



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

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

**WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024 @ 1000 HRS**

**VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)**

**PRESENT:**

Kirsty Darwent, Chair (KD)  
Stuart Ballingall (SJB)  
Brian Baverstock (BB)  
Neil Mapes (NM)  
Malcolm Payton (MP)  
Madeline Smith (MS)  
Tim Wright (TW)

Fiona Thorburn, Deputy Chair (FT)  
Steve Barron (SB)  
Angiolina Foster (AF)  
Therese O'Donnell (TO'D)  
Andrew Smith (AS)  
Paul Stollard (PS)  
Mhairi Wylie (MW)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Ross Haggart (RH)      | Chief Officer   |
| Stuart Stevens (SS)    | Deputy Chief Officer  |
| Liz Barnes (LB)        | Interim Deputy Chief Officer (Corporate Services)                   |
| David Farries (DF)     | Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Operational Delivery           |
| Andy Watt (AW)         | Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Training, Safety and Assurance |
| Mark McAteer (MMcA)    | Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications      |
| Sarah O'Donnell (SO'D) | Director of Finance and Contractual Services                        |
| Chris Fitzpatrick (CF) | Business Intelligence and Data Services Manager (Item 11 only)      |
| Ijaz Bashir (IB)       | Head of Asset Management (Items 13-16 and 24 only)                  |
| Lynne McGeough (LMcG)  | Head of Finance and Procurement (Items 13-16 and 24 only)           |
| Stuart Free (SF)       | Asset Quality Manager (Item 15 only)                                |
| Kevin Murphy (KM)      | Group Commander, Board Support Manager                              |
| Heather Greig (HG)     | Executive Officer Board Support                                     |
| Debbie Hadow (DJH)     | Board Support/Minutes   |

**OBSERVERS:**

Robert Scott, HMFSI  
AC Michael Humphreys, LSO Highland  
Seona Hart, FBU

**1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**

- 1.1 KD opened the meeting and welcomed those present and observing via MS Teams.
- 1.2 Attendees were reminded to raise their hands, in accordance with the remote meeting protocol, should they wish to ask a question.

**2 APOLOGIES**

- 2.1

## OFFICIAL

David Lockhart, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Prevention, Protection and Preparedness

Lyndsey Gaja, Interim Director of People

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

3.1 The Board agreed that the *Capital Programme 2024/25* and *Systel Update* items would be taken in private. This is due to the confidential commercial/financial information and matters deemed confidential (Standing Order 9E and 9G), respectively.

### 4 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 The following declarations of conflict of interests were noted during the meeting and confirmed as already being declared with the individual's Register of Interests:

- Madeline Smith, Board Member of Scottish Ambulance Service
- Brian Baverstock, Member of Fire Service Pension Advisory Board
- Mark McAteer, Board Member of Fire and Rescue Heritage Scotland

4.2 Paul Stollard declared his recent appointment as Chair of the Board of Institute of Fire Engineers. Register of Interests to be updated in due course.

4.3 There were no other declarations of conflict of interests made.

### 5 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

#### 5.1 **Thursday 14 December 2023**

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

5.1.2 **The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

#### 5.2 **Matters Arising**

5.2.1 There were no matters arising.

### 6 **ACTION LOG**

6.1 The Board considered the action log and noted the updates.

#### Action 15.10 Resource Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 – October 2023 (14/12/23):

The Board requested clarity on the statement that the Board would not be required to make a specific decision to accept an unbalanced budget should that scenario occur. RW advised that guidance from Audit Scotland confirmed that the Board would be, and were already, acting and scrutinising appropriately should an unbalanced budget occur. RW offered his assurance that the Board continued to undertake good governance and that any guidance available would be followed should an unbalanced budget position occur.

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 noting the impact assessments provided for decisions made 12 months ago.

7.2 **Members noted the updated Decision Log.**

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

8.1 KD presented the Chair's Update report which noted events that had occurred since the Board meeting held on 14 December 2023 and highlighted the following:

- Ongoing meetings of the Reform Collaboration Group where more information was shared on the various workstreams, and programme of works were agreed. One area of focus was the wider community response to mental health and the

## OFFICIAL

increasing roles for Police Scotland (PS) and Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS). The main fire related focus was Community Resilience Hubs.

