



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

PUBLIC MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021 @ 1000 HRS

BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES

PRESENT:

Kirsty Darwent (Chair) (KD)
Brian Baverstock (BB)
Anne Buchanan (AB)
Fiona Thorburn (FT)
Malcolm Payton (MP)
Tim Wright (TW)

Nick Barr (NB)
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)
Marieke Dwarshuis (MD)
Bill McQueen (Deputy Chair) (BMcQ)
Primrose Stark (PS)
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Blunden (MB)	Chief Officer
Ross Haggart (RH)	Deputy Chief Officer
Liz Barnes (LBa)	Director of People and Organisational Development
John Dickie (JD)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Director of Finance and Contractual Services
Paul Stewart (PSt)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance
Alasdair Cameron (AC)	Group Commander Board Support
Heather Greig (HG)	Board Support Executive Officer
Debbie Haddow (DH)	Board Support/Minutes

OBSERVERS:

None

1 CHAIR'S WELCOME

1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those participating via MS Team. The Board were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.

1.2 This meeting would be recorded to allow the Board to review and decide whether this recording would be published on the SFRS website for wider public access.

2 APOLOGIES

2.1 Stuart Stevens, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery

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- 3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**
- 3.1 The Board agreed that the private minutes of the previous meetings and private action log would be taken in private due to the confidential nature of the issues.
- 3.2 No further private items were identified.
- 4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
- 4.1 None.
- 5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**
- 5.1 **Thursday 17 December 2020**
- 5.1.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 5.1.2 Matters Arising
In relation to Suspension of Public Access to SFRS Board Public Meetings, the Board re-affirmed the accuracy of the previous minutes and associated action log entry. The Chair noted that the intention would be for Board Members to review and provide feedback on the trial recording of today's meeting and, barring any technical issues, publish on the website. Previous minutes to remain unchanged.
- 5.1.3 In relation to Item 16.1 Combined Risk and Performance Report Quarter 2 Progress Report, it was noted in the previous minutes that an option for consideration would be given to updating the Board (Strategy Day) on increases in response times. RH indicated that this would be progressed and an update would be issued in due course.
- 5.2 **Thursday 25 February 2021 (Special)**
- 5.2.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the special meeting.
- 5.3 **The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2020 and 25 February 2021 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**
- 6 ACTION LOG**
- 6.1 The Board considered the action log and noted the updates.
- 6.2 **Members noted the updated Action Log and approved the removal of completed actions.**
- 7 DECISION LOG**
- 7.1 The Board considered the Decision Log.
- 7.2 **Members noted the updated Decision Log.**
- 8 CHAIR'S REPORT**
- 8.1 The Chair presented her report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 17 December 2021, highlighting:
- Lord Greenhalgh address at the Local Government Authority Fire Conference and the publication of the HMICFRS State of Fire and Rescue Report (England). Both have implications for all UK fire and rescue services (FRS). In Lord Greenhalgh's speech, he spoke on FRS's professionalism, people and governance, including an indication to move towards a police and fire commissioner model, professional career structures and breadth of the firefighter's role. The HMICFRS report expanded on these areas and also indicated a major reform or potential abolition of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Fire. This would have significant impact on SFRS, who needed to be politically aware of potential changes.
 - Meeting with Fire Brigades Union (FBU), facilitated by the NJC, had been scheduled for 31 March 2021 to discuss future negotiations and SFRS's direction of travel. CO

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Blunden's letter outlining the wider context and contents of discussions had been previously shared with the Board.

- Introductory meeting scheduled with Robert Scott, new HMFSI Chief Inspector, on 1 April 2021. On behalf of the Board, KD thanked Simon Routh-Jones for his contributions and wished him well for the future.

8.2 In relation to the implications for SFRS following the publication of the State of Fire report, KD indicated that it was still uncertain. She noted that a White Paper on Fire Reform in England would be published in the Spring. Any changes to the NJC would have direct implications on SFRS and the situation would continue to be closely monitored.

