



SERVICE
DELIVERY REVIEW

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: FIFE

November 2026


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SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
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1. Introduction

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is seeking views on proposed changes affecting fire stations in Fife as part of the ongoing Service Delivery Review.

The Service Delivery Review is a nationwide programme looking at how our staff, stations and appliances are aligned to operational risk and demand. Its aim is to ensure we continue to provide effective emergency response while making the best use of available resources and investing in the future of the Service.

Following a public consultation in 2025, the SFRS Board approved a range of operational changes to fire stations across Scotland in June 2026.

However, a final decision on a Fife proposal affecting Glenrothes, Methil and Lochgelly was deferred to allow further consideration of an alternative option. We are now seeking views on that additional proposal, known as Option 3.

This consultation will run **between 9 and 30 November 2026** and provides the opportunity for local communities, staff, stakeholders and elected representatives to share their views before any final decision is made.



2. About the SFRS

SFRS is a national emergency service, committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland.

IN **SCOTLAND** THERE ARE:

7,589 TOTAL STAFF

6,667 TOTAL OPERATIONAL STAFF

IN **FIFE** THERE ARE:

300 OPERATIONAL STAFF*

204 WHOLETIME

96 ON CALL

IN **SCOTLAND** THERE ARE:

356 FIRE STATIONS

74 WHOLETIME

240 ON CALL

IN **FIFE** THERE ARE:

13 FIRE STATIONS

5 WHOLETIME

8 ON CALL

IN **SCOTLAND** THERE ARE:

621 OPERATIONAL APPLIANCES

420 PUMPING APPLIANCES

16 AERIAL APPLIANCES

185 OTHER APPLIANCES

IN **FIFE** THERE ARE:

18 PUMPING FIRE APPLIANCES**

8 WHOLETIME

10 ON CALL

* Operational staff refers to the number of uniformed staff roles within an area. This is used rather than headcount because some wholetime firefighters also undertake an on call role.

** This is the most up-to-date figure, which reflects the permanent withdrawal from Dunfermline and two temporary withdrawals from Methil and Glenrothes.

2.1 How we operate

All of our emergency vehicles are national resources. It's not always your local fire station that will respond to an emergency in your local community. If they are already mobilised elsewhere, Operations Control will send the nearest available appliance and most appropriate level of response.

The number of emergency vehicles based in fire stations varies. Some places will have one appliance, while others will have two or three appliances with different capabilities, as well as other specialist vehicles like our all-terrain vehicles that are used to tackle wildfires.

2.2 Responding to emergencies

Firefighters are highly skilled to deal with many different types of emergencies, such as fires, flooding and road traffic incidents. Some crews have specialist capabilities – like water or rope rescue – and provide wider regional and national coverage.

2.3 Types of services delivered by firefighters

Fires still make up the majority of significant incidents that crews attend, but the number of fires has reduced over time. The types of incidents that we respond to are changing, with more weather-related emergencies, like storm damage or flooding, as well as large outdoor fires.

For example, Dwelling fires are at an all-time low. There were 4,104 house fires recorded in 2024-25, which is around 26% fewer than in 2014-15. The number of people injured in fires has also decreased steadily since the early 2000s.



3. About the Service Delivery Review

SFRS is carrying out a Service Delivery Review to look at ways of reshaping and modernising the organisation. The primary aim is to ensure that resources – staff, stations and appliances – are matched to operational risk and demand across Scotland, while helping to address urgent property and financial challenges.

3.1 How we got here

3.1.1 Temporary appliance withdrawals

In 2023, the SFRS Board approved the temporary withdrawal of ten fire appliances from service and now a permanent solution is required. We based this decision on where withdrawals would have the least impact, and we have been monitoring this.

This included three in Fife at:

- Glenrothes,
- Methil, and
- Dunfermline.

This approach contributed to an annual saving of £11m across the Service. Permanent arrangements are now required that build on this position while driving best value through the effective and sustainable alignment of resources to risk and demand.

The evaluation of the temporary withdrawals found no evidence of a negative effect on firefighter safety or adverse operational outcomes attributable to the changes. It also identified increases in second-appliance response times in some areas. These findings provide evidence in support of retaining the current arrangements.

3.1.2 Public consultation 2025

A series of proposed changes were put forward as part of 23 options considered during a public consultation in 2025. Engagement activity included public meetings and drop-in sessions across affected communities, attended by more than 800 people across Scotland, alongside a public survey which generated more than 3,600 responses. This included events in Glenrothes, Methil, Lochgelly and Dunfermline attended by more than 140 members of the community; with 465 survey responses received relating to the options for Fife.

