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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD

MINUTE of Meeting of the POLICE, FIRE & RESCUE AND SAFER COMMUNITIES BOARD held in Via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 14th May, 2021 at 9.30 am

Present:- Councillors G. Turnbull (Chairman), D. Moffat, N. Richards, E. Robson, H. Scott, E Small, Mr M Dickson - NHS Borders and Ms M Simpson - Voluntary Sector.

In Attendance:- Chief Superintendent J McKenzie, Chief Inspector V Fisher, Local Senior Officer S Gourlay, Group Commander T Collins, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service; Safer Communities and Community Justice Manager; Senior Policy Advisor, Communities and Partnership Manager, and Democratic Services Officer, J Turnbull, SBC.

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the online meeting. He advised that this was Mr Dickson's last meeting as his tenure with the NHS Board would end in July. The Chairman thanked Mr Dickson for his valuable contribution to the Board meetings over the years and introduced Mr James Ayling who would replace Mr Dickson from the next meeting.

DECISION

- (a) **ACREED to thank Mr Malcolm Dickson for his valuable contribution to the Police, Fire and Rescue and Safer Communities Board.**
- (b) **NOTED the new NHS representative on the Board was Mr James Ayling.**

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 5 February 2021. With reference to paragraph 6.2 the Minute of 6 February, the Chairman thanked Sergeant Walker for advice given to communities with regard to CCTV. With reference to paragraph 6.1 of the Minute, Mr Dickson advised that the Forensic Examination Unit at NHS Borders was now scheduled to open at the end of 2021.

DECISION

APPROVED the Minute.

3. **PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATES ON SERVICE MATTERS - POLICE SCOTLAND**

- 3.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the minute of 5 February 2021, there had been circulated copies of Police Scotland's Scrutiny Report for Quarter 4. Chief Superintendent McKenzie introduced the Q4 report, highlighting the main points from the report. He explained that domestic abuse continued to be a priority, a solvency rate of 76% showed their focus on targeting perpetrators. Support also continued for victims of domestic abuse. The significant rise in Group 2 Crime primarily involved communication offences, the 70% solvency rate was one of the strongest for a Division in Scotland. Violent Crime had increased by 43%, one of the reasons was the rise in threats of extortion driven by online activity and drug activity. There was a 90% solvency rate for serious assault which showed the ongoing commitment to targeting violent crime. Inquisitive crime was on the decrease, driven by the lockdown restrictions during the public health crisis, but it was expected this would rise in the next quarter. A continued focus on targeting organised

crime has been demonstrated through recent drug recoveries across the Scottish Borders. The focus on intelligence led policing linked to organised crime continued in the Scottish Borders with the aim of safeguarding communities.

