

TAYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE BOARD**REPORT BY THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER****11 MAY 2009**

**TAYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE
TOWARDS A SAFER TAYSIDE ACTION PLAN 2009-2010****Abstract**

This Report provides Members with background information in relation to the attached Tayside Fire and Rescue, Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan 2009-2010.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the attached Tayside Fire and Rescue, Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan 2009-2010.

2 INTRODUCTION

At the Board meeting on 17 November 2008 Members agreed to the contents of the Tayside Fire and Rescue Board, Towards a Safer Tayside Consultation Document and that this document be distributed to key stakeholders for consultation purposes (Board Report FB/08/39 refers).

At the Board meeting on 30 March 2009 Members considered the responses received from stakeholders as part of the consultation process (Board Report FB/09/08 refers).

The attached Tayside Fire and Rescue, Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan 2009-2010 has been produced in accordance with the decision of the Board at the meeting on 30 March 2009.

The actions contained within the attached Action Plan are key to Tayside Fire and Rescue achieving success against our Strategic Objectives. Success in the achievement of the Objectives enables us to achieve our organisational mission of "Protecting the Community by providing the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to all of the communities we serve".

The attached Action Plan will be distributed to stakeholders of Tayside Fire and Rescue in accordance with our key stakeholder register.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the publication of the attached Action Plan. The financial implications of the achievement of any of the actions contained within the Action Plan will be brought before the Board as appropriate.

4 CONSULTATION

The Clerk and Treasurer have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

5 CONCLUSION

The attached Tayside Fire and Rescue, Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan has been the subject of extensive consultation and consideration by the Board. The actions contained within the Action Plan will enable Tayside Fire and Rescue to continue on its journey of continuous improvement in the services we deliver and the way we deliver these services in pursuit of our organisational mission of “Protecting the Community by delivering the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to all the communities we serve”.

S Hunter
Chief Fire Officer

Background Papers

No background papers, as defined in section 50d of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

Fire and Rescue Headquarters
DUNDEE



Tayside Fire and Rescue Board

Towards A Safer Tayside

Action Plan
2009-2010



Version 8

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Introduction

In November 2008 Tayside Fire and Rescue Board approved the contents of the Towards a Safer Tayside Consultation Document which set out the Board's proposals for the provision of fire and rescue services to the communities of Tayside.

Following consideration of the consultation responses, the Fire and Rescue Board has now issued this Action Plan for the year 2009/10. This Action Plan continues to build on the foundations laid in previous years Action Plans and details a number of initiatives which are designed to facilitate incremental improvements to the services we provide and the way we provide these services.

Tayside Fire and Rescue Board's mission is to provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to all the communities we serve.

In support of this mission every activity within the organisation is undertaken under one of our four Corporate Aims:

PREVENTION: Working with local communities to reduce risks to life, property and the environment from fire and other emergencies.

INTERVENTION: Responding promptly and effectively to deal with fires and other emergencies when they occur.

PEOPLE: Ensuring that services are delivered by a well equipped, skilled and highly motivated workforce which is able to work safely and whose composition reflects the diverse communities we serve.

PERFORMANCE: Monitoring performance to ensure continuous improvement and delivery of Best Value.

Key Drivers

Within the scope of the four corporate aims there are a number of associated key drivers which direct the activities of the fire and rescue service both nationally and locally.

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 affirmed new principles for the fire and rescue services of Scotland, placing prevention at the heart of what they do. It created new duties including promoting fire safety and gave powers to help create safer communities.

The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland highlights the Scottish Government's intention to improve the quality and effectiveness of Scottish fire and rescue services through Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP's) and collaboration with the wider community.

The Scottish Government Reform Agenda introduced reforms that will lead to a service which focuses on reducing risk whilst also responding to incidents. This strategy will improve community safety and result in fewer casualties and less property damage from fire.

The Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 places a duty on fire and rescue services to secure Best Value by striving for continuous improvement in the performance of the authority's functions. In doing so the service must maintain an appropriate balance between:

- the quality of its performance; and
- the cost to the authority of that performance.

This Act requires fire and rescue services to participate in Community Planning and to conduct consultation with both public and community bodies regarding delivery of services. Tayside Fire and Rescue is committed to working in a manner which constantly examines the effectiveness and efficiency of everything we do and we welcome the views and comments of our communities obtained through the consultation process.

