

Public Document Pack

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 14 September 2020 – Virtual meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast) commencing at 10.00 am.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES REGARDING THE AGENDA PAPERS OR REQUIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT DIANE BROOKS, PRINCIPAL MEMBER SERVICES OFFICER ON TELEPHONE NUMBER PRESTON 01772 866720 AND SHE WILL BE PLEASED TO ASSIST

IF ANY MEMBER OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC WISH TO RAISE A QUESTION FOR THE CHAIRMAN PLEASE DO SO NO LATER THAN 3 WORKING DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING BY EMAIL TO: DIANE BROOKS@LANCSFIRERESCUE.ORG.UK

AGENDA

PART 1 (open to press and public)

Chairman's Announcement – Open and Transparent Virtual Committee Meeting

In response to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Government has made regulations that enable virtual meetings.

This meeting will be accessible for Committee Members via Microsoft Teams and for members of the press and public via a live webcast on YouTube.

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Standing item.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Authority is requested to consider the appointment of a Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the term 2020/21.

4. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are asked to consider any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (PAGES 1 - 26)

6. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2020 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (PAGES 27 - 42)

7. MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 13 JULY 2020 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE (PAGES 43 - 56)

8. MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 28 JULY 2020 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE (PAGES 57 - 64)

9. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES (PAGES 65 - 72)

10. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/21 AND 2021/22 (PAGES 73 - 74)

11. EXECUTIVE BOARD SUCCESSION ARRANGEMENTS

Verbal report.

12. HMICFRS COVID-19 INSPECTION

Verbal report.

13. ANNUAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT (PAGES 75 - 92)

14. POLICY FOR DEALING WITH HABITUAL AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS (PAGES 93 - 100)

15. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS (PAGES 101 - 106)

16. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS (PAGES 107 - 130)

17. MEMBER COMPLAINTS

Standing item.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority will be held on Monday 14 December 2020 at 1000 hours – venue to be confirmed.

19. URGENT BUSINESS

An item of business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Clerk should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

20. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Authority is asked to consider whether, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, they consider that the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.

PART 2

21. RE-APPOINTMENT OF CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER

(Paragraphs 1 and 2)

Verbal report.

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 24 February 2020 at 10.00 am in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton

MINUTES

PRESENT:

F De Molfetta (Chairman)

Councillors

L Beavers	M Khan OBE
S Blackburn	Z Khan
P Britcliffe	T Martin
I Brown	D O'Toole
S Clarke	M Parkinson OBE (Vice-Chair)
J Eaton	A Riggott
N Hennessy	J Shedwick
S Holgate	D Smith
D Howarth	D Stansfield
F Jackson	G Wilkins
A Kay	T Williams
H Khan	

55/19 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman, CC Frank De Molfetta expressed gratitude to all staff for their hard work during the recent storms Ciara and Dennis.

56/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from County Councillor Liz Oades.

57/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

58/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 16 December 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

59/19 MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2020 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 28 January 2020 be noted and endorsed.

60/19 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2020 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 10 February 2020 be noted and endorsed.

61/19 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2020/21

In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 a pay policy statement for 2020/21 was considered by Members.

The pay policy published data on senior salaries and the structure of the workforce and it demonstrated the principles of transparency.

The pay policy statement set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to: -

- The remuneration of its chief officers;
- The remuneration of its lowest paid employees;
- The relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and that of other employees who are not chief officers.

The statement included: -

- The level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer;
- Remuneration range for chief officers on recruitment;
- Methodology for increases and additions to remuneration for each chief officer;
- The use of performance-related pay for chief officers;
- The use of bonuses for chief officers;
- The approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under, or be employed by, the authority, and
- The publication of and access to information relating to the remuneration of chief officers.

It also included the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to other terms and conditions applying to its chief officers.

RESOLVED: - That the Pay Policy Statement be approved.

62/19 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2020/21

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report that set out the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2020/21.

Statutory Requirements

The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting Regulations required the Authority to "have regard to" the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Authority's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

This report fulfilled the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act*

2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Guidance.

Treasury Management Strategy For 2020/21

The Strategy Statement had been prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. Accordingly, the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's Treasury Management Strategy would be approved by the full Authority, and there would also be a mid-year and a year-end outturn report presented to the Resources Committee. In addition, there would be monitoring and review reports to Members in the event of any changes to Treasury Management policies or practices. The aim of these reporting arrangements was to ensure that those with ultimate responsibility for the treasury management function appreciated fully the implications of treasury management policies and activities, and that those implementing policies and executing transactions have properly fulfilled their responsibilities with regard to delegation and reporting.

The Authority had adopted reporting arrangements in accordance with the requirements of the Code as set out in the report.

The Treasury Management Strategy covered the following aspects of the Treasury Management function: -

- Prudential Indicators which will provide a controlling framework for the capital expenditure and treasury management activities of the Authority;
- Current Long-term debt and investments;
- Prospects for interest rates;
- The Borrowing Strategy;
- The Investment Strategy;
- Policy on borrowing in advance of need.

Setting the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21

In setting the treasury management strategy the: economic forecasts, interest rate forecasts, the current structure of the investment and debt portfolio and the future capital programme and underlying cash forecasts were considered.

Economic Context

The UK economy had been affected by concerns over the world economy, in particular the trade war between the USA and China, and the uncertainty arising from the UK's exit from the European Union. The Bank of England set its monetary policy to achieve the government's target of keeping inflation at 2%. The latest inflation rate was measured by the Consumer Prices Index as 1.5%. In the short term, the Bank of England had to balance the target of low inflation with supporting economic growth and jobs. As a result, the base rate had remained at 0.75% throughout 2019 with the last movement being a 0.25% increase in August 2018.

The Bank of England monetary policy committee met on 19 December 2019 with the committee's latest projections for activity and inflation being set out in the November Monetary Policy Report and assumed an orderly transition to a free trade agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union. UK Gross Domestic Product growth was projected to pick up, supported by the reduction of Brexit-related

uncertainties, an easing of fiscal policy and a modest recovery in global growth. With demand growth outstripping the subdued pace of supply growth, excess demand and domestic inflationary pressures were expected to build gradually. Consumer Prices Index inflation was projected to rise slightly above the 2% target towards the end of the forecast period.

Interest Rate Forecast and Prospects for Market Liquidity

Interest rate forecasts were made in the context of the overall economic position as outlined. The Bank of England last changed rates in August 2018.

The latest forecast of long-term interest rates as provided by Treasury Consultants Arlingclose Ltd was shown in the report.

Current Treasury Portfolio Position

At the 31 December 2019 the debt and investments balances were: -

Debt	Principal £m	%
Fixed rate loans from the Public Works Loan Board	2.000	100%
Variable rate loans		-
	2.000	100%
Investments		
Variable rate investments with Lancashire County Council	29.575	85.5
Fixed rate investments	10.000	14.5
	39.575	100%

The level of investments represented the Authority’s cumulative surplus on the General Fund, the balances on other cash-backed earmarked reserves and a cash-flow balance generated by a surplus of creditors over debtors and by grant receipts in advance of payments. There was a net investment figure of £37.575m.

Borrowing and Investment Requirement

In the medium term LCFA borrowed for capital purposes only. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes was measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital were the underlying resources available for investment. The table in the report compared the estimated CFR to the debt which currently existed.

The CFR forecast included the impact of the latest forecast of the funding of the Capital Programme which currently assumed that there would be no borrowing until 2022/23. It also included a voluntary MRP in 2019/20 to take the future loans element of the MRP to nil.

CIPFA’s Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommended that the Authority’s total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. However, the table in the report showed that the level of loans was above the CFR, which was the result of the Authority adopting a policy of setting aside additional Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in order to generate the cash to repay loans either on maturity or as an early repayment. The table also indicated that

rather than having a need for borrowing it was estimated that the Authority had an underlying need to invest although the available balances were forecast to reduce.

Although the Authority did not have plans for new borrowing it currently held £2.0m of loans as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes.

Borrowing Strategy

The draft Capital Programme implied there may be a requirement to use borrowing to fund the capital programme in the later years. At this stage it was unlikely that borrowing would be required in 2020/21. However, it was still best practice to approve a borrowing strategy and a policy on borrowing in advance of need. In considering a borrowing strategy the Authority needed to make provision to borrow short term to cover unexpected cash flow shortages or to cover any change in the financing of its Capital Programme.

In the past the Authority had raised all of its long-term borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board, but if long term borrowing was required other sources of finance, such as local authority loans, and bank loans, would be investigated that may be available at more favourable rates. This was especially the case as in October 2019 the PWLB announced that its loan rates would be increased to be 1.8% above the rate of Gilts rather than 0.8% as it was, at the time.

Short term borrowing if required would most likely be taken from other local authorities.

Therefore, the approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing were: Public Works Loan Board, UK local authorities, any institution approved for investments, any other bank or building society authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority to operate in the UK and UK public and private sector pension funds.

Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

In line with the existing policy the Authority would not borrow more than or in advance of need purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. However advance borrowing may be taken if it was considered that current rates were more favourable than future rates and that this advantage outweighed the cost of carrying advance borrowing. Any decision to borrow in advance would be considered carefully to ensure value for money could be demonstrated and that the Authority could ensure the security of such funds and relationships.

In determining whether borrowing would be undertaken in advance of need the Authority would: Ensure that there was a clear link between the capital programme and the maturity profile of the existing debt portfolio which supported the need to take funding in advance of need; Ensure the on-going revenue liabilities created, and the implications for the future plans and budgets had been considered; Evaluate the economic and market factors that might influence the manner and timing of any decision to borrow; Consider the merits and demerits of alternative forms of funding and; Consider the alternative interest rate bases available, the most appropriate periods to fund and repayment profiles to use.

Debt Restructuring

The Authority's debt had arisen as a result of prior years' capital investment decisions.

It had not taken any new borrowing out since 2007 as it had been utilising cash balances to pay off debt as it matured, or when deemed appropriate with the Authority making early payment of debt. The anticipated holding of debt at 31 March 2020 was £2.0m. All the debt was from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) at fixed rates of interest and repayable on maturity. This debt was taken out in 2007 when the base rate was 5.75% and when the Authority was earning 5.84% return on its investments. Given the high interest rates payable on these loans, relative to current interest rates, we had again reviewed opportunities for debt repayment/restructuring.

The level of penalty applicable on early repayment of loans now stood at £1.131m.

Outstanding interest payable between now and maturity was £1.497m. Giving a gross saving of £0.366m.

However, any early repayment meant that cash balances available for investment would be reduced and hence interest receivable would also be reduced. The extent of which was dependent upon future interest rates. It was estimated that if interest rate on investments was at 1.1% over the remaining period of the loan then repaying the loans now would be broadly neutral. If they were higher, then lost investment interest would exceed the interest saving on repayment and if they were lower then lost investment returns would be lower than the saving on repayment.

It was also noted that the draft capital budget potentially required additional borrowing in 2023/24 and 2024/25. Given the penalties it was considered beneficial to retain these loans.

In relation to debt restructuring County Councillor O'Toole commented that, as guardians of public money he did not think the Authority should borrow without good need to borrow.

Investment Strategy

At 31st December 2019 the Authority held £39.575m invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus existing balances and reserves. In the past 12 months, the Authority's investment balance had ranged between £27.7m and £48.0m. The variation arose principally due to the timing of the receipt of government grants. It was anticipated that similar levels would be maintained in the forthcoming year.

Both the CIPFA Code and the MHCLG Guidance required the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money was to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Therefore, in line with the guidance the Treasury Management Strategy was developed to ensure the Fire Authority would only use very high-quality counterparties for investments.

The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparties as set out in

the report.

Whilst the investment strategy had been amended to allow greater flexibility with investments any decision as to whether to utilise this facility would be made based on an assessment of risk and reward undertaken jointly between the Director of Corporate Services and LCC Treasury Management Team, and consideration of this formed part of the on-going meetings that took place throughout the year.

Currently all of the Authority's investments were with other local authorities.

The Authority currently had access to a call (instant access) account with a local authority, which paid bank base rate, this was currently 0.75%. Each working day the balance on the Authority's current account was invested to ensure that the interest received on surplus balances was maximised.

In addition, longer term loans had been placed with UK local authorities to enhance the interest earned. To this end at the following investments were already impacting 2020/21.

Start Date	End Date	Principal	Rate	Interest 2020/21
18/10/18	19/10/20	£5,000,000	1.15	£31,664
10/12/19	10/06/21	£5,000,000	1.20	£60,000
20/04/20	20/04/22	£5,000,000	1.45	£68,726

Consideration was given fixing further investments if the maturity fit with estimated cash flows and the rate was considered to be attractive. This would continue to be reviewed. Current rates payable by other local authorities indicated by brokers were:

3-month investment	0.85%
6-month investment	0.90%
12-month investment	1.00%

The overall combined amount of interest earned on Fixed/Call balances as at 31st December 2019 was £0.257m on an average balance of £37.5m at an annualised rate of 0.91%. This compared favourably with the benchmark 7-day LIBID rate which averages 0.57% over the same period, and was 0.16% above the current bank rate.

Specified and Non-specified investments

The legislative and regulatory background to treasury management activities required the Authority to set out its use of "specified" and "non-specified" investments.

Specified Investments: The CLG Guidance defined specified investments as those: -

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and invested with one of:
- the UK Government,
- a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
- a body or investment scheme of "high credit quality".

The Authority defined “high credit quality” organisations as those having a credit rating of A+ or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.

Non-Specified Investments: were any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment was classed as non-specified. The Authority did not intend to make any investments denominated in foreign currencies, nor any that were defined as capital expenditure by legislation, such as company shares. Non-specified investments would therefore be limited to long-term investments, i.e. those that were due to mature 12 months or longer from the date of arrangement, and investments with bodies and schemes not meeting the definition on high credit quality.

The Authority may lend or invest money using any of the following instruments: -

- interest-bearing bank accounts,
- fixed term deposits and loans,
- callable deposits where the Authority may demand repayment at any time (with or without notice),
- certificates of deposit,
- bonds, notes, bills, commercial paper and other marketable instruments, and

Investments may be made at either a fixed rate of interest, or at a variable rate linked to a market interest rate, such as LIBOR, subject to the limits on interest rate exposures below.

The Authority prepared daily cash flow forecasts to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast was compiled on a pessimistic basis, with receipts under-estimated and payments over-estimated to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments were set by reference to the Authority’s medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Under Local Authority Accounting arrangements, the Authority was required to set aside a sum of money each year to reduce the overall level of debt. This sum was known as the minimum revenue provision (MRP).

The Authority would assess their MRP for 2020/21 in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Authority had made a voluntary MRP in 2019/20 and it was anticipated that the MRP on loans will be nil in 2020/21 this will be the case until capital expenditure was financed by borrowing.

Whilst the Authority had no unsupported borrowing, nor had any plans to take out any unsupported borrowing in 2020/21 it was prudent to approve a policy relating to the MRP that would apply if circumstances changed. As such in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, the MRP on any future unsupported borrowing would be

calculated using the Asset Life Method. This would be based on a straightforward straight-line calculation to set an equal charge to revenue over the estimated life of the asset. Estimated life periods would be determined under delegated powers. To the extent that expenditure was not on the creation of an asset and is of a type that was subject to estimated life periods that were referred to in the guidance, these periods would generally be adopted by the Authority. However, the Authority reserved the right to determine useful life periods and prudent MRP in exceptional circumstances where the recommendations of the guidance would not be appropriate.

As some types of capital expenditure incurred by the Authority were not capable of being related to an individual asset, asset lives would be assessed on a basis which most reasonably reflected the anticipated period of benefit that arose from the expenditure. Also, whatever type of expenditure was involved, it would be grouped together in a manner which reflected the nature of the main component of expenditure and would only be divided up in cases where there were two or more major components with substantially different useful economic lives.

Assets held under a PFI contract and finance leases formed part of the Balance Sheet. This had increased the overall capital financing requirement and on a 4% basis the potential charge to revenue. To prevent the increase the guidance permitted a prudent MRP to equate to the amount charged to revenue under the contract to repay the liability. In terms of the PFI schemes this charge formed part of the payment due to the PFI contractor.

Revenue Budget

The capital financing budget currently showed that income received exceeded expenditure. This excluded the PFI and Finance lease payments, which were included in other budgets. Based on the Strategy outlined then the proposed budgets for capital financing were:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Interest payable	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090
MRP	0.010	0.010	0.010	0.010
Interest receivable	(0.322)	(0.297)	(0.322)	(0.347)
Net budget	(0.222)	(0.197)	(0.222)	(0.247)

Prudential Indicators for 2019/20(revised) to 2022/23 in respect of the Combined Fire Authority's Treasury Management Activities.

In accordance with its statutory duty and with the requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance and the CIPFA Code for Treasury Management, the Combined Fire Authority produced each year a set of prudential indicators which regulated and controlled its treasury management activities.

The table in the report set out the debt and investment-related indicators which provided the framework for the Authority's proposed borrowing and lending activities over the coming three years. These indicators would also be approved by Members

as part of the Capital Programme approval process along with other capital expenditure-related indicators, but needed to be reaffirmed and approved as part of this Treasury Management Strategy.

It was noted that contained within the external debt limits, there were allowances for outstanding liabilities in respect of the PFI schemes and leases. However, from 1 April 2020 accounting standards were changing in relation to recording leases. In effect, more leases were likely to be included on the balance sheet and therefore would be included against the other long term liabilities indicators. At this stage work was on-going to quantify the impact of the change and therefore the other long-term liabilities limits may be subject to change.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority:

- i) Approved the revised Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators as set out in the report now presented;
- ii) Agreed the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation as set out in the report as now presented; and
- iii) Agreed the Treasury Management Policy Statement as now presented.

63/19 RESERVES AND BALANCES POLICY

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. The Fire Authority held reserves to meet potential future expenditure requirements. The reserves policy was based on guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). It explained the difference between general reserves (those held to meet unforeseen circumstances), earmarked reserves (those held for a specific purpose) and provisions (where a liability existed but the extent and/or timing of this was uncertain). In addition, the policy identified how the Authority determined the appropriate level of reserves and what these were. The policy confirmed that the level of, and the appropriateness of reserves would be reported on as part of the annual budget setting process and as part of the year end accounting process.

General Reserves

Review of Level of Reserves

In determining the appropriate level of general reserves required by the Authority, the Treasurer was required to form a professional judgment on this, taking account of the strategic, operational and financial risk facing the Authority. This was completed based on guidance issued by CIPFA, and included an assessment of the financial assumptions underpinning the budget, the adequacy of insurance arrangements and consideration of the Authority's financial management arrangements. In addition, the assessment should focus on both medium and long-term requirements, taking account of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (as set out in the draft budget report discussed later on the agenda). For Lancashire Combined Fire Authority this covered issues such as: uncertainty surrounding future funding settlements and the potential impact of this on the revenue and capital budget; uncertainty surrounding future pay awards and inflation rates; the impact of changes to pension schemes, both in terms of pensionability of allowances and the remedy for the McCloud judgment; demand led pressures, risk of default associated with investments as set out in the Treasury Management Strategy, cost associated with maintaining operational cover in the event of Industrial Action etc.

2019/20 was the final year of a four-year settlement. This meant that funding for 2020/21 was subject to a one-year settlement, with a further four-year Spending Review planned for 2021/22. As per the Local Government Finance Settlement we would receive a 1.6% inflationary increase for 2020/21.

There was greater degree of uncertainty over long term funding than in recent years as the outcome of the fair funding review of relative needs and resources and the Government intention to move to greater retention of Business Rates would take effect. Furthermore, the impact of Brexit on the national economy was still unknown.

As such the Treasurer considered it prudent to maintain the minimum target reserves level at £3.0m, 5.2% of the 2020/21 net revenue budget, reflecting the increasing level of uncertainty. This was broadly in line with the 5% threshold identified by the Home Office above which the Authority was required to justify why it held the level of reserves.

Given the limited scope to increase council tax without holding a local referendum the ability to restore depleted reserves in future years was severely limited. Hence any maximum reserve limit must take account of future anticipated financial pressures and must look at the long-term impact of these on the budget and hence the reserve requirement. Based on professional judgment, the Treasurer felt that this should be maintained at £10.0m.

Should this be exceeded the following financial year's budget would contain options for applying the excess balance in the medium term, i.e. over 3-5 years.

Level of General Reserves

The overall level of the general fund balance, i.e. uncommitted reserves, anticipated at the 31 March 2020 was £8.2m, providing scope to utilise approx. £5.2m of reserves.

The proposed drawdown of £0.4m in 20/21 would reduce the general balance to £7.8m. Discussions were on-going both locally and nationally in respect of Fire-fighter pensions and until such time as these concluded it was not clear whether any backdating costs would be incurred, hence at the present time no allowance had been made for these. Based on this the Treasurer considered these were at an appropriate level to meet expenditure requirements in 2020/21. It was noted that reserves were being used to fund recurring expenditure and hence this could only be a short-term solution, with recurring savings being required to offset the shortfall.

Future requirements were less clear as multi-year settlements would have ended and the budget forecasts become less accurate as there were a whole host of assumptions underpinning these projections, particularly around pension costs, funding, vacancy profiles, future inflation and pay awards and council tax increases.

General reserves were sufficient to balance the budget throughout the next year. However, dependent upon which scenario was considered reserves would not be sufficient to meet the current anticipated funding gap over the next 5 years and hence significant additional savings would be required.

Earmarked Reserves

Level of Earmarked Reserves

The earmarked reserves forecast at 31 March 2020 were £7.2m and a breakdown of these was considered by Members. It was noted that as at 31 March 2019 the Authority held £0.9m to meet the potential penalty costs associated with the repayment of the remaining PWLB loans. Given the reducing likelihood of repaying the loans with such a large penalty, it was proposed that this balance be transferred into the Capital Funding Reserve to meet the costs of the future capital programme as referred to later in the report. It was also noted that of the anticipated balance of £5.4m at 31 March 2025, almost £4m related to the Private Finance Initiative reserve.

Based on this the Treasurer believed these adequate to meet future requirements in the medium term.

Capital Reserves and Receipts

Capital Reserves had been created from under spends on the revenue budget in order to provide additional funding to support the capital programme in future years; as such they could not be used to offset any deficit on the revenue budget, without having a significant impact on the capital programme that the Authority could support.

Capital Receipts were generated from the sale of surplus assets, which had not yet been utilised to fund the capital programme. Under revised regulations receipts generated between April 2016 and March 2020 could be used to meet qualifying revenue costs, i.e. set up and implementation costs of projects/schemes which were forecast to generate on-going savings. The on-going costs of such projects/schemes did not qualify. Whilst the Authority currently held £1.6m of capital receipts only £0.2m of this arose in the relevant time period. Given the small amount eligible we did not currently have any plans to use this in line with new regulations and hence for the purpose of planning all capital receipts would be used to meet future capital costs, not qualifying revenue expenditure.

At 31 March 2020 the Authority anticipated holding £18.7m of capital reserves and receipts. Based on the capital programme presented elsewhere on this agenda it was anticipated fully utilising these by 31 March 2025. Of the total reserve £0.6m was contractually committed.

Based on this the Treasurer believed these were adequate to meet future requirements in the medium term.

Provisions

The Authority had two provisions to meet future estimated liabilities: -

Insurance Provision

This covered potential liabilities associated with outstanding insurance claims. Any claims for which we had been notified and where we were at fault would result in a legal commitment, however as the extent of these could not be accurately assessed

at the present time this provision was created to meet any element of cost for which we were liable, i.e. which were not reimbursable from insurers as they fell below individual excess clauses and the annual self-insured limits. This provision fully covered all estimated costs associated with outstanding claims.

The provision stood at £0.5m at 31 March 2019. Given the uncertainty in terms of future insurance claims it had been assumed that the provision would be maintained at this level throughout the 5-year period. There were no existing legal obligations associated with this provision, as the legal obligation only arose when settlement of outstanding claims was agreed.

Business Rates Collection Fund Appeals Provision

This covered the Authority's share of outstanding appeals against business rates collection funds, which was calculated each year end by each billing authority within Lancashire based on their assumptions of outstanding appeal success rates, as part of their year-end accounting for the business rates collection fund.

At 31 March 2019 this provision stood at £0.8m to cover anticipated costs of outstanding business rates appeals. Whilst a significant element of this would be utilised in the current financial year, reflecting the settlement of outstanding appeals, it was impossible to accurately predict the extent of this usage or the need for any additional provision to meet appeals that arose in year, until such time as a full review was undertaken as part of the financial year end process. Therefore, for the purpose of this report it had been assumed that the level of business rates appeals provision remained unchanged. Until the outcome of any appeal was known there was no legal obligation arising from the appeal.

The Treasurer felt that the levels of provisions were sufficient to meet future requirements in the medium term.

Summary Reserve Position

The summary anticipated position in terms of reserves and balances showed the overall level reducing to approx. £13m by 31 March 2025, after allowing for potential backdating of pensionability of allowances.