- Meeting with Deputy First Minister at McDonald Road Community Fire Station to demonstrate co-location work with SAS and to deliver a presentation, and seek financial support, for Community Resilience Hubs.
- Meeting with Commemoration Project Board to discuss and identify suitable ways to commemorate, albeit this was only at the early scoping stage.
- Meeting with HMFSI to discuss progress of inspections and future Culture inspection work.
- Various meetings with Scottish Government including one with the Director of Safer Communities to discuss the ongoing Strategic Service Review Programme (SSRP) work and gain a sense of the appetite and thoughts on the change programme ahead of the formal engagement phase.
- Formal constructive feedback was received following the mid-year review and no issues were raised.
- Board member appraisals had been undertaken and the updated common themes document shared with Board members and the Chief Officer for awareness.
- Overview of NJC activities/meetings relating to firefighters pay terms and conditions, pay claim from the Fire Brigades Union and potential settlement, previous agreement to consider different areas of work such as On Call retainer and the differential between control firefighters and firefighters, employer's survey issued and pay offer would be submitted in advance of deadline.
- Meeting with Fire and Rescue Services Association (FRSA) to provide an update on national considerations.

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

8.2

### **9 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT**

9.1

RH presented the Chief Officer's report noting events which had occurred since the Board meeting held on 14 December 2023 and highlighted the following:

- Progressing onto more formal negotiation process in relation to uniformed pay settlement for 2024/25. Significant level of engagement since last year which demonstrated good employee relations and partnership working. This was a positive position and credit to both the employer and employee sides of the NJC.
- First anniversary of Ff Barry Martin's tragic death on 27 January 2024. A joint SFRS/FBU event, in celebration of Ff Martin's life, was held at McDonald Road Community Fire Station where a commemorative plaque was unveiled.
- Meeting with Audrey Nicol, Convenor of the Justice Committee, provided an opportunity to discuss wider Service-related issues outwith the pre-budget scrutiny forum.
- Chief Officer Commendations have been awarded to 4 inspirational young people in recognition of their actions and bravery.
- Commemoration of the 64<sup>th</sup> Cheapside Street disaster to be held at Glasgow Necropolis on 28 March 2024.

9.2

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

### **10 COMMITTEE UPDATES**

10.1

#### **Change Committee (CC)**

10.1.1

FT reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 9 November 2023 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes, noting that a full verbal update had been provided at the previous meeting. A subsequent public meeting was held on 15 February 2024 and FT provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Presentation given on the new website (launched in September 2023) noting the enhancements to communications and improved data gathering abilities.

## OFFICIAL

- Spotlight on change maturity, capacity and capabilities and the Service's current position against future needs to deliver the level of change required.

10.1.2

FT provided confirmation that due to the progress made, it would no longer be appropriate to discuss Portfolio Office (PO) progress as the Service has moved onto the next stage and this was now considered business as usual.

10.1.3

**The Board noted the approved minutes and verbal update.**

### 10.2 **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)**

10.2.1

BB reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 18 January 2024 and referred the Board to the draft minutes (subsequently approved at the 26 March 2024 meeting) and highlighted the following:

- Internal Audit Report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion was presented noting the conclusions were robust and numerous areas of good practice were highlighted.
- Appointment of Audit Scotland as the new External Auditors. Review and consideration of the currency of legacy recommendations was undertaken.
- New style of reporting on risk management which increased focus on narrative and led to a fuller discussion on risk, impact, control measures and actions.
- Private update on control weakness failure at an On Call station.

10.2.2

BB reported that a subsequent public meeting was held on 26 March 2024 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- Internal Audit remains on track to deliver against the current year's plan.
- Draft Internal Audit Plan 2024/25 was presented and recommended for approval. Different approach being taken with fewer audits being planned to allow greater depth, detail and ultimately better value from the internal audit function.
- Current Internal Auditor's (Azets) contract had been extended for a further year. Procurement for new internal auditor would commence later in 2024.
- Risk report had been further revised and facilitated robust discussions. Further consideration from the full Board needs to be given to Risk Appetite.
- Private update on the previously reported control weakness failure at an On Call station and an additional second failure.

10.2.3

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

### 10.3 **People Committee (PC)**

10.3.1

MW reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 7 December 2023 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes, noting that a full verbal update had been provided at the previous meeting. MW highlighted a minor typographical error within the approved minutes.

10.3.2

MW reported that a productive committee workshop was held on 13 February 2024 and highlighted the updates provided on the safety culture survey and People, Payroll, Finance and Training project.

