



**Scottish Fire and Rescue Service**

# **Strategic Plan 2022-2025**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## We are delighted to introduce the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Strategic Plan 2022-2025

As we approach our 10th anniversary in 2023, this is our fourth Strategic Plan and the first one that aligns to our [Long-Term Vision](#) for the Service which we published in 2021. In our Vision we set out our ambitions to be a progressive organisation, centred around people's needs, inclusive of all and better connected to our communities. This Plan marks the next steps towards realising that Vision. It also builds on our organisational [Values](#), demonstrates our commitment to further modernising the Service by doing more for our communities and changing how we work. It further strengthens our approach to prevention while maintaining an excellent emergency response and addressing the repair and replacement challenges within our estate.

This Plan will deliver against the strategic priorities set out for the Service by the Scottish Government in the [Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022](#). It comes at an important time for Scotland as we recover and learn lessons from COVID-19. In response to the pandemic and to help Scotland recover from its impacts, the Scottish Government has committed to:

- Developing a progressive, wellbeing economy for Scotland
- Building public services on a person-centred basis
- Addressing issues of systemic social and economic inequality
- Strengthening partnership working across public services

As a Service committed to the Christie reform principles, we will play our part in achieving these wider ambitions for Scotland. In producing this plan, we have ensured that our actions will support these priorities for Scotland as we work to improve the safety and wellbeing of our communities.

Although we pride ourselves on our ability to plan our services for a future Scotland, the pandemic has shown it is impossible to fully predict the future. As such, we have set out what we need to achieve over the next three years within this Plan. We also highlight some of the challenges we are faced with and the barriers we will need to overcome to achieve more for Scotland. We must address the problems of an ageing estate and operating systems that need upgraded. We also need to maintain an extensive fleet of vehicles and equipment that supports what we do, whilst taking steps to reduce our carbon consumption. We will have to achieve this by working more flexibly across the whole country. But to do so, we will require significant investment and sustained commitment over the next three years and beyond.

Finally, the commitments within this Plan are only possible because of the excellent work of all our people. They are truly inspirational and we would like to thank them all for everything they do for each other and the people of Scotland. We would also like to thank our partners and communities who we proudly serve and who support us in what we do.

# 2. WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-25?

The SFRS was established in April 2013. Since then we have produced strategic plans every three years to detail the activities we undertake to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of Scotland's communities, whilst keeping our firefighters safe.

This Strategic Plan outlines the high-level outcomes through which we will continually work towards our overall purpose, as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022: **'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.'**

[The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022](#) also sets for us seven strategic priorities and we have a statutory duty to have regard to these when developing our Strategic Plan:

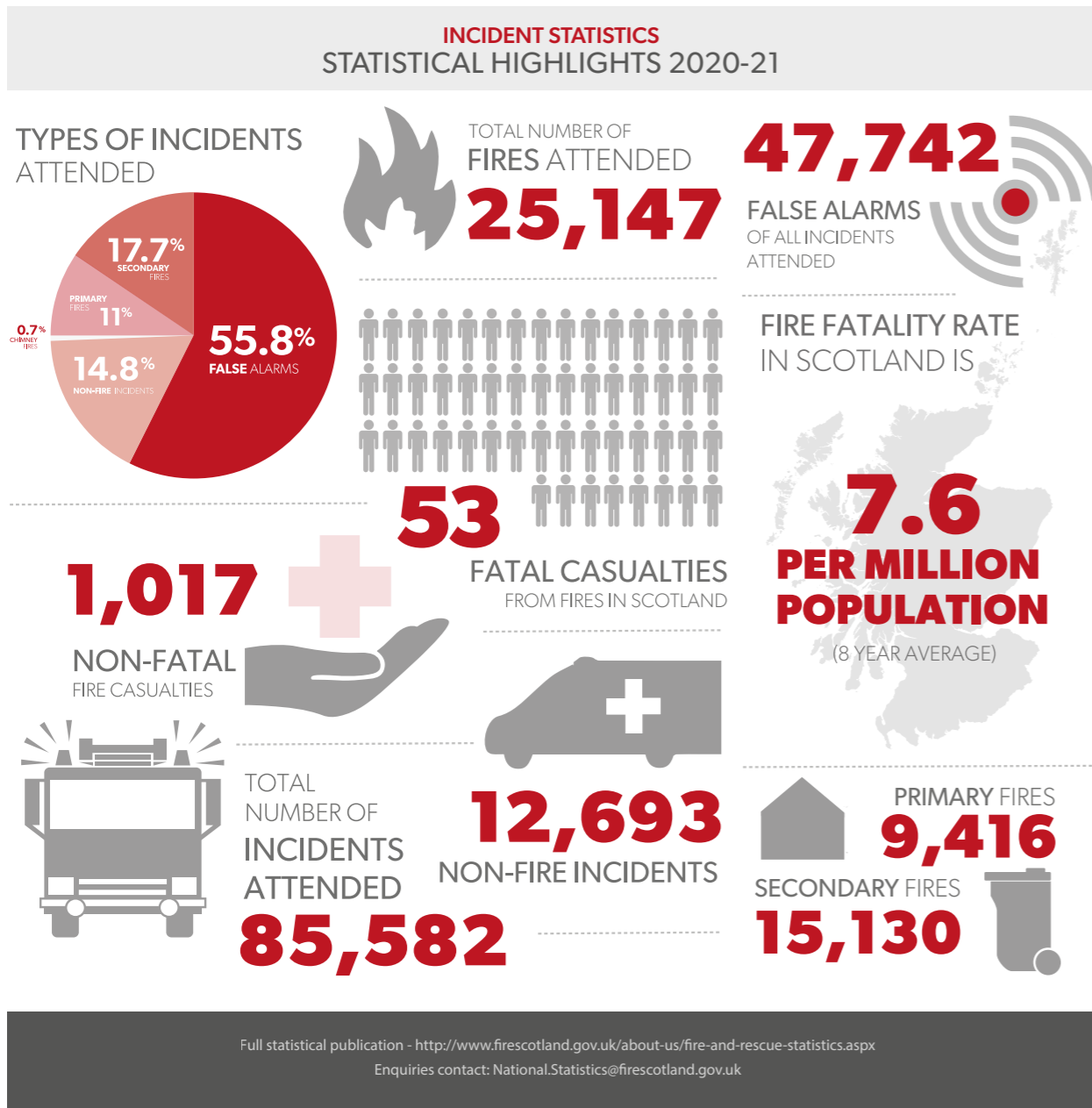
- Prevention and Protection
- Response
- Innovation and Modernisation
- Climate Change
- Effective Governance and Performance
- Partnership
- People

### SFRS Long-Term Vision

As well as considering the Fire Framework, this Strategic Plan supports the achievement of our [SFRS Long-Term Vision](#). Our Vision is an aspirational document which was shaped by our staff and stakeholders. It sets out our future direction and outlines where we want to be in ten years' time. This Plan outlines the next stage in that journey.

Our Plan has been developed with these important documents in mind, with our seven Outcomes complementing the strategic priorities of the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland. We have developed this Plan in consultation with our people, a range of our partners across the country and the people of Scotland.

### 3. HOW WE HELPED TO KEEP SCOTLAND SAFE DURING 2020/21



### 4. OUR SERVICE, OUR AMBITIONS FOR SCOTLAND'S COMMUNITIES

We are the fourth largest fire and rescue service in the world. Our key role will always be to respond to fires and other emergency incidents but we do much more than that. In communities across Scotland, you'll find us:



We firmly believe that the best way to deal with any type of emergency is to try and stop it from happening in the first place. With a key focus on prevention, particularly in support of the most vulnerable members of society, we work with our partners across the country to deliver: crucial fire safety campaigns; prevention interventions; and work on a wide range of public safety initiatives that keep people and businesses safe. Because of this and because our firefighters, both wholtime and on call, are so valued within their communities, we have an ambition to develop our offer to Scotland. As we develop this offer we must ensure

that the facilities and equipment we use are of the highest standard. They need to be modern, purpose designed for the 21st century and safe for our people. This will help us retain those who currently work for us while attracting new people to help us become a more diverse organisation that reflects the communities of modern Scotland.