8.3 It was agreed that an invitation would be extended to Robert Scott, offering the opportunity to attend a future strategy day in order to meet the Board and to outline his proposals for the future.

ACTION: BST

8.4 KD provide a brief update on Board Members recruitment, which closed on 22 March 2021, noting the shortlisting of applications had commenced. Following the interview process, new Board Members would be confirmed by mid-May 2021.

8.5 KD formally announced the retirement of Board Members Anne Buchanan and Primrose Stark, who would be stepping down on 30 June 2021. On behalf of the Board, KD thanked both Anne and Primrose for their valuable contributions during their tenures and wished them well for the future.

8.6 KD confirmed her formal appointment as Chair of the Board for a further 4 years.

8.7 During their last meeting with the Minister of Community Safety, prior to purdah, Ms Denham expressed her thanks and best wishes to the Board and SFRS for the future.

8.8 **The Board noted the report and the verbal update.**

9 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT

9.1 The Chief Officer presented his report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 17 December 2020, highlighting:

- Discussions held with Chief Executives of Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and Moray Councils regarding realignment of Local Senior Officer areas following a recent review undertaken.
- Covid Recognition Scheme awarded gift vouchers to 504 individuals, including 143 Sodexo personnel.
- Attending Cheapside Street Memorial on Sunday 28 April 2021.

9.2 In regard to the Franklin Covey Leadership sessions, the Board asked for reflections on what contributions and impact these were making. MB noted the significant changes within the SLT over the last 12 months and as such Franklin Covey has been hugely beneficial for the SLT. This has helped to identify and focus on priority areas including health and wellbeing of staff, recovery from Covid and engagement around the draft vision. These sessions have provided the SLT with an opportunity to understand how they work together by identifying individual and combined strengths. This would now be cascaded, via the Leadership Framework, through the whole organisation. The Board commented on the improved cohesiveness within the SLT, interaction with the Board and quality of papers being presented.

9.3 In regard to the Wildly Important Goals Session, MB noted that this has been delayed until 29 March 2021 and outlined the expectation for the session.

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- 9.4 MB informed the Board that the HMICFRS State of Fire Report recommended, due to inconsistencies in approach, that the Fire Standards Board publish England Fire Standards covering activities undertaken by English fire and rescue services. The aim being to drive improvements, enhance professionalism and identify good practice. Fire Standards relating to Emergency Response Driving, Operational Preparedness, Operational Competence and Operational Learning have already been published. SFRS would take cognisance of these standards, undertake a gap analysis and prepare a report for the SLT and Staff Governance Committee for scrutiny.
- 9.5 Taking cognisance of the England Fire Standard, MB noted his anticipation that the HMFSI would potentially audit these areas and this would provide the Service with external verification on our position.
- 9.6 MB updated the Board on the work undertaken to develop and deliver training as close to the point of need as possible, and noted that this has been accelerated due to Covid. Within the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland areas, resources were now available to deliver all elements of core skills and recruitment processes, emergency response driving courses/refreshers and modularised Incident Command Level 1 (pilot scheme).
- 9.7 In relation to delivery of Incident Command Level 2 and 3, all refresher content can now be delivered remotely. On Monday 29 March 2021, the first fully remote Incident Command Level 2 acquisition course would be delivered.
- 9.8 MB noted that the initial review of the Rural Full-Time posts (Phase 1), highlighted both significant benefits and value for money. Following completion of the final phase, the Service were now bringing all the resources together to ensure consistency in delivery.
- 9.9 In regard to key risk areas, MB highlighted the McCloud judgement and the potential reputational and financial risks. Meeting scheduled with the Scottish Pensions Agency (SPA) to gain a better understanding. Report to be presented to the next Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub Committee (RANSc) in June 2021.
- 9.10 MB also highlighted COP 26, in particular potential Marauding Terrorist Attacks (MTA). He reminded the Board of the current position, in relation to training and preparedness, within the Service. He noted his intention to inform Chris McGlone, FBU Executive Member, what measures the Service would be undertaking to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff, should they find themselves involved in a MTA incident. MB clarified that the Service would like to reach a partnership approach with the FBU on the 4 identified stations, provide appropriate training, pay the additional responsibility and provide a guaranteed 24/7 response to assist partners across Scotland.
- 9.11 The Board reiterated the importance of firefighter safety and supported the Chief's proposals.
- 9.12 MB agreed to provide a formal report on the context and progress made on this issue at the next meeting (April 2021). This should include training for all firefighters across Scotland and also specialist resources. It was further proposed that a standing agenda item for MTA be added to the forward plan.