In determining our policies and direction we have taken cognisance of all of the above 'key drivers'. Our Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan commits us to the continuous development of our services, with the aim of offering our communities even greater protection from fire and other emergencies. Tayside Fire and Rescue Board remains committed to securing the improvements which the initiatives contained within this Action Plan will deliver. However, the most important driver of all is our desire to reduce deaths and injuries from emergency incidents and provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services possible to the communities we serve.

This is the first Towards a Safer Tayside Action Plan to be produced following the introduction of the Concordat, the new operating relationship between central and local government in Scotland, and the development of Single Outcome Agreements. Through delivery of our organisational Mission, Aims, Strategic Objectives and Strategic Action Points, Tayside Fire and Rescue plays a major part in delivering against the Governments 5 strategic priorities and 15 national outcomes.

Tayside Fire and Rescue recognises that continuous improvement is a journey, not a destination and this Action Plan builds upon the significant achievements of previous Action Plans to continue that journey. This Action Plan enhances the safety of the communities we serve through the delivery of more effective community safety and emergency response services and increases the effectiveness and efficiency of Tayside Fire and Rescue as an organisation.

Consultation

After approving the contents of the Towards a Safer Tayside Consultation Document on 17 November 2008, Tayside Fire and Rescue Board embarked upon an extensive consultation process which closed on 27 February 2009. The Board's aim was to raise public awareness and seek the opinions of people who were most likely to be affected by the proposals in the Consultation Document.

The Board recognises that effective consultation plays a vital part in successfully implementing the proposals contained within the Consultation Document. Communicating the organisation's priorities and explaining how and why we aim to achieve them, should greatly assist in helping people understand and indeed support any proposed changes. To that end, we consulted extensively with internal and external stakeholders utilising various media. Numerous channels have been made available to facilitate feedback and enable people to express their support or concerns regarding our draft proposals. These channels included:

- Widespread distribution of paper copies of the Towards a Safer Tayside Consultation Document, with an accompanying questionnaire, to elected members and local centres like libraries and community councils. Copies were also sent to interested groups, such as other fire and rescue services, other emergency services and groups representing vulnerable sections of the community.
- A direct dial phone line which was staffed during office hours and provided with an answer/message service after hours.
- A web based presence through Tayside Fire and Rescue's website, www.taysidefire.gov.uk, with an online questionnaire. Comments could also be submitted electronically to a dedicated IRMP email address.

Presentations regarding the proposals for Balmossie, Perth and Forfar Fire Stations were given to all managers and operational watches in Tayside Fire and Rescue, retained personnel at Balmossie and Forfar, the Fire Brigades Union, our constituent councils, community councils and the media. Meetings were also held with local councillors, MP's and MSP's.

Those who replied and gave contact details have received a written response. Where it was felt that additional information would help to address issues raised by the respondent this was provided to them. The feedback received via these lines has been considered by the Fire and Rescue Board prior to the production of this Action Plan.

From the results of the questionnaires returned we can interpret the following:

- Most of the respondents (82%) found the document either very easy or easy to read and understand, however, a small number (18%) thought the document was difficult to understand.
- A large majority of respondents (85%) agreed that we should continue to build upon on our previous Action Plans and target our prevention activities at those at most risk within our communities. A small number (9%) disagreed with this proposal.
- A large majority of respondents (88%) agreed that after identifying the level of risk in each fire station area, the appropriate level of emergency response should be

commensurate with the level of risk faced by that community. A small number (3%) disagreed with this proposal.

- The proposal to make more effective use of our organisational resources so that Tayside Fire and Rescue can continue to provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response service to all the communities in Tayside was welcomed by the majority (79%) of respondents. A small number (12%) disagreed with this proposal.
- Achieving our primary aim of preventing fires and other emergency incidents occurring by Tayside Fire and Rescue becoming more involved within the community to promote prevention through Home Fire Safety Visits was agreed by the majority (82%) of respondents with a small number (6%) disagreeing with this proposal.
- Our intention to continue working with key agencies to reduce the number of Road Traffic Collisions in Tayside, with particular focus on young and inexperienced drivers was supported by 85% of respondents. A small number of respondents (3%) disagreed.
- Our proposal to invest in training and equipment to enable us to deal more effectively with changes in climatic conditions and the major threat of serious flooding within Tayside and therefore protecting people, their property and the environment was agreed by the majority of respondents (88%). A small number of respondents (3%) disagreed.
- Our bid to drive down the number of malicious fire calls by working with community planning partners to integrate initiatives into the wider community safety agenda was supported by the majority (91%) of respondents. Only 3% disagreed with this.
- A large majority (79%) of respondents agreed that the proposals contained in the Towards a Safer Tayside document will help make Tayside a safer place. A small number (12%) disagreed.
- 64% of respondents agreed that our proposals within our People section will help attract applicants from a wider section of the community and thus representing the diversity of all the communities in Tayside. 27% disagreed.
- Our plan to reassess the partnerships that we are currently involved in and ensure they are a worthwhile use of our resources and that they are delivering results towards our aims and objectives was welcomed by the majority (79%) of respondents with a small number (6%) disagreeing to this plan.
- There was unanimous satisfaction by everyone who had used our services.

