisations over the five-year period from 2018/19 to 2022/23. As a comparison, Bathgate, the highest-demand station of the same configuration, recorded 8,401

mobilisations over the same period. This equates to Helensburgh experiencing around 21% of Bathgate's mobilisation demand. There were ten solely On-Call stations with greater demand, three of which only have one appliance.

5.7.57 Consultation feedback and public sentiment was strongly negative with the main concerns relating to response times and safety. Of the 326 people who responded to the survey, there were 41 who had supported the proposals as a practical balance of daytime cover with flexible On-Call use and trusted SFRS to adjust if needed.

5.7.58 The consultation also raised concern about specific high-risk sites, including Faslane, and those concerns had been explored in depth. The Faslane naval base and the depot were heavily protected Ministry of Defence sites with their on site fire and rescue provision supported by regulated emergency response plans and partnership working with the Service through local resilience arrangements, training and exercising. Incident activity at Faslane had been very low with only three recorded incidents in the five years between 2019/20 and 2024/25. Two of those incidents were false alarms and the Service had not been required for the other incident.

5.7.59 Helensburgh may support any response as part of a dynamic mobilising arrangement but would not always necessarily be the nearest available appliance to these sites. The operational rationale was that the DSDS and On-Call model better aligned response with demand whilst maintaining appropriate resilience and supporting the wider rebalancing. The liberated posts (approximately 12-17) would be redeployed into prevention, training and operational delivery. Staff feedback highlighted concerns over On-Call availability at the station and that a wholetime resource was essential for the risk in that area.

5.7.60 The Board noted that Helensburgh was a RAAC station and had been identified as suitable for remediation. The Board sought clarification whether this work would be progressed through the capital programme. DS confirmed that the associated remediation costs were included within the current capital programme of works.

5.7.61 The Board queried whether there had been any concerns raised by the Ministry of Defence and requested additional detail on the partnership working and joint planning. DF indicated that he was not aware of any specific concerns raised. DF advised that the Local Senior Officer and wider local team worked closely with the Ministry of Defence, and training and exercising arrangements were well established locally. DF noted that all watches undertook site familiarisation and these would continue under the proposed station model. The station would also maintain its relationship with those sites, although operational demand does not reflect the perceived level of risk in the area.

5.7.62 The Board queried when contingency planning would begin should sufficient personnel not be secured to support the On-Call or DSDS model. The Board highlighted the need for a clearly defined timeframe, noting that should the proposed model progress as intended, an alternative solution would be required to address the RAAC issues at the station. DF acknowledged the concerns about the On-Call element, which had also been reflected in the consultation feedback. DF noted that, unlike Hawick, Helensburgh does not have the same level of On-Call availability. However, weeknight availability was strong in the area, whilst weekday availability remains more challenging. DF further noted that the On-Call appliance had mobilised only 30 times in the previous year. Further work would be needed to test the contractual arrangements for the ten On-Call staff at Helensburgh to assess their ability to provide additional availability.

5.7.63 The Board noted consultation feedback referenced the impact of Covid-19 on the data and questioned whether there was anything to note. DF advised that Covid-19 had been raised during staff engagement as a potential factor affecting the data. However, the Service had been clear throughout the public consultation and staff engagement that incident patterns changed during that period, but trends and patterns had returned to those seen previously post Covid.

5.7.64 The Board noted that feedback had referred to the possibility of a 24-hour shift pattern and queried whether this was a viable option for consideration. LG advised that the main complexities would relate to working time regulations, balancing the 24-hour working pattern with statutory rest periods, wellbeing of personnel and sustainability. JH noted that there were some UK services who operate 24-hour working patterns successfully. However, this had not been explored as part of the current negotiations, although it could be considered in future.

5.7.65 The Board requested further detail on the relationship between dual contracts and the banding system and sought clarity on why this had been raised as an area of concern. DF explained that the introduction of new terms and conditions and the banding system had meant that limits had been placed on the banding in which dual contracts could work to ensure sufficient rest periods and this had not been universally welcomed. However, the decision had been supported by representative bodies to ensure appropriate rest for staff.

5.7.66 The Board queried whether the adoption of the DSDS would prevent individuals from providing On-Call cover during that period. DF advised that availability would depend on individual circumstances, including rest periods and whether individuals had been mobilised. DF provided examples of existing staff currently working in day duty roles, who were also providing On-Call cover.

5.7.67 The Board queried whether the 69 posts liberated from wholetime duty could potentially support dual contracts. DF confirmed that this could be possible, depending on where individuals lived and whether they were close enough to an On-Call station to provide availability.

5.7.68 The Board sought assurance that all SDR papers, including the consultation response and supporting raw data, had been published on the Service website. DF confirmed that the 3,000 consultation responses and associated raw data were available on the website within the SDR section of the website.

5.7.69 SS acknowledged the concerns raised by communities and reiterated the value of the feedback and engagement received, noting that this had influenced elements of the proposal. As part of the SLT assurance process, response times, On-Call availability and additional assurance around Faslane had been considered. SS advised that SLT was content with the information provided and therefore recommended proceeding with the option.

5.7.70 **The Board approved the introduction of an alternative duty system for the first appliance at Helensburgh, which was currently crewed by wholetime firefighters. This would see that appliance crewed by wholetime firefighters on a Day Shift Duty System and crewed by On-Call firefighters out with these hours. The second On-Call appliance would remain unchanged.**

5.7.71 **East Dunbartonshire (Milngavie)**
DF advised that the recommended option for Milngavie was to introduce an alternative DSDS for the appliance which was currently crewed by wholetime firefighters. The proposals were to crew the appliance with wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (0800-1800 hrs Monday to Friday) and with On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. DF advised that Milngavie was one of the Service's RAAC stations which was suitable for repair and remediation. Milngavie had the lowest demand of all one-pump wholetime stations in Scotland. The operational rationale was that demand was very low for a wholetime model and the proposed configuration would provide a proportionate and resilient response aligned with neighbouring stations. Modelling and demand suggested

that the station could operate solely as On-Call. However, staff and public consultation feedback strongly opposed change with concerns focusing mainly on increased response times and resilience outside daytime hours. The ability to recruit and retain On-Call staff in an area with high house prices and competition from local employers was also raised. It was acknowledged that establishing On-Call capability where none currently exists could present implementation challenges. Staff also noted that the only perceived positive aspect was the potential for organisational financial savings. However, there was some acknowledgement that a DSDS shift pattern could improve work-life balance by removing evening and weekend commitments.

5.7.72 SS advised that the SLT recommended proceeding with the proposed option.

5.7.73 The Board queried whether there would be flexibility to consider the DSDS and On-Call timings to better match actual demand, noting that this had been raised during consultation feedback and at engagement sessions. DF advised that this aligned with the wider discussion on DSDS stations. DF noted that staff feedback had highlighted that start and finish times should be considered carefully for a range of reasons.

5.7.74 The Board noted the significant reduction in UFAS incidents at this station, meaning actual demand was even lower than the data had previously indicated. DF noted that there had been a significant reduction in UFAS incidents and attendances in the Milngavie area and across the Service. DF further noted that based on current figures, Milngavie remains the lowest-demand wholetime one-pump station in Scotland.

5.7.75 The Board referred to a motion by East Dunbartonshire Council to consider a feasibility study for a potential major emergency centre in the locality and queried whether any further information had been received from the Council on this matter. The Board suggested that if no update was available, the Service should seek to establish whether the Council had progressed the feasibility study.

5.7.76 DF noted that several options considered feasibility studies for potential co-location hubs with other agencies, which the Service would continue to pursue through the collaboration group. The Board noted that this remained an interesting concept and suggested that it could be explored separately from the SDR process.

5.7.77 **The Board approved the introduction of an alternative duty system for the appliance at Milngavie, which is currently crewed by wholetime firefighters. This would see the appliance crewed by wholetime firefighters on a Day Shift Duty System and crewed by On-Call firefighters out with these hours.**

5.7.78 **Edinburgh and East Lothian (Marionville, Newcraighall, Musselburgh, Tranent)**
DF advised that the recommended option covering Edinburgh and East Lothian was to close Marionville Fire Station, relocating its wholetime single appliance to Newcraighall to provide two wholetime appliances there, and to close Musselburgh Fire Station, moving one wholetime appliance to a new build station in the Tranent area, creating a two appliance station with one wholetime and one On-Call appliance. DF further advised that Marionville and Tranent were two of the Service's RAAC stations which both required repair or alternative arrangements. Musselburgh was in a location that was not beneficial since Newcraighall opened in the 1990s. Marionville was in close proximity to McDonald Road. Combining these four stations into two would create a more effective distribution of operational resources across east Edinburgh and East Lothian. Newcraighall had recently benefited from a £2.6 million upgrade and could accommodate a second wholetime appliance. With an additional appliance at Newcraighall, there would be limited operational benefit in retaining Musselburgh on its current site which was also considered unfit for purpose. Tranent must be rebuilt and this would create an opportunity to develop a new station in that area and relocate the Musselburgh wholetime appliance there. The evidence supported proceeding in East Lothian, as incident growth and response-time

performance indicate that relocating the appliance to a new-build station in Tranent with an additional wholetime dayshift resource would benefit the area. This would also support On-Call capacity and wider resilience.

5.7.79 The East Lothian components were well received at local public meetings with feedback that the area required more rather than less fire cover. The options consulted on did not reduce resources just adjusted their deployment and proposed to add an additional appliance to the area.

5.7.80 There was significant public and political opposition to the Marionville option. The feedback focused on concerns about population growth, station location and RAAC remediation works. The Edinburgh City Plan 2040 and East Lothian Local Development Plan 2 both indicated continued population growth and spatial expansion across the affected area. Concerns relating to response times in the current Marionville station area were also raised alongside the view that the option did not fully account for risks associated with industrial/high-risk sites in Leith and north Edinburgh. Marionville staff strongly opposed the proposal and preferred that the station be rebuilt or modernised. Staff also requested that resources be redirected towards strengthening training and prevention activity across the Service.

5.7.81 SS advised that it would be helpful to consider the East Lothian and Edinburgh components separately. SS highlighted that the revised proposals reflected the Service's consideration of consultation feedback and additional information received in relation to both areas.

5.7.82 In relation to East Lothian, SS confirmed that the recommendation was to proceed with an additional DSDS resource to be located within East Lothian to support wider regional resilience.

5.7.83 In relation to the Marionville option, SS advised that the recommendation was not to proceed with the Edinburgh component at this stage. SS noted that the consultation feedback had raised substantial thoughtful and relevant issues requiring further consideration. In particular, there were emerging and existing factors/risks within Edinburgh that required further assurances before the Service could proceed or rely on the response times set out in the Case for Change. As previously referenced, these factors included significant commercial, residential and industrial developments in the Marionville and wider Edinburgh area. SS stated that he was not assured that the resulting level of emerging risk had been fully considered or quantified to an extent that would support closure of the city-centre station. Further points raised through consultation, including alternative sites and condition surveys, would also be considered through detailed analysis and modelling of the Edinburgh area and potential station locations. For the reasons stated, SS advised that it would not be appropriate to proceed with the Edinburgh component until that work had been completed and the relevant information obtained.

5.7.84 The Board were advised that the East Lothian element would be considered first and the Marionville and wider Edinburgh city aspect would be discussed separately. MW highlighted a recent meeting, alongside SS, with East Lothian Chief Executive and Head of Communities, who had reported that the proposal had been well received at their recent Scrutiny Committee and indicated they would welcome and support the proposal.

5.7.85 The Board queried whether the proposed location of the additional DSDS resource, intended to strengthen resilience across East Lothian, had been confirmed or would require further work during implementation. DF advised that further work would be required to determine the most appropriate location for the additional DSDS resource to ensure the maximum benefit for East Lothian communities.

5.7.86 The Board noted that the additional DSDS resource had not been separately costed within the proposals. It was explained that the released resources would be reinvested and relocation of resources. SS confirmed that the additional DSDS resource would be funded through reallocated resource and would not represent a change to the overall budget.

5.7.87 The Board queried and were advised that a new site for Tranent had not yet been identified.

5.7.88 SS confirmed that the nucleus crew model had been considered but would not be taken forward following staff feedback. SS noted that East Lothian wholetime resources would move to the Tranent area although no site had yet been identified. Tranent remained a priority for rebuild due to operational activity, risk, demand and population growth. The project remained within the capital plan with site purchase expected in 2028/29 and construction over the following two years.

5.7.89 The Boad questioned whether the main driver for the additional DSDS resource was the anticipated level of activity in East Lothian. DF confirmed that the growing demand had been a key factor alongside the fact that East Lothian was predominantly served by On-Call provision with only one wholetime station in the area.

5.7.90 DF explained that additional resource in East Lothian would strengthen wider regional resilience. It was noted that Edinburgh appliances were often required to support incidents in East Lothian and by increasing capacity this would also help protect resilience within Edinburgh. DF noted that this reflected feedback from Edinburgh colleagues who had highlighted the impact of Edinburgh appliances being drawn into East Lothian.

5.7.91 SS reiterated the need to gain a fuller understanding of the Edinburgh component, noting that strengthening the provision in East Lothian would help to mitigate the risk of Edinburgh resources being drawn out of the city.

5.7.92 SS noted that whilst a direct correlation with demand had not yet been identified, Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian were among the areas experiencing the greatest population growth which was projected to continue over the next decade. Therefore, this level of growth could reasonably be expected to affect future risk and demand.

5.7.93 The Board noted that the additional resource would be based in East Lothian but it would provide wider resilience benefits alongside the new Dalkeith Fire Station.

5.7.94 In relation to Edinburgh, the Board acknowledged and accepted the Chief Officer's explanation and rationale not to proceed with this option to allow additional work to be undertaken. SS confirmed that the Edinburgh component would be considered through a future SDR process. SS advised that until the work had been commissioned and scope identified, the timescale could not be confirmed. SS further advised that any different option proposed would be subject to consultation, albeit localised and proportionate to the option being considered.

5.7.95 **The Board approved the closure of Musselburgh station which had one appliance that was crewed by wholetime firefighters, to move the Musselburgh appliance to a new-build two appliance station at Tranent, with one crewed by wholetime firefighters and one crewed by On-Call firefighters AND additionally, introduce additional wholetime dayshift resource (location to be confirmed) to support On-Call capacity in East Lothian and resilience more widely.**

5.7.96 **The Board approved the proposal NOT to proceed with the Edinburgh component (Marionville and Newcraighall).**

5.7.97 **Inverclyde**
DF advised that the recommended option covering Inverclyde (Greenock only) was to replace the second wholetime appliance, which was currently a CARP with a dedicated HRA. DF reminded the Board that since September 2023, the second appliance (CARP) had been temporarily withdrawn and provided an interim dedicated high-reach capability. The recommended option would make this temporary arrangement permanent.

5.7.98 The second option considered involved Greenock and Port Glasgow with the permanent replacement of the second appliance and in addition the introduction of a new duty system for the On-Call third appliance at Greenock. The proposals would have seen the third appliance crewed by wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (0800-1800 hrs Monday to Friday), and On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. Introduction of a new duty system for the wholetime first appliance at Port Glasgow, to crew the appliance with wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (0800-1800 hrs Monday to Friday), and On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. The On-Call second appliance would remain unchanged. Overall Inverclyde had a high density of appliances when compared to other areas with similar risk and demand across Scotland. Greenock had low levels of mobilisations and demand compared to other two pump full-time stations and also had an On-Call crew available at the station.

5.7.99 Option one provided the same operational resource since the temporary withdrawals in 2023 and no significant impact or poorer outcomes have been recorded.

5.7.100 Consultation feedback focussed on high-reach capability, maintaining a stable operational presence, and wider issues such as co-location and specialist functions.

5.7.101 Staff struggled to see any benefits and concerns were raised over increasing response times, particularly at nights and weekends under option two, and proportionality of change. Option one formalises the current temporary arrangement and maintains high reach provision whilst avoiding additional staff movement and complexity associated with option two.

5.7.102 The evidence indicates that option two would offer limited benefit and return for greater disruption. Consultation responses included suggestions relating to creating an Inverclyde superstation. A reconfiguration of stations in Inverclyde across Port Glasgow, Greenock and Gourock including the merging of stations in a purpose-built new location, had previously been a feature of the SDR. However, this was not progressed due to limitations of affordability and deliverability. It was felt that this option could be revisited in the future.

5.7.103 The Board sought further explanation of the rationale for not proceeding with the proposed duty-system changes at this stage and queried whether any future review of station locations could consider strengthening Gourock, given that it is the busiest station in the area. SS reiterated his earlier comments relating to the SLT's amendment of the proposals in terms of organisational capacity, resource, change capacity and the balance of deliverability against benefit. SS advised that the benefit of the current option, when considered against deliverability, was not as strong as the potential longer-term station reconfiguration option and noted that this alternative had emerged through the process and needed to be considered further. SS further advised that the current capital funding would not allow that option to proceed at present and on that basis, option one remained the appropriate recommendation at this stage.

5.7.104 The Board sought clarification that should the recommendation option be approved, this would not prevent the Service from considering alternative options in the future. The Board noted that the benefits of progressing option two were not considered sufficient to justify implementation. DF reiterated that option one reflected the current arrangements introduced through the temporary appliance withdrawals in 2023 and confirmed that it would not prevent further investigation into alternative options in future. DF reminded the Board that a similar option had been considered at the earlier stage of the process but had been discounted at the hurdle-criteria stage due to affordability.

5.7.105 The Board questioned whether option two had become more complex during development than the other options considered and what the underlying rationale or ambition had been. DF advised that the early rationale had been developed through consideration of the distribution of activity, local risk and demand across the area. DF further advised that option two had been intended to explore whether day-shift duty systems could have supplemented the area's strong On-Call position. However, resilience during nights and weekends had to be considered, particularly in relation to Port Glasgow. DF noted that, whilst the option was not overly complicated, there were more elements to be considered than some of the other options.

5.7.106 **The Board approved the recommendation to replace the second wholetime appliance at Greenock, which was a combined aerial rescue pump (CARP) with a dedicated high reach appliance (HRA). The second appliance (CARP) had been temporarily withdrawn and replaced with a high reach appliance (HRA) in September 2023.**

5.7.107 **Glasgow**

DF advised that the recommended option covering Glasgow was to rebuild Cowcaddens on the adjacent Maitland Street site, reinstate the second wholetime pumping appliance temporarily withdrawn in September 2023, and reduce the number of wholetime pumping appliances at Springburn from two to one. The option would also close the one wholetime pumping appliance at Yorkhill, reinstate the second wholetime appliance at Maryhill, and permanently reduce the number of wholetime appliances at Govan from two to one. The second appliance at Govan had been temporarily withdrawn in September 2023.

5.7.108 The second option proposed the closure of Cowcaddens, which currently has two wholetime appliances, while retaining ownership of the neighbouring Maitland Street site for future development. The option also maintained the current reduction of wholetime appliances at Govan from two to one and reinstated the second wholetime appliance at Maryhill, which had been temporarily withdrawn in September 2023. Operational evidence showed only marginal differences between the two options; however, option one provided better balance of workload across Springburn, Cowcaddens and Maryhill. Option one would avoid concentrating demand at Springburn and recognised the limitations of the Yorkhill site including restrictions on pump coverage caused by the Clyde Expressway and the River Clyde. Option one had been supported by Glasgow City Council which noted that it best aligned with regeneration and longer-term planning for the city.

5.7.109 Public consultation feedback highlighted concerns about reduced fire cover. However, it was noted that resources would remain consistent with arrangements in place since 2023, albeit with a different disposition. The review of the 2023 temporary appliance withdrawals had been a useful evaluation of those changes and provided reassurance. Specific risks, including high-rise development and student accommodation were noted and respondents placed significant value on Cowcaddens' central location and high activity levels. Alternative suggestions including station mergers, crewing models and co-location were also noted. Further review of Glasgow and the surrounding areas would continue to be developed through future phases of the SDR.

5.7.110 The Board queried whether Glasgow's growing population including student accommodation and increasing number of high-rise developments had been considered within the proposals. DF advised that the city's risk profile had been considered in 2023, and that subsequent evaluations had confirmed that the reduction in wholetime appliances remained appropriate. The proposed option would rebalance existing resources.

5.7.111 The Board sought clarity on the timescales for the rebuilding of Cowcaddens and whether this would impact on the other proposed changes, ie closure of Yorkhill. SO'D advised that the intention was to commence the new build whilst the existing Cowcaddens station remained operational. It was noted that planning permission had been agreed in principle, however the design phase etc still needed to be progressed before the timescale could be confirmed. It was noted that there were no additional hurdles anticipated to impede deliverability. It was further noted that the proposed new build remained affordable and deliverable within the current five-year capital programme.

5.7.112 It was confirmed that there would be no delay in reinstating the second pump at Cowcaddens due to the new build.

5.7.113 The Board sought clarification on the temporary arrangements for appliance location and capacity during the new build process. DF advised that the phasing approach would retain the same overall number of appliances whilst temporarily redistributing resources in order to maintain a balance of workload. DF noted that the level of demand (capacity) was considered manageable.

5.7.114 The Board sought clarification on the capital cost difference between the two options and what additional benefit would be delivered through option one. SO'D advised that the capital cost difference between the two options was approximately £8 million. SO'D further advised that Option one would remove two ageing stations and would provide a new, fit for purpose facility in Glasgow city centre. The new facility would provide accommodation equivalent to two stations whilst supporting a revised distribution of appliances to better align resources with risk and demand. SO'D noted that the closure of Yorkhill was expected to generate staff and running cost savings of approximately £1.35 million per year.

5.7.115 The Board sought clarity on the timescale for the sale of the Cowcaddens site. SO'D advised that the Board would be updated at their next meeting (9 July) to confirm the sale would not progress during 2026/27.

5.7.116 The Board sought assurance on the SECC's concerns regarding its enhanced tier status under the Terrorism Protection of Premises Act 2025 and the potential impact of the proposals on the Service's multi-agency response. DF confirmed that Glasgow's response would remain resilient and confirmed the proposals would not affect the Service's ability to meet the site's requirements. DF explained that although Yorkhill was closer to the SECC, there were road network challenges in the surrounding area.

5.7.117 SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommendation to proceed with option one.

5.7.1.18 **The Board approved the recommendation to rebuild Cowcaddens on the adjacent Maitland Street site, reinstate the second wholetime pumping appliance that was temporarily withdrawn in September 2023, AND reduce the number of wholetime pumping appliances based at Springburn from two to one, AND close Yorkhill which has one wholetime pumping appliance based there, AND reinstate the second wholetime appliance at Maryhill that was temporarily withdrawn in September 2023, AND reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at Govan from two to one. The second appliance was temporarily withdrawn in September 2023.**

5.7.119 **Lanarkshire (Cumbernauld and Hamilton)**
DF advised that the recommended option covering Lanarkshire was to introduce alternative duty system for the second appliance at Cumbernauld, which was currently

crewed by wholetime firefighters. The proposals were to crew the appliance with wholetime firefighters during day shift hours (0800-1800 hrs Monday to Friday) and with On-Call firefighters outwith those hours. The first appliance would remain unchanged. In addition, the number of wholetime appliances based at Hamilton would reduce from two to one, making the temporary withdrawal since September 2023 of the second appliance permanent.

5.7.120 The second option involved Bellshill, Cumbernauld, Hamilton and Lesmahagow. The proposal for Cumbernauld remained the same as the first options. The proposal for Hamilton would introduce an alternative DSDS for the second appliance with the first appliance remaining unchanged. Bellshill would increase the station to two appliances, one wholetime and one day shift duty system. In addition, a nucleus crew of wholetime firefighters would be introduced at Lesmahagow to be tactically deployed across the area during weekday day-shift hours, supporting the existing On-Call appliances.

5.7.121 DF advised that Cumbernauld was one of the Service's RAAC stations and a decision was required on its occupancy level to ensure appropriate remediation and reconfiguration works be completed. Cumbernauld was well located but had relatively low demand compared with other two-pump wholetime stations across Scotland. Hamilton station was close to the arterial road network but did not provide the most efficient coverage of risk and demand in the area due to the location of Bellshill and Motherwell. As such, this had been the reason Hamilton's second appliance was temporarily withdrawn in 2023. Evaluation of the temporary appliance withdrawals had not identified any significant impact on incident outcomes in the area following the removal of Hamilton's second appliance.

5.7.122 Staff and public consultation feedback opposed the proposed changes with concerns mainly focused on increased response times for second appliances and wider resilience across Lanarkshire. The ability to recruit and retain On-Call staff from the outset had been identified as a potential barrier. Transitional costs would be required to maintain appropriate skills and competencies through wholetime staff until the On-Call crew were fully operational. Participants at public meetings also criticised the proposal to add resources to support On-Call provision through a hub at Lesmahagow, as they did not consider this would benefit Lanarkshire more broadly. Option two had been fully considered and it had been recognised that additional resources for Lanarkshire could be introduced in future should changes in risk or demand require them.

5.7.123 The Board sought clarification why option one had been recommended when option two appeared less harmful. DF advised that, whilst option two reflected Lanarkshire's changing profile and communities, the key element of the configuration would be the ability to release resources from Cumbernauld for reinvestment elsewhere. DF reiterated that Cumbernauld remained one of the lowest-demand stations of its type and could operate with one wholetime appliance supported by a day-shift On-Call arrangement.

5.7.124 In relation to option one, the Board sought clarification on the reference to the avoidance of £5 million of capital investment and whether the remediation works were included within the capital plan. SO'D advised that the change to day shift duty system at Cumbernauld would change the station's capacity and layout requirements, negating the need for a larger build. The works would focus on remediation and refurbishment of the existing site.

5.7.125 The Board sought assurance that the proposal would not compromise the urban search and rescue capability currently based at Cumbernauld. DF noted that this issue had arisen throughout the process. DF highlighted the distinction between the specialist resources review and the SDR, whilst recognising the clear links between them where considering stations that have a specialist resource. DF explained that the Operations function and the Local Senior Officer for Lanarkshire would be expected to consider how the operational resource could be maintained and supported with the revised crewing model.

5.7.126 SS noted that the questions raised reflected the areas considered by SLT. SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommendation to proceed with option one.

5.7.127 **The Board approved the introduction of an alternative duty system for the second appliance at Cumbernauld, which was currently crewed by wholetime firefighters. This would see that appliance crewed by wholetime firefighters on a Day Shift Duty System and crewed by On-Call firefighters out with these times. The first wholetime appliance would be unchanged. The Board approved the reduction of wholetime appliances based at Hamilton from two to one, the second appliance having been temporarily withdrawn in September 2023.**

5.7.128 **Dundee City and Monifieth**
DF advised that the recommended option (option two) covering Dundee City and Monifieth was to remove the wholetime appliance from Balmossie, retaining one On-Call appliance there, and reinstate the second wholetime appliance at Kingsway East, which had been temporarily removed in September 2023.

5.7.129 Option one proposed closing Balmossie, which currently had one wholetime appliance and one On-Call appliance, and reinstate the second wholetime appliance at Kingsway East, which was temporarily removed in September 2023.

5.7.130 Balmossie had not been within scope at the time of the temporary withdrawal, as it had only one wholetime appliance. However, data now indicates that Balmossie was the more suitable option for permanent withdrawal or closure. Reinstating the second wholetime appliance at Kingsway East would provide adequate coverage for the area. Balmossie was poorly located on the road network which limited the operational areas that it could serve. Operational demand at Balmossie was the fourth lowest of stations of the same type and was lower than the busiest On-Call stations.

5.7.131 Public consultation overwhelmingly opposed the closure or downgrading of the station with concerns mainly focussed on response times. The strongest feedback came from Balmossie On-Call staff, mainly focussed on income impacts and specialist roles. Co-location and merger options were raised during the consultation process, however these options were not feasible within current strategic priorities, capital constraints and delivery timescales. The suggestion to develop a shared hub or new purpose-built site was acknowledged as a strong operational option, however, it could not be progressed during this phase of SDR due to affordability and deliverability considerations.

5.7.132 Operational rationale supported option two, as it would preserve Dundee's operational balance, retain specialist capability at Balmossie and avoid the greater workforce and resilience impact associated with option one. It had also been recognised that Balmossie was a key mobilisation location for the Scottish Ambulance Service.

5.7.133 SS reiterated the value of the feedback and thanked those who contributed, noting that the feedback had been influential in shaping the position. SS recognised significant value of On-Call firefighters across all stations, including Balmossie, through their commitment to their communities. SS noted that the local area would lose an additional pump, however, it was considered that this remained the overall right course of action. SS referenced the public service reform and noted the partnership with Scottish Ambulance Service should be considered in relation to the Balmossie site. SS advised that the proposal struck an appropriate balance between maintaining operational resilience, allowing for future considerations as outlined by DF, and ensuring that fire cover and preventative activity continued to be provided in the Balmossie area through the On-Call crew.

5.7.134 The Board sought clarification that the data modelling compared the proposed position with the pre-2023 baseline, when Kingsway East had two pumps. DF confirmed that the operational response modelling and outputs are based on the pre-2023 position.

5.7.135 The Board sought clarification that proceeding with option two would retain the potential for further development or alternative options in future, particularly in relation to public service reform. SS confirmed that this was the case.

5.7.136 The Board noted the reference to the "proven value" of the Balmossie wholetime duty system hub and queried whether further evidence supported that statement. DF confirmed that factual evidence was available on the mobilisation and use of the Balmossie wholetime appliance but would not speculate on the intended meaning of the wording.

5.7.137 The Board raised concerns whether communications on wider efficiency savings were reaching staff effectively and welcomed the verbatim recording of staff feedback. DF explained that the wider improvement programme continued to be communicated through regular newsletters covering SDR and related projects.

5.7.138 The Board commented on the need to ensure future-focused ideas raised during consultation, such as co-location, hubs, etc be captured for future consideration.

5.7.139 SS confirmed that the SLT supported the recommendation to proceed with option two and noted that liberated personnel would be used to support prevention and training activities.

5.7.140 **The Board approved the recommendation to remove the wholetime appliance from Balmossie station and maintain one On-Call appliance at the station; and reinstate the second wholetime appliance at Kingsway East station that was temporarily removed in September 2023**

5.7.141 **Fife**
DF advised that option one covering Fife involved Dunfermline, Lochgelly and Methil. Option one would replace the third appliance at Dunfermline, currently a CARP with a dedicated HRA. The third appliance had been temporarily withdrawn and replaced with a HRA in September 2023 and would make this change permanent. The option would also reduce the number of wholetime appliances at Lochgelly and Methil from two to one and reinstate the second appliance at Glenrothes. Option two was the same as option one, with the exception that the second appliance would be reinstated at Methil instead of Glenrothes. These were the two options taken forward for consultation.

5.7.142 Operational demand at Lochgelly, Glenrothes and Methil were amongst the lowest of all wholetime stations with two appliances and was more closely aligned with stations operating a single appliance. Operational modelling indicated that permanently reducing two of these locations to one appliance would still provide sufficient coverage. Since the temporary withdrawals in September 2023, incident demand at Lochgelly had slightly exceeded that of Glenrothes and Methil. As Glenrothes and Methil had fewer appliances available, Lochgelly's two appliances alongside the second appliance from Kirkcaldy had taken a greater share of operational activity. There had been overwhelming opposition from staff and consultation respondents to both proposed options.

5.7.143 During consultation, staff and communities suggested that the current temporary arrangements should be considered as a permanent option. Lochgelly staff in particular sought a stronger case for reinvestment and felt that retaining the current model would avoid further disruption.

5.7.144 Due to the number of communities associated with the Fife options, a substantial volume of information had been considered. Strong views were expressed that Fife was being disproportionately affected by the proposed changes. The main themes focussed on response times, public and firefighter safety, wider area resilience, and the future of specialist resources based in Fife. In relation to specialist resources, there was uncertainty about the future of the rope rescue unit currently situated at Lochgelly with staff concerned about the potential costs of relocating the unit to another station. There was also significant scepticism about the rationale and data used. In Dunfermline, the proposals were received more positively with the replacement of the CARP with a dedicated HRA viewed as a significant operational improvement. However, crews expressed concern that the loss of Lochgelly's second appliance could affect second and third pump response times in West Fife. There were also calls for the Service to consider more flexible staffing models including day crewing, rotating second appliances, station consolidation or merger and regional hubs. Similar station merger proposals had been ruled out of this phase of the SDR on affordability and deliverability grounds.

5.7.145 SS welcomed the feedback and passion expressed by communities, staff and stakeholders across Fife, noting that the feedback had influenced the Service's thinking and the proposed outcome. SS advised that SLT proposed deferring the decision on the remaining Fife options, as an alternative proposal had been put forward during consultation to make the current temporary wholetime pump withdrawal permanent. SLT had considered this proposal alongside the ten-pump withdrawal analysis and the technical assessment provided as part of the consultation. Consideration had also been given to deliverability, financial implications, training capacity, the cost of removing rope rescue capability from the station, and the associated workforce impact. SS advised that SLT believed that the benefits of the Fife changes had largely been achieved and that any further benefit would not be proportionate to the level of disruption required at this stage.

5.7.146 SS confirmed that the SLT were committed to considering the alternative option of permanently implementing the current temporary withdrawal, whilst exploring whether the DSDS resource in Fife could support resilience and the On-Call model. On that basis, it was proposed to proceed with the Dunfermline element and defer the remaining elements to allow further work and public consultation.

5.7.147 The Board sought clarification on the work required and timeline needed to reach a decision on the Fife options, noting that the current temporary configuration had already been in place since September 2023. DF explained that although evidence exists from the temporary arrangement, the alternative option would need to be modelled and presented in the same way as options one and two to assess the long-term impact. DF advised that further public consultation would be required as the previous consultation had presented options where a resource could return to either Glenrothes or Methil, whereas the alternative option would not restore a resource to either community. Legal advice confirmed that the proposal should therefore return to public consultation before being reconsidered in the wider Fife context.

5.7.148 The Board questioned whether any longer-term review of the Fife area should consider the wider balance of resources across Central and East Fife. SS reminded the Board that alongside station activity levels, overall resilience, weight of response and specialist resources had to be considered. SS noted that rescue team capability required two appliances to provide appropriate support.

5.7.149 The Board noted that the current temporary Fife configuration had resulted in no evidence of adverse impact. SS confirmed that the current model had operated for three years and had been subject to evaluation and ongoing operational assurance. SS noted that first appliance attendance remained the key factor and that any potential sub-optimal second appliance cover had to be balanced against specialist resources, deliverability, organisational impact and training capacity. CMcG advised that the position had to be considered in the wider context of training priorities and other activity beyond the SDR, as any decision could have direct or indirect impacts across the organisation.

5.7.150 **The Board approved the recommendation to permanently replace the third appliance at Dunfermline which was a combined aerial rescue pump (CARP), with a dedicated high reach appliance (HRA), and defer decision on the remainder of the options pending further consideration of an alternative proposal to permanently implement the current temporary wholetime pump withdrawal configuration.**

5.8 **The Board, having approved the individual options, confirmed their approval of the entire list of recommendations as itemised with the overarching recommendations report (paragraph 4.3).**

5.9 Next Steps

5.9.1 SS advised that the next steps included the communication of today's outcomes with staff and stakeholders, engaging with trade union colleagues and developing individual delivery plans for each option which would then be progressed through the change governance routes.

5.9.2 SS confirmed that, on the basis of the outcomes of today's meeting, there were no further staff headcount reductions beyond September 2023, instead there was an increase of one wholetime DSDS appliance and the potential recruitment of up to 20 additional On-Call staff in DSDS areas.

5.9.3 It was agreed that an action would be taken to the Integrated Governance Forum to consider the overarching benefits tracking and governance arrangements.

ACTION: BST

5.9.4 It was noted that the Board would be given the opportunity to provide feedback or debrief on any aspects which arose through the consultation, such as opportunities to explore, emergency response hubs, so that they are not lost. It was further noted that a separate debrief on the SDR process would be scheduled at an appropriate time.

5.10 Closing Remarks

5.10.1 SS noted his thanks to the Board for their discussion and challenge throughout the meeting and entire process. SS further noted his thanks to all staff and communities for their engagement and contributions throughout the consultation process.

5.10.2 On behalf of the Board, the Chair extended her thanks to all staff, stakeholders, Service Delivery Team, Board Support Team and Legal Service Manager for their advice, support and efforts throughout the process. Thanks were also extended to everyone who contributed to the consultation, and it was hoped that they could be assured that their input had been taken into consideration and helped shaped the changes, where appropriate.

5.10.3 The Chair acknowledged the impact of today's outcomes on staff and that the Board would continue to seek assurance on mitigating challenges and maximising opportunities.

5.10.4 On behalf of the Board, the Chair offered her thanks to Deborah Stanfield for her contributions during her tenure with the Service and best wishes for the future.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6.1 It was confirmed that the provisional public meeting of the Board scheduled to take place on Thursday 25 June 2026 would now be stood down.

6.2 A special public meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 9 July 2026, to cover business as usual matters deferred from the June meeting.

6.3 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1606 hrs.

Agenda Item 5.2

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

THURSDAY 9 JULY 2026 @ 1300 HRS

VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)

PRESENT:

Mhairi Wylie, Chair (MW)	Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair (AF)
Brian Baverstock (BB)	Therese O'Donnell (TO'D)
Malcolm Payton (MP)	Madeline Smith (MS)
Paul Stollard (PS)	Tim Wright (TW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Watt (AW)	Deputy Chief Officer
Craig McGoldrick (CMcG)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
David Farries (DF)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational Delivery
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Governance, Strategy and Change
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)	Head of People
William Lindsay (WL)	Decision Support Manager
Chris Fitzpatrick (CF)	BI and Data Service Manager (Item 11 only)
Stuart Free (SF)	Asset Governance and Performance Manager (Item 15 only)
David Johnston (DJ)	Risk and Audit Manager (Item 22 only)
Christopher Casey (CC)	Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Debbie Haddow (DJH)	Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS:
Robert Scott, HMFSI

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting welcoming those attending and observing via MS Teams. Attendees were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question. Due to the volume of business, the Board were requested to keep questions concise to allow sufficient time for all agenda items.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Stuart Ballingall, Board Member
Neil Mapes, Board Member
Andrew Smith, Board Member
Stuart Stevens, Chief Officer
Sarah O'Donnell, Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)
Jon Henderson, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Prevention
Deborah Stanfield, Interim Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
Richard Whetton, Head of Governance and Compliance

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

3.1 The Board agreed that the *Draft Private Minutes* and *Private Action Log* would be taken in private. The Board agreed that the *Increased Settlement Authority for an Employer's Liability Claim* would be taken in private due to matters subject to legal proceedings (Standing Order 9D).

3.2 No further items were identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 For transparency, the following standing declarations of interests were recorded:

- Paul Stollard, Chair of Board of Institute of Fire Engineers
- Tim Wright, Trustee of Dementia Heroes Charity

4.2 There were no other declarations or conflict of interests made.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

5.1 Thursday 30 April 2026

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

5.1.2 **The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2026 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

5.2 Thursday 22 June 2026

5.2.1 The Chair advised that the draft minutes were not yet available for this additional extraordinary meeting. This was due to the substantial business of the previous meeting, the process required to ensure that the draft public minutes were accurate and the short timescale between meetings. It was confirmed that the draft minutes from 22 June 2026 would be presented at the next meeting (August 2026).

