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for a safer Scotland**



**SCOTTISH  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

# LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN FOR ABERDEEN CITY 2018



**ABERDEEN  
CITY COUNCIL**

## Contents

Introduction.....	3
National Context.....	5
Local Context.....	6
Local Priorities.....	10
Priority-Domestic Safety and Wellbeing.....	10
Priority-Deliberate Fire Setting.....	11
Priority-Non Domestic Fire Safety.....	12
Priority-Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.....	13
Priority-Emergency Response and Resilience.....	14
Performance and Scrutiny.....	15
Review.....	15
Contact or follow us.....	16

## Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Aberdeen City. The plan takes forward the SFRS's strategic vision, as defined within the SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-19 and that of Aberdeen City's Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) "Aberdeen a place where all people can prosper"

The plan sets out the local priorities, actions and outcomes for the SFRS to deliver within Aberdeen from 2018 onward.

One of the key aims of The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 is to strengthen the connection between the SFRS and local communities through formal relationships thus providing greater opportunities for locally elected members to become involved and allowing improved integration with community planning partnerships.

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 requires local plans to contain:

- Priorities and objectives for SFRS in connection with the carrying out duties in the local authority's area of SFRS's functions
- The reasons for selecting each of those priorities and objectives
- How SFRS proposes to deliver those priorities and objectives
- In so far as is reasonably practicable, outcomes by reference to which delivery of those priorities and objectives can be measured
- How those priorities and objectives are expected to contribute to the delivery of any other relevant local outcomes which are identified by community planning
- Such other matters relating to the carrying out of SFRS's functions in the local authority's area as SFRS thinks fit.

Partnership and engagement are central to this relationship, as is local democratic scrutiny and as such the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan is approved and scrutinised via the Council's committee and governance structure.

The main purpose of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on **prevention, protection and response** in order to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.

Local multi-agency partnerships in Aberdeen have made significant progress in achieving improved outcomes and the introduction of a single fire and rescue

service has enhanced opportunities to contribute further in expanding from reactive emergency response to the positive outcomes of prevention and protection.

A key aim is for us to work together with communities and target our resources to deliver where the need is greatest. We will invest in preventing the problems of the future through a strong commitment to early intervention with a clear focus on “People and Place”.

Developed with consideration of the Community Planning Aberdeen LOIP, the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan sets out local solutions to local issues, linking to our national performance management framework and demonstrating how we contribute to national priorities and key performance targets.

The SFRS will continue to use data analysis techniques to identify the local risk profile and to ensure resources are allocated to the point of need. While considering the strategic priorities of the SFRS we will develop local action plans to mitigate risk and ensure equitable access to Fire and Rescue resources.

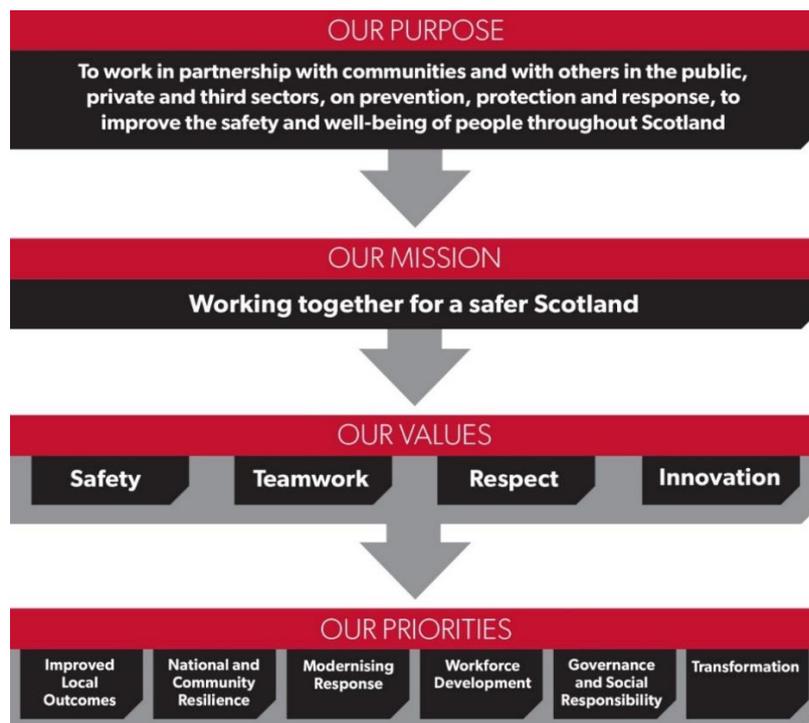
Through on-going involvement with the Local Community Planning groups in Aberdeen we will continue to develop our understanding of local needs and proactively seek out consultation opportunities with all sections of the community. Using this approach we will ensure that the service we deliver is driven by consultation, in line with public expectations and helps to build strong, safe and resilient communities.