10.3.3

MW noted that a subsequent public meeting was held on 7 March 2024 and provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:

- People performance reports included updates on workforce planning, Operations Control vacancies and new approach to recruitment, Modern Apprenticeship and SVQ, culture and colleague experience survey.
- Training performance reports included updates on issues with training for operational competence (TfOC) and On Call, implementation of the national training structure and training functions continuous improvement progress.

## OFFICIAL

- Health and Safety performance updates included acts of violence, reduction in vehicles accidents, contaminants quarterly report and progress against inspection audit action plans.
  - Spotlight on pension remedy workstreams.
- 10.3.4
- Employee Partnership Forum update noting the HMFSI's input and engagement on the culture audit inspection work.
- 10.3.5
- For transparency, BB's position on the Fire Service Pension Advisory Board was declared (captured under Agenda Item 4 above).

- The Board noted the burden of work being placed on the Service in response to the pension remedy and asked whether there was a true understanding of the quantum of the challenge and what measures were in place to address same. MW advised that the Service were not yet able to fully understand the quantum of the work involved, however work had begun to put resourcing in place to start the process. LB advised
- 10.3.6
- that the Service were working closely with SPPA to ensure that appropriate resources were identified and in place. LB noted that she was not overly concerned at this stage.

### **The Board noted the approved minutes and verbal update.**

#### 10.4 **Service Delivery Committee (SDC)**

- 10.4.1
- TW reported that the Committee held a public meeting on 28 November 2023 and referred the Board to the attached approved minutes, noting that a full verbal update had been provided at the previous meeting. A subsequent public meeting was held on 27 February 2024 and TW provided a verbal update, highlighting the following:
- Welcomed Andrew Smith and Madeline Smith to their first official committee meeting.
  - Routine Service Delivery update presented and recommended to the full Board for review due to the broad and insightful overview of the range of activities across the Service.
  - Initial 6-month review of changes in operational response to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS).
  - Spotlight on the collective value and use of operational intelligence.
  - Review of the Service's response to severe weather events in October 2023 alongside the HMFSI's Response to Climate Change inspections.
  - Fatal Fire Analysis report.
  - Site visit to Clydesmill Community Fire Station.

#### 10.4.2 **The Board noted the approved minutes and verbal update.**

#### 10.5 **Reform Collaboration Group (RCG) Oversight Group**

- 10.5.1
- FT reported that the RCG Oversight Group held private meetings on 18 December 2023, 11 January, 22 January, 5 February and 21 February 2024 and highlighted the following:
- The role of the Non-Executive led group and attendees from all organisations at the fortnightly meetings.
  - Routine progress updates provided by all organisations.
  - Routine discussions and engagement with Rep Bodies. Next meeting was scheduled for 10 April 2024.
  - Good progress being made towards the outline business case.
  - Next meeting was scheduled for 28 March 2024.

#### 10.5.2 **The Board noted the verbal update.**

*(C Fitzpatrick joined the meeting at 1050 hrs)*

**11 ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD Q3 2023-24**

11.1 MMcA presented the Board with the third quarter performance information for the fiscal year 2023-24. MMcA noted that development continues as the platform matures and all KPIs have been categorised within the covering report to improve orientation and scrutiny.

11.2 CF highlighted the following key points:

- KPI41 (Service Desk Incidents within SLA) and KPI42 (Service Desk request within SLA) noted that Q3 was missing. This had now been rectified but not reflected within this report.
- KPIs split into 4 categories: exceptional variation/monitoring, deteriorating (long term), improving (long term) and not changing.
- KPI12 (total incidents) recorded over 18K this quarter which was 5K less than the quarterly average. Increase in special service incident requests and effect entry/exit incidents.
- KPI14 (Response times) recorded a slight increase which could be attributed to increased demand to weather related incidents/detrimental effect on road conditions.
- KPI17 (Wholetime availability) increased from previous quarter and more aligned to the period prior to 2022/23. Assistance being provided to Service Delivery colleagues to improve both the data collection and assurance processes.
- KPI21 (UFAS incidents) continue to decrease. Notable reduction in incidents in educational facilities.
- KPI27 (Specialist Rescue Currency) recorded an increase on expected levels on the delivery of courses.
- KPI28 (Training Function Currency) recorded a decrease which was attributable to venue conflict, instructor availability and low nominee numbers. These have all been addressed at local level.
- KPI31 (Effecting Entry/Exit Incidents) recorded a slight increase on previous quarter. Pattern of incidents over the last 3 years were consistent with a peak in each third quarter. Requests from SAS and public have increased over the last 3 years. Expectations were that requests would continue to increase.
- KPI30 (Assist Other Agencies Incidents) recorded a slight increase on previous quarter. Expectations were that requests would continue to increase.
- KPI6 (Home Fire Safety Visits) baseline reset post pandemic. Currently recording over 26K visits, approximately 70% of target figure.
- KPI15 (Call Handling Times) recorded a slight increase. Activity levels within each service delivery area were provided.
- KPI16 (On Call availability) recorded under target at 75%. On Call Strategic Co-ordination Group had been established to progress recommendation and pilots.
- KPI22 (Core module skills completed) recorded under target at 74%. Factors impacting on this were increased demand for hazmat training and lower completion rates for tactical ventilation.
- KPI38 (FOI within timeframe) recorded below target at 70%. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive quarter below average for the period. The Head of Corporate Communications had requested a single point of contact (SPOC) to be identified within each directorate to provide support.