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.

Action 11.7 (PMF Quarterly Performance Report 2025/26 (18/12/2025): MMcA confirmed that this action would remain open until the consultation process had concluded and the AI Policy had been formally approved by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).

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 MW presented the Chair's Update report which noted events that had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 April 2026 and highlighted the following:

- Attendance at Long Service Good Conduct ceremonies in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Stornoway. Thanks were extended to the recipients for their valuable contributions to the Service and communities.
- Constructive meetings held with Trade Union representatives from each union. Potential for annual meetings and incorporation into future Board induction programme.

- Attendance at a Fire Skills passing out parade which highlighted the value of these programmes to individuals, families and local communities.
- Thanks were extended to the Communications and Service Delivery Review (SDR) teams for their work in relation to the SDR decision meeting (22 June 2026).
- Attendance at the recent Reform Collaboration Group.
- Progress update of NJC meetings relating to pay settlement and College of Fire consultation submission.

8.2 In relation to the College of Fire consultation, AW advised that he attended the recent meeting on behalf of the Chief Officer. AW confirmed that the Service would be submitting a comprehensive response to the consultation and also to Scottish Government, due to the devolved nature of our arrangements.

8.3 In regard to the NJC meeting, MW advised that the Service had emphasised that the College should be accessible and beneficial for all 4 nations and not solely focused on England. Overall, there was substantial support for the creation of the college and the consistency of standards.

8.4 The Board were made aware of the consultation relating to the creation of the Transitional Board, which would assist the UK government on implementing the Grenfell recommendations. It was noted that some areas of the Transitional Board would directly impact Scotland and the Service should remain vigilant to these.

8.5 **The Board noted the report and verbal update.**

9 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

9.1 In the Chief Officer's absence, AW presented the Chief Officer's Report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 April 2026.

9.2 AW advised that following the previous Board meeting (22 June 2026), the Service had received and were responding to various Freedom of Information and political enquiries. AW noted that the Service would facilitate in-person meetings where required.

9.3 AW confirmed that the Grey Book pay settlement had been agreed following the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) ballot for acceptance.

9.4 AW updated the Board on the significant fire in Edinburgh yesterday (8 July 2026) noting that Scottish Government had also been provided with an update. He noted that the operational response had been routine (level 2) and that the attending crews had efficiently contained the fire within the building.

9.5 **The Board noted the report and verbal update.**

10 COMMITTEE UPDATES

10.1 Strategic Planning and Change Committee (SPCC)

10.1.1 <u>Approved Minutes of Special Meeting: 16 February 2026</u>
TO'D presented the approved minutes from the special public meeting held on 16 February 2026, noting that a verbal update had been provided at the last meeting.

10.1.2 <u>Draft Minutes of Meeting: 14 May 2026</u>
TO'D presented the draft minutes from the public meeting held on 14 May 2026, noting that a verbal update had been provided at the last meeting.

10.1.3 **The Board noted the approved and draft minutes.**

10.2 **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)**

10.2.1 Draft Minutes of Meeting: 9 April 2026

BB presented the draft minutes from the public meeting held on 9 April 2026, noting that a verbal update had been provided at the last meeting.

10.2.2 **The Board noted the draft minutes.**

10.3 **People Committee (PC)**

10.3.1 Verbal Update of Meeting: 18 June 2026

MS reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 18 June 2026 as well as a private workshop and tour of the training facilities at Perth Fire Station. The following key areas from the formal meeting were highlighted:

- Discussions relating to emerging risks and the potential for a future workshop to explore wider themes rather than individual risks.
- Reframing of the People Strategy to the People Plan to afford the incoming Director of People, Communications and Engagement the opportunity to shape the longer-term strategy.
- Update on the learning and development activity across the organisation.
- Update on the organisational culture and leadership work and action plan development. One key theme related to the integration of the safety standards and performance.
- Update on contaminants noting that good progress continued to be made. Consideration to be given to whether future contaminants updates should be included within the overall safety and wellbeing report.

10.3.2 **The Board noted the draft minutes.**

10.4 **Service Delivery Committee (SDC)**

10.4.1 Verbal Update of Meeting: 4 June 2026

TW reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 4 June 2026 and highlighted the following key points:

- Presentation from Local Senior Officer Joe McKay, East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute (EWDAB). Updates were provided on local activities, innovative communications (podcast) and the first volunteer to retained pathway candidate.
- Update on Service Delivery activities across the Service.
- Overview of the Annual Compliments and Complaints reports.
- Thematic Station Audit Overview 2025-2026 had been provided for information.
- Private session was held to present an overview of the safety, standards and performance across the Service and the mitigating actions being taken.

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

10.5 **Reform Collaboration Group (RCG)**

10.5.1 MW reported to the Board that the RCG held a meeting on 30 June 2026 and highlighted the following key points:

- Revised structure of the RCG (previously circulated to the Board).
- Ongoing discussions relating to Section 19 and the potential impact on training.
- Discussion on mental health and the agreement that the existing Scottish Government multi-agency group remained appropriate. However, the Service needed to remain aware of the wider mental health and crisis response landscape and how this could impact on future operational response.

10.5.2 In regard to Section 19, CMcG reminded the Board of the impact on training delivery and methodology. He commented on the logistical and practical challenges in delivering this revised training, particularly to the On Call staffing group, across the Service. He noted that the Service had been engaging with partners including Scottish Government's

Sponsor Unit for a considerable period on this matter. He further noted that the Service would continue to work with the Sponsor Unit to ensure that an appropriate consultation response was submitted.

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

(C Fitzpatrick joined the meeting at 1329 hrs)

11 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE 2025/26 Q4

11.1 MMcA, introduced CF who presented the Board with the fourth quarter performance report for fiscal year 2025-26 for scrutiny with reasonable assurance being recorded. The following key points were highlighted:

- KPI04 Fire Fatalities was revised down from 33 to 31 following confirmation that two deaths were not fire related. This total number of fire fatalities was lower than the previous year and the 10-year average.
- KPI05 Fire Casualties reduced to the lowest annual total on record.
- KPI10 Accidental Dwelling Fires continued to show sustained long-term improvement with approximately 30% reduction over the past ten years.
- KPI06 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) increased during the quarter following an overall reduction in the introduction of the new process in early 2025.
- KPI09 Fire Safety Audits reporting maintained improvements.
- KPI12 Total Incidents increased by 5% due to an increase in outdoor fires during Q1.
- KPI14 Response and KPI15 Call Handling Times were improving, and further improvements were anticipated as the new mobilising system embedded.
- KPI21 UFAS Incidents remained stable and substantially lower than previous years.
- KPI30 Assisting Other Agencies Incidents increased by 14% which were mainly attributable to forced entry/exit incidents.
- KPI32 Carbon Emissions increased due to higher operational activity and additional emissions sources being included, however, this was not viewed as a reversal of the overall direction of travel.
- KPI37 Data Breaches increased and remained under review.
- KPI60 Estate Condition continued to decline and remained an area of concern.
- KPI62 Female Ratio – Wholetime increased to a Service high of 7.2%.
- KPI51 Attacks on Firefighters continued to increase and were subject to ongoing monitoring through Safety and Assurance.

11.2 The Board noted that reference to the rollout of the new Strategic Plan within the covering paper should be removed from future reports. CF confirmed that this would be rectified in future reports.

11.3 In regard to HFSV partner referrals, the Board noted that assurances had previously been provided that the technical issue with capturing this data would have been resolved in Q4. AW advised that the ongoing issue with security penetration testing was still being progressed and that this had impacted on the ability to record and capture referrals through the app. AW confirmed that partner referrals were being received and actioned.

11.4 The Board noted concerns on the overall development and delivery of new technology solutions and whether lessons were being learned and embedded. Consideration to be given to explore this further at a future strategy/development day.

11.5 Brief discussion took place on the KPI recording of HFSV and how the Service would be able to gain assurance of the effectiveness of these visits going forward. CF noted that the Service would be taking part in a university research project, commencing in October 2026, which related to assessing the value of HFSV.

11.6 In regard to the increase in data breaches, the Board sought clarification on the reasons and whether there were any identifiable patterns. MMcA advised that these breaches were internal low-level incidents. He noted that a detailed report would be submitted to the Board in due course. MMcA confirmed that the risk relating to data breaches would be reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

11.7 In regard to KPI54 Near Misses, the Board noted the high number of near misses relating to breathing apparatus (BA) and sought clarity on the reasons/circumstances. CMcG noted that further information could be taken to a future Service Delivery Committee. CMcG outlined the difference between a near miss and RIDDOR incident and provided some examples of potential near miss incidents.

11.8 In regard to KPI15 Call Handling Time, the Board noted the reduction and queried whether the recent recruitment had been a factor in this. AW noted that a detailed update had been provided at the recent Service Delivery Committee and advised that no single factor had been identified, however, a combination of factors including recruitment, new mobilising system and reduction in manual workarounds were attributable.

11.9 The Board noted that the reduction was not identical across all service delivery areas. AW advised that the Senior Management Board had also identified this and work would be undertaken to review this as part of the restructure into the Preparedness and Resilience Directorate.

11.10 The Board commented on the benefit of including weight of response to incidents as this would further their understanding. AW noted that this should be considered within the wider approach to managing and monitoring performance, such as assurance mapping. AW further noted that operational assurance reports already examined significant incidents and considered whether the weight of response had been appropriate and the impact of the incident on the wider Service.

11.11 In regard to KPI21 UFAS Incidents, the Board noted that this had stabilised and commented on whether it was appropriate to consider Phase 2.

11.12 In regard to KPI30 Assisting Other Agencies Incidents, the Board commented on the potential benefit of including a breakdown of incident types to aid understanding.

11.13 In regard to KPI45 Portfolio Cashable Benefits, the Board noted that this had plateaued and that consideration should be given to change/improve the position.

11.14 In regard to KPI60 Estate Condition, the Board noted the significant reduction in the percentage of stations in good or satisfactory condition and queried the reason for this. AW explained that the reduction was partly due to an internal change in the measurement criteria rather than a deterioration within premises. As a result, both the Asset and Health and Safety functions would work together to establish standards based on legal compliance, statutory compliance and HSE guidance. The Board queried the impact on the change in measurement criteria on the backlog maintenance and whether this had increased the level of works required to ensure stations were fit for purpose. AW to seek confirmation from the Asset function and provide feedback outwith the meeting.

11.15 The Board noted their disappointment in the increased attacks on firefighters.

11.16 In regard to KPI36 (Subject Access) and KPI38 (Freedom of Information), the Board noted the improvements in response time and queried whether this was sustainable. MMcA advised that the Annual Data Governance report and Internal Audit Freedom of Information report would be presented to the next Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. He noted that the Service had reached and were maintaining the completion target despite the increase in requests. The additional resource and restructure within the function had helped to achieve this improvement.

11.17 The Board noted and welcomed the highest ratio of female wholetime firefighters in the history of the Service. The Board recognised the positive improvements and significant work undertaken to achieve this.

11.18 In regard to KPI49 Absence Rate, the Board noted that this had stabilised and that this should continue to be monitored. LG advised that the benchmarking with other public sector organisations indicated that the Service were performing well, however work would continue to support staff attendance.

11.19 **The Board scrutinised the Performance Management Framework Quarterly Performance 2025/26 Q4 with reasonable assurance.**

(C Fitzpatrick left the meeting at 1409 hrs)

12 THREE-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN 2025-28: QUARTER 4 2025-26 PROGRESS REPORT

12.1 MMcA presented the Board with the quarter 4 progress report on how we are performing against the 2025/26 actions within the Three-Year Delivery Plan 2025-28. The following key points were highlighted:

- 28 actions have been completed this year. Of which, 22 were fully completed and the remaining 6 residual actions would be captured within the 2026/27 plan.
- All Green actions would be progressed to conclusion and reported through normal management processes.
- All Amber actions would be progressed to conclusion and reported through normal management processes. The ESN-related action would remain within the enabling infrastructure programme and be reported through the Strategic Planning and Change Committee.

12.2 The Board noted their concerns that residual or partially completed actions were being referred to as complete or proposed for closure, particularly as some actions were part of a multi-year programme of works. The Board also noted concerns over residual actions being moved to Committee or Executive reporting as this could weaken the golden thread and Board's oversight.

12.3 The Board asked for consideration to be given to clearer articulation of actions that were completed within the current year, actions that would continue into 2026/27, the governance/scrutiny arrangements for actions that would be reported through wider programmes and the narrative within the dashboard. MMcA noted the Board's concerns and apologised for any unintended lack of clarity. MMcA agreed to review the language, improve reporting distinctions, update the dashboard and map residual actions to appropriate governance routes.

ACTION: MMcA

12.4 **The Board scrutinised the report with reasonable assurance.**

(The meeting broke as 1435 hrs and reconvened at 1440 hrs)

13 RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – MAY 2026

13.1 WL presented a report to the Board advising of the resource budget position for the period ending 31 May 2026. WL outlined the analysis of the financial position and referred Members to Appendix A of the report, which identified the current resource position showing an overspend of £0.600million and a forecast year-end overspend of £1.362 million. Compared to the unfunded gap of £2.200 million, this was a reduction of 37%, which was primarily due to salary vacancies and lower activity levels compared with the previous year.

13.2 WL noted that the significant risks identified included uniform pay award (3.8%), potential inflationary impacts on support staff salaries, essential property repairs and hydrant maintenance costs which remained outwith the Service's control. WL further noted that there may be limited opportunities to release savings from ring-fenced contingencies within the current financial year.

13.3 The Board queried the reason for the under recovery of income in relation to modern apprenticeships. WL advised that this was due to an incorrect budget assumption which had now been rectified.

13.4 In regard to the underspend in Operations Control staff, the Board queried whether the targeted recruitment had addressed the shortfall. WL noted that the recruitment had briefly brought staffing up to establishment, however, attrition levels had since reduced those levels.

13.5 The Board sought clarity whether the forecasted underspend in Operations Control had been intentional and if so, what were the risks. AW clarified that it had not been intentional and that the Service aimed to recruit to full establishment. He noted that staff turnover, sickness and abstraction levels continued to impact on staffing levels, however these were in line with other public sector call centres.

13.6 In regard to the financial risk summary, the Board requested greater clarity on whether each individual risk increased or decreased budget pressures. WL noted that the estimated range of risk section reported whether the risk was attributable to an over or underspend. WL further noted that additional narrative would be helpful to provide a clearer position.

13.7 **The Board scrutinised the resource budget position for the period ending 31 May 2026 with reasonable assurance.**

14 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – MAY 2026

14.1 WL presented a report advising the Board of the actual and committed expenditure against the 2026/27 capital budget position for the period ending 31 May 2026. He noted that the capital spend showed 47% progressed and 47% forecasted, which reflected an anticipated 94% full year spend (potential underspend of circa £4.000 million). The underspend was mainly attributable to delays at Dalkeith Fire Station and non-capitalisation of NMS control overtime. It was noted that the next agenda item (Capital Programme Update) would provide further detail.

14.2 The Board sought assurance that the Service had identified the complete list of capital works required and how viable sites had been prioritised, particularly in relation to welfare facilities and remediation work. AW advised that the SLT continually reviewed and prioritised capital spend in order to manage existing and potential future risks. He noted the Service Delivery Review (SDR) options to be progressed, however there were other areas that also needed to be addressed. DF advised that the Service were aware of which premises required welfare facilities, however final decisions would be influenced by wider work on station clustering, hub sites and satellite stations through the on-call improvement programme.

14.3 **The Board scrutinised the level of actual and committed capital expenditure for the period ending 31 May 2026 with reasonable assurance.**

15 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE 2026-2030**

15.1 SF presented the report seeking approval of the revised Capital Programme 2026-2030 and highlighted the following key points:

- Revisions included the removal of the assumed receipt from the sale of Cowcaddens during 2026/27 and the updated medium term planning assumptions following the SDR decisions made by the Board.
- Other revisions in 2026/27 included reductions in property, fleet, equipment and IT spend.
- Delayed start at Dalkeith Fire Station had also reduced planned expenditure.
- Relevant directorates had been in consultation on the development of the revised programme which had been structured to ensure the delivery of all SDR recommendations within the five year period.

15.2 In regard to Dalkeith Fire Station, the Board sought clarification on the reasons for the delay and when these had been identified. SF advised that the delay was due to rescheduling the construction stages to align and remain within the available budget.

15.3 In regard to the retendering for the aerial ladder platforms (ALP), the Board sought clarification on the reasons and whether this could have been identified earlier. SF advised that the procurement process had been robust, however legal advice had been to retender due to the potential risk of legal challenges. It was noted that further details would be provided in the private session due to the ongoing tendering process.

15.4 The Board sought clarification on how the Service would capture and maintain visibility of the risks created by delayed investment in facilities in order to remain within the available budget. In particular, the Board highlighted Liberton Fire Station, the National Training Centre and wider SDR ambitions. SF advised that work on Liberton had already commenced and would conclude in September 2027. SF further advised that the recent work completed at Dreghorn had helped to mitigate the risks associated with delayed investment at the National Training Centre. As the capital programme remained subject to change, the Service could plan and minimise risk as necessary. CMcG noted that one of the main risks remained the reliance on aging assets for longer than originally planned, however work had been undertaken to assess lifecycle, longevity and resilience options.

15.5 **The Board approved the revised Capital Programme 2026-2030 with reasonable assurance.**

16 LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

16.1 MMcA presented a report providing an update on the development of revised Local Fire and Rescue Plans. The following key points were highlighted:

- Under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act, individual plans were required for the 32 local authority areas. The plans would be aligned to the Service's Strategy and Community Planning Partnership's local outcome improvement plans.
- Evaluation of existing plans commenced in March 2026 and involved LSO colleagues and Service Delivery DACOs.
- Draft plans were being developed ahead of public consultation commencing in August 2026.
- Anticipated completion of all local plans by the end of the calendar year.
- Consultation outcomes summary report would be presented to the Board before the plans were finalised.

16.2 The Board commented on the need for LSOs to balance the Service's strategic priorities with local authority priorities. It was noted that the process and template appeared to place greater emphasis on local priorities than on the Service's priorities. MMcA noted that the intention was for local plans to translate the Service's strategic priorities into local delivery and recognised that this could be made clearer with the template.

(L Gaja left the meeting at 1515 hrs)

16.3 In regard to governance arrangements, MMcA confirmed that the Service owned the local plans and were responsible for consulting on them, however local authorities ultimately approved and scrutinised their delivery. He noted that these governance arrangements were in line with the legislation which established local scrutiny arrangements to address concerns relating to legacy Services moving away from local authority control.

16.4 The Board were reminded that the Service Delivery Committee regularly engaged with LSOs to gain an understanding of local issues, performance, etc. However, it was noted that this input was light touch but could be formalised.

16.5 It was noted that an agenda item relating to Local Fire and Rescue Plans was scheduled to be presented to the next Integrated Governance Forum (16 July 2026). The Board requested that discussions consider the evaluation process including quality, impact and reporting.

16.6 DF advised that local plans remained the main mechanism for local police and fire scrutiny committees to scrutinise the Service's performance against plans in their areas. It was recognised that future evaluation reports could include further information on how strategic objectives were being delivered locally and whether performance aligned with local plan priorities.

16.7 **The Board scrutinised the report with reasonable assurance.**

17 RISK THEMES

17.1 There were no new or emerging risks identified during this meeting.

18 FORWARD PLAN

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

19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

19.1 The next public meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 27 August 2026.

19.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1520 hrs.

(The meeting broke at 1520 hrs and reconvened in private session at 1525 hrs)

PRIVATE SESSION

20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETINGS:

20.1 **Thursday 30 April 2026**

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

20.2 **Thursday 28 May 2026 (Special)**

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

20.3 **The minutes of the private meetings held on 30 April 2026 and 28 May 2026 were approved as a true record of the meetings.**

21 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

21.1 The Board considered the action log and noted the updates.

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

22 INCREASED SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY FOR AN EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY CLAIM

22.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the recommendations in relation to the employer's liability claim raised against the Service.

22.2 **The Board approved the recommendations within the report.**

(D Johnston left the meeting at 1544 hrs)

15 <u>CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE 2026-2030 (Continued)</u>

15.6 DF provided a further update on the ALP tendering process.

15.7 **The Board noted this additional update.**

There being no further matters to discuss in private, the meeting closed at 1554 hrs.

Agenda Item 6

SFRS BOARD MEETING – ROLLING ACTION LOG

SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Background and Purpose

A rolling action log is maintained of all actions arising or pending from each of the previous meetings of the Board. No actions will be removed from the log or the completion dates extended until approval has been sought from the Board.
The status of Actions are categorised as follows:

- Task completed – to be removed from listing
- No identified risk, on target for completion date
- Target completion date extended to allow flexibility
- Target completion date unattainable, further explanation provided.

Actions/recommendations

Currently the rolling action log contains 4 actions. A total of 3 of these actions had been completed.

The Board is therefore asked to approve the removal of the 3 actions noted as completed (Blue status), note no actiosn were categorised as Green status and note one action were categorised as Yellow status on the action log.

Board Meeting: 18 December 2025						
Agenda Item	**Actions Arising**	**Lead**	**Due Date**	**Status**	**Completion Date**	**Position Statement**
11.7	**PMF Quarterly Performance report 2025/26:** MMcA to provide off-table update on current AI validation methods.	**MMcA**	**March 2026**			**Complete (26/03/2026):** A SFRS policy on the use and deployment of AI technology is in its final stages of its development. The policy will outline steps to encourage people to acknowledge where they are already using AI tools. This is to help the Service better understand current usage of AI and any issues and challenges this could present to the Service as we develop our approach to the use of AI. **RE-OPENED (26/03/2026):** To remain open until the AI Policy had been finalised and approved by the Strategic Leadership Team. **Update (30/04/2026):** AI policy draft has been finalised and is out for consultation. Following consultation, it will go to May Senior Management Board and Strategic Leadership Team for approval. Regarding validation methods. In the draft policy, AI validation is achieved through a combination of proportionate pre-approval review, alignment with existing assurance processes, mandatory human checking of AI outputs, transparency and accountability controls, defined prohibitions on high-risk use, and ongoing governance review. Validation is framed primarily as a governance and risk-management activity, rather than a technical model-testing exercise. **Update (09/07/2026):** AI policy due before Senior Management Board on the 28 July 2025 asking for recommendation to Strategic Leadership Team for approval. **Update (27/08/2026):** AI policy approved by Senior Management Board. Scheduled to go to the Strategic Leadership Team on 2 September 2026.

Board Meeting: 30 April 2026						
Agenda Item	**Actions Arising**	**Lead**	**Due Date**	**Status**	**Completion Date**	**Position Statement**
13.5	**Internal Audit Plan 2026/27:** The Board tasked the ARAC to scrutinise other sources of assurance where gaps exist in the internal audit plan, particularly for AI and digital risks, and to report back confirming that these areas would be addressed.	**BB (ARAC)**	**July 2026**		**August 2026**	**Update (09/07/2026):** The mechanism for ensuring organisational assurances is Assurance Mapping. This will be discussed at the ARAC meeting on 16 July 2026. **Complete (27/08/2026):** Relevant subject areas identified for scrutiny will be discussed with the Chair of ARAC as part of forward planning and be added to the forward plan for ARAC as required.

Board Meeting: 22 June 2026 (Special)						
Agenda Item	**Actions Arising**	**Lead**	**Due Date**	**Status**	**Completion Date**	**Position Statement**
5.9.4	**Service Delivery Review Recommendations:** It was agreed that an action would be taken to the Integrated Governance Forum to consider the overarching benefits tracking and governance arrangements.	**BST**	**August 2026**		**July 2026**	**Complete (27/08/2026):** Added to the Integrated Governance Forum forward plan for their 16 July 2026 meeting.

Board Meeting: 9 July 2026						
Agenda Item	**Actions Arising**	**Lead**	**Due Date**	**Status**	**Completion Date**	**Position Statement**
12.3	**Three-Year Delivery Plan 2025-28: Quarter 4 2025-26 Progress Report**: MMcA agreed to review the language, improve reporting distinctions, update the dashboard and map residual actions to appropriate governance routes.	**MMcA**	**August 2026**		**August 2026**	**Complete (27/08/2026):** Amendments to the language of the Quarter 4 Progress Report were made in line with Board member comments. Work to improve the reporting distinctions and update the dashboard and map residual actions appropriately is underway and will be available from Q2. **Circulated via email on 18 August 2026 (link)**

Agenda Item 7

SFRS BOARD MEETING DECISION LOG

PURPOSE

Decisions made at the meetings of the Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are recorded in the minutes of these meetings and published on the SFRS website. This ensures that all decisions of public interest are accurately documented and made available for public scrutiny. The Standing Orders for Meetings of the Board and its Committees state that a decision made by the Board cannot be changed within 6 months, unless the Chair rules that there has been a material change of circumstances.

The attached decision log therefore provides a record of all significant decisions made by the board at its meetings held in the most recent 12 months, and in accordance with Standing Orders, notes the earliest date for reviewing each decision. Further to this and detailed under each decision is a section that will be completed 12 months following the initial decision by the Board to formally reflect the impact each Board decision has had for the organisation.

In summary, the decision log will also ensure there is a means for the Board to keep sight of their recent decisions and the follow up actions put in train, together with the impact assessment, and helps to maintain high standards of corporate governance.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is invited to note the contents of the decision log.

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 31 July 2025 (Special)				
ITEM 5	**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT 2024/25 (PRIVATE)**	The Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications presented the Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service with the Annual Performance Review Report 2024/25 and asked that it was approved for use at the Annual Performance Review Meeting that is scheduled to take place on 9 September 2025.	**Subject to the amendments, the Board approved the Annual Performance Review Report 2024/25 and agreed its release to Scottish Government.**	**December 2025**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 07/2026): The Board's approval of the Annual Performance Review Report 2024/25 enabled the submission of a comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of SFRS performance to the Scottish Government. This supported statutory accountability requirements, facilitated constructive scrutiny and challenge through the Annual Performance Review process, and informed discussions on organisational performance, improvement priorities, and strategic outcomes. The decision contributed to maintaining transparency, assurance, and stakeholder confidence in SFRS performance reporting arrangements.				
ITEM 6	**CIVTECH 10.2 – PRE-COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT (PCA) PHASE (PRIVATE)**	On behalf of the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance a report was presented seeking approval, as part of the CivTech 10 Innovation programme, SFRS are intending to enter into a joint venture to further develop an innovative solution for the identification and monitoring of firefighter exposure to contaminants.	**The Board approved the match funding and Civ Tech Fee. The Board approved the joint venture in FireHazResearch with SFRS staff being appointed as Directors of that company.**	**December 2025**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 07/2026): Participation in the CivTech programme demonstrates SFRS's commitment to innovation. By collaborating with external partners to develop new ways of working with emerging technologies, the SFRS Board decision to support this work has helped SFRS continue to innovate in its efforts to enhance firefighter safety and operational effectiveness.				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 30 OCTOBER 2025				
ITEM 11	**BOARD FORWARD PLAN SCHEDULE 2026/27**	The Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications asked the SFRS Board to approve a proposal setting out a meetings schedule for the Board and its Committees and Board Forward Plan until March 2027. These set out the Board's programme of scrutiny and key decisions for 2026-27, while also taking into account the Public Bodies Information Update 257, which focuses on 'Public Body Boards – Online Meetings & A Green Recovery'. The proposal will look to balance the number of in person and virtual meetings, while continuing to ensure that the business being brought forward is strategic in nature and aligning with the Service's planning cycle, governance policies, procedures and priorities.	**The Board approved the proposed schedule of meetings for 2026-27 along with the arrangements for reviewing these.**	**April 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 10/2026):				
ITEM 12	**ANNUAL PROCUREMENT REVIEW REPORT 2024/25 (PRIVATE)**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services presented the Annual Procurement Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, as required under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) 2014	**The Board approved the Annual Procurement Report for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, with several recommendations for changes to future reports.**	**April 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 10/2026):				
ITEM 14	**CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2025/26 – SEPTEMBER 2025**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services advised the Board of actual and committed expenditure against the 2025/26 capital budget for the period ending 30 September 2025 and sought approval for the budget virements in section 3.5.	**The Board approved the proposed virements and the further slippage environment, noting the strategic alignment and readiness to reallocate funds as needed.**	**April 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 10/2026):				

ITEM 22	**DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2024/25 (PRIVATE)**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services presented the Draft Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025. The document reports that the Resource budget underspent by £0.271 million, the Capital budget was on budget and the Capital budget for Right of Use assets was underspent by £0.030 million.	**Subject to minor amendment, the Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts 2024/25 and authorised the Accountable Officer to sign and submit on behalf of the Service.**	**April 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 10/2026):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 18 DECEMBER 2025				
ITEM 13	**ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY FRAMEWORK**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services provided the Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service with the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy documentation for decision.	**The Board approved the revised SFRS Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, the Counter Fraud Strategy and the Fraud Response Plan for implementation**	**June 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 12/2026):				
ITEM 21	**JENNERS INVESTIGATION UPDATE (PRIVATE)**	The Deputy Chief Officer provide an update the Board on the progress of the Jenners Investigation, ongoing legal process and to seek a decision on the future approach.	**The Board approved the recommendation outlined within the report.**	**June 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 12/2026):				
ITEM 22	**UPDATE ON CLAIM AGAINST SYSTEL (PRIVATE)**	The Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services) providing an update on the Appeal which took place on 2 May 2025 and the next steps in pursuit of the claim for recovery of damages against Systel.	**The Board approved the recommendation (Option 2).**	**June 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 12/2026):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 26 February 2026 (Special)				
ITEM 5	**BUDGET APPROACH 26-27 (PRIVATE)**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services asked the Board to approve the Budget Approach 2026/27. The report sets out the proposed approach to developing both the Resource and Capital budgets for the forthcoming financial year, within the context of the Scottish Government's budget proposals.	**The Board DID NOT approve the Budget Approach 2026/27 instead opting to postpone their decision and await the outcome of discussions with Scottish Government and receipt of the letter of comfort. This would provide clarity to the Board and enable an informed decision to be made**	**August 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 02/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 26 March 2026				
ITEM 13	**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026-2030**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services presented the proposed Capital Programme 2026–2030 to the Board for approval. Total proposed expenditure over the 4-year period is £218.750 million, funded by anticipated Capital DEL budget of £203.4 million and estimated capital receipts of £15.350 million.	**The Board approved the Capital Programme 2026-2030, recognising that figures for years 2, 3 and 4 are indicative and will be refined in future years.**	**September 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 03/2027):				
ITEM 13	**RESOURCE BUDGET 2026-2027**	The Interim Director of Finance and Contractual Services presented the proposed Resource Budget for 2026/27 to the Board for approval. It is proposed that the Resource Budget for 2026/27 be set at £353.62million, in line with funding from the Scottish Government. The report also sets out the implications of the 2026/27 budget position for the wider Spending Review period, recognising	**The Board:** • **Approved the Resource Budget for 2026/27, as set out in section 3 and detailed in Appendix A, on the basis of a balanced budget with an unallocated requirement of £6.2m, noting the Scottish Government's SBR assurance**	**September 2026**

		that decisions taken this year influence affordability, risk and sustainability in future years.	**of up to £4.0m, and the conditions attached.** • **Endorse and agree with the concerns of the executive in relation to the proposed SFRS flat cash budget for years 2 and 3.** • **Supported a clear strategic assessment: that the structural funding deficit must be corrected and thereafter funding must be maintained in real terms to enable resources released through reform and transformation activity to be reinvested, to reduce risk and deliver a sustainable service over the medium/long term.** • **Supported continued, constructive engagement with the Scottish Government to manage the 2026/27 in year pressures and secure a sustainable funding position.**	
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 03/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 30 April 2026				
ITEM 11	**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (PMF) AND ASSOCIATED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND OTHER EVIDENCE OF ASSURANCE**	The Head of Governance and Compliance presented the final Performance Management Framework, associated suite of Strategic Performance Indicators and wider sources of assurance identified to evidence delivery of the SFRS Strategy 2025–2028 for approval.	**Subject to the proposed amendments, the Board approved the Performance Management Framework with reasonable assurance.**	**October 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 04/2027):				

ITEM 12	**THREE-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN 2026/27**	The Head of Governance and Compliance presented the Three-Year Delivery Plan and requested approval for publication	**Subject to the proposed amendments, the Board approved the Three-Year Delivery Plan with Reasonable assurance.**	**October 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 04/2027):				
ITEM 13	**ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2026-27**	The Deputy Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee asked the Board to approve the SFRS Internal Audit Plan 2026/27. This sets out a timetable of the main reviews of key activities during 2026/27 that are intended to assist in ensuring effective governance and monitoring arrangements within SFRS, which link to the Service's purpose, outcomes and risks.	**The Board approved the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2026/27 with an adjusted assurance level of Reasonable.**	**October 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 04/2027):				
ITEM 14	**ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE RELATED ITEMS**	The Head of Governance and Strategy asked the SFRS Board to approve the proposed amendments outlined in Board and Committee related governance documents, following review, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the governance arrangements of the SFRS Board and its Committees.	**Subject to minor changes, the Board approved the Annual Governance Review with substantial assurance.**	**October 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 04/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 28 May 2026 (Special)				
ITEM 5	**INCREASED SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY FOR AN EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY CLAIM (PRIVATE)**	The Director of Governance, Strategy and Change provided a report to the Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in relation to an employer's liability claim intimated against SFRS, seeking increased settlement authority.	**The Board approved the recommendations outlined within report with Reasonable assurance.**	**November 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 05/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 22 June 2026 (Special)				
ITEM 5	**SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT**	The Director of Operational Delivery provided a report to the Board to detail the Service Delivery Review Consultation Process and seek approval to proceed implementation of options for change. .	**The Board approved the recommendations outlined within report with substantial assurance.**	**December 2026**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 06/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 9 July 2026 (Special)				
ITEM 15	**CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE 2026-2030**	The Asset Governance and Performance Manager provided a report to the Board seeking approval of the updated SFRS Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2029/30 with proposals to realign expenditure plans, recognising there would not be a capital receipt from the sale of the Cowcaddens site in 2026/27.	**The Board approved the revised Capital Programme 2026-2030 with reasonable assurance.**	**January 2027**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 07/2027):				

Minute Ref	Paper	Issue	Decision	Earliest Review Date
Meeting Date: 30 July 2026 (Special Private)				
ITEM 5	**RECOVERING LOSSES FROM SYSTEL- DECISION ON SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL (PRIVATE)**	The Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services) provided a report to the Board to present the offers for settlement and provide an evaluation of the settlement proposals with options for decision making.	**The Board approved the recommendations outlined within report with Substantial assurance.**	**January 2027**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 07/2027):				

ITEM 6	**SETTLEMENT AUTHORITY FOR AN EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY CLAIM (PRIVATE)**	The Director of Governance, Strategy and Change provided a report to the SFRS Board in relation to an employer's liability claim intimated against SFRS, seeking settlement authority.	**The Board approved the recommendations outlined within report with Reasonable assurance.**	**January 2027**
Impact Assessment for Board Decision (Review Date – 07/2027):				

Agenda Item 8

THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
THURSDAY 27 AUGUST 2026

CHAIR'S UPDATE: JULY-AUGUST 2026

Monday 13 July 2026
Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Pre-Agenda meeting
Meeting with Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair

Tuesday 14 July 2026
Meeting with Mentor
Meeting with CO Stuart Stevens and Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair

Wednesday 15 July 2026
Regular Chair/Board Support Team meeting

Thursday 16 July 2025
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Integrated Governance Forum
Meeting with CO Stuart Stevens

Friday 17 July 2026
Firefighter Graduation, Cambuslang
Meeting with DCO Andrew Watt
Meeting with DCO Sarah O'Donnell

Monday 20 July 2026
Meeting with CO Stuart Stevens
Meeting with Chief Executive of East Renfrewshire Council and CO Stuart Stevens

Tuesday 21 July 2026
Regular meeting with Stuart Greig, Deputy Director of Safer Communities
Meeting with Lyndsey Gaja, Head of People
Weekly EA Catch up
Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub Committee

Monday 27 July 2026
Meeting with John Lamont, MP and CO Stuart Stevens
National Joint Council

Tuesday 28 July 2026
Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub Committee Forward Planning
Weekly EA Catch up

Thursday 30 July 2026
SFRS Special Board Meeting
SFRS Board Strategy Day and Informal Workshop

Friday 31 July 2026
Meeting with Board Support Team
Meeting with Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change

Tuesday 11 August 2026
Meeting with Angiolina Foster, Deputy Chair
Weekly EA Catch up
Meeting with HMFSI
Meeting with GM Chris Casey, Board Support Manager
Meeting with DCO Sarah O'Donnell

Wednesday 12 August 2026
Regular Chair/Board Support Team meeting

Monday 17 August 2026
Meeting with CO Stuart Stevens
SFRS Board Pre-Agenda

Thursday 20 August 2026
Regular meeting with Stuart Greig, Deputy Director of Safer Communities and CO Stuart Stevens
Weekly EA Catch up

Friday 21 August 2026
Regular meeting with Don McGillivray, Director of Safer Communities and CO Stuart Stevens
Regular 1:1 meeting with Don McGillivray, Director of Safer Communities
Meeting with Chief Executive of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Council and CO Stuart Stevens
Meeting with DCO Andrew Watt

Wednesday 26 August 2026
Meeting with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government/HMFSI
Weekly EA Catch up

Thursday 28 May 2026
SFRS Special Board Meeting
SFRS Board Strategy Day
Meeting with James Wallace, Director of Finance, Communications and Engagement
Partnership Advisory Group Pre Agenda

In addition to the above diarised events, the Chair's duties involved responding to written correspondence, dealing with enquiries and numerous ad hoc teleconference calls.

THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
THURSDAY 27 AUGUST 2026

Agenda Item 9

CHIEF OFFICER'S UPDATE: JULY – AUGUST 2026

Monday 13 July 2026
Annual Leave

Tuesday 14 July 2026
Regular Catchup with HMFSI Chief Inspector
Regular Chief, Chair & Deputy Chair Meeting
Regular Director 1:1
Risk Spotlight Report meeting for Remunerations, Appointments & Nominations Sub Committee

Wednesday 15 July 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Organisational Culture & Leadership Programme Meeting
Identification of SFRS Strategic Risks Meeting

Thursday 16 July 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meeting
Integrated Governance Forum
Objectives Meeting with Board

Friday 17 July 2026
Cabinet Secretary Meeting
Firefighter Graduation, Cambuslang

Monday 20 July 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Regular Chief and Chair Meeting
Introductory meeting with CEO of East Renfrewshire Council

Tuesday 21 July 2026
National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) Chief Fire Officers Call
Firefighters Foundation Programme Chief Officer Introduction (T3/26)
Regular Director 1:1
Remunerations, Appointments & Nominations Sub Committee Meeting

Wednesday 22 July 2026
Senior Leadership Team Meeting

Friday 24 July 2026
Catch Up with Deputy Chief Officer
Monthly Catch Up with CFOs for Northern Ireland FRS & North Wales FRS
Regular Director 1:1
Cabinet Secretary Meeting re Wildfires
SGORR Meetings with Scottish Government

Monday 27 July 2026
Catch Up Meeting with Assistant Chief Officers
Exit Interview with retiring staff member
Meeting with MP

Tuesday 28 July 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Monthly Case Review Meeting

Wednesday 29 July 2026
National Joint Council (NJC) Pay Reform Meeting, London

Thursday 30 July 2026
SFRS Board Meeting (Special Private)
SFRS Board Strategy Day
Justice Board Meeting, Edinburgh

Friday 31 July 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Regular Director 1:1

Monday 03 August 2026
Monthly HMFSI Catch Up Meeting
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Chief Officer (CO) and Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) Weekly Catch Up

Tuesday 04 August 2026
NFCC Chief Fire Officers Meeting
Incident Command Assessment
Meeting with HMFSI Inspector
Scottish Heritage Museum Filming

Wednesday 05 August 2026
New Director Introductory Meetings (x2)
Youth Volunteer Scheme Games Opening & Closing Remarks
Senior Leadership Team Meeting
Senior Leadership Team Wildfire Discussions

Thursday 06 August 2026
Annual Leave

Friday 07 August 2026
NFCC Trustees Call

Monday 10 August to 14 August 2026
Annual Leave

Monday 17 August 2026
Regular Chief and Chair of Board Meeting
SFRS Board Pre Agenda Meeting
Regular Director 1:1
CO & DCO's Weekly Catch Up
Introductory Meeting with CO Staff Officer

Tuesday 18 August 2026
NFCC Chief Fire Officers Meeting
Regular Director 1:1 x 2
Wildfire Think Tank Session, Lancashire FRS

Wednesday, 19 August 2026
Senior Leadership Team Meeting

Thursday 20 August 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Regular Director 1:1
SLT Pre Agenda Meeting
Comms Video – People Plan
Regular Meeting with Deputy Director of Safer Communities

Friday 21 August 2026
Introductory meeting with CEO of Western Isles Council
Regular Meeting with Director of Safer Communities

Monday 24 August 2026
National Employers/FBU Meeting, London

Tuesday 25 August 2026
54th Anniversary of Kilbirnie Street Fire, Glasgow
HMFSI Meeting

Wednesday 26 August 2026
Budget/Strategy Planning Session
Monthly Case Review Meeting
Regular Director 1:1

Thursday 27 August 2026
SFRS Board Meeting
Partnership Advisory Group Pre Meeting

Friday 28 August 2026
Executive Assistant Weekly Catch Up
Monthly Catch Up with SFRS/NIFRS & NWFRS

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/ARAC/02-26

Agenda Item: 10.2ii

Report to:	**THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Meeting Date:	**27 AUGUST 2026**
Report Title:	**COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26 TO THE ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER AND BOARD**

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Report Classification:</td><td rowspan="2">For Information Only</td><td colspan="7">SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY
For Reports to be held in Private
Specify rationale below referring to
Board Standing Order 9</td></tr>
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1	**Purpose**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present the review of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Annual Report 2025/26, to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Board 'For Information Only' following its approval at the ARAC on 16 July 2026.
2	**Background**
2.1	Consistent with the Scottish Government Audit and Assurance Committee Handbook, and generally accepted principles of good corporate governance, the Terms of Reference of the SFRS ARAC calls for an Annual Report to the Board and Accountable Officer of the SFRS, summarising the Committee's work for the year past, and its opinion of the overall assurances it has received and issues it has considered.
3	**Main Report/Detail**
3.1	The Annual Report supports and assists with the preparation of the Accountable Officer's 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which was also scrutinised by ARAC on 16 July 2026. Production of the ARAC Annual Report has therefore been timed to support the preparation of the AGS.
3.2	This report provides further assurance in support of the SFRS Annual Report and Accounts for 2025/26 which is scheduled to be presented to the SFRS Board on 29 October 2026.
4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The Board is invited to note the contents of the ARAC Annual Report 2025/26 as set out in Appendix A and provide feedback to the ARAC should it be necessary.
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1	**Risk Appetite and Alignment to Risk Register**
5.1.1	Evidence gathered in support of this report deems that no significant risks have been identified.
5.2	**Financial**
5.2.1	This report provides further assurance in support of the SFRS Annual Report and Audited Accounts for 2025/26 which are scheduled to be presented to the Board on 29 October 2026.

5.3 5.3.1	**Environmental & Sustainability** There are no environmental and sustainability implications arising from this report.
5.4 5.4.1	**Workforce** There are no workforce implications arising from this report.
5.5 5.5.1	**Health & Safety** There are no Health & Safety implications arising from this report.
5.6 5.6.1	**Health & Wellbeing** There are no Health & Wellbeing implications arising from this report.
5.7 5.7.1	**Training** There are no training implications arising from this report.
5.8 5.8.1	**Timing** This report has been produced in support of the SFRS Annual Governance Statement which is scheduled to be presented to the Board as a part of the Annual Report and Audited Accounts for 2025/26on 29 October 2026
5.9 5.9.1	**Performance** Information contained within this report deems that there are no significant gaps in the performance of the ARAC and its approach to seeking assurance on, and scrutinising, the risk management and internal controls across SFRS.
5.10 5.10.1	**Communications & Engagement** This report provides an opportunity for Board members to review the contents and provide feedback to the ARAC if necessary.
5.11 5.11.1	**Legal** Production of this report is consistent with the Scottish Government Audit Committee Handbook and generally accepted principles of good corporate governance.
5.12 5.12.1	**Information Governance** DPIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. *If not applicable state reasons.* *No DPIA was required for this paper as it contains no personal information.*
5.13 5.13.1	**Equalities** EHRIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. *If not applicable state reasons.* *Covered by the SFRS Corporate Governance Arrangements 2025 EHRIA.*
5.14 5.14.1	**Service Delivery** There are no implications associated with the recommendations of this report.
5.15 5.15.1	**Prevention** There are no prevention implications with the recommendations of this report.
6	**Core Brief**
6.1	The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) asked the Board to note the contents of the ARAC Annual Report 2025/26. The ARAC Annual Report assists with the preparation of the organisation's 2025/26 Annual Governance Statement (AGS), prior to inclusion in the Annual Report and Accounts of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for 2025/26, all of which support good corporate governance arrangements.

7	**Assurance (SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)**	
7.1	**Director:**	Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change
7.2	**Level of Assurance: (Mark as appropriate)**	~~Substantial~~/**Reasonable**/~~Limited/Insufficient~~
7.3	**Rationale:**	Effective governance arrangements relating to the Board and its Committees have been embedded in SFRS governance structures for a substantial number of years and are reviewed regularly. The annual report from ARAC outlines the work undertaken, including that with internal and external audit bodies and the assurance received.
8	**Appendices/Further Reading**	
8.1	Appendix A – SFRS ARAC Annual Report 2025/26 to the Board and Accountable Officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.	

Prepared by:	Chris Casey, Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Sponsored by:	Brian Baverstock, Chair of the SFRS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Presented by:	Brian Baverstock, Chair of the SFRS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

Links to Strategy and Corporate Values

Links to Outcome 5 of the SFRS Strategy 2025-28:
"We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate and fleet, making us more effective and efficient."

Governance Route for Report	**Meeting Date**	**Report Classification/ Comments**	***Meeting Approvals/ Outcomes***
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	*16/07/2026*	*For Decision*	*Approval*
SFRS Board	*27/08/2026*	*For Information only*	

APPENDIX A

SFRS AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

TO

**THE BOARD AND ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER
OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

1 Purpose

1.1 In accordance with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's Terms of Reference this report has been prepared for the Board and Accountable Officer to provide the Committee's opinion on the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal controls across the organisation. This opinion is based on the work received by the Committee over the year 2025/26 and is intended to assist with the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

2 Background

2.1 The report provides a high-level overview of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's work for the year 2025/26 and its opinion on:

- the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board and Accountable Officer's needs;
- the reliability and integrity of these assurances in relation to their accountability obligations;
- the implication of these assurances for the overall management of risk;
- any issues the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee considers pertinent to the Annual Governance Statement and any long-term issues the Committee thinks the Board and/or Accountable Officer should give attention to;
- financial reporting for the year, and
- the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's view of its own effectiveness.

3 Summary of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's Work

3.1 In the period from April 2025 to March 2026 the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee has met a total of four times - four public meetings, each of which included a private session. In addition, the Committee met in February 2026 to review its effectiveness. The Committee met utilising a blend of 'in person' meetings at SFRS HQ and virtual technology via MS Teams. To support transparency of Committee business, all public papers and minutes continued to be accessible on the SFRS website. The capability and development of using MS Teams enabled members of the public to have access to meetings as an observer, should this be requested, and as published on our website.

3.2 The Committee comprises of five Non-Executive members. It has a quorum of three members and all meetings were quorate. The Committee has the relevant skills and experience collectively to assess the issues within its Terms of Reference. This conclusion was confirmed at a virtual workshop on 25 February 2026, at which the Committee confirmed compliance with its Terms of Reference.

3.3 All meetings were attended by SFRS senior management, Audit Scotland, as External Auditors, BDO, Internal Auditors for SFRS and His Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI). This routine attendance provided the Committee regular access to all key assurance sources.

3.4 The key areas of the Committee's work are outlined in sections 4 to 10 below.

4 Internal Audit

4.1 BDO were appointed as Internal Auditor partners at the start of 2025/26 for a 4-year period. Progress reports are presented at every meeting of the Committee outlining progress against the annual audit plan and the implementation of internal audit recommendations.

4.2 In reviewing the work of internal audit, the Committee:

- focused on the reported assurance levels, the quality and significance of audit recommendations and reasonableness of the management responses to them;
- monitored the ongoing implementation of recommendations arising from current and prior year audits;
- welcomed early sight of each Audit scope, allowing for comment in advance, if required, including the numbers of days allocated;
- commented on the need for a collaborative approach to take action and provide evidence to close items off promptly;
- requested further information be included with regards to revision of dates and outstanding requirements;
- queried if identified issues are taken into account when considering risk;
- welcomed the future inclusion of KPI information and noted that consideration should be given to include qualitative, value added, benchmarking, etc.
- acknowledged the efforts of BDO and the Executive Team in completing the 2025/26 audit plan; and
- noted the overall opinion given by Internal Audit in its Annual Report, that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has a framework of governance, risk management and controls that provides **reasonable assurance** regarding the effective and efficient achievement of objectives.

4.3 The Committee concluded that Internal Audit's work was appropriately focused and was sufficiently resourced. Based on the Committee's review of audit reports and the Auditor's overall opinion we can conclude that controls are generally operating effectively.

4.4 The Committee continued to encourage Internal and External Auditors as well as HMFSI to engage with each other and review plans to identify any opportunities for synergies and avoid any potential overlap or duplication of review activity.

5 External Audit

5.1 Audit Scotland were SFRS's External Auditors for 2025/26 as appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland for a five-year term. This was Audit Scotland's fourth year of their appointment.

5.2 During the period under review, the Committee scrutinised the progress of the wider scope and Best Value approach designed to help ARAC and the SFRS Board discharge their governance duties on the following areas: Financial Management, Financial Sustainability, Governance and transparency, Value for money and Best Value. Previous recommendations were followed up, in particular the requirement for external cyber security accreditation and the medium term financial plan.

5.3 The Committee also reviewed the draft 2024/25 Annual Report and Accounts, and External Auditor's report, **which provided an unqualified opinion**. The Committee commended the efforts of the SFRS Finance Team in achieving this positive outcome, particularly given the challenges encountered during the year.

5.4 The Committee held a private session with Audit Scotland in October 2025, no matters were raised that would require to be disclosed in this report. The Committee will consider the draft 2025/26 Accounts and the External Auditor's report at its meeting in October 2026.

6 His Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate

6.1 The HMFSI attends and presents progress update reports at each ARAC meeting.

6.2 During 2025/26 HMFSI published a report following an inspection of the North Service Delivery Area (NSDA). The Chief Inspector's plan for 2025-2028 was published in April 2025.

6.3 During 2025/26 HMFSI completed the following Thematic Inspections:

- Organisational Culture Volume 2 inspection report was completed and laid in Parliament in June 2025.
- Operational Assurance inspection report was completed and laid in Parliament in Autumn 2025.
- Operational Training and Development inspection report was completed and laid in Parliament in June 2026.

6.4 Thematic inspection on Organisational Culture (Volume 2) commenced with the inspection outline drafted. It was anticipated the final report would be available in Autumn 2026.

6.5 A focused inspection on the Planning and Preparedness of the SFRS for the Commonwealth Games 2026 was undertaken and would be published in June 2026.

6.6 HMFSI will also continue to maintain contact with both the Internal and External Auditors to progress areas of shared work, which is essential to reduce any duplication, where appropriate. The reports themselves are published on the HMFSI Website which details the assurances and recommendations to the SFRS.

6.7 The Committee welcomes the approach of HMFSI activity as it strives to meet its statutory purpose to inquire into the efficiency and effectiveness of the SFRS, thus assisting in its continuous improvement.

7 Risk Management

7.1 During the year the Committee:

- reviewed regular updates on risk management arrangements and welcomed the revised reporting format incorporating additional information relating to the risk appetite statement and any variations, risks with ratings below 15.;
- scrutinised the use of risk spotlights and risk appetite to discuss and gain assurance and how this is captured and reported.
- noted that the Risk Management Audit had identified an increase in risk maturity levels which evidenced improvements within the Risk Management Framework.
- undertook a risk spotlight on Vulnerabilities within On Call System which focused on both the financial risk and operational implications.

7.2 Based on its scrutiny of risk and recognising the work to embed risk appetite, the Committee welcomed the ongoing development of the risk management framework and revised report and can provide assurance on the operation of risk management arrangements throughout the year.

8 Financial Reporting

8.1 During the year the Committee considered the following:

- assurances received from the work of internal and external audit about the financial systems and controls that provide the figures for the accounts for 2025/26;
- accounting policy regulatory changes;
- any incidences of Fraud/Misappropriation of Funds;
- cyber/organisational security;
- sought further clarity and detail on the extent of and reporting culture relating to Gifts, Interests and Hospitality within SFRS.

8.2 The Committee is satisfied that the accounting policies adopted for the preparation of the 2025/26 accounts are appropriate and that it has received reasonable assurance on the financial systems and controls.

9 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Effectiveness

9.1 The Committee considers that it has operated in accordance with its Terms of Reference (ToR), pursuing the appropriate issues of risk assurance and internal control, and that its challenge and scrutiny function continues to be robust.

9.2 The Committee ToR were reviewed at their workshop in February 2026 and amended and approved by the SFRS Board on 30 April 2026. At this workshop, the Committee concluded that it continues to operate effectively.

9.3 At the operational level, improvements continue to be made, where appropriate, to the management of meetings, including the forward planning of agendas for the year ahead. Specific forward planning and pre-agenda meetings were held to further support this approach.

9.4 Administrative arrangements continually improve with any revised templates and guidance being provided for corporate level papers as approved by the SFRS Board, to ensure that reports contain an appropriate level of classification in order to assist Committee members to scrutinise and challenge effectively, with risk and assurance being much more of a focus when reporting to Committee's and the Board in general.

9.5 During 2025/26 integrated assurance mapping continued to evolve and maintain a focus on levels of assurance and associated rationale.

9.6 The Committee continues to undertake oversight of HMFSI plans and subsequent action plans through a high-level dashboard.

9.7 The Committee's effectiveness relies heavily on the support provided by the Board Support Team, which continues to be of the highest quality.

10 Conclusions

10.1 Overall the work of the Committee during the period under review, and the assurances received, enables ARAC to conclude that, in general, the SFRS has effective governance, risk management and internal control arrangements in place.

10.2 Looking ahead it is clear that ensuring the Service adequately plans for, and responds to, any future financial challenges will be the key area of focus for the Committee over 2026/27, as will the ongoing development of assurance mapping and its alignment with risk and performance reporting. Together these represent critical metrics to support governance and organisational performance.

Brian Baverstock
Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

July 2026

Agenda Item 10.3

PUBLIC MEETING – PEOPLE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2026 @ 1245 HRS

**LECTURE ROOM (1st FLOOR), PERTH COMMUNITY FIRE STATON
401 HIGH STREET, PERTH PH1 1PL / VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)**

PRESENT:
Madeline Smith (MS), Chair
Angiolina Foster (AF)
Andrew Smith (Deputy Chair) (AS)
Neil Mapes (NM)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Watt (AW)	Deputy Chief Officer
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)
Craig McGoldrick (CMcG)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Lyndsey Gaja (LG)	Head of People
Fiona Griffith (FG)	People Manager, Strategic People Partner (Item 9.2 only)
Jim Holden (JH)	Head of Safety & Assurance
Ross Robison (RR)	Deputy Assistance Chief Officer, Head of Training
Stevie Campbell (SC)	Area Commander, Training
Ceri Dodd (CD)	Deputy Head of People (Item 9.3 & 10.1 only)
Lynne McGeough (LMcG)	Head of Finance and Procurement (Item 21 only)
Paul McGovern (PMcG)	Programme Manager (Item 21 only)
Mhairi Wylie (MW)	Chair of SFRS Board
Christopher Casey (CC)	Board Support Manager
Margaret Kyle (MK)	Minute Taker

OBSERVERS:
Penny McIntyre
Gus Sproul, Fire Brigades Union (FBU)

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the People Committee meeting, including those joining virtually via MS Teams and noted that those present in Perth had already spent a busy day reviewing facilities and receiving an overview of the Leadership and Development Framework. The Chair also welcomed observers, including Penny McIntyre, who would formally be joining the Service as Director of People, Communication and Engagement on 3 August 2026.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Malcolm Payton, Board Member
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 agreed that the draft minute from the previous private meeting and the private action log would be taken in private. It was also agreed that the *Key Case Update* report would be taken in private session due to the small number of individuals involved and confidentiality and in line with Standing Orders (Item 9D). The *Update on Corporate Business Solutions* 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 issues (Item 9G).

3.2 No further items were identified for private consideration.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 No declarations of interest were declared.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 5 MARCH 2026

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

5.2 The Committee agreed Item 9.1.2 from the minute of 5 March 2026 be incorporated into the safety discussion at this meeting, with the expectation it may return as a substantive item in future.

5.3 **The minute of the meeting held on 5 March 2026 was approved as a true record of the meeting.**

6 ACTION LOG

6.1 CC presented the People Committee Rolling Action Log for consideration. The Committee reviewed and approved the removal of five actions noted as complete.

6.2 **The Committee noted the updated Action Log and approved the removal of completed actions**.

7 COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

7.1 The Committee considered the Annual Statement of Assurance presented which provided assurance that the Committee had appropriately discharged its responsibilities over the reporting period. The Committee agreed that the statement represented a fair and accurate reflection of the activity and areas of oversight.

7.2 During discussion, it was noted that the future priorities section did not explicitly reference the people implications of the Service Delivery Review (SDR). It was agreed that this had not been a deliberate omission and that the statement would be amended to include a clear commitment to consider and scrutinise the people implications arising from SDR outcomes.

ACTION: BST

7.3 **The Committee scrutinised and approved the report.**

8 PEOPLE COMMITTEE RISK REGISTER

8.1 **Risk Report Update**

8.1.2 Committee members discussed key changes to the risk register, including reductions in risk ratings, updates on control measures, and the integration of AI and cybersecurity risks, with input from members on strategic alignment and reporting clarity.

8.1.3 <u>Risk POD 24 – Skills and Capability Investment</u> - The Committee noted that the risk rating had reduced from 12 to 9, reflecting an increase in the Learning and Development budget for 2026–27 and separation of developmental activity from regulatory compliance training. Additional controls for the corporate business solutions project were also highlighted, with updates to be reflected in future reports. It was confirmed that additional funding would be ring-fenced to support developmental activity, reducing the reliance on the budget for compliance-only training.

8.1.4 The Committee accepted the rationale for the revised risk score but requested that future reports include clearer narrative explaining the basis of risk movements.

ACTION: LG

8.1.5 Risk POD 27 – Corporate Business Solutions - The Committee noted the control relating to approval of the Outline Business Case had now been closed following approval. Two further controls had been introduced relating to procurement governance and system implementation, which would be reflected in future reports. Updated controls would be reflected in the next reporting cycle. An update on the programme would be provided in the private session.

8.1.6 Risk POD 16 – Development Competence and SVQ Policy - The Committee noted the relevant policy was progressing through governance and that associated control actions were expected to be completed prior to the next reporting cycle.

8.1.7 The Committee noted that the Organisational Change Framework and supporting Toolkit were due to be completed within the current quarter, with associated controls expected to close.

8.1.8 The Committee highlighted the need for improved clarity and transparency within the risk register reporting, specifically:

- Enhanced narrative to support changes in risk scores;
- Greater visibility of progress against actions, particularly where actions exceed original timescales;
- Inclusion of commentary confirming whether work is underway, nearing completion or delayed.

8.1.9 It was noted that the current reporting limitations were largely due to manual processes. CMcG advised that, although the dashboard approach may make closed actions less visible, substantial work had already been completed on face fit testing, including embedding requirements into the SCBA replacement project and using pilot data from Dumfries and Galloway to inform future plans and provide assurance on compliance.

8.1.10 The Committee discussed the increasing significance of cyber security risks, including the potential impact of AI and that cyber risk was recognised as a key strategic risk. Further work was underway to strengthen the strategic risk register through a Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) workshop.

8.1.11 The Committee referenced FCS017 and requested more detail on the outcomes of a recent cyber desktop exercise and what recommendations resulted from that exercise and whether any of those recommendations considered AI impacts.

8.1.12 SO'D assured the Committee that cyber security remains a key strategic risk advising that an AI policy was in development and further work was underway at SLT to consolidate risks. SO'D also advised the cyber desktop exercise had produced recommendations, which were currently being reviewed. Further detail would be reported through the appropriate governance channels, including the next Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (July 2026) with information brought back to People Committee or a Board Strategy Day if required.

8.1.13 The Chair suggested that AI should be considered at a future Board Strategy Day, noting its cross-cutting nature, and proposed linking this to Integrated Governance Forum to ensure co-ordinated and organisation-wide approach.

ACTION: BST

8.1.14 The Committee queried the delay in aligning risks to the 2025–28 strategy, noting the strategy was already one-third of the way through its lifecycle, and sought clarity on when alignment to the strategy will be completed. SO'D acknowledged the need to align risks to the current strategy and advised that this would be progressed imminently through SLT-led strategic risk work, including a workshop (mid-July) to consolidate and align risks, supported by development of a new risk dashboard.

8.1.15 The Committee welcomed the assurance provided in that alignment of risks to the strategy would be progressed imminently through SLT activity and confirmed this was best taken forward at an organisational level.

8.1.16 The Committee highlighted that some risk actions were more than nine months beyond their original due date and requested future risk reporting include additional narrative for these items, setting out whether progress was underway, whether completion was dependent on other activity, or whether the action had been deprioritised. SO'D agreed to take the risk report away for future development, noting that the new risk dashboard should provide greater flexibility in reporting.

ACTION: SO'D

8.1.17 The Committee sought clarification on the status of the Home Fire Safety Visit App (PPP009), including whether it was fully operational, how visits were currently being undertaken in practice, and the impact on partner referral processes and relationships. AW reported that this issue was being managed through governance, with scrutiny via the Service Delivery Committee. The Home Fire Safety Visit App was largely operational, with only partner referral functionality outstanding due to cyber security requirements. In the interim, manual workarounds were in place, and strong partner relationships were being maintained.

8.1.18 The Committee were content to note the updates provided and welcomed ongoing improvements to the quality and presentation of the risk register.

8.1.19 **The Committee scrutinised the People Committee Risk Register.**

9 PEOPLE: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

9.1 **People Performance Report Quarter 4 2025/2026**

9.1.2 The Committee reviewed the People Performance Report, discussed KPI integration, on-call Target Operating Model (TOM) updates, leadership training uptake, and benchmarking, with a focus on narrative clarity and support for psychological absences. The Committee agreed to continue embedding KPIs 46 to 49 within the People Performance report and emphasised the need for clear narrative to interpret data trends. LG confirmed future reports would integrate Learning and Development (L&D) updates and provide comprehensive analysis. LG and AW clarified the revised approach to the on-call TOM being progressed through governance and would be brought to the next meeting (September 2026).

9.1.3 The Committee sought explanation in relation to language around "coastguard volunteers" as opposed to "SFRS volunteers". The Committee were advised that Coastguard volunteers were not employees, whereas SFRS "volunteers" were contracted and paid employees, and therefore the Coastguard ruling has no direct impact on SFRS.

9.1.4 The Committee noted benchmarking was valuable for learning and comparison, not performance scoring, and requested consideration of wider comparators such as other emergency services. LG agreed to expand benchmarking to include other fire and ambulance services and clarified that "other" in short-term absence data refers to a combination of multiple minor categories, not a single undefined reason.

ACTION: LG

9.1.5 **The Committee scrutinised the People Performance Report.**

9.2 **SFRS People Strategy**

9.2.1 The Committee noted that the draft People Strategy would be reframed as an SFRS People Plan. The Plan would cover the period from approval through to the end of the 2027–28 financial year, aligning with the current SFRS strategy period. The Committee endorsed this approach, recognising that it provided a clear short-term direction while enabling development of a longer-term People Strategy.

9.2.2 AW and LG agreed that the People Plan should include explicit reference to adapting to new technologies and AI, with further strategic focus expected once the New Director of People, Communication and Engagement joined the Service.

9.2.3 The Committee stressed the importance of ongoing evaluation, including pulse surveys and other engagement mechanisms, to ensure the plan translates into improved staff experience and organisational culture. LG confirmed future workstreams would address colleague engagement and progress measurement.

9.2.4 FG advised that consultation feedback on the draft People Plan had been broadly positive, with strong support for its clarity, brevity and direction, while also highlighting the importance of sustained communication and engagement to support delivery.

9.2.5 **The Committee scrutinised the SFRS People Strategy Report.**

9.3 **Learning and Development Annual Overview 2025-26**

9.3.1 The Committee noted the revised approach to Learning Needs Analysis to better inform future planning. It was noted that a new model for 2026–27 included ring-fenced budgets for both compliance training and leadership/strategic capability development.

9.3.2 The Committee noted strengthened governance arrangements, including how the learning partners operate and a structured engagement cycle. Improved financial performance was noted, with 96% utilisation of the L&D budget.

9.3.3 The Committee discussed the previous imbalance in L&D spend, with a high proportion of budget allocated to compliance training, limiting investment in leadership and capability development.

9.3.4 The Committee discussed the benefits of the revised approach in supporting organisational priorities, particularly alignment with the organisational culture and leadership programme.

9.3.5 The Committee highlighted the importance of maintaining the appropriate balance between regulatory requirements and strategic workforce development noting these as areas for consideration next year.

9.3.6 The Committee sought assurance on how the service supported colleagues in preparing for retirement. In response the Committee noted that support was in place through pre-retirement workshops, wellbeing resources, and guidance with opportunities for individuals to continue contributing post-retirement, including through the On Call Duty System. LG offered to share the iHub link which offers information on available support.

9.3.7 The Committee sought assurance on the Leadership Essentials programme for Supervisory Managers and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Supervisory and Middle Management programmes, including attendance, completion, and overall effectiveness. In response, it was noted that attendance challenges for Leadership Essentials were primarily due to operational commitments and availability; however, actions were in place to improve uptake, including enhanced scheduling, communication with line managers and use of reserve lists. It was further confirmed that the NFCC programmes demonstrate high completion rates, supported by structured delivery, active line manager involvement and cohort-based learning, which strengthens application of learning in the workplace.

9.3.8 The Committee welcomed the delivery approach and outcomes of the NFCC programmes, noting these were cost-effective and engaging, and emphasised the importance of scaling the programmes, improving reporting metrics, and providing greater clarity on overall reach and future rollout.

9.3.9 CD confirmed that further work would be undertaken to improve performance reporting by providing clearer metrics on programme reach, planned cohorts and organisational coverage, giving a fuller picture of progress and scale across supervisory and middle managers.

9.3.10 AW highlighted the importance of recognising the crossover with wider organisational priorities, particularly safety, standards, and performance, emphasising the need for a clear, strategic approach to investment, with a focus on areas of greatest organisational impact. Middle Managers were key for a number of reasons as they influence downwards and were the future strategic and senior managers of the organisation. Further strategic work across different leadership levels would be developed through the Leadership and Management Development Framework.

9.3.11 The Committee raised concerns regarding clarity and consistency of reporting within the Learning and Development Annual Overview, noting that the language used in section 3.1.4 (Key Improvements Achieved), particularly the final bullet point, was overly complex and difficult to interpret for a public-facing paper.

9.3.12 The Committee also highlighted an apparent inconsistency in section 3.3.4, where the Protection total (£231,739) did not align with the narrative describing prevention as the largest area of spend. CD clarified that the apparent discrepancy in 3.3.4 arose from the way figures were presented, noting that the narrative referred to aggregated totals across multiple areas, and acknowledged that this could be clearer in future reporting.

9.3.13 **The Committee scrutinised the SFRS Learning and Development Annual Overview 2025-26 Report.**

10 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, CULTURE AND FAIR WORK

10.1 Organisational Culture and Leadership Update

10.1.1 CD reported nothing significant to report since the paper was written and submitted.

10.1.2 The Committee noted the update and sought assurance on benefits realisation, employee engagement, leadership development, and inclusive facilities. It was confirmed that a structured approach to measuring benefits was being implemented at both workstream and programme level, supported by improved employee insight. The supervisory leadership pilot had been deliberately sequenced to align with wider leadership frameworks, and progress was being made to address inclusive facilities through estates planning and compliance activity. The programme was recognised as supporting safety, performance, and broader cultural improvement.

10.1.3 The extended timescale for the supervisory pilot reflected the need to align it with the wider leadership framework and incorporate learning from existing development programmes, ensuring a coherent and strategically robust approach. In parallel, the Committee emphasised the importance of continued investment in recruitment and the provision of appropriate equipment and dignified facilities, recognising these as critical enablers to support delivery, cultural change, and operational effectiveness.

10.1.4 The Committee welcomed the update and investment in organisational culture and leadership, emphasising the need to demonstrate clear benefits realisation and improved performance. It was noted that evaluation should evidence the tangible impact on organisational culture and workforce experience, supported by effective employee engagement and feedback mechanisms.

10.1.5 **The Committee scrutinised the Organisational Cultural and Leadership Report.**

11 TRAINING

11.1 **Training Function Update and Performance Report Quarter 4 2025/26**

11.1.1 The Committee received an update from the Head of Training on key areas of activity.

11.1.2 RR highlighted the continued progress of the Training Standards Review (TSR) Project, noting strong alignment between SFRS activity and the UK-wide competency framework development led by the NFCC. Early work packages, including extrication and tactical firefighting, were progressing, with ongoing collaboration in place to ensure strategic alignment as both programmes develop.

11.1.3 The Committee noted the potential short-term impact on Incident Command competency levels within Quarter 2, arising from recent Deputy Assistant Chief Officer appointments and the timing of training delivery. It was confirmed that an external provider had now been contracted to deliver Incident Command Level 4 training, with courses scheduled for October. Competency levels were expected to recover in Quarter 3.

11.1.4 Overall, assurance was provided that training activity was progressing positively, with appropriate mitigations in place to manage short-term capacity and competency impacts.

11.1.5 During discussions the Committee highlighted the importance of maintaining sufficient trained driver capability in light of potential legislative changes and an area of potential risk therefore required monitoring. Committee also highlighted the need to reflect operational pressures, particularly for on-call staff, when planning training delivery to ensure requirements remain achievable and the value of capturing and sharing lessons learned, particularly from the successful BA Recovery Programme, to inform future large-scale training delivery.

11.1.6 The Committee noted the reported challenges under KPI 23, specifically the volume of training modules required within the reporting period and the impact this may have on the on-call and volunteer staff capacity. The Committee sought assurance on how these pressures are being considered in future training planning and delivery. RR confirmed feedback mechanisms were in place with Local Senior Officer areas to capture capacity constraints and operational pressures. This feedback was actively used to inform future planning, with adjustments made where possible to balance compliance requirements and operational demands.

11.1.7 The Committee acknowledged the significant improvements reflected in KPI 26, noting the successful delivery of the Breathing Apparatus (BA) Recovery Programme and the strong progress in core skills currency. The Committee recognised that this was a positive outcome following a previously challenging position.

11.1.8 RR advised that a formal Closing Report on the Breathing Apparatus (BA) Recovery Programme was being prepared and would progress through governance. This report would capture the lessons learned from the programme and provide a comprehensive overview of delivery and outcomes and subject to agreement, the closing report would be shared with the Committee for information, recognising the scale and significance of the programme and the value of understanding its successful delivery approach.

ACTION: RR

11.1.9 Overall, the Committee were encouraged by the direction of progress and the evidence of continuous improvement within the training function, while emphasising the importance of sustaining momentum and addressing identified risks.

11.1.10 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

12 SAFETY, ASSURANCE AND WELLBEING

12.1 Safety and Assurance Performance Report Quarter 4 2025/26

12.1.1 JH presented Safety and Assurance Performance Report Quarter 4 2025-26 to provide updates on key projects of works across the function to support Safety and Assurance Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). The following key achievement areas were highlighted in respect of compliance:

- Food Safety Regulations – JH reported training of staff for food safety compliance at fire stations and integration of operations control into assurance processes with plans to review the impact of end-to-end assurance in future meetings.
- Statistics in the KPIs for injuries and RIDDORs remain consistent. Since the paper was submitted, areas for further focus had been identified, including situational awareness and incident risk assessment, and these would be progressed over the coming months.
- Vaccinations – Nearly completed based on a risk based approach. Water based personnel were the main priority for vaccinations.
- Acts of Violence against Staff – continuing spike in violence against firefighters in operational and non-operational roles. Currently working with local areas to identify specific locations. Research project underway with Edinburgh Napier University initiated to explore emergency services workers' experience of violence with focus on causation and impact. Limpada/University of Hull research was approved, funded, and underway, with surveys, focus groups, and a final action-focused report planned to inform SFRS and sector-wide improvements.
- Asbestos Medicals – Asbestos medical surveillance programme had recently re-started, with numbers expected to rise as the new Occupational Health Structure was implemented.

12.1.2 The Committee noted the integration of Operations Control into the operational assurance framework, supporting the development of a more comprehensive, end-to-end approach to assurance. The Committee requested future updates provide a clear view of end-to-end assurance, including how integration had strengthened oversight across the full operational process and any learning, insights or improvements identified through this broader approach.

ACTION: JH

12.1.3 The Committee agreed that this would support a better understanding of assurance coverage and organisational performance across the full operational system.

12.1.4 **The Committee scrutinised this report.**

12.2 Contaminants Quarterly Update

12.2.1 The Committee received the Contaminants Quarterly Update presented by the Director of Training, Safety and Assurance. It was noted contaminants management was now transitioning from a programme-based approach to being embedded within business-as-usual governance, with oversight incorporated into the National Health, Safety, Wellbeing and Assurance Board.

12.2.2 The Committee supported this direction of travel, recognising contaminants activity as increasingly aligned with wider health, safety, and wellbeing reporting. The Committee emphasised the importance of maintaining visibility and focus on contaminants as a critical staff safety issue, while integrating reporting within the broader assurance framework.

12.2.3 Discussion highlighted that, while considerable progress has been made - particularly through infrastructure improvements, standard operating procedures and training, there remains an ongoing requirement to embed consistent behaviours across the organisation. The Committee acknowledged that cultural change was still developing, with continued effort required to reinforce safe practices and address differing attitudes at station level.

12.2.4 The Committee also noted positive engagement with initiatives such as the CivTech pilot, confirming participation levels were sufficient to support the project. Overall, the Committee were assured that progress was being made, while recognising the need for sustained focus on behavioural change, staff understanding, and continuous improvement in contaminants management.

12.2.5 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

13 AUDITS/INSPECTIONS

13.1 **HMFSI Inspection Action Plan Update**

13.1.1 LG/JH presented a report updating the Committee on the progress on HMFSI inspection action plans for scrutiny. Progress updates were provided for action plans relating to HMFSI reports on Organisational Culture (Volume 1). The majority of actions are progressing well with only one action being rated amber due to a request to extend the due date to allow additional communications activity to take place before completion. All other actions are reported green within the plan.

13.1.2 Fieldwork was underway for Volume 2 of the Organisational Culture Thematic Inspection, which focuses on the conduct and management of misconduct allegations, with the report expected in due course.

13.1.3 The Committee queried the “green” status of Action 12.1, noting the complex history and reset of the underlying corporate systems work. SO’D clarified that the status reflects progress against the revised HMFSI action plan, with delivery now aligned to the Corporate Business Solutions programme and its updated timeline. The action was therefore considered on track against current expectations.

13.1.4 The Committee welcomed continued progress against HMFSI Culture Volume 1 Action Plan, noting that the majority of actions are on track. Members acknowledged the positive direction of travel, particularly given the earlier development of the plan, and would continue to monitor progress alongside the emerging Culture Volume 2 work.

13.1.5 **The Committee scrutinised the report.**

14 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14.1 **Employee Partnership Forum (EPF)**

14.1.1 The Committee were updated on the EPF meeting, which focused on welfare support for operational teams and included positive, constructive discussion on targeted welfare investment.

14.1.2 The EPF also discussed welfare support for operational teams and reviewed governance structures with plans to update the Working Together Framework in collaboration with partners.

14.2 **Partnership Advisory Group**

14.2.1 LG reported that an update had been provided on the FBU “Fight for 52” maternity pay campaign. This included constructive discussion and agreement on next steps to present a position paper to SLT and RANSC in August and September, respectively, with further updates to follow for the People Committee.

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

15 FORWARD PLANNING

15.1 **Committee Forward Plan Review**

15.1.1 The Committee reviewed the forward plan, identified potential topics for future risk spotlights, and agreed on actions to improve reporting and policy review processes.

15.1.2 The Committee proposed that a potential topic for future risk spotlight discussion focuses on near misses and learning culture, particularly the wider issue of near miss reporting.

15.1.3 The Committee agreed that a future risk spotlight focused on exploring near misses and reporting culture and also the potential to include a workshop element at a future meeting.

15.2 **Items for Consideration at Future IGF, Board and Strategy Day Meetings**

15.2.1 During Risk Register discussion, the Chair highlighted some issues should be escalated beyond Committee level ie Cybersecurity and AI (*including AI policy, cyber risk, and recommendation from desktop exercise).* As this is cross-cutting and strategic, it should probably go to a Board Strategy Day for fuller consideration.

16 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

16.1 CC confirmed that there were formal actions recorded during the meeting

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 17 September 2026.

17.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1545 hrs.

