



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Report to: SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

Report Number: B/POD/3-13

Date: 28 NOVEMBER 2013

Report By: CHIEF OFFICER

Subject: WORKING TOGETHER FRAMEWORK

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board of progress with regards to the SFRS Working Together Framework and seek approval for this document.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Board is invited to:

- a) Note the content of this report
- b) Approve the final draft of the Working Together Framework (attached).

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Board of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, its managers and recognised Trade Unions are committed to working together to address the challenges that lie ahead, constructively and positively. In recognition of this commitment, the Fire Brigades' Union was invited to develop a Working Together Framework in partnership with management colleagues on behalf of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Autumn 2012.
- 3.2 The Working Together Framework has progressed in consultation with all of the SFRS's recognised Representative Bodies, and has been discussed at Employee Partnership Forums between December 2012 and October 2013.

4 PRINCIPLES OF THE FRAMEWORK AND KEY CHANGES

- 4.1 The Framework outlines key principles and agreements which include recognition arrangements, partnership principles and structures, shared objectives, and also how to work together and resolve disputes when there is a failure to agree.

- 4.2 Previous arrangements outlining the principles of mediation when there is a failure to agree have been replaced in favour of a 6-step approach which emphasises the methodology of, and commitment to, joint problem solving. This is supported by a series of flowcharts which outline how, in practical terms, joint problem solving may be approached. This would not affect the right to access other forms of dispute resolution such as collective grievance, conciliation, mediation or arbitration using ACAS and/or NJC arrangements. However, the SFRS and Representative Bodies will use these processes as a last resort when internal problem solving arrangements have been exhausted.
- 4.3 The section outlining Partnership structures arrangements that are designed to support the efficient and effective progression of joint business, has been updated to reflect the current national and local arrangements.
- 4.4 It was originally intended that a further agreement offering information relating to facilities for trade union representatives (e.g. Time Off for Trade Union Duties) would be included. Instead, the principles of facilities arrangements will be outlined in an interim paper until a harmonised policy has been developed and approved.
- 4.5 Final changes to the Framework were made following feedback from Representative Bodies during October 2013.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The Working Together Framework achieved agreement from all members of the Employee Partnership Forum on 14 November 2013.
- 5.2 It is recommended that the Working Together Framework is piloted and kept under regular review by the Employee Partnership Forum for the first year of its implementation (which in effect is a 12 month consultation period).
- 5.3 The attached copy of the Framework is presented as the final draft and the Board are invited to approve this document based on the principles and recommendations contained within this report.

6 EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Employee implications are contained within the Framework.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Financial implications are mainly those associated with facility time and charge back arrangements which are currently being assessed with a view to introducing harmonised arrangements from 1 April 2014. Financial implications associated with the implementation of the Framework will be reviewed within the first 6 months of its inception and on an annual basis thereafter.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Working Together Framework has been subject to equality impact assessment which identifies some limited relevance to the general equality duty to eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct as well as advancing equality of opportunity. The relevance is largely indirect in as much the Framework focuses on the processes involved in reaching agreed workplace solutions rather than the decisions reached under this process. The equality impact assessment makes specific note of the need to be mindful of the needs of all employees in the engagement, communication and decision making processes of the SFRS and the use of accessible formats of communication. Furthermore, the equality impact assessment also highlights the commitment of the Partnership Forum to make use of the equality impact assessment in the development of policies and initiatives. While only indirectly relevant to the general equality duty, the Framework provides an opportunity to make a positive contribution on the grounds of equality and contribute towards the development of policies sensitive to the needs of all SFRS employees.
- 8.2 Consultation arrangements are implicit within the report.

DIANE VINCENT

Director of People and Organisational Development

28th November 2013

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

WORKING TOGETHER FRAMEWORK



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland



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1. Introduction

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was established on 1 April 2013 to replace the eight previous Fire and Rescue Authorities and Joint Fire and Rescue Boards. This major reform of fire and rescue services in Scotland presents a range of opportunities and challenges for the SFRS to manage during the transition towards new fiscal arrangements, organisational structures and working practices.

The process of reform has created a new model of employee relations based on mutual trust and respect built through partnership. This Working Together Framework formally establishes the principles of partnership as the foundation for the relationship between the Board, the Strategic Leadership Team, Management, Employees and their Trade Unions.

To deliver the benefits of reform, the Scottish Government has set out a number of strategic priorities for the SFRS within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Framework. The Strategic Plan Working Together for a Safer Scotland (2013-2016) sets out the SFRS's Vision, Values and Objectives in support of the achievement of these strategic priorities.

Partnership involves a commitment to work together. In setting joint objectives the interests of employees and their Trade Union can be taken into account alongside any specific risks, issues and opportunities for service improvement.

