



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

**MEETING: SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (SFRS) BOARD**

**THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2015**

**ALBERT HALLS, ALBERT PLACE, DUMBARTON ROAD, STIRLING, FK8 2QL**

**PRESENT:** Pat Watters CBE (*Chair*); Jimmy Campbell (*Deputy Chair*); Bob Benson; Dr Michael Foxley; Robin Iffla; Grant Thoms; Martin Togneri; Kirsty Darwent; Sid Patten; Neil Pirie; Bill McQueen

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Alasdair Hay (*Chief Officer*); Alex Clark (*Deputy Chief Officer*); Sarah O'Donnell (*Director/Finance & Contractual Services*); Diane Vincent (*Director/People & Organisational Development*); David Goodhew (*ACO/Director Response & Resilience*); Robert Scott (*ACO/Director of Strategic Planning, Performance & Communications*); Dave Boyle (*ACO/Director of Service Delivery*); Peter Murray (*ACO/Director of Service Transformation*); David McGown (*Head of Prevention & Protection*); Kenneth Fraser (*Business Support Manager*); Jo-Anne Breckenridge (*Business Support/Minutes*).

**ACTION**

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and reflected on the engagement event held the previous evening. The Board were advised an additional item in regards to the role of Deputy Chair would be discussed after agenda item (5). The Board were informed Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, would join the Board for the afternoon session of the meeting.

**2 APOLOGIES**

- Marieke Dwarshuis (*Board Member*)
- ACO/Director of Prevention & Protection.

**3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 27 NOVEMBER 2014**

The Board commented as follows:

Page 5 – Scheme of Delegations

Some discussion on the Scheme of Delegations took place and it confirmed that they would be reviewed in March 2015.

Page 7 – Chair’s Update – first bullet point  
Amend three working groups to read five working groups.

Page 10 – VAT Issue

The Chair advised he had been in contact with Danny Alexander’s office to arrange a meeting to discuss this issue further, hence the slight delay on this. Letters are in the process of being distributed to the Prime Minister/Chancellor of the Exchequer/MPs/MSP in relation to the VAT issue.

Page 7 – Action point for ACO Boyle/BST in relation to future report on Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest being presented at a future Board meeting and input at a Board Strategy day was omitted from action log, this will be rectified.

Page 8 – Action point for updating the Board on the partnership work with the Ministry of Defence Fire and Rescue Service will be taken forward by ACO Goodhew, not the Chief Officer as stated. This will be amended.

Page 11 – Code of Conduct

The Chair referred to the joint letter from the Service and the Trade Union representatives in relation to the use of Social Media and advised the text of the letter had been agreed but the delay was due to the FBU election process. This process is now complete and letters will be issued early next week.

Page 13 – Item 15 – Outcome of the 2014 Annual review of the Effectiveness of the SFRS Board

The Chief Officer informed the Board that ACO Robert Scott will work with the Deputy Chair to co-ordinate the action plan. The Chair will liaise off table with the newly elected Deputy Chair to discuss taking this forward.

Item 17 – Quarter Two Performance Report 2014/15

Commonwealth Games -The Chair informed the Board the final report in relation to the CWG was now complete and had been approved by Scottish Government and will be circulated to Members.

With the above amendments, the minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 November 2014 were approved as an accurate record.

*Matters Arising*

None

## **5 ACTION/DECISION LOG**

The Board noted the Action/Decision Log, the following was highlighted:

Page 16 – 26 June 2014 – Item 10 Internal Audit Plan 2014/15

Neil Pirie advised this was complete.

Page 16 – 31 July 2014 - Item 8.1 Evolving Local Scrutiny and Engagements Arrangements

The Chair informed the Board a meeting has been arranged with COSLA on 6 March to progress this, he will report back to the Board at the March Board meeting.

Page 16 – 31 July 2014 – Item 10 Communications Strategy

Grant Thoms advised the Local and Stakeholder Engagement Committee would be reviewing Social Media at their next meeting and advised they would try and structure the day to include the full Board if possible.

Page 16 -- 31 July 2014 - Items 5 and 10

It was also noted that, due to the alignment of the SLT roles, the lead office for the above actions would be amended from the Deputy Chief Officer to ACO Robert Scott.

Page 17 – 25 September 2014 – Item 10

Sarah O'Donnell advised the next iteration of the Corporate Risk Register would be presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in March, review date to be amended from January 2015 to March 2015.

