

A meeting of the Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel will be held on Thursday 27 March 2025 at 3pm.

Members may attend the meeting in person or via remote online access. Webex joining details have been sent to Members and Officers. Members are requested to notify Committee Services by 12 noon on Wednesday 26 March 2025 how they intend to access the meeting.

In the event of connectivity issues, Members are asked to use the *join by phone* number in the Webex invitation and as noted above.

Please note that this meeting will be live-streamed via YouTube with the exception of any business which is treated as exempt in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

Further information relating to the recording and live-streaming of meetings can be found at the end of this notice.

LYNSEY BROWN
Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services

BUSINESS

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The reports are available publicly on the Council’s website and the minute of the meeting will be submitted to the next standing meeting of the Inverclyde Council. The agenda for the meeting of the Inverclyde Council will be available publicly on the Council’s website.

Please note: this meeting may be recorded or live-streamed via YouTube and the Council’s internet site, where it will be capable of repeated viewing. At the start of the meeting the Provost/Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded or live-streamed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during any recording or live-streaming will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy, including, but not limited to, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available via the Council's internet site or YouTube.

If you are participating in the meeting, you acknowledge that you may be filmed and that any information pertaining to you contained in the recording or live-stream of the meeting will be used for webcasting or training purposes and for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available to the public. In making this use of your information the Council is processing data which is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. If you are asked to speak at the meeting then your submission to the committee will be captured as part of the recording or live-stream.

If you have any queries regarding this and, in particular, if you believe that use and/or storage of any particular information would cause, or be likely to cause, substantial damage or distress to any individual, please contact the Information Governance team at dataprotection@inverclyde.gov.uk

Enquiries to – **Lindsay Carrick**– Tel 01475 712114

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**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Working together for a safer Scotland

SFRS Spotlight Report: Inverclyde Deliberate Fire Setting

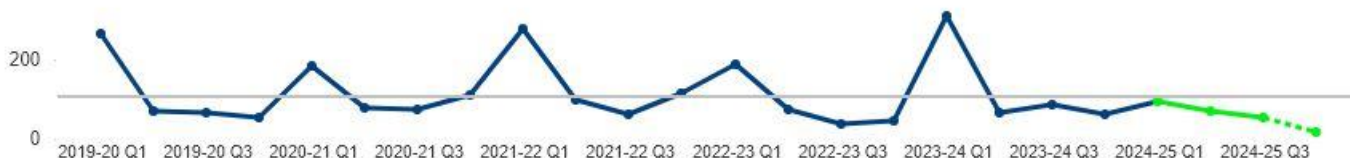
Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

This spotlight report will provide an overview of the statistics around deliberate fire setting within the Inverclyde area and the wider West of Scotland as well as highlighting the activities undertaken by SFRS, in conjunction with our partners to address this issue. Deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour is an ongoing problem across Scotland, with SFRS attending between 10,000 and 15,000 deliberate fires each year, these incidents impacting on communities, businesses and the environment.

Although it is perceived to be a major issue within Inverclyde, in relation to the overall statistics, Inverclyde compares positively with many other local authority areas when looking at total numbers of incidents of deliberate fire setting, as illustrated below:

Local Authority Area	Number of Deliberate Fires Recorded 2024-25
City of Glasgow	1680
North Lanarkshire	1054
South Lanarkshire	709
Renfrewshire	415
North Ayrshire	375
East Ayrshire	357
West Dunbartonshire	265
Inverclyde	237
South Ayrshire	184
East Renfrewshire	157
Dumfries & Galloway	92
East Dunbartonshire	92
Argyll & Bute	34

The numbers of deliberate fire setting incidents recorded in Inverclyde has been reducing over the last 5 years with occasional spikes in numbers in some quarters as shown on the chart below:

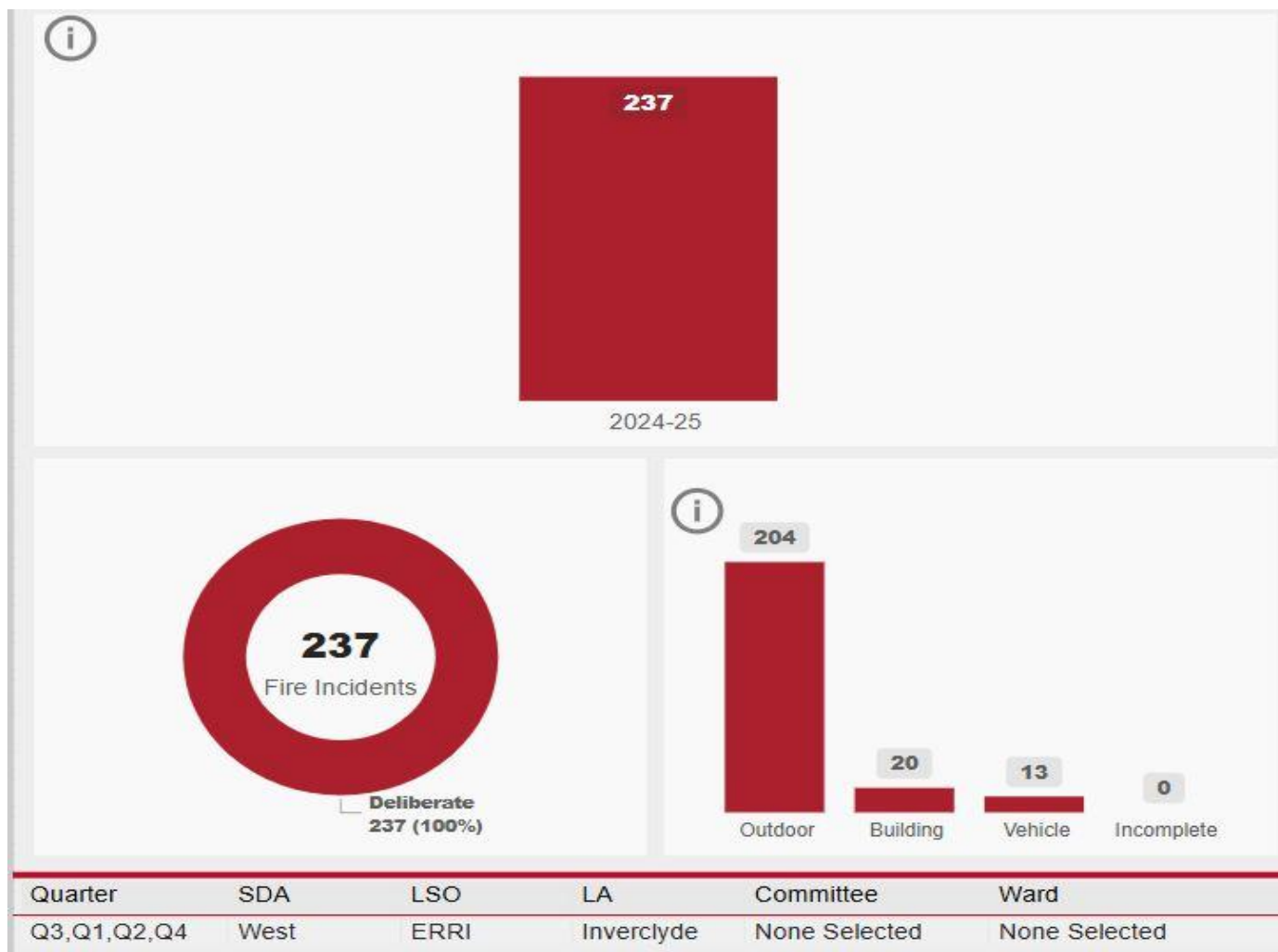


These fluctuations in incident numbers can be attributed to various influencing factors, these include the time of year, the weather and other anti-social behaviour, for example fly tipping.

The annual totals for the last 5 years started at 449 in 2019-20, peaked at 553 in 2020-21 with the lowest being this year, where to date we have recorded 237 deliberate fires in Inverclyde. The geographic spread of these incidents across Inverclyde’s wards is as follows:

Inverclyde Central	40
Inverclyde East	38
Inverclyde East Central	50
Inverclyde North	14
Inverclyde South	27
Inverclyde South West	51
Inverclyde West	17
Total	237

Most incidents of deliberate fire setting within Inverclyde involve outdoor fires, these can be further broken down into those which involve refuse or refuse containers, and then other outdoor fires. To date for 2024/25 we have recorded 204 outdoor fires, with 88 involving refuse and 116 in the other outdoor category. The remaining deliberate fires have been 20 involving buildings and 13 vehicle fires.



Further statistics are provided for information on page 5 and 6 of this report.

Deliberate fire setting is a core SFRS Prevention and Protection objective for several reasons, it is a Key Performance Indicator within our Performance Management Framework, is one of the performance measures which we report on to the Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel, but also because targeting our education and engagement to address deliberate fire setting has many benefits, including:

- Demand reduction for SFRS
- Demand reduction for our partners
- Financial savings for SFRS and partners because of demand reduction
- Improved community safety and wellbeing.

Our Community Action Team (CAT) and operational crews are at the forefront of delivering our safety messaging around deliberate fire setting, this being covered as part of our education engagement syllabus with this being one of the topics covered as part of a wider presentation on fire related anti-social behaviour. The presentation also covers:

- Deliberate fire setting and fire vandalism
- Fire hydrant vandalism and misuse
- Damage or theft of firefighting equipment and/or facilities
- Malicious/hoax 999 calls
- Deliberate actuations of fire warning systems
- Acts of violence against fire service personnel.

These topics are also covered by our operational crews during visits to youth groups etc. as well as by CAT during the FireSkills courses which we have delivered and continue to deliver in Inverclyde, with the support of Inverclyde Council and our partners.

Another part of our targeted safety messaging can be seen within our Fire Safety Support and Education Programme (FSSE). It is one of a suite of educational interventions designed to promote fire safety and is aimed at young people, under 18 years of age, who have shown an unsafe interest in fire or fire related anti-social behaviour. This programme involves engagement with professionals from a wide range of disciplines to benefit individuals, families and communities. Engagements can often be with some of the most vulnerable in society and our staff delivering the programme, FSSE advisors, undergo specialist training to enable them to effectively communicate with the young people, being aware of factors that drive this type of behaviour such as the impact of trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and can then employ strategies to encourage behavioural change.

During routine fire safety audits our Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (FSEOs) will provide advice and guidance to responsible persons in relation to their premises waste management practices and how these can reduce incidences of deliberate fire setting. Where we have a spate of deliberate fires involving refuse or refuse containers at a specific premises, which might suggest there are issues with their waste management procedures, our FSEOs would engage with our partners, other enforcing authorities and responsible persons with an aim to addressing the issue.

