



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland



Strategic Plan 2022-2025



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Blue Light Services photocall staged by Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance (SCAA) at their Perth Airport base to show the many services and organisations that SCAA works with. Credit Perthshire Picture Agency

We are delighted to introduce the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

As SFRS approaches our 10th anniversary in 2023, this is our fourth Strategic Plan and the first one that aligns to our new [Long-Term Vision](#) for the Service which we published in 2021. In our Vision document we set out our ambitions to be a progressive organisation, centred around people's needs, inclusive of all and better connected to our communities. This Plan marks the next steps towards realising that Vision. It also builds on our organisational [Values](#), demonstrates our commitment to continuing to modernise the Service by doing more for our communities and changing how we work. It further strengthens our approach to prevention while maintaining an appropriate emergency response and addressing the repair and replacement challenges within our estate.

This Plan will deliver against the strategic priorities set out for the Service by the Scottish Government in the [Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022](#). It comes at an important time for Scotland as we recover and learn lessons from COVID-19. In response to the pandemic and to help Scotland recover from its impacts, the Scottish Government has committed to:

- ◆ Developing a progressive, wellbeing economy for Scotland.
- ◆ Building public services on a person-centred basis.
- ◆ Addressing issues of systemic social and economic inequality.
- ◆ Strengthening partnership working across public services.

As a Service committed to the Christie reform principles, we will look to play our part in achieving these wider ambitions for Scotland. In producing this Plan, we have ensured that our actions will support these priorities for Scotland as we work to improve the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

Although we pride ourselves on our ability to plan our services for a future Scotland, the pandemic has shown it is impossible to fully predict the future. As such, we have set out what we want to achieve over the next three years within this Plan, as well as highlighting some of the challenges we are faced with and the barriers we will need to overcome to realise our potential and achieve more for Scotland. We recognise we will be working to deliver this Plan through a period of significant economic and financial challenges. From 2023/24 to 2026/27 the Scottish Government has set an indicative flat cash budget for the Service which, with the impact of inflation, will represent a cut in real terms in our budget over that period. As we drive forward with the ambitions set out in this Plan we recognise that we will do so against this backdrop and as a result some hard choices will need to be made as we prioritise our actions. Equally we must address the problems

of an ageing estate and operating systems that need upgraded. We also need to maintain an extensive fleet of vehicles and equipment that supports what we do, whilst taking steps to reduce our carbon consumption.

The challenges we face are significant and it is clear to us that our capacity to deliver our full potential will be contingent on the availability of funding. We will always strive to do more for the people of Scotland but we must also be realistic in pursuing our ambition based on the resources available to us.

Finally, the commitments within this Plan are only possible because of the excellent work of all our people. They are truly inspirational and we would like to thank them for everything they do for the people of Scotland and for each other. We would also like to thank our partners and communities who we proudly serve and who support us in what we do.



WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-25?

The SFRS was established in April 2013. Since then we have produced strategic plans every three years to detail the activities we undertake to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of Scotland's communities, whilst keeping our firefighters safe.

This Strategic Plan outlines the high-level outcomes through which we will continually work towards our overall purpose, as outlined in the *Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022*:

'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 wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.'

The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022 also sets for us seven strategic priorities and we have a statutory duty to have regard to these when developing our Strategic Plan:

PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

RESPONSE

INNOVATION AND MODERNISATION

CLIMATE CHANGE

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE

PARTNERSHIP

PEOPLE

SFRS LONG-TERM VISION

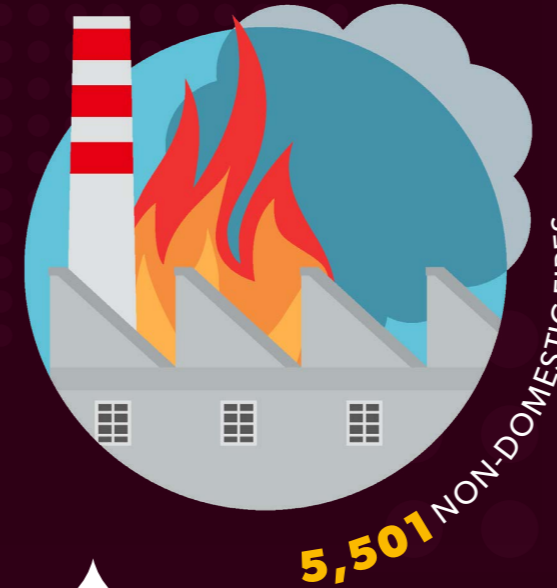
As well as considering the Fire Framework, this Strategic Plan supports the achievement of our *SFRS Long-Term Vision*. Our Vision is an aspirational document which was shaped by our stakeholders and staff. It sets out our future direction and outlines where we want to be in ten years' time. This Plan outlines the next stage in that journey.

