

**The Highland Council**  
**Communities and Partnerships Committee**  
**9 June 2016**

Agenda Item	5
Report No	CP 11/16

**Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland Consultation**

**Report by Acting Head of Policy**

**Summary**

This report outlines the background to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland Consultation and asks Members to consider the draft response, suggest any amendments and agree a final response.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland is how The Scottish Government sets out the priorities and objectives that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) must take into account when it carries out its functions in terms of public safety, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 The proposed framework is currently out for [consultation](#) and this report outlines the background to the consultation and proposed response informed by the Member workshop held on 26 May 2016.

**2. Consultation Content**

- 2.1 The consultation sets out the strategic priorities for the SFRS for the period from 2016. The 10 strategic key priorities within the 2016 Framework are outcome focused, set out Government expectations of the SFRS and also seek to provide guidance and support to the SFRS. It is expected that these strategic priorities will be reflected in the local Strategic Plan.
- 2.2 The consultation seeks views on the strategic priorities proposed and the commentary supporting it. The 10 priorities are:
  1. **Performance Measures** - the SFRS must specify appropriate performance measures to support its Strategic Plan and the delivery of outcomes relating to the strategic priorities and objectives set out in the Framework.
  2. **Safety, Well-being and Prevention** – The SFRS should ensure that there is a clear process for working with partners to identify the risks faced by communities and individuals so that the SFRS can target activity where it can most effectively contribute to addressing inequalities within and between communities.
  3. **Response and Resilience** - The SFRS should work with other public service partners to evolve a holistic and dynamic process of identification, evaluation and assessment of community risk.

4. **Response and Resilience** - The SFRS should support effective multi-agency emergency planning and response including contributing fully to the work of Regional Resilience Partnerships (RRPs). When working with other emergency responders, the SFRS should play a key role in building community resilience and protecting both Scottish and UK critical infrastructure assets.
5. **Partnership** - Community planning and partnership working with other services and communities should be embedded throughout the SFRS.
6. **Service Transformation** - The SFRS should continue to ensure that the benefits of Fire Reform are fully realised, evidenced and tracked, and it should explore through service redesign new and innovative ways in which it can improve the safety and well-being of communities throughout Scotland by building on the traditional roles carried out by the Service.
7. **Modernising Response** - The SFRS should develop and implement dynamic, innovative and sustainable operating systems throughout Scotland which are fit for purpose and meet local needs (covering both the Retained Duty System and whole-time firefighter work patterns).
8. **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)** - The SFRS should develop a process for recording the number of blue light journeys made in response to UFAS. The SFRS should also take steps to reduce the overall number of blue light vehicle journeys made in response to UFAS – including identifying the main sources of false alarms, and taking all reasonable and practical steps to reduce their incidence.
9. **Effective Governance and Performance** - The SFRS should ensure it has an effective approach to performance management to support robust scrutiny of the service at national and local levels.
10. **People** - The SFRS should aim to be an employer of choice – maximising the effectiveness of its approach to workforce planning; promoting the safety, health and well-being of all staff; and being a learning organisation with opportunities for all. The SFRS should also seek to be an organisation that is more representative of the people and communities of Scotland that it serves.

2.3 The document also sets out the key targets for the SFRS contained within the 2013 Framework and seeks views on whether these should be kept, dropped or amended. The current targets are:

1. **Fire casualties** - Reduce the rate of fire fatalities and casualties (excluding precautionary checks) per million population by 5% a year based on the previous 3 year rolling average.
2. **Reducing special services casualties** - Based on a 3 year rolling average, reduce the rate of casualties and fatalities per million population, each year. Special services to be included: Road Traffic Collision; other transport incident; flooding; rescue or evacuation from water; and other rescue/release of persons
3. **Reducing the number of accidental dwelling fires by 10% each year** - Comparing a three year rolling average against the previous 3 year average, reduce the rate of accidental dwelling fires per 1,000 households by 10% each year. Support the target with a measure of 'life risk accidental dwelling fires' - i.e. accidental dwelling fires where there was a casualty or fatality to show how the SFRS impacts the fires that matter.

4. **Reducing the number of non-domestic fires** - Reduce the rate of non-domestic fires per 1,000 in other buildings from the previous year.
5. **Reducing firefighter injuries** - Reduce the rate of injuries per staff member (headcount, including volunteers) each year.
6. **Improving attendance** - Increase attendance - reduce the days lost to sickness so that the SFRS at least matches the average of the best four pre-2013 fire and rescue services.

### 3. Proposed Council Response

3.1 A workshop, led by SFRS Local Senior Officer and Area Manager, was held with Members on 26 May 2016. This provided an opportunity to consider and discuss the content of the proposed Framework and inform the draft response which is detailed at **Appendix 1**.

#### 3.2 **Strategic Priorities**

In relation to the proposed Strategic Priorities, the draft response outlines support for the priorities. The priorities are broad and will enable local flexibility to engage in new activities. Many of the principles are cross-cutting in nature, reflect on the important partnership work in which the SFRS is engaged in and also the newer roles the service is adopting around prevention and community safety.

