

OFFICIAL



SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

17 November 2023

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a special meeting of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board as follows:

**Date:** Thursday 23 November 2023

**Time:** 1600 hours

**Venue:** Braidwood Suite, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Westburn Drive, Cambuslang, G72 7NA / Virtual (MS Teams)

The business for the meeting is detailed overleaf.

Should you require any other information, please contact Group Commander Kevin Murphy on 07780 468734, Heather Greig on 07824 307616 or Debbie Haddow on 07341 880523.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kirsty L. Darwent'.

**KIRSTY DARWENT**  
Chair

Please note that the meeting will be recorded for minute taking purposes only.



**SCOTTISH**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

**SPECIAL MEETING - THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**  
**THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2023 @ 1600 HOURS**  
**BRAIDWOOD SUITE, SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS,**  
**WESTBURN DRIVE, CAMBUSLANG, G72 7NA / VIRTUAL (MS TEAMS)**

**AGENDA**

- 1 CHAIR'S WELCOME**
- 2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 3 CONSIDERATION OF AND DECISION ON ANY ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE**
- 4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

*Members should declare any financial and non-financial interest they have in the items of business for consideration, identifying the relevant agenda item, and the nature of their interest.*

- 5 LEADHILLS COMMUNITY FIRE STATION CONSULTATION REPORT**  
*(attached)*

*S Stevens*

*The Board is asked to approve the report.*

- 6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  
Thursday 14 December 2023

**PRIVATE SESSION**

- 7 NEW MOBILISING SYSTEM: INVITATION TO TENDER** *(attached)*

*S Stevens*

*The Board is asked to scrutinise the report.*

# SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

## The Board of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service



**SCOTTISH**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
Working together for a safer Scotland

Report No: B/SDEL/05-23

Agenda Item: 5

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Report to:             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | THE BOARD OF SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE        |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Meeting Date:          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 23 NOVEMBER 2023                                     |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Report Title:          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | LEADHILLS COMMUNITY FIRE STATION CONSULTATION REPORT |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Report Classification: |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | For Decision                                         | Board/Committee Meetings ONLY<br>For Reports to be held in Private<br>Specify rationale below referring to<br><u>Board Standing Order 9</u> |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                      | <a href="#">A</a>                                                                                                                           | <a href="#">B</a> | <a href="#">C</a> | <a href="#">D</a> | <a href="#">E</a> | <a href="#">F</a> |
| 1                      | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 1.1                    | The purpose of this report is to provide the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Board with details of the consultation report for consideration and make a recommendation relating to the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station (CFS).                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2                      | Background                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2.1                    | Since 20 February 2015, Leadhills CFS premises have been completely vacated, and unavailable for operational response within the community due to a number of factors including crewing levels, competency, and property.                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2.2                    | In 2022 it was identified that the current lease arrangements for Leadhills was due to expire in August 2023 and future options and recommendations were provided within Briefing Papers that were submitted and approved at Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) in October 2022 and the Board in November 2022.                                                                                                         |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2.3                    | The Board endorsed the recommended option which was to ‘conduct a public consultation on the formal discontinuation of operations at Leadhills Community Fire Station’.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2.4                    | A Leadhills working group was established including the Public Involvement and Consultation Team (PICT) and this was led by DACO Stevie Wright (West SDA). The group agreed a timeline to include both pre-consultation, consultation and post consultation phases and the PICT was tasked with designing and managing the preparatory work (stakeholder-mapping etc.) in April 2023.                                |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 2.5                    | The consultation report ( <a href="#">Appendix A</a> ) provides the findings and outcomes of the consultation for consideration and decision.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 3                      | Main Report/Detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| 3.1                    | A group of internal stakeholders including the Head of West Service Delivery, Local Senior Officer (LSO) Lanarkshire, Corporate Communications, Legal, People Directorate and the PICT was formed to consider how SFRS undertake the process of consultation and engagement ensuring compliance with appropriate legislative and technical guidance whilst ensuring our staff are considered and engaged throughout. |                                                      |                                                                                                                                             |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |

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|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.2 | <p>In terms of the options appraisal process that would provide the basis for public consultation there were two options these were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reinstatement of operations</li> <li>2. Closure of Leadhills Community Fire Station</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.3 | <p>Each of these proposals were considered against the criteria for (i) community safety, (ii) operational response, (iii) best value and (iv) asset availability and benefits and disbenefits are also included for each.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3.4 | <p>In terms of consultation and engagement there are three identified key stakeholder groups, and these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SFRS staff, specifically the two remaining Volunteer employees at Leadhills but this will also include staff from neighbouring stations</li> <li>• External stakeholders and Partner agencies</li> <li>• Public and local community.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 3.5 | <p>There is a three-stage engagement process for each of these groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-consultation where we indicate the intent to consult and engage offering the detail and context of the engagement.</li> <li>• Formal engagement and consultation</li> <li>• Post consultation where the feedback has been collected and analysed into a full detailed report (<a href="#">Appendix A</a>) and shared with stakeholders following final decision by the SFRS Board.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3.6 | <p>In terms of the consultation stage the areas of focus were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SFRS staff including specifically the two remaining Volunteer employees at Leadhills</b> – Formal request to meet each Leadhills employee to inform them of the options appraisal information, seek initial feedback and advise them due to the circumstances, they are at risk of redundancy. Engagement with staff from surrounding stations (Abington and Sanquhar) was also conducted.</li> <li>• <b>External stakeholders and partner agencies including representative bodies</b> – Request for consultation on the future of the station to be included within the South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partnership (CPP) to enable an update on the options appraisal and seek formal feedback. The same process was followed at the Safer South Lanarkshire Board to enable elected members to review and provide feedback. A formal meeting with Representative bodies was also conducted.</li> <li>• <b>Public and local community</b> – The online survey on Option(s) for formal consultation was launched, public information session(s) held and updated posters and leaflets distributed around Leadhills and Wanlockhead villages sign-posting local residents etc. to the online survey and informing them of public information session(s).</li> </ul> |
| 3.7 | <p>The following engagements were undertaken during the consultation process and referenced within the content of the consultation report:</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3.8 | <p><b>Pre – Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaflet drops to approximately 300 domestic dwelling and business (including posters) in the villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead informing the public of the drop-in session held on Tuesday, 04 July 2023 at Leadhills Community Hall</li> <li>• Engagement with 40 stakeholders; partner agencies and the third sector partners</li> <li>• Drop-in Session held on Tuesday, 04 July 2023 which twelve people attended to give their views on the proposals around the future of LCFS.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.9      | <b>Consultation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Meeting held on Tuesday, 08 August 2023 which eleven people attended. A presentation was delivered by LSO Quinn and was followed by a question-and-answer session with attendees</li> <li>Online Survey from 10 July 2023 - 18 August 2023, receiving twenty-seven responses.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 3.10     | <b>Post – Consultation findings</b><br>The consultation report includes the analysis and interpretation of all responses from staff, stakeholders, public session(s) and online survey regarding the feedback from stakeholder for the future of LCFS.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3.11     | Concerns were raised regarding the safety of residents in the event of a fire if the station were to close and the potential impact of any delay in a response mobilising from neighbouring stations. There were particular concerns regarding the impact in winter months when the village can be inaccessible due to adverse weather.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3.12     | However, the engagement process highlighted a lack of awareness as to the role that could be fulfilled even with a fully crewed volunteer station. Another main consideration of stakeholders was the potential use of the building moving forward.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3.13     | South Lanarkshire Council (key stakeholder) replied with a detailed response stating that <i>'The Council has no concerns regarding the volume of fire incident trends presented in the consultation and is confident that SFRS can respond quickly and effectively to reported incidents in Leadhills and Wanlockhead irrespective of the decision to close or reinstate Leadhills CFS'</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 3.14     | There were no significant areas highlighted by any stakeholder which SFRS has failed to take into consideration.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3.15     | This consultation report with a summary Briefing was presented to SLT on 6 September 2023 for consideration and the recommendations identified below were accepted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Recommendation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4.1      | Based on the full details within the consultation report ( <a href="#">Appendix A</a> ) and having undertaken a thorough consultation with stakeholders, the recommendation is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close Leadhills Community Fire Station</li> <li>Undertake a targeted home fire safety visits (HFSV's) initiative within the villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead to address any safety concerns for residents before the end of the calendar year</li> <li>Continue to provide community safety initiatives and HFSV engagement to the communities of Leadhills and Wanlockhead as part of the Lanarkshire LSO business-as-usual community safety strategy.</li> </ul> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Key Strategic Implications</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 5.1      | <b>Risk</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 5.1.1    | The level and detail of risk will be identified once the preferred option has been decided by SLT and the Board.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 5.2      | <b>Financial</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 5.2.1    | The financial impact will be determined once the preferred option is identified and will range from no further cost to the full cost of providing an asset and resource for the provision of an operational response.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