Our Plan has been driven by these important documents and the seven Strategic Outcomes

which follow complement, and are structured against, the seven strategic priorities of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland.

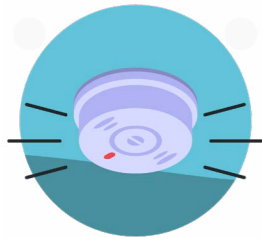
We have developed this Plan in consultation with the people of Scotland, our partners across the country, and our own people. The consultation process revealed strong support for our seven Strategic Outcomes. As such, we're confident that our ambitions for the next three years align with the needs of communities across Scotland.





OUR SERVICE, OUR AMBITIONS FOR SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITIES

We are the fourth largest fire and rescue service in the world. Our key role will always be to respond to fires and other emergency incidents but we do much more than that. In communities across Scotland, you'll find us:



Promoting fire safety



Dealing with structural collapse of buildings



Enforcing fire legislation



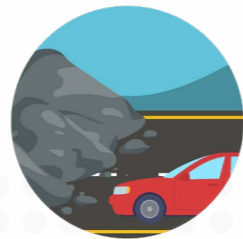
Planning for and responding to chemical, biological and nuclear incidents



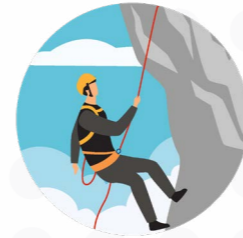
Responding to road traffic collisions



Responding to serious flooding



Responding to serious transport incidents



Carrying out rescues at height



Undertaking inland water rescue



Working with key partners to enhance community safety

We aim to be a first-class emergency service responder that is valued by the communities that we serve. However, we firmly believe that the best way to deal with any type of emergency is to try and stop it from happening in the first place. With a key focus on prevention, particularly in support of the most vulnerable members of society, we work with our partners across the country to deliver: crucial fire safety campaigns; prevention interventions; and work on a wide range of public safety initiatives that keep people and businesses safe. Because of this and because our firefighters, both Wholetime and On Call, are valued within their communities, we have an ambition to develop our contribution to Scotland. As we develop our services we want to ensure that the facilities and equipment we use are of the highest standard. We want them to be modern, purpose designed for the 21st century and safe for our people. Better buildings and equipment will help us retain those who currently work for us while attracting new people to help us become a more diverse organisation.

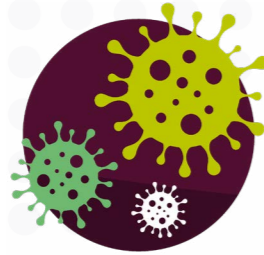
We will keep improving people's lives and the safety and wellbeing of the communities we serve by reducing the risk from harm and working in collaboration with our partners and communities.

OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

The delivery of this Plan will be influenced by the following aspects of our operating environment and how we will work to ensure their impacts on us are appropriately managed.

RECOVERING AND LEARNING FROM COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic we adapted swiftly alongside our partners to provide life-saving and innovative services for our communities. It is imperative that we continue to put key lessons we have learned from the pandemic into place to help us, and Scotland, fully recover.



BUDGETING RESPONSIBLY

Over the next three years we will face significant budgetary pressures in both



our resource and capital budgets, with a flat cash settlement being indicated in the Scottish Government Resource Spending Review (2022). While our actual budget will not be known each year until the December prior to the new financial year beginning in April, we will have to proceed and plan for savings to meet these budget challenges. During this same period, inflation will lead to high price increases for the goods and services we need to deliver our services. We are likely to see challenges emerging for our people around the increased cost of living and the pressures this places on them and their households. We also face a significant and growing investment need in our estate with many of our buildings requiring substantial upgrading and decarbonisation. Failure to invest in our estate will add further pressure to our resource budget as we increasingly spend more money on repair costs that come from ageing buildings. We will always strive to balance our budget; however, the pressures we

are facing will lead to an unavoidable increase in costs. As a result, we will need to make hard choices as we work to modernise the Service whilst maintaining financial sustainability and budgetary control.

