

Public Document Pack

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 26 April 2021 – Virtual meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast) commencing at 10.00 am.

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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. 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.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (PAGES 1 - 28)

5. MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2021 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE (PAGES 29 - 36)

6. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 17 MARCH 2021 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (PAGES 37 - 58)

7. MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 23 MARCH 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE (PAGES 59 - 64)

8. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 24 MARCH 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE (PAGES 65 - 74)

9. URGENT DECISION ARRANGEMENTS AT ELECTION TIME (PAGES 75 - 76)

10. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS (PAGES 77 - 82)

11. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS (PAGES 83 - 102)

12. MEMBER COMPLAINTS

Standing item.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority will be held on Monday 28 June 2021 at 1000 hours – venue to be agreed.

14. 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.

15. 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.

Agenda Item 4

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 22 February 2021 at 10.00 am - Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast)

MINUTES

PRESENT:

F De Molfetta (Chairman)

Councillors

N Hennessy (Vice-Chair)

L Beavers

S Blackburn

P Britcliffe

I Brown

S Clarke

J Eaton

S Holgate

D Howarth

J Hugo

A Kay

H Khan

Z Khan

T Martin

D O'Toole

M Pattison

A Riggott

J Shedwick

D Smith

D Stansfield

G Wilkins

T Williams

115/19 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, CC Frank De Molfetta welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. 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.

Mr Mark Nolan, Clerk to the Authority conducted a roll call and Authority Members individually confirmed their attendance.

116/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from: Councillor Mohammed Khan and County Councillor Liz Oades.

117/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A personal interest was declared by County Councillor M. Pattison outside the meeting as an employee for Ageconsulting who supported the Authority's Champion responsible for older people.

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority notes that this is recorded by Councillor Pattison on the Member's Register of Interests and is satisfied that for the purposes of the Authority Meeting there is no conflict of interest.

118/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 14 December 2020 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

119/19 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2020 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 16 December 2020 be noted and endorsed.

120/19 HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) completed a Thematic Inspection of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) in September 2020. On 22 January 2021, the thematic report as now considered by Members was released alongside a covering national report which summarised the findings across the sector. This was the first of three reports expected from HMICFRS in the first quarter of 2021. The second report was HMICFRS findings of the phase 1 Inquiry into Grenfell Tower which had now been received and the third was the annual State of Fire and Rescue report, due March 2021.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) received a positive inspection from HMICFRS. The inspection was a light touch and looked at how the Service had delivered its functions safely and how it worked for the greater good of the community alongside partners. The report noted how prevention and protection work continued, albeit in a modified capacity and how the Service worked with its partners in the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) providing structure, support and logistics. LFRS had successfully engaged with unions such as the Fire Brigade Union and Unison and was able to put in place effective plans in line with requests from partners in the LRF, many of which came under the tripartite agreement. LFRS was also praised for wellbeing support to staff which was supported by all levels of management and the ability to communicate with staff at all levels using a variety of innovative methods.

LFRS was graded 'outstanding' in the round 1 inspections for culture and values. This further positive result arising from the Thematic Inspection would contribute to grading under the round 2 inspection. Based on latest information available, it was expected that the outcome report from LFRS' inspection would be published in summer 2022 and tranche three reports in winter 2022, followed by the third State of Fire and Rescue Report in 2023.

In response to a request from County Councillor Pattison regarding how the Service identified the most vulnerable, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service worked on a day to day basis with the local authorities as key referral partners into the Service for vulnerable people at risk from fire; this was the basis of the circa 20,000 safe and well visits undertaken per year. In addition, the 3 upper tier authorities also had arrangements for the Service to refer a vulnerable person back to them. At the start of the pandemic last year, under the tripartite arrangements LFRS staff also visited 5,000 clinically vulnerable people to ensure they had access to necessities

(medicines and food etc) which was hugely successful and remained ongoing. He confirmed that the Service was still meeting critical needs and whilst a covid secure risk assessment applied, where the risk from fire and harm was significant a visit was made by the Service.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised anyone who had concerns about a member of the public to contact their local authority via the information on the relevant local authority website or the Service website.

RESOLVED: That the Authority noted the report.

121/19 PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2021/22

The Director of People and Development presented the report. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 a pay policy statement for 2021/22 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 were 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.

122/19 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2021/22

The Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer presented the report that set out the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy for 2021/22.

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 2021/22

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 had 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 would 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 2021/22

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 impact on the UK from coronavirus, lockdown measures, the rollout of vaccines, as well as the new trading arrangements with the European Union (EU), would remain major influences on the Authority’s treasury management strategy for 2021/22.

The Bank of England (BoE) maintained Bank Rate at 0.10% in December 2020 and Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion having extended it by £150 billion in the previous month. The BoE also forecast the economy would now take until Q1 2022 to reach its pre-pandemic level rather than the end of 2021 as previously forecast.

UK Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) for November 2020 registered 0.3% year on year, down from 0.7% in the previous month.

Interest Rate Forecast and Prospects for Market Liquidity

The treasury management consultant Arlingclose was forecasting that BoE Bank Rate would remain at 0.1% until at least the first quarter of 2024. The risks to this forecast were judged to be to the downside as the BoE and UK government continued to react to the coronavirus pandemic and the new EU trading arrangements. Members considered the latest forecast as presented in the report. It was noted that the Authority could borrow at 80 basis points above the gilt yield, for example a fixed interest rate to borrow PWLB money for 10 years would be 1.05%, 0.25% plus 0.80%.

Current Treasury Portfolio Position

At the 31 December 2020 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	24.110	61.6
Fixed rate investments	15.000	38.4
	39.110	100%

The level of investment 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 £37.110m.

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, this gave an indication of the borrowing required. It also showed the estimated resources available for investment. An option was to use these balances to finance the expenditure rather than investing, often referred to as internal borrowing. The table in the report gave an indication of the minimum borrowing or investment requirement through the period.

The CFR forecast included the impact of the latest forecast of the funding of the Capital Programme which currently assumed there would be no borrowing in the next three years. A voluntary MRP was made 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 at 31.3.20. This 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 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 in the next three years it did currently hold £2.0m of loans as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. The draft capital programme, reported elsewhere on the agenda, identified a borrowing requirement in 2025/26.

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 extremely unlikely that borrowing would be required in 2021/22. 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. 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 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 has 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

2021 was £2.0m. All the debt was from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) and was all at fixed rates of interest and was 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, the opportunities for debt repayment/restructuring had again been reviewed.

The level of penalty applicable on early repayment of loans now stood at £1.180m.

Outstanding interest payable between now and maturity was £1.407m.

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 were at 0.7% over the remaining period of the loan then repaying the loans now would be broadly neutral.

It was noted that the capital budget allowed for additional borrowing within the next 5 years. Current long-term borrowing rates were 1.67% for a 25-year loan and 1.49% for a 50-year loan, both of which exceed the breakeven position noted above. Hence given the penalties it was considered beneficial to retain these loans.

Investment Strategy

At 31st December 2020 the Authority held £39.110m invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus existing balances and reserves. During the year the Authority's investment balance had ranged between £28.6m and £52.0m. 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.

Regarding the risk of investing with another local authority, only a very few authorities have their own credit rating. Any lender to a local authority had protection, under statute, by way of a first charge on the revenues of that authority. No local authority had ever defaulted to date and this also may be an indication of security. However, following the downgrade of the UK credit rating by the rating agencies those local authorities with a rating saw a reduction in their ratings. Therefore, consideration had been given to reducing the risk associated with the investment with other local authorities. Arlingclose, the County Council's Treasury Management advisor, stated

they were "comfortable with clients making loans to UK local authorities for periods up to two years, subject to this meeting their approved strategy. For periods longer than two years we recommend that additional due diligence is undertaken prior to a loan being made." On that basis it was proposed that the investments to local authorities be limited as follows:

	Maximum individual investment (£m)	Maximum total investment (£m)	Maximum period
Up to 2 years	5	30	2 years
Over 2 years	5	25	10 years

The investment in LCC as part of the call account arrangement was excluded from the above limits. The balance on that account was dependent upon short term cash flows and therefore did not have a limit.

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 is currently 0.10%. 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 2021/22.

Start Date	End Date	Principal	Rate	Interest 2021/22
10/12/19	10/06/21	£5,000,000	1.20	£11,506
20/04/20	20/04/22	£5,000,000	1.45	£72,500
24/04/20	25/04/22	£5,000,000	1.45	£72,500

Consideration was given to 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. Suggested rates payable by other local authorities indicated were:

3 month investment	0.05-0.11%
6 month investment	0.05-0.15%
12-month investment	0.12-0.28%
3-year investment	0.53-0.68%
4-year investment	0.62-0.77%

The overall combined amount of interest earned on Fixed/Call balances as at 31st December 2020 was £0.197m on an average balance of £42.6m at an annualised rate of 0.61%. This compared favourably with the benchmark 7 day LIBID rate which averaged 0.12% over the same period, and was 0.51% above the current bank rate.

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 2021/22 in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 21(1A) of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Authority made a voluntary MRP in 2019/20 and it was anticipated that the MRP on loans would be nil in 2021/22 this would 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 2021/22 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 was 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 contracts 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 the proposed budget 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)	(0.175)	(0.075)	(0.060)
Net budget	(0.222)	(0.075)	0.025	0.040

Although the MRP requirement was currently nil the budget included a provision for making a charge either due to incurring a small amount of borrowing or to make a voluntary MRP to offset against future requirements.

Prudential Indicators for 2020/21(revised) to 2023/24 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, accounting standards were likely to change 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.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor O'Toole, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that all the Authority's investments were with other local authorities.

RESOLVED – That the Authority:

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

123/19 RESERVES AND BALANCES POLICY

The Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer 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.

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 judgement 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 elsewhere on this 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 and the remedy for the McCloud judgement; 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.

Funding for 2021/22 was subject to a one-year settlement, with a further four-year Spending Review planned for 2022/23. Based on December's Local Government Finance Settlement, the Authority would receive a 0.2% inflationary increase for 2021/22.

There was greater degree of uncertainty over long term funding than in recent years as the impact of both Brexit and the Pandemic on public finances and the national economy were still unknown. Furthermore, 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 over the next Spending Review period.

As such the Treasurer considered it prudent to increase the minimum target reserves level at £3.5m, 6% of the 2021/22 net revenue budget, reflecting the increasing level of uncertainty. This was slightly higher than the 5% threshold identified by the Home Office above which the Authority was required to justify why it held the level of reserves, reflecting the increasing uncertainty about future funding, pension costs and pay awards.

Should reserves fall below this minimum level the following financial year's budget would contain options for increasing reserves back up to this level.

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 judgement, 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 2021 was £6.0m, providing scope to utilise approx. £2.5m of reserves.

The proposed drawdown of £0.3m in 21/22 would reduce the general balance to £5.7m. After allowing for this the Treasurer considered these were at an appropriate level to meet expenditure requirements in 2021/22. (No allowance has been made in the revenue budget shortfall for potential costs arising from the McCloud pension remedy, as it assumed these were reflected in future changes to pension contribution rates.)

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 but based on the existing draft revenue budget, general reserves were sufficient to balance the budget over the next 3 years, falling below the current minimum level by 31 March 2024, however that was subject to a great deal of uncertainty, particularly around pension costs, funding, vacancy profiles, future inflation and pay awards and council tax increases.

Earmarked Reserves

Level of Earmarked Reserves

The earmarked reserves forecast at 31 March 2021 were £10.2m and a breakdown of these was considered by Members. The Director of Corporate Services highlighted earmarked reserves (as set out on pages 70 and 71) which were held for:

- Section 31 Business Rate Relief Grant of £1.9m;
- Carried forward 2020/21 underspend relating to timing of activities delayed by the pandemic of £0.5m;
- Specific grant carried forward in respect of Protection Uplift Grant; Building Risk Review Grant and Grenfell Infrastructure Grant of £0.2m;
- Covid funding to meet costs associated with the pandemic of £0.2m.

It was noted that of the anticipated balance of £5.1m at 31 March 2026, £3.7m 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.

At 31 March 2021 the Authority anticipated holding £20.4m of capital reserves and receipts, after allowing for the transfer of the anticipated £0.5m year-end underspend into this reserve. Based on the capital programme presented elsewhere on this agenda it was anticipated fully utilising these by 31 March 2025. Of the total reserve £3.5m 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 cannot 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 fall below individual excess clauses and the annual self-insured limits. This provision fully covered all estimated costs associated with outstanding claims.

This provision stood at £0.5m at 31 March 2020. 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 2020 this provision stood at £1.0m 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 by billing authorities 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 reserve position showed, next year the Authority remained in a healthy position. The reduction in the level of reserves became more of a concern thereafter with the overall level reducing by over £20m over the next three financial years. With the general reserve potentially moving below the minimum target level from April 2024 onwards. However, 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.

In response to a question by Councillor Williams regarding a breakdown of how the innovations fund was being utilised, the Director of Corporate Services advised that there was a bidding process to use the fund which may include capital (ie: there may be some equipment in the capital programme which could potentially be charged to this fund), however, this process had not yet been carried out therefore this fund had not yet been utilised.

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

124/19 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND BUDGET 2021/22 - 2025/26

The Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer 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 was reported to the Authority for approval each February. The programme set out the capital projects taking place in the financial years 2021/22 to 2025/26, and would be updated in May to reflect the effects of the final level of slippage from the current financial year (2020/21).

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.

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:

	2021/22 (inc Slippage)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Vehicles	4.525	0.996	0.947	1.592	1.712	9.772
Operational Equipment	0.444	1.000	0.250	0.530	-	2.224
Buildings	4.325	1.200	8.450	3.400	11.200	28.575
IT Equipment	2.005	0.350	-	0.220	0.600	3.175
	11.299	3.546	9.647	5.742	13.512	43.745

Vehicles

The Fleet Asset Management plan had been used as a basis to identify the vehicle replacement programme as detailed in the report. This was a very large programme and hence some slippage may occur.

It was noted that Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service (LFRS) currently had several vehicles provided and maintained by Communities and Local Government (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, it was understood 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 may be available to fund them. Based on the current position, these vehicles (or any potential grant) had not been included in the replacement plan.

In addition, Fleet Services continued to review future requirements for the replacement of all vehicles in the portfolio, hence there may be some scope to modify requirements as these reviews were completed, and future replacement programmes would be adjusted accordingly.

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. Again, this was a very large programme of works, which would be a challenge to deliver alongside on-going day-to-day property issues, and any new initiatives that were identified at a later date.

It was noted that costs and timing for both Preston Fire Station and the Service Headquarters relocation were estimates only, based on current information. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed the first SHQ Working Group was scheduled for the following week. As plans were refined further updates would be provided for specific approval.

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.

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 2020/21 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 2021/22, 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 expected to hold £1.7m of capital receipts as at 31 March 2021. This would be fully utilised during the 5-year programme.

There was no allowance for the potential sale of the existing Fulwood site as this could not be disposed of until such time as any changes required to Fulwood Fire Station were enacted. Once this was complete sale proceeds were forecast to be in excess of £2m, depending on which Fulwood Fire Station option was undertaken.

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. The Authority expected to hold £18.7m of capital reserves as at 31 March 2021. Over the life of the programme it was anticipated all these reserves would be utilised.

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. The revenue contribution remained the same over the life of the programme, at £2.25m.

Drawdown of Earmarked Reserves

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

Drawdown of General Reserves

No allowance has 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:

	2021/22 (inc Slippage)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Grant	1.000	-	-	-	-	1.000
Capital Receipts	-	-	-	1.663	-	1.663
Capital Reserves	8.049	1.296	7.397	1.828	0.150	18.720
Revenue Contributions	2.250	2.250	2.250	2.250	2.250	11.250
	11.299	3.546	9.647	5.741	2.400	32.633

Summary Programme

Based on the draft capital programme as presented there was a shortfall of £11.1m:

	2021/22 (inc Slippage)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Capital Requirements	11.299	3.546	9.647	5.741	13.512	43.745
Capital Funding	11.299	3.546	9.647	5.741	2.400	32.633
Surplus / (Shortfall)	-	-	-	-	(11.112)	(11.112)

This was a very large funding gap, demonstrating that the programme as set out was not achievable without significant borrowing.

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. The capital programme showed the Authority utilising all of its capital reserves and receipts part way through 2025/26, 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.

