



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

# Strategic Plan 2016-19



**Working together  
for a safer Scotland**





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**To find out more, visit our website at [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)**

# FOREWORD



**PAT WATTERS CBE**

Chair  
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board



**ALASDAIR HAY QFSM**

Chief Officer  
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

## It is our pleasure to introduce the 2016-19 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Plan.

This sets out our commitments to improve community safety, response and resilience, whilst addressing inequality and enhancing the wellbeing of the people of Scotland. It also shows how we will strengthen the sustainability of this highly valued and respected emergency service.

We will fully embrace our statutory responsibilities, and continue to work with our partners and communities, building on existing relationships and forging new ones to make Scotland safer. The ambitions in this Plan reflect the role a modern fire and rescue service should play in generating better outcomes for the people of Scotland, while demonstrating leadership in public service reform.

We will be mindful of the financial challenges facing us and other public services, and approach our financial challenges head on. How we evolve and adapt our frontline services to meet these challenges will be key to our success. By being responsive to change and through exploring new and innovative ways of working we will continue to improve the safety and wellbeing of the diverse communities we serve.

This will mean taking a fresh look at what we can do to evolve further and taking the lead in breaking down organisational barriers to ensure we join with other public services to target our resources to where they are needed most. Our staff will have a key role as we explore how we can work more closely with partners to tackle inequality in society and improve safety across Scotland.

Our staff have already come through considerable and wide spread change with continuing dedication and commitment. We want the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to continue to be a great place to work where the professionalism of our staff is fully harnessed to shape and achieve future success.

We strive to be an 'employer of choice' that people are attracted to, whose employees are motivated to work for and who will promote our Service to future potential recruits as an attractive, engaging, positive and rewarding place to work. Specifically we will also continue to support our operational staff to be prepared for and deal with the inherent risks associated with their roles.

The views of communities and staff who are engaged in delivering services to the public are very important to us. We will maximise the use of ideas and insights from our own people, communities and individuals, to the full in modernising our Service and delivering better outcomes for all.

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This will enable us to respond better to the needs of communities and be more informed in how we support them and our partners in delivering better outcomes for all.

We are very proud to have played a part in building a national fire and rescue service for Scotland. Success would not have been possible without the dedication of our staff and the obvious clear support of the public and our partners. By facing our challenges and embracing change together, we can do even more to make a difference to people's lives.

We invite all of our people, our partners and our communities to join us and work with us in making this journey a positive one for all.

# INTRODUCTION

We have a key role to play to help achieve the Scottish Government's Purpose of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth.

This Purpose is underpinned by five strategic objectives and sixteen national outcomes to form the National Performance Framework<sup>1</sup>.

Scottish Government places a duty on public services to work together to contribute to its Purpose and the delivery of the national outcomes. As we go about building a safer society and by working through economic, health, social and environmental issues with our partners we will directly or indirectly contribute to the national outcomes but our core contribution relates to making our communities safer and stronger.

Scottish Ministers set out their expectations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland<sup>2</sup>. The Framework was revised by the Scottish Government in 2016 to place a greater emphasis on how we should contribute to a wider range of national outcomes and where we can contribute to public service reform. This Strategic Plan has been developed in response to that and builds in the views of our people, partners and communities with whom we have engaged in its preparation.

Our first Strategic Plan, published in 2013, principally focused on integrating the eight former fire and rescue services operating in Scotland. This included harmonising and standardising corporate frameworks, people policies and operating procedures. Single systems for finance and human resources have been introduced and essential core digital network and software infrastructure have been developed. Resourcing structures were established so that all corporate and local responsibilities are managed cohesively and consistently across Scotland.

Our scrutiny bodies have recently reported that the merger has been a success and we can report that we have completed almost all the tasks we were set. We will continue to finalise this work to ensure the aims of reform are fully embedded. However, the journey of reform and transformation continues.

Our focus remains firmly on Working Together for a Safer Scotland. This establishes a clear and committed message of what we are here to do. Our ambition goes well beyond 'safer from fire'. It means we are committed to making people safer from experiencing the effects of harm, much of which is driven by social and economic inequality.

We believe people are safer when they know more about the risks they face and have the capacity and resilience to help themselves. Equally people are safer because we are a socially responsible organisation which seeks to continually improve our frontline services, in new and innovative ways. And just as importantly our Firefighters are safer because they have the right skills, training and equipment to work as safely as possible in an inherently dangerous working environment.

At the heart of our plans is the management of risk - identifying vulnerabilities in our communities, businesses and in our own organisation; building resilience and strategies for sustainability; gathering data and knowledge to understand more and ensuring compliance. It is vital we do this well so advancing our skills and methodologies features heavily in this Plan so that we can prevent, protect and respond to the best of our ability.

To do this more efficiently and effectively across a wider range of community issues and risks requires strong collaborative working with our partners and communities. We fully embrace public service reform and all that it brings. We will use this momentum to lead the way in breaking down organisational barriers, removing isolated disjointed working to build strong, engaging and influential relationships that help us meet our mission in Working Together for a Safer Scotland.

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<sup>1</sup> National Performance Framework - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0049/00497339.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00505071.pdf>

Now that we are maturing as an organisation and taking on the role of provider of official statistics, the revised Framework for 2016 gives us direct responsibility for measuring and managing our performance and setting, where appropriate, improvement targets.

This will provide the flexibility to identify key measures as our role evolves over time. As we see this as a significant step to improving our performance management arrangements, we have identified the development of a new performance framework as a key strategic objective.

We have set our new priorities and objectives against a complex and evolving backdrop. Wider public service reform, financial austerity, an increasing aged population,

climate change and the threat of terrorism are some of the core challenges we face now in our operating environment. How we will return positive results from these challenges and achieve our aims is reflected in this Strategic Plan.

Our ambition extends beyond the three years of this Strategic Plan to encompass longer term outcomes. These are our ultimate goals. Through the identification and delivery of priorities and objectives set out in this and our future plans, and despite our challenges, we are confident that our journey in working with our partners and the communities of Scotland will achieve these outcomes.



## As a result of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012<sup>3</sup> the eight Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland were merged to form the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in 2013.