There was a very positive view towards the quality of service provided by the crews and control staff of Tayside Fire and Rescue, indicating that the service is held in high regard by the communities it serves.

The Fire Brigade's Union (Tayside) submitted a document entitled Response to the 2009/10 IRMP Consultation Document. A formal response was also received from the Fire Officers Association.

The Fire Brigade's Union conducted a high profile campaign of resistance to the proposal relating to changes in the services delivered from Balmossie, Forfar and Perth Fire Stations. All relevant campaign information, including media articles, was considered.

In total there were over 1,600 responses to the consultation process which included correspondence from MP's, MSP's, local councillors and members of the community, consultation response questionnaires and standard letters submitted as part of the Fire Brigades Union's campaign of resistance.

All responses were considered as part of the consultation process and led to the decision by the Board, at its meeting on 30 March, to accept all the proposals contained within the Consultation Document except those relating to changes to the services delivered from Balmossie and Forfar Fire Stations. The Board also agreed amendments to the proposal relating to changes to the services delivered from Perth Fire Station.

Tayside Fire and Rescue Board wish to continue to engage in further formal consultations with communities in future years. Our guiding principle is that any person or organisation that might have a legitimate interest in our proposals, or who may be affected by our proposals, should have the opportunity to express their views.

PREVENTION

Strategic Objective One

Tayside Fire and Rescue Board aims to:

SO1 Reduce the number of deaths and injuries due to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies.

Action Points For Achieving This Objective

Tayside Fire and Rescue will:

- AP1 - Expand the scope of Home Fire Safety Visits to encompass all of the areas and communities we serve.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date – 30 April 2009
- AP2 - Ensure that we are at the fore in terms of devising and promoting campaigns which are targeted, using risk management data, at those identified as being most at risk.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP3 - Introduce a performance based process to ensure the most vulnerable high risk individuals are provided with a Home Fire Safety Visit.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 30 April 2009
- AP4 - Further improve targeting by increased use of local authority/Tayside wide data sharing.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010

How These Action Points Will Help Us Meet This Strategic Objective:

Most fire deaths occur in the home. By delivering home fire safety visits to the most vulnerable and providing smoke alarm installation we aim to reduce the number of deaths and injuries. Our close working with a range of agencies also ensures that additional measures such as domestic sprinklers may be provided if appropriate. We are continuing the effectiveness of our activities by utilising the local knowledge of our staff and the local communities added to the intelligent use of electronic analytical tools which identify the areas of greatest need for prevention work.

We will actively continue working with local authorities, police, and road maintenance organisations to reduce the number of people killed and injured on our roads. It is a sad fact that young, inexperienced drivers are most at risk of being involved and suffering the consequences of road traffic collisions. The partnership approach continues as we pursue improving the 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' project targeted at fifth and sixth year school pupils.

Our prevention work contributes to the Scottish Government's Strategic Priority of a Safer Scotland.

How Tayside Fire and Rescue Will Measure its Performance Against This Objective:

- PI 1 - Number of deaths from fire.
- PI 2 - Number of injuries from fire.
- PI 3 - Number of deaths from road traffic collisions.
- PI 4 - Number of injuries from road traffic collisions.
- PI 5 - Number of deaths from other emergencies.
- PI 6 - Number of injuries from other emergencies.

Strategic Objective Two

Tayside Fire and Rescue Board aims to:

SO2 Reduce the number of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies.

