



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

**PUBLIC MEETING - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BOARD**

**THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2020 @ 1000 HRS**

**BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES**

**PRESENT:**

Kirsty Darwent (Chair) (KD)  
Brian Baverstock (BB)  
Anne Buchanan (AB)  
Sid Patten (SP)  
Primrose Stark (PS)  
Tim Wright (TW)

Nick Barr (NB)  
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)  
Bill McQueen (BMcQ)  
Malcolm Payton (MP)  
Fiona Thorburn (FT)  
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
Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D)	Director of Finance and Contractual Services
Mark McAteer (MMcA)	Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Stuart Stevens (SS)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery
Paul Stewart (PSt)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Corporate Governance
Hilary Sangster (HS)	Group Commander Business Support
Alasdair Cameron (AC)	Group Commander Board Support
Debbie Haddow (DH)	Board Support/Minutes

**OBSERVERS:**

Heather Greig	Board Support Executive Officer
Vlad Valiente	Legal Services Manager

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those present and those participating via video conference. The pre-meeting guidance and virtual meeting protocol was reiterated to the attendees.

The practicalities and potential to reopen Board/Committee meetings to key stakeholders initially would be discussed at the Integrated Governance Forum with recommendations being brought back to the Board for decision at the appropriate time.

**2 APOLOGIES**

2.1 Marieke Dwarshuis, Board Member

**3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**  
3.1 The Board agreed that a section of the Chair and Chief's reports would be taken in private due to confidential matters (Standing Order 9G).

3.2 No further private items were identified.

**4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 None

**5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2020**

5.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

5.2 Matters Arising

5.2.1 SO'D provided the Board with an update on the progress, timescale and planned workshops of the Accenture work.

5.3 **The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2020 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 30 April 2020, highlighting:

- Regular meetings with the Minister providing updates on how the Service has continued to function effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Constructive meeting with the Chief Executive of Scottish Care to discuss the potential for future joint working.

**The Board moved into private session at 1015 hrs to discuss confidential issues. The Board moved back into public session at 1055 hrs.**

8.2 **The Board noted the report.**

**9 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

9.1 The Chief Officer presented his report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 April 2020, highlighting:

- The thoughts of the Service had been conveyed to the family affected by the tragic fatal fire in Paisley and commended all personnel involved for their efforts and professionalism during the incident.
- Launch of the Mental Health Strategy (22 June 2020), which publicly set out the commitment to prioritise mental health within the Service, creating a supportive environment to enable personnel to speak openly and honestly and to continue the positive partnership with the Rivers Centre.
- Update figures on COVID-19 absences and confirmed cases.
- Update on the Reset and Renew Strategy including the development of workplace management arrangements, the expectation that personnel would not be fully

returning to the office until the end of the year, engaging with personnel about their working location preferences and the review/refresh to an agile working policy.

- Reiterated that the Service is committed to being an equal rights employer who support their Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) personnel and communities and who condemn racism, hate and injustice wherever it is found.

**9.2 The Board noted the report.**

**10 SERVICE TRANSFORMATION UPDATE**

10.1 RH updated Members in regard to Service Transformation which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 30 April 2020, highlighting the following:

- Senior Management Board meeting held on 17 June 2020. This was previously the Senior Management Team (Programme Office).
- Gateway Review action plan continues to be updated to ensure recommendations are being met.
- Programme Office renamed Portfolio Office.
- Service Transformation and Major Projects dashboard updated.
  - Safe and Well showing Amber for time due to additional ICT work required.
  - Service Delivery Model Programme showing Amber for skills/resources/time due to additional risk management work undertaken. Impact of COVID-19 to be reported to the Transformation and Major Projects Committee (TMPC) meeting (6 August 2020) with revised Phase 2 dossiers.
  - Command and Control Futures update.
  - Protection of Vulnerable Group project update and ongoing positive engagement with Disclosure Scotland.
- First iteration of the People, Training, Finance and Assets (PTFA) Systems Programme dossier has been produced.
- Future meetings – Senior Management Board (15 July 2020) and TMPC (6 August 2020).

