

**The Highland and Islands Fire Board
Integrated Risk Management Planning Working Group**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Integrated Risk Management Planning Working Group** held in the Chamber, Inverness Town House, Inverness on Friday, 15 January 2010, at 10.35 a.m.

Present:

Representing the Highland Council: Mr R Durham
Dr A Sinclair
Mr D Fallows

Representing Comhairle nan Eilean Siar: Mr I MacKenzie

Representing Orkney Islands Council: Mr A Drever

Representing Shetland Islands Council: Mr A Duncan

**Also in attendance:
Highland Council**

Mr D Flear
Mr J Ford
Mr J Gray
Mr P Carlin
Mr N MacLeod
Mr B Leslie

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Orkney Islands Council

Officials in attendance:

Mr T Johnson, Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Mr J Jenks, Head of Corporate Services, Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service (HIFRS)
Mr S Ross, Performance and Best Value Manager, HIFRS
Mrs R Moir, Assistant Clerk
Ms L Lee, Clerk's Office

Mr R Durham in the Chair

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs H Carmichael, the Highland Council.

All other Board Members also having been invited by the Convener to attend the meeting, apologies for absence were also intimated on behalf of Ms M Smith, the Highland Council and Mr A Cooper, Shetland Islands Council.

2. IRMP Risk Review – Phase III

At its meeting held on 6 November, the Working Group had considered the possible expansion of the set of factors agreed by the Board in 2005 as shaping the direction of the IRMP Risk Review process, and had agreed that a report on expanded proposals be submitted to a future meeting for consideration. Accordingly, there had been circulated Report No. IRMP1/10 dated 8 January 2010 by the Chief Fire Officer proposing revisions to the Board's parameters for future Risk Reduction Strategies.

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer (TDCFO) spoke to the report. Phases I, II and IIa of the Risk Review had now been completed. As had been previously recognised, the development of the Risk Review was an evolving process, with subsequent stages being influenced by the findings/outcomes of previous stages. At each stage data had been honed down and made more meaningful and manageable. Since 2005, a greater understanding of Service 'risk' had been achieved, risk reduction strategies had been progressed and the financial position continued to evolve. This would have significant impact on the Service in future years. There was therefore now a need to revisit the original parameters. Any changes would be made in a transparent way and staff would be kept informed of what was agreed by the Board.

A comparison of the original framework and the proposed parameters is appended to this minute for ease of reference. The TDCFO explained the reasons for each of the proposed parameters, drawing attention in particular to:

- the need for intervention resources to be provided on the basis of identified risk, which required to be balanced against the expectations of communities; this approach could strengthen the position when it came to reviewing the Service's current level of provision and when considering additional allocation of resources
- the possibility that risk could increase or decrease – i.e. developments within an area, demographic shifts and risk reduction strategies, etc, could change risk profiles for an area
- the removal of the word "retained" when referring to the creation of stations - this gave greater flexibility and thought should be given now to what the Service requirements in 10-20 years or more might be
- additional duties following the introduction of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 which required additional commitment of resources for training and equipping staff
- the balance between proactive risk reduction strategies - e.g. Home Fire Safety Checks, work to reduce road traffic collisions, etc - and intervention provision

In answer to a variety of questions raised, Members were advised that:

- the operation of the Service was reviewed on an ongoing basis with a view to identifying any ways of working more efficiently; however, the current efficient working practices of the Service had been acknowledged and there currently appeared to be very little spare capacity
- whilst the benefit of working with schools to promote fire safety and to attract future recruits was recognised, financial considerations would determine whether opportunities to build new stations as a joint venture with schools should be taken forward

- the Engineering Workshop was currently operating to service the needs of the expanded fleet; however, opportunities to offer workshop services to other authorities could be investigated as they arose
- joint working with other partners could be demonstrated in a number of areas – e.g. Scottish Ambulance First Responders - and a number of other options were currently being explored with the Police; joint working would not necessarily result in decreased costs, but use of resources would be maximised
- whilst it was strongly hoped that budgetary constraints would not impact on staffing levels, it had to be recognised that, as staffing comprised the majority of expenditure, in a worst possible scenario staffing numbers might have to be reviewed
- whilst flexibility required to be retained, reductions in expenditure might be achieved through, for example, reviewing equipment provision on some vehicles, where this was shown by data to be not required; this would provide savings in equipment purchase, installation and maintenance, and staff training.

Comments raised in discussion included that:

- the proposed extension to the IRMP parameters appeared rational – Members supported the proposals
- account should be taken of overall impact on a community of changing the role of units – local people tended to volunteer for more than one role in a community, and synergy between these roles could be lost
- where planning permission was sought for a high-rise building, and the building would mean that the Service then needed to purchase a high-reach ladder, developer contributions should be sought
- the Board should lobby the Scottish Government to introduce legislation requiring all new buildings to be fitted with sprinkler systems.

The Working Group **NOTED**:

- i. the information given;
- ii. that more detailed proposals would be brought to future meetings of the Working Group; and
- iii. that the new Chief Fire Officer would be fully apprised of the position with regard to IRMP the following week.

The Working Group **AGREED** to recommend to the Board that:

- i. the IRMP parameters for future Risk Reduction Strategies be revised as set out in the report;
- ii. a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Working Group on the potential to develop extending the Engineering Workshop activity to include carrying out work for partners; and
- iii. the Working Group's views on legislation requiring the installation of sprinkler systems in all new buildings be taken forward to the COSLA Community Safety Executive Group and the Fire Conveners' Forum.

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.

IRMP Framework as agreed by the Board on 24 November 2005	Proposed changes – January 2010
<i>In discussion, they (the Members present), indicated their unwillingness to see sustainable stations closed on the basis of FSEC data but, without prejudice, accepted that consideration could be given to:</i>	<i>Members indicated their willingness to progress the Risk Review Framework Phase III – To Develop the Most Appropriate Allocation of Resources to Maximise Risk Reduction and, without prejudice, accepted that consideration could be given to:</i>
a) changing the role of stations where these were unsustainable (eg. where not enough recruits could be found or appropriate cover not be provided)	a) providing the most appropriate allocation of intervention resource to match Service risk
b) changing the role of stations on the basis of identified risk	b) maintaining an appropriate level of intervention resources to ensure resilience
c) relocation of resources from multi-pump stations	c) changing the role of stations where these were shown to be unsustainable (eg. where not enough recruits could be found or appropriate cover could not be provided) (cf. 2005 (a))
d) the creation of new retained stations	d) changing the role of stations on the basis of identified risk (either increasing or decreasing) (cf. 2005 (b))
e) increasing revenue expenditure above current levels	e) changing the role of stations with regard to long term projected sustainability issues
<i>Any changes would require to be assessed on individual merit, with the information available being thoroughly scrutinised.</i>	f) relocation of resources from multi-pump stations (cf.2005 (c))
	g) the creation of new stations (cf. 2005 (d))
	h) balancing of the distribution of resource allocation to reduce risk whether external (in the community) or internal (staff development)
	i) the effects of the Service’s current and future risk reduction strategies
	j) increasing revenue expenditure above current levels (where possible) (cf. 2005 (e))
	<i>Any IRMP proposal resulting from Phase III review would require to be assessed on individual merit, with the information available being thoroughly scrutinised.</i>