Our partnership must:

- *Deliver the benefits of reform*
- *Face the challenges associated with change*
- *Seek opportunities for continuous improvement and to further develop our services*
- *Respond to the changing needs of our Communities across Scotland*
- *Create a working environment that is responsive to individual aspirations and which encourages employee satisfaction, motivation and commitment*

The Working Together Framework is designed to create an environment where mutually acceptable solutions can be found, however, it is recognised that management and employees may at times have conflicting interests. Therefore a number of separate arrangements are contained within this Framework which set out how the Board, Management and the Trade Unions will "work together".

The success of this partnership approach is dependent on strong and visible leadership from the Board, the Strategic Leadership Team and the Trade Unions in addition to the participation and commitment of all employees and their managers.

2. Our Partnership

This Working Together Framework is agreed between the SFRS and _____ (*insert Trade Union name*) _____, who represent employees.

It sets out our common interest in ensuring the future success of the SFRS. All parties are committed to the SFRS Vision, Values and Objectives as contained within the Strategic Plan and to delivering our Service within a flexible and responsive employee relations environment which is based on a shared belief that partnership will benefit both the SFRS and individual employees.

The Framework does not replace those procedures required of the SFRS under employment law and each of the separate arrangements contained within it are designed to support our partnership whilst complying with all relevant employment legislation, regulations and guidance.

The effectiveness of the Framework will be kept under regular review as set out within the terms of individual recognition agreements and as a standing item at the Employee Partnership Forum.

By partnership we mean that the SFRS, its Management and the Trade Unions will work together in accordance with the principles of partnership as defined by the Trade Unions Congress. Within the context of the Working Together Framework these principles can be defined as:

- 1. Joint Commitment to the success of the SFRS:** All parties are committed to the success of the SFRS and believe this will be attained through the delivery of jointly agreed objectives based on the stated SFRS Vision, Values and Objectives. All parties are committed to continuous improvement; working together to deliver a flexible, efficient and effective emergency service.
- 2. Recognising Legitimate Interests:** The SFRS accepts the legitimacy of Trade Unions as employee representatives and that their involvement and participation will improve decision making at all levels of the organisation. As such the SFRS recognises the value of Trade Union involvement and encourages its employees to join a Trade Union.

The Trade Unions recognise that the SFRS is required to operate within a framework of Government legislation and accepts that it has a duty to deliver against the objectives of its' Strategic Plan in order to provide efficient and effective services to the Communities of Scotland.

- 3. Commitment to employment security:** It is recognised that external factors may emerge which could influence matters of employment, however, all parties will work together to provide security in employment.

4. **Focus on the quality of working life:** All parties will work together to provide the highest quality fire and rescue services whilst maintaining the best possible conditions of employment and our reputation as an employer of choice.

5. **Transparency and Information Sharing:** All parties agree to be transparent in their business processes, to inform and consult meaningfully with each other and to share information with employees at the earliest opportunity on all matters concerning their employment.

6. **Win-win partnership:** All parties agree that working in partnership will deliver mutual benefits. The aim is to have open, constructive and candid discussions that support transparent decision making at all levels within the service; avoiding “winners and losers” by focusing on the agreed objectives and joint problem solving rather than the securing of respective positions. All parties will refrain from the use of threatening, offensive or intimidating language and agree to manage employee relations within the principles and practices of this Working Together Framework.

7. **Communications:** All parties agree that communication is an essential part of any partnership; communication processes will be open and transparent and conducted in accordance with our joint commitment to the success of the SFRS.

Through this Working Together Framework we aim to reassure employees that their voice will be heard at a national and local level.

On behalf of (insert Trade Union name)

Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

On behalf of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

3. Partnership Arrangements

1. Purpose

The partnership arrangements are designed to provide practical support to the Working Together Framework.

2. Flexibility

Each arrangement is flexible in that it may be amended, merged with others or withdrawn by mutual agreement. In addition, new arrangements may be mutually agreed and introduced as and when appropriate.

3. Review

The Working Together Framework and all of its component parts will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with the terms set out within individual recognition agreements.

4. Termination of Overall Agreement / Individual Agreements

The Working Together Framework and all of its component parts will be terminated following twelve months' notice by the Trade Union/s or the Chief Officer (unless this timescale is varied by mutual agreement).

5. Functions

The function of each arrangement is set out below:

Recognition Arrangement

Sets out the terms under which the SFRS recognises each of the Trade Unions

Promoting Our Partnership

Sets out how the parties will work together to promote a positive image of the SFRS and engage in effective communication.

Working in Partnership

Refers to the steps the parties should take during negotiations, to solve problems and resolve disputes.

Partnership Structures

Outlines structural arrangements under which the Working Together Framework will operate.

Developing in Partnership

Outlines the importance of continuously developing our skills and learning from examples of good practice.

4. Recognition Arrangements

This section sets out the basis for recognition as separate and bilateral arrangements between the SFRS and each of the individual recognised Trade Unions that agree to abide by the Working Together Framework. Appropriate arrangements for facilities (including time off and arrangements for Trade Union Representatives) will be contained within a separate SFRS policy.

1. Trade Union Recognition

The Working Together Framework defines a Trade Union as an organisation of workers created to protect and advance the interests of its members by negotiating arrangements with employers on pay and conditions of work.

