
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

22 November 2021

Police Fire and Rescue Committee

Title: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Consultation on Strategic Plan 2019-2022

Purpose: To advise the Committee of the consultation request and the response proposed.

Recommendation: That the Committee notes the terms of the consultation request and approves that the draft response contained at Appendix 1 is submitted.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is carrying out a consultation on how it has performed against its current Strategic Plan 2019-22 and its stated outcomes and objectives.
- 1.2 The response to the consultation is due for submission by 25th November 2022. A draft response has been prepared for consideration by the Committee and is contained in Appendix 1. The Committee is asked to consider the draft response and approve for submission to SFRS.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is undertaking a Consultation on its performance against its Strategic Plan for 2019 – 2022. The Plan outlines its objectives to deliver a fire and rescue service that serves our communities and meet demand including new and emerging risks.
- 2.2 The consultation seeks views on how SFRS has performed against the outcomes and objectives contained in the Plan. The Plan contains a number of Outcomes: -
 - Outcome 1: Having a collaborative approach and targeted prevention and protection activities to improve community safety and wellbeing and support sustainable economic growth.
 - Outcome 2: Having a flexible operational model to provide an effective emergency response to meet diverse community risks
 - Outcome 3: Being a great place to work where people are safe, supported and empowered to deliver high performing innovative services

- Outcome 4: Being fully accountable, maximising public value by delivering a high quality and sustainable fire and rescue service

2.3 A draft response has been prepared to the consultation which Members are asked to consider. The draft response reflects on the positive working relationship that has been fostered between the Council and SFRS and offers some comment for future inclusion in the next SFRS Strategic Plan.

3. Proposals

3.1 That the Committee (i) notes the consultation request, (ii) considers and approves the draft consultation response contained at Appendix 1 and (iii) agrees to its submission to SFRS in response to the consultation.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

4.2 There are no Human Resources implications arising from this report.

Legal

4.3 There are no Legal implications arising from this report.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 SFRS will assess the outcomes of the consultation exercise for equality, diversity and socio-economic outcomes.

Environmental and Sustainability

4.5 There are no Environmental implications arising from this report.

Key Priorities

4.6 The response to the consultation contributes to the Council's priorities of developing and promoting Aspiring Communities in North Ayrshire with active and strong communities where residents and communities are safe.

Community Wealth Building

4.7 There are no Community Wealth Building benefits arising from this report.

5. Consultation

5.1 SFRS will consult on any actions they propose to take in response to the consultation responses received from members of the public and strategic partners.

Aileen Craig
Head of Service (Democratic)

For further information please contact **Aileen Craig, Head of Service (Democratic)**, on 01294 324125.

Background Papers
Appendix 1

**Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Consultation
Strategic Plan 2019-2022: Your Views
Response from North Ayrshire Council**

Background

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is undertaking a Consultation on its performance against its Strategic Plan for 2019 – 2022. The Plan outlines its objectives to deliver a fire and rescue service that serves our communities and meet demand including new and emerging risks.

Consultation Request

SFRS have asked for the Council's views on its performance on the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.

The Plan contains a number of Outcomes: -

- Outcome 1: Having a collaborative approach and targeted prevention and protection activities to improve community safety and wellbeing and support sustainable economic growth.
- Outcome 2: Having a flexible operational model to provide an effective emergency response to meet diverse community risks
- Outcome 3: Being a great place to work where people are safe, supported and empowered to deliver high performing innovative services
- Outcome 4: Being fully accountable, maximising public value by delivering a high quality and sustainable fire and rescue service

Response

North Ayrshire Council has an excellent partnership with its local Fire and Rescue Service which is approachable, proactive and responsive to need. The Council's Police, Fire and Rescue Committee receives regular informative updates and presentations on performance and initiatives. The Council is satisfied with the performance of the local SFRS on the Strategic Outcomes contained in the Strategic Plan.

The following additional comments are offered:

- The contribution of SFRS to Community Planning has been welcomed and should continue as a priority in any plan with resources being made available to deliver local outcomes and improvement plans.
- The preventative strategy should continue. It is a sensible approach to improving outcomes for communities and to protect people from harm. It is recognised that the work being done by SFRS in assisting to keep people safe and prevent them from coming to harm is a valuable contributor to public service delivery. Working in collaboration with the other emergency services in this regard has made good sense.

- The SFRS is a locally well-respected emergency service. SFRS should continue to engage with local communities to build confidence in the service and establish and foster relationships with a view to the prevention agenda and supporting communities.
- In terms of the objective of dealing with UFAS, it is noted that numbers are still high and that SFRS has recently put forward options for consultation on how these should be responded to. The Council has commented on those proposals. The Council would welcome proposals working towards reducing the frequency of such alarms rather than purely concentrating on response once they have been activated.
- Recognising the diversity of local areas and the specific needs of communities is vital. In North Ayrshire, this is being demonstrated where new response vehicles are being deployed to better meet the needs of the community and its environment.
- The contribution of SFRS as an employer in the local area makes a difference in the local economy and community as a whole and the continued availability and retention of quality local jobs should be a priority as a contributor to the area.
- The Council's involvement with SFRS people has been positive. The local commander and his team are dedicated to their roles and are excellent representatives for SFRS. Going forward, it is vital that the Service continues to invest in its people to ensure the maintenance of positive working relationships with strategic partners and communities and a well-trained workforce equipped to respond to emergencies.
- Governance and accountability form a key part of monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan to ensure that outcomes are met. In that regard, the regular and informative updates provided to the Council's Police Fire and Rescue Committee where the questions of Elected Members are comprehensively responded to have provided assurance that objectives are being met.
- A continued local approach in line with the principals of the Christie Commission should be maintained in the future Strategic Plan to ensure that local commanders are empowered to deliver services according to local needs and demands.
- There should be increased focus on sustainability and climate change in the next Strategic plan.

Conclusion

The Council welcomes further consultation on the content of the new Strategic Plan once that has been developed, building on the positive work that has been achieved to date. The Council, its partners and communities have benefited from the positive working relationship that has been fostered with the local commander and his team and looks forward to that continuing.

Aileen Craig
 Head of Service (Democratic)
 North Ayrshire Council