3.1.3 SFRS Board decision

In June 2026, the SFRS Board agreed to defer a decision on the remaining Fife proposals to allow further assessment and public consultation on the alternative proposal, now known as Option 3. Options 1 and 2 remain in scope. Option 3 would make permanent the temporary withdrawal of the second wholetime appliances at Glenrothes and Methil, while retaining two wholetime appliances and the rope rescue capability at Lochgelly.

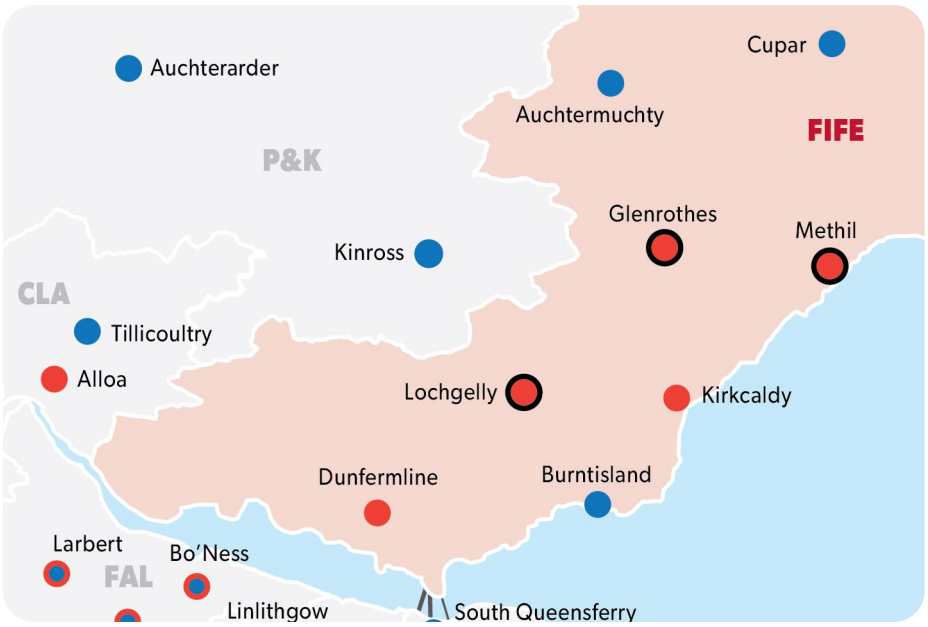
3.1.4 Why we are consulting again

Option 3 is the current temporary arrangement that has been in place since September 2023. This was previously assessed as an option and discounted during the options appraisal and development process, as it had a greater operational impact compared to Options 1 and 2.

However, consultation feedback from staff and communities indicated a strong desire to maintain this temporary arrangement and this has now been brought back under consideration.

Consideration was given by SFRS Board and senior leadership to the deliverability, financial implications, training capacity and cost of relocating the rope rescue capability currently located at Lochgelly, and the associated workforce impacts. It was their professional opinion that the benefits of the Fife changes had largely been achieved by the temporary arrangements (Option 3) and that any further benefit would not be proportionate to the level of disruption required to implement either Option 1 or Option 2.

4. Options for change

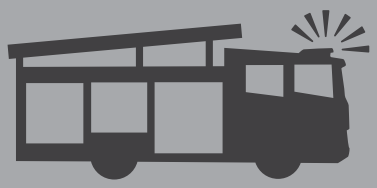


There are three options proposed for Fife that involve three fire stations.

- **Lochgelly**
- **Glenrothes**
- **Methil**

The options within this document involve changes to fire appliances, commonly known as fire engines or rescue pumps.

All three options allow for future developments in Fife and do not prevent a wider review of resources across Central and East Fife as risk, demand and opportunities change. Future proposals could consider flexible crewing, support for the On Call model, specialist capabilities and estate opportunities, subject to evidence, affordability, deliverability and any required engagement and approval.



4.1 Option 1

Previously consulted

- Reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at **Lochgelly** from two to one; **AND**
- Reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at **Methil** from two to one. The second appliance was temporarily withdrawn in September 2023; **AND**
- Reinstate the second appliance that was temporarily removed in September 2023 at **Glenrothes**.

Pros

- Reinstatement of second appliance at Glenrothes.
- Maintains required £2.4 million saving in annual running costs.
- Most balanced average wholetime pumping appliance demand across Fife stations.

Cons

- Increase in second attending appliance response times within local areas and across Fife.
- Requires relocation of Lochgelly's rope rescue capability, with training costs estimated at up to £108,000, demands on training capacity and workforce disruption.