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| 5.3<br>5.3.1   | <b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability</b><br>There is no perceived environmental impact other than the potential for additional travel distance and appliance carbon emissions for other local operational appliances attending an incident in the Leadhills area.                                                |
| 5.4<br>5.4.1   | <b>Workforce</b><br>The workforce impact will be determined once the preferred option is identified and will range from the redundancy of two current volunteer employees to the requirement to establish a full crewing establishment for a volunteer station.                                                   |
| 5.5<br>5.5.1   | <b>Health &amp; Safety</b><br>There is no perceived health and safety impact other than the potential for additional road risk associated with any extended travel for other local operational appliances attending an incident in the Leadhills area.                                                            |
| 5.6<br>5.6.1   | <b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b><br>The impact of the potential redundancy for the two existing Volunteer staff has been considered and regular engagement with them throughout the process.                                                                                                                         |
| 5.7<br>5.7.1   | <b>Training</b><br>The training impact will be determined once the preferred option is identified and will range from no required training to full training (2 weeks task and task management for approximately 10 people).                                                                                       |
| 5.8<br>5.8.1   | <b>Timing</b><br>Consideration should be given to the timing of the deadline for the conclusion of the current lease arrangements.                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 5.9<br>5.9.1   | <b>Performance</b><br>There is no perceived performance impact as both proactive community safety engagement and operation response will continue. If the decision is taken to close LCFS the communities of Leadhills and Wanlockhead would be offered HFSV's as part of a targeted community safety initiative. |
| 5.10<br>5.10.1 | <b>Communications &amp; Engagement</b><br>Communication and engagement have taken place throughout the process as identified in the main body of the briefing paper and consultation report.                                                                                                                      |
| 5.11<br>5.11.1 | <b>Legal</b><br>Legal representation is included in the working group to ensure that appropriate legal and technical compliance is adhered to. The PICT are also included and embedded in the process to support the LSO Area.                                                                                    |
| 5.12<br>5.12.1 | <b>Information Governance</b><br>Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) completed as part of the consultation process.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 5.13<br>5.13.1 | <b>Equalities</b><br>Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) form completed. Based on the EHRIA, no group or individual are deemed to have experienced discrimination or disadvantage during this consultation process.                                                                               |
| 5.14<br>5.14.1 | <b>Service Delivery</b><br>There is no perceived service delivery impact as both proactive community safety engagement and operation response will continue.                                                                                                                                                      |

| <b>6</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Core Brief</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | This report provides the background to the current availability and response challenges of Leadhills Community Fire Station and the decision and outcomes of the public involvement and engagement process. The purpose of this brief is to seek Board approval for the closure of the station. |                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>7</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Assurance (Board/Committee Meetings ONLY)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                              |
| 7.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Director:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | David Farries, Director of Service Delivery                                                                                                  |
| 7.2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Level of Assurance:<br/>(Mark as appropriate)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Substantial/Reasonable/limited/Insufficient</b>                                                                                           |
| 7.3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Rationale:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Full public consultation and all related governance procedures have been followed in reaching this decision and the provision of this Paper. |
| <b>8</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Appendices/Further Reading</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |
| 8.1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <a href="#">Appendix A</a> - Leadhills Community Fire Station Consultation Report                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Prepared by:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Stephen Wright, Deputy Assistant Chief Officer                                                                                               |
| <b>Sponsored by:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | David Farries, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery                                                                         |
| <b>Presented by:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | David Farries, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Service Delivery                                                                         |
| <b>Links to Strategy and Corporate Values</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>SFRS Strategic Plan 2022-25</b><br>Outcome 2 - Communities are safer and more resilient as we respond effectively to changing risks.<br>Outcome 5 - We are a thriving organisation, use our resources responsibly and provide value for money to the public. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Governance Route for Report</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Report Classification/<br/>Comments</b>                                                                                                   |
| <i>Service Delivery – DMT</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>30 March 2022</i>                                                                                                                         |
| <i>SFRS Senior Leadership Team</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Approved for decision</i>                                                                                                                 |
| <i>SFRS Fire Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>5 October 2022</i>                                                                                                                        |
| <i>SFRS Strategic Leadership Team</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Options Paper Approved – Option 2</i>                                                                                                     |
| <i>SFRS Strategic Leadership Team</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>16 May 2023</i>                                                                                                                           |
| <i>SFRS Strategic Leadership Team</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Consultation and Engagement Progress Update.</i>                                                                                          |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>6 September 2023</i>                                                                                                                      |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Approved for Decision</i>                                                                                                                 |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>26 October 2023</i>                                                                                                                       |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>For Decision</i>                                                                                                                          |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>23 November 2023</i>                                                                                                                      |
| <i>SFRS Board</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>For Decision</i>                                                                                                                          |

**Appendix A**

# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Leadhills Community Fire Station Consultation Report

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### 1. Purpose

1.1 This report describes the consultation undertaken to support the Scottish Fire and Rescue's (SFRS) decision around the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station (LCFS).

### 2. Background

2.1 At its meeting on 24 November 2022, SFRS Board considered a report on the future of LCFS. The Board endorsed the recommended option which was to 'conduct a public consultation on the formal discontinuation of operations at Leadhills Community Fire Station'. The Public Involvement and Consultation Team (PICT) was tasked with designing and managing the consultation and commenced preparatory work (stakeholder-mapping etc.) in April 2023.

2.2 External consultation focused on the communities of Leadhills and surrounding area and possible impacted stakeholder partners. The key factors central to consideration around the future of LCFS were: community safety, incident demand, recruitment challenges, building maintenance and best value.

### 3. Working Group

3.1 A Leadhills working group was established, led by DACO (West SDA) Stevie Wright. The group agreed a timeline to include both pre-consultation and consultation phases, with the intention of submitting a final report to Board by September 2023.

3.2 The working group agreed that the pre-consultation stage would run from 29 May 2023 to 10 July 2023 (6 weeks). This included extensive stakeholder mapping, site visits to the villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead, survey design, and other preparatory work. It was agreed the formal consultation stage (including online survey) would run from 10 July 2023 to 18 August 2023 (also 6 weeks).

### 4. Pre-Consultation

4.1 As per guidance from the Consultation Institute, the intention of the pre-consultation stage was to engage with stakeholders on options development and appraisal. This involved offering stakeholders the opportunity to work with SFRS to determine whether there were any proposals that could be developed into desirable, viable and feasible options to take to full consultation.