Trade Unions will be recognised by the SFRS for the purposes of negotiation and collective bargaining as follows:

- *Trade Unions that have membership of national collective bargaining arrangements will be recognised for negotiating purposes for the relevant potential bargaining unit, or*
- *Trade Unions able to demonstrate a minimum of 10% of SFRS employees that constitute a potential bargaining unit.*

Recognised Trade Unions for the purposes of negotiation, collective bargaining, collective consultation, and the provision of information are:

- *Fire Brigades' Union (FBU)*
- *Retained Fire Union (RFU)*
- *Unite*
- *UNISON*
- *Association of Principal Fire Officers Scotland (APFOS)*
- *Fire Officers' Association (FOA)*

Other Representative Bodies may be recognised by the SFRS for the purposes of consultation.

The SFRS will therefore set out separate recognition arrangements with each Trade Union, with the terms of each agreement aligned with the principles of partnership as laid down within this Framework.

Recognition also extends to the representation of individual Trade Union members when discussing matters directly affecting their individual employment with the SFRS.

2. Scope of Recognition

The Trade Unions are recognised for the purposes of collective consultation and negotiation for those matters which have a significant impact on the groups of employees represented by the recognised Trade Unions and which relate to any of the following matters:

- a) *Terms and conditions of employment, including their reference to pay.*
- b) *Allocation of work or the duties of employment between employees or groups of employees.*
- c) *All policies and procedures related to conditions of employment.*
- d) *Facilities for accredited representatives of Trade Unions.*
- e) *Machinery for negotiation or consultation and other procedures relating to these, including the recognition by SFRS of the right of a Trade Union to represent employees in such negotiation or consultation or in the carrying out of such procedures.*

3. Geographical Bargaining Unit

The geographical bargaining unit for all recognised Trade Unions is national in extent (i.e. covering all sites, services and designated employee groups within the SFRS). No local geographical bargaining unit exists.

4. Level at Which Collective Bargaining Processes are Conducted

All collective agreements that regulate or change contracts of employment are arrived at by negotiation between the relevant parties exclusively.

At the date of this agreement, collective bargaining on pay and other contractual issues take place in National Joint Council (UK) or CoSLA (SJC) forums. In the longer term it is possible that collective bargaining may take place at SFRS service level as approved by the Board. Therefore, to streamline the management of collective bargaining all parties agree that, until SFRS arrangements are established, any relevant NJC or CoSLA agreements recognised as applicable to the SFRS will be jointly reviewed and agreement reached on their application or implementation.

All other collective bargaining processes take place exclusively at SFRS service level.

5. Promoting Our Partnership

Promoting our approach to partnership and presenting a positive image of the SFRS is paramount to ensuring that our communities have faith and trust in our ability to provide an emergency service that is effective, efficient and high performing.

The success of our partnership is dependent on strong and visible leadership from the Board, the Strategic Leadership Team and the Trade Unions in addition to the participation and commitment of all employees and their managers.

To promote our partnership and the image of the SFRS we will:

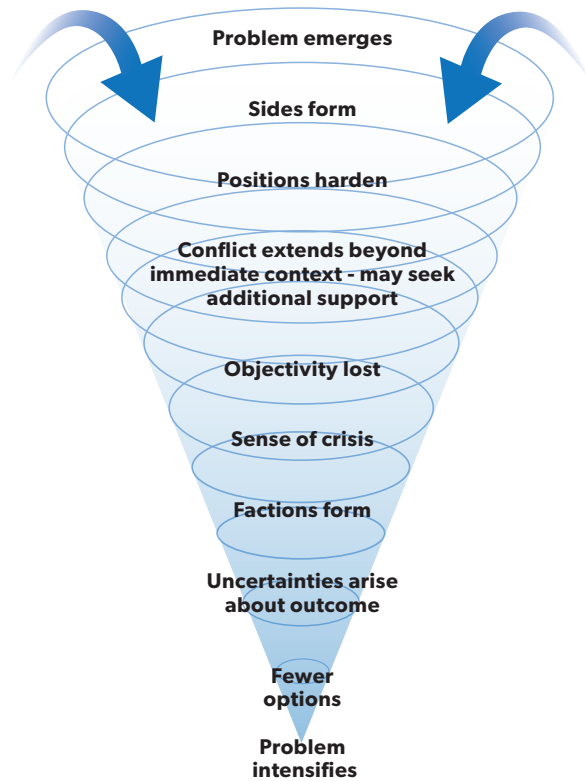
- *Actively support the stated SFRS Vision, Values and Objectives through jointly agreed objectives.*
- *Actively promote the service provided by and the achievements of the SFRS and its employees.*
- *Demonstrate commitment to our partnership using joint communications whenever appropriate.*
- *Convey agreement on matters resolved.*
- *Deal professionally with all matters affecting the SFRS by maintaining confidentiality, representing our separate interests fairly without undue criticism of the parties involved and refraining from making destructive comments or personalising issues via internal or external media.*