We will keep improving people's lives and the safety and wellbeing of the communities we serve; by reducing the risk from harm and working in collaboration with our partners and communities.

## 5. OUR OPERATING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS

The delivery of this Plan will be influenced by the following challenges we face within our operating environment and how we will work to resolve them.

### Recovering and learning from COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, we adapted swiftly alongside our partners to provide life-saving and innovative services for our communities. The impacts of the pandemic are not over and will have a lasting effect on us, communities and businesses over the years ahead. It is imperative that we put key lessons we have learned from the pandemic into place to help us, and Scotland, fully recover.

### Flexibility

Being a more flexible organisation was key to how we responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will maintain our agile and flexible approach to deliver what is required of us by our communities. This means avoiding a "one size fits all" mentality and approach so that we can respond to differing community needs appropriately.

### Service Modernisation

We will develop our offer to communities as an emergency service based on a better understanding of changing risk and reshape the use of our resources and service activities. However, achieving more to support and safeguard our communities within existing resources will be our biggest challenge.

### Budgeting Responsibly

Over the next three years we will face significant budgetary pressures in both our resource and capital budgets. We will be faced with high levels of inflation in the goods and services we need to purchase to deliver our services. We are likely to see challenges emerging for our people around the increased cost of living and the pressures this places on them and their households. We also face a significant and growing investment need in our estate which requires ongoing decarbonisation. Our buildings are ageing and many require substantial upgrading or replacement. Failure to invest in our estate will add further pressure to our resource budget as we increasingly spend more money to overcome the repair costs that come from an ageing set of buildings. We will

always balance our budget; we are required to do so by law. However, given these pressures we will need to make hard choices on timing and financial capacity as we modernise the Service whilst maintaining current financial sustainability and budgetary control.

### Climate Emergency

The impacts of climate change will increase over time. We will have to respond to more weather-related incidents which will increase in intensity, impact and frequency and continue to ensure our firefighters are properly trained, equipped and supported in this.

### Demographic Change

People are living longer and care will increasingly shift from institutional settings towards home-based care. This change will generate new demands as Scotland seeks to support our population to age well in safe and resilient communities, while we work to reduce the risk of fire and other forms of unintentional harm within homes. We will continue our crucial work with communities and our partners to prevent such harm from happening and develop our service offer in supporting the vulnerable members of Scotland's communities.

### Place

We are a national service, delivered locally. We are committed to understanding the changing risks across the country and meeting community needs in ways that work best for them. We will support the wider public service reform agenda of adopting a place-based approach to how public services are designed and delivered. This will shape how we work to ensure that our communities are safer, stronger and more resilient.

### Resilience

We play an important role helping communities become more resilient. Whether in safeguarding people and communities against the impacts of a pandemic, the effects of adverse weather events, dealing with the threat of terrorism and much more. There remains a vital need and a statutory duty for us to work with our communities and emergency service partners to prepare better to meet these threats as they evolve over time.

### People

Ensuring the safety of our firefighters and ensuring the wellbeing of communities has always been at the heart of how we operate. This approach of putting people first remains at our core. We will continue to place a strong focus on meeting people's needs as we change how we work.

### Engagement and Empowerment

To make good decisions you need to engage people in the decision-making process and empower them to make appropriate choices for themselves. We are committed to working this way, both with our own people and with our communities. This will help us

arrive at better decisions which will make us a stronger and more successful organisation.

### Managing Change

We have and will continue to run large change projects across the Service. Projects can range from introducing new technology systems, undertaking large scale building projects, working with suppliers to develop new types of emergency response vehicles, to changing the ways we work. Throughout the duration of this Plan we will further improve how we manage projects to ensure their effective and efficient delivery.