At that time Scottish Ministers defined a new purpose for the Service. That purpose still remains relevant today. It fully supports our principal legislative requirements and, as the table below shows, forms the backbone to our mission and values and fundamentally shapes our organisational strategy. Our priorities are non-hierarchical so equal importance is placed in them all.

To ensure delivery of a high quality efficient public service the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is governed by a Board. The broad structure which surrounds our governance and accountability arrangements with Scottish Government is defined in the SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework Document<sup>4</sup>. The Board is accountable to Scottish Ministers providing assurance that governance and financial management is sound and that our priorities and objectives contribute to the Scottish Government's Purpose and National Performance Framework.

To reflect our position as an 'other significant public body', the Board continually seeks to strengthen its governance arrangements and is taking positive action to support Scottish Ministers' ambition of a 50:50 gender split by 2020.

A small executive team comprising of the Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer and five Directors provide strategic leadership for the Service. Our services are delivered through 356 stations which cover the 30,414 miles<sup>2</sup> of Scotland's unique and diverse city, urban, rural, remote rural and island landscape.

How we use our resources and assets will be directed by priorities and objectives set out in this Strategic Plan. Further detail on the specific strategic actions we will take will be presented each year in our Annual Operating Plan.

Our Local Senior Officers also prepare Local Plans for each of the 32 local authority areas. These Local Plans provide the channel to increase local scrutiny and accountability and balance our national direction with local needs.

We will enhance our work with local authorities by continuing local arrangements with authorities individually and in working collectively with local government through the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and other representative bodies from the sector.

As a national service, we are proudly committed to our community planning role. Local Senior Officers engage with local authorities, community groups, and partners to better understand local risks and identify how best to respond to them.

The introduction of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015<sup>5</sup> (CEA) and Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016<sup>6</sup> reinforces the commitment required of local partners to plan together with communities.

As Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Plans are embedded to meet the requirements of these Acts, Local Senior Officers will continue in their vital role in integrating fire and rescue services with other community planning partner services to prioritise and achieve shared goals in all of Scotland's communities.

<sup>3</sup> Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 - Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

<sup>4</sup> SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework Document - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0041/00417389.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 - Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

<sup>6</sup> Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 - Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016



## OUR PURPOSE

To work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and well-being of people throughout Scotland



## OUR MISSION

Working together for a safer Scotland



## OUR VALUES

Safety

Teamwork

Respect

Innovation



## OUR PRIORITIES

Improved  
Local  
Outcomes

National and  
Community  
Resilience

Modernising  
Response

Workforce  
Development

Governance  
and Social  
Responsibility

Transformation

# OUR VALUES

A strong values driven culture which supports our strategic priorities and objectives is vital to our success.

As we formed the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service we took the opportunity to give our workforce a meaningful stake in shaping the Service by involving them in a cultural audit.

From this process we identified the type of culture that we had but more importantly the type we wanted. To help shape this culture, a new set of values were developed to direct the behaviours we and all those who engage with us expect to see.

These values have shaped and informed how we have engaged our staff, partners and communities in developing this draft Strategic Plan and they will guide us in the actions and decisions that we take to realise our ambitions.



- We work alongside communities to keep them safe
- We work to protect our firefighters from the high risks they face
- We promote a culture of health, safety and wellbeing across all our staff



- We work towards common goals by forging strong internal relationships
- We approach operational incidents and emergency situations as a team
- We work well with partners on prevention, responding to incidents and delivering common aims



- We respect ourselves and each other
- We respect the communities and individuals we serve
- We recognise effort, achievement and contribution



- We aim to improve the way we do things
- We look beyond current habits and policies to find new solutions
- We will ensure human life and firefighter safety are not compromised by rigid ways of dealing with incidents

# OUR CHALLENGES

## Financial Austerity

Scotland's public spending challenge is substantial and significant pressure on spending will remain over the next few years. While the Scottish Government has pledged to protect some services we acknowledge that we are not immune to spending pressures. There is no doubt that financial pressures will be a major test of our resilience going forward. The duration and severity of future financial reductions are not yet fully clear but what we do know is that to protect and improve service delivery outcomes we will need to transform how we operate.

## Public Service Reform

The Scottish Government is driving forward with an ongoing programme of public service reform. The Christie Commission report<sup>7</sup> on the future delivery of public services is the foundation on which all future developments shall be based. Public services are expected to collaborate more to deliver a person centred approach which contributes to improving outcomes that matter most to people and to prevent social and economic problems that drive much of the demand for those services. A stronger direction for Community Empowerment, Health and Social Care and Community Justice has recently been introduced to reinforce these duties.

To realise the intended benefits of reform, public services will need to work closely and collaborate in order to successfully deliver shared outcomes. This will include designing services which rely on the sharing of resources, which are delivered and targeted based on a joint understanding of risk. We will work with our partners to realise these ambitions. We will work together with communities to empower people to get involved with us in order to voice how they want services designed and delivered to meet their future needs. We will be an exemplar of successful transformational reform in the period ahead.

## Social Issues

The Scottish Government has stated that social and economic inequality has for too long been a persistent feature in the lives of many people and communities in Scotland. In areas of multiple deprivation communities experience poorer health, lower educational attainment, lower employment, more emergency hospital admissions and reduced safety. Typically the fire and rescue service is called out more often in these areas. This provides evidence that there is a close relationship between wider social and economic issues, fire related incidents and unintentional social and personal harm.

The number of older people in Scotland is predicted to rise over the next few decades. This will generate an increased demand on all public services as, for example, the number of older people susceptible to slips, trips or falls at home increases. By 2037 we expect to see the over 65 age group rise significantly as a proportion of our population with many more people also living beyond the age of 84. While people living longer lives is a positive indicator for Scotland, as people grow older they will require new forms of support to keep them safe from harm.

There is a risk that if public services do not adapt to meet these issues, vulnerabilities within communities could increase. As we plan collective response and prevention activities with our partners in dealing with this, we are mindful that in some of the most deprived areas of Scotland healthy life expectancy is significantly lower than the national average. Working with partners and with communities we will refocus our efforts in dealing with these issues.