- 3.2 The Chief Superintendent then referred to the paper, circulated prior to the meeting, about the reclassification of Dalkeith Custody Centre which has a potential minimal impact on the Scottish Borders. He explained that within the Scottish Border there was a primary centre in Hawick and three ancillary centres at Duns, Eyemouth and Galashiels. On occasions, if Hawick was not available, Dalkeith Custody Centre would normally be used. From a context perspective Hawick was unavailable during 24 shift periods within a full year. The Chief Superintendent acknowledged concerns about police officers having to leave the Scottish Borders to attend St Leonards, if reclassification of Dalkeith was progressed he explained that there would be a quick turnaround with more efficient processing. He added that the refurbishment of Galashiels showed the ongoing CJSD commitment to the Scottish Borders.
- 3.3 The Chief Superintendent then went on to advise of a consultation on the proposed closure of Coldstream Police Station. The station had not been used in an operational sense for a number of years. Members and the public would be asked for their views on the proposed closure. The results of which would be brought back to the Scrutiny Board. In response to a question about retaining a visible police presence in Coldstream, Chief Inspector Fisher explained that the police station was in a state of dilapidation which would increase over time. The Chief Superintendent added that the mobile data devices used by front line officers enable police visibility in Coldstream without the need to return to a police station.
- 3.4 Chief Inspector Fisher then highlighted the main points from the Q4 Performance Report. With regard to the Community Action Team (CAT), the Inspector advised that they had undertaken targeted patrols focussed on youth antisocial behaviour in the Tweeddale and Eyemouth areas. They had also issued 24 warning letters to under 18s, with repeat offenders being visited as a means of early intervention. With regard to drug crime, the CAT had undertaken 84 person searches, 32% of which were positive; 18 misuse of drug warrants had been executed with 94% recoveries of Class A, B and C drugs. Interventions had resulted in £55k of substances and £10k of cash being recovered. In terms of road safety, 77 road traffic offences were detected, with six drivers receiving ASOB warnings, 102 parking fines had been issued. Two motorcycles had been seized in Selkirk and activity continued at Monymut in respect of off-road motorcycles. The CAT has also undertaken night patrols with Northumbria police to deter cross border rural thefts, further partnership working was planned in Q1 of next year.
- 3.5 In response to a question about the 20 mph speed limit, the Chief Superintendent explained that because of limited resources enforcement was based on data that demonstrated that there was a challenge on a particular road. However, he reassured the Board that if there was a 20 mph zone which showed greater risk to the community in terms of accidents then enforcement action would be taken. Chief Inspector Fisher added that the police prioritise areas of greatest risk and speed enforcement was carried out for casualty reduction. With regard to safety cameras, sites were assessed annually to ensure the integrity of the safety camera programme. With regard to organised crime and the cuckooing training package, the Safer Communities and Community Manager, Mr Jones, advised that discussion was underway to align with public protection arrangements and to involve SB Cares staff. Mr Dickson suggested that staff working within mental health and learning difficulties might also benefit from the training and he would discuss further following the meeting. In respect of proxy purchasing of alcohol, Chief Inspector Fisher advised that they were considering a bottle marking initiative in Peebles to track back to the point of sale. In terms of parents supplying alcohol, where there was such a situation, the police talked to the parents. The Chief Superintendent added that this was not just a police issue, wider communities and licensing legislation was important and he urged Members to reconsider introducing the Alcohol Byelaw pilot. Mr Jones would also

consider if there would be a benefit in reintroducing the 'Don't supply it, Don't buy it' campaign. Regarding response times for the 101 service, the Chief Superintendent advised that the national average was 2 minutes. However, he would bring back figures outlining 101 performance to the next meeting. Mrs Simpson advised that the voluntary sector could assist by providing support in the wider community. They had recently delivered training around cyber security and identity thefts, they had also funded a project to raise awareness of grooming of young people.

DECISION

NOTED the report.

ADJOURNED

The meeting adjourned at 11.05 am to 11.15 am.

4. PROGRESS REPORTS/UPDATE ON SERVICE MATTERS - SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

- 4.1 With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 5 February 2020, Local Senior Officer Gourlay introduced the SFRS Local Performance Plan for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda. The LSO advised that it has been a challenging period but locally they were looking forward to blended working arrangements for partnerships and training. Nationally, the Scottish Government were committed to supporting the modernisation of the SFRS, central to this was broadening the role of firefighters in Scotland. A new Scottish Strategic Plan would be generated this year. There would also be a consultation around the management of Unwanted Fire Alarm signals. LSO Gourlay further advised that 12 local fire stations had been used to deliver asymptomatic testing, as part of a partnership approach, which had received a positive community response.
- 4.2 Group Commander (GC) Tony Collins then went on to highlight the main points from the performance report, explaining that dwelling fires, all fire casualties, deliberate fires, road traffic collisions and special service casualties had all decreased. False alarm equipment failure had also decreased slightly. He explained that the SFRS had attended 1,500 incidents over the last year, which was down 159 from the previous year, of which 57% of these related to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). There had been no major incidents in the year to date. With regard to Prevention and Protection activities, an update had been circulated with the agenda. Although performance activity had been severely curtailed because of restrictions, the SFRS had recommended high risk home safety visits and would start visiting businesses and schools when it was appropriate to do so. In response a question regarding road traffic collisions in Berwickshire, Mr Gourlay advised that the SFRS only attended when intervention was required and they did not get involved in collision investigation. The recent fatal fire investigation had been referred to the Procurator Fiscal and appropriate safety measures would be issued. Regarding the trends relating to all deliberate fire and UFAS with peaks in quarter 1 and quarter 2 respectively. LSO Gourlay explained that deliberate fires increased during the lighter nights, drier weather and Easter holidays and they had an appropriate tactical action plan in place. The decrease in UFAS was probably due to schools returning, with primary schools and nurseries being one of the largest offenders. Most UFAS's came from a collector service with no contact from the site, this might be one of the options that was explored in the consultation. With regard to SEPA identifying potential fire risks to the SFRS, LSO Gourlay explained that they had a good working relationship with SEPA and it would be useful to have an awareness but that the SFRS had no role in preventing fly tipping. To conclude his report GC Collins explained that as well as assisting with asymptomatic testing the SFRS were discussing assisting the NHS with surge testing. LSO Gourlay then referred to the updated 2021 SFRS Local Fire and Rescue Plan, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda. He explained that the priorities remained the same with the focus on delivering in partnership. There would be a new Scottish Strategic Plan when the Local Plan would be refreshed again. In response to questions regarding flood rescue he discussed the resource for swift water rescue in the