4.2 Option 2

Previously consulted

- Reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at **Lochgelly** from two to one; **AND**
- Reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at **Glenrothes** from two to one. The second appliance was temporarily withdrawn in September 2023; **AND**
- Reinstate the second appliance that was temporarily removed in September 2023 at **Methil**.

Pros

- Reinstatement of second appliance at Methil.
- Maintains required £2.4 million saving in annual running costs.

Cons

- Increase in second attending appliance response times within local areas and across Fife.
- Requires relocation of Lochgelly's rope rescue capability, with training costs estimated at up to £108,000, demands on training capacity and workforce disruption.
- Less balance in average wholetime pumping appliance demand across Fife stations.



Glenrothes Community Fire Station



Methil Community Fire Station

4.3 Option 3

New option for consultation

- Reduce the number of wholetime appliances based at **Methil** and **Glenrothes** from two to one. The second appliances at both stations were temporarily withdrawn in September 2023.

Pros

- Retains an arrangement operating since September 2023 for which evaluation and ongoing operational assurance have identified no evidence of adverse operational outcomes attributable to the temporary withdrawals.
- Maintains required £2.4 million saving in annual running costs.
- No additional impact on SFRS Training capacity and no further staff relocations required.
- Avoids one-off cost up to £108k for relocation of specialist rope rescue asset at Lochgelly and associated training costs.

Cons

- Increase in second attending appliance response times within local areas and across Fife.
- Imbalance in average wholetime pumping appliance demand across Fife stations.



Lochgelly Community Fire Station

4.4 Why we need to change

The temporary arrangement from 2023 now requires a permanent equivalent solution. In Fife, this means the permanent withdrawal of three wholetime appliances at a cost saving of £2.4 million. A change has already been approved and implemented at Dunfermline, and further changes are required at two of Glenrothes, Methil and Lochgelly.

We know that there has been a high concentration of resources based within Fife relative to the operational demand of Glenrothes, Methil and Lochgelly and compared to other similar geographical areas elsewhere in Scotland.

For example, operational demand at these stations is among the lowest of all stations in Scotland that have two wholetime appliances; and is more aligned to stations with one wholetime appliance.



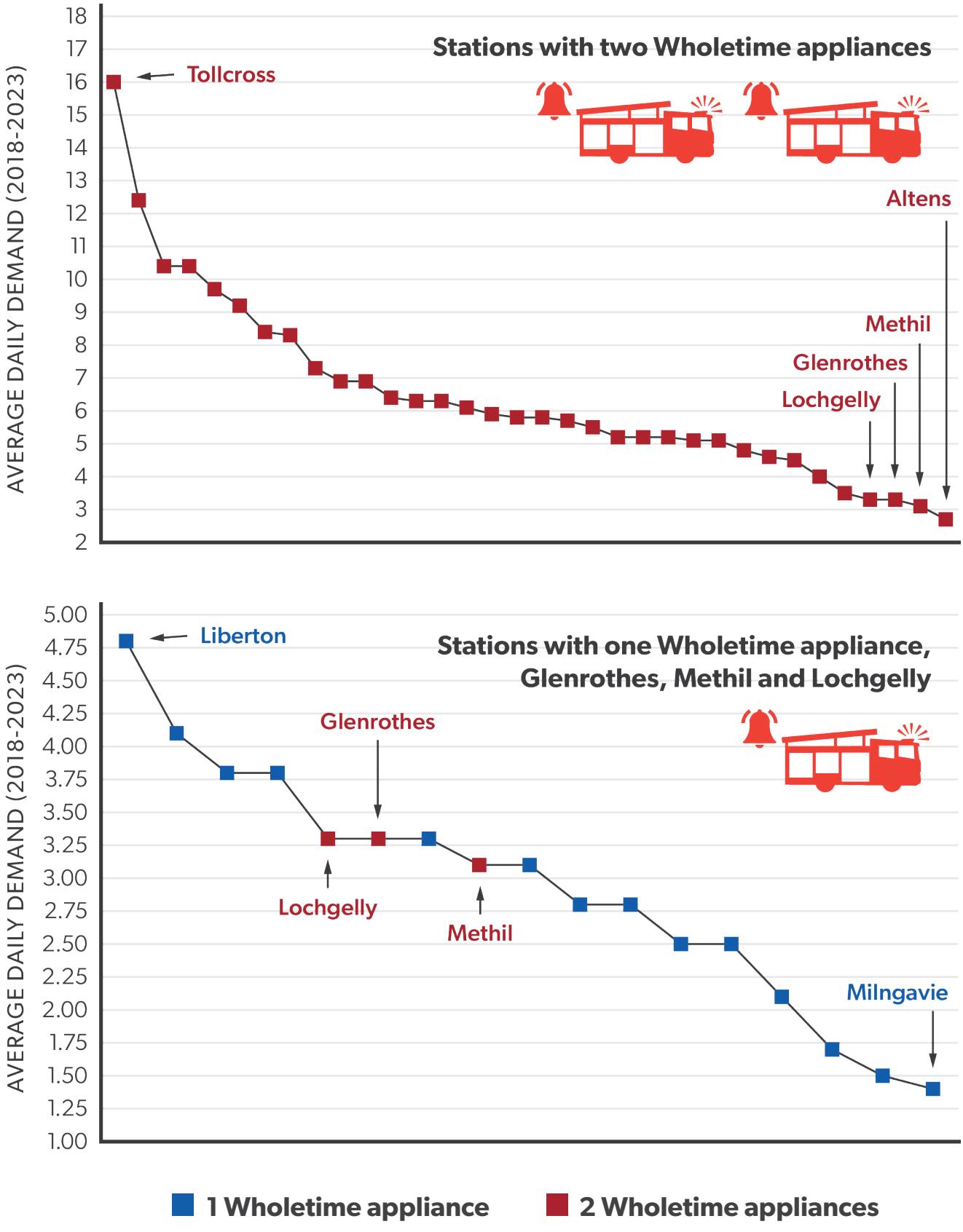
Since 2023, the incident demand of Lochgelly station has exceeded that of Glenrothes or Methil. This is because these stations have had fewer appliances to deploy resulting in the two Lochgelly appliances picking up a larger share of the operational activity.