By developing co-ordinated local responses with our partners and communities, we will focus proactively on prevention as well as high quality response measures that will help reduce these types of inequalities and improve a wider range of social outcomes.

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<sup>7</sup> Christie Commission Report - <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/352649/0118638.pdf>

## Climate Change

The climate has changed over the past few years with most areas experiencing a marked rise in extreme and unpredictable weather conditions. Severe storms, wide spread flooding, significant snow fall and major temperature fluctuations can have a devastating impact on peoples' lives and livelihoods. Dry spells may be welcomed after long wet winters, however if these become prolonged Scotland's vast grass and heath moorland are at a much greater risk of wildfire. By understanding the greatest risks and vulnerabilities arising from climate change we will plan, prepare and deploy our prevention and response resources to enable swift and effective actions where and when they are needed across Scotland.



## International Terrorism

In the modern world many countries experience the threat of terrorist violence. As we have seen in the recent past Scotland is not immune from such threats. In working with our partners across the UK and Scotland we will develop a better understanding of the nature of the threat Scotland faces so that we are well prepared. Our major strength in response to this, or any catastrophic event, is our ability to draw on resources across Scotland should such a threat ever materialise in any of our cities, towns or communities.



As the environment in which we and other public services operate evolves we will continually analyse those changes, determine what they mean for our Service, our partnerships and critically our communities. We will use the insight gained to influence how we deliver our services and how we will continue to work with our partners and communities in addressing the challenges ahead. We know we will need to be a more flexible, responsive, agile and efficient Service going forward. Our focus will be upon further building our prevention approach while retaining a strong response capability that adds wider value to the wellbeing of the Scottish people and keeps communities safe.



# OUR WORKFORCE

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service employs four broad categories of staff; wholtime firefighters, retained/volunteer firefighters, control personnel and support staff.

Figure 1 below shows the percentage of people employed and the relative spend for each employee category at the end of 2015. Since the inception of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service we have adopted a partnership approach to employee relations, ensuring early engagement with our trade unions in policy development and employment matters, which has been formalised in the Working Together Framework, endorsed by the Board and all trade unions.

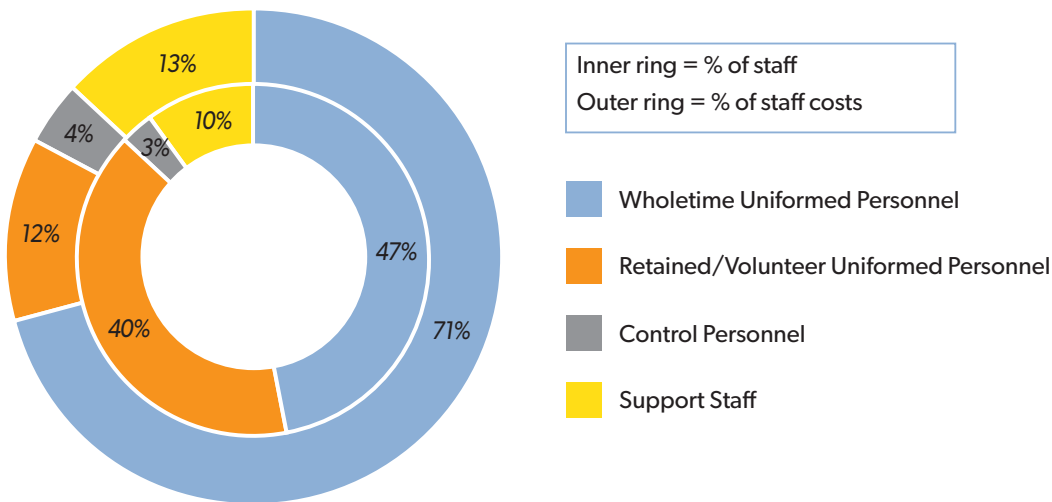


Figure 1 - Workforce numbers and costs



# OUR MONEY

It is anticipated that the financial environment for public services across Scotland and the UK will remain extremely challenging for the foreseeable future.

We are developing a long term financial strategy as an integral part of our strategic planning. It will take on a vital role to help us deliver on the aspirations of this Plan against the significant budget pressures expected in the future.

The core purpose of the long term financial strategy is to inform how we will plan the use of whatever resources and assets we have available to us.

This will help us make decisions and put detailed plans in place more quickly once our future budgets are more certain. Figure 2 below gives an indication of how our money is currently spent.

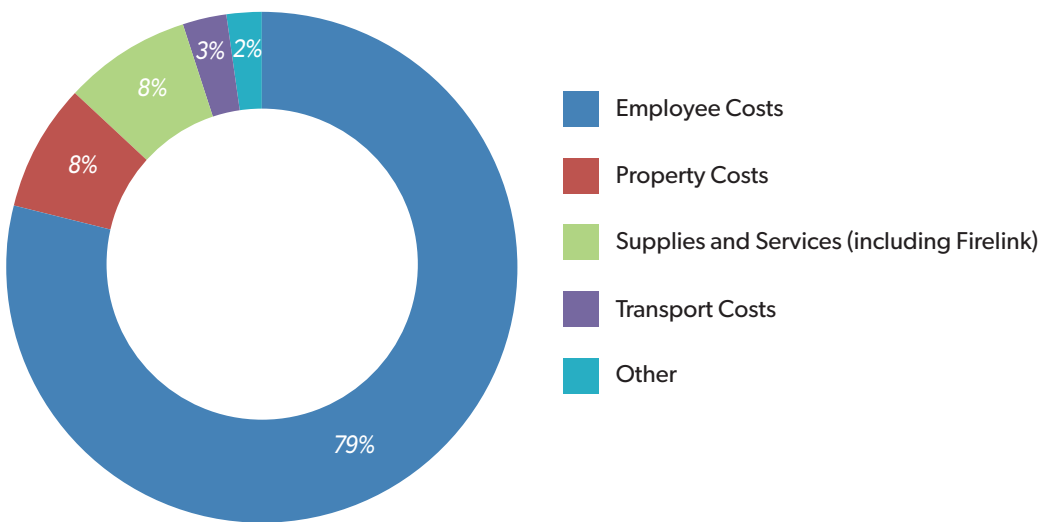


Figure 2 - Allocation of budget: calculations based on Resource Budget 2016/17

Significant work has been carried out to reduce our cost base by £54.4m and balance our resource budgets since our initial year as a national organisation. Through our critical savings pathway, plans are in place to deliver further recurring savings of £2.5m up to 2019/20.