The Action Log will be updated accordingly.

**The Board agreed the Action Log would be developed further in order for action status to be easily identified.**

**BST/  
M TOGNERI**

## **5.1 ADDITIONAL ITEM – ROLE OF DEPUTY CHAIR**

The Chair informed the Board that Jimmy Campbell had indicated he wished to step down as Deputy Chair and requested the Board elect a new Deputy Chair. The Chair put on record his personal thanks and the thanks of the Board to Jimmy for the support, commitment and expertise he had provided and advised that he will continue to serve as a Board Member.

The Chair asked for nominations from the Board for the role of Deputy Chair, the Board nominated Kirsty Darwent for the role and this was unanimously agreed. The Chair welcomed Kirsty in her capacity as Deputy Chair and wished her well in her new role.

## **6 CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair updated Members in regard to events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 27 November 2014, highlighting the following:

- Attended cold cut demonstration at SFRS College Cambuslang on 1 December 2014. The Chair commented on the type of equipment used and its capability, advising it was very impressive;
- Has attended 2 regular meetings with the new Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Paul Wheelhouse, advising the Minister is keen to build a relationship with the Service. Notes of the meetings have been circulated to Members for information;
- Met with Chairs of Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) on 9 December 2014 and have tasked

Chief Officers to draft a report to consider if £1 million of savings from collaborative initiatives in 2014/15 could be achieved. The Chair advised this report will come forward to the Board in due course;

- Has commenced a series of meetings with trade unions to progress support staff pay and reward negotiations. Discussions are at an early stage and will progress over the next 8 -10 weeks;
- The Chair reflected on the tragic incident which happened in George Square just before Christmas and informed the Board the first crews on scene where also the first on scene at the Clutha Bar incident. He put on record the Board's thanks and appreciation for the professionalism shown by all staff involved in the incident and how they conducted themselves. He also thanked the Brigade Chaplains, Father Jim Thompson and Reverend Gordon Armstrong for their work in supporting staff and members of the public at the incident and the following days.

## **7 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Chief Officer updated Members in regard to events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 27 November 2014, highlighting the following:

- Reflected on the dedication and professionalism of SFRS personnel who were recognised in the New Year's Honours List and offered congratulations to ACO David Goodhew and Watch Manager William Paterson on receiving a QFSM; and Volunteer Leader and Community Firefighter Dave Millard on receiving an MBE;
- Advised the DACO process had now concluded and offered congratulations to the successful applicants: John Miller (Head of East Service Delivery Area), Paul Connelly (Head of West Service Delivery Area), Andy Coueslant (Head of North Service Delivery Area), David McGown (Head of Prevention and Protection), Peter Heath (Temporary Head of Human Resources Organisational Development). He further advised that Andy Hermiston, who had been successful in the post of DACO (Training and Employee Development), has been successful in securing the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer at Gloucestershire FRS, therefore there is still a DACO vacancy available and this will be appointed shortly on a temporary basis;
- Attended the annual Scottish Leaders Forum on 27 and 28 November 2014 and provided an overview of the main theme, which was encouraging a Flourishing Scotland, and discussions held examined Participative Democracy in the Context of the Referendum, the Distinctive Approach to Public Services in Scotland, Engaging and Motivating Scotland, Our Big Challenges and the opportunity of executive leaders to set conditions to solve these challenges through Creative Collaboration and Civic Engagement;
- Attended NJC Advisory Forum on 15 January 2015 and advised a number of issues were discussed including Public Sector Pay Policy and Inflation Rates. There has been very positive engagement between technical advisors and the trade unions. He informed the meeting that there is ongoing work to develop the

following workstreams: Environmental Challenges, Multi agency response, Emergency Medical Response, Youth and other social engagement work, Inspection and enforcement which he would provide further updates in due course.