FLEXIBILITY

Being a more flexible organisation was key to how we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will maintain our agile and flexible approach to deliver what is required of us by our communities. This means avoiding a “one size fits all” mentality and approach so that we can respond to differing community needs appropriately.



SERVICE MODERNISATION

We aim to develop our offer to communities as an emergency service based on a better understanding of changing risk. We will then reshape the use of our resources and service activities based on that risk and the resources we have available.



CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The impacts of climate change will increase over time. We will have to respond to more weather-related incidents which will increase in intensity, impact and frequency and continue to ensure our firefighters are properly trained, equipped and supported in this.



DEMOGRAPHIC AND COMMUNITY CHANGE

People are living longer with care increasingly shifting from institutional settings towards home-based care. This will generate new demands as Scotland seeks to support our population to age well in safe and resilient communities. Communities and households will also feel the impacts of the Cost of Living pressures and we know that when this occurs public expectation on frontline public services such as ours increases to help those most disadvantaged in our communities. Such pressures mean targeted prevention and early intervention work within communities will be of even greater



importance. We will continue this crucial work with communities and our partners to prevent unintentional harm from happening and continue to support vulnerable members of Scotland's communities.

PLACE

We are a national service, delivered locally. We are committed to understanding the changing risks across the country and meeting community needs. We will support the wider public service reform agenda of adopting a place-based approach to how public services are designed and delivered. This will shape how we work to ensure that our communities are safer, stronger and more resilient.



RESILIENCE

We play an important role in helping communities become more resilient. Whether in safeguarding people and communities against the impacts of a pandemic, the effects of adverse weather events, dealing with the threat of terrorism, and much



more. There remains a vital need for us to work with our communities and emergency service partners to prepare better to meet these threats as they evolve over time.

PEOPLE

Ensuring the wellbeing of communities and the safety of our firefighters has always been at the heart of how we operate. This approach of putting people first remains at our core. We will continue to place a strong focus on meeting people's needs as we change how we work. This includes ensuring that our people continue to receive the appropriate equipment and the training they need to carry out their crucial role.



ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

Engaging people in the decision-making process and empowering them to make appropriate choices for themselves is critical to making good decisions. We are committed to working this way, both with our communities and our own people. This will help



us arrive at better decisions which will make us a stronger and more successful organisation.

MANAGING CHANGE

We have and will continue to run large change projects across the Service. Projects can range from introducing new technology systems, undertaking large scale building projects, working with suppliers to develop new types of emergency response vehicles, to changing the ways we work. Throughout the duration of this Plan we will further improve how we manage projects to ensure their effective and efficient delivery.



As we proceed over the next three years we will continually revisit our assumptions about our operating environment and how any changes impact on the way we work. The detail in the following sections outlines what we aim to achieve over the lifetime of this Plan. How we will do so will be set out, scrutinised and monitored through our Annual Operating Plan by our Board.



OUR OUTCOMES: OUTCOME ONE

Community safety and wellbeing improves as we deploy targeted initiatives to prevent emergencies and harm.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We firmly believe that preventing problems from arising is better than dealing with them when they occur. Our approach to prevention helps people, communities and the economy stay safe and enables us to support work addressing wider inequalities. We will continue to share data appropriately with our partners to protect the vulnerable in our communities. To support Scotland's economy, we will continue to enforce and provide advice around fire safety legislation to business owners in shops, offices, workshops and factories. We will further expand our prevention work to Scottish households and develop our prevention approaches to influence people's behaviours to help keep themselves safe and improve their wider wellbeing. We will build on the work with our partners to target education and safety initiatives to those who need it most, including the young and the vulnerable. We will develop our home fire safety visit programme to incorporate wider health and social care considerations and develop a coordinated approach to reducing unintentional harm, including falls, burns and scalds, and drowning, throughout Scotland.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 our prevention work will help individuals, communities, organisations and businesses feel more confident regarding safety within their homes, premises and localities. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Refocusing our preventative activities to address issues of social, economic and health inequalities.
- ◆ Leading initiatives with our partners to appropriately share data and information.
- ◆ Leading initiatives to reduce unintentional harm in our communities.
- ◆ Working with communities, partners and stakeholders to produce and disseminate safety advice and information effectively.
- ◆ Improving community safety and wellbeing by working to encourage sustained behavioural change within households.
- ◆ Supporting business owners to protect Scotland's non-domestic buildings and premises.



