



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING – STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2020 @ 1300 HOURS

**BRAIDWOOD SUITE, SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,
WESTBURN DRIVE, CAMBUSLANG, G72 7NA**

PRESENT:

Primrose Stark (Chair) (PS)
Bill McQueen (BMcQ)
Malcolm Payton (MP)

Anne Buchanan (AB)
Sid Patten (SP)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Liz Barnes (LB)
Fiona Munro (FM)
Paul Stewart (PSt)
Geri Thomson (GT)

Director of People and Organisational Development
Head of Human Resource and Organisational Development
Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training
Deputy Head of Human Resource and Organisational
Development

Julie Harkins (JH)
Kirsty Darwent (KD)
Alasdair Cameron (AC)
Debbie Haddow (DH)

Health & Safety Manager
Chair of SFRS Board
Group Commander, Board Support
Board Support /Minutes

1 WELCOME

- 1.1 The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present. The Chair commented on the numerous verbal reports on the agenda and asked for written reports to be submitted for the next meeting.
- 1.2 It was agreed that a verbal update on the Service's preparedness for COVID-19 would be provided under Item 14 Strategic Risk Register.

2 APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Karen Lockhart (KL), Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing
John Miller, Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, West Service Delivery Area
James McNeil, Deputy Assistant Chief Officer, East Service Delivery Area
Richard Whetton, Head of Corporate Governance

3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE

- 3.1 The Committee discussed and agreed that the Key Case report would be heard in private session due to the small number of individuals involved and confidentiality in line with Standing Orders (Item 9F).
- 3.2 No further items were identified.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 None.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 5 DECEMBER 2019

5.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

5.2 **The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

5.3 Matters Arising

5.3.1 There were no matters arising.

6 ACTION LOG

6.1 The Committee considered the action log and noted the updates. It was agreed that the due date for Action 8.8.2 Respiratory Protective Equipment (December 2018) would be extended to June 2020.

7 POD PROGRESS & PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 3 2019/20

7.1 The Committee welcomed the revised format of the report and noted that further changes were anticipated due to organisational restructuring.

7.2 FM presented the Committee with the POD Progress and Performance Report Quarter 3, highlighting the following POD key areas:

- Staff Retirement Data – Work undertaken with SPPA and Finance to more accurately profile potential retirements, including those impacted by legal change in status relating to the old pension scheme, and to improve forward planning ie recruitment.
- Positive Action Strategy launched during March 2020. A calendar of events such as LGBT History Month to be produced and events publicised.
- Evaluation of Career Ready Programme report drafted and would be brought to the next Committee meeting (June 2020).
- Leadership Development - Conference held in November 2019, Executive Development and Leadership for Change programmes were progressing. All nominees would be placed on the Leadership for Change programme. The purpose of the Leadership for Change programme was outlined and it was noted that the programme was for all middle/strategic managers across all staff groups and directorates.
- Negotiations of RDS Standardisation – Hopeful to progress to RAP by the end of the month.
- Employee Recognition Scheme had been positively received at the Employee Partnership Forum.
- Wellbeing and Managing Attendance – No significant change to absence levels but acknowledged the increased absence due to psychological condition. Further manual analysis on the circumstances for these absences ie work or non-work related to be carried out. Comparison with other blue light services, organisations to be considered
- Vaccination project plan and dossier was being developed for this new major project.
- Training Review Board convened and agreed Terms of Reference and Instructors' Terms and Conditions discussed with an anticipated 12 month implementation phase. Verbal update on progress and arising risks/issues to be brought back to next meeting (June 2020).

7.3 The Committee noted the positive improvements in Fitness Assessments figures, Post Incident support arrangements and reduction in waiting times for health and wellbeing.

7.4 JH highlighting the following Health and Safety key areas:

- Annual Plan was 37% complete at the end of Q3 which was a 20% improvement on the previous year. Further engagement was planned in the East and West Service Delivery areas. Changes in DACO level and increased focused at management level will improve the situation.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- Reduction of 9% in all Health and Safety events in Q3.