In addition, all parties recognise that effective communication is vital to the success of our partnership. In this regard, all parties commit to:

- *Develop and publish a communications strategy to support the work of partnership.*
- *Communicate all relevant matters through the Employee Partnership Forum unless an issue is identified as a local or single union matter.*
- *Meet regularly, formally and informally, to discuss matters affecting the operation of the SFRS or matters significantly affecting employees.*
- *Provide consistent representation throughout discussions and negotiations.*
- *Professionally manage partnership business (e.g. advance agenda and papers, minutes of meetings, decision/action log)*
- *Provide regular updates and briefings to employees with regard to on-going discussions between Management and the Trade Unions.*
- *Produce formal collective agreements and/or joint communications to employees regarding the outcomes of a consultation or negotiation exercise. Where a joint communication cannot be produced, each party will discuss the text of its own communication prior to this being issued.*

6. Working In Partnership

The fundamental principle of the Working Together Framework is that the focus should remain on the matter under negotiation and the associated issues; not the respective positions of the parties involved which can create winners and losers and a "spiral of conflict".

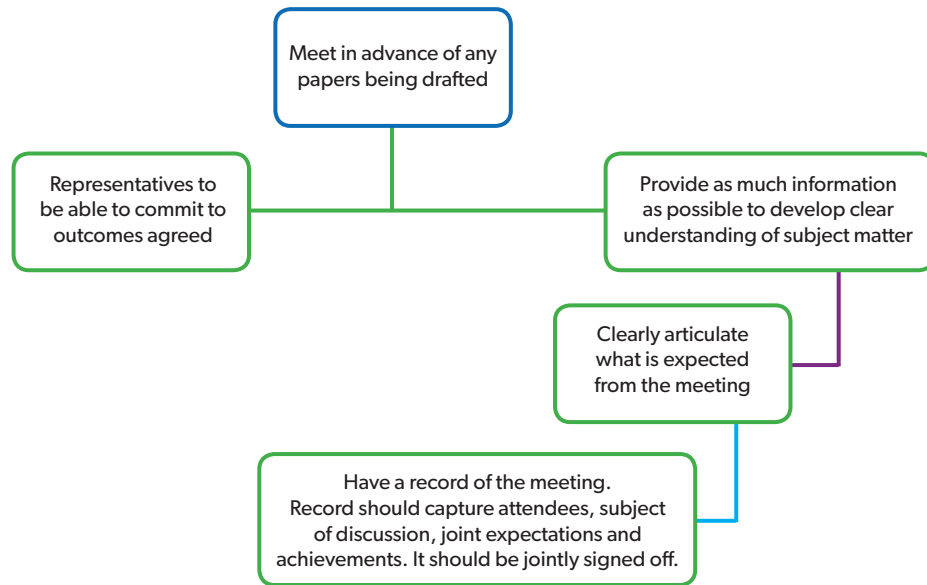


Where issues do arise, the partnership approach should ensure that these are resolved at the lowest possible level; that the parties adopt joint problem-solving techniques that focus on common organisational improvement and development objectives and that they maintain communications at all levels. The partnership structures will support the Working Together methodology outlined below:



Step 1: Focus on the task

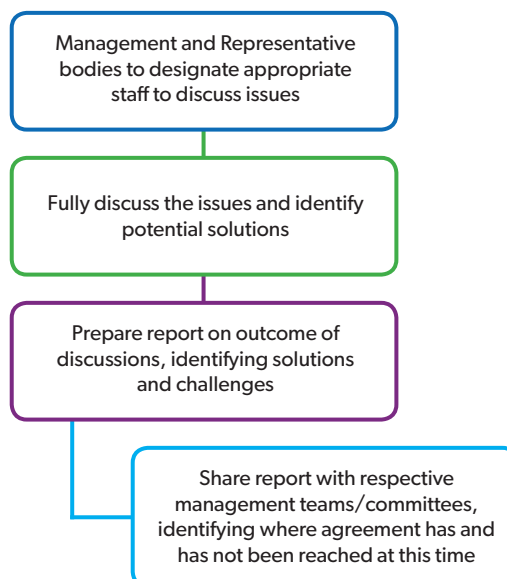
The parties involved should focus on the issue they are seeking to resolve, the facts of the matter under discussion and any progress previously made. This will allow the discussion to focus on the outcomes/issues to be resolved rather than individual positions.



Step 2: Discuss the issues

Under the terms of the Working Together Framework, each of the parties involved agrees to an open discussion on the issues. In terms of this, it is recommended that the parties:

- Agree what is to be discussed
- Separate the people from the issues
- Rely on concrete examples rather than anecdotal evidence



Step 3: Understand interests

Interests cause people to take a position. To avoid conflict it is important that all parties understand each other's interests and agree to consider the issues from each other's perspectives; the focus should be on what each party needs from the process to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Step 4: Develop options

It is possible to satisfy various interests without there being winners and losers. The right solution is the one that satisfies most interests. In seeking a solution, each of the parties involved should agree to develop a range of potential options, for example:

- Generate ideas
- Don't judge ideas until the process is exhausted
- Relate the ideas to the issues; which ones could provide possible options?

