

**HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS FIRE BOARD
POLICY & FINANCE WORKING GROUP**

Service Plan 2008/09-2010/11

Agenda Item	
Report No	PFWG 5/08

Summary

The attached report is the draft service Plan for the Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service 2008/09 – 2010/11

Contents of the Plan

This document presents our aims and objectives for 2008/09 and the subsequent two years, set in the context of our strategic aims. Contained within this report there are details of:

- the service planning process,
- the Service's mission statement and strategic aims
- the objectives to deliver the strategic aims
- the financial plan to support the Service Plan

Recommendation

Members are asked to recommend Board approval of the Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service Plan for 2008/09-2010/11.

**ALEX MACALLISTER
HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

DATE: 18TH DECEMBER 2007



DRAFT

SERVICE PLAN v1

2008/09 – 2010/11

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1. INTRODUCTION

Our purpose as an emergency service is set out in the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. Our principal functions are fire prevention, through promotion of fire safety, and to save life and property of the people of the Highlands and Islands. The road to achieve this is made easier by a well developed Service Planning process which will help deliver an efficient and effective service to the communities we serve.

What is the Service Plan

Our Service Plan is a clearly defined statement of what Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) intends to achieve in the short and medium term (2008/09 – 2010/11). It not only identifies the overarching “mission” of the Service but also provides details of how we will deliver our services through our strategic aims and objectives.

This Service Plan forms an integral part of our Performance Management Framework. It is used to set the scene, inform Service personnel, establish priorities, set targets, allocate resources including finance, monitor progress and plan for the future.

The ever changing environment in which the Fire Service operates requires the Service Plan to be a dynamic document. Therefore, the Service Plan will continue to be reviewed and updated regularly to meet this challenge. Each year the Service Plan will be republished to reflect any changes resulting from our ongoing review.

As in previous years, the aims and objectives contained within the Service Plan are underpinned by detailed Departmental Plans, copies of which can be made available on request from the Head of Corporate Services.

Ownership of the Plan

The ultimate ownership of the Plan rests with the Members of the Fire Board but all employees within HIFRS both individually and collectively take ownership, and responsibility, for its delivery.

Monitoring performance

To deliver to the high standards expected of us by our communities and stakeholders, we must have a framework to monitor and manage our performance in a controlled and visible manner. The Service Plan is the keystone of this framework.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As in previous years, the Service has followed a rigorous Service Planning process to ensure it has a clear strategy to deliver a high quality service to the people of the Highlands and Islands.

This Service Plan sets fourteen challenging objectives, which are clearly aligned to the four strategic aims and support the overall mission for the Service.

The Service's mission, the four strategic aims and the fourteen strategic objectives are all summarised below.

The Service's Mission Statement

“Helping Make Highlands and Islands a Safer and Better Place to Live”

The Four Strategic Aims

- 1 Prevent** Operate a managed approach to reduce the risk in the communities we serve.
- 2 Prepare** Provide a well equipped skilled and motivated workforce able to work safely and whose composition and purpose reflects the risk and diversity in the communities we serve.
- 3 Respond** Respond promptly and effectively to fires and other emergencies.
- 4 Resource** Provide a service committed to the highest levels of quality, delivering value for money and demonstrating public accountability.

The Fourteen Strategic Objectives in Priority Order

	Prevent	Prepare	Respond	Resource
• Develop solutions from the IRMP sustainability review	X	X	X	X
• Operational Assuredness	X	X	X	X
• Further develop incident command skills		X	X	X
• Introduction of Firelink communications system		X	X	X
• Succession Planning	X	X	X	X
• Retained availability management		X	X	X
• Implementation of approved restructure				X
• Fire Scotland Act Part 3 - Legislative Fire Safety	X			
• Flooding response			X	X
• Single status				X
• Introduction of the Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)		X	X	X
• Information management / document Control		X		X
• Risk review	X	X	X	X
• Information Technology (IT) Provision		X		X

3. SERVICE STRUCTURE

Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service is tasked with providing a service to one sixth the landmass of the United Kingdom, an area equivalent to Belgium in size. The population of approximately 280,000 and the industrial infrastructure is spread across the large mainland area and numerous islands. Communications are difficult and many communities need to be effectively self sufficient, in the knowledge that support of any kind may be hours away. Protecting the people and economy of this area is therefore a demanding challenge that requires an innovative and caring response.

Fire Board

The Board is the legal Fire Authority constituted under the Fire Service (Scotland) Act 2005. It discharges a range of duties in accordance with this Act, the Fire Service Framework and the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003. Its principal activities are budget setting and policy adoption but it is also responsible for the management systems that ensure the effective and efficient delivery of fire services to our communities. The Board meets on a quarterly basis.