3.3 The consultation also seeks views on the supporting text within the Framework. The draft response includes comments around:

- Working with others and Local Flexibility – support for the inclusion within the Framework, the importance of the partnership role SFRS has and the scrutiny relationship with Local Authorities.
- Future role of the fire fighter – support for the wider community and response roles the SFRS are adopting around falls prevention and CPR training and the wider benefit this brings to communities and local partners.
- Modernising emergency response – support for the recognition in the text about the importance of the retained duty system, given the critical role for service delivery in rural communities.
- Community Empowerment and Community Planning - support for the inclusion of this within the document. SFRS are key and valuable local partners and the inclusion within the strategic framework recognises the importance of community planning and the role of the SFRS within that.

#### 3.4 **Targets**

The consultation seeks views on the existing targets from the 2013 Framework. The draft response queries the appropriateness of the setting of specific targets in relation to fire casualties and reducing the number of accidental dwelling fires, given that the other targets are relating to downward trends.

Given the importance of retained fire fighters for the SFRS generally and particularly in relation to rural communities, the draft response suggests that it would be appropriate to include a target in the Framework around the percentage availability of retained fire fighters.

3.5 Members are asked to consider the draft response detailed in Appendix 1, suggest any amendments and agree a final response for submission.

#### **4. Implications**

4.1 Resource implications: there are no resource implications.

4.2 Legal implications: there are no legal implications.

4.3 Equalities implications: the Framework highlights the important role the SFRS plays with support vulnerable individuals and communities alongside with their key duties as a service provider and employer under the terms of the Equality Act.

4.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever implications: none are identified.

4.5 Risk implications: none are identified.

4.6 Gaelic implications: none area identified.

4.7 Rural implications: the strategic priorities note the important and challenge of the recruitment and retention of retained fire fighters within rural areas.

#### **5. Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the SFRS consultation
- Consider the draft response in Appendix 1, suggest any amendments and agree a final submission.

Designation: Acting Head of Policy

Date: 26 May 2016

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Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Draft Response to Fire and Rescue Framework Consultation

**Fire and Rescue Framework Consultation  
The Highland Council – Draft Response**

1. Do you agree with the 10 strategic priorities attached in **Annex A** to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The Council would support the strategic principles outlined. The priorities are broad and will enable local flexibility to engage in new activities. Many of the principles are cross-cutting in nature, reflect on the important partnership work in which the SFRS is engaged in and also the newer roles the service is adopting around prevention and community safety.

2. Do you agree with the text set out in the sections **Protecting Communities** and **Prevention and Protection**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The prevention and protection role the SFRS is crucial and this section accurately reflects this.

3. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Responding to Incidents**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The SFRS plays a critical role in emergency planning and perhaps the text could more accurately reflect the role in relation to support and building community resilience around civil contingencies which is reflected in priorities 3 and 4.

4. Do you agree with the text set out in the section **Managing Risk**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

No comments

5. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Evidence Based Decision Making**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The information and data collated by the SFRS also has a significant contribution to greater local understanding and partnership decision and priority setting.

6. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Working with Others**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The partnership role the SFRS has is wide reaching which the text accurately reflects. It is particularly helpful to set out and acknowledge the role of the SFRS as one of the 5 statutory partners for Community Planning

7. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Local Flexibility**, in Chapter 1 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

It is helpful to set out the very important relationship between the local SFRS and Local Authorities and the value this brings in taking forward local priorities.

8. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Driving Improvement and Realising the Benefits of Fire Reform**, in Chapter 2 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

No comments

9. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **The Future Role of the Firefighter: Productive use of Capacity**, in Chapter 2 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The Council would strongly support the new and innovative practices being adopted by the SFRS and the wider support and benefit this brings to communities and local partners.

10. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Modernising Emergency Response**, in Chapter 2 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The Council would strongly support the text in relation to the importance of the retained duty system given the critical role for service delivery in rural communities.

11. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Telecommunications Systems: Current and Future Use**, in Chapter 2 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

No comments

12. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals**, in Chapter 2 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

Acknowledge the challenge this poses and agree that this should be included as a strategic priority.

13. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Managing Performance**, in Chapter 3 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

No comments

14. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Developing Capacity**, in Chapter 3 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

No comments

15. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Equalities and Human Rights**, in Chapter 3 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

It is helpful to acknowledge the role of the SFRS both as an employer and service provider in relation to Equality issues and by including it within the Framework emphasises its importance and part of the core function of the SFRS.

16. Do you agree with the text set out in the section, **Community Empowerment and Community Planning** in Chapter 3 of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland **2016**?

Yes  No

The Council would strongly support inclusion of this within the document. SFRS are key and valuable local partners. This recognises the importance of community planning and the role of the SFRS within that.

17. **Annex B** includes the 2013 Framework Targets and we would like to hear your views on whether these should be kept, dropped or amended. We would also like to hear if you think that any new targets should be added for example reduction of unwanted fire alarm signals or how better to measure the economic impact of non-domestic fires?

The would question the appropriateness of setting specific targets in relation to fire casualties and reducing the number of accidental dwelling fires, given that the other targets are relating to downward trends.

Given the important of retained fire fighters for the SFRS generally and particularly in relation to rural communities, it is suggested that it would be appropriate to include a target in the Framework around the percentage availability of retained fire fighters.