

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 26 November 2019

## Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - City of Edinburgh Area Update

Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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1.1 To note the update from the divisional commander.

**Andrew Kerr**

Chief Executive

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# Report

## Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - City of Edinburgh Area Update

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides the first update from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service since the Policy and Sustainability Committee was established.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 In May 2019 the Council agreed that police and fire and rescue service city-wide plans, policies and performance would be considered by the new Policy and Sustainability Committee.
- 3.2 This would provide a forum for Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to discuss major cross-cutting issues with the Council as well as fulfilling their duty to engage with the local authority.
- 3.3 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service are required by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 to involve the local authority in the setting of its priorities and objectives for its area.

### 4. Main report

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- 4.1 This report is the first report by the Area Commander to be considered by the Policy and Sustainability Committee. It is intended that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will report three to four times a year although the Area Commander may bring other reports for consideration by the Council if he thinks necessary.
- 4.2 This is also the first report by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to be considered at a corporate level since the cessation of the Police and Fire Scrutiny Committee. As a result, the content of the report is aimed to be a high-level overview of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's progress on their key priorities and the strategic issues facing the service. Elected Members are asked to consider the information provided by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and whether any additional content is requested.

## **5. Next Steps**

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5.1 Not applicable.

## **6. Financial impact**

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6.1 Not applicable.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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7.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have discussed the content of the report with the Council and the information can develop as feedback is received.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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8.1 The City of Edinburgh Council 30 May 2019 – [Review of Political Management Arrangements 2019](#)

8.2 Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

## **9. Appendices**

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Report by the Area Commander

### Introduction

This report provides information on our prevention, protection and operational response activities within the City of Edinburgh area during the period to the end of Quarter 2 of 2019-20 (1st April – 30th September).

The Scottish Government provides an overarching vision for public services. This vision is supported by 16 National Outcomes, which demonstrate commitment to creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable growth. The SFRS can make a significant contribution to improving these outcomes for the City of Edinburgh by contributing to the Community Planning arrangements across the area.

The overarching aim of the local Fire & Rescue Service in the City of Edinburgh is to reduce death and injury from fire and other emergencies in the community. To achieve this, we will work in partnership, be pro-active and target our prevention and protection activities to where they are required, based on evidence. Within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the City of Edinburgh 2017, six priorities have been identified:

1. Operational Resilience and Preparedness
2. Domestic Fire Safety
3. Reducing Unintentional Injury and Harm
4. Reducing Deliberate Fire Setting
5. Non-Domestic Fire Safety
6. Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (False Alarms).

These priorities, and our strategies for service delivery, are clearly aligned to the Community Planning structure, which supports the delivery of the Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan 2018-2028 and the four Locality Improvement Plans.

The full Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Edinburgh can be accessed at:

[https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1228026/edinburgh\\_local\\_fire\\_and\\_rescue\\_plan\\_2017.pdf](https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1228026/edinburgh_local_fire_and_rescue_plan_2017.pdf)

Area Commander Kenneth Rogers,  
Local Senior Officer for City of Edinburgh

## Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using 10 key indicators:

	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	Trend
Accidental Dwellinghouse Fires	266	240	216	234	218	
Fire casualties (non-fatal - incl. precautionary check up's and fatal)	66(2)	66(1)	47(1)	75(3)	41(0)	
All deliberate fires	977	866	945	755	685	
Non- domestic fires	143	123	130	117	97	
False Alarms - Malicious	171	188	166	138	130	
- Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals	1995	2139	1893	2060	2167	
Special Service - RTC's	79	91	68	61	60	
- Flooding	71	98	61	71	158	
- Effecting Entry	233	262	237	223	211	
- Medical Assistance	27	14	33	22	13	

The table shows that the City of Edinburgh has seen a reduction in 8 of the 10 indicators identified through our Local Fire & Rescue Plan. Areas of note are

- the continued downward trend in accidental dwellinghouse fires and a return to a downward trend for fire casualties following a spike during the same reporting period last year.
- no recorded fire fatalities during the first 2 quarters of the current year.
- the increase in flooding incidents attended resulted from unusually heavy rainfall periods during June and August.
- Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (False Alarms) remain a concern and make up 38% of all calls received in the City. Further information on the work we are doing in this regard is detailed later in this paper.

During this reporting period, the 7 Wholetime and One Retained Duty Service Station (South Queensferry) which cover the Local Authority Area attended a total of 5761 incidents.

## Progress on local Fire & Rescue Plan Priorities

### Operational Resilience and Preparedness

The Service must identify, prioritise and plan to meet the risks in each local community.

