SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Report No: B/SPPC/20-18

Agenda Item: 5

Report To:	**THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Meeting Date:	**29 NOVEMBER 2018**
Report Title:	**TRANSFORMATION CONSULTATION FINDINGS**

Report Classification:	**For Decision**	**Board/Committee Meetings ONLY** **For Reports to be held in Private**	
		Reason	

1	**Purpose**
1.1	To inform the Board of the outcomes of the Service Transformation Public Consultation exercise and to ask the Board to discuss its findings and agree recommendations for the next steps.

2	**Background**
2.1	The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) undertook a public consultation exercise on its Service Transformation proposals, *Your Service Your Voice, Have Your Say*, from February to May of 2018. The consultation document set out the rationales and drivers for transformation and highlighted in some detail the future vision for the Service and the key benefits that it will bring to Scotland. The consultation also made clear that the views of stakeholders were **crucial** in helping the Service to understand the strength of support and any opposition to its proposals in order to further develop the implementation details of the transformation programme.

3	**Main Report and Discussion**
3.1 3.1.1	**The Transformation Consultation Exercise** Following public consultation good practice guidelines, the consultation exercise ran for 90 days from 13 February 2018 to 14 May 2018. In order to ensure a wide awareness of the exercise the Communications and Engagement Team (CET) developed a strategy to deliver a comprehensive consultation process targeted at both external and internal stakeholders to raise awareness of the proposals and maximise responses. Key activities included: 1. Contacting all staff by email to make them aware of the consultation and encourage them to respond to it. 2. Launching and maintaining a dedicated consultation page 'Your service…Your Voice' on the transformation area of the iHub. 3. Delivering a series of Manager Roadshows to allow staff to engage directly in discussion about the rationales, challenges and benefits of transformation. These were delivered by the Chair of the Board, Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer and supported by Service Leadership Team (SLT) members. 4. Local Senior Officers (LSO's) undertook sessions with staff across their areas delivering approximately 929 engagement events across all Service Delivery Areas (SDA's) ensuring all stations and watches were engaged in discussing the proposals. 5. LSO's and their management teams undertook 165 external engagement exercises across all SDA's between January and May 2018. 6. A dedicated 'Transformation' area was published on the website replicating the information available on the iHub to ensure external stakeholders and the public could access sufficient information on the transformation proposals.

7. A range of external corporate engagements were undertaken including meetings at senior level with all 4 opposition parties in the Scottish Parliament; meeting 23 individual MSPs in their constituency capacity and meetings with all 4 Opposition justice spokespeople.

8. The Communications and Engagement team widely promoted the consultation exercise throughout the broadcast, written media and Social Media channels.

3.2 **The Transformation Consultation Results**

3.2.1 The Service commissioned Professors James Mitchell and Ailsa Henderson of The Academy of Government, The University of Edinburgh to undertake an independent analysis of the consultation responses. They undertook both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the responses, their report is attached as Appendix 1 and the findings are summarised below.

3.2.2 Overall the consultation generated 1563 responses, the majority were from individuals but a significant number of public service partners also responded. 313 SFRS employees responded to the survey, they self-identified as such by using their Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) email to register to complete the survey. When reporting the survey results below the views of self-identified SFRS employees are separated out for analysis but they also remain within the overall response numbers from individuals.

3.2.3 The formal consultation document included 6 core statements that summarised the key facets of the transformation proposals. Respondents were asked to state their agreement/ disagreement with each. They were also encouraged to provide open ended responses to elaborate on the reasons for their opinions and their overall view of the Transformation proposals. The overall breakdown of the number of responses to the consultation was as follows:

3.2.4 **Table 1**

Type of Response	Number	% of overall responses
Individual	1426	91.23
Organisation	137	8.77

3.2.5 All consultation respondents were asked 'Do you agree with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service overall vision for Transformation'. This resulted in an overall majority of respondents backing the proposals and the direction of travel set out in the consultation document.

3.2.6 **Table 2**

Do you agree with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service overall vision for Transformation	Yes	No
	52%	48%

3.2.7 In addition all respondents were asked to state their views (agree/ disagree/ no opinion) of the 6 core statements. In Table 3 below the first number indicates the total percentage agreeing, while the number in brackets lists the percent agreement after those with no opinion have been removed (i.e. the valid percent), both numbers were subject to rounding which is why not all add up to 100.

3.2.8 The results demonstrate clear support for the use of up-to-date technology, as well as for training and improved remuneration for firefighters linked to progressing with transformation. There is less support for changes to the operating model including changing the station footprint, reducing the burden on other public services and the introduction of more flexible crewing arrangements. On these global figures it is important to note that a majority of respondents disagreed with reducing the burden on other public services and the introduction of flexible crewing models to the Service.

3.2.9 **Table3**

Agreement with Core Statements	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	94 (97)	3 (3)	2
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	87 (89)	11 (11)	2
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	85 (88)	11 (12)	4
I trust the Scottish fire and rescue services to change its operating model – including station footprint – in ways that are safe for Scotland	46 (50)	45 (50)	9
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	44 (47)	50 (53)	6
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	38 (44)	49 (56)	13

3.2.10 However as seen in Table 4 below when the responses were analysed by respondent type; individuals, Partner Bodies, SFRS employee, a different and more nuanced picture emerged. There was strong support from the Transformation proposals evident from both partner bodies and SFRS employees, while individuals offered some support to elements of the proposals while disagreeing with others. It is worth noting that individuals who responded to the consultation were not asked to provide detailed information about themselves and therefore we cannot say how representative they or their views are of the wider Scottish public.