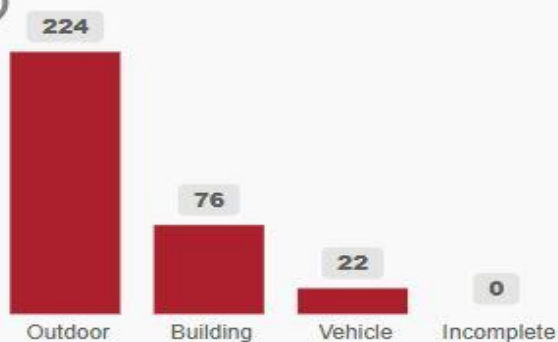
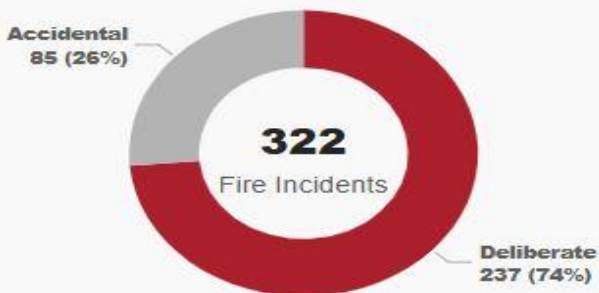
Derelict and unoccupied properties can be targets for deliberate fire setting as witnessed within the Clune Park area, some of these incidents were a substantial draw on the resources of SFRS and our partners. Through partnership working it was possible to put together a plan to tackle the issues in this area of Inverclyde and the incidences of deliberate fire setting reduced dramatically.

It is clear that deliberate fire setting and fire related anti-social behaviour is not something which SFRS can tackle on its own, with partnership working being key to reducing these types of incidents. SFRS works closely with our partners, particularly via the Inverclyde Hub, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to responding to incidences of deliberate fire setting or to other fire related anti-social behaviour. The Hub provides a valuable forum where information and intelligence can be shared with partners including Police Scotland, Inverclyde Council staff including community wardens and registered social landlords. The regular sharing of operational and community intelligence has allowed us to find opportunities for preventative work and to identify various individuals at risk of harm. The mutual sharing of information has also informed operational preparedness across all partners and has had a significant impact on improving the safety of firefighters, partners and the wider community.

SFRS will continue to have a focus on the reduction of deliberate fire setting within Inverclyde and will continue our close collaboration with all our local partners to assist in achieving this aim, ultimately making the communities across Inverclyde safer.

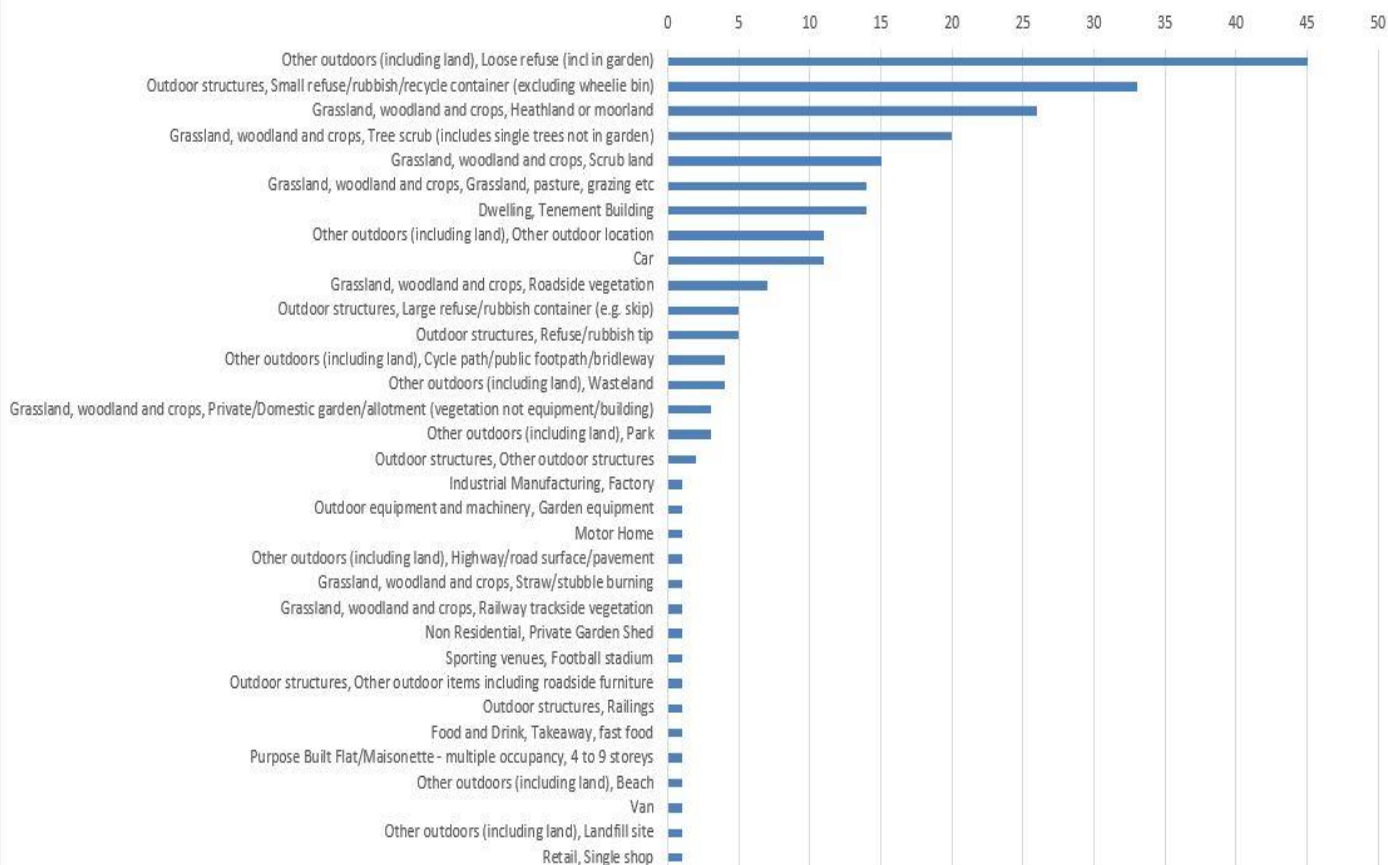


2024-25



Quarter	SDA	LSO	LA	Committee	Ward
Q3,Q1,Q2,Q4	West	ERRI	Inverclyde	None Selected	None Selected

Number Of Deliberate Fires By Property Type



<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Deliberate Fires</u>
2019-20 Q1	264
2019-20 Q2	68
2019-20 Q3	64
2019-20 Q4	53
2020-21 Q1	185
2020-21 Q2	77
2020-21 Q3	75
2020-21 Q4	109
2021-22 Q1	279
2021-22 Q2	100
2021-22 Q3	60
2021-22 Q4	114
2022-23 Q1	190
2022-23 Q2	74
2022-23 Q3	36
2022-23 Q4	44
2023-24 Q1	310
2023-24 Q2	65
2023-24 Q3	86
2023-24 Q4	62
2024-25 Q1	95
2024-25 Q2	69
2024-25 Q3	55
2024-25 Q4 (to date)	18

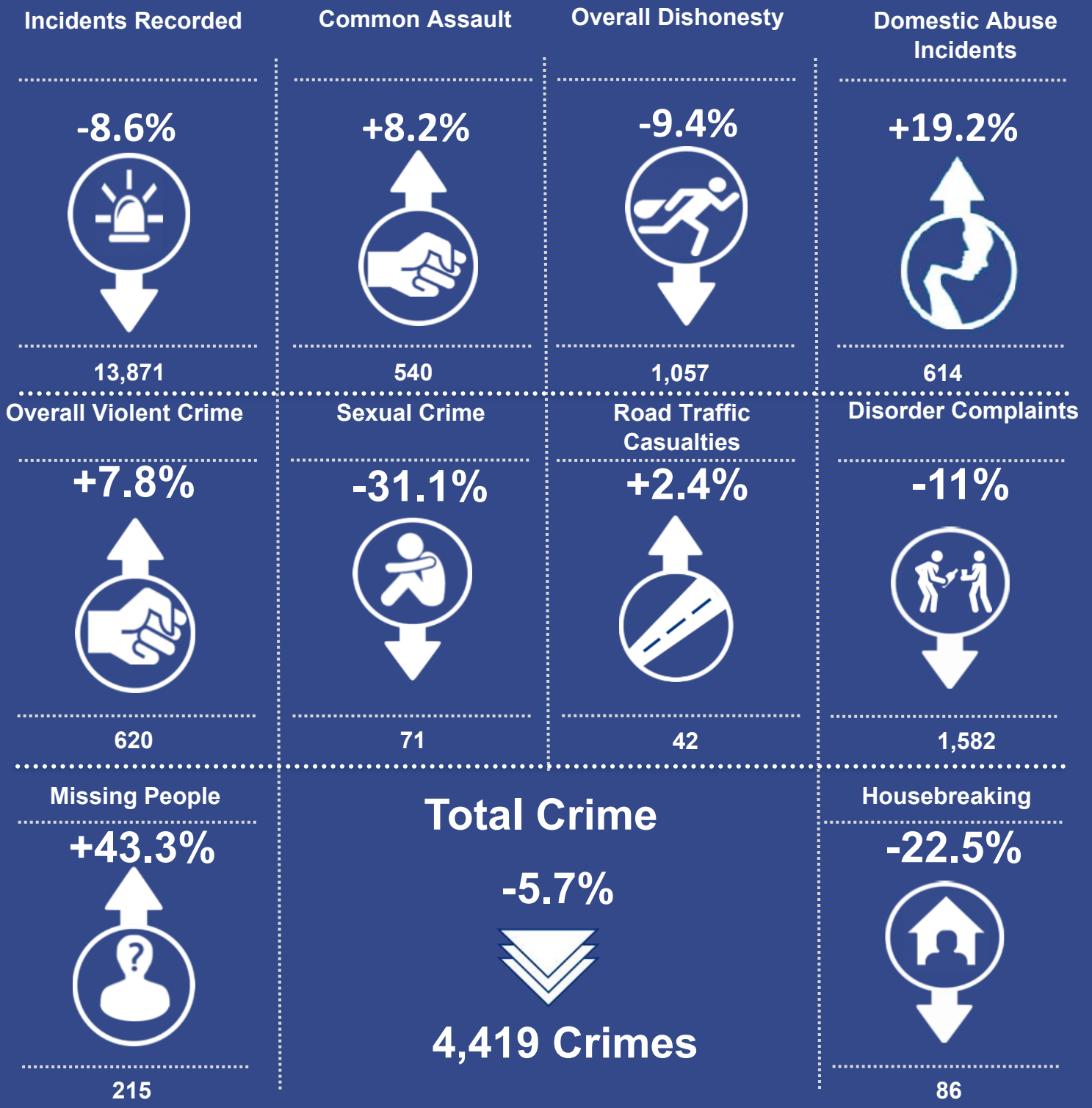


POLICE
SCOTLAND
POILEAS ALBA

Inverclyde Performance Summary Report

Reporting Period: 01/04/2024 - 31/12/2024

Unless otherwise stated, all data provided is for the period 1 April - 31 December 2024, and all comparisons are made with the same period in 2023/24. All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information. All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of 11 February 2025.