Although our workforce accounts for nearly 80% of our budget these savings have been identified mainly against non-employee and also managerial and support costs.

Since the creation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service our capital funding has been variable each year. Through our strategic intent programme we have rationalised our property portfolio and we anticipate that this will generate capital receipts that will be fully reinvested in the Service.

In addition we receive a capital allocation from the Scottish Government and we will continue to reinvest this money into our assets so that they are fit for purpose in meeting our mission of Working Together for a Safer Scotland. Our capital spend from 2013/14 to 2015/16 is set out here.

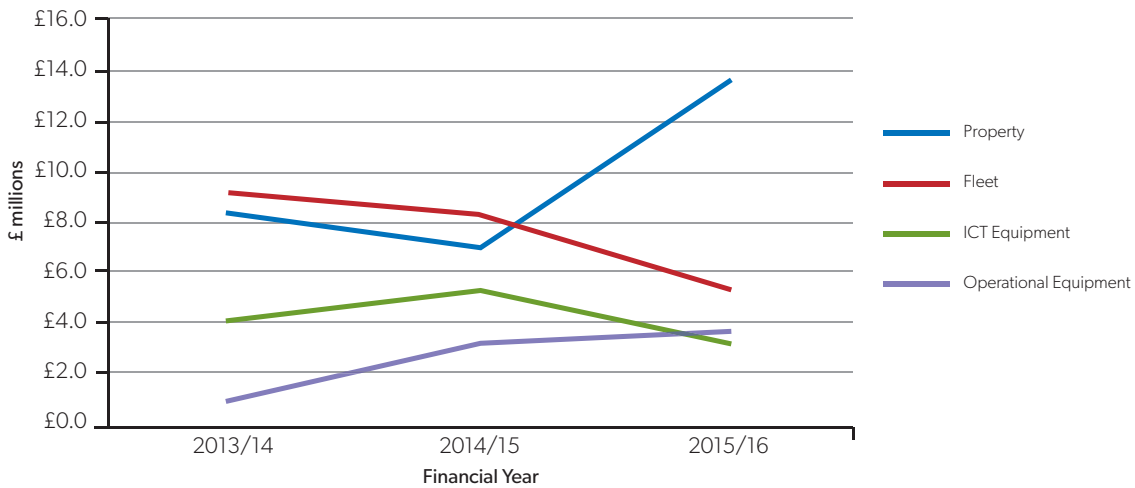


Figure 3 – Capital Budget: Actual Spend

# OUR PERFORMANCE

## We have been tracking our performance against the priorities and six challenging targets set by Scottish Government in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013.

Figure 4 below provides an outline of how we have been performing against five of these over the past six years. Our sixth target relates to staff absence. As we have changed the way we measure absence we do not yet have comparable figures to present. Further information about how we perform is detailed on our website<sup>8</sup>.

Over the longer term we can see marked reductions in the majority of these measures. However, we are now experiencing some increases. Various factors can affect these results and can be subject to seasonal and year-to-year fluctuations, but positive indicators can be drawn. For example, despite a recent increase in the overall fire casualties figure, fewer people are dying as a result of fire. And similarly, although we have been called to attend more accidental dwelling fires, analysis indicates these continue to be less severe with many being extinguished before we arrived.

To ensure performance monitoring is consistent with our strategy we will work with our managers, staff representatives and wider partners to develop a comprehensive set of performance measures against the outcomes, priorities and objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan.

These measures will form the basis of our future performance reports, which will enable us to continue to provide relevant, accurate, timely and consistent data and information to maintain effective scrutiny and challenge both at national and local levels.

To support this we will build on and extend our performance systems and methodologies and, against the principles of the Scottish Government's open data agenda, work with partners to share information. This will enable us to build a true holistic picture of where we need to target our resources and how we will know what improvements we are making.

We will publish our Annual Report and Accounts each year. This report will provide a detailed account of our organisation, our financial stewardship and will provide a balanced analysis of our risks and progress made against the priorities and objectives set out in this Plan.

Each year our Board will be held to account for our performance by Scottish Government Ministers. We will continue to undertake an annual performance review meeting which will be open to the public providing individuals, community representatives and our partners with the opportunity to question the Minister and our Board on our activities. Stronger local scrutiny arrangements are now in place as a result of reform. Our Local Senior Officers will continue to build on these arrangements to ensure local elected members are provided with every opportunity to track our progress in improving local outcomes.



Figure 4 – Key Performance Indicators 2010/11 to 2015/16

<sup>8</sup> Fire and Rescue Statistics - <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/about-us/fire-and-rescue-statistics.aspx>







# OUR STRATEGY

Following an extensive engagement exercise during 2015 with our staff, partners and community groups we have set ourselves on a course to make Scotland safer while meeting the full aspirations of the National Performance Framework.

To achieve this we have identified six key strategic priorities for the Service going forward. These priorities define our overall direction and will be central to our financial and business plans. They are each underpinned by specific strategic objectives which establish the steps we will take to address our challenges and successfully achieve our goals.

## Improved Local Outcomes

Fire and Rescue Services have a strong track record of effective prevention. The introduction of the Fire (Scotland) Act in 2005 led to a legislative responsibility to balance activities across intervention, prevention and protection. Our prevention focus is achieving results, as statistics show there has been marked reduction of accidental dwelling fires over the past 16 years. This success in turn creates new opportunities for us.

As well as seeking to drive down the incidence of fire we will continue to work with our partners in support of our collective efforts to minimise communities' exposure to risk and harm; for example in how we work with partners through prevention activities to reduce the incidences and impact of slips, trips and falls among vulnerable people in their homes.

Critically this search will lead to widening our traditional operational areas and include working more closely with a range of local partners so that we can contribute to improving a greater range of outcomes both locally and nationally. By working with partners in this way we will support the Scottish Government's priority of reducing inequalities across our society.