3.2.11 **Table 4**

Response differences by type of respondent (% agree after 'no opinion' removed)	Individuals (% agree)	Organisations (% agree)	SFRS employees (% agree)
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	96	99	98
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	89	95	95
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	89	95	96
I trust the Scottish fire and rescue services to change its operating model – including station footprint – in ways that are safe for Scotland	47	91	75
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	44	77	75
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	40	78	68
Number of responses	1426	137	313

| 3.2.12 | As seen in Table 5 below a further issue that emerged from the detailed analysis related to trust in the Service to deliver aspects of the transformation agenda. It would appear that where there is trust that the SFRS can bring about change to its operating model this helps to account for positive attitudes to the other statements. Among those who expressed trust in the Service to change the operating model there was considerably greater support for flexible crewing and partnership working to reduce the burden on other public services. Where trust to bring about change was lacking there was still majority support for using the latest technology, giving firefighters appropriate training and rewarding firefighters for expanding their role. However in this group there was a considerable majority opposed to the transformation proposals relating to reducing the burden on other public services and introducing a more flexible crewing model into the SFRS. |

| 3.2.13 | **Table 5** |

Trust the SFRS to change its operating model	SFRS Employees		Individuals		Organisations (non SFRS)	
	No N=68	**Yes N=205**	**No N=616**	**Yes N=426**	**No N=10**	**Yes N=82**
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	55 (83%)	202 (99%)	474 (79%)	419 (98%)	8 (80%)	80 (98%)
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	55 (86%)	200 (99%)	493 (82%)	384 (91%)	9 (90%)	67 (99%)
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	62 (93%)	205 (100%)	564 (93%)	422 (99%)	10 (100%)	81 (100%)
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	19 (28%)	171 (93%)	83 (14%)	294 (73%)	1 (11%)	67 (84%)
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	5 (9%)	153 (89%)	60 (10%)	270 (72%)	0 (0%)	68 (87%)

| 3.2.14 | In addition to asking these specific questions consultation respondents were also asked to provide written comments to allow them to elaborate on the reasoning behind their views. Professors Mitchell and Henderson have highlighted in their report the detailed themes that emerged from their analysis of this material. Below summarises those themes. While individual respondents were not asked to provide details of where they lived, in many cases respondents indicated which part of Scotland they resided in. There appeared to be more vocal backing for the transformation proposals from rural and island area respondents with stronger reservations expressed by those indicating that they resided in urban Scotland. The following summarises the general themes that were prevalent across both positive and negative responders comments: |

Positive Themes	Negative Themes
• Transformation gives a stronger focus to prevention role of the Service	• SFRS should stick to its 'core' roles and avoid the risk of over stretching itself
• Transformation will allow the Service to adapt to the changing risks facing Scotland and our communities	• SFRS personnel will not be as well trained/ skilled in proposed new roles as existing public service personnel e.g. in Emergency Medical Response
• Transformation will bring greater flexibility and a recommitment to partnership working	• An expanded role for SFRS could be used as a pretext to reduce the budget of other public services
• Staff responders were on the whole positive and eager to engage further in understanding how transformation will progress	• Constant change is impacting negatively on moral, staff need some stability

3.2.15   Furthermore, across both the positive and negative responders common themes were expressed in relation to what would be necessary for the Transformation Programme to succeed. The most common factors cited were:
- The right training and equipment would need to be provided to all Firefighters
- Further engagement, internally and externally, will be required on more detailed plans for the proposed change themes
- The local impacts of the strategic change proposals will need closer examination and further local consultation conducted in areas where transformation would impact most
- The proposed changes should not be used as a smokescreen for Service cuts

3.3   Conclusions and Next Steps

3.3.1   The consultation exercise yielded an overall majority of support for the Transformation proposals. However more detailed analysis of the responses indicated that some respondents were distrustful of the Service's ability to bring about changes in the operating model. Where this occurred respondents disagreed with 'reducing the burden on other public services' and of introducing more flexibility into working arrangements within the Service. Where trust in the ability to deliver change in the SFRS operating model existed the opposite was evident. There was also a degree of divergence of views between respondents indicating they resided in rural or island communities in comparison with those indicating they resided in an urban location.

3.3.2   The SFRS Board formally approved the Transformation proposals on the 28/09/17 and that approval provided the basis for the Transformation consultation documents that were consulted upon. In the document the benefits of Transformation were clearly articulated and these were reaffirmed in dialogue sessions across the country throughout the consultation and engagement period. As noted above the Transformation proposals were endorsed by a majority of respondents, but the Service fully appreciates the concerns and issues raised by those who did not. We remain however convinced of the benefits that Transformation will bring to communities throughout Scotland. Consequently it is recommended that the Service continues to proceed with the development of a Transformation programme, while being fully committed to further engaging with those communities, partners and individuals who raised concerns during the consultation exercise, but that programme should proceed to realise the benefits that Transformation will bring to Scotland's many communities.

