

## **Item: 3**

**Police and Fire Sub-committee: 21 November 2023.**

**Local Fire and Rescue Plan.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To update members regarding progress of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has a statutory role to prepare a local fire and rescue plan for local authority approval.

#### **2.2.**

That, following a review of the current Local Fire and Rescue Plan, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service aims to share the Plan, with key stakeholders, including the local authority, by the end of the calendar year.

#### **2.3.**

That the review, referred to at paragraph 2.2 above, will be used to help inform the options development process for service changes in the coming year.

#### **2.4.**

That Scottish Fire and Rescue Service anticipate that, once the options development process and full public consultation on the proposals have been completed, the local plan will be revised to take account of any operational changes.

#### **2.5.**

That, once the steps outline at paragraphs 2.2 to 2.4 above have been completed, the local fire and rescue plan will be presented to the Police and Fire Sub-committee for consideration.

## **3. Background**

### **3.1.**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was established as a single national organisation by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 ('the 2012 Act') to provide fire and rescue services across Scotland.

### **3.2.**

The 2012 Act also amended the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act') to take account of fire reform and further modernise and update the functions of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

### **3.3.**

Section 41J of the 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act) establishes a new statutory role for the Local Senior Officer, who will be designated by and accountable to the Chief Officer, for the purposes of carrying out the following delegated functions on behalf of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:

- Preparing a local fire and rescue plan under Section 41E of the 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act) (having regard to the Fire and Rescue Framework and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service strategic plan and consulting on a draft plan) for local authority approval and reviewing such a plan under section 41F or 41G of that Act (both inserted by the 2012 Act).
- Providing information and reports to the local authority as requested.
- Participation in community planning within the local authority area.
- Receiving feedback and recommendations from the local authority on the discharge of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service functions within the area.

## **4. Current Position**

### **4.1.**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, like all public bodies, is facing challenging financial and operational circumstances. In May 2022, the publication of the Scottish Government's Resource Spending Review indicated a flat cash budget for resource and capital spending for the period 2023/24 to 2026/27. Since publication, and the subsequent additional funding awarded by Scottish Government for 2023/24, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service has continued to review the funding available, and the changes required to achieve potential savings options.

## **4.2.**

A package of change proposals to address the financial challenges faced by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service this year has been developed. For 2023/24, this includes:

- The temporary withdrawal of ten appliances, none of which are in Orkney.
- A reduction of High Reach Appliances, none of which are in Orkney.
- The move to dual crewing for both fire and water rescue at Polmadie.
- The closure of the West Service Delivery Area Headquarters at Hamilton.
- A review of Corporate Services.

## **4.3.**

Despite these measures, further changes in coming years will be needed. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service plan to consult on proposals to make permanent changes next year and, therefore, do not feel at this time they can ask for the consideration of local priorities with more changes to follow.

## **4.4.**

In the meantime, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will complete a review of current Local Fire and Rescue Plans and aim to share these reports by the end of the year. This review will be used to help inform the options development process for service changes next year and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will be including key stakeholders, including local authorities, in this process.

## **4.5.**

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service anticipate that once the review is completed the options development process and a full public consultation on their proposals, the next steps will then be to revise the local plan and ensure the plan takes cognisance of any operational changes made.

## **5. Corporate Governance**

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and scrutiny and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

## **6. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Aspects**

### **7.1.**

Legal aspects are covered in respect of the Statute by this report at paragraph 3.3 above.

### **7.2.**

There are no legal implications arising as a direct result of this report.

## **8. Contact Officers**

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