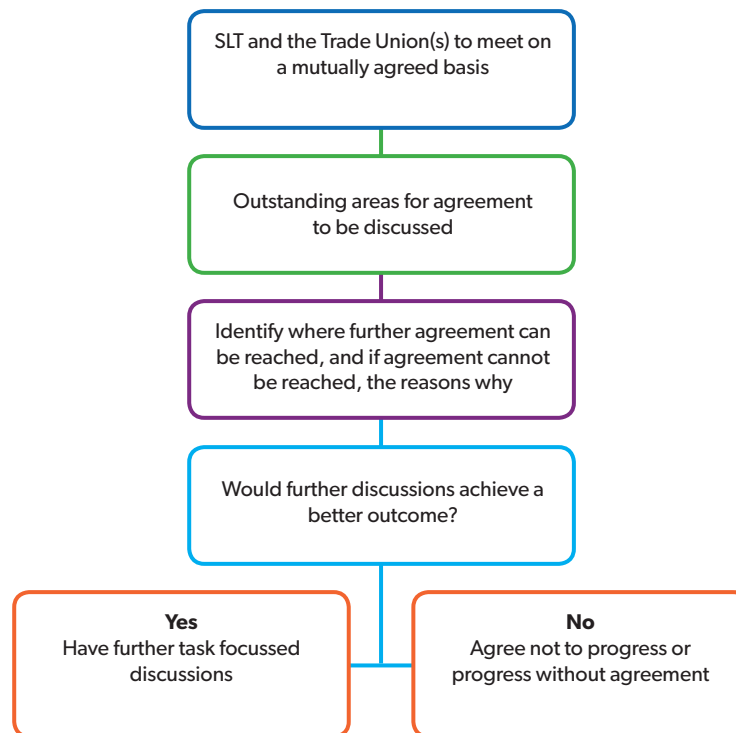


Note: Timescales for this process should recognise where each partner is required to consult wider.

Step 5: Choose a solution

In order to choose a solution, each option must be assessed, for example in terms of:

- How does each option meet each party's relevant interests?
- Are there resources available to deliver the solution?
- Does the solution meet wider stakeholder requirements?
- Whose buy-in is required?



Step 6: Implement the solution

The last step is to create an action plan to implement the solution. The responsibility for the actual implementation of Action Plans may be delegated to Working Groups or functional teams who would be answerable to and monitored by the sponsoring Partnership Forum.

Joint Problem Solving

At any stage in the above process, when a dispute on a particular issue is emerging, each of the parties involved will agree to taking time away from the issue to avoid positions becoming fixed and the conflict escalating. "Time out" should be used to reflect on the issues that are emerging, to consider all viewpoints and to review the matter they are seeking to resolve.

It should be noted that the commitment to joint problem solving does not affect legal rights or the right to access other forms of dispute resolution such as collective grievance, conciliation, mediation or arbitration using ACAS and/or NJC arrangements. However, the SFRS will use these processes as a last resort when internal problem solving arrangements have been exhausted.

Individual grievances, disciplinary action or any type of individual complaint should be dealt with through the appropriate SFRS procedure; however, line managers and employees alike are encouraged to adopt similar problem solving techniques before initiating formal processes to avoid the escalation of individual disputes and complaints.

7. Partnership Structures

The partnership structures are designed to support the efficient and effective progression of joint business in that they will:

- Build trust and mutual understanding.
- Place an emphasis on discussion and the exchange of ideas (without prejudice).
- Provide opportunities for regular meetings.
- Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Ensure that those who attend have the necessary skills and experience to add value to the partnership process and that they are empowered to make decisions.

1. National Arrangements

These include:

1.1 Partnership Advisory Group

The Partnership Advisory Group consists of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, the Chief Officer, the Deputy Chief Officer, the Director of People and Organisational Development and nominated Trade Unions.

The Partnership Advisory Group will:

- *Establish the Working Together Framework; the ethos of joint working and the structures required to support it.*
- *Act as the custodians of the Working Together Framework; principles, policy and procedures.*
- *Provide advice and support to the SFRS to devise and maintain its partnership arrangements; acting as a vehicle for the discussion of any partnership issues which may arise.*
- *Provide support to negotiations and facilitate the resolution of disputes (as required).*

1.2 Employee Partnership Forum

This forum consists of recognised Trade Union representatives, the Chair of the Board, the Chief Officer, representatives from the SFRS Board and the Strategic Leadership Team.