3.3.3	It is important that as a major Scottish public service the SFRS demonstrates its willingness to respond to the concerns and issues raised by some respondents to the consultation proposals. We will in the near future publish, were we have permission, the comments made by consultation respondents and indicate how we will take on board their concerns as we develop our plans for implementing Transformation. As a public service we are fully committed to listening to the public, our partners and our employees in shaping the Transformation agenda and we will demonstrate in our detailed planning how we have done so.
3.3.4	It is proposed that the Service further engage with stakeholders to build our understanding of the reasons why some respondents expressed less trust in the Service's ability to bring about change in our delivery model and how this affects their views on key aspects of the transformation proposals. The consultation results also suggest that there was some geographical and community differences in opinions relating to Transformation. We propose ongoing engagement with communities to ensure the full benefits of Transformation are realised throughout Scotland in ways that reflect the country's geography and population dispersal. In so doing we will seek to allay concerns and listen to suggestions communities and individuals may have as we develop our detailed plans. This will help the Service to better communicate the details of the Transformation programme going forward at local and national levels and demonstrate our commitment to responding to stakeholders and communities in shaping the next stages of our transformation journey.
3.3.5	Lastly, it is proposed that the Service proceeds to develop a high level Transformation Delivery Plan. This plan should outline the key projects that will be developed and delivered to support the Transformation proposals. It should also set out a timeline for delivery of the programme and the key benefits that the programme as a whole will achieve. The Board are requested to consider and further guidance on aspects that they think are relevant to such a high level plan.
4	**Recommendation**
4.1	The Board are asked to note and agree the following: • To note the report on the findings of the consultation exercise by the Professors James Mitchell and Ailsa Henderson of The Academy of Government, The University of Edinburgh. • Agree that the Service publish the report by Professors Mitchell and Henderson and in the near future publish, were it has permission, the comments of those who offered them in the consultation exercise. • Agree that the Service develop a plan for further stakeholder and community engagement at local and national levels to ensure that issues and concerns raised in the consultation exercise are more fully understood and are seen to influence, where appropriate, the detailed implementation of the Transformation proposals. • To agree that the Service, develop and publish a high level plan setting out the projects, stages and broad timelines with which the Transformation programme should proceed.
5	**Key Strategic Implications**
5.1 5.1.1	**Financial** There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. There are, however, significant financial impacts related to all aspects of transformation progressed by the SFRS. These impacts, and associated financial authorisation and management will be subject to normal Service governance arrangements.

5.2 5.2.1	**Legal** The Service has a legal duty to consult on major change proposals and publish the findings of these.
5.3 5.3.1	**Performance** The use of the SFRS' standard programme and project management methodology would assist to ensure that, subject to approval, the SFRS transformation programme is fully scrutinised from a performance management perspective.
5.4 5.4.1	**Environmental & Sustainability** Various aspects of the transformation programme will focus on the impact that the SFRS has on the environment and sustainability.
5.5 5.5.1	**Workforce** Communicating the consultation findings of the transformation proposals will help keep SFRS' workforce informed of developments.
5.6 5.6.1	**Health & Safety** All aspects of Health and Safety requirements will be considered as part of any transformation proposals progressed.
5.7 5.7.1	**Timing** Subject to direction given by the SFRS Board, a programme will be developed, which will outline aspects of transformation to be progressed and when.
5.8 5.8.1	**Equalities** An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed for the overall Transformation vision, which will be kept updated. Specific assessments will also be undertaken as necessary to support individual projects.
5.9 5.9.1	**Information Governance** The transformation consultation has been undertaken using SFRS' consultation tool, Citizen Space, thereby supporting information governance considerations in respect of the data captured.
5.10 5.10.1	**Risk** The principles for risk management adopted by the Programme Office align to the direction contained within SFRS' Finance and Contractual Services Risk Management Policy. This approach will insure the robust management of risk for any transformation work progressed, in keeping with Service protocols in this regard.
5.11 5.11.1	**Communications & Engagement** Communicating the findings of the transformation consultation is in line with the Service's Communications and Engagement Framework.
5.12 5.12.1	**Training** Training requirements associated with transformation will be fully integrated into the relevant projects that are progressed.

6	Core Brief
6.1	The findings of the recent Service Transformation consultation were discussed by the SFRS Board. It was noted that an overall majority of respondents to the exercise backed the proposals set out in the transformation consultation document. Overall staff and partners were positively disposed towards the proposals with a more mixed picture emerging among wider stakeholders. The Service will proceed to publish a high level plan demonstrating how it will progress with Transformation. In addition further work will be undertaken to better understand the issues where some reservations were expressed in the consultation exercise regarding some elements of transformation to ensure the Service fully understands the nature of those concerns and can adequately reassure all stakeholders regarding transformation.

7	Appendices/Further Reading
7.1	Appendix A – SFRS Your Service Your Voice, Have Your Say - Transformation Public Consultation Analysis

Prepared by:	Mark McAteer, Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Sponsored by:	Mark McAteer, Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications
Presented by:	Mark McAteer, Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications

Links to Strategy
Transformation has been identified as being a priority for further action within the SFRS' 2016-19 Strategic Plan.

Governance Route for Report	Meeting Date	Comment
SFRS Board	*29 November 2018*	*For Decision*

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE

YOUR SERVICE YOUR VOICE, HAVE YOUR SAY

TRANSFORMATION PUBLIC CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) recently undertook a public consultation exercise on its Service Transformation proposals, *Your Service Your Voice, Have Your Say*. The consultation document set out the rationales and drivers for the transformation of the Service and highlighted in some detail the vision for the possible future of the Service. The exercise made clear that the views of the public and SFRS stakeholders were crucial in coming to a final decision on the future transformation of the Service. The document also set out how people could respond to the consultation either via online, email or by postal options.

2   THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

2.1   The SFRS Communications and Engagement Team co-ordinated the consultation exercise on behalf of the Service. Following public consultation good practice guidelines, the consultation exercise ran for 90 days from 13 February 2018 to 14 May 2018. In order to ensure a wide awareness of the exercise the Communications and Engagement Team developed a strategy for the consultation process and developed a series of communication exercises targeted at both external and internal stakeholders to maximise the awareness of the exercise and encourage as many responses as possible.