Based on the provisional 1-year settlement, and future forecasts, the position in respect of the revenue budget appeared sustainable until March 2024. Dependent upon the outcome of the next Spending Review and its impact on future funding the revenue contribution to capital (RCCO) could come under increasing pressure. It therefore appeared unlikely that there would be any scope to increase RCCO in future years. (It was noted that the existing contribution of £2.25m was only sufficient to meet the current vehicle replacement programme, any capital requirements over and above must be funded in another way.) This meant the Authority needed to borrow to meet future capital requirements and this would impact the revenue budget as capital financing (interest payable and Minimum Revenue Provision) charges.

As funds had already been set aside (prepaid MRP) to offset the existing £2.0m of PWLB borrowing we would need to take out new borrowing of £9.1m. This would have a significant impact on the revenue budget, in terms of interest payments and setting aside a sum equivalent to the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Two examples are provided in the report showing the position over a 25 and a 50-year period, based on current long-term interest rates. The final year of the revenue budget, presented elsewhere on this agenda, included the sum of £142k to meet the costs associated with this borrowing, however the impact on the MRP would not be felt until 2026/27.

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, significant external borrowing would be required in the final year 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: -

1. In terms of prudence, the level of capital expenditure, in absolute terms, was considered to be prudent and sustainable at an annual average of £8.2m 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;
2. 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 it was generally agreed at the last Authority meeting that the Headquarters building was not suitable. Given the planned meeting of the Service Headquarters Working Group for the following week and the number of other large capital requirements set out in the report (for vehicles, buildings and ICT etc. coupled with the Treasurer's pessimistic view in the long-term) he wanted to wait until a decision had been made on a new location before agreeing to the recommendations set out in the report. In response, the Director of Corporate Services provided reassurance that in terms of the Headquarters capital requirement, the report set funding aside pending the Authority's formal decision. The report tried to set out a programme of potential costs to set aside money for as and when changes were agreed.

Due to a technical issue with the webcast the meeting was adjourned until the issue was resolved. The Clerk ensured all Members were present and Members then:

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

- i) Capital Strategy;
- ii) Capital Budget; and
- iii) Prudential Indicators as now presented.

The Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer presented the report which set out the draft revenue budget for 2021/22-2025/26 and the resultant council tax implications.

The budget requirement had been re-assessed 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, it had been assumed a freeze in 21/22 and 2% each subsequent year;
- What impact the McCloud judgement 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 would be introduced and if so what contribution rates would 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 21/22 and would be incorporated into the subsequent Spending Review, and it had therefore been assumed this would continue throughout the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The draft Local Government Settlement showed funding increasing by 0.19%. Until such time as a future Spending Review was announced there was no indications of future funding levels, as such the draft budget allowed for a funding increase of 1.5% each year.

Both the council tax base and collection fund, and the business rates collection fund had all been affected by the pandemic: -

- The council tax base had fallen by 0.25%, predominantly due to an increase in the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. Hence the Government had allocated additional grant of £0.8m to offset the short-term reduction in the tax base;
- The council tax collection fund was £0.1m in deficit;
- The business rate collection fund was £1.9m in deficit, but this was offset by anticipated additional section 31 grant in respect of new in-year rate reliefs agreed by the Government in response to the pandemic's impact on businesses;
- To offset both the collection fund deficits the Government was allowing any relevant in-year deficits to be spread over 3 years, thus smoothing the impact, and had agreed to provide additional grant equivalent to 75% of the relevant reduction in specific elements of the collection fund deficits. However as billing authorities had not yet calculated this it had been excluded from our estimates.

In terms of council tax, the referendum limit had been maintained at 2%.

Overall the following year's budget showed a funding shortfall of approx. £0.3m, assuming council tax was increased by 2%.

Looking longer term the key variables remained pay awards, pension costs and funding. There was an increase in the funding gap as no allowance had been made for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme continuing, and hence the estimated funding gap increased to approx. £1m.

However, any pay award in 21/22 or further increases in pension costs would add in further financial pressures, as would a reduction in funding as part of the next Spending Review. As such additional scenarios were presented showing the potential impact of these. As always, the longer the forecast the less accurate it would be.

There were too many uncertainties in the budget to produce meaningful longer-term plans, however it was clear that the Authority remained in a strong position to face these challenges, once future funding became clearer.

The report set out the implications of increasing council tax by 2%, 1% or of freezing this. The increases equated to 2% was £1.41 per annum, £0.03 per week and 1% was £0.70 per annum, £0.01 per week.

Members considered the report in detail.

The Treasurer confirmed that one consultation response had been received from the Fire Brigades Union: "The FBU reluctantly support an increase in Council Tax as a way of offsetting and lessening the impact of Central Government cuts. Although we prefer to see no reductions The Fire Brigades Union support the small drawdown from reserves to allow for a balanced budget and maintained establishment and response model".

The proposal based on a council tax increase of 1.99%, £1.41, resulting in a council tax of £72.27 for a Band D property was **MOVED** by County Councillor Frank De Molfetta and **SECONDED** by County Councillor Nikki Hennessy.

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 (22)

L Beavers, S Blackburn, P Britcliffe, I Brown, S Clarke, F De Molfetta, J Eaton, N Hennessy, S Holgate, D Howarth, J Hugo, A Kay, H Khan, Z Khan, T Martin, D O'Toole, M Pattison, A Riggott, J Shedwick, D Smith, G Wilkins and T Williams.

Against (1)

D Stansfield.

Abstained (0)

No Members abstained.

The motion was therefore **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 £58.175m for 2021/22;
4. noted the level of Revenue Support Grant Funding £8.570m;
5. noted the level of Business Rates Retention Top Up Funding £11.295m;
6. noted the level of Local Business Rates Retention Funding £4.279m;
7. noted the section 31 grant of £1.320m due in respect of the business rate reliefs;
8. noted the business rate tax collection fund deficit of £1.862m, after allowing for the

- 3-year spread;
9. noted the section 31 grant of £1.925m due in respect of the additional in-year business rate reliefs for 2020/21;
 10. noted the Local Council Tax Support Grant of £0.789m;
 11. noted the net council tax collection fund deficit of £0.137m after allowing for the 3-year spread;
 12. agreed the council tax requirement, calculated in accordance with Section 42A(4) of the Localism Act of £31.996m;
 13. noted the council tax base of 442,730 determined for the purposes of Section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;
 14. agreed a council tax band D equivalent of £72.27, an increase of £1.41 (1.99%), calculated by the Authority under Section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 agree, on the basis of the fixed ratios between valuation bands set by the Government, council tax for each band as follows:

Band A	£48.18
Band B	£56.21
Band C	£64.24
Band D	£72.27
Band E	£88.33
Band F	£104.39
Band G	£120.45
Band H	£144.54

15. agreed, based on each district and unitary councils share of the total band D equivalent tax base of 442,730, the share of the total LCFA precept of £31.996m levied on each council as follows:

Blackburn With Darwen Borough Council	£2,524,981
Blackpool Borough Council	£2,663,367
Burnley Borough Council	£1,681,579
Chorley Borough Council	£2,708,405
Fylde Borough Council	£2,238,564
Hyndburn Borough Council	£1,462,673
Lancaster City Council	£2,999,205
Pendle Borough Council	£1,727,109
Preston City Council	£2,834,574
Ribble Valley Borough Council	£1,734,986
Rossendale Borough Council	£1,472,863
South Ribble Borough Council	£2,617,577
West Lancashire District Council	£2,657,662
Wyre Borough Council	£2,672,593
TOTAL	£31,996,138

126/19 REPORT ON REVIEW OF THE AUTHORITY'S GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL POLICIES

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority presented the report following a review undertaken of various constitutional and procedural governance policies and

the corresponding Constitutional and Procedural Standing Orders to bring them in line with changes to legislation, to promote continuing best practice and to sustain and support the current needs of the Authority.

Of the policies reviewed by the Clerk, all but one had undergone minor amendments:

1. Code of Conduct for Fire Authority Members;
2. The Role of Members and Generic Member Champions Role Description;
3. Members' Allowance Scheme
4. Member / Officer Relations Protocol;
5. Constitutional and Procedural Standing Orders

The only significant change related to the current Members' Code of Conduct following the publication of the Evans Report and a draft Model Code of Conduct by the Local Government Association. The Clerk advised that the Model Code was not as far reaching as the Evans Committee recommendations but remained consistent with the current Authority Code of Conduct, with some relevant updates.

Members considered the reviewed policies in detail.

RESOLVED: - That the proposed changes as now presented be endorsed as amendments to the Authority's policies and to its corresponding Constitutional and Procedural Standing Orders.

127/19 PERSON CENTRED HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKS AND HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECK EFFECTIVENESS

In response to Member questions and discussions at the last meeting (resolution 104/19 refers) a report was presented by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer in relation to person-centred Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and the overall effectiveness of the HFSC, Safe and Well visits delivered by the Service.

Members noted that a 'person-centred approach' placed the Service recipient at the centre of the offer and ensured they were treated as a person first.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had a number of prevention activities and campaigns which had been developed around this personalised approach by focussing on the importance of well-informed risk assessments, dignity, choice and close partnership working.

The HFSC and Safe and Well visit delivered a bespoke, personalised fire risk assessment, which was tailored towards individual need and, by working with partners for inward and onward referrals, ensured resources were focussed on, and tailored to, high risk and vulnerable individuals.

Fire and Rescue Services in the UK have a statutory duty to prevent fires and considerable effort and resources had been focussed on reducing risk using a variety of prevention activities. LFRS' largest prevention offer was the HFSC which assessed risk in the home and enabled specific fire safety advice and equipment to be provided to meet the needs of the individual.

Historically the HFSC was target driven where success tended to equate to a high

number of checks being carried out. As time progressed it was recognised that targeting at such a wide geographic level was becoming increasingly inefficient and a shift occurred towards targeting the individual's presenting greatest risk by using lifestyle and societal factors.

In 2015 the Chief Fire Officers Association, now the National Fire Chiefs Council, together with the Local Government Association, Public Health England and Age UK produced a joint consensus statement setting out their intention to collaborate and strengthen efforts to tackle a range of shared health risks. The aim of this was to improve safety and quality of life thereby reducing pressures on the NHS.

To address this LFRS shaped the transition from a HFSC to a new co-designed, more holistic visit, centred on the person/family. This was the Safe and Well visit which now formed part of the complete HFSC Service.

The Safe and Well visit included additional questions relating to seven areas which were selected not only because they linked to the types of health risks partners were seeking to address, but also because they were inexorably linked to fire risk. These were:

1. Falls prevention;
2. Social isolation;
3. Living with dementia;
4. Diabetes;
5. Healthy homes/ winter pressures;
6. Home security/ arson vulnerability;
7. Mental health.

If appropriate and with the person's consent, a referral could be made to the appropriate service/organisation to access further support (and reduce risk). The Service recognised the benefit of individuals making their own decisions and being involved with their fire risk assessment so that they were fully engaged with the process.

The opportunity for Fire and Rescue Services and strategic health and social care partners to work more effectively together was based on one important factor, the individuals' wishes and needs. Evidence that could be derived from fire fatalities across the UK indicated that there remained common risk factors. Research showed that health and care issues, when coupled with fires in the home, resulted in worse outcomes including a much higher likelihood of fatalities. These factors included: multi-morbidity and frailty, cognitive impairment, smoking, drugs, alcohol, physical inactivity, obesity, loneliness and cold homes. Some of these factors such as smoking increased the likelihood of having a fire and others such as frailty increased the likelihood of sustaining more serious injuries or fatalities.

Alongside the refined approach a new risk scoring criteria was implemented with any referrals scoring 22 or above automatically offered a Safe and Well Visit and those scoring lower were provided with bespoke fire safety advice. This had enabled LFRS to triage all referrals and identify the most vulnerable and high-risk people across Lancashire. LFRS worked closely with over 241 partner organisations and provided a fast track mechanism for referrals for any of their service users.

The report detailed how HFSC figures and the number of accidental dwelling fires (ADF) and casualties had varied over the past decade and showed how the fire risk map had changed in that time. In 2010 the Service delivered over 55,000 HFSCs and by 2020 that number had reduced to just below 20,000 while in the same period the number of accidental dwelling fires continued to fall by over 30% and in the same period annual casualty figures reduced by a similar percentage. It was not statistically sound to fully link HFSC delivery to ADF rates and casualty outcomes as to do so ignored the multitude of other risk reduction methods used. However, risk tended to link with deprivation and other associated determinants such as fuel poverty so the data presented should be taken in the context of the wider decade which covered the austerity period. What the data tended to show was that it was possible to reduce the absolute number of HFSCs while at the same time continuing to reduce risk, provided the risk reduction activity was targeted effectively.

As the Safe and Well offer had significant depth and the referral pathways varied significantly based on local provisions LFRS had introduced a quality assurance process which checked a minimum of one Safe and Well visit per area per month to ensure that agreed standards were being consistently delivered, the appropriate questions were being asked and the relevant advice and equipment provided.

LFRS also delivered evidence-based campaigns to raise awareness regarding certain risk and behaviours. These were focussed and targeted on geographical and demographics that were experiencing the highest risk of fire. Examples of typical campaign activity were presented in the appendix.

The report also detailed ongoing work being developed through the National Fire Chief Council Prevention Committee to further refine the risk factors which lead to fire in the home and the effectiveness of the associated control measures and referral pathways necessary to mitigate them. This project was currently being initiated at a national level and strategically was intended to support Fire and Rescue Services to deliver against objectives in the future Prevention Fire Standard (currently in draft for consultation) with likely objectives included in the report alongside characteristics that should be evident when providing a person-centred HFSC (these included: affording people dignity, respect and compassion, offering co-ordinated and personal support, being enabling and to recognise these characteristics and that individuals may have varying and increasing fire risk based upon numerous and changing factors).

In response to questions raised by County Councillor Riggott the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the work currently under development through the National Fire Chiefs Council Prevention Committee was expected sometime later this year. He reassured Members that this work was not new to LFRS who had been working for the last 6 or 7 years to target resources in the right place and provide a person-centred Home Fire Safety Check.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer also confirmed that LFRS delivered in the region of 20,000 HFSCs per annum. He advised that when the HMICFRS did inspect they looked at the volume of checks carried out against the population headcount. LFRS worked closely with its partners and there was a clear referral mechanism to target the right people. Monitoring identified the proportion of checks undertaken for the vulnerable was in the region of 65 - 70%.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer also confirmed that the quality assurance process

checked one safe and well visit per district/unitary area per month.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Riggott regarding the percentage of referrals that scored 22 or above and were offered a Safe and Well visit, Area Manager for Prevention and Protection, Mark Hutton advised he would provide an exact figure after the meeting but from memory it was in excess of 70% of people that were offered a physical HFSC. The remaining 30% (who scored under 22 and were low-risk) received an appropriate form of HFSC via telephone or email.

Councillor Williams asked whether the high demand for portable heaters over the winter months had in turn caused additional accidental dwelling fires. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the report for the next Performance Committee was currently in draft and although accidental dwelling fires had increased this was not significantly and he was not aware of any trends of the impact of higher use of gas canisters.

County Councillor Hennessy was pleased to receive the report and to be assured that the safe and well visits were person-centred particularly given the business risk implications as outlined in the report.

In response to a comment from the Chairman regarding the changing fire risk over time, the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service was preparing the next Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which gave an opportunity to reflect. The overall risk management score was taken regularly to the Performance Committee but the IRMP was a good opportunity to show the direction of travel achieved.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

128/19 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report which summarised fire safety prosecutions and arson incidents (where evidence had been provided by Fire Investigators into the Criminal Justice system) where court proceedings had progressed to trial and sentencing.

Fire protection and business support information was provided in relation to the building risk review work to audit and assess all Lancashire's 72 residential high-rise premises over 18m. The Service was currently ahead of schedule having completed 39 inspections. LFRS aimed to have all the audits completed by June in recognition that the provision of technical reports by building owners and managers could be a lengthy process. Currently Lancashire had 6 premises with interim measures to the presence of non-compliant cladding and a further 3 were due to compartmentation issues.

It was also noted that the residential care sector was receiving ongoing fire safety business support in the form of a 7-minute briefing to all Lancashire Care and Nursing Home providers which had been produced in conjunction with the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board. In addition, Fire Protection staff were delivering fire safety talks to providers via online webinars.