11.3 In regard to KPI31 (Effecting Entry/Exit Incidents), the Board queried how the Service prioritised these types of incidents and impact of capacity. DF advised the Board that these types of incidents were categorised in the same manner as any other emergency calls and were not prioritised. However, the Service does have procedures in place to allow crews attending this type of incident for an extended period to be made available for other emergency calls, if necessary.

11.4 In regard to KPI14 (Response times), the Board queried whether the Service



## OFFICIAL

benchmarked against other fire and rescue services or blue light organisations to gain a wider understanding of cultural factors, capacity, etc. CF advised that the Service does not benchmark and noted the issues when comparing with other blue light agencies in finding a good comparison. CF further advised that SFRS were the only Scottish blue light service to publish official statistics. CF noted that the Home Office provide comprehensive yearly analysis of response times to primary fires. This had been discussed with Scottish Government and consideration was being given to expanding publication of response times. CF further noted that incident response times have increased nationally. DF reminded the Board that this area was regularly discussed and scrutinised at the Service Delivery Committee. He noted that as response times included call handling times, it was difficult to compare across other blue light services. DF advised the Board of the Service's involvement with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Mobilising Officers Group who look at any emerging trends.

- 11.5 In regard to KPI15 (Call Handling), the Board noted the increased median call handling time in the East and West and queried the reasons for this. DF reminded the Board that this area was regularly discussed and scrutinised at the Service Delivery Committee. DF outlined the potential reasons for increased times such as complexity of calls, system/supplementary procedures and staffing challenges.
- 11.6 In regard to KPI46 (On Call Volunteer FTE), the Board queried whether the Service had an understanding of the reasons for individuals leaving with under 5-years service. DF advised that there was some understanding and the Service were continuing to do more to gather additional information. DF noted that the length of service was similar to the wider UK fire and rescue services. DF commented on the work of the On Call Improvement Programme, NJC workstreams in relation to remunerations and terms and conditions and On Call Support team.
- 11.7 In regard to KPI6 (Home Fire Safety Visits), it was noted that the narrative was short and generalised, and that the Board requires a greater understanding of the sustained downward trend.
- 11.8 In regard to KPI7 (Home Fire Safety Visits vulnerable), it was noted that there was contradictory information within the covering report and appendix.
- 11.9 SS advised the Board that the Service had recognised the continuing trends and were actively working on this. SS noted that these trends needed to be considered against other indicators such as accident dwelling fires, casualties, and fire fatalities. SS further noted that a fundamental reform of Home Fire Safety Visits and other community safety activities was required including enhanced engagement with partners/referral pathways. SS advised that through SSRP the Service would invest in prevention and protection and improve community safety engagement prevention activities. SS further advised that the Service would also engage with NFCC and academia to provide some research and support to enhance the benefits of preventative activities.
- 11.10 RH advised that following the recent Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) restructure, a new prevention strategy was being developed. RH commented on the challenges in recording mechanisms for preventative work, noting that only a small subset (HFSV) were captured in the Performance Management Framework. The recording of this information needed to be improved to capture the totality of this work and to provide greater assurance to the Board.
- 11.11 In regard to Outcome 3 Innovation, the Board commented on limited information/KPIs and noted the importance of innovation in the SSRP and proposed new Committee work. SS agreed that there needed to be more focus on this outcome and innovation going forward. SS noted that the Performance Management Framework had not fully demonstrated the full value of the organisation and this could be improved. The Board

## OFFICIAL

requested further information on the work ongoing to capture data related to Outcome 3 (Innovation) and the wider prevention work.