10.2 RH confirmed that Accenture have been sighted on the change portfolio work including the PTFA Systems project.

**10.3 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 25 March 2020 and referred the Board to the attached draft minutes noting that a verbal update was provided at the previous Board meeting.

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

**11.2 Service Delivery Committee (SDC)**

11.2.1 NB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 11 June 2020 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Service Delivery update from Deputy Chief Officer.
- Quarterly Performance Report Q4 update from ACO Stuart Stevens and Chris Fitzpatrick, Performance Data Services Team Leader.
- Action Plan Update – further information was requested in regard to the HMFSI Closure Report for Performance Management Systems.
- Operational Learning presentation on Water Rescue/Operational Discretion.
- Quarterly Update on Grenfell Fire Action Plan.
- Spotlight Risk on UFAS and update on stocktake report.
- Final HMFSI routine report to the Committee prior to future reporting to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

## **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

- Forward Planning – Clinical Governance and Scrutiny of Gold Decision Making to be added.
- Private session discussion on Gold Decision Making.

11.2.2 In relation to the Grenfell Fire update, SS provided a brief overview on the working group and the progress against the actions. Where appropriate actions have been linked to the Training Review, Ministerial Working Group and Operations Control Testing and Exercise Programme. The impact of COVID-19 has caused some slippage in the timescale, however, there was confidence the final completion date of June 2021 could still be achieved. Scottish Government's Ministerial Working Group have completed their recommendations which the Service has been significantly involved with.

11.2.3 In relation to the Gold Decision Making, KD noted that the governance arrangements for rapid decision making were introduced as an additional layer of decision making. The de-escalation the current COVID-19 situation will now allow decisions that were made to be reviewed and, if necessary, confirmed within the normal governance procedures.

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

### 11.3 **Staff Governance Committee (SGC)**

11.3.1 PS reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 4 June 2020 and referred the Board to the attached draft minutes noting that a verbal update was provided at the previous Board meeting. The following was highlighted:

- Commend the work undertaken by POD, Training and Safety & Assurance during the pandemic.
- Discussion on identifying different working practices and best practices for remote working and delivery of training.
- Impact on workforce planning due to COVID-19 and the recovery programme in place.
- Commend the work of the Mental Health Strategy and LBA's involvement within the COVID Wellbeing Board.
- Update on Protection of Vulnerable Groups project.
- Overall low level of absenteeism throughout the pandemic period.

11.3.2 **The Board noted the draft minutes and verbal update.**

*(The meeting broke at 1130 hrs and reconvened at 1140 hrs.)*

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

11.4.1 FT reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 7 May 2020 and referred the Board to the attached draft minutes noting that the key areas were highlighted during the Deputy Chief Officer verbal update (Item 10).

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

### 11.5 **Integrated Governance Forum (IGF)**

11.5.1 KD reported that the first meeting of the Forum was scheduled for 9 July 2020.

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

## **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

### **12 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY UPDATE**

- 12.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval for the updated Environmental Policy 2020, noting the following key points:
- Overarching Environmental Policy refreshed to reflect changes to the broader environment in this area.
  - Eight high level objectives have been set and will be reflected in other environmental documents i.e., Carbon Management Plan.
  - Implementing this policy will have financial implications.
  - £2.8million has been allocated within the current Capital Programme.
- 12.2 The Board commented and requested that the 5% waste reduction objective be reconsidered with a view to increasing this amount.
- 12.3 SO'D stated that work was still ongoing to progress Green Champions within the Service and the Environmental Team continue to engage with all stations. SO'D noted the Service's recent success in the UK's Green Action National Energy competition with 3 SFRS stations placing 1<sup>st</sup> (Comrie), 2<sup>nd</sup> (South Lochs) and 5<sup>th</sup> (Shotts). The Board commended this achievement and the work undertaken by all concerned. SO'D further informed the Board that this had also been noted in Scottish Parliament.
- 12.4 With reference to performance indicators, SO'D confirmed that collating information on private mileage was an area for development and targets would be set in due course. SO'D noted that Flexi Duty Officers mileage was now being recorded through provided fuel card.
- 12.5 Training and education of personnel begins with a session during their induction and work is ongoing to develop a programme to champion green issues.
- 12.6 SO'D commented on ongoing work with the Energy Savings Trust who have analysed the Service's fleet and journeys undertaken, identifying areas to decarbonised and potential of moving to electric fleet. It was hoped that support would be provided from Scottish Government to drive this forward.
- 12.7 The Board suggested some changes to the terminology within the Policy and SO'D agreed to take this into consideration.
- 12.8 The Board noted and welcomed the clear statement of the financial implications arising from implementing this policy.
- 12.9 The Board commented on the possibility of the policy containing clear cross references to the underpinning plans as this would have been helpful.
- 12.10 **The Board approved the revised Environmental Policy 2020.**