Internal Consultation

2.2   Internally the communications strategy embraced a combination of face to face sessions with staff and senior managers and a range of intra net based and direct communication exercises. To support internal communications the Communications and Engagement Team developed:

- 5 dedicated SFRS News articles
- 3 dedicated global emails
- 3 targeted video messages
- 4 iHub what's new items
- 11 dedicated Transformation what's new items

2.3   Promotion of the consultation ran in SFRS News between 8 February 2018 and 9 May 2018.

2.4   Global emails were also utilised as a mechanism to reach staff across the service. Every SFRS staff member received 3 dedicated direct mail campaigns throughout the lifecycle of the consultation. The date issued and the content are shown in the table below:

Date and Content
13 February 18 - Launch of the consultation
9 May 18 – Final countdown
23 May 18 – The next steps

2.5 A dedicated consultation page titled 'Your service…Your Voice' was launched on the transformation area of the iHub on 13 February 2018 in unison with the launch of the public consultation. This produced

- **26,825** hits on Transformation area during the consultation period
- **91,756** hits on the 'Your Views' area in total during the consultation period
- **2,632** hits on the 'Your Service….Your Voice' page from 13 February to 14 May 2018
- Peak of **730** hits on 13 February on the consultation launch day

2.6 In addition the Communications and Engagement Team helped facilitate a series of Manager Roadshows to allow staff to engage directly in discussion about the rationales, challenges and benefits of transformation. The roadshows were delivered by the Chair of the Board, Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer. These 3 service-wide management road shows were delivered on the 5, 6 and 7 February 2018. The roadshows took place in each of the three Service Delivery Areas, with Station, Group and Area Managers invited along with support staff equivalents. Members of the Strategic Leadership Team and Deputy Assistant chief Officers (DACOs) also supported the events. In total 183 management personnel attended these sessions.

2.7 From January to May 2018 Local Senior Officers (LSO's) were encouraged to run their own sessions with staff across their areas. They delivered approximately 929 internal engagement events across all Service Delivery Areas. All stations and watches were engaged by management in relation to the consultation and transformation proposals. Some stations were visited on several occasions to maintain a healthy level of engagement.

External Communications

2.8 To ensure the wider public and external stakeholders were encouraged to participate the Communications and Engagement Team made wide use of the SFRS website and the general news media to draw attention to the exercise.

2.9 A dedicated 'Transformation' area was published on the website on 29 September 2017. This area replicated the information available to staff to give our external stakeholders and the public access to all information available on the SFRS transformation proposals.

- **404,410** page views of the home page of website occurred during the consultation period
- **40,923** page views of the transformation page occurred from 29 September 2017 until 14 May 2018.
- **24,459** pages views of the transformation page occurred during the consultation period
- **2,681** page views to the Consultation area (visitors accessing the 'Consultation' section from the home page of website) occurred during the consultation period
- **6,810** pages views to 'Your Service …. Your Voice' page (visitors accessing the 'Your Service …. Your Voice page from the Transformation area) occurred during the consultation period

2.10 In addition to the online support activities the SFRS undertook a range of external corporate engagements, these included:

- Meetings at senior level with all four Opposition parties in the Scottish Parliament.
- 23 individual MSPs were met in their local constituency capacity
- All four Opposition justice spokespeople were met with

2.11 LSO's and their management teams were also encouraged and supported in undertaking external engagement exercises. In total 165 external engagements across all Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) were conducted between January and May 2018. These included a variety of stakeholders, including but not limited to, Local Authorities; individual elected members; local MSPs and MPs; local Scrutiny Boards; Health & Social Care Partners and Community Planning Groups. Across the 3 Service Delivery Areas the following external engagement activities took place:

Service Delivery Area	Number of Engagements
North	38
East	58
West	69

2.12 To ensure wide public engagement the Communications and Engagement team promoted the consultation exercise throughout the broadcast and written media. This resulted in:
- 14 newspaper features on the consultation exercise
- 442 column inches of coverage of the consultation exercise
- 23 pages dedicated to coverage of the consultation exercise
- Four front pages featuring the consultation exercise

2.13 Lastly the Communications and Engagement Team made extensive use of Social Media through a variety of channels to draw attention to the consultation exercise. This resulted in:
- 101 posts relating to transformation
- 1,042,085 impressions
- 121,128 clicks
- 45,507 video views
- 3 public vox pop campaigns

2.14 The formal consultation document offered respondents 6 core statements against which they were asked to agree/ disagree/ offer no opinion. They were also offered open ended response options to elaborate on the reasons for their opinions and their overall view of Service transformation.

2.15 Overall the exercise generated in 1563 responses. The majority of responses were from individuals but a significant number of SFRS public service partners responded to the exercise. The consultation did not ask questions about gender, age, location or occupation and so it is difficult for us whether the sample is representative of the Scottish population. The breakdown of the responses was as follows:

Type of Response	Number	% of overall responses
Individual	1426	91.23
Organisation	137	8.77

3   CONSULTATION SURVEY RESULTS

3.1   All consultation respondents were asked 'Do you agree with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service overall vision for Transformation'. This resulted in an overall majority of respondents backing the proposals.

Do you agree with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service overall vision for Transformation	**Yes**	**No**
	52%	48%

In addition the 6 core statements set out in the consultation document were analysed and the following level of agreement and disagreement was evident.

Table 1: Agreement with core statements

	Agree	*Disagree*	*No opinion*
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	94 (97)	3 (3)	2
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	87 (89)	11 (11)	2
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	85 (88)	11 (12)	4
I trust the Scottish fire and rescue services to change its operating model – including station footprint – in ways that are safe for Scotland	46 (50)	45 (50)	9
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	44 (47)	50 (53)	6
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	38 (44)	49 (56)	13

3.2   Table 1 indicates the general agreement with the 6 core statements. The first number indicates the total percentage agreeing, while the number in parentheses lists the percent agreement after those with no opinion have been removed (i.e. the valid percent).

3.3   The results show a clear support for the use of up-to-date technology, as well as for training and improved remuneration for firefighters linked to progressing with transformation. There is less support for changes to the operating model including changing the station footprint, reducing the burden on other public services and the introduction of more flexible crewing arrangements. Of those offering an opinion, a majority disagreed with reducing the burden and the introduction of flexible crewing.