**ACTION: MMcA**

- 11.12 In regard to KPI22 (core skills modules completed), the Board queried the current level against the target and what actions were being taken to close the gap. AW reminded the Board of the challenges with availability for On Call personnel. To address this a blended or combined approach, which reduces the number of modules whilst delivering the same level of training, was being developed. AW noted that Day Duty personnel were also now included in this KPI, which has affected the data. Work would continue in this area to help achieve the overall target of 95%.
- 11.13 In regard to KPI28 (training function currency), the Board sought clarity on any implications of this downward trend, particularly the safety of firefighters and communities.
- 11.14 AW stated that KPI28 was a new indicator and would help the function identify areas of improvement. AW outlined the various factors that impact on course nominee availability and noted that all instructors were currently being upskilled to widen their skill sets to be able to deliver core training. Other measures being taken included introduction of station based instructors (utilising annualised hours), restructuring the training function (Service wide) and introduction of the new Central Staffing Team (training programme and scheduling).
- 11.15 The Board queried whether the drop in trend impacted on firefighters attending incidents and whether there were any concerns regarding this. AW reminded the Board that, as well as the Training Strategy and Vision Document, three framework documents were being developed. One would focus on skills maintenance and this would provide clarity on the expectations and consequences on maintaining skills levels.
- 11.16 In regard to Outcome 4 (Climate Change), the Board commented on the limited progress in this area, whilst noting the competing priorities for the Service. SO'D noted that this would be covered under the Risk Based Capital Investment Plan.
- 11.17 The Board commented on the quality of the paper, accessibility of data and subsequent discussions. The Board requested an opportunity for further discussion on scrutiny of performance at either IGF or Strategy Day to prevent or reduce any overlap with Committees and to achieve appropriate overall scrutiny of performance as a Board.

**ACTION: MMcA/BST**

- 11.18 **The Board scrutinised the Organisational Performance Dashboard Q3 2023-24 report.**

*(C Fitzpatrick left at 1141 hrs)*

*(Meeting adjourned at 1141 hrs and reconvened at 1150 hrs)*

## 12 ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN PROGRESS REPORT – QUARTER 3 2023/24

- 12.1 MMcA presented a report advising the Board of the quarterly progress made against the strategic outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2022-25 in relation to the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) between 1 October and 31 December 2023. The following key points were highlighted:

- Total of 20 actions of which one action was reporting Blue, 8 actions were reporting Green, 7 actions were Amber, and 4 actions were Red.
- Reasons for the 4 actions reporting red were outlined and verbal update provided.



## OFFICIAL

- 12.2 In regard to Multi Factor Authentication action, the Board noted the amber rating and completion rate of 75%. RH advised of discussions at last week's SLT and agreed to provide an update in the private session of the meeting.
- 12.3 In regard to the design and implementation of a continuous improvement framework, the Board noted the red rating and completion rate of 50%. LB advised that the test for change against industry standard process was complete. However, due to staffing issues the roll out process had been delayed. LB stated that a paper was being developed which would outline the learnings from the test of change report and recommendations how to progress this further. The paper would be presented to the SLT in April 2024.
- 12.4 In regard to the higher than anticipated response to the Safety Culture Survey, AW advised that the timeline was extended due to the increased level of analysis required which influenced and helped shape the strategy.
- 12.5 In regard to the reducing exposure to contaminants, AW noted that this action specifically related to the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedure. AW confirmed that this would be carried over into next year to allow time for securing the capital required, procurement of relevant PPE and to undertake risk assessments on stations, etc. Anticipated launch date would be October 2024.
- 12.6 The Board requested up to date verbal updates be available, or that narrative be provided in the cover paper on the accurate status of actions approaching their due dates.

