

**The Highland Council**  
**Community and Partnerships Committee**  
**9 February 2017**

Agenda Item	<b>16</b>
Report No	<b>CP 09/17</b>

**Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 3 2016-17**

**Report by Local Senior Officer for Highland - Area Manager John MacDonald**

**Summary**

This Report and attached quarterly performance report (QPR) details fire and rescue service performance across a range of Intervention, Prevention and Protection activities for quarter 3, 2016-17.

The performance reporting aligns with the target outcomes of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Highland 2014-17 and the Highland single outcome agreement (SOA) 2013-19.

The QPR also contains key information and performance specifically for the Highland area as requested by Community and Partnerships Committee Members.

**1. Performance Reporting 2016-2017**

- 1.1 The attached QPR for quarter 3, 2016-17 contains the key elements of fire and rescue service activities across the Highland area. These key elements also align with partnership agreed outcomes contained in the Highland SOA 2013-19.
- 1.2 As with previous reports, this report also aligns with the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the Highland area 2014-17 and supports the wider analysis of trends and performance in the short, medium and longer term.
- 1.3 This quarter has seen an increase in the number of accidental dwelling fires when compared to the same reporting period last year and this is similar to the data presented for the first two quarters of this year. Further analysis identifies that although the numbers of fires have slightly increased, the severity of the fires are decreasing. Of the 108 accidental dwelling fires recorded, 80% (86) of them resulted in damage to less than 5m<sup>2</sup> with 36% (39) resulting in no damage at all. The most common source of ignition has been cooking appliances and consequently the most common room of origin is the kitchen. In terms of intervention by firefighters, almost two thirds of the incidents required either no intervention or just the removal from a heat source or isolation of the fuel supply. Less than a third of incidents actually required firefighters to apply water to the fire. The analysis of the data clearly indicates that cooking is the greatest risk in terms of accidental dwelling fires in the Highland area. Locally based community safety personnel and firefighters will ensure that cooking and kitchen safety features high on the agenda during the delivery of Home Fire Safety Visits.

- 1.4 Within the category of fatal accidental dwelling fire casualties, tragically during this reporting quarter an elderly gentleman in Caithness lost his life as a result of an accidental dwelling fire. These horrific incidents not only have a devastating impact on families, the horrendous consequences also affect the community as a whole. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is committed to eliminating these awful events and improving the wellbeing of our communities. This cannot be achieved in isolation and the service will continue to work in partnership with other agencies and the communities themselves to identify those most at risk and to deliver appropriate and targeted prevention activities.
- 1.5 The number of non fatal fire casualties as a result of accidental dwelling fires is the lowest figure it has been in Highland for the same reporting period over the past 5 years and this replicates the figures presented for the last reporting quarter as well. This trend and low figure is encouraging and confirms that the community safety activity delivered by the service is having a positive impact, however one casualty is one too many and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to target those most vulnerable from fire within the community with the ultimate aim of reducing the number of fire casualties to zero. In the year to date there have been 15 reported non fatal casualties of which 9 are female and 6 male with none of the casualties being younger than 20 years old and the oldest within the 90 to 99 years old category. Of the 15 casualties, 5 were rescued, 4 were taken to hospital for further treatment with 11 receiving first aid treatment at the scene of the incident.
- 1.6 It is pleasing to note that for the third quarter in a row, the Service is able to report the lowest figure for deliberate fires across Highland for the same reporting period for the past five years. Deliberate fires include those as a result of fire related anti social behaviour as well as wildfires. The Service has a seasonal community safety calendar, which supports the adoption a thematic and targeted approach to specific risks at specific times of the year where there is a known or anticipated increase in the likelihood of a fire occurring. This proactive, targeted, intelligence led and partnership approach will be maintained to ensure continued improvements in the deliberate fires category.
- 1.7 The number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service this quarter has increased when compared with the same reporting period for the past five years. Although the number of incidents has increased further analysis of the data identifies that of the 168 recorded incidents only 45 or 27% required firefighters to release or extricate persons. The majority of incidents (64%) only required firefighters to make a vehicle or the scene safe or to stand by. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service staff across Highland will continue to work in partnership with the other emergency services, partner agencies and the Highland Road Safety Group to reduce the number of these incidents occurring and subsequently the impacts on our communities.

- 1.8 The number of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) has increased this reporting quarter when compared to the same reporting period last year and is the highest recorded for the previous five years. In the year to date within Highland there have been a total of 763 UFAS incidents. At almost 30% of total calls, UFAS incidents are the most common incident type within the Highland area. A new recording system for UFAS incidents has been established by the service and this will allow personnel to interrogate incident data to identify trends and causation factors and to apply an intelligence led approach to reducing these incidents. At every UFAS incident the front line attending crews provide advice and guidance to duty holders in the offending premises and where appropriate, local senior managers will also engage with the premises. If there is no improvement then fire safety enforcement officers can be deployed to consider the level of fire safety compliance in line with Part 3 of the Fire Scotland Act 2005. At present the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is piloting a UFAS Pre Determined Attendance Reduction process within the West Service Delivery area. This process involves an individual risk assessment being completed for offending premises and may result in the number and type of fire engines being sent to fire alarms at the premises being reduced unless a confirmed fire is reported. Across the Highland area front line operational crews and Prevention and Protection personnel will continue to work with duty holders to try and reduce these incidents through the provision of advice and guidance and if necessary, through enforcement activity.
- 1.9 Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (FSEOs) across the Highland area continue to deliver fire safety enforcement activity through the completion of audits for all mandatory premises as well as conducting post fire audits in all commercial premises. On page 14 of the accompanying Quarterly Performance Report, the list of mandatory premises is confirmed. This year to date, FSEOs have delivered a total of 182 audits which represents 73% of target.
- 1.10 Firefighters and Community Safety personnel continue to deliver free Home Fire Safety checks to anyone who requests a visit or to any referral from a partner agency. The Highland area set a target of 4000 visits per year and at the end of quarter 3 a total of 3160 visits have been delivered with 806 smoke alarms being fitted. Of the 3160 visits, 1272 or 40% of them have been delivered to those at greatest risk within our communities. This is a key area of focus for all Scottish Fire and Rescue Service operational and community safety personnel within Highland and we will continue to work closely with partner agencies and communities to identify and assist those at greatest risk in order to promote better outcomes for all.