ACTION: MB/BST

- 9.13 **The Board noted the report.**

10 SERVICE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

- 10.1 RH updated Members in regard to Change Portfolio matters which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 17 December 2020, highlighting the following:
- New Head of Portfolio appointed and would take up post on 26 April 2021.

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- Senior Management Board (SMB) meeting held on 24 March 2021, discussed the new architecture of the portfolio which would help to streamline and strategically focus scrutiny.
- Ongoing programmes/projects were Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP), People, Training, Finance and Assets (PTFA) Programme, Retained/Volunteer Duty System (RVDS) project, CCMS project, Emergency Service Network Implementation (ESNI) programme, McDonald Road/Museum of Fire, West Asset Resource Centre (ARC), Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) project, Safe and Well project and Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) project.
- OCHA Closing Report to be submitted to the next SMB meeting (April) and Transformation and Major Projects Committee (TMPC) meeting (May).
- Post project evaluations were undertaken for the Rapid Response Unit (RRU) and Rural Full-Time Posts (RFTP) projects. These evaluations were focused on the management aspects of the project and action plans have been developed to address the recommendations.
- Post project evaluation underway on the 5 Watch Duty System and would be presented to the TMPC in due course.

10.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

11 **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

11.1 **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)**

11.1.1 BB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 24 March 2021 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Internal Audit Plan, impacted by Covid but assurance received that the plan would be completed as scheduled.
- Final Report SFRS ICT and Data Security discussed and assurances were provided on how the Service were addressing the identified weaknesses.
- Internal Audit Plan for 2021/22, clear alignment with the strategic direction and emerging strategic risks for the Service.
- Risk register – new revised format presented. The Committee acknowledged the significant improvements in terms of readability, accessibility and strengthened alignment between the risk management and planning process across the Service.
- Detailed discussion on the spotlighted risk relating to the Service failing to undertake consultation/engagement processes. Assurances were provided that the Service had appropriate systems and processes in place and were fully aware of the potential challenges and issues associated with these processes.

11.1.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

11.2 **Service Delivery Committee (SDC)**

11.2.1 NB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 10 December 2020 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes noting that a verbal update was provided at the previous Board meeting.

11.2.2 NB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 11 March 2021 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Comprehensive Service Delivery Update.
- Quarterly Performance Report for Q3 2020/21 noting the impact of Covid on statistics.
- Action Plan and Closing Report Update noting Management of Fleet equipment and Operational Risk Information were progressing well.
- Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) Review Project Update progressed to Stage 3 and included an externally facilitated stakeholder's engagement event.

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- Clinical Governance Arrangements continuing to be progressed along with Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). Memorandum of Understanding currently being developed.
- Risk spotlight on Fire Safety Enforcement was deferred to the next meeting (May 2021).