Scottish Borders and opportunities to upskill stations for flood level response based on past incidents. He would arrange a demonstration later this year when restrictions allowed. With regard to cross border support he advised that cooperation happened but the percentage was small.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the report.**
- * (b) **AGREED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL approval of the 2021 SFRS Local Plan, attached to the Minute.**

MEMBER

Mrs Simpson left the meeting during consideration of the above report.

5. SAFER COMMUNITIES

- 5.1 With reference to paragraph 5 of the Minute of 5 February 2021, there had been circulated copies of the Safer Communities Performance report from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The Safer Communities Justice Manager, Mr Jones, advised that the some staff were still deployed to the Covid-19 response, assisting Community Assistance Hubs which had impacted some of the Teams' work. However, they has been able to sustain antisocial behaviour activity, the violence against women partnership and MARAC by utilising Microsoft Teams. The Rural Crime Partnership had met twice, areas covered including thefts in communities and how to improve information flow to target a response. Mr Jones further advised that a member of staff attended the South of Scotland Visitor Management Planning Group. The Group discussions included rural crime and salmon poaching and there was an opportunity to manage information flow to remote parts of the Scottish Borders. The Animal Control Officer and the CAT had been discussing dog fouling reports and their classification to improve response. There had already been two successful enforcement actions.
- 5.2 Mr Jones then discussed the performance report highlighting the main points and responding to questions. With regard to the young driver's scheme Mr Jones explained that it had reclassified as a charity to access funds. The Older Drivers Scheme was supported by the community safety officer and the young drivers the Institute of Advance Motorists. Covid had impacted upon delivery during 2020 and 2012. With regard to RSLs response to requests for relocation of vulnerable tenants experiencing antisocial behaviour, Mr Jones advised that he would pass on the comments to the Housing Associations. With regard to the Mediation Officer's role with the travellers in Selkirk, Mr Jones explained that his role was to satisfy Scottish Government's requirements for gypsy travellers during the pandemic. Since 26 April numbers at the site had been dispersing. Inspector Fisher added that the police had been aware of tensions in the community and patrols had been increased in the interests of the travellers and the local community. This commitment was likely to continue until the restrictions fully lift and the site opened commercially.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled to be held via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 27 August 2021 at 9.30 am.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm

2021



LOCAL FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

SCOTTISH BORDERS

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Introduction

Welcome to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Scottish Borders Local Fire and Rescue Plan. This Plan has been developed to support the delivery of agreed local outcomes for the people in the Scottish Borders in conjunction with the national priorities contained within the SFRS Strategic Plan 2019- 2022. Our ambition is to work in partnership to improve community safety and enhance the well-being of those living in the Scottish Borders whilst tackling issues of social inequality. This Plan will set out our priorities in order to support this ambition. A review of the previous plan has confirmed that the agreed priorities are fit for purpose and have been agreed through the Local Authority scrutiny arrangements.

Early in 2020 we faced an unprecedented challenge in the form of a global pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we dramatically changed how we worked so that we could continue to deliver an emergency service whilst keeping our staff and the public safe. The pandemic is expected to have a lasting effect on society and this will change the way in which we deliver services in the long-term. The full implications are not yet known and this makes it difficult to make any far-reaching plans with certainty. As such we will keep the priorities of this Plan under regular review to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

This Plan recognises what we have delivered in the past but looks forward to what we aim to achieve over the next three years and beyond. The safety of our communities is at the heart of everything we do, whether it is responding to emergencies or providing preventative advice and measures. The Plan will highlight our resources in the Scottish Borders, the changing risks to local communities, and how we aim to deliver our services to meet all the challenges we face.