Executive Command

This is the Service's policy making forum and consists of the three Principle Officers – the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer. In addition, the Heads of Corporate Services and Human Resources attend in an advisory capacity. This group meets on a weekly basis.

Service Management Team (SMT)

This team consists of the three Principle Officers and all Heads of Department. This group acts as a policy advice and 'sounding board' forum. The SMT are responsible for the management of the Service's performance and act as a strategic communication forum. SMT meet on a fortnightly basis.

Service Delivery

This group is lead by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer which comprises the Area Managers of Community Risk Management, North Area, South Area and Operations Support. It is responsible for policy development and implementation, management of service delivery resources and implementation of objectives. It also serves as an internal communication forum and is responsible for the management of departments, districts, stations and Community Response Units. In addition, a number of committees and working groups report to this forum. This group meets every four weeks.

Service Support

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer leads this group which comprises the Area Manager Operations Support, Area Manager Development, Head of Human Resources and Head of Engineering and Supplies. This group has broadly the same responsibilities as those of Service Delivery, outlined above, with the focus being on support activities. Like Service Delivery a number of committees and working groups report to this forum. This group also meets every four weeks.

4. SERVICE PLANNING PROCESS

The Service has a well developed Service Planning process involving Staff, Managers, Principle Officers and Board Members. The Service Planning process can be broken down into a number of key steps:

Step 1

Agree/Re-affirm the overall singular purpose of the Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service. Please see Section 5 – “The Mission Statement”.

Step 2

Agree the strategic aims to help deliver the “Mission”. Please see Section 5 – “Strategic Aims”.

Step 3

Establish the strategic objectives to deliver the aims, whilst examining our current position as well as internal and external pressures, such as Firelink, operational assurance audit, legislation etc. Please see Section 6 – “Strategic Objectives”.

Step 4

Prioritise and rank the strategic objectives using a weighted matrix which considers a number of factors including risk and efficiency. Please see Section 6 – “Strategic Objectives”.

Step 5

The resource implications of the prioritised strategic objectives are identified, and accommodated within the financial budget. This process is integral to the Service Plan and is designed to ensure achievement of the Services’ aims and objectives within a Best Value context. Please see Section 8 – “Financial Plan”.

Step 6

Communicate the Service Plan to relevant stakeholders including staff, the Fire Board and local communities.

Step 7

Monitor and evaluate performance. This is achieved using a well developed, sophisticated performance management framework. Please see Section 7 – “Monitoring Performance”.

5. MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC AIMS

The Mission Statement

HIFRS overarching mission statement is:

“Helping Make Highlands and Islands a Safer and Better Place to Live”

Strategic Aims

The four Strategic Aims to deliver the mission have been identified as:

Aim	Description
1 Prevent	Operate a managed approach to reduce risk in the communities we serve.
2 Prepare	Provide a well equipped skilled, and motivated workforce able to work safely and whose composition and purpose reflects the risk and diversity in the communities we serve.
3 Respond	Respond promptly and effectively to fires and other emergencies.
4 Resource	Provide a service committed to the highest levels of quality, delivering value for money and demonstrating public accountability.

6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

After taking stock of the current position, and understanding our internal and external pressures. The following 14 strategic objectives have been identified, in priority order, as key to delivering the strategic aims. The strategic objectives will focus the use of resources over the short and medium term.

Priority	14 Strategic Objectives	Which strategic Aims does the Objective Support			
		Prevent	Prepare	Respond	Resource
1	<p><u>Develop solutions from IRMP Sustainability Review</u> The Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process will provide information on the current level of Service Delivery by operational stations.</p> <p>Benefits This will allow performance to be reviewed and will assist the Service in ensuring the principles of IRMP are being met.</p> <p>Outcome Improvement in the performance of stations.</p>	x	x	x	x
2	<p><u>Operational Assuredness</u> In 2006/07 the service underwent a Comprehensive Performance Audit which concentrated on non operational issues such as strategic planning, finance and member involvement. The resulting local report identified this Service as having many areas of "Best Practice".</p> <p>A similar audit is scheduled for 2008 to cover operational matters. Four areas will be examined during this audit: Risk Analysis; Operational Preparedness; Incident Support and Emergency Response.</p> <p>Benefits An independent review of the Service's operational capability.</p> <p>Outcome An improvement agenda to ensure that the Service's operational capability remains consistent with "Best Practice".</p>	x	x	x	x