### 5. Stakeholder Mapping

5.1 The following stakeholders were engaged with directly:

Local residents in Leadhills and Wanlockhead, SFRS staff, representative bodies, South Lanarkshire Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Hopetoun Estate, Leadhills Community Council, Leadhills Community Company, Wanlockhead Community Council, local councillors, MP, MSPs, Forest and

Land Scotland, Scottish Gamekeepers Association, National Air Traffic Control Systems, SSE Renewables (Clyde Windfarm), Scottish Power, Scottish Gas Networks, Police Scotland, VASLAN, local businesses, Clydesdale Housing Association, Mountain Rescue Teams.

5.2 In terms of local residents, this involved leaflet drops to around three hundred dwellings across both villages. Posters were also displayed on notice boards in both villages (c. twelve sites in total).

5.3 The current Leadhills volunteer crew have been engaged with throughout. This has been in-person wherever possible, and has been led by Ramona Coxall, People Manager (Strategic Partnering) assisted by LSO Jim Quinn and SC Phil McDonald.

## 6. Resources and Approach

6.1 An information pack, outlining the need to review the future of LCFS, and the factors under consideration, was produced, and hardcopies were made available.

6.2 Paid-for social media advertising was also used to promote to the local community the opportunity to get involved.

6.3 Around forty stakeholder partner agencies were contacted directly with links to the information pack, invitations to both the drop-in session and the formal public meeting, as well links to the online survey.

6.4 LSO Jim Quinn (South Lanarkshire) and LSO Andy Kenna (Dumfries and Galloway) also spoke directly to their respective local authority Scrutiny Boards and CPP Boards.

## 7. Drop in Session

7.1 A drop-in session was held at Leadhills Hall from 2-8pm on 04 July 2023. SFRS staff attending were LSO Jim Quinn, GC Craig Campbell, SC Phil McDonald, PICT Manager Paul Anderson, and PICT Officer Tom McGunnigle.

7.2 Twelve people attended and spoke with uniformed staff and asked questions on SFRS presence in the area. They also completed an interactive *dot-mocracy* exercise, indicating which factors around the options that were important to them. A distinct focus of the drop-in session was to identify whether there were any suggestions or proposals that could be developed into desirable, viable and feasible options which to take to full consultation.

7.3 The only suggestion to come from this stage was:

*'Would it be acceptable to seek funding from other bodies (e.g. windfarms) to fund upgrading of building to SFRS required standard? or for leasing of costs of the building - or other costs needed to reinstate the Leadhills Community Fire Station?'*

7.4 However, after input from the SFRS National Property Manager, it was determined that this was not feasible, based on a number of factors including the current condition of the building, the cost of a new-build, and asset (building) availability, etc.

7.5 This confirmed the identification of two options on which to consult:

1. Reinstatement of operations
2. Closure of LCFS

A report of the pre-consultation meeting can be found at [Appendix 1](#).

## 8 Themes and Responses

8.1 The themes raised by stakeholders at the 04 July 2023 pre-consultation drop-in session (and echoed throughout the consultation) can be summarised as follows: remote location; response times; transport difficulties (esp. in winter weather); community safety; and recruitment challenges.

8.2 The identification of these themes concluded the pre-consultation stage and confirmed the two options that SFRS would formally consult on. Importantly, the pre-consultation stage did not result in any additional proposals or suggestions from stakeholders that could have been consulted on. As a result, planning was initiated for the formal consultation stage, including the design of an online survey, a comms plan and stakeholder engagement to promote participation at a public meeting.

## 9 Public Meeting

9.1 A public meeting was held at Leadhills Hall on the evening of 08 August 2023. SFRS staff attending were LSO Jim Quinn, SC Phil McDonald, PICT Manager Paul Anderson, PICT Officer Tom McGunnigle and Comms Team Leader, Angeline Sneddon. Eleven members of the public attended.

9.2 LSO Quinn delivered a presentation followed by a question-and-answer session and participative discussion. This gave attendees the opportunity to seek clarity on any issues, as well as to give their views on the proposals around the future of LCFS.

9.3 The public meeting expressly addressed all of the points raised during the 04 July 2023 pre-consultation meeting. These points were addressed in a '*You asked, we responded*' approach. Each point was directly responded to by LSO Quinn as part of his presentation. In addition, both LSO Quinn and SC McDonald answered questions on these issues during the discussion with attendees.

9.4 At the end of the meeting PICT staff verbally summarised the points covered, and attendees confirmed this was an accurate record of what was discussed.

A report of the public meeting can be found at [Appendix 2](#).

## 10 Online Survey

10.1 An online survey was held from 10 July 2023 to 18 August 2023 – a period of six weeks. This asked stakeholders to respond to three separate questions:

- I. *Please let us have your views on the option to fully reinstate operations at Leadhills Community Fire Station.*
- II. *Please let us have your views on the option to close Leadhills Community Fire Station.*
- III. *In terms of the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station, please tell us your priorities.*

10.2 There were twenty-seven responses to the online survey. Most respondents were local residents from the Leadhills / Wanlockhead area.

10.3 Overall, around two thirds of responses were in favour of Option 1: Reinstatement. The remaining third supported Option 2: Closure.

10.4 The themes raised in the online survey closely resembled those raised during the 04 July 2023 drop-in session and the 08 August 2023 public meeting.

A write-up of the survey findings can be found at [Appendix 3](#).

## 11 Summary

11.1 The consultation around the future of LCFS has been comprehensive and genuine. It has been supported by the specialist resource of the Public Involvement and Consultation Team (PICT) working in close liaison with senior operational staff in the West SDA, and with colleagues in the Communications and Engagement Team.

11.2 Around three hundred domestic residences in the two villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead were contacted directly. In addition, almost forty stakeholder organisations were invited to participate in the consultation.

11.3 The consultation approach has been subject to a rigorous and ongoing equalities impact assessment throughout [\(Appendix 4\)](#).

11.4 Based on this, no group or individual are deemed to have experienced discrimination or disadvantage during the course of this consultation based on any protected characteristic.

11.5 This extensive stakeholder mapping resulted in twenty-seven responses to the consultation.

11.6 The consultation has been designed and delivered guided by the Best Practice Principles of the Consultation Institute.

11.7 The pre-consultation stage did not result in any desirable, viable or feasible proposals on which to consult.

11.8 Consequently, the two options consulted on were 1: Reinstatement of operations and 2: Closure.

11.9 Almost two thirds of respondents were in favour of reinstatement of operations at LCFS. The remaining one third or so accept that closure is the practical, cost effective option.

11.10 The consultation process has not highlighted any areas which SFRS has failed to take into consideration.

11.11 Only one key stakeholder partner agency responded. South Lanarkshire Council replied with a detailed response saying that *".... the Council has no concerns regarding the volume of fire incidents or incident trends presented in the consultation and is confident that the SFRS can respond quickly and effectively to reported incidents in Leadhills and Wanlockhead irrespective of the decision to close or to reinstate Leadhills CFS"* [\(Appendix 5\)](#).

## 12 Next Steps

12.1 This report will be considered by Strategic Leadership Team at its meeting on 06 September 2023. Once a final decision has been made at that meeting, and ratified by the SFRS Board, stakeholders, including local residents, will be informed as soon as possible. A summary of the decision, with rationale, will be made available on the SFRS website.

**Paul Anderson**  
**Public Involvement and Consultation Manager**  
**25 August 2023**

# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Appendix 1 Leadhills Community Fire Station Pre-Consultation Report

---

### 1. Introduction

This short report provides an update and summary of the pre-consultation work undertaken around the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station. The report captures the feedback from a public drop-in session held in Leadhills on 04 July 2023. The findings from this drop-in session will be used to inform the progress of the consultation, specifically, the identification of formal Options on which to consult.