As a public service and a statutory member of the Scottish Borders Community Planning Partnership, we recognise that to be effective and efficient, we must work closely with our partners in order to identify and provide for those most at risk. By working this way, we will look to reduce duplication, share resources and information and make improvements. We will actively contribute to the shared Intent, Vision and Themes set out in the [Scottish Borders Plan](#) and it is our intention that the Fire and Rescue Plan is viewed as an extension of this Plan.

As the SFRS resets and renews delivery of key services, whilst moving beyond the pandemic, we will continue to contribute wherever we can in the wider partnership agenda to ensure continued improvements for outcomes for the communities in the Scottish Borders.

Steve Gourlay

Local Senior Officer

Midlothian, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders

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 2019-22](#) has been designed to meet these national expectations. Set against a complex and evolving backdrop our Strategic Plan encapsulates our mission, values and our strategic outcomes and objectives.



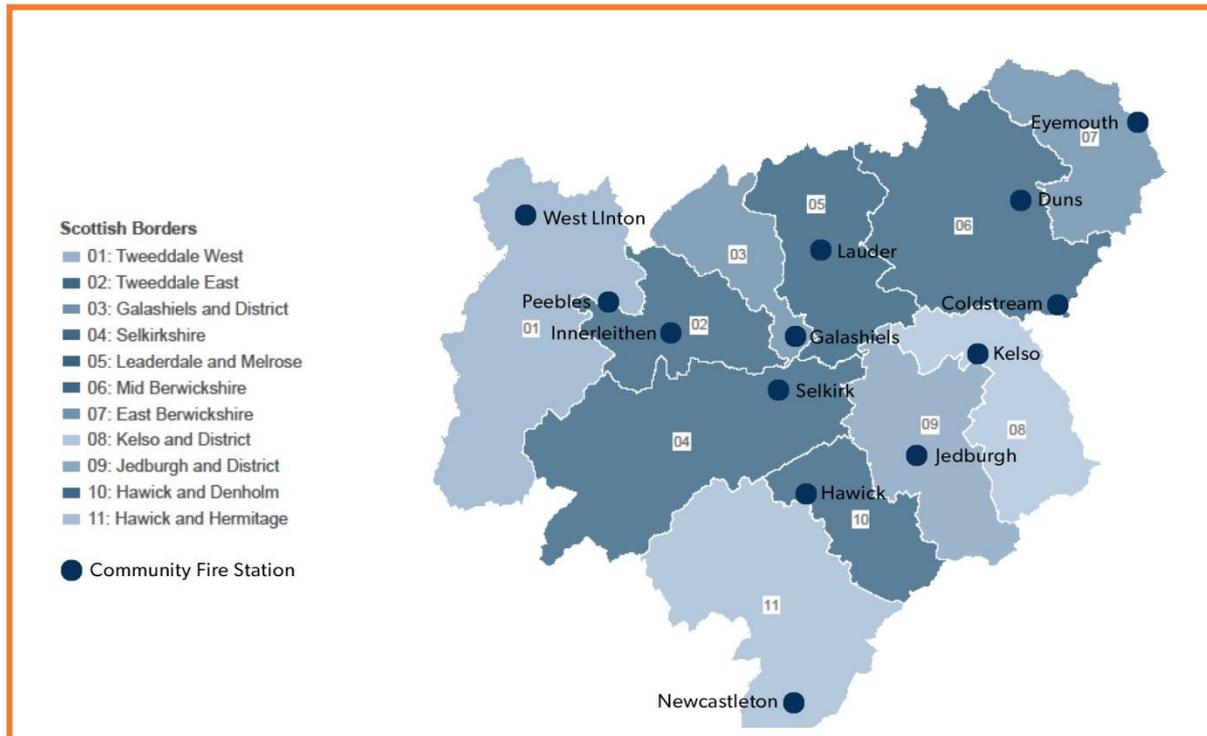
To ensure we can prevent the worst from happening and to be fully prepared to respond should we called, we need to be aware of any new changing risks which threaten the safety of communities or the workforce. When developing our most recent plan, cognisance was given to: our changing population and the forecasted rise in over 75s; doing what we can to balance social and economic inequality; climate change and the devastating impact the inclement weather can have on peoples’ lives and livelihoods; and the threat of terrorism.