Report(s) For Information Only:

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

- Performance Management Framework Quarterly 2025-26 Q4
- People Policy Review Schedule Update
  - The Committee suggested that the Policy Review Schedule should not only show policies being reviewed or updated but should also identify opportunities to close or discontinue policies where appropriate, rather than simply reviewing or maintaining all of them.
- Training Continuous Improvement Programme – Update Report
- Training Function Policy Review Schedule
- Safety and Assurance Documents Forward Planning Schedule

(The meeting broke at 1515 hrs and reconvened in private session at 1530hrs).

PRIVATE SESSION

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: 5 MARCH 2026

18.1 The minutes of the private meeting held on 5 March 2026 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

19 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

19.1 The Committee noted there were no outstanding actions.

20 REMUNERATION, APPOINTMENTS AND NOMINATIONS SUB COMMITTEE UPDATE

20.1 **Draft Private Minutes of last RANSC Meeting** – 5 March 2026

20.2 The draft minutes of the RANSC private meeting held on 5 March 2026 had been circulated to the Committee for information.

The Committee noted the draft minute.

21 UPDATES ON CORPORATE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS PROJECT

21.1 LMcG and PMcG provided the Committee with an update on the Corporate Business Solutions Project.

The Committee noted the report was for information only.

22 KEY CASE UPDATES 2025/26 – Q4

22.1 LG provided the Committee with an overview of employee relations and employment litigation cases against SFRS including insight from case trends and case reviews.

The Committee scrutinised the report.

Agenda Item 10.4

PUBLIC MEETING – SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2026 @ 1000 HRS

CONFERENCE ROOM, EAST AND WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE AND ARGYLL & BUTE (EWDAB) HEADQUARTERS, 2 KILBOWIE ROAD, CLYDEBANK G81 6QT / VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)

PRESENT:
Tim Wright, Chair (TW)
Angiolina Foster (AF)
Madeline Smith (MS)
Paul Stollard, Deputy Chair (PS)
Andrew Smith (AS)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andy Watt (AW)	Deputy Chief Officer
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)
David Farries (DF)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational Delivery
Jonathan Henderson (JH)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Prevention
Craig McGoldrick (CMcG)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Robert Scott (RS)	HMFSI
Joe McKay (JMcK)	Area Commander, Local Senior Officer
Chris Fitzpatrick (CF)	Business Intelligence and Data Services Manager (Item 9.1 only)
Carol Wade (CW)	Information Governance Manager (Items 11 & 12 only)
David Johnston (DJ)	Risk and Audit Manager (Item 13 only)
Chris Casey (CC)	Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Debbie Haddow	Board Support Executive Assistant / Minutes

OBSERVERS
Neil Mapes, Board Member
Therese O'Donnell, Board Member

1 WELCOME

1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present and participating via MS Teams. The Chair thanked LSO McKay for hosting the meeting.

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 There were no apologies.

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

3.1 The Committee agreed that the Safety and Standards presentation would be provided in the private session due to the confidential nature of the issues in line with Standing Orders (Item 9G).

3.2 There were no other items to be taken in private.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 No declarations of interests were made.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 24 FEBRUARY 2026

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

5.2 **Matters Arising**

5.2.1 There were no matters arising.

5.3 **The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2026 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

6 ACTION LOG

6.1 The Committee considered the action log, noted the updates and agreed the closure of the action.

6.2 **The Committee noted the updated Action Log and approved the removal of the completed action.**

7 COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2025/26

7.1 TW presented the annual Service Delivery Committee (SDC) Statement of Assurance 2025/26, outlining evidence of how the Committee supports the effective functioning of the Board.

7.2 The following amendments were agreed:

- Within Section 5, the words “Actively seeks” to be removed from the 4th bullet point.
- Within Section 5, reference to the close working relationship with the People Committee to be added (last bullet point).

7.3 **Subject to the agreed amendments, the Committee approved the annual Statement of Assurance 2025/26 with assurance as reasonable.**

8 SERVICE DELIVERY UPDATE

8.1 AW introduced the update report which details relevant matters from a Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Service Delivery perspective, which comprises of Operational Delivery, Prevention and Training, Safety and Assurance (TSA) Directorates. The report covered the period for the quarter February 2026 to May 2026, albeit some issues may precede and extend beyond this period.

8.2 In regard to the On-Call Appliance Availability Resilience Scheme (OCAARS), the Committee queried the metrics and mechanisms for assessing the safety and effectiveness of the new on-call appliance model. DF explained that the model would be a supplement to the regular ongoing recruitment and would continue to be monitored. DF confirmed that the model would not deviate from normal safety procedures and that the intention was to increase appliance availability.

8.3 In regard to National Fire Resilience Scotland (NFRS), the Committee queried the resource implications and risks associated within maintained standards. AW reminded the Committee that this related to the replacement cycle of national resilience assets. A business case had been submitted to the Contest Board and the Service would continue to engagement with Scottish Government. DF provided clarity on the capability strategy referenced within this section.

8.4 In regard to Health and Wellbeing (HW) Support, the Committee queried the resource implications for additional administrative support being provided to the HW Recovery. CMcG noted that a positive outcome had been the increased effectiveness and efficiency of central staffing oversight of staff availability which had benefits beyond the recovery process.

8.5 Brief discussion took place on the Operations Delivery Liaison Forum, noting that the forum was not new as it had existed in various previous formats. It was further noted that the purpose of the forum was to provide Group Commanders from all LSO areas the opportunity to engage with the Operations Delivery function and share information across the Service. There were no formal plans or processes in place to monitor the effectiveness of the forum, instead the intention was to support open discussion, sharing of ideas and facilitate two-way communication.

8.6 In regard to the hydrant maintenance application, JH advised that the new iteration of the app would help to integrate multiple data sources, prioritise and proactively target high-risk areas and improve resource allocation.

8.7 In regard to Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV), the Committee queried whether hoarding would be a criterion to initiate a visit. JH confirmed that hoarding was a high-risk indicator and that the Service would continue to work with partners to promote the referrals pathway. The potential to promote HFSV within GP surgeries to be considered.

8.8 In regard to fire retardant bedding being provided during visits, JH confirmed that this could be available to high-risk individuals, particularly those with a history of smoking in bed.

8.9 The Committee noted and welcomed the positive statistics and report on the Museum of Scottish Fire Heritage.

8.10 JH briefed the Committee on the research involving master's students on fire safety, sport and education, including the intended audience, purpose and how this was commissioned. RW outlined the Service's formal approach to research, development and innovation which included the establishment of an internal group, chaired by JH, with a focus on research activities. RW noted that the Service were engaging with a range of academic partners across different subject areas and were seeking to identify specific research priorities aligned to strategic objectives. PS noted that the University of Chester were hosting a UK-wide symposium on fire research on 23 June 2026 and offered to help connect SFRS with the event organisers if required.

8.11 The Committee noted and welcomed the declining number of fire fatalities.

8.12 The Committee noted concerns relating to the low percentage of enforcement actions following audits. JH explained that considerable levels of advice were given informally and, therefore, not captured within statistics. JH noted the Committee's concerns and agreed that more enforcement activity and/or recording may be warranted.

8.13 In regard to wildfire training, the Committee were advised that phase one training targets had been met and additional resources had been stood up for this specific wildfire season. It was noted that a new wildfire app was under development for operational support.

8.14 In regard to the incident at Union Street, Glasgow, RS advised the Committee that HMFSI had been invited to and attended the debrief sessions. RS commended the debrief process, notably the willingness of attendees to speak openly on all aspects of the incident which demonstrated a mature and open culture without fear of repercussion. RS has since written to CMcG, the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer to provide formal feedback. CMcG thanked RS for his comments. CMcG confirmed that the formal recommendations report would be developed and brought to a future Committee meeting and, if requested, to a future Strategy Day for wider Board awareness.

8.15 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

8.2 **Local Senior Officer (LSO) Performance Overview**

8.2.1 JMcK provided an overview of East and West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute (EWDAB) LSO area, including operational structure, major risks, partnership work, community initiatives and recruitment challenges. The following key areas were highlighted:

- Overview of the area's diverse geography, local population and tourism and numerous significant risks.
- Mixture of operational structures across the area which included Wholetime, On-Call, and Volunteer stations and specialist responses.
- Overview of the Safety, Standards and Performance activities including thematic audits to ensure standards were being maintained, multi-agency debriefs, performance management meetings and training/exercises.
- Reduction in unwanted fire alarm signals, other false alarms and fires.
- Overview of partnership working, community and prevention activities which included Community Planning Partnership, Youth Volunteer Schemes, Water Safety Partnership, good relationships with local authorities, etc.
- Overview of recognition and charity work which included local BUZZ magazine awarding of recognition plaques/medals/awards, charity events and open days.
- Acknowledgement of major incidents across the area.
- Overview of key challenges which included recruitment and retention across On Call and Volunteer stations, significant geographic diversity and routine disruption of transport links.
- Initiatives include the local delivery of the modular task and task management and training delivery.
- The Service's first successful Volunteer to Retained Duty Scheme Pathway candidate.

8.2.2 Brief discussion took place on the positive relationships with local authorities and the tailored level of support provided to each. It was noted that there was an ongoing need, and challenges, to raise awareness of the positive work, activities and support provided by the Service. JMcK advised that information was regularly shared internally, however more could be done to publicise this.

8.2.3 Brief discussion took place on community resilience, multi-agency training and preparedness exercises, good relationships with partners and business continuity planning.

8.2.4 The Committee commented on the local authority make-up of the LSO area. JMcK noted that, whilst the areas were distinct from each other, access to national resources and the ability to share learning across both areas were beneficial.

8.2.5 **The Committee welcomed and noted the verbal update.**

(J McKay left the meeting at 1120 hrs)
(Meeting broke at 1120 hrs and reconvened 1125 hrs)

9 INSPECTIONS/AUDITS

9.1 UPDATE FROM HM FIRE SERVICE INSPECTORATE

9.1.1 RS presented the report to the Committee to provide an update on HMFSI inspection and reporting activity.

9.1.2 The Committee sought clarity on how the proposed estate, fleet and equipment inspections would interact with other reviews to address gaps and/or avoid duplication. RS advised that the estate, fleet and equipment review would be undertaken jointly with, and be led by, Audit Scotland. The review would focus on the operational implications of underinvestment, inadequate budgets and uncertainty in future investment in these areas. RS noted that it was too early to comment on how prioritisation of investment would be approached or captured within the review. RS confirmed that the review would take account of existing and planned work to avoid duplication.

9.1.3 RS advised that the Focused Report on the Commonwealth Games was being finalised and would be laid in Parliament in June 2026. RS noted that the report commended the Service's preparedness and would contain lessons to be learnt in relation to partnership with private entities involved in large scale public events.

9.1.4 **The Committee noted the report.**

9.2 HMFSI Inspection Action Plan Update

9.2.1 RW presented the Committee with an update report on HMFSI inspection action plans for scrutiny. The following key points were highlighted:

- West Service Delivery Area (WSDA) action plan was reporting Green, 90% completion with 7 live actions. During this reporting period, it was anticipated that Action 3.26 would be completed by July 2026.
- North Service Delivery Area (NSDA) action plan had been finalised and approved by Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). Formal progress update would be presented to the next meeting.
- Operational Assurance action plan had been finalised and approved by SLT. Formal progress update would be presented to the next meeting.

9.2.2 It was clarified that the Committee were being asked to scrutinise the report and any decisions on closure of actions remained the remit of the Senior Management Board.

9.2.3 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as substantial.**

(R Scott left the meeting at 1140 hrs)
(C Fitzpatrick joined the meeting at 1140 hrs)

10 SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE REPORTING

10.1 Quarterly Performance Report for Q4 2025-26

10.1.1 The Chair advised that the report would be taken as read by the Committee members and subsequently moved straight to questions.

10.1.2 The Committee queried the range and variance of on-call and wholetime appliance availability by station. DF advised that performance data for individual stations was available and this management information sat under the high level KPI presented to the Committee. Further informal discussions to be taken off table.

10.1.3 In regard to KPI 14 and 15 (Response and Call Handling), the Committee sought clarification on the higher timings within the East. DF reminded the Committee that the increase was only a matter of seconds and there was no specific reason for this. AW referenced a recent SLT discussion and noted that this was being investigated.

10.1.4 In regard to KPI 18 (Operational Intelligence Inspection), JH advised that the improvements were due to streamlining of processes and technology and not due to increased resources.

10.1.5 The Committee commented on the need for more interpretive narrative within KPI summaries to aid understanding and scrutiny. CF confirmed that future reports would include clearer interpretation and summaries of performance against targets and provided an overview of how this would be achieved.

10.1.6 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

(C Fitzpatrick left the meeting at 1158 hrs.)
(C Wade joined the meeting at 1158 hrs)

11 SFRS COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

11.1 CW presented the Complaints annual statistics for 2024/25 for scrutiny and provided an explanation on the delay in providing this report. The following key points were highlighted:

- Slight reduction in the number of complaints from previous year.
- Explanation of the differences between the resolved classifications.
- Majority of complaints were dealt with at Stage 1.
- Only 4 complaints were upheld.
- Overview of key themes including breakdown by areas and subcategories.
- Benchmarking data had been included with the caveat that it was not a true comparison.

11.2 The Committee commented and welcomed the positive speed to response to complaints.

11.3 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

12 SFRS COMPLIMENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

12.1 CW presented the Committee with a progress update regarding the SFRS Compliments process as outlined in the SFRS Compliments Handling Policy and Procedure for scrutiny. The following key points were highlighted:

- Slight increase in the number of compliments from previous year.
- Work commenced to capture compliments through Museum and social media.
- Next iteration of the report would include themes within the dashboard.
- No regulations to publish compliments, therefore difficult to benchmark.

12.2 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

(C Wade left the meeting at 1212 hrs)
(D Johnston joined the meeting at 1212 hrs)

13 SERVICE DELIVERY RISK REGISTER

13.1 Committee Aligned Directorate Risks

The report was presented which contained the identified Directorate risks and controls aligned to the business of the Committee. DJ provided a brief update on the development of the risk dashboard with feedback being sought from other directorates and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to ensure scrutiny requirements were sufficient.

13.2 DJ noted that several control actions relating to Finance, Digital and Infrastructure, including cyber security, risks had been overlooked and would be included within future reports.

13.3 In regard to Risk OD001 (Operational Control Staffing), the Committee sought assurance on the level of reduction (15 to 9). AW outlined the process for changing risk rating levels, noting that sufficient evidence had to be presented. AW advised that the reduction in risk was attributable to the stabilisation of staffing levels.

13.4 In regard to Risk TSA020 (Face Fit Testing), CMcG advised that no formal exemption from HSE had been requested. CMcG provided an update on face-fit testing, noting that a robust plan was in place and that the HSE were satisfied with the Service's progress.

13.5 **The Committee scrutinised the report with assurance as reasonable.**

(D Johnston left the meeting at 1223 hrs)

14 FORWARD PLANNING

14.1 Committee Forward Plan

14.1.1 The Committee noted the forward plan. It was noted that the Chair and AW would review the Forward Plan outwith the meeting to ensure that future items remained relevant.

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

14.2.1 There were no items identified.

15 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

15.1 CC confirmed that there were no formal actions arising during the meeting.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8 September 2026.

16.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1225 hours.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

The following report was provided for information only and was taken as read.

- Thematic Station Audit Overview 2026-2028

<u>PRIVATE SESSION</u>

17 SAFETY AND STANDARDS

17.1 AW gave a presentation to the Committee outlining historic and current challenges relating to safety standards and performance within the Service.

17.2 **The Committee noted the presentation and verbal update.**

There being no further matters to discuss, the private meeting closed at 1331 hours.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/GSC/10-26

Agenda Item: 11

Report to:	**THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**	
Meeting Date:	**27 AUGUST 2026**	
Report Title:	**THREE-YEAR DELIVERY PLAN 2025-28: QUARTER 1 2026/27 PROGRESS REPORT**	
Report Classification:	**For Scrutiny**	**SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY For Reports to be held in Private Specify rationale below referring to Board Standing Order 9** A B C D E F G

1	**Purpose**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present the Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) with a quarterly progress report on how we are performing against the 2026/27 actions within the Three-Year Delivery Plan 2025-28.
2	**Background**
2.1	The Scottish Government Governance and Accountability Framework sets out the SFRS's duty to prepare an Annual Operating Plan each year to support the achievement of the SFRS Strategy 2025-28.
2.2	From 2024/25 a three-year rolling plan was developed that also provided information on Portfolio Programmes and Projects. As such, the Three-Year Delivery Plan was developed, replacing the Annual Operating Plan, to provide one over-arching document that details the strategic and change activities that are planned for the next three years.
2.3	This report provides an update of progress made against the 2026/27 actions of the Three-Year Delivery Plan 2025-28 in Quarter 1 of 2026/27.
3	**Main Report/Detail**
3.1	The quarterly progress report is attached as **Appendix A**.
3.2	This report provides details of the overall progress made against the Three-Year Delivery Plan between 1 April and 30 June 2026.
3.3	**Governance Arrangements**
3.3.1	To enable the Quarter 1 Progress Report to be presented to the Board at the earliest opportunity, an alternative governance route is being applied on this occasion. Due to the timing of scheduled meetings and associated paper submission deadlines, the report will be considered by the Strategic Leadership Team prior to the Senior Management Board, rather than following the usual Senior Management Board → Strategic Leadership Team → Board route.
3.3.2	As a result, there is limited opportunity to incorporate amendments between governance stages before submission to the Board. This is a one-off arrangement for Quarter 1 reporting only, and subsequent quarterly reports are expected to follow the standard governance process.

3.4
3.4.1
	Quarter 1 Update
	There are 21 actions contained within the Three-Year Delivery Plan. At the end of Quarter 1 2026/27, the following progress has been reported:
	
	• 19 actions have been noted as progressing as planned and are **green.**
	
	• 2 actions have been noted as experiencing some delay and are **amber:**
	  • Action 8: Undertake a review of SFRS Values to ensure they remain relevant and aligned to wider organisational culture and leadership work.
	  A revised action due date from 31 December 2026 to 31 March 2027 is requested, extending delivery of the overall action by 3 months.
	  A revised due date for Milestone 1 **'Develop options for an approach to an SFRS Values review'** ***has been requested from 31 August 2026 to 30 September 2026. This request does not impact the overall action due date.***
	  (People, Communications and Engagement)
	
	  • Action 18: Implement robust data governance frameworks.
	  A revised action due date from 31 March 2027 to 31 October 2027 is requested, extending delivery of the overall action by 7 months.
	  (Finance, Digital & Infrastructure / Governance, Strategy & Change / Corporate Services Review)

3.4.2	There are also 4 residual actions from 2025/26 Year 1 of the Three-Year Delivery Plan:
	
	• 2 residual actions have been noted as experiencing some delay and are **amber:**
	  • 2025/26 Action 6.1: Develop and publish an SFRS People Strategy.
	  A further (2nd) revised action due date from 30 June 2026 to 31 August 2026 is requested, extending delivery of the overall action by 2 months.
	  (People, Communications and Engagement)
	
	  • 2025/26 Action 9.4: Introduce a future model for specialist operations.
	  This action is progressing towards the previously agreed initial revised due date of 30 September 2026 and has been marked amber to reflect that completion was not achieved during the 2025/26 reporting year.
	  (Operations)
	
	• 2 residual actions have been noted as experiencing more significant delay and are **red:**
	  • 2025/26 Action 11.4: Deliver a suite of systems to solutionise our rostering, availability and payroll functionality.
	  A further (3rd) revised action due date from 30 September 2026 to 31 March 2027 is requested, extending delivery of the overall action by 6 months.
	  (Enabling Infrastructure / Finance, Digital & Infrastructure)
	
	  • 2025/26 Action 11.5: Replacements of In-Vehicle devices.
	  A further (2nd) revised action due date from 31 March 2027 to 30 June 2027 is requested, extending delivery of the overall action by 3 months.
	  (Enabling Infrastructure / Finance, Digital & Infrastructure)

3.5 3.5.1	**Detailed Commentary** In line with usual reporting processes, **Appendix A** provides detailed commentary on all amber actions and any red actions (where applicable).
3.5.2	The full reporting dashboard also available should members wish to further interrogate by viewing progress updates down to milestone level.

3.5.3	If Board members would like to view the Power BI Dashboard this can be provided via the Strategic Planning Team at SFRS.StrategicPlanning@firescotland.gov.uk. Member feedback on the reporting process and solution is also welcomed.
3.6 3.6.1	**Future development** At the SFRS Board meeting held on 9 July 2026, Board Members requested a number of design enhancements to the Three-Year Delivery Plan Progress Report to: • clearly identify actions that span two or more years • highlight actions where completion dates have been revised • improve visibility of the reporting year to which each action relates
3.6.2	This work is currently being developed and will be incorporated into future reporting from Quarter 2 onwards.
4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The Board is invited to: • scrutinise the Quarter 1 Progress Report as detailed in **Appendix A**
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1 5.1.1	**Risk Appetite and Alignment to Risk Registers** The Three-Year Delivery Plan is a core vehicle for delivering the SFRS Strategy and represents a significant element of the Service's risk profile. Quarterly reporting provides timely visibility of delivery confidence, emerging risks, and escalation to corporate and directorate risk registers where required.
5.2 5.2.1	**Financial** The Plan is aligned to the Medium-Term Financial Plan and reflects the constraints of the Scottish Spending Review settlement. Quarterly updates provide assurance that priorities remain deliverable within available funding and enable timely reprioritisation where financial or delivery pressures arise.
5.3 5.3.1	**Environmental & Sustainability** Environmental and sustainability considerations are embedded at activity level and overseen through quarterly reporting. This ensures impacts are identified, mitigated, and managed as part of delivery rather than retrospectively.
5.4 5.4.1	**Workforce** Delivery assumptions are contingent on securing sufficient workforce capacity. Quarterly reporting highlights emerging pressures from cumulative demand and enables escalation and mitigation through established governance routes.
5.5 5.5.1	**Health & Safety** Health, safety, and wellbeing considerations are integral to Plan delivery. Regular reporting provides assurance that risks are identified early, mitigations remain effective, and pressures arising from pace or scale of change are managed.
5.6 5.6.1	**Health & Wellbeing** Health and wellbeing considerations are integral to Plan delivery. Regular reporting provides assurance that risks are identified early, mitigations remain effective, and pressures arising from pace or scale of change are managed.
5.7 5.7.1	**Training** Implementation of the Three-Year Delivery Plan will continue to generate training and skills development requirements across functions and directorates. Activity owners are responsible for identifying these requirements and ensuring they are planned and resourced appropriately. Regular reporting provides assurance that risks are identified early,

	mitigations remain effective, and pressures arising from pace or scale of change are managed.
5.8 5.8.1	**Timing** As a rolling three-year framework, the Plan enables flexibility through annual review and reprioritisation. Quarterly reporting highlights delays, dependencies, and timing risks, supporting informed adjustments.
5.9 5.9.1	**Performance** Progress against the Plan will be monitored through established quarterly reporting arrangements to the Senior Management Board, Strategic Leadership Team, and the SFRS Board. This enables the Board to exercise effective oversight of delivery, focus scrutiny on areas of risk or under-performance, and ensure that corrective action is taken where necessary.
5.10 5.10.1	**Communications & Engagement** Regular reporting supports clear, consistent communication of progress, challenges, and priorities to staff, partners, and stakeholders, reinforcing accountability and managing expectations.
5.11 5.11.1	**Legal** Preparation and delivery of the Three-Year Delivery Plan supports the Service's obligations under the Governance and Accountability Framework, providing a clear mechanism for planning, prioritisation, and reporting in support of statutory duties and strategic objectives.
5.12 5.12.1	**Information Governance** Preparation of the Three-Year Delivery Plan does not require the collation or processing of personal data and therefore a Data Protection Impact Assessment is not applicable. Information governance requirements will continue to be considered as individual actions progress into delivery.
5.13 5.13.1	**Equalities** As a strategic planning document, the Three-Year Delivery Plan does not itself require an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment. Equality considerations will be assessed, where appropriate, at the level of individual actions as plans are developed and implemented.
5.14 5.14.1	**Service Delivery** The actions contained within the Three-Year Delivery Plan 2025-28 represent the Service's primary delivery commitments across a rolling three-year period with incremental Plans each year (Year 1 - 2025/26, Year 2 - 2026/27 and Year 3 - 2027/28) and beyond. Successful delivery will directly contribute to maintaining and improving service outcomes for communities across Scotland, particularly in the context of constrained resources and rising demand.
5.15 5.15.1	**Prevention** The Plan includes activities that support the Service's prevention agenda and contribute to long-term risk reduction and community safety. Effective prioritisation and delivery of these actions is critical to sustaining prevention outcomes alongside response and protection activity.
6	**Core Brief**
6.1.1	The Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications presented the SFRS Three-Year Plan Quarter 1 Progress Update to the Strategic Leadership Team and requested that they approve the requests made and agree its release to the SFRS Board.

7	Assurance (SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)	
7.1	**Director:**	Mark McAteer, Director of Governance Strategy and Change
7.2	**Level of Assurance: (Mark as appropriate)**	~~Substantial~~/**Reasonable**/~~Limited/Insufficient~~
7.3	**Rationale:**	The content of the Annual Operating Plan is reviewed by Directorates/Functions on a yearly basis to ensure that critical business and those actions required to deliver our ambitions for change are prioritised throughout the year. Following approval by the Senior Management Board, Strategic Leadership Team and the SFRS Board, quarterly reporting ensures that we can track our performance against Annual Operating Plan actions and milestones and take any corrective action where possible/necessary.
8	**Appendices/Further Reading**	
8.1	**Appendix A:** Three-Year Delivery Plan Q1 Progress Update	

Prepared by:	Kirsty Jamieson, Planning and Performance Officer
Sponsored by:	Richard Whetton, Head of Compliance and Governance
Presented by:	Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change

Links to Strategy and Corporate Values

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is directed to produce an Annual Operating Plan through the Governance and Accountability Framework set out by the Scottish Government. The Three-Year Delivery Plan is revised each year to support the delivery of the SFRS Strategy and uphold corporate values.

Governance Route for Report	Meeting Date	Report Classification	Meeting Approvals/Outcomes
Strategic Leadership Team	19/08/2026	For Decision	
Senior Management Board	24/08/2026	For Recommendation	
SFRS Board	27/08/2026	For Scrutiny	

SFRS Three-Year Delivery Plan: Exceptions

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

APPENDIX A

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Welcome

The Three-Year Delivery Plan outlines our key commitments over the three-year period, and the actions that have been agreed by the Strategic Leadership Team as a priority over that period to deliver the SFRS Strategy 2025-28.

This report provides a consolidated overview of progress and performance, with a focus on **exception reporting** (actions with a red or amber status). The Action Summary page provides a visual scorecard of overall status, whilst the subsequent pages present detailed updates and highlight any factors that may be influencing delivery.

Key contact: Louise Patrick or Kirsty Jamieson
For Power BI technical questions: BI@firescotland.gov.uk

Reporting Period:
2026-27-Q1

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW | ACTION SUMMARY | ACTION INDEX

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION
There is no confidential information in this report – content can be shared with partners.
Data is subject to change.

This overview presents a snapshot of the status of **all** of the Three-Year Delivery Plan actions identified by the Strategic Leadership Team as priorities, including actions for the current reporting year and any residual actions not yet complete. The chart highlights their alignment with the Chief's key priorities.

For further detail, individual red or amber actions can be explored on the following pages.

2 Red Actions

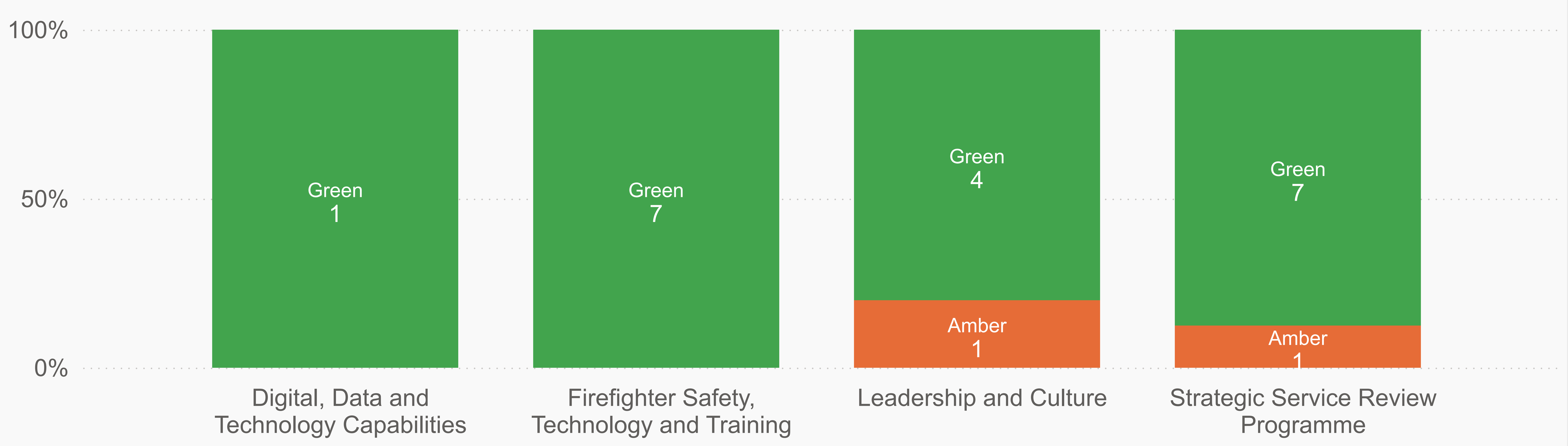
4 Amber Actions

19 Green Actions

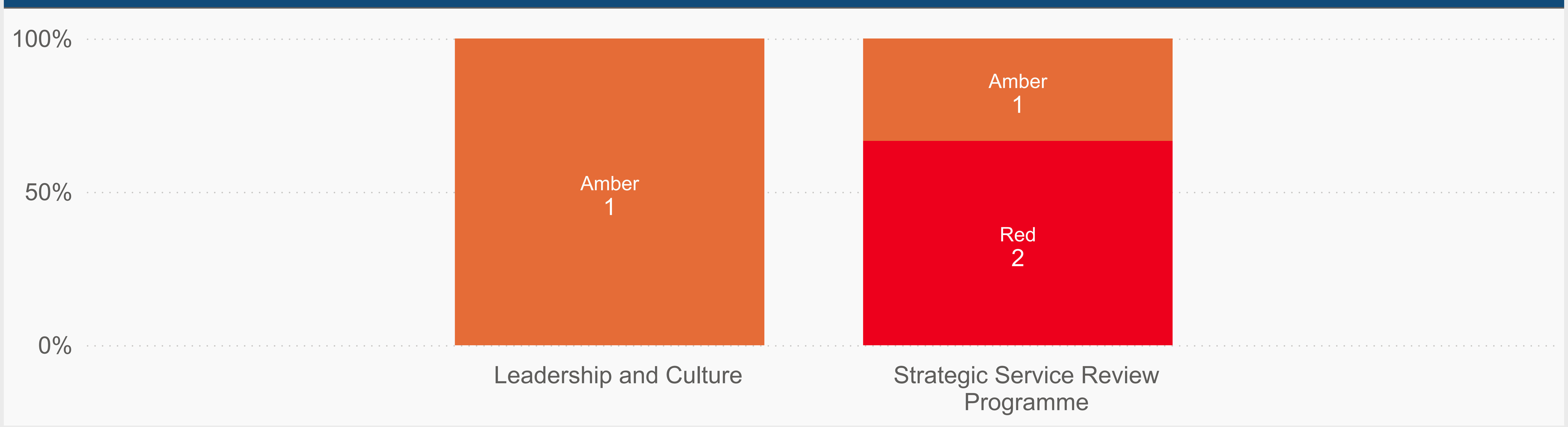
0 Blue Actions

6 Revised End Dates

Chief's Priorities with Action Status' 2026-27



Chief's Priorities with Action Status' Residual Actions 2025-26



This Executive Summary presents a high-level scorecard of **all** of the Three-Year Delivery Plan actions, including actions for the current reporting year and any residual actions not yet complete.

For further detail, individual red or amber actions can be explored on the following pages.

2 Red Actions

4 Amber Actions

19 Green Actions

0 Blue Actions

6 Revised End Dates

2026-27

Chief Priority	Action Ref	Action	Lead Directorate	% complete	Action Status
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	1	Electronic H&S System	Training, Safety and Assurance	75%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	2	Key Learning for Ff safety	Training, Safety and Assurance	25%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	3	Tactical Firefighting Delivery Model	Training, Safety and Assurance	50%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	4	Compartment Fire Behaviour Training	Training, Safety and Assurance	50%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	5	Health and Wellbeing Structure	Training, Safety and Assurance	60%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	6	Health Surveillance	Training, Safety and Assurance	55%	
Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training	7	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus.	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure / Enabling Infrastructure	25%	
Leadership and Culture	8	SFRS Values	People, Communications and Engagement	20%	
Leadership and Culture	9	Recruitment and Selection	People, Communications and Engagement	50%	
Leadership and Culture	10	SFRS Employee Networks	People, Communications and Engagement	65%	
Leadership and Culture	11	SFRS Leadership Framework	People, Communications and Engagement	65%	
Leadership and Culture	12	Improved Facilities, Equipment and Kit	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure	65%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	13	On Call Clustering Solutions	Operational Delivery / Service Delivery Review	5%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	14	Service Delivery Review	Operational Delivery / Service Delivery Review	25%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	15	Corporate Business Solutions	Governance, Strategy & Change / Corporate Services Review	50%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	16	Corporate Services Review	Governance, Strategy & Change / Corporate Services Review	35%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	17	Attraction, Retention and Reward	People, Communications and Engagement / Corporate Service	85%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	18	Data Governance Frameworks	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure / Governance, Strategy & Change / Corporate Services Review	10%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	19	NMS Computer Aided Dispatch	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure / Enabling Infrastructure	55%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	20	NMS Phase 2	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure / Enabling Infrastructure	0%	
Digital, Data and Technology Capabilities	21	Cyber Security Action Plan	Finance, Digital & Infrastructure	50%	

2025-26 Residual Actions

Chief Priority	Action Ref	Action	Lead Directorate	% complete	Action Status
Leadership and Culture	SC6.1	People Strategy	People Directorate	55%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	SC9.4	Specialist Appliance Review	Service Delivery Review / Operations Delivery	80%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	SC11.4	Rostering Project	Enabling Infrastructure / Finance and Contractual Services	55%	
Strategic Service Review Programme	SC11.5	In-Vehicle Systems	Enabling Infrastructure / Finance and Contractual Services	65%	

Service Commitment:

ACTION

SFRS Values

Undertake a review of SFRS Values to ensure they remain relevant and aligned to wider organisational culture and leadership work.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
3.3	2026-06 (Jun)	2026-12 (Dec)	Yes	30/03/2027

8

Lead Directorate:

People, Co...

Action Status:

Amber

20% Complete

3 Milestones

PROGRESS UPDATE

An options-based approach to reviewing SFRS Values has been developed, aligned to organisational capacity and strategic priorities. Initial consideration has been given to alignment with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics and the Nolan Principles.
Delivery of the agreed approach will be progressed now that the Organisational Culture and Leadership (OCL) resource has been approved.

ISSUES

The revised completion date of March 2027 has been requested to align with the resourcing of the new Organisational Development Adviser post, which has been approved by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). The additional resource will support the progression and delivery of this work, alongside wider Organisational Culture and Leadership (OCL) workstreams.
An initial revised due date is requested for this action.

MITIGATION

Recruitment to the approved Organisational Development Adviser post is underway. In the meantime, priority activity is being progressed within existing resource, with the additional capacity expected to support delivery of the outstanding actions and revised March 2027 completion date.
An initial revised due date from 31 December 2026 to 31 March 2027 is requested.

Service Commitment:

ACTION

Data Governance Frameworks

Implement robust data governance frameworks.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
4.3,5.6	2026-05 (May)	2027-03 (Mar)	Yes	30/10/2027

18

Lead Directorate:

Finance, Digital &...

Action Status:

Amber

10% Complete

5 Milestones

PROGRESS UPDATE

Progress has been made in developing the data governance framework and identifying the specialist resource requirements necessary to support implementation. However, progress towards delivery has been slower than anticipated due to limited internal capacity. A business case is currently under consideration as part of the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) Strategy programme. Subject to approval, this would enable the recruitment of specialist resources to lead and support the implementation of data governance arrangements across the Service.
Given the dependency on securing additional resource, delivery timescales have been reviewed, and a revised completion date of 31 October 2027 is proposed. The action is therefore rated Amber to reflect the current resourcing risk and associated delay to implementation.

ISSUES

Limited specialist capacity is impacting the pace of implementation of the Data Governance Framework and presents a risk to delivery within the original timescales.
An initial revised due date is requested for this action.

MITIGATION

A business case is being progressed through the DDaT Strategy programme to secure additional specialist data governance resource. Subject to approval, this will strengthen delivery capacity, support implementation of the framework and reduce the risk of further delays. In parallel, alternative delivery options, including external specialist support and targeted workforce development, will continue to be explored.
An initial revised due date from 31 March 2027 to 31 October 2027 is requested.

Service Commitment:

By developing and delivering a SFRS People Strategy and a Culture & Leadership Vision and Strategy we will identify key priorities that will align and drive the people activities that support the delivery of the SFRS Strategy through building the capability of our leaders to create the conditions in which our people can thrive, leading to improved individual and organisational performance and enhance our employee experience.

ACTION

People Strategy

Develop and publish a SFRS People Strategy.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
3.3,3.6,3.7,3.8,3.9	2025-06 (Jun)	2026-03 (Mar)	Yes	30/08/2026

SC6.1

Lead Directorate:
People

Action Status:
Amber

55%
Complete

1
Milestones

PROGRESS UPDATE

The final draft of the SFRS People Strategy progressed through governance routes - SMB, SLT and People Committee - as planned. There is close proximity between the proposed publication date (June 2026) and the date of the incoming Director of People, Communications and Engagement (August 2026). Given this, agreement was reached with them plus Head of People and Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services) to a revised timeframe and initial remit for the SFRS People Strategy, amending from 2026-2031 to 2026-2028 and being reframed as the SFRS People Plan. This will allow wider work to look at how the SFRS People Strategy supports and interlinks with all elements of the wider SFRS Strategy, and will align timeframes for development of the SFRS Strategy 2028-31.

Work continues with Communications & Engagement function in readiness for publication in August, including pre-publication/warm-up activities. In parallel, work to develop the supporting action plans - aligned to the shorter timeframes outlined above - continues.

ISSUES

Whilst governance approval took place during Q1 as planned, the publication of the SFRS People Plan has been deferred to August 2026. This has been due to competing priorities to ensure appropriate communications and engagement plan to support the launch of the People Plan, including warm-up communications and wider engagement to support its introduction and ongoing promotion with stakeholders. Due date to be revised to 31 August 2026 to reflect this.

A further (2nd) revised due date is requested.