It was noted that reserves fell dramatically over the programme reflecting the scale of the draft capital programme. Furthermore, this position would be subject to significant change as pension costs, funding, inflation, pay awards and other pressures all become clearer in future years. The annual refresh of this policy would identify the impact of any changes as they developed.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority approved the Reserves and Balances Policy and the level of reserves included within it.

64/19 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET 2020/21 - 2024/25

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. The Authority's capital strategy was designed to ensure that the Authority's capital investment:

- assisted in delivering the corporate objectives;

- provided the framework for capital funding and expenditure decisions, ensuring that capital investment was in line with priorities identified in asset management plans;
- ensured statutory requirements were met, i.e. Health and Safety issues;
- supported the Medium Term Financial Strategy by ensuring all capital investment decisions considered the future impact on revenue budgets;
- demonstrated value for money in ensuring the Authority's assets were enhanced/preserved;
- described the sources of capital funding available for the medium term and how these might be used to achieve a prudent and sustainable capital programme.

Managing capital expenditure

The Capital Programme was prepared annually through the budget setting process, and reported to the Authority for approval each February. The programme set out the capital projects taking place in the financial years 2020/21 to 2024/25, and was updated in May to reflect the effects of any slippage from the current financial year (2019/20).

The majority of projects originated from approved asset management plans, subject to assessments of ongoing requirements. Bids for new capital projects were evaluated and prioritised by Executive Board prior to seeking Authority approval.

A budget manager was responsible for the effective financial control and monitoring of their elements of the capital programme. Quarterly returns were submitted to the Director of Corporate Services on progress to date and estimated final costs. Any variations were dealt with in accordance with the Financial Regulations (Section 4.71). Where expenditure was required or anticipated which had not been included in the capital programme, a revision to the Capital Programme must be approved by Resources Committee before that spending could proceed.

In response to a question from County Councillor Wilkins regarding the management of slippage, the Director of Corporate Services advised that slippage tended to be a timing issue and did not represent anticipated underspends. Project costs were front loaded in the year the project was anticipated to begin to ensure sufficient allocation was made in that year, in case the project proceeded quicker than anticipated.

Proposed Capital Budget

Capital expenditure was expenditure on major assets such as new buildings, significant building modifications and major pieces of equipment/vehicles.

The Service had developed asset management plans which assisted in identifying the long-term capital requirements. These plans, together with the operational equipment register had been used to assist in identifying total requirements and the relevant priorities.

A summary of all capital requirements was considered by Members:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Vehicles	3.249	1.388	1.020	1.132	1.368	8.157
Operational Equipment	0.100	0.215	0.500	0.250	1.000	2.065
Buildings	5.575	4.695	6.641	4.250	2.750	23.911
IT Equipment	1.895	0.600	0.100	-	0.220	2.815
Total	10.819	6.898	8.261	5.632	5.338	36.947

Vehicles

The Fleet Asset Management plan had been used as a basis to identify the vehicle replacement programme as detailed in the report. The plan set out the content of the vehicle replacement schedule and the following was noted:

- Replacement of the ALP in 2021 would keep the number of ALPs at 4 – with the expansion of the Water Tower capability this could potentially be reviewed;
- Two additional Water Towers replaced a Pumping Appliance in 2021 & 2122 (note the Service was still considering options in terms of its long term capability which may lead to a further two Water Towers replacing Pumping Appliances – this would add a further £0.6m into the programme cost);
- The budget for the provided cars was based on the current cost of a hybrid Toyota Rav4, reducing the impact on the environment;
- No allowance had been made for the introduction of vehicles with specific high-rise capability.

LFRS currently had several vehicles provided and maintained by CLG under New Dimensions (5 Prime Movers and 1 Incident Response Units), which under LFRS replacement schedules would be due for replacement during the period of the programme. However, the understanding was that CLG would issue replacement vehicles if they were beyond economic repair, or if the national provision requirement changed. Should LFRS be required to purchase replacement vehicles, grant from CLG might be available to fund them. Based on the current position, we had not included these vehicles (or any potential grant) in the replacement plan.

Operational Equipment

The operational equipment plan as detailed in the report allowed for the replacement of items at the end of their current asset lives, based on current replacement cost. Each of the groups of assets were subject to review prior to replacement, which may result in a change of requirements or the asset life.

Buildings

In terms of all the building proposals it was noted that requirements/designs were still being developed hence costings were to provide some context for decision making.

Of the 20/21 budget, £4.9m had been transferred from the approved 2019/20

programme, comprising £4.2m in relation to the Fleet workshop replacement facility, £0.5m in relation to Morecambe NWAS & Training hub works, with the balance relating to improved station facilities.

It was noted that both Preston Fire Station and the SHQ relocation were subject to ongoing review/business case development, hence costs and timing were estimates only at this stage. Further updates would be presented to Resources Committee in due course.

ICT

The sums identified for the replacement of various ICT systems were in line with the software replacement lifecycle schedule incorporated into the ICT Asset Management Plan. All replacements identified in the programme would be subject to review, with both the requirement for the potential upgrade/replacement and the cost of such being revisited prior to any expenditure being incurred.

Capital Funding

Capital expenditure could be funded from the following sources:

Prudential Borrowing

The Prudential Code gave the Authority increased flexibility over its level of capital investment and much greater freedom to borrow, should this be necessary, to finance planned expenditure. However, any future borrowing would incur a financing charge against the revenue budget for the period of the borrowing.

Given the financial position of the Authority it had not needed to borrow since 2007, and had repaid a large proportion of borrowing in October 2017. There was no allowance for any borrowing in the draft programme, although this did result in a funding shortfall in the last 2 years, which was referred to later in the report.

Capital Grant

Capital grants were received from other bodies, typically the Government, in order to facilitate the purchase/replacement of capital items.

The ESMCP project carried forwards from 2019/20 was anticipated to receive £1.0m grant funding which was included in the programme. To date no other capital grant funding had been made available for 2020/21, nor had any indication been given that capital grant would be available in future years, and hence no allowance had been included in the budget.

Capital Receipts

Capital receipts were generated from the sale of surplus land and buildings, with any monies generated being utilised to fund additional capital expenditure either in-year or carried forward to fund the programme in future years.

The Authority held £1.6m of capital receipts as at 31 March 2019. It was proposed to amend the current accounting policy to have all vehicle sales proceeds classified as capital receipts, rather than revenue income in order to provide more funding for future capital items, therefore notional annual capital receipts of £50k had been

included to reflect anticipated disposal proceeds.

At the end of the 5-year programme all the capital receipts would have been utilised, however should the relocation of SHQ go ahead, the income from the sale of the surplus site would be received in 2025/26. This could be in the region of £1.5m dependent on what happens to Fulwood fire station within the site boundary.

Capital Reserves

Capital Reserves had been created from under spends on the revenue budget in order to provide additional funding to support the capital programme in future years. Following completion of the 2019/20 capital programme, the Authority expected to hold £17.0m of capital reserves. Over the life of the programme it was anticipated that all these reserves would be used.

Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)

Any revenue surpluses may be transferred to a Capital Reserve in order to fund additional capital expenditure either in-year or carried forward to fund the programme in future years.

In order to balance the capital programme over the next 3 years, the revenue contribution had increased to £2.15m in 2020/21 returning to £2.0m in subsequent years.

Drawdown of Earmarked Reserves

No allowance had been made for the drawdown of any earmarked reserves.

Drawdown of General Reserves

No allowance had been made for the drawdown of any of the general reserve.

Total Capital Funding

The following table details available capital funding over the five-year period:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Grant	1.000	-	-	-	-	1.000
Capital Receipts	-	1.749	0.050	0.050	0.100	1.949
Capital Reserves	7.669	3.149	6.211	0.012	-	17.041
Revenue Contributions	2.150	2.000	2.000	2.000	2.000	10.000
	10.819	6.898	8.261	2.062	2.100	30.140

Summary Programme

Based on the draft capital programme as presented there was a shortfall of £6.8m:

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Requirements	10.819	6.898	8.261	5.632	5.338	36.947
Capital Funding	10.819	6.898	8.261	2.062	2.100	30.140
Surplus / (Shortfall)	-	-	-	(3.570)	(3.238)	(6.807)

This could be funded from additional borrowing, but would have an impact on the revenue budget, for interest payable and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). For example, the above requirement to shortfall would actually result in borrowing £4.8m cash, as we had already set aside funds (prepaid MRP) to offset our existing £2.0m of PWLB. Borrowing over 25 years would cost approx. £0.5m per year in the revenue budget, or the same sum repaid over 50 years would cost approx. £0.3m per year in the revenue budget.

It was highlighted that the programme was based around a number of assumptions which could change:-

- Replacement of the ALP in 2021 would keep the number of ALPs at 4 – with the expansion of the Water Tower capability this could potentially be reviewed;
- Two additional Water Towers replace a Pumping Appliance in 2021 & 2122 (note the Service was still considering options in terms of its long-term capability which may lead to a further two Water Towers replacing Pumping Appliances – this would add a further £0.6m into the programme cost);
- No allowance had been made for the introduction of vehicles with specific high-rise capability;
- New Dimensions vehicle replacements were expected to be carried out by CLG, however this position may change;
- All operational equipment item replacements were at estimated costs, and would be subject to proper costings nearer the time;
- The costs and timing for both Preston Fire Station and the SHQ relocation were estimates only at this stage, based on current information, but clearly if/when either of them goes ahead would create a need for external borrowing;
- Property project timings were front-loaded and as such were expected to vary between years;
- Operational Communications replacements (ESMCP) were subject to a great deal of uncertainty in terms of both timing and costs as they were related to a national replacement project, in addition there may be grant funding available for this which was also unknown at this time;
- ICT software replacements were based largely on the ICT asset management plan, and were subject to review prior to replacement, which had led in the past to significant slippage;
- Capital grant may be made available in future years, in order to assist service transformation and greater collaboration;
- Capital receipts of up to £1.5m may be available following the end of the 5-year programme if the relocation of SHQ went ahead.

Impact on the Revenue budget

It was noted that the capital programme and its funding directly impacted on the revenue budget in terms of capital financing charges and in terms of the revenue contribution to capital outlay. Based on the provisional 1-year settlement the position in respect of the revenue budget appeared sustainable. Dependent upon future funding position the revenue contribution to capital (RCCO) could come under increasing pressure, which may mean that the Authority needed to borrow to meet future capital requirements which would impact the revenue budget as capital financing (interest payable and Minimum Revenue Provision) charges, the scale of which would depend upon the type of asset the borrowing is charged against, as it was linked to the life of assets.

It was also noted that the capital programme showed the Authority utilising all of its capital reserves and receipts before the end of the 5-year period, meaning that the remainder of the capital programme would need to be met from either capital grant (if available), additional revenue contributions or from new borrowing. Potentially this would also leave a problem in future years beyond this programme where the ongoing revenue contribution of £2.0m was insufficient to meet the current vehicle replacement programme and operational equipment capital replacements. For example, from 2025/26 onwards the estimated average annual capital spend (based on current vehicles in service and assumed spends for operational equipment, property and ICT systems) was £2.8m per year, an average shortfall of £0.8m.

Summary

Over the next three years the programme was balanced, and as such could be considered prudent, sustainable and affordable. Should all the items in the five-year programme go ahead, potentially significant external borrowing would be required in the latter years of the programme.

However, should any of the funding assumptions or expenditure items within the programme change, this would have an impact on the overall affordability of the programme.

Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Code gave the Authority increased flexibility over its level of capital investment and much greater freedom to borrow, should this be necessary, to finance planned expenditure. However, in determining the level of borrowing, the Authority must prepare and take account of a number of Prudential Indicators aimed at demonstrating that the level and method of financing capital expenditure was affordable, prudent and sustainable. These Indicators were set out at Appendix 1 now presented, along with a brief commentary on each. The Prudential Indicators were based on the programme set out in the report. These indicators would be updated to reflect the final capital outturn position, and reported to the Resources Committee at the June meeting.

The main emphasis of these Indicators was to enable the Authority to assess whether

its proposed spending and its financing was affordable, prudent and sustainable and in this context, the Treasurer's assessment was that, based on the Indicators, this was the case for the following reasons: -

- In terms of prudence, the level of capital expenditure, in absolute terms, was considered to be prudent and sustainable at an annual average of £8.7m over the 3-year period. The trend in the capital financing requirement and the level of external debt were both considered to be within prudent and sustainable levels. No new borrowing was currently planned during the three years.
- In terms of affordability, the negative ratio of financing costs arising from borrowing reflected interest receivable exceeding interest payable and Minimum Revenue Provision payments in each of the three years. This reflected the effect of the previous decision to set aside monies to repay debt.

County Councillor O'Toole commented that the last Planning Committee meeting was held in a different meeting room due to flooding at Headquarters. This had proven to him that the building was totally inappropriate for its purpose. He thought that it was appalling that nothing had been brought before the Authority earlier to reconsider the move of Service Headquarters to Service Training Centre and he was concerned that since previously considered the associated costs would have increased. He would like to see immediate progress on relocation including the current valuation of the site at Fulwood; with relocation of the fire station if necessary.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the capital identified in the report was for building construction and that the business case was currently being progressed.

Following Member discussion there was general agreement for the project to be considered as soon as possible, ideally at the next Strategy Group meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the Combined Fire Authority approved the: -

1. Capital Strategy;
2. Capital Budget; and
3. Prudential Indicators as now presented.

65/19 REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 - 2024/25

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report which set out the draft revenue budget for 2020/21-2024/25 and the resultant council tax implications.

The report detailed changes to budget requirements, taking account of known/anticipated changes, incorporating current year-end forecast projections, and forecast vacancy factors based on anticipated recruitment. The most significant unknowns were: -

- Future pay awards; assumed at 2% each year;
- The additional cost associated with making various allowances pensionable, an extra £600k had been allowed for this;
- It was unclear what impact the McCloud judgment would have on the budget, (such as increased employer contributions, transfer of personnel between

schemes, retirement profiles and hence vacancy factors, whether a new pension scheme will be introduced and if so what contribution rates will be set). None of these changes had been factored into the budget;

- Section 31 Grant in respect of the additional pension costs had been confirmed for 20/21 and would be incorporated into the subsequent Spending Review, and it had therefore been assumed that this continued throughout the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Local Government Finance Settlement resulted in a funding increase of 1.6% for 2020/21 and a council tax referendum limit of 2%.

The report set out the implications of increasing council tax by 2%, 1% or of freezing this. Allowing for a 2% increase in council tax and a gross budget of £57.8m the report identified a funding shortfall of £0.4m. It was therefore proposed either identifying additional in-year savings, or drawing down reserves, to deliver a balanced budget. This gave a net budget of £57.3m, resulting in a council tax of £70.86 per Band D property, an increase of 1.99% (£1.38 per annum, less than 3p per week).

Until such time as the outcome of next year's Spending Review was published it was impossible to provide any meaningful funding forecast, however for the purpose of medium-term financial planning it was assumed that funding was increased by 1.5%, and the 2% council tax referendum principle continued to apply. Based on this the Authority was still faced with a funding gap of up to £0.6m in subsequent years.

Looking at the medium-term plans it was clear that the key variables remained pay awards, pension costs and funding. As such additional scenarios were presented showing the potential impact of these ranging from a £1.4m to a £3.8m loss of funding or a £2.4m increase in costs.

Currently the Authority remained in a good financial position with reserves able to offset the financial challenges next year. The position became more challenging thereafter however by that time the Authority should have greater certainty on future funding, pay awards and future referendum limits, which would enable it to deliver more reliable medium term financial plans in order to address any gap that exists.

Members considered the report in detail.

County Councillor O'Toole asked that the good relationship with the local Fire Brigade Union be acknowledged.

The proposal based on a council tax increase of 1.99%, £1.38, resulting in a council tax of £70.86 for a Band D property was **MOVED** by County Councillor Frank De Molfetta and **SECONDED** by County Councillor Miles Parkinson.

The Clerk held a recorded vote and the names of Members who voted for or against the Motion and those who abstained are set out below:

For (24)

L Beavers, S Blackburn, P Britcliffe, I Brown, S Clarke, F De Molfetta, J Eaton, N Hennessy, S Holgate, D Howarth, F Jackson, A Kay, H Khan, M Khan, Z Khan, T Martin, D O'Toole, M Parkinson, A Riggott, J Shedwick, D Smith, D Stansfield,

G Wilkins and T Williams.

Against (0)

No Members voted against the motion.

Abstained (0)

No Members abstained.

The motion was therefore unanimously CARRIED and it was:

RESOLVED: - That the Authority: -

1. noted the Treasurer's advice on the robustness of the budget
2. noted the Treasurer's advice on the appropriate level of reserves/balances
3. agreed the revised budget requirement of £57.339m for 2020/21
4. noted the section 31 grant of £1.246m due in respect of the business rate reliefs
5. noted the level of Business Rates Retention Top Up Funding £11.295m
6. noted the level of Local Business Rates Retention Funding £4.340m
7. noted the business rate tax collection fund surplus of £0.122m
8. noted the council tax collection fund surplus of £0.363m
9. agreed the council tax requirement, calculated in accordance with Section 42A(4) of the Localism Act of £31.450m
10. noted the council tax base of 443,827 determined for the purposes of Section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992
11. agreed a council tax band D equivalent of £70.86, an increase of £1.38 (1.99%), calculated by the Authority under Section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 agreed, on the basis of the fixed ratios between valuation bands set by the Government, council tax for each band as follows:

Band A	£47.24
Band B	£55.11
Band C	£62.99
Band D	£70.86
Band E	£86.61
Band F	£102.35
Band G	£118.10
Band H	£141.72

12. agreed, based on each district and unitary councils share of the total band D equivalent tax base of 443,827, the share of the total LCFA precept of £31.450m levied on each council as follows:

Blackburn With Darwen Borough Council	£2,521,025
Blackpool Borough Council	£2,632,946
Burnley Borough Council	£1,656,991

Chorley Borough Council	£2,652,894
Fylde Borough Council	£2,171,080
Hyndburn Borough Council	£1,484,376
Lancaster City Council	£2,954,862
Pendle Borough Council	£1,718,894
Preston City Council	£2,771,619
Ribble Valley Borough Council	£1,673,926
Rossendale Borough Council	£1,462,197
South Ribble Borough Council	£2,556,183
West Lancashire District Council	£2,549,467
Wyre Borough Council	£2,643,111
TOTAL	£31,449,571

66/19 HMICFRS STATE OF FIRE & RESCUE ASSESSMENT REPORT

During January this year, HMICFRS released the ‘State of Fire Report’ which was the annual assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of fire and rescue services in England, based on the 45 inspections carried out between June 2018 and August 2019. The report provided a summary of the performance of the 45 fire and rescue services against the 3 inspection pillars of effectiveness, efficiency and people and provides a comparator for the high levels of performance delivered by Lancashire when considered against peers nationally. The [report](#) highlighted that the sector had many strengths but that ongoing improvement was required. Whilst it was acknowledged that many of the negative statements within the report existed nationally, it was pleasing that these were not representative of the picture that was reflected within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service’s (LFRS) first tranche report.

State of Fire provided strategic recommendations on reforms needed, to ensure that modern fire and rescue services could be provided which were fit for the future. The report recommended:

1. By June 2020, the Home Office, in consultation with the fire and rescue sector, should review and with precision determine the roles of: (a) fire and rescue services; and (b) those who work in them.
2. By June 2020, the Home Office, the Local Government Association, the National Fire Chiefs Council and trade unions should consider whether the current pay negotiation machinery requires fundamental reform. If so, this should include the need for an independent pay review body and the future of the ‘grey book’.
3. By September 2020, the Home Office should consider the case for legislating to give chief fire officers operational independence. In the meantime, it should issue clear guidance, possibly through an amendment to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, on the demarcation between those responsible for governance and operational decision making by the chief fire officer.
4. By December 2020, the National Fire Chiefs Council, with the Local Government Association, should produce a code of ethics for fire and rescue services. The code should be adopted by every service in England and considered as part of each employee’s progression and annual performance appraisal.

Second inspection confirmed

The dates for the second inspection of LFRS have been confirmed as week commencing 11th May 2020. For the second inspection the former Service Liaison Lead (SLL), Dave Dryburgh, hands over to his replacement, Jo Hayden (Seconded Programme and Planning Manager for Nottinghamshire FRS). It was anticipated that the Service would meet with the new SLL following their formal HMICFRS training in February.

Meantime work was ongoing within Service to meet key dates within the timeline: –

- Data Return – completed in the last week of January 2020.
- Preparation of LFRS Self-Assessment against the inspection framework, prior to Discovery Week.
- Document return – (awaiting the request but previously this constituted 53 service level documents).
- Discovery week – initial visit by a few members of the inspection team, confirmed as week commencing 20th April.
- Inspection week – full inspection team into Service, week commencing 11th May.

During the previous inspection, the Chief Fire Officer's strategic brief was delivered prior to inspection week. This time, it would be delivered to the inspection team on the first morning of inspection week.

It was noted that there was a spring bi-annual data return expected in May which may coincide with the inspection dates.

Learning from other FRS and sharing our best practice

Whilst LFRS had areas of strength, it recognised that further improvements could be derived from best practice of our peers. Following the release of the reports from the final tranche of inspections and the more recent State of Fire report, the Service had identified a number of opportunities to be explored with our peers. Accordingly, visits had been made to other FRS, examples being, Merseyside to look at their approach towards Prevention activity, phone conferences with Cambridge and Oxfordshire to look at various areas of strength and a further visit being planned to West Midlands to consider the work undertaken to achieve their 'outstanding' in response.

Conversely LFRS had hosted several FRS over the course of the year to share areas of our best practice, including Lincolnshire, Durham and Darlington and a number of FRS whom attended a recent event to share an overview of our Risk Based Inspection Programme for fire protection.

In response to Member comments regarding the importance of considering an environmental impact reduction strategy the Director of People and development confirmed that the Authority's Carbon Management Plan included a visionary target of 40% by 2020, however the current reduction was 25%. How this could be improved

was currently being considered. The Chief Fire Officer added that the HMICFRS inspection was looking at operational efficiency which included consideration for the environment. It was noted that recently the Environmental Agency had compared the Service's response to a like for like recycling fire and LFRS had resolved it ten times quicker; such examples would be presented during the inspection.

County Councillor Shedwick advised that the last Planning Committee received excellent insight into the amount of data and work needed to prepare for the inspection and it was noted that there was a lot of work needed to prepare for the next one. Members requested a briefing on progress at the next Authority meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

67/19 MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007. A review of the areas of focus for Member Champions was considered at the Authority meeting held in June 2017 where new areas of responsibility were agreed. The current Member Champions and their areas of responsibility were:

- Community Safety – Cllr Tony Williams
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Cllr Zamir Khan;
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan;
- Road Safety – Cllr Fred Jackson.

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period up to 24 February 2020. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference.

Councillor Williams added to his report that at the Blackpool Council meeting held earlier in the month he had put forward a motion which had been unanimously agreed for the Chief Executive to write to the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government to consider making it mandatory in building regulations that house builders install Fire Authority approved sprinkler systems on all new residential buildings.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.

68/19 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 November 2019 to 1 February 2020 was provided.

Fire protection and business support information was provided and Members noted that there were 3 arson convictions during the period.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Britcliffe in relation to the inspection

process for working men's clubs, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the risk-based inspection process would vary regarding the premises type and focused on people rather than location. If however there were any concerns regarding a particular building then contact should be made with the local fire station.

Councillor Martin referred to a multi occupied dwelling fire in Blackpool where 2 paramedics entered the burning building to assist getting all the occupants out and asked if they could be recognised for their actions.

In response to a request from Councillor Kay for more detail regarding the Primary Authority Scheme, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the scheme was provided to businesses on a cost recovery basis and that it enabled a consistent approach to be applied for fire safety provision across large scale developments. He agreed to provide scheme details separately to Councillor Kay after the meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.

69/19 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

This report included information for the 2 Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Fire Safety Initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest throughout the period December 2019 – January 2020.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.

70/19 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

71/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 20 April 2020 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

72/19 CONDOLENCES

The Authority supported the Chief Fire Officer to report condolences following the sad loss of serving Firefighter Alistair Cudworth who served over 26 years in the Service.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 June 2020, at 10.00 am - Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

S Holgate (Chairman)
M Khan OBE (Vice-Chair)
L Beavers
P Britcliffe
S Clarke
N Hennessy
Z Khan
A Riggott
D Smith

In accordance with the resolution of the predecessor Performance Review Committee at its inaugural meeting on the 30th July 2004 (Minute No. 1/04 refers), representatives of the LFRS, the Unions and Audit had been invited to attend all Performance Committee meetings to participate in discussion and debate.

Officers

D Russel, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
B Norman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
T Crook, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS)
S Morgan, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
N Bashall, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

19/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman, County Councillor Holgate welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the first virtual committee meeting of the Performance Committee. He advised that in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Government had made regulations that enabled virtual meetings. This meeting was accessible for Committee Members via Microsoft Teams and for members of the press and public via a live webcast on YouTube.