**ACTION: MMcA**

### 12.7 **The Board scrutinised the Annual Operating Plan Progress Report Quarter 3 2023/24.**

*(I Bashir and L McGeough joined at 1205 hrs)*

## 13 **RESOURCE BUDGET 2024/25**

- 13.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the proposed Resource Budget for 2024/25:
- Minor error identified within the funding from Scottish Government and work was ongoing to rectify the shortfall of £0.300 million.
  - Outline of the process undertaken to develop the resource budget on the basis of the approved budget approach and numerous opportunities for SLT and Board involvement during the process.
  - Details of the 2024/25 budget were provided in Appendix A.
  - Budget evolution from the previous year was provided in Appendix B.
  - Budget related risks and mitigating actions were detailed in Appendix C.
- 13.2 The Board queried the risk in finding investment to progress SSRP during the year and the challenges this may cause in other areas. SO'D advised that as much as possible had been done to identify needs for SSRP at this stage with the provision of resources and funding for planned projects. As the programme progresses, should any additional needs be identified, adjustments would require to be made within the budget in order to release funds.
- 13.3 In regard to SSRP provision within the budget, SO'D advised that this was recorded as 2024/25 initiatives (Appendix B) and noted that all new initiatives would be subject to formal business case processes in order to release funding.

## OFFICIAL

- 13.4 In regard to the Target Operating Model (TOM), SO'D advised that these figures were the agreed position for Wholetime, Operations Control and Support Staff, however, the On Call was the legacy position.
- 13.5 In regard to the SSRP savings (£8.300million), SO'D advised that this resulted in the temporary withdrawal of 10 appliances during 2023/24 and the Service did not have the funding to reverse the effect of this at this stage.
- 13.6 In regard to the difference in Employee costs recorded in Appendix A and B, SO'D advised that the difference related to SSRP savings.
- 13.7 It was noted that there were no additional assumptions of SSRP savings within 2024/25.
- 13.8 **The Board approved the Resource Budget 2024/25.**

## 14 RISK BASED CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

- 14.1 SO'D advised the Board that the Plan was one of the underlying documents used to build the Capital Programme which was being presented later on the agenda (Private session).
- 14.2 The Chair welcomed IB and congratulated him on his recent appointment as Head of Asset Management.
- 14.3 IB presented the draft Risk Based Capital Investment Plan (RBCIP) to the Board for scrutiny, setting out a framework of risk decision criteria relative to Property, Fleet and Equipment and highlighted the following key points:
- Significant level of inherent backlog and future funding constraints.
  - Exploring opportunities to deliver a modernised and sustainable service which may enable the asset base to evolve through partnership working and public service reform.
  - The 2024/25 RBCIP would take into account the outcomes from SSRP and assist the data led decisions for the provision of future asset requirements for the Service.
  - A light fleet review would be carried out to mitigate and reduce the fleet backlog.
  - Additional funding for modular fire stations was being sought from Scottish Government and a business case would be developed and brought forward in due course.
  - Work continued on the development of the Service Asset Management Plan for training assets.
  - For greater transparency, the proposed 3-year Capital Programme has direct links and alignment with the RBCIP.
- 14.4 The Board enquired about the work undertaken to identify costs and benefits through the impact of climate change and sustainability work. IB outlined some of the work undertaken in regards to introducing all-terrain vehicles and PPE equipment for firefighting wildfires, light fleet review and ultra-low emission vehicles. IB reiterated that business cases would need to be developed to pursue funding from Scottish Government.
- 14.5 IB reminded the Board that the Service have routinely donated old equipment or PPE to other countries. IB noted that within the new equipment contract, the Service requested for recycling or buy back options to be included to reduce potential landfill waste.
- 14.6 In regard to net zero grant opportunities, IB advised that the Service was working with a consultant on a net zero approach at 4 sites and the potential grant opportunities through the Scottish Green Public Sector State Decarbonisation Scheme. IB further noted that a review to restructure the Energy Team would be undertaken and business

## OFFICIAL

case would be developed to support this spend to save initiative. This would also create capacity within the team to develop innovative net zero projects, improve management and monitoring of energy use, and help to identify innovations and advancements in this area.

### 14.7 **The Board approved the Risk Based Capital Investment Plan.**

## 15 **RESOURCE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24 – FEBRUARY 2024**

15.1 SO'D presented a report advising the Board of the resource budget position for the period ending 29 February 2024. SO'D outlined the summary of the financial position and referred Members to Appendix A of the report, which identified the current resource position showing an overspend of £0.428 million and a forecast year-end overspend of £1.060 million. The following key points were highlighted:

- Range of actions taken have reduced the level of overspend.
- Consultation had taken place with Scottish Government seeking approval of this overspend and a business case had been submitted. Formal response was still awaited.

15.2 The Chair noted Scottish Government's comments and appreciation relating to the work undertaken to reduce the level of overspend.