11.2.3 Grenfell Tower Fire Update

RH provided the Board with an update on the work undertaken by the Service in conjunction with relevant partners, following the Grenfell tower fire tragedy in June 2017. The following key points were highlighted:

- Interim update report presented to the Committee. Reminder that the Full Action Plan and Interim Update reports were presented at alternating meetings.
- Action Plan covers 3 key areas: Grenfell Tower Enquiry Phase 1 report, London Fire Brigade (LFB) Investigation Report and SFRS' own Register of Focus Areas.
- SFRS Action Plans contained all 46 Grenfell Tower Enquiry Phase 1 recommendations. Of the 31 recommendations specific for LFB, SFRS have closed 11 recommendations with a further 3 presented to SDC for closure, revised timelines for 10 recommendations and the remaining 7 actions remained on track. Revised timelines were due to ongoing Covid restrictions and reprioritisation of both internal and third-party resources. It was anticipated that this would not impact on the overall completion timeline (June 2021), however this would continue to be monitored and, if necessary, adjusted accordingly.

11.2.4 Joint Workshop - Command and Control Future (CCF)

NB reported that a joint workshop, with the Transformation and Major Projects Committee, on the (CCF) project was held on 11 March 2021. During the workshop, the Committees looked at the chronological order of the existing infrastructure and processes including threats and opportunities, migration to and establishment of a new system.

11.2.5 FT reported that the workshop provided a greater understanding of specific risks associated with legacy systems and the mitigations in place and provided assurances to both Committees of the cohesive team work involved on the project.

11.2.6 **The Board noted the approved minutes and verbal updates.**

11.3 **Staff Governance Committee (SGC)**

11.3.1 PS reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 3 December 2020 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes noting that a verbal update was provided at the previous Board meeting. A Building the Future Together and workplace culture workshop was scheduled to be held directly after this meeting (25 March 2021).

11.3.2 PS reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 4 March 2021 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Agreement on Instructors terms and conditions.
- Update on the PVG project noting the remedial actions being taken to improve response rates.
- RDS resourcing, both the challenges with recruiting and the mitigating actions.
- PTFA project update including the provision to extend the current working arrangement to provide continuity of existing services.
- Wellbeing survey undertaken and results will be available in Q4. Any emerging themes will be linked to the next staff survey.
- Positive aspect of the increase in self referrals.
- Graduations held in December 2020 (24 graduates) and scheduled for April 2021 (24 graduates).
- Risk profile focused on the impact on training including the robust processes to mitigate any reduction and impact on specialist skills, operational abilities, etc.

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- Meeting scheduled (31 March 2021) to review and reformat future training reports to include new performance indicators.
- Innovative solutions introduced during this pandemic to ensure that training continued to be delivered.
- Workforce planning including the future Area and Station Commander processes in the near future.

11.3.3 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

11.4 **Transformation and Major Projects Committee (TMPC)**

11.4.1 FT reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 4 February 2021 and referred the Board to the attached draft minutes, the following key points were highlighted:

- Welcomed restructure and additional resourcing within the Portfolio Office.
- Circulation of monthly CCF report to all Committee members for awareness. Option to schedule a short phone call, if deemed necessary, outwith the normal meeting cycle.
- Further information to be brought to the next meeting (May 2021) on the PTFA project.

11.4.2 **The Board noted the draft minutes.**

(The meeting broke at 1140 hrs and reconvened at 1150 hrs)

12 **RESOURCE BUDGET 2021/22**

12.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the proposed Resource Budget for 2021/22. The following key points were highlighted:

- Detailed presentation during Board Strategy Day (18 March 2021).
- Details of overall budget (value and breakdown) and noted the Service's intention to remain within this budget.
- Uncertainty regarding the timing and financial implications of the ongoing response and future recovery phases of Covid. This situation would continue to be closely monitored.
- Reimbursement of costs for the provision of additional support services (national response) have been assumed.
- Ring fenced funding to be provided for 2 major UK-level projects: COP26 Climate conference and the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project (ESMCP).
- Appendix A to be amended to include the 2020/21 Revised Budget column and amended 2020/21 Base Budget figures.

12.2 The Board acknowledged the previous scrutiny on the budgets at the recent Board Strategy Day (18 March 2021).

12.3 In regard to a decrease in Property Costs, SO'D noted there were substantial adjustments made this year to progress areas of deficit within property and this budget was being brought back in line with the base core position. The Service has also benefited from reduction in rates and utility costs.

