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Dear Kirsty

## **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2021/22**

I would like to express my thanks to you, the Board and Senior Leadership Team for attending the ninth Annual Performance Review (APR) of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) which was held both in person and through MS Teams on 27 September 2022. I am writing given that the previous Minister has now left and I was present at the meeting.

During the review meeting the Board were asked a number of questions across a range of themes which included culture and behaviour, partnership working, prevention and modernisation. As you know it is an important aspect of the APR that questions can also be asked by stakeholders and the general public and it was pleasing that this year we were able to meet in person but with the added benefit of offering virtual attendance.

Our review discussion was wide-ranging, but I would like to highlight a couple of issues in particular that were covered:

### **Culture and Behaviour**

We discussed the policies that SFRS have in place to support a culture of dignity and respect within the organisation and how the Board satisfies itself that these policies and their implementation are having a positive impact on the culture and behaviours in SFRS. It was pleasing to hear the clear commitment from the Board on this issue.

You discussed the reporting mechanisms to the Board which are well tested and comprehensive but also we were able to hear of the more practical work going on to embed positive culture such as that of the employee partnership forum, work at community level through the Youth Volunteer Schemes and employee network groups.

## **Partnership Working**

We used this opportunity to discuss how SFRS partnerships are developing joined up policies to wider multidimensional problems facing our communities. We heard that the Service Delivery Committee takes the lead in overseeing partnership work and then discussed some practical examples of current partnership working around water safety, work with the Scottish Ambulance Service and work on both planning, delivery and debrief concerning the COP 26 arrangements. We also heard about the wider partnership work on strategic asset management and joint facility usage, it was useful to hear that there are already conversations happening about the benefits staff are seeing when sharing facilities between emergency responders, with Lerwick being highlighted as one of example.

We also discussed the Partnership and Collaboration Working Group and the various other collaboration workstreams that are in place. It would be useful for Scottish Government Officials to have a note of these groups, their remits and the lead emergency service for each.

## **Conclusion**

We did of course cover a number of other issues and the Review meeting was a very good discussion covering a wide range of topics over the last reporting year.

I would once again like to express my thanks to you, your Board and the Senior Leadership team for your responses to the Minister's questions and I would also like to record my own thanks to the SFRS and all its staff.

In an effort to continue to be as open and transparent as possible I am content for this letter to be published on the SFRS website as a record of the Review meeting.

Yours sincerely

Tom Hardy

**Unit Head  
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