Table 2: Differences by type of respondent (% agree after 'no opinion' removed)

	Individuals (% agree)	Organisations (% agree)	SFRS employees (% agree)
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	96	99	98
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	89	95	95
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	89	95	96
I trust the Scottish fire and rescue services to change its operating model – including station footprint – in ways that are safe for Scotland	47	91	75
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	44	77	75
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	40	78	68
n	1426	137	313

3.4 In Table 2 we are able to disaggregate the results by type of respondent. There were 137 responses from those who indicated that they were responding on behalf of an organisation. In addition there were 313 SFRS employees. Some of these indicated that they were responding on behalf of an organisation (SFRS), or indicated that they were individuals but listed their organisation as SFRS. Others used a valid SFRS email to respond to the consultation. As a result the SFRS employees can appear in either the individual and organisation columns and so we have left them in twice. In addition, by their responses to the comments section it appears that there were SFRS employees who did not identify as a such in the questionnaire. The SFRS column therefore likely underestimates responses from SFRS employees. In Table 2, anyone indicating that they were responding as an individual, whether SFRS employees or not, is listed in the first column. As we can see below, there is support across the three categories of respondents for the first three statements (and in each case support among organisations and SFRS employees is highest). There are marked decreases in support for the last three statements, as highlighted in table 1, and table 2 shows that the drop in support is particularly apparent among individuals but less so among organisations.

3.5 Table 3 reflects **agreement** with five of the consultation statements according to whether one trusts the SFRS to change its operating model. The first number indicates the total number of respondents agreeing, while the number in parentheses lists the percent agreeing. The percentages reflect the proportion of responses to the question agreeing with the statement. If people skipped the question or indicated 'no opinion' these respondents are stripped from the sample. As the column headings indicate, different numbers of individuals responded to each question, which is why, for example, 55 SFRS responses agreeing to statements 1 and

2 result in different %s agreeing and why 67 agreements to statement 2 results in a higher percentage agreement than 80 responses agreement to statement 1.

Table 3: How trust in SFRS relates to other attitudes to reform (cells are numbers of respondents, with column % in parentheses)

| | Trust the SFRS to change its operating model | | | | | |
| | SFRS Employees | | Individuals (non SFRS) | | Organisations (non SFRS) | |
	No N=68	Yes N=205	No N=616	Yes N=426	No N=10	Yes N=82
Firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet the new and emerging risks Scotland faces	55 (83%)*	202 (99%)	474 (79%)	419 (98%)	8 (80%)	80 (98%)
Firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role, and in accordance with the risks they take	55 (86%)	200 (99%)	493 (82%)	384 (91%)	9 (90%)	67 (99%)
Latest technology should be used where possible to improve firefighter and public safety	62 (93%)	205 (100%)	564 (93%)	422 (99%)	10 (100%)	81 (100%)
Firefighters could be trained to take on roles that would reduce the burden on other public services	19 (28%)	171 (93%)	83 (14%)	294 (73%)	1 (11%)	67 (84%)
A more flexible approach to crewing during the late evening and early morning hours would allow firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher	5 (9%)	153 (89%)	60 (10%)	270 (72%)	0 (0%)	68 (87%)

3.6   It would appear that whether an individual trusts the SFRS to change its operating model is related to attitudes to the other statements. Among those who trusted the SFRS, there was considerably greater support for flexible crewing and partnership with other public services. Organisations took a particularly dim view of flexibility if they didn't express trust the SFRS (or vice versa, obviously).

Qualitative Consultation Comments

3.7   In addition to closed-ended questions, the consultation provided open-ended questions in which respondents could outline, in their own words, how they felt about the transformation. The following sections identify the main themes in responses by type of respondent.

Responses from organisations

3.8   There were 85 responses from organisations that were not SFRS (analysed separately). This included one duplicate entry and 7 where the individuals did not list the organisation they were representing as well as:

Local authorities 19

Community councils

NHS regional boards 8

Scottish Ambulance Service 5 [1]

Fire and Rescue services out with Scotland 4

The remainder include other community organisations (e.g. health and social care partnerships, adult and child protection committees, community and safety and resilience board) as well as national bodies (Police Scotland, Scottish Environment and Protection Agency). The discussion of findings below attributes views to particular organisations to provide an understanding of the depth and breadth of views on certain issues.

Main benefits of SFRS Transformation

3.9   **Responses were generally positive**. They highlighted:

- Increased focus on prevention, which was seen as a way of protecting individuals and heading off more expensive problems for other public services (including the NHS)

- Adapting to new risks (e.g. terrorism, weather, and aging population but also financial challenges) which warranted updated training and technology

- Flexibility and partnership, which was seen as more efficient, making communities – especially rural communities - more safe, and seen as a way of adapting to changed risks as well as furthering partnerships with communities themselves

3.10   **Despite the generally positive view there were some caveats**, namely that regional situations should be reflected in the national approach (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar), a need for more dialogue with SFRS and their trade unions (Dundee City Council) and a need to consider governance structures and resourcing (Scottish Ambulance Service). With respect to partnership there were queries about whether this would map onto existing 'pinch points for SAS/health/social care' (also SAS).

3.11   Many explicitly said they did not feel it was appropriate to comment on pay. Others said in principle rewarding staff for these changes is fine but 'enhanced payment for these roles needs to be carefully balanced against capacity, level of responsibility and any latent capacity' (Cumbria FRS)

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[1] There were five 'organisational' responses from the Scottish Ambulance Service, one of which appears to be the official SAS response.

3.12   **Not every organisation was supportive.** There were suggestions that the SFRS should stick to responding to fires. This was portrayed as better for safety (in that SFRS staff could not be as well trained as SAS employees or would make poor first responders) as well as a way of protecting others' jobs. Responses to the consultation from those saying they were responding on behalf of the Scottish Ambulance Service were perhaps the most negative. These comments, while listed as responses on behalf of an organisation, appear to be from individuals employed by the SAS rather than the Scottish Ambulance Service official response to the consultation (which was broadly positive and identifies useful caveats). They are also the exception to a general trend of support for a focus on prevention, efficiency and partnership.