		Which strategic Aims does the Objective Support			
3	<p>Incident Management Skills As a predominately retained service, covering a large geographical area, it is a constant challenge to ensure that incident management skills are maintained. This challenge will continue to be addressed through a comprehensive training programme.</p> <p>Benefits Enhanced incident management skills appropriate to the individual station needs.</p> <p>Outcome A system capable of auditing operational activity including a review/monitoring mechanism.</p>		x	x	x
4	<p>Firelink In 2006 the Service commenced preparation for the introduction of "Firelink" - the new communication network for the Fire Service.</p> <p>2008/09 sees the project move into phase B with the installation of the Firelink system on all appliances and stations.</p> <p>Benefits A fully Integrated emergency management system.</p> <p>Outcome Firelink will enable stations to have the ability to communicate with other emergency services across the UK.</p>		x	x	x
5	<p>Succession Planning As a consequence of increased recruitment in the late 1970's a significant number of experienced officers will be due for retirement over the next two years. The Service has already planned for the financial impact of this on pensions; it will now also have to ensure there is adequate succession planning to continue the service delivery.</p> <p>Benefits Fully trained and experienced personnel to ensure the Service has uninterrupted continuity of service delivery.</p> <p>Outcome A succession plan and personal development plans which will ensure that the appropriate skill base continues within the Service.</p>	x	x	x	x

		Which strategic Aims does the Objective Support			
6	<p>Retained Availability Management 2008/09 will see the introduction of a computerised retained availability management system.</p> <p>Benefits This will provide comprehensive, “real time” information on retained firefighters’ availability to Control, District and Station Managers.</p> <p>Outcome Improved efficiency and effectiveness of the Retained Service.</p>		x	x	x
7	<p>Implementation of Approved Restructure In 2007 the Fire Board approved a restructure programme to be implemented in a phased manner based on opportunity and risk. 2008/09 will see further elements of the restructure implemented.</p> <p>Benefits Enhanced capacity in front line Service delivery.</p> <p>Outcome Improved structure to meet the needs of the service.</p>				x
8	<p>Fire Scotland Act Part 3 – Legislative Fire Safety</p> <p>The new Act requires preparatory work to ensure the Service is able to undertake the role of the Enforcing Authority as required by the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.</p> <p>Benefits Reduced risk throughout the service area.</p> <p>Outcome The provision of appropriate risk based fire safety precautions within the service area.</p>	x			
9	<p>Flooding response The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 obligates Fire & Rescue Services to provide effective flooding response capability.</p> <p>Benefits Improved protection for the community and enhanced safety for Fire Service personnel.</p> <p>Outcome The Service will provide equipment and training to enable it to meet it’s obligations under the Act.</p>			x	x

		Which strategic Aims does the Objective Support			
10	<p>Single Status In line with all public sector bodies, the Fire & Rescue Service has an obligation to harmonise terms & conditions of non-uniform employees and to ensure equal pay for equal value.</p> <p>Benefits Improved industrial relations.</p> <p>Outcome Compliance with legislation ensuring the Service provides equal pay for equal value.</p>				x
11	<p>Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS) IPDS is a means by which the Fire & Rescue Services can implement best practice human resource processes across the full range of Fire Service activity.</p> <p>Benefits It will enable Fire Service staff to attain, and subsequently maintain the level of competence required to meet the demands of their role.</p> <p>Outcome Continue the rollout of IPDS to retained stations and consolidate IPDS to wholetime personnel.</p>		x	x	x
12	<p>Information Management / Document Control The control and efficient use of information is crucial to enable effective service delivery.</p> <p>Benefits Improved efficiency.</p> <p>Outcome The information strategy will be further developed. In addition a comprehensive exercise to consolidate both Service Orders and Policies will be undertaken.</p>		x		x
13	<p>Risk Review Through the IRMP risk review the Service will further develop the manner in which it provides effective prevention and intervention responses.</p> <p>Benefits Improved safety in our communities.</p> <p>Outcome The delivery of effective Community Fire Safety and legislative enforcement and the provision of an appropriate intervention resource.</p>	x	x	x	x

		Which strategic Aims does the Objective Support			
14	<p><u>Information Technology (IT) Provision</u></p> <p>Our IT framework will ensure that IT continues to contribute effectively towards achieving the Service's corporate aims and objectives and will provide best value whilst meeting the government's electronic service delivery agenda.</p> <p>Benefits Improved efficiency and communications.</p> <p>Outcome Delivery of the framework will include the completion of the roll-out of IT facilities at all 95 retained stations along with the implementation of phase 4 of the Fujitsu partnership project.</p>		x		x

7. MONITORING PERFORMANCE

The Service has an established management framework which facilitates the monitoring of performance. Utilising a traffic light reporting system, electronic reports are routinely produced and reviewed at the appropriate levels of management. These progress reports are further supported by performance indicators which are reviewed continually throughout the year at departmental level, SMT, Exec Command and the Fire Board.