- Met with Chief Executive and Leader of Aberdeen City Council on 20 January 2015, discussed strategic intent proposals, potentially making use of the new cutting technology, flooding and resilience operations around Scotland;
- Following discussions with FBU looking to run a large scale pilot by putting new cutting technology on fire appliances within Aberdeen City and Stonehaven. Greater Manchester FRS are already doing this and will share their evaluation and emerging findings with us. Looking to build this up as a concept, further information will come forward to the Board in due course;
- Reflected on the number of fatalities up to the end of last quarter and advised a number of fire related suicides have occurred. We are currently looking at age profile and social circumstances and there are a number of common themes emerging, ACO Ramsay has been leading background work with health and social care partners;
- Work progressed in relation to next year's budget, which will be presented at the February Board meeting;
- No formal response yet from Audit Scotland in regards to findings of the recent review carried out, however, the report will be circulated to the Board when available;
- Advised a lot of work is being progressed by ACO Boyle on Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest. Scottish Government will launch an OHCA Strategy on 26 March and Members will receive an update at a future Board strategy day.

## **8 COMMITTEES UPDATE**

### **8.1 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee**

#### **(a) Committee Update**

The Chair, Neil Pirie, reported the Committee held a public meeting on 9 December and referred the Board to the Committee update report for noting, highlighting the following:

- HMFSI – 6 monthly progress report received in relation to Overview of SFRS , no significant issues; Thematic reports on Emergency Medical Response and SFRS and Risk Based Operational Decision Making in SFRS reviewed, response and action plans will be developed and considered at the Committee's next meeting;
- Internal Audit provided reasonable assurance on Audits in regards to IT Security and Fleet Management Arrangements;
- External Audit presented the 2013/14 Annual Report, no particular issues to report;
- Update received on the Corporate Risk Register, which highlighted no major changes. The Committee will consider some risks in more detail at their next meeting;

**The Board noted the update and the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 9 December 2014.**

## **8.2 Local & Stakeholder Engagement Committee**

### **(a) Committee Update**

The Chair, Grant Thoms, reported the Committee held a public meeting on 14 January and referred the Board to the Committee update report for noting, highlighting the following:

- Considered a report on Board engagement in Service Delivery areas, further work is required on this;
- Received a presentation on engagement with the Third Sector, this will be developed further with updates to the Board in due course;
- The Committee considered their forward work plan. A review of social media and understanding audiences will be considered at next meeting;
- Implementation of Engagement Framework - advised that ACO Scott is developing an implementation plan.

**The Board noted the update and the draft minutes of the Local and Stakeholder Engagement Committee held on 14 January 2015.**

## **8.3 Service Transformation Committee**

### **(a) Committee Update**

In Marieke Dwarshuis absence, Martin Togneri reported the Committee held a public meeting on 11 December and a workshop on 22 January and referred the Board to the Committee update report for noting, highlighting the following:

- Programme delivery is progressing well. At the January workshop the Committee received a presentation regarding delivery times of the Specialist Resources project. . A number of project dossiers will come forward to the Committee for consideration at their March meeting;
- Key project update – projects progressing well, some slippage to Business Consolidation project. The Committee have requested an update in regards to provision of ICT resources to deliver BAU;
- Noted the Risk Register was showing a downward trend, but agreed for the ARAC to consider in further detail recruitment and retention of skilled staff;
- Six projects were approved for closure, one on Occupational Health and 5 from ICT;
- Received an overview of the Benefits Realisation processes undertaken within the Programme and were content with the approach. An interim benefits report will be presented to the Committee at its March meeting and thereafter be presented to the full Board.

**The Board noted the update and the draft minutes of the Service Transformation Committee held on 11 December 2014.**

## **8.4 Employee Partnership Forum**

The Chair provided an update in regards to the Employee Partnership Forum, which met on 20 November. The forum received updates in relation to Working Together Framework, Pay and Reward Project, overview of RDS project, admin review/VSER, Whistleblowing Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy and Cultural Audit. The Chair advised there were issues raised by the FBU at the latest Employee Partnership

Forum in regards to the Cultural Audit, an on-going report will come forward to the Board on how this matter is progressed.

**The Board noted the update and the approved minutes of the Employee Partnership Forum held on 20 November 2014.**

**9 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Diane Vincent presented a report seeking approval of the Whistleblowing Policy. She provided background information to the report, advising the policy was developed in consultation with the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Managers and Trade Unions.

Within the policy, the Board considered whether the Fire Service Inspectorate should be referenced at section (4) "Raising a Complaint".

**The Board approved the Whistleblowing policy requesting the above point be considered. If necessary, an amendment to the policy can be brought back to a future meeting for further discussion.**

**D VINCENT**

**10 PAY AND REWARD FOR SUPPORT STAFF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PROCESS – DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The Chair presented a report seeking delegated authority from the Board to the Staffing Group to facilitate the pay and reward collective bargaining process for support staff.