'Stop trying to justify your jobs by taking other people's' (SAS)

'You hardly respond to enough emergencies to warrant a massive hike in pay' (SAS)

Why

3.14   Many respondents noted that the main reason to support Transformation was the **changing world,** which presented risks as well as a changed financial situation. In this respect, greater coordination across other public services was seen as a way of coping with underfunding of other services. There was considerable concern, however, that this would **further enable :**

'shortfalls in other public services'

'The fire service should not be picking up the slack or deficiencies of other emergency services' (no organisation named)

3.15   It was also feared, however, that SFRS expansion into new roles would in the long run lead to reduced funding for services as a whole and other services in particular. Or, as one submission states:

'The motivation for firefighters to take on additional roles … should not be about reducing the burden on other public services, but rather supporting and complementing the wider prevention landscape' (Scottish Community Safety Network).

3.16   There were specific concerns that increasing partnership could be:

'papering over cracks in the ambulance service' which needs proper investment (Councillor for Wishaw Ward)

Priorities

3.17   Most respondents indicated that the single most important thing about SFRS is the **ability to save lives in emergency situations** and mentioned specifically a speedy and reliable response to fires. Others mentioned safety but emphasised that this included the safety of firefighters as well as the public. Still others highlighted rural and vulnerable communities in particular. Limiting damage to property was mentioned less often. Others chose to mention that the most important thing was relations with communities:

'maintaining public confidence' (North Berwick Community Council)

'engagement with the community' (Shetland Community Safety and Resilience Board)

Shouldn't do

3.18   There were concerns about the **risk to the good reputation** of the SFRS if it overextends, particularly in terms of first response to medical emergencies. This was phrased as a possible risk to public **safety** (first responders but without means to transport people to hospital), but also in terms of losing sight of priorities (shouldn't be repairing homes). The complexity of medical response in particular was highlighted.

3.19   Other respondents said the SFRS shouldn't reduce personnel, or presence in communities (or, for some, shouldn't do so without extensive consultation). There were particular concerns for rural areas and calls (as above) for regional realities to be treated differently.

3.20   There were calls for transformation to be **evidence-led**, including trials in terms of extending services as well as research to see if certain interventions have any positive impact and if not, should be:

'sufficiently bold to ' stop (Stewartry Community Safety Forum)*.*

3.21   Some offered to take part in pilots of greater flexibility and partnership. There were also specific concerns re smaller appliances which, if not used in a purely supplementary role, might not offer full capacity to respond.

3.22   Most organisations indicated that they were **supportive**. Some provided specific examples of how the transformation could dovetail with other initiatives (e.g. single authority plans in islands, community rooms in firehouses as trialled in England). Others called for more info before they would comment (e.g. re staffing, impact on vehicle size and type on response times) as well as for more research, including an external survey.

3.23   With respect to the **impact of the transformation on firefighters**, there were concerns about pre-existing problems with staff motivation, legacy terms and conditions and their impact on pay as well as the training and time commitments for retained staff or those with other employment.

3.24   Moving forward, the success of the transformation was seen to depend on the level of **engagement** with possible partners and local communities. This should be seen to include not just blue light services and other stakeholders, but also local communities and, in particular, young people.

3.25   Throughout the responses, **rural communities** were perceived to be particularly vulnerable to closure and understaffing and therefore with most to benefit from flexibility. There was some concern, though, about the availability of recruits in rural areas, and in particular with the training requirements for enhanced roles which should be managed in such a way so as not to put off possible retained firefighters (Orkney Islands Council).

Responses from the Public

Priorities

3.26   When asked about the 'single thing most important to you about the SFRS', most individual respondents mentioned responding to fires quickly and saving lives. This was seen as SFRS core business and was a nearly universally-held view. It was recognised that this required sufficient personnel, training, equipment and local coverage to ensure the public's safety as well as the safety of firefighters, with many references to fast responses, 24/7 coverage 365 days a year. Much commentary raised the implications of reform to this central role with broadly three categories of responses:

1.   Some felt the SFRS role should be limited to fighting fires;

2.   Others felt the role could be expanded but only if sufficient training was offered and there was no drop in service for firefighting or funding for other core services;

3.   Others welcomed the change though this was the smallest group.

3. 27   A number of respondents mentioned the service's reputation for competence and professionalism and linked this to concerns that this might be diluted by any changes,

The fire service should be allowed to do the job what it was set up to do without being asked to be a general dogsbody for other organisation in times of supposedly financial restrictions.

Shouldn't Do

3.28   There were a number of comments on the importance of fire stations to the local community which was perceived to be particularly important for recruiting retained SFRS officers. This was also the context within which respondents emphasised that a single solution for Scotland might not work. Centralisation that ignored local realities, was perceived as unfair and unlikely to succeed. This was, in turn, linked to concerns that the loss of local stations might reduce community cohesion and create difficulties in recruiting retained firefighters.

3.29   Concern was expressed about some key changes: medical responsibilities; cutting personnel, stations or shift patterns; and centralisation. There was a particularly strong view that medical emergencies should not be the responsibility of firefighters. Those responding tended to offer one (or more) of four main reasons for their opposition:

1.   SFRS service staff are not trained to equivalent level of paramedics and might put public at risk:

Paramedics and Ambulance Technicians are highly skilled professional clinicians who practice evidence based healthcare, they are the only emergency service personnel who have the appropriate knowledge to be responsible for any clinical decision making.

Having experienced several FRS 'medical jobs' I wouldn't want any of you near my family unless you were bringing a shock box and an ambulance was 2 minutes behind you.

2. Responding to medical emergencies would tie up personnel and appliances needed for fires:

   When I need a fire appliance I get a fully staffed and readily available one. Not one from a neighbouring area that takes longer because my closest one is stuck at a medical incident waiting for an ambulance.

   Who is attending fires when the Fire Service are attending Ambulance and local authority calls? Very worried about this.