- 7.5 The Committee commented on the changes to the Employment and Criminal Conviction Policy in relation to PVG checks and asked whether the implications of this change were known yet. FM noted that the change was required for some roles within the organisation and the policy detailed the steps taken by the Service, if required. There had been no issues to date, however, the overall administration process was slow. All new trainees were automatically being PVG checked.
- 7.6 FM stated that the Service recognise the levels and reasons for absence within Operations Control and work was ongoing to address this including visits by health and wellbeing teams. Operations Control have a representative on the Mental Health Board. GT noted the challenges with ICT systems to quickly interrogate data to identify staff groups/locations. Additional reporting mechanisms were being looked at to help speed up the process.
- 7.7 The Committee commented on the waste of time/resources in relation to the cancellation or non-attendance at medicals being due to annual leave and training.
- 7.8 JH explained the reason for the delay in the roll out of Think Act Stay Safe modules and it was anticipated that initial module would be available on 1 April 2020. The Committee commented on the reoccurring ICT issues which impact on all areas. The Committee wanted this reinforced back to Senior Management that attention was required to enforce all health and safety aspects.
- 7.9 It was agreed that a spotlight on RDS, including turnover rate, retirements profile, current situation, etc would be presented at the next meeting (June 2020).
- 7.10 The Committee noted their disappointment that operational colleagues were not in attendance at this meeting but understood that this was due to the escalation of COVID 19 emerging issues.
- 7.11 The Committee agreed to raise further issues later in the meeting once ACO Paul Stewart was in attendance.

9 WORKFORCE PLANNING

9.2 Recruitment and Selection Project Update

9.2.1 FM presented a report updating the Committee on the progress being made within the Recruitment and Selection (R&S) project. The following key areas were highlighted:

- Review of recruitment lifecycle to consider current processes with a view to improve and streamline.
- Review of RDS arrangements.
- Review of admin and assessments for ongoing promotion and transfer processes.
- Work ongoing with Communications to information out to all staff groups.

9.2.2 The Committee noted the report.

(LB and PSt joined the meeting at 1415 hrs)

9.3 Balancing the Workforce Profile Action Plan

9.3.1 FM presented a report to the Committee providing an update on progress against the Workforce Profile Action Plan and recent refresh/updates to same. The following key areas were highlighted:

- Evaluation of Career Ready Pilot undertaken.
- Modern Apprenticeship progressing well noting a further 2 potential opportunities within the Service. New SVQ Co-ordinator recruited to help administer and streamline the process.
- Continuing to progress Positive Action.

9.3.2 FM confirmed that information was being gathered on retention of modern apprentices and outcomes of positive action campaigns.

9.3.3 **The Committee noted the report.**

9.1 **POD Restructure – Organisational Chart for POD/Other Directorates**

9.1.1 LB informed the Committee that the new Head of POD, Scott Semple, would take up his role in March 2020. Thereafter, a full review of the POD Directorate would be undertaken and a new organisation chart would be circulated when available.

ACTION: LB

9.1.2 **The Committee noted the verbal update.**

7 POD PROGRESS & PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 3 2019/20 (Continued)

7.12 The Committee noted their degree of disquiet in relation to competencies profile within the report and level of mandatory/standard training modules which does not tie in with narrative earlier in the report. The Committee asked whether they could have confidence with the overall figures in relation to core competence.

7.13 PSt advised that the challenges with RDS and Volunteers have been picked up in the Training Review report and HMFSI report. He further noted the issues with time allocated for training, inconsistency in reporting methodology and inconsistencies in systems in terms of what training was actually required for RDS which leads to incomplete/inaccurate data. The People, Training and Asset Systems Group are currently looking at this area. Similar issues have also been identified for standard and enhanced module which were based on risk profiling. The Committee suggested that some explanatory narrative be included in future reports.

7.14 PSt informed the Committee of the challenges to fill training courses for RDS personnel due to a number of reasons, however, there was a need to understand the systems/processes required to provide a wider holistic appraisal.

7.15 The Committee reiterated their request for a spotlight on the current issues with RDS to better inform the Committee, highlight mitigation actions and also to potentially feed recommendations into the SMDP project and TED Review.