**The Board agreed the Staffing Group be authorised to develop recommendations within prescribed limits on elements of the pay and reward framework during the collective bargaining process, following which they will present these recommendations as a package to the Board for approval.**

**11 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY**

Diane Vincent presented a report seeking approval of the Recruitment and Selection policy. She provided background information to the report, advising the policy had been developed in consultation with the Staffing Group, SLT, Managers and Trade Unions.

During discussions the Board asked for clarification around vacancy management and plans for training of personnel. Diane Vincent clarified that vacancy management is included in workforce planning arrangements and controls are in place. She further informed the Board that training issues emerged as part of Positive Action Action Plan and is currently in development.

In the interests of transparency, the Board suggested guidance is offered to Managers in the Recruitment and Selection Guidance Handbook around what constitutes an interview panel.

**The Board approved the Recruitment and Selection Policy.**

**12 COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS 2015/16**

The Chair presented a report with details of proposed Committee arrangements for 2015/16 for the Boards approval. The Chair referred Members to section (7) of the report under Resource Implications,

advising there will be a need to review capacity within the Board Support Team but assured the Board there would be no financial implications in these arrangements.

The Chair informed the Board that Grant Thoms had indicated he wished to stand aside as Chair of the Local and Stakeholder Engagement Committee but would continue as a Member of the Committee. The Chair thanked Grant for his invaluable support, work and expertise and reflected on his excellent Chairmanship of the Committee.

The Board considered the report and commented as follows:

- considered the name of “Consultation and Engagement Committee” and agreed this would be amended to “Engagement Committee”;
- highlighted the increased work load for Members, particularly around the Staff Governance Committee over the coming period around the Pay and Reward Project.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to approve all Committee Chairs formally as follows:

- Neil Pirie – Chair, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee;
- Marieke Dwarshuis – Chair, Service Transformation Committee;
- Sid Patten – Chair, Performance Committee;
- Bob Benson – Chair, Engagement Committee;
- Following a nomination, the Board agreed to appoint Bill McQueen as Chair to the Staff Governance Committee;

The Board agreed a zero-based Committee approach and the Committee Chair’s will be selected by the Board.

The Board discussed the short life Engagement Working Group, and clarified that the Working Group would consider the Terms of Reference of the Engagement Committee and the implementation plan for the Engagement Framework and this could commence with immediate effect and would be made up by Members of the existing LSEC Committee. There was no requirement to approve the appointment of the Working Group as it was acknowledged the Group would be subsumed as part of the work of the Committee.

The Board discussed the remaining vacancies within the Committees, should any Member have an interest/personal preference in filling any of these places they should direct this to the Chair/Deputy Chair. The Chair advised he would take account of personal preferences and the Board skills matrix in order to achieve the right balance of Members within each Committee.

**The Board agreed the following recommendations:**

- **Approved the appointment of the Committees and their operating arrangements outlined in Section 5 of the report;**
- **Approved the adoption of the zero-based Committee approach as the approach for supporting the annual review of the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees;**

- **Approved Committee Membership of five;**
- **Approved implementation date of 6 April 2015.**

The Board noted there was a significant amount of work to be done in ensuring the new Committees are operational for April 2015. It was acknowledged the Board Support Team may require additional resources in order to service this requirement.

It was agreed the Chief Officer would meet with the Committee Chairs to understand future committee business and the contribution required of executive members

12.30 hours – the Board recessed for lunch.

13.00 hours – The Board reconvened. The Chair welcomed Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs.

### **13 SPECIALIST RESOURCES REVIEW**

ACO David Goodhew presented the outcomes of the review into the provision and deployment of Special Resources across Scotland. Work on the report has been on-going for 14 months. A number of key elements have been considered with respect to the development of the report, including risk profiling, training requirements and the health and safety of firefighters. ACO Goodhew outlined the key principles which were used to inform the report, and the recommendations. These included training requirements, implementation arrangements, employee and financial implications. Engagement has been on-going for some time with Representatives Bodies, MP/MSPs, Partner Agencies, Local Authorities and Police Scotland. The Board were informed that two Local Authorities have raised concerns regarding the report recommendations. ACO Goodhew referred Members to the synopsis at paragraph 4.5 which provided a brief summary of the recommendations.