Individuals who have died as a result of fire were, more often than not, known to other agencies such as health, social care or criminal justice. This highlights the absolute need to share knowledge between services about those most vulnerable in our society and to work together better to reduce their risk from harm. We remain committed to and will continue to play a key role in developing information sharing protocols, detailing necessary clear processes, systems and practices, allowing us to work even closer with partners locally, to share information and identify those most vulnerable in our communities. We will also build on the reciprocal training already carried out between public sector bodies on referral pathways and accessing advice.

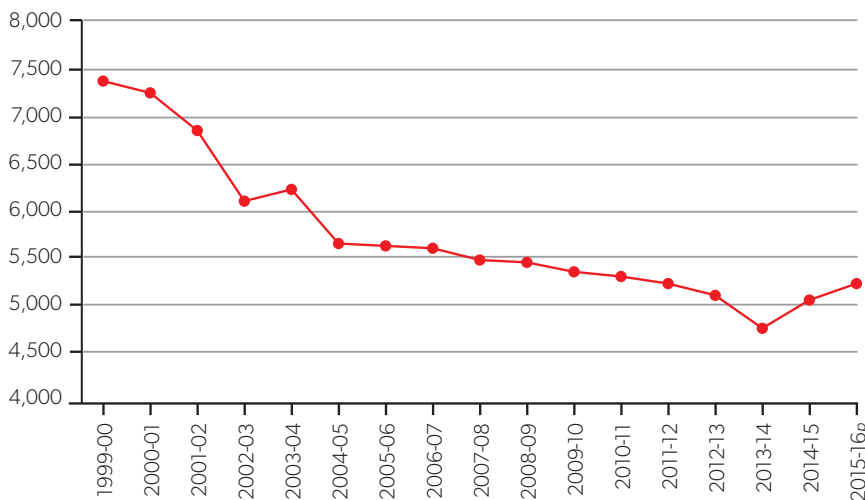


Figure 5 – Accidental Dwelling Fires 1999-00 to 2015-16

We have well advanced methods to predict the likelihood of fire related incidents in geographical areas and have an understanding of the social and economic inequalities that can lead to these.

By combining our intelligence with that of other agencies and Scottish Government led initiatives such as the Building Safer Communities Programme<sup>9</sup>, we will increasingly understand the social make up of each community - its individuals, behaviours, vulnerabilities and inequalities. We will be able to better integrate and coordinate our plans with our local partners to contribute to making communities safer and to enhance their wellbeing.

In this regard, we will then be able to use our resources, and our ability to positively engage with communities, to contribute to the wider safety and wellbeing of people. This will include, but will not be limited to, matters relating to falls, mental health, socio-economic deprivation, the provision of life saving skills and safeguarding vulnerable individuals. In doing so, we will be able to target our resources and activities to those who are identified as being most at risk.

We will collectively identify solutions and deliver a broad range of prevention services which add the greatest value to peoples' lives. A common understanding between agencies and communities of local priorities will allow for better integration of plans, co-production and coordination of services to target prevention activity where it will be most effective. We will therefore increasingly deliver our broad prevention work as part of local multi agency action teams. We will also look to use, wherever possible, new technologies to support the delivery of our services, such as technology enabled care and safety applications.

Building an awareness of risks and consequences is a key prevention technique used to influence and change behaviours. For a number of years we have used education and targeted public safety messages to motivate and empower people to take responsibility for their safety and wellbeing.

We will build on the success of our previous work and, with our partners in the public sector and various charitable organisations, will develop further initiatives to engage with key sections of the community.

Our Ageing Safely and Youth Engagement Frameworks are just two examples of how we will work across Scotland with many local and national bodies in this regard. The Youth Engagement Framework<sup>10</sup> in particular shows how we will increase the number of initiatives we run which are aimed at getting young people involved in activities where they can build valuable knowledge and life skills to prepare them for the future.

Changes in health and social care place a greater emphasis on enabling people to stay in their homes, or a homely setting, safely. Working with our partners, including social housing landlords, we need to better understand the risks that people will face as a community if we are to successfully achieve this ambition. To manage and reduce this risk we need a collaborative approach. We see local Health and Social Care Integration Boards, and their multi agency delivery groups, as being the key local forums which we will contribute to, and work closely with. This will enable us to play an integral part in developing local priority plans, and jointly delivering services to improve a wide range of local outcomes.

As a learning organisation we are committed to ensuring we always utilise best practice in all that we do. We are committed to using evaluation methods to assess our activities and interventions to ensure they contribute to improving community outcomes, achieve greater effectiveness in their intended impacts and help us secure greater efficiency in our operations. With our partners, we will develop robust methods and resources to enable us to evaluate the impact of our activities on improving local outcomes over the medium and long term. In addition to measuring against fire and wider health outcomes, this will also allow us to evaluate and publicise the wider social value of our work through the Scottish Government's Social Impact Pledge initiative<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Building Safer Communities Programme - <http://www.bsc.scot/>

<sup>10</sup> SFRS Youth Engagement Framework - <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-young-people/initiatives.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> Social Impact Pledge Initiative <http://www.communityscot.org.uk/social-impact-pledge/>

Our safety work goes beyond protecting people in their own homes. We also have a statutory duty under Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 to provide advice and enforce fire safety regulations in most non-domestic buildings across Scotland. Based on the assessment of risk, we will work to target fire safety audits balanced against highest life risk or where businesses have been affected by fire to determine if dutyholders are meeting their responsibilities under the Act and thereafter offer necessary business support. We will also continue to develop our partnership approach to support better regulation, and will progress the recommendations of the Regulatory Review Group's report relating to part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

To make certain we do all we can to support dutyholders to build and maintain safe business environments we take a highly active role in the collaborative Scottish Business Engagement Forum. Membership includes representatives from the Scottish business community and statutory bodies alike. Together we will build on and share good practice in legislative compliance and assist in promoting sustainable economic growth.