OUTCOME TWO

Communities are safer and more resilient as we respond effectively to changing risks.



WHAT WE WILL DO

We will apply the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to how we operate. We will continue our work to understand the changing risks within our communities and strategically decide how best to locate our operational resources based on where the greatest risks lie. We will aim to deliver on the commitments made in our Operational Strategy which places operational response at the forefront as we work with partners to deliver long term benefits to Scotland's communities. We will ensure we have the right resources in the right places at the right times and further improve our On Call service. We will have appropriate systems to direct our firefighting activities effectively and continue to ensure all our people have the right skills, training and equipment. We will continue to plan and respond with other emergency services to improve public and firefighter safety.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 our effective emergency response will contribute to ensuring communities remain safe. We will achieve this by:

- ♦ Building upon our knowledge of our communities and using a place based approach to responding to the changing risks and inequalities they face.
- ♦ Applying the lessons we have learned from COVID-19 to drive sustainable improvement in how we work.
- ♦ Training effectively and efficiently as a Service and with our partners to improve community safety.
- ♦ Providing the right technology and equipment to keep firefighters safe.
- ♦ Improving how we manage calls from the public and deploy our resources to emergency incidents.
- ♦ More efficiently responding to false fire alarm calls and improving road safety by reducing the number of blue light journeys we make to them.



OUTCOME THREE

We value and demonstrate innovation across all areas of our work.

WHAT WE WILL DO

Innovation is about new processes and new ways of doing things. It allows us to look at the equipment we use or the services we provide and renew or update them by applying new processes, techniques or implementing new ideas that lead to improvement. Over the next three years, innovation will be crucial in helping us to continue to deliver and develop our services as we face budgetary pressures. We will continue to embed innovation into how we work and operate. We will work with others to seek innovative opportunities to drive change and improvement. We will continue to use our talent, partnerships and resources to develop and improve our systems, processes and performance. We will develop our first corporate wide Innovation and Improvement Strategy which will set out how, as one of the largest fire and rescue services in the world, we will encourage and drive innovation across all areas of our work and help us make the best use of our resources, adapt to changing risks and drive good practice.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will embrace innovative approaches to how we operate. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Promoting and embedding a culture of innovation in the Service that encourages staff involvement to develop new ways of thinking and working.
- ◆ Delivering new opportunities, partnerships and collaborations to improve public and employee safety and wellbeing.
- ◆ Deploying new digital and other technologies to change how we work and to keep firefighters safe.
- ◆ Improving inter-departmental working and knowledge sharing across the Service.
- ◆ Implementing a new approach to undertaking research and development.
- ◆ Developing further innovative approaches to modernising our estate.

OUTCOME FOUR

We respond to the impacts of climate change in Scotland and reduce our carbon emissions.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We will continue to develop the resources needed to tackle the impacts of climate change and we will ensure that these are strategically located across the country. Our firefighters will remain fully trained and equipped to support communities in meeting extreme weather events. We will also make use of other local resources that are available to bolster our response during prolonged or widespread incidents. We will continue to work to reduce our own organisational impact on the environment by changing how we work, how we consume and manage energy, and how we behave as we adapt to climate change. Reducing our carbon emissions is the first step in this journey. By 2045 we aim to become a carbon neutral organisation.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will reduce our carbon emissions and continue to support our communities to tackle climate change. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Ensuring our people continue to plan, are trained for and equipped to respond to climate change incidents.
- ◆ Working with partners to prevent fires, thereby reducing carbon released into the atmosphere.
- ◆ Strategically placing specialist resources in areas where there is a greater risk of flooding.
- ◆ Reducing our carbon consumption by aiming to invest in renewable technologies and reducing energy waste across the Service.
- ◆ Investing further in the greening of our fleet by acquiring zero emission vehicles where appropriate.
- ◆ Supporting staff to adopt changes and behaviour to support more environmentally friendly working practices.

OUTCOME FIVE

We are a progressive organisation, use our resources responsibly and provide best value for money to the public.