The Board considered the report and commented as follows:

The Board raised the issue of the change in risk assessment, which was carried out for operational reasons, in relation to High Volume Pumps and sought assurances that this change had been communicated to the relevant Local Authorities.

The engagement process which was undertaken with stakeholders was discussed with the Chair informing Members he had received a letter from Highlands and Islands Council regarding the process. ACO Scott providing an overview of the engagement to date which had taken place within the North Service Delivery Area and specifically with Highlands and Islands Council. He further advised that engagement with this Council will continue.

**The Board approved the final report in regards to the Review of Specialist Resources and agreed that a programme of implementation be developed and communicated in conjunction with the Service Transformation Committee, with the caveat that SFRS will continue to engage with all Local Authorities during this period of change.**

**ACO  
GOODHEW**

**14 MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND LEGAL AFFAIRS**

The Chair introduced Paul Wheelhouse, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs. The Minister extended his thanks to the Board for their invitation and was very fulsome in his praise of the work carried out by the fire and rescue service making particular reference to staff working on the front line dealing with incidents such as the George Square incident in Glasgow.

The Minister discussed the success of bringing together eight antecedent services, as well as the Scottish Fire Service College, appreciating the difficult challenges that the Service had to overcome however realising there are significant challenges to face going forward.

Members were asked to reflect on the future design of service provision in response to wider public sector reform.

The Minister highlighted the Community Empowerment Bill currently progressing through the Scottish Parliament and asked the Board to consider the significance of this Bill with regard future service provision within the context of tackling inequalities that exist within Scottish society.

The Minister reminded the Board social justice is one of the key policy aims of government at this time.

Whilst recognising the significant work that has already been undertaken and giving praise to SFRS Board & staff for progress achieved, the Minister encouraged the Board to continue this work to improve outcomes for Scotland's people going forward.

**15 CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2014/15 – DECEMBER 2014**

Sarah O'Donnell presented a report informing the Board in relation to actual and committed expenditure against 2014/15 capital budget for the period ending 31 December 2014. She referred Members to Appendix A which provided a breakdown of the current forecasted profile for the financial year. The Board were advised the programme is progressing well and is anticipated to be fully spent by the end of the financial year.

During discussion, the Board made the following comments:

- The Board indicated they would like to see more detailed information about capital spend - Sarah O'Donnell advised this can be discussed more fully at next week's Board Strategy day;
- Continue to focus on profile of capital spend throughout the year;
- It was agreed there would be an amendment to the expenditure table under report item (3) Expenditure – the column headed up "actual" would be amended to read "paid".

**S  
O'DONNELL**

**The Board noted the level of actual and committed expenditure for the period ending 31 December 2014.**

**16 RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – DECEMBER 2014**

Sarah O'Donnell presented a report informing the Board of the resource budget position for the period ending 31 December 2014. She outlined the analysis of the financial position and referred Members to Appendix A, which identified a current underspend against budget of £512k, and to

Appendix B, which provided an explanation of the significant variances and outlined proposed actions to address these. The report also provided some detail on Grant in Aid adjustments that have been made at this time of year. As requested by the Board, appendix A also included comparators for reference.

During discussion, the Board made the following comments:

- The Board raised the overtime issue and asked if there was a timeframe of when this may be resolved - Sarah O'Donnell advised there were a number of challenging issues to be addressed and ACO Boyle is taking this forward through the on-going working group;
- Under recovery of income – Sarah O'Donnell informed the Board this relates mainly to seconded officers and as this was different to what was originally budgeted it was not possible to recover the income.
- Costs of contract cleaning – Sarah O'Donnell advised that as part of next year's Operating Plan, Asset Management will take a comprehensive look at cleaning and caretaking across the Service in order to get a more streamlined approach;
- Appendix C Wholetime Employee Costs – the Board requested this be aided by further breakdown for comprehension. Sarah O'Donnell will progress this;
- Requested for variances to be depicted as percentages as well as figures in future reports.

**S  
O'DONNELL**

**S  
O'DONNELL**

**The Board noted the Resource Budget position for the period ending 31 December 2014.**

At this point the Chair took the opportunity to welcome Gordon McQuade, who was recently elected as Chair of the FBU in Scotland. The Board offered their congratulations to Gordon and offered their appreciation for the work carried out by former Chair, Alan Patterson.

**17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 26 February 2015 at 10am in Perth.