12.4 SO'D stated that the Resourcing – Recovery and Renewal budget was projected for staffing resources ie temporary support staff, etc.

12.5 Due to the volatile impact of the pandemic, SO'D explained that the Service had tried to be as adaptable as possible, continue to closely monitor budgets and reprioritise as appropriate. Looking forward the SLT would be considering business cases on 14 April 2021, to identify potential "shovel ready" projects. SO'D reiterated the challenges of resourcing and delivering projects within a 12-month budget period.

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12.6 To provide assurance to the Board, RH commented on the extent of the co-ordinated recovery activities within the Service, including specific SMB meetings focusing on recovery, reset and renew work, reviewing of the route map and work packages. Finance was an overarching factor; however, there was still an element of uncertainty as we have not yet moved into the recovery phase. The financial position would continue to be monitored, updated and refreshed as the Service moves into the recovery phase.

12.7 **The Board approved the Resource Budget for 2021/22.**

13 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021-2024

13.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the proposed Capital Programme 2021-2024. The following key points were highlighted:

- Capital DEL funding represents a flat cash position.
- Anticipated capital receipts from the sale of legacy properties.
- Additional grant funding received to support fleet decarbonisation. Work continues to source further grant funding and this will be incorporated into the budget when secured.
- Asset Management Strategy is critical in terms of the approach to capital investment. Anticipated that the Service Delivery Model Programme will provide clarity on long term capital investment.
- Continue to proactively engage and identify collaboration opportunities with partners via the Reform Collaboration Group and other avenues.

13.2 In regard to collaboration opportunities, SO'D commented on the previous work with partner agencies and noted the renewed focus to identify shared infrastructure opportunities. SO'D informed the Board of ongoing engagement with Edinburgh City Council's Place Based Opportunities Board and also the North Territory Partnership Board which may provide opportunities for the Service to explore.

13.3 In regard to the property investment backlog, SO'D confirmed that the Chief Officer and Chair of the Board continued to raise awareness with Scottish Government of the substantial investment required. The Carbon Management Plan and associated documents highlighted the Service's ability and preparedness to deliver on projects should funding be available. SO'D reiterated that the magnitude of the investment required to ensure that the Service's property profile was fit for purpose. KD informed the Board that the investment backlog was widely recognised within Scottish Government. The Service would continue to actively raise the awareness and pursue funding at every opportunity. It was acknowledged that SFRS's situation was mirrored across the wider public sector.

13.4 Discussions took place regarding the potential to explore alternative financial modelling/ initiatives for future investment. It was noted that advantages and disadvantages of any such initiatives would have to be fully investigated and identified. The Service would also need to ensure compatibility with other public sector organisations and the requirements of public sector funding.

13.5 **The Board approved the Capital Programme 2021-2024.**

14 STATUTORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – MAINSTREAMING REPORT AND EQUALITY OUTCOMES REPORT 2021

14.1 LBa presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the proposed revised Equality Outcomes and the Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Report 2021, the following key points were highlighted:

- Proposed new equality outcomes.
- Statutory duty to publish no later than 30 April 2021.