Our Strategic Plan is supported by a three-year Strategic Plan Programme which provides details on all the activities we intend to carry out to successfully achieve our ambitions. The Programme informs our Annual Operating Plan, which provides specific detail on the actions we carry out each year, and from which our performance is scrutinised.

This Plan is a statutory Local Fire and Rescue Plan. It sets local direction to meet the strategic outcomes and objectives outlined above. It also demonstrates how we will contribute to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs).

Scottish Borders Local Context

The Scottish Borders has a population of just over 115,000 people who reside within an area including and ranging from major towns such as Galashiels and Hawick to single dwellings in remote rural locations. The diagram below outlines the electoral ward boundaries whilst highlighting the locations of our 13 Community Fire Stations.



The SFRS attends an average of 1500 emergency incidents a year in the Scottish Borders and reporting focuses on the agreed Key Performance Indicator table below. This details our operational response over the last five years by incident type and provides the Local Authority and partners with the required information to hold the SFRS to account.

Key performance indicator	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	YTD
Dwelling fires	109	91	100	104	103	●
All fire casualties (fatal & non-fatal (incl. p/c's))	18	27	18	21	31	◆
All deliberate fires excl. dwellings	101	97	150	137	128	●
Special Service - RTCs	108	99	93	87	99	◆
Special Service - Casualties	120	110	85	92	82	●
False Alarm - Equipment failure	570	629	614	654	655	▲

RAG rating - KEY		
◆	RED DIAMOND	10% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
▲	YELLOW TRIANGLE	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period, or local target not achieved.
●	GREEN CIRCLE	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent quarter (or YTD period), or local target achieved.

Reducing Dwelling Fires, Fire Casualties and Fatalities will continue to be at the heart of our prevention activities, over the last two decades, similar to the rest of the UK, we

have seen a gradual decrease in the amount of dwelling fires we attend. Dwelling Fires accounted for around 5.0% of our operational activity, whilst fire casualties have averaged around 23 over the last five years, sadly including five fire fatalities over that period. Prevention activity in the Scottish Borders will continue to focus on those at highest risk with defined vulnerabilities in partnership with those providing care and may be responsible for other risk reduction measures.

Deliberate fires (not including dwellings) are often, but not always, of a malicious nature. Deliberate fires accounted for approximately 8.5% of our operational activity over the last five years and typically involved refuse, grass, wood and scrubland. Increases in this type of incident activity are generally seasonal and often linked to anti-social behaviour. Deliberate fires of a malicious nature place an unnecessary demand on SFRS and partner resources and often affecting communities socially and economically.

Responding to Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) as part of a multi-agency effort to minimise injury to those involved and reduce the impact on the transport infrastructure is an area of business that the SFRS invests heavily to ensure the appropriate response. 3.5% of incidents attended are RTCs although not a true reflection of the total number in the Scottish Borders, only the ones where SFRS were requested.

The term "Special Service" is used to describe non-fire related incidents and includes RTC's, Flooding, medical emergencies, Water Rescue and Hazardous Materials incidents amongst others. Throughout the last 15-20 years, Fire and Rescue Services across the UK have seen a significant increase in attendance at these types of incident whilst domestic property fires decrease. Special Service incidents account for approximately 19% of all emergency calls in the Scottish Borders.

Recent history demonstrates that severe wet weather and subsequent flooding is a risk for particular parts of the Scottish Borders and this will remain a focus of our emergency response capability, particularly for our Water Rescue and Flood Response teams. When required we will also work in partnership with Scottish Borders Council Emergency Planning and other service providers either as an emergency response or in a preventative capacity.

Due to the location and skills sets of our community-based resources, and the remote nature of much of the Scottish Borders, we have been able to provide assistance to partners, such as Police Scotland and the SAS, on an increasing basis and for a variety of reasons. Effecting entry for non-fire incidents now accounts for just over 3% of activity in the Scottish Borders.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) have accounted for over 30% of our operational incidents in the Scottish Borders over the last five years. Similar to other operational activities, this type of incident demand is not unique to the Scottish Borders, with the UK as a whole facing challenges in relation to reducing UFAS. With disruption to local businesses, schools, healthcare facilities and others, these unwanted calls can have a significant impact across the Scottish Borders area. Following national policy and using local initiatives we will continue to prioritise the reduction of UFAS whilst engaging with key stakeholders, partners and those with responsibilities for the premises involved.