Bruce Farquharson  
Local Senior Officer

## National Context

Scottish Ministers set out their specific expectations for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016. This provides the outline we should follow to ensure our resources and activities are aligned with the Scottish Government's Purpose and national outcomes.

Our Strategic Plan 2016-19 has been designed to meet these national expectations. Set against a complex and evolving backdrop our Strategic Plan encapsulates our mission, values and strategic priorities.



These have been shaped with due regard to the challenges we face and to what we need to achieve to be a highly effective, sustainable public service. Operating within a climate of significant financial uncertainty and public service reform means we need to transform how we operate. This will particularly include how we prepare for and respond to changing societal needs, the impact of climate change and the threat of terrorism.

Strong leadership, supported by sound governance and management arrangements are at the very core of our foundations. These arrangements will direct and provide assurance that we comply with our statutory responsibilities. In addition, they will provide Local Senior Officers with supporting mechanisms to deliver services specifically tailored to local needs.

## Local Context

The Aberdeen City area consists of 13 council wards. The City has a sizable and diverse community. In June 2016 the population of Aberdeen City was estimated to be 229,840 which equates to 4.2% of Scotland's total population. The City's population is projected to increase to around 255,400 by the year 2030. Demographical projections identify that the number of people aged 65 and above will increase by around 30% during this period while the number of people of working age or younger will increase by a much lower percentage.

An increasing and ageing population provides unique challenges in delivering services, additional housing and the resulting demand in community facilities. The fire and rescue service locally has identified this as a key priority in focusing on those most vulnerable or at risk individuals within Aberdeen communities and will target resources where they are most needed. Trends will be closely monitored to enable early identification of any potential adverse consequences in relation to domestic safety and wellbeing.

### Aberdeen City Council Ward Map



#### Wards

- |                                      |                                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone           | 8 George Street/Harbour          |
| 2 Bridge of Don                      | 9 Lower Deeside                  |
| 3 Kingswells/Sheddocksley/Summerhill | 10 Hazlehead/Ashley/Queens Cross |
| 4 Northfield/Mastrick                | 11 Airyhall/Broomhill/Garthdee   |
| 5 Hilton/Stockethill                 | 12 Torry/Ferryhill               |
| 6 Tillydrone/Seaton/Old Aberdeen     | 13 Kincorth/Loriston             |
| 7 Midsocket/Rosemount                |                                  |

Whilst the oil & gas sector has been a significant economic contributor, Aberdeen City is also economically vibrant across many other business sectors such as the electronics industry, research and development, agriculture and further education. Aberdeen remains a relatively wealthy area, nevertheless there are known pockets of deprivation located throughout the city. Currently the relatively low oil price is having a negative impact for the City leading to the potential for increasing levels of vulnerability within our local communities.

The local assessment addresses issues which are relevant across the Aberdeen City area. Linking to the LOIP through analysis of data, partnership working, the development of cross referral pathways and consultation, local improvement plans can be developed to ensure positive outcomes and results are achieved.

To enable the SFRS to plan and deliver on a proactive and reactive basis, it is important to understand where and how demand for fire and rescue resources may arise in the short, medium and longer term. As a local authority area, Aberdeen City is constituted by thirteen multi-member electoral wards comprising a range of diverse communities distributed over approximately 72 square miles. Emergency response within the local authority area is initially provided from four local fire stations comprising of three wholtime stations (permanently crewed) and one retained duty station which operates on an 'On Call' basis. SFRS resources located in neighbouring areas and throughout Scotland can respond into the area to provide additional operational support if necessary.

The review of SFRS activity ("Aberdeen City 2014 - 2017 Local Fire and Rescue Plan review report") indicates a positive downward trend in five out of the six local priorities over the period. The outcomes of the review have been used to identify the emerging fire risk profile and the key priorities included within our revised local plan for Aberdeen.

Our staff are trained and ready to respond to a variety of emergencies and local risks including serious flooding, fires, road, rail and transport incidents. The Service will maintain and assure the quality of service delivery by supporting all staff in their continuous professional development. The application, implementation and monitoring of nationally recognised operational standards will ensure an appropriate emergency response is available when required.