MITIGATION

The extension to this due date by 2 months has enabled development of graphics of the final People Plan, a plan on a page graphic to support delivery, and an effective communications and engagement plan and activity to support launch and ongoing promotion. Weekly meetings are taking place between People and Comms & Engagement colleagues to support this. Publication is on track for completion by the end of August 2026.

A further (2nd) revised due date from 30 June 2026 to 31 August 2026 is requested.

Service Commitment:

By reviewing our current Service Delivery processes and response models, we will ensure that our staff, stations and appliances are matched to operational risk across Scotland enhancing firefighter safety and increasing organisational capacity.

Specialist Appliance Review

ACTION

Introduce a future model for specialist operational response capabilities that align with the National Fire Resilience programme.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
2.2,2.3,2.4,4.3	2025-04 (Apr)	2026-03 (Mar)	No	

SC9.4

Lead Directorate: **SDR / Operations ...**

Action Status: **Amber**

80% Complete

4 Milestones

PROGRESS UPDATE

This is a residual action from the 2025/26 Three-Year Delivery Plan which has one outstanding milestone: Develop a Concept of Operations for Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV).
Work is progressing to develop a Concept of Operations (CONOPS) for ROV (Uncrewed Aircraft Systems), however, the presentation of the associated paper to introduce ROV to the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) has been delayed until 05 August 2026 (now presented and approved) but this does not impact the previously agreed revised due date of 30 September 2026. Once this paper is approved, the CONOPs will be finalised in line with revised due date.

ISSUES

The remaining milestone remains amber as it is residual activity from the 25/26 Three-Year Delivery Plan.

MITIGATION

The action is on track to be completed by the revised due date of 30 September 2026.

Service Commitment:

By undertaking our Enabling Infrastructure programme, we will ensure our people have access to modern systems, equipment and property.

Rostering Project

ACTION

Deliver a suite of systems to solutionise our rostering, availability and payroll functionality.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
2.5,4.3	2025-06 (Jun)	2025-12 (Dec)	Yes	30/03/2027

SC11.4

Lead Directorate:

Enabling Infrastr...

Action Status:

Red

55%
Complete

6
Milestones

PROGRESS UPDATE

Good progress has been made across the Rostering Project, with Availability and Payroll successfully implemented across all Service Delivery Areas. However, the complexity of SFRS crewing requirements has delayed testing of the full rostering solution. Joint working between SFRS and Total Mobile has improved progress, and dedicated workshops are underway to finalise the scope and delivery plan for the remaining project activity.

ISSUES

Delays in configuring and testing complex SFRS crewing models have extended the testing phase and impacted subsequent implementation, training and rollout activities. As a result, milestone completion dates have required further revision through the project's change control process.
A further (3rd) revised overall due date is requested for this action.

MITIGATION

Additional supplier and SFRS resources have been dedicated to testing and development activities, supported by strengthened governance and senior-level engagement with Total Mobile. A revised collaborative approach to testing and analysis, together with ongoing workshops and approved change requests, is helping to resolve outstanding issues and support delivery of a fully functioning Day-1 solution.
A further (3rd) revised overall due date from 30 September 2026 to 31 March 2027 is requested.

Service Commitment:

By undertaking our Enabling Infrastructure programme, we will ensure our people have access to modern systems, equipment and property.

SC11.5

Lead Directorate: **Enabling Infrastr...**

Action Status: **Red**

65% Complete

7 Milestones

ACTION

In-Vehicle Systems

Replacement of in-vehicle devices and implementation of new OI system.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Start Date	Original End Date	Revised End Date?	Revised End Date
2.5,5.5	2025-06 (Jun)	2026-02 (Feb)	Yes	30/03/2027

PROGRESS UPDATE

Mounting plates for the Samsung (A8) tablets is well underway as part of the In Vehicle fit by Telent. The mounting fits the replacement device (A11) which are due to be rolled out.
Installation of the CF33 tablets is well underway with all first responding pumps in the East Service Delivery Area complete, and work is now moving to Specialist Vehicles and the North Service Delivery Area.
Work is currently ongoing with Guardian Fire to prepare the Command and Evacuation Modules for release alongside The Guardian Fire Web application.

ISSUES

There have been technical challenges with the current systems and the new systems working alongside the New Mobilising System (NMS) Project.
A further (2nd) revised due date is requested.

MITIGATION

Next steps will include to continue to work with Airwave and Guardian Fire to overcome the GD92 issues in the West Service Delivery Area (SDA), to continue with CF33 installations in the North and the West Service Deliver Areas once these are available and to continue the development work with the Drop 2 Software.
A further (2nd) revised due date from 28 February 2027 to 31 March 2027 is requested.

BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE

Created by Business Intelligence

Any issues or questions with this report please contact

bi@firescotland.gov.uk

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/FDI/05-26

Agenda Item: 12

Report to:	**THE BOARD OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**	
Meeting Date:	**27 AUGUST 2026**	
Report Title:	**RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING JULY 2026**	
Report Classification:	**For Scrutiny**	**SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY For Reports to be held in Private Specify rationale below referring to Board Standing Order 9** A B C D E F G

1	**Purpose**
1.1	To advise the Board of the Resource Budget position for the period ending 31st July 2026 (Period 4).
2	**Background**
2.1	The Scottish Government initially allocated funding via the Scottish Budget to Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) for 2026/27 of £436.0million. This funding comprises a Resource and Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) of £353.6million and £48.4million respectively, and £34.0million in respect of depreciation (Ring-fenced or "non-cash" DEL).
2.2	SFRS will receive as part of the Autumn Budget Revision (ABR), an allocation of £5.3million. This consists of £4.0million operational support and £1.3million specifically to fund the uniform staff pay award pressure. On this basis, the reported SFRS Resource DEL for 2026/27 will be **£358.9million**.
3	**Main Report/Detail**
3.1	A summary of the consolidated financial position at this stage in the financial year is attached at Appendix A – Consolidated Financial Position.
3.2	The report outlines a current overspend of £1.954 million against budget, with the projected year-end position indicating an overspend of **£3.784 million**. Further management action and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) decisions will be required to agree a path to financial balance.
3.3	Having started the year with a funding gap of £2.169million (incorporating the agreed £4million additional support from Scottish Government), the following material forecast variances have been identified at this stage:
3.4	Employee costs: • An underspend for Control of £0.307million due to current vacancies. • An underspend for Support of £0.286million due to current vacancies. • An overspend for Wholetime of £0.135million caused by increased number of staff meeting the criteria for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) payments. • An overspend for On Call of £0.139million caused by recent increase in operational demand due to significant wildfires.

3.5	Other Costs, noting the variability of operational activity: • An overspend of £1.799million within Property, relating to current demand for essential property repairs and maintenance. This reflects that 49% of current allocation has already been committed. • An overspend for Supplies & Services of £0.437million, relating to late arrival of contaminant control kit, originally due to be received prior to 31st March 2026, ancillary costs associated with the recent wildfire incidents and dual running IT costs linked to Saughton House services. Hydrant maintenance costs are also forecast to overspend due to pass through of traffic management costs by the 3rd party supplier. • An overspend in Transport costs of £0.618million, due to the continuing impact of higher fuel prices driven by geo-political factors and increased operational activity related to the recent wildfires. • An overspend of £0.118million for Third Party Payments, primarily caused by continuing use of external supplier for asbestos screening as in-house team has not been recruited at this time. These costs are partially offset by reduced demand on physician services. • Additional Income of £0.159millon due to improved return from the Biomass agreement, additional rental for shared services and recovery of services in support of the Commonwealth Games. • Unallocated Savings – due to additional support from Scottish Government and revised budget requirements for Firelink, this forecast reflects a potential gap of £1.254million. • Other minor values account for the remaining forecast overspend of £0.036million.
3.6	Current intelligence suggests the additional cost of the recent wildfire will exceed £300,000, incorporating salaries, welfare, fuel and equipment related expenditure.
3.7	Appendix A identifies risks to the reported financial position. The most likely relate to potential increases in the support staff pay award linked to higher Consumer Price Index levels, and ongoing pressures in areas relating to enabling infrastructure projects, hydrant maintenance, wholetime overtime and wildfire costs. Conversely, delays in planned initiatives or changes to current operational business rules may lead to cost reductions.
4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The Board is asked to: • scrutinise the report.
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1 5.1.1	**Risk Appetite and Alignment to Risk Registers** In relation to the risk of failing to provide a safe and effective emergency response SFRS has a **Minimalist** appetite.
5.1.2	In relation to breaching budgetary limits, SFRS has a **Minimalist** appetite, aiming to fully utilise but not exceed approved budgets. In exceptional circumstances, where additional spend may be required, that would exceed budget provision, approval may be sought from the Scottish Government.
5.1.3	The forecast Resource position for the financial year and associated actions are considered an appropriate balance of our stated risk appetite and performance will continue to be monitored to ensure it remains aligned.
5.2 5.2.1	**Financial** The financial implications are detailed within the report.

5.3 5.3.1	**Environmental & Sustainability** There are no environment and sustainability implications directly associated with this report.
5.4 5.4.1	**Workforce** The workforce implications are detailed within the report.
5.5 5.5.1	**Health & Safety** There are no health and safety implications directly associated with this report.
5.6 5.6.1	**Health & Wellbeing** There are no health and wellbeing implications directly associated with this report.
5.7 5.7.1	**Training** The training implications are detailed within the report.
5.8 5.8.1	**Timing** The potential savings associated with proposed actions are based on immediate implementation. Any delay will reduce the impact of these measures.
5.9 5.9.1	**Performance** The financial performance of the Service is measured by key performance indicators. This report provides further context to those figures.
5.10 5.10.1	**Communications & Engagement** Once presented to the Board, this report will be a public document and will be available via the Service website.
5.11 5.11.1	**Legal** SFRS is required, under the Scottish Public Finance Manual and Scottish Government's Governance and Accountability Framework, to manage its expenditure, in pursuit of the SFRS Strategy 2025-28 and the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022, within the budget allocation provided.
5.12 5.12.1	**Information Governance** DPIA completed No. DPIA is not required as advised by Information Governance Function as the report contains no personal identifiers
5.13 5.13.1	**Equalities** EHRIA completed Yes/~~No~~. An EHRIA in respect of the Resource Budget 2026/27 has been prepared, with the assistance of the EDI team and is being considered by Finance management.
5.14 5.14.1	**Service Delivery** The Service Delivery implications are detailed within the report.
5.15 5.15.1	**Prevention** The Service Delivery implications are detailed within the report.
6	**Core Brief**
6.1	The Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure advised the Board of the resource budget position for the period ending 31st July 2026. The July 2026 resource monitoring report shows a current overspend against resource budget of £1.954million, with a forecast year-end resource overspend of £3.784million.

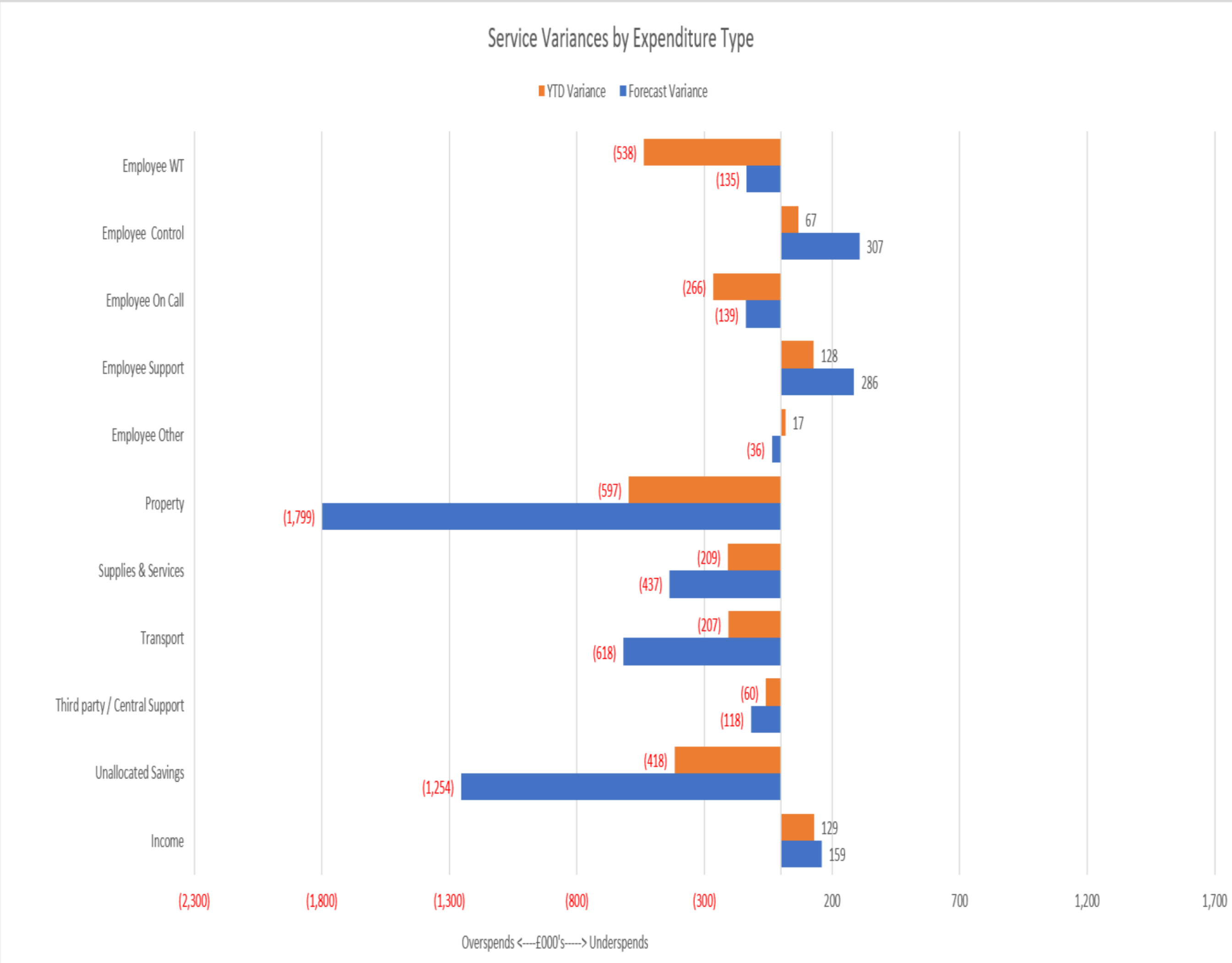
7	**Assurance (SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)**	
7.1	**Director:**	James Wallace, Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
7.2	**Level of Assurance: (Mark as appropriate)**	~~Substantial/~~**Reasonable**/~~Limited/Insufficient~~
7.3	**Rationale:**	The financial position is reviewed monthly and budget variances and forecasts are highlighted. During the year, SLT agree actions to ensure we manage the financial position within agreed financial parameters.
8	**Appendices/Further Reading**	
8.1	Appendix A – Consolidated Financial Position	

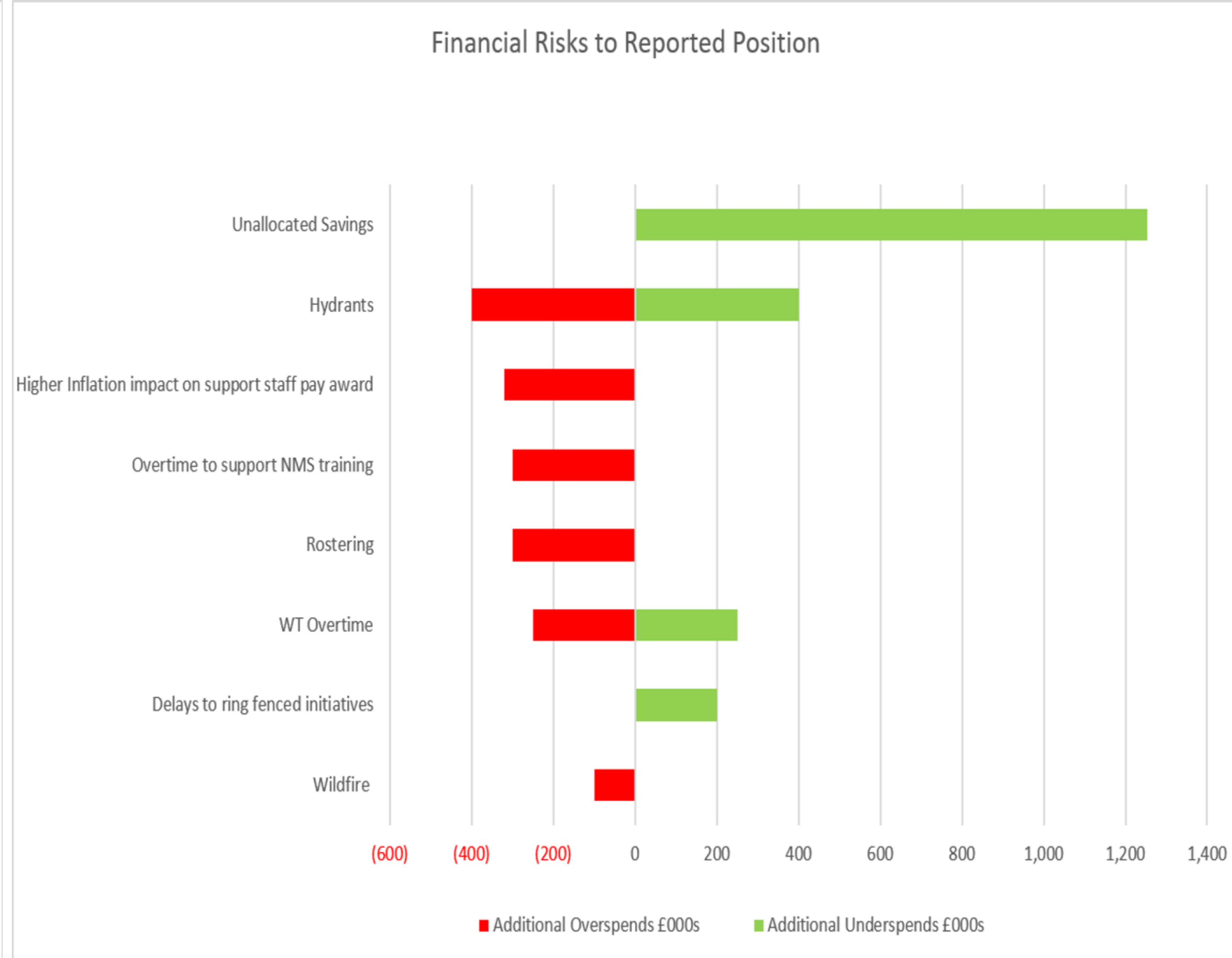
Prepared by:	William Lindsay, Decision Support Manager
Sponsored by:	Lynne McGeough, Head of Finance and Procurement
Presented by:	James Wallace, Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
Links to Strategy and Corporate Values	
The budget recognises the important role the Service plays in delivering against our corporate value of working together for a safer Scotland.	

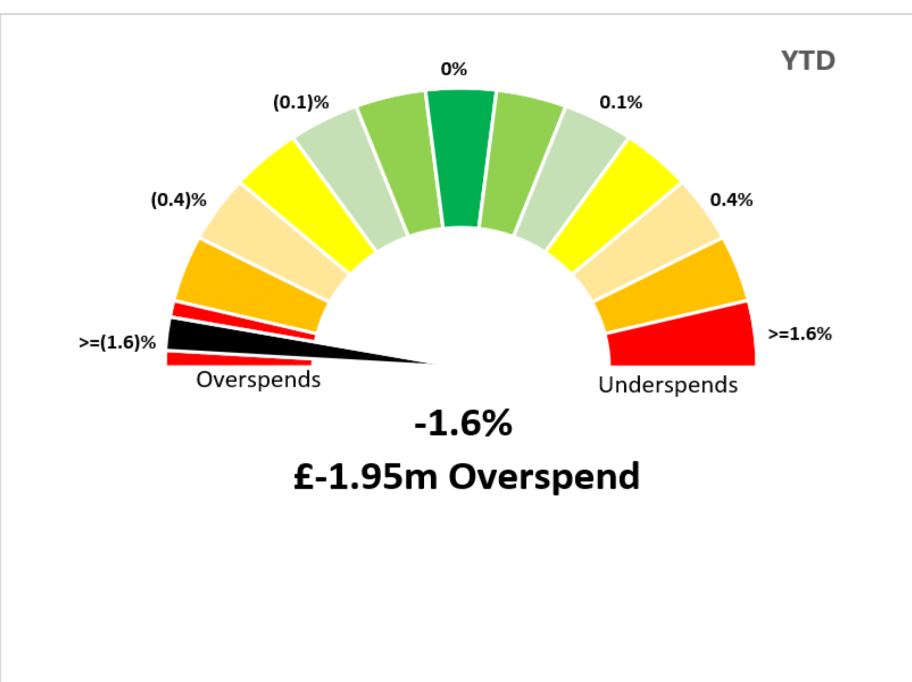
Governance Route for Report	Meeting Date	Report Classification	Meeting Approvals/Outcomes
Strategic Leadership Team	*19/08/2026*	*For Decision*	
SFRS Board	*27/08/2026*	*For Scrutiny*	

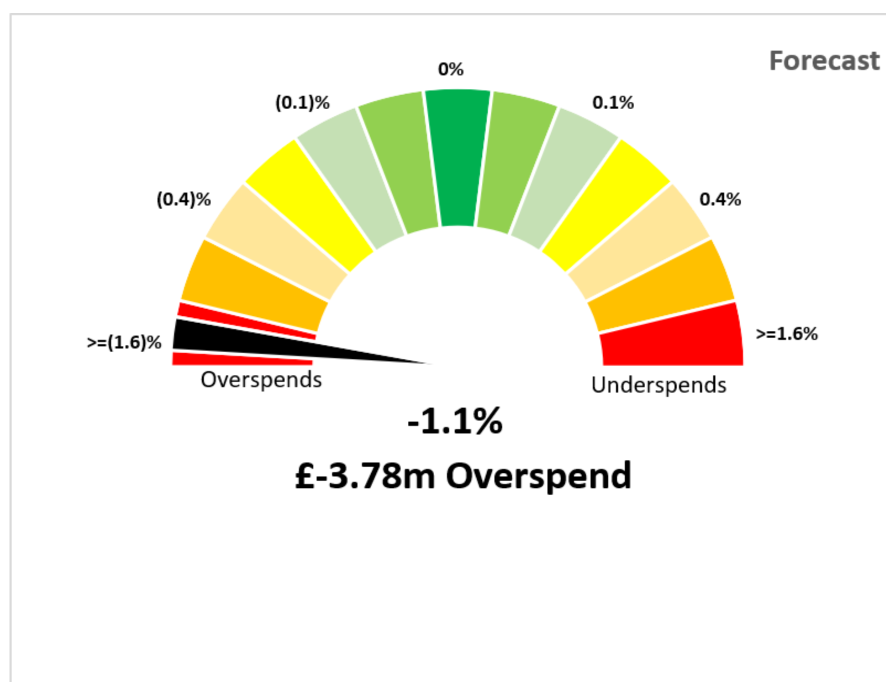
Appendix A
Consolidated Financial Position
July 2026

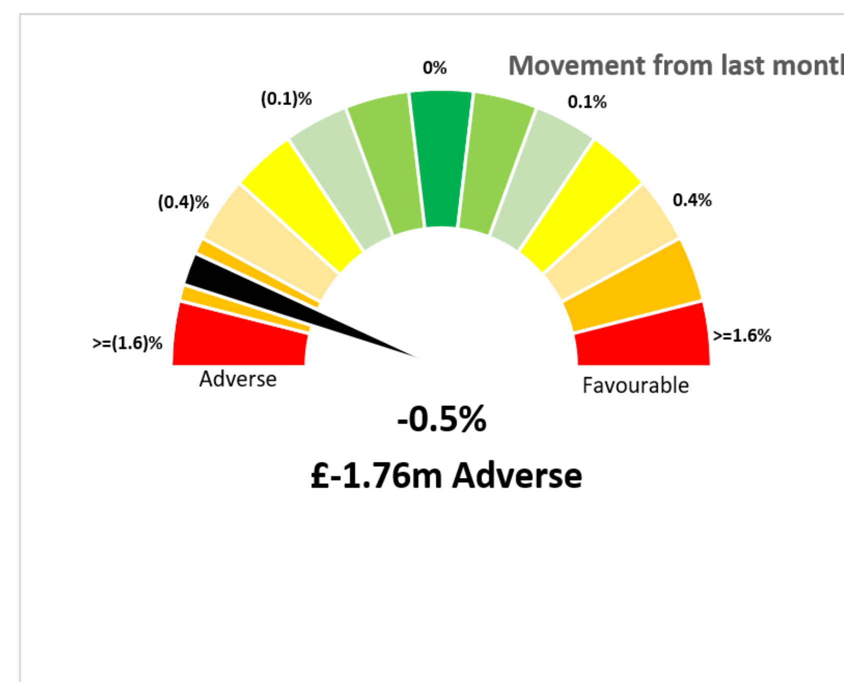
SFRS Financial Overview 2026/2027 Period 4











SFRS Resource Monitoring Report July 2026

The report below highlights a year-to-date overspend, as at the 31st July 2026, of £1.954 million (1.6% of the year-to-date budget). The forecast overspend to the 31st March 2027 is £3.784 million (1.1% of the full year budget).

Board Approved Budget (incl.	SG Budget Revisions	Virements	Revised Annual Budget	Narrative	Year to Date (£000's)				Year-End Projection (£000's)		
					Budget	Actual	Variance		Forecast	Variance	
			(1)+(2)				£ (4)-(5)	% (6)/(4)		£ (3)-(8)	% (9)/(3)
(1)		(2)	(3)		(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
286,369	1,301	570	288,240	Employee Costs	93,763	94,355	(592)	-0.6%	287,957	283	0.1%
276,692	*1,301*	*531*	*278,524*	*Salary and Related Costs (including overtime)*	*90,945*	*91,554*	*(609)*	*-0.7%*	*278,205*	*319*	*0.1%*
184,787	*1,058*	*(93)*	*185,752*	*Wholetime*	*60,763*	*61,301*	*(538)*	*-0.9%*	*185,887*	*(135)*	*-0.1%*
9,113	*50*	*0*	*9,163*	*Control*	*2,972*	*2,905*	*67*	*2.3%*	*8,856*	*307*	*3.4%*
35,740	*193*	*(0)*	*35,933*	*On-Call*	*11,529*	*11,795*	*(266)*	*-2.3%*	*36,072*	*(139)*	*-0.4%*
47,052	*-*	*624*	*47,676*	*Support*	*15,681*	*15,553*	*128*	*0.8%*	*47,390*	*286*	*0.6%*
9,677	*-*	*39*	*9,716*	*Other Employee Costs*	*2,818*	*2,801*	*17*	*0.6%*	*9,752*	*(36)*	*-0.4%*
3,854	*-*	*-*	*3,854*	*Early Retirement Charges*	*1,230*	*1,205*	*25*	*2.0%*	*3,830*	*24*	*0.6%*
1,831	*-*	*39*	*1,870*	*Training*	*313*	*310*	*3*	*1.0%*	*1,869*	*1*	*0.1%*
2,676	*-*	*3*	*2,679*	*Subsistence & Travel*	*862*	*866*	*(4)*	*-0.5%*	*2,708*	*(29)*	*-1.1%*
1,316	*-*	*(3)*	*1,313*	*Other*	*413*	*420*	*(7)*	*-1.7%*	*1,345*	*(32)*	*-2.4%*
34,303	-	(5)	34,298	Property Costs	17,221	17,818	(597)	-3.5%	36,097	(1,799)	-5.2%
31,412	-	(1,420)	29,992	Supplies & Services	12,509	12,718	(209)	-1.7%	30,429	(437)	-1.5%
6,275	-	-	6,275	Transport Costs	2,137	2,344	(207)	-9.7%	6,893	(618)	-9.8%
1,981	-	(260)	1,721	Third Party Payments	518	578	(60)	-11.6%	1,839	(118)	-6.9%
1,372	-	-	1,372	Financing	23	23	-	0.0%	1,372	-	0.0%
(6,169)	*4,000*	4,915	(1,254)	Unallocated Savings	(418)	-	(418)	100.0%	-	(1,254)	100.0%
355,543	**5,301**	**3,800**	**360,644**	**GROSS EXPENDITURE**	**125,753**	**127,836**	**(2,083)**	**-1.7%**	**364,587**	**(3,943)**	**-1.1%**
(1,923)	-	200	(1,723)	Income	(297)	(426)	129	-43.4%	(1,882)	159	-9.2%
		-	-	Disposal of Assets	-	-	-	0.0%	-	-	0.0%
353,620	**5,301**	**4,000**	**358,921**	**NET EXPENDITURE**	**125,456**	**127,410**	**(1,954)**	**-1.6%**	**362,705**	**(3,784)**	**-1.1%**

Figures are based on assumptions detailed in section 3.

Forecast Assumptions

Wholetime Firefighters (WTFF)

- All staff are forecast to continue in their current role and pay rate for the remainder of the financial year.
- Employees who have indicated they intend to retire or meet the retiral assumptions are forecast to leave the Service at the relevant date and an acting up chain will immediately follow. This means that all retirals are forecast to result in savings at firefighter competent level.
- Employees who meet the requirement to retire but have not elected to leave are forecast to remain in employment until their next trigger date.
- Employees in firefighter development roles will progress to competent pay after 33 months unless other factors impact their pathway.
- The financial assumptions for retirals have been discussed with Workforce Planning and remain valid.
- Planned WTFF recruitment has been included in the forecast.

Control

- All existing staff are forecast to continue in their current roles and pay rates for the remainder of the financial year.
- Costs for posts where start dates have been agreed are included in the forecast.
- Known leavers have been included in the forecast and an acting up chain is assumed to immediately follow. This means that all leavers are forecast to result in savings at firefighter competent level.
- Staff in firefighter development roles will progress to competent pay after 36 months.

On Call personnel

- Retainer fees have been forecast based on current staff levels.
- On Call operational activity levels are forecast for future months to be at budgeted levels, unless significant events such as wildfires, have taken place recently.

Support

- All existing staff are forecast to continue in their current roles and pay rates for the remainder of the financial year.
- Costs for posts where appointment dates have been agreed are included in the forecast.
- Known leavers have been included in the forecast.
- The end dates for fixed term posts have been factored into the forecast.
- No adjustments have been made for current recruitment that is underway but has yet to be offered, or future staff turnover, as it is assumed these will negate each other.

Pay Awards

- Uniformed pay awards of 3.8% have been applied and reflected in the forecast.
- Support staff pay awards of 3.5% have been applied and reflected in the forecast.

Year to Date versus Forecast Position

- Where the forecast variance does not correspond to the year to date run rate, an explanation will be detailed in the Changes to Financial Position section of the relevant account category. The most common reasons for not following the run rate are seasonality and operational demand, e.g. utilities, hydrants and On Call activity.

Budget Revisions and Virements

During July 2026, the following budget revisions and virements have resulted in movements between categories of expenditure:

- **Unallocated Savings:** A budget transfer from Supplies & Services (Contingency) provided greater transparency of the Service's required savings position, establishing an identified Unallocated Savings balance of £6,169,000.
    - A subsequent transfer reflecting Firelink savings reduced the Unallocated Savings requirement by £915,000, decreasing the balance from £6,169,000 to £5,254,000. This was offset by a corresponding reduction in the Supplies & Services (Contingency) budget.
    - **Scottish Government Autumn Budget Revision (ABR):** Following receipt of a Letter of Comfort from the Scottish Government, the Unallocated Savings requirement was further reduced by £4,000,000, bringing the remaining balance to £1,254,000.
    - The ABR also provided additional funding to following the employee budgets: Employee WT by £1,051,000, Employee Control by £49,000 and Employee Retained by £193,000.
- **Training Assurance (Ringfenced):** A transfer from Ringfenced Contingency increased the Wholetime Employee budget by £99,000, with an equivalent reduction to the Supplies & Services (Ringfenced Contingency) budget.
- **Significant Investigations Team:** a second draw from Ringfenced Contingency increased budgets for Wholetime Employees by £8,000 and for Employee Support by £36,000, with a corresponding £44,000 reduction in the Supplies & Services (Ringfenced Contingency) budget.
- **DDaT Strategy Project:** a transfer in budget has resulted in an increase in the Employee Support (Private Contractor) budget by £500,000 and a decrease in the Supplies & Services (IT Contracts) budget by £500,000.

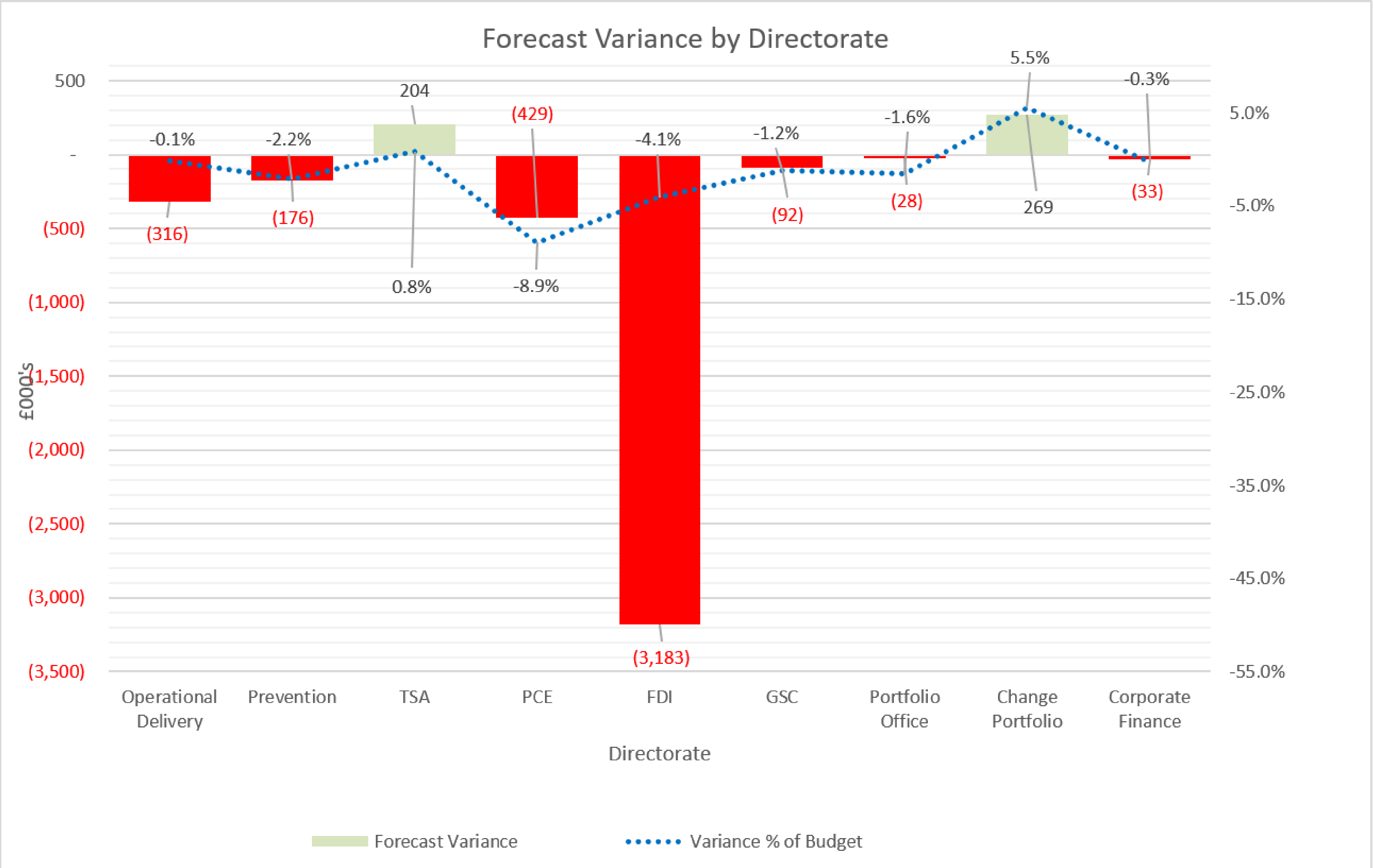
The table below highlights all the budget virements that have taken place within the current financial year.

Analysis of Budget Virements £000's

	Budget Approved by the Board	Budget Setting Adjustments	Enhanced Instructor Pool	Significant Investigations Team	OCL Ringfenced	Training Assurance - Ringfenced	Unallocated Savings	DDaT Strategy Project	SG ABR	Other		Revised Budget
Employee WT	184,697	108	(282)	201	-	99	-	-	1,051	(123)		185,752
Employee Control	9,113	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	49	-		9,163
Employee Retained	35,740	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	193	-		35,933
Employee Support	46,809	253	-	98	17	-	-	500	-	0		47,676
Employee Pension	3,854	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		3,854
Employee Training	1,831	(0)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39		1,870
Employee Subsistence & Travel	2,676	(4)	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-		2,679
Employee Other	1,316	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4)		1,313
Property	34,303	(6)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(0)		34,298
Supplies & Services	25,576	(327)	282	(299)	229	(99)	5,254	(500)	-	(123)		29,992
Transport	6,275	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		6,275
Third party / Central Support	1,981	(24)	-	-	(246)	-	-	-	-	10		1,721
Financing	1,372	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		1,372
Unallocated Savings	-	-	-	-	-	-	(5,254)	-	4,000	-		(1,254)
Income	(1,923)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200		(1,723)
Disposal of Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
Net Expenditure	**353,620**	**(0)**	**(0)**	**0**	**(0)**	**0**	**0**	**-**	**5,300**	**0**		**358,921**

Note – the Service's contingency balance is held within Supplies & Services. The forecast assumes this budget will be fully utilised.

