

2020



# LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

Aberdeen City



Community Planning  
Aberdeen

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Aberdeen City. This plan has been developed to promote and improve community safety across Aberdeen City in conjunction with the national priorities contained within the SFRS Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and the vision of Community Planning Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (LOIP); "Aberdeen, a place where people can prosper".

This plan sets out 5 local priorities, from 2020, onwards providing context underpinning each priority along with proposed actions, intended outcomes and performance indicators against which progress will be measured and reviewed.

The priorities that have been identified are;

- Improving Fire Safety in the Home
- Reducing Deliberate Fires
- Improving Fire Safety in the Business Community
- Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
- Effective Risk Management and Operational Preparedness

Making progress against these priorities is not something the SFRS can achieve in isolation and, locally, we will continue to be an active partner across all community planning activity supporting partners and communities to tackle stubborn inequalities and improve outcomes for all of our communities across Aberdeen City.

Ensuring we have a highly skilled workforce allows us to respond safely, effectively and efficiently to the vast range of emergency incidents we encounter across Aberdeen and beyond, however, providing greater focus to our prevention work will reduce operational demand and allow us to explore opportunities to expand our work into new areas that reflect the changing risks across all of our communities.

Early in 2020 we faced an unprecedented challenge in the form of a global pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we dramatically changed how we worked so that we could continue to deliver an emergency service whilst keeping our staff and the public safe.

The pandemic is expected to have a lasting effect on society and this will change the way in which we deliver services in the long-term. The full implications are not yet known and this makes it difficult to make any far-reaching plans with certainty. As such we will keep the priorities of this Plan under regular review to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

**Bruce Farquharson**  
**Local Senior Officer**

# National Context

Scottish Ministers set out their specific expectations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016. This provides the outline we should follow to ensure our resources and activities are aligned with the Scottish Government's Purpose and national outcomes.

Our [Strategic Plan 2019-22](#) has been designed to meet these national expectations. Set against a complex and evolving backdrop our Strategic Plan encapsulates our mission, values and our strategic outcomes and objectives.



To ensure we can prevent the worst from happening and to be fully prepared to respond should we be called, we need to be aware of any new changing risks which threaten the safety of communities or the workforce. When developing our most recent plan, cognisance was given to: our changing population and the forecasted rise in over 75s; doing what we can to balance social and economic inequality; climate change and the devastating impact the inclement weather can have on peoples' lives and livelihoods; and the threat of terrorism.

Our Strategic Plan is supported by a three-year Strategic Plan Programme which provides details on all the activities we intend to carry out to successfully achieve our ambitions. The Programme informs our Annual Operating Plan, which provides specific detail on the actions we carry out each year, and from which our performance is scrutinised.

This Plan is a statutory Local Fire and Rescue Plan. It sets local direction to meet the strategic outcomes and objectives outlined above. It also demonstrates how we will contribute to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).