The Committee Members individually confirmed their attendance at the start of the meeting.

20/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Stansfield.

21/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

22/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

In response to a question raised by CC Riggott, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that in relation to 1.3, Accidental Dwelling Fires quarter 2 activity was 213 with the previous year quarter 2 activity 196; this represented an increase of 8.67% (and not a decrease as stated in the report).

Further to the update presented by Mr Basson, North West Fire Control at the last meeting, CC Hennessy requested an update in relation to Fire Control staff recruitment and turnover. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer agreed to investigate and report back to CC Hennessy after the meeting.

RESOLVED: - That, subject to the above amendment the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 28 November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

23/19 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

The Chairman introduced, Deputy Chief Fire Officer David Russel who presented the report.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that this was the 4th quarterly report for 2019/20 as detailed in the Risk Management Plan 2017-2022 and it included an Annual Report on Road Safety Intervention Activity during 2019/20.

Members examined each indicator in turn as follows:-

KPI 1 – Preventing, fires and other emergencies from happening and Protecting, people and property when fires happen

Risk Map

This indicator measured the fire risk in each Super Output Area. Risk was determined using fire activity over the previous 3 fiscal years along with a range of demographic data, such as population and deprivation.

The standard was to reduce the risk in Lancashire – an annual reduction in the County risk map score.

The current score 31,816, previous year score 32,114.

1.6 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that the Service attended with one or more pumping appliances.

Quarter 4 activity 3,851, previous year quarter 4 activity 3,575 an increase of 7.72% over the same quarter.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
17,207	3,851	17,062	3,575

Incidents attended consisted of a myriad of different types. The report presented a chart which represented the count and percentage that each activity had contributed to the overall quarter's activity; most notably was that 47% were false alarms.

In response to a question from CC Clarke on whether the Service could impose a charge or penalty for repeat offenders the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that a robust approach was taken but no charge was applied. He confirmed there was a huge spread of alarm systems across the built environment and numbers of repeat offenders were not that high.

1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of the fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known'.

It was noted that quarter 4 activity was 201, the previous year quarter 4 activity was 185, which represented an increase of 8.65% over the same quarter (not a decrease as stated in the report).

Total number of Accidental Dwelling Fires – Year to Date, 816

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the previous year activity of 815 was the lowest level in the previous 10 years and this year was on a similar level which reflected all the good work staff were doing to reduce risk and keep people safer from fire in their homes.

CC Hennessy felt that a press release should be issued to recognise this achievement and give staff credit for their good work.

1.3.1 Accidental Dwelling Fires – Extent of Damage (Fire Severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of the fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known' presented as a percentage extent of fire and heat damage.

The extent of fire and heat damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was

sent and included all damage types. The report charted a rolling quarterly severity of accidental dwelling fire over the previous two years with each quarter broken down into high, medium and low severity. Each quarter included the percentage (out of 100%) that each severity type represented of the total, with an indicator to illustrate the direction against the same quarter of the previous year.

The latest quarter recorded a combined 'low' and 'medium' severity of 92% which was a decreased of 4.8% against the 96.8% recorded in the same quarter of the previous year.

Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 4	
Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3		
3.2%	3.8%	6.5%	4.9%	8.0%	
49.7%	49.8%	51.5%	57.3%	49.8%	
47.0%	46.4%	42.0%	37.9%	42.2%	

1.3.2 Accidental Dwelling Fires – Number of Incidents where occupants have received a Home Fire Safety Check

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known' by the extent of the fire and heat damage. The HFSC must be a completed job (i.e. not a refusal) carried out by LFRS personnel or partner agency. The HFSC must have been carried out within 12 months prior of the fire occurring.

	2019/20		2018/19	
	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC
Q1	23	11%	21	10%
Q2	26	13%	17	9%
Q3	31	15%	24	11%
Q4	27	13%	15	8%

1.4 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

This indicator reported the number of fire related fatalities, slight and serious injuries at primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known'. A slight injury was defined as; a person attending hospital as an outpatient (not precautionary check). A serious injury was defined as; at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient.

There were 2 fatalities during the latest quarterly period. 4 casualties were recorded as serious and 11 slight. The same quarter of the previous year recorded no

fatalities, 3 serious and 10 slight.

Casualty Status	2019/20 Quarter 4	2018/19 Quarter 4
Fatal	2	0
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Serious	4	3
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Slight	11	10
TOTAL	17	13

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced Area Manager Morgan who advised that sadly the 2 fatalities recorded (in Leyland and Chorley) were both older, females in receipt of care packages to assist with underlying health conditions. He confirmed that where people had unfortunately lost their lives a review of the circumstances was undertaken to draw out any learning which was then fed back to staff. It was recognised that while advice and support was provided from multi-agencies it was difficult to secure behavioural change.

A negative exception report was provided due to the number of casualty's recorded during the month of January being above the upper control limit.

Analysis of the casualties recorded showed that during quarter 4 January 2020 – March 2020 there had been 17 recorded casualties, with a peak in January of 11. This month recorded 1 fatality, a further 2 casualties with serious injuries an 8 with slight injuries 2 of which occurred at the same incident. Due to the number of casualties being quite small, there can often be large variations in the month on month counts. As such, the monthly 'mean' average over the year showed there were an average of 5 casualties per month, compared to 4 over the previous 3 years.

The overall Accidental Dwelling Fire count that the end of year count was at a 10-year low.

Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC's) had also been increasing, with a greater number being undertaken in 2019/20 than in each of the previous 4 years.

Members noted the actions being taken to improve performance.

1.5 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Dwellings)

This indicator reported number of primary fires where the property type was 'Building' and the property sub type did not equal 'Dwelling' and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known'.

Quarterly activity decreased 25.26% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Total number of incidents	2019/20 Quarter 4	2018/19 Quarter 4
	71	95

1.5.1 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Dwellings) – Extent of Damage (Fire Severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the property type was a building and the property sub-type was not a dwelling and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known' presented as a percentage extent of fire and heat damage.

The extent of fire and heat damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was sent and included all damage types. The report charted a rolling quarterly severity of accidental dwelling fire over the previous two years with each quarter broken down into high, medium and low severity. Each quarter included the percentage (out of 100%) that each severity type represented of the total, with an indicator to illustrate the direction against the same quarter of the previous year.

The latest quarter recorded a combined 'low' and 'medium' severity of 83.1%. This is an improvement of 13.6% against a combined severity of 69.5% in the same quarter of the previous year. Accidental building fires with a calculated fire severity of 'high' and 'low' increased against the same quarter of the previous year, whilst 'medium' severity decreased.

Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 4
Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	
30.5%	36.8%	19.7%	12.5%	16.9%
49.5%	50.6%	57.9%	58.3%	63.4%
20.0%	12.6%	22.4%	29.2%	19.7%

o Deliberate Fires

This indicator reported the number of primary and secondary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Deliberate'. Secondary fires were the majority of outdoor fires including grassland and refuse fires unless they involved casualties or rescues, property loss or 5 or more appliances attended. They included fires in single derelict buildings.

Deliberate Fire Type	2019/20 Quarter 4	2018/19 Quarter 4
1.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Anti-Social Behaviour	256	301
1.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings	30	22
1.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Non-Dwellings	29	25

1.7 Home Fire Safety Checks

This indicator reported the percentage of completed Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC), excluding refusals, carried out where the risk score had been determined to be high.

An improvement was shown if: i) the total number of HFSC's completed was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year; and ii) the percentage of high HFSC outcomes was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year.

The number of completed HFSCs decreased 14% over the same quarter of the previous year and those with a high risk outcome, decreased by 5%.

	2019/20	2018/19
	% of High HFSC outcomes	% of High HFSC outcomes
Q1	65%	66%
Q2	61%	67%
Q3	60%	64%
Q4	60%	65%

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that this year had seen a significant increase from the previous year of 2,000 HFSCs undertaken. Going forwards, the Service would be monitoring that increases in the number of visits undertaken included more high risk vulnerable people.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced Area Manager Crook to provide a brief update for Members on what the Service had been undertaking to keep people safe in their homes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

AM Crook advised that during the pandemic the Service was leading on the 'humanitarian assist cell' for the Lancashire Resilience Forum. This involved contacting vulnerable and shielded people, working with local authority community hubs and visiting people to find out if they were safe and well and to leave any supplies and medicine as required. The Service had carried out approximately 3,500 visits during the last quarter to assist people in Lancashire. The visits were carried out mainly by community safety staff who had redesigned their work and shift pattern across a 7-day week; with support from LFRS volunteers who also worked over the weekend. The Service engaged with local authorities and within districts for this work and had taken the opportunity to ask whether they would like to become a 'preferred partner' which meant that details of any vulnerable person would then automatically be sent for the Service to carry out a home fire safety check. To date 9 (out of 14) local authorities had responded favourably to this request. This would hopefully increase the count of high risk HFSCs. The Committee wanted to express their thanks to staff and volunteers for their support to vulnerable people during this time.

CC Riggott had asked at the last meeting whether it was possible to determine from the domestic fires attended where a home fire safety check had been refused; he also asked whether reasons were known for these refusals. Area Manager Crook advised that there were various reasons why a home fire safety check was refused ie: transient people may have already relocated, sometimes the fire was small and people didn't want to make any more contact with the Service. Of the 816 accidental dwelling fires reported this year (under KPI 1.3) 121 people had been offered a visit and had refused for a variety of reasons (broken down into quarters these were: 30

in quarter 1, 30 in quarter 2, 35 in quarter 3 and 26 in quarter 4). AM Crook confirmed that immediately following an accidental dwelling fire a smoke detector was fitted and advice given; this was then followed up with that dwelling and the surrounding area provided advice and HFSCs.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer stated that the challenge going forwards was 3 fold: i) a closer conversion rate ie: the service offered was taken up; ii) there was an increase in completion rates; iii) alongside an increasing percentage return on the numbers completed within high risk households. It was agreed that more detail would be provided in future reports.

In response to a question raised by CC Hennessy regarding whether it was possible to determine of those who had refused a HFSC whether they subsequently had a fire, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed this was possible and details would be provided at a future meeting.

1.8 Road Safety Education Evaluation

This indicator reported the percentage of participants of the Wasted Lives and Road Sense education packages that showed a positive change to less risky behaviour following the programme; based on comparing the overall responses to an evaluation question before and after the course.

Total participants were a combination of those engaged with at Wasted Lives and Road Sense events.

The total number of participants increased by 24.9% and those with a percentage of positive influence on participant's behaviour remained consistent with the same quarter of the previous year.

	2019/20 (cumulative)		2018/19 (cumulative)	
	Total participants	% positive influence on participants' behaviour	Total participants	% positive influence on participants' behaviour
Q1	4,354	85%	5,002	85%
Q2	8,158	85%	5,983	85%
Q3	16,417	85%	10,613	85%
Q4	21,516	85%	17,220	85%

Area Manager Crook advised that the Service delivered a number of road safety education packages which included:

- Wasted lives –a hard-hitting prevention package targeted at year 11 high school children on the consequences of dangerous driving behaviour;
- Road Sense – targeted at year 6 primary school children to understand risks as they prepare for the transition to high school and more independent travel;
- Biker Down senior workshops were community events which targeted particular demographics ie: motor bike users and the older population who may have

- health concerns while driving;
- Safe Drive Stay Alive – aimed at college students aged 16-17 to highlight the risks of dangerous driving;
- Community events were also held for the wider population where cars that had been involved in accidents were shown to demonstrate what could happen.

AM Crook also advised that the Service was part of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership which was Chaired by Deputy Chief Constable Terry Woods. The work of the partnership included:

- Child pedestrian training at reception, year 1 and year 2 at almost every primary school in the county;
- Cycle training at every primary school;
- Targeted social media campaigns based on the ‘fatal 5’: failure to wear seat belts, intoxication, speeding and driving while fatigued or distracted (ie: driving without thinking about other road users behaviour);
- Activity in communities at key times of the year in line with the national road safety calendar;
- Managing and responding to community speed concerns;
- Delivery of speed awareness courses;
- Coordinated safety engineering and enforcement works such as the installation of the average speed cameras.

All this work did have an impact but this was difficult to quantify. However, the Department of Transport figures nationally showed that between 2014 – 2018 there had been a consistent year on year decrease in the number of people who have been killed and seriously injured on Lancashire’s roads (860 in 2014 had dropped to 740 in 2018).

County Councillor Hennessy asked whether it was possible to find out the age of the drivers who had died and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that it was.

It was therefore agreed that the detail requested for Home Fire Safety Checks and Road Safety be brought together as a separate item for a future meeting of this Committee and more detail be provided as part of this report going forwards.

1.9 Fire Safety Enforcement

This indicator reported the number of Fire Safety Enforcement inspections carried out within the period resulting in supporting businesses to improve and become compliant with fire safety regulations or to take formal action of enforcement and prosecution of those that fail to comply.

Formal activity was defined as one or more of the following; enforcement notice or an action plan, alterations notice or prohibition notice.

An improvement was shown if the percentage of adults ‘requiring formal activity’ was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year. This helped inform that the correct businesses were being identified.

*The 'number of inspections' count included business safety advice and advice to other enforcement authorities which were not captured within the formal/informal or satisfactory counts.

	2019/20				2018/19	
	*No. of Inspections	Requiring		Satisfactory Audit	% requiring Formal Activity	% requiring Formal Activity
		Formal Activity	Informal Activity			
Q1	411	38	270	90	9%	9%
Q2	392	35	248	105	9%	12%
Q3	385	38	222	93	10%	7%
Q4	251	33	147	55	13%	11%

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that following the Grenfell Fire and the independent review of building regulations and fire safety led by Dame Judith Hackitt there had been a number of legislative changes that would increase the powers of the Fire Authority in its enforcement of the Fire Safety Order. The performance of the Service in relation to how people were being kept safe in buildings (that were not domestic properties) would be an area of focus for central government and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. It was noted that the Assistant Chief Fire Officer would be taking a report on this to a future meeting of the Planning Committee.

KPI 2 – Responding, to fire and other emergencies quickly and competently

2.1.1 Emergency Response Standards - Critical Fires – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

This indicator reported the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident in less than the relevant response standard.

The response standards included call handling and fire engine response time for the first fire engine attending a critical fire, these were as follows:-

- Very high risk area = 6 minutes
- High risk area = 8 minutes
- Medium risk area = 10 minutes
- Low risk area = 12 minutes

The response standards were determined by the risk map score and subsequent risk grade for the location of the fire.

Standard: to be in attendance within response standard target on 90% of occasions.

Quarter 4 – 1st pump response improved 5.4% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
88.47%	88.99%	85.31%	87.97%

2.1.2 Emergency Response Standards - Critical Fires – 2nd Fire Engine Attendance

This indicator reported the time taken for the second fire engine to attend a critical fire incident measured from the time between the second fire engine arriving and the time of call. The target is determined by the risk map score and subsequent risk grade for the location of the fire.

Standard: to be in attendance within response standard target on 85% of occasions.

Quarter 4 – 2nd pump response improved 4.41% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
86.40%	85.56%	82.14%	81.15%

2.2.1 Emergency Response Standards - Critical Special Service – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

This indicator measured how long it took the first fire engine to respond to critical non-fire incidents such as road traffic collisions, rescues and hazardous materials incidents. For those incidents there was a single response standard which measured call handling time and fire engine response time. The response standard for the first fire engine attending a critical special call was 13 minutes.

Standard: to be in attendance within response standard target on 90% of occasions.

The latest quarter 1st pump response decreased 2.15% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
88.90%	87.75%	89.85%	89.90%

2.3 Fire Engine Availability – Wholetime, Day Crewing and Day Crewing Plus

This indicator measured the availability of fire engines that were crewed by wholetime, day crewing and day crewing plus shifts. It was measured as the percentage of time a fire engine was available to respond compared to the total time in the period.

Fire engines were designated as unavailable for the following reasons:

- Mechanical
- Crew deficient
- Engineer working on station
- Appliance change over
- Debrief
- Lack of equipment
- Miscellaneous
- Unavailable
- Welfare

Standard: 99.5%

Year to date availability of 99.55% was a decrease of 0.1% over the same period of the previous year.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
99.51%	99.55%	99.45%	99.63%

2.4 Fire Engine Availability – On-Call Duty System

This indicator measured the availability of fire engines that were crewed by the on-call duty system. It was measured as the percentage of time a fire engine was available to respond compared to the total time in the period.

Fire engines were designated as unavailable (off the run) for the following reasons which include the percentage of off the run hours that each reason contributed to the total. Members noted that fire engines can be off the run for more than one reason; hence the percentages were interpreted individually (rather than as a proportion of the total):

- Manager deficient 59%
- Crew deficient 60%
- Not enough BA wearers 50%
- No driver 45%

Standard: above 95%

Year to date availability 87.49%, a 0.23% increase against the previous year to date of 87.29%.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
87.49%	90.20%	87.29%	87.05%

2.4.1 Fire Engine Availability – On-Call Duty System (without wholetime detachments)

Subset of KP1 2.4 and provided for information only

This indicator measured the availability of fire engines that were crewed by the on-call duty system (OC) when wholetime detachments were not used to support availability. It was measured by calculating the percentage of time a fire engine was

available to respond compared to the total time in the period.

Fire engines were designated as unavailable (off-the-run) for the following reasons:

- Manager deficient
- Crew deficient
- Not enough BA wearers
- No driver

Standard: As a subset of KPI 2.4 there was no standard attributable to this KPI.

The percentage of time that OC crewed engines were available for quarter 4 was 86.68%. This excluded the wholetime detachments shown in KPI 2.4.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer praised the exceptional efforts of on-call firefighters and officers during the pandemic; they have worked hard to deliver almost 100% availability due in part to staff being furloughed and self-employed staff working longer contracted hours.

2.5 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the number of staff accidents.

The number of staff accidents during the latest quarter decreased by 47.39% against the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 4	Previous year to Date	2018/19 Quarter 4
73	11	65	16

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained the increase was a rise in accidents of routine activity, typically manual handling related injuries at road traffic incidents and at incidents attended with North West Ambulance Service involving bariatric casualties; ie: the moving of people in testing environments. It was noted that the Authority had recently invested £60k for lightweight, battery powered tools that could be used at road traffic incidents which would help going forward. Also while there had been an increase in accidents overall, a more accurate of picture of injury severity could be gained from the number of accidents reported to Health and Safety Executive under Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). Statistics reportable under RIDDOR for the last 3 years was 13 in 2017/18; 9 in 2018/19 and 9 in 2019/20. While there had been an increased number the severity was not high. It was difficult to provide an accident free environment due to the nature of the work but the Service endeavoured to create a culture where accidents were as low as possible.

KPI 3 – Delivering, value for money in how we use our resources

3.1 Progress against Savings Programme

The annual budget for 2019/20 was set at £56.0m with the spend for the same period £56.0m.

3.2 Overall User Satisfaction

There had been 2,401 people surveyed since April 2012 and the number satisfied with the service was 2,378; % satisfied 99.04% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance 1.58%.

During the latest quarter, 94 people were surveyed and 94 responded that they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the service they received.

KPI 4 – Valuing, our people so that they can focus on making Lancashire safer

4.1 Overall Staff Engagement

Staff surveys were undertaken on matters which required a broader range of input. In the past, these had related to health and wellbeing, naming of the new intranet or more targeted surveys on challenges faced by blue light drivers. Due to surveys being undertaken on an ad hoc basis they were reported on an 'as required' basis. As such, the measure of success would be the levels of engagement in a survey and in contributing to decisions and improvements.

During December 2019 and December 2020 a survey was undertaken as part of a review of the duty rig uniform. The survey was carried out via online and paper surveys. 573 staff responded to the survey representing 49% of the workforce. This was an increase on the 2018 staff survey response rate which was 43%.

A further 57 members of staff participated in trials of new trousers and boots and 32 engaged in focus groups to provide feedback. Based on the engagement levels and the positive feedback during the consultation, the Service is changing to the boots and trousers preferred by staff.

4.2.1 Staff Absence – Excluding on-Call Duty System

This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for all wholetime, day crewing plus, day crewing and support staff divided by the total number of staff.

Annual Standard: Not more than 5 shifts lost
Cumulative total number of monthly shifts lost 9.132

This was a negative exception report due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the analysis, that:-

During quarter 4 (January 2020 to March 2020), absence statistics showed above target for all 3 months. Wholetime personnel and non-uniformed personnel were both above the target over all 3 months.

There were 14 cases of long term absence which spanned over the 3 months and there were 26 other cases of long term absence which were recorded within the 3 months with the reasons detailed in the report.

Members also considered the actions undertaken to improve performance which included that the Service aimed to continue with:

- Early intervention by Occupational Health Unit (OHU) doctor / nurse / physiotherapist;
- Human Resources supported managers in following the Absence Management Policy managing individual long term cases, addressing review periods / triggers in a timely manner and dealing with capability of staff due to health issues;
- To be included again within the leadership conference to assist future managers understanding and interpretation of the policy;
- Encouraging employees to make use of our Employee Assistance Programme provider Health Assured and The Firefighters Charity;
- HR to be in attendance at Stress Risk Assessment meetings, to support managers and to offer appropriate support to the employee along with signposting;
- OHU to organise health checks for individuals on a voluntary basis;
- Support from Service Fitness Advisor / Personal Training Instructors;
- Promotion of health, fitness and wellbeing via the routine bulletin and Employee Assistance programme.

4.2.2 Staff Absence – On-Call Duty System

This indicator measured the percentage of contracted hours lost due to sickness for all on-call duty staff.

Annual Standard: Not more than 2.5% lost as % of available hours of cover.

Cumulative on-call absence (as % of available hours cover) at the end of the quarter, 0.61%.

ANNUAL REPORT ON ROAD SAFETY INTERVENTION ACTIVITY 2019/20

This activity was discussed earlier. Members noted that through the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017-2022 (IRMP), prevention and protection services and the structure for delivery were reviewed over the course of the last IRMP to ensure that the Service was delivering appropriate services in line with the changing operating environment. As a result working practices had changed with a strategic focus on the quality of the services that continued to be delivered. These services were delivered around 4 key themes: helping people to start safe, live safe, age safe and be safe on our roads with a focus on working collaboratively with other organisations. To ensure constant improvement in all parts of the prevention priority, the Service had dedicated thematic groups which reviewed current practice and results.

Members were provided with an annual overview of road safety intervention activities being delivered by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to the communities of Lancashire on a daily basis.

RESOLVED: - That the Performance Committee endorsed the quarter 4 measuring progress report and noted the contents including the 2 negative key performance indicator exception reports and the annual Road Safety Intervention Activity.

24/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 1000 hours – venue to be confirmed.

A further meeting date was noted for 16 December 2020.

25/19 URGENT BUSINESS - APPEAL TO STOP THE USE OF DISPOSABLE BARBECUES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The Chairman asked for an update on the progress made regarding the appeal made by the Service for people to stop using disposable barbecues in the countryside following two large wildfires in the county.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the 2 significant moorland fires were in Longridge and Darwen. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Norman was in charge and he declared this a major incident because of the collective impact of these fires. Lessons learned from Winter Hill enabled the incidents to be dealt with swiftly and partnership arrangements worked seamlessly. Everyone connected with LFRS had been appalled by the behaviours of some people who appeared to have an utter absence of regard to public safety or the impact on the environment if a fire got out of control, whether that was in relation to barbeques, smoking materials or lighting fires.

On the specific issue of disposable barbeques, which have been problematic in the past and were problematic in the 2 recent incidents, the Chief Fire Officer had a strong view and had been very vocal to state that these should be unequivocally banned. The Chief had also made contact with Chief Executives of local authorities who have agreed in principle to start to try and ban and progressively eradicate the use of them in open moorland areas.

The next step for the Service was to work with major suppliers within the county ie: supermarket type outlets with the aim of gaining agreement to remove these items from their stores.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 13 July 2020, at 10.00 am - Virtual meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

M Parkinson OBE (Chairman)
I Brown
F De Molfetta (for T Martin)
J Eaton
Jane Hugo
H Khan
M Khan OBE
D O'Toole
J Shedwick

Officers

J Johnston, Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
B Norman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
J Charters, Area Manager, Head of Service Development (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
N Bashall, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

25/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman, County Councillor Parkinson welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Planning Committee. He advised that in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Government had made regulations that enabled virtual meetings. This meeting was accessible for Committee Members via Microsoft Teams and for members of the press and public via a live webcast on YouTube.

The Committee Members individually confirmed their attendance at the start of the meeting.

26/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Tony Martin.

27/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

28/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

29/19 ANNUAL SERVICE REPORT

Area Manager Charters presented the report.

The Annual Service Report (ASR) was a key part of the Service's corporate planning process which enabled the documentation of deliverables in the previous 12 month performance period as set out in the Annual Service Plan.