Our 13 Community Fire Stations include two Wholetime stations at Galashiels and Hawick with the remaining eleven being Retained Duty System (RDS) stations (as shown on map on page 4). Wholetime stations are permanently staffed 24/7 throughout the year whilst our RDS staff operate on an "on call" basis and are alerted by pager for emergency calls.

Frontline staff are supported by a team of local and national officers from the Training Function. The local training officers are based at Galashiels Community Fire Station and provide dedicated support to operational crews in terms of acquiring new skills, maintaining existing skills and ensuring role competency.

Prevention and Protection (P&P) officers are located at Galashiels, Duns and Hawick. They consist of Fire Safety Enforcement officers who deal with legislative matters including the auditing of relevant premises and officers who carry out a community engagement role through a diverse and wide-reaching range of prevention activities. In addition to this, a SFRS Local Area Liaison Officer acts as a coordinator for engagement activities whilst liaising with external partners and has a base in Newtown St Boswells.

Since agreeing the 2018 plan three newly established full-time posts for RDS watch commanders to support the thirteen RDS stations is proving a success and provides direct support for availability, training and community safety activities in the Scottish Borders.

An Area Commander (AC), or Local Senior Officer (LSO), has overall responsibility for discharging the functions of the SFRS within the Scottish Borders. Day to day management of resources is devolved to the Scottish Borders Group Commander (GC) and three Station Commanders (SCs) responsible for Service Delivery. The Senior Management team also consists of a further GC and two SC's who have responsibility for P&P and Training across the LSO area of Midlothian, East Lothian and the Scottish Borders.

This plan and its priorities reflect a partnership approach whilst sharing the vision and themes that will lead to improved outcomes for the communities of the Scottish Borders. The examples below highlight some of the ways in which we aim to contribute to the Scottish Borders Community Plan 2017. The list is not exhaustive and we will continually look for innovative ways to help improve outcomes.

Working in Partnership to achieve better outcomes for the people in the Scottish Borders

Scottish Borders Community Plan Theme

How we plan to contribute

<p><i>Our Economy, Skills and Learning</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By consolidation and where possible, development of existing youth engagement initiatives such as the TD1 project in Galashiels. By participating in these programmes, younger people will acquire new skills, practical and theoretical, learn to work within a team and build self-confidence. The programme will promote better citizenship whilst potentially improving opportunities for employment. • By reducing the impact of unwanted fire alarm signals on local businesses and education establishments.
<p><i>Our Health, Care & Wellbeing</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide a range of prevention advice and measures through holistic home safety visits with the aim of keeping people safe in their homes. • We will explore opportunities to work closer with our Health and Social care colleagues in order to reach those most vulnerable in our communities whilst contributing to longer term health outcomes.
<p><i>Our Quality of Life</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Police and other CPP members, we will prioritise the reduction of anti-social related Deliberate Fire Setting (excluding Dwellings) through a range of prevention, intervention and diversionary activities. • We will continue to be an active member of the Scottish Borders Safer Communities team and carry out a range of preventative and intervention activities. This will include addressing social issues such as, reducing Domestic Abuse, identifying those at risk from Drugs and Alcohol, Frailty and Dementia. • In partnership, we will aim to reduce the amount of people killed or seriously injured on our roads

	<p>through active participation as a member of the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst also contributing to prevention initiatives such as the Drivewise initiative and continuing our “make it or break it” programme that highlights the consequences of RTC’s to new and potential young drivers.
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<i>Our Place</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By identifying those suffering from fuel poverty during home safety visits or attendance at operational incidents and offering assistance through partner referral and advice.
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Performance Scrutiny

The arrangements for local scrutiny of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in the Scottish Borders sits with the Police, Fire and Rescue and Community Safety Board which meets on a quarterly basis. The SFRS Local Senior Officer is responsible for ensuring the committee are kept informed of all relevant service matters and provision of performance reporting for agreed priorities and associated indicators.

Scottish Borders Priorities

1. As part of a Community Partnership approach, we will make people safer in their homes.

Background:

As a key focus for the SFRS making people safer in their homes has long been a priority and will continue to be. From 2005 firefighters have visited Scottish Borders residents at home and provided home fire safety visits. The will of the SFRS is to continue to look for opportunities with partners to improve on this single subject visit and provide a more holistic approach.