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- 14.2 In relation to monitoring effectiveness of services ie Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) within different communities across Scotland, it was noted that there was currently no routine demographic data collected during HFSVs. MMcA noted that a customer satisfaction survey was being developed and this could potentially be used to capture this data.
- 14.3 In regard to equalities based work with travelling communities, LBa noted that there had been no specific work with these communities and agreed to feed this back to the team for further consideration. LBa confirmed that travelling communities were regularly visited and offered fire safety advice.
- 14.4 The Board commented on the accuracy of the statement that the SFRS was not representative of the communities it serves, when there was a high percentage of non-declaration. LBa stated that this was a true statement and data was available to confirm that the SFRS were not factually representative, however accepted the comments on non-declaration/unknown elements.
- 14.5 LBa informed the Board that personal data was collected at the Offer of Employment stage, not the initial recruitment stage. The Service actively encourages individuals to provide this data, however, it remains voluntary and there were numerous possible reasons for withholding. LBa commented on the focus on mental health during the pandemic, the positive culture change and raised awareness across the Service.
- 14.6 It was noted that faith based diversity within the Service was not contained within the report and LBa agreed to feed this back to the team.
- 14.7 In regard to mainstreaming approach, LBa confirmed that a dedicated team had been established and a programme of work and action plan had been developed to achieve the outcomes. There were 2 elements of accessibility: providing core services to communities and employment opportunities. It was recognised that work was still required to breakdown the perception, and potential barriers, of working for SFRS.
- 14.8 Following the publication of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Inquiry on Race, Equality, Employment and Skills, LBa to provide details on the 3 new actions being undertaken.

ACTION: LBa

- 14.9 **The Board approved the Statutory Reporting Requirements – Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes Report 2021.**

15 EQUAL PAY AND GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2021

- 15.1 LBa presented a report to the Board seeking approval to publish the Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2021. The Board were advised of the Service's statutory obligations to publish information on the Gender Pay Gap between male and female employees. The report also includes an Equal Pay Statement declaring how the Service intends to deliver equality in pay, and which additionally provides information of occupational segregation within the SFRS in respect to gender, ethnic origins and disability. The following key points were highlighted:
- Statutory duty to publish no later than 30 April, every 2nd year
 - Traditionally focus on difference between male and female pay gap. Following recommendations by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, information now included on disability and BAME communities.
 - SFRS's Gender Pay Gap, as of January 2021, was 1.01% (mean) and 2.5% (median).
 - Gender pay gap was attributable to occupational segregation within the Service.
 - Low representation from the disabled and BAME communities, with 0.8% and 0.71% recorded respectively.

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- 15.2 The Board commented on the potential impact of rejected (uniformed) pay offer on the statistics. LBa agreed that this would have an effect on the figures, however, reiterated that would still be due to occupational segregation and not pay inequalities.
- 15.3 In regard to SFRS's recruitment and promotion processes being gender-neutral, the Board asked whether training was provided for individuals involved in these processes to ensure gender neutrality. LBa confirmed that training was provided to those involved in the recruitment process. Equality training is undertaken on recruitment and mandatory refresher equality training was required every 3 years. The recruitment process was anonymised until shortlisting stage and the appointments panel system reduces any risk of personal prejudices.
- 15.4 The Board commented on the differential levels of promoted posts for male and females. LBa noted that recent and future recruitment of women would positively impact on future statistics.
- 15.5 LBa confirmed that the pay figures are based on base pay rates only, in order to ensure a fair and even comparison. As overtime was generally voluntary, and due to the difference in the numbers of males to females in certain roles, consideration of overtime pay could potentially skew the statistics.
- 15.6 It was agreed that the Board would benefit from further discussion and exploration of this area at a future Strategy Day.
- 15.7 **The Board approved the publication of the Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2021.**
- 16 RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – FEBRUARY 2021**
- 16.1 SO'D presented a report advising the Board of the resource budget position for the period ending 28 February 2021. SO'D outlined the analysis of the financial position and referred Members to Appendix A and B of the report, which identified the current resource position showing a forecast year-end underspend of £3.943million, which would be reduced to £1.943million once proposed budget adjustments were agreed. This forecast position includes costs for COP26 and net savings of £3.035million in respect of COVID-19.
- 16.2 SO'D outlined some additional areas of work undertaken to utilise the underspend such as drainage surveys, installation of smart metering, etc. The Board were reminded that Scottish Government had been made aware of any potential underspend.
- 16.3 In relation to the forecasted underspend in subsistence and transport costs, the Board asked whether there were future savings identified due to changes in work practices and delivery of services. SO'D indicated that savings were being assumed for the first quarter and had been appropriately reallocated. It was acknowledged that going forward there would be areas overspent ie training, home fire safety visits, etc to allow the Service to "catch up". SO'D noted the positive aspects of current adjusted working practices for the Service's carbon footprint and this was being fed into the Reset and Renew Group for their information. At this stage, it was too early to identify a definitive financial saving.
- 16.4 The Board commented on the reduced RVDS activity level and the potential for rebasing this budget post Covid. SO'D reminded the Board that the RVDS activity levels were historically volatile but had been impacted by recent societal changes ie reduced road traffic collisions, etc. The situation would continue to be monitored and as previously stated it was too early to identify any long term societal changes or definitive financial saving.