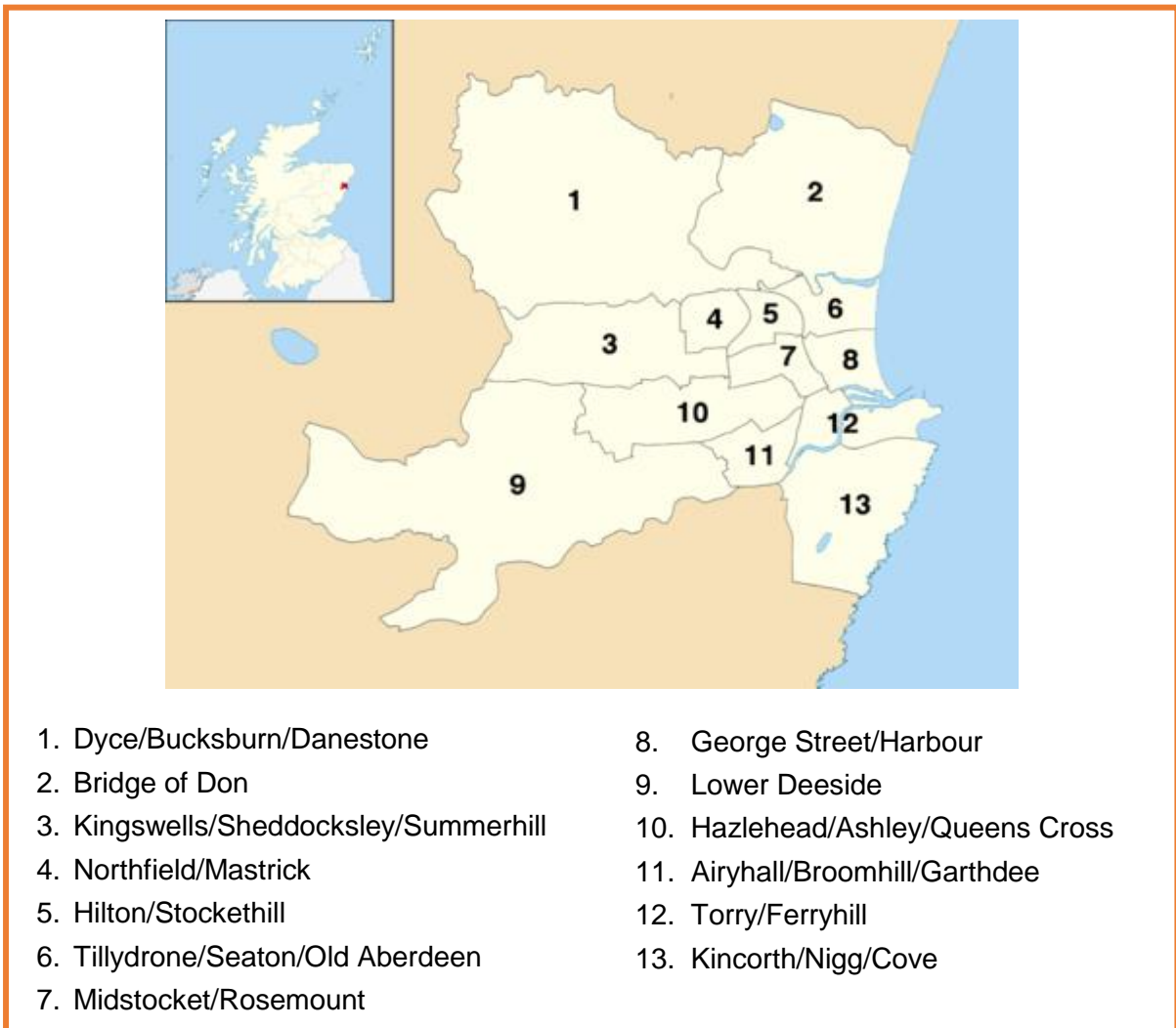
## Local Context

Aberdeen City covers an area of 185.7km<sup>2</sup> and consists of 13 multi-member council wards. The City has a population of 228,000, 4.2% of Scotland's population, which is predicted to rise to 230,000 by 2026 according to projections by National Records of Scotland (NRS).

69% of the population are of working age, 15% are under 16 and 16% are of pensionable age. NRS estimates that the number of Aberdeen City residents of pensionable age will rise by 30% by 2028.

Aberdeen City also has a very diverse population with an estimated 24% of its residents born outside the UK.