7.16 **The Committee noted the report.**

8 PROGRESS UPDATE: OPERATIONAL TRAINING REVIEW PROJECT

8.1 PS requested that a written report be presented at future meetings.

8.2 PSt gave a verbal report to the Committee providing an update on the action taken to progress the recommendations contained within the Operational Training Review report and highlighted the following key areas:

- Inaugural meeting of the Training Continuous Improvement Board was held on 24 January 2020 with the main business being to draft the Terms of Reference.
- The next meeting of the Board (6 March 2020) would look to define the areas of priority/quick wins, identifying requirements around major projects and robust governance arrangements. Action plan to be developed to capture this information.
- Business case for dedicated Programme Manager has been prepared and submitted to Strategic Leadership Team for approval.
- Timescale: 3-5 year plan in some areas due to complexities in the implementation phase.

8.3 The Committee acknowledged the complexities involved and requested information on the 3 strands along with some context of urgency/quick wins.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

8.4 The Committee asked whether benefit analysis would be undertaken and where this would be scrutinised. PSt indicated that it was essential to understand what the changes were and the reasons for the change. He gave an example of changes to RDS training requirements, and the potential benefits can be measured ie reduced hours/increase training.

8.5 **The Committee noted the verbal report.**

(The meeting broke at 1445 hr and reconvened at 1455 hrs)

10 PAY, REVIEW AND BENEFITS

10.1 Detached Duty Policy Update

10.1.1 FM a verbal update to the Committee and highlighted the following key areas:

- Policy implemented in January 2020 resulting in an increased movement of staff.
- No negative feedback has been reported.
- Interim review scheduled for October 2020 and update on analysis to be brought back to the Committee.

10.1.2 **The Committee noted the verbal report.**

10.2 Employee Recognition Scheme

10.2.1 FM presented a report to the Committee providing an update on the planned implementation of the SFRS Employee Recognition Scheme and highlighted the following key areas:

- Results from Staff Survey and various informal recognitions of staff.
- Continue to monitor new scheme and noted that further options could be considered going forward.
- Initial funding available through savings generated from Edenred UK.

10.2.2 **The Committee noted the report.**

11 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

11.1 Update from Employee Partnership Forum (EPF)

11.1.1 FM advised the EPF held a meeting on 20 February 2020 and highlighted the following key areas:

- Board Member Anne Buchanan has taken over the role as Chair.
- Updates on Staff Survey, Positive Action, Mental Health Strategy, Recruitment and Selection project, Stonewall Equality Index, Staff Recognition scheme, Workforce Programme and Review of Training Standards.
- Issues raised by Fire Brigade Union included Firefighter Control trainee to development rate of pay, Wholetime Firefighter development to competent rate of pay and issues relating to the MOU Rapid Relief Team.
- Process for escalating issues to the Partnership Advisory Group to be reviewed.
- Restructuring of future agendas.

11.1.2 **The Committee noted the verbal report.**

11.2 Update from Partnership Advisory Group (PAG)

12.2.1 LB advised the PAG held a meeting on 4 March 2020 and highlighted the following key areas:

- Similar issues raised at previous EPF.
- Agreement to firm up procedures to allow due diligence and appropriate governance.
- Terms of reference to be reviewed.

11.2.2 **The Committee noted the verbal report.**

12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

12.1 Draft SFRS Mental Health Strategy Update

12.1.1 LB advised the Committee that the Draft SFRS Mental Health Strategy would be presented to the Strategy Leadership Team (11 March 2020) for approval. The Strategy outlines the principles on what the Service wishes to achieve and the next steps on how to achieve them. The Mental Health Board have met and provided feedback on the strategy. The Rivers Centre has also provided external scrutiny on the strategy.

12.1.2 The Committee noted the verbal update.

12.2 The Lifelines Scotland Proposal Update

12.2.1 GT provided a verbal update on the Lifelines Scotland Proposal, highlighting the following key areas:

- Discussions ongoing with Rivers Centre, however formal governance procedures were being put in place.
- Brief background information on the establishment of Lifelines Scotland and the recent extension to include emergency services.
- SFRS funding has been received from the Firefighters Charity
- Project launched summer 2019 with Gill Morton, taking up the position of Project Lead towards the end of 2019.
- Discussions held on what the project would deliver, development of the project plan, delivery within individual services whilst ensuring consistent approach across all Services and the implementation within development pathways ie induction, supervisory/middle manager, retirement.
- Project Initiation document to be submitted to the Mental Health Board (April 2020) and feedback would then be taken to the Reform Collaboration Group.