County Councillor Shedwick expressed his satisfaction for the robust approach the Service took.

Councillor Williams noted the high proportion of arson incidents in Blackpool. He commented that this work was very serious and it did cost lives. The work the Service was doing was excellent and something to be proud of.

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

129/19 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

The Chief Fire Officer advised that for the past few months the Service had focussed its efforts to support the local NHS vaccination programme with support garnered from the Home Office and Home Secretary to achieve the approach made. Since 15 December 2020 LFRS had supported vaccination centres as soon as they opened; initially this was 22 / 23 vaccination sites across GP surgeries and latterly clinics and now mass vaccination centres.

The Service was now mainly supporting just the mass vaccination centres including the two new centres that went live that week at Preston and Burney. This meant that so far LFRS had supported around 80,000 people including the direct administration of 8,000 around vaccines by LFRS staff from all different parts of the organisation.

Wonderful stories had been received from people who had encountered LFRS staff while attending the vaccination centres and staff had found being able to support others during this time to be inspiring, memorable and emotive. LFRS as the first Service to do this had led to other Fire and Rescue Services following our lead. The current position across the country was that 1 in 60 vaccinations was being delivered by a Fire and Rescue Service.

The Fire Authority unanimously requested that their pride and appreciation be put on record and conveyed to staff who were involved in this tremendous achievement to make the people of Lancashire safer.

The report presented by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer included information for the 2 Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Fire Safety Initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest during the period December 2020 – January 2021.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer highlighted that while efforts were focussed on the response to the pandemic, LFRS had also continued to deliver its prevention agenda on a risk assessed basis (as outlined in 1.5 of the report) as well as attending a number of significant incidents (outlined in 1.7 of the report).

County Councillor Eaton thanked the firefighters for their professional action when dealing with the Birtwistle Mill incident in Haslingden. He had received a number of calls from constituents where some residents had to be relocated for their safety.

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

130/19 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

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

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

131/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 26 April 2021 at 10:00am
at – venue to be agreed.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 8 February 2021, at 10.00 am - Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

N Hennessy (Chairman)
S Blackburn (Vice-Chair)
I Brown
J Eaton
J Hugo
M Khan CBE
T Martin
D O'Toole
M Pattison
J Shedwick

Officers

S Healey, Deputy 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)

43/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman, County Councillor Hennessy welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Planning Committee. County Councillor Hennessy 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.

County Councillor Hennessy welcomed Steve Healey, who had started with the Service in the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer in January 2021.

44/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

45/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

46/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 16 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

47/19 STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISK AND INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Head of Service Development presented the report which provided an update on the work to date on the formulation of the Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) and planning for production and consultation on the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which would commence in April 2022.

In April 2022 the Service would be required to deliver the next Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) as required within the “Fire and Rescue National Framework” published in May 2018. The guidance within this document required that the IRMP must:

1. Reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
2. Demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
3. Outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
4. Set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
5. Cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;
6. Reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
7. Be easily accessible and publicly available.

In order for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) to efficiently discharge the requirement, it would be essential that suitable and sufficient resource and time be allocated to the planning and production of the IRMP and supporting documents such as the Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR), and associated strategic documents, policies, plans and governance statements.

Work had started on a new and revised SAoR format that would deliver prior to April 2021. This would underpin and guide the next iteration of the IRMP, based upon a robust data-led methodology which, when coupled with the new district intelligence profiles, would provide LFRS with a refreshed evidence-led direction for future Prevention, Protection and Operational Response activities over the medium term.

Through LFRS's linkages into national workstreams running under the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Service remained closely aligned to emerging work pertaining to Risk Management Planning and intended to evolve the IRMP, so far as was reasonably practicable, aligned to this emerging sector-led guidance as new information became available.

The Head of Service Development presented a timeline for planned work as below:

Integrated Risk Management Plan 2022 to 2027 Milestone Chart

Date	Activity
01/10/2020	SAoR and IRMP Planning and Shaping
01/11/2020	SAoR and IRMP Development Commences
18/01/2021	Working groups formed for SAoR and IRMP
01/02/2021	SAoR methodology complete
12/02/2021	Risk table completed
13/02/2021	IRMP production commences
28/02/2021	First draft SAoR completed
01/07/2021	Strategy Group – progress update with draft IRMP
12/07/2021	Planning Committee – Draft IRMP approval to consult
14/07/2021	Draft IRMP consultation to start (10 weeks)
21/09/2021	Draft IRMP consultation ends (10 weeks)
22/09/2021	Formulate consultation report and prepare amended draft
18/10/2021	Strategy Group – Present progress to date
15/11/2021	Planning Committee – Final Draft
21/02/2022	Full CFA – Final IRMP presented for approval
01/04/2022	IRMP published

The SAoR had been taking shape in the basic statistical framework, and would be progressed to internal stakeholder groups for consultation and professional judgement to be applied with any supporting rationale suitably documented.

Once the risk categories had been finalised through the stakeholder groups, work would commence in tandem to complete the final version of the SAoR and the inception of the IRMP document that would be presented in an update to Strategy Group in early July 2021.

Thereafter, Planning Committee would be asked to approve the opening of consultation for a 10-week period from mid-July. The Service had been in discussion with other Fire and Rescue Services who had been planning/undertaking

consultation work, to learn from their experiences and to best position the Service to deliver an effective consultation exercise over the 10-week period, despite the constraints arising from the potentially ongoing pandemic.

In response to a question from County Councillor O'Toole in respect of timescales, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that although the new plan would cover five years (2022 to 2027), there would be opportunities over that period to take on board changes post-Pandemic.

In response to questions from County Councillor Shedwick and County Councillor Hennessy about consultation parameters, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) advised that the intention would be to use a blended approach to the consultation with a wide spectrum of engagement. This approach would draw on what had worked well in other Fire and Rescue Services nationally and would utilise the more traditional formal processes of previous years whilst seeking out innovation, including using the network of social media the Service had in place. The ACFO added that the thoughts and feedback of Members about what could be added to the consultation process would be welcomed.

In response to a question from County Councillor Hennessy about the wording of the Plan, the Head of Service Development advised that the aim would be for the high level IRMP to be written as a clear and transparent all-encompassing document that would be understandable to a lay person whilst allowing agility in what the Service delivered. The detail that would sit below the IRMP would be in the Annual Service Plans. These plans would drill down into the work that would be delivered over a 12-month period. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that care would be taken with the level of detail and use of acronyms within the IRMP and that consideration would be given to providing an additional succinct executive summary of the Plan that could be used to support the consultation process.

In response to a question from County Councillor Hennessy relating to the resources that would be available to undertake this work, the Head of Service Development confirmed that work on the Plan had started earlier than in previous years and the aim would be for this to be undertaken within existing internal resources.

RESOLVED: - that the Planning Committee noted and approved the contents of the report.

48/19 BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION

The Head of Service Development presented the report which provided an update on the collaborative work that had been progressed by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

As reported at the previous Planning Committee, the quarterly Blue Light Collaboration meetings had largely been placed on hold due to the ongoing support being provided by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) and partners, to Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Whilst the tri-partite agreement (National Fire Chiefs Council, Employers and Fire Brigades Union) had ceased mid-January, LFRS employees had continued the outstanding work in support of the wider Covid response.

As reported previously, this had initially commenced with preparations for, or delivery of, the following:

- Face fitting for masks to be used by frontline NHS and clinical care staff working with C-19 patients;
- Mass casualty transportation (movement of bodies in support of Coroner functions);
- Vulnerable person contacts and visits (delivery of essential items);
- Delivery of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other medical supplies to NHS and care facilities;
- Lead agency for collating all PPE requirements through the Joint Intelligence and Planning Group.

The support provided by LFRS to the LRF strategy and multi-agency response had been reviewed on a regular basis and at that time there were no ongoing activities with regards to any of the tri-partite agreement related topics.

More recently however, LFRS had become the first Fire and Rescue Service in the country to step up support to the national vaccination programme. LFRS staff had risen to the challenge admirably and by joining the Service's 'volunteer list', had made themselves available to provide logistical support to the delivery of vaccinations initially through 21 Primary Care Network establishments and subsequently through the Mass Vaccination sites at Blackburn, Blackpool and Lancaster.

At the time of the report, this commitment had seen 163 operational and support staff support the delivery of over 65,200 vaccinations whilst also delivering crucial home fire safety advice to some of Lancashire's most vulnerable individuals. The Head of Service Development advised that these figures had subsequently risen to almost 290 staff supporting nearer to 85,000 vaccinations.

From mid-January the Service's offer had increased further, and following provision of the appropriate training and guidance, LFRS had the first firefighters in the country actively administering Covid-19 vaccines at Mass Vaccination Centres at Blackpool and Blackburn with over 400 delivered in the first week alone. An increasing number of staff had subsequently been trained as vaccinators with LFRS staff having delivered around 5,000 vaccinations to date.

Members shared their positive experiences of the support provided by LFRS staff at vaccination establishments and centres. County Councillor O'Toole commented on the good publicity generated by the recent television news report which had featured a Firefighter from LFRS delivering vaccinations at one of the centres. County Councillor Hennessy, who confirmed that she had also volunteered at a local vaccination centre, expressed pride in the Service and asked that the wholehearted thanks of the Members be passed to all staff and officers involved with the vaccination effort.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer thanked Members for sharing their insights and expressed his pride in the level of volunteering within the Service and the innovation shown by LFRS to have been the first FRS in the country both to have had FRS staff

working at vaccination centres and to have had Firefighters delivering vaccinations.

In terms of the Service's continuing support to the LRF, an Emergency Planning Watch Manager and Station Manager had been embedded; their role being to lead the coordination of LFRS involvement across the various areas of work.

Within Service, the provision of Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) had been established into a number of fire stations, Service Headquarters and Service Training Centre, moving towards a planned Service wide roll out within the short term. This had proved invaluable in identifying asymptomatic members of staff, reducing risk of transmission within the workplace and supporting front line fire engine availability, whilst also providing much needed reassurance to members of staff and those they support within the home environment. To date, LFRS staff had taken up the offer of over 1889 LFT's across the Service (figures quoted as at 26/1/21). The Head of Service Development advised that the rapid rate of rollout of LFT's across all 42 sites had meant the figure had subsequently increased to almost 3,500 tests having been conducted.

All activity had been collated within the collaboration log which provided an overview of outcomes delivered and benefits realised, and would form a definitive evidence base for any future HMICFRS inspections.

The intention remained that the formal Blue Light Collaboration meetings would be restarted when capacity across the blue light partners permitted, meantime cross-organisational dialogue and collaborative working remained ongoing across many areas of work.

County Councillor Hennessy thanked all staff and officers involved for their fabulous work.

RESOLVED: - that the Planning Committee noted the contents of the report.

49/19 HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report which provided an overview of the Covid Thematic report outcomes and detail of the publications that were due from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), along with an update on the second round of inspections which would commence in 2021.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) had completed the Thematic Inspection of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) in September 2020. On 22 January, the thematic report (attached as appendix 1) had been released alongside a [covering national report](#) which summarised the findings across the sector. This was the first of three reports expected from HMICFRS in the first quarter of 2021.

LFRS had received a positive inspection from HMICFRS. The inspection, which occurred during late September 2020, had involved a data return and self-assessment survey followed by digital interviews with key staff members. The HMICFRS Service Liaison Lead (SLL) had met, via Microsoft Teams, with the Chief

Fire Officer and Chairman of the Combined Fire Authority, Director of People and Development, Director of Corporate Services, Group Manager (GM) Prevention and Protection, GM Response and Emergency Planning, GM Training and Operational Review, and Head of Safety, Health and Environment.

The inspection had been light touch and had looked at how LFRS had delivered its functions safely and how it had worked for the greater good of the community alongside partners. The report noted how prevention and protection work had continued, albeit in a modified capacity and how LFRS had worked with its partners in the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) providing structure, support and logistics. LFRS had successfully engaged with unions such as the Fire Brigade Union and Unison and had been able to put in place effective plans in line with requests from partners in the LRF, many of which had come under the tripartite agreement. These activities had included antigen testing, face fitting, assisting vulnerable people and packing/repacking food. This had differed from the HMICFRS National report which had highlighted areas of difficulty in reaching these agreements in some other Fire and Rescue Services. The Service had also been praised for wellbeing support to staff which had been supported by all levels of management and our ability to communicate with staff at all levels using a variety of innovative methods.

LFRS had been graded 'outstanding' in the round 1 inspections for culture and values. This further positive result arising from the Thematic Inspection would contribute to our grading under the round 2 inspection.

The second report to be produced would be the HMICFRS findings of the phase 1 Inquiry into Grenfell Tower. This was expected on 10 February 2021 and would focus on the recommendations made in the Inquiry and may provide opportunities for learning within LFRS. The third would be the annual State of Fire and Rescue report; now due in March 2021 and expected to focus upon improvement since the round 1 inspection, as well as encompassing the recently published Thematic Inspection outcomes.

The Audit Assurance team would take into consideration the findings of the national report and would establish a position from which the Service can assess the performance of LFRS ahead of the round two inspection.

As per the previous round of inspections, there would be three tranches in Round 2 with the first starting January 2021. The second tranche (within which sits LFRS) would run from September 2021 until February 2022, and the third and final tranche would run from March 2022 to September 2022. Based on latest information available, it was reasonable to expect that the LFRS report would be published in summer 2022 and tranche three reports in winter 2022, followed by the third State of Fire and Rescue Report in 2023.

The LFRS document and self-assessment request would occur around May/June 2021. This was in addition to six-monthly data requests each May and October. The Audit Assurance Team had previously conducted a gap analysis of the Service using the lines of enquiry that the inspection team would use in the round 2 inspection. Given that improvements had been delivered collaboratively and innovations had been delivered in response to the changed operating environment, work had commenced to refresh the internal assessment to ensure the Service would be best positioned to provide the most robust evidence base to the inspectors.

County Councillor O'Toole welcomed the extremely positive report and congratulated the whole team for having ensured that once again LFRS had been the best Fire and Rescue Service in the country. The Service had done consistently well and this would not have been possible without the work and cooperation of all staff.

County Councillor Pattison added her thanks for the Service's outstanding work. In response to a question from County Councillor Pattison, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) confirmed that accommodation for vulnerable staff had been offered by some privately owned small establishments as well as some national hotel chains and the Universities. The ACFO advised that these offers had been taken up in small numbers for short periods of time and that the safe systems of work in place had meant that staff had not felt the need to shield for long periods and had shown confidence in the secure working arrangements and latterly the testing arrangements.

County Councillor Hennessy thanked everyone involved in the HMICFRS interview process.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) thanked Members for their supportive comments and confirmed that the Service was really clear on both the areas they would be looking to improve and what the Service would be delivering. The ACFO confirmed that an update would be provided to the next meeting including progress against the Grenfell Action Plan.

RESOLVED: - that the Planning Committee noted the report.

50/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 12 July 2021 at 1000 hours – venue to be confirmed.

Further meeting dates were noted for 15 November 2021 and agreed for 7 February 2022.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 March 2021, at 10.00 am - Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

S Holgate (Chairman)
M Khan CBE (Vice-Chair)
L Beavers
P Britcliffe
S Clarke
H Khan
Z Khan
P Rigby
A Riggott
D Smith

Officers

S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
B Norman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
J Charters, Area Manager, Head of Service Development (LFRS)
T Crook, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS)
M Hutton, Area Manager, Head of Prevention and Protection (LFRS)
S Morgan, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery for South, East and Pennine (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
N Bashall, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

40/19 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chairman, County Councillor Holgate welcomed Authority Members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. 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.

A roll call was undertaken and Members individually confirmed their attendance.

41/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

42/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

43/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 16 December 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

44/19 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was pleased to present a positive report. This was the 3rd quarterly report for 2020/21 as detailed in the Risk Management Plan 2017-2022. He proposed that at the end of the performance year a report be brought to the next Committee meeting to look at making small changes to the key performance indicators (delivering value for money and valuing people) to better align with data returns submitted to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

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

1.1 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 32,448, previous year score 31,816.

1.2 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that the Service attended with one or more pumping appliances. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the number of incidents attended included work undertaken with other emergency services particularly the Police and North West Ambulance Service. An increase in number of incidents attended was not therefore negative if the Service was supporting other blue light colleagues.