### 2. Key Stakeholder Partners

On 15 June 2023, key stakeholder partner agencies (South Lanarkshire Council (SLC), Dumfries and Galloway Council, elected members (Cllrs, MSPs, MPs), Police Scotland, the Third Sector Interface for North Lanarkshire: VASLAN, etc.) were contacted about the intention to review the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station, and were asked to respond to SFRS with their views on the two proposals: reinstatement of operations and closure of the fire station. Key stakeholder partner agencies were also asked to suggest other proposals for the future of the fire station.

LSO for Lanarkshire, Jim Quinn also spoke at SLC Community Planning Partnership Board and SLC Scrutiny Board on 07 and 12 June 2023 respectively.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment was undertaken at the commencement of the pre-consultation stage and has been updated continually through the process.

### 3. Current Volunteer Crew Members

The LSO for Lanarkshire and colleagues in the People Directorate have been in regular contact with the two volunteer crew members to keep them informed of progress of the consultation and any possible implications linked to any final decision on the proposals.

### 4. Responses

4.1 We received one response from key stakeholder partners: a local Station Commander based in Dumfries and Galloway emailed (24 June 2023):

*'I visited Sanqhuar fire station on their drill night 21/6/2023 to discuss the planned closure of Leadhills community fire station. The crew there had no issues with picking up the extra responsibility and increased response area. As this had been the position for 7-8 years they viewed it a business as usual by now. They could not see any negatives but did raise the issue of challenging driving conditions in the winter if snow was present and the impact on response times.'*

4.2 In addition, a young man (teenager) resident in Leadhills contacted SFRS by email (15 June 2023) indicating he had learned of the consultation through social media, and that he was keen to

become an on-call fire-fighter. Given that this young man was underage, he was responded to appropriately by colleagues in the People Directorate (19 June 2023).

## 5. Leaflet-drop

Leaflets were delivered to domestic dwellings and businesses (and posters were displayed) in the villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead on Thursday, 29 June 2023 advertising the public drop-in session to be held on Tuesday, 04 July 2023 at Leadhills Hall from 2-8pm.

## 6. Drop-In session 04 July 2023 (2-8pm)

Over the course of the session, twelve people attended and gave their views on the proposals around the future of the fire station. Attendees spoke with senior operational staff and asked questions on the operational aspects of the SFRS delivery in the local area.

Attendees were then invited by staff from the PIC Team to give us their views on each proposal using a simple interactive ('dot-mocracy') exercise. This involved indicating which factors in the re-instatement and the closure of the fire station were important or not important to them.

## 7. Feedback

This is what we learned:

7.1 The main issue raised was in relation to recruitment, mentioned by eleven attendees. Attendees asked about how SFRS recruits on-call fire-fighters.

7.2 Six people said directly that they would like to see the fire station in Leadhills reinstated regardless of all other considerations (incident demand, recruitment difficulties, best value, etc.)

7.3 Six people said that having a fixed SFRS presence in Leadhills village was either not important to them or they were neutral about it.

7.4 All attendees said nearby stations should still contribute to community safety in the local area.

7.5 Everyone we spoke with said whatever happens to the fire station, home fire safety visits in the local area should continue.

7.6 There were a number of queries over the future use of the current fire station building.

7.7 There was a need for clarity around the role of SFRS and the need for proper risk assessment in local communities.

It is notable that of the twelve attendees at the drop-in session on 04 July 2023, no-one raised the specific issue of response times, should the fire station be closed.

## 8. Any Other Comments / Further Suggestions

Attendees at the drop-in session were asked to leave any additional comments or give us any further suggestions around the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station. Four attendees responded as follows:

8.1 *Can SFRS actually recruit in Leadhills? Not been able to for the last 8 years. Given that, how is a fire station an option?*

8.2 *If Leadhills does not have its own station, it's important that the crews serving have local knowledge of Leadhills.*

8.3 *If the fire station is not reinstated, I would like to see it re-purposed for community use.*

8.4 *Would it be acceptable to seek funding from other bodies (e.g. windfarms) to fund upgrading of building to SFRS required standard? or for leasing of costs of the building - or other costs needed to reinstate the Leadhills Community Fire Station?*

These issues will be addressed by SFRS operational staff in the formal consultation public meeting on 08 August 2023 in a 'You said, we responded' approach.

## **9. Keeping Up to Date**

Before leaving, all 04 July 2023 attendees were informed that we would be holding a formal consultation public meeting on 08 August 2023 (6.30-8.30pm) in the same venue.

Attendees at the drop-in session were offered the opportunity to leave us their contact details if they wished to be kept up-to-date with the consultation process. Seven attendees opted to do so.

## **10. Next Steps**

10.1 Based on the feedback from stakeholders, and in line with best consultation practice as advocated by the Consultation Institute, SFRS will formally consult on two Options:

- Reinstatement of operations at Leadhills
- Closure of Leadhills Community Fire Station.

10.2 Monday, 10 July 2023 (9am)

- Launch of formal survey online (10 July 2023 – 18 August 2023)
- Email all stakeholder partner agencies with link to online survey
- Email seven attendees at drop-in session with link to online survey

10.3 Preparation and production of leaflets and posters promoting formal consultation public meeting scheduled for 08 August 2023.

10.4 Distribution of leaflets and posters around Leadhills and Wanlockhead.

**Paul Anderson**  
**Public Involvement and Consultation Manager**  
**05 July 2023**

# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Appendix 2 Leadhills Community Fire Station Public Meeting - Leadhills Hall 08 August 2023

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### 1. Introduction

This short report captures the feedback from a formal public meeting held in Leadhills on 08 August 2023. The findings from this meeting will be used to inform the consultation around the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station, and will be included in the final consultation report.

The meeting was attended by:

- Jim Quinn – SFRS Area Commander / LSO Lanarkshire
- Phil McDonald – SFRS Station Commander, Lanarkshire
- Paul Anderson – SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation Manager
- Tom McGunnigle - SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation Officer
- Angeline Sneddon – SFRS External Communications Team Leader

### 2. Leaflet-drop

Leaflets were delivered to domestic dwellings and businesses (and posters were displayed) in the villages of Leadhills and Wanlockhead on Tuesday, 01 August 2023. These advertised the public meeting to be held on Tuesday, 08 August 2023 at Leadhills Hall from 6.30-8.30pm. Around three hundred domestic dwellings in total were covered.

### 3. Public Meeting 08 August 2023 (6.30-8.30pm)

Eleven people attended and Paul Anderson chaired the meeting. LSO Quinn opened by stressing that no decision on the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station would be taken this evening. Rather, the discussion this evening would be used to inform the final decision.

LSO Quinn then delivered a short PowerPoint presentation. This focused on the issues raised by the local community in the pre-consultation drop-in session held on 04 July 2023, and covered the factors that SFRS is required to consider regarding the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station.

The presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session with attendees. This gave those in attendance the opportunity to seek clarity on issues, but also give their views on the options around the future of the fire station.