The response to, and recovery from, major emergencies as defined within the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 will continue through our participation in the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership. These arrangements include the emergency plans and agency specific operational policies and procedures intended to facilitate an effective joint response to any emergency affecting Aberdeen or the North of Scotland.

The SFRS has a statutory duty to promote fire safety including the provision of information and publicity aimed at preventing fire and reducing deaths and injuries, restricting fire spread and advising on means of escape from buildings. It also has a duty under the Local Government (Scotland) Act to participate in the community planning process, which is delegated to the Local Senior Officer to undertake in each local authority area.

The greatest fire risk to our communities continues to be a fire in the home. During the period 2014-2017 there were 869 accidental dwelling house fires in Aberdeen. It is a fact that in the majority of occasions the spread of fire is limited to the immediate area of origin which is a significant change in circumstances to that which we would have seen in earlier years. The service will continue to focus on reducing the risk of fire in the home and the subsequent impact this has on our communities.

During the 2014-2017 period 172 casualties and 6 fatalities occurred as a result of all fires occurring in the City area. While the service will always strive for zero fire deaths and casualties we acknowledge that it will be extremely challenging to achieve this in reality. The service is firmly committed to working pro-actively with our local partners in many disciplines to reduce the occurrences of unintentional harm in our communities.

All workplaces and business premises involved in fire are classed as Non Domestic Fires. Premises where people sleep are seen as a particularly high fire risk since most fatal fires occur at night when people are less vigilant and at their most vulnerable. Residential care homes, student accommodation, Houses in Multiple Occupation and self-contained sheltered housing make up the greatest proportion of these premises within the Aberdeen area. Non domestic fires have been steadily reducing year on year with 107 recorded during 2016-17 which is the lowest annual figure to date. The service is conscious of the impact that these incidents have for the people and economy in Aberdeen and will maintain a focus on this risk going forward.

The total number of deliberately ignited fires in Aberdeen has seen a positive reduction in recent years. In 2016-17 the service identified a total of 344 deliberately ignited fires which is the lowest number to date. We believed that the proactive approach taken by the service and our key partners is having an extremely positive effect in this area. Deliberate fire starting has a negative and anti-social impact on the local community and the local economy and as such remains a key focus for our service.

On average Aberdeen-based firefighters respond to 3500 emergency call outs per year. A high proportion of these calls, approximately 50%, turn out to be false alarms which require no action by the fire and rescue service. An Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) is defined as a signal transmitted by an Automatic Fire Detection system reporting a fire when there is none. Increasing numbers of UFAS calls are being received with the majority resulting from system failures. While there is no direct risk to the local community on these occasions, there are associated risks created by emergency service vehicles responding on local highways and the commitment of SFRS resources when they may be needed to deal with a real emergency elsewhere. The service is committed to seeking new and innovative approaches to reduce the impact of UFAS in Aberdeen.

Other types of false alarm calls include malicious 999 calls and emergency calls made when a person genuinely believes that an emergency has occurred which requires the attendance of the SFRS, and that belief subsequently turns out to be unfounded. Malicious 999 calls to SFRS in Aberdeen have steadily reduced over the last five years as a result of positive action by the service and key partners

which will continue under business as usual arrangements. Calls of a good intent nature are not an area of concern for the service which encourages members of the community to call for assistance at the earliest opportunity.

The delivery of shared outcomes is embedded within Aberdeen City through its range of community planning approaches. Aberdeen City's Community Planning Partnership is committed to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and its vision of "Aberdeen a place where all people can prosper"

Through the introduction of the LOIP for Aberdeen focused on Economy, People and Place the SFRS takes an active role in the delivery of the priorities and their intended outcomes through participation and engagement across the partnership arena. Supporting the delivery of Anti-Social Behaviour reduction, Adult and Child Protection, Health and Social Care including Alcohol and Drug strategies are examples of where the SFRS can collaborate with partners at a local level whilst achieving the priorities of this Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

## Local Priorities

### 1. Domestic Safety and Wellbeing

Unintentional harm in the home environment, and in particular injuries resulting from, accidental fires, slips, trips, falls and accidental poisoning are major risk factors impacting on the health and wellbeing of our communities. In addition to the personal trauma associated with these risks there is an increasing impact for a wide range of our local public services.

Working with our community safety partners in Aberdeen and across Scotland, SFRS has a significant role to play in contributing towards identifying the most vulnerable groups and individuals at risk of harm. Sharing information to enable appropriate assessment of the risks they are exposed to, and reducing those risks, either through direct intervention, or indirectly through partner liaison. Our aim is to reduce the likelihood of unintentional harm by improving safety in the home.