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16.5 In regard to Out of Pattern Rostered Reserve (OPRR), SO'D explained the purpose for amending the phasing of OPRR to provide greater flexible with the budget available.

16.6 **The Board scrutinised the resource budget position for the period ending 28 February 2021.**

17 CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 – FEBRUARY 2021

17.1 SO'D presented a report advising the Board of actual and committed expenditure against the 2020/21 capital budget for the period ending 28 February 2021. It was anticipated that the revised budget of £39.632 million would be spent by the end of the financial year. SO'D outlined the additional monies/grants received during this financial year and commented on the significant effort undertaken to ensure that the Service were in this positive position.

17.2 The Board requested clarification on the separate tendering exercise being developed for the Museum. SO'D noted that the museum was not an integral part of the original tender, however, the main contractor had been asked to tender for this work. To ensure best value, this separate tendering process had been developed. It was not anticipated that the tendering process would materially impact on the timelines, however, if there were timeline changes with this project these would continue to be monitored and reported accordingly.

17.3 **The Board scrutinised the level of actual and committed expenditure for the period ending 28 February 2021.**

18 DRAFT ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN 2021/22

18.1 MMcA presented the Board with the first draft of the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) 2021/22 for scrutiny. The purposes of the AOP was to support the delivery of the strategic plan and had been constructed over a 3-year rolling programme. This would allow greater flexibility in resourcing delivery of the priorities, allow better management of the overall resources within the Service and efficient management of the interconnected nature of actions and differing cross-directorate contributions. MMcA commented on the impact of Covid, noting the reduction in actions and the increased flexibility, if necessary.

18.2 MMcA reminded the Board that business as usual activities, outwith the AOP, continued and were managed through Directorate Management Plans.

18.3 The Board were informed that the development of the AOP was co-ordinated by the SMB. All core directorate and cross directorate resources are identified prior to the AOP being finalised.

18.4 MMcA confirmed that the report was being presented to ascertain whether the Board were content with the AOP and direction of travel. He noted that detailed scrutiny would be undertaken at Committee level, however it remained relevant that the Board maintained strategic level overview of the AOP.

18.5 The Board asked for consideration to be given to present the Portfolio Office projects in a tabular format. MMcA noted that these projects were scrutinised by the TMPC, but would consider inclusion of a table with additional narrative/purpose.

18.6 The Board commented on potential additional item relating to the conclusion of the Grenfell Tower Action Plan due to the strategic importance. MMcA to discuss with SS.

