

## Our People

Section 2 of the 'Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say' document describes the variety of incidents within SFRS and the different responsibilities we have

1. To ensure the highest possible levels of community and firefighter safety, SFRS needs to have firefighter duty systems with the right staffing levels available to attend incidents at the time of day when there is most risk. Do you:

- Agree strongly ✓
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Prefer not to answer

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council strongly agrees with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) position on ensuring appropriate firefighter staffing levels. Public safety is our top priority, and having the right number of firefighters available during peak risk times is essential for protecting both our communities and emergency personnel. We are committed to working collaboratively with SFRS to achieve this goal.

To ensure decision-making is transparent it would be helpful to have a clearer understanding of the following:

- Types of risks and their prevalence at different times i.e. what are peak risk times?
- Definition of "daytime" in the context of staffing
- Balance between risk severity and impact on staffing decisions.
- What will the impact be on response times for perceived lower-risk times of day?

Knowing how these factors are weighed would help ensure firefighter deployment decisions are being made with adequate consideration of response times and public safety.

## Service Priorities

1. The 'Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say' document (Section 3) outlines the need for SFRS to change. From the list below, please select UP TO FOUR issues that you feel should be priorities for SFRS. Please RANK THESE IN ORDER with 1 being the most important.

**(2) Crews should be based in areas where there is more risk and demand.**

**(1) SFRS should have the right resources (i.e. fire appliances) in the right place – based on analysis of risk.**

**Fire stations should have dignified changing facilities for firefighters.**

**Reassurance that any changes won't make me or my family less safe.**

**There should be a visible SFRS presence near where I live.**

**(3) SFRS should undertake prevention work to protect the most vulnerable in communities**

**SFRS needs to demonstrate best value for public money.**

**SFRS should strive to reduce its carbon footprint wherever possible.**

**(4) SFRS should work alongside communities to build resilience and better prepare for significant events, including flooding and wildfire**

## Investing in Change

1. Section 4 of the 'Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say' document outlines the need for SFRS make better use of our resources. One way we can do this is to work in partnership with other public bodies (e.g., Police Scotland and others) to explore how we can provide better value for the public. Do you:

- Agree strongly. ✓
- Agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Disagree.
- Disagree strongly.
- Prefer not to answer.

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council strongly agrees with the need for SFRS to make better use of resources through partnerships with other public bodies. We believe collaboration can significantly improve public safety and overall service delivery through data sharing, joint training, shared resources, joint prevention activities, joint vulnerability assessments, and co-location of services. However, in the current financial climate objectives around co-location of premises may prove challenging given the capital required to invest in new buildings.

## Our Appliances

Section 5.2 of the 'Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say' document (Changing Where our Stations and Appliances are Based) outlines why we need to review where our appliances are located. For communities to be safe, we need to have the right resources in the right place.

1. SFRS should have fire appliances located based on risk in local communities

- Agree strongly
- Agree ✓
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Prefer not to answer

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council agrees with SFRS basing fire appliance locations on a risk-based analysis of local communities for the following reasons:

- Improved Response Times: Strategic placement based on risk can significantly reduce response times, particularly in critical situations. Faster arrival translates to better chances of saving lives and minimising property damage.
- Targeted Resource Allocation: Distributing fire appliances based on risk ensures resources are aligned with areas of greatest need.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: A risk-based approach uses objective data to optimise resource allocation, maximising efficiency, and effectiveness.

While The Council support a risk-based approach to fire appliance location, we also recognise the importance of maintaining adequate coverage for perceived low risk areas or outlying or geographically challenging areas. We'd be happy to work with SFRS to ensure a balance is achieved, where high-risk zones have the necessary resources while response times in other areas remain acceptable. Open communication and data sharing will be crucial in finding the optimal solution that prioritises safety across all our communities.

As stated above transparency around the quantification of risk would be helpful in ensuring that proposals and decisions around appliance location are taken with adequate consideration of response times and public safety.

## Where We're Located

Section 5.2 of the 'Shaping Our Future Service: Your Say' document (Changing Where our Stations and Appliances are Based) outlines why we need to review where our fire stations are located. To do this, we must consider how the communities we serve have changed and are continuing to change.