Quarter 3 activity 4,109, previous year quarter 3 activity 4,281 a decrease of 4.02% over the same quarter.

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 51% were false alarms.

As agreed at the last meeting, proposals for changes to the Unwanted Fire Signals Policy would be considered as a separate item later on the agenda.

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 3 activity was 231, the previous year quarter 3 activity was 206, which represented an increase of 12.1% over the same quarter. Year to date performance was 654 compared with 615 the previous year.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there had been an increase in Accidental Dwelling Fire incident numbers in the last quarter which could be due to lockdown. Circa 50% of activity was kitchen fires and corporate communications colleagues were increasing safety messaging to raise awareness.

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

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised this indicator set out the damage which had occurred from Accidental Dwelling Fire incidents. He was pleased to report that whilst incident numbers remained fairly static the level of damage sustained was reducing due to proactive work including community safety and smoke alarm ownership.

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 95.7% which was an increase of 0.6% against the 95.1% recorded in the same quarter of the previous year.

Severity (Direction against the same quarter of previous year)	Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 3
	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	
High ↓	4.9%	8.2%	7.1%	3.5%	4.3%
Medium ↓	57.8%	51.0%	52.4%	43.9%	47.6%
Low ↑	37.4%	40.8%	40.4%	52.55%	48.1%

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 to the fire occurring.

	2020/21		2019/20	
	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC
Q1	26	12%	23	11%
Q2	21	11%	26	13%
Q3	31	13%	31	15%
Q4			27	14%

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.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that sadly there was 1 dwelling fire fatality in the quarter. One casualty was recorded as serious and 12 slight. The same quarter of the previous year recorded no fatalities, 8 serious and 10 slight.

Casualty Status	2020/21 Quarter 3	2019/20 Quarter 3
Fatal	1	0
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Serious	1	8
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Slight	12	10
TOTAL	14	18

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 increased 8.33% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Total number of incidents	2020/21 Quarter 3	2019/20 Quarter 3
	78	72

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

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that whilst the level of damage from accidental dwelling fires was reducing; in commercial buildings it was increasing. On investigation there had been a significant increase in fires in private sheds and outbuildings which could be quickly lost to fire prior to the arrival of the Fire and Rescue Service.

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 building fires 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 75.6%. This was a decrease of 11.9% against a combined severity of 87.5% in the same quarter of the previous year.

Severity (Direction against the same quarter of previous year)		Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 3
		Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	
High	↑	12.5%	16.4%	43.4%	39.7%	24.4%
Medium	↑	58.3%	64.4%	47.8%	43.8%	64.1%
Low	↓	29.2%	19.2%	8.8%	16.4%	11.5%

1.6 Deliberate Fires

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was really pleased to report that through the proactive work undertaken by the Service and work with Police colleagues the Service had seen the lowest level of deliberate fires over the last decade (particularly secondary fires throughout November and December). At the end of the report a presentation would be given by Area Manager Hutton on the community safety work undertaken during the "BrightSparx" period.

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	2020/21 Quarter 3	2019/20 Quarter 3
1.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Anti-Social Behaviour	290	345
1.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings	31	29
1.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Non-Dwellings	27	35

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 HFSC's had decreased 29% over the same quarter as the previous year; due to the challenges presented by the Covid 19 pandemic. However, through a modified HFSC engagement with the most vulnerable had resulted in a 9% increase of those with a high-risk outcome.

	2020/21	2019/20
	% of High HFSC outcomes	% of High HFSC outcomes
Q1	71%	65%
Q2	72%	61%
Q3	69%	60%
Q4		61%

To help illustrate the importance of the Home Fire Safety Check service; properties that had refused a HFSC, but subsequently, suffered an Accidental Dwelling Fire were monitored. During this quarter 7 properties recorded an ADF after refusing a HFSC during the previous rolling 12-month period.

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.

	2020/21 (cumulative)		2019/20 (cumulative)	
	Total participants	% positive influence on participants' behaviour	Total participants	% positive influence on participants' behaviour
Q1	The covid-19 pandemic led to the closure of educational facilities which meant it was not		4,354	85%
Q2			8,158	85%
Q3			16,417	85%

Q4	possible to deliver road safety activities in the normal way.	21,516	85%
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It was noted that the pandemic had led to the closure of educational facilities and the Service had been unable to deliver road safety activities in the normal way. However, to ensure road safety messages continued to be available, the Service had undertaken Wasted Lives sessions via an online video chat service. During quarter 3 there had been 5 Wasted Lives sessions, involving 40 attendees. The Service also continued to engage with people via social media platforms (which included coverage of the Road Safety week during November) and information was shared via the Biker Down webpage. Later on the agenda, was a presentation on the work of the Road Safety Partnership.

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 failed 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 not captured within the formal/informal or satisfactory counts.

	2020/21				2019/20	
	*No. of Inspections	Requiring		Satisfactory Audit	% requiring Formal Activity	% requiring Formal Activity
		Formal Activity	Informal Activity			
Q1	18	5	7	4	28%	9%
Q2	48	7	29	9	15%	9%
Q3	83	12	59	4	14%	10%
Q4						13%

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service continued to inspect based on risk. The percentages shown which required formal activity were higher than the previous year; this demonstrated the successful targeting of buildings most at risk.

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

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that in the main the Service was reaching very stretching response standards ie: setting a 90%, 6-minute attendance standard to very high-risk areas was probably amongst the quickest response arrangements

across the country with many other Services having response standards of 10 – 15 minutes.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was pleased to advise that North West Fire Control had reported call handling times had reduced to fire incidents across the last quarter to an average of 76 seconds against a target of 90 seconds.

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 3 – 1st pump response increased 1.52% of total first fire engine attendances over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
88.80%	89.58%	88.31%	88.06%

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 3 – 2nd pump response increased 3.56% of total second pump attendances over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
86.40%	87.77%	86.67%	84.21%

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 2.96% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
86.76%	87.83%	89.30%	90.51%

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 99.29% was a decrease of 0.21% over the same period of the previous year.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
99.29%	99.16%	99.50%	99.51%

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 61%
- Crew deficient 63%
- Not enough BA wearers 51%
- No driver 36%

Standard: above 95%

Year to date availability 90.46%, a 4.46% increase against the previous year to date total availability of 86.60%.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
90.46%	87.90%	86.60%	87.47%

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised the on-call availability was amongst the very best in the country which had been impacted (positively) through employers furloughing staff which had enabled on-call staff to provide more cover. It was noted that many other Services had around 60-70% availability.

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 3 was 86.15%. This excluded the wholetime detachments shown in KPI 2.4.

2.5 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the number of staff accidents.

The number of staff accidents during the latest quarter decreased by 28.57% against the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 3	Previous year to Date	2019/20 Quarter 3
50	15	62	21

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

3.1 Progress against Savings Programme

The annual budget for 2020/21 was set at £57.3m with a budget to 31 December of £40.8m. The spend for the same period was £39.9m which gave an underspend of £0.9m; a variance of -1.57%. This was a result of the pandemic continuing to affect planned spend activity during the period. This position would continue to be monitored in the forthcoming months.

3.2 Overall User Satisfaction

There had been 2,553 people surveyed since April 2012 and the number satisfied with the service was 2,525; % satisfied was 98.90% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.44%.

During the latest quarter, 27 people were surveyed and 27 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

An engagement index was calculated based on five questions measuring pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration and motivation; factors that were understood to be important features shared by staff engaged with the organisation.

For each respondent an engagement score was calculated as the average score across the five questions where strongly disagree is equivalent to 0, disagree is equivalent to 25, neither agree nor disagree is equivalent to 50, agree is equivalent to 75 and strongly agree is equivalent to 100. The engagement index was then calculated as the average engagement score in the organisation. This approach meant that a score of 100 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly agree to all five engagement questions, while a score of 0 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly disagree to all five engagement questions. An improvement was shown if the percentage engagement index was greater than the previous survey. The engagement index was previously measured in the last full staff survey undertaken in May 2018.

Staff were surveyed from October to December 2020 on topics including working at LFRS; equality, diversity and inclusion; health and wellbeing; training and development; leadership and management; and internal communication.

The engagement index was 79%, an increase of 9% on the 2018 survey. The number of responses was 458, a decrease of 6% on the 2018 survey.

This equated to a decrease of 31 people however the Service was unable to undertake focus groups and engage with crews at stations due to the coronavirus pandemic. These were carried out extensively during the last survey to encourage participation.

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 5.300

This was a negative exception report due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target for each month during quarter 3.

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

During October 2020 – December 2020, absence statistics showed above target for all three months for both Whole-time personnel and Non-uniformed personnel. There were 10 cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 3 months and there were 21 other cases of long term absence which were also recorded within the 3 months; reasons for these absences were set out in the report. It was noted that during the quarter 16 employees had returned to duty.

At the end of December 2020, the cumulative totals showed that non-uniformed staff absence was above target at 6.73 shifts lost per employee, for whole-time uniformed staff absence was also above target at 4.84 shifts lost per employee.

Overall absence for all staff (except On Call staff) was 5.3 shifts lost which was above the Service target of 3.75 shifts lost for this quarter.

The cumulative figures in the period included employees absent due to coronavirus and those required to self-isolate as a result of coronavirus since 1st September 2020.

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 contracted 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, 0.92%.

The Chairman commented that a number of years ago the Committee had serious concerns in relation to the performance of the call handling centre and had limited conversation with North West Fire Control. Representatives were invited to attend quarter 2 and quarter 4 meetings. As a consequence, the Committee had a better knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced by North West Fire Control and the Service and there had been a significant improvement in performance which was commendable. He asked that this be noted in the minutes and that the Committee be given credit for embarking on that engagement.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith regarding how the Service captured the exceptional performance of staff supporting the vaccination programme the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that this was captured in the community fire safety reports presented to the Authority meetings. To date over 300 staff had volunteered with over 100,000 vaccinations given of which 10,000 had been delivered by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) staff. LFRS was the first Service to support the vaccination programme. Colleagues in corporate communications were sending messages out using social media, Teams meetings were being held with volunteers to thank them for their support and members of the senior team were visible at vaccination centres to thank staff.

BrightSparx

Area Manager Mark Hutton summarised BrightSparx, which was a major winter safety campaign that included work undertaken across the Service which had contributed to some of the positive performance reported earlier in relation to antisocial behaviour fires, deliberate fires and accidental fires and casualties during the bonfire period (October/November) which for the Service started much earlier in May/June. It was noted that covid restrictions this year had meant that normal diversionary activities in the districts were not available (such as public bonfires). The presentation focussed on how the Service had used resources as effectively as possible to deliver this performance.

The BrightSparx campaign aimed to: i) maximise public and responder safety; ii) target resources at the areas and demographic groups most at risk based on data and incident intelligence; iii) increase target audience awareness of Bonfire and Firework Safety; iv) ensure legal compliance regarding safe storage and the sale of fireworks; v) identify and work closely with appropriate partners and vi) to reassure members of the public who may be concerned that the Service was pro-active in managing the risks associated with Firework and Bonfire related activity, whilst also recognising that for many the period was one of celebration.

Area Manager Hutton outlined the details of the media campaign which was viewed

as being more essential than ever due to the limited opportunity for face to face engagement / education. The Service worked with Lancashire Resilience Forum partners with clear target groups to take a co-ordinated approach across multiple platforms.

In addition, prevention and education included a Virtual Library which was refreshed with current and relevant material aligned to target groups and the ongoing Covid compliance campaign. This was used by the Fire Cadets and the Prince's Trust programme to assist youth engagement. Environmental Visual Audits were undertaken by crews to support district council street cleaning and cleansing teams waste removal work. Where covid rules allowed, innovative engagement methods were used which included radio interview and videos playing in entrances to schools / Mosques.

The Protection Team monitored lists of firework storage and retail sites from Trading Standards which were updated regularly as these changed throughout the period and risk information was added to Fire Appliance Mobile Data Terminals. Protection Fire Safety Inspectors undertook targeted audits of premises which presented the greatest risk.

Annual plans were well rehearsed in conjunction with Lancashire Constabulary and the North West Ambulance Service. Multiagency cars were deployed in each area (based on historical data and current intelligence) over the 4 nights predicted to have the highest activity. The Command Support Room was staffed at Service Headquarters with multi-agency co-ordination from Greenbank Police Station. In addition, LFRS Managers, co-located in North West Fire Control were deployed to small fires in lieu of appliances to triage response and maintain fire appliance availability for genuine emergencies. In total these vehicles responded to 67 incidents.

LFRS employed a debrief and analysis process deemed essential to maintain effectiveness which was used to inform the following years plan. This included: objective data and subjective feedback which would contribute to the usual performance reporting cycle and meet an improvement area cited by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

Performance Outcomes

Overall, 230 media articles reached 9.23 million people and had 83% positive sentiment which equated to an advertising value equivalent of £132,000. The virtual Bonfire Night hosted live on the Service's Facebook and YouTube page reached over 270,000 people from the UK and abroad. Almost 4,000 comments and messages were received from people thanking everyone involved and saying how much they enjoyed it and over £1,800 was raised for the Firefighters' Charity.

Digital School Education Sessions were delivered to:

KS2 - 52 schools (12 sessions) - 4,390 pupils
KS3 - 18 schools (26 sessions) - 6,425 pupils
Total - 70 schools (38 sessions) - 10,815 pupils

50% of schools provided feedback with 90% of respondents grading the sessions as good or outstanding

It was noted that: i) the number of fires from antisocial behaviour during the period was 192 which was the lowest in 5 years; ii) there was an increase in accidental secondary fires (from 120 in 2019/20) to 179 in 2020/21 (which was thought to be due to more bonfires held at home); iii) casualties (incidents which the Service attended) remained at low levels (with 1 casualty during the period); and iv) there was a slight increase (from 3 in 2019/20) to 4 in 2020/21 of attacks on firefighters predominantly in the eastern part of the county.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee endorsed the Measuring Progress report for Quarter 3 (including noting the contents of the 1 negative exception report and the BrightSparx presentation).

45/19 UNWANTED FIRE SIGNAL POLICY (UWFS) - PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced the report. He drew Members attention to the overall activity breakdown detailed earlier on the agenda which showed that 51% of incidents were due to automatic fire alarm activations. He advised that if attendance was discounted for support given to Police and North West Ambulance Service colleagues (for gaining entry, support to missing persons searches and other activities) the overall activity breakdown to automatic fire alarm activations would increase to around 54% and it was known from statistical analysis that around 99% of those activations would be false alarm calls. He also took the opportunity to re-emphasize the inspectorate scrutiny in this area.

Members received a presentation from Area Manager Jon Charters and Area Manager Mark Hutton that provided an overview of the current policy pertaining to Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) actuations (in particular, those categorised as Unwanted Fire Signals) and proposals for policy change.

The presentation focussed on system-based actuations and attendances made where the Service could work with premises owners to eradicate and reduce actuations as opposed to well-intended actuations from people who reasonably believed there was a fire and activated the fire alarm system or malicious calls (which represented a small proportion of calls and were dealt with very differently).

The current AFA policy had been in place since April 2016. It i) set out the impact and risks associated with Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS); ii) defined what constituted an UWFS; iii) defined the role of Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs); iv) defined the call handling role within North West Fire Control; v) confirmed the information gathering role of Operational Crews; vi) correctly categorised the incident and populated the Incident Recording System; vii) confirmed that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) did not reset Fire Alarms; viii) set trigger points for Fire Protection staff intervention; and ix) set out a proportionate enforcement route which started with the provision of business support and escalated to formal enforcement action to resolve unsatisfactory premises.

It was noted that LFRS continued to attend much higher volumes of AFA actuations than many other fire and rescue services, as noted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services during its first inspection. In 2020, LFRS attended 4,851 AFA's of which 63% were in sleeping risk premises and 37% in non-sleeping risk premises.

At the present time, LFRS was distinctly out of step with the approaches currently

being employed by the other Services operating within North West Fire Control, who had taken a risk-based approach to reducing mobilisations to AFA's, typically framed around building types and/or time of day or night.