3. Adding medical responsibilities would enable governments to continue to underfund public services such as the NHS and Scottish Ambulance Service

   The SFRS should not be used to prop up a stretched, under staffed and underfunded Scottish Ambulance Service and social care.

4. Covering services offered by other blue light services would make it harder for them to receive increased budgets and personnel.

I would rather see public money being spent on an increase in paramedics with improved methods of getting to patients, than this.

The NHS is on its knees. Spend the cash there instead.

Attitudes to Transformation

3.30 Members of the public offered slightly different responses to those of organisations. There was considerably more cynicism from members of the public about expanding the role of firefighters in what is perceived to be a bid to shore up other under-funded services and less tolerance for change. Many called for sufficient funding and fast responses from both the fire service and ambulance service

   A fire service propping up an ambulance service won't work. A properly funded fire service and properly funded ambulance service is the answer.

3.31 The responses suggest a more risk averse public, markedly less open to change than those responding on behalf of organisations, or more concerned about the consequences of transformation to themselves, their families and local communities. In general, there was less attention in responses from the public to possible improvements that could be made (to pay, to morale) than to retaining what is perceived to be a competent and professional service with a good reputation and good local coverage.

3.32 There were also specific concern about particular stations. Some respondents were not opposed to transformation as such, but concerned about the process by which it might be implemented, including the speed of change and perceived lack of evidence and lack of consultation with employees.

3.33 Some concerns were expressed regarding the boundaries of the new roles of SFRS which would cause confusion with the public and could damage SFRS reputation.

   I don't see the fire service as the answer to every problem that is present in modern day society. Otherwise, our list of 'new duties' will be pretty much endless. What's next? Ploughs on the front of the fire engines to clear the snow from the roads?

   I agree with medical, environmental and terror response. I also agree with falls assessment and prevention work, as I believe this ties in the core roles of a firefighter and the prevention role they undertake. I do not believe it is the role of a firefighter

to bail out other underfunded public services and there should be a definitive agreement as to what additional work they will undertake, not a blank canvas.

3.34 Concern is expressed that the transformation is a smokescreen for cuts and that this consultation will have no impact on the proposals:

Anyways we all know you are going to do what you want to do and none of this survey even matters its just like any other service you will do what benefits you.

This is just a smokescreen isn't it you aren't going to take any of what anybody says on board and you're just going to railroad whatever plans you have to save money, cut jobs and put the community at risk.

3.35 Many respondents called for additional consultation once more is known about the transformation plan. There was a mixed view on whether involving the union more or less would be fruitful. A minority of respondents saw transformation as an opportunity but it must be noted that these were in the minority:

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to really change the fire and rescue service to benefit the people of Scotland. This is an exciting time for the service and all those involved. Let's not look back and say we wish we had done this or that.

3.36 Many respondents expressed concern about low pay and morale in the service but the majority view seems to be that the high reputation of the SFRS is something that is warranted and should be protected. There are concerns that transformation might put this at risk, particularly if changes happen too quickly, without sufficient consultation or training for the employees.

Responses from SFRS employees

3.37 In common with organisations and other individual responses, SFRS employees were very positive in response to questions on technology, training, and an expanded role for the service. In their qualitative comments there was considerably less support amongst SFRS employees when it came to trust in the SFRS, reducing the burden on other public services and adopting a more flexible approach Behind these raw figures, a variety of views and concerns are evident in the written commentary.

Overall Vision of Transformation

3.38 The overall vision is broadly supported by SFRS staff

It will give the people of Scotland a better service in the way that the cardiac rest will be treated fast and the hope more people will survive.

Save more life by providing that immediate cpr that's needed before the ambulance arrives.

More appropriate response to modern day incidents and potential for improved cover in rural areas.

The main benefits will be a more robust modal fit for modern day responses. This allowing us to deliver a public service that's fit for a modern day Scotland.

I agree that the SFR service needs to keep modifying in order to prepare for ever changing risks and variety of tasks that we now face.

The Fire Service are useless if you can not transport a critically ill patient to Hospital and need to sit for Hours waiting on an Ambulance. As a member of the public, a father of two, a husband and a retained fire fighter I can see all aspects of the transformation being a positive one. As we live in a very rural and remote part of the Highlands we are fully aware of the geography with poor ambulance and hospital care provided.

3.39   **Notwithstanding this support**, anxiety exists around the precise nature and parameters of change. A main concern, where concern was expressed, relates to the perceived lack of information

...this is such a major reform it would require more discussion with personnel at grassroots level…

I can't make a decision on the information provided so far and need more!

I do not feel that enough communication with regards to the future role, investment and commitment to CRUs.

You state that you want Firefighters to do more during the day when demand is higher. Do more what?

I would like more details on what the plans and vision would be before moving forward.

Trust in SFRS

3.40   Related to this are comments challenging statements made and statistics provided by senior management. This appears to reflect distrust. There was some doubt cast on the interpretation of data on changing risks. There were a number of comments which either disputed the numbers of fires at night or maintained that the data misrepresented the nature of risk. . Where distrust exists, it often appears to relate to perceptions of statistics used making the case for reform. Respondents appear to be seeking more information on the evidence base for transformation/

It is disheartening to hear … say things like the service is stuck on a 1940s operating model and that the fire service now needs to adapt having not changed in a long time. This is simply not true.

The statement saying 'risks have changed' is false as the risks have remained the same, but other risks have become more prevalent in recent years.

According to statistics there is a higher rate of fire deaths at night.

Your night time fire statistics range from 11pm to 7am. To me this is misleading as night time by definition is the time after the sun has set…. I can't help but feel the ties used is a way to alter the figures to suit the transformation agenda.

With regards to trust of SFRS, yes i trust their intent and aim to serve the communities of Scotland however there still appears to be a gap between SFRS and Rep bodies and information both are releasing.