Our modelling and analysis of risk and demand indicates that each of Glenrothes, Methil and Lochgelly could operate with one wholetime appliance. However, all three options under consideration would retain a second wholetime appliance at one of the three stations, providing additional capacity to support communities across Fife.

Lochgelly was not considered for the temporary appliance withdrawal in 2023 because the specialist rope rescue capability currently located there, which requires two specially trained crews, could not be relocated within the three-month implementation period.

Therefore, Glenrothes and Methil were selected for temporary appliance withdrawal. The longer-term Service Delivery Review and subsequent public consultation allowed this to be brought under consideration for permanent change.

Options 1 and 2 would require the relocation of that capability. Relocation would involve training, workforce and implementation implications alongside the response-time benefits of Options 1 and 2. These factors must be considered together, rather than allowing either response times or one-off costs alone to determine the decision.


Stations with two Wholetime appliances
AVERAGE DAILY DEMAND (2018-2023)
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
Tollcross
Altens
Methil
Glenrothes
Lochgelly
Stations with one Wholetime appliance, Glenrothes, Methil and Lochgelly
AVERAGE DAILY DEMAND (2018-2023)
5.00
4.75
4.50
4.25
4.00
3.75
3.50
3.25
3.00
2.75
2.50
2.25
2.00
1.75
1.50
1.25
1.00
Liberton
Glenrothes
Lochgelly
Methil
Milngavie
1 Wholetime appliance
2 Wholetime appliances

5. Public Consultation

The extended public consultation on the options affecting Fife will run for a period of three weeks from 9 to 30 November 2026.

5.1 How to participate

You can participate by completing our online survey via firescotland.gov.uk

We will hold two public meetings online, scheduled to take place from **2-4pm** on **Monday, 16 November** and from **6-8pm** on **Tuesday, 17 November**.

These meetings will be open to members of the public and to representatives of community groups and third sector organisations - such as equalities groups - who want to have their voices heard. The meetings will be run by an external impartial facilitator, with joining instructions available via firescotland.gov.uk

While consultation events will be held online, we are committed to reducing barriers to participation and will work with local partners to identify and support individuals who may be at risk of digital exclusion, ensuring they have opportunities to contribute their views.

To help minimise this, we will provide support to participants before and during the consultation process and will offer alternative ways to share views where required.

5.2 Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

As part of the public consultation process, we have progressed Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIA).

These EHRIAs will support the final decision-making process by identifying the potential impact on communities and the workforce based on different characteristics people hold, such as their age grouping or having a disability.

5.3 Other formats

If you require this information in a language other than English, or in a different format, such as braille or audio, please email: SFRS.Publicinvolvement@firescotland.gov.uk

5.4 Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of our public consultation, please contact us:

- by emailing SFRS.Publicinvolvement@firescotland.gov.uk

5.5 Next Steps

After the consultation closes on **30 November 2026**, we will take time to analyse and consider the findings. A report will go to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board for a final decision in February 2027.


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