Inverclyde Performance Summary Report

Reporting Period: 1 April 2024 to 31 December 2024

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Introduction

I am pleased to present this report to the Police Fire and Rescue Committee for its information and consideration. Please note that all data included in this report are management information and not official statistics. All data are sourced from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as of date of publication. Unless stated otherwise, numerical comparisons are against the comparable period in the preceding reporting year.

Chief Superintendent Rhona Fraser
Local Policing Commander
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division

INVERCLYDE POLICING PRIORITIES 2023 - 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence, Disorder and Antisocial Behaviour

Violent crime in Inverclyde has risen by 7.8% (620 crimes). Serious violence increased by 5.3% (80 crimes), and common assaults rose by 8.2% (540). The detection rate improved to 69.3%, exceeding the previous year and national average. Violence remains concentrated in deprived areas. Weapons offences fell by 10.9% (131 crimes), with an 86.3% detection rate. Antisocial behaviour complaints dropped by 11%, while vandalism and fireraising fell significantly.

Protecting People at Risk of Harm

Sexual crimes in Inverclyde fell by 31.1% (71 crimes). Contact offences dropped 51.7%, while non-contact crimes declined 4.4%. The detection rate rose to 76.1% (from 65%). Missing person reports increased by 43.3% (215 reports, 106 individuals), largely due to new national recording rules. A third involved care-experienced young people. Domestic abuse incidents rose by 19.2% (614 cases), with multi-agency frameworks supporting victims. Inverclyde recorded six confirmed and seven suspected drug-related deaths, with cocaine and bromazolam commonly involved.

Acquisitive and Cyber/Digital Crime

Recorded crimes of dishonesty in Inverclyde fell by 9.4% (1,057 crimes), contrasting a 1.3% national rise. The detection rate improved to 51.1% (from 43.3%). Housebreaking crimes decreased by 22.5% (86 crimes), with detection rising to 20.9%. Fraud remains a key threat but fell by nearly 30% (109 crimes), with banking, retail, and bogus tradesperson scams prevalent. Shoplifting rose by 12.5% (551 crimes), making up over half of dishonesty crimes, with repeat offending a major factor. Cyber-enabled crime remains a significant concern in Inverclyde, with online fraud continuing to feature as the most common issue.

Road Safety and Road Crime

Inverclyde recorded 42 road casualties, one more than last year, including one fatal collision. Police Scotland remains committed to road safety through enforcement and education, supported by the Road Policing Unit and Safety Camera Unit. Road traffic offences fell by 1.5% (728 offences), contrasting a 3.3% national rise. Proactive enforcement led to an 81% rise in detected speeding offences, a 27% increase in dangerous driving, and a 15% rise in mobile phone offences. The detection rate improved to 85%.

POLICE SCOTLAND'S POLICING PRIORITIES 2023 - 2026

Protecting vulnerable people

Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division continues to support a multi-agency approach to reduce drug deaths, to engage with Scottish Government and stakeholders to influence approaches to supporting individuals with complex mental health needs, and to work in partnership to develop local effective and efficient pathways to support vulnerable people.

Tackling crime in the digital age

Police in Inverclyde continue to benefit from the support of specialised Police Scotland units such as the Cybercrime Unit and the Economic Crime and Financial Investigation Unit, amongst others. There are continued efforts to ensure our Officers have the training, resources and equipment needed to tackle the threat arising from cyber related criminality and technological advancement.

Working with communities

The Division continues to support this Police Scotland priority and to develop strategic partnerships to find synergy in policy making and shared resources. Police in Inverclyde recognise the importance of engaging with communities to understand their needs, and strive to support innovation in local partnership settings.

Support for operational policing

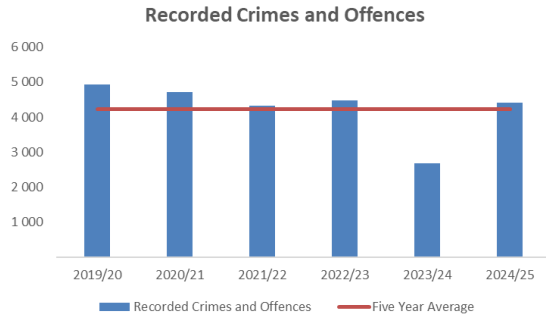
Inverclyde Police continue to link in closely with Police Scotland's Corporate Services who enable and support operational resources to deliver against the strategic priorities and their outcomes. As part of the Digitally-Enabled Policing Programme, migration to new national Core Operational Systems has led to increased efficiency and deployability of local Police Officers, allowing them to more effectively serve Inverclyde's communities.

DEMAND ANALYSIS

PYTD - PREVIOUS YEAR TO DATE

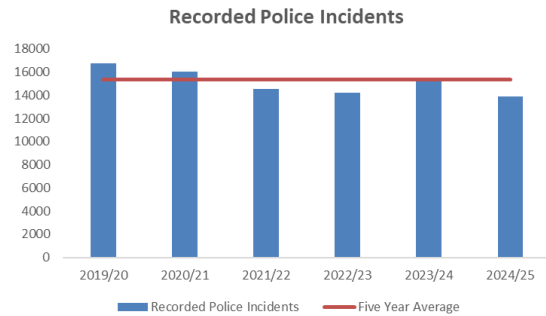
CYTD - CURRENT YEAR TO DATE

CRIME	PYTD	CYTD	INCIDENTS	PYTD	CYTD
Total Crimes & Offences	4,687	4,419	Total number of incidents	15,178	13,871



Crime and Offences

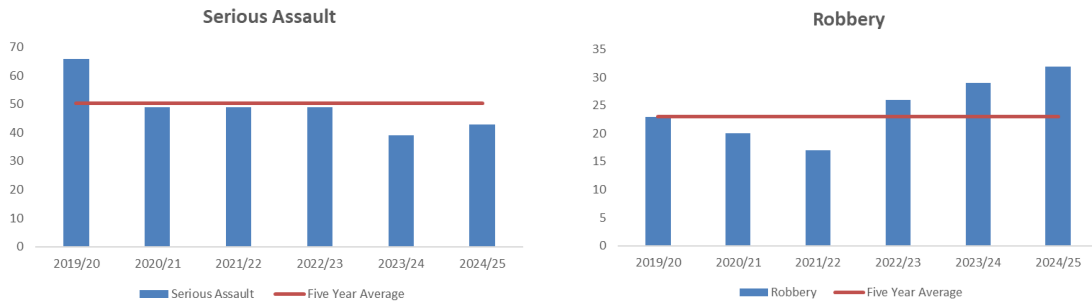
Year on year, crimes and offences in Inverclyde have fallen by 5.7%, to a total of 4,419. Conversely, recorded crimes and offences have increased by 1.3% at a national level. In Inverclyde, the overall decrease in recorded crime has arisen from a drop across several crime categories, namely Group 2 sexual crimes (e.g. sexual assault and indecent communications offences), Group 3 crimes of dishonesty (e.g. housebreaking, fraud and theft of motor vehicle), Group 4 crimes of damage and reckless behaviour (e.g. wilful fireraising and vandalism), Group 5 crimes against society (e.g. drugs and weapon offences), and Group 8 road traffic offences (e.g. seatbelt offences and driving dangerously). Meanwhile, recorded Group 1 non-sexual crimes of violence (e.g. serious assault and robbery) and Group 7 miscellaneous offences (e.g. licensing offences and general telecommunications offences) rose on last year's figures. The overall detection rate for crimes and offences in Inverclyde is 72.7%, an increase on the previous year's position of 64.6%; the detection rate also remains above the current national position of 66.1%.



Police Incidents

Police incidents recorded this year have dropped by 8.6%, totalling 13,871. One contributory factor in this decrease is a reduction of over 35% in silent or abandoned 999 calls, suggesting that technical solutions addressing accidental emergency dials from certain smartphones are working. Despite the decrease in the total number of incidents, there are indications of growing demand in relation to certain issues, including a rise in missing person/absconder incidents, domestic incidents, assist member of the public incidents, and drugs/substance misuse incidents. We continue to work closely with partner agencies to ensure the implementation of the most appropriate and proportionate Police response to identified issues.

VIOLENCE, ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND DISORDER



Violence

Overall violent crime has risen by 7.8% compared to the same period in 2023/24, totalling 620 recorded crimes. 80 crimes of serious violence have been recorded - an increase of 5.3% on the previous year; while common assaults have increased by 8.2% to a total of 540.

The detection rate for violent crimes in Inverclyde in the reporting period was 69.3%, remaining above the previous year's rate of 65.6% and the national rate of 68.7%.

Inverclyde's most vulnerable communities continue to experience a disproportionate rate of violence, with nearly two-thirds of recorded violent crimes taking place in the top 10% most socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods. In the case of crimes of serious violence, this proportion increased to three-quarters - underscoring the well-established link between violence and factors such as financial stress, social instability and limited access to support services.

Weapons Offences

131 offensive/bladed weapons offences were recorded in the current reporting period, a decrease of 10.9% on the previous year. Continued proactive focus on the issue contributed to the detection rate for weapons offences rising to 86.3% (from 81.6% in the previous year). Community Policing Officers and the Partnerships and Preventions Team have also worked across Inverclyde schools to deliver programs like "No Knives, Better Lives" and have also engaged with local community groups to address specific antisocial behaviour concerns.

Disorder and Antisocial Behaviour

Complaints regarding disorder in Inverclyde decreased by 11%, with a total of 1,582 incidents reported. Tackling disorder and antisocial behaviour remains a key focus of the Inverclyde Partnership Hub, a police-led multi-agency initiative that collaborates with statutory and third-sector organisations. Crimes involving damage and reckless behaviour also fell by 23.8% compared to the previous year, totalling 359 crimes. Wilful fireraising crimes dropped to their lowest point in several years, with 27 (-55% on 2023/24 figures), while reports of vandalism fell by 22%.