We said we would:

- *Identify and assess the risk to our communities through Operational Intelligence gathering.*
- *Undertake planned training events to support the acquisition and maintenance of skills to provide the capability to respond to emergency incidents.*
- *Review our operational response to incidents to ensure ongoing firefighter safety and to ensure the ongoing protection our communities from harm.*
- *Work in partnership to plan, prepare and test our responses to major emergencies.*
- *Continue to draw upon our experience of multi-agency event planning to ensure that all events within Edinburgh are safe, successful and enjoyable, minimising disruption to the city and maximising public safety.*
- *Support and promote the reduction of harm from 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests.'*

### What We Do

- Our operational staff continue to gather and analyse local risk information and operational intelligence which is used in our preparations to resolve incidents. In the reporting period we have placed a specific focus on the Local Authority High Rise residential estate. SFRRS officers are engaging with Local Authority Housing and Regulatory Services staff in terms of the firefighting equipment/facilities provisions in each of the buildings. Specific areas of discussion include the upgrading of lifts and the standardisation of lift keys and firefighter switches as well as fire safety during the refurbishment work stages. In addition, we have agreed that officers will attend consultation meetings the Local Authority are arranging with tenants to offer support and reassurance. In addition to updating the operational intelligence held on each of the buildings this partnership approach is also being used to and arrange practical training exercises wherever possible.
- We conduct Post Incident debriefs to identify any lessons that can be learned from our preparedness and response to emergency events.
- We use Urgent Operational Intelligence Briefings to inform our operational staff of any safety critical information.
- We continue to be an active member of the Lothian and Borders Local Resilience Partnership activity.
- We share information with local authority partners and other key stakeholders (e.g. Police Scotland) to ensure emergency event risks are mitigated. This is extremely valuable given the current UK threat level and its implication for the SFRRS and our partners. In quarters 1 and 2 SFRRS was an active partner in the planning of events such as the Highland Show, the Edinburgh Festival and the Royal Military Tattoo.

## Domestic Fire Safety

Dwelling fires can have devastating effects on our community and the SFRS is committed to keeping people safe in their homes. We share information with partners to make sure that the right people get the right information they need, particularly those who are vulnerable due to age, isolation or addiction. The table below details the occurrence of accidental dwelling fires in quarters 1 and 2 per locality area over a 5-year period.

Accidental Dwellinghouse Fires	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
North East Locality	76	67	68	74	61
North West Locality	53	59	52	56	60
South East Locality	69	69	48	63	44
South West Locality	68	45	48	41	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>218</b>

Whilst we seek to reduce Dwelling Fires even further, it should be noted that the severity of fires is often restricted to item first ignited or room of origin.

### What We Do

- A primary activity related to improving the safety of our communities is delivering Home Safety Visits (HFSV). Evidence identifies that dwelling fires occur more frequently in those premises that are occupied by the more vulnerable members of our community such as the elderly and those with substance and alcohol dependencies. SFRS continue to develop Information Sharing Protocols with partners, including Social Work, Housing providers, Health etc. to target those most vulnerable within our communities, by seeking referrals. In the period 1<sup>st</sup> April-30<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- After any operational incident, if appropriate, operational crews will deliver educational input. Post Domestic Incident Response (PDIR) is an important engagement opportunity to deliver specific home safety advice to residents who have been at risk of a fire within the home. PDIR offers SFRS the opportunity to provide public reassurance to neighbouring properties and provide any fire safety advice they require. From this incident response, appropriate referrals can be made to our partners should vulnerable individuals be identified.

## Reducing Unintentional Injury and Harm

It is not uncommon for those at risk from fire to also be at risk from other injuries within the home, in particular from injuries arising from slips, trips and falls. Requests to the SFRS to provide assistance directly through a first responder role or to provide support to other agencies are increasing. Analysis of data indicates falls are a common cause of accidental deaths and injuries and account for a significant proportion of admissions to hospital. Those persons injured through falls may often be affected by other medical conditions such as dementia. The SFRS has a role to play in contributing to the protection of those at risk from injury and harm within the home.

Out with the domestic environment, the SFRS responds to a range of non-fire related emergencies. The most common incident of this type within Edinburgh is attendances at Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) which results in the majority of non-fire related injuries. Responding to RTCs is a statutory duty for the SFRS, however a collective approach is required amongst community planning partners to support risk reduction measures.