LFRS' current approach posed a number of challenges to the Service:

- Diverted essential resources from actual emergencies;
- Created risk to crew and public whilst responding;
- Disrupted Community and Business Safety activities;
- Created disruption for businesses employing on-call firefighters;
- Reduced operational training time and impacted upon planned exercises;
- Created environmental impact;
- Constituted a draw upon public finances; and
- Caused call handling delays in NWFC impacting Service performance levels.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) published guidance to assist fire and rescue services in reducing the risks created by Unwanted Fire Signals citing options such as: i) undertaking call challenge in control rooms (NWFC did this); ii) ensuring Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations undertake call-back (NWFC also did this); and iii) sending reduced or no attendance under risk based and defined conditions (LFRS partially did this). The NFCC also endorsed: i) setting reasonable expectations for UWFS (LFRS applied these; ii) providing Business Advice to continually nudge compliance (LFRS did this); iii) using Fire Safety Enforcement to secure compliance (LFRS did this); and iv) exercising capability to raise charges (LFRS did not do this).

The present approach to management of AFA's combined Business Safety advice and legal enforcement measures (under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Business Safety Advisors delivered engagement / education and dealt with poor AFA performance using a series of triggers, which aimed to help premises owners and operators to comply. Where business safety advice was not followed the case was escalated and a full Fire Safety Audit undertaken and Fire Safety Order legal powers used. (Enforcement Notices issued to secure compliance, if for example, the Fire Alarm was deemed not suitable.) To withstand legal scrutiny / appeal, LFRS had to demonstrate the fire alarm system generating the AFA was poorly installed, defective or poorly managed against criteria in British Standard, BS5839:1.

These approaches to supporting premises owners to comply would continue. However, a number of improvement options existed which could fundamentally reduce fire appliance mobilisations, thereby alleviating Service wide impacts, providing increased operational efficiency and better value for money.

Subsequent to the detail on the AFA policy being provided at the last Performance Committee, work had been undertaken to explore policies of other Services both within the North West region and beyond, to examine the differing approaches, benefits, and risks, in order to shape LFRS' proposals for change.

Members considered the 3 options presented which sought to derive maximum Service benefit, optimise performance whilst encompassing a carefully risk-based approach:

IMPROVEMENT OPTION 1: REMOVE ATTENDANCE TO AFA AT NON-SLEEPING PREMISES

Performance Benefits:

- Would immediately realise c.40% reduction in attendances to AFA's;
- Aligned LFRS to other FRS in NW Fire Control;
- Improved NWFC call handling process and associated KPI;
- Improved availability and speed of response to real emergencies;
- Introduction could be staged i.e. during the day in year 1 and during the night from year 2.

Resource Implications:

- Public Consultation.

Risks:

- In 2019, there were 1,841 AFA in non-sleeping risks, 4 of which were found to be fires on arrival (0.2%).

A comparison of incidents over a 3-year period was provided which compared LFRS' current approach with the approach taken by Cheshire FRS who used this policy for apparatus incidents in non-sleeping premises. If LFRS had applied the same policy, there would have been faster call handling times and would have potentially seen an average reduction across the period of 38.7%.

IMPROVEMENT OPTION 2: IMPLEMENT A CHARGING POLICY

Performance Benefits:

- Likely to realise a small % reduction in attendances;
- Could generate up to £80k in cost recovery charges.

Resource Implications:

- Public Consultation;
- Inspecting Officer time / costs (gathering sufficient evidence to withstand potential appeal);
- Administration costs (raising charges and tracking payments / non-payments).

Risks:

- Potential reputational damage (£60k of charges would arise from NHS premises);
- Inspecting Officer time / costs (gathering sufficient evidence to withstand potential appeal);
- Administration costs (raising charges and tracking payments / non-payments).

The 46 Fire and Rescue Services nationally had been contacted in relation to their charging policies of which 17 had responded. All had non-attendance policies for non-sleeping risk premises, 5 had charging policies (which were used in the extreme and had been put on hold during the covid pandemic) and 1 had a non-attendance policy for non-sleeping risk and also reduced attendance to sleeping risk premises if charges were raised.

If LFRS had applied the London Fire Brigade policy of charging for the tenth and any additional AFA in non-sleeping risk properties, based upon the results of the latest 2020 count; this would have resulted in raising circa £9,000 in cost recovery charges

from 7 premises.

If LFRS had applied the London Fire Brigade policy of charging for the tenth and any additional AFA in sleeping risk properties, based upon the results of the latest 2020 count; this would have resulted in raising circa £70,000 in cost recovery charges from 9 premises (£60k of which would be from hospitals).

IMPROVEMENT OPTION 3: INTRODUCE A DOMESTIC FALSE ALARM POLICY

This would be a very different type of policy as AFA's from domestic dwellings were predominantly generated from Telecare systems incorporating smoke alarms. Numbers of actuations were increasing year on year and so the policy would focus on close collaboration with Lancashire's Social Care Providers.

The Objective:

To reduce UWFS and simultaneously reduce risk to vulnerable persons who relied on Telecare systems for their safety. Focus would be on poor installations and improvements that reduce UWFS but didn't increase risk to the occupier/s.

Should LFRS adopt this policy it would be one of the first Fire and Rescue Services in the country to take this approach and recognise this was an emerging issue.

The Chairman confirmed that the Committee recommendations would be brought to a future Authority meeting therefore there would be the option for further debate.

The Chairman PROPOSED that a recommendation be made to the Authority to adopt option 1; to remove attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms at Non-Sleeping premises staged over 2 years; to be introduced during the day in year 1 and during the night from year 2. He did not believe the Committee should recommend option 2 to be pursued because of the suggestion that it might affect other blue light services and he asked that further work be undertaken on option 3 to bring a report to a future meeting.

Councillor Smith SECONDED the motion.

The Chairman called a vote on this motion. It was noted that County Councillor Lorraine Beavers was not present in the meeting at this time. The remaining Councillors all voted in favour therefore the decision was CARRIED unanimously.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommend to the Authority the adoption of option 1; to remove attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms at Non-Sleeping premises staged over 2 years; to be introduced during the day in year 1 and during the night from year 2; option 2 should not be pursued because this might affect other blue light services and that further work be undertaken on option 3 to bring a report to a future meeting.

46/19 LANCASHIRE ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced Road Safety Coordinator, Rhiannon Leeds who presented the report and accompanying presentation to provide Members with an update on the work of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP).

The Road Safety Partnership for Lancashire was set up in 2001 initially as the co-

ordinating body for all the speed cameras. Very quickly an education and engagement division of the Partnership was established and there had been a lot of changes since then.

The partnership comprised of: Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service, Lancashire Constabulary, North West Ambulance Service, Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council, Highways England and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Working together to reduce duplication, the partnership aimed to reduce road casualties through the management of speed, enforcement, engineering, emergency response, driver education and training and through developing collaborative approaches to education, awareness, engagement and other measures. Everything the Partnership did was based on casualty, collision and police data in order to target some of the most vulnerable road user groups.

In 2010 the funding model for partnerships changed and local authorities did not receive government grant for road safety. Since 2010 there had been a small year on year rise in people killed or seriously injured on Lancashire's roads. In 2013/14, Lancashire County Council Scrutiny Panel told the Road Safety Partnership to make improvements to address the lack of a purposeful strategy, meaningful analysis, coordination and duplication of effort. The Partnership then identified: the right people for the right roles, a clear, long-term strategy alongside short-term tactical needs, issues with realistic and evidence-based options and tactics in order to be effective.

Rhiannon Leeds gave examples where processes had improved that resulted in clear, targeted messages and consistent responses to queries raised in different areas of Lancashire. Over the last 12-18 months an online tool for members of the public to report concerns had been implemented. This looked at speed, casualty and collision data to enable a fair and consistent policy to be applied across the county.

All the LRSP partners were committed to working together to reduce casualties on Lancashire's roads and make people feel safe. Some of the partnership activities were noted as:

- Child pedestrian training at reception, year 1 and year 2 at almost every primary school in the county;
- Cycle training at primary school age;
- Targeted social media campaigns based on the 'fatal 5';
- Activity in communities at key times of the year in line with the national road safety calendar;
- Managing and responding to community speed concerns county wide;
- Delivery of speed awareness courses (and other educational courses as an alternative to prosecution);
- Coordinated safety engineering and enforcement works such as the installation of average speed cameras;
- Delivery of RoadSense to Year 6;
- Delivery of Safe Drive Safe Alive.

A reporting structure was presented which incorporated the 3 local authorities, 14 districts and policing divisions across the county. The Local Road Safety Partnership was governed by an Executive Board which was chaired by the

Assistant Chief Constable. Reporting to the Executive Board was a joint Operational Group supported by Casualty Reduction Partnerships in Pennine, South Lancashire and North Lancashire to determine local initiatives.

The vision set out in the strategic plan was that “people are safe and feel safe on Lancashire’s roads”. The plan set out a number of priorities and the work of the Road Safety Partnership fell under priority 1 “co-ordinated and evidence-based response to Road Safety”. Alongside the strategic plan sat the Action Plan and Areas of Focus documents which identified everything to be delivered by the partnership.

A graph was presented that demonstrated problem trends by mode of transport and age range which included spike charts to show the previous 5-years data and the number of incidents during the period. This assisted to identify emerging trends to inform future plans.

A chart was presented that showed the possible effects of the pandemic on road safety by comparing road traffic casualties during 2019 and 2020. Although the 2020 data had yet to be verified it showed that during March – April there was a huge decrease in the volume of casualties in Lancashire which was not the case in other areas of the country.

A further chart was presented that demonstrated road traffic collision casualties over the last 12 years which showed a steady continuous decline due in part to Firefighters now being trauma trained enabling injured parties to receive help much quicker and technological improvements had been made to vehicles. The chart also showed killed or seriously injured casualties to have peaked in 2019. It was noted that CRASH (Collision Reporting And Sharing Hub) was a national system that digitally supported consistent reporting of road traffic collisions across the country. In addition, the chart showed the number of fatalities across the county during the period; this had been fairly consistent until 2020 where there was a decline (which was in line with the volume of traffic). It was noted that the type of casualty had changed to an increased involvement of motor cyclists.

Based on speed, casualty and collision data the Partnerships top 8 issues had been identified as: i) young road users; ii) motorcyclists; iii) A584 between Cifton and Squires Gate; iv) A59 between Clitheroe and the Lancashire / North Yorkshire border; v) A59 between Nrothway and Tarleton; vi) A682 Colne Road between Burnley and J12; vii) M6 between J31a and J33; and viii) Careless Driving. Over the next few months work would be undertaken with partners and analysts to understand the detail to develop relevant initiatives including: education, engagement, engineering and enforcement.

An example was provided of a campaign that aimed to change driver behaviour which ran during the christmas period in 2019 depicting 59 pairs of shoes; each representing a person killed on Lancashire’s roads in one year.

It was noted that due to the covid-19 pandemic a lot of work had been undertaken online during the previous 12 months including: i) RoadSense which had been delivered to over 5,000 year 6 pupils since mid-January; ii) Speed Awareness Courses and iii) a TyreSafe campaign had been launched the previous day.

It was also noted that since 2010, the Partnership had been used on national

platforms as best practice.

County Councillor Clarke queried what could be done to enforce speeding restrictions in areas where the limit was 20 miles per hour (mph). The Chairman commented that, although a valid concern enforcement was out of our jurisdiction. In response, Rhiannon Leeds advised that 20 mph areas nationally fell into 2 categories: areas and zones. Areas were usually sign only (which applied to most roads in Lancashire) and 20 mph zones had extra street furniture such as speed bumps and chicanes. One of the reasons there had been no enforcement in 20 mph areas in Lancashire was that according to the national guidance, 20 mph areas should be self-enforcing and in locations where traffic was already low volume and low speed.

Any concerns about specific roads could be raised with the Partnership via: www.lancsroadsafety.co.uk/submit-concern. If there was an issue identified, something would be done ie: additional signage, additional community engagement and education.

County Councillor Britcliffe felt that the placing of additional cameras would slow traffic. In response, Rhiannon Leeds advised that action was based on data. Currently there were plans to introduce new average speed cameras on 5 roads in the county in addition to the 8 established routes (which would be funded from national government funding). Similarly, if data identified speeding on a particular road the Partnership had flexibility to change the location of speed camera vans. It was noted for information that the camera vans which looked for speeding offences also looked for other offences such as occupants not wearing seat belts and drivers not in proper control ie: while using a mobile phone.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted and endorsed.

47/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 30 June 2021 - venue to be agreed.

Further meeting dates were noted for 15 September 2021 and 15 December 2021 and agreed for 16 March 2022.

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 23 March 2021, at 10.00 am - Virtual meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

H Khan (Chairman)
J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)
S Clarke
S Holgate
A Kay
D Smith

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 Ayre, External Audit, Grant Thornton
A Smith, External Audit, Grant Thornton
J Taylor, Internal Audit, Lancashire County Council

49/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman, County Councillor H Khan welcomed Authority members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Audit Committee. She 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.

50/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mohammed Khan.

51/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

52/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

53/19 EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

The External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter represented an overall assessment of the Authority's performance, drawing on the Auditor's findings and conclusions from their work, which had previously been reported to the Audit Committee.

Members considered the Annual Audit Letter which summarised Grant Thornton's 2019/20 audit of the Authority as presented by Andy Ayre.

The Auditors had issued an unqualified opinion on the Authority's 2019/20 accounts on 30 November 2020. The External Auditors were satisfied that the Authority put in place proper arrangements to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2020.

It was noted that the External Auditor's fee of £34,419 was £6,000 higher than that included in the Audit Plan of £28,169 which had been highlighted in the Audit Findings Report at the last meeting. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the increase was consistent with similar audited bodies.

RESOLVED:- That the Audit Committee noted and endorsed the content of the Annual Audit letter 2019/20.

54/19 INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING REPORT

The Internal Auditors produced a summary of progress against the annual plan for each Audit Committee meeting, setting out progress to date and any significant findings. The report for the period up to 26 February 2021 was presented by Judith Taylor. It was noted that work carried out during this period was in accordance with the agreed audit plan.

The report identified that 63 days had been spent this financial year on the 2020/21 plan which equated to 90% of the totalled planned activity of 70 days.

Progress to date in relation of the plan was provided and discussed by Members. In relation to work completed to date, all work on the key financial systems (accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger, treasury management, human resources and payroll) had been completed and an opinion of substantial assurance provided. Substantial assurance was also provided in relation to safeguarding with 3 minor areas for improvement suggested. Ongoing work would be finalised in line with the plan and the Annual Report brought to the next meeting.

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

55/19 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 identified 1 new risk which warranted inclusion on the corporate risk register:

Changes to Emergency Response Driver Training leading to a reduction in trained appliance drivers and hence impacting on pump availability

A new Fire Standard for Emergency Response Driver Training had been published which required more training for new drivers within the sector. The requirements were: i) current instructors to be added to a register and new drivers would need to complete a formal pathway; ii) a 10-day course with an element of night driving for all new drivers; iii) a 10 or 15-day initial response course for flexi-officers depending on current competency in response driving; and iv) longer courses for special appliances which were not LGV.

All of these would see a marked increase in the length of a driving course, which may require additional instructor resource and the impact on driving instructors was currently being reviewed, hence the need for additional capacity within the Team.

The initial driving course extension of time from 5 days to 10 days increased instructor time and may lead to difficulties in the on-call service as personnel may not be able to take the time away from primary employment to undertake training which could lead to a decline in on-call appliance availability.

This applied to new drivers therefore the impact would be felt gradually over a period of time as personnel left the service. This would be more significant in the on-call service as turnover rates were much higher. The impact would be monitored over time to ensure that new entrants were able to undertake the relevant training.

In response to Member questions regarding whether the training could be split over 2 five-day sessions and the percentage of on-call staffing that were drivers the Director of Corporate Services advised that discussions were currently taking place on how best to deliver the course to achieve the standard and maintain the number of required drivers.

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, inability to make required savings, additional financial pressures such as RDS pensions etc, plus council tax limits via local referendum resulting in Authority being unable to set a balanced budget

It was anticipated that a new 4-year Spending Review be published, however due to uncertainty this had been delayed. As such 2021/22 was a one-year settlement, with a four-year settlement anticipated later that year. Running alongside this was a Fair Funding and the prospect of moving to a 75% Business Rates Retention model (both of which would impact future funding) had also been put on hold. As such it

was impossible to predict what future funding will look like, which was reflected in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The budget for 2022/23 and beyond assumed a funding increase of 1.5% each year, and based on assumptions contained within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy showed a funding gap of up to £1.0m in subsequent years. The Authority held sufficient reserves to meet this in the short to medium term, until March 2024.