The Employee Partnership Forum will:

- *Meet regularly to discuss and review proposed and ongoing developments.*
- *Meet annually to agree an annual action plan that sets out joint objectives in support of the SFRS.*
- *Ensure that the work of the Forum is communicated to all employees and key stakeholders.*
- *Ensure that any necessary resources, facilities and training are in place to support the partnership arrangements; seek appropriate opportunities to build capacity within the forums.*
- *Commission work on its behalf from either a Local Partnership Forum or by establishing a defined Working Group.*
- *Identify areas of 'good practice' to assist the partnership arrangements.*
- *Ensure that we engage in robust consultation, negotiation and joint problem solving techniques to implement change within the SFRS.*
- *Provide support/facilitation to resolve issues that have been escalated by a Local Partnership Forum.*

2. Local Arrangements

The partners at a local level will have autonomy to establish Local Partnership Forums. Each Local Partnership Forum will comprise of the Director of Service Delivery and their Management Team together with recognised Trade Union representatives.

The Local Partnership Forum will:

- *Ensure that the nationally agreed and shared objectives of the Employee Partnership Forum guide the work carried out a local level.*
- *Create a Forum for the sharing of ideas, the exchange of information and the identification/development of opportunities for partnership working.*
- *Support local planning processes e.g. the production of Local Plans.*
- *Work together on issues of a local nature within the agreed principles, policy and procedures of the Working Together Framework.*
- *Ensure that any necessary resources, facilities and training are in place to support the partnership arrangements.*
- *Regularly consult and communicate with local managers and the local Trade Union representatives.*
- *Be responsible for the set-up and monitoring of specific Working Groups.*
- *Provide regular reports to the Employee Partnership Forum and share examples of 'good practice'.*
- *Provide support/facilitation to other Local Partnership Forums as required.*

3. Working Groups

Working Groups will be set up, as and when required, to explore, examine, analyse, research and make recommendations relating to specific issues as identified and agreed by the relevant Partnership Forum. The sponsoring Forum will select members for these working groups on the basis of specialist knowledge, skills or interest in a specific topic; employees from all levels, roles and departments are eligible for inclusion.

The Working Groups will:

- *Agree the Terms of Reference with the sponsoring Forum.*
- *Ensure members possess the requisite skills to engage in joint problem solving and consensus decision-making.*
- *Prepare an action plan to complete the objectives set by the sponsoring Forum within the specified timescales.*
- *Undertake the work required to complete the objectives set; requesting resources from the sponsoring Forum as necessary.*
- *Provide regular reports to the sponsoring Forum on progress.*
- *Present outcomes and recommendations on conclusion of their work.*

8. Developing In Partnership

To successfully achieve the aims of the Working Together Framework parties will commit to learning and developing together in order to acquire the skills, knowledge and behaviours associated with partnership working.

The SFRS People and Organisational Development function will support the Working Together Framework by facilitating relevant development opportunities that will enhance joint working. To support the development of our partnership culture we will:

- *Identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to support the Working Together Framework.*
- *Regularly consider the training needs of all parties in support of partnership working.*
- *Ensure that training in support of partnership working is jointly designed and delivered at the appropriate level (e.g. induction, management development, Trade Union courses).*
- *Establish a joint partnership learning sub-group to oversee and evaluate partnership learning outcomes and to report any recommendations for further development to the Employee Partnership Forum.*
- *Encourage the sharing of good practice and learning from experience via the Employee and Local Partnership Forums.*



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Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment Recording Form Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

PART 1 BASIC INFORMATION

Directorate/Team/Function	Name: Employee Partnership Forum Members (including Chair of the Board and appointed Board members, SLT, Trade Union Representatives). Framework maintained by People and Organisational Development Directorate.
E&D Officer	Name: Elaine Gerrard
Title (of function/policy to be assessed e.g. name of policy, title of training course)	SFRS Working Together Framework
Date Assessment Commenced	November 2013

The purpose of the following set of questions is to provide a summary of the function/policy.

Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the function/policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SFRS Working Together Framework formally establishes the principles of partnership as the foundation for the relationship between the Board, the Strategic Leadership Team, Management, Employees and their Trade Unions. By partnership it is meant that the SFRS, its Management and the Trade Unions will work together in accordance with the principles of partnership as defined by the Trade Unions Congress. • The Working Together Framework seeks to ensure the delivery of our Service within a flexible and responsive employee relations environment which is based on a shared belief that partnership will benefit both the SFRS and individual employees. • Terms of Reference for the Employee Partnership Forum (As tabled to the Forum in November 2013): sets out the arrangements which enable the forum to support the efficient and effective progression of joint business and to discuss any relevant SFRS business, activity or initiative.
Are there any associated objectives of the function/policy (please explain)?	The Board and SFRS personnel operate in an environment conducive to good decision making.
Does this function/policy link with any other function/policy? If Yes, please list and	Police and Fire Reform Scotland Act Fire and Rescue Framework Strategic Plan

describe relationship.	Annual Operating Plan
Who is intended to benefit from the function/policy and in what way?	SFRS Board – through clear processes for administering business in partnership with trade unions SFRS recognised Trade Unions All SFRS employee groups
What outcomes are wanted from this function/policy?	Efficient and effective partnership working between the SFRS Board, the Strategic Leadership Team, Management, Employees and their Trade Unions.
What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	Detract – failure to ensure that the overall process of working in partnership is fully communicated to and understood by all relevant SFRS personnel.
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function/policy?	Senior representatives from SFRS's recognised Trade Unions. Chair of the SFRS Board and representatives from the Board. SFRS Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team
Who implements the policy and who is responsible for the function/policy?	Senior representatives from SFRS's recognised Trade Unions. Chair of the SFRS Board and representatives from the Board. SFRS Chief Officer and Strategic Leadership Team. Framework will be maintained by the People and Organisational Development Directorate.