ACTION: MMcA

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- 18.7 In relation to Strategic Outcome 4, the Board asked for consideration to be given to revising the End Dates as the majority were recorded as March 2022.
- 18.8 **The Board scrutinised the Draft Annual Operating Plan 2021/22.**
- 19 SFRS BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE STRATEGY AND 2021/22 ACTION PLAN**
- 19.1 MMcA presented the Board with the SFRS Business Intelligence Strategy and Action Plan for 2021/22 to the members of the SFRS Board for scrutiny. The following key areas were highlighted:
- Business Intelligence Strategy outlines how the Service can improve their data management to more effectively analyse performance, identify new practices and improve the insights across the Service.
 - Information would be more accessible, relevant and form part of decision-making processes.
 - Analysis would become more forward looking and predictive in analysis.
 - Business Intelligence Strategy and Digital Strategy would work together.
 - Intended benefits including improving decision making and prioritisation across the Service.
 - Suggested principles including single version of the truth to ensure consistency of data.
 - Annual update report on progress against the Strategy and Action Plan to be brought to the Board.
 - Action Plan themes include building useful partnership connections across the public services, developing products to improve how data is utilised, developing data discovery, identifying and developing tools/products and developing predictive analysis.
- 19.2 The Board commented on the potential tension between the performance and artificial intelligence elements. MMcA acknowledged the tension and noted the intention to utilise both elements simultaneously with performance being used as a corrective against predictions.
- 19.3 MMcA reminded the Board of the Business Intelligence review carried out last year, which included costs and disbenefits, and noted that the Service's approach would be to build capacity on an iterative basis to minimise risks.
- 19.4 The Board asked how the Service would use this intelligence to challenge risk appetite and influence innovation and collaboration. MMcA informed the Board of a collaboration with NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) to host a Vizathon on wildfires, including impact of climate change and future predictions.
- 19.5 The Board welcomed the report and noted the future aspirations, innovations, collaborative working and benefits from the improvement in data management.
- 19.6 **The Board scrutinised and noted the SFRS Business Intelligence Strategy and 2021/22 Action Plan.**
- 20 LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN CONSOLIDATED REVIEW REPORT**
- 20.1 The report provided an overview of our current Local Fire Plans which had been conducted to establish: our progress against local priorities and whether our local priorities remain relevant to the current operating landscape. MMcA noted the local plans were reviewed last year and in conjunction with local scrutiny partners paused reframing of local plans due to Covid. Local plans have now been refreshed and agreed with local partners.
- 20.2 As discussed at yesterday's ARAC, there would be a more fundamental review of the local plans undertaken, in light of the next strategic plan. However, this report highlights

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the strengths in local scrutiny arrangements, in terms of relationships with communities and partners, as well as some areas of improvement.

- 20.3 The Board noted the report highlighted the importance of partnership working with young people and requested a future Strategy Day session be scheduled relating to development of Young Firefighter Scheme, corporate parenting responsibilities, etc.
- 20.4 In regard to LSO level performance, the Board asked how information on LSO level intended outcomes, performance against these outcomes were collated and reported. As set out in legislation, MMcA stated that local reporting was through local authorities, and their role was to scrutinise the local plan. He noted that the Service were looking to standardise their approach to local performance reporting, however the Service would still need to take full account of the legislation. The Board acknowledged the legislation, but noted that it was the Service's response being deployed at the local level.
- 20.5 The Board were reminded that the opportunity to attend Local Scrutiny Committee, and engage with Local Senior Officers, would be reintroduced once Covid restrictions allow.
- 20.6 **The Board noted the Local Fire and Rescue Plan Consolidated Review Report.**

21 RISK THEMES

- 21.1 There were no new or emerging issues identified during this meeting.

22 FORWARD PLAN

- 22.1 The Forward Plan was noted and would be kept under review. The following items were noted:
- 22.2
- MTA Approach Training Across Scotland and Specialist Resources – April 2021
 - MTA Approach to be added as a standing agenda item
 - Gap analysis re Fire Standards (England) – *Staff Governance Committee*
- 22.3 The following Strategy Day items were noted:
- Potential session – Introductory meeting with Robert Scott, HMFSI
 - Potential item regarding development of the Young Firefighter scheme, Corporate Partnering, etc – Date to be confirmed.
 - Potential session – further discussion and exploration around Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap.

23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 23.1 The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 29 April 2021 at 1000 hrs.
- 23.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1405 hours.

PRIVATE SESSION

24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING:

24.1 Thursday 17 December 2020

- 24.1.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

24.2 Thursday 25 February 2021 (Special Board)

- 24.2.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

25 PRIVATE ACTION LOG

- 25.1 The Board considered the action log and noted the updates.
- 25.2 There being no further matters to discuss in private, the meeting closed at 1410 hours.