Justice Committee

Fire and rescue service reform

Written submission from North Lanarkshire Council

1. **Introduction**

1.1 We welcome the opportunity to submit written evidence on the Reform of the Fire and Rescue Service and in particular wish to provide you with feedback in relation to our views around the five questions which you have asked relative to the new national fire and rescue service which took its full functions on 1 April 2013.

1.2 Our response is informed by our experience and discussion at North Lanarkshire Partnership Board, which is our strategic community planning group, and also from information received from our residents and key stakeholders within North Lanarkshire.

1.3 We have answered the five questions below in the order in which you have set these out on your letter.

2. **Impact at local level**

2.1 We wish to confirm that there has been no change to the local service delivery and in particular, to operational fire fighters and local resource allocation. To date we have received no negative comments from our residents or partners and within our areas normal business has not been altered or impacted upon. The only visible change is due to the rebranding which reflects the change of name to the service.

3. **Consultation process for local plans**

3.1 The process for comment on the three year local plan had been extended this time to enable wider consultation and involvement. We were asked to comment to Scottish Fire and Rescue and provided minimal comments as the plan was informative and had included the key partnership priorities and challenges aligned to North Lanarkshire Partnership’s Single Outcome Agreement and associated action plans.

3.2 Furthermore, all MSPs, MPs and local elected members were contacted on an individual basis to ensure comprehensive engagement took place and in addition, Key partners, Scottish Fire and Rescue staff and local press and media were contacted to reinforce the importance of providing feedback on the local issues and priorities contained within the plan.

4. **Scottish Fire and Rescue Service’s Strategic Plan**

4.1 As above, the Strategic Plan consultation was inclusive and North Lanarkshire Partnership Board approved this plan in October 2013.
5. **New proposals for Scottish Fire and Rescue Service’s Estate**

5.1 We can advise that the Strategic Intent (rationalising assets going forward) does not impact on the North Lanarkshire area however, the Local Senior Officer has kept our Chief Executive and all partners and stakeholders fully informed of the developments.

5.2 It should be noted that the current location of the control room for North Lanarkshire is within Johnstone, Paisley and that we anticipate that no material change should take place for our residents however; operating levels of staff should be maintained to reflect potential risk.

6. **Summary**

6.1 In summary, we have no issues or concerns following on from the introduction of the reform and have in place robust structures for approving the local plan, effective problem solving and communication methods at a local level and overall effective partnership working to ensure that our residents are safe within our communities.

North Lanarkshire Council
19 February 2014