We not only seek to promote fire safety in existing premises, we aim to get involved in the early planning stages of new innovative building design proposals and construction projects, which may also include adaptation of existing buildings. We have specialist officers qualified in fire risk engineering working closely with local authority building standards officers as well as the project design team to offer practical guidance to ensure fire safety compliance at an early design stage. As design and construction materials change and evolve over time so will the risks that need to be managed. We will continue to work closely with the construction industry to develop our understanding of these changing modern methods of construction and in doing so continue to protect our firefighters, and the communities we serve.

We will work in partnership with those who use, manage, install and maintain automatic fire systems to reduce the number of false alarm signals we receive, and the subsequent number of blue light journeys incurred<sup>12</sup>. This will involve working with a wide range of partners to identify the main sources of false alarms, and then take all reasonable and practical steps to reduce their incidence.

## To achieve improved local outcomes, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will work in collaboration with our partners and communities in a flexible and responsive manner to ensure our collective resources jointly tackle issues related to inequality and protect those at greatest risk
- We will ensure that the safety and wellbeing of our communities is improved by working with them to build their knowledge and capacity, and providing targeted education and awareness campaigns using innovative technologies and new media platforms
- We will develop robust evaluation methods and resources to determine our impact on local outcomes and contribution to social value
- We will further develop our approach to better regulation by working closely with dutyholders to ensure the built environment is safe from fire

<sup>12</sup>SFRS Unwanted False Alarm Signal Policy - [http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-business/unwanted-fire-alarm-\(ufas\).aspx](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-safety/for-business/unwanted-fire-alarm-(ufas).aspx)



## National and Community Resilience

Resilience is the ability to adapt well when things go wrong. We and other key public services have the duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004<sup>13</sup> to prepare for and respond to any significant threats or major emergency events. This includes being able to deal well with events such as localised or widespread flooding, major transport accidents, chemical incidents, terrorist attacks, natural disasters or even pandemics.

To support the Scottish Government to prepare and protect Scotland, these dangers are assessed and co-ordinated plans made to respond to them by public services and numerous private and third sector agencies. We play a significant part in these partnerships and together we will secure an integrated approach to planning and response. This will be supported through our continued active involvement in Regional Resilience Partnerships across Scotland.

Our aim remains to be fully prepared when we are called into action. As seen during recent severe weather incidents, fire reform has created a dynamic platform on which to build sufficient and flexible resources to respond to large scale or multiple incidents across Scotland. By working with other emergency responders we will enhance our ability to assess risks and identify any vulnerability to critical national infrastructure assets or communities. This will include improving the use of data to be better informed and investing in technologies to help us respond more effectively.

In the event of a disruptive incident, such as power failure or cyber-attacks, we also need to be resilient and able to operate critical functions. As our service transforms and evolves we will make sure our business continuity and disaster recovery plans remain current and our people are fully aware of what to do should a disruptive event occur. This will ensure disruption is minimised and we become fully operational again in the shortest possible time.

Should terrorism strike in Scotland, we will act in support of those public agencies with the primacy for such incidents. We will work with those partners to fully plan how we will respond and how our people are trained and equipped. We will endeavour to safeguard our people as they in turn safeguard others.

Community resilience can be enhanced when individuals, groups or businesses are able to manage the effects of debilitating incidents. With our community planning partners we will help build capacity within communities to increase resilience so that they are stronger and can help themselves. This will involve working directly with people and groups to harness knowledge of their area and build confidence to develop emergency plans to prevent and lessen the impact of any incident should it happen. Communities and public agencies working in harmony will greatly enhance the ability to return to normal as quickly as possible after a destructive event.

### To achieve national and community resilience, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will take a lead role with partners in designing co-ordinated plans to manage the effects of major emergencies
- We will take a lead role with partners to enhance the protection of critical national infrastructure
- We will lead the way with our partners to secure enhanced community resilience

<sup>13</sup> Civil Contingences Act 2004 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/36/contents>

## Modernising Response

Our principal response functions, as laid out in the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005<sup>14</sup>, and the Fire (Additional Function) (Scotland) Order 2005<sup>15</sup> are to make provisions in relation to fire fighting and a range of other emergencies including road traffic collisions, flooding, search and rescue, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents, as well as having the power to respond to other incidents at our discretion.

However, we are seeing an increased demand to respond to a greater variety of incidents. By the very nature of emergencies these incidents may involve a coordinated response from other blue light partners such as the Police, Ambulance Service and Coastguard or from other agencies such as, local authorities, Scottish Environment Protection Agency or in the event of wild fire, landowners.

The figure below shows the top 15 incident types attended in 2015-16, and the difference between the provisional totals for 2015-16 and the preceding three-year average. Incidents associated with partnership working show the largest percentage increases.

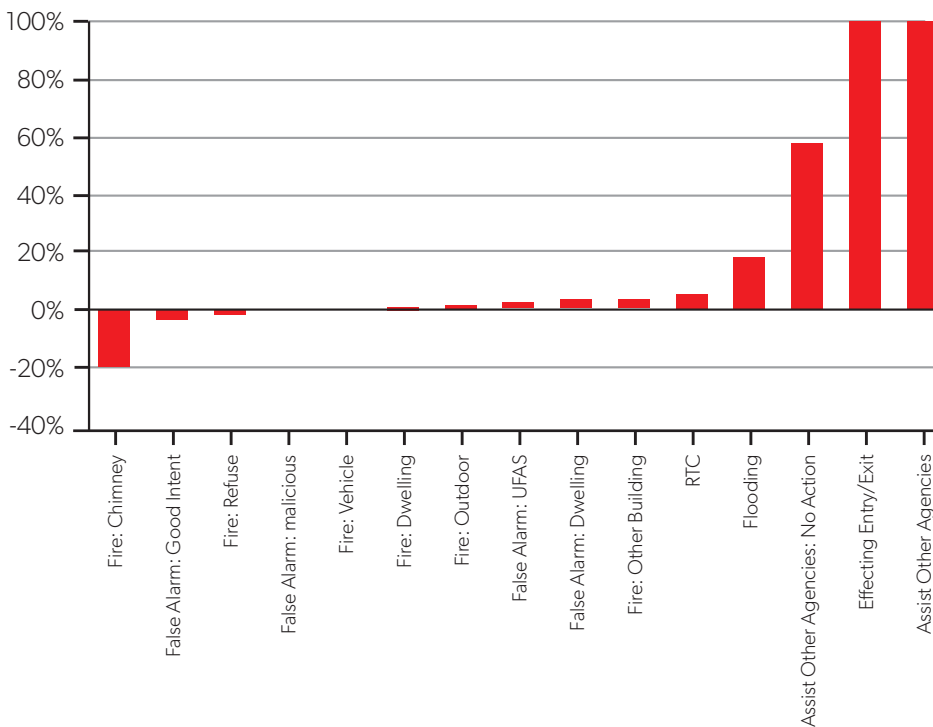


Figure 6 – Provisional Incident Data 2015/16: Difference from preceding 3 year average