### Aberdeen City Council Ward Map



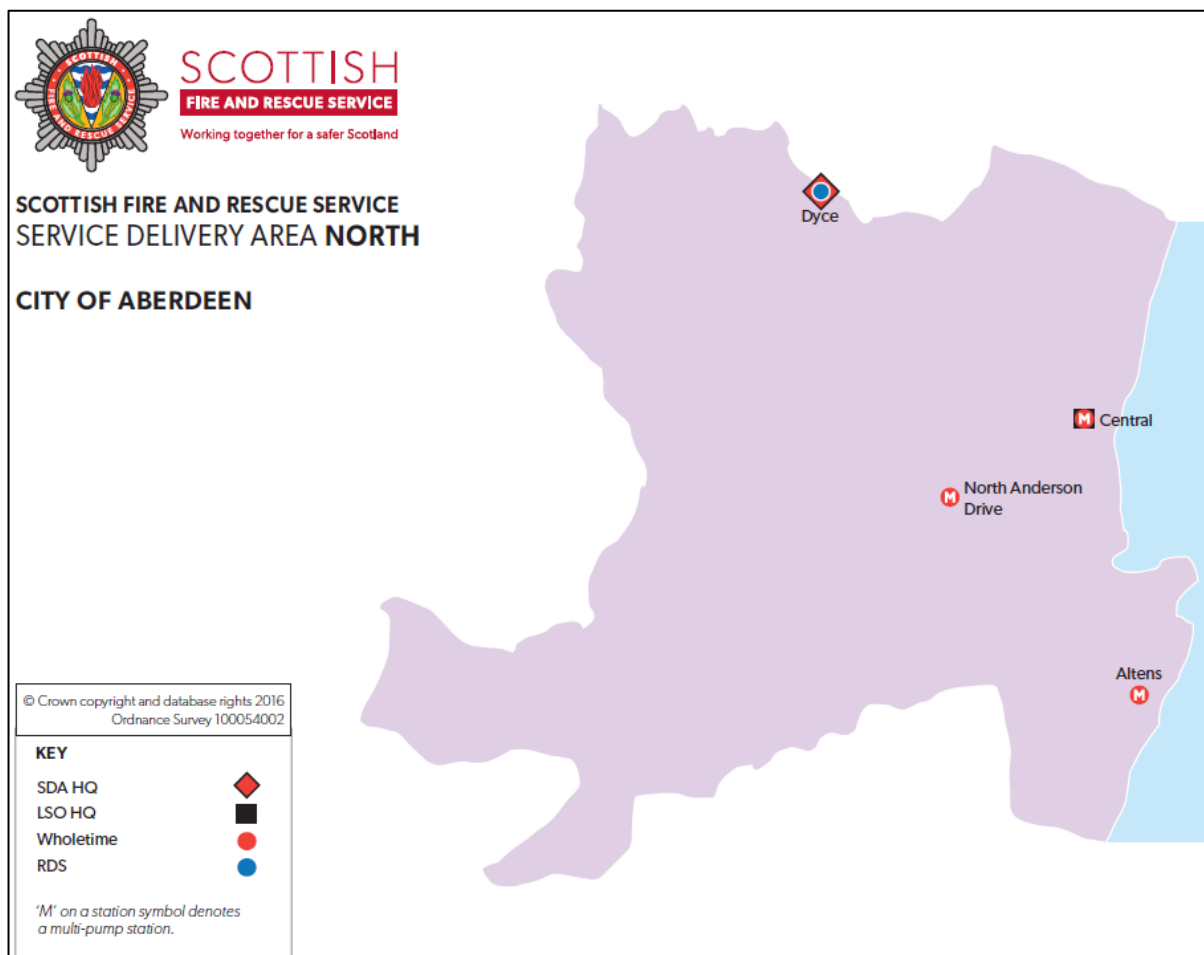
While the overall population is projected to remain relatively static over the next 8 years, the increasing ageing population will present its own challenges across a number of services and will see an increased demand for community facilities and support.

A priority for the SFRS is to protect those most vulnerable from harm in their own home, a number which will inevitably increase as the ageing population increases. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that we target our resources and activity in such a way that reduces demand in other areas, allowing us to focus more resources at supporting the most vulnerable and at-risk people in our communities.

Aberdeen City remains a frontrunner across the energy sector which is a significant economic contributor, however the city is also economically vibrant across many business sectors including electronics, research and development, agriculture and further education.

Overall, Aberdeen remains a relatively wealthy area with 40% of Aberdeen’s SIMD data zones in the 20% least deprived areas of Scotland. However, the City also has areas of deprivation with 8% of Aberdeen’s data zones falling into the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland.

### About the SFRS in Aberdeen City



The SFRS has four community fire stations located across Aberdeen City, three Wholetime stations (Altens, North Anderson Drive and Central) and one Retained station (Dyce). These stations provide prevention, protection and response services tailored to local needs. These stations also contribute to national resilience providing a range of specialist skills including water rescue, rope rescue, mass decontamination, hazardous material and urban search and rescue.