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

Following a High Court decision on allowances within the fire service, which provided a different interpretation to both the historical basis and to previous decisions of the Pensions Ombudsman, the pensionability of various allowances changed with associated cost implications. The Service agreed eligibility with the FBU going forward and this had been implemented. The question of backdating remained unresolved. The current situation was the Service has responded positively to the FBU request for 6 years backdating for relevant allowances (primarily DCP) but the Union had not currently accepted this offer. Since the offer the Pensions Ombudsman had determined an individual case for an active employee within Lancashire and the implications for both the Service and employees was being worked through. This included liaison with our pension provider in respect of potential remedy implications. Once the appropriate action had been determined administrative resource would need to be provided to resolve.

Risk no. 29 – High levels of staff absence due to pandemic

Following implementation of Business Continuity Plans (BCP), staff absence levels peaked as expected during mid-January, following the Christmas / New Year relaxation of lockdown arrangements. The highest levels of staff absence were evident between 13th and 15th January 2021, at which time 92 staff were absent, with 15 confirmed C-19 cases, 50/51 self-isolating, and 4 with suspected C-19 (awaiting test results). This compared to staff absences which typically ran at c.40 cases across the Service at any given time. In early December 2020, LFRS accessed a provision of Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) and began a pilot rollout across a number of locations aimed at early identification and isolation of asymptomatic cases of C-19. An ambitious rollout plan followed which resulted in LFT provision being made available in a self-sustaining manner across all 39 fire stations, Service Headquarters and Service Training Centre. As at 15 January 2021, 4,277 LFT have been conducted with our workforce, resulting in a number of positive cases being identified and measures then implemented to reduce risk to their closest colleagues. Interim BCP debrief conducted internally to capture learning from the first few months of the pandemic. Further internal and Lancashire Resilience Forum debriefs to be progressed once BCP arrangements stood down.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the actions taken and endorsed the revised corporate risk register.

56/19 EXTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT REPORT AND SECTOR UPDATE

Mr Ayre presented the external audit progress and sector update report which detailed progress at March 2021 in relation to the financial statements and value for money conclusion. The report also set out what the External Auditors would do and

their planned completion date.

In addition, the report included sector issues which provided an up to date summary of emerging national issues and developments to support the Authority/Committee. This covered areas which may have an impact on the organisation; they were not specific issued related to the Authority. For example, the Redmond Review was an independent review into the oversight of local audit and the transparency of local authority financial reporting. The key recommendations in the review included: i) A new regulator; ii) Scope to revise fees; iii) September deadline for audited local authority accounts to be published; iv) Accounts to be simplified. In addition, a new Code of Audit Practice brought a revised approach to value for money audit work for this financial year. This included: i) a new set of key criteria; ii) more extensive reporting; and iii) more sophisticated judgements on performance. The auditors would be reporting across those 3 criteria.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the changes to the value for money audit work and the revised audit standard meant more work was required.

It was noted that the meeting scheduled for July had been moved to September to assist with the deadline for the audit findings report. In the meantime, an Audit Plan and Interim Audit Findings report would be required to be presented to the committee at a date to be agreed.

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

57/19 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN - 2021/22

RESOLVED: - The YouTube live webcast stopped working during this item which in effect excluded the press and public from the meeting, therefore the public section of the meeting was adjourned. This was prior to the Committee's determination of the recommendations which would now need to be considered (as appropriate) with an update provided to the next meeting of this Committee.

58/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 28 September 2021 at 10:00 hours - venue to be agreed.

Further meeting dates would be re-considered following the revised deadline for publishing audited local authority accounts in September.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24 March 2021, at 10.00 am in the Virtual Meeting accessible via MS Teams and YouTube (as a live webcast).

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

F De Molfetta (Chairman)
T Martin (Vice-Chair)
L Beavers
J Hugo
D O'Toole
M Pattison
P Rigby
G Wilkins
T Williams

Officers

J Johnston, Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)
B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)
J Bowden, Head of Finance (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
N Bashall, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

104/19 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman, County Councillor F De Molfetta welcomed Authority members and members of the press and public to the virtual committee meeting of the Resources 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.

105/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Simon Blackburn.

106/19 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

107/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

108/19 REPORT ON TRANSACTION OF URGENT BUSINESS

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted and endorsed.

109/19 FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report.

Revenue Budget

The overall position as at the end of January showed an underspend of £0.6m, largely as a result of pay underspends as previously reported and detailed in the table in the report. Since the last Resources Committee, discussions had been held with budget holders on what impact the pandemic had had on their planned spend and virements totalling £0.5m had been identified which had been reflected as transferring into earmarked reserves for use in the next financial year. It was also proposed to transfer £0.1m of underspent Fleet Services budgets into the Covid fund, in relation to savings on vehicle running costs due to remote working during the pandemic. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) had been collating both spends and savings for the fire sector during the pandemic and reporting to the Home Office.

After allowing for this, the outturn position was currently expected to be an underspend of £0.4m as detailed in Appendix 1. It had previously been reported that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would be carrying out the annual national non-domestic rates return (NNDR3) reconciliation, and be making payments where appropriate to Authorities before the end of March 2021, however MHCLG had now confirmed that there would be no levy account distributions in 2020/21.

The year to date and forecast positions within individual departments were set out in the report with major variances relating to non-pay spends and variances on the pay budget being shown separately in the table below: -

Area	Overspend / (Under spend) to 31 Jan	Forecast outturn at 31 March	Reason
	£'000	£'000	
Service Delivery	(105)	(156)	The underspend for both to date and the outturn position largely related to the reduced activity levels, in particular for car allowances/mileage due to remote working during the pandemic, however the position allowed for the proposed transfer of

			<p>the following into earmarked reserves, for use in the next financial year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £104k for unspent smoke detector purchases; • £34k for spend on an USAR training prop, delayed by the pandemic.
Protection Transformation	-	-	<p>The Protection Transformation department was created as a result of the Authority being able to access £310k in grant from the Home Office to support protection work in the wake of the Grenfell tragedy. It was anticipated spending circa £180k during the year on additional staff, staff training and updated software to meet the suggested improvements, with the balance being transferred to an earmarked reserve for use in the following year.</p>
Covid-19	-	-	<p>As previously reported, total funding of £1.4m had been received. £1m had been spent to date, with the balance being held in an earmarked reserve. The spend to date was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional staff costs £71k; • Additional cleaning £21k; • Consumable items (eg sanitiser) £138k; • Remote working equipment £113k; • PPE £654k. <p>It was expected that any further costs associated with the ongoing pandemic would be met from this fund.</p> <p>As reported above, £0.1m of underspends would be transferred in relation to savings against the Fleet & Technical Services budget due to the reduced use of vehicles during the pandemic.</p> <p>It was noted that the Home Office had issued a further tranche of allocations to the Fire Service from April next year of which LFRS had been allocated £225k which would be held in the earmarked reserve and drawn down as required.</p>

Youth Engagement	(150)	(55)	This budget included both the Prince's Trust activities and the Fire Cadets units. The year to date position arose from the amended delivery model for Prince's Trust teams, where the residential fees and other team running costs were not being incurred. The forecast position anticipated the transfer of the balance of unspent Prince's Trust income into earmarked reserves to meet future running costs, but this would be brought for a decision during year end. Fire cadet units had been running remotely since last March, hence the expected year end underspend.
Training & operational review	(71)	(68)	The year to date and outturn position both reflected the reduced onsite catering requirement for the year alongside various other activity related underspends. However, the position allowed for the proposed transfer of £61k into earmarked reserves, in relation to training courses and training prop maintenance for use in the next financial year.
Fleet & Technical Services	(111)	(134)	The current underspend largely related to vehicle repairs and maintenance, where the anticipated (and budgeted) increases in the hourly rates charged by LCES had been mitigated thus far by careful management and scrutiny of repairs passed to LCES, with use of alternative contractors where cost effective to do so. In addition, LFRS benefitted from free fuel offered by BP to emergency services during the first quarter, and there had also been a general reduction in spend on fuel and tyres. The position allowed for the transfer of £50k into earmarked reserves in relation to unspent equipment R&D budget, and the transfer of £0.1m into the Covid fund as referred to earlier.
Property	(21)	(9)	All non-essential maintenance was put on hold in quarter one, and was gradually re-instated, departmental

			capacity and the ongoing situation meant that it was proposed to transfer a total of £264k into earmarked reserves in relation to backlog planned maintenance.
Non DFM	634	760	Both the current and outturn positions reflected the £0.4m funding gap identified at the time of setting the budget in February, and the additional £0.3m RCCO approved at the last meeting.
Wholetime Pay (including associate trainers)	(763)	(823)	In anticipation of reduced staffing levels due to the pandemic, 16 existing On Call staff who had been successful in the Wholetime recruitment campaign and who were initially due to commence on the recruits' course in September were allowed to commence riding Wholetime appliances in May. This ceased once they commenced the recruits' course in September. The additional cost of this was more than offset by a total of 22 early leavers since the budget was initially set, the majority of whom left in the early part of the year. This resulted in an average of 18 more under establishment than anticipated in the budget, an underspend of £0.8m. The outturn position included the completion of the ongoing January recruits' course in addition to all of the above.
On-Call Pay	164	201	The overspend reflected activity related payments for the year, which could be partly attributed to several moorland fire incidents during quarter one (a 36% higher activity level than quarter one last year) but had been higher on average <u>for the whole year</u> than the previous year. It was assumed that these would continue at broadly the same levels for the rest of the year.
Support staff (less agency staff)	(66)	(84)	The underspend related to vacant posts across various departments, which were in excess of the vacancy factor built into the budget. The underspend position arose due to the initial cessation of recruitment activity

			due to the pandemic, and subsequent reduced recruitment activity. Note - agency staff costs to date of £63k were replacing vacant support staff roles, this accounted for less than 1% of total support staff costs.
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Capital Budget

The Capital budget for 2020/21 stood at £11.2m. Following on from the Fire Authority budget setting meeting in February, the 2020/21 capital programme had been adjusted to remove the items flagged as slipping into 2021/22, due to the ongoing pandemic and associated capacity issues, as follows:

Aerial Ladder Platform (to be replaced with a Turn Table Ladder)	£0.590m
Command Units (Mobile Fire Stations)	£0.580m
Pumping appliances x 5 (1920 & 2021 budgets)	£1.060m
Water tower	£0.500m
Softrack All-Terrain Vehicle	£0.083m
Pod x 3 (1819, 1920 & 2021 budgets)	£0.083m
Various support vehicles	£0.174m
Future firefighting – reserve appliances	£0.027m
CCTV on appliances	£0.150m
Fleet Workshop	£3.375m
Morecambe NWS co-location	£0.132m
Enhanced station dormitory and shower facilities	£0.350m
Drill tower replacements	£0.200m
Performance management system	£0.100m
Hydrant management system	£0.050m
Incident command system (linked to command units)	£0.100m
VMDS/MDT hardware replacement (linked to ESMCP)	£0.400m
Incident ground radios (linked to ESMCP)	£0.180m
On-Call alerters (linked to ESMCP)	£0.065m
ESMCP (Airwave replacement)	£1.000m
Total	£9.199m

This adjustment brought the remaining capital programme to £2.0m, however it was proposed to increase the STC Workshop budget by £34k (which would be transferred from where it currently sat in the Fleet Services revenue budget) for the breathing apparatus compressor replacement, to enable this to be done as part of the project due to its size and integration into the fabric of the building. The revised total budget remained at £2.0m (rounded to £m).

There remained very little spend against the resultant 2020/21 programme, just £1.1m, against vehicles and property projects, as departments had been dealing with the impacts of the ongoing pandemic. The current position against the programme was set out below, with further details in Appendix 2: -

Pumping Appliances	The amended budget allowed for the remaining stage payments for 7 pumping appliances for the 2018/19 programme, which had all now been delivered, in line with the budget, no further spend
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	was expected.
Other vehicles	The amended budget allowed for the replacement of support vehicles which were reviewed prior to replacement, with limited further spend anticipated prior to the year end. Delivery had been taken of all vehicles ordered in the year and the spend was broadly in line with the budget.
Building Modifications	This budget allowed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a new workshop, BA Recovery and Trainer facility at STC. Work was ongoing on site, as the committed expenditure to date reflected, and the anticipated year end spend was circa £1.1m, however the majority of the budget would be spent in the next financial year and was removed from the 2020/21 budget; • South Shore refurbishment and extension was underway as the committed expenditure to date reflected, and was expected to be largely complete by the end of March.

The committed costs to date would be met by revenue contributions, with the excess of contributions in year being put into the capital funding reserve.

Delivery against savings targets

The current position on savings targets identified during the budget setting process, hence removed from the 2020/21 budget and performance to date against this target was reported. The performance to date was significantly ahead of target, largely due to savings in respect of staffing, smoke detectors and Procurement savings. The savings target for the financial year had already been exceeded.

County Councillor O'Toole queried why the revenue budget underspend at the end of January was shown as £0.6m and the equivalent value of virements and transfers (as reported in the first 2 paragraphs of the report) resulted in an underspend of £0.4m. In response the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that these figures were not comparable; given the timing of the underspends continued throughout the year and that some of the adjustment transfers had already been made.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor O'Toole regarding the Non DFM budget which reflected a £0.4m funding gap at the time of setting the budget, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the funding gap referred to in the report was the one identified in February 2020 when the budget was set for 2021. At that time there were a lot of assumptions made and it would have been difficult to predict for example, the number of early leavers and the impact of the pandemic. This financial monitoring report identified where variances occurred and explained why there were differences to the assumptions made.

In relation to the Covid-19 expenditure on home working equipment, Councillor Williams asked whether there was a contingency plan for the equipment once the pandemic was over. In response, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the cost related to a mix of equipment for the use of staff working remotely and also for the equipment needed to facilitate the Authority's meetings. Consideration was being given to the benefits of remote working for those able to do so and the equipment would be used to facilitate this going forwards.

In response to a further question from Councillor Williams regarding budgeting for the costs of technological changes and the maintenance and upgrading of equipment the Director of Corporate Services advised that budgets were agreed with Departmental Heads and given the age of the equipment this would perhaps be in 18 months' time. Changes would more likely be the use of the infrastructure and its effectiveness for example, consideration was currently being given to the resilience of YouTube to live stream these meetings. He felt it was important in the long term to ensure there was sufficient budget to keep pace with the changes.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Wilkins regarding whether checks were being made on the expiry dates of PPE the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the lifespan depended on what the PPE was for and the Service made sure it was fit for purpose, met the safety standard and was within its life. He did not suspect there would be a need to replace a lot of PPE within the next 12 months which was under ongoing review. He confirmed the main focus for spend in the next 12 months was likely to be staff costs for supporting the vaccination programme.

County Councillor Wilkins queried the use of CCTV on vehicles and whether there had been any discussions with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) regarding how it protected firefighters and equipment. In response, the Director of People and Development advised that there had been discussions with the FBU over many years. He confirmed they were aware of the cameras and how this assisted staff if they were subject to assault or if they were involved in an accident or incident as the camera assisted in apportioning blame. FBU concern originally was CCTV being used for disciplinary and although this could not be discounted it had proven not to be the case. The CCTV also assisted with ongoing driver training.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted and endorsed the financial position, and approved the following virements:

- to transfer £0.5m unspent budgets across several departments into earmarked reserves for spend in the next financial year; and
- to transfer £0.1m into the Covid fund in relation to underspends on fuel and other vehicle running costs as reported.

110/19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 7 July 2021 at 1000 hours in – venue to be agreed.

Further meeting dates were noted for 29 September 2021 and 1 December 2021 and agreed for 30 March 2022.

111/19 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: - That the press and members of the public 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.

112/19 PENSIONS UPDATE

(Paragraphs 3 and 4)

The Director of People and Development updated Members on the current position in respect of fire service pension schemes.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted the recommendation as outlined in the report.

113/19 SICKNESS UPDATE

(Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3)

Members considered additional information in relation sick pay arrangements agreed at the last meeting.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee determined to reaffirm the decision made at the last meeting to retain the current guidance as outlined in the report.

