



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

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

**THURSDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2022 @ 0915 HRS**

**BY CONFERENCE FACILITIES**

**PRESENT:**

Kirsty Darwent, Chair (KD)  
Nick Barr (NB)  
Brian Baverstock (BB)  
Angiolina Foster (AF)  
Paul Stollard (PSt)  
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

Stuart Ballingall (SJB)  
Steve Barron (SBa)  
Lesley Bloomer (LBI)  
Malcolm Payton (MP)  
Tim Wright (TW)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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
Iain Morris (IM)	Acting Director of Asset Management
Stuart Stevens (SS)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery
Paul Stewart (PS)	Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Development
John Thomson (JT)	Acting Director of Finance and Procurement
Richard Whetton (RW)	Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance
Desmond Donnelly (DD)	Group Commander Business Support
Alasdair Cameron (AC)	Group Commander Board Support
Heather Greig (HG)	Executive Officer Board Support
Debbie Haddow (DJH)	Board Support/Minutes

**OBSERVERS:**

Robert Scott, HM Chief Inspector

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

- 1.1 The Chair opened the special meeting and welcomed those present and participating via MS Teams.
- 1.2 The Board were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.
- 1.3 This meeting would be recorded and published on the public website.

**2 APOLOGIES**

- 2.1 Fiona Thorburn, Board Member  
Martin Blunden, Chief Officer  
Mark McAteer, Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications

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

3.1 No further private items were identified.

### 4 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 None.

### 5 **BUDGET STRATEGY 2022-23**

5.1 JT presented the Board with a report seeking approval of the amended Budget Strategy for 2022-23 after receiving feedback at the Board Strategy Day on the 27 January 2022. The following key points were highlighted:

- Budget Strategy provides sufficient information to understand the factors that impact on the overall budget, key decisions and the assumptions made to develop the budget.
- Amendments to the Budget Strategy since the Strategy Day on 27 January 2022 included:
  - Inclusion of Support Staff pay award
  - Increased costs associated with gas and electricity.
  - Additional details on efficiencies.
  - Inclusion of reference to Service Delivery Model Programme (SDMP) following feedback from Scottish Government (SG).
- Specific impact due to lack of funding on the capital programme would be discussed further during a further additional Strategy Day session directly after this meeting.
- Following feedback from the Strategic Leadership Team on 22 February, some further minor amendments would be made.

5.2 With reference to the key objective of reaching the Target Operating Model (TOM) by August 2024, the Board queried whether it would be more cost effective to achieve this objective earlier. JT reminded the Board of the physical constraints and practicalities of the recruitment process as well as the additional Covid recovery activities required. JT noted that additional funds would be attributed to overtime budget to accommodate increased costs.

5.3 RH provide a brief update on recovery activities and reminded the Board that there was a Recovery, Reset and Renew session scheduled to be presented at the Strategy Day directly after this meeting.

5.4 With regard to income from shared services/sites, the Board queried whether this was proportionate and whether the Service received a percentage of capital receipts from other agencies. JT confirmed that the Service recovered the running costs only. There was no contribution or investment in capital or from capital receipts. JT noted that SG were aware of the Service's willingness to share premises, the need for capital investment to support this and the future potential opportunities for new build shared premises. JT advised the Board that further shared sites/services had been identified and were being progressed.

5.5 IM informed the Board that within the shared services contract, the Service retained the right to terminate agreements, subject to due notice being served. IM advised that all costs associated works within areas solely occupied by other agencies were fully recoverable. Within communal areas, the appropriate percentage of costs was also recoverable.

5.5 With regard to the budget assumption for the uniformed pay award (2%), KD confirmed that she was content with this assumption and noted that the Service had not yet received any claim from the National Joint Council relating to the pay award

5.6 The Board requested that further consideration be given to clearly articulate that the Service was and would remain fully commitment to protect both staff and communities

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to new/emerging risks, despite the financial challenges. JT confirmed that Service was fully committed to protecting staff/communities and agreed to review the language/nuance within the report.

**ACTION: JT**

- 5.7 In terms for the Budget Strategy, JT noted that the strategy provided details on how the budget would be formulated and developed for the 2022-23 budget but acknowledged that it was not a medium or long-term strategy.
- 5.8 With regard to the additional £9.5million funding from SG, JT noted that the Service have outlined their priorities and intentions within the Budget Strategy. JT noted that further significant funding would be necessary from SG to fully modernise the Service.
- 5.9 With reference to the process for monitoring efficiencies, JT noted that this would be provided through the routine monitoring reports but acknowledged this could have been clearer.
- 5.10 The Board enquired whether the Service were content that the TOM was still relevant. RH noted that the TOM, which was agreed with the Fire Brigades Union in September 2017 and based on the 11<sup>th</sup> version of the resource based crewing model, was still deemed as appropriate. RH reminded the Board of the ongoing operational and financial challenges faced by the Service due to not operating at the TOM. Should circumstances deem it necessary to revise the agreed TOM prior to its implementation (August 2024), the Service would need to follow due process ie consultations, engagement, etc.
- 5.11 The Board commented on the time lapse since the agreement of the TOM, the new/emerging risks facing the Service and the potential outcomes of the SDMP. RH reminded the Board that the timelines for the SDMP were running in conjunction with the timelines for the recovery of the TOM. RH noted that the plans in place to recover the TOM and for the SDMP. These plans would speak to each other and if any adjustments were required, these would be progressed through due process.
- 5.12 PSt reminded the Board that the SDMP was predicated on risk, resource and demand and although there would be financial implications, the SDMP is not being driven by finance.
- 5.13 **The Board approved the Budget Strategy 2022-23, subject to minor amendment relating to the commitment to delivery and challenges around financial constraints.**
- 6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- 6.1 The next meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 31 March 2022 at 1000 hrs.
- 6.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 0950 hours.