



**SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland



# ***SFRS Long-Term Vision***



# CONTENTS

FOREWORD	1
INTRODUCTION	3
HOW WE DEVELOPED OUR VISION	5
FUTURE CHANGES	7
WHY THE SFRS MUST KEEP EVOLVING	8
OUR VISION	9
OUR MISSION	9
OUR PURPOSE	10
OUR STRATEGIC INTENTIONS	11
OUR PRINCIPLES	13
OUR PRIORITIES	15
NEXT STEPS	16

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's long-term vision, our 10-year forward-look to what the Service will deliver for the people of Scotland.



**KIRSTY DARWENT**  
Chair, SFRS Board

## FOREWORD

If the last two years have taught us anything, it is that we can't predict or prepare for everything that may happen. But we can decide what sort of organisation we want to be and how we will meet new challenges when they arise.

As a result, this document sets out our strategic intentions and priorities for the future and everything we do will link back to these core elements of our Vision.

We are committed to making Scotland safer but we can't do this alone. To provide the best Service we can, we have to work with our staff, partners and communities. That's why we spent a full year engaging with our staff and stakeholders to develop this Vision.

What has been most encouraging throughout this process is finding out that we are all agreed – working in and with our communities to keep developing our Service is what matters most.

We want to thank everyone who has helped us to develop this Vision. Whether that was through staff workshops or our public consultation we have listened – and will keep listening – to what you have to tell us.

**As Chief Officer and Chair of SFRS, our commitment is that we will continue to build on these relationships and will do more to engage with our communities over the next decade.**

There's a lot to do and we are looking forward to working with you now and in the future.

**MARTIN BLUNDEN**  
Chief, SFRS



# INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) was established in April 2013. Since then we have built upon the work of the legacy Services from which we were formed. We are also proud to walk in the footsteps of all the Fire Service staff who have served Scotland over the last 200 years. As we look forward, we will maintain our values and traditions while ensuring they remain relevant to Scotland's future.

The vision for Scotland's public services, embodied in the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services (Christie Commission), is at the heart of the SFRS. We are dedicated to improving the quality of our Service. We want to keep improving people's lives and improving the safety and wellbeing of the communities we serve; focusing on the prevention of risk of harm and working in collaboration with our partners and communities. We are also fully committed to respecting people's opinions regarding how we design and deliver our services and to ensuring that their voice helps us shape what we do.

We are conscious that we launch our vision for the Service at a time when Scotland is emerging from the impacts of the worst pandemic for a century. In October 2021, the Scottish Government published its "COVID Recovery Strategy For a Fairer Future" which set out how Scotland will recover from the COVID pandemic.

As the full consequences of COVID-19 become clear we will offer our full support to Scotland's recovery strategy and to communities across Scotland. We are committed to working with our staff, partners and communities directly to help address the underlying social, health and economic challenges that the pandemic has exposed. We will ensure we play our full part in helping build resilient communities and sustainable and inclusive growth across Scotland as we recover from the pandemic. By working together, we can deliver major change to better support our communities.



357 FIRE STATIONS IN SCOTLAND



7,831 SFRS STAFF MEMBERS

1,631 VEHICLES IN OUR FLEET



# HOW WE DEVELOPED OUR VISION



When we set out to develop our long-term vision we were clear this needed to be done in partnership with our staff, our partners and the communities we serve.

We began this process by undertaking an extensive staff engagement process to help us draft an initial Vision document which we could share with partners, stakeholders and the public for their views and comments.

The first phase of staff engagement involved three online leadership events for senior management in September. We also undertook 15 independently facilitated workshops with 150 frontline staff to explore some of the emerging themes in more detail.

An electronic staff survey was established on the staff intranet (iHub) and promoted through staff briefings and a station engagement toolkit was developed to capture the comments of station-based staff.

The first draft vision document was then tested at a workshop with senior managers and a further three workshops with frontline staff.

A six-week document review public consultation was launched on 7 June 2021 and a stakeholder mapping exercise was undertaken to target key stakeholders as well as the wider public.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the consultation process was largely virtual, with a direct email to key stakeholders, an



online survey and community engagements and partner contacts undertaken by the Local Senior Officers (LSOs) and their teams. The consultation period formally concluded on 18 July.

Staff, stakeholders and partners across all platforms agreed that this Vision is the right one for SFRS. They also agreed that working together with our partners and communities to identify the services they need and to design local solutions is key to our future success.

**Furthermore, staff indicated that building on our strong partnerships and working together to achieve the Vision through continued engagement was essential. This is the fundamental building block of our Vision.**

We have also reviewed and reflected on all the comments we received from stakeholders and have incorporated these, where possible, into our Vision.

This Vision is not just the Service's Vision but it has been shaped and developed by everyone who has taken the time to share their views and feedback.



## FUTURE CHALLENGES

As we saw with the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot always predict what may happen in the future.