114/19 HIGH VALUE PROCUREMENT PROJECTS

(Paragraph 3)

Members considered a report that provided an update on all contracts for one-off purchases valued in excess of £100,000 and high value procurement projects in excess of £100,000 including: new contract awards, progress of ongoing projects and details of new projects.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 26 April 2021

URGENT DECISION ARRANGEMENTS AT ELECTION TIME

Contact for further information:

Mark Nolan – Clerk and Monitoring Officer -Tel No 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The Authority needs to ensure there are adequate arrangements to enable any urgent decisions to be taken in the event of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman retiring from office as Lancashire County Councillors, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the date of the Combined Fire Authority's Annual Meeting scheduled for 28 June 2021.

Recommendations

The Authority is asked to Authorise the Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk to the Authority to take any urgent decisions upon any matters arising between the fourth day after the ordinary day of the Lancashire County Council elections and the CFA Annual Meeting, in the event of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman not being re-elected.

Information

As set out in the Executive Summary.

Business Risk

The Authority needs to make arrangements for the delegation of urgent decisions for business continuity purposes.

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

As determined by the Members' Allowance Scheme.

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 26 April 2021

FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

Contact for further information:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey – Tel. 01772 866801

Executive Summary

This report summarises Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) fire safety prosecutions and arson incidents (where evidence has been provided by Fire Investigators into the Criminal Justice System) where court proceedings have progressed to trial and sentencing stage.

Fire Protection and Business Support Information are included in the report.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note and endorse the report.

FIRE SAFETY CONVICTIONS

Fire Safety Prosecutions

The mention hearing for Plaza Beach Hotel, Albert Road Blackpool at Preston Crown Court was listed for the 22/02/2021, with sentencing rescheduled for 13/5/2021.

Prosecution case files continue to be produced for 6 further premises.

FIRE PROTECTION & BUSINESS SUPPORT INFORMATION

Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)

The Inspection Programme which will shape the pro-active audits Fire Protection Officers undertake in the period 2021/24 has been through a series of quality assurance processes and is being rolled out to teams for use commencing 1st May.

Inspection activity for High Rise premises remains a priority (as part of the ongoing building risk review) along with ongoing management of risk in Care & Nursing Homes. The latter is being undertaken utilising additional information from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Care Commissioners to assist effective targeting. Joint CQC and Fire and Rescue Service Inspections, following intelligence and Information sharing, have been ongoing. Recognising the ongoing challenges of Covid 19 infection control in the care sector, inspectors will initially undertake a telephone audit, requesting key records by e-mail, with full audits being undertaken where compliance cannot be assured.

Business Fire Safety

With the government roadmap to recovery now clearly outlining the approach to reducing national lockdown, business safety advice is being tailored to match.

Mindful that many businesses may not have been occupied or operating throughout the recent lockdown, their focus will inevitably be on commencing trading and Covid control measures potentially at the expense of wider health and safety issues such as fire safety.

Consequently, tailored advice is being provided to ensure responsible persons fully consider fire safety within their reopening process. The advice will be communicated via LFRS' website, social media channels, leaflet drops and via local liaison with District Councils.

The content fully recognises that re-opening of businesses is crucial to the wider financial and emotional well being of the County and emphasises LFRS does not want to impede this in any way but fire safety remains a legal requirement and the last thing recovering businesses and communities need at this time is to experience a serious fire.

ARSON RISK REDUCTION

R v Jordan SCHOFIELD

Maccs Nightclub Hammerton Street, Burnley

Date and Time of call – 26/09/2019 02:50

This incident involved a fire in a nightclub which was broken into during the early hours of the 28 September 2019 before fuel was poured over the bar and a DJ stand set alight. The fire caused severe damage to a large section of the bar and surrounding areas including fridges, optics and tills. The entire ground floor suffered further damage by smoke and water.

On the 28th January 2021 the defendant pleaded guilty to the charge of arson and attempted arson and was sentenced to 47 months imprisonment.

R v Anthony ECCLES

29 Marcroft Avenue Blackpool FY4 3JL

Date and Time of call – 14/02/2020 18:23

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of a garden shed resulting in the destruction of the shed and contents by fire. The fire also caused damage to the fascia board and cladding of an adjacent domestic conservatory. CCTV footage from a neighbouring property showed the fire being started deliberately by the defendant.

The defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 3 years and 4 months imprisonment for arson and causing criminal damage

R v Michael Ashby YOUNG

143 Fawcett Close, Blackburn BB2 2LS

Date and Time of call – 30/08/2020 10:11

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of an item which was placed in a bedroom cupboard. The fire caused severe damage to the property and contents and put the lives of two adults and a child in danger.

On the 26th February 2021 the defendant pleaded guilty to arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered and was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment and received a 5-year restraining order.

R v Royd ULLAH

11 Waddington Avenue, Burnley BB10 4LB

Date and Time of call – 15/10/2020 19:37

This incident involved two separate points of origin of fire in a flat, one in the bedroom and one in the living room, which had been ignited deliberately. The property was severely damaged by the fire.

The defendant pleaded guilty to arson and committing violence and was sentenced to 10 years and 8 months imprisonment.

R v Susan HODSON

135 Rodwell Walk Blackpool

Date and Time of call – 21/10/2020 16:53

This incident involved a fire in the bedroom of a 2nd floor flat which had been set deliberately by the occupier. The bedroom and contents were destroyed by the fire and the remainder of the flat suffered severe smoke damage.

On the 5th February 2021 the defendant pleaded guilty to reckless arson and was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.

R v HOUGHTON

118-120 Hornby Road Blackpool FY1 4QS

Date and Time of call – 08/08/2020 05:18

This incident involved a deliberate fire in derelict house. One room suffered severe damage by fire, heat and smoke. The remainder of the property was severely damaged by smoke.

The defendant pleaded guilty to reckless arson and was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment.

R v Jack BIRTWISTLE & Henry CLARK

Darwen Moors

Date and Time of call – 30/05/2020 18:45

This incident involved a moorland fire. The defendants had used a BBQ on the moorland which had ignited surrounding dry grass which quickly got out of control. The fire caused a major incident and firefighters spent seven days tackling the blaze.

Both defendants pleaded guilty to reckless arson and received a conditional caution with a requirement to carry out 150 hours unpaid restorative work on the moors.

R v Connah JENKINSON, John O'BRIEN & Joseph McEWEN

20a Waverly Skelmersdale WN8 8BD

Date and Time of call – 26/09/2019 00:44

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a domestic property and resulted in the tragic death of the male occupier. The offenders forced entry into the property before spraying a petrol like substance over the male occupier and around the property then igniting the liquid.

Following a trial at Preston Crown Court the offenders were sentenced on the 22nd January 2021:

Connah JENKINSON was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment for murder including 10 years for arson with intent.

John O'Brian received 15 years imprisonment for manslaughter including 8 for reckless arson.

Joseph McEWEN received 13 years imprisonment for manslaughter including 7 for reckless arson.

R v Sean Anthony FISHER & Liam WILKINSON

11 Vicarage Street, Chorley, PR6 0DW

Date and Time of call –24/06/2020 03:10

This incident involved a domestic property which was occupied at the time of the fire and required the rescue of 3 occupants from a first-floor window. The defendants had poured fuel on the front door and through the letterbox prior to setting it on fire.

Both defendants pleaded guilty to arson with intent to endanger life and were sentenced on Friday 5th March 2021. Liam WILKINSON was sentenced to 9 years and 1-month imprisonment and an extended licence of 3 years on completion of his

initial sentence. Sean Anthony FISHER was sentenced to 5 years 6 months imprisonment.

R v Youth 1 & Youth 2

282 Blackburn Road, Darwen

Date and Time of call – 07/10//2020 01:45

This Incident was a fire in a care home providing accommodation for persons aged 0 - 18yrs who require nursing or personal care. The defendants deliberately ignited a mattress and single bed using an aerosol canister.

On 9th March 2021 both youths attended Preston Magistrates Court and pleaded guilty to arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered. Both defendants have been referred by the court to a Youth Offender Panel which is made up of members of the community. The panel will agree a contract with the defendants, which could involve promises of future behaviour, an apology for the offence or unpaid work. This referral is for 6 months. If this contract is breached, the case can be referred back to the court. A further victim surcharge of £22 was given.

Business Risk

Moderate – Members need to be 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:		

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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on Monday 26 April 2021

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey, Director of Service Delivery

Tel: 01772 866801

Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of Community Safety activities and incidents of operational interest across the 14 district authorities.

Furthermore, the report provides an overview of the ongoing Service support to Covid-19 pandemic response.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note and endorse the report.

Information

Included as Appendix 1 are detailed reports relating to activity undertaken within the 14 Lancashire districts.

This report covers the period February 2021 – March 2021

Summary:

Community Safety

1.1 Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) has continued to deliver against our prevention agenda on a risk assessed basis. The Service has made use of digital technology and adapted working practices to ensure our communities continue to receive a high level of service:

- Fire Cadets have continued to work virtually during the pandemic culminating in over 100 Cadets achieving Skills for Justice qualifications.
- Home Fire Safety Checks / Safe and Well Assessments have continued via a modified approach.
- Post incident preventative activities have continued throughout the pandemic via a modified approach.
- Road Sense package for primary school, year 6 students, has been adapted for virtual delivery into schools and for pupil's currently home schooling, so far reaching over 5000 pupils.

- Prince's Trust teams have returned to classroom delivery within educational bubbles, in conjunction with frequent lateral flow testing. In total there are approximately 100 young adults across the 8 teams.
- The Service is also developing methods for virtual delivery of Wildfire Prevention, Water Safety and Road Safety campaigns from April, cognisant of the likely changes in public behaviour aligned to the Government's planned roadmap and our internal Recovery ambitions.

Covid-19

- 1.2 LFRS continues to support the national pandemic response. LFRS was the first Fire and Rescue Service nationally to engage in the roll out of the vaccination programme and locally, our firefighters, community safety staff and support staff have delivered some outstanding work in support.

As at the end of March 2021, LFRS staff had supported the 5 mass vaccination sites (Blackburn, Blackpool, Lancaster, Burnley and Preston) and our staff assisted in the delivery of over 187,000 vaccinations. 21,800 of these were injections delivered directly by LFRS staff.

Staff have also been widely involved in marshalling, administration and coordination at the centres. The Service has received wide ranging praise from members of our communities. We currently maintain a volunteer list of over 300 and presently have 33 staff repurposed full time to assisting with the vaccination programme.

Internally, safety and protection of staff have been a continued priority and the ability to roll out Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) arrangements across our sites was an early ambition. LFT is now in place across all Service locations and integrated into working practices to ensure our staff, their families and our communities can be as safe as possible during this pandemic.

Operational Incidents of note

- 2.1 The following summaries the operational incidents of note over the period with further detail provided in Appendix 1:

- Persons Reported residential building fire in Blackpool, 5 people rescued.
- Road Traffic Collision on M65 motorway, Burnley.
- Rescue of vulnerable female from height in Hyndburn.
- Hazardous Materials incident in Lancaster.
- Fatal incident following building collapse in Lancaster.
- Building explosion in Preston.
- Road Traffic Collision involving (2x) Light Goods Vehicle on A59, Ribble Valley.
- Rescue of horse from a ravine in Rossendale.

Business Risk

N/A

Environmental Impact

Potential impact on local environment in relation to operational incidents. A number of significant incidents benefitted from the attendance of specialist water tower resources (Stingers) which made a positive impact on firefighting operations and reduced environmental impacts.

Equality and Diversity implications

N/A

Financial Implications

N/A

HR Implications

N/A

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

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

Appendix 1

REPORTING PERIOD: FEBRUARY 2021 – MARCH 2021

NORTHERN AREA (Lancaster and Wyre Districts)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Northern Area
Campaign:	Partnership Engagement
Activities (brief details):	
Lancaster:	
<p>Due to the close working relationships with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) at Lancaster Community Fire Station, a concern was raised by NWAS regarding the living conditions (hoarding) of one of their service users.</p> <p>During a visit to the property which is a block of purpose-built flats, fire safety enforcement issues were identified. These issues were brought to the attention of the Fire Safety Enforcement Team, who conducted a Fire Safety audit of the property.</p> <p>Shortly after this the Community Fire Safety team participated in a 'best interests meeting' also attended by Mental Health Safeguarding Team, Community Mental Health Team, Environmental Health, and a Student Social Worker. Discussions took place as to how the various agencies could offer support after it transpired that the occupier had been admitted to Hospital and was temporarily in a Nursing Home.</p> <p>Arrangements were made through the Social Worker to contact the occupier in order to conduct a modified Home Fire Safety Check, this was completed and approval was given for a full Safe and Well visit to be completed post Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Other agencies are working with family members to significantly reduced hoarding and associated risks in this property.</p>	
Wyre:	
<p>Following an attendance by Operational Crews at an incident, concerns were identified as to the living conditions of an individual. The person had history of abusive and aggressive behaviour towards residents in the local community.</p> <p>Our records indicated a previous refusal of our services by the person concerned. A Community Risk record was placed against the property within our records, highlighting the risks which could be encountered from the occupier, in addition to mobility, anti-social behaviour and mental health aspects.</p>	

Following the latest incident, LFRS staff raised their concerns to partner agencies. All partners attended a meeting and an action was raised for Social Services to visit, assess and identify any support that they are able to instigate to assist the occupier. This case highlights how effective the collaboration between staff internally and key partners can be in reducing risk within our communities.

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Lancaster District - Lancaster
Date:	15.02.2021
Time of Call:	19:59
Incident Details: Hazardous Material Incident	
<p>Initially 3 fire engines and one officer (acting as a National Inter Agency Liaison Officer [NILO]) were requested to attend a special service call, the nature was reported to be a hazardous materials incident, with an acid attack on one male.</p> <p>As Lancaster's crew was leaving the fire station, a police vehicle pulled up on the forecourt. The police informed the crew that they were bringing the victim of the acid attack to the fire station in order to wash the victim down and provide immediate casualty care. The victim arrived within another vehicle and water was applied via the appliance hose reel to the victim's head area, along with the application of eye wash from the Trauma First Aid kit.</p> <p>As North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) jointly occupy the Fire Station, they were immediately informed of the incident and NWAS staff then took care of the casualty at the station, before transferring him to the Royal Lancaster Infirmary and onwards to the Barrow specialist eye hospital.</p> <p>The fire engine was then mobilised to assist the duty NILO at scene, where the police and Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) conducted their enquiries.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Lancaster District: Morecambe
Date:	10/02/2121
Time of Call:	11:52
Incident Details: Rescue of dog from water	
<p>This incident was a Special Service Call attended by one fire engine and a 4x4 vehicle involving the rescue of one dog from ice.</p> <p>The dog had run onto the ice chasing a duck and then fallen through, approximately 10 metres from the shore. The pond had been created by flood water on low lying grassland.</p> <p>The dog's owner had already attempted to enter the water and break through the ice to reach her dog, but failed and fallen back in the water to waist height. One firefighter wearing a Flood Rescue Suit and lifejacket, armed with appropriate equipment, entered the water to break through the ice for the dog to swim/climb to safety. The dog was then speedily recovered back to the bank and reunited with the owner. Safety advice was given at scene to the owner and other dog walkers in the vicinity.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Lancaster District - Bolton Le sands
Date:	08/02/2021
Time of Call:	12:54
Incident Details: Building collapse, 2 fatalities	
<p>Incident attended by 3 fire engines, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team, the Incident Command Unit and several flexi duty officers.</p> <p>Two adults were trapped underneath 4 tonnes of concrete roofing, after a roof removal they were undertaking went wrong. The crew from Bolton le Sands worked to release the two victims, with the assistance of pumps from Carnforth and Morecambe. USAR from Chorley and Bamber Bridge also attended the incident.</p> <p>On arrival, crews quickly assessed the scene with NWAS and performed a snatch rescue on the older gentleman using high pressure airbags. The second victim took longer to extricate due to the positioning of the person and the concrete beneath which he was entrapped.</p> <p>Both casualties were released from the concrete by LFRS personnel, unfortunately one was confirmed deceased at the scene and the second was airlifted to Royal Preston Hospital in a critical condition, but passed away a couple of days later.</p> <p>LFRS personnel secured the scene and assisted Crime Scene Investigation with evidence gathering and reports.</p>	