As we proceed over the next three years we will continually revisit our assumptions about our operating environment and how any changes may impact on how we will work. The detail in the following sections outlines what we will achieve over the lifetime of this Plan. How we will do so will be set out, scrutinised and monitored through both our Annual Operating Plan and Change Plan by our Board and the wider public as we deliver on this Plan's ambitions.

## 6. OUR OUTCOMES

### OUTCOME ONE:

Community safety and wellbeing improves as we deploy targeted initiatives to prevent emergencies and harm.

#### WHAT WE WILL DO

We firmly believe that preventing problems from arising is better than dealing with them when they occur. Our approach to prevention helps people, communities and the economy stay safe and enables us to support work addressing wider inequalities. As we did during the pandemic, we will continue to share data appropriately with our partners to protect the vulnerable in our communities. To support Scotland's economy we will continue to enforce and provide advice around fire safety legislation to business owners in shops, offices, workshops and factories. We will further expand our prevention work to Scottish households and develop our prevention approaches to influence people's behaviours to help keep themselves safe and improve their wellbeing. We will build on the work with our partners to target education and safety initiatives to those who need it most, including the young and the vulnerable. We will develop our home fire safety visit programme to incorporate wider health and social care considerations and develop a coordinated approach to reducing unintentional harm throughout Scotland.

#### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 our prevention work will help individuals, communities, organisations and businesses feel more confident regarding safety within their homes, premises and localities. We will achieve this by:

- Refocusing our preventative activities to address issues of social, economic and health inequalities.
- Leading initiatives with our partners to appropriately share data and information.
- Leading initiatives to reduce unintentional harm in our communities.
- Working with communities, partners and stakeholders to produce and disseminate safety advice and information effectively.
- Improving community safety and wellbeing by working to encourage sustained behavioural change within households.
- Supporting business owners to protect Scotland's non-domestic buildings and premises.

#### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- 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.
- Partnership working will be at the core of how we work.
- We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities.
- We will be a more environmentally sustainable organisation.

#### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Fire Safety Enforcement (Protection) Framework for Scotland 2021
- Community Safety Engagement Planning and Evaluation Policy and Procedure
- Communications and Engagement Strategy

### OUTCOME TWO:

Communities are safer and more resilient as we respond effectively to changing risks.

#### WHAT WE WILL DO

We will apply the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to how we operate. We will continue our work to understand the changing risks within our communities and strategically decide how best to locate our operational resources based on where the greatest risks lie. We will deliver on the commitments made in our Operational Strategy, ensuring we have the right resources in the right places at the right times and further improve our on call service. We will have the best systems to direct our firefighting activities effectively and continue to ensure all our people have the right skills, training and equipment. We will continue to plan and respond with other emergency services to improve firefighter and public safety.

#### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 our effective emergency response will ensure communities remain safe. We will achieve this by:

- Building upon our knowledge of and responding to the changing risks and inequalities faced by our communities.
- Applying the lessons we have learned from COVID-19 to drive sustainable improvement in how we work.
- Training effectively and efficiently as a Service and with our partners to improve community safety.
- Providing the right technology and equipment to keep firefighters safe.
- Improving how we manage calls from the public and deploy our resources to emergency incidents.
- More efficiently responding to false fire alarm calls and improving road safety by reducing the number of blue light journeys we make to them.

#### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- 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.
- Partnership working will be at the core of how we work.
- We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities.

#### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- COVID-19 Recovery Plan
- Operational Strategy 2022-2032
- Asset Management Strategy 2019-2029
- Community Asset Register

## OUTCOME THREE:

We value and demonstrate innovation across all areas of our work.

### WHAT WE WILL DO

We will continue to embed innovation into how we work and operate. As we did throughout the pandemic we will work with others to seek innovative opportunities to drive change and improvement. We will further use our talent, partnerships and resources to develop and improve our systems, processes and performance. We will develop our first Innovation and Improvement Strategy which will set out how, as one of the largest fire and rescue services in the world, we will encourage and drive innovation across all areas of our work and help us make the best use of our resources, adapt to changing risks and drive good practice.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will embrace innovative approaches to how we operate. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting and embedding a culture of innovation in the Service to develop new ways of thinking and working.
- Delivering new opportunities, partnerships and collaborations to improve both public and our peoples' safety and wellbeing.
- Developing and deploying new digital and other technologies to change how we work and to keep firefighters safe.
- Improving inter-departmental working and knowledge sharing across the Service.
- Implementing a new approach to undertaking research and development.
- Developing further innovative approaches to modernising our estate.

### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- We will be innovative in our use of technology, data and information to change how we work.
- Partnership working will be at the core of how we work.
- We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities.

### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Innovation and Improvement Strategy
- Business Intelligence Strategy 2021-2024
- Digital Strategy
- Operational Strategy 2022-2023

## OUTCOME FOUR:

We respond to the impacts of climate change in Scotland and reduce our carbon emissions.

### WHAT WE WILL DO

We will further develop the resources needed to tackle the impacts of climate change and we will ensure that these are strategically located across the country. Our firefighters will remain fully trained and equipped to support communities in meeting extreme weather events. We will also make use of other local resources that are available to bolster our response during prolonged or widespread incidents. We will continue to work to reduce our own organisational impact on the environment by changing how we work, how we consume and manage energy and how we behave as we adapt to climate change. Reducing our carbon emissions is the first step in this journey. By 2045 we will become a carbon neutral organisation.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will reduce our carbon emissions and continue to support our communities to tackle climate change. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring our people continue to plan, are trained for and equipped to respond to climate change incidents.
- Working with partners to prevent fires, thereby reducing carbon released into the atmosphere.
- Strategically placing specialist resources in areas where there is a greater risk of flooding.
- Reducing our carbon consumption by investing in renewable technologies and reducing energy waste across the Service.
- Investing further in the greening of our fleet by acquiring zero emission vehicles where appropriate.
- Supporting staff to adopt changes and behaviour to support more environmentally friendly working practices.

### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- We will be innovative in our use of technology, data and information to change how we work.
- Partnership working will be at the core of how we work.
- We will be a more environmentally sustainable organisation.

### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Carbon Management Plan 2020-2025
- Climate Change Response Plan 2045
- Energy and Carbon Strategy 2020-2030
- Wildfire Strategy
- Operational Strategy 2022-2032

## OUTCOME FIVE:

We are a thriving organisation, use our resources responsibly and provide value for money to the public.

### WHAT WE WILL DO

As a progressive organisation our Board will continue to provide robust scrutiny whilst governing responsibly and transparently. We will continue to collect and publish the right data to show how well we are performing, making this information available to the public in ways that are accessible and easy to understand. We will continue to manage our finances, physical and digital infrastructure, vehicles, equipment and supporting infrastructure responsibly and maintain them to the very best of our ability. In addition, as an emergency service and an organisation that is always learning and looking to improve, we will continue to focus on the effective management of risk, and the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and members of the public.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will continue to demonstrate how effective we are at managing and sharing our resources, and performing against our objectives and obligations. We will achieve this by:

- Remaining open and transparent in how we make decisions.
- Improving levels of Service performance whilst providing value for money to the public.
- Improving the use of data and business intelligence to support decision making.
- Proactively engaging with and providing more accessible information on what we do for the public and our stakeholders.
- Managing and maintaining our buildings, vehicles and wider infrastructure as well as we can.
- Managing further major change projects and organisational risks effectively and efficiently.

### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- We will be innovative in our use of technology, data and information to change how we work.
- We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities.
- We will be a more environmentally sustainable organisation.

### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Asset Management Strategy 2019-2029
- Long Term Financial Strategy 2019-2029 (revised 2022/2023)
- Medium Term Finance Model 2023 - 2026
- Procurement Strategy 2021-2024
- Governance and Accountability Framework
- Carbon Management Plan 2020-2025
- Climate Change Response Plan 2045
- Energy and Carbon Strategy 2020-2030
- Communications and Engagement Strategy

## OUTCOME SIX:

The experience of those who work for SFRS improves as we are the best employer we can be.