12.2.2 The Committee noted the verbal update.

(GT left the meeting at 1515 hrs)

13 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

13.1 AC presented the revised Committee Terms of Reference, noting the amendments were made to the following sections: Membership, Responsibilities and Appendix 1. It was noted that further amendments would be required due to the revised Strategic Leadership Team structure.

13.2 The Committee commented on the term “*advisory capacity*” under the Responsibilities sections (2nd bulletpoint) be reconsidered.

13.2 The Committee recommended the review Terms of Reference, pending further amendment, for approval to the Board.

14 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

14.1 LB presented the risk register, which had been refined and aligned to the strategic priorities. She advised that further refinement was ongoing to reduce the overall number of Corporate (strategic) risks and expand the Directorate risks.

14.1.1 The Committee noted their continuing disquiet relating to the lack of progress on the Health and Safety Plans within the organisation.

14.2 COVID-19 Update

14.2.1 LB informed the Committee that Response and Resilience were leading on this risk and were expanding the current corporate risk to include COVID-19. The following key points were noted:

- The existing continuity plan for pandemic flu was being reviewed and updated.
- Senior Management Team stood up to gather information and review business continuity plans.
- Tactical group convened to consider actions, practical implications, key staff group, etc
- Communications issued to staff and managers.
- Measures in place to track individual's self-isolating and follow up processes. Cognisance to be taken on child care implications, existing known underlying health issues, etc. Linking with Health and Wellbeing to ensure contact is maintained throughout the isolation period.
- Normal procedures for booking sick/absent remain in place, however additional information would require to be gathered (as per Manager's communication).
- The continuity plan also considers the impact on all areas of work including non-critical areas such as Home Fire Safety Visits.
- Implications should the official classification change from *Containment* to *Delay*.

14.2.2 It was confirmed that should self-isolation be advised all staff will continue to receive payment.

14.3 **The Committee noted the report and verbal report.**

15 FORWARD PLANNING

15.1 POD Policy Review Schedule Update

15.1.1 MC presented the report to the Committee outlining the revised and updated POD Policy Review Schedule which detailed the ongoing work in relation to POD policies and procedures.

15.1.2 **The Committee noted the report.**

15.2 Committee Forward Plan Review

15.2.1 The following items were identified for the June 2020 meeting:

- Update on Career Ready Pilot (F Munro)
- Update on Mental Health Analysis (F Munro/L Barnes)
- Update on RDS Terms and Conditions (F Munro/L Barnes)
- Spotlight on RDS (F Munro/L Barnes)

15.2.2 The following items were identified for the October 2020 meeting:

- Update on analysis of Detached Duty Policy (F Munro)

15.3 Items for Consideration at Future IGC, Board and Strategy Meetings

15.3.1 The following was noted a session on the Retained Duty System would be informative at a future Board Strategy Day, however, it was felt that it would be appropriate to await the outcomes of the DACO John MacDonald's project.

16 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

16.1 AC confirmed the actions arising during the meeting.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 4 June 2020 at 1300 hrs in the Braidwood Suite, SFRS Headquarters, Westburn Drive, Cambuslang, G72 7NA.

17.2 There being no further matters to discuss, the public meeting closed at 1535 hrs.

PRIVATE SESSION

18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: 5 DECEMBER 2019

18.1 The minutes of the private meeting held on 5 December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

19 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

19.1 The Committee considered the action log and noted the update. It was agreed that due date for Action 22.5 Key Case Update (December 2018) would be extended to June 2020

20 RANSC UPDATE

20.1 The draft minutes of the RANSc meeting on 5 December 2019 had been circulated to the Committee. The Committee noted the meeting of RANSc that was held earlier in the day (5 December 2019).

21 KEY CASE UPDATE – Q3

21.1 FM presented a report providing an overview of the Discipline, Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Statistics for Quarter 3 2019/20.