Reducing services at night and early mornings are concerning, unless there are statistics to prove that these times do not require services.

RDS service. Improvement of equipment and training

3.41   A range of attitudes are discernible from the written comments on the reforms to the operating model. While there was strong support for change, where concern existed it focused on the fear that the *core of the core* activities might be diluted with the changing role in the operating model proposed.

The SFRS already carry out a broad range of roles within communities and therefore personnel should be rewarded for these roles already being carried out. They should not be utilised to cover up deficiencies within other emergency services and council departments.

I feel that it will dilute down the skill sets of fire and rescue personnel, and not in a good way.

Putting firefighters into roles not associated with the fire service (tackling antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse, slips trips and falls, reoffenders etc) isn't putting the core duties of a firefighter to best use. Surely with continual training in core duties (traditional fire service roles) should be the pinnacle of the fire service as it stands ever ready for incidents.

…detrimental to the service if the proposed changes take place, I think the service should expand its role for emergencies such as weather, terrorism, emergency medical but not into social care or normal medical requirements. With the number of cuts to Appliances, Stations, and Staffing levels the current management have made it has left the service very vulnerable to cope with major incidents.

A fire service should not be diluted to also be a social care service when this service is already provided by a private company.

I totally disagree that the fire service e should be moving into the social care role. I don't believe that is what the vast majority signed up for when they joined the fire service.

I agree that the service requires to change to cope with modern life and technology but strongly disagree that Firefighters should become involve with other services work.

I agree whole heartedly with taking on further roles, operationally. I don't agree with expanding into the social care of the community, I feel there are far more qualified and capable 'professionals' that should deal with this side of community care, not operational fire fighters.

Assisting someone who has had a heart attack is one thing, but being sent to other medical emergencies where we can do no more than the patients neighbour can till the ambulance turns up is a waste of resource.

3.42   There also appears to be a perceived lack of clarity on which new or expanded roles will be taken on by SFRS, which suggests that, moving forward, reassurances about appropriate recompense, training, facilities and support to be required would be welcomed.

I don't know enough about the change in the operating model to provide an opinion.

I personally feel quite excited by the thought of helping out at more incidents and making the difference to the community. But, I have little confidence in some my crew members, who doubt the process and I know will be very 'stand offish' and not become involved with the care given.

Will the Fire service only respond to ambulance calls if it is a cardiac arrest like you say? Where will their new remit stop?

Operating Model: Key Observations

3.43   In short, views range from strong support for reforms through to strong opposition but there are various views between these two positions.

I trust the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to change its operating model – including station footprint - in ways that are safe for Scotland.

Operating Model - This would target resources in the right places at the right time providing improving people outcomes. The change to the operating model would also assist Scottish Fire and Rescue Service target the Performance Indicators that are currently challenging.

I see this new operating model as a great step forward for the fire service and public safety.

Medical response in rural areas is a must.

I do not agree with SFRS taking on more of the duties of other public sector/emergency services.

I do not agree that firefighters should be trained to take on 'new and emerging risks' if this includes terrorist attacks. This should be the role of the police and military services.

Trained and Equipped - It is essential that staff are trained to, and maintained at, a competent level for the tasks that they may have to undertake.

Historically the operating model has changed so many times that I can only imagine this will keep happening.

…allow RDS personnel to fully use the limited training time and tailor training to risks in area

3.44   These variations in view may need to be investigated further. It is clear that opposition to some reforms may be dependent on interpretation of the reforms and/or that some aspect of the proposed reforms is supported while other aspects are opposed. The survey does not lend itself to sufficient robust data to evaluate this but there is sufficient evidence that more research is required. Opposition to changing roles refer to particular roles with strongest opposition to SFRS taking on what some refer to as social care/social work/social service work while being willing to consider some aspects more directly related to existing roles. There appears to be some confusion as to the precise nature of what is proposed, with opposition to any diminution of the core activities and current roles of the SFRS. There are fears that this exercise is simply about a mixture of plugging (potential or existing) gaps in other services, only about saving money, and a view that reforms will make the service a Jack of all trades and master of none. These are important distinctions which emerge from the written comments that require further study.

4   CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   There is overwhelming support for retaining SFRS's *core of core* activities focused on public protection and that this should be protected with nothing done that would undermine this work.

4.2   There is general agreement on three of the core statements drawn from the consultation exercise: using latest technology to improve firefighting and public safety; firefighters should be trained and equipped to meet new and emerging risks; and firefighters should be rewarded for taking on an expanded role according to risks involved.

4.3   There is less agreement on the other three core statements: trust in SFRS to change its operating model; firefighters could be trained to take on roles to reduce the burden on other public services; and a more flexible approach to crewing during evenings and early morning hours would allow the service to tackle demands when demand is higher.

4.4   The lack of trust where it exists is related to negative perceptions regarding training and flexibility. There is a need to allay concerns that the core activity of saving lives in emergency situations, seen as the most important service provided by SFRS almost universally, might be diluted through reform.

4.5   Perceptions of reform varied across stakeholders and consideration might be given as to whether greater engagement with targeted organisations is required e.g. Scottish Ambulance Service.

4.6   The public are markedly less confident about the transformation than others, particularly about SFRS involvement in medical emergencies

4.7   At least some of the negative perceptions of reform relate to possible misperceptions of what is involved in reform. Greater clarity and more communication on the nature and extent of reform may be required.

4.8   There appears to be some evidence, though requiring further research for confirmation, that there may be a geographical dimension to different attitudes with more rural/Highlands and Islands respondents more willing to embrace the full range of reforms than others in urban and some of small town Scotland.

4.9   Evidence from within the service suggests a diversity of attitudes but the data make it difficult to identify with confidence where most concerns are to be found. There are indications that there may be a geographical dimension to this diversity of views with officers in some sparsely populated areas more positive about reform. More research on this, followed by more engagement may be required.