Hate Crime

During the reporting period, 114 hate crimes were recorded in Inverclyde, with a detection rate of 67.5% for these crimes. In addition to the impact of new legislation, changes in methodology and counting rules arising from the introduction of new recording systems make comparisons with previous years challenging. Race was the most commonly targeted protected characteristic, featuring in nearly 40% of hate crimes recorded in Inverclyde.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Sexual Crime

A total of 71 sexual crimes were recorded in Inverclyde during the reporting period, a decrease of 31.1% on the same period in 2023/24. Contact offences (such as rape, attempted rape and sexual assault) have fallen by an even greater margin (-51.7%), while non-contact crimes (including cyber-enabled offences such as indecent communications and possession of indecent images of children) fell by 4.4%. The detection rate for sexual crimes was 76.1%, compared to 65% in the previous year and the national rate of 58.1%.

Missing People

Inverclyde Police take all missing person reports seriously, using a rigorous threat assessment to determine potential risks to the individual or others. During the reporting period, 106 individuals collectively featured in a total of 215 missing person reports. Compared to the same period in 2023, total missing person reports increased by 43.3%. A significant contributory factor for this increase is the National Missing Persons Unit's implementation of national business rules relating to how these incidents are recorded and when forms must be raised, which have helped establish an accurate reflection of the number of missing people and the resulting demand of these incidents on frontline officers. All individuals were traced, with the average missing period lasting just over 14 hours. Around a third of all missing people in the reporting period were care-experienced young people.

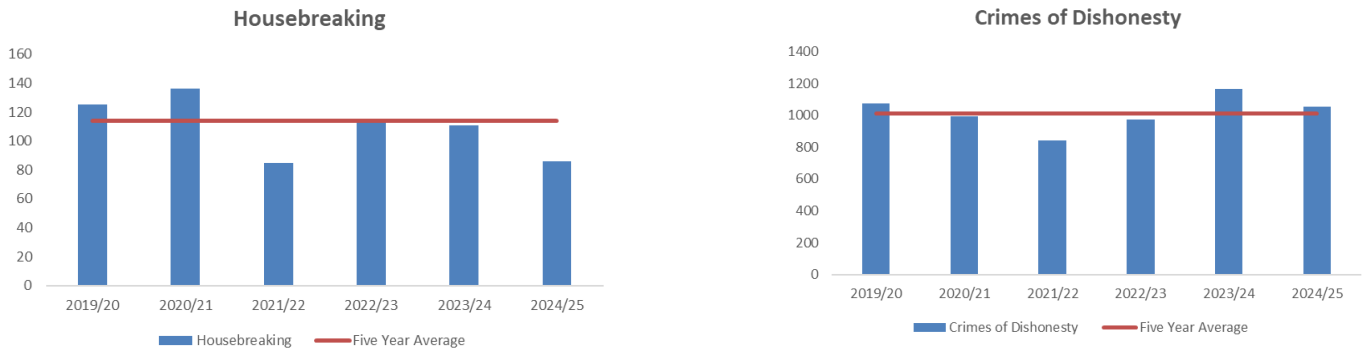
Domestic Abuse

Tackling domestic abuse remains a top priority for Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division. While domestic abuse is widely recognised as under-reported, police remain committed to providing a professional, sensitive, and consistent response to victims. Caution should be exercised when comparing the number of domestic abuse incidents involving recorded crimes and the detection rate, as changes in methodology and counting rules, introduced with a new recording system this year, affect direct comparisons with previous periods. Despite these caveats, Inverclyde recorded a 19.2% increase in domestic abuse incidents over the past year, reaching 614 cases, with 297 of these (48.4%) resulting in a crime being recorded. Multi-agency collaboration remains critical in safeguarding victims and holding offenders accountable, with the Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) frameworks continuing to provide essential support and ensuring effective partnership working. During the reporting period, Inverclyde recorded 110 MARAC referrals, while 14 MATAC referrals were made across Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. The Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS), which allows individuals to request information about a partner's history, remains a key tool in prevention, with 279 applications submitted and 190 disclosures made across the Division in the past year. Police in Inverclyde continue to engage in national and local initiatives to prevent domestic abuse, including participation in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, a campaign calling for an end to violence against women and girls. Additionally, the Domestic Abuse Investigation Unit and Divisional Rape Investigation Unit continue to deliver continuous professional development (CPD) events for CID and uniformed officers, focusing on the role of specialist units and best practices in investigating domestic abuse and sexual crime.

Drug-Related Deaths

Six confirmed and seven suspected drug-related deaths occurred in Inverclyde during the reporting period, with toxicology results still awaited in relation to the latter. A range of substances are suspected of having contributed to these deaths, with cocaine and bromazolam commonly featuring. We continue to collaborate with various partners to combat drug-related harm, including delivering educational programs in schools and taking proactive measures to address drug supply and distribution within the community.

ACQUISITIVE CRIME



Converse to a rise of 1.3% at a national level, recorded crimes of dishonesty in Inverclyde decreased by 9.4% on the previous year, with a total of 1,057 recorded crimes. The current detection rate for acquisitive crimes in Inverclyde is 51.1%, considerably above the previous year’s rate (43.3%) as well as the current national rate (34.9%).

A total of 86 housebreaking crimes (including attempts) were recorded, a decrease of 22.5% on the previous year. Housebreaking crimes of all types have fallen on the previous year’s figures, with fewer crimes to dwelling houses, sheds/outbuildings and also commercial/public buildings. The detection rate also increased from the previous year’s position of 18.9%, to 20.9% in the current reporting year.

Although fraud continues to be identified as a key threat in Inverclyde due to ever-evolving methods used by fraudsters, recorded crimes have fallen by nearly 30% on last year’s figures, with a total of 109 crimes reported. Common fraud categories targeting victims in Inverclyde include banking and credit industry frauds, consumer and retail frauds, advance fee payment frauds and bogus tradesperson frauds.


Theft by shoplifting crimes constituted more than half of the overall total number of crimes of dishonesty. Recorded shoplifting crimes increased by 12.5% on the previous year, totalling 551 crimes. Repeat offending is a significant issue in crimes of theft by shoplifting, with 84 individuals being charged with two or more crimes in Inverclyde in the current reporting year.

CYBER & DIGITAL CRIME

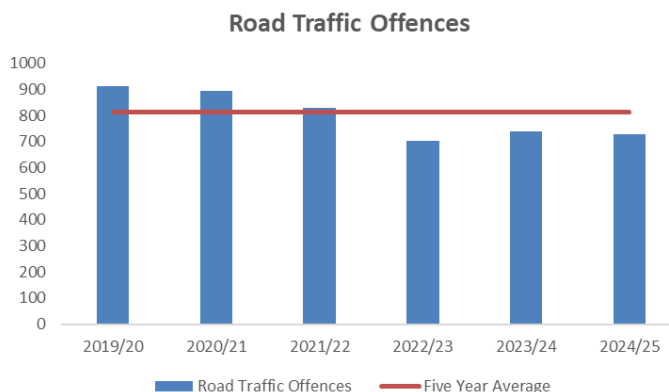
Cyber-enabled crime remains a significant concern for communities in Inverclyde. Fraud continues to be the most commonly recorded cyber-enabled in Renfrewshire, with nearly 43% of all recorded frauds being perpetrated online. We continue to address this issue through local partnerships and national collaboration with the Cyber Scotland Partnership and the financial sector to raise awareness of online fraud.

Over three-quarters of recorded crimes of threats and extortion in Inverclyde were cyber-enabled, with sexual extortion continuing to be identified as a key threat. ‘Sextortion’ is a form of online blackmail where offenders manipulate victims into sharing intimate images or videos and then threaten to expose them unless further images, videos, or money are provided. Offenders often build trust through social media or messaging platforms before making demands. This crime can have serious emotional and financial consequences for victims.

ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME

Road Traffic Casualties		2023/24	2024/25
	Number of persons killed on our roads	0	1
	Number of persons seriously injured	13	20
	Number of persons slightly injured	28	21
	Number of children seriously injured	0	1

Road Traffic Data from 01/04/2024 to 31/12/2024



Road Casualties

During the reporting period, Inverclyde recorded 42 road traffic casualties - an increase of one on the same period in 2023/24, with one fatal road collision recorded in the current year. Police Scotland remains committed to reducing road casualties through ongoing enforcement and education efforts. The dedicated Road Policing Unit (RPU) from Police Scotland's Operational Support Division continues to support local policing through a range of road safety and crime prevention campaigns. Recent initiatives have included Operation Drive Insured, Brake Safety Road Week, the National Taxi Education & Enforcement Campaign, and the Festive Drink Drug Drive Campaign.

The West Safety Camera Unit (SCU) of Safety Cameras Scotland continues to assist Inverclyde Police across the local authority area. Camera deployment is guided by a detailed assessment of collision volume, severity, and causation. Officers will maintain close coordination with the RPU, partners, and the community to enhance road safety efforts.

Road Traffic Offences

A total of 728 road traffic offences were recorded in Inverclyde during the period, reflecting a 1.5% decrease on the previous reporting year. This contrasts with a national increase of 3.3% in road traffic offences. However, a proactive focus on key issues has resulted in an increase of nearly 81% in detected speeding offences, a 27% increase in dangerous driving offences, and 15% rise in mobile phone offences. Overall, the detection rate for road traffic offences in Inverclyde rose from last year's position of 81.6%, to 85% in the current reporting year.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE: COMPLAINTS & USER SATISFACTION

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE POLICE

TOTAL COMPLAINT CASES RECEIVED			TOTAL NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED		
YTD	LYTD	% Change	YTD	LYTD	% Change
66	79	-16.5%	123	132	-6.8%

In the reporting period April to December 2024, a total of 66 complaint cases and 123 allegations were received in Inverclyde. 98 related to 'on duty' allegations, with over half of on duty allegations pertaining to irregularity in procedure. A further 25 allegations were received relating to quality of service, with a large proportion of these relating to policy or procedure.

Allegation Category and Type	YTD	PYTD	% change from PYTD
On Duty - TOTAL	98	96	2.1%
Assault	9	7	28.6%
Corrupt Practice	1	0	x
Discriminatory Behaviour	1	2	-50.0%
Excessive Force	14	6	133.3%
Incivility	17	18	-5.6%
Irregularity in Procedure	49	53	-7.5%
Neglect of Duty	0	2	-100.0%
Oppressive Conduct/Harassment	2	2	0.0%
Other - Criminal	0	2	-100.0%
Other - <u>Non Criminal</u>	1	2	-50.0%
Traffic Irregularity/Offence	1	2	-50.0%
Unlawful/Unnecessary Arrest or Detention	3	0	x
Quality Of Service - TOTAL	25	36	-30.6%
Policy/Procedure	12	6	100.0%
Service Delivery	6	8	-25.0%
Service Outcome	7	22	-68.2%
Grand Total	123	132	-6.8%

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

83.3% of respondents to the 'Your Police' survey reported that they felt safe in their local area, compared to the national figure of 85.3%. 44.1% of respondents reported that their concern about crime had increased in the last 12 months, lower than the national proportion of 48.4%.