### **13 ENERGY AND CARBON STRATEGY 2020-2030**

- 13.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the SFRS Energy and Carbon Strategy 200-2030 and highlighted the following key points:
- Schematic of strategic planning hierarchy.
  - Importance of energy and carbon management within the overarching environmental management.
  - Breakdown of energy use and areas for improvement.
- 13.2 SO'D confirmed that the Service were progressing with implementing building management systems and funding had been identified.

## **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

- 13.3 In regard to the Bo'ness trial, this was progressing well with a 45% reduction in carbon emission for gas. Funding would need to be identified to allow this to be rolled out further.
- 13.4 It was noted that future reporting would be through the Board's Performance report.
- 13.5 The Board discussed the potential for Managers to consider the inclusion of environmental/carbon reduction issues when setting objectives with personnel.
- 13.6 SO'D confirmed that the Service were engaged with Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Transport Scotland to develop and progress the move to electric vehicles. The work and funding required to move the current fleet to EURO6 compliant vehicles has been undertaken and shared with Scottish Government.
- 13.7 **The Board approved the Energy and Carbon Strategy 2020-2030.**
- 14 ARRANGEMENT FOR REVIEWING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOARD**
- 14.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board detailing how the SFRS Board Member arrangements have been reviewed to ensure their continued effectiveness. The following key points were highlighted:
- Access to SFRS Learning Content Management System (LCMS) and Scottish Government Governance Hub.
  - Access and development to O365.
  - Board Members Appraisal process and identified training delivered.
  - Strategy Days/Workshops were drivers of improvement.
- 14.2 The Board were informed that future strategy day sessions and/or workshops would be developed from the main themes identified through the appraisal process.
- 14.3 **The Board approved the arrangements for reviewing the effectiveness of the Board.**
- 15 RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**
- 15.1 SO'D presented a report advising the Board of the resource budget position for the period ending 31 May 2020. SO'D outlined the analysis of the financial position and referred Members to Appendix A of the report, which identified the current resource position showing a forecast year-end underspend of £1.221million. The forecast position includes anticipated costs for COP26 and net savings to date in respect of COVID-19. COVID-19 recovery costs were still to be fully established and there was no assumption of any additional funding for extraordinary events i.e. COP 26, COVID-19.
- 15.2 In relation to overtime the Service has been proactive in the measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain service delivery. Similarly, the Service has improved their planning and forecasting of early retirement as much as possible.
- 15.3 SO'D explained that the forecasted overspend on reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) panels is a result of ongoing necessary checks and regular inspections required until the situation is rectified.
- 15.4 In regard to the forecasted underspend, SO'D assured the Board that work was underway to identify potential areas of spend.
- 15.5 SS confirmed that Retained Duty System training nights were returning to normal and personnel would be required to attend.

**NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

15.6 SO'D stated budget holders would be asked for proposals to address any underspend and this would include spend to save options. The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) would consider these options on their deliverability, protecting long term financial positions, dealing with COVID-19 and environmental issues.

15.7 In regard to support staff vacancies, LBA updated the Board on the current position, ongoing recruitment and adjustments to roles made during this period.