1. SFRS should have fire stations located based on risk in local communities. Do you:

- Agree strongly
- Agree ✓
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Prefer not to answer

2. SFRS should consider sharing premises with partners (e.g., Scottish Ambulance Service, Police Scotland and local authorities) to provide a better service for our communities. Do you:

- Agree strongly ✓
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Prefer not to answer

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council believe in both a risk-based approach to fire station location and co-location with partner agencies (Scottish Ambulance Service, Police Scotland) for several reasons:

- **Optimising Resources:** Locating fire stations based on risk ensures resources are strategically placed to address areas with the highest need. This improves response times and overall service effectiveness.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Co-location with partner agencies provides closer collaboration and better communication. This can lead to faster joint responses to emergencies and improved information sharing.
- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Sharing facilities can potentially lead to significant cost savings for all involved parties. These savings can then be re-directed towards other vital services.

However SFRS should also consider:

- **Equity in Service Delivery:** Focusing solely on high-risk areas might neglect outlying or lower-risk communities, potentially increasing response times in those areas. This could be a fairness concern, particularly for residents in those communities.
- **Unexpected Incidents:** Risk assessments may not predict all potential emergencies. A purely risk-based approach might leave areas vulnerable to unforeseen incidents.
- **Data Accuracy and Currency:** The effectiveness of a risk-based approach hinges on the accuracy and timeliness of data used to identify high-risk zones. Inaccurate data could lead to suboptimal resource allocation.
- **Financial implications:** Co-location with partners is likely to require capital investment in buildings that will be challenging for partner agencies to access within the current financial climate. Decisions of station location are also long-term commitments, and inflexible in comparison to evolving risk profile changes.

## Our Role In Local Communities

Our prevention, preparedness and protection work can help reduce the risk of fires and other potentially life-threatening situations. It can also help us better plan for events such as flooding and wildfires.

1. SFRS should work with community partners (e.g., local authorities and others) to further reduce these risks. Do you:

- Agree strongly ✓
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly
- Prefer not to answer

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council strongly agree that collaboration is key to reducing fire risks within communities. We believe in a multi-pronged approach that leverages the

strengths of various partners across the Inverclyde Alliance. This could include public education, community outreach, and data sharing.

2. SFRS should contribute towards Net Zero by, for example, reducing our own carbon emissions. Do you:

- Agree strongly. ✓
- Agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Disagree.
- Disagree strongly.
- Prefer not to answer.

Please use this text box to give us any additional thoughts on this.

Inverclyde Council strongly agree that SFRS should contribute to achieving Net Zero. Reducing carbon emissions aligns with our own environmental sustainability goals. The Council would like to work together to make significant progress towards a cleaner, more sustainable future. However, it should always remain the case that public safety is the main priority for SFRS and any resource allocation proposals should not compromise that objective in favour of carbon reduction projects.

1. SFRS may wish to hold a future public consultation on some of the issues detailed below. Please tell us to what extent you think the public should be consulted on each issue.
  - The public should be fully consulted
  - The public don't need to be consulted, but should be informed.
  - The public don't need to be consulted
  - Unsure

Changes to firefighter role (e.g., to include emergency first aid responder) **Full Public Consultation**

Modernisation / upgrade of a fire station(s) **Public Information, Not Full Consultation**

Closure of a fire station **Full Public Consultation**

Moving a fire station to a new location **Full Public Consultation**

Permanent removal or relocation of a fire appliance(s) **Full Public Consultation**

Changes to firefighter duty systems **Public don't need to be consulted**

Sharing locations with other partners (e.g., Police, Ambulance, local authorities.), **Full Public Consultation**

Building a new fire station **Full Public Consultation**

## *Any Other Comments*

- 1. Please give us any other comments that SFRS should take into account when considering the future of the Service.*

This survey focuses on agreement with positive strategic goals, which may limit the ability to gather meaningful and nuanced feedback. To understand how these goals translate into local service delivery, going forward it will be crucial to explore how these positive strategic objectives translate into resource allocation decisions that will impact our communities.

Inverclyde Council strongly encourages the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to continue its commitment to open and transparent engagement on future plans that may have local implications. Any proposal that includes a reduction in appliances, buildings, or whole-time coverage would need rigorous assessment and consultation to ensure there was no detrimental impact on public safety within our communities. Future public consultation should be through a variety of engagement mechanisms to ensure all voices within our communities are given the opportunity to have their say on proposals that may affect them.

We believe that a collaborative approach, with open communication and opportunities for public input, is essential for building trust and ensuring that SFRS services effectively meet the needs of our communities. Similarly the service should ensure there is full engagement with their workforce and unions.

We appreciate the efforts SFRS has made thus far to engage with local authorities and communities, and we look forward to continued collaboration as decisions are made about the future of the service.

We are confident that by working together, SFRS and local communities can develop a future-proofed fire and rescue service that prioritises public safety and well-being.