## **2. Retained Firefighter Recruitment & Training**

- 2.1 As reported in quarter 2, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service introduced a new Retained Duty System (RDS) recruitment process on 21 November 2016, which will not only streamline but also improve the application process for those expressing an interest in joining the service. From 21 November 2016 until 31 January 2017, a total of 120 applications have been received for retained firefighter positions across the Highland area. This figure is most encouraging and the support of members, MSPs and MPs in promoting the value and role of the RDS firefighter is very much appreciated.

- 2.2 In addition to the promotion of the RDS role by political figures across the Highlands, the Inverness Courier has been running a weekly feature on the challenges around the recruitment of RDS firefighters. Working closely with the service, journalists have been given direct access to retained firefighters to discuss and learn about the role of the firefighter as well as attending fire behaviour and breathing apparatus training at the Invergordon training centre, routine training exercises at Inverness community fire station and interviews with firefighters serving at the various community fire stations around the Inverness Shire and Ross Shire areas. The published articles have provided an accurate and realistic insight into the role of the retained firefighter as well as capturing the experiences of serving firefighters and this professional and supportive reporting by the Inverness Courier has certainly contributed to the success of the current recruitment process for which the service is very grateful. The success has been such that other media agencies are now expressing an interest in the topic and are looking to work with the service, local managers and firefighters to build upon the great articles in the printed press.
- 2.3 The challenges around the operational availability of the Lochinver fire appliance are well known and have been a topic of discussion between the Local Senior Officer and elected members from some time. It is pleasing to note that this quarter the district officer with responsibility for Lochinver, supported by local training staff have been able to deliver targeted training locally to the personnel in Lochinver to ensure that the necessary competencies are in place that will allow the appliance to become operational in February. This is a significant step forward in providing a resilient operational intervention role within Assynt and this combined with the 6 applications currently in the system for Lochinver provides a very optimistic outlook for Lochinver Community Fire Station. Senior managers will continue to maintain a focus to build the necessary resilience and to deliver continual improvement.

### **3. Inverness Operations Control Migration**

- 3.1 On Tuesday 6 December 2016 at 1000hrs as part of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Strategic Intent programme, the Operations Control function based in Inverness was migrated to the Dundee Operations Control Room. This migration was the final element of the control rationalisation that had previously seen the Operations Control in Dumfries migrated to Operations Control in Johnstone, the Operations Controls in Maddiston and Thornton migrated to Operations Control in Edinburgh and the Operations Control in Aberdeen migrated to Operations Control in Dundee.
- 3.2 On Monday 14 November 2016, Area Manager Tony Hughes who leads the Command and Control Futures Programme attended Inverness and delivered a presentation and discussed in detail the programme in place to support the control rationalisation. During the session, AM Hughes explained the checks, balances and processes that were in place to ensure a smooth transition and a reliable and resilient service following migration and was able to answer the many questions posed by members who attended. AM Hughes also advised members that with Inverness being the final migration, this was an advantageous position as the programme team had been able to capture all of

the learning from the previous migrations and feed that back into the plans for the Inverness migration.

- 3.3 The actual migration of the Inverness Operations Control to Dundee Operations Control on Tuesday 6 December 2016 was the smoothest of all migrations within the control rationalisation programme with no problems or challenges being experienced at all. The switch over took place at 1000hrs with the first emergency call for the Highland area being taken at 1044hrs which was to a fire alarm activation in Invergordon.
- 3.4 Since the migration on 6 December 2016 until 31 January 2017, Dundee Operations Control has mobilised resources across the Highland area to a total of 493 emergency incidents which can be broken as detailed in the table below:

Primary Fire	Secondary Fire	Chimney	False Alarm	Special Service	TOTAL
53	29	34	299	79	493

Incident Figures for Highland Area - 6 December 2016 to 31 January 2017

In addition to the specific figures provided above for the Highland area, for the same date range, across the whole North Service Delivery Area which encompasses Perth, Kinross, Angus & Dundee, Aberdeenshire & Moray, Aberdeen City, Western Isles, Orkney & Shetland as well Highland, staff in Dundee Operations Control have taken and handled a total of 4054 emergency calls for assistance and mobilised resources to total of 2626 emergency incidents.

#### Recommendation

Committee Members are invited to **scrutinise** and **comment** on SFRS service delivery and performance contained within the Report and attached QPR for quarter 3, 2016-17.

**Area Manager John MacDonald**  
**30 January 2017**

Attachments: **Highland Quarterly Performance Report: Quarter 3, 2016-2017**