Our Wholetime stations are crewed by 5 teams (watches) of full-time firefighters who provide a 24/7 operational response availability to respond to emergencies. In contrast, our Retained station is crewed by part-time firefighters who have alternative primary employment and respond by pager to emergency incidents.

While operational personnel are the most visible SFRS resource they are supported by a management team and non-operational personnel. Our valued prevention activity is delivered by legislative fire safety enforcement officers and a Community Action Team who work alongside CPA partners to deliver initiatives that improve the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

The North Service Delivery Area (NSDA) HQ is connected to Dyce Community Fire Station and is the main office for the Deputy Assistant Chief Officer who has responsibility for service delivery across the NSDA. A number of national support colleagues are also based in this building.

**Community Planning Aberdeen (CPA)**

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires planning partners to come together and work in partnership to improve local outcomes.

The “Golden Pyramid” below illustrates the determination to ensure that CPA work in partnership to enable and empower local people and communities to be the drivers of their own improved outcomes.





The Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP), developed by CPA, provides a focus on Economy, People and Place and identifies 15 stretch outcomes that, within them, contain 120 improvement projects that aim in combination to achieve each of these 15 outcomes.

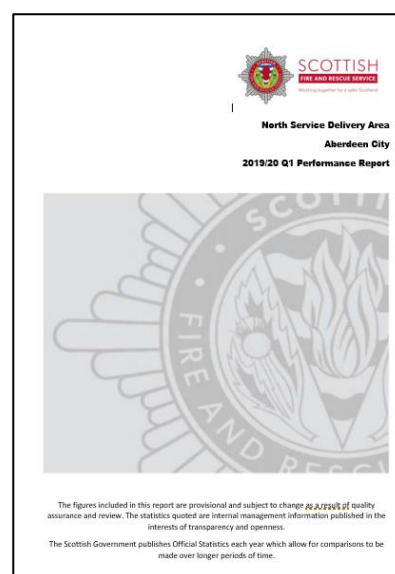
The SFRS is a statutory and active member of CPA's Outcome Improvement Groups and is committed to CPA's vision; "Aberdeen, a place where all people can prosper".

ECONOMY	PEOPLE (Children & young people)	PEOPLE (Adults)	PLACE
<p>1. 10% increase in employment across priority and volume growth sectors by 2026.</p> <p>2. 90% of working people in Living Wage employment by 2026.</p>	<p>3. 95% of children (0-5years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026.</p> <p>4. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026.</p> <p>5. 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</p> <p>6. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>7. Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.</p> <p>8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>	<p>9. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction each year by 2026.</p> <p>10. 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year of receiving a community or custodial sentence by 2026.</p> <p>11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.</p> <p>12. Rate of harmful levels of alcohol consumption reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland by 2026.</p>	<p>13. No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026.</p> <p>14. Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.</p> <p>15. 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p>

## Performance Scrutiny

As part of the process of scrutinising local fire and rescue service delivery, we are required to submit quarterly performance reports to the Aberdeen City Council Public Protection Committee. The purpose of these reports is to present information on the performance of the SFRS against the priorities contained within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Dundee.

A review of our performance against the previous Local Fire and Rescue Plan, which included an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute via an online survey, was undertaken during the first quarter of 2020. The outcomes of the review, along with an assessment of the challenges we face and opportunities for change have been incorporated into the priorities identified within this plan.



# Local Priorities

## 1. Improving Fire Safety in the Home

### Background:

Over the past 5 years accidental dwelling fires (ADF) account for 7% of operational demand across Aberdeen City. Whilst a relatively low figure, it is the incident type in which individuals are most likely to die or be injured. Improving fire safety in the home, therefore, continues to be a priority for us.

There are over 116,000 homes in Aberdeen and on average, we attend 271 fires in these each year, however, the high prevalence of low severity ADF's is a reflection of the focus on prevention and protection work that has taken place across the city. Over the past 5 years 12,849 HFSV's have been conducted with 3814 detectors installed, providing an essential early warning of fire.

Evidence indicates the most vulnerable individuals in our communities, and those living in certain geographical areas, are at higher risk from fire in the home. The elderly account for approximately 30% of all ADF's with additional contributory factors such as lone occupancy, smoking, mobility, alcohol dependency and use of medical oxygen increasing that risk.