15.8 **The Board scrutinised the resource budget position for the period ending 31 May 2020.**

**16 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

16.1 SO'D presented a report advising the Board of actual and committed expenditure against the 2020/21 capital budget for the period ending 31 May 2020. It was anticipated that the budget of £33.060 million would be spent by the end of the financial year with 60% already committed.

16.2 SO'D reminded the Board of the impact of COVID-19 on construction projects and the subsequent recommencement of work. A review of the capital programme has been undertaken and several adjustments were noted.

16.3 SO'D informed the Board that an additional £4.35 million from Scottish Government has been provided to augment the capital budget. The Board welcomed these additional monies and noted the work ongoing to identify appropriate areas of spend.

16.4 **The Board scrutinised the level of actual and committed expenditure for the period ending 31 May 2020.**

*(The meeting broke at 1235 hrs and reconvened at 1245 hrs.)*

**17 BOARD SUMMARY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR Q4 2019-20**

17.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board providing the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter Summary Performance Report for fiscal year 2019-20 and highlighted the following key points:

- Low number of fire fatalities over the year.
- General improvement across all incidents.
- Ongoing development of supporting other agencies.
- Information Requests (GRS1.10) – Improvements anticipated due to new handling procedures being implemented to ensure statutory timescales were being met.

17.2 The Board commented on the reduction in accidental dwelling fires which was a testament to the Service's preventative work.

17.3 The Board noted the increased UFAS incidents. SS reminded the Board of the new measures in place to reduce blue light journeys and noted that this was different from reducing the number of UFAS incidents. A UFAS Stocktake report, containing historical data, identified positive actions and the potential for national implementation, had been produced and would be brought to a future strategy day (July 2020).

17.4 MB informed the Board of recent discussions by the SLT regarding UFAS incidents and the risk based approach.

17.5 In regard to response times, SS acknowledged the slight increase in attendance time and noted the factors outwith the Service's control impacting this, i.e speed control measures, management of operational road risk, etc.

17.6 MMcA noted his discussions with Committee Chairs in relation to performance reporting/development of the performance framework which along with information on target setting could be considered for a future strategy day.

17.7 **The Board scrutinised the report.**

**18 ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN 2019/20 INTERIM Q4 PROGRESS REPORT**

18.1 MMcA presented a report to the Board detailing the interim Q4 quarterly progress of the Annual Operating Plan 2019/20 and highlighted the following key points:

- Initial impact of COVID-19 on planned work and resources reported.
- Full update to Q4 progress report to be brought back to the next Board meeting (August 2020).

18.2 **The Board noted the interim quarterly report and progress made against the Annual Operating Plan 2019/20.**

**19 UPDATED ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN**

19.1 MMcA advised the Board that the Annual Operating Plan 2020/21 would be updated and brought back to the next Board meeting (August 2020) along with the Q1 progress report.

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

*(GMack joined the meeting at 1305 hrs)*

**20 COMMAND AND CONTROL FUTURES PROJECT**

20.1 JD presented a report to the Board providing an overview of the Command and Control Mobilising System (CCMS) project timelines, progress against critical path and impact of COVID-19 mitigation measures on project delivery. GMack highlighted the following key points:

- Project currently Amber for time and cost with a recommendation for quality to be adjusted to Amber going forward.
- Work continues to prepare the software and infrastructure to enter the pre-user acceptance test phase.
- Impact of COVID-19 mitigation measures, any additional workload has been monitored, assessed and managed as far as practicable.
- Continuing to adhere to planned timelines as far as possible.
- Report confirming the extent of the impact of COVID-19 was submitted to the CCF Board (18 June 2020) and considered 6 key areas including impact on the supplier, Systel.
- In the initial stages of COVID-19, Systel's Chief Executive informed JD that some resources may be redirected away from development to maintain existing service users.
- Notification received (8 June 2020) that the current software release was subject to delay and the subsequent software release would also be delayed and released incrementally throughout June-October 2020. This would have a direct impact on training, testing and planned go live date.
- Systel's inability to confirm the content and functionality of each intended software release has caused challenges for configuration, data entry, test planning and training.
- A series of timeline review meetings have been scheduled and already commenced.
- Proposed new timeline to be brought back to the CCF Board in July 2020.

## NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- 20.2 JD confirmed that he has written to Systel's Chief Executive to request details of the incremental software releases. Systel have acknowledged receipt of the letter but have still to formally respond.
- 20.3 JD informed the Board that the French Government's decision to enforce a lockdown, directly impacted on Systel's ability to access their testing environment. This was an external factor that the Service had no control over.
- 20.4 GMacK confirmed that in all areas, in terms of the provision of information, Systel continue to deliver to allow the Service to progress aspects of the timeline. However, concerns were around the content of the existing builds being provided and lack of clarity of what future software builds will contain.
- 20.5 JD reminded the Board of the contingency work that is continually being undertaken to identify any issues/mitigations actions and provide assurance.
- 20.6 JD noted that milestone payments would only be paid following confirmation from all stakeholders that Systel have delivered against the agreed timeline.
- 20.7 The Board asked whether the delays were proportionate and whether there was a risk of complete failure to deliver. In his opinion, GMacK stated that the delays were proportionate and understandable given the impact from COVID-19. He noted that once the Service had an understanding of the content of the software then User Acceptance Testing could be progressed.
- 20.8 In regard to the risk of failure to deliver, GMacK noted the transparency and practical solutions to the challenges from Systel and this was an increase in clarity, trust and honesty. This would be measured over the coming software builds as the Service have requested clarity on timelines and software content. Should the timelines or content (high demand) differ then this trust will erode. Failure to deliver was not envisioned but the Service has to see the consistent injection of SFRS specific elements that would make it a fit for purpose, safe and a stable mobilising system.
- 20.9 FT confirmed that the CCF project update was a standing agenda on the TMPC agenda and appropriately scrutinised. Thanks were extended to JD, GMacK and the wider team for their professionalism and continued hard work throughout this project.

20.10 **The Board noted the report.**

*(GMacK left the meeting at 1325 hrs)*

**21 STONEWALL WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX AND SFRS COMMITMENT TO A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE.**

- 21.1 LBa presented a report to the Board highlighting the Service's current placing within the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, creation of action plans on help, focus on initiatives and to raise awareness of Diversity Champions. It was noted that Guidance for attendance at Pride events was still being finalised and would be published on iHub. The Board were informed of the current employee network group, future expansion plans and promotion of these groups on the iHub.
- 21.2 The Board commented on the helpful and informative Stonewall training session held on 10 June 2020.
- 21.3 The Board commented on specific terminology within Appendix C (Employee Guide to Establishing Recognised Employee Networks in SFRS) and LBa would consider these comments.

## **NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED**

21.4 The Board noted the relatively low score against the SLT. LBa provided some possible justification for this score including changes in personnel and level of involvement and anticipated improvement going forward.

21.5 **The Board noted the report.**

### **22 RISK THEMES**

22.1 None.

### **23 FORWARD PLAN**

23.1 KD presented the Forward Plan noting that this would be kept under review and proposed agenda items would be prioritised due to the ongoing pandemic situation.

It was agreed that the Forward Plan would be updated to include:

- Annual Operating Plan 2019/20 Q4 Progress report – August 2020
- Annual Operating Plan 2020/21 and Q1 Progress report – August 2020

**ACTION: BST**

### **24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

24.1 The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 27 August 2020 at 1000 hrs.

24.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1340 hours.

## **PRIVATE SESSION**

### **8 CHAIR'S REPORT**

8.3 The Chair and Chief jointly highlighted the following:

- The Minister has been updated on the national position with the NJC, NFCC and the tripartite agreement which SFRS have never agreed.
- Future Fire Reform to be led by Lord Greenhalgh who would Chair the Fire Reform Board. Letter has been sent to Lord Greenhalgh regarding the SFRS's position and expectation.
- Future Vision update.

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

### **25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING: THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2020**

25.1 Subject to one amendment, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.