We said we would:

- *Utilise our Home Fire Safety Visit programme to assess for non-fire related risk and refer those deemed at risk from injury and harm to partners to provide additional support.*
- *Raise the awareness of fire and rescue service personnel to those factors that increase the risk of unintentional injury or harm*
- *Work in partnership to deliver targeted road safety programmes to young drivers.*
- *Focus resources where demand has been identified and deliver key safety messages.*

### What We Do

- SFRS frontline staff submitted 95 'Adult Protection' and 3 "Child Welfare" referrals to our partners within the Social Work Department in Quarters 1 and 2 to ensure appropriate support is delivered.
- SFRS are expanding the HFSV within the guidance set out in the Safer Communities Programme. This will see a further transition towards Home Safety Checks with fire crews submitting referrals for 'slips, trips and falls' and 'sensory impairment' in support of reducing unintentional harm where possible. It is envisaged that whilst keeping vulnerable residents safe in their homes, it will reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and ease the burden in the Health Sector.
- The coming months will see an increase in knowledge input to partners in Housing Associations to identify vulnerable tenants. SFRS officers will deliver hazard identification training to housing managers which will upskill them to identify persons at risk.
- SFRS will augment the learning outcomes of Road Safety delivered at the Risk Factory, The Young Drivers Event at the Corn Exchange each year and during Fireskills/ Employability and IGNITE youth engagement events. This will come in the form of offering tuition to young people on the hazards encountered on our roadways and educating them on safer driving and the consequences of losing concentration at the wheel.
- SFRS continues to work in collaboration with partners to support the local communities and assist other agencies in delivering services. The Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) pilot has been paused across Scotland with the outcomes being used to assess the ongoing SFRS Transformation Project in this regard. Through ongoing negotiations, it is hoped the

delivery of this service can be rolled out in the near future across all community fire stations across Edinburgh.

## Reducing Deliberate Fire Setting

Deliberate fire setting is a significant problem for the SFRS in the City of Edinburgh. In the main, deliberate fires are secondary fires categorised into either refuse, grassland or derelict building incidents. There is a close link between deliberate secondary fires and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

We said we would:

- *Identify those parts of Edinburgh`s communities affected by deliberate fire setting and sharing this information with our partners.*
- *Utilise our Young Firefighters, Fire Reach, Firesetters and school`s education programmes to raise awareness of the impact of fire related anti-social behaviour.*
- *Work with partners to develop joint strategies to reduce the risk posed by deliberate fire setting and to mitigate its impacts.*

### What We Do

- SFRS have developed positive relationships with locality Based Police Officers to ensure a more targeted approach in dealing with secondary fires and anti-social behaviour. SFRS Community Safety Advocates/Community Firefighters and Operational Firefighters, deliver an educational programme within schools to address any developing trends. The purpose of this is to deliver seasonal fire education with the focus on reducing fire related ASB and hoax calls. This will also reduce the financial impact on Local Authority Budgets and protects our built environment.
- Information sharing with partners and effective multi-agency partnership working is focussed on reducing deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour. This included initiatives aimed at preventing fires within derelict properties and fires involving refuse and wheelie-bins.
- Wilful fire raising where refuse/ grass fires are set remains a problem and is being addressed at Localities groups with partners. Guidance has been given to partners and cascaded to residents to be more vigilant and to give consideration when they place bins out for uplift.
- The Fireskills, Employability and IGNITE programmes continue to assist our young people in the City of Edinburgh (CoE) creating diversionary activities tailored to the reduction of fire related anti-social behaviour and developing life skills. SFRS is working with the Scottish Credits and Qualifications Framework to allow these types of courses to attract an educational award for young people which will be delivered nationally and City of Edinburgh are well advanced in the development and delivery of this programme. This will enhance the employability of our young people as well as providing self-confidence and a greater sense of achievement.
- There are growing issues of mental ill-health within the student population including isolation and stress. An individual`s resilience isn`t fixed however; It can be developed - through innovative pedagogies and students` social and living environment. The SFRS work with many partner agencies to deliver a range of courses to students from across the localities to help develop an individual`s resilience. Through the courses we aim to be positive role models and provide the young persons with reassurance and encouragement to help support their ability to rebound more quickly after a difficult event or problem in their life.

## Non-Domestic Fire Safety

Fires in Non-Domestic Property can have a detrimental effect on the built environment, local businesses, employment, the provision of critical services and our heritage. Evidence suggests that business premises affected by a serious fire experience a high failure rate.

We said we would:

- Undertake our fire safety audit programme in accordance with the SFRS Enforcement Framework.
- Engage with duty holders to promote responsible fire safety management of premises that come under the auspices of Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Work in partnership to ensure the appropriate provision of fire safety standards are incorporated in new premises under construction or premises undergoing material changes.
- Work in partnership with other enforcement agencies and organisations to support legislative compliance.

### What We Do

A Programmed Fire Safety Enforcement Audit is an audit programmed at the commencement of the fiscal year, selected from premises held within the Service's database, based on a risk assessment as defined in the Service's Enforcement Framework. The table below outlines the quarter 1 and 2 audits which have been completed and the type of premises which have been visited. Our Programmed Audits remain on schedule for completion in 2019/20.