Many of these higher risk individuals are known to other agencies which highlights the absolute need to review and strengthen referral pathways to ensure knowledge, data and information is shared across these agencies.

### We will achieve it by:

- *Target Home Safety Visits, fire safety education and fire safety advice at those identified as being most vulnerable and at risk from fire.*
- *Review and strengthen existing referral pathways and identify opportunities to extend these pathways to other partners.*
- *Analysing data and information to identify individuals, households, communities and geographical areas most at risk from fire.*
- *Working with CPA partners to support LOIP outcomes that protect people from all harm in the home.*

### Performance Indicators:

- *Accidental Dwelling Fires.*
- *Fire casualties and fatalities resulting from Accidental Dwelling Fires.*
- *Number of high risk Home Safety Visits completed as a percentage of all visits.*
- *Number of Home Safety Visit referrals received from partners.*

### Expected Outcomes:

- *Improved community safety and wellbeing.*
- *Reduction in number of Accidental Dwelling Fires.*
- *Reduction in number of casualties and fatalities resulting from Accidental Dwelling Fires.*

## 2. Reducing Deliberate Fires

### Background:

Protecting the communities of Aberdeen isn't just about preventing accidental fires, we also work hard to tackle the problem of deliberate fire-setting.

Over the past 5 years deliberate fire-setting has accounted for almost 10% of all incident activity across Aberdeen City placing Aberdeen 20<sup>th</sup> out of all 32 local authority areas and well below the Scottish average. Despite this, we still need to provide a focus on reducing deliberate fires as these incidents divert firefighters from attending more serious incidents, contribute to avoidable financial costs and linked to wider anti-social behaviour that can make people feel unsafe in their communities.

Across Aberdeen, secondary fires (grass, bushes, wheelie bins, refuse etc) make up around 74% of all deliberately set fires with the more deprived areas suffering the highest incidences of these incidents.

Collaborative working with CPA partners and youth engagement programmes are where SFRS can contribute resources to the reduction of deliberate fire-setting and help improve local outcomes.

### We will achieve it by:

- *Reviewing, analysing and sharing data to identify trends in deliberate fire-setting activity.*
- *Target education and prevention activities in areas identified as suffering higher incidences of deliberate fire-setting.*
- *Increase the number of SFRS personnel trained as counsellors through the Firesetters Intervention and Re-education Scheme to then engage directly with offenders and ex-offenders involved in deliberate fire-setting.*
- *Work with partners to develop innovative risk-reduction strategies to minimise the impact of deliberate fires and associated anti-social behaviour.*

### Performance Indicators:

- *All deliberate secondary fires (and their locations).*
- *All deliberate primary fires (and their locations).*

### Expected Outcomes:

- *Reduce the number of wilful fires by 20% (LOIP Key Driver 9.2).*
- *Improved community safety and wellbeing.*
- *Improved data analysis to ensure resources are directed to maximise community outcomes.*
- *Protect Aberdeen's natural and built environment.*

### 3. Improving Fire Safety in the Business Community

#### Background:

Fires in businesses and workplaces have the potential to have a significant impact on critical infrastructure, local heritage and the economy. Ensuring businesses are better protected, and more resilient to fire is a key priority for us during these challenging economic times.

The SFRS has a statutory duty under Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 to provide advice and enforce compliance with fire safety regulations. The duty holders in all premises considered as “relevant” under the Act are required to meet certain responsibilities in relation to maintaining safe environments.

The SFRS operate a risk-based fire safety audit programme, prioritising premises that are considered as presenting the highest risk, having the potential for loss of life or serious injury. These premises form a list of framework premises that are audit annually, however, Local Fire Safety Enforcement Officers also undertake a programme of thematic audits, out with the framework list e.g. in response to incident trends, at other high-risk premises, premises critical to local infrastructure etc.