PART 2 ESTABLISHING RELEVANCE

- This section is designed to determine the relevance of the function/policy to equality.
- This section also fulfils our duty to consider the impact of our activities in relation to Human Rights.
- Initial screening will provide an audit trail of the justification for those functions not deemed relevant for equality impact assessment.
- Throughout the process the evidence and justification behind your decision is more important

Q1. *The function/policy will or is likely to influence SFRs ability to....*

- Eliminate discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010 and/or;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not and/or;
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Please tick as appropriate.

	Yes/ Potential	No	Don't Know/Don't Have Enough Evidence
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caring responsibilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and civil partnership (answer this only in relation to point a above)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion and belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex (gender)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social and economic disadvantage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have selected 'No' for any or all of the characteristics above please provide supporting evidence or justification for your answers.

AND,

If you have identified any potential links to other functions/policies please comment on the relationship and relevance to equality.

SFRS's recognised Trade Unions will generally have established their own standards for equality and fairness promotion. Combined with the SFRS's commitment to develop and harmonise a Dignity and Integrity at Work policy by 1st April 2014, this will ensure that equality is promoted.

Q2. Is the function/policy relevant to the Human Rights Act 1998?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

If you have selected 'No' please provide supporting evidence or justification for your answers

AND,

If you have identified any potential links to other functions/policies please comment on the relationship and relevance to Human Rights.

Concluding Part 2

Outcome of Establishing Relevance	Please Tick	Next Steps
There is no relevance to Equality or the Human Rights Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proceed to Part 4 Monitoring</u>
There is relevance to some or all of the Equality characteristics and/or the Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proceed to Part 3 Impact Assessment</u>
It is unclear if there is relevance to some or all of the Equality characteristics and/or the Human Rights Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proceed to Part 3 Impact Assessment</u>

PART 3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Describe and reference:

- relevant issues
- evidence gathered and used
- any relevant resolutions to problems
- assessment and analysis
- decision about implementation
- justification for decision
- potential issues that will require future review

Characteristic	
Age	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of age.</p> <p>Relevance to age relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings. Issues of accessibility are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p> <p>According to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2012 Trade Union Membership Statistics), Trade Union members are increasingly older employees. Issues of accessibility and participation for all SFRS employees should be considered for those who do not hold membership of a Trade Union.</p>
Caring Responsibilities	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Relevance to caring responsibilities relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p> <p>According to BIS, female employees are more likely to be a trade union member; however the SFRS workforce profile predominantly consists of male employees (86.9%). As a higher number of females tend to have primary caring responsibilities compared to males, this may therefore affect females' ability to attend meetings.</p>
Disability	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of disability.</p> <p>Relevance to disability relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings and materials. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p>

<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of gender.</p> <p>As with Caring Responsibilities section above, issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p>
<p>Marriage and Civil Partnership</p>	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership status.</p> <p>The requirement to disclose equal opportunities monitoring information which may feature in reports provided as a result of the partnership framework may require individuals to disclose their marital civil partnership status.</p>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>As with caring responsibilities relevance to pregnancy and maternity relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p>
<p>Race</p>	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of race, ethnicity and/or nationality.</p> <p>Relevance to ethnicity relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings and materials. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p> <p>The Summary and Conclusion section references the importance of broad interaction with stakeholder groups.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p>	<p>As with race comments above.</p>
<p>Sex (gender)</p>	<p>As with caring responsibilities and pregnancy and maternity comments above.</p> <p>Whilst the SFRS does not currently hold gender split data for Trade Union membership, it is anticipated that given the current workforce profile of the SFRS, the majority of Trade union membership is predominantly male.</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation</p>	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of sexual orientation.</p>

	The requirement to disclose equal opportunities monitoring information which may feature in reports provided as a result of the partnership framework may require individuals to disclose their sexual orientation.
Social and economic disadvantage	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the grounds of social or economic disadvantage.</p> <p>Relevance to social or economic disadvantage relates entirely to the accessibility of Partnership structure proceedings and materials. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p> <p>The Summary and Conclusion section references the importance of broad interaction with stakeholder groups.</p>
Human Rights	The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on the Human Rights.
Impact on People in General not covered by specific characteristics	<p>The suite of documents covered by this assessment do not relate to the decisions made by the Board or SFRS personnel which may potentially impact on people.</p> <p>Some people may be less able to attend Partnership structure meetings because of their geographic location. Issues of accessibility and other methods of participation are referenced in the Summary and Conclusion section below.</p>

Summary and Conclusion of Impact Assessment

Under the partnership approach laid out within the SFRS Working Together Framework, the intention is to make use of the EIA process for all work related policy and practice.