The promotion and delivery of free Home Fire Safety Visits will remain a key focus for the SFRS across Aberdeen and these visits will be expanded to assess a broader range of risks. Through liaison with partners the service will apply a targeted approach prioritising those who are most vulnerable and at risk from fire or harm in the home.

#### We will achieve it by:

- *Promoting and undertaking Home Safety Visits prioritising those who are deemed most vulnerable and at risk from fire and/or harm*
- *Working with our community planning partners and others to share information in order to provide solutions which protect people from harm*
- *Supporting the Local Outcome Improvement Plan*
- *Focusing our engagement activities in areas where greater service demand has been identified*

#### Performance Indicators:

- *Accidental Dwelling Fires*
- *Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties & Fatalities*
- *Number of High Risk Home Safety Visits delivered*
- *Number of Referrals for Home Safety Visits received from partners.*

#### Expected Outcomes

- *Improved support for the safety and wellbeing of our communities*
- *Reduction in the number of casualties resulting from accidental fires and accidents in the home*
- *Reduction in the number of accidental dwelling fires*
- *Reduction in social and economic costs*

## **2. Deliberate Fire Setting**

Evidence reflects a significant reduction in deliberate fire setting in Aberdeen over the last four years. However these type of fires continue to account for a number of operational incidents in various forms. Whilst a small proportion involve occupied buildings, vehicles and outdoor structures such as sheds, the majority of deliberate fires are classed as secondary fires such as grass, bushes, wheelie bins and refuse. Evidence also shows that deliberate fire setting is often linked to broader elements of antisocial behaviour affecting our communities.

Partnership working and youth engagement are both key areas where the SFRS can contribute resources in order to reduce the risk in Aberdeen. The service aims to continue its support for youth engagement activities such as the award winning Street Sports, the Fire-Setters Intervention Programme and the Police Youth Volunteer Scheme. The Service is acutely aware that deliberate fire setting has a negative impact on both the community and the public services.

### **We will achieve it by:**

- *Continual review of the areas affected by deliberate fire setting and sharing this information with our partners*
- *Implementing thematic action plans which are tailored to local needs*
- *Supporting the Local Outcome Improvement Plan*
- *Maintaining our commitment to a wide range of local youth engagement programmes*
- *Continuing to work with our partners to develop joint risk reduction strategies to further mitigate the impact of deliberate fires and broader antisocial behaviour affecting our local communities.*

### **Performance Indicators:**

- *All deliberate fires*

### **Expected Outcomes**

- *Reduction in the number of deliberate fires*
- *Reduce the impact on our local communities*
- *Protect Aberdeen's natural and built environment*
- *Reduce the risk for SFRS and partner agencies*

### 3. Non Domestic Fire Safety

In general, all workplaces and business are classed as non-domestic premises and as such, come within the scope of Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, which places duties on persons responsible for these premises to comply with the Act and its associated regulations. The SFRS has a statutory duty to promote fire safety and where required enforce compliance with fire safety legislation. To discharge this duty and to ensure compliance, the SFRS has adopted an approach utilising advice, education and where required formal enforcement powers.

Premises where people sleep are seen as a particularly high risk since most fatal fires occur at night when people are most vulnerable. Residential care homes, student accommodation, Houses in Multiple Occupation and self-contained sheltered housing make up the greatest proportion of this type of premises within Aberdeen. The impact of fire can be devastating for our local businesses, employment, the provision of critical services and also our City's heritage. Fires within non domestic premises in Aberdeen have been steadily reducing year on year to date and we wish to promote this trend by maintaining a focus on this priority.

#### **We will achieve it by:**

- *Continuing the fire safety audit programme prioritising high risk premises.*
- *Engagement and provision of support to the business community to highlight their responsibilities for compliance with fire legislation.*
- *Identifying fire trends in particular building types and conducting thematic audits*
- *Utilising the support of our partners and our operational personnel to identify derelict or vacated properties and to make them secure.*
- *Supporting initiatives which highlight to young people the risk to them and our communities from wilful fire-raising.*

#### **Performance indicators:**

- *All non-domestic fires*
- *Number of fire safety audits completed*
- *Deliberate fires in non-domestic properties*

#### **Expected outcomes:**

- *Assisting the business sector in understanding their legislative fire safety responsibilities*
- *Ensuring that buildings are safer, people feel protected and the opportunities for acts of deliberate or wilful fire raising are reduced*
- *Supporting and protecting business continuity and employment within Aberdeen*
- *Protecting our natural heritage and built environment.*

## 4. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

An Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) is defined as a signal transmitted by an Automatic Fire Detection system reporting a fire when there is none. UFAS calls within Aberdeen have been steadily increasing in numbers with the majority resulting from faults occurring within detection systems. Responding to UFAS incidents causes disruption to our local businesses and to other SFRS priorities. Unnecessary blue light journeys on city streets creates additional road risk for firefighters and the public and has a detrimental impact on the environment. SFRS is committed to reducing the impact from UFAS through active engagement with those who are responsible.