Variance Analysis by Directorate



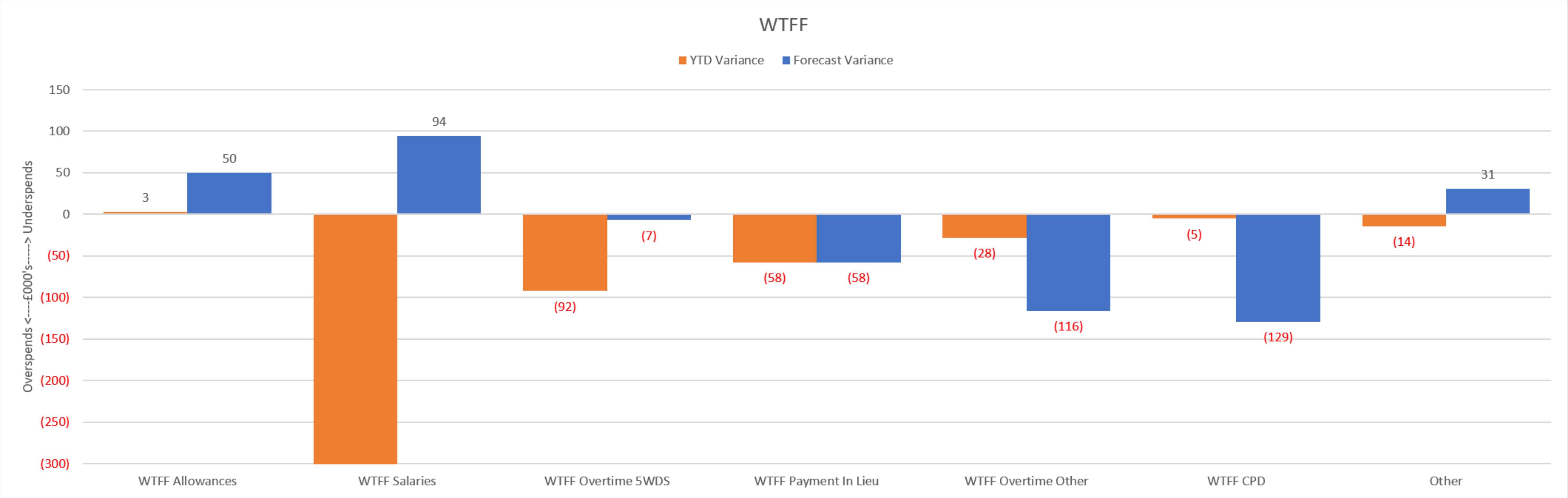
Wholetime

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £538,000 overspent, representing 0.9% of budget.	**Forecast to be £135,000 overspent, representing 0.1% of budget.**

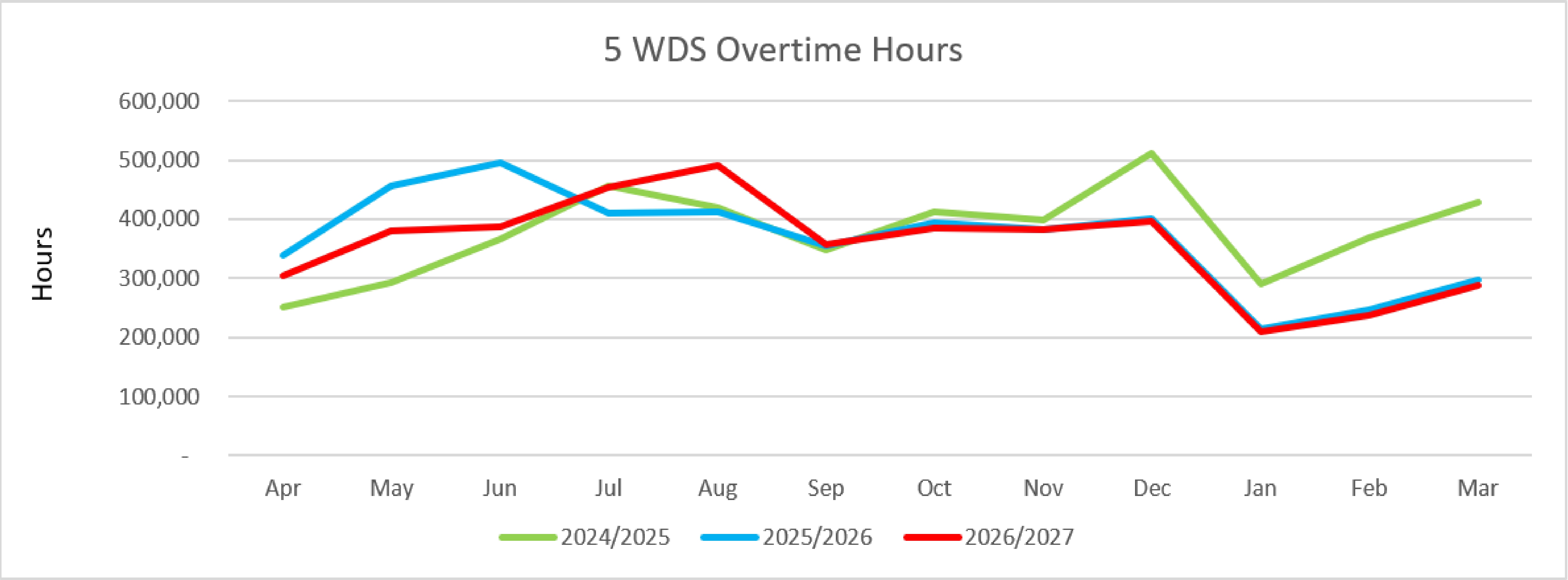
YTD Underspends:
- Allowances – less staff currently eligible to claim.

YTD Overspends:
- Salaries – currently, fewer retirements than assumed in budget.
- Overtime 5WDS – increased levels of overtime due to vacancies, and demand to cover specialist skills. Includes cost relating to Commonwealth Games that will be recovered.
- Payment In Lieu – payments in respect of untaken holidays.
- Overtime Other – increased costs for attendance at incidents spanning shift changes and staff undertaking bank hours to improve appliance availability at key On Call stations.
- CPD – increase in staff eligible to receive payment.
- Other – additional flexi officers covering long term absence and projects.

Changes in Financial Position:
- Allowances – the forecast is based on current month's staffing levels.
- Salaries – the forecast reflects the number of firefighters that are expected to leave during the financial year and incorporates the recruitment schedule for 2026/27. This has resulted in lower salaries but an expectation that operational overtime will be required to maintain operational availability.
- Overtime 5WDS – forecast based on current business rules being maintained and impact of trainees joining stations throughout the year.
- Payment In Lieu – no further costs are forecast as staff encouraged to utilise annual leave prior to retirement.
- Overtime Other – bank hours are expected to continue at current rate but other elements are forecast at budgeted rates.
- CPD – payment for newly eligible staff only commences from July 2026 onwards.
- Other – costs not forecast to continue at current levels.



5 WDS Overtime

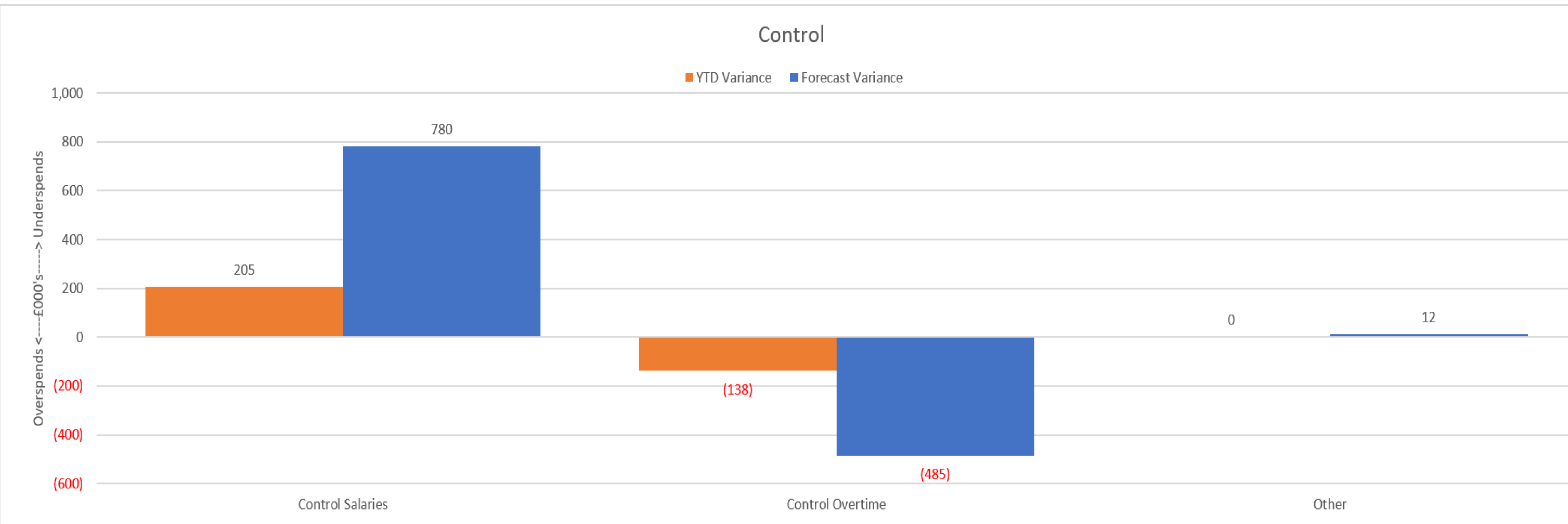


The chart above shows the costs of overtime relating to maintaining the requirements of the 5 Watch Duty System (5 WDS) (at current prices) over the last two years and the forecast for 2026/27.

The impact of the change to Central Staffing business rules will be monitored and the forecast amended as required. This has already resulted in a lowering of costs associated with operational overtime; however, it has led to an increase in the use of On Call Standbys to maintain operational cover in certain areas. A cautious approach has been taken with the remaining forecast however based on the current modelling; operational overtime may decline further compared to current modelling. This was significantly lower than expected based on previous year's trend.

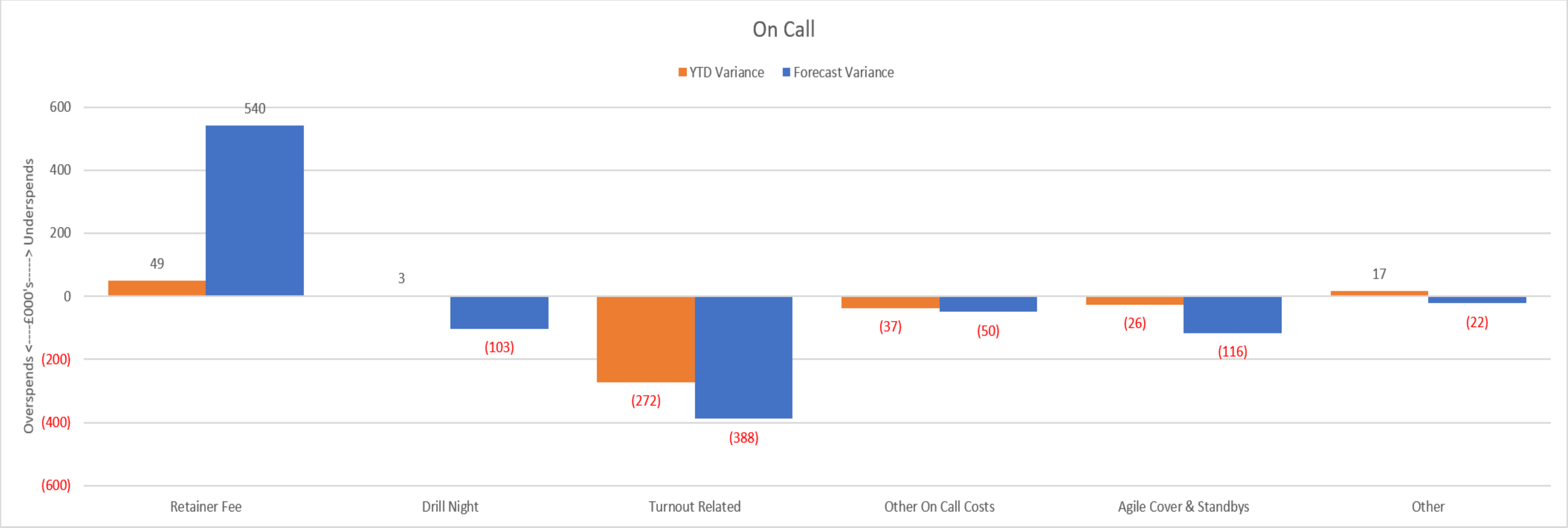
Control

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £67,000 underspent, representing 2.3% of budget.	**Forecast to be £307,000 underspent, representing 3.4% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Salaries – the result of vacancies and staff on development rates of pay within the Control rooms. **YTD Overspends:** • Overtime – the impact of providing cover for vacancies and staff that have been on long-term absence.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Salaries – the forecast is based on the ongoing impact of current vacancies, staff in development roles and staff that have indicated they would be leaving. The forecast also incorporates the known recruitment in 2026/27. • Overtime – the forecast is based on current activity levels required to support vacancies and maintain operational cover.



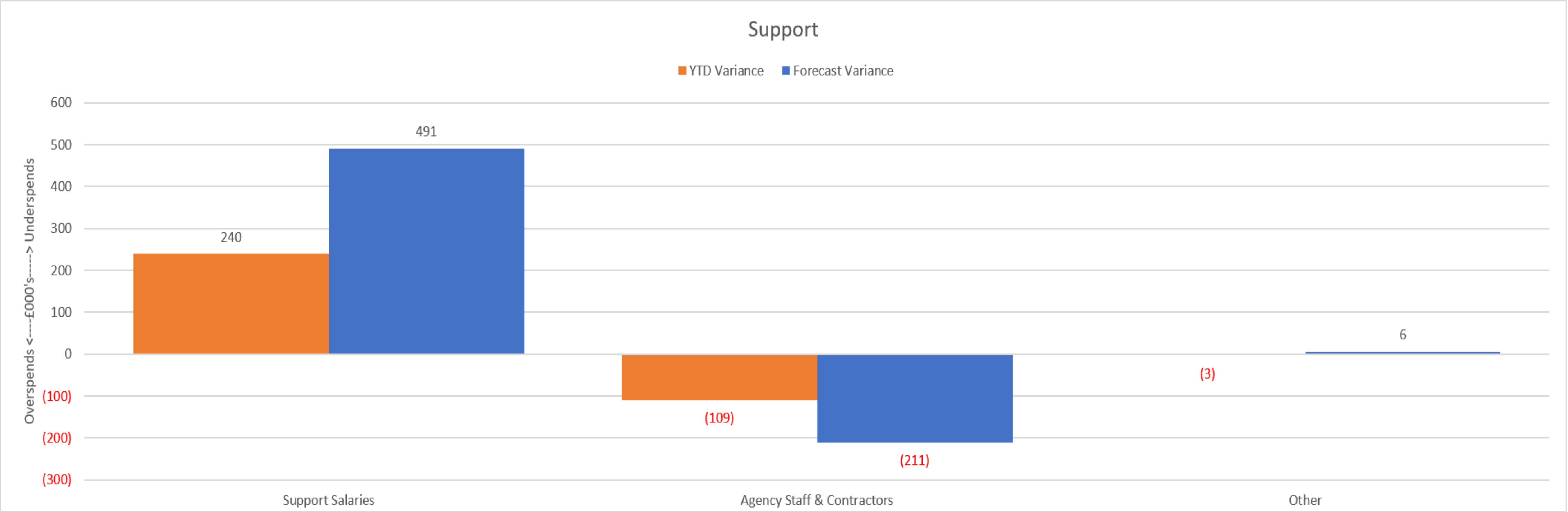
On Call

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £266,000 overspent, representing 2.3% of budget.	**Forecast to be £139,000 overspent, representing 0.4% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Retainer Fees – vacancies. **YTD Overspends:** • Turnout Related – reflects recorded hours in rostering system for recent wildfires. • Other On Call – absence costs. • Agile Cover & Standbys – use of standbys to maintain operational cover.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Retainer Fees – the forecast is based on current month's staffing levels. • Drill Nights – forecast reflects expected levels of drill nights for future months. • Turnout Related – On Call operational activity levels are forecast for future months, to be at budgeted levels, unless significant events, such as wildfires or flooding, occur. • Other On Call – absence costs expected to reduce over the remainder of the year. • Agile Cover & Standbys – forecast reflects current levels of demand.



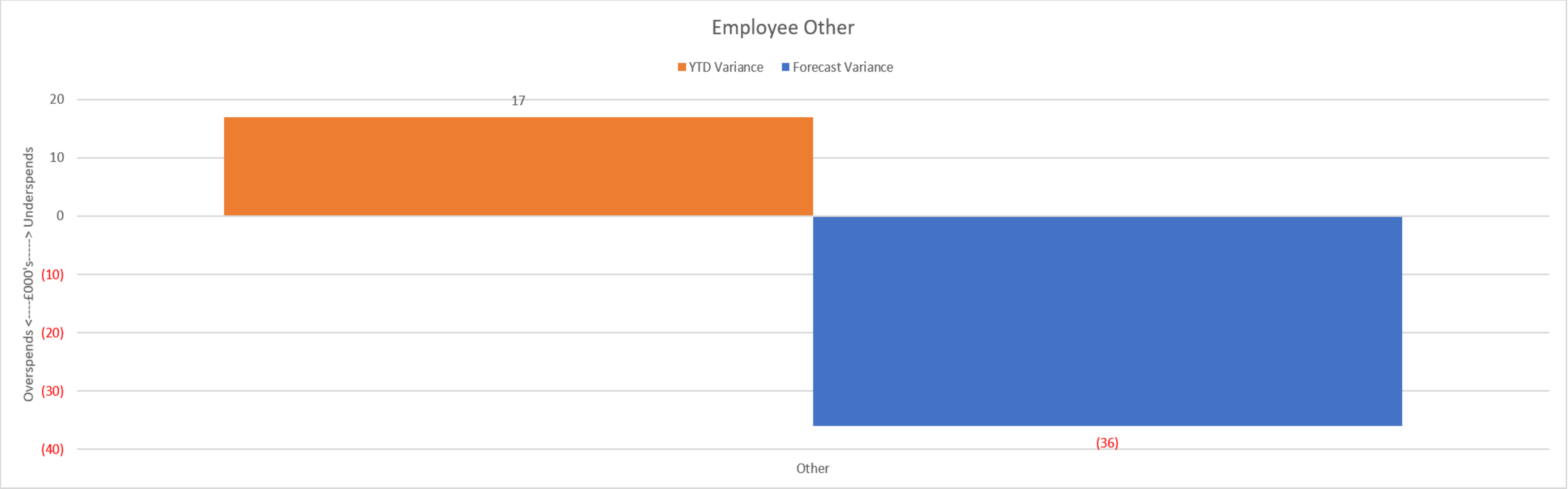
Support

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £128,000 underspent, representing 0.8% of budget.	**Forecast to be £286,000 underspent, representing 0.6% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Salaries – vacancies. **YTD Overspends:** • Agency Staff & Contractors – additional costs for staff providing short-term resources within the People, Communications & Engagement (PCE) and Governance, Strategy & Change (GSC) Directorates.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Salaries – the forecast is based on current staffing levels adjusted to reflect known leavers and new starts. • Agency Staff & Contractors – current level of agency staff not expected to continue for the full financial year.



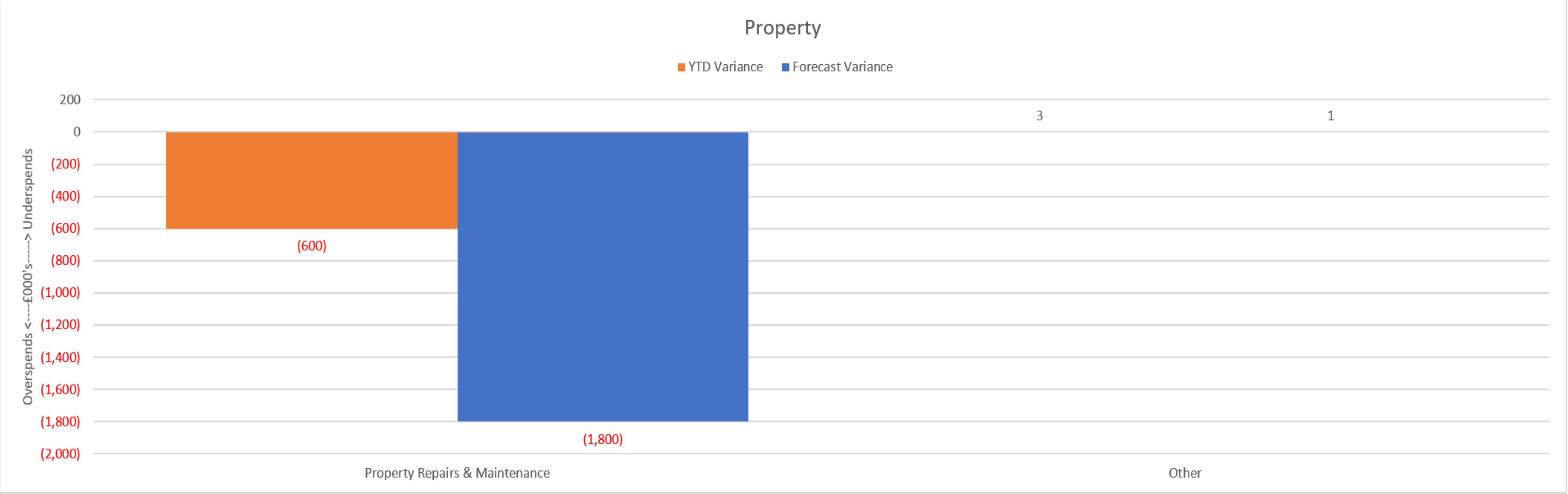
Employee Other

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £17,000 underspent, representing 0.6% of budget.	**Forecast to be £36,000 overspent, representing 0.4% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Travel & Subsistence – lower demand due to capacity issues and operational priorities. • Injury Benefits – costs currently less than anticipated.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Travel & Subsistence – demand expected to increase as capacity within Training improves and operational demand declines after wildfire season. • Injury Benefits – due to volatility of demand, further reduction in costs is not assumed at this point.
YTD Overspends: • Incident Catering – wildfires in the North. • Travel Bookings – increased unit prices, activity relating to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) improvement notices within the North and more visible leadership in operational areas.	



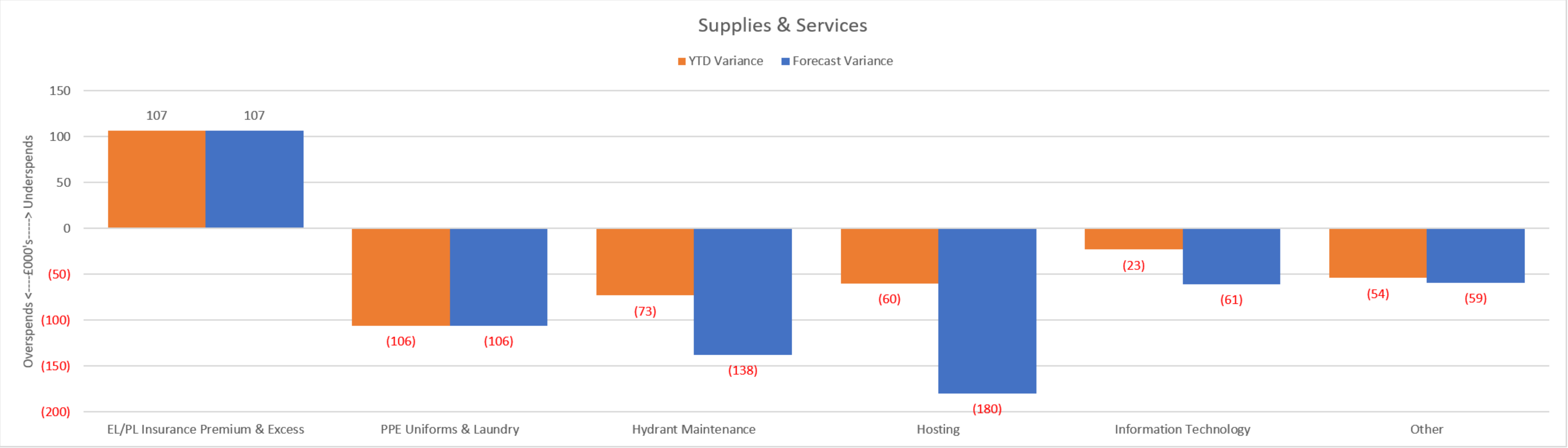
Property

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £597,000 overspent, representing 3.5% of budget.	**Forecast to be £1,799,000 overspent, representing 5.2% of budget.**
YTD Underspends:	**Changes in Financial Position:**
YTD Overspends: • Property Repairs & Maintenance – 49% of annual budget committed on essential repairs.	



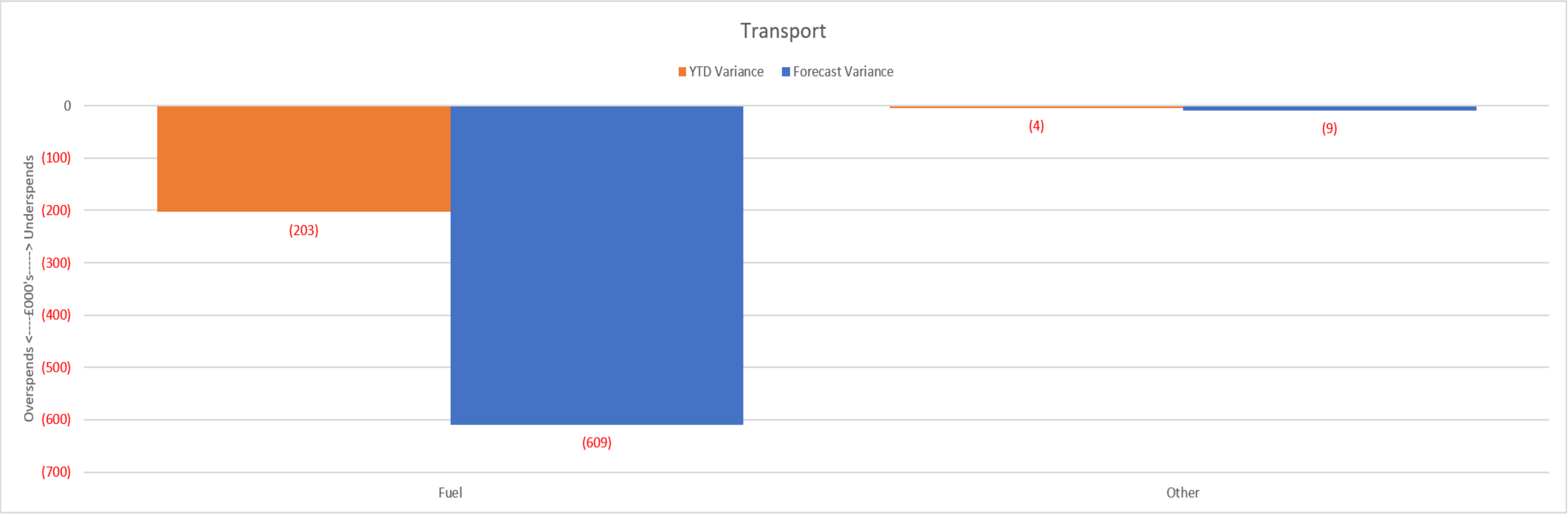
Supplies & Services

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £209,000 overspent, representing 1.7% of budget.	**Forecast to be £437,000 overspent, representing 1.5% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Insurance – recent tender exercise resulted in a lower than budgeted cost for insurance premiums. **YTD Overspends:** • PPE Uniforms & Laundry – spend within FF uniforms for the requirement to provide personal issue of towels to operational staff. • Hydrant Maintenance – due to third party supplier processing historical orders at a higher-than-expected rate and increased traffic management and survey costs being passed on to SFRS. • Hosting – dual running within hosting and overage charges being incurred four months earlier than expected. • Information Technology – upgrade to electric vehicle charger facilities. • Other – one-off purchases of equipment at area level to support training needs.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Insurance – no further significant costs forecast for the remainder of the year. • PPE Uniforms & Laundry – no further unbudgeted spend anticipated. • Hydrant Maintenance – future months are forecast at budgeted levels. • Other – local equipment purchases not expected to continue at current level.



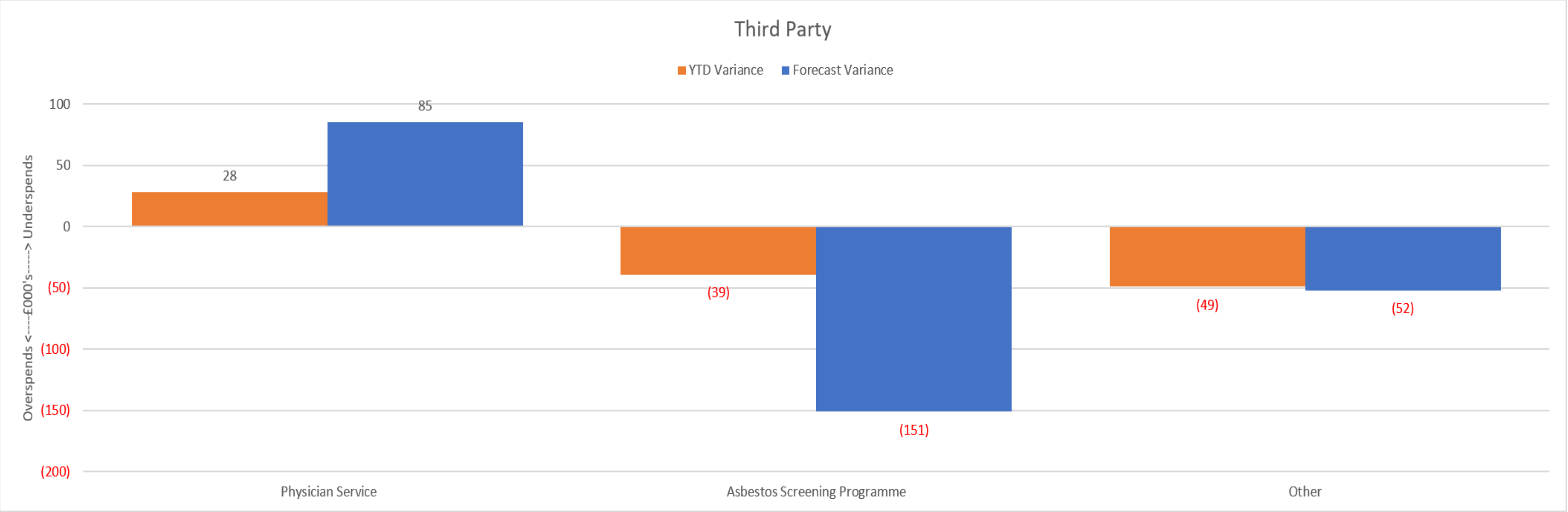
Transport

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £207,000 overspent, representing 9.7% of budget.	**Forecast to be £618,000 overspent, representing 9.8% of budget.**
YTD Underspends:	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Fuel – the forecast is based on July 2026 prices and current operational activity levels.
YTD Overspends: • Fuel – overspend reflects current spend, including higher prices and activity levels.	



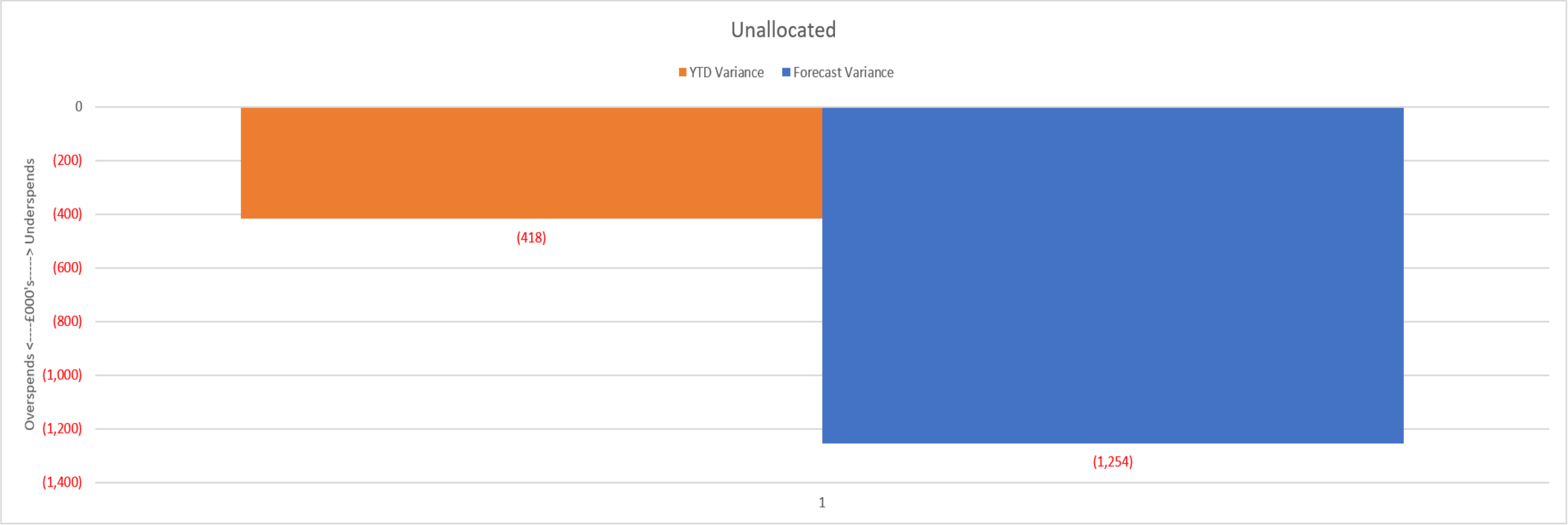
Third Party Payments

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £60,000 overspent, representing 11.6% of budget.	**Forecast to be £118,000 overspent, representing 6.9% of budget.**
YTD Underspends: • Physician Service – actual activity less than anticipated levels.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Asbestos Screening Programme – increasing demand throughout the year. • Other – one-off payment in June 2026 for public administration licence.
YTD Overspends: • Asbestos Screening Programme – ongoing costs as the new staff structure is implemented and is offset by the current salary underspend. • Other – increase to public administration licence costs as new pricing is based on increased professional staff numbers.	



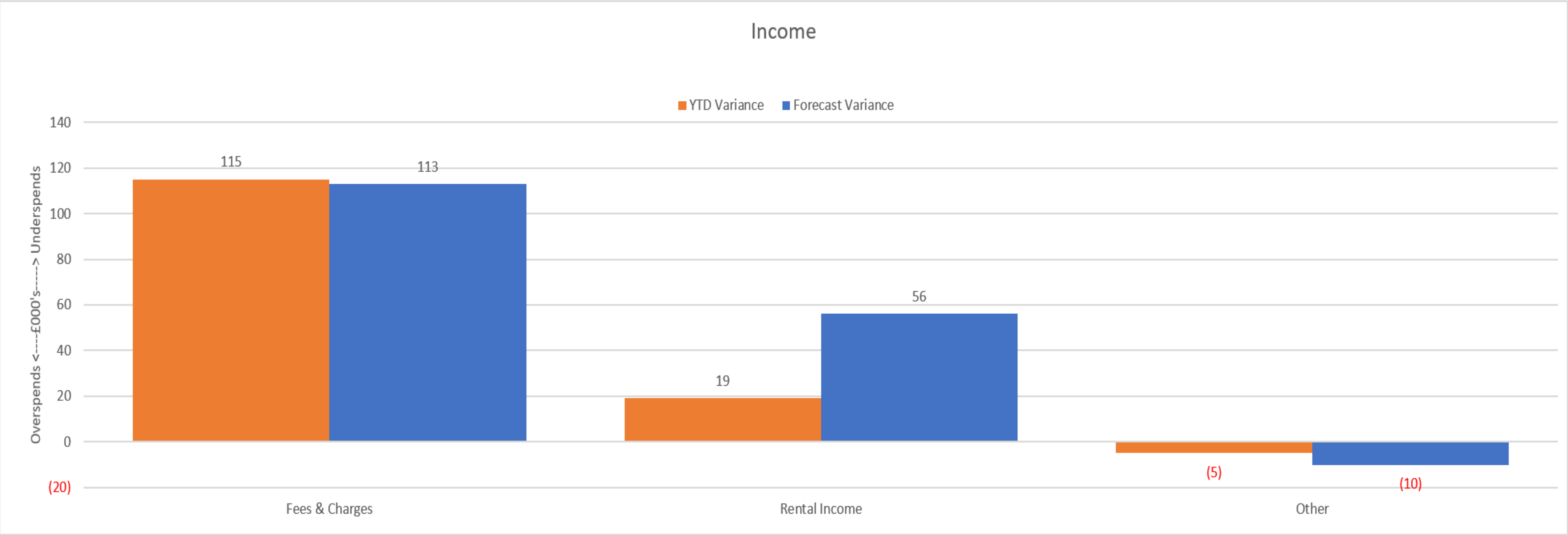
Budget Reallocation

Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £418,000 overspent.	**Forecast to be £1,254,000 overspent.**
YTD Underspends:	**Changes in Financial Position:**
YTD Overspends: • Funding Gap – specific actions to address the issue have not yet been fully defined.	