43.9% agreed, or strongly agreed that they had confidence in the Police in their local area, with 41.3% of respondents giving this response at the national level. 28.5% of Inverclyde respondents expressed the opinion that the police were doing a good job in the local area (nationally, 33.8% of respondents responded this way).

Key concerns raised by the community include road safety, with concerns relating to a wide range of related issues including speeding, the use of illegal vehicles on Inverclyde's roads and dangerous / careless use of roads in the vicinity of schools and other vulnerable locations. Drug supply and drug abuse also continue to feature as a common issue which causes concern to Inverclyde's residents. Analysis also identifies the theme of a continued, strong desire for greater visible policing in communities, highlighting the value placed on local officers and their presence in keeping people safe.

LOCAL POLICING PRIORITY OUTCOMES – CASE STUDIES

Sextortion Inputs

The Preventions Team is wrapping up a series of awareness sessions on sexual extortion, targeting S5 and S6 high school students in Inverclyde. This proactive approach aims to equip young people with the knowledge and resilience to protect themselves from online exploitation.

Multi-Agency Partnership Training - Missing Persons

The Missing Person Coordinator for Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Division co-delivered missing persons training at the Inverclyde Royal Hospital, strengthening collaboration between partners and enhancing frontline responses to this key community issue.

Drug Harm Prevention – DSM Foundation Training

Officers in Inverclyde received refresher training from The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs (DSM) Foundation, a drug and alcohol education charity dedicated to reducing harm among young people. This training provided officers with updated knowledge on the risks and effects of substance use, equipping them with better tools to engage with vulnerable individuals and prevent drug-related harm. Recognising the wider benefits, the training was also extended to partner agencies, ensuring a joined-up approach to tackling substance misuse in Inverclyde's communities.

Strengthening Victim Support Services

A targeted push to promote victim support services in Inverclyde has been undertaken, ensuring greater awareness and accessibility of assistance for those affected by crime.

After Dark Campaign

This well-received campaign focused on personal safety and crime prevention as daylight hours shortened, encouraging Inverclyde's residents to take proactive steps to protect themselves and their property.

FORTHCOMING INITIATIVES

Preventions Educational Initiatives

To continue to build knowledge of essential local and national resources for mental health, suicide prevention, and substance abuse, the Preventions Team will be briefing frontline officers in Inverclyde on available local partnership supports, with partner agencies also attending to enhance collaboration. Officers will be equipped with the 'This Is For You' (TIFY) crisis card and other support materials, as well as a digital version for PDAs, enabling quick connections to the right support for vulnerable individuals.

Road Safety Campaigns

In the upcoming period, Inverclyde Police - supported by the Road Policing Unit - will launch key road safety initiatives, including the Pedestrians and Older Drivers Campaign and the National Speeding Campaign. These campaigns aim to improve road safety through a combination of education, high-visibility patrols, and targeted enforcement.

Report To: Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel **Date:** 27 March 2025

Report By: Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development **Report No:** P&F/02/25/HS

Contact Officer: Hugh Scott, Service Manager, Community Learning Development, Community Safety & Resilience and Sport **Contact No:** 01475 715450

Subject: Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel Update Report

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision

For Information/Noting

1.2 The report informs the panel of local and national initiatives, reviews, and consultations and, where appropriate, informs Members of potential future agenda items relevant to Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and local impacts.

1.3 This report is intended to draw these elements together with a view to informing and shaping future meeting agendas as appropriate and raising awareness of emerging issues.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the panel:

1. notes the current and emerging local and national issues relating to Police and Fire & Rescue matters; and
2. approves the proposed response to consultation on SFRS draft strategy 2025-28.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 THE SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY BOARD

3.1 The meeting of SPA Board was held on 20 February 2025 <https://www.spa.police.uk/what-we-do/governance-meetings/board-meeting/20-february-2025/> and considered several updates, including: -

- Live Facial Recognition – National Conversation
- Recorded Police Warnings Webinar
- Policing mental health, distress and vulnerability
- Arrests under the Terrorism Act – Greenock
- County Lines intensification week
- Pay Awards 2024-25
- Festive drink and drug driving campaign

3.2 Live Facial Recognition – National Conversation

In June 2024, the Scottish Police Authority and the Biometrics Commissioner called for a national discussion about Police Scotland’s potential use of live facial recognition. Over the coming months, they plan to hold focus groups, conduct polls and surveys, and host a national conference to gather public and stakeholder input. The goal is to determine if there’s consensus on whether Police Scotland should further develop a policy and procedure for using this technology. The results of this national conversation, along with Police Scotland’s recommendation, will be presented to the Authority’s Policing Performance Committee in June 2025.

3.3 Recorded Police Warnings Webinar

The Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland hosted a webinar on 11 December to discuss the use of direct measures within the criminal justice system. These measures are an established practice with guidelines, but are not used for offenses like sexual offenses, domestic abuse, or hate crimes. Data is collected and monitored to ensure proper use.

The event aimed to educate the public and address concerns. Participants included representatives from Police Scotland, COPFS, Community Justice Scotland, and Edinburgh University. The discussion, informed by public and stakeholder questions, focused on the proportionality and consistency of direct measures, and empowering police officer discretion. The Authority expressed gratitude to its partners and the public, and confirmed its continued oversight, with a future focus on research to assess the effectiveness of direct measures.

3.4 Policing mental health, distress and vulnerability

The Scottish Police Authority is working with a partnership group to improve police support for people in mental health distress. The group, including police, NHS, government, and community representatives, has created a Framework for Collaboration and Collaborative Commitments, building on the existing Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These documents aim to help people in mental health crisis who interact with the police to get appropriate support quickly. The Authority's Policing Performance Committee will track progress and report in September 2025.

Further information about the Framework publication is presented in section 5 of this report.

3.5 Arrests under the Terrorism Act – Greenock

A 16-year-old male was arrested outside the Inverclyde Islamic Centre in Greenock on 23 January and charged under the Terrorism Act. A second 16-year-old was also arrested in connection with a separate terrorism offense but released pending further inquiries. Following these arrests, police have been engaging with local faith groups and the community to offer reassurance. Due to the ongoing investigation, further details are limited, but the Panel will be updated as the case progresses.

3.6 County Lines intensification week

During a national County Lines intensification week (25 November – 1 December 2024), Police Scotland safeguarded 66 vulnerable people and arrested 81 individuals (60 men, 21 women) involved in drug dealing. 54 search warrants were executed at 79 addresses, including 25 suspected "cuckooing" locations. The operation resulted in the seizure of illegal drugs (heroin and cocaine), £60,000 in cash, and offensive weapons. County Lines operations exploit vulnerable people to sell drugs and bring violence to smaller communities.

3.7 Pay awards 2024-25

On Friday, 14 February, a 4.75 per cent uplift to pay and relevant allowances for police officers was confirmed for 2024-25. Backdated pay will be paid in March's salary run following the decision, which was made by independent arbitration. An independent arbitrator was appointed by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) after an agreement was not reached. Following a ballot, on Monday, 6 January, staff unions agreed a headline 4.75 per cent pay award for police staff for 2024-25.

3.8 Festive drink and drug driving campaign

During their festive drink and drug driving campaign (1 December 2024 – 19 January 2025), Police Scotland detected over 1,300 offences. Officers conducted 4,779 breath tests and 963 drug wipes, speaking with over 25,000 drivers. The campaign involved proactive patrols, community engagement, data-driven targeting, responding to public information, and roadside checks.

4.0 **POLICE OFFICER QUARTERLY STRENGTH STATISTICS: 31 DECEMBER 2024**

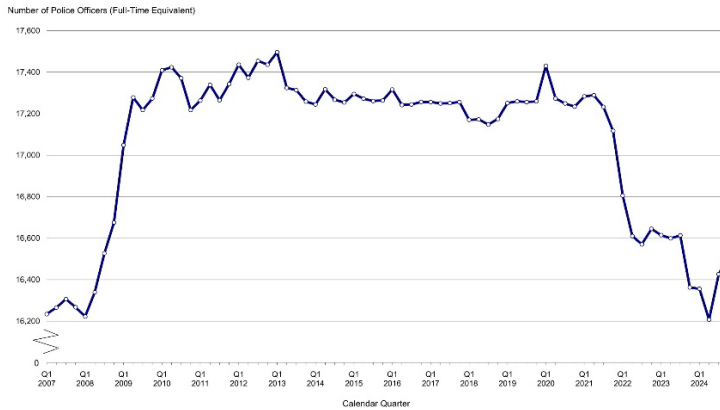
4.1 Scotland's Chief Statistician has published statistics on Police Officer Quarterly Strength, which gives the number of full-time equivalent police officers employed by Police Scotland. The key findings of the statistics are:

- there were 16,508 full-time equivalent (FTE) police officers in Scotland on 31 December 2024
- police officer numbers increased by 81 FTE officers (+0.5%) in the last quarter from 30 September 2024
- police officer numbers increased by 145 FTE officers (+0.9%) in the last year from 31 December 2023
- this is an increase of 273 FTE police officers (+1.7%) from the 16,234 FTE police officers recorded at 31 March 2007

Police officer numbers have increased compared to last quarter to their highest figure since Q3 of 2023.

4.2 The chart below shows the total number of police officers (full-time equivalent) in Scotland between Q1 2007 and Q4 2024. The number of FTE police officers have been on a downward trend since Q2 2021 but have increased in Q4 2024 (16,508) when compared to the previous quarter (16,427).

Figure 1. Number of FTE Police Officers in Scotland



4.3 The publication file (.xlsx) is available to download at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/police-officer-quarterly-strength-statistics-31-december-2024/>.

5.0 MENTAL HEALTH - DISTRESS FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION: MULTI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

5.1 The Scottish Police Authority has been working closely with a Partnership Delivery Group to explore how policing can best support individuals experiencing mental health distress. This group, comprised of representatives from policing, NHS partners, the third and community sectors, and the Scottish Government, has developed and published a Framework for Collaboration and associated Collaborative Commitments.

These documents build upon the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, co-sponsored by COSLA and the Scottish Government, and promote a collaborative approach to ensure that individuals in mental health distress or crisis who come into contact with the police can access appropriate services and support rapidly.

Upon the documents' release, Justice Secretary Angela Constance MSP stated, "We want to ensure that those in emotional distress are directed to the most appropriate support for them. This will help individuals and also relieve pressure on police officers and other emergency workers so they can focus on frontline responsibilities."