In addition to highlighting the key projects that had been delivered against the 2019/20 Annual Service Plan, it also presented the opportunity to reflect on some of the unplanned major achievements and challenges the Service had delivered over the last 12 months.

Members considered the detailed a range of projects, action plans and priority items for completion during the year as set out in the report:-

Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening and protecting people and property when they do

Deliver tailored prevention activity

- CookSafe and TeenSafe campaigns

The Keep It Clean, Keep It Clear cooking safety campaign ran from July to October 2019 and was centred on keeping ovens and hobs clean and clear to reduce the risk of fire. High risk areas were targeted as part of the campaign, as well as people living alone and people over the pensionable age. There had been a decreasing trend in cooking related accidental dwelling fires since the CookSafe campaign started in 2017.

The 2019/2020 academic year saw the first full year of key stage 3 TeenSafe delivery, which provided targeted sessions on themes such a Bonfire Night, water safety, grass fire safety and anti-social behaviour. In addition prevention sessions were provided for year 2 and early years' pupils, both at their settings and on stations. The Service also worked with voluntary youth groups such as guides and scouts, as well as further education and higher education establishments delivering student safety sessions.

- Become an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) aware organisation

During 2019/20, ACE toolbox talks were undertaken at the Service's headquarters and training centre and at a number of fire stations across Lancashire. Delivery of the talks would continue in 2020/21 until ACE was embedded as a core organisational offering.

Harness technology to improve protection activity

Work continued to develop technology to support quicker report production and

wider digitisation of business safety and enforcement services, with more agile ways of working including mobile access to building files and plans. This was part of a wider project to ensure fire safety inspectors' resources were targeted at the most appropriate premises through an increasingly refined risk based inspection programme which considered building use, management history and other factors such as cladding.

Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently

Evaluate tools to strengthen response

- Pre-alerting system

Following promising results at four fire stations, the trial had been extended to include the majority of fire engines in the north of the county to examine the impact of early mobilisation messages on performance levels on all shift systems including on-call.

- Dynamic cover tool

The Service continued to explore the feasibility of a shared product with regional partners to improve the effectiveness of geographical resource allocation across Lancashire.

Strengthen operational assurance

Following the successful launch of a debrief app the Service continued to develop a bespoke assurance monitoring system. The system would ensure the recording, analysis and tracking of any learning from incidents and exercises effectively and efficiently. Learning from other fire and rescue services and from station assurance visits would also be managed through the system.

Integrate a second water tower into the fleet

Following evaluation of our first Stinger appliance and confirmation that the appliance significantly enhanced firefighter safety, firefighting capability in the built environment and pumping capacity, a second Stinger had been integrated into the Service's fleet and was based at Skelmersdale Fire Station.

Replace incident command units

Work to finalise the specifications for the incident command unit as well as incident command software had progressed, and would provide the Service with a bespoke vehicle for use at multi-agency and major incidents. This would enhance command and control capability and provide a space for high level incident ground discussions and decisions to take place. New software would enable the safe and efficient sharing of information across the incident ground and with other agencies. A physical prototype of the new command support unit had been constructed and work was being carried out to ensure the unit and software could be seamlessly integrated. Once both the specifications and prototype had been finalised the procurement process could commence.

Optimise rota management

The Service operated a risk based approach to staffing fire appliances and other specialist vehicles and by necessity there were a range of duty systems in use, each with their own guidelines, management overheads and interdependencies. The Service had been working to ensure this project would reduce the amount of time staff spent in both operational and administrative roles in managing people disposition. The project had already delivered a contemporary approach to overtime management, utilising an app, and would go on to focus on smarter ways to manage other aspects of staffing.

Establish a wildfire burn team

The crew at Bacup Fire Station now made up a newly established specialist wildfire burn team capable of proactively burning areas of land to reduce the spread and duration of wildfires. The team had provided successful interventions at several wildfire incidents resulting in fires being contained and extinguished in a relatively short period of time; prevention of further fire spread; and no reported injuries. The team helped to maximise firefighter safety and minimise the risk to people, property and the environment, and positive feedback had been received from partner agencies.

Lead nationally on the use of drones

The Service remained at the forefront of emergency service drone technology and maintained a joint drone team with Lancashire Constabulary. Through its national lead status, the Service had assisted a large number of other emergency services in developing their own drone capability. As the only Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) qualified training organisation in the sector, training had also been delivered to other services and government agencies.

The Service keeps up with the rate of technological change in the drone industry through links with research organisations, manufacturers and academia; currently supporting a number of research projects including the development of the Lancashire Unmanned Aviation Vehicle Cluster in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire.

Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer

Develop a strong organisational culture where our values are understood

- Improve how the appraisal conversation is undertaken

Further to extensive staff consultation, a revised approach to the appraisal conversation was created including new documentation. This was launched alongside a video to ensure colleagues were aware of the reasoning behind the change in arrangements. The new approach had been welcomed by members of staff and alternative recording arrangements were now being developed within existing HR systems. To ensure that meaningful conversations took place in relation to performance activity around having difficult conversations within the development programme for supervisory managers was also included. Line managers also attend coaching development sessions.

- Performance manage the completion of appraisals

Further to the implementation of the new appraisal approach, the completion rate in relation to appraisals last year was 98% for operational members of staff and 97% for support staff.

- Tools to improve the appraisal conversation

A 360 degree appraisal tool had been developed however the launch of a pilot was postponed due to the Covid-19. The Service is looking to implement this work in September 2020.

Encourage and listen to employee voice

Following months of staff consultation, a new internal intranet 'The Engine House' was launched and was now widely used. Incorporating social networking to connect staff across the Service, the site allowed them to raise and discuss new ideas, as well as share knowledge and ideas in an open forum. The Engine House was used as a central hub for all internal information.

Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the Service

- Promote opportunities to diverse communities

The Service had selected suitable candidates for firefighter recruitment courses in September 2020 and January 2021 after a positive action campaign was held in February 2019. How social media could be used to engage diverse groups in the next recruitment drive was being explored.

A careers insight day provided operational and support staff the opportunity to learn about the variety of roles available in the Service provided by those with experience, including how these could be accessed and pathways to promotion.

- Consult communities to shape our activity

Throughout 2019/20 staff were consulted regarding options for new and improved uniform; proposed building work to create dormitory facilities for women at South Shore, Blackpool, Hyndburn and Preston fire stations; and locker rooms in the fleet garages at Service Training Centre. The network of contacts across minority groups in Lancashire were reviewed to ensure the Service was best placed to engage and specific work had been undertaken with the LGBT community, people with disabilities, women and families and ethnic minorities in terms of considering a career in the fire service.

Pride events

The Service had utilised its Pride liveried fire engine to highlight its inclusive employer status. Over the last year, the number of Pride events in Lancashire had increased and this opportunity had been used to promote key prevention and recruitment messages at Blackpool, Lancaster, Morecambe and Preston based events. Given the scale of the celebration and crowds, the Service also attended Manchester Pride to promote recruitment to the many thousands of attendees. In addition to these formal events the LGBT employee voice group had worked closely with other colleagues and supported a number of fundraising, health and wellbeing

and recruitment events using the striking appliance as a key backdrop, supporting engagement at the event and also across the Service's social media platforms.

Expand apprenticeship opportunities

The Service was successful in gaining employer provider status and was now delivering firefighter apprenticeships. This benefitted new starters who received a more individually focused training course and subsequent development programme to support them on station. The first cohort of apprentices had completed their initial recruits' course and they were progressing with their development at stations across the county.

Build a strong and resilient workforce

- Embed Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)

Health and wellbeing toolbox talks had been delivered to all members of staff in order to embed TRiM. The talks, which continued across the Service, also provide key information about PPE contamination, musculoskeletal issues, mental health and wellbeing and the link with physical fitness, all to help improve personal resilience.

- Blue Light Wellbeing Framework assessment

A gap analysis against the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework hosted on Oscar Kilo had been completed. Some of the key themes highlighted were flexible and family friendly working practices, rewards and recognition and future training on wellbeing topics ranging from difficulty sleeping, menopause and nutrition to personal resilience, alcohol and drugs and suicide prevention. The framework was a live document being used to develop continuous improvement.

Re-develop Preston Fire Station

The scope of this redevelopment and potential to site share with other public services had been evaluated and the costs would be considered pending a medium term financial settlement from the government.

Upgrade fire station accommodation

Progress had been made towards upgrading accommodation at South Shore, Hyndburn and Blackpool fire stations. At South Shore, planning permission had been obtained and tender documents approved. At Hyndburn the Service was working with the contractor towards starting the procurement process and planning permission had been received for proposals at Blackpool however procurement for this project would commence upon completion of South Shore and Hyndburn works.

Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

Invest in training and equipment

- Expand facilities at Service Training Centre

Building plans for the upgrade of facilities at the training centre had been developed and planning permission to expand had been requested. The contract had been awarded to the successful bidder and pre-construction work was progressing, although somewhat delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Firehouse refurbishment

The firehouse had been refurbished and now allowed for basement fire training in a realistic fire environment. This enhanced training facility enabled operational crews to develop further skills and knowledge in a practical setting.

- Review of duty rig uniform

Extensive staff consultation and trials had taken place to ensure that new duty rig uniform met the needs of the workforce. As a result, new trousers and boots had been chosen and would be rolled out across the Service in 2020/21.

- CCTV on operational fire appliances

Work had progressed to scope the fitting of CCTV on all operational fire appliances. Soft market testing had been completed and the tender process was being prepared. Once fitted, these CCTV systems aimed to improve driver training and reduce the amount of time taken to investigate incidents.

Collaboration with other public services

- Collaboration programme with Lancashire Constabulary

Work was ongoing to expand collaboration opportunities with Lancashire Constabulary, specifically looking at joint accreditation of staff to undertake fire scene investigations.

- Site sharing opportunities

A shared location had been established with the local neighbourhood policing team at Skelmersdale Fire Station; and site sharing opportunities continued to be explored with other partners.

Information management strategy

- Centralised document management system

This project had a number of inter-dependencies and has been incorporated into wider work to develop the information management strategy.

- Integrated Planning and Performance (IPP)

Given the resources required to maintain the current reporting system (Corvu), it was decided to refocus the direction of this work solely on replacing this vital tool rather than developing it. This activity underpinned much of the IPP work and allowed progress to be made towards multiple organisational objectives. An interim solution that delivered data directly from the existing system to planning documents was rolled out successfully in 2019.

Making Lancashire safer

In addition to the priorities set out in the Annual Service Plan, the Service provided a wide range of services throughout the year to help keep people safe, including:

- Working alongside Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to provide realistic high-rise firefighting training based on learning from the Grenfell Tower fire;
- The implantation of rapid flood catchment area response plans, which enabled North West Fire Control to mobilise the nearest resources on receipt of flooding notifications;
- A combined event for members of staff was held for those who had achieved 20, 30 and 40 years' service and those who had been awarded employee Star Awards;
- Last winter's safety campaign focused on elderly, isolated and vulnerable members of our community who were encouraged to reach out for help and support over the winter months;
- The latter part of 2019/20 saw the outbreak of Covid-19 in the UK. The Service acted quickly to continue responding to emergencies, protect the most vulnerable members of our communities and ensure the health and safety of our people. Also resources were re-allocated to support the Lancashire Resilience Forum with a number of activities including helping vulnerable people in the community, distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) across the county, assisting in taking samples for Covid-19 antigen testing and face-fitting masks for NHS staff.

Significant Incidents

A number of significant incidents were also detailed in the report, namely:

- Wildfire in Bacup, April 2019;
- Commercial building fire in Lower Darwen, May 2019;
- Recycling centre fire in Preston, August 2019;
- Derelict building fire in Preston, October 2019;
- Commercial building fire in Condor Green, January 2020;
- Storm Ciara across Lancashire, February 2020;
- Derelict building fire in Lytham St Anne's, February 2020;
- House fire in Preston, February 2020; and
- Commercial building fire in Preston, February 2020.

County Councillor O'Toole felt the report was excellent and he was really pleased that the drones were being put to good use.

County Councillor O'Toole asked whether significant incidents that related to commercial building fires had increased during the pandemic and whether these were being investigated. In response, ACFO Norman advised that the Service had seen a slight change in the volume and type of call during the lockdown. There had been an increase in unwanted fire signals in premises that were empty more often and in relation to nuisance fires. He confirmed there had not been a significant spike in arson or suspected arson. The Incident Intelligent Officer Team investigated significant incidents extensively and the issue would be closely monitored.

County Councillor Eaton thanked officers for a very detailed report. As referenced on page 14 of the report, in relation to the 17,206 incidents attended and the average attendance time of 7 minutes and 28 seconds, County Councillor Eaton asked how these numbers compared to the previous year. In response, AM Charters advised that the total incidents attended this year had increased by 150 on the previous year which was mainly due to gaining entry to premises (incidents attended on behalf of Police and Ambulance colleagues to gain entry to premises so life-saving intervention could be delivered). He confirmed that the average attendance time had improved by 16 seconds on the previous year.

Also referenced on page 14, County Councillor Shedwick noted that 83 on-call firefighters had been recruited which was excellent. He asked for information regarding the number of vacancies currently held for on-call firefighters. AM Charters advised that the recruitment of on-call firefighters was an area of challenge for the Service which was resourced extensively. The numbers of on-call firefighters recruited remained broadly consistent with the previous year. Recruitment encouraged increased diversity across the workforce from all sectors of the community. The detail of ongoing vacancies across all on-call stations would be provided to County Councillor Shedwick after the meeting.

County Councillor Shedwick was pleased that on-call fire engines were available to respond to incidents 87% of the time. He asked for confirmation that this figure was in the upper quartile when compared with many other Fire and Rescue Services. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service continued to be one of the best performing Services in terms of on-call availability.

RESOLVED: - That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the Annual Service Report.

30/19 HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES UPDATE

Area Manager Charters presented the report.

The second inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was due to be conducted in April/May 2020. This was suspended due to the Covid-19 outbreak and the recall of HMICFRS seconded staff to their own fire and rescue services in order to support the planning and management of response during the pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic period LFRS' Service Liaison Officer had maintained contact with the HMICFRS' Service Liaison Lead, Jo Hayden by means of two-weekly telephone conversations.

Whilst the Service Liaison Officer would return to the HMICFRS with effect from 29 June 2020, there would be an ensuing period of time where the HMICFRS would need to undertake work to recruit to vacant roles within the inspection teams, meaning that a full inspection was not expected until much later into 2021.

However, early indications suggested that a Covid-19 Thematic review was likely to occur and whilst confirmation was awaited, the Service was making preparations in readiness for:

1. The Data Return request (postponed from May) and likely to incorporate Covid-19 specific data sources. A subsequent Data Return in October this year bringing LFRS back into the planned HMICFRS data rhythm;
2. A Covid-19 Thematic inspection of all FRS between July and October 2020;
3. A Thematic report being published in January 2021 on the findings of the Covid-19 inspection;
4. A HMICFRS 'return to work strategy' that involved the use of Microsoft Teams to provide an engagement tool for use with fire and rescue services;
5. A return to business as usual by July 2021.

The Covid-19 inspection was thought likely to be a sub-diagnostic within the wider inspection framework and framed around the pillars of efficiency, effectiveness and people. It would be reasonable to expect that such an inspection would consider delivery of prevention, protection and response activities during the period, provisions made for employee welfare, and work conducted under the tri-partite agreement and in support of the Lancashire Resilience Forum partnership.

RESOLVED: - That the content of the report be noted.

31/19 IMPLEMENTING REGULATORY CHANGE AND TRANSFORMING PROTECTION SERVICES

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report. He advised that the need for regulatory change had been discussed for a number of years now as it had been 3 years since the Grenfell tragedy. Some significant changes had been made towards the legislation and much more was expected. So far, the focus had been on high-rise buildings. However, there was a move now to buildings below what would traditionally be seen as high-rise and the regulations for that would have a knock on effect on the entire built environment. The scale therefore would probably be the most significant change seen by the sector since it carried out fire certifications 20 years ago. When the Regulatory Fire Safety Order 2005 was put in place it changed the role of the Fire Service to be more like the Health and Safety Executive ie: using fewer resources to provide some support to businesses, investigating fires in commercial premises and prosecuting as required. These responsibilities would remain but the changes to the role of the Service were more likely to include giving consent to changes to the use of buildings. A transformation was required by the sector in the way it was structured and responded to the changes that had been made to the built environment during the last 20 years ie: where there had been a number of changes to the way inspections by local building control had been undertaken and the role of approved inspectors.

Dame Judith Hackitt had described the current system as broken and in need of fundamental reform. This was the early stages of that transformation which came with a commitment to provide surge funding which was expected would be built into baseline funding as part of the comprehensive funding review; the detail of which had yet to be seen due to the pandemic.

This was the start of a journey of significant change in the sector, one which should put the Service in a much stronger position to assure the building stock in Lancashire was fit for purpose in terms of protecting the people who resided and operated in them.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the first part of the paper largely introduced the legislation and the drivers for change. Page 30 set out the Fire Safety Bill, which was a response to the Grenfell Tower Fire and which would amend the Fire Safety Order to clarify that the responsible person or duty-holder for multi-occupied residential buildings must manage and reduce the risk of fire for: the structure and external walls of the building, including cladding, balconies and windows; and the entrance doors to individual flats that opened into common parts.

The paper then detailed the scope of the amended legislation and referred on pages 32-33 to the Building Safety Bill which was due to come into force in a couple of years' time. If the Fire Safety Bill was the regulatory device used to correct deficient existing building stock, then the Building Safety Bill would be the regulatory device used to ensure future construction of higher risk residential buildings (HRRB) to avoid the pitfalls of the past.

The new legislation would require:

- LFRS to act as part of the new Building Regulator (formerly called Joint Competent Authority) with HSE (lead) and Local Authority Building control;
- LFRS to consult at all [gateway] stages whereas previously consultation was only undertaken at Building Regulation application stage;
- HRRB inspectors would, as a minimum need to be Fire Safety Inspectors with a L4 Diploma, current CPD log and registration to IFR (or similar);
- LFRS to maintain access to Fire Engineers.

The paper then discussed the competency framework which was agreed by the national Fire Chiefs Council on 5 February 2020. Members noted that LFRS were co-authors of the revised Framework, which would ensure suitably trained Fire Safety Inspector Officers with levels, 3, 4 and 5 diplomas operated within that bespoke area of work.

Pages 34-35 detailed how the Service was engaging with seconded, dedicated staff members into working part-time as part of their role for the various key governance areas and teams that were driving best practice.

The latter part of the report identified the transformation change required, including short-term and medium-term objectives. The proposal included changes to the structure; moving the prevention and protection department under the directorate of service delivery and training and organisational review moving to sit alongside emergency planning, policy and strategy. The paper also showed how the initial government surge funding of £300k would be utilised to add some strategic leadership and additional practitioners to focus initially on the transformational change and meet future needs.

County Councillor De Molfetta was pleased that the report stated on page 31 that Robert Jenrick MP had announced steps to introduce mandatory sprinkler systems and consistent wayfinding signage in all new high-rise blocks of flats over 11 meters tall which would come into effect for all buildings constructed after 26 November 2020.

County Councillor Shedwick observed from the Chief Fire Officer's introduction that as the role for the Service would be enhanced to include involvement in local authority licencing and planning applications for bigger buildings there were also

historic licensing conditions that may not have been complied with which maybe more problematic. He felt the identification of these could be a role for Members of the Fire Authority if they were aware of historic conditions that were not being complied with. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed he would welcome that information from Members. He advised that there was currently a Built Environment Assessment Team undertaking a one-off piece of work over the next few months to analyse: the building stock, its current condition and whether the changes to legislation might have any material effect. The Team were also looking at what remedies may need to be put in place to work with the building owners and how the Service could plan to respond to a building that potentially did not perform as expected in relation to the current building regulations.

RESOLVED: - That the Planning Committee noted the national drivers for change, the allocation of pump prime funding and endorsed the proposed internal restructuring necessary to underpin the transformation plan.

32/19 CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report. The Authority had a consultation strategy which provided a framework through which it could seek public opinion on major change issues.

Each year the Planning Committee reviewed the strategy as now considered by Members to assure continued compliance with guidance or legislation and to incorporate learning from any public consultation exercises undertaken.

The review concluded that the strategy continued to be legally compliant and in line with good practice.

In response to a comment from County Councillor O'Toole, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer provided assurance that the style and reporting of consultations including the number of consultation events, number of respondents involved and the collation of comments made would remain a part of the work undertaken. This would be the case next year when there would be a consultation on the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan. This had not been a feature of today's meeting as there had not been requirement for a consultation item during the last year.

County Councillor O'Toole expressed concern regarding the relevance of collecting personal data during a consultation (as categorised in section 9 on page 51 of the agenda pack). He felt this would be intrusive and unnecessary and that gathering such information caused division in society and locally.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the intention was to show that the Authority complied with the General Data Protection Regulations in its processing of personal data and was more an indication of the type of data that needed to be protected. The Chief Fire Officer added that this data was not generally collected apart from where it was required to collect some, such as during recruitment.

Councillor Jane Hugo commented that she disagreed with County Councillor O'Toole in that there were occasions where it was important to collect such data to ensure that the Fire Authority was not inadvertently excluding people. For example, reaching equal number of men and women and not excluding any groups.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted and endorsed the consultation strategy.

33/19 BUSINESS CONTINUITY TESTING

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was required to test Business Continuity Plans (BCP) annually. The Service test was usually scheduled towards the end of the year once all plans had been updated and reviewed.

The 2019/20 test (Exercise Raven) had been planned in detail and was programmed to be held in March 2020. It involved a simulated pandemic influenza event combined with a fuel shortage. Planning and preparation for the impending arrival of Covid-19 within Service replaced delivery of the 'test' exercise with actual instigation of business continuity plans.

Meanwhile a significant flooding event also occurred on Sunday 9 February 2020 which triggered the LFRS BCP and led to non-essential headquarters-based staff being prevented from entering the building for the subsequent 2 days.

Members considered the scale of both events was significant enough to qualify as live tests of the business continuity plans.

The Chairman asked how the Service was preparing itself for any potential second wave of the pandemic in the winter months particularly the level of physical and mental wellbeing support provided to operational and non-operational staff.

In response, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that Chief Fire Officer was the national lead for fitness standards and that the Service had a comprehensive fitness and wellbeing programme with a commitment to Oscar Kilo (which was a wellbeing programme that the National Fire Chiefs Council had signed up to that shared learning and best practice across blue light emergency services). He advised that there had been an increase in the staff use of the support mechanisms which included the Service Employee Assistance Scheme and efforts had intensified to signpost staff for wider support as required.

In terms of a potential spike, the Service was linked into the Local Resilience Forum which prompted the consideration for the potential of a localised spike, pan-county or larger footprint. The current classification was Phase 2 where the emergency phase was ongoing but resources were being dedicated also to the recovery phase. Currently the Service was planning to be in the emergency phase for quite some time which might intensify during the winter months where some of the earlier intelligence was that the threat from Covid-19 might increase. The Service was also planning to resume prevention and protection services which had been adapted or ceased during the pandemic but was cognisant of the need for a quick and effective response as required.

The Chief Fire Officer added that the Service had recently surveyed staff to ensure all the learning was captured and that the Service took any advantages that had arisen during the pandemic ie: enabling more flexible working in general was something being considered now. The Service was aware of the potential mental health effects. One of the observations from discussions with staff was that operational personnel were used to going into an emergency phase which could last a few days at most (with Winter Hill the exception) however, this was the biggest

business continuity change event. Therefore, people were being encouraged to take leave, downtime and be aware of the potential for burn out particularly for some Officers.

RESOLVED: -

- (i) to accept the basement flooding event in February 2020 and subsequent debrief as the annual Business Continuity Plan test for the financial year 2019/20 and;
- (ii) to accept the arrangements implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic as the annual Business Continuity Plan test for the financial year 2020/21.

34/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 16 November 2020 at 1000 hours venue to be confirmed.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 28 July 2020, at 10.00 am - Virtual meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

N Hennessy (Chairman) (part)
J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)
S Clarke
S Holgate
A Kay
M Khan OBE
D Smith (part)

Officers

K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)
J Bowden, Head of Finance (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
N Bashall, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance

A Smith, External Audit, Grant Thornton
A Ayre, External Audit, Grant Thornton
R Lowry, Internal Audit, Lancashire County Council

27/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

As the Chairman, County Councillor Hennessy initially had connection problems, County Councillor John Shedwick, Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

CC Shedwick welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Audit Committee. He advised that in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Government had made regulations that enabled virtual meetings. This meeting was accessible for Committee Members via Microsoft Teams and for members of the press and public via a live webcast on YouTube.

The Committee Members individually confirmed their attendance at the start of the meeting; both County Councillor Hennessy and Councillor Smith had initial connection issues but joined the meeting as indicated.