Income

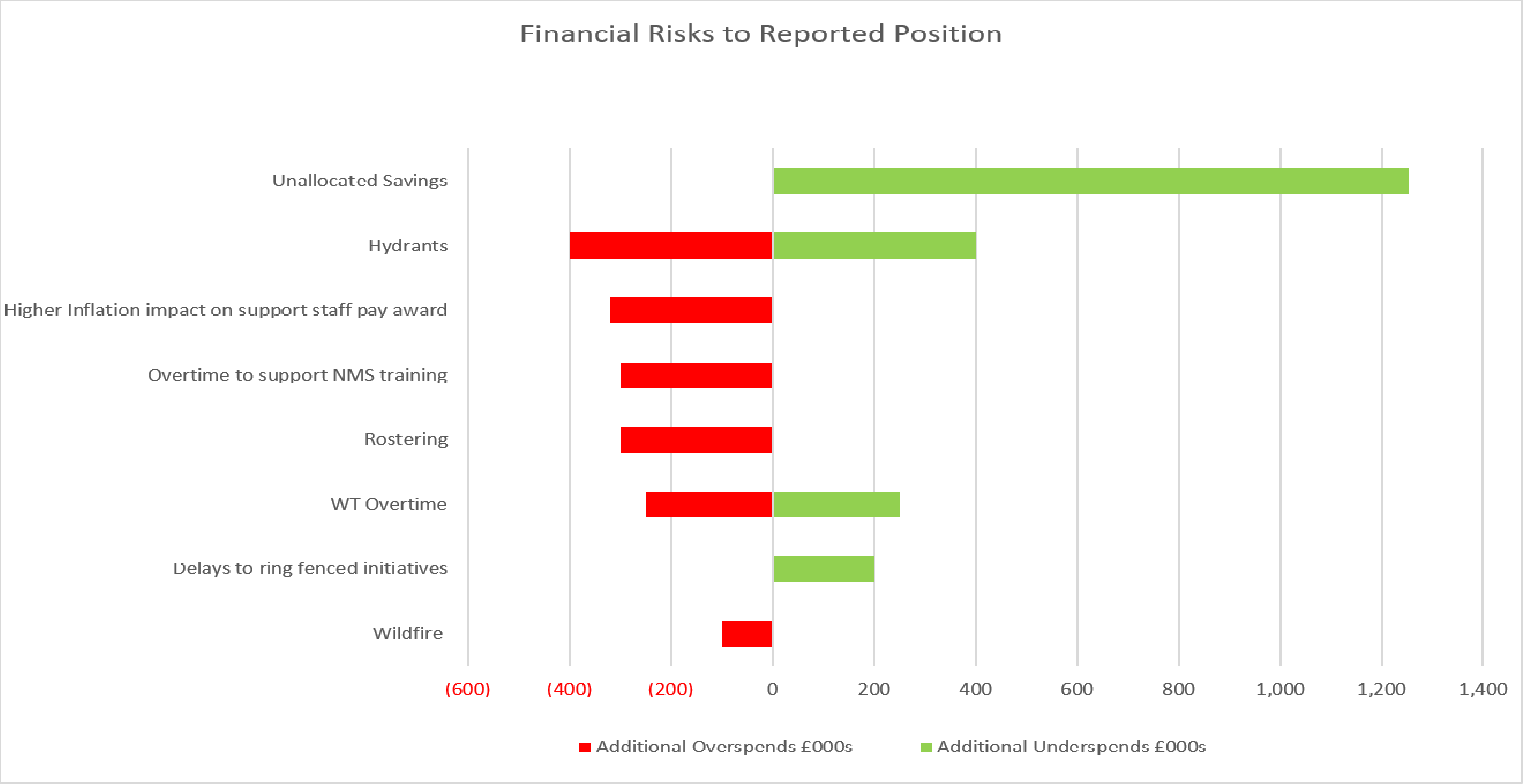
Year to Date (YTD)	Forecast
Currently £129,000 over recovered, representing 43.4% of budget.	**Forecast to be £159,000 over recovered, representing 9.2% of budget.**
YTD Over – Recoveries: • Fees & Charges – income from Commonwealth Games and from renewable energy sources generation. • Rental Income – additional income from shared services.	**Changes in Financial Position:** • Fees & Charges – no additional one-off events currently included in the forecast.
YTD Under – Recoveries:	



Actions

Area Driving Reason for Recommendation	Recommended Action	Progress	Responsibility	Expected Impact Savings/(Pressure)	Status
Property – Repairs & Maintenance – Overspend	Property Services are currently processing essential orders only; however, 49% of the budget has already been committed, resulting in a potential £1.8 million overspend. An immediate decision is required from the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) on whether to maintain this level of activity or move to an emergency-only service.	Asset Management have provided details of current repairs spending plans.	SLT	£(1.8)m	**New Action**
Hydrant Maintenance	Escalated engagement with supplier's senior management to reform SLA and reduce backlog.	Senior management have sought engagement from supplier, without success.	Prevention	£(0.4)m	**New Action**
Unallocated Funding Gap	Current resource budget reflects an unallocated funding gap of £6.2 million but Scottish Government have indicated an additional £4 million of support will be forthcoming. SLT to consider whether further measures are required to close the remaining gap.	Scottish Government have confirmed that the additional support of £4 million will be allocated as part of the Autumn Budget Revision (ABR). The current forecast improves the position by £0.9 million	SLT	£(1.3)m	**Ongoing**
Ring-fenced contingency	SLT is asked to review ring-fenced contingency initiatives to confirm ongoing requirements and phasing.	Specific cases are reviewed by SLT, with decisions made on a case-by-case basis.	SLT	£1.0m	**Ongoing**
Support staff – Salaries	Agree that the £0.85 million enhanced support funding remains centrally controlled pending SLT prioritisation of critical posts, with approval based on service criticality, risk and affordability.	Interim process on current recruitment with all stages being reviewed and signed off by SLT. Appointments currently made on a fixed term basis where possible.	SLT	Nil	**Ongoing**

Estimated Range of Risks to Reported Financial Position



Total Overspend Risk to Reported Position £000	Total Underspend Risk to Reported Position £000
£(1,670)	£2,104

Financial Risks

High Impact Risks

Unallocated Savings

- There is a possibility that the current gap relating to unallocated savings is further closed due to unforeseen opportunities.

Medium Impact Risks

Hydrants

- There is a risk that pressure from the service provider, relating to ancillary costs, may result in completed work costs differing from ordered levels.

Support Staff Pay Award

- There is a risk that the current consumer price index levels will trigger additional pay award expenditure for support staff after December 2026.

Control Overtime

- There is a risk that overtime to support the implementation of the NMS may incur additional costs.

Rostering

- There is a risk that the project timeline may extend beyond the planned end date in October 2026.

WT Overtime

- Future retirals may mean that changes to the business rules may be insufficient to ensure operational availability is maintained. This may result in the need to use overtime to maintain availability or to recruit additional trainee firefighters. Future staff movements may lead to increased costs as staff are promoted into vacant roles.

Low Impact Risks

Delays to ring-fenced initiatives

- There is a risk that delays to recruitment for identified initiatives will result in lower that forecast salary expenditure.

Wildfires

- There is a risk that ancillary expenditure for community assets relating to the wildfires may lead to higher than forecast costs.

Risks
High Impact Risks impact on reported forecast may be greater than £500,000
Medium Impact Risks impact on reported forecast likely to be between £250,000 and £499,999
Lower Impact Risks impact on reported forecast not likely to exceed £249,999

Contingency Fund

To help provide cover for unknown financial risks the Service holds a contingency fund. This fund is used throughout the year to provide budgets for unexpected events and to allow for corrections to be made to the existing budget in light of new information.

The table provides an analysis of the contingency fund and the adjustments that have been made so far this year.

The forecast assumes that the remaining contingency fund will be fully utilised during the year.

Contingency Fund 2026/27	**Total £000's**
Original Fund Allocation	**928**
Ringfenced - Rostering	**74**
Ringfenced - Training Assurance	**140**
Ringfenced - Training Programme	**180**
Ringfenced - Training Implementation	**100**
Ringfenced - Significant Investigation Team	**381**
Total Contingency Fund	**1,803**
Utilisation of Contingency	
Standard Contingency - April-June	(103)
Ringfenced Contingency - April-June	257
July	
Firelink excess move from DaTS	915
To Unallocated Savings	(915)
Ringfenced - Significant Investigation Team - 2nd draw	(44)
Ringfenced - Training Assurance	(99)
In Year Movement	***11***
Current Contingency Fund	**1,814**
Ringfenced - Rostering	74
Ringfenced - Training Assurance	41
Ringfenced - Training Programme	180
Ringfenced - Training Implementation	100
Ringfenced - Significant Investigation Team	82
Ringfenced - Enhanced Instructor Pool	282
Ringfenced - Organisational Culture and Leadership (OCL)	229
Ring Fenced Total Remaining	**988**
Unallocated Standard Contingency Fund	**825**

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/FDI/06-26

Agenda Item: 13

Report to:	**THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**							
Meeting Date:	**27 AUGUST 2026**							
Report Title:	**CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2026/27 – JULY 2026**							
Report Classification:	**For Scrutiny**	**SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY For Reports to be held in Private Specify rationale below referring to Board Standing Order 9**						
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G

1	**Purpose**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with the actual and committed capital expenditure against the 2026/27 capital budget for the period ending 31 July 2026 (Period 4).
2	**Funding**
2.1	The Budget (Scotland) Act 2026, approved by the Scottish Parliament on 25 February 2026, set **Capital DEL** funding for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) at £48.400m for 2026/27.
2.2	**CivTech**, an innovation accelerator programme funded by the Scottish Government, has awarded SFRS capital grant funding totalling £0.450m in support of Challenge 10.2: Monitoring Firefighter Exposure to Contaminants. Of this, £0.306m has been allocated in financial year 2026/27 to part fund milestone payments to FireHaz Research Ltd, SFRS's joint venture partner engaged in delivering this work.
2.3	The **sale of Hamilton** is progressing well, with missives expected to be concluded imminently. A capital receipt of £0.515m has been incorporated into the capital programme. There is currently no specific budget allocation for the disposal of **non-operational vehicles**. However, the proceeds from sale of any surplus assets disposed, would be intended for reinvestment into the Light Fleet Vehicles budget. Regular updates will be provided throughout 2026/27.
2.4	On this basis, total capital funding for 2026/27 is £49.221m, as set out in the table below:

Funding Source	Budget £000s	%
Capital DEL	48,400	98.3%
Capital Grant - CivTech	306	0.6%
Capital Receipts	515	1.1%
TOTAL FUNDING	**49,221**	**100%**

3	Progress towards Programme Delivery

3.1 Capital Expenditure has been programmed based on available funding as shown in the table below:

Category	Approved Budget £000s	Expenditure £000s					
		Spend in Progress			Forecast to Year End	Full Year Forecast	Variance to Budget
		Committed	Receipted	Paid			
Property Major Works	21,180	11,609	755	5,923	2,674	20,961	(219)
Property Minor Works	7,600	3,753	1,227	491	2,150	7,621	21
Vehicles	7,440	4,162	0	245	3,033	7,440	(0)
Digital, Data and Technology	4,330	552	1	1,121	2,696	4,370	40
Operational Equipment	8,671	271	0	864	7,536	8,671	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**49,221**	**20,347**	**1,984**	**8,644**	**18,088**	**49,063**	**(158)**
Percentage of Budget	**100.0%**	**41.3%**	**4.0%**	**17.6%**	**36.7%**	**99.7%**	**(0%)**

3.2 **Financial Position Summary – July 2026:**

- The actual and receipted capital expenditure to date is £10.628m (21.6%) with a further £20.347m (41.3%) of committed expenditure.
- The current capital forecast for 2026/2027 is £49.063m compared to the approved budget of £49.221m. The forecast underspend of £0.158m primarily relates to projects within Property Major Works partially offset by Property Minor Works and DDaT.
- Further detail is provided in the Project Status Summary.
- Carried forward expenditure from the prior year is included within the forecasts.
- A summary of the Budget for the year is included in Appendix A (Page 4), along with budget virements implemented during Period 4.

3.3 **Project Status Summary – July 2026:**

3.3.1 A summary assessment has been carried out across each budget area, evaluating current progress against **Milestone**, **Budget** and **Risk** RAG criteria. The following tolerances have been applied to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to rating project performance and identifying any emerging delivery or financial risks.

	Milestone RAG Status Tolerances	Budget RAG Status Tolerance	Risk RAG Status Tolerance
	No delays to project - Green	No budget decision to be made - Green	Low or no significant risks identified - Green
	Delays expected but project will still complete by year end - Amber	In the process of taking budget actions, no concerns at present - Amber	Some risks emerging but manageable within existing plans - Amber
	Delays expected to roll forward into next financial year - Red	Unresolved budget issues in the year - Red	High or escalating risks likely to impact delivery - Red

3.3.2 **1. Property Major Works**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
Property Major Works			

The overall **Milestone RAG** and **Budget RAGs** have moved to **Amber**. While the majority of projects continue to report a Green milestone status, the change reflects the position of the **Dalkeith Fire Station** project, where an indicative revised cost estimate exceeds the current budget provision. Options are being evaluated to determine the preferred way forward, including potential implications for the phasing, prioritisation, and funding of projects across both the current and future financial years.

The **Budget RAG** is **Amber**, reflecting a forecast **underspend of £0.219m**. This is primarily due to uncertainty around the timing and progression of the **Liberton Fire Station project**, pending the outcome of onsite investigations. This is partially offset by additional funding requirements for the projects at **Livingston, Alloa, Stirling and**

Kilmarnock Fire Stations. The financial implications of the revised cost position at **Dalkeith Fire Station** have still to be determined and may impact the wider Capital Programme budget profile. Budget virements will be considered and submitted for approval where appropriate to maintain alignment with project forecasts.

The **Risk RAG** is **Red**, reflecting the potential impact of the revised cost position at Dalkeith Fire Station on both current and future years' capital investment plans. At **Liberton Fire Station**, key uncertainties remain pending the outcome of site investigations. The **Dignified Facilities / Contaminant Control** programme also requires further work to prioritise viable sites. These challenges are further compounded by limited **internal project management** capacity and dependencies on design development, statutory consents, utility connections and third-party activities. All risks continue to be actively monitored and managed.

3.3.3 **2. Property Minor Works**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
Property Minor Works	Green	Amber	Amber

Property Minor Works continues to report **a Green Milestone RAG,** with good progress being made across both the Minor Works and Decarbonisation / Environment programmes. The **On-Call Welfare Solutions** project remains **Amber** while work continues to identify and prioritise suitable sites. The project is expected to return to Green once this exercise has been completed and a delivery plan agreed.

The **Budget RAG** is reporting **Amber**, reflecting a small forecast overspend of £0.021m arising from capitalisation costs associated with **lease extensions**. This pressure can be accommodated within the overall Property programme underspend.

The overall **Risk RAG** remains **Amber,** reflecting ongoing site selection challenges for **the On-Call Welfare Solutions project,** together with dependencies on internal project management capacity and third-party activities, including design development, site investigations, statutory approvals and utility connections.

3.3.4 **3. Vehicles**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
Vehicles	Green	Green	Amber

The overall **Milestone and Budget RAGs remain Green,** with programme delivery and expenditure continuing in line with approved plans.

The **Risk Rag** remains **Amber**, reflecting procurement-related risks associated with the **Control Units** and **Welfare Vehicle** projects. Delivery remains dependent on the availability of commissioning and procurement resources, together with the identification of suitable procurement routes to market. There is also a risk of delay to the **Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)** programme following the reissue of the tender process.

3.3.5 **4. Digital, Data and Technology Services (DDaT)**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
DDaT	Green	Amber	Amber

DDaT continues to report **a Green Milestone RAG,** with delivery progressing as planned and no significant milestone issues to highlight.

The **Budget RAG** has moved to **Amber** due to minor forecast variances across the programme. The net forecast overspend of £0.040m mainly reflects additional **WAN hardware** and **project staffing** costs. As project scopes and cost estimates are further refined, budget virements will be implemented where required to maintain alignment with programme forecasts and support a return to a Green Budget RAG.
The **Risk RAG** remains **Amber**, reflecting dependencies relating to vehicle availability, scheduling, and installation capacity which may impact delivery of the **ESN Programme** by the planned completion date of 31 March 2027.

3.3.6 **5. NMS**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
NMS	Amber	Green	Amber

The **Milestone RAG** status remains **Amber** due to ongoing programme pressures and compressed timescales associated with delivering the CAD system by November 2026.

The **Budget RAG** status for NMS continues to be **Green**.

The **Risk RAG** is also rated **Amber** with key delivery risks including implementation of the Boomi integration solution, the significant volume of CAD configuration activity required ahead of go-live, and dependencies on the In Vehicle Systems project to complete software upgrades to the new Mobile Data Terminal's (MDT's) prior to NMS pilot testing and migration.

3.3.7 **6. Operational Equipment**

	Milestone RAG	Budget RAG	Risk RAG
Operational Equipment	Green	Green	Amber

All projects currently report **Green Milestone** and **Budget RAGs**.

The **Risk RAG** remains **Amber** due to outstanding approvals and procurement activity required for the **SCBA Systems Upgrade / Replacement** and **SCBA compressors** projects. Any delays in progressing these activities could affect the timely placement of orders and subsequent delivery timescales.

3.4 The budget RAG status for the financial year reflects how closely financial performance aligns with planned budgets and key deadlines. Finance, Digital & Infrastructure Services will continue to work closely with Service Delivery colleagues to ensure these commitments are confirmed and fully achieved.

3.5 Where required, budget virements will be actioned to align budgets to the expected forecasts and to support a return to a Green RAG status.

3.6 Appendix A provides a detailed breakdown of the Capital financial position, including RAG Analysis, at this stage in the financial year.

3.7 The following actions are now planned:

- Work with Service Delivery colleagues, through the Capital Monitoring Group, to ensure project delivery timescales continue to be met.
- Should variations occur, identify and prepare alternative projects within the Capital Programme that could be brought forward, if necessary,
- Process budget virements where necessary to ensure full budget spend across the programme.

4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The Board is asked to: • scrutinise the report.
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1 5.1.1	**Risk Appetite and Alignment to Risk Registers** Risk of not fully spending the Capital Budget by 31st March 2027, which would result in capital underspend being returned to Scottish Government. The Capital Programme will be realigned to ensure delivery and full expenditure whilst addressing priority needs across the asset estate in the event of any forecasted underspend. We work closely with colleagues across the organisation, for example the Training and Service Delivery teams, as well as with Procurement colleagues, to maintain focus and progress the Capital Programme to achieve spend.
5.1.2	In relation to breaching budgetary limits, SFRS has a **Minimalist** appetite, aiming to fully utilise but not exceed approved budgets. In exceptional circumstances, where additional spend may be required, that would exceed budget provision, approval may be sought from the Scottish Government.
5.1.3	In relation to multi-year capital planning SFRS has an **Open** risk appetite. We are prepared to initiate capital investment beyond confirmed future funding, aligned to careful monitoring and management, to ensure the maximum possible investment in our asset priorities. The forecast capital spend for the financial year is consistent with our stated risk appetite.
5.2 5.2.1	**Financial** Financial implications are detailed within the report.
5.3 5.3.1	**Environmental & Sustainability** Environmental and sustainability plans are incorporated within each property project.
5.3.2	Investment in Euro 6 fire appliances and electric vehicles is making a significant contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
5.3.3	Investment in decarbonisation projects in prior years have improved energy efficiency and this is helping to partially mitigate increases in energy prices.
5.4 5.4.1	**Workforce** SFRS employees will benefit from this investment in our asset base.
5.5 5.5.1	**Health & Safety** The introduction of new appliances, equipment and property, as well as digital and technology upgrades, will further enhance the health, safety and welfare of employees and the public.
5.6 5.6.1	**Health & Wellbeing** No Health & Wellbeing implications identified.
5.7 5.7.1	**Training** The capital programme includes significant investment in training facilities.
5.7.2	Training requirements associated with the introduction of new assets are identified and co-ordinated through the relevant project boards, with oversight provided by the Change Portfolio Progress Group (CPPG).

5.7.3	In line with Accounting Standards, any training required to support the implementation of new assets will be funded through Resource, ensuring compliance and appropriate capability ahead of deployment.
5.8 5.8.1	**Timing** This report covers the period up to 31 July 2026 and known events following the period end.
5.9 5.9.1	**Performance** Total forecast expenditure at present is £49.063m compared to the budget of £49.221m. The reasons for the forecast underspend of £0.158m are detailed in Section 3.
5.10 5.10.1	**Communications & Engagement** Key stakeholders are engaged during project development and implementation.
5.11 5.11.1	**Legal** External legal support is in place to support procurement where needed and to facilitate the sale of assets.
5.12 5.12.1	**Information Governance** DPIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. There are no specific Information Governance implications associated with this report.
5.13 5.13.1	**Equalities** EHRIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. There are no specific Equalities implications associated with this report. The development of any new build fire stations will be in line with the Service's approved Standards of Station Design which has been subject to an EHRIA.
5.14 5.14.1 5.14.2	**Service Delivery** Capital investment in property, digital and technology, vehicles and equipment is required to maintain and improve service delivery capabilities. The introduction of new assets is closely coordinated between Asset Management, DDaTS, Training and local service delivery areas. Any delays in capital expenditure have implications on their Milestone RAG status and for service delivery in the timing of new assets becoming available for operational use. There is currently no operational impact from the progress of the capital programme at this stage in the financial year.
5.15 5.15.1	**Prevention** There are no specific prevention implications identified within this report.
6	**Core Brief**
6.1 6.2	The Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure advised the Board of actual and committed expenditure against the 2026/27 capital budget for the period ending 31 July 2026. Capital expenditure of £49.063m is forecast for 2026/27 against the budget of £49.221m. The Capital Programme will be realigned as required, to ensure delivery and full expenditure whilst addressing priority needs across the asset estate in the event of any forecasted underspend.

7	Assurance (SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)	
7.1	**Director:**	James Wallace, Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
7.2	**Level of Assurance: (Mark as appropriate)**	~~Substantial/~~**Reasonable**/~~Limited/Insufficient~~
7.3	**Rationale:**	The financial position is closely reviewed on a monthly basis with budget holders, and budget variances and forecasts are highlighted. During the year SLT agree actions to ensure we manage the financial position within agreed financial parameters.
8	**Appendices/Further Reading**	
8.1	Appendix A – Capital Monitoring Report – Strategic Leadership Team – July 2026	

Prepared by:	Caroline Adams, Deputy Accounting Manager
Sponsored by:	James Wallace, Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure
Presented by:	James Wallace, Director of Finance, Digital and Infrastructure

Links to Strategy and Corporate Values

The 2026/2027 capital budget recognises the financial resources deployed in delivering against our objectives and to achieve our strategic outcomes outlined in our Strategic Plan 2025-2028 and our mission of working together for a safer Scotland.

Governance Route for Report	Meeting Date	Report Classification	Meeting Approvals/Outcomes
Strategic Leadership Team	*19/08/2026*	*For Scrutiny*	
SFRS Board	*27/082026*	*For Scrutiny*	

Capital Monitoring Report

July 2026

Content

- Full Year Actuals/Forecast v Budget by Category
- Year to Date Budget Virements
- Property Major Works – New Build Programme
- Property Major Works – Development Programme / Other
- Property Minor Works
- Vehicles
- Digital and Technology (exc NMS)
- New Mobilising System (NMS)
- Operational Equipment

Capital Monitoring Report – July 2026

Full Year Actuals/Forecast v Budget by Category

Category	Original Budget	Virements	Revised Budget	ACTUAL Q1 Apr-Jul	FORECAST Q2 Aug-Sept	Q3 Oct-Dec	Q4 Jan-Mar	Total	Variance to Budget	Variance (%)	RAG STATUS Milestone RAG	Budget RAG Status	Risk RAG Status
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%			
Property Major Works	31,300	(10,120)	21,180	6,678	3,910	4,849	5,524	20,961	219	1%			
Property Minor Works	8,100	(500)	7,600	1,718	144	1,937	3,822	7,621	(21)	(0%)			
Vehicles	9,290	(1,850)	7,440	245	625	1,656	4,914	7,440	0	0%			
Digital, Data and Technology	4,984	(654)	4,330	1,122	717	1,100	1,431	4,370	(40)	(1%)			
Operational Equipment	9,726	(1,055)	8,671	864	1,136	1,235	5,436	8,671	0	0%			
Total Expenditure	**63,400**	**(14,179)**	**49,221**	**10,627**	**6,532**	**10,777**	**21,127**	**49,063**	**158**	**0%**			
Cumulative Total				**10,627**	**17,159**	**27,936**	**49,063**						

Capital Monitoring – July 2026

Year to Date Budget Virements

Category	Original Budget £000s	Total Virements £000s	Revised Budget £000s	Commentary
Property Major Works	31,300	-10,120	21,180	Virements in Period 3: Reductions for Dalkeith (£6m), Liberton (£1.2m), Huntly (£0.100m), Glasgow New Build (£0.7m), Alloa (£0.2m), Stirling (£0.4m). Kilmarnock (£0.1m), Dignified Facilities (£0.250m), Portlethen DC Reconfiguration (£1.5m), Property Project Costs (£0.050m) offset by increases for Livingston (£0.050m), Calton (£0.180m), Uig (£0.050m) and Perth CFBT (£0.100m). **Net movement at Period 4 - £10.120m decrease.**
Property Minor Works	8,100	-500	7,600	Virements in Period 3: Reduction in Decarbonistation / Environment (£0.500m). **Net movement at Period 4 - £0.500m decrease.**
Vehicles	9,290	-1,850	7,440	Virements in Period 3: Reductions to Aerial Platform & Bodyworks (£1.250m), Light Fleet (£0.450m) and High Reach Overhaul Programme (£0.150m). **Virements in Period 4:** Transferred £0.240m from Frontline Appliances to High Reach Overhaul Programme for costs associated with additional works identified during overhauls. **Net movement at Period 4 - £1.850m decrease.**
Digital, Data and Technology	4,984	-654	4,330	Virements in Period 2: £46k transferred from Civtech to ESN. Virements in Period 3: Reductions in DDaT Project Costs (£0.046m) and NMS (£0.654m). **Virements in Period 4:** Transferred underspends totalling £0.104m from Replacement / upgrade of AV kit (£0.020m), Systems Infrastructure (£0.044m) and Cyber Security Provision (£0.040m) to Network Infrastructure for WAN equipment. **Net movement at Period 4 - £0.654m decrease.**
Operational Equipment	9,726	-1,056	8,671	Virements in Period 2: Increase expenditure budget to reflect addition of CivTech grant funding (£0.306m). Transfer £0.046m from CivTech to DDaT. Virements in Period 3: Reductions in Ladders (£0.016m), PPE (£0.600m) and Technical Rescue / Wildfire PPE (0.700m). **Virements in Period 4:** Transferred £0.057m from Power Tools Standardisation to Powered Rescue Equipment to allow orders to be placed for 2 sets of equipment. **Net movement at Period 4 - £1.056m decrease.**
Total	**63,400**	**-14,179**	**49,221**	
Project Funding				
Capital DEL	-48,400	0	-48,400	
Capital Grant - CivTech	0	-306	-306	Period 2 - Addition of CivTech grant funding of £0.306m for Challenge 10.2. **Net movement at Period 4 - £0.306m increase.**
Capital Receipts - Property	-15,000	14,485	-515	Period 3: Budget Reduction to remove Cowcaddens Receipt (£15.5m) offset by a budget increase to reflect the sale of Hamilton (£0.515m). **Net movement at Period 4 - £14.485m decrease.**
Capital Receipts - Vehicles	0	0	0	
Total	**-63,400**	**14,179**	**-49,221**	

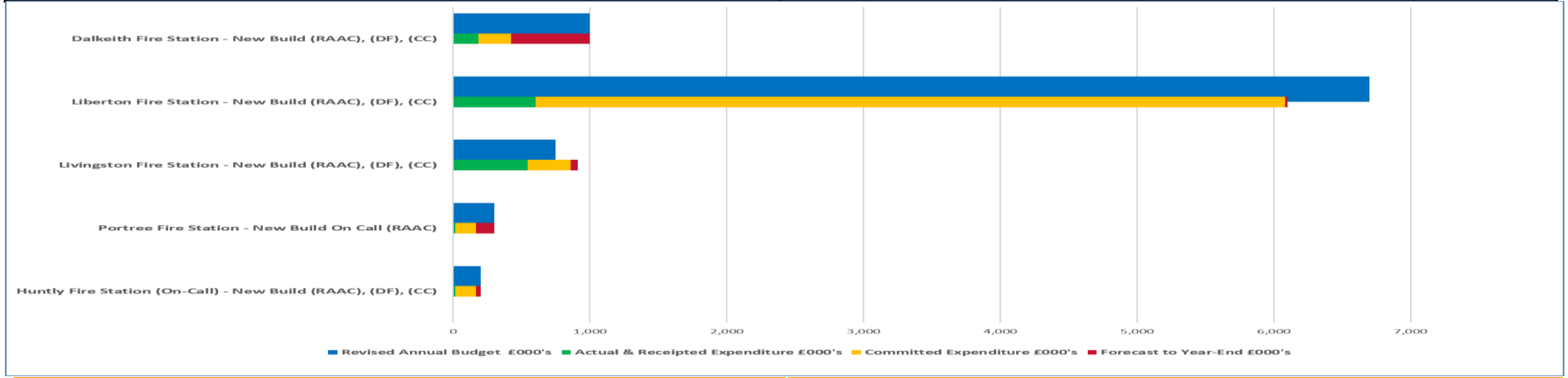
Property Major Works – New Build Programme

Progress in the month

- Initial price received from Hub South-East for **Dalkeith Fire Station**.
- Demolition of old **Liberton Fire Station** is now underway. Site Investigation report is awaited.
- Design development continues to progress for **Livingston** and **Huntly Fire Stations.**
- Topographic remedials work continue to progress in **Portree Fire station.**

Progress anticipated in coming months

- Construction contract to be finalised for **Dalkeith Fire Station**, to enable works to commence on site.
- Construction to commence at **Liberton Fire Station**.
- **Portree Fire Station** to progress to Stage 4 & enter tender.
- **Huntly and Livingston Fire Stations** to progress to Stage 4.



Milestone RAG

- All projects are currently progressing as planned and hold a Green milestone RAG status, with the exception of **Dalkeith Fire Station**, which is Red. As a result, the overall programme milestone RAG status is **Amber**. Hub Southeast has submitted an initial cost estimate that exceeds the current budget allocation. Options are being explored to determine the way forward, with any decisions potentially affecting the phasing and funding of other projects across this and future financial years.

Deviation from Budget RAG

- A forecast underspend of £0.440m is currently projected primarily due to uncertainty around the timing and progress of **Liberton Fire Station**, offset by an additional funding requirement for Livingston Fire Station, resulting in an **Amber** Budget RAG status. The outcome of the Site Investigation report for Liberton is awaited, which will determine future spend requirements. In addition, decisions regarding **Dalkeith Fire Station** may have implications for the overall Capital Programme budget position. If necessary, approved budget virements will be processed to return the RAG status back to Green.

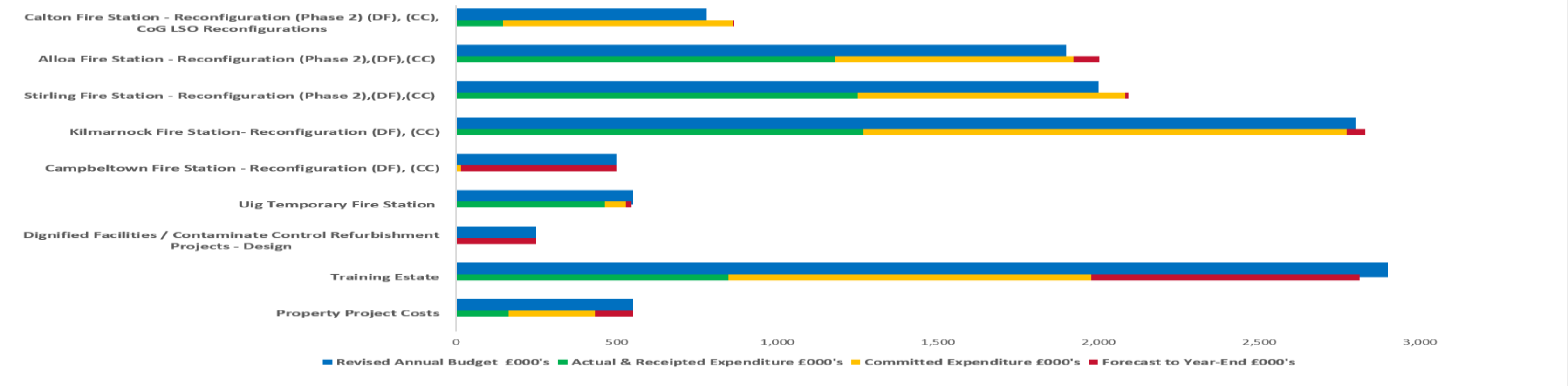
Property Major Works - Development Programme / Other

Progress in the month

- Work continue to progress well at **Alloa, Stirling and Kilmarnock Fire Stations,** alongside the temporary station at **Uig,** with all sites expected to be completed and re-occupied within the current financial year.
- Within the **Training Estate**, good progress continues to be made on the **Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) replacement at Perth** and the **smoke-capture system Dreghorn**, both of which are expected to complete by end of September. A brief is being developed for **Porthlethen reconfiguration.**

Progress anticipated in coming months

- Complete the remaining works at **Calton Fire Station,** including the relocation of Area HQ staff and the delivery of car park improvements.
- Progress approvals, cost confirmation and commence on-site works at **Campbeltown Fire Station**.
- Confirm feasibility and advance design development for **Dignified Facilities / Contaminate Control Refurbishment** projects.
- Finalise designs, secure planning consent and commence construction for **Training Estate** projects at Sumburgh and Portlethen.



Milestone RAG

- The overall programme Milestone RAG is **Green,** with good progress being made at **Alloa, Stirling and Kilmarnock Fire Stations**. Work is ongoing to identify feasible and deliverable projects within the **Dignified Facilities / Contaminate Control Refurbishment Programme** that can be designed during the current financial year. Progress will continue to be monitored over the coming months**.**

Deviation from Budget RAG

An overspend of £0.221m is currently anticipated, primarily as a result of the good progress achieved at **Alloa, Stirling and Kilmarnock Fire Stations**, together with a number of smaller budget virements reflecting the current spend profile. It is expected that this can be accommodated within the overall Property underspend, resulting in an **Amber** Budget RAG status. Budget virements will be processed, where necessary, to return the Budget RAG status to Green.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

Property Major Works (New Build) – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
Dalkeith Fire Station - New Build (RAAC), (DF), (CC)	Get Price, conclude construction contract	Price received from Hubco £12.5M, out with current budget allocations and management decision required on progression		Capital program reviewed and budgets realigned to reflect latest projected spend information. Decisions on Dalkeith could have a significant impact on other projects both in this financial year and in future years.		Risk that design team may not novate from NEC4 to Hubco DBDA, Hubco unable to comply with SFRS requirement for PBA, final price has exceed previously indicated Hubco price, reliance on third party provision of water supply and drainage infrastructure if delayed	
Liberton Fire Station - New Build (RAAC), (DF), (CC)	Conclude Temporary Accomadation Lease, Decant Station, Demolish Existing Building, Progress Construction Project	Demolition in progress, completed Site Investigation report awaited		Contract Activity schedule and cashflow currently indicating an £6.7m spend this year To be review when risks associated with post demolition are realised.		Ground investigations cannot be completed until demolition of existing building , risk that foundations may need redesigned which would incur 10 week delay, reliance on third parties for utility discinnection to permit construction to progress which may cause delay	
Livingston Fire Station - New Build (RAAC), (DF), (CC)	Progress to Stage 4 & decide on progression to tender dependant upon available budget in future years	Design development in progress, no current issues		Additional allocation of £160k required to complete works initiated last financial year			
Portree Fire Station - New Build On Call (RAAC)	Conclude site purchase and progress to Stage 4 & decide on progression to tender dependant upon available budget in future years	Site purchase negotiations inclusive of topographic remedials progressed to legal, Design development in progress, no current issues					
Stewarton Fire Station - New Build (RAAC), (DF), (CC)	On Hold until future years						
Huntly Fire Station (On-Call) - New Build (RAAC), (DF), (CC)	Progress to stage 4 ready to commence tender process in future years.	Design development in progress, no current issues		Reduced budget requirment as project to be put on hold following design development with no tender/SI this year			
Glasgow New Build Fire Station - (DF), (CC)	On Hold until future years						

Property Major (Development) – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
Calton Fire Station - Reconfiguration (Phase 2) (DF), (CC), CoG LSO Reconfigurations	Get planning approval, carpark, price and complete al phases of project	DF complete, LSO accomadation complete, Kitchen complete, planning received, carpark works being repriced, site start planned for end July, Kilbirnie house in progress		Reflective of position achieved at year end and prices received post middle east issues.. Additional £260k required this year.		Work on existing building brings risk of unknowns and contingency should be made available within budget	
Alloa Fire Station - Reconfiguration (Phase 2),(DF),(CC)	Complete project & reoccupy station	In progress on site and on program		Reflective of position achieved at year end. Replacement of failed heating system incorporated into project.		Work on existing building brings risk of unknowns and contingency should be made available within budget	
Stirling Fire Station - Reconfiguration (Phase 2),(DF),(CC)	Complete project & reoccupy station	In progress on site and on program		Reflective of position achieved at year end. Replacement of failed heating system incorporated into project.		Work on existing building brings risk of unknowns and contingency should be made available within budget	
Kilmarnock Fire Station- Reconfiguration (DF), (CC)	Complete project & reoccupy station	In progress on site and on program		Reflective of position achieved at year end.			
Campbeltown Fire Station - Reconfiguration (DF), (CC)	Complete approved design, get permissions, get price, commence works	Design reviewed, ammendment to warrant being progressed prior to tender.					
Uig Temporary Fire Station	Complete project & occupy	In progress on site and on program		Reflective of position achieved at year end			
Dignified Facilities / Contaminate Control Refurbishment Projects - Design	Determine possible projects for approval, Procure Design teams, progress designs to inform future years works programmes.	Currently assessing estate to identify those with feasible/deliverable solutions				Work being undertaken to determine a prioritised list of viable projects , Lack of internal project management resource and requiremnent to procure design team support to deliver	

Property Major (Development) (Cont) – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
Training Estate							
Perth CFBT	Complete project & commission	In progress on site					
Dreghorn CFBT c/w Smoke Capture	Complete project & commission	In progress on site					
Sumburgh Welfare	Obtain permissions, get price, commence works, complete project	Awaiting Planning permission				Estimated costs may rise due to construction inflartion and impact of middle east situation	
NTC CFBT c/w Smoke Capture	On Hold until future years						
Portlethan DC Reconfiguration for DF, CC and BA Maint	Develop brief, get approval, procure DT, design, obtain permissions, price and commence project	Currently engaging with Training to develop a project brief for agreement and submission to SMB for consideration and approval		Budget to be realigned as project will progress across financial years		Full scope to be developed and estimated costs may rise due to construction inflartion and impact of middle east situation	
Training Estate - Assets Various	Complete projects	A number of necessary investments identified for training assets instructed and in progress		Minor training estate works, will require a budget allocation from within over all training estate allocation.			
Property Project Costs	Recruit two Project Managers	Awaiting SLT approval to create posts on establishment		Recruitment of additional staff reduced and delayed		PM salarys in SFRS below the current market, may make recruitment of suitably qualified and experianced candidates difficult	
TOTAL PROPERTY MAJOR WORKS							

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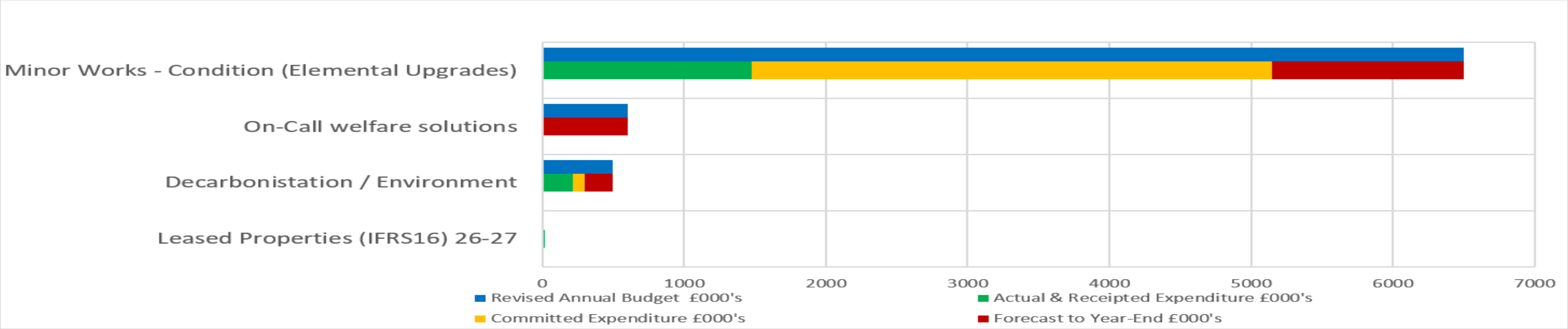
Property Minor Works

Progress in the month

- Various **Minor Works** projects are progressing across design, pricing, programming and delivery stages with £5.150m spent / committed to date (79% of the approved annual budget). In Summary: 22 complete, 27 in progress, 9 programmed, 40 instructed, 5 in pricing and a further 55 proposed.
- Good progress continues within the **Decarbonisation and Environment** projects: **8 fuel site remediations** completed and 1 in progress. **4 on-call station heating control** projects are in progress, with 1 proposed.
- The **Solar Field** project at **Portlethen** is being investigated.