Premises Type	North	East	West	South	Target for 2019/20	Progress to date
Hospital & Prisons	9	1	20	13	<b>43</b>	37 (86%)
Care Home	22	21	54	35	<b>132</b>	132 (100%)
House of multiple occupation (HMO) Tenement	46	41	17	62	<b>166</b>	109 (66%)
Hostels	3	0	9	0	<b>12</b>	25 (200%)
Hotels	54	10	13	29	<b>108</b>	22 (21%)
Other sleeping accommodation	11	4	0	11	<b>26</b>	18 (70%)
Further Education	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>	0
Public Building	7	1	1	4	<b>13</b>	1 (8%)
Licenced Premises	23	0	0	35	<b>58</b>	24 (42%)
Schools	1	0	0	6	<b>7</b>	30 (428%)*
Shops	3	0	0	1	<b>4</b>	6 (150%)
Other premises open to public	1	3	0	6	<b>10</b>	8 (80%)
Factories & Warehouses	0	0	1	1	<b>2</b>	1 (50%)
Offices	7	9	1	5	<b>22</b>	15 (68%)
Other Workplace	6	1	3	3	<b>13</b>	1 (8%)

We have eight fire safety enforcement officers (FSEO) who audit premises throughout the city. Premises are selected through a risk based approach, audited and the outcome is scored through a matrix where benchmarks are weighted in importance. This creates a Management Compliance Level (MCL) score, ranging from one to five:

- MCL 1 and 2 are given to premises where minor deficiencies have been identified
- MCL 3 results in SFRS working with duty holders on an action plan
- MCL 4 & 5 result in legislative action from SFRS.

Fire Safety Enforcement outcomes 2019/20 against 2018/19;

Management Compliance Level	Quarter 1 & 2 activity 2018/19	Quarter 1 & 2 activity 2019/20
1	226	272
2	70	142
3	15	32
4	1	0
5	1	0
Total	313	446

A Post Fire Audit would be undertaken following any fire within relevant premises, no matter the size of fire or outcome. The purpose is to educate the duty holders of their responsibilities and refresh the importance of fire safety within the organisation after a fire has occurred.

Post Fire Audits	2018/19	2019/20
Total	34	54

An Unscheduled Audit is an audit that can occur throughout the year. This type of audit would be undertaken because of the following: fire safety complaints, requests from partner agencies or joint initiatives with partners and the targeting of specific premises type in line with the Service's Enforcement Framework.

No Enforcement Notices have been served within the city during this reporting period. This is a positive picture as the duty holders across the area are largely in compliance with only recommendations being the main enforcement activities.

## Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (False Alarms)

False Alarms include calls to the Fire Service with good intent, malicious acts and Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). UFAS are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, when the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire emergency. The SFRS is committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce Unwanted Fire Alarm signals.

### We said we would:

- *Engage with premises owners/occupiers to identify the cause of every UFAS incident.*
- *Work with owners/occupiers to implement and support their management of fire alarm systems and the introduction of demand reduction plans.*
- *Identify premises which attract a significant operational response and re-assess the response required.*

### What We Do

SFRS have developed a UFAS Policy to ensure that persistent UFAS incidents within premises are addressed appropriately. Engagement with key holders is key to reducing SFRS attendance.

We have programmed engagement sessions with duty holders and alarm providers to discuss solutions to UFASs, with the most recent discussions taking place with CoE council and the school estate who account for a number of UFAS calls. SFRS have a robust UFAS Policy and analyse trends and engage appropriately with Duty Holders of relevant premises.

## Strategic Issues

In 2018 SFRS commenced a programme of transformation aimed at improving the safety and wellbeing of communities by making our resources work more effectively and efficiently.

The Service needs to transform because:

- Fires are reducing but new risks are emerging;
- Risks include terrorism, emergency medical response, ageing population, severe weather;
- We need to be trained and equipped to meet these risks;
- Our people and resources are no longer aligned to need;
- Current model limits ability to reduce risk through prevention and intervention activity;
- Current model limits ability to support other public services and reduce demand;
- The Retained (Part Time) Service needs strengthened to meet the needs of rural communities.

To progress this transformation programme a number of projects have been instigated with full engagement of employee representative bodies. As this work matures the Committee will be provided with full details, including consultation information, highlighting any impact on service delivery and/or resources within Edinburgh.

The commitment to transformation is reaffirmed in the new SFRS Strategic Plan which came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and which can be accessed at:

[https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1379168/draft\\_strategic\\_plan\\_2019\\_22\\_v2.0.pdf](https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1379168/draft_strategic_plan_2019_22_v2.0.pdf)