



Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say

Summary

April 2024

Introduction

We want to be a modern fire and rescue service that is ready for the challenges of Scotland's future.

We want to do more for our communities – not just by responding to incidents but by stopping them from happening.

To make sure we have the right resources in the right place at the right time we need to change.

This document sets out areas we could change but we need your help to make sure we get this right for the communities we serve.

We want to hear your views on what you want from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

The views we gather will help us to develop change options for full public consultation later this year.

Why do we need to change

The types of incidents we attend are changing and different parts of Scotland need different services from us. This means we need to change how we work too.

For example, we are seeing fewer house fires but more flooding and wildfire incidents.

We know some of our fire stations are in areas to support risks that are no longer there – like heavy industry such as shipyards or coal mines.

Some of our fire stations are also no longer fit for purpose and require significant investment to make them safer and more suitable for our staff.

For example, we need to address issues with contamination where our firefighters are being exposed to dangerous materials and ensure our buildings have suitable welfare facilities.

We also have 14 fire stations with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) panel issues which require a permanent solution.

Our communities are changing too with more people living longer at home who need additional support.

We know we can do more to keep Scotland safe. We want to focus on prevention to make communities safer so we can reduce demand on both us and other public services.

We are also committed to reducing our carbon footprint which means investing in more energy efficient buildings and vehicles.

What could change?

Some, all, or a combination of these changes could be implemented throughout the Service.

Developing the firefighter role

We would like to develop the role of our firefighters. We could work with our public service partners to take on more prevention work in our communities or support other emergency response activities.

Changing where our stations and appliances are based

Some of our stations are not in the best places to meet the current risks faced in communities.

We could change where our stations and appliances are based. This could involve merging stations in similar locations to better reflect risk and demand.

Merging or moving stations would allow us to use our resources elsewhere and invest in new stations where required.

By changing our footprint, we can reduce our running costs and potentially generate income from sites being sold.

Building new stations would also help to address issues with contamination and suitable welfare facilities while providing staff with a modern workplace.

Changing how and when we staff our resources

Our wholetime firefighters provide cover at some stations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Our on call (retained) firefighters provide the same service but are called to attend emergencies via a pager.

We also have on call (volunteer) firefighters and Community Response Units who respond to specific types of incidents via a pager system.

These are all types of duty systems. Some stations use one type of duty system and others use a mix.

We could change duty systems in some areas where appropriate. For example, we could have wholetime firefighters during the day and on call firefighters at night.

Changing how we attend emergencies

Our crewing model – which is the number of firefighters in appliances that attend an emergency – is another area we could explore for change.

Different models are used throughout the UK and there could be options to change the crewing arrangements for different appliances in individual stations.

Rationalising our corporate buildings

Our corporate buildings provide working space for both uniformed and support staff.

We have already closed our West Service Delivery Area Headquarters at Hamilton after the site was designated as surplus to requirements, saving £500,000 in annual running costs.

We could create savings to invest in other areas by closing additional sites.

Next steps

You can read the full version of this document on our website.

To share your views please complete our online survey or email:

SFRS.PublicInvolvement@firescotland.gov.uk

Once we have completed this exercise, we will review all feedback. This will be used to help develop options for public consultation.