This priority supports the *Scottish Borders Plan*.

We will achieve it by:

- *Providing a highly skilled, well trained and appropriate Firefighting response*
- *In partnership, proactively identifying those most at risk from Unintentional Harm in the home*
- *Explore conducting holistic Home Safety Visits that assess a range of risks within the home including fire, slips, trips and fall and other vulnerabilities*
- *Exchanging risk information with partners including referrals.*

Performance Indicators:

- *The primary performance measures will be the number of accidental dwelling fires and associated casualties.*
- *Quantity and quality of risk based home fire safety visits delivered.*
- *Partnership referrals for vulnerable at-risk individuals and dwellings.*

Expected Outcomes:

- *Support the independent living of vulnerable people within the Scottish Borders*
- *Reduce the social and economic cost of Unintentional Harm in the home including fires and slips, trips and falls.*

2. We will promote Community Resilience whilst contributing to improved outcomes for people involved in non-fire emergencies.

Background:

“Special Service” is the Fire and Rescue Service term given to non-fire related emergencies/incidents including, Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), Rescue from Water, Flooding, Height, Confined Space, Structural Collapse, Hazardous Material incidents and medical emergencies supporting the Scottish Ambulance Service. Unfortunately, when incidents of this type occur they often involve casualties and sometimes fatalities.

The Scottish Borders has a diverse range of Special Service risks including busy A and B class roads that are used regularly by commuters and tourists, and many commercial businesses.

On average, 19% of all SFRS incidents each year in the Borders are Special Service calls. As the SFRS explore opportunities for assisting our partners through emergency intervention there is a potential for associated casualty figures to continue to rise as we attend more Special Service incidents.

We will look to improve existing preventative strategies with Community Partners whilst ensuring that should we need to provide emergency response, we can do, effectively and efficiently, in order to improve outcomes for all Special Service Casualties.

This priority also supports the Scottish Borders Plan.

We will achieve it by:

- *Being an integral component of the Scottish Borders Community Planning and championing an effective partnership approach to risk reduction*
- *Education and awareness aimed at high-risk groups within our communities*
- *Training our staff and locating our resources in order to provide an effective and efficient emergency response*
- *Building on our relationships with other emergency services and improving how we work together through prevention and intervention.*

Performance Indicators:

- *Reviewing and reporting on the number of Special Service Casualties including RTC, Water/ Flood Rescue, medical emergencies and effecting entry*
- *Monitoring and evaluating SFRS participation in community events and initiatives designed to enhance community resilience.*

Expected Outcomes:

- *Improved outcomes for persons involved in non-fire emergencies in the Scottish Borders*
- *Reduce the social and economic cost of Special Service Casualties*
- *Where capacity exists, reduce the demand on Community Partners through prevention and intervention activities.*

3. Together with our Community Partners, we will contribute to making the Scottish Borders roads safer.

Background:

Road traffic collisions (RTCs) continue to impact across the Scottish Borders with often tragic consequences. The SFRS has trained and equipped firefighters across the area prepared to deal with the incidents where, as part of a multi-agency response, we rescue and provide care for those affected.

As well as providing an emergency response to accidents on our roads, the SFRS have a key role to play in reducing RTC's through education and raising awareness in partnership with our Community Partners. By using experience and statistical evidence we will identify those most likely to be involved in a RTC in the Scottish Borders, with these groups being the focus of attention for prevention activities based on risk.

We will aim to build on existing local prevention initiatives and in partnership look to utilise our resources innovatively, efficiently and proactively with the aim of making the roads in the Scottish Borders safer.

This priority supports the *Scottish Borders Plan*.

We will achieve it by:

- *Working with our partners within the Scottish Borders to identify those groups most at risk*
- *Delivering the appropriate prevention activities to those most at risk whilst being proactive and innovative*
- *Continued support of the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Road Safety Working Group*
- *Encouraging young drivers and other groups to be responsible road users through active engagement and education.*

Performance Indicators:

- *Reviewing and reporting on the number and type of road traffic collisions within the Scottish Borders*
- *Reporting and evaluating the effectiveness of our partnership prevention activities.*

Expected Outcomes:

- *SFRS to have contributed towards reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on roads in the Scottish Borders*
- *SFRS to have contributed to the reduction of Road Traffic Collisions the Scottish Borders*
- *SFRS to have contributed to reducing the consequences and associated community impacts of RTC's.*

4. As part of a Community Partnership, we will challenge anti-social behaviour

Background:

Anti-social behaviour can manifest itself in many ways and often has a significant detrimental effect on communities for a number of reasons.