The Scottish Police Authority's Policing Performance Committee will oversee the progress and impact of this approach, with the first report due in September 2025. The framework document and collaborative commitments are available via the links below.

- [Mental health - distress framework for collaboration: multi-agency partnership approach - gov.scot](#)
- [Mental Health Partnership Delivery Group: collaborative commitments plan - gov.scot](#)

6.0 SFRS DRAFT STRATEGY 2025-28 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is legally obliged to develop a 3-year Strategy. SFRS is inviting members of the public to share their views on its draft SFRS Strategy 2025-28. The document outlines the Service's direction for the next three years and represents a significant step towards realising its long-term vision. To address known Service risks and achieve its ambitions, the SFRS has identified five key strategic objectives, each considered equally important in driving the Strategy forward. The document also details the outcomes the Service aims to achieve in pursuit of these objectives.

- 6.2 The Strategy sets the overall direction, while the specifics of its implementation will be detailed in the Three-Year Delivery Plan. This plan will be a dynamic document, outlining the activities the SFRS intends to undertake throughout the Strategy's duration. Development of the Three-Year Delivery Plan will commence once the SFRS has finalised its Strategy.
- 6.3 The online consultation is available on the SFRS website at <https://firescotland.citizenspace.com/planning-and-performance/draft-sfrs-strategy-2025-28/>. Closing date for the consultation is 2 April 2025
- 6.4 A response has been prepared in consultation with Inverclyde Elected Members, including the chair of Inverclyde Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel. The draft strategy and proposed response are presented in Appendix 1 of this report, and members of the Panel are asked to approve this response for submission to SFRS.

7.0 SECONDARY SCHOOL DOMESTIC ABUSE RESOURCE

- 7.1 Police Scotland and Education Scotland have launched "YOU, ME, TOGETHER," a resource to educate secondary school students about domestic abuse and violence against women and girls. The program includes a video and teaching materials to facilitate discussions about coercive control, unhealthy relationships, and peer pressure. The initiative emphasises collaborative action involving victims, families, support agencies, and police. It aims to empower young people to recognise warning signs and seek help. The program was piloted in 2022 and 2023, and after positive feedback, it's now available online for national delivery through the personal and social education curriculum. This initiative is part of Police Scotland's ongoing commitment to address gender-based violence, including campaigns like "That Guy" and support for the 16 Days of Activism.

8.0 RECHARGABLE BATTERY FIRES CAMPAIGN

- 8.1 Fires caused by rechargeable batteries in Scotland have dramatically increased from 3 in 2018 to at least 26 last year. These batteries, found in many household items like phones, laptops, vapes, e-bikes, and e-scooters, can be dangerous if damaged, faulty, or improperly used, potentially causing fires, explosions, and toxic fumes. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has launched a safety campaign urging people to follow charging guidelines, spot damaged batteries, and only buy from reputable retailers using approved chargers. They also stress the importance of never charging these devices in escape routes and having working smoke detectors. The SFRS, along with Zero Waste Scotland, also highlight the fire risk of improperly disposing of these batteries, urging recycling instead of throwing them in household bins. The campaign is supported by Community Safety Minister Siobhian Brown, who emphasises the need for careful use, charging, and storage of these batteries.

Further detail can be found by visiting the following link

<https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/news/rechargeable-battery-fires-are-rising-warn-firefighters/>.

9.0 SFRS INVESTMENT IN PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- 9.1 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is investing £3.2 million to protect firefighters from fire contaminants. £1.4 million is being used to purchase over 2,000 extra sets of PPE (tunics, trousers, gloves, and fire hoods), which will be stored in 35 reserve stock hubs across Scotland. The remaining funds will be used for cleaning and storage solutions at fire stations. This investment aims to provide firefighters with fresh PPE when their gear is contaminated, improving cleaning processes and reducing the risk of exposure to harmful substances. The SFRS is working with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) on this initiative. The FBU welcomes the investment

and commitment to firefighter safety. This follows research showing firefighters have a higher cancer mortality rate than the general public.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

10.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

10.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal/risk implications contained within this report.

10.4 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications contained within this report.

10.5 Strategic

There are no strategic implications contained within this report.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 There were no consultations required outside those noted in the report.

12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None



Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

DRAFT STRATEGY

2025-2028

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CHIEF OFFICER'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the SFRS Strategy 2025-28. A document that clearly sets out our ambitions for the next three years and explains how we will meet them.

I am incredibly proud to lead this Service and of the wide-reaching work we deliver throughout Scotland. As well as providing an effective emergency response, we sit at the heart of communities and work with a wide range of partners to improve the social and economic outcomes for the people of Scotland through our prevention activity.

As we look to the future, I have an ambitious vision for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). One which would see us deliver a sustainable, modern and technological advanced Fire and Rescue Service that is fit to meet the challenges of Scotland's future.

As Chief Officer, I have six immediate priorities which will be delivered through this Strategy:

- Public Service Reform
- Enhancing Prevention
- Firefighter Safety, Technology and Training
- Leadership and Culture
- Strategic Service Review Programme
- Digital, data and technology capabilities

I want the Service to be a leader for Public Service Reform, recognising our role in a whole system approach to addressing Scotland's challenges. One that continually adapts to be better; and builds on the prevention, preparedness and response progress that we have already made by continuing to develop our people, equipment, facilities and intervention services.



STUART STEVENS
SFRS Chief Officer

I believe we have the potential to do more for the people of Scotland, responding to a broader range of life critical incidents and in further developing our prevention activity. I want us to realise that potential. This means continuing to invest and advance, whilst delivering the best value for money we can.

I will prioritise the safety of our people, with a clear focus on training, professional standards, competence and continuous improvement. Our ability to pursue innovation, embracing new technologies and working practices will be key to our success.

As we move forward, the development of all our staff groups is critical. I will place a clear emphasis on leadership development, inclusion and talent development. I am committed to ensuring that we continue to build a positive culture in our Service that is welcoming and equitable for all. I want us to be an employer of choice for everyone. One that supports our people to always feel physically and mentally safe; and to work in a supportive environment that celebrates our differences and recognises the benefits those unique life experiences can bring to the whole.

There are changes we must make to ensure that our Service is fit for the challenges of Scotland's future. This will allow us to invest in areas such as training and prevention; while also addressing the issues

we face across our ageing estate. Our Strategic Service Review Programme, which will look at how we deliver our services will be a priority over the next three years and beyond.

Sustained investment in our systems will be critical in supporting change in how we work. I am committed to making better use of our digital, data and technology capabilities to drive efficiency and improve performance.

While we recognise the importance of change, we also need to maintain a strong and capable organisation to manage the risks of today as we evolve to meet the new risks of tomorrow. This SFRS Strategy 2025-28 provides a clear vision of how we want to achieve both. It shows where we want to be in three years. It shows how we want to build on the strong foundations we already have through our current daily activities, and it marks the first steps in an ongoing journey to be a leading, sustainable and modern fire and rescue service for Scotland.

DELIVERING A SUSTAINABLE SERVICE

SFRS has a proud history of serving communities and ensuring people and communities in Scotland are safe. We do this by:

- Responding to fires
- Promoting fire safety
- Developing and delivering our prevention activities
- Enforcing fire legislation
- Responding to road traffic collisions
- Responding to serious transport incidents
- Responding to serious flooding
- Undertaking inland water rescues
- Dealing with structural collapse of buildings
- Responding to chemical, biological and nuclear incidents
- Carrying out rescues at height
- Supporting other agencies

Our prevention, preparedness and response roles have developed over time. We want to build on this success as a modern, technologically enabled fire and rescue service that is ready to meet the needs of Scotland's communities.

Scotland is changing and we need to adapt with it to continue to keep communities safe. We respond to a wider range of incidents than ever before, and the nature of our country means that different parts of Scotland require different combinations of services from us. Put simply, this means we need to keep changing how we work.

We are seeing fewer house fires but more flooding and wildfire incidents. Some of our stations are in areas where heavy industry, shipyards or coal mines formerly existed but are no longer present. Furthermore, we have stations that are no longer fit for purpose and require significant investment to make them safer and more suitable for our people. We want to make sure we have the right resources, in the right place, at the right time to continue to provide the best service we can.

Providing the best service is not only about response. It is about understanding emerging risks and preventing an emergency incident or harm from happening in the first place. Scotland faces evolving risks such as an ageing population, increased vulnerabilities, impacts of social and economic inequality, and the impacts of climate change. We have a proven track record in delivering a wide range of prevention interventions. This pro-active approach helps to support people to make their homes and communities safer. We support Scotland's diverse communities and groups – from educating young people, to supporting adults and older people to live safely and independently. We also support the business community to remain safe and prosper by regulating businesses and workplaces. This helps to ensure that the places people work in, or visit, are safe from fire.

Since the formation of SFRS, we have continued to deliver an effective emergency and prevention service for the people of Scotland, whilst delivering an ambitious savings target set by the Scottish Government. These savings were delivered through a systematic efficiency programme which changed our structure, our estate, and our work processes to ensure that we were being run as effectively and efficiently as possible, while creating a more resilient organisation.

Despite making these savings and recent budget increases, we are still faced with significant and complex spending pressures. As an already lean Service, our ability to keep modernising is becoming more difficult.

SFRS remains ambitious for Scotland regardless of these challenges. But to realise our ambitions we require investment. That investment will enable us to change, adapt and evolve. Without it, our ability to keep evolving will be compromised.

We have set out our ambitious Strategic Service Review Programme (SSRP) which will enable us, with investment, to deliver the changes we need to make and to build a sustainable Service for the future. This will allow us to develop new services, adopt new technologies and safeguard communities and firefighters in the future.

A priority for the next three years, SSRP will focus on: providing firefighters with modern facilities, fleet and equipment to enhance community and firefighter safety; how and where we deliver our services from; and ensuring our corporate services are as efficient and effective as possible.

We know from our own experience that change brings challenges, but our track record gives us confidence in our ability to advance further. We are committed to working and consulting with our communities and partners to deliver the change the country needs of us.

PURPOSE OF OUR STRATEGY

This Strategy sets the direction for how we will evolve over the next three years and is an important step towards progressing our Long-Term Vision as a Service.

It provides a set of clear objectives that we will deliver for the people of Scotland.

Our Strategy supports the delivery of our Purpose, Mission and Vision.

OUR PURPOSE:

“To work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors, on prevention, protection and response, to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland.”
– Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022

OUR MISSION:

“Working Together, for a Safer Scotland”

OUR VISION:

“To be a leading, sustainable, modern and technologically advanced fire and rescue service that is fit to meet the challenges of Scotland’s future.”