#### 4. Questions and Responses

| QUESTION                                                                                                                                  | RESPONSE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Question about cuts to service in Leadhills and the fact that the current volunteers are limited in what they can do.</i>              | Acknowledgement of the difficulties around recruitment and lack of suitable candidates within Leadhills. SFRS operational requirement to have the right resources in the right location; decisions on this are data-led. Also, reference to the need to demonstrate best value.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Question about weather conditions, and potential for landslides and flooding restricting access to both villages.</i>                  | No different from other remote areas in the country. SFRS will always look at different routes into both villages. SFRS works as part of wider SLC Community Planning Partnership to address such issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Recruitment – A point was raised in relation to current personnel and reluctance of local residents to come forward as volunteers.</i> | It would be inappropriate to discuss specifics as part of a public meeting. Response broadened more widely as to how recruitment challenges impacts crewing levels.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Question regarding the structure of the houses in the village and the lack of fire separation should there be a structural fire.</i>   | Answer focused on the importance of community safety and prevention. If the decision is taken to close the fire station, the communities of Leadhills and Wanlockhead would be offered HFSVs as part of a targeted community safety initiative. Also incumbent on residents to increase their own safety by taking necessary steps including the fitting of linked smoke and heat detection.                                                                             |
| <i>Question in relation to a house fire fatality that occurred c.2004.</i>                                                                | Again, the limitations of the existing crew were highlighted and discussed. The volunteer crew in a station the size of Leadhills would not normally be equipped or trained to deal with structural fires. Suitable resource would be deployed from elsewhere. Firefighter safety is a key responsibility for SFRS also.                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>What can the existing Leadhills volunteer crew tackle / not tackle?</i>                                                                | Not structural fires. Current volunteer crew can attend grass fires; limited involvement with flooding incidents; some road traffic incidents, etc. It was stressed that this model is not unique to Leadhills; it is used across rural areas of Scotland.<br><br>Some discussion around first-aid skills and fact volunteers' response is in lieu of the Scottish Ambulance Service attendance who are trained and more skilled. Safe systems at work also highlighted. |
| <i>Who should be contacted first regarding incidents requiring first response / initial first aid?: Fire Service, Police or SAS?</i>      | SAS would normally be expected to attend first. However, there may be occasions, based on resources available and risk assessment, where SFRS assistance is requested. SFRS would only make a response if requested by SAS. Residents should always ask for SAS as a response to clinical care.                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Question regarding the feeling that Leadhills houses are more vulnerable to fire risk.</i>                                             | SFRS footprint and response is based on risk and previous demand in last number of years;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                               | this is aligned to best value and right resources in the right locations. The importance of community safety was again discussed. LSO Quinn stressed the importance of inter-linked fire alarm systems. Attendees acknowledged their readily availability and relative low cost. SC McDonald outlined the prevention work (including HFSVs) that can be undertaken by community action teams (CATs). |
| <i>Does SFRS have adequate and up-to-date local knowledge on, for example: fire hydrants, open water supply and access to difficult narrow streets/lanes?</i> | Local knowledge (including detailed awareness of local topography and water sources) is key for crews and forms part of ongoing training and response. The importance of undertaking local risk assessment and having suitable plans in place was stressed.                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Can attendees see the responses of other stakeholders?</i>                                                                                                 | The final consultation report will be available to the public. Personal details will be removed in line with legal requirements around handling of personal data.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

Tom McGunnigle summarised the above issues raised, with responses, and confirmed with attendees that this was an accurate record of the discussion.

During the discussion, it was stressed by LSO Quinn and SC McDonald, that community safety would be at the forefront of the SFRS response in the area. SC McDonald indicated that if the decision is made to close the fire station, then a focused community safety initiative would be rolled out within Leadhills and Wanlockhead, including home-fire safety visits, to ensure a high level prevention and protection approach.

There were final discussion points in relation to:

- Uniqueness of Leadhills and Wanlockhead and high number of older people and empty holiday lets.
- Duplication of point in relation to first responders defib (first aid) and who should respond first.
- The benefits of interlinked fire alarm systems, and their relatively easy availability, low-cost and ease of installation.

## 5. Keeping Up to Date

Attendees at this meeting were offered the opportunity to leave their contact details if they wished to be kept up to date with the consultation process. Seven attendees opted to do so.

## 6. Next Steps

Based on the feedback from stakeholders, and in line with best consultation practice (as advocated by the Consultation Institute), SFRS will consider the salient points from this public meeting and their implications in terms of the two options:

- Reinstatement of operations at Leadhills
- Closure of Leadhills Community Fire Station.

Paul Anderson informed the group that a final decision regarding the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station would be made in September 2023 and would be communicated locally as soon as possible afterwards.

**OFFICIAL**

LSO Quinn closed the meeting by reassuring attendees that community safety would not be compromised regardless of the final decision regarding the future of the fire station.

**Paul Anderson**  
**Public Involvement and Consultation Manager**  
**09 August 2023**

# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Appendix 3 Leadhills Community Fire Station Consultation Survey Results

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### 1. Introduction

The formal consultation around the future Leadhills Community Fire Station (LCFS) ran from 10 July 2023 to 18 August 2023. A key element of the consultation was an online survey. The survey was also available in hard copy and alternative formats, upon request. No requests were received.

There was a total of twenty-seven responses. Twenty-two were from members of the public – mostly residents from the local community. One person identified as an SFRS employee but was not local to the area. Where postcodes were supplied, twelve were in the ML12 postcode (Leadhills). A further three responses came from the wider ML postcode area and three were received from neighbouring Dumfries & Galloway. The remaining postcodes represented other parts of Scotland.

Four responses were received from organisations / stakeholder groups: South Lanarkshire Council, Leadhills Community Company Ltd, Lowther & District Men's Shed and Lanark Men's Shed.

### 2. Findings

Seventeen respondents (63%) strongly supported reinstating LCFS. The remainder were either supportive of closure on grounds of incident demand and best value; or accepted that the continuation of the status quo (cover from nearby stations) provided adequate safety assurance.

### 3. South Lanarkshire Council

An email was received from South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) on 18 July 2023 seeking clarity on a number of issues. A meeting was held on 24 July 2023 with the SLC Policy Officer, Alison Mitchell. The following SFRS staff attended: Marysia Waters, Head of Corporate Communications; Craig Campbell, Group Commander, Lanarkshire and Paul Anderson, Public Involvement and Consultation Manager. The Council's formal response to the consultation was received on 18 August 2023 and can be found at [Appendix 5](#).

### 4. Leadhills Community Company Ltd

Leadhills Community Company Ltd. stated *"From the face-to-face consultation that I attended on 8 August, it is clear that reinstatement of the lapsed service would not offer the service response to persons or buildings that our aging community needs, and many believe it had. The village never had a trained response beyond grass fire emergencies"*.

It was acknowledged however that the engagement undertaken as part of the consultation had been enlightening. In addition, it was thought that visits, offering fire safety advice to residents. would be well received and would help to soften the impact of no fixed SFRS presence in the village.

## 5. Lowther & District Men's Shed

The point above was echoed by Lower & District Men's Shed; *"It would be good to have it, but what's the point if they can't tackle a house or building fires?; what's the point in having it (if they) only tackle grass fires?"*.

## 6. Lanark Men's Shed

In terms of reinstatement, the view was that; *"Too much time has passed now, and the building has been left in disrepair and would cost too much to bring back to operational status when that money could be used elsewhere in the fire service. Already over past 8yrs support is being provided successfully from two other stations"*.

## 7. Engagement by SFRS operational staff

7.1 Chris Ross, Station Commander at Nithsdale Fire Station, Dumfries & Galloway visited Sanquhar fire station on 21 June 2023 (drill night) to discuss the review of Leadhills community fire station.