28/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

29/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

30/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 28 January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

31/19 INTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

The report was presented by Mrs Ruth Lowry, Head of Internal Audit, Lancashire County Council. The Internal Audit Annual Report summarised the work that the Internal Audit Service had undertaken during 2019/20 and the key themes arising from it. It provided an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of governance, risk management and internal control.

On the basis of programme of work for the year, the Head of Internal Audit provided substantial assurance over the adequacy of design and effectiveness in operation of the organisation's frameworks of governance, risk management and control.

The opinion was based on the individual assurance levels provided for each of the individual audit reviews undertaken in 2019/20, detailed in the report now presented to Members.

Overall a strong control environment continued to operate, overseen by a Service Management Team that was responsive to internal audit findings and committed to continuous improvement. No significant areas of weakness in governance, risk management or control had been identified from audit work and where areas for improvement had been identified, actions had been agreed to enhance aspects of the control framework further and to ensure that it was effectively operating throughout.

It was confirmed that consideration was also given to the wider sources of assurance available including the results of the HMICFRS Inspection and the findings of Grant Thornton as the Authority's external auditor.

The work of the Internal Auditor was one of the key control measures in place within the Authority. As such, the annual report provided an assurance to Members that risks were being managed and controlled, and fed the Authority's overall assessment of the internal controls that operated within the Service.

RESOLVED: - That the Audit Committee noted and endorsed the report.

The Authority was required to produce an Annual Governance Statement as part of the year end process for 2019/20 along with the Authority's financial statements, following a review of the effectiveness of the internal controls in place. The report and the statement set out the key elements of the Authority's governance framework, how these had been evaluated, the outcome of the assessment of effectiveness and any areas for improvement.

The Audit Committee had previously approved a revised Code of Corporate Governance, in line with guidance produced jointly by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants) and SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives). The Code defined corporate governance as the way an authority ensured that it was doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Authority's current arrangements a self-assessment had been undertaken by the Executive Board who had considered the various sources of assurance that supported the core principles outlined in the report and the outcome of this was considered by Members under appendix 1 as now presented. One of the key elements of this was external assurance of the systems, and this was provided by internal and external auditors, both of whom provided positive reports, and by the outcome of the HMICFRS Inspection which rated the Service as Good.

The assessment also considered recommendations made as part of last year's Annual Governance Statement i) to continue to develop and embed a new assurance monitoring system app to collate information and intelligence; and, ii) to performance manage the completion of the appraisals and introduce new tools to improve the appraisal conversation. An update on the position in respect of these was considered by Members. Both areas were ongoing with target dates set as March 2021.

The various reviews highlighted an area for further improvement was to develop 360° assessments for leaders to inform personal development. As part of the review, the Service was required to identify and disclose any significant internal control issues, of which there had been none. Hence the statement re-affirmed that Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service had in place a satisfactory system of internal control which facilitated the effective exercise of its functions and which included arrangements for the management of risk.

It was noted that the Statement on Annual Governance arrangements had been considered, approved and signed by the Chairman of the Combined Fire Authority, the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer on 8 July 2020.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted and endorsed the self-assessment and the Annual Governance Statement.

The external auditors were required to produce an annual audit plan, setting out the areas it intended to review during the year.

The Director of Corporate Services introduced Mr Andrew Smith, Key Audit Partner and Mr Andy Ayre, Audit Manager who were in attendance to present the report.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the audit fee of £28.4k had been discussed with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee. He felt that it was important to agree the fees in advance of the work being done and that the additional charges reflected additional work required.

Mr Smith advised there had been a £4,700 increase in the base fee to cover additional work which was largely around the valuation of land and buildings and pension liability; two areas that the regulator was very focussed on and which resulted in a late variation fee last year but was built into the plan going forwards.

Mr Smith highlighted that the impact of covid-19 meant the audit was being conducted remotely but no significant issues were anticipated. He advised that the pandemic had resulted in a change to the timetable as the Government had significantly put back the deadlines for the production of the draft accounts and the completion of audit. The deadline (which was July last year) was now 30 November. He also advised that the audit aimed to start mid-August, with fieldwork completed by the end of September and no problems were envisaged in order to report in November. If the audit was not completed by that date a statement must be made that the audit had not yet been completed and subsequently republished once the audit was complete. It was noted that several authorities had to follow this guidance last year.

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy, Chairman of the Committee joined the meeting.

Mr Smith handed over to Mr Ayre to provide Members of the Audit Committee an overview of the planned scope and timing of the statutory audit which included: key matters that impacted on the audit, details of significant risks identified and the proposed response to the risk, details of other audit responsibilities, materiality, value for money arrangements, audit logistics and team and audit fees. The report also confirmed there were no significant facts or matters that impacted on the auditors' independence to express objective opinion on the financial statements.

County Councillor Holgate felt it was excessive to be undertaking an audit and valuation of property every year. In response, Mr Smith confirmed that CIPFA and auditing standards required this area of work auditing every year as the valuation represented a significant estimate by management. It was therefore identified as a significant risk which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement. However, he acknowledged that the valuation of land and buildings did not fundamentally change the Authority's financial position. He advised that Grant Thornton was campaigning to move away from fair value accounting through influencing CIPFA via an independent review led by Sir Tony Redmond (which sought views on the quality of local authority financial reporting and external audit).

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the Authority commissioned revaluations of its assets on a 5-year rolling basis (20% each year with the remaining 80% a desk-top exercise) given the majority of buildings were fire stations.

County Councillor Holgate did not feel the annual valuation was a sensible use of the Authority's resources as it didn't add any significant value and it wasn't a risk in real terms. He queried whether the Audit Committee could support the review of this requirement.

County Councillor Shedwick added that the Fire Authority did not have the biggest property portfolio. The Committee therefore asked the external auditors to note and feedback these comments as appropriate.

RESOLVED:- That the Audit Committee agreed the external audit plan for 2019/20 and the increased fee.

34/19 EXTERNAL AUDIT - UNDERSTANDING HOW THE AUDIT COMMITTEE GAINS ASSURANCE FROM MANAGEMENT

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy took the Chair.

It was noted that in order to comply with Auditing Standards, the External Auditors, Grant Thornton were required to obtain an assurance as to how those charged with governance gained assurance over management processes and arrangements, as set out in their letter dated April 2020, copy considered by Members.

A response had been prepared and submitted by Chairman of the Audit Committee which was considered by Members.

RESOLVED:- That the Committee noted and endorsed the response submitted.

35/19 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21

The Internal Auditors were required to produce an Annual Audit Plan, setting out work to be undertaken during the year. The plan amounted to a total resource of 70 audit days in 2020/21 which equated to an overall cost of £23,450 which represented a 3% increase from the previous year and was in line with the budget provision.

A proposed plan was presented by Mrs Ruth Lowry. It was noted that in light of the pandemic the plan may need to be discussed and reconfirmed. Mrs Lowry also advised that work would normally begin in September / October time however it was noted that the rest of the Internal Audit Team had been redeployed into operational roles (including Senior Auditor, Judith Taylor who would usually be present at this meeting). It was expected that the Team would return over the next couple of months and the plan, as considered now by Members would be fulfilled.

The internal audit plan was designed to provide the evidence necessary to support

an opinion of governance, risk management and control to encompass the following:

- Coverage of the key components of each part of the opinion, namely, governance, risk management and control;
- Sufficient coverage over operations as a whole so that a fair assessment may be made across the Service;
- Coverage of the controls that served to mitigate the most significant risks to an acceptable level;
- Coverage of the controls that operated most broadly to mitigate the most significant risks in the greatest number of individual instances to an acceptable level; and
- Follow up of the actions agreed by management to mitigate risks identified through previous audit activity.

The deployment of audit resources was proposed as follows:-

Governance and business effectiveness	3 days
Service delivery and support	20 days
Business processes	30 days
Follow up audit activity	4 days
Other components of the audit plan	13 days
Total	70 days

RESOLVED:- That the Audit Committee agreed the internal Audit Plan for 2020/21.

36/19 RISK MANAGEMENT

The report highlighted action taken in respect of corporate risk since the last Audit Committee meeting. The latest review of the corporate risk register had not identified any new risks which warranted inclusion on the corporate risk register.

An updated corporate risk register was considered by Members with changes summarised in the report. The Director of Corporate Services highlighted the following key areas: -

Risk no. 1 – insufficient resources due to poor funding settlement

This risk was reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process in February. Discussions now pointed towards a 3-year Spending Review later this year which would provide more certainty. In addition, the outcome of a Fair Funding Review and the prospect of changes to the business rates retention model remained uncertain, both of which would impact on future funding. A further update would be provided as details became available. It was noted that funding had been received from the Government towards the cost of the pandemic and some of this was currently left in the budget.

Risk no. 27 – Increased costs associated with changes to pensionability of allowances

Members were aware of ongoing discussions with representative bodies regarding making some allowances pensionable with an implementation date agreed of

1 June 2020. This added £600k to the budget which had been included in the agreed revenue budget for 2020/21. There remained however, uncertainty regarding any backdating of the allowances and associated timescales. The outcome of ongoing discussions with representative bodies regarding this was awaited. Any backdating would have a significant cost implication on the Authority's financial position.

Risk No 29 – High levels of staff absence due to the pandemic

Currently there remained a lot of uncertainty in terms of the way forward. It was noted that the Business Continuity Plan was implemented in March 2020 in response to Covid-19. Incident Management Teams and sub-groups had been implemented, the Service was working as part of the Lancashire Resilience Forum workstreams and a lot of work had been done to manage the impact and provide support to staff. It was noted that absence levels had been lower than were anticipated in March, hence appliance availability had been maintained. The risk score was under constant review however, given the uncertainty as the lockdown measures eased across the county the proposal was to leave the risk score at 25.

RESOLVED: - That the Audit Committee noted the actions taken, endorsed the revised corporate risk register.

37/19 SCALE OF AUDIT FEES 2020/21

Councillor Smith joined the meeting.

The Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA) (the successor to the Audit Commission) had produced a consultation document on the proposed scale of fees for 2020/21 in which it was proposed to maintain the fees at the current level of £23.7k with any variation to this being dealt with through local negotiations.

It was not felt that this approach accurately reflected the audit requirements at the present time. Whilst PSAA stated that the impact of some of the changes were likely to vary from one audited body to another, even within classes of similar bodies, it was not believed that this was an accurate reflection of the situation. It was readily acknowledged that fees would vary according to the complexity of organisation and this was already reflected in the base fee, however it was not believed that the fee for changes to asset valuations, or pension liability valuations or the extent of challenge required would vary significantly between one organisation and another, other than to reflect size and complexity which were already taken account of. As such the opinion was that PSAA should do more to agree the impact of changes to auditing standards at a national level, as opposed to simply passing these discussions onto local negotiation. Therefore after consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair a response was agreed as set out in the report.

Subsequently the PSAA confirmed the scale of fee and that they had commissioned a review of the scale fees framework in 2019 and published the findings of that review. They highlighted that the current level of scale fees generated significant comment from audit firms, opted-in authorities and other stakeholders and it was a common theme from commenters on public audit. In most cases, scale fees had reduced by 65% from 2011/12. The reasons for this included a significant reduction

in Audit Commission activity from 2012/13, the transfer of all the Commission's audit staff to firms, keen pricing from firms in successive procurements, improved audit efficiencies and reductions in PSAA costs. There was now mounting pressure on fees as the scope of audit and the role of the auditor had come under renewed scrutiny. Recent high-profile corporate failures in the private sector, concerns about the financial resilience of some local government bodies and additional technical requirements had led to an increase in the amount of work auditors were undertaking to discharge their statutory responsibilities. PSAA stated their fee setting process strived to take into account both the needs of opted-in bodies and the need for long-term sustainability of the local audit supply market. Their current review was exploring the arrangements for setting and varying scale fees. The results of this review would be reported to the Board during 2020, and hence should inform future consultations.

RESOLVED:- That the Audit Committee noted the response to the consultation documents as now considered and the subsequent confirmation that the fee remained at £23.7k, subject to local agreement on any variations.

38/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Following discussion around the timing of the External Audit detailed in agenda item 6, the next meeting of the Committee was changed from Tuesday, 29 September 2020 to Monday 23 November 2020 at 10:00 hours – venue to be confirmed.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 14 September 2020

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Contact for further information:

Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer - Telephone 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The Chairman has agreed that as appropriate, Members who sit on outside bodies provide a report to the full Authority to feedback on key topics discussed in other forums such as Local Government Association (LGA) meetings.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note and endorse the report.

That Members receive a presentation by the senior pension advisor of the LGA.

Information

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy has attended the following Local Government Association meetings:

Fire Fighters Pensions Scheme Advisory Board (SAB)

- **Fire Fighters Pensions Scheme Advisory Board – 09/01/2020 (rescheduled from 12/12/2019)**
- **Firefighters Pension Scheme Advisory Board 31 March 2020 at 11 am**
- **Firefighters Pension Scheme Advisory Board 11 June 2020 at 11 am**

Background Information

The Firefighters Pension Scheme (England) Scheme Advisory Board (the “Board”) is a body set up under Section 7 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and The Firefighters’ Pension Scheme (Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015.

The purpose of the Board is to be both reactive and proactive to carry out the following functions: provide advice in response to a request from the Secretary of State on the desirability of making changes to this scheme and any connected scheme; provide advice to scheme managers and local pension boards in relation to the effective and efficient administration and management of this scheme and any connected scheme.

It will seek to encourage best practice, increase transparency, and coordinate Technical and standards issues, and build positive relationships with stakeholders and industry bodies – such as the Home Office, the Pensions Regulator and the Government Actuary’s Department.

County Councillor Hennessy does have access to confidential papers and conversation.

Key Points Raised

Following the court of appeals ruling on 20th December 2019 there was to be technical discussions and public consultation on the unlawful discrimination identified in the public service pension schemes following the Court of Appeal's rulings on McCloud v Ministry of Justice (Employment judges) and Sargeant v London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority & Others (Firefighters) cases.

The SAB formed a working group to respond and to fully understand the impact of the informal proposals on the stakeholders addressing unjustified age discrimination in transitional arrangements to the 2015 pension schemes.

The Home Office has confirmation from Her Majesty's Treasury that the consultation will be published on Thursday, 16 July.

The Fire Commission

- **Fire Services Commission on 24 January 2020 at 10.30 am**
- **Fire Commission 15 May 2020 at 11 am (CFO phoned in)**

Background Information

The Fire Commission provides a forum for all authorities in voting membership or associate membership of the LGA with a responsibility for fire and rescue to come together to:

- discuss matters of common interest and concern;
- represent the views and concerns of the fire community in relation to fire service modernisation;
- take the lead on day-to-day policy issues affecting fire authorities;
- exchange good practice; and
- Influence the priorities and activities of the LGA.

All fire authorities in full or associate membership of the LGA have the right to representation and voting on this commission in accordance with paragraphs 21-24 of the LGA Governance Framework.

Additional members from fire authorities are appointed as necessary by the political groups to ensure political balance on the Fire Commission.

The Fire Commission is led by the Fire Services Management Committee which reports to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board.

Key Points Raised

The 24th January meeting was a Special meeting on Grenfell inquiry Phase 1 report. In attendance was

- London Fire Brigade Commissioner Andy Roe

- Assistant Commissioner Andy Bell – London Fire Brigade Grenfell Tower Investigation (GTI) and Review Team
- Deputy Mayor for Fire & Resilience, London Assembly Dr Fiona Twycross
- Chair National Fire Chief's Council Roy Wilsher

The independent inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire under Sir Martin Moore Bick published its Phase 1 report on Thursday 30 October 2019. The report focusses on the night of the fire. It is approximately a thousand pages long. The LGA have responded to the report.

Mr Bell described his role heading up the Grenfell Tower Investigation and Review Team. He said that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) was fully committed to the Duty of Candour by supporting the Inquiry and the criminal investigation by providing documents, information and witnesses. He talked about the scale of the commitment from LFB in providing this support, including providing over 70,000 documents to the GTI, 710 voluntary witness statements to the Police and a statement and interview under caution and the impact on staff wellbeing.

Mr Bell went on to explain the impact that the Grenfell fire had had on LFB staff. He said that in total, 1074 staff attended the incident over a period of 13 days with 139 needing counselling support for anxiety/depression and PTSD.

Mr Bell then spoke about the GTI's 46 recommendations and how LFB was responding to them. He gave an understanding on the impact of criticism that they had to endure and answer. The report directed recommendations at all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) and LFB.

Mr Roe explained LFB Transformation plan and he talked through a few minutes about the night. He went through the Strategic Framework that had been drawn up in order to transform the culture and working practices within LFB post-Grenfell. He explained that behind each of the 4 strategic pillars ("the best people and the best place to work"; "Seizing the future"; "Delivering excellence"; and "Outward facing") there was a detailed action plan which he was happy to share. Mr Roe added that the key to transformation was good leadership and he acknowledged that lack of leadership training had been a significant failing for LFB.

Mr Roe asked that we ensure we support national colleagues and he commented on the good relationship with FBU and as well as Leadership training.

Dr Twycross talked about how to respond to Grenfell as politicians. She gave credit to Danny Cotton for talking about mental health. She also said we need to address culture. Get diversity a way of thinking. And she agreed we get that challenge from new blood.

Mr Wilsher paid tribute to colleagues in London and his support for the LFB.

Mr Wilsher said that he had written to all the Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) urging them to hold off making any local reforms in their services until the sector had taken stock nationally and decided upon a way forward.

Mr Wilsher said that the sector was still grappling with just how these dangerous materials came to be on so many buildings and cited the recent Cube fire in Manchester as another example of the failings of the building control system.

Mr Wilsher said that the Government's recent announcement that it intends to lower the height threshold for sprinkler requirements in new buildings from 30 meters to 11 metres was a really positive move and a testament to the effective lobbying by the sector.

Mr Wilsher concluded by saying that leadership nationally will be key and that this must include working closely with partners such as the LGA, the Home

The 15th May meeting was held virtually for the first time. The CFO was available and he dialled into the meeting.

The new Fire Minister – Lord Stephen Greenhalgh attended. The Minister set out his three key priorities for the sector; people, professionalism and governance. He explained that he was formally seeking an update on the LGA's response to the four HMICFRS State of Fire & Rescue recommendations. This response has since been provided by the LGA in consultation with the FSMC (Fire Service Management Committee.).

County Councillor Hennessy invited Lord Greenhalgh to come visit Lancashire when it was safe to do so and he did seem genuinely keen to come visit.

Mr Wilsher commented on the FRS response to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the main focus of work for the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) for the last 7 weeks, whilst maintaining as much business as usual, e.g. the Protection Board. A NFCC Gold Group was quickly established to provide overarching support and leadership to the sector through this challenging time and meet regularly to coordinate the response to this pandemic and has met virtually every Tuesday.

Mr Wilsher gave details of the NFCC Strategic intentions that were issued in mid-March and the briefings and documentation that had been produced. These were COVID testing statistics to 30 April 2020 for numbers of FRS personnel tested and the supply chain with any on-going issues.

The Fire Service Management Committee

- **Fire Service Management Committee 24 January 2020 at 1.00 pm**
- **Fire Service Management Committee 9 March 2020 at 4 pm**
- **Fire Service Management Committee 19 June 2020 at 11am**

Background Information

The role of the Fire Services Management Committee (FSMC) is to represent as an LGA body the views and concerns of the fire community ensuring that local circumstances have a voice in the national context. FSMC will take the lead on behalf of the LGA: on the future direction of the fire and rescue service; improvement within the sector; and on all other day-to-day issues (e.g. technical or operational matters) affecting fire authorities.

Board Objectives:

- Advise and assist fire and rescue authorities around increased accountability and transparency in the governance of the fire and rescue service including helping them prepare for the new inspection regime and influencing the development of a new standards body.
- Support the continuing development of the fire and rescue service by helping authorities to increase the flexibility and diversity of the workforce and make the best use of on-call roles.
- Contribute to the LGA's work to improve fire safety following the fire at Grenfell Tower.
- Work to transform service delivery, including greater collaboration across blue-light services, and support the National Fire Chiefs Council programme to improve procurement practices.
- Make the case for risk-based funding of the fire and rescue service

Key Points Raised

Meeting held on 24th January

HMI Zoe Billingham presented the findings of the State of Fire & Rescue Report to the Committee.

Ms Billingham explained report and was based on inspections carried out between June 2018 and August 2019. She detailed that only 16 services had been graded as 'good' for all 3 pillars with the 'effectiveness' pillar being the strongest for most services and the 'people' pillar the weakest. Ms Billingham added that for the next round of inspections, there would be a greater focus on the 'efficiency' pillar.

The good practice that they had found - in particular, strong response to emergencies and good collaboration between services. The areas where services needed to improve such as compliance with fire safety regulations, workforce diversity and a toxic culture in some. There were some serious barriers to change faced by services.

The reports 4 recommendations – (i) Home Office to define the role of Fire & Rescue Services; (ii) Home Office, LGA and NFCC to consider reforming pay negotiation machinery; (iii) Home Office to consider legislating to give Chief Fire Officers operational independence; (iv) NFCC and LGA to produce a code of ethics for Fire & Rescue Services.

Members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a wider airing of the report's recommendations at the LGA Fire Conference in March.

The comprehensive spending review was on the agenda and Climate change which was brought to the Fire Conference in March.

Meeting 9th March

Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP)

Ian Taylor, Senior User and Business Change Lead for the National Fire Chiefs Council introduce his report.

Mr Taylor explained that the Emergency Services Network (ESN), the product of ESMCP, would replace the existing Airwave service as the next generation of communications for the emergency services in Great Britain, providing secure and resilient mobile broadband capability with near universal coverage across the country. He said that ESMCP was a cross-Government Programme led by the Home Office. He added that governance arrangements were in place locally and were predominantly officer-led but there was a vacancy on the Fire Customer Group for two LGA members.

Mr Taylor also said that two years ago, the programme was in a state of flux but, after a reset, it was now back on track with a revised Full Business Case due out for consultation in Spring 2020. It was hoped that the full roll out of ESN would take place by 2024.

County Durham and Darlington FRS became the first users of an ESN service in July 2019 and other FRS's were keen to take early capability.

Mr Taylor reported that £21.6 million of Local Transition Resource Funding had recently been agreed with the Home Office for implementation of ESN contingent upon greater levels of assurance on spend.

Mr Taylor said that work was still being done on the Airwave system to ensure that it remained working up until the time of switch over.

Mr Taylor acknowledged that fire and rescue authorities had concerns about potential additional costs of introducing ESN due to the loss of the 60 per cent Government grant funding they currently received for Airwave. He assured members that the NFCC was working on quantifying these costs and potential business benefits.

Inclusion and Diversity

In October 2019, members agreed to make Inclusion one of the three main priorities for the year. The HMICFRS had identified a range of problems around diversity and inclusion in their first tranche of inspections and highlighted the fact 25 services received 'Requires Improvement' judgements and two were graded 'Inadequate' in the 'People' pillar.

The LGA had set targets for diversity in recruitment and retention 2 years ago in its Fire Vision but latest Home Office workforce statistics showed that much work still remained to be done if the targets were to be met.

A key piece of work was being done by the LGA to establish a Diversity and Inclusion Champions' Network which met for the first time in January. The aim of the network was to disseminate good practice and to drive change in FRS's locally and the LGA was encouraging all FRA's to appoint a Champion.

The LGA is continuing to work with its key partners on improving inclusion and diversity, in particular the NFCC through their People Programme and via the National Joint Council-led Inclusive Fire Service Group (IFSG).

The Champions' Network would discuss possible future training resources for members.

The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). It would be a 3 or 4 year financial settlement and so it was vital that the Fire & Rescue Service sector was able to put up a good case to the Treasury to increase funding.

Meeting 19th June

The Minister for Building Safety, Fire & Communities – Lord Stephen Greenhalgh, attended.

The Minister said that he had written to Chairs of FRAs, CFOs and other stakeholders (including the LGA) requesting a formal response to the State of Fire & Rescue recommendations and was awaiting these with interest.

The Minister then outlined his 3 priorities for positive change in the fire and rescue sector:

1. Professionalism – he stated that he wanted to see the changes that had taken place in policing 6 years ago to be introduced in the fire & rescue sector through the Executive Leadership Programme.
2. People – lots of different areas of expertise were needed in the sector, particularly in order to adopt best practice on prevention. Therefore, services needed to think about the talents of individual employees and make best use of them.
3. Governance – he stated that police governance reform had worked well, particularly in London. Reform of fire and rescue governance needed to learn from the police model but not lose local government expertise. He added that better use needed to be made of the fire estate.

The Minister finished by emphasising the importance of joining up reform of fire and building safety and his job role and remit reflected that.

Peter Baker – Director - Building Safety and Construction at the Health & Safety Executive gave a presentation.

Mr Baker outlined the HSE's role in the transition to the new building safety regime and what the future role of Fire & Rescue Services and their governing bodies would be.

Mr Baker explained that the detail of the new system would be contained within a new Building Safety Bill which would be laid before Parliament in draft form before the summer recess with the aim of receiving Royal Assent by the middle of 2021.