### **We will achieve it by:**

- *Identifying premises with high UFAS activity levels to determine if they comply with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and have appropriate fire safety management procedures in place*
- *Supporting owners and occupiers to develop workable action plans for UFAS reduction within their premises*
- *Robust call management and implementation of SFRS policy for UFAS.*

### **Performance indicators:**

- *Number of UFAS incidents*

### **Expected outcomes:**

- *Reduce disruption for local businesses and our service*
- *Reduce road risk for the public and our operational staff*
- *Reduce our services impact on the environment*
- *Increase the capacity of the fire and rescue service to deliver against other local priorities*

## 5. Emergency Response and Resilience

The SFRS has a statutory duty to reduce the risks faced by our communities and our staff to make certain that they receive the best possible service. It is essential that we maintain suitable resources locally and that our firefighters possess the skills, knowledge and expertise to respond safely to incidents which vary in type & complexity. The introduction of the single Fire and Rescue Service has provided us with an enhanced opportunity to call upon additional resources from across Scotland should a need arise.

The service must prepare for and respond to major emergencies. The scope of such preparations may include responding to adverse weather events, natural disasters, pandemics, chemical incidents or major transport incidents. The potential for acts of terrorism compels the SFRS to be adequately prepared to respond alongside our partner agencies should such an event occur.

A key aim for the service is to develop resilience within our communities creating an ability for people to assist each other in times of need and to quickly recover from emergencies. 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests' is one example where SFRS is actively supporting others across the City to develop vital lifesaving skills. Increasing the number of people who are confident in applying CPR will increase the survivability for anyone suffering a heart attack.

### **We will achieve it by:**

- *Ensuring our training, staff development and equipment continue to be fit for purpose aligned to the risk profile and that we are adaptable to changing circumstances.*
- *Ensuring that local operational intelligence risk information is obtained, communicated and our operational response tested*
- *Working locally with partner organisations and agencies to ensure effective wider consequence emergency response plans are developed for identified local risks.*
- *Fulfilling our statutory duties in relation to the Civil Contingencies Act by way of our contribution to Grampian Local Resilience Partnership and North of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership.*
- *Supporting and promoting the reduction of harm from 'Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests'*
- *Supporting the Local Outcome Improvement Plan*
- *Applying a robust internal operational assurance process*

### **Performance indicators:**

- *Staff competence*
- *Availability of operational intelligence risk information*
- *Appliances, equipment and specialist resources*
- *CPR lifesaving awareness skills sessions*
- *Operational assurance audits*

### **Expected outcomes:**

- *Keeping our staff, members of the public and other emergency services safe should an incident occur*
- *Maintaining a modern and effective local service*
- *Reducing the financial burden and disruption caused to our communities when emergencies occur*
- *Increased community resilience*
- *Proactively helping the wider community by contributing to preventing emergencies, planning to mitigate their effects when they occur, and by adding value through focus on prevention and protection*

## **6. Performance Scrutiny**

Our Local Fire and Rescue Plan is approved and scrutinised by Aberdeen City Council Communities, Housing and Infrastructure committee (CHI). Within this forum the Committee undertakes the process of scrutiny to monitor progress against each of the priorities and also engages with the Local Senior Officer in matters arising on a regional or national basis which may impact upon the local area.

The Local Senior Officer, or their deputy will attend and provide an update on progress against this plan, overall performance, and any other matters deemed relevant to the delivery of fire and rescue service provision within Aberdeen City.

Local SFRS performance reports will be published on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service website following scrutiny.

## **7. Review**

To ensure this Local Plan remains flexible to emerging local or national priorities a review may be carried out at any time but will be undertaken at least once every three years. A review may also be carried out if the Scottish Minister directs it or if a new Strategic Plan is approved. Following a review the Local Senior Officer may revise the Plan

## 8. Contact or follow us

If you would like to tell us what you think of this plan or how you think we are doing locally you can:

Write to: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service  
Aberdeen City Area HQ  
Central Fire Station  
Mounthooly way  
Aberdeen  
AB243ER

Phone: 01224 618371

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

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