<sup>14</sup> Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/5/contents>

<sup>15</sup> Fire (Additional Function) (Scotland) Order 2005 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2005/342/contents/made>

Assisting other agencies, for example has increased mainly in relation to attending Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest calls. These calls for assistance cover many other situations in which our crews and equipment are needed to support our emergency responder partners.

Together with our partners we will continue efforts to prevent incidents from happening but when they do occur our Firefighters will be prepared. Preparations include building a high level of flexible skills and expertise and providing access to a wide range of specialist equipment. An effective response tailored to best fit community needs is built around an understanding of the unique risk profile of each local area.

We will continue to learn from past incidents attended including subsequent fire investigations. This intelligence will be used to enhance community and firefighter safety. Our fire investigation work will also be used to support partners in the criminal justice system where appropriate.

We will enhance our risk assessment capabilities so that we deploy our resources in the most efficient and effective way. This will help us to balance risk with demand. Modernising our response will cover such things as looking at options for improving both wholetime and retained duty systems as well as how we crew our vehicles, what vehicles and equipment we use and what supervisory support our crews require. As we seek to develop modern response options we will fully engage with our staff and their representatives, our local and national partners and with communities directly.

Our primary goal is to make the people of Scotland safer and there is an opportunity for our response role to broaden further. This is reflected by our commitment to support Scottish Government's strategy<sup>16</sup> to improve life outcomes following out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. To test how this could work in practice, trials are being carried out in support of the Government's aim to improve survival rates in Scotland. These trials will be evaluated and the Service will develop a longer term position in light of the evaluation.



False alarms account for over half of the incidents we attend. The majority of these unwanted calls are generated by automatic fire alarm systems. This is a significant drain on our resources and travelling to these incidents under blue-light conditions presents an undue risk to our Firefighters and other road users.

Whilst we encourage the use of automatic fire detection to save lives and protect buildings we need to do more to reduce the burden to us and businesses that false alarms from systems installed in commercial and public premises cause. By looking at our approach and by working closely with the relevant people who install, manage and maintain automatic fire alarm systems we expect to see a marked reduction in attendance, including blue light journeys, to these types of incidents over the coming years.

## To achieve a modernising response, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will ensure that the way we respond to emergencies when they occur is tailored to meet the specific needs of communities
- We will work to ensure that the range of our emergency response roles is enhanced to improve life outcomes
- We will work with property owners to ensure that they are supported to reduce unwanted fire alarm signals

<sup>16</sup> Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest A Strategy for Scotland - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00474154.pdf>

## Workforce Development

We are a highly respected emergency service with a strong reputation for doing a good job. We achieve this by having a skilled and resilient workforce dedicated to making a difference to peoples' lives throughout Scotland. By continuing to train and support our workforce we aim to maintain and build on the positive impact they have.

To deliver sustained high performance into the future we will invest time to fully plan what our workforce needs will be. Our plans will be fully integrated with our business and our financial planning processes to make sure we have an affordable balance of roles and skills to deliver what is required of us now and into the future. We will explore the implications of any new emerging roles and the skills sets required for effective and safe delivery.

Being an employer of choice means that we create and maintain a good, stable working environment both to attract and retain talented and motivated individuals from across Scotland's diverse population. We will continue to promote an inclusive culture and equality of opportunity for all so that each individual can reach their full potential. To do this we will provide the right framework so that everyone can develop skills and knowledge to excel in their job and aspiring leaders are nurtured to grow and progress.

We are absolutely committed to the continuous improvement of health, safety and wellbeing services for our employees. Safety is one of our Values and as a key strategic objective it is paramount for our workforce. All our practices will proactively protect against harm and promote a positive safety culture in which all individuals are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard their own and others wellbeing.

We will encourage positive relationships and empower employees to get involved, express ideas and feed back regarding decisions that matter to them. Employees will work in an atmosphere with a strong sense of inclusion and recognition where they can flourish. Through a new Communication and Engagement Strategy we will build on how we engage and communicate with our staff so they have access to the right information to do their job well, know what is happening and how they contribute.

We will promote a career with the fire and rescue service in a way that is attractive and accessible to a wide range of people from across our society. This will include exploring employment programmes which provide greater opportunities for young people to develop practical transferable skills and achieve recognised qualifications. We will also carefully consider job design so that our jobs are inspiring and stimulate a shift in how working in a modern fire and rescue service is viewed.

To develop our workforce, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will develop plans to ensure that our current and future workforce needs are understood and planned for
- We will seek to be an employer of choice that better reflects the diversity of the people of Scotland
- We will continue to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of each employee
- We will work to ensure that our workforce is highly skilled and empowered







## Governance and Social Responsibility

Effective corporate governance is necessary to ensure that organisations are properly directed, controlled and held to account for what they achieve. Good governance assures a blend of value for money and accountability with transparent decision making and probity. There are a variety of characteristics which support good governance including effective planning and performance, good communication and engagement as well as the management of risk and environmental protection. We will continue to review our governance arrangements and structures so that they remain fit for purpose.

The systematic management of risk is fundamental to both our strategic and operational decision making processes. It underpins our business planning preparations and is central to our prevention, protection and response arrangements. Improved outcomes can be achieved if we make sure our decisions are based on strong evidence that responds directly to the holistic needs of communities. To support an evidence led approach, we will enhance our use of data and build on our analytical capabilities and reporting. This in turn will continue to enrich our decision making processes.