Covid-19 – an NFCC Perspective

Roy Wilsher, NFCC Chair

Roy highlighted several points from the report to members:

- The structure put in place by the NFCC with a gold group providing overarching support and leadership to the sector during the crisis had worked very well.
- The fact that it had been a national approach, with the tri-partite agreement, was very important.
- The NFCC had linked in effectively with other professional organisations such as the National Police Chief’s Council and Public Health England.
- Daily calls were taking place with key Home Office officials.
- NFCC secured early recognition of all Fire and Rescue Staff as ‘key workers’ to enable access to school places and allow travel to work where necessary.
- Workforce absence had remained remarkably low at 5.4%.
- The NFCC was now looking at the transition to recovery and returning to business as usual but also being prepared for a possible second wave.

Financial Implications

None

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Human Resource Implications

None

Business Risk Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 14 September 2020

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2020/21 & 2021/22

Contact for further information:

Diane Brooks – Principal Member Services Officer - Tel No (01772) 866720

Executive Summary

A programme of meetings for the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to agree the programme of meetings for as set out in the report now presented.

Information

At the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 17 June 2019, the CFA agreed a programme of Meetings for 2019/20 and 2020/21. It is now necessary to agree a programme of dates for 2021/22.

In considering suitable dates, the following points have been taken into consideration: -

- i. A preference previously expressed that meetings of the CFA be held on Mondays commencing at 1000 hours (at the Training Centre, Euxton); although the Authority is currently holding virtual meetings in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020.
- ii. Standing Order 2.3a of the CFA, which states that a programme of meetings for the Authority should be determined annually by the Authority and additional meetings of the Authority held as determined by the Authority or at the discretion of the Chairman.
- iii. Approval to undertake consultation on the budget was delegated to the Chairman in consultation with the Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer (resolution 10/18 refers) enabling one budget meeting to be held in February, at which Members will consider and agree a final budget and the resultant council tax implications.

For information the following dates have previously been agreed for 2020/21: -

2020/21

27 April 2020*

15 June 2020* (Annual Meeting of the CFA)

14 September 2020

14 December 2020

22 February 2021 (Budget Setting Meeting)

*cancelled in line with the Coronavirus Act

Proposed dates for 2021/22 are:-

26 April 2021

28 June 2021 (Annual Meeting of the CFA)

13 September 2021

13 December 2021

21 February 2022 (Budget Setting Meeting)

Business Risk

None

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
CFA Constitutional Standing Orders	18 June 2012	Diane Brooks Principal Member Services Officer
CFA Minutes	17 June 2019	
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		N/A

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held 14 September 2020

ANNUAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT 2019/20 (Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information: Bob Warren, Director of People and Development
Tel: 01772 866804

Executive Summary

Attached in full at Appendix 1 is the Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report for Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service (LFRS) covering the period 1st April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

As the body with ultimate responsibility for staff health and safety and environmental compliance it is important that all CFA Members are aware of performance in this respect. The report therefore provides a summary of key actions, overall progress and outturn performance in respect of accidents and near misses, carbon emissions together with a look forward.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report and associated safety, health and environment performance outcomes.

Information

As the Health and Safety Management System and the Environment Management System continue to be integrated this report is part of that integration process. This report includes performance information for health and safety and the environment.

Business Risk

Significant - From a legal, economic and moral standpoint, a number of health and safety and environmental obligations are imposed on the Authority, whilst the Health and Safety Executive and Environment Agency will readily take enforcement action where significant or recurring failures are identified.

Environmental Impact

Due to the changing climate and types of incidents being attended such as flooding, wildfire and prevention activities this has an impact on utility and energy use. Fuel use this year has started to see a steady decrease again from fleet vehicles. Gas use has increased but still has benefitted from the upgrading of heating systems over the last few years. Electricity remains fairly constant with an ever increasing demand on battery powered equipment and technology. Since the introduction of PFI stations electricity use increased mainly due to the build specification which utilises air-control systems.

Equality and Diversity implications

None

Financial Implications

None

HR Implications

Significant – The Authority is committed to providing a safe and healthy workforce which is particularly important in the context of emergency service operations, and which requires ongoing and effective health and safety management arrangements.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
Annual Health and Safety Report 2009/10 LFRS Sustainability Report 2009/10	20 th September 2010	Director of People and Development Bob Warren Telephone 01772 866804
Annual Health and Safety Report 2010/11 LFRS Sustainability Report 2010/11	20 th June 2011	
Annual Health and Safety Report 2011/12 LFRS Sustainability Report 2011/12	18 th June 2012	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2012/13	17 th June 2013	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2013/14	23 rd June 2014	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2014/15	22 nd June 2015	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2015/16	20 th June 2016	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2016/17	19 th June 2017	
Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report 2017/18	18 th June 2018	
Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2018/19	17 th June 2019	
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		



Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2019 / 2020



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making Lancashire safer

Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2019 / 2020

Introduction

This report summarises the arrangements in place to deliver the Service's Safety, Health and Environment Policy and provides a summary of safety, health and environment performance data.

It includes the reporting on occupational safety, health and environmental issues that have arisen during the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) Safety, Health and Environment Management Arrangements

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) has overall responsibility for the effective governance of health, safety and environment. The Fire Authority is responsible for agreeing the safety, health and environment policy and for ensuring adequate resources is available for safety, health and environment purposes. The Authority will provide a clear direction for the Executive Board and Senior Management Team to establish policies and procedures and manage safety, health and environment performance effectively.

Whilst individual members of staff, supervisors and managers all have responsibility for safety, health and environment, the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Department coordinates and oversees the day to day management of health and safety activities and at the same time continues to provide competent professional advice.

The Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) is based on the Health and Safety Executive model HS (G) 65 – Successful Health and Safety Management and written and implemented to the International Standard for health and safety management system ISO 45001:2018. The Environment Management System (EMS) is written and implemented to the International Standard ISO 14001:2015.

During 2019/2020 we have continued to enjoy a positive working relationship with the Representative Bodies, particularly the Fire Brigades Union and UNISON. The Service consults formally on a quarterly basis working together to ensure safety, health and environmental concerns are resolved. Safety Representatives play a vital role in achieving a healthier and safer workplace and improving our health and safety culture whilst reducing our impacts on the environment.

Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2019 / 2020

Controlling Risk within LFRS

The varied nature of the Service's work activities and working environments inevitably means that there is a broad range of risks to manage. The level of risk to both employees and service users can be identified from a number of the Service's performance measures including the:

- total number of accidents reported by employees and non LFRS employees;
- number of safety events reported to the Health and Safety Executive;
- number of near miss events reported;
- number of days lost following an accident at work;
- type of events that are being reported;
- risks being managed effectively through the development and implementation of policies and procedures contained within the Service's HSMS and EMS;
- carbon emissions from LFRS premises and activities; and
- fitness assessments for operational staff.

The HSMS and EMS and associated policies and procedures are designed to promote safe systems of work and minimise the risk of injury to employees and visitors and reduce the impact to the environment. The SHE Department develops bespoke and proportionate procedures for LFRS, minimising 'red tape' and focusing on controlling real risks in the workplace. Managers, through devolved safety, health and environment responsibilities, ensure that recognised safe systems of work are being applied 'as far as is reasonably practicable'.

To ensure that the Service continues to meet its legal obligations in respect of safety, health and environment we ensure that all policies, procedures, instructions and guidance are regularly reviewed and updated. SHE training is refreshed every three years together with any specific training required by role.

Safety, health and environment performance is reviewed on a regular basis, through high level scrutiny via the CFA Performance Committee and at Director Level through the LFRS Health, Safety & Environment Advisory Group (HSEAG) chaired by the Director of People and Development and Health and Safety Consultation Committee chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.



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External Audit of the Health and Safety and Environment Management Systems

Since initial certification in November 2011, surveillance visits have been conducted annually and re-certification every three years to maintain external certification for our HSMS and EMS. In February 2020 the auditors from British Assessment Bureau carried out audits against the international standards for health and safety ISO 45001:2018 and environment ISO 14001:2015.

The scope for both standards was '**The Provision of Fire, Rescue and Supporting Services across Lancashire**'. This included all operational activity with visits to five fire stations operating different duty systems together with a number of supporting departments including Safety, Health and Environment, Corporate Communications, Fleet and Engineering Services, Procurement, Human Resources and Property. Continued certification has been granted for ISO 45001:2018 and ISO14001:2015. LFRS received no non-conformances or opportunities for improvement.

During the audit process, the auditor identified a number of positive aspects, including:

- Opportunities for improvement are identified by the service negating the need to be raised by the Auditor.
- We do communication well – internal and external.
- Simplified appraisal process a good approach.
- Document management and control no issues within the HSMS and EMS.
- Improvement is carried out through near miss reporting.
- Dedicated people within the service.

As part of the audit, where areas for improvement were identified by LFRS staff, these have been developed into an 'improvement action plan' and taken forward through the Service's Health, Safety and Environment Advisory Group.



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Improvement Actions during 2019/20

LFRS ensures continuous improvement is made in both the HSMS and EMS each year. Below are some examples of the improvements carried out during 2019/20:

- Reviewed the organisational arrangements for health and safety and environment to meet the revised meeting structures within LFRS.
- Continued to embed improvements in fitness and the mandatory fitness testing for operational staff.
- Carried out Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks and wellbeing promotions at our fire stations, service headquarters and service training centre to continue to embed and support staff health and wellbeing.
- Introduced our Leadership Framework into LFRS.
- Continued to provide improved PPE for attending operational incidents.
- Continued to implement National Operational Guidance into service.
- In partnership with UCLAN and FBU developing best practice to mitigate the potential risks of contaminants on dirty fire PPE.
- Made improvements and refurbished the fire house training building at Service Training Centre (STC) used to deliver breathing apparatus training to operational crews.
- Extended our Employee Assistance Programme contract for a further two years.
- Continued to develop and integrate the Wildfire Burn Team and their skills into Wildfire Operational Incidents.
- Carried out a self-assessment against the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework promoted by the National Fire Chiefs Council.
- Introduced the Operational Briefing Note to ensure learning from incidents is communicated effectively.

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Health and Safety Performance

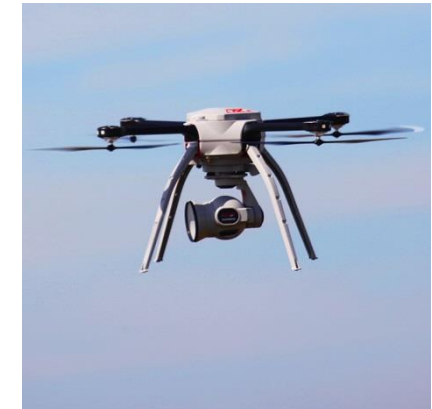
Active Monitoring is integrated into day-to-day work. This includes an integrated approach to workplace inspections at station and department level for both health and safety and environmental hazards and risks.

In addition to day-to-day monitoring of health and safety by managers, active monitoring features extensively during operational incidents and forms an essential part of the Incident Command System at all levels. Incidents are monitored, debriefed and outcome reviews are carried out to ensure that continuous learning from incidents is achieved.

The Service has implemented a system of robust reactive monitoring as defined in the accident reporting and accident investigation procedures of the HSMS. The SHE department co-ordinates and controls this system, and heads of department and line managers are responsible for implementation.

During 2019/2020 there were:

- **88 accidents** (73 to LFRS staff and 15 to non LFRS staff) each event being investigated and recorded in line with Service Policy.
- **113 near misses** (91 near misses and 22 near miss attacks on staff) that were investigated and the recommendations were fed back into the service policy, procedure, or risk assessment as appropriate.
- There were **9 RIDDOR** events that were reported to the Health and Safety Executive; 1 major injury and 8 resulting from over 7 day's absence.



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A summary of the total accident and ill-health statistics for 2019/20 are detailed below in Figure 1.

The figures in the following Table 1 relate to working days lost due to work related injury/illness.

The overall trend is downward from absence following work related injury/illness. In 2018/19 one long term absence resulted in 162 days off work which impacted on the performance for that year.

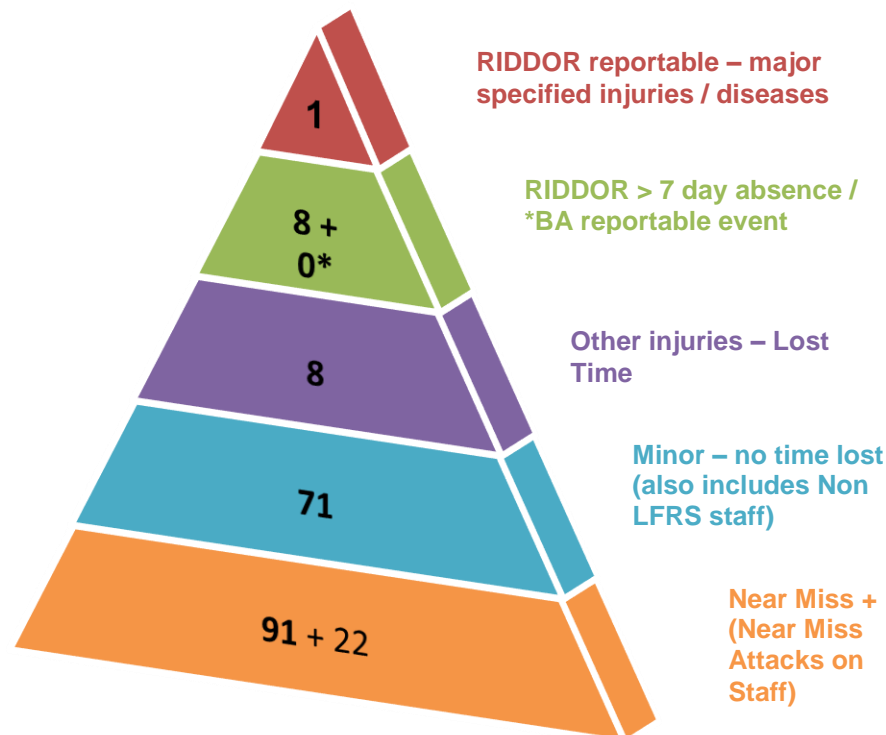


Figure 1

Year	Days Lost
2015/16	331
2016/17	205
2017/18	245
2018/19	377
2019/20	264

Table 1 - Days Lost due to Work-related injury/illness 2015/16 to 2019/20

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Figure 2 gives a background position on the safety performance of LFRS since 2014/15:

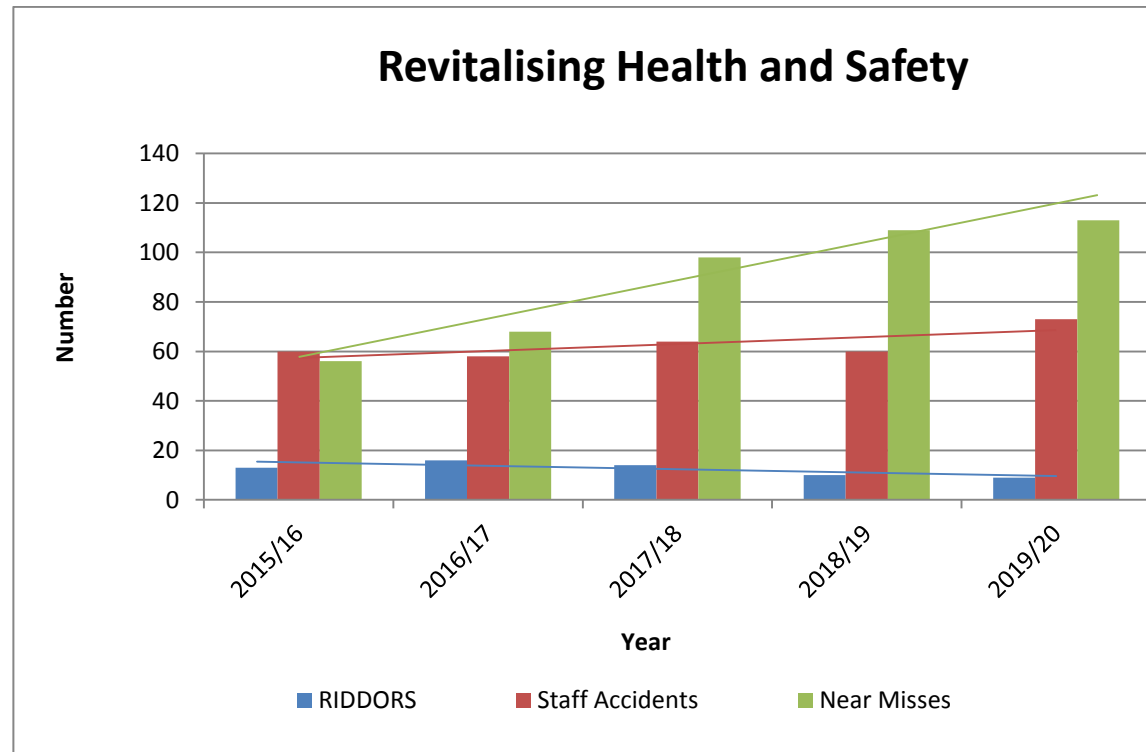


Figure 2 – LFRS Safety Performance 2015/16 to 2019/2020

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Table 2 shows the types of accidents that were reported during 2019/20 comparing the last five year's performance with the numbers for each category.

TYPE OF ACCIDENT	LFRS Staff 2019/20	LFRS Staff 2018/19	LFRS Staff 2017/18	LFRS staff 2016/17	LFRS staff 2015/16	Non LFRS staff 2019/20	Non LFRS staff 2018/19	Non LFRS staff 2017/18	Non LFRS staff 2016/17	Non LFRS staff 2015/16
Handling lifting or carrying	18	7	15	17	23	1	2	1	4	5
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	12	4	7	5	6	2	2	4		1
Slip trip fall	12	11	9	12	9	2	2	1	4	3
Hit something fixed or stationary	4	10	8	6	1	5	3	6	1	-
Other	15	12	7	11	10	2	-	1	4	1
Injured by an animal	2	1	3		1		-	-		-
Fall from Height	1	3	4		1	2	-	1	1	
Exposed to fire	1	6	3		4		-	1		1
Exposed to harmful substance	4	4	7	3	3		2	-	3	1
Exposed to an explosion		-	1	-	-		-	-	-	-
Contact with Electricity		-	-	2	-	1	-		-	-
Hit by a moving vehicle	1	1	-	2	1		-		-	-
Contact with Moving Machinery	1	-	-	-	-		-		-	-
Drowned or Asphyxiated		-	-	-	-		-		-	-
Physically assaulted by a person	2	1	-	-	1		2		8	2
Trapped by Something Collapsing		-	-	-	-		-		-	-
TOTAL	73	60	64	58	60	15	13	15	25	14

Table 2 – Types of accidents in 2019/20 compared to 2015/16 – 2018/19.

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Near Miss Reporting

A near miss event is an unplanned and unforeseeable event in which there is no injury, but the potential to cause injury or other form of loss exists should it occur again.

Table 3 below shows the increasing number of near misses being reported each year in the prevention of accidents within the workplace. A wide range of learning opportunities have been captured in relation to stations/building, equipment, appliances, operational procedures and breathing apparatus issues.

Year	Number of Near misses
2015/16	56
2016/17	68
2017/18	98
2018/19	109
2019/20	113

Table 3 - Near Miss Reporting 2015/16 to 2019/20



Vehicle Accidents

Table 4 shows the number of accidents involving fleet vehicles from 2015/16 to 2019/20

Year	Number of Vehicle Accidents
2015/16	45
2016/17	67
2017/18	58
2018/19	74
2019/20	69

Table 4 Number of Vehicle Accidents

Analysis of the type of accidents LFRS vehicles have been involved in during 2019/20 has shown that the majority of accidents occur during vehicle maneuvering at slow speeds and there is an increasing trend.

To look at ways of help reduce vehicle accidents a working group has been established to examine current working practices and to develop a Management of Occupational Road Risk framework.

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Health and Wellbeing

Sickness Absence

The management of sickness absence for 2019/20 shows that musculoskeletal and mental health related conditions accounted for 28% of all sickness absence. In total there were 1165 sickness absence cases resulting in 11,331 working days lost within the service. 327 musculoskeletal related absences gave rise to 3136 working days lost and 61 mental health related absence resulted in 2081 working days lost and 15 cases relating to cancer relating to 1062 working days lost.

In order to improve performance from musculoskeletal and mental health related absence, health and safety toolbox talks are to be delivered to all staff during the coming year. The toolbox talks will engage staff to increase understanding of the links between maintaining physical fitness for role, reducing the risks of musculoskeletal injuries and encouraging good mental health.

Health Promotion & Wellbeing Framework

During 2019/20 there has been an increasing focus on employee health and wellbeing through the development of a more holistic wellbeing approach. This aims to improve the health and wellbeing of our workforce ensuring that all who are working for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) are engaged, motivated, healthy, resilient and well. Examples of the activities carried out in 2019/20 are:

- Developed and promoted wellbeing material jointly with the Firefighters Charity.
- Developed a collaborative approach to wellbeing through the delivery of face-to-face Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks which considered the 'whole person' to emphasis the link between maintaining physical fitness and good mental health/wellbeing. To ensure that all elements of the 'whole person' were considered the following topics were delivered:-
 - Trauma Risk Management
 - Employee Assistance Programme
 - Physical Fitness & Wellbeing link
 - Musculoskeletal (MSK) Awareness/Injury Prevention
 - PPE Contaminants

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Environmental Performance

LFRS Carbon Management Plan was agreed by CFA Resources Committee in March 2009. The plan included targets of 20% carbon emission reduction by March 2013 with a visionary target of 40% by March 2020. A revised and simplified plan was created in April 2013 with a target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2020.

The Service achieved an overall reduction of **23%** by March 2020 which equates to **1005** tonnes of CO₂. The plan has delivered cost savings in the region of **£679k**. The original plan included the closure of SHQ and a move to new premises which has not happened.

The Carbon Management Team continues to meet and make progress against a new plan and revised target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2030. The team will deliver projects accepting these will be fewer and more targeted in the future. The Plan is overseen by the Director of People and Development.

Monthly meter readings for Gas, Electric and Water continue to be collated together with fuel data collated by Fleet and Engineering Services, providing a full picture of carbon emissions for all LFRS premises.

Fire-fighters' Charity Recycling Banks

LFRS continues to support the Fire Fighters Charity with seventeen fire stations currently having recycling banks on site and two at a neighbouring Tesco and B&Q. For each tonne of clothing, a donation is made to the Fire-fighter's Charity.

In 2019/20, the banks had collected over 40 tonnes of textiles. This has raised £8,880 for the charity.



Waste Management

There has been a 7% increase in waste collected from April to March 2018/19 to April to March 2019/20. The total of waste collected is 110 tonnes.

The percentage of recycled waste during 2019/20 is 31.9% which shows a slight decrease from last year with 9 sites have a recycling rate of 40% or above which is one down from last year.



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Carbon Emissions

Table 5 shows the carbon emission comparisons from the 2007/08 baseline and from the previous year 2018/19.

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	% change on previous year	% change since baseline 2007/08
Buildings	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Electricity	1600	1340	1524	1516	1421	1411	1653	1664	1605	1581	1592	1495	1478	1.1%	7.6%
Gas	1594	1499	1634	1545	1462	1363	1145	1026	978	934	1025	901	988	9.6%	38%
Total	3194	2839	3158	3061	2883	2774	2798	2690	2583	2515	2617	2396	2466	2.9%	23%
Transport	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
Fuel	1158	1179	1217	1146	1058	858	827	732	793	796	858	968	882	8.9%	23.8%
Service Total	4352	4018	4375	4207	3941	3632	3625	3422	3376	3311	3475	3364	3347	0%	23%
<i>Shown separately in Carbon Management Plan</i>															
Water	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)	Carbon (tonnes)		
	9.1	8.8	8.1	6.9	6.7	6.1	6.5	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.4	4.9	6.4	31%	30%

Table 5 Carbon Emissions 2007/08 to 2019/20

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A Look Ahead to 2020/21

Looking to 2020/21, key safety, health and environment priorities are to:

- Rationalise and refresh the existing risk assessments, standard operating procedures/service orders and training requirements following the introduction and publication of National Guidance for Fire and Rescue Services together with legislative changes.
- Reduce the number of accidents and related sickness absence whilst increasing the number of near miss events reported.
- Maintain LFRS certification to ISO 45001:2018 and ISO14001:2015 standards and continually improve the HSMS and EMS.
- Embed Safety, Health and Environment through continued training and interaction with staff to enable proportionate and informed workplace safety, health and environmental decisions to be made.
- Continue to engage our Environmental Champions to assist in reducing carbon emissions from energy and fuel use through a refreshed Carbon Management Plan and reduce waste collected and increase the percentage of waste being recycled.
- Continue to deliver a program of health and wellbeing support to engage staff in maintaining fitness, reducing injury and absence, informing staff about the support available to maintain health and wellbeing whilst promoting ways to enhance personal resilience.
- Develop a Management of Occupational Road Risk policy.
- Embed our Leadership framework.
- Review Climate Change impacts.

Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report 2019 / 2020

Overall Summary

2019/20 has again seen a very positive year in terms of overall safety, health and environment performance of LFRS.

The number of accidents to LFRS staff 73 has slightly increased from last year however the severity from injury has lowered to 17 lost time safety events which is an improvement from recent years. HSE were notified under RIDDOR regarding 9 events: 1 major injury and 8 over 7 day absences following accidents.

LFRS continues to deliver continuous improvement within the HSMS and EMS maintaining ISO 45001:2018 and ISO 14001:2015 certification through external examination receiving no non-conformances or opportunities for improvement.

Projects and work to manage and improve health and wellbeing, learn from incidents and provide operational assurance, reduce carbon emissions, review National Operational Guidance, research and develop equipment and firefighting techniques to ensure firefighter safety continue to deliver a safe person and safe working environment.

The good relationship with the Fire Brigades Union and UNISON continue working together to maintain a positive culture within LFRS.

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on Monday 14 September 2020

POLICY ON DEALING WITH HABITUAL AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS (Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information: Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Telephone: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

At its meeting held 20 June 2016 the Authority adopted a formal Policy on Dealing with Habitual and Vexatious Complaints (resolution 13/16 refers) which is fair and proportionate, yet which does not prevent genuine complaints from being properly investigated and fair and equitable outcomes promulgated (attached as appendix 1).

On an annual basis the Clerk and Chief Fire Officer review the status of complainants judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious and reports this to the Authority.

In addition, each year the Clerk reviews the Policy. This year's review concludes that the effectiveness of the Policy is demonstrable, accordingly the Policy remains appropriate, proportionate and effective to the needs of Members, Officers and staff.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note and endorse the report.

Information

The Policy on Dealing with Habitual and Vexatious Complaints identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants might be considered to be habitual or vexatious. It sets out the definitions of habitual or vexatious complainants and the process that the Authority follows.

During the previous 12 months there has been 1 complainant judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious. This individual has given cause for concern within the last 12 months as a result of action taken on their part which unequivocally demonstrates that they are a vexatious and habitual complainant and they will be informed in writing of this status, in open correspondence from the Clerk.

In line with the Policy, the Clerk has reviewed it to ensure that it remains appropriate, proportionate and effective to the needs of Members, Officers and staff.

Business Risk

The policy will be used to defend the Authority's position in refusing to engage with "vexatious" complainants who may pursue perceived entitlement to make applications to the Authority under, e.g.: Freedom of Information or Data Protection Act legislation, there is a risk that such complaints will be elevated outside the Authority's internal processes. The Authority may therefore be required to defend its position externally in processes governed by, for example; the Information Commissioner's Office ("ICO") or Local

Authority Ombudsman. The exposure to risk can be minimised by virtue of the fact that in such cases the Authority will be given an opportunity by the external arbiter to provide comment with any supporting documentation and ultimately to review or even change its decision. At this point there should be a further assessment of the business and financial risk to the Authority of maintaining its position regarding a decision to declare the relevant complaint as vexatious. Such an assessment should also involve a review of the evidence which has given rise to the conclusion that such complaints are habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in the policy.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

There is a minor risk that any habitual or vexatious complaints could be driven by mental impairment, with a correspondingly low risk that such impairment amounts to a disability, for which the Authority would be culpable, only if the complainant was an existing employee. In those circumstances the existence and application of the Policy would, in all likelihood consist of a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, which would therefore be capable of rebuttal. Otherwise it is highly unlikely to conflict with the Authority’s public sector Equality Duty.

HR Implications

The policy must not conflict with the Authority’s obligations under its own Whistle Blowing Policy, as this may cast doubt on the Authority’s compliance with a whistle blowing policy and obligations. However, given that such disclosures are to be made in good faith, not for personal gain and in the genuine public interest, there should in reality be no conflict or overlap, provided the complaints have been properly evaluated under the criteria outlined in the Habitual and Vexatious Complaints Policy.

Financial Implications

In the index example, above, involving the ICO could in theory give rise to a situation where the ICO makes a determination holding the Authority culpable. It has the power to impose fines, should the ICO apply to a court for certification that the Authority has failed to comply with a decision notice, an information notice or an enforcement notice. The matter would be dealt with thereafter as a civil contempt. It is highly unlikely that given the provision for review and conciliation that the Authority would be placed in such a situation and that any risk of such an outcome would occur in no more than 2-5% of any cases and such action could be militated whatever the circumstances if necessary.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY HABITUAL AND VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

1. Introduction

This policy identifies situations where a complainant, either individually or as part of a group, or a group of complainants, might be considered to be habitual or vexatious. The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority ("CFA") policy for dealing with and responding to these situations is set out herein below.

- 1.1 The term habitual means 'done repeatedly or as a habit.'
- 1.2 The term vexatious is recognised in law and means 'denoting an action or the bringer of an action that is brought without sufficient grounds for winning, purely to cause annoyance to the defendant.'
- 1.3 This policy intends to assist in identifying and managing persons who seek to be disruptive to the CFA or the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) by pursuing an unreasonable course of conduct.
- 1.4 The term complaint in this policy includes requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and reference to the Complaints Procedure is, where relevant, to be interpreted as meaning a request under those acts.
- 1.5 Habitual or vexatious complaints can be a problem for CFA staff and Members. The difficulty in handling such complainants and their complaints is that they are time consuming and wasteful of resources in terms of Officer and Member time. While the CFA endeavours to respond with patience and sympathy to the needs of all complainants, there are occasions when there is nothing further which can be reasonably done to assist or to rectify a real or perceived problem.
- 1.6 Raising legitimate queries or criticisms of a complaints procedure as it progresses, for example if agreed timescales are not met, should not in itself lead to someone being regarded as a vexatious or an unreasonable persistent complainant. Similarly, the fact that a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint and seeks to challenge it once, or more than once, should not necessarily cause him or her to be labelled vexatious or unreasonably persistent.
- 1.7 The aim of the policy is to contribute to the overall aim of dealing with all complainants in ways which are demonstrably consistent, fair and reasonable.

2. Habitual or Vexatious Complainants

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions of habitual or vexatious complainants will be used. The repeated and/or obsessive pursuit of:

- (a.) Unreasonable complaints and/or unrealistic outcomes and/or
- (b.) Reasonable complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Prior to considering its implementation the CFA will warn an individual and will send a summary of this policy to the complainant to give them prior notification of its possible implementation.

Where complaints continue and have been identified as habitual or vexatious in accordance with the criteria set out in section 3, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer will seek agreement to treat the complainant as a habitual or vexatious complainant for the appropriate course of action to be taken. Section 4 details the options available for dealing with habitual or vexatious complaints.

The Clerk, on behalf of the CFA, will notify complainants in writing of the reasons why their complaint has been treated as habitual or vexatious and the action that will be taken.

The status of the complaint will be kept under review. If a complainant subsequently demonstrates a more reasonable approach, then their status will be reviewed.

The CFA will be advised that a person or their supporter or co-complainant involved in any joint complaint or joint enterprise has been declared vexatious.

3. Definitions

The CFA defines unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants as those complainants who, because of their or other peoples' complaints interfere with or impede the operation of LFRS. The description 'unreasonably persistent' and 'vexatious' may apply jointly or separately to a particular complainant.

Examples include the way in which, or frequency with which, complainants raise their complaints with staff or how complainants respond when informed of the CFA decision about the complaint.

Features of an unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant include but are not limited to the following (the list is not exhaustive, nor does one single feature on its own necessarily imply that the person will be considered as being in this category.) An unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious complainant may:

- Have insufficient or no grounds for their complaint and be making the complaint only to annoy (or for the reasons that he or she does not admit or make obvious);
- Refuse to specify the grounds of a complaint despite offers of assistance;
- Refuse to co-operate with the complaint's investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved;
- Refuse to accept that issues are not within the remit of the complaints policy and procedure despite having been provided with information about the scope of the policy and procedure;
- Refuse to accept that issues are not within the powers of the CFA to investigate, change or influence;

- Insist on the complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure or with good practice (e.g. insisting that there must not be any written record of this complaint);
- Make what appear to be groundless complaints about the staff dealing with the complaints, and seek to have them dismissed or replaced;
- Make an unreasonable number of contacts with LFRS by any means in relation to a specific complaint or complaints;
- Make persistent and unreasonable demands or expectations of staff and/or the complaints process after the unreasonableness has been explained to the complainant (an example of this could be a complainant who insists on an immediate response to questions, frequent and/or complex letters, faxes, telephone calls or emails);
- Harass or verbally abuse or otherwise seek to intimidate staff dealing with their complaint by use of foul or inappropriate language or by the use of offensive and racist language or publish their complaints in other forms of media;
- Raise subsidiary or new issues whilst a complaint is being addressed that were not part of the original complaint at the start of the process;
- Introduce trivial or irrelevant information whilst the complaint is being investigated and expect this to be taken in to account and commented on;
- Change the substance or basis of the complaint without reasonable justification whilst the complaint is being addressed;
- Deny a statement he or she made at an earlier stage in the complaint process;
- Are known to have covertly electronically recorded meetings and conversations without the knowledge or consent of the other party or parties involved;
- Adopts a 'scattergun' approach, for example by pursuing a complaint or complaints not only with the CFA with, for example, a Member of Parliament, other Authorities, elected Members of this and other Authorities, CFA Independent Auditor, the Police, other public bodies or solicitors' firms.
- Refuse to accept the outcome of the complaint process after its conclusion, repeatedly arguing the point, complaining about the outcome, and/or denying that an adequate response has been given;
- Make the complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insist that any minor differences make these 'new complaints' which should be put through the full complaints procedure;

- Persistently approach the CFA through different routes or other persons about the same issue;
- Persist in seeking an outcome which the CFA has explained is unrealistic for legal, policy or other valid reasons;
- Refuse to accept documented evidence as factual;
- Complain about or challenge an issue based on an historic and/or irreversible decision or incident;
- Combine some or all of these features.

4. Imposing Restrictions

The CFA will ensure that the complaint is being, or has been investigated properly according to the adopted complaints procedure.

In the first instance the Clerk, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer will, prior to issuing a warning to the complainant, contact the complainant in writing, or by email, to explain why this behaviour is causing concern and ask them to change this behaviour and outline the actions that the CFA may take if they do not comply.

If the disruptive behaviour continues, the Clerk will issue a CFA letter to the complainant advising them that the way in which they will be allowed to contact the CFA in future will be restricted. The Clerk will then make this decision in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and inform the complainant in writing of what procedures have been put in place and for what period.

Any restriction that is imposed on the complainant's contact with the CFA will be appropriate and proportionate and the complainant will be advised of the period of time over which the restriction will be put in place. The restrictions would be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Restrictions will be tailored to deal with the individual circumstances of the complaint and may include:

- Banning the complainant from attending or approaching all CFA or LFRS premises, in circumstances where Members' or Officers' safety may be at risk;
- Banning the complainant from making contact by telephone except through a third party, e.g.: a solicitor, a spouse or family member, or a friend acting on their behalf;
- Banning the complainant from sending emails to individuals and/or all CFA Officers and insisting they only correspond by post;
- Requiring contact to take place with one named member of staff only;
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and or times or duration, requiring any personal contact to take place in the presence of an appropriate witness;

- Letting the complainant know that Lancashire Combined Fire Authority will not respond to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specified topic of that complaint (in this case, a designated person will be identified to read future correspondence).

When the decision has been taken to apply this policy to a complainant, the Clerk will contact the complainant in writing to explain:

- Why the decision has been taken;
- What action has been taken.

The Clerk will enclose a copy of this policy in the letter to the complainant.

Where a complainant continues to behave in a way that is unacceptable, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and/or Chief Fire Officer may decide to refuse all contact with the complainant and stop any investigation into his or her complaint.

Where the behaviour is so extreme or it threatens the immediate safety and welfare of staff, other options will be considered, e.g. the reporting of the matter to the Police or taking legal action; in such cases the complainant may not be given prior warning of that action.

5. New Complaints from Complainants treated as Abusive, Vexatious or Persistent

New complaints from people to whom this policy has already been applied will be treated on their own merits. The Clerk in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer will decide whether any restrictions that have been applied before are still appropriate and necessary in relation to the new complaint. A blanket policy is not supported, nor is ignoring genuine service requests or complaints where they are founded.

The fact that a complaint is judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious and any restrictions imposed on Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's contact with him or her, will be recorded and notified to those who need to know within the CFA.

6. Review

The status of the complainant who is judged to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious will be reviewed by the Clerk and the Chief Fire Officer after twelve months and at the end of every subsequently twelve months within the period during which the policy is to apply and reported annually to the CFA.

The complainant will be informed of the result of this review if the decision to apply this policy has been changed.

7. Record Keeping

The responsibility for maintaining any time tabling records to trigger reviews will be that of the Clerk. The Clerk will retain adequate records of the details of the case and the action that has been taken. Records will be kept of:

- The name and address of each member of the public who is treated as abusive, vexatious or persistent, or any other person who so aids the complainant;
- When the restriction came into force ends;
- What the restrictions are;
- When the person and the CFA were advised.

The CFA will be provided with an annual report giving information about members of the public who have been treated vexatious/persistent as per this policy, and advised of individuals when those individuals have been declared vexatious.

8. Application and Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all staff to comply with this policy as directed by the Chief Fire Officer and guided by the Clerk.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Clerk to ensure that it is appropriate, proportionate and effective to the needs of the Members, Officers and staff of the CFA.

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 14 September 2020

FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

Contact for further information:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ben Norman – Tel. 01772 866801

Executive Summary

This report updates the Authority with respect to significant fire safety prosecutions, arson convictions and relevant changes to Fire Protection policy and delivery.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

FIRE SAFETY CONVICTIONS

Current prosecutions

LFRS v Alan Diamond (Cornhill Hotel Blackpool)

Sentencing for LFRS v Alan Diamond (AD) took place at Preston Crown Court on the 09/07/2020 in relation the Cornhill Hotel, 377 – 379 Promenade, Blackpool, FY1 6BH

AD had previously pleaded guilty to eight offences of the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 on the 20/02/2020, The Judge, His Honour Judge Medland, sentenced AD to 9 months prison sentence suspended for 18 months, total costs awarded were £7000.

In summing up HHJ Medland commented that ‘Despite all of the help and support given to you by Fire Safety Teams based in Blackpool you continually flouted the law and had little or no consideration for the safety of your guests’.

HHJ Medland further commented that ‘Fire Safety Teams in the local area should be commended for not only compiling an exemplary prosecution case file but also the help, support and professionalism shown throughout to Mr Diamond was above and beyond what was expected but unfortunately Mr Diamond chose to ignore it’.

LFRS v Aheed Sultan (Plaza Beach Hotel Blackpool)

On the 31st October 2019 Aheed Sultan pleaded guilty to 8 of the 10 offences he was charged of under the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005.

Sentencing was due at Preston Crown Court on the 20/03/2020 but due to illness was adjourned and a new sentencing date scheduled for the 16/10/2020.

Gordon Working Men's Club, Springfield Street, Morecambe.

On the 09/10/2019 at the Gordon Working Men's Club, Springfield Road, Morecambe two persons were fatally injured as a result of a serious fire.

The joint investigation into the fire continues and is being carried out by Lancashire Constabulary, Lancaster City Council Health & Safety and LFRS.

Multi Occupied Dwelling Burnley Road, Colne.

On the 30/07/2019 a fire claimed the life of one of the residents of the property, the investigation is ongoing.

Case files under preparation

- Multi Occupied Dwelling Morecambe
- Take-away premises in Blackburn
- Multi Occupied Dwelling Blackpool
- Multi Occupied Dwelling Bamber Bridge
- Multi Occupied Dwelling Chorley

FIRE PROTECTION & BUSINESS SUPPORT INFORMATION

Fire Safety Information System and Inspection programme

The Fire Safety Inspection System is a desktop application used by Fire Protection teams to allocate finite audit and inspection capacity based on risk. The inspection programme includes elements which are continually refined based on emerging national and local issues (eg inspecting all High Rise buildings, 18m plus, annually) as well as a section based on a calculation which determines which of Lancashire's circa 60,000 non-domestic premises are included in the Risk Based Inspection Program (RBIP) and are inspected every three years (and indeed more frequently where there is a poor fire safety management history). The RBIP is currently being recalculated to ensure the Service can robustly differentiate and prioritise between different risks.

The software the Service uses to capture premises inspection history, the Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS), was upgraded to version 6.3 on 7 April 2020. As part of the Enhancing Protection Services Project this was preceded by extensive system and user testing. Staff are receiving training to ensure new features the system offers are utilised to increase effectiveness. Initially this will involve the system automatically generating letters and notices following an audit. Eventually this work will underpin the ability for Protection Officers to use remote devices to record audit details directly into CFRMIS, and generate the resultant reports, whilst away from the office.

Business Safety and Website

The business safety section of LFRS' website has been continually developed throughout Covid to reflect changing fire risk resulting from the impact of the

outbreak on society. The advice currently focuses on the types of issues businesses have encountered when re-opening after a long period of lock down.

Implementing regulatory change and transforming fire protection services.

Planning committee approved a paper on the above on 13th July. The Service has now appointed a Station Manager to lead the Protection Transformation Team.

Building Risk Review (BRR) of all High Rise Buildings in Lancashire

The BRR is being led by the NFCC Building Safety Team and is a project to assess the safety of all high rise buildings in England that have an upper floor more than 18m from the access level. The focus being the External Wall system (EWS). Since the initial attention on Aluminium Clad Material (ACM) brought about by Grenfell, the programme now considers all EWS, their cladding material, insulation, cavity barriers and balconies etc. The national project concludes in December 2021. LFRS has reported a planning trajectory to NFCC that is shorter than this timescale and the aim is to have undertaken all the necessary audits by March 2021. This recognises that although the audit may have been completed, it might take considerably longer for Responsible Persons to undertake the necessary surveys and reports to confirm the full construction details of their EWS.

Lancashire has 73 High Risk Residential Building's that fall within the scope of the Programme. Although all 73 will be subject to a detailed audit, the majority have previously been inspected and 6 are already known to have a non-compliant EWS. These 6 all receive an enhanced operational attendance to confirmed fires and, until the EWS is remediated, the management maintain a waking watch. All premises management teams have been written to advising on the application window for the Government's remediation fund (1st June to 31st July).

Recruitment of Fire Protection staff

In order to deliver the full extent of the Fire Safety Inspection Programme it is essential all Fire Protection roles are filled with competent staff. The Service has recently completed a successful internal selection process and 14 appointments have been made to Fire Safety Team Leader, Fire Safety Inspecting Officer and Business Safety Advisor roles. Training for new staff will commence in November (taking 2 years to achieve competence in role). At the conclusion of the process 5.5 Fire Safety Inspecting Officer roles remain vacant. These will now be advertised externally for competent Fire Safety Inspecting Officers (green and grey book) and internally for green book staff.

ARSON RISK REDUCTION

R v Liam WHITTLE Avenham Lane, Preston

This incident involved a deliberate fire that started in the entrance hall by occupant bringing a flame into contact with flammable materials. Fire contained to entrance hall within flat area, severe damage by fire to entrance hall.

Liam WHITTLE attended Preston Crown court in April 2020. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a 3 year community order, supervision by probation service for 3 years, 6 month residency order and attendance on a drink and drug rehabilitation programme for 12 months.

R v Terry BOLAN
Shaw Street, Blackburn

This incident involved a deliberate fire that was started in the bedroom by the occupier. Damage: Severe by fire to room of origin and contents.

Terry BOLAN was summoned to attend court in April 2020 but passed away before sentencing. Case closed.

R v Carl SALT
Burnley Road, Colne

This incident involved a 3-storey end terraced property with 3 adults having separate bedrooms but shared communal living space and bathroom. A resident deliberately set fire to a sofa in the downstairs living room. Damage: Severe by fire to living room and sofa, resulting in a fatal incident.

Carl SALT attended Preston Crown Court and was sentenced to 10 years for manslaughter and 4 years for arson reckless as to whether life is endangered. Sentences to run concurrently. Additional 4 years extended licence on completion of original 10 years.

R v 3 Youths
Glastonbury Avenue, Blackpool

This incident involved a deliberate fire starting in the attic room resulting in severe fire damage to the attic. All 3 youths participated in a Restorative Justice session.

R v Maciej BIEGUSZEWSKI
Central Drive, Blackpool

This incident involved deliberate ignition by the occupier to three separate parts of the property. Damage: 1st point of origin: slight by fire to handful of loose paper. 2nd point of origin: slight by fire to contents of cupboard (plastic bags and general waste). 3rd point of origin: severe by fire to half square meter of floorboards and skirting board, severe by fire to rear of door. The occupier smashed the upstairs window and climbed through the glass to escape the smoke sustaining cuts to his feet and body.

Maciej BIEGUSZEWSKI was sentenced on 03/06/2020 at Preston Crown Court to a hospital order under section 37 Mental Health Act.

R v Gemma TITTERTON and Gary KENNEDY
King Street, Blackpool

This incident involved a deliberate fire involving a large external smoking shelter.
Damage: Severe by fire to smoking shelter.

Gemma TITTERTON was sentenced to a 2 year Community Order. She will have to attend a drug rehabilitation programme. For the breach of suspended sentence she received 3 months imprisonment which was time served on remand to court.
Gary KENNEDY was sentenced to a 2 year Community order. He will have to attend a drug rehabilitation programme for 6 months. For the breach of suspended sentence, he received 6 months imprisonment which was time served on remand to court.

R v Joshua Colin James HENRY.
Hollingreave Road, Burnley

This incident involved a male who had thrown petrol around the internal areas of the property. He was making threats to ignite the petrol and was subsequently arrested by Police. A Fire Investigation Dog was used by the Incident Intelligence Officer and Volatile Organic Compound Detector equipment to identify the areas of contamination and nature of fuel used.

Joshua Colin James HENRY attended Preston Crown Court and was sentenced to 18 months custodial reduced to 8 months custodial due to early plea of guilty.

R v Brett DUFFY
Belgrave Road, Colne

This incident involved deliberately setting fire to a Suzuki LT50 Childs quadbike in a rear garden located approximately 3 metres away from the rear of property.

Brett DUFFY attended Burnley Crown Court and was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years with 30 days Rehabilitation Activity Requirement. 6 months alcohol treatment programme. Curfew 8pm – 6am electronically monitored for 2 months. He also has to pay a surcharge to the court.

R v Guiseppe BONA
Wycollar Avenue, Burnley

This incident involved deliberate ignition of a living room of a first floor flat. Damage: severe by fire to living room and contents. Occupier of the flat had been making threats earlier in the day about setting fire and killing everyone. Male occupier was arrested at the scene by police. No other property affected by fire. One male occupier self-evacuated from first floor flat. 3 other male occupiers of ground floor flat evacuated by fire service as a precaution. Male occupier arrested at scene charged with arson to endanger life. Has since pleaded guilty to the charge.

Guiseppe BONA attended Burnley Crown Court on 3rd July 2020 and was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment.

Business Risk

Moderate – Members are made aware of prosecutions related to fire safety activity and/or arson within Lancashire in order to satisfy themselves that the required robust approach is being pursued.

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

None

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on Monday, 14 September 2020

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS (Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ben Norman, Director of Strategy & Planning

Tel: 01772 866801

Executive Summary

Reports in relation to the 2 Unitary and 12 District Authorities are attached containing information relating to:-

- Community Safety activity;
- Incidents of Operational interest.

Operational incidents of interest will be presented to Members for information.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note and endorse the report.

Information

Included as Appendix 1 are reports for the two unitary and twelve district authorities in relation to:

- Community Safety initiatives;
- Incidents of Operational interest.

Business Risk

None

Environmental Impact

Potential impact on local environment

Equality and Diversity implications

None

Financial Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	BLACKBURN-WITH-DARWEN
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LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)

Home Fire Safety Checks

During the period and in line with COVID guidelines, community safety engagement has been greatly reduced, however fire safety advice has been maintained via telephone consultation and plans put in place for re-visits to be conducted when normal business returns. Supplementing the Home Fire Safety Check work, the community safety team has been engaged with Lancashire Resilience Forum by conducting surveys and providing additional safety information to the most vulnerable residents of the borough who had not been contacted by Local Authority teams.

Zoom and Teams meetings with partners have increased along with the use of social media platforms, which have also enabled us to increase the awareness of cooking, water and wildfire safely.

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)

Date: 21 August 2020
Time: 03:16

An automatic fire alarm was received to a large mill in Blackburn. Initially, a one pump pre-determined attendance (PDA) was mobilised to the premises. On arrival, the Officer in Charge was met by a developing fire involving a machine, he therefore requested a further three appliances to attend. The fire was extinguished and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) was requested to treat two employees for smoke inhalation as they had attempted to extinguish the fire. After the fire was extinguished, it was noted that several issues had been identified regarding the fire safety compliance of the property and a Significant Incident Fire Safety (SIFS) incident was declared.