**Response:** *"The crew there had no issues with picking up extra responsibility and increased response area. As this had been the position for 7-8 years, they viewed it as business as usual by now. They could not see any negatives but did raise the issue of challenging driving conditions in the winter if snow was present and the impact on response times."*

7.2 LSO Andy Kenna (Area Commander, Dumfries & Galloway) attended the Scrutiny Board meeting on 15 June 2023. LSO Kenna informed the sub-committee of the consultation on LCFS. He explained that LCFS was a volunteer unit which had been non-operational since February 2015. Like all public services, SFRS has a duty to prioritise where it allocates limited resources and it is considering a number of factors, including best value and incident data, to help develop options for our future operations in the area. As part of this process, SFRS was seeking the views of the local community and stakeholder partners. LSO Kenna went on to confirm that a pre-consultation stage, aimed at developing options to formally consult upon to determine the future of LCFS, would commence 05 June 2023 and that formal consultation would run from 10 July 2023 to 18 August 2023. **Outcome:** No questions or feedback was received.

7.3 LSO Jim Quinn (Area Commander, Lanarkshire) had a telephone conversation on 04 August 2023 with one stakeholder regarding the condition of the fire station building.

## 8. Media and Social Media Coverage

The SFRS Twitter feed of 10 July 2023 which advertised the public meeting on 08 August 2023 (as well as containing the link to the online survey) resulted in two responses from other Twitter users:

*'We know what preferred option is so why bother putting out to consultation? Just a tick box exercise....'*

*'Perhaps get rid of your high earners...save plenty of money there'*

## 9. SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey asked consultees three questions:

**1. Please let us have your views on the Option to fully reinstate operations at Leadhills Community Fire Station**

Seventeen respondents (63%) were strongly supportive of reinstating LCFS. Comments such as *"It is vital that this is reinstated"* are typical.

By contrast, five respondents (19%) felt it was appropriate to close the station given it had not been operational for a number of years:

*"If the other stations have been covering for 8 years, then this must be sustainable. If it has not been operational since 2015, why reinstate it?"*

One person acknowledged:

*"Coverage from other local stations should be more than adequate, perhaps with some additional activities planned to enhance visibility in the Leadhills area".*

## **9.1 THEMES**

### **9.1.1 Remote location**

Leadhills rural location and road network challenges were cited by most recipients as a reason for reinstating operations. The following typifies these responses:

*"In any area like Leadhills, which is quite remote, it is essential to have local fire and rescue services".*

### **9.1.2 Response times**

Concerns were raised about the response time from other stations and the difference it could make to an outcome if crews had to come from Abington and Sanquhar.

*"With the nearest fire stations to Leadhills at either Sanquhar or Biggar, an incident could rapidly worsen in having to wait for them to attend".*

### **9.1.3 Winter weather**

The impact of winter weather was cited by numerous respondents, and was closely linked to the themes of remote location, poor road conditions, and response times. Residents mentioned that the village can be difficult to reach in inclement weather.

*"Extreme weather conditions in Leadhills and Wanlockhead can make it near impossible for an outside unit to come up any of the roads leading to the villages".*

### **9.1.4 Increased risk and danger to life**

The themes highlighted above (remote location, response times and winter weather) were linked to increased concern over safety. Some respondents expressed a view that the lack of local cover could potentially increase risk to people and property.

*"The community is so remote that the time to respond otherwise will likely result in loss of life whether house fire or traffic incident".*

### **9.1.5 Reinstatement impractical**

A minority (26%) was mindful that reinstating operations at Leadhills would not be pragmatic or cost effective.

*"Full reinstatement of operations at Leadhills does not seem in any way a realistic option".*

### 9.1.6 Recruitment

On the issue of recruitment, three consultees acknowledged that the option to reinstate did not appear to be realistic.

*"It is clear that the community will not be able to provide suitable candidates to maintain either a volunteer or On-Call service".*

However, one consultee challenged: *"there is also no evidence that you have made any effort to recruit from the local area"*.

|                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2. Please let us have your views on the Option to close Leadhills Community Fire Station</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

A similar response pattern was evident in the views expressed in answer to this question i.e., six respondents (22%) considered it pragmatic to close LCFS, while others were resolute in their objection. *"Not enough cover in the area so can't close"* is a response typical of those opposed to closure.

## 9.2 Themes

Question two responses drew out similar themes to those expressed in question one. Comments centred around increased danger and inclement weather experienced in the area.

### 9.2.1 Increased risk

One person considered that closing LCFS would be *"Putting the lives of residents of both villages in danger"*.

Comment was made about other risks, in particular wildfires:

*"There are also lots of tourists wild camping in the summer, lighting fires. These villages deserve a level of fire cover."*

In addition to wildfires, another individual mentioned *"domestic, commercial and farm incidents; and emergencies on the M74"*.

### 9.2.2 Winter conditions

Community concerns are characterised by the following comment:

*"What will happen in a severe situation in winter when there is snow and ice on the ground?"*

### 9.2.3 Resources

A minority of consultees (23%) took a different view. They questioned why the present arrangement should change. The following comment summarises these well:

*"The continued waste of money on a resource which does not contribute to the safety and resilience of the local community should be drawn to a close as soon as possible".*

Two residents suggested that the proposal was based on financial considerations not public safety:

*"Unfortunately, everything seems to be about money. Saving lives shouldn't be about how much it costs".*

**3. In terms of the future of Leadhills Community Fire Station, please tell us your priorities.**

This question provided a range of answers which reinforced the views already expressed. Some respondents summed up their priorities succinctly. For example: *“public health and safety”; “protection of life and property”; “locally manned station”*.

### **9.3 THEMES**

#### **9.3.1 Local service to provide emergency cover**

The retention of some form of cover to protect residents was judged to be important: *“Providing immediate quick response to emergencies in the local area”*.

One consultee considered that having emergency cover in the village would enable a situation to be ‘held’ until other crew attended.

A resident commented on the importance of having; *“a group of trained SFRS personnel, known to the community, who would be able to respond in the first instance, to emergencies in the locality, with good knowledge of the local area and of local folk”*.

#### **9.3.2 Assurance on fire safety prevention**

It was suggested that *“Advice about fire prevention in the home could be embedded in the community by a trusted team”*. This view was held by others who considered a stronger presence in the village around fire safety would impact positively on community safety and identity.

#### **9.3.3 Rapid response to local incidents**

Related to having local cover, another priority was being able to respond to incidents in a timely manner: *“Care of the public’s health and safety at ALL times”*.

*“It takes Abington or Sanquhar over half an hour to reach any of the villages - which is only when they can muster enough firefighters to attend”*.

Winter conditions were again highlighted as a major factor in the ability to have a rapid response from elsewhere: *“Ability to have a quick response - especially in winter due to road conditions”*.

#### **9.3.4 Not viable to reinstate**

Four consultees (15%) did not support reinstatement of operations in any circumstance: *“Let the building close and spend the money on operational stations”*. Also: *“Money from sale of property, appliance upkeep, maintenance cost can be spent on stations that are operational”*.

Although in favour of keeping LCFS open, the view from others considered that, cost wise, it would not be realistic to reinstate it: *“It’s a facility that I would very much be in favour of keeping, but I am acutely aware that the cost to get it compliant and up and running will not be cost effective for the taxpayer to fund”*.

Another consultee conceded: *‘Realistically I don’t think it’s a viable option sadly, given the very small number of incidents the area has had since it closed’*.

#### **9.3.5 Summary**

Seventeen respondents (63%) were strongly in favour of reinstatement of operations at LCFS. As illustrated by the comments above, support for that Option was underpinned by concerns about response times from other stations. These issues were linked to the village’s remote location and

transport challenges, especially in winter. In turn, this fed concerns about increased danger to life and the local community.