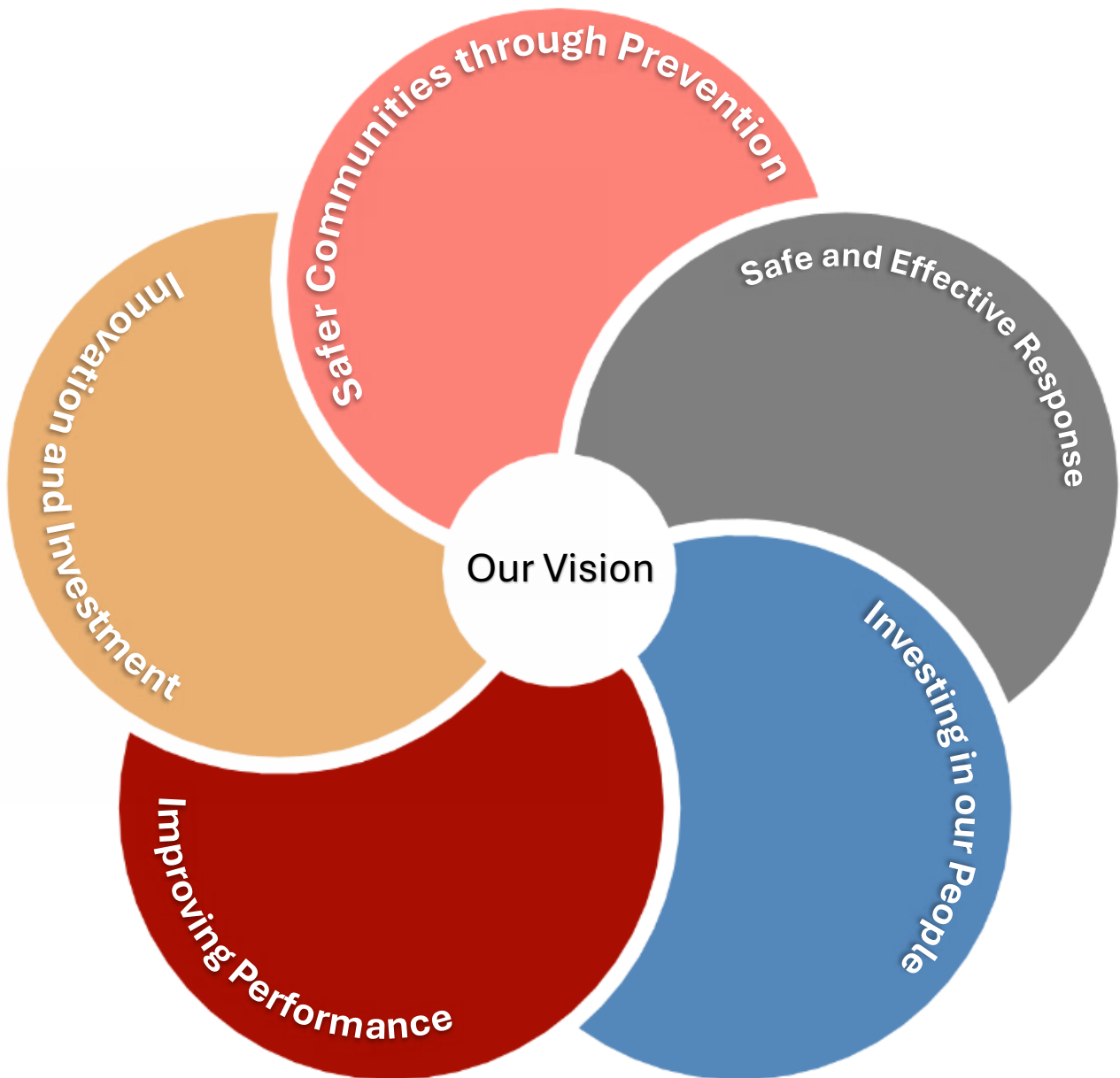
Our Purpose, Mission and Vision will be supported by our Values which provide a foundation for decision-making, behaviour and strategic direction:



OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To achieve our ambitions, manage known Service risks, and deliver the Chief Officer's priorities, we have identified five strategic objectives for the Service.

Each objective holds equal value in driving our Strategy forward. As a collective, they define our overall direction and will be central to how we plan our activities and our budget over the next three years.



In the next section we have set out the outcomes we will pursue in meeting our objectives and what we will deliver to realise those outcomes.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Safer Communities through Prevention

Outcome: Through our work, in partnership with communities and other organisations, the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland continually improves.

What Safer Communities means for us:

We will always respond to emergency incidents, but it is better if they don't happen in the first place. We work to prevent fires in homes and businesses to reduce the devastating impact a serious incident can have. Working with a wide variety of partner organisations and communities also helps us to address existing and new wider safety concerns, including how we contribute to safeguarding vulnerable people. We are proud of this element of our work, and we want to do more - our Prevention, Protection and Preparedness Strategy will help us do this. We want to work even more closely with

communities, businesses and our Public Service partners to support Scottish Government's Public Service Reform ambitions. We want to build on our success of preventing harm, improving wellbeing and helping communities increase their resilience by working with local councils and a wide range of public and third sector partners. Critical to this is listening to and responding to communities' needs as we develop the services we provide. We want to remain a daily and trusted part of Scotland's communities and public service delivery system.

How we will deliver:

- Investment in new and enhanced data-led prevention interventions where their design is led by research and work with partners to achieve the impacts we wish to see.
- Our expertise will advise and influence the development of national policy areas, specifically those that include resilience, fire safety and prevention.
- Improved evaluation of our prevention interventions will enhance how we and our partners work to prevent harm.
- Our approach to fire prevention and enforcement will be revised through the implementation of findings from major incident reviews such as the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Reports.
- Preparedness will be increased to enable us to work alongside communities and our partners to build resilience to help us, and them, be better organised to meet the challenges of major incidents as well as enhancing day to day community safety.
- Continued commitment to Community Planning and partnership working, nationally and across all localities in Scotland, to improve community safety and wellbeing.

Safe and Effective Response

Outcome: We are a leading Fire and Rescue Service where our communities and people are safe.

What a good Fire and Rescue Service looks like:

Providing an effective emergency response will always be a priority for us. This is critical to reducing harm in our communities and keeping firefighters safe. To do this well and safely, it is important that we understand changing risks in Scotland. The impact of climate change will drive significant demands and pressures on to the Service as its effects are felt across Scotland's communities, in addition to changing social and economic risks. To meet the demands those risks generate we will adapt and develop our equipment, training, and the way we work to be as prepared for and effective as we possibly can be, whilst always

ensuring the safety of communities and firefighters. In our Operational Strategy (2022-32) we placed an effective operational response at the forefront of the Service. To do this, we will continue to learn and adapt from the incidents that we attend. We also acknowledged the importance of collaborating with partners and using the latest technology and techniques at the heart of our operational delivery across the country. Through our Training Vision and Strategy we will ensure that firefighters are suitably and competently trained to safely resolve operational incidents.

How we will deliver:

- Operational and control room firefighters will be equipped and receive high quality training in line with our Training Strategy 2024-29, ensuring they can safely and effectively respond to emergencies and maintain and develop their competencies.
- Fit for purpose workforce, technology, stations and vehicles that are located strategically to respond to community risk and need.
- New and different ways of working will be explored to maximise effective and productive worktime for our people.
- New operating delivery models to maximise organisational effectiveness.
- New systems and technologies to enable more effective and productive incident response capabilities.
- Organisational learning from operational incidents, training events and external event investigations will influence future practice, enhance performance and improve firefighter safety.

Investing in our People

Outcome: Our people feel valued and supported by SFRS in a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, empowerment and accountability and drives joined up working.

What being a great employer means to us:

Our strength comes from our people. We are committed to creating a collaborative and supporting environment where everyone can excel and feel heard. We will put their safety, and their physical and mental health at the forefront of what we do. We will support them through change. We will develop and nurture their talent and skills, provide development opportunities for all, and offer rewarding careers. We will be

inclusive, with a culture that allows our people to be themselves at work. Our senior leaders will lead by example and show they are committed to our values through their behaviours, they and all staff will uphold those values in their daily work. We will take opportunities to build a workforce that better reflects the communities we serve and will promote diversity and inclusion at all levels of the Service.

How we will deliver:

- Our safety culture will put health, safety and wellbeing at the forefront across the Service.
- The mental health and wellbeing of our people will be protected, supported and improved.
- A culture that values and promotes inclusion, fairness, equality, respect and drives professional standards will continue to be embedded.
- Service Values will be reviewed so that they are reflective of a modern fire and rescue service and its people.
- Opportunities for our people to develop their skills and careers will be available.
- Our people will receive the leadership and management skills they need to match their role and enhance professional standards.
- New ways of working will help attract, retain and further support our workforce.
- Our workforce will increasingly reflect the population of Scotland where we employ individuals from a wide range of perspectives, communities, life experiences, characteristics, and heritage.
- Enhanced succession planning arrangements to ensure we always have a sustainable and skilled workforce will be in place.
- Strong and effective relationships will be maintained with our recognised Representative Bodies.

Improving Performance

Outcome: We will continuously improve our organisational performance, productivity and resilience.

What being and effective organisation means to us:

We strive to continually improve the services we provide to make Scotland safer. In challenging financial times, using innovative processes, technology and ideas will help us do this. As we adapt, it is important we have effective compliance, change and performance management processes in place. This will help us ensure we continue to deliver the best possible service and provide value

for money to the people of Scotland. We believe that effective governance, strong accountability, resilient performance and sound financial planning are at the heart of good public services. Our decision making will be evidence-led, open, and transparent. We will fully engage with our people and representative bodies as we continue to evolve and improve our services.

How we will deliver:

- Innovative ways of working will increase levels of productivity and performance, whilst providing value for money to the public.
- Change projects will be effectively managed, delivering on time, cost and quality whilst helping our people understand and commit to change.
- Organisational risk, security and resilience will be effectively managed to maintain business continuity during impactful events such as cyber security attacks.
- Continue to ensure the Service is well governed, providing information and assurance to the people of Scotland.
- Improved use of data and business intelligence across the Service will support decision making, manage activities, and enable us to work more productively.
- New and innovative ways of engaging with communities to inform and support our decision making.
- Building insights into public attitudes and levels of community satisfaction in what we do and how we work.

Innovation and Investment

Outcome: We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate and fleet, making us more effective and efficient.