The issues included blocked fire escapes, fire exits that were unable to be opened, machines that had been tampered with so that they could not be isolated and made safe. The fire alarm had not been activated until ten minutes after the initial ignition causing a delay in fire service attendance and finally general bad housekeeping around the mill.

The SIFS investigation involved specialist skills from different departments of LFRS including Incident Intelligence Officers and fire safety enforcement officers and also external partnership working with the Health and Safety Executive. On conclusion of the SIFS investigation, the paper mill will have remedial work to complete; this will create a safer working environment for the employees and also reduce the risk of another significant incident at this premises in turn reducing the impact to both LFRS and the local economy.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	BLACKPOOL
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<p><u>Fire Cadets</u></p> <p>With the current Covid 19 situation, the Fire Cadets are receiving weekly virtual phone calls where we are completing games and revision sessions in relation to the work they have completed to date within the Fire Cadet Scheme. They are able to keep their skills up to date and through one to one calls completed by different staff members the Cadets can keep up their familiarisation with staff, in preparation for returning to face to face sessions. Alongside this, the Fire Cadets have completed their Skills for Justice workbooks online and the majority have returned them as complete which will give them the full Skills for Justice Level 2 certificate or the award (year 1 of the award).</p> <p>The Cadets have participated in the 999 Challenge which was led by the UK National Fire Cadets whereby the Cadets completed a physical challenge over approximately six weeks and all monies raised were donated to the Firefighters Charity.</p> <p>Before the Fire Cadet scheme was postponed, we had 21 Cadets on the scheme and we envisage having approximately 16 return. These will be split as Year 2 and Year 3 Fire Cadets.</p> <p><u>Partnerships</u></p> <p>During the Covid-19 period, the core duties of the community safety team have been adapted to manage the ever changing risk associated with the pandemic.</p> <p>The team have used this time to focus on collaboration with local partners and organisations such as Blackpool Adult Services to highlight the Home Fire Safety Check Service incorporating the Safe and Well aspect.</p> <p>The team have also forged partnerships with Turning Tides - a project that will be based out of Claremont Digital Library - in partnership with Claremont Park Community Centre, offering Claremont residents the use of a data ready tablet for up to six months to support them with isolation and improving digital and social networks. A timetable of online sessions for the residents to log into will be arranged, with Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service contributing an electronic educational fire safety session.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)**Date:** 17 July 2020**Time:** 03:19

A 10 pump fire involving a Blackpool historic pier. The fire originated in the maintenance workshop on the south side of the pier prior to breaking through and rapidly engulfing a workshop and the 'Waltzer' fairground ride.

Date: 12 August 2020**Time:** 23:20

Fault in manifold which connected 6 x 4600 litre high pressure propane tanks serving large holiday park. The holiday park was fully booked at the time with guests. The area was evacuated until it could be made safe. LFRS entered secure compound and isolated supply via turning valves on each tank.

Date: 28 July 2020**Time:** 21:06

Fire on self-service checkout, as part of the Covid response process, the conveyer belts are sprayed with disinfectant. This had run inside the unit and entered the electrics causing a fire within the unit, severe fire damage to electrics internal of the unit and small quantity of till rolls.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	BURNLEY
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Casualty Reduction</u>	
<p>Burnley and Pendle Districts have proactively supported a major operation launched in Lancashire to target speeding on the county's road network. Locally, the main road at the boundary of Burnley and Brierfield has been classified as one of the top ten most dangerous roads in Lancashire. (Manchester Road/Colne Road).</p> <p>The majority of people within the county are staying at home and, if they need to go out, appear to be continuing to adhere to the speed limits – but with less traffic currently on the roads we have unfortunately seen an increase in a minority of vehicles travelling above the speed limit in the last few weeks.</p> <p>The aim is to focus on education to road users rather than enforcement by targeting the main causes of road traffic collisions – speed, driver impairment through drink or drugs, use of mobile phones, dangerous and careless driving.</p> <p>Key messages being delivered include “Road safety is always a priority in Lancashire and can have devastating consequences. Sadly, we have seen an increase in some people driving at excessive speeds potentially putting themselves and others at risk. No matter how quiet the roads are the speed limits still apply”.</p> <p>“In this unprecedented health emergency, keeping the pressure off our emergency services is so important whilst they keep the public safe and well”.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)	
Date:	29 May 2020
Time:	00:14
<p>On the afternoon of Thursday, 28 May 2020, staff working within the warehouse started to smell smoke. On investigation they had noticed shredded carpet and rubber, smouldering at the rear of the granulator machine. Although the smouldering carpet at the rear of the granulator was removed, the main housing on top of the conveyor wasn't checked before staff left at 18:00.</p> <p>At 00:14hrs on 29 May, LFRS were called to a building fire in the vicinity of Phoenix Way Burnley. Upon arrival initial crews were presented with a fully developed fire with large quantities of smoke.</p>	

The Watch Manager increased the pumping appliances to eight, plus an aerial ladder platform and the Stinger appliance. Operation Merlin was declared early due to the roof and sides consisting of asbestos. As the incident developed, another aerial ladder platform, along with the high volume pump were requested to help contain the fire.

Firefighting operations were hampered by solar panels fixed to the roof of the building, which had reduced the water application into the fire.

By 05:47, the fire was surrounded and resources reduced accordingly.

Damage was severe by fire to approximately 100sqm of roof and carpet piles within warehouse. Severe by smoke to approximately 200sqm of warehouse.

**LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT**

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	CHORLEY
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Vulnerable Persons Visits</u>	
<p>The community safety team has been working with Chorley Council to contact those people who were deemed as vulnerable and were shielding for 12 weeks. The visits involved door knocking those people the Council couldn't make contact with over the telephone in order to offer them support with shopping, collection of prescriptions and offering food parcels. A total of 261 visits took place which resulted in 38 home fire safety checks.</p>	
<p>The lists came from partners including the Council, NHS and Department for Work and Pensions and were such a good source of referrals for home fire safety checks that the partnership has continued.</p>	

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	FYLDE
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Vulnerable Persons Visits</u>	
<p>During the Covid-19 period the Community safety team has carried out 97 vulnerable persons' visits on behalf of Fylde Borough Council. These visits are to those occupants that have been identified as being on the shielding list and that the council had not had any contact with. The Community Safety team members checked the welfare of the occupants and supported them if any assistance was required.</p> <p>Due to the positive working relationship between the Community Safety team and Fylde Council this has resulted in a positive working relationship with shared knowledge and the offer of training that will be delivered by the Community Safety Team in relation to the Home Fire Safety Check Service, incorporating the Safe and Well service.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)	
Date:	04 July 2020
Time:	22:23
<p>Three fire engines from Wesham, Lytham and South Shore attended a road traffic collision involving one car that had collided with a pedestrian on Station Road in Kirkham. Firefighters used cutting and stabilising equipment to extricate three casualties from the vehicle. Five casualties were treated by ambulance crews. One person tragically died.</p>	
Date:	01 June 2020
Time:	18:43
<p>On the evening of 1 June a fire engine was called to reports of a bin on fire on the promenade in St Anne's. On arrival the bin was well alight and the fire service used a hose reel to extinguish the fire. The cause of the fire was a disposable BBQ placed in the bin whilst the embers were still hot. Although this may only seem like a small incident it was in fact one of a number of similar incidents along the promenade over a number of days, where the cause of the incident was related to disposable BBQ's being used on the beach. St Anne's saw high numbers of visitors due to the relaxation of lockdown measures and the warm weather and it may only have been a matter of time until the use of a disposable BBQ could have caused a more significant incident, possibly involving the dunes. With this in mind Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service crews from St Anne's spent several days working in co-operation with Fylde Community Safety Partnership patrolling the beach giving advice to members of the public advising them that the use of BBQ's on the beach was banned. This advice was well received and since that time we have had no more incidents involving the use of BBQ's on the beach.</p>	

Date: 22 July 2020
Time: 10:11

Two fire engines were mobilised to a report of a crash involving 1 motorbike which had struck a brick wall on a well-used local road. The fire engines were initially mobilised to make the scene safe but on arrival it became apparent that the rider was suffering from serious injuries to his chest and legs. One of the fire crews assisted the paramedics on scene with the casualty by providing trauma care whilst the other fire crew isolated the fuel on the bike as a precaution. The rider was taken to hospital by North West Ambulance Service where he could receive definitive care. Following a discussion with the police on scene Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) removed the bike to a place of safety. During this discussion the crews were made aware of a very recent change of policy by the police whereby they are now to treat any road traffic collision the same as a murder scene until it is discounted. This information was then passed onto LFRS's national lead for road safety who was able to confirm the change of procedure for the police and pass this new information and its impact on LFRS onto operational crews who may be first in attendance to future road traffic collisions.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	HYNDBURN
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LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)

Home Fire Safety Checks

During the period and in line with COVID guidelines community safety engagement has been greatly reduced however fire safety advice has been maintained via telephone consultation and plans put in place for revisits to be conducted when normal business return. Supplementing the Home Fire Safety Check work the Community Safety team has been engaged with Lancashire Resilience Forum by conducting surveys and providing additional safety information to the most vulnerable residents of the borough who had not been contacted by Local Authority teams.

Zoom and Teams meetings with partners have increased along with the use of social media platforms which have also enabled us to increase the awareness of cooking, water and wildfire safety.

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)

Date: 22 August 2020

Time: 14:11

The Building fire was situated in the middle of Healy Wood, Burnley proving access to be very difficult indeed. On the first attending appliance the crew manager assisted the oncoming fire appliances using the 'What 3 Word' app which proved to be very effective. Once the fire had been initially suppressed using a hose reel, water supplies became an issue so the fire crews had to physically carry a light portable pump with hoses and branches about a quarter of a mile. The lay of the land was extremely difficult and the crews worked tremendously hard delivering the pump to a nearby well. After a few minutes pumping the well became dry and the crews then had to run out hoses to scene from a hydrant over a quarter of a mile away. Credit must go entirely to the firefighters for their efforts as most of them when crossing a field they were confronted by a very large and aggressive ram who was not to happy that they were in his field. All the hard work payed off as the fire soon came under control. Credit must go to L90P2/L94P1/L70P1 for all their hard work in what turned out to be a very difficult incident.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	LANCASTER
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<p><u>Dementia Awareness</u></p> <p>Community Fire Safety was contacted by The Neuro Drop In Centre, regarding a course being run for people with neurological conditions. The course was run over a six week period and was attended by 24 people, who had various forms of early onset of debilitating conditions such as Parkinson’s Disease, Alzheimer’s or Dementia.</p> <p>The venue was attended by a Community Safety Advisor who gave a presentation on fire safety in the home and what additional resources are available to aid safety. The opportunity was taken to promote The Guardian Angel which may prove to be valuable for the people suffering with Alzheimer’s or Dementia. A total of ten referrals for Home Fire Safety Visits were received for this potentially vulnerable high risk group.</p> <p><u>Vulnerable People</u></p> <p>As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, LFRS has worked closely with the Local Authority carrying out Vulnerable Person visits. A set of questions were asked to determine if this group of people had any welfare, health, and domestic issues which could be addressed. Feedback was provided back to the Local Authority Hubs.</p> <p>During this period a total of 341 vulnerable people have been contacted by Community Safety Advisors.</p>	

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	PENDLE
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LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)

Wildfires

After spike in significant wildfires within Nelson area during 2020 the crews and prevention staff from Nelson proactively carried out prevention and education activities including posting in prominent locations laminated leaflets informing of preventative measures and the dangers of wildfires. They also attended the local allotments as the service received several calls regarding allotment holders burning garden waste on their plots and causing a smoky atmosphere.

Our advice to residents and visitors is when outdoors especially during the pandemic that they take great care to prevent fires, particularly as heat-waves occur. “Our key message is to take extra care and be extra vigilant when outdoors. Disposable BBQs, discarded cigarettes and even rubbish left on the ground can all start a fire and should be avoided or used in designated areas.”

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)

Date: 06 July 2020

Time: 16:24

Two appliances from Nelson were mobilised along with rope rescue teams from St Anne’s and Chorley to a female teenager aged 13 years old holding on to a tree in a precarious position with a 20 foot ravine below her. Operational discretion was utilised due to the time critical nature of this incident. Crews using a general purpose line lowered a firefighter down the slope and brought the teenager up to safety. No injuries were reported.

Date: 23 July 2020

Time: 15:30

An appliance from Nelson was sent to a large fuel leak on a main carriageway in Nelson. Operation Merlin was declared to notify partners of the impact of this incident. Crews used their ‘grab pack’ and contained hundreds of litres of diesel, whilst a hazmat officer liaised with the Environment Agency about the fuel that had escaped to drains.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	PRESTON
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Vulnerable Persons Visits</u>	
<p>Preston's Community Safety Team has been working with Preston City Council to contact those people who were deemed as vulnerable and were shielding for 12 weeks. The vulnerable visits involved door knocking those people who the Council couldn't make contact with over the phone, in order to offer them support with shopping, collection of prescriptions and offering food parcels and signposting for additional help. Through this initiative, LFRS was also able to complete a large number of home fire safety checks for the vulnerable occupiers.</p> <p>The lists came from partners including Preston City Council, NHS and Department for Work and Pensions. Due to the risk associated with the majority of the received referrals, LFRS has been in contact with each of the referring agencies in order to set up referral streams for the completion of further Home Fire Safety Checks. Referrals from agencies will be monitored and further training and support will be offered if necessary.</p>	
<u>Virtual Visit My Mosque – 19-21 June 2020</u>	
<p>#VisitMyMosqueDay is a national campaign facilitated by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) supporting 250+ mosques across the UK to hold open days.</p> <p>This year, despite the lockdown, #VisitMyMosque went virtual on the internet with a series of live virtual tours as part of the #GreatGetTogether weekend, 19th-21st June 2020. (Faz Patel from Preston Community Fire Safety is the Northern Lead for Visit my Mosque Campaign) https://www.visitmymosque.org/about/</p> <p>This initiative was supported by over 250 people and also enabled staff from LFRS to learn about Ramadan, Mosques supporting local communities during COVID19, community cohesion, building partnership working within Preston and engagement with Muslim communities. Further information and learning was shared with how mosques can support LFRS in giving key fire safety messages within the Muslim community to cover topics such as cooking safety, electrical safety, road safety and the offer of a Home Fire Safety Check within the home. This work will continue and Preston CFS Department will share all relevant safety information through the local links which have now been established.</p>	
<u>Fire Cadets 999 Campaign</u>	
<p>During COVID-19, the Preston Fire Cadets were unable to engage with activities in the classroom/drill yard. The 999 challenge was set up to keep the Cadets engaged with the programme and to engage with the community via social media. All areas created their own ideas for the challenge and Preston adapted it to not only raise money for the Fire</p>	

Fighters Charity, but to deliver key fire safety messages. Our challenge was 9 fire safety messages, 9 hose run, 9 days.

There were 9 Cadets involved in the challenge. Each Cadet had their own fire safety message to deliver and they each carried out 9 hose runs over 9 days. Fire safety messages included the importance of having a working smoke alarm along with the provision of smoke alarms for the hard of hearing, wildfire incidents, water safety, road safety, candle safety, supporting people with dementia, cooking safety, smoking and sleeping over with friends.

All Cadets and their families were eager to get involved in the challenge and share the key messages. Through this initiative, the cadets were also able to raise money for the charity and it was a massive success due to the hard work by all the Fire Cadets and the support from Kelly McHugh (Preston CSA) who was able to produce the video clips in sign language for all to enjoy. Clips are available for viewing on LFRS Facebook page and on Youtube – 999 Challenge Preston Fire Cadets.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	RIBBLE VALLEY
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Home Fire Safety Checks</u>	
<p>During the period and in line with COVID guidelines community safety engagement has been greatly reduced however fire safety advice has been maintained via telephone consultation and plans put in place for revisits to be conducted when normal business return. Supplementing the Home Fire Safety Check work the Community Safety team has been engaged with Lancashire Resilience Forum by conducting surveys and providing additional safety information to the most vulnerable residents of the borough who had not been contacted by Local Authority teams.</p> <p>Zoom and Teams meetings with partners have increased along with the use of social media platforms which have also enabled us to increase the awareness of cooking, water and wild fire safely.</p> <p>Following the recent large wildfire incident on Longridge Fell, initial scoping out of future wildfire prevention measures on the fell has taken place with a joint meeting with all partners and landowners who have the responsibility to manage the fell.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)	
Date:	13 August 2020
Time:	02:09
<p>A member of the public had fallen from a railway bridge onto an embankment causing serious lower leg injuries and they were unable to move. A fire appliance from Clitheroe attended and completed an initial assessment/preparation of the scene. Due to the restricted / difficult access in the vicinity the casualty was rescued from the railway line using the skills of the Rope Rescue Team from Bamber Bridge (USAR). Additional support was provided and crews liaised with NWAS HART team / paramedics, British Transport Police, and the Rail Incident Officer who were all involved in the stabilisation and extrication of the casualty from the scene. Excellent joint Emergency Services Interoperability principles applied and multi-agency response / co-ordination enabled a successful outcome to the incident.</p>	

**LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT**

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR: ROSSENDALE

LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)

Lockdown Safety in the Home

Documents were circulated in Rossendale District with relevance to a trending spike in incidents around the county. The theme in particular was home safety in response to incidents caused by using various forms of equipment both inside and outside the home over the lock-down period (chip-pans, irons, candles, DIY tools etc.) These were carried out in an attempt to lower A&E admissions due to accidents in the home and reduce incidents of fire in the home. The bespoke literature was distributed to all properties within the Safe & Well packs. This was as part of a Home Fire Safety Check in Rossendale during the initial lockdown period.

All homes which required fire detection and other prevention equipment received the Service.



LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	SOUTH RIBBLE
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>One Front Door</u>	
<p>Following on from the success of the Vulnerable Persons visits that LFRS was involved in carrying out, South Ribble Council, along with partners from organisations including the Police, Citizens Advice Bureau, Department for Work and Pensions and various local charities and groups, have set up a new initiative called 'One Front Door'.</p> <p>This is an initiative whereby anyone who is working with someone who requires additional help can refer into the group and each selected partner will carry out this support. For example, on a home fire safety check someone might ask us to signpost them to someone for debt advice, fixing a leaky tap and concerns about local young people congregating near their house. This would then be picked up by Citizens Advice Bureau, Preston Care and Repair and the Police respectively.</p> <p>This is a way of continuing to support the vulnerable members of South Ribble and enable LFRS to carry out Home Fire Safety Checks to those who are deemed most at risk from fire.</p>	

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	WEST LANCASHIRE
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<u>Dying for a Dip</u>	
<p>Due to the warm weather, there has been an influx of people attending Dawber Delph Quarry in Appley Bridge. Normally during this time the Community Safety Teams would visit local schools to deliver the ‘Dying for a Dip’ campaign around the dangers of open water swimming, however, due to Lockdown this proved impossible. It was more important than ever to get the message out during Lockdown due to the amount of free time people had.</p> <p>Before schools officially closed, the Dying for a Dip package was sent out to schools and teachers sent this out either as a lesson (the closest to how it should have been delivered), as the salient points or as a ‘thought of the day’ on a Friday when the weather was forecast to be sunny over the weekend. A minimum of 2383 students and teachers received the package.</p> <p>The package was also shared with colleagues in Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service as a large proportion of people who were visiting were from Kirkby. The Police launched a social media campaign and gave out our safety leaflets to anyone in attendance.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)	
Date:	06 August 2020
Time:	20:33
<p>Four appliances were called to reports of a fire at a commercial premises on Yewdale in Skelmersdale. Crews from Skelmersdale and Wigan attended and on arrival found a fire involving a small amount of refuse inside the property. Firefighters used a triple extension ladder and a hose reel to extinguish the fire and were in attendance approximately thirty minutes.</p>	
Date:	03 August 2020
Time:	20:05
<p>Two fire crews from Chorley were called to reports of a fire at a house on Eaves Lane, Chorley. The fire involved the kitchen of the property however was out on arrival of firefighters. Two firefighters wore breathing apparatus and used a ventilation unit to clear the property of smoke and ensure the scene was safe. There was one casualty at the incident believed to have been suffering from the effects of smoke inhalation. They attended hospital for a precautionary check. Crews were in attendance approximately two hours.</p>	

Date: 10 August 2020
Time: 19:32

Four fire engines from Skelmersdale and Ormskirk were called to a derelict building fire on Westgate, Skelmersdale. Firefighters used two breathing apparatus, one hose reel and one ventilation unit to extinguish the fire. No injuries were reported and the fire is under investigation.

LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

REPORTING PERIOD: JUNE 2020 – AUGUST 2020

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	WYRE
LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY ACTIVITIES (brief details)	
<p><u>Sendsafe</u></p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service was contacted by the manager of a purpose built centre in Fleetwood, which offers respite care through Social Services.</p> <p>The centre caters for young adults aged 18+ who currently live with carers or family within the district of Fylde and Wyre. The attendees are people who have learning disabilities in various forms.</p> <p>It is recognised that children, young people and adults with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are a particularly important group to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service as they, by definition, can be considered as more ‘at risk’ and vulnerable to the dangers fire can pose.</p> <p>After consultation with The Centre Manager and a Community Safety Advisor (CSA), it was decided to deliver five units from the SEND Toolkit; these were delivered by Sendsafe aware CSA’s and operational firefighters. Topics covered were smoke alarms, causes of fire, crawling low in smoke, escape plans, and get out stay out call the fire service out.</p> <p>The afternoon’s activities culminated in the Operational Firefighters explaining about their kit, how and why this is worn to keep themselves safe from fire and smoke and exploring the fire appliance looking at various equipment and finding out what it is used for.</p> <p><u>Vulnerable Persons Visits</u></p> <p>As a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic, LFRS has worked closely with the Local Authority carrying out Vulnerable Person visits. A set of questions were asked to determine if this group of people had any welfare, health, and domestic issues which could be addressed. Feedback was provided back to the Local Authority Hubs so that issues identified could be addressed. During this period a total of 157 vulnerable people have been contacted by Community Safety Advisors.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST (brief details)**Date:** 23 July 2020**Time:** 17:00

Four appliances, one aerial ladder platform and two station managers attended a chimney fire at premises in Churchtown, near Garstang.

The property is a 17th / 18th century building in six acres of land that has recently become unoccupied. The property has fallen into disrepair, particularly the roof and electrics, and it would appear the property is available for sale.

This fire was contained to the chimney breast in the three-story building. The fire was extinguished using a hose reel and nimbus nozzle from both an aerial ladder platform and also chimney rods from basement and first floor.

The incident has been referred to the Technical Fire Safety team to identify suitable post incident actions.

Date: 26 July 2020**Time:** 03:45

Five appliances and two Station Managers attended a fire which spread to five caravans at a business premises on Garstang bypass.

This incident involved two caravans initially, on the forecourt of a caravan sales area. The caravans were located next to the gas compound housing several cylinders which crews effectively protected and prevented from becoming involved.

Several other caravans were affected by the heat of the fire, a number of main jets and breathing apparatus wearers were used to extinguish the fire.

Fire investigation officers visited the incident and determined the cause to be accidental (fault in an electric dehumidifier). The fire was captured by CCTV footage prior to the cameras/cables melting as a result of the fire.

The incident was referred to Technical and Community Fire Safety teams which have subsequently provided advice around clearance between Caravans to improve business safety.

Date: 6 July 2020
Time: 13:02

One appliance attended an incident involving a person who had fallen from height.

One male fell from a ladder whilst climbing into an access platform. He had fallen approximately 30 feet onto the concrete footings of an underground structure.

The incident required a multi-agency approach involving North West Ambulance Service, Air Ambulance and the Fire Service to extricate the casualty and provide treatment.

The casualty was carried out of the footings in which they were confined and onto a longboard via an existing walkway.

The casualty was flown to a major trauma centre with head, back and pelvic injuries.

Date: 26 June 2020
Time: 01:08

The incident involved a fire in a kitchen which had ignited as a result of the occupant falling asleep after putting food on the hob to cook.

On arrival at the incident the crews were met with billowing smoke from the rear of the property, where they identified that the occupant was asleep on a chair in the rear of the property.

Four firefighters wearing breathing apparatus were committed into the property to extinguish the fire and to rescue the individual who received a precautionary check at the incident.

The incident has subsequently been referred to the Community Fire Safety team for suitable follow up actions

Date: 21 July 2020
Time: 08:33

The incident involved a cow that was trapped in water and required rescuing from the bank of the river.

The incident involved preparatory work to make the banking suitable for a rescue and with three Swift Water Rescue Technicians committed to the banking / water with equipment to lift the cow from its entrapment and manoeuvre to safety, supported by the farmer, the cow was effectively released and returned to the safety of its field.

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