Ten respondents accepted that closure was the best Option. A range of reasons were given. Some respondees – including South Lanarkshire Council - replied that they were reassured that the decision to close LCFS would not result in a detrimental impact on community safety. For others, reinstatement was deemed as being impractical and not the best use of public funds. A number of respondents questioned why an arrangement that had worked for more than eight years should be changed.

In terms of tone, the majority of local residents supporting reinstatement of operations were highly emotive with comments based around a worst-case or 'what if' scenario: *"Just because it hasn't happened does not mean it won't or can't"*. This is typified in assertions such as: *"People will die,"* and radical suggestions such as *"residents should be equipping themselves with hoses and be prepared to fight fires"*.

The comments from those supporting closure were mindful of all the factors (including best value) that need to be considered in order to reach a desirable, viable and feasible outcome.

**Paul Anderson**  
**Public Involvement and Consultation Manager**  
**25 August 2023**

# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Appendix 4 Leadhills Community Fire Station Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment

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### 1. Introduction

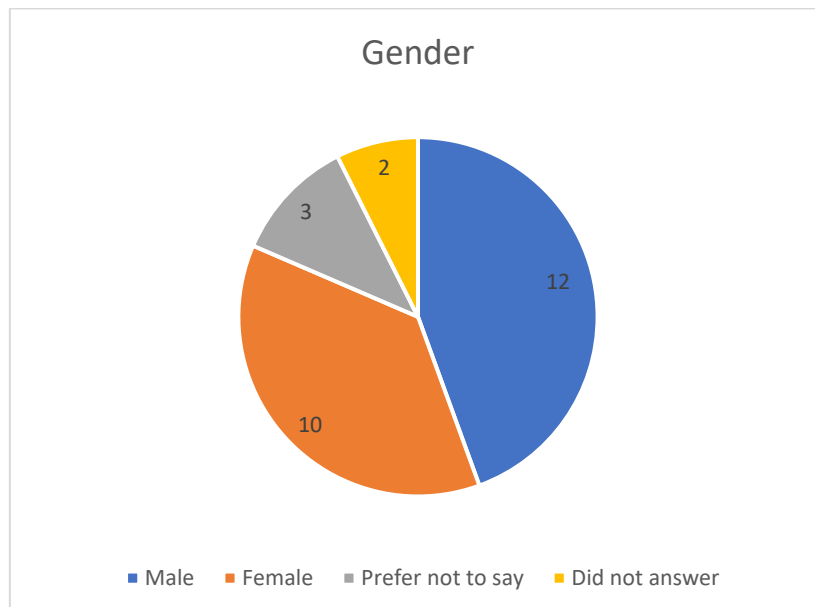
Equality has been mainstreamed into the planning and delivery of the consultation around LCFS. The equality issues associated with this piece of work have been considered and are detailed within the Equality Impact Assessment. This has been updated on an ongoing basis and submitted to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team on an ongoing basis.

The online survey asked six equalities questions. These were optional and were intended to evidence SFRS's commitment to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty under Sec. 49 of the Equality Act (2010).

### 2. Findings

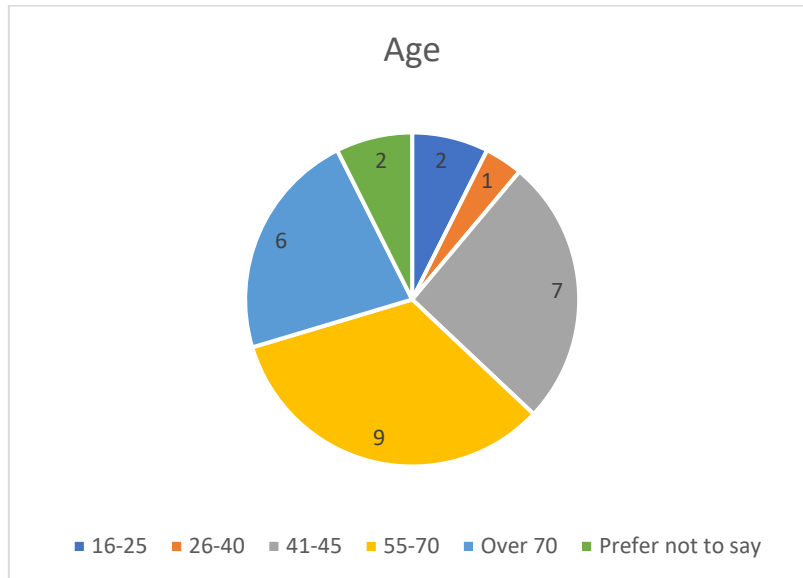
#### 2.1 Gender

The gender split of survey respondents was male (12), female (10), preferred not to say (3), did not answer (2).



## 2.2 Age

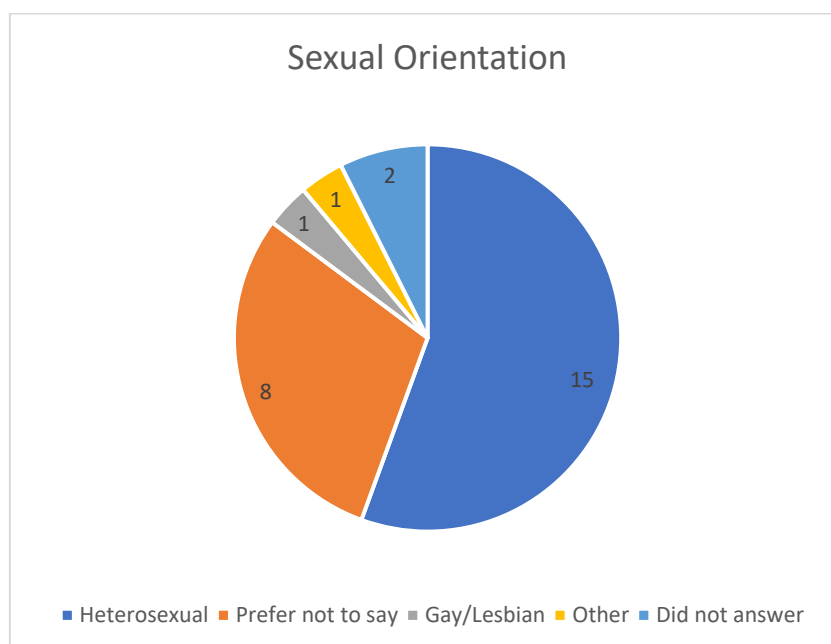
The 55-70 age group provided nine responses. The 41-45 age band accounted for seven responses and the over 70 group provided six responses. The youngest age bracket i.e., the 16-25 accounted for two responses with a further person identifying in the 26-40 age range. Two people preferred not to state their age. No responses were received from the 46-54 age group.



## 2.3 Sexual Orientation

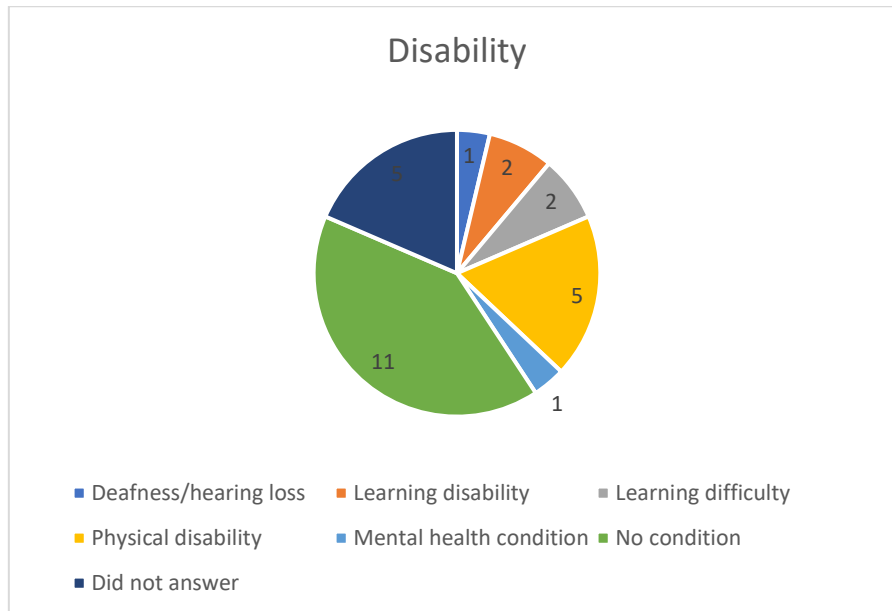
The majority (15) identified themselves as heterosexual; one person as gay/lesbian and another individual as 'Other'.