#### We will achieve it by:

- *Prioritising our legislative fire safety audits towards protecting relevant premises presenting the highest life risk.*
- *Support all businesses affected by fire by undertaking a post-fire audit, assisting in their recovery as efficiently as possible.*
- *Identify fire trends in particular property types to inform our thematic audit programme.*
- *Respond promptly to complaints over fire safety compliance in relevant premises.*

#### Performance Indicators:

- *All fires in relevant premises as defined under Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.*
- *Number of framework fire safety audits completed.*
- *Number of non-framework, thematic audits completed.*

#### Expected Outcomes:

- *Through a risk-based audit programme, we will protect Aberdeen’s built environment and natural heritage, at the same time supporting economic growth.*
- *Enhanced understanding of fire safety legislation and responsibilities across the business sector.*

## 4. Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

### Background:

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) is defined as 'a fire alarm activation resulting from a cause other than fire'. Over the past 5 years false alarms have accounted for 62% of all operational activity in Aberdeen City. Within that category, Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) make up 57% of all false alarms (35% of all emergency calls we have responded to).

The SFRS encourage the use of automatic fire detection as they help save lives and protect buildings. However false alarms, such as those caused by system faults, are an unnecessary drain on our resources, cause disruption to businesses and present undue road-risk for the public and firefighters responding to these calls under blue light conditions.

### We will achieve it by:

- *Investigating the cause of every UFAS event engaging with the premises owner/occupier, providing advice to prevent reoccurrence.*
- *Identify individual premises and generic premises types that have high actuation levels and work with the owners/occupiers to develop UFAS reduction plans.*
- *Enforce formal action on owner/occupiers of premises that are generating unacceptably high levels of UFAS and have inadequate fire safety management procedures in place.*

### Performance Indicators:

- *Number of UFAS incidents.*

### Expected Outcomes:

- *Reduced impact on businesses, communities and the SFRS, creating capacity to deliver against other local and national priorities.*
- *Reduce SFRS' carbon footprint through less vehicle movements.*
- *Reduction in unnecessary demand on retained firefighters and their primary employers.*
- *Reduced road risk for SFRS operational personnel and the general public.*

## 5. Effective Risk Management and Operational Preparedness

### Background:

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire (Additional Function (Scotland) Order 2005 sets out the statutory duties and responsibilities for the SFRS in relation to responding to emergencies. It is essential our firefighters possess the skills, knowledge and expertise to respond to incidents which, by their nature, can be varied in type and complexity.

The risks we face in Aberdeen vary depending on where people live and work. Commercial risks include industrial sites, large shopping centres, hospitals and universities. The residents of Aberdeen City include an extensive student population and live in a broad range of housing types including houses, tenement flats, high rise properties and dedicated halls of residence.

Understanding these local risks and pre-planning for any incidents these risks may encounter assists us to promote the joint aims of community safety and firefighter safety.

Additionally, as a Category 1 responder, we work alongside other emergency responders in the Local and Regional Resilience Partnerships to prepare for, and deal with, large scale incidents and major emergencies such as adverse weather events, natural disasters, major transport incidents etc. where a co-ordinated approach is required to achieve successful outcomes.

### We will achieve it by:

- *Identify and assess the risk to our communities through the process of Operational Intelligence (OI) gathering and active involvement in the Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) and Regional Resilience Partnership (RRP).*
- *Undertake planned training events to support the acquisition and maintenance of skills to provide the capability to respond to emergency incidents.*
- *Strengthen community resilience by engaging with them to build their capabilities for managing the effects of emergencies.*
- *Work with partner organisations and agencies to ensure appropriate emergency response plans for identified local risks are developed, tested and reviewed.*
- *Participation in major event debriefs to continually improve the planning process.*

### Performance Indicators:

- *Number of OI visits undertaken.*
- *Number of Multi-Storey Operational Assurance Visits undertaken.*
- *Staff Competence.*
- *Availability of appliances and specialist resources.*

### Expected Outcomes:

- *Support the wellbeing and safety of the public, SFRS personnel and other emergency responders*
- *Improved community resilience.*
- *A Fire and Rescue Service that can respond effectively and efficiently across Aberdeen, and beyond.*

## Review

To ensure this Local Fire and Rescue Plan remains flexible to emerging local or national priorities a review may be carried out at any time but will be reviewed at least once every three years. A review may also be carried out if the Scottish Minister directs it or if a new Strategic Plan is approved. Following a review, the Local Senior Officer may revise this Plan.

## Contact Us

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