

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing & Infrastructure Committee
DATE	24 January 2017
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan Review

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report brings before the Committee a review of the current Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Aberdeen City.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- i. provides feedback to the Local Senior Officer on this review

and

- ii. note the intention to extend the current Local Fire and Rescue Plan for a further 12 months

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications for the Council to this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The discharging of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the Act is of direct relevance to the delivery of the Council's responsibilities in relation to Community Planning, the Single Outcome Agreement and the Business Plan.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The latest Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2014-17 was approved at a meeting of the Full Council on 14th May 2014.

This local plan is a statutory requirement under the auspices of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and sets out the fire and rescue priorities from 2014-17.

The priorities have a significant focus on reducing risk in local communities by conducting preventative and protection activities with a strong link to local partnership working.

Under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 there is no statutory requirement to conduct an annual review of Local Fire and Rescue Plans.

However, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has recently published its latest Strategic Plan 2016-19 and is therefore felt appropriate that a review of our local plan is carried out.

In addition, nearly three years have elapsed since the publication of this plan and, combined with a previous review in May 2015, it will ensure the current priorities remain relevant and provide opportunities to identify any emerging issues.

The current Local Plan outlines 6 key priorities for the SFRS. These are:

- Local Risk Management and Preparedness
- Reduction in Accidental Dwelling Fires
- Reduction in Fire Casualties and Fatalities
- Reduction in Deliberate Fires
- Reduction in Non-Domestic and Secondary Fires
- Reduction of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Summary of Review

Over the past 9 months we have continued to deliver a longer-term reduction in the fire risk profile for Aberdeen.

Whilst we welcome this positive direction it has been noted that the rate at which fires have been reducing can vary across differing incident types (We would highlight that in some categories of fires reported we currently are operating at extremely low baseline levels).

Some emerging information also seems to suggest that when fires are occurring, particularly within dwelling houses, the impact and severity of such fires appear to be lessening.

This does seem to suggest that enhanced understanding of the risk of fire in the home coupled with increased ownership of working smoke alarms may be positively contributing in this area.

The current plan focuses on reducing the risk of specific incident types and over the last 9 months there have been no emerging trends in other types of incidents that we believe required wider intervention.

We continue to place a premium on the value of local partnership work most notably within the Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership.

Over the last year we have continued to develop local targeted initiatives to achieve improved outcomes in reducing the risk of harm.

This has included innovative approaches to partnership working such as seconded placements of external partners within our internal local community safety teams.

We have also maintained our operational capability and have ensured that our firefighters are able to apply all procedures and processes to ensure a safe and successful outcome at operational incidents.

Over the last 9 months this has included preparation and initial training for the introduction of new specialist skills, such as Water & Rope Rescue, into Aberdeen City.

This work to deliver enhanced rescue capability is on schedule with a projected completion date of all new skills by 2018.

Influencing Factors

This review also considered the following wider factors:

- The Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

We have contributed and played a full part within local Community Planning on the development of the LOIP.

This work is well advanced with a projected publication around October 2017.

We will seek to align the next version of our local FRS plan to identify opportunities to contribute to the wider well-being of local communities in Aberdeen.

- The SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-19

Following extensive engagement and consultation the SFRS has recently published its new Strategic Plan.

The plan articulates our priorities over the next three years with a key aim of transforming the wider role the Fire Service plays in delivering improved outcomes.

This presents an opportunity for our next local plan to reflect our own national priorities whilst retaining a local focus relevant to the risk profile in Aberdeen.

It does therefore suggest it is sensible not to make any amendments to the Local Plan for a further 12 months and allow time for the LOIP and the planned three Locality Plans to be fully implemented.

This approach has the added advantage of allowing time for the SFRS to conduct robust local engagement and consultation on the next version of the Local Plan with all our internal and external partners.

Conclusions

It has been concluded that the current Aberdeen City Fire and Rescue Plan 2014-17 continues to currently focus our priorities within areas that have the potential to deliver a positive impact to local communities.

It retains a sufficient scope and range of intended actions that allows the Service to utilise local, regional and national resources as necessary to seek to achieve improved outcomes.

Whilst recent performance has been reasonably good we are mindful that this can change and remain vigilant to increased levels of fire risk.

We therefore intend to retain the current six priority outcomes and extend the local plan for a further 12 months to April 2018.

6. IMPACT

As noted above, the subject matter of this report is relevant to the Council's work in relation to Community Planning, the Single Outcome Agreement and the delivery of the Business Plan.

The subject matter of the report will be of interest to the public.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

NA

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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