The SFRS generally experience anti-social behaviour through deliberate fire setting which can sometimes manifest into physical or verbal violence to our crews. Thankfully, the latter is a rare occurrence in the Borders, however, the figures relating to Deliberate Fire Setting are not so positive.

There is often a close link between deliberate fires and anti-social behaviour and predominately involves malicious ignition of refuse, grass, woodland. Incidents of this type accounted for approximately 8-9% of our operational activity over the last five years. The Scottish Borders has seen a welcome decrease over the last couple of years and working with partners we would seek to further reduce this.

Due to the sporadic and random nature of many deliberately started fires, prevention activities are often reactive.

As a Service, we recognise our responsibility in reducing anti-social behaviour and its impact, this extends to not only fire related instances but includes other social issues such a Domestic Abuse.

This priority supports the *Scottish Borders Plan*.

We will achieve it by:

- *In partnership identifying those parts of the Scottish Borders affected by deliberate fire setting, whilst delivering effective prevention activities*
- *Acting as role models to promote good citizenship, especially with those who have or are likely to become involved in deliberate fire setting*
- *Continued support of the Scottish Borders Safer Communities Team and the Multi Agency*

- Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) in relation to Domestic Abuse*
- *Exploring opportunities to lead and participate in innovative projects.*

Performance Indicators:

- *Reviewing and reporting on the number and type of deliberate fire setting incidents within the Scottish Borders*
- *Evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of our youth engagement/intervention programmes and monitoring our attendance at MARAC's.*

Expected Outcomes:

- *Support the promotion of "people and place" across the Scottish Borders*
- *Support our communities in feeling safe from crime, disorder and danger*
- *Reduce the number of attendances to fires of a deliberate nature, particularly secondary fires*
- *Reduce the adverse effects and negative impacts which deliberate fire setting has on people's lives within the Scottish Borders.*

5. In partnership, we will aim to reduce the occurrence and impact of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

Background:

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS when there is no fire. With UFAS accounting for over 30% of our incident activity it's clear that this places a significant burden on SFRS in terms of resources, time and associated costs. The impact of UFAS in the wider community can be very significant in terms of business disruption, effects on health care premises, education establishments and any other non-domestic premises effected by this. The level of unnecessary blue light response journeys also increase road risks and hazards to firefighters and to the public and have a detrimental impact on the environment through additional carbon emissions. Active and positive engagement with occupiers to take responsibility in limiting the number of UFAS incidents within their premises is integral to reducing these impacts.

We will achieve it by:

- *Investigating the cause of each UFAS call and documenting the information gained*
- *Engaging with duty holders and those responsible for fire safety management of premises to examine causes of UFAS calls and provide advice to prevent reoccurrence*
- *Look to reduce the number of fire appliances mobilised using a risk based approach to responding to automated fire alarms*
- *Maintaining a dedicated UFAS champion within the Scottish Borders area to oversee performance and best practice approaches to UFAS reduction.*

Performance indicators:

- *Reviewing and reporting on the number of UFAS calls in the Scottish Borders*
- *Reviewing and reporting on risk based reductions in the SFRS weight of response to premises with automated fire alarm systems.*

Expected Outcomes:

- *Reduce the demand on the SFRS from UFAS*

- *Reduce the economic cost to commerce in the Scottish Borders from disruption from UFAS*
- *Reduce the impact on education premises and health care facilities from UFAS*
- *Reduced vehicle movements, increasing capacity for other activity, improved road safety and reduced carbon footprint.*

Review

To ensure this Local Fire and Rescue Plan remains flexible to emerging local or national priorities a review may be carried out at any time but will be reviewed 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. This refresh of the 2018 plan will provide an interim direction as the SFRS and communities across Scotland move beyond the pandemic which has changed so many areas of our lives. Following any review, the Local Senior Officer may revise the Plan.

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