There is limited relevance to equality and some, albeit limited, opportunity to make a positive impact in relation to the general equality duty across the protected characteristics as it relates to these governance and operating arrangements. It will be the proposals and recommendations submitted to the groups within the Partnership structure which makes use of these arrangements that will potentially be relevant to equality and human rights rather than the arrangements to be followed.

There are, nevertheless, some specific areas of activity where there is a direct relevance to equality arising from this suite of documents.

Relevant documents:

Issue: Accessibility of Partnership structure agendas, reports, papers and other communication (public)

Employee Partnership Forum papers are made available to the EPF members and may be further cascaded via the Trade Union representatives that attend the meetings. It is recognised that many SFRS employees do not hold Trade union membership. Although the Working Together Framework relates to ensuring that positive relationships with trade

unions and their members are developed, relevant communication, engagement and consultation (where appropriate) with all staff groups will be a key consideration of the Chair of the Board, SFRS Board members, the Chief Officer and the SLT.

The SFRS and Board have an ambition to provide materials in easy to understand language and format. It is, however, noted that the business of the groups within the Partnership structures may at times be complex and will not lend itself to simplification without loss of meaning. The Board and the SFRS recognise the importance of focusing on key and significant messages and will aim to ensure that documents related to the partnership structures will be clear and transparent.

Employee Partnership Forums are currently scheduled to take place on Thursday afternoons in SFRS Interim HQ (Perth Fire Station). The dates do not conflict with known religious observance days and as such the timing of meetings does not pose a barrier to attendance. It is unlikely that the scheduling of meetings will bring the date of meeting into conflict with significant religious festivals. Nevertheless, a schedule to prevent repeated conflict of dates affecting any particular faith group will be maintained. The geographical location of the meeting may change once a new HQ facility has been established. Until then, it is difficult to anticipate potential issues with accessibility arrangements.

Concluding Part 3

Impact Assessment	Please Tick	Next Steps
There is no relevance to Equality or the Human Rights Act 1998	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proceed to Part 4 Monitoring</u>
There is relevance to some or all of the Equality characteristics and/or the Human Rights Act 1998 and relevant actions are recorded above in Summary and Conclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>Proceed to Part 4 Monitoring</u>

PART 4 MONITORING & REVIEW

- The purpose of this section is to show how you will monitor the impact of the function/policy.
- The reason for monitoring is to determine if the actual impact of the function/policy is the same as the expected and intended impact.
- A statement on monitoring is required for all functions/policies regardless of whether there is any relevance to Equality or the Human Rights Act.
- The extent of your answer will depend upon the scope of the function/policy to impact on Equality and Human Rights issues.

If you have provided evidence or justification for believing there is no relevance to Equality or the Human Rights Act in Section 2 Establishing Relevance or Section 3 Impact Assessment:

Q1 How do you intend to monitor and review the function/policy?

If you have provided evidence or justification for believing there is relevance to Equality or the Human Rights Act:

Q2 What will be monitored?

The POD directorate will review the processes for administering Partnership structure business during each Employee Partnership Forum. In addition, the framework will run as a pilot for a period of 12 months. During this time, the SFRS will:

1. Assess that the potential for promotion of members' interests via the Trade Unions does not come into conflict with the rights of protected characteristics.
2. Review accessibility and suitability of meeting venues (access and catering provisions)
2. Review and accommodate requests for alternate formats of written information on grounds of disability and language

The purpose of the monitoring is to:

- Identify trends and patterns of requests made and action taken relating to disability access and non-English language provision
- Illustrate the steps taken by the SFRS to ensure that all SFRS employee groups

This will mean that the processes for monitoring will themselves be reviewed and refined over time.

Q3 How will monitoring take place?

1. Log requests for alternate formats and action taken.
3. Log requests for assistance at Partnership structure meetings and action taken.
4. Log any requests for attendance at meetings and/or note any issues arising during proceedings relating to equality.

5. Log the range of stakeholder/community groups involved in the ancillary activities taking place alongside Partnership structure meetings.
6. Compliment, comment and feedback on Partnership proceedings

This range of measures may be refined where it is determined that there is no on-going need to capture this information.

Q4 What is the frequency of monitoring?

The POD directorate will review the processes for administering Partnership structure business during each Employee Partnership Forum. As the framework will run as a pilot for a period of 12 months, monitoring information will be provided at the end of this period.

Q5 How will monitoring information be used?

The information will be used to:

- Demonstrate the measures involved in ensuring the Partnership structures actively pursue a policy of openness, transparency and accountability
- To inform Partnership structures and proceedings to ensure that people are enabled to participate and that processes are accessible

PART 5 APPROVAL

This Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was completed by:

Name	Fiona McOmish
Date	14 November 2013

This Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment was approved by:

Name	Elaine Gerrard
Date	15 November 2013