What we set out below is not a prediction of the future but our understanding of some factors that will shape Scotland's future and what that will mean for the SFRS.



Over the next decade Scotland will have a stronger focus on addressing the factors that improve people's wellbeing. The country will also be managing the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, plus the impact of people living with the long-term consequences of the virus. Also, a focus on addressing the social, health and economic conditions that lead to inequality will be a key feature in how all public services will be designed, directed and resourced.

At the same time the climate emergency will increase its impact on our weather patterns. Meeting the challenges of climate change to

ensure our communities are resilient and safe is something that we will play our part in.

There will be ongoing developments to ensure the resilience and safety of communities to safeguard the people who live there. We will continue to experience the threat of potential acts of terrorism, which in turn means there will need to be strong multi agency co-ordination and working to deal the threat as it evolves and changes over time. SFRS will be ready to play an appropriate role in this response while ensuring our staff are protected.

The development in digital and other technologies means new communities will be formed. These will not just be communities in the traditional sense that are formed by living in a common locality, but they will also be communities of interest and experience. All public services, including the SFRS, will need to adapt to deliver what people will increasingly expect of them. This means we will be innovative in our use of technology and how we design our services and will engage with communities to help us design those elements of service change.

The decade ahead presents profound but exciting challenges to Scotland. The onus on public services will be to adapt, thrive and prosper to help meet the challenges ahead. The reward for so doing will be a country and communities that thrive. The SFRS offers enormous potential in delivering a more prosperous and safe Scotland. We already add huge value to the communities we serve, but we can do more.

**By adapting to our context, meeting the changing needs of communities and engaging with staff, partners and communities we will help communities across Scotland reach their full potential.**

## WHY THE SFRS MUST KEEP EVOLVING

The SFRS must evolve, not for the sake of change, but because Scotland is changing. As a Service, it is our duty to respond to those new risks brought about by change. We will do this in new and innovative ways, whilst continuing to deliver our core services. Innovation in the design and delivery of our Service, in the technology and information we use, and how we work with our partners and communities will be the key to our success.

Notwithstanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, over the next decade we will see Scotland's population alter as more people live into older age. Many will live alone and have multiple frailties that will require public services to work together to support them in staying safe, healthy and free from harm.

We will continue to evolve, ensuring that we remain the Service that Scotland needs us to be; designed and built to face the challenges of the third decade of the 21st century and beyond.

## OUR VISION

We want to be regarded as among the best fire and rescue services in the world, focused on meeting the changing needs of our communities. As an industry leader, committed to achieving best practice standards, we will share our experiences, insights and learning with others about our achievements and how we got there.



At the core of any successful organisation is an understanding of why it exists and what it can deliver – its purpose.

## THE PURPOSE FOR THE SFRS IS:

“...to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.”

This means:



As well as responding to more traditional emergencies, we will further strengthen our work to prevent fires and other accidents occurring.



We will support the safety of Scottish businesses so that they may continue to grow and deliver a sustainable and inclusive economy for Scotland.



Our services will continue to reflect the changing needs of different localities and communities across Scotland.



We will help educate our children and young people in all issues relating to safety to help keep them free from harm.



We will work with partners to protect the most vulnerable members of society, help address inequalities within our communities and respond when people are in need.



We will work with our partners and with communities to drive out inefficiencies and improve what we do in making life better for the people of Scotland.



We will respond to the growing climate emergency.

In delivering against our purpose, we will continue to evolve as an organisation because that's what our communities and Scotland needs of us.

## OUR MISSION

As a confident, modern, efficient, outward looking, learning organisation, our mission remains clear. We are: 'Working Together, for a Safer Scotland' We will work together to secure the ongoing safety of our staff and those we serve throughout Scotland. As we deliver our mission, we will continue to evolve, adapt, grow and transition into whatever is required of us to secure the safety and wellbeing of our communities. We will never lose sight of what our mission means to us. It represents who we are and what we stand for.





## OUR STRATEGIC INTENTIONS

To realise the aspirations and ambitions of our Vision we have set four long-term strategic intentions. We have not ordered these by priority, each of them is of equal importance in achieving our long-term success. We will use our strategic intentions to determine our direction of travel and to continually steer the organisation over the next decade. They will guide our ability to adapt, to develop new capabilities and to exploit future opportunities as we realise our purpose and meet our mission. They will also allow us to correct any drift from our purpose that may occur from unexpected changes to our organisational environment.

We are a learning organisation committed to ensuring our staff are safe in carrying out their duties in all that they do. Staff are supported through better training and in terms of their own health and wellbeing. Staff are more satisfied and empowered in their work.

As we modernise our Service over time our communities are safer and more resilient. We are more reflective of our communities and engage them more in shaping how we work to help address the challenges Scotland faces.

To work in partnership with communities and others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and well-being of people throughout Scotland

The breadth and depth of what we contribute to Scotland's communities is deepened. We deliver our services to reflect the differences across communities. We are fully accountable to communities and stakeholders for delivering our ambition.