A summary of the performance achieved during the year is provided in the annual Public Performance Report (PPR).

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Progress Reports

Monthly reports are produced as a management tool for departmental managers and SMT to identify and review the progress against the activities detailed in departmental plans. Where an activity is not on target, the report identifies the reason why and the remedial action required.

Statutory Performance Indicators (SPI's)

SPI's are a simple way of monitoring performance against targets, identifying opportunity for improvement and making necessary changes. SPIs are set by the Accounts Commission and allow them, and other interested parties, to compare the performance of Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service with that of other fire and rescue services.

Local Performance Indicators (LPI's)

LPI's are set by the Service and reflect local priorities. Once again they are a way of monitoring performance against targets, identifying opportunity for improvement and making necessary changes, and demonstrating progress against our targets for the year.

Scottish Local Performance Indicators (SLPI's)

These have been agreed by all Scottish Fire and Rescue Services as a way to benchmark performance against each other. All of these indicators are reported, on a quarterly basis, to the following meetings: departmental, service management team, executive command and to Board members. Our performance against our targets is also published annually in our Public Performance Report (PPR).

Public Performance Report (PPR)

The PPR is published annually and in addition to reporting our performance in the current year, it shows our performance in the previous year, thereby allowing comparison and demonstrating trends and improvement.

8. FINANCIAL PLAN

Introduction

Financial planning continues to be a core activity for the Board and the Service. Historically, Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service has faced considerable challenges with regard to both its revenue and capital needs. This continues to be the situation in 2008/09.

The Revenue and Capital challenges require the Service to have a carefully constructed, realistic budget setting process reflecting both needs and resources. This process is integral to the Service Plan and is designed to ensure achievement of the authorities' aims and objectives within a Best Value context.

2008/09 Budgets

The revenue budget for approval by the Board in 2008/09, excluding loan charges, is £21.6m. Approximately 83% of this budget, £17.9m, relates to staffing. The estimated capital budget for the same period is £2.2m.

The compilation of both these budgets is heavily influenced by the strategic aims and objectives of the Service Plan. The detailed resource implications have been included for each initiative in the departmental plans and these, in turn, feed into the budget process.

The examples below clearly illustrate the link between the Service Plan and the financial budgets.

Firelink

Firelink, the National Communication Strategy contracted for by the Government, is estimated to require £300,000 to fund the set-up costs of training and vehicle conversion.

In line with the Board's revenue reserve strategy, this sum has been earmarked from reserves to fund the estimated "one-off" set up costs associated with the Firelink project.

IPDS

The cost of the roll-out of the integrated personnel development system has been built into the baseline revenue budget. In addition the training costs associated with Continuing Professional Development (CPD) have been separately identified and resources of £146,000 allocated.

Flood Response

The resource implication, equipment and training required, to meet our statutory obligations with regards to flooding response have been included in both the capital and revenue budgets

Insert the revenue and capital budgets here

9. TIMETABLE

Every member of the Service has the opportunity to submit proposals for inclusion in the Service Plan and all such proposals are welcome. Proposals are channelled through the Service Management Team where they are scrutinized in detail.

The following timetables are used to prepare the Service Plan and Revenue Budget.

Service Planning process	Completed during
Proposals from staff forwarded to Key Managers.	September
Proposals considered by Service Management Team.	October
Proposals and completion reports from Service Delivery, Service Support functions and Executive Command considered at annual SMT Service Plan meetings.	November
Draft Service Plan submitted to Policy and Finance Working Group of Fire Board together with draft Revenue Budget. The Service Plan is also submitted to the Audit Working Group of the Fire Board.	Early January
Draft Service Plan and Revenue Budget are submitted together to the Fire Board for approval.	Mid January
Final Plan printed and issued.	March

Budget Planning Process	Completed during
Service Delivery and Service Support Groups and Department Heads meet to consider budgetary timetable and bids emanating from proposals arising as part of service planning process.	November
Policy and Finance Working Group of The Fire Board considers budgets and Service Plan.	Early January
Fire Board considers detailed budget and recommendations of the Policy and Finance Working Groups.	Mid January
When the final detailed budget is approved, the constituent authorities are advised by the Treasurer of their respective requisitions for the forthcoming year.	

10. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRM	Community Risk Management
IPDS	Integrated Personal Development System
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan
IT	Information Technology
HIFRS	Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service
LPI	Local Performance Indicator
PPR	Public Performance Report
SLPI	Scottish Local Performance Indicator
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPI	Statutory Performance Indicator