In response to being asked if they considered themselves to be trans, or have a trans history, seventeen people replied 'No'. The remaining respondents preferred 'Not to say' or declined to answer.



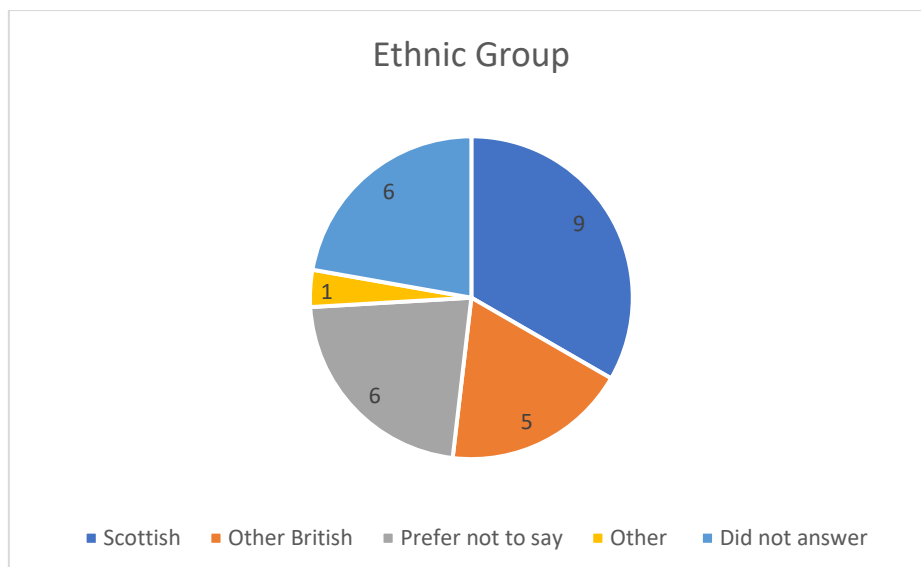
## 2.4 Disability

There was a broad range of answers to the questions on disability. Six respondents declared a disability. Six people opted to say their condition could be managed by treatment or medication. The remaining responses covered learning, hearing and mental health conditions.



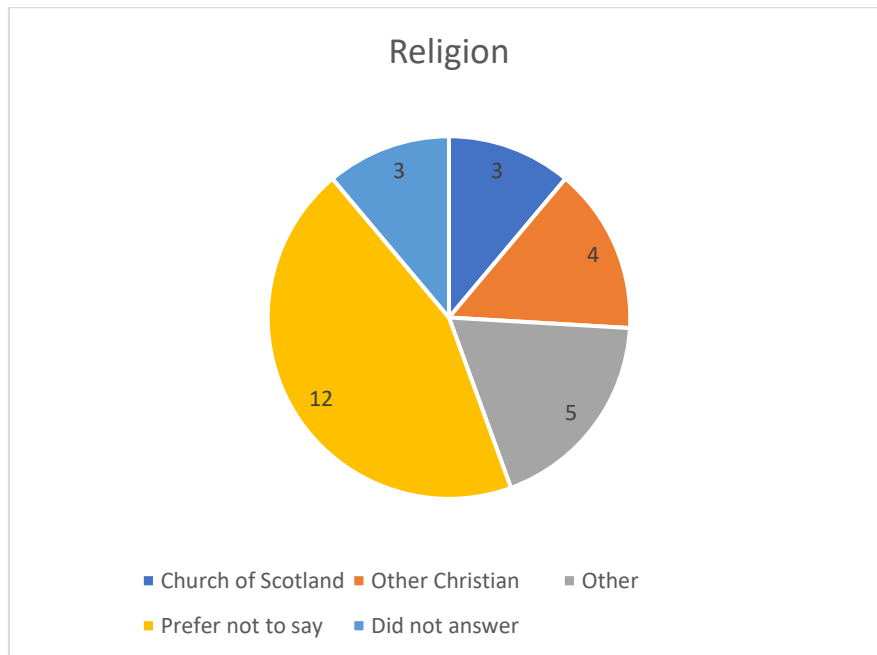
## 2.5 Ethnicity

Nine people identified as 'Scottish'. Five were 'Other British'. Six people did not answer. Six preferred not to say. One person categorised their ethnicity as 'Other'.



## 2.6 Religious Belief

The majority (15) either did not answer, or responded 'Prefer not to say'. 'Other' was selected by five people with 'Church of Scotland' and 'Other Christian' accounting for a total of seven responses.



# SFRS Public Involvement and Consultation



## Appendix 5: Leadhills Community Fire Station Response from South Lanarkshire Council 18 August 2023

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### Response on Option to Reinstate LCFS

The council notes that this is an operational decision for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

The council notes that Leadhills CFS has never been part of a pre-determined presence. Also, that volunteer fire-fighters serve a specific and limited role and that there are the historic and ongoing recruitment challenges associated with Leadhills CFS. The council is concerned that volunteer recruitment is likely to pose an ongoing challenge and if re-instated the station will continue to be vulnerable to closure, which may also place pressures on resource planning for the SFRS to the detriment of the Leadhills and Wanlockhead communities. The council agrees that a firm decision over the future of Leadhills CFS will allow the SFRS to plan and allocate operational resources more effectively, rather than operating on the present ad hoc basis.

### Response on Option to Close LCFS

The council is reassured that a decision to close the Leadhills CFS will not compromise the level of service and response that Leadhills and Wanlockhead communities receive. This is evidenced through the present service arrangement that has been in place for the past eight years including sufficient capacity to resource, and with no complaints from those communities.

A further consideration is that the villages are designated conservation areas of architectural and historical significance. The council is aware that heritage structures in conservation areas are unlikely to meet present regulations or may pose particular risks and therefore require a specialist response. The council is reassured that the closure of the Leadhills CFS will not impact on the SFRS arrangements to attend incidents relating to heritage structures, which requires to come from stations with the necessary equipment and expertise.

The council is reassured that communication between the villages and the local community action teams and surrounding fire stations in Lanarkshire and Dumfries & Galloway will maintain good local relationships and local knowledge, and is confident that this has proven effective over the last eight years.

### Priorities Around the Future of LCFS

The main consideration is that preventable injury or death to residents and visitors, and preventable damage to infrastructure and property is unlikely to increase because of a decision to close Leadhills CFS.

The council notes that there have been 47 incidents requiring attendance over a seven-year period, equivalent to seven per year. The council acknowledges that the majority of fire incidents attended were avoidable call outs and that as a result of the new UFAS response the number of incidents are anticipated to reduce in the future. The council has no concerns regarding the volume of fire incidents

or incident trends presented in the consultation and is confident that the SFRS can respond quickly and effectively to reported incidents in Leadhills and Wanlockhead irrespective of the decision to close or to reinstate Leadhills CFS.