We take our environmental responsibilities seriously and have an Environmental Strategy<sup>17</sup> in place to manage the impact we have on the environment. These plans seek to reduce carbon emissions and pollution and improve our efficiency while contributing to improved environmental sustainability over the longer term. We also have a significant role to play under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009<sup>18</sup> in minimising the risks brought on by climate change and will continue to work with others to widen the asset base of preventive and response solutions.

Our social responsibility doesn't stop there. We will manage our organisation in a way that balances environmental, social, ethical and economic issues.

This includes creating fairer life chances through targeting our prevention activity to those most in need, working with our partners to positively engage with young people to support them into work, working with our suppliers to optimise benefits and by creating a workforce that is reflective of the communities we serve. We will also take care of our workforce by protecting their safety and wellbeing, listening to their views and by paying the living wage.

Children and young people from the care system can face ongoing challenges in society. This can have a negative impact on their wider life chances and experiences. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014<sup>19</sup> provides the legislative framework to improve a wide range of children's policies. Within this framework 24 categories of public bodies are named as Corporate Parents, including the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. This places a duty on us to be systematic and proactive in our efforts to meet the needs of children who are or have been in care. As a Corporate Parent we take our responsibilities seriously and will endeavour to find ways to tackle the inequalities looked after children and young people can face to improve their life chances.



<sup>17</sup> SFRS Environmental Strategy 2014-17 - <http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/about-us/environmental-strategy.aspx>

<sup>18</sup> Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2009/12/contents/enacted>

<sup>19</sup> Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 - Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

To enable effective scrutiny and challenge a new holistic performance framework will be prepared which will clearly set out the measures and systems we will use to keep track of our progress and identify areas for improvement. In preparing the framework we will consider how best to align national measures with tailored local measures as well as exploring ways to effectively capture our contribution to wider community outcomes. In addition, we will continue to develop our analytical capacity, to build greater intelligence through improved forecasting and modelling and achieve accreditation in official statistics provision.

Effective engagement and communication is vital to the successful functioning of any organisation. Our commitment to this will be emphasized through the development of a new Communication and Engagement Strategy. By harnessing effective communication we can better manage, motivate and explain.

To effectively engage and communicate with our partners and the public we will firstly ensure our workforce is well informed. We will make better use of communication tools to reach the right audiences in their preferred ways. By improving the reach of our safety messages we can save more lives and reduce injuries and economic damage.

To achieve good governance and social responsibility, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will continue to ensure that our decision making processes are transparent and evidence led
- We will develop our approach and strengthen our commitment to protecting the environment and achieving greater sustainability
- We will develop a performance framework that enables the effective management of risk and supports effective scrutiny, challenge and improvement
- We will embed effective communication and engagement in all that we do

## Transformation

Our knowledge of intervention, prevention and protection has been built over many years of experience. However, to continue improving our contribution to creating better outcomes for the people and communities of Scotland and tackle inequalities we need to keep evolving.

To do this we will implement a new transformation programme so that we fully explore opportunities to modernise and redesign our Service. We will set out to develop better, more efficient, ways of doing things across the diverse communities of Scotland. In partnership with colleagues in industry and academia and through knowledge sharing with other fire and rescue services in the UK and globally we will continue to look for new and innovative solutions and approaches to increase safety and reduce risks. This will include working with partners and communities to promote the installation of fire suppressant systems and other technologies where appropriate, based on an assessment of risk.

In response to Scottish Government's Digital Public Service Strategy<sup>20</sup> we aim to fully exploit the opportunities and efficiencies digital technology can bring. Through our own Digital Strategy<sup>21</sup>, we commit to invest in our ICT infrastructure and capability to meet the growing demand for effective and efficient communication and interoperability internally and across organisational boundaries. This will include being fully engaged with the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme which will seek to replace the national communication system used by Fire, Police and Ambulance Services across the UK.

As we explore ways to enhance our role and develop new ways of working we need to have an asset base that is aligned and fit for purpose. Effective management of our assets will embed our commitment to delivering high quality, sustainable and economically efficient services across Scotland whilst providing the best possible safe working conditions for our people.

As well as developing ways to target our own resources to best effect, the opportunity for further savings and efficiencies across the wider public service will be explored with our partners.

This will include investigating where benefits can be gained from the sharing of resources and assets, and where better collaboration can reduce duplication and increase productivity and economic advantage.

We will look to optimise the way we work and increase our efficiency and productivity to deliver better value into the future. By challenging the way things are done and through listening to the views of our workforce and our communities we will drive inefficiencies from how we operate and will keep improving the quality of our services.

To achieve transformation, a summary of our key strategic objectives is:

- We will explore new ways of working to meet Scotland's future needs
- We will continue to make better use of digital technology to improve how we work
- We will continue to manage and deploy our assets to meet the different needs of our communities
- We will continue to explore how we maximise efficiency and productivity within our organisation and partnerships

<sup>20</sup> Digital Public Service Strategy – <http://www.gov.scot/resource/0040/00407741.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> SFRS Digital Strategy – [http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/669265/140925\\_item\\_9a\\_lct\\_digital\\_strategy\\_appendix.pdf](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/669265/140925_item_9a_lct_digital_strategy_appendix.pdf)



We are an ambitious public service because that is what Scotland needs us to be.

We will enhance the public's trust in us and use our unique asset base and the skills and motivations of our staff to do even more for the people of Scotland.

We are absolutely determined that we will meet the challenges ahead and we will work together with our people, our partners and our communities to do so.

We invite others to work with us and to join us on that journey.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

This Strategic Plan sets out what our broad ambitions will be on behalf of the people of Scotland over the next 3 years. It sets the strategic direction for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and it will shape the details contained in all our other plans for that period.

Consultation on this Plan was carried out between 31 May 2016 and 9 August 2016. Over one hundred individuals or organisations participated in our online survey, providing valuable feedback. Views confirmed that we have set the right direction and our commitments echoed national and local partnership aspirations.

If you would like to view these consultation comments and our response you can do so by following this link [firescotland.citizenspace.com](http://firescotland.citizenspace.com).

If you would like more information on this, or if you would like more information about the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service you can:

Write to: **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters**  
Westburn Drive  
Cambuslang  
G72 7NA

Phone: 0141 646 4501

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