### WHAT WE WILL DO

We will be the best employer we can be. As an aspirational employer, we will invest to attract and retain the best people to deliver our services to the public. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we had to work in more flexible and agile ways. Over the next three years we will embed those changes in how we work and use technology to make day to day tasks easier for our people. We will continue to improve our training to enable our people to develop and maintain their competencies and skills. We will improve our recruitment processes and make our roles more attractive to all members of our communities and develop our approach to youth engagement and employment further. We will continue to nurture an inclusive culture that values and welcomes everybody to be themselves at work. We will provide our people with the dignified work facilities that they deserve and we will work with our representative bodies to champion fairness, equality, partnership, engagement and respect for all. We will continue to be a Fair Work Employer, paying the Living Wage for all of our staff.

### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will be an employer that demonstrates our commitment to our people. We will achieve this by:

- Continuing to work in partnership with our representative bodies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the public and our people.
- Developing and deploying new and more agile ways of working to protect the safety, wellbeing, physical and mental health of our people.
- Providing the best training and development opportunities for all our people to ensure they have the right mix of knowledge and skills.
- Further promoting diversity and expanding our youth engagement and employment programmes.
- Continuing to make working for SFRS more fulfilling and ensuring all our people can have their say regarding how we work.
- Promoting a culture that values inclusion, promotes fairness, equality and respect for all while providing dignified work facilities for our people.

### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

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

### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Mental Health Strategy 2020-2030
- Agile Working Framework
- Communications and Engagement Strategy
- Positive Action Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023
- Training Strategy 2020-2025
- Resourcing Plan 2021-2026

## 7. TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

### OUTCOME SEVEN:

Community safety and wellbeing improves as we work effectively with our partners.

#### WHAT WE WILL DO

Partnership working is at our core. The difference it made to our operations throughout the pandemic was key to helping communities through this challenging time. We will continue to work closely with our partners, including with other fire and rescue services throughout the UK and internationally, to improve firefighter safety and the wellbeing of individuals and communities. We will remain fully committed to Community Planning, and work with partners including Police Scotland, the Scottish Ambulance Service, Local Authorities, Health Boards, the Third Sector and Community Groups throughout Scotland. Partnership working is vital to ensure we perform at our best in all that we do. We will work more closely with our communities to understand their changing needs and include them in the design, development and prioritisation of our services.

#### WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN THREE YEARS

By 2025 we will be recognised as a reliable and valued partner, delivering an effective emergency service and a wide range of place based initiatives with partners across Scotland and further afield. We will achieve this by:

- Continuing our commitment to Community Planning and partnership working across all localities in Scotland.
- Working with our partners to further safeguard the young and our vulnerable adults.
- Working with our partners to address common service demand challenges.
- Sharing more of our premises with partners and seeking efficiencies where we can through collaborative working.
- Engaging more with communities and partners when designing, developing and delivering services.
- Being positively valued by our partners and communities in all that we do.

#### SUPPORTING OUR LONG-TERM VISION PRIORITIES

- Partnership working will be at the core of how we work.
- We will be innovative in our use of technology, data and information to change how we work.
- We will be driven by a deeper understanding of the needs of our communities.
- We will be a more environmentally sustainable organisation.

#### EXISTING SFRS STRATEGIES/PLANS THAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Business Intelligence Strategy 2021-2024
- Communications and Engagement Strategy

This draft Strategic Plan 2022-2025 sets out what our broad ambitions will be over the next three years. Your views are important to us and you are invited to tell us what you think of our approach.

The formal consultation for this draft Strategic Plan opened on **Monday 9 May 2022 and will run until Sunday 10 July 2022**. To ensure we review and manage all responses consistently please feedback to us using our online survey. This can be accessed at [firescotland.citizenspace.com](https://firescotland.citizenspace.com). After the consultation is closed we will publish the results.

If you cannot access our online survey, or if you would like more information about the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service you can:

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Visit our website: [www.firescotland.gov.uk](https://www.firescotland.gov.uk)



## Acknowledgements

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service would like to thank the many people of Scotland and our own staff members who contributed their time, knowledge and experiences to help us develop this document.



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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

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