WHAT WE WILL DO

As a progressive organisation our Board will continue to provide robust scrutiny whilst governing responsibly and transparently. We will continue to collect and publish the right data to show how well we are performing, making this information available to the public in ways that are accessible and easy to understand. We will continue to manage our finances, physical and digital infrastructure, vehicles, equipment and supporting infrastructure responsibly and maintain them to the best of our ability with the resources available to us. In addition, as an emergency service that is always looking to improve, we will continue to focus on the effective management of risk, and the health, safety and wellbeing of the public and our staff.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will continue to demonstrate how effective we are at managing and sharing our resources, and performing against our objectives and obligations. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Remaining open and transparent in how we make decisions.
- ◆ Improving levels of Service performance whilst providing value for money to the public.
- ◆ Improving the use of data and business intelligence to support decision making.
- ◆ Proactively engaging with and providing more accessible information on what we do for the public and our stakeholders.
- ◆ Managing and maintaining our buildings, vehicles and wider infrastructure as well as we can.
- ◆ Managing major change projects and organisational risks effectively and efficiently.



OUTCOME SIX

The experience of those who work for SFRS improves as we are the best employer we can be.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We will be the best employer we can be and will put the physical and mental health of our people at the forefront. As an aspirational employer, we will aim to attract and retain the best people to deliver our services to the public. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we had to work in more flexible and agile ways. Over the next three years we will continue to embed those changes in how we work and use technology to make day to day tasks easier for our people. We will continue to improve our training to enable our people to develop and maintain their competencies and skills. We will continue to improve our recruitment processes and make our roles more attractive to all members of our communities and develop our approach to youth engagement and employment. We will nurture an inclusive culture that values and welcomes everybody to be themselves at work. We will continue to provide our people with the dignified work facilities that they deserve, but this requires substantial investment. We will work with our representative bodies to champion fairness, equality, partnership, engagement, empowerment and respect for all. We will continue to be a Fair Work Employer, never paying less than the Living Wage to our staff.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will be an employer that demonstrates our commitment to our people. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Continuing to work in partnership with our representative bodies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public and our people.
- ◆ Developing and deploying new and more agile ways of working to protect the safety, wellbeing, physical and mental health of our people.
- ◆ Continuing to provide training and development opportunities for all our people to ensure they have the right mix of knowledge and skills.
- ◆ Expanding our youth engagement and employment activity.
- ◆ Further promoting diversity and working with our partners to improve recruitment outcomes for minority ethnic people.
- ◆ Continuing to make working for SFRS fulfilling and ensuring all our people can have their say regarding how we work.
- ◆ Promoting a culture that values inclusion, promotes fairness, equality and respect for all while working to provide dignified work facilities for our people.

Bottom photo: Pride Glasgow 2022 © Kiera Burns Photography



OUTCOME SEVEN

Community safety and wellbeing improves as we work effectively with our partners.

WHAT WE WILL DO

Partnership working is at our core. We will continue to work closely with our partners, including other fire and rescue services throughout the UK and internationally, to improve the wellbeing of communities and the safety of our firefighters. We will remain fully committed to Community Planning, and work with partners including Police Scotland, the Scottish Ambulance Service, Local Authorities, Health Boards, the Third Sector and Community Groups throughout Scotland. Partnership working is vital to ensure we perform at our best in all that we do, particularly in these financially challenging times. We will work closely with our communities to understand their changing needs and include them in the design, development and prioritisation of our services.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will be recognised as a reliable and valued partner, delivering an effective emergency service and a wide range of place based initiatives with partners across Scotland and further afield. We will achieve this by:

- ◆ Continuing our commitment to Community Planning and partnership working across all localities in Scotland.
- ◆ Working with our partners to further safeguard the young and our vulnerable adults.
- ◆ Working with our partners to address common service demand challenges.
- ◆ Sharing more of our premises with partners and seeking efficiencies where we can through collaborative working.
- ◆ Engaging more with communities and partners when designing, developing and delivering services.
- ◆ Being positively valued by our partners and communities in all that we do.

STRATEGY ON A PAGE

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 wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.

OUR VALUES



OUTCOME ONE

Community safety and wellbeing improves as we deploy targeted initiatives to prevent emergencies and harm.

OUTCOME TWO

Communities are safer and more resilient as we respond effectively to changing risks.

OUTCOME THREE

We value and demonstrate innovation across all areas of our work.

OUTCOME FOUR

We respond to the impacts of climate change in Scotland and reduce our carbon emissions.

OUTCOME FIVE

We are a progressive organisation, use our resources responsibly and provide best value for money to the public.

OUTCOME SIX

The experience of those who work for SFRS improves as we are the best employer we can be.

OUTCOME SEVEN

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