We are a more innovative and agile organisation, responding to how risks are changing across Scotland's communities and we work ever partners better with our in doing this. We seek to prevent harm where we can and respond effectively when incidents require it of us.



# OUR PRINCIPLES

Our Vision is also set in line with the values that define our Service. We will ensure our values remain at the heart of what we do as we deliver our Vision. We will adopt the following four operating principles:



## PRINCIPLE 1: PROGRESSIVE

We will continue to embrace innovation, change and improvement. We will secure best value in all that we do and will challenge ourselves to find new solutions to old problems. We will develop how we respond to emergency situations and work harder to prevent those situations arising where we can. We will be more efficient, ensuring our resources are redirected to priority areas within the Service and are aligned to current and existing risks. We will achieve more by working with our partners and communities in addressing the needs of our changing environment and in building a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient Scotland. We will achieve greater organisational sustainability by reducing our carbon consumption and our environmental impact.

As a public service we are committed to achieving fairness and equality for our staff and for our communities. We will enable more people to join our Retained and Volunteer service by allowing them to balance work and life commitments better. We are committed to working in more agile ways so that staff can build work patterns around their family and personal lives. We will use technology to build our organisational systems and processes to support these forms of agile working. We will connect our data and information to that of our partners to help build insight into how risks are changing, where inequality manifests itself in our communities and to predict operational demand in order to better prevent problems arising. We are committed to being open and transparent in how we perform and about what we achieve.



## PRINCIPLE 2: PEOPLE CENTRED

We will be people centred in all that we do. We will be a fair and equitable employer and we will enable our staff to help shape the progression of our vision. We will develop new roles and career opportunities focused on prevention and community resilience building. We will develop our services to meet our communities and staff's needs. We will invest in developing leaders who have the right skills to work in complex situations, work well with people and are innovative in seeking solutions to problems. When we change, we will work with interested parties to ensure that the changes are right for everyone. We will ensure we use the full talents of our staff and our communities to support our change journey.



## PRINCIPLE 3: INCLUSIVE

We will embrace inclusiveness and difference. We will reflect the characteristics and make-up of our communities and put their needs at the heart of what we do. We firmly believe an

organisation that is as diverse as the communities it serves is stronger. By embracing differing viewpoints, understandings and insights we will be even more welcoming, tolerant, aspirational and respectful of all. We will work more closely with our existing partners, sharing properties and assets, and will seek new partners to help us achieve our ambitions for Scotland as we know there is no single right answer in keeping communities safe and improving their wellbeing. We will ensure everyone who wants to offer their insight, opinion, guidance and support, as we realise our ambitions, will be able to do so.



## PRINCIPLE 4: CONNECTED

We recognise the importance of 'place' in shaping the lives of the people of Scotland. We will work with communities in developing our understanding of their needs and how we can contribute more to enriching the lives of those who live there. We will ensure our staff are better connected to each other in their work by exploiting technology while reducing our carbon consumption as they work together across the country. We will adopt new technologies to improve the safety of operational staff as they attend incidents.

# OUR PRIORITIES

To deliver our Vision we propose eight overarching priorities for the Service. By focusing on these priorities over time we will transition our organisation to what Scotland needs us to be. Over time as our Vision is realised we will revisit these priorities to ensure they remain relevant to our strategic

intentions, operating principles, and the needs of the communities we serve.

Our priorities are presented below to show how they connect most strongly to our operating principles. While each priority is listed against one principle, they serve all our principles and strategic intentions.



## PROGRESSIVE

Prevention will be at the heart of our service delivery model as it evolves to meet Scotland's changing needs

We will be innovative in our use of technology, data and information to change how we work



## INCLUSIVE

Partnership working will be at the core of how we work

We will value difference of views, experiences and backgrounds within and out with our organisation



## PEOPLE CENTRED

We will be an organisation that works in agile and smart ways to support our staff to achieve a positive work/life balance

We will invest in developing our leaders and train our staff to the highest standards



## CONNECTED

We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities

We will be a more environmentally sustainable organisation

# NEXT STEPS

On the basis of the feedback we have received, this Vision – and the key intents set out in it represent our future.

Our Vision reflects the feedback we have received through our engagement and consultation process and is our commitment to our staff and stakeholders. Our Vision marks a new phase in our change journey and it may take us a decade to fully realise.

It will shape what we do, how we work, how we engage with people and how we will evolve to meet the challenges facing Scotland and its diverse communities. It is the foundation for how we will build our Service for the future. But, for us, this is only the beginning.

We now need to set out how we are going to achieve the ambitions our staff, partners and communities have helped us to develop.

In line with the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland, we will develop a new Strategic Plan for 2022-25 which will outline the first stage in our journey towards realising our Vision.

We will do this in partnership with our staff, stakeholders and communities because by working together we really can make a difference to the wellbeing and safety of the people of Scotland.





[www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)