EASTERN AREA (Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Eastern Area
Campaign:	Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC), Roadsense and Vaccination Programme
Activities (brief details):	
<p>Blackburn with Darwen:</p> <p>The Community Safety team has continued to work in line with COVID guidelines, in order to deliver HFSCs via a modified or critical pathway. These completed HFSCs have all been referred via the maintenance of existing partnership routes, or following the attendance of crews at incidents.</p> <p>Our Winter Safety campaign, continued with the distribution of thermometers via our HFSC delivery.</p> <p>Ribble Valley:</p> <p>Open fire information leaflets have been refreshed at point of sale outlets throughout the Ribble Valley.</p> <p>Hyndburn:</p> <p>The introduction of new ICT software within the Service, has now enabled the delivery of our Roadsense education programme to schools throughout the borough, with positive engagement and feedback from children and teachers involved.</p> <p>Operational crews, support departments and community fire safety have continued with volunteering at Mass Vaccination sites including Blackburn Cathedral.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Eastern Area - Hyndburn
Date:	20/02/2021
Time of Call:	01:09
Incident Details: Special Service Call – Rescue of persons from height	
<p>This incident involved a young woman who had climbed through a Velux window and onto the roof of the house, following which she became stuck in a precarious position.</p> <p>A fire engine and Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) from Hyndburn attended with a Station Manager to oversee the incident. The ALP was unable to assist the rescue which meant that a traditional rescue with the 13.5m ladder was required.</p> <p>The crew pitched the ladder in difficult conditions and secured/rescued the casualty. She was virtually unresponsive throughout due to her exposure to inclement weather. This meant that the casualty had to be coached on to the ladder and down to safety. This was a difficult rescue for the individual firefighter, who worked well under pressure to conclude this incident with a safe outcome.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Eastern Area – Ribble Valley
Date:	13:21:24
Time of Call:	04/03/2021
Incident Details: Special Service Call – Road Traffic Collision	
<p>Two fire engines from Clitheroe attended a road traffic collision involving two heavy goods vehicles at the junction of Pimlico Link and the A59.</p> <p>Due to the Urban Search and Rescue team already being out of county, assisting Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service with an incident, the Major Rescue Unit (MRU) from Preston was mobilised as support. Crews utilised the scaffold system on the Major Rescue Unit (MRU) and operated Holmatro cutting equipment in order to carry out the rescue.</p> <p>LFRS staff released the driver of one of the HGV's, who was treated at the scene by NWS and transported to hospital. This was a complex and difficult extrication, with crews being on scene for around an hour and a half.</p>	

SOUTHERN AREA (Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Southern Area
Campaign:	Community Safety
Activities (brief details):	
<p>Chorley:</p> <p>The team continues delivery of the virtual Road Safety session to year 6 pupils from across Lancashire. Two of the team are members of the delivery group for this project are involved in establishing further virtual delivery sessions for Teen Safe and other educational packages, for use across the Service.</p> <p>South Ribble:</p> <p>The Community Fire Safety team has been working with local food banks, in order to ensure the winter safety message and key fire safety messages are shared with the service users of these centres. As part of this work, staff have supplied thermometers to be placed into the food parcels; and cards also provide contact information for the service to ensure people are aware of how to make a Home Fire Safety Check referral.</p> <p>West Lancashire:</p> <p>One of the Community Safety Team attended a Community Partnership Talk as a guest speaker, via a virtual platform, during a session on Hoarding. During the session, the panel members were asked three questions about hoarding and the services that are available within the community. As part of this platform, they were able to share how LFRS can provide safety equipment, consider fire safety with the occupant and ensure they become as safe as possible.</p> <p>This was a great opportunity to share how to make a referral for a HFSC and link in with partner agencies that are working with hoarders across Lancashire.</p> <p>All Teams:</p> <p>The Community Fire Safety teams continue to support the vaccination centres, mainly deployed to the Preston site, but willing to support any location as required. One of the team is qualified as a vaccinator, with another member of the team currently training towards this qualification. Three of the other members of the team are supporting marshalling duties, with each member of the team providing two days per week within the centres.</p>	

INCIDENTS OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Southern Area - Chorley
Date:	05/02/2021
Time of Call:	09:07
Incident Details: Commercial Fire	
<p>Two fire engines were mobilised to a fire in a property in Chorley. On arrival the crews found a fire in the ground floor utility room to the rear of a property used as a restaurant/takeaway. Four firefighters wearing breathing apparatus were committed in to the property, identified the fire to have originated from a tumble dryer before spreading to other items within the room. The fire was dealt with using a hose reel, a positive pressure ventilation unit and thermal imaging camera.</p> <p>Crews remained in attendance for approximately 3 hours, initially dealing with the fire and undertaking fire investigation work. As the property consisted of ground floor (used as the restaurant) plus two upper floors (used as flats), the fire service incident commander requested the attendance of specialist officers from the Protection team. These officers assessed the impact that the fire could have had on the resident's flats above and worked with the owner to ensure the property was safe for continued occupation, whilst repairs were effected to the fire damaged areas.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Southern Area - South Ribble
Date:	20/03/21
Time of Call:	12:03
Incident Details: Hazardous Materials incident	
<p>Two fire engines from Leyland and Bamber Bridge and a specialist hazardous materials officer were mobilised to reports of a gas leak on Olympian Way, Leyland.</p> <p>On arrival the fire crews found a 4x4 type vehicle that had just re-fuelled with LPG at a nearby petrol station and was leaking from underneath. It was identified that the vehicle's tank held 80ltrs of LPG.</p> <p>Fire crews, along with Lancashire Constabulary worked to establish a 50m safety cordon; this included evacuating a number of nearby homes. In addition, a ground monitor was used to create a fine spray water curtain and control the vapour cloud formed by the leaking LPG.</p> <p>Fire crews then stood by awaiting the arrival of a specialist LGV vehicle engineer who had the required knowledge and equipment to make the leak safe.</p>	

Fire crews were engaged at the incident for approximately seven hours, before the vehicle was made safe and transported by a specialist vehicle recovery contractor. The owner of the vehicle was advised not to use the vehicle again until it had undergone a full inspection.

WESTERN AREA (Blackpool and Fylde Districts)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Western Area
Campaign:	Covid-19 Pandemic Response
Activities (brief details):	
<p>Blackpool and Fylde district Community Safety Advisors have been supporting the National Health Service in the delivery of Covid-19 vaccinations in the community.</p> <p>The team have been an integral part of the Winter Gardens Mass Vaccination site and have been providing Site Lead and marshalling roles thus maintaining a well organised and safe environment for the general public to access the services.</p> <p>Most recently the team have also been supporting a further vaccination site in South Shore, Blackpool. The team continue to rotate through these sites whilst also managing the HFSC referrals into Western Area.</p>	

INCIDENT OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Western Area - Blackpool
Date	26/02/2021
Time of Call:	15:19
Incident Details: Building Fire, Domestic – Persons Reported	
<p>Two fire engines from Blackpool were mobilised to reports of smoke issuing from the first floor flat of a mid-terraced property. On arrival at the premises, the officer-in-charge quickly established that, although the occupants of the flat in question were not believed to be in the premises, the building actually comprised 6 residential flats and residents of flats on the second floor were trapped due to heavily smoke logged communal areas, preventing their escape.</p> <p>Two breathing apparatus teams were committed; one to tackle the fire on the first floor and a second to rescue residents trapped on the second floor. An additional pumping appliance from South Shore was also mobilised to the incident.</p> <p>Crews rescued five people from the building, ranging in ages from 30 to 50 years and Fire Service personnel assisted North West Ambulance staff by administering oxygen therapy to casualties suffering from smoke inhalation. Two casualties were conveyed to hospital via ambulance.</p>	

The fire was caused by an electrical fault in a refrigerator, causing it to ignite and then spread to the carpet, floorboards and door frame of the flat. A Station Manager attended and instigated an investigation under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order by local Protection Officers.

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Western Area - Fylde
Date:	26/02/2021
Time of Call:	14:51:49
Incident Details: Domestic Property Fire - Sheltered housing	
<p>Crews from St Annes and South Shore were called to a report of a domestic building fire in a kitchen, at a sheltered housing premises. On arrival, crews were faced with a small fire involving batteries in a kitchen drawer, which if not detected early could easily have developed into a serious fire. On this occasion, the property did have working smoke alarms fitted.</p> <p>There is a requirement for fire crews to undertake an investigation to determine the cause of fire. This work is important as the findings support the Service with the development of Prevention and Protection strategies. In this instance the fire was caused by the occupier storing a large quantity of batteries / superglue / household tools etc in drawer beneath a sink drainer. A 9v battery without terminal protectors had come into contact with a metal ruler, resulting in a short circuit between the terminals, which subsequently overheated causing ignition of adjacent cardboard packaging.</p> <p>Details of the incident were passed to Protection and Prevention departments so follow-up activities could be undertaken. This is standard practice and aimed at ensuring victims of fire in residential settings are supported post fire, that prevention equipment is installed and working and education becomes embedded. In commercial settings, the follow-up work is to ensure the building meets the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order. This follow-up activity has been completed with no further issues being identified.</p>	

CENTRAL AREA (Preston District)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Central Area - Preston
Campaign:	Ramadan, Vaccinations and Student Safe
Activities (brief details):	
<p>Ramadan: Work is underway to enable support and safety information to be shared within Muslim communities on the lead up to this year's Ramadan. Community Fire Safety staff from both Central and Eastern Areas have been in contact with all local mosques to share advice and information and they have also presented on local radio, providing education associated with the dangers of cooking and hot oil.</p> <p>Challenges still remain due to the restrictions from COVID, but the contacts have all been set up and information is being shared through social media with an online Microsoft Teams meeting in order to support local communities during the pandemic.</p> <p>Further information and learning is to be shared via mosques on key fire safety messages within the Muslim community, covering topics such as cooking safety, electrical safety, road safety and the offer of a Home Fire Safety Check.</p> <p>Vaccinations: Staff from Central CFS have continued with assisting the logistics and administration of the COVID vaccine at mass sites throughout Lancashire. A staffing rota has been set up to ensure sufficient cover for core prevention work and support will continue to be provided until the situation is relaxed and hopefully sees a return to business as usual.</p> <p>Student Safe: Work has begun through the recovery phase to establish a uniformed approach for both Central and Northern Area in delivering fire safety information for new students enrolling at the universities. Unwanted Fire Signals statistics for student halls in Preston have been provided and each residence with high activity will receive fire safety input from both CFS and Operational Crews, once the COVID-19 road map allows the reintroduction of face to face activity. Meantime, students will receive fire safety information through the LFRS Studentsafe generic fire safety disc upon enrolment. LFRS has requested that UCLan ensure that every student receives the input as part of their registration and provides numbers of recipients for recording purposes.</p>	

INCIDENT OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Preston
Date:	16/2/2021
Time of Call:	10:39
Incident Details: Explosion – dwelling	
<p>Four fire appliances were mobilised to an explosion in a 2-storey mid terraced dwelling.</p> <p>The initial crews provided first aid to the occupier before handing him over to the care of the paramedics and Air Ambulance crew that attended. The surrounding area was evacuated by LFRS and police due to concerns over further explosions, the structural stability of the building and surrounding properties.</p> <p>Fire crews made the scene as safe as possible. Building control and LFRS Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) were requested to attend, in order to establish the extent of the structural damage to the building and neighbouring properties.</p> <p>A safe working cordon control system was established to monitor LFRS staff and personnel from other agencies in and out of the risk area. Gas supply was isolated initially by LFRS crews, then once the area was deemed safe for them to enter, isolated further by Cadent Gas.</p> <p>The building was inspected by Local Authority Building Control and USAR, who deemed it structurally safe with substantial cosmetic damage including windows, doors and internal walls being blown out by the blast.</p> <p>The incident highlighted safe and effective joint working between blue light and local authority partners.</p> <p>The explosion is believed to have been caused by a gas leak within the property ignited by the occupier when he lit a cigarette.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Preston
Date:	11/3/2021
Time of Call:	09:27
Incident Details: Dangerous structure	
<p>Crews were mobilised to reports of a handrail 100m long hanging in a dangerous position on top of a mill.</p> <p>The initial crews recognised the need for additional resources and requested an additional fire appliance, the rope rescue team and an aerial ladder platform (ALP).</p> <p>The crew utilised rope rescue equipment and the ALP to access and remove the handrail. Police attended for traffic control and to maintain the outer cordon.</p> <p>The incident was caused by deterioration of brickwork and fixings.</p>	

PENNINE AREA (Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale)

COMMUNITY SAFETY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Pennine Area
Campaign:	Pennine Mass vaccination sites and Virtual Fire Safety
Activities (brief details):	
<p>Burnley and Pendle:</p> <p>Since the mass roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination sites* began in December, LFRS staff have teamed up with NHS colleagues to ensure efficient running of the sites. The teams have worked tirelessly and Community Safety staff have been humbled to be part of the huge ongoing efforts.</p> <p>Dedicated staff have gone the extra mile for those that have come through the doors for their 1st vaccine; meeting and greeting Burnley`s most vulnerable people in their 100`s each day. Finding such reward in their continued effort, staff have gone forward with the offer to become vaccinators and have embarked on new qualifications, training and skills, whilst endeavouring to join forces with NHS teams to meet the challenge of vaccinating the community.</p> <p>*St Peters Centre *Town Centre Burnley</p> <p>Rossendale District:</p> <p>A request from Burnley Prince`s Trust Team, to deliver a fire safety session to their team of young people was received into the Pennine Community Fire Safety Office. Rossendale-based Community Safety Advisor`s put together a bespoke education package, which contained a range of information including a quiz, which they were able to present over Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>The cohort received a combination of inputs such as fire science and the roles within the fire services including some information which encompasses part of the fire cadet learning modules, giving insight to the standards and requirements of roles within the service. This was a very successful combined effort, where the 2 departments came together to help shape the future for these young people.</p>	

INCIDENT OF OPERATIONAL INTEREST

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Pennine Area - Burnley
Date:	09/03/2021
Time of Call:	08:11
Incident Details: Road Traffic Collision – M65 Westbound, car left carriageway and struck bridge.	
<p>Fire engines from both Burnley and Hyndburn were mobilised to an incident on the westbound carriageway of the M65. The incident involved one vehicle that is believed to have been stationary on the hard shoulder before crossing both lanes of traffic and then returning back towards the hard shoulder, riding up the safety barrier and settling between the embankment and bridge, which it had struck before coming to a stop.</p> <p>LFRS crews were first on scene and took the lead with the casualty care of the two occupants, one male and one female, who were out of the vehicle by this stage. One casualty was conscious and breathing with the second unconscious, but breathing.</p> <p>Due to the precarious position of the vehicle, crews utilised specialist stabilisation equipment on the car, ensuring no further movement or risk to emergency services on scene.</p> <p>Liaison was had between emergency responders, which concluded with a request from the Highways Agency to arrange a structural inspection of the bridge due to the impact of a vehicle. Both casualties were conveyed to hospital via road ambulance.</p>	

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Pennine Area - Pendle
Date:	02/03/2021
Time of Call:	15:47
Incident Details: Special Service – Casualty impaled	
<p>A 10-year-old girl was at the park with her mother and had been playing on a climbing frame. On arrival, the crew from Nelson discovered that the girl had become trapped on rope webbing of the climbing frame. NWS were already in attendance.</p> <p>The webbing had previously been damaged and had wire intertwined within it to provide strength. The girl had got two lengths of the wire embedded in her finger.</p> <p>In order to free the girl from the entrapment, crews had to cut the wire ropes using bolt croppers, wire cutters and other pieces of equipment.</p>	

The casualty was then taken to hospital by ambulance, with the wires still in her finger, in order for them to be removed.

SUMMARY REPORT FOR:	Pennine Area - Rossendale
Date:	21/03/2021
Time of Call:	16:52
Incident Details: Special Service Call: Rescue of Horse from Ravine	
<p>Following the discovery of a horse that had fallen down a ravine into a ditch, a call was made by the owners to request the attendance of LFRS to assist in the rescue of the 5-year old animal.</p> <p>On arrival, the officer-in-charge realised that the Rope Rescue Team was required and asked for them to be mobilised to the incident.</p> <p>The Large Animal Rescue team from Nelson also attended, alongside a local vet, who had been called by the horse owner. A full assessment was conducted and the animal was rescued by hoisting it to its feet, assisting the vet and owner to walk the horse out onto firm safe land.</p> <p>The animal was expected to make a full recovery. The incident lasted around 2 hours before concluding safely.</p>	