What innovation means to us:

New developments are happening at an increasing pace across every aspect of our society and economy. We want to do more for the communities of Scotland. We want to be a leader in how public services are delivered and this includes developing and diversifying our own role within communities. We believe that by working with our public service partners we could expand our activities, help save lives, minimise harm to people, and add social and economic value to Scotland. For example, we could provide an emergency medical response and support the most vulnerable in our communities. This could improve wider community outcomes, reduce demand of partner services and ultimately reduce the risk within Scotland's communities. As

we continue to evolve, it is important that our people have the right facilities, equipment and technology to do their jobs safely and well. Supported by our Strategic Asset Management Plans, we want our stations to be fit for a leading fire and rescue service, where our facilities reflect the needs of our workforce, improve our approach to reducing firefighters' exposure to contaminants, and are environmentally sound. Our people also need more technologically advanced equipment and vehicles to use at incidents; and to train with. Making better use of technology, embracing new ways of working to drive efficiency, innovation and automation will be a key feature in the next stages of our Service evolution.

How we will deliver:

- A diversified role within communities that increases our prevention and emergency response activities.
- Building an organisational environment that supports the research and development of innovative technology and working practices that improves public and firefighter safety.
- An improvement programme to deliver buildings that provide safe and appropriate facilities that reflect the needs of a modern workforce.
- Focus on identifying and reducing the risk of firefighter exposure to contaminants.
- Vehicles and equipment will continue to be modernised to support the safety and wellbeing of our people.
- Through investment in digital, data and technology capabilities we will support change in how we work.
- Review of Corporate Service functions will lead to better aligned, more efficient, effective and productive business processes.

DELIVERING OUR STRATEGY

The SFRS Strategy sets our national direction for the Service and shapes our approach to how we plan and deliver our services and in turn it will shape our local area plans. These plans are community focused and detail how national priorities will be delivered. They show how SFRS will support the delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plans, with local risk and need at the forefront.

Our Strategy will be delivered through our **SFRS Three-Year Delivery Plan**. This is a rolling planning document that details how we will deliver these priorities over the duration of the Strategy. It contains the most important activities that are required each year to deliver our ambitions. As it sets the direction for all other work plans, progress of the Three-Year Delivery Plan is closely scrutinised by the SFRS Board. Our delivery plan provides us with flexibility, allowing us to adapt our plans should unforeseen challenges arise. Any additions or changes must be approved by the Board. This ensures that the actions contained within it remain the top priorities for the Service.

From a corporate perspective, delivery of the SFRS Three Year Plan is supported by **Directorate Plans**. These go into further detail of the Directorate level work that will be carried out throughout the year. These Plans are scrutinised

by Directorate Management Teams; and form the basis of the work that is undertaken by individual teams through **Functional/Team Plans**.

From an operational perspective, delivery of the SFRS Strategy and Three Year Plan is supported by **Local Fire and Rescue Plans**. These plans are community focused and detail how national priorities will be delivered with local risk and need at the forefront. Progress against Local Fire and Rescue Plans is scrutinised by Local Management Teams and Local Authority Scrutiny Committees. Local Fire and Rescue Plans are supported by **Community Fire Station Plans**, showing how each station in that local authority area will contribute to the delivery of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan and ultimately help deliver this Strategy. This diagram shows how our planning process provides clear guidance at every level of the Service.



HOW WE WILL MEASURE AND EVALUATE OUR WORK

Progress against the objectives in this Strategy will be closely monitored and evaluated to ensure that we are effective in their delivery.

Internally we report our performance to Executive and Non-Executive Boards and Committees on a quarterly basis through our Three-Year Delivery Plan Update Reports and our Quarterly Performance Dashboards. These reports provide progress updates on our detailed delivery plans and targets.

As a public service body that is committed to transparent reporting, the same reports are widely available on the [SFRS website](#).

More details of our annual progress is also made available via our Annual Performance Review Reports, Annual Report and Accounts and our Official Statistics. We also have a range of qualitative performance reports which detail how we are working towards specific priorities within the Strategy. This includes publications like our SFRS Working in Partnership Report, Annual Procurement Report and Health and Safety Report – all of which can also be found on the [SFRS website](#).

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

The formal consultation of this draft SFRS Strategy 2025-28 opened on Wednesday 5 February 2025 and will run until Wednesday 2 April 2025. To ensure we review and manage all responses consistently please feed back to us using our online survey. This can be accessed on the [SFRS website](#). After the consultation is closed, we will publish the results.

If you cannot access our online survey, or if you would like more information about the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service you can:

Write to:

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Westburn Drive
Cambuslang
G72 7NA

Phone: 0141 646 4501

Visit our website: www.firescotland.gov.uk



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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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SFRS Draft Strategy 2025-2028

Version 1.0 February 2025

OUR OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

To manage known Service risks and achieve our ambitions, we have identified five key strategic objectives and outcomes for the Service.

Each objective holds equal value in driving our Strategy forward and has an associated outcome.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME 1

Our first objective and outcome is:

Objective: Safer Communities through Prevention

Outcome: Through our work, in partnership with communities and other organisations, the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland continually improves.

Looking at this Objective (Safer Communities through Prevention), to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Looking at this Outcome, to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Are there any other comments you would like to make about this Objectives or Outcome?

Inverclyde Council supports the inclusion of "Safer Communities through Prevention" as a core objective in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28. The Council believes that a proactive approach to fire and rescue service delivery, focusing on prevention, is essential for the long-term safety and wellbeing of our residents. This objective aligns with our own priorities for community safety and reinforces our commitment to creating a safer environment for our communities.

The stated outcome, "Through our work, in partnership with communities and other organisations, the safety and wellbeing of the people of Scotland continually improves," is also encouraged. We recognise the importance of collaborative working and are eager to strengthen our partnership with the SFRS to achieve this shared goal. We believe that by working together, pooling resources, and engaging with our communities, we can make significant strides in reducing preventable incidents and improving overall wellbeing.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME 2

Our second objective and outcome is:

Objective: Safe and Effective Response

Outcome: We are a leading Fire and Rescue Service where our communities and people are safe.

Looking at this Objective (Safe and Effective Response), to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Looking at this Outcome, to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Are there any other comments you would like to make about this Objectives or Outcome?

Inverclyde Council supports the inclusion of "Safe and Effective Response" as a key objective in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28. A rapid and effective response to emergencies is essential for protecting lives, property, and community well-being. We recognise the vital role the SFRS plays in ensuring the safety of our residents and businesses, and we believe this objective is fundamental to fulfilling that role.

The Council also supports the associated outcome: "We are a leading Fire and Rescue Service where our communities and people are safe." This aspiration aligns with our own commitment to creating a safe and secure environment for our community. The Council believe that striving to be a "leading" service implies a dedication to continuous improvement, innovation, and the highest professional standards. We are interested in understanding how the SFRS will measure its progress towards becoming a "leading" service and what specific metrics will be used to demonstrate improvements in response times, effectiveness, and community safety.

We consider that a "safe and effective response" involves not only the swift deployment of resources to emergencies but also strong collaboration with the Local Authority and other partners.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME 3

Our third objective and outcome is:

Objective: Investing in our People

Outcome: Our people feel valued and supported by SFRS in a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, empowerment and accountability and drives joined up working.

Looking at this Objective (Investing in our People), to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Looking at this Outcome, to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Are there any other comments you would like to make about this Objectives or Outcome?

Inverclyde Council supports the SFRS's commitment to "Investing in our People" as a crucial objective within the 2025-28 Strategy. The Council recognise that the SFRS's most valuable asset is its dedicated workforce, and investing in their well-being, development, and job satisfaction is essential for ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality services to our community. We believe that a motivated and supported workforce is a more effective workforce.

We also support the associated outcome: "Our people feel valued and supported by SFRS in a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, empowerment and accountability and drives joined up working." This outcome reflects the values that we, as a Local Authority, also strive to uphold. We believe that a culture of diversity and inclusion is not only ethically right but also crucial for creating a fire and rescue service that truly reflects and serves the needs of our diverse community. Empowerment and accountability are also key principles for ensuring effective service delivery and building public trust. Finally, we strongly endorse the emphasis on "joined up working," as effective partnerships between the SFRS and the Local Authority are essential for addressing the complex challenges facing our community.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME 4

Our fourth objective and outcome is:

Objectives: Improving Performance

Outcome: We will continuously improve our organisational performance, productivity, and resilience.

Looking at this Objective (Improving Performance), to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Looking at this Outcome, to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Are there any other comments you would like to make about this Objectives or Outcome?

Inverclyde Council strongly supports the inclusion of "Improving Performance" as a key objective in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28. Continuous improvement is essential for ensuring that the SFRS provides the most effective and efficient service possible to our community. We believe that a commitment to improving performance demonstrates accountability to the public and a dedication to maximising the impact of resources.

We are equally supportive of the associated outcome: "We will continuously improve our organisational performance, productivity, and resilience." This outcome reflects a proactive approach to service delivery and a commitment to adapting to evolving challenges. We are interested in how the SFRS will measure its progress in these areas. We believe that clearly defined metrics and transparent reporting are crucial for demonstrating improvement and ensuring accountability. We would welcome further details on the specific performance indicators that will be used, such as response times, incident rates, community engagement metrics, and staff training and development outcomes.

OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME 5

Our fifth objective and outcome is:

Objective: Innovation and Investment

Outcome: We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate, and fleet, making us more effective and efficient.

Looking at this Objective (Innovation and Investment), to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Looking at this Outcome, to what extent do you agree it should be included in the SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

- Strongly Agree ✓
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Prefer not to say

Are there any other comments you would like to make about this Objectives or Outcome?

Inverclyde Council supports the inclusion of "Innovation and Investment" as an objective within the SFRS Strategy 2025-28. In a rapidly changing world, embracing innovation and making strategic investments are essential for ensuring the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the fire and rescue service. We recognise that the SFRS needs to be equipped with the latest technology, equipment, and infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of our community and to protect the safety of both firefighters and the public. Crucially, we believe that innovation and investment must also be directed towards maintaining and enhancing the current level of service provided to our community. Modernisation should not come at the expense of existing service provision.

We are also supportive of the associated outcome: "We are more innovative and achieve sustained investment in our technology, equipment, estate, and fleet, making us more effective and efficient." This outcome clearly articulates the commitment to modernisation and improvement, which we fully endorse. We are particularly interested in learning more about the SFRS's plans for innovation. What specific areas of technology and equipment are being prioritised? How will the success of these initiatives be measured and evaluated? We would also like to understand how the SFRS will ensure that the introduction of new technologies and equipment does not negatively impact existing service levels, particularly during transition periods.

Are there any other comments you would like to make about the draft SFRS Strategy 2025-28?

While the strategy outlines ambitious plans for modernisation and improved service delivery, there is clearly a need for sufficient investment to ensure these plans are fully realised and sustained over the long term.