15.3 In regard to the Wholetime costs, the Board sought clarification on the level of change within this budget. SO'D advised that this was primarily in relation to the pension remedy and the expectation on significant retirements which did not materialise. This resulted in the projected underspend changing into an overspend position.

15.4 RH commended the work and efforts of the finance function and the wider organisation, to minimise the level of overspend and achieve the best possible budget position. RH noted that this budget position was achieved whilst the Service delivered savings of over £10.000 million.

15.5 The Board commented on the transparency of the efforts made and work undertaken to reduce the level of overspend and thanked all those involved.

### 15.6 **The Board scrutinised the resource budget position for the period ending 29 February 2024.**

## 16 **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24 – FEBRUARY 2024**

16.1 SOD introduced LMcG, who had recently been appointed as Head of Finance and Procurement. The Chair welcomed LMcG and congratulated her on the new role.

16.2 LMcG presented a report advising the Board of the actual and committed expenditure against the 2023/24 capital budget position for the period ending 29 February 2024. It was anticipated that the revised budget of £32.922 million would be spent out by 31 March 2024. The following key points were highlighted:

- As at February 2024, the position summary was £32.273 million (98%) committed or paid to date.
- Confident that full budget will be spent out by the end of the financial year.

16.3 In regard to prior year spend information on the Year to Date Spend and Committee slide, LMcG advised that this information related to spend which spanned over different financial years. LMcG noted that neither vehicle nor operational equipment spend spanned over financial years, and as such, were recording zero.

16.4 In regard to transition to net zero grants, LMcG advised that this budget was recorded as a zero budget as the Service were reliant on grants being sourced and secured.

## OFFICIAL

- 16.5 The Board thanked all those involved in achieving this budget position within a single year budget.
- 16.6 **The Board scrutinised the level of actual and committed capital expenditure for the period ending 29 February 2024.**
- 17 REPORTS FOR INFORMATION ONLY:**  
The Board were reminded that reports provided for information only would be taken as read and only questions, with prior notification, would be allowed.
- 17.1 Fire Museum of Heritage**
- 17.1.1 For transparency, MMcA declared an interest as Board Member of Fire and Rescue Heritage Scotland (captured under Agenda Item 4).
- 17.1.2 MMcA advised the Board that following an unannounced inspection from Visit Scotland, the Fire Museum achieved an overall score of 89% and had been awarded a 5-star attraction rating. Visit Scotland's report would be shared with the Board for information.  
**ACTION: MMcA**
- 17.1.3 MMcA recorded his personal thanks to Cathy Barlow, Kelly McMeekin, Quonya Huff, Iain Morris and the wider property team for their hard work and efforts during the delivery of the project and their ongoing commitments within the museum.
- 17.1.4 The Board acknowledged the well-deserved achievement and extended their congratulations to all those involved.
- 17.1.5 **This verbal report was for information only.**
- 18 RISK THEMES**
- 18.1 There were no other new or emerging risks identified during this meeting.
- 19 FORWARD PLAN**
- 19.1 The Forward Plan was noted and would be kept under review and subject to change.
- 20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
- 20.1 The next public meeting of the Board is scheduled to take place on Thursday 25 April 2024 at 1000 hrs.
- 20.2 There being no further matters to discuss in public, the meeting closed at 1235 hrs.

### **PRIVATE SESSION**

- 21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS PRIVATE MEETING:**
- 21.1 **Thursday 14 December 2023**
- 21.1.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 21.2 **Thursday 7 February 2024 (Special)**
- 21.2.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 21.3 **Thursday 29 February 2024 (Special)**
- 21.3.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 21.4 **The minutes of the meetings held on 14 December 2023, 7 February 2024 (Special) and 29 February 2024 (Special) were approved as a true record of the meetings.**
- 21.5 **Matters Arising**
- 21.5.1 There were no matters arising.

**22 PRIVATE ACTION LOG**

22.1 The Board considered the private action log and noted the updates.

**23 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2026/27**

23.1 SO'D presented a report to the Board seeking approval of the Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27.

23.2 **The Board approved the Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27.**

**24 SYSTEL UPDATE**

24.1 S'OD provided a verbal update in relation to Systel.

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

**25 ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

**25.1 New Mobilising System Update**

25.1.1 SO'D provided a verbal update on the status of the ongoing procurement process.

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

**25.2 Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)/Cyber Security**

25.2.1 RH provided a verbal update on MFA/cyber security which had been presented to the Strategy Leadership Team.

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