Progress anticipated in coming months

- **Minor Works** projects are expected to continue to progress well throughout the remainder of the financial year.
- Prices expected for the **boiler replacement at McAlpine Road, Dundee** and the **heating replacement at Invergordon**.
- **On-Call Welfare Solutions** to be progressed through an assessment to identify sites with feasible and deliverable options.



Milestone RAG

- Property Minor Works programme continues to progress well and remains on track overall, with good progress across the majority of projects. The **On-Call Welfare Solutions** project is currently rated **Amber** while work continues to identify suitable sites and develop feasible, deliverable solutions. This position is expected to improve as site options are confirmed and proposals are developed. Overall, the Milestone RAG status remains **Green**.

Deviation from Budget RAG

- A small overspend of £0.021m is currently anticipated due to the capitalisation costs associated with lease extensions at **Newtonmore** and **Bressay,** resulting in an **Amber** Budget RAG status. This is expected to be accommodated within the overall Property underspend. Budget virements will be processed, where necessary, to return the Budget RAG status to Green.

Property Minor Works – RAG Status

Capital - Property Minor Works							
Project Description	**Current Year Project Milestones**	**Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones**	**Milestone RAG**	**Deviation from Original Budget**	**Budget RAG**	**Project Risks Identified**	**Risk RAG**
Minor Works - Condition (Elemental Upgrades)	Progression of vaious projects	Various projects in either design, pricing, programming or delivery, no forseeable issue with achieving spend - Summary:- Complete 22, Deferred 10, In Progress 27, Instructed 40, On Hold 3, Pricing 5, Programmed 9, Proposed 55 - Total 171					
On-Call welfare solutions	Determine approved projects, Procure DT support, Design, obtain permissions price and commence projects	Currently assessing estate to identify those with feasible/deliverable solutions				Work still required to determine a prioritised list of viable projects. Lack of internal project management resource. Solutions may still require design, site investigations, statutory permissions and utility connections all by third parties.	
Decarbonistation / Environment	Progression of vaious projects	8 Fuel site remediations complete and 1 in progress, HQ Solar farm commissioned, 4 OC station Htg Controls in progress and 1 in progress, Macalpine Road Boiler Replacement and Invergordon heating being priced, Solar farm Portlethan being investigated		Budget reduced to support other areas of capital program			
Leased Properties (IFRS16) 26-27	Renewal of various Property Leases including Craighead, Bayhead and Kilcreggan, along with extensions for Bixter and Bressay.	Newtonmore (£15k) and Bressay (£7k - 6 months)		Budget virement to be processed to allocate funding to this project.			
TOTAL PROPERTY MINOR WORKS							

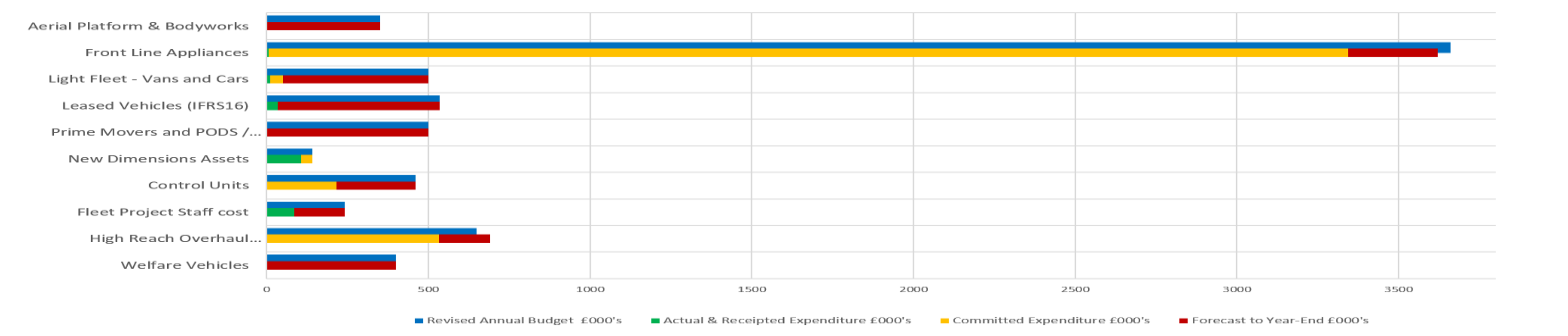
Vehicles

Progress in the month

- **DIM Vehicles** – Production of all four vehicles continues to progress, with the second-stage payment now completed. All four units remain on schedule for delivery in late August.
- **Control Units** – The order for four base vehicles has now been placed, with delivery anticipated in December 2026. The contract for the conversion of up to 2 of these units in 2026-27 will be progressed in the coming weeks.
- The 10-year overhaul of the first **High Reach Unit** continues to progress well in Germany, with delivery expected before the end of August, after which the second unit will be transported to Germany.

Progress anticipated in coming months

- **Frontline Appliances** – A further 15 vehicle builds are due to commence in October, using chassis purchased in 2025/26.
- Procure up to **4 Management Team vehicles** and replace other light vehicles with **EV's** where feasible.
- Introduce 20 replacement **leased vehicles**, as well as a telehandler forklift.
- Award contract and procure up to **5 water carriers** (demountable pods).
- Progress **Welfare Van** conversion, commission crew vans and procure up to 2 x welfare trailers.



Milestone RAG

- The majority of projects continue to report a Green milestone RAG. However, the **ALP's contract requires to be re-tendered**, which is expected to result in a delay to procurement and delivery timescales. This will continue to be monitored in the coming months.

Deviation from Budget RAG

- The budget RAG status is Green.

Vehicles – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
Aerial Platform & Bodyworks	Award Contract and Purchase Chassis Element.	Issues with the contract award has resulted in the tender being withdrawn. The specification will be updated in relation to the suspension/jacking system and the tender resubmitted to the market. We have met with Procurement in relation to this and the process is underway.		No Deviation at this time, however this may require to be adjusted in line with the revised anticipated progress.		Possible delay on the completion of these units as a result of the re-issuing of the tender process.	
Front Line Appliances	Complete 10 units slipped from 2025/26 and 15 units from 2026-27.	All 10 units expected to be completed in the 26-27 FY have been inspected and delivered to SFRS. The 15 units for this year are expected to go into production in October 2026. Additional funds may be required to adapt the 15 new builds to the new SCBA requirements.		P2 - £912 vired to New Dimension Assets; P4 - £240m transferred to High Reach Appliances to cover the anticipated budget shortfall in additional costs identified during the overhauls.			
Light Fleet - Vans and Cars including transition to ULEVs	Purchase up to 4 Management Team cars and replace other light fleet with EV's where possible.	Quotes being prepared for Management Team Cars as well as replacement FDM response cars. We are working with procurement colleagues to finalise route to market via the CCS Framework.					
Leased Vehicles (IFRS16)	Bring in up to 20 Lease Cars and possibly a telehandler forklift.	Request made for quotes to supply Kia EV3's plus a Telehandler unit. Finance colleagues have confirmed there is currently budget provision to order 16 cars, with potential for further funding later in the year to allow the lease of the full 20 cars.					
Prime Movers and PODS / Water Carrier Strategy	Award Contract and purchase up to 5 water carriers.	User Intelligence Group (UIG) now established and a series of meetings have been completed. The direction of travel has now been confirmed as Demountable Pods for use with Prime Movers. and we are now working on a specification and other required documents such as the PUWER.					
New Dimensions Assets	Complete 4 DIM Units.	All four vehicles are in production and at the final build stage. One unit was anticipated to be delivered by late July, however this did not materialise, All four vehicles with the other three expected before the end of September.		P2 - £912 vired from Frontline Appliances			
Control Units	Purchase Base Vehicles and award conversion contract to complete up to 2 units in 2026-27.	Orders placed with Iveco for four base vehicles with delivery expected in December 2026.				Risk associated with the availability and capacity of both Commissiong staff and Procurement staff.	
Fleet Project Staff cost	Pay full wages and overtime for any work on Capital Projects for the Commissioning Team.	All staff working on Capital Projects on a full time basis. we are projecting a small overspend due to additional staff payments.		This may require a small virement toward the end of the financial year to cover additional cost for overtime etc.			
High Reach Overhaul Programme	Send up to three Height Units to Germany for their 10 year overhaul.	One ALP unit currently in Germany for overhaul and due completion and return to the UK before the end August. One unit due to be sent for this work in September and the third unit towards the end of the financial year. The budget may need to be adjusted to reflect only 3 of the 4 planned height unit overhauls in this year, however this may be balanced with the anticipated requirement for funds to cover any additional works found during the inspection process.		Additional work of just under £80k identified by the supplier and a was PO raised to cover this requirement. This Line is currently projecting an overrespond. P4 - Budget virement of £240k processed from Frontline Appliances to balance the anticipated spend on this line.		Risk of additional defects being identified during overhaul inspection process which could push up costs.	
Welfare Vehicles	Welfare Van conversion, Crew van commissioning and purchase up to 2 x welfare trailers.	Quotes for towable welfare units received, route to marked currently being discussed with Procurement. Also route to Market for Van conversions required.				Risk associated with the availability and capacity of both Commissiong staff and Procurement staff as well as the route to market for the towable units.	
TOTAL VEHICLE							

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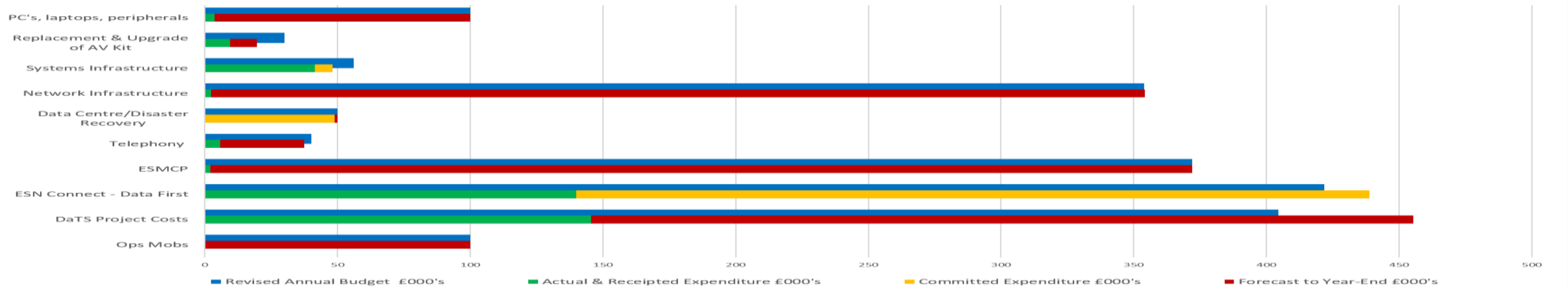
Digital, Data and Technology (exc NMS)

Progress in the month

- **Audio Visual Replacement** – Purchase of Equipment completed, including EIS Resource.
- **Systems Infrastructure** – Interim Test Analyst and Developer contracts were extended to complete outstanding work; both assignments have now been successfully completed.
- **Data Centre/Disaster Recovery** – Hardware delivered to support implementation of the new backup server.
- **ESN Connect** – A further 74 installations have been paid during the month, bringing the total for the financial year to 127 installations.

Progress anticipated in coming months

- **Network Infrastructure** – Procurement and installation of Wireless Access Points across all whole-time stations will continue in conjunction with Property. An order will be placed for SD-WAN hardware, with milestone payments scheduled across 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29.
- **Telephony** – Scope and procurement activity will progress for the replacement of desktop telephone handsets and Phase 1 of the mobile handset refresh programme, addressing end-of-life devices.
- **ESMCP** – Options appraisal for station end hardware will be completed, enabling progression towards procurement of the preferred solution.
- Work will continue across all projects to ensure that expenditure is committed in line with service requirements.



Milestone RAG

- All DDaT projects are currently on track and reporting a Green RAG status. However, a delivery risk has been identified within the **ESN Connect – Data First** project due to dependencies on vehicle availability, scheduling constraints and installation timescales. These factors will continue to be closely monitored as they may impact completion of the installation programme by 31 March 2027.

Deviation from Budget RAG

- The DDaT Budget RAG status is **Amber** due to forecast overspends and underspends across the programme, with the overall net overspend of £0.040m mainly reflecting additional WAN hardware costs and project team costs. As project scopes and cost estimates continue to be refined, budget virements will be undertaken as necessary to maintain alignment with programme forecasts and return the Budget RAG status to **Green**.

Digital, Data and Technology (excl NMS) – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
PC's, laptops, peripherals	TBC						
Replacement & Upgrade of AV Kit	TBC			P4 - Projected underspend of £20k transferred to Network Infrastructure for additional WAN purchases.			
Systems Infrastructure	Interim staff extended from 25-26 to cover remaining work in thier areas - Test Analyst extended for 3 months, Developer extended for 6 weeks to end of June.	Both pieces of work are now complete.		P4 - Projected underspend of £44k transferred to Network Infrastructure for additional WAN purchases.			
Network Infrastructure	Wireless Access Point purchase and installation at all WT stations. Hardware purchases relating to delivery of new Wide Area Network - Milestone payments across this and next 2 FYs have been agreed and the PO is going through the approvals process.	Wide Area Network hardware omitted from original forecasting - additional funding required		P4 - Projected underspends totalling £104k from Replacement & Upgrade of AV Kit (£20k), Systems Infrastructure (£44k) and Cyber Security provision (£40k) transferred to contribute to initial WAN hardware purchases			
Data Centre/Disaster Recovery 26-27	Hardware purchase for new Back Up Server	Order raised in P2					
Telephony	1) Replacement of desktop telephone handsets 2) Phase 1 replacement of end of life mobile handsets 3) 0.5FTE Fulfilment Officer coordinating mobile device estate & End User Computing equipment distribution	Pepraratory work is ongoing					
Cyber Security Provision	TBC			P4 - Projected underspend of £40k transferred to Network Infrastructure for additional WAN purchases.			
ESMCP	Station end kit hardware purchase	Scoping work is ongoing				Until scoping work is complete, there is a risk that the project cannot be delivered within the current financial year.	
ESN Connect - Data First	Vehicle installations & associated costs	Ongoing		P2 - £45,500 vired from CivTech		Risks around availability and scheduling of vehicles, and fitting times	
DaTS Project Costs	Salary costs of Programme Delivery team	Ongoing - overspend forecast		Forecasting £40k overspend			
Ops Mobs	TBC	Scoping work is ongoing for Station End kit and pagers.					

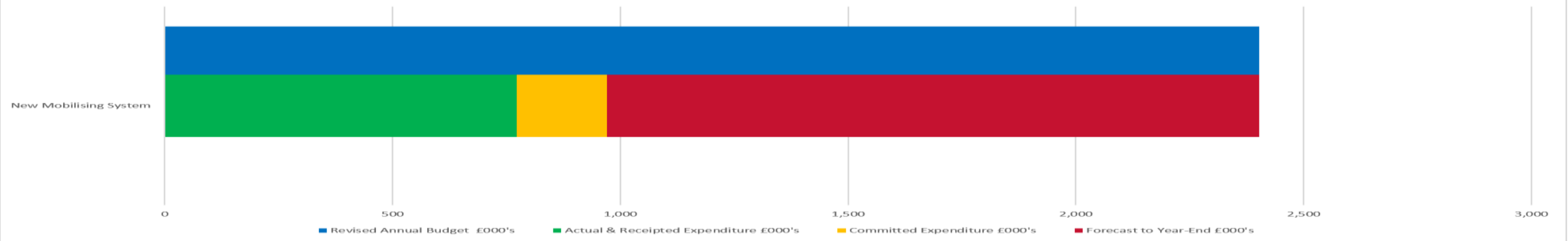
New Mobilising System (NMS)

Progress in the month

- Round 2 **User Acceptance Testing (UAT)** was completed on 2 July, resolving the two high-priority issues identified through the initial UAT phase.
- **EOC End User Training** continues to receive positive feedback, with Dundee training commencing 27 July.
- Installation of **CCP hardware** has been completed for all 3 Operations Controls (OC's). Telent SAT testing was successfully completed, enabling functional testing to begin on 28 July.
- **Station mobilising testing** has commenced across all 357 stations to verify end-kit functionality via the primary connection. Testing will continue into August.
- Stations selected for the **MDT pilot** have been confirmed and communicated to IVS. The pilot is awaiting NMS upgrades to operational gateways and remains dependent on IVS software installation for new MDTs in the East and North.
- A draft **transition plan** has been developed, with ongoing meetings refining preparation activities and day-of-transition arrangements.

Progress anticipated in coming months

- Define **CAD requirements** for wallboards within OC's and Incident Support Rooms (ISR's) and submit the associated change request.
- **Complete CCP functional testing** with test and live stations and communicate confirmed NMS go-live dates to stakeholders.
- Progress remaining **CAD configuration** ahead of go-live.
- Deliver the second **IT Health Check**, including reviews of CCP, SharePoint and the potential audio-visual display solution.
- Initiate detailed planning for **Phase 2 Optimisation** (Tranche 1).



Milestone RAG

- The Milestone RAG status remains **Amber** due to ongoing programme pressures and compressed timescales associated with delivering CAD by November 2026. Principal risks relate to the implementation of the Boomi solution, the significant CAD configuration workload required prior to go-live, and dependencies on the In Vehicle System project to complete software upgrades on the new Mobile Data Terminal's (MDT's) in advance of NMS pilot testing and migration.

Deviation from Budget RAG

- The Budget RAG status is currently green and will continue to be monitored as the projects progress to go Live.

NMS – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
New Mobilising Syetem	• CAD End User Training • EOC CAD go-live • DOC CAD go-live • JOC CAD go-live	The NMS project is reporting Amber due to continued compressed timelines to deliver CAD by November 2026. Key issue is related to the implementation of the Boomi solution being completed prior to Go-live, and key risks relating to significant CAD Configuration work required for Go-live and dependency on IVS project to complete software upgrades on the new MDTs prior to NMS pilot and migration.		P3 - Budget virement processed to reduce the budget from £3,055,307 to £2,401,807: -10 Firefighters Training - £0.434m -CCP Costs - £0.310m -Less Addn Boomi Costs (£0.091m)		Key risks relate to the implementation of the Boomi solution completed prior to Go-live, significant CAD Configuration work required for Go-live and activites required for the MDT testing and migration.	
TOTAL DDaT							

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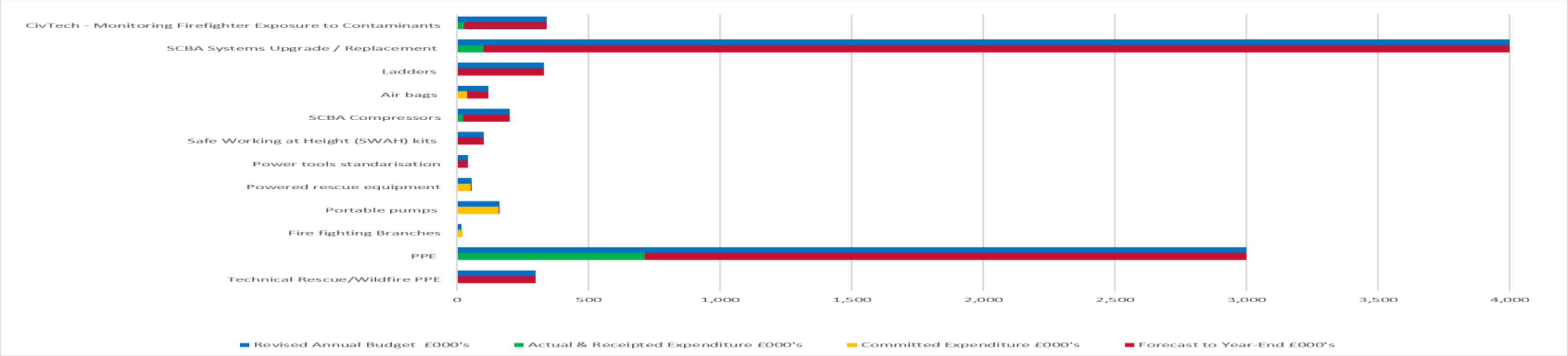
Operational Equipment

Progress in the month	Progress anticipated in coming months
• Orders have been placed for **31 portable pumps, 40 firefighting branches, 2 sets of power rescue equipment and 14 heavy lifting bags,** supporting the ongoing replacement and enhancement of operational equipment. • **Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Systems/Upgrade** – Procurement activity continues to progress as planned. The Invitation to Tender (ITT) closed 10 July and submissions are currently undergoing evaluation. Contract award remains on track for September 2026. • Progress on the **CivTech** project continues through the delivery of key milestones in partnership with FireHaz Research. Some delays have been experienced however Milestone 9 has been partly achieved, with a corresponding milestone payment now partially made.	• **Operational Equipment** procurement will be progressed, with further orders planned for ladders, airbags, SCBA compressors, safe working at height equipment, standardised power tools. • The planned programme of monthly **PPE replacement** will continue throughout the year, supporting both wholetime recruitment and on-call firefighter recruitment campaigns.



Milestone RAG	Deviation from Budget RAG
• All Operational Equipment projects are on track with a RAG status of **Green**.	• The Budget RAG status is **Green** with no issues currently anticipated.

Operational Equipment – RAG Status

Project Description	Current Year Project Milestones	Progress / Issues in Achieving Milestones	Milestone RAG	Deviation from Original Budget	Budget RAG	Project Risks Identified	Risk RAG
CivTech - Monitoring Firefighter Exposure to Contaminants (Challenge 10.2)	Milestone Payments 5.2 to 17 to FireHaz Research totalling £0.342m offset by CivTech grant income of £0.306m. Temporary Operational Development & Innovation Manager for 6 months. To be funded by CivTech additional grant.	Delay in milestone payments 6,7 and 8. Milestone payment 9 has now been partially made.		P2 - £306,000 CivTech grant funding added to the budget. £45,500 SFRS funding transferred to ESN (DDaT).			
SCBA Systems Upgrade / Replacement	SCBA Project team costs for 1 x GC , 3 x WC , 1 x PM.	Project team in place, additional SC now recruited and in post. Procurement activity for the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Systems/Upgrade project continues, with the Invitation to Tender (ITT) now closed 10th July, tenders being evaluated. Still on target for contract award Sept 2026.				Failure to achieve contract award.	
Operational Equipment							
Ladders	33 sets of ladders to be ordered circa £10k per set	orders still to be placed					
Air bags	50 full sets of air bags to be ordered circa £2,300 per set	Orders placed for heavy lifting bags and additional control valves £40k additional orders to be placed.					
SCBA Compressors	Replacement of SCBA compressors at end of operational life and staff costs for 1 x GC to undertake operational review on compressor dispostion	UIG still to be established, GC in post for RDI section				UIG and procurement proceses still to be undertaken.	
Safe Working at Height (SWAH) kits	Replacement of SWAH equipment	orders still to be placed					
Power tools standardisation	Standardistion of Power tools on front line appliances	orders still to be placed, new contract required due to supplier entering administartion, partial budget transfer to PRE line.					
Powered rescue equipment	2 sets of Heavy PRE required to be ordered	Order placed for 2 sets awaiting delivery, additional storage brackets to be					
Portable pumps	30 new LPP's for new appliances	order placed for 31 new LPP's awaiting delivery					
Firefighting Branches	Replacement branches for NSDA.	orders placed for 40 new branches awaiting delivery. £566 over budget will cover from other line.					
PPE	12 monthly replacements costs £102k per month, 120 WT recruits , 234 OC recruits	Ongoing monthly charges and recruit campaigns		Potential reduced requirement (£0.600m) based on up-to-date information on recruit numbers - to be confirmed.			
Technical Rescue/Wildfire PPE	Orders to be placed following completion of Wildfire PPE Strategy						
TOTAL OPERATIONAL EQUIPMENT							

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/GSC/11-26

Agenda Item: 14

Report to:	**THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**							
Meeting Date:	**27 AUGUST 2026**							
Report Title:	**ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOARD**							
Report Classification:	**For Decision**	**SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY For Reports to be held in Private Specify rationale below referring to Board Standing Order 9**						
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G

1	**Purpose**
1.1	The purpose of this report is to highlight how the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Board Member arrangements have been reviewed to ensure their continued effectiveness. Incorporated in this paper at Appendix A is a summary review and provision of future arrangements for decision.
2	**Background**
2.1	The Board approved its first action plan back in November 2014, which outlined improvement actions and timescales for delivering the outcomes of the review of the effectiveness of the Board. Activities and actions continue to be undertaken in order to support Board Members and ensure ongoing review of the effectiveness of the Board.
2.2	In May 2015 Audit Scotland published their Best Value report of the SFRS where improvement actions were undertaken. In May 2018, Audit Scotland published their most recent Best Value report of the SFRS (Further Reading within 8.3), where it details the progress made. It states that we have a well-structured corporate template for reporting to the SFRS Board and its Committees, that is now being used. This corporate report template continues to be reviewed and amended annually and was last approved by the Board at its meeting in April 2026.
2.3	In November 2020, Azets, the then Internal Auditor concluded a report into our corporate governance arrangements (Further Reading within 8.4), stating they gained assurance that the SFRS has generally effective corporate governance arrangements. These are supported by procedures covering recording, monitoring and reporting processes, which they found to be well designed and generally reflect good practice.
2.4	In March 2021, Deloitte, the then External Auditors to SFRS, presented their wider scope report (Further Reading within 8.5 and Appendix A) which included aspects of ‘Governance and Transparency’ within the Service and specifically detailed two recommendations for the SFRS Board to consider which were subsequently actioned.
2.5	In April 2025, our current Internal Auditors, BDO, commenced an internal audit into the corporate governance arrangements within the Service, which provided a Substantial Assurance outcome. Three recommendations arose from the outcome of this audit which were considered and appropriate action taken to strengthen the corporate governance arrangements.

3	**Main Report/Detail**
3.1	To ensure continuous improvement, future arrangements to review the effectiveness of the Board will evolve to allow the SFRS Board to continue developing and improving in its role to meet the strategic ask of Ministers contained within the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and the expectations of Scotland's communities.
3.2	As a result, on that basis it is proposed that the monitoring of the effectiveness and future development of SFRS Board continues to be progressed as detailed within Appendix A.
3.3	In summary, this paper highlights some of the key areas that have contributed to developing the effectiveness of the SFRS Board collectively and individually throughout 2025/26.
4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The SFRS Board is invited to approve the arrangements for reviewing the effectiveness of the SFRS Board as set out in section 3 and Appendix A, subject to any amendments.
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1	**Risk Appetite and Alignment to Risk Registers**
5.1.1	The proposed arrangements require to be developed to enable the Board to perform its scrutiny role and deliver its statutory duties effectively.
5.1.2	The report is aligned to the Service's Governance risk in relation to our internal governance, where the Service has a Cautious appetite.
5.2	**Financial**
5.2.1	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
5.3	**Environmental & Sustainability**
5.3.1	There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising from this report.
5.4	**Workforce**
5.4.1	Following the planned resignation of Kirsty Darwent an appointments process was undertaken to appoint a new Chair, serving Board member Mhairi Wylie was successful in that process and assumed the role of Chair on 1 February 2026.
5.4.2	At the same time, Angiolina Foster was appointed Deputy Chair.
5.4.3	An appointments process took place to appoint new Board members with 5 new Board members expected to start in October 2026.
5.5	**Health & Safety**
5.5.1	There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report.
5.6	**Health & Wellbeing**
5.6.1	There are no Health and Wellbeing implications arising from this report.
5.7	**Training**
5.7.1	Board Members will be given the opportunity to access the SFRS Learning Content and Management System/Workforce Pro and also to attend training days, workshops and effectiveness/development/information days, together with further external opportunities, which supports them to develop in their role, in order to perform as effectively as possible.
5.7.2	New Board members will undergo an extensive induction programme.

5.8 5.8.1	**Timing** This report has been produced to reflect fully on the effectiveness of the Board for the previous financial year period.
5.9 5.9.1	**Performance** The information obtained will be outlined accordingly within the Annual Governance Statement provided by the Accountable Officer to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Any assurance gaps identified from these reviews will form improvement actions that will be allocated to Directorates to be addressed as part of business as usual arrangements, or alternatively through the Annual Internal Audit Plan, as deemed necessary.
5.10 5.10.1	**Communications & Engagement** Engagement has taken place with the Integrated Governance Forum regarding arrangements for monitoring and scrutiny of SFRS Governance moving forward. The detail within this report has been developed by the Board Support Team in consultation with the Director of Governance, Strategy and Change and Head of Governance and Compliance, and presented within this report to the Board for their consideration and approval, subject to any amendments.
5.11 5.11.1 5.11.2 5.11.3 5.11.4	**Legal** The recommendations contained within this report are intended to assist the Board in its ability to perform its scrutiny role and therefore deliver its statutory duties effectively. The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, Schedule 1A, paragraph 11, entitled Public Access requires the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to ensure the following: “SFRS must ensure that its proceedings and those of its committees and sub-committees are held in public”. Throughout this period SFRS had appropriate measures in place for members of the public to be able to join public meetings of the SFRS via the use of virtual technology. Access to minutes and papers continue to be made available within our website, endeavouring to ensure complete transparency.
5.12 5.12.1 5.12.2	**Information Governance** DPIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. DPIA not applicable as no personal information is contained within this report.
5.13 5.13.1	**Equalities** EHRIA completed ~~Yes~~/No. If not applicable state reasons. *Covered by the SFRS Corporate Governance Arrangements 2026 EHRIA.*
5.14 5.14.1	**Service Delivery** There are no Service Delivery implications arising from this report.
5.15 5.15.1	**Prevention** There are no Prevention implications arising from this report.
6	**Core Brief**
6.1	The Director of Governance, Strategy and Change asked the Board to acknowledge and approve the progress made around the arrangements for reviewing the effectiveness of the SFRS Board during 2025/26. This is intended to ensure that the SFRS Board continues to develop and improve, to meet the strategic ask of Ministers contained within the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and the expectations of Scotland’s communities.

7	Assurance (SFRS Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)	
7.1	**Director:**	Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change.
7.2	**Level of Assurance: (Mark as appropriate)**	~~Substantial/~~**Reasonable**~~/Limited/Insufficient~~
7.3	**Rationale:**	Arrangements for reviewing the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees have been embedded in SFRS governance structures for a number of years and are reviewed regularly. Feedback is sought and any perceived weaknesses or anomalies requiring updating are identified and strengthened as part of that process.

8	Appendices/Further Reading
8.1	Appendix A - Arrangements for Reviewing the Effectiveness of the Board
8.2	Further Reading: • Annual Governance Review of Board and Committee Related Items 2026 • Internal Audit Corporate Governance Final Report – September 2025 • Internal Audit Corporate Governance – Assurance January 2021 • Deloitte Wider Scope Report 2020/21 • Audit Scotland Report – Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Published May 2018 • Scottish Governance Guidance on the Appraisal of Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) Board members and Chairs, Published February 2017 • Changing the Chemistry, a peer-to-peer support network designed to improve the effectiveness of Boards, Website Home Page • Scottish Government Governance Hub Website

Prepared by:	Chris Casey, Group Commander, Board Support Manager
Sponsored by:	Richard Whetton, Head of Governance and Compliance
Presented by:	Mark McAteer, Director of Governance, Strategy and Change

Links to Strategy and Corporate Values

Strategy 2025-28:
Improving Performance – Our Organisational performance, productivity and resilience continually improves.
Innovation and Investment - We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate and fleet, making us more effective and efficient.

Governance Route for Report	Meeting Date	Report Classification	Meeting Approvals/Outcomes
SFRS Board	*27/08/2026*	*For Decision*	

APPENDIX A

2025/26

ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SFRS BOARD

The SFRS successfully maintained its delivery of services and whilst continuing to operate within a challenging environment, a significant level of activity and outcomes continued to be achieved and scrutinised by the SFRS Board.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the SFRS Board, monitoring of the effectiveness and future development is captured and progressed through the implementation of the following:

- The 'Annual Governance Review of Board and Committee Related Items' presented to the Board in April 2026, as part of our continuous improvement and effectiveness of the Board and its Committees, in compliance with statutory requirements.

- A hybrid approach to all Board and Committee meetings was taken with some meetings being held in person and others online. The utilisation of virtual technology continued with remote access being available to stakeholders, by request, for all public meetings. Papers and approved minutes of public Board and Committee meetings are available for stakeholders to access on the SFRS website.

- The meetings that were held in person had a positive impact and enabled Board members to engage and meet with personnel at various SFRS venues. The Service Delivery Committee continues to hold its meetings at various locations around the Service, with a further programme of engagement to take place in the coming year involving Board members, allowing wider stakeholder engagement around the country.

- Following approval by the Board of the SFRS Good Governance Framework at its meeting on 28 April 2022, work has continued to progress elements of the framework, with integrated assurance mapping being introduced. This workstream continues to evolve to identify how best it can support the Board and its Committees.

- Throughout 2025/26, the continued approach of using a series of Committee workshops provided an opportunity for members to focus on any key areas of work and support each other, while also providing an opportunity to review each Committee's Terms of Reference, ensuring they remain fit for purpose and are relevant.

- Board Strategy / Information / Development Days continued to take place with clear guidance and format for these events in place, the key objectives being:
  - To continue to support the effective and positive working relationships between the Board and Strategic Leaders of the Service.
  - To inform the Board of key strategic projects, workstreams and organisational workloads.
  - To give the Board time to ask questions and gain clearer understanding of these workloads.
  - To ensure better scrutiny and assurance at Board level.
  - To provide the Board with development and information to improve their overall knowledge and effectiveness.
  - To provide opportunities for early discussion to enable the Board to influence future direction and shaping.

- Board Member access to the SFRS Learning Content Management System (LCMS) continues to enable training to be carried out. The Service's ability to offer training to Board Members will be strengthened with the introduction of Workforce Pro to the organisation.

- Board Members undertook a 'Firefighter for a Day' training event to provide a greater insight into the skills, incident types, PPE, fleet and equipment associated with operational response. This is now in the planning phase again for new Board Members.

- Board Members observed a Marauding Terrorist Attack joint exercise which was held with colleagues from Scottish Ambulance Service and Police Scotland firearms officers to provide a fuller understanding of the context of this type of incident.

- Access also continues to Office 365 training and development sessions on our SFRS iHub in order to further support our Digital First ethos.

- All SFRS Board Members continue to receive access to the Scottish Government Governance Hub which gives access to modules together with an online forum intended to support the induction of new Board Members to Public Body Boards. This remains a useful maintenance of skills tool for existing Board Members and access will continue to be used moving forward.

- Board Member SharePoint platform within O365 continues to provide a purpose-built area for Board Members to access general information, for example Public Body Updates, together with quick, easy and secure access to Board and Committee papers/reports in preparation for forthcoming meetings.

- Strategic Planning and Development Workshop days took place in November 2025. This event was well received, providing a great opportunity for the Board and members of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to meet and discuss matters of a strategic nature and future vision of the SFRS.

- The Board Members appraisal process continues to work well and identify individual areas of development and also common themes across the Board. The process is fully aligned to the SFRS policy timeframe which includes a mid-year review being offered.

- The template for Board Member appraisals continues to incorporate the most recent guidance issued by Scottish Government (Further Reading - 8.2). Most recently, the Chair facilitated these during March and April of 2026.

- The outcomes of Board Members appraisals and production of a skills matrix continues to be used to consider the Board's strengths and weaknesses and therefore help to inform its medium to long term succession planning arrangements, something that will be used for future Public Appointments.

- Performance reporting through the use of Power Business Intelligence (BI) tooling has continued to be developed during 2025/26. Interactive dashboard reporting has been used to deliver performance reports to various Committees allowing more up to date information being available for scrutiny.

- An opportunity was provided for Board members to be part of a development pathway through the Aspiring Chairs Development Programme facilitated by NHS Education in Scotland which will provide skills and readiness to become an effective Board Chair.

In summary, collectively and through detailing a variety of examples within this report, it clearly demonstrates that progress continues to be made in order to improve the overall effectiveness of the Board throughout this period.

Agenda Item 16

SFRS DRAFT BOARD FORWARD PLAN

BOARD MEETING	STANDING ITEM	FOR INFORMATION ONLY	FOR SCRUTINY	FOR RECOMMENDATION	FOR DECISION
24 September 2026 (Special)	• Chair's Welcome • Apologies • Consideration of and Decision on any items to be taken in Private • Date of Next Meeting	**Standing/Regular Reports** • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** **New Business** • SDR: Recommendations Report – Addendum • Annual Performance Review 2025/2026 (Private) •
29 October 2026	• Chair's Welcome • Apologies • Consideration of and Decision on any items to be taken in Private • Declaration of Interests • Minutes • Action Log • Decision Log • Chair's Report • Chief Officer's Report • Committee Reports & RCG Approved Minutes • Risk Themes • Forward Plan • Date of Next Meeting	**Standing/Regular Reports** • SFRS/Anthony Nolan Partnership Annual Report **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Resource Budget Monitoring Report • Capital Budget Monitoring Report • Capital Budget Outturn Report 2025/26 • Resource Budget Outturn Report 2025/26 • Quarterly Performance Report 2026/27 Q1 **New Business** • Draft Safety and Assurance Annual Report 2025/26 • SFRS Working in Partnership 2025/26	**Standing/Regular Reports** • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Board Forward Plan Schedule 2027/28 • Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2025/26 (Private) • Annual Procurement Report 2025/26 • **New Business** •
17 December 2026	• Chair's Welcome • Apologies • Consideration of and Decision on any items to be taken in Private • Declaration of Interests • Minutes • Action Log • Decision Log • Chair's Report	**Standing/Regular Reports** • HS Policy and Policy Statement • Corporate Parenting Plan Annual Update •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Resource Budget Monitoring Report • Capital Budget Monitoring Report • Quarterly Performance Report 2026/27 Q2 • Safety and Assurance Annual Report 2025/26 • Three-Year Delivery Plan Progress update Q2	**Standing/Regular Reports** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** •

SFRS DRAFT BOARD FORWARD PLAN

BOARD MEETING	STANDING ITEM	FOR INFORMATION ONLY	FOR SCRUTINY	FOR RECOMMENDATION	FOR DECISION
	• Chief Officer's Report • Committee Reports • Risk Themes • Forward Plan • Date of Next Meeting				
		New Business •	**New Business** •	**New Business** •	**New Business** •
25 March 2027	• Chair's Welcome • Apologies • Consideration of and Decision on any items to be taken in Private • Declaration of Interests • Minutes • Action Log • Decision Log • Chair's Report • Chief Officer's Report • Committee Reports & RCG Approved Minutes • Risk Themes • Forward Plan • Date of Next Meeting	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Corporate Parenting Plan Annual Update • Annual Summary of Honours/Awards Received **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Resource Budget Monitoring Report • Capital Budget Monitoring Report • Quarterly Performance Report 2026/27 Q3 • Three-Year Delivery Plan Progress update Q3 • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • **New Business** •	**Standing/Regular Reports** • Resource Budget 2027/28 • Capital Programme 2025-2028 • **New Business** •