Action Points For Achieving This Objective

Tayside Fire and Rescue will:

- AP5 - Improve the accessibility of fire safety information for 'hard to reach' groups.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP6 - Continue to work with key agencies to support the activities aimed at reducing the number of road traffic collisions under the banner of 'Road Safe-Tay' - as reflected in each authority's Single Outcome Agreement.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP7 - Review our organisational structure to ensure that resources are best targeted to achieve the maximum effect possible in reducing the risk to our communities.
Lead Department – Principal Management
Target Date – 30 September 2009
- AP8 - Further develop the content and use of Community Risk Analysis Reports to better inform our risk reduction activities and those of our partner agencies.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010

How These Action Points Will Help Us Meet This Strategic Objective:

Our analytical processes assist in determining the likelihood and locations of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies. Using this information ensures we target our prevention activities to those communities and areas of greatest need. We will continue to review incidents attended and use this information to provide the necessary resources, along with our partner agencies, to reduce the impact of fire and other emergency incidents on our local communities.

We will also continually review our structures to ensure that the resources required for these activities are the most effective for the potential risk.

How Tayside Fire and Rescue Will Measure its Performance Against This Objective:

- PI 7 - Number of fires attended by Tayside Fire and Rescue.
- PI 8 - Number of road traffic collisions attended by Tayside Fire and Rescue.
- PI 9 - Number of other emergencies attended by Tayside Fire and Rescue.
- PI 10 - Percentage of accidental domestic property fires confined to room of origin.

Strategic Objective Three

Tayside Fire and Rescue Board aims to:

SO3 Protect our communities through the enforcement of fire safety legislation and community safety activities.

Action Points For Achieving This Objective

Tayside Fire and Rescue will:

- AP9 - Ensure we contribute effectively to the development and delivery of the constituent authorities Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreements (SOA's).
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP10 - Strengthen partnership activities at a local level to ensure our strategic objectives and Community Planning Partnerships Single Outcome Agreements are delivered.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP11 - Review the Community Fire Safety structure to ensure engagement with all sections of the community as identified within the equality target groups.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP12 – Undertake a review to examine the benefits and feasibility of a dedicated youth engagement team.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 December 2009
- AP13 - Investigate options for future requirements for risk management databases and integration with other software management systems.
Lead Department – Risk Management
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP14 - Complete the evaluation of the use of wireless mobile devices to carry out routine community based activities.
Lead Department – Community Safety
Target Date - 31 March 2010
- AP15 - Conduct a comprehensive review of Legislative Fire Safety policies and procedures.
Lead Department – Risk Management

Target Date – 31 March 2010

- AP16 - Take cognisance of developments at national level and revise our fire investigation strategy and implement new policies and procedures.

Lead Department – Risk Management

Target Date – 31 March 2010

- AP17 – Develop a process whereby operational personnel integrate thematic fire safety inspections into existing visits to gather risk information.

Lead Department – Risk Management

Target Date – 31 March 2010

- AP18 - Continue to promote the installation of fire suppression systems in the residential sector.

Lead Department – Community Safety

Target Date – 31 March 2010

- AP19 - Continue to develop our relationship with Procurators Fiscal in order to deal with breaches and potential prosecutions effectively.

Lead Department – Risk Management

Target Date – 31 March 2010

How These Action Points Will Help Us Meet This Strategic Objective:

There are great benefits to organisations, agencies and other stakeholders working together to achieve outcomes that improve the wellbeing of our communities. In recognition of this we will continue to contribute to the development and delivery of activities and agreements, along with our community planning partners.

The victims of fire and other emergency incidents are predominantly from within certain sections of the community, including those with disabilities, health issues, language, and behavioural and/or communication difficulties. Issues which may result in them becoming socially excluded. We will ensure that our structures allow us to continue to explore every opportunity to access individuals within these groups who are often known to key agencies and local communities.

The vast majority of young people contribute positively to their local communities and seek to push their own personal boundaries. There are also young people who have challenging backgrounds which impact on their personal development and their ability to achieve their full potential. There is also a minority of young people who become involved in anti-social behaviour activities which cause problems in our local communities. In recognition and response to this we have developed a number of successful programmes including our Young Firefighter Scheme, Fire Academy, and Fire College in addition to our work with The Prince's Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards programme. We will undertake research to establish whether a dedicated team will improve the delivery and development of these programmes.

By working with the public and private sector communities across Tayside we hope to achieve maximum co-operation in the field of legislative fire safety. To ensure we are being effective it is vital we develop assessment methods for future prevention work.

Internet access to databases by our personnel whilst away from the office will provide up to date information to maximize effectiveness when working with our communities.

How Tayside Fire and Rescue Will Measure its Performance Against This Objective:

