

# Public Document Pack

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 13 December 2021 in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton commencing at 10.00 am

Car parking is available on the Main Drill ground.

If you have any queries regarding the agenda papers or require any further information, please initially contact Diane Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer on Telephone Number Preston 01772 866720 and she will be pleased to assist.

Rooms have been made available for Political Group meetings from 0900 hours onwards.

Conservative Group - Lecture Hall 5

Labour Group – Lecture Hall 6

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:

[dianebrooks@lancsfirerescue.org.uk](mailto:dianebrooks@lancsfirerescue.org.uk).

## AGENDA

### PART 1 (open to press and public)

#### Chairman's Announcement - Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

This meeting will be held in line with Covid-19 restrictions.

Combined Fire Authority Members will attend in person.

Members of the press and public can attend in person (subject to national Covid-19 restrictions) or view the meeting via a live webcast on YouTube.

Any persons present at the meeting may photograph, film or record the proceedings during the public part of the agenda. Any member of the press and public who objects to being photographed, filmed, or recorded should let it be known to the Chairman who will then instruct that those persons are not photographed, filmed or recorded.

#### 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 - 8)

5. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (Pages 9 - 30)
6. MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE (Pages 31 - 36)
7. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE (Pages 37 - 56)
8. MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021 OF STRATEGY GROUP (Pages 57 - 60)
9. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2021 OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP (Pages 61 - 66)
10. MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2021 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE (Pages 67 - 82)
11. MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE (Pages 83 - 88)
12. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE (Pages 89 - 102)
13. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES (PAGES 103 - 106)  
Standing item.
14. MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT (Pages 107 - 112)
15. ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2020-2021 (Pages 113 - 130)
16. STRATEGIC AERIAL APPLIANCE REVIEW (Pages 131 - 134)
17. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS (Pages 135 - 142)
18. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS (Pages 143 - 150)
19. OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF INTEREST (Pages 151 - 156)
20. MEMBER COMPLAINTS  
Standing item.
21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING  
The next meeting of the Authority will be held on Monday 21 February 2022 at 1000 hours at Washington Hall Training Centre, Euxton.
22. 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.

23. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

PART 2

24. PENSIONS UPDATE - IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT (Pages 157 - 166)

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# Agenda Item 4

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Monday, 13 September 2021 at 10.00 am in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

D O'Toole (Chairman)

#### Councillors

J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)

L Beavers

S Clarke

M Dad

N Hennessy

K Iddon

F Jackson

A Kay

H Khan

Z Khan

G Mirfin

S Morris

M Pattison

J Rigby

P Rigby

S Serridge

J Singleton

D Smith

T Williams

R Woollam

#### 21-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors P Britcliffe, D Haworth and J Mein and Councillor J Hugo.

#### 22-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

#### 23-20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 28 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

#### 24-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 1 JULY 2021 OF STRATEGY GROUP

The Chairman took the opportunity to encourage Members to attend meetings of the Strategy Group as these were very informative.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group held on 1 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

25-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 7 JULY 2021 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried how the proposed increase in maternity pay provisions to 26 weeks full pay, as referred to in paragraph 3 on page 14 of the agenda pack, compared with other Fire Authorities. In response the Chief Fire Officer advised that the report proposed an enhancement to the provision of maternity and paternity pay to all members of the Service and when compared with other Fire Services, this was in the top quartile of favourable policies across the sector. County Councillor Hennessy felt that 6 months was insufficient, suggesting a year be more appropriate particularly for a first child and where the Service wanted to encourage the retention of female firefighters. The Chief Fire Officer added that it would be possible after the policy had been adopted to reflect on its impact.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 7 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

26-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 12 JULY 2021 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried whether all Members would receive a copy of the strategic brief referred to in paragraph 2 on page 41 of the agenda pack. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the document prepared for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services was an internal document that set out the Service position in relation to key lines of enquiry and this would help shape the strategic briefing presentation for the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman to present to the HMI at the start of the inspection. The Clerk to the Authority advised that there were rules in relation to access to information. Where information would not normally be shared any written requests for access would be considered on a need to know and case by case basis.

The Chairman raised a further question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried the level of progress in relation to the 9 recommended changes to the protection workforce listed on page 44 of the agenda pack. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided reassurance that the first 5 recommendations had been completed with the remaining 4 ongoing, some of which related to training which would take some time to complete.

In response to a question raised by the Chairman regarding blue light collaboration, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that throughout the covid pandemic collaboration work had been concentrated through the Lancashire Resilience Forum and there remained some staff working in the vaccination centres. He advised that a review had been undertaken of the blue light collaboration proposals which had focussed on the Service and Lancashire Constabulary actions. A meeting had been held recently with Mr Gene Quinn, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) Interim Head of Service for Cumbria and

Lancashire and it was agreed that project leads would be asked to meet, refocus and draft a proposed forward plan. It was noted that the Service provided support to NWS and Lancashire Constabulary in gaining entry to premises in a medical emergency and there had been successful site sharing arrangements.

The Chairman commented that the Service had very capable staff who could be used as emergency first responders. This was a pilot from a number of years ago where the Service responded to a wide range of medical emergencies on behalf of NWS. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the pilot had not been extended following national terms and conditions negotiations, this was still an issue of interest among colleagues who were happy to respond in their communities and the positive efforts of staff who made life-saving interventions were very well documented.

In response to a question from the Vice-Chairman regarding support provided for missing persons and the availability of assets, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service operated under the Constabulary who had overall responsibility for missing persons. Assets available were staff who had received training, 58 fire engines, drone and canine provision. Positive feedback had been received from NWS that without support from the Service in locating missing persons outcomes might have been very different.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman expressed pride and gratitude to staff and volunteers who had, and continued, to marshal and give vaccinations at covid centres.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 12 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

27-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING TUESDAY, 20 JULY 2021 OF AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 20 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

28-20/21 MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 28 JULY 2021 OF PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

In response to a comment from the Chairman, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there had been a slight increase in recent months in Accidental Building Fires (non-dwellings) as detailed on page 63 of the agenda pack. There had also been an increase in deliberate fires in these types of premises. The Service worked closely with the Police with the outcome of any prosecutions reported later on the agenda.

The Chairman commented on the term 'accidental' which could only be determined following an investigation. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised on the work of the Incident Intelligence Officers and fire investigations, adding that it was intended to refresh the performance indicators alongside the Community Risk Management Plan for implementation April 2022.

RESOLVED: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 28 July 2021 be noted and endorsed.

29-20/21 SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers must prepare, and where necessary revise, a written statement of health and safety policy. The existing safety, health and environment policy document, which was last considered by the Authority in September 2019, had been recently reviewed, amended as required, and was now presented to Members for consideration.

As the health and safety and environment functions were managed in a similar way it was considered appropriate for the Authority to declare its intent for both health and safety and the environment in the same document.

The Chairman raised a question that had been put to him by County Councillor Hennessy who queried whether the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) "DECON – to prevent and protect" information for firefighters to better protect themselves would be included in the policy document. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that a lot of work had been done regarding contamination and when Anna Stec, Professor in fire chemistry and toxicity at the University of Central Lancashire produced the report she had undertaken analysis of the Service which showed there was some surface contamination found on the top of some lockers but no air borne contamination was identified which was reassuring. The Policy captured high level narrative and would not go into that level of detail. He confirmed that a lot of work had already been done within LFRS and in consultation with the FBU and other unions. The Service was doing a lot to ensure firefighters continued to be protected. There had been a £4m investment in new facilities at Service Training Centre, state of the art breathing apparatus sets were provided, washing machines and drying machines would be provided, P3 face masks were being issued to every firefighter, training on the correct use of PPE was provided, stations designated separate clean and dirty areas, fire engines had wipeable surfaces and Lancashire operated a pooled PPE system that ensured stores were constantly replenished.

County Councillor Hennessy referred to an internal draft document on the "Management of PPE Contamination". The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised this was being shaped through the Service's Contamination Working Group which included representation from the FBU and the Health and Safety Team. He confirmed that the Service followed best practice and, in many ways, exceeded best practice by taking a whole systems approach. The Chairman cautioned the use of a draft document that had not been completed, approved nor was accessible yet to other Members of the Authority.

RESOLVED: - That the Authority endorsed the revised Safety, Health and Environment Policy as now presented.

30-20/21 MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007 with a review of roles in 2017. The Authority appointed its Member Champions at its Annual meeting in June and current Member Champions were:

- Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby



- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan;
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Andrea Kay;
- Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam.

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period June – August 2021. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with defined terms of reference.

County Councillor Mirfin added that as a member of Ribble Valley Community Partnership he would receive information on road accident statistics from the previous year and a 3-month rolling update had been requested. If appropriate he would be happy to provide this information at future meetings.

In response to request from County Councillor Hennessy regarding access to the Biker Down course, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised details could be found on Lancashire Road Safety Partnership website and which he would provide separately to her.

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

#### 31-20/21 FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021 was provided.

Fire protection and business support information was provided and Members noted that there were 5 arson convictions during the period.

The Vice-Chairman commented that arson prosecutions amounted to over 20 years custodial sentences. He paid tribute to the officers who painstakingly investigated these cases which resulted in these severe penalties.

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

#### 32-20/21 OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF NOTE

This report provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note since the last report to the Authority.

The Chairman and County Councillor Hennessy expressed gratitude for everyone involved in attending the school fire in Ormskirk. Fires in schools did not just damage the premises but impacted greatly on the pupils. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the Authority recommended the installation of sprinklers in all new school buildings and significant renovations or extensions (resolution 31/13 refers).

County Councillor Pattison expressed gratitude for the blue light services that attended a domestic building fire in Morecambe which had sadly resulted in a fatality. She gave thanks to Service personnel who offered reassurance to the

community including the offer of a home fire safety check.

As part of the report Members received a presentation by Station Manager Mark Warwick, Response and Emergency Planning / International Search and Rescue Co-ordinator. SM Warwick introduced Tom Cogley, Crew Manager who advised of the support provided by himself and 3 other members of the International Search and Rescue team from Lancashire. The team were deployed for a week from 7 August 2021. They formed part of a 21-person team to support a UK Fire and Rescue response to devastating wildfires in Greece.

Members noted that the team was put together by the National Fire Chiefs Council who had responded to a request from the Home Office to provide operational assistance to Greece. The wildfires were largely due to the country's most severe heatwave in 30 years, with temperatures soaring to more than 40 degrees centigrade in some areas.

The team's main priority was to protect the areas of greatest need using a wide range of specialised skills. This involved protecting the surrounding village's properties and infrastructures, removing vegetation to create firebreaks close to the wildfires, flying drones, identifying hotspots, and driving fire engines to provide operation cover for Greek firefighters.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman congratulated the ISAR team on a fantastic job who continuously demonstrated resilience and represented Lancashire to the highest standard.

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

33-20/21 MEMBER COMPLAINTS

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

RESOLVED: - That the current position be noted.

34-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 13 December 2021 at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.

35-20/21 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.

36-20/21 RE-APPOINTMENT OF CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER

(Paragraphs 1 and 2)

The Clerk to the Authority withdrew from the meeting for this item.

RESOLVED:- That the Authority approved the re-appointment of Mr Mark Nolan as Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for a period of twelve months, to the September meeting of the Authority in 2022.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 September 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

#### Councillors

K Iddon (Chairman)  
P Rigby (Vice-Chair)  
L Beavers  
A Kay  
J Singleton (Substitute)  
H Khan  
Z Khan  
J Rigby  
D Smith  
R Woollam

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

#### Officers

S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
M Hutton, Area Manager, Head of Prevention and Protection (LFRS)  
C Burscough, LFRS  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

#### 6-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillor Peter Britcliffe. County Councillor John Singleton was in attendance as a substitute.

#### 7-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

8-20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9-20/21 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented a detailed report to the Performance Committee. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> quarterly report for 2021/22 as detailed in the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017-2022 and included an Annual Report in Road Safety Intervention Activity during 2020-21.

The Members were informed by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, that the KPIs would be reviewed as part of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and a report would be brought to the Committee in due course. KPI 4 (Valuing Our People) was the main area to be strengthened as a number of indicators were reported to Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

This quarter's Four KPIs were shown in red which indicated that they were in negative exception. These were 1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF); 2.3 Fire Engine Availability – Wholetime, Day crewing and Day Crewing Plus; 2.4 Fire Engine Availability – On Call Duty System; and 4.2.1 Staff Absence – Excluding On-Call Duty System.

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 was 31,862 and the previous year's score was 32,448 meaning that the fire risk continued to reduce.

1.2 Overall Activity

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

Quarter 1 activity 4,867 previous year quarter 1 activity 4,916 a decrease of 1.00% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that it was expected the Service would respond to approximately 17,500 incidents over the year. There were also opportunities to support agencies such as the Police and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). He highlighted to Members that there had been a peak in the number of incidents in April which had been a trend for the past three years. With the number of people outdoors increasing due to the start of spring, it could be a reason for the rise in the number of anti-social fires. The mean average should plateau during the year following the rise at the beginning of the year.

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 43% were false alarms. However, pleasingly the number of false alarms had reduced compared to the last report to the Performance Committee.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer noted that the Service was currently consulting members of the public and broader stakeholders for their views on the proposed improvements to the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) attendance policy. It was pleasing that there had been a significant number of responses. The results would be reported to Members through the relevant Committees.

### 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 1 activity was 236, the previous year quarter 1 activity was 225, which represented an increase of 4.89% over the same quarter of the previous year.

A negative exception report was presented to Members due to the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs) recorded during April 2021 being above the upper control limit. The report analysis explained that there were 103 ADFs during April 2021, against an upper control limit of 101. The start of April coincided with the half term school holidays and the lifting of England's Covid response 'stay at home' rule. Both were factors which interrupted the daily routine and could lead to distraction.

Ignition sources related to cooking appliances continued to account for the largest proportion of ADF incidents. During the month of April, 48% of ADF incidents recorded a cooking appliance incident. That decreased during May and June to 38% and 40% respectively. ADF activity during the following months of May and June had since decreased; with May recording 18% fewer incidents than the five-year average and June's activity being just 3% greater.

Actions were being taken to improve performance. Service and station social media accounts were actively being utilised to warn and inform / advise residents. Community Safety teams continued to ensure they deliver post incident advice to all occupiers following an accidental dwelling fire, along with targeted

engagement in identified sheltered accommodation and super output areas based upon ADF activity within similar property types and areas. Operational crews had resumed face to face Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) following a significant period of Covid-19 restrictions. Crews would provide occupiers with advice primarily focusing on cooking safety and preventing secondary fires spreading to property. The Service was continuing to undertake thorough quality assurance of the Post Incident Action Log (PIAL) to ensure internal referrals were completed, along with continued auditing of the Service’s Information recording System (IRS) to ensure incidents are correctly reported.

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

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

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

The latest quarter recorded a combined ‘low’ and ‘medium’ severity of 96.2% which was an increase of 3.3% against the 92.9% recorded in the same quarter of the previous year.

Severity (Direction against the same quarter of previous year)		Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 1 (2021/22)
		Quarter 1 (20/21)	Quarter 2 (20/21)	Quarter 3 (20/21)	Quarter 4 (20/21)	
High	↓	7.1%	3.5%	3.9%	7.0%	<b>3.8%</b>
Medium	↑	52.4%	43.9%	47.8%	55.1%	<b>57.6%</b>
Low	↓	40.4%	52.5%	48.3%	37.9%	<b>38.6%</b>

**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.

Over the latest quarter, Accidental Dwelling Fires with a previous HFSC



decreased 3% against the total number of ADF's over the same quarter of the previous year.

	2021/22		2020/21	
	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC	ADF's with previous HFSC	% of ADF's with previous HFSC
Q1*	21	9%	26	12%
Q2				
Q3				
Q4				

\*Quarter 1. The impact of COVID19 working guidelines during the previous 15 months has led to a reduction in the number of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC's) delivered – KPI 1.7 page 17. This has led to a decrease in the percentage of ADF's with a recorded HFSC within the previous rolling 12-month period.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that where the number of reported dwellings fires was high, it could suggest that the fire alarms were functioning and effective or, conversely, it could suggest that people were having fires despite the prevention activity. This may be an area where Members require further clarity and the value of reporting these figures may not be too beneficial.

#### 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 last quarterly period. Three casualties were recorded as serious and 6 slight. The same quarter of the previous year recorded no fatalities, 1 serious and 9 slight.

Casualty Status	2021/22 Quarter 1	2020/21 Quarter 1
Fatal	1	0
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Serious	3	1
Victim went to hospital visit, injuries appeared Slight	6	9
TOTAL	10	10

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that, sadly, the fatality in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was an 89-year-old male with the cause of the fire involving smoking materials. In addition, in two separate incidents, which had serious casualties, the cause of the fires also involved smoking materials. As part of the home safety checks, advice was given around smoking cessation.

### 1.5 (a) Accidental Building Fires (Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'unknown' and included property types which were regulated under the fire safety order such as: offices, retail, and hotel accommodation. Due to the nature of the construction of private garages and private sheds, there were recorded separately in KPI 1.5(b).

Quarterly activity increased 40.68% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Total number of incidents	2021/22	2020/21
	Quarter 1	Quarter 1
	83	59

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer highlighted that there was a direct correlation between low levels of accidental fires during the lockdown period and the rise of incidents in April when the Covid-19 restrictions were lifted and businesses began operating again.

### 1.5 (b) Accidental Building Fires (Non-Commercial Premises: Private Garages and Private Sheds)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'unknown' and included non-commercial building types: private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, and private summerhouse.

Quarterly activity decreased 62.96% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Following the previous meeting, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed that accidental building fires in non-commercial premises such as private garages and private sheds had been presented separately. This provided a more accurate performance indicator as these types of accidental building fires were often recorded as high severity due to the loss of a building, often before the Fire Service had arrived on scene.

### 1.5.1 (a) Accidental Building Fires (Commercial Premises) – Extent of Damage (Fire Severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'unknown' and included property types which were regulated under the fire safety order such as: offices, retail, and hotel accommodation. Due to the nature of the construction of private garages and private sheds, there were recorded separately in KPI 1.5.1 (b).

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 75.0%. This was an increase of 18.4% against a combined severity of 56.6% in the same quarter of the previous year.

1.5.1 (a) Severity (Direction against the same quarter of previous year)		Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 1 (2021/22)
		Quarter 1 (20/21)	Quarter 2 (20/21)	Quarter 3 (20/21)	Quarter 4 (20/21)	
High	↓	43.4%	37.7%	22.4%	24.0%	25.0%
Medium	↑	46.5%	47.2%	65.7%	66.0%	65.8%
Low	↓	10.1%	15.1%	11.9%	10.0%	9.2%

1.5.1 (b) ABF (Non-Commercial Premises: Private Garages and Private Sheds) – Extent of Damage (Fire Severity)

This indicator reported number of primary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'unknown' and included non-commercial building types: private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, and private summerhouse. Due to their single room construction, any damage was often classified as 'whole building' which had the effect of increasing their severity category outcome.

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 63.0%. This was an increase of 5.9% against a combined severity of 57.1% in the same quarter of the previous year.

1.5.1 (b) Severity (Direction against the same quarter of previous year)		Previous Rolling 4 Quarters				Quarter 1 (2021/22)
		Quarter 1 (20/21)	Quarter 2 (20/21)	Quarter 3 (20/21)	Quarter 4 (20/21)	
High	↓	42.9%	45.0%	30.8%	25.0%	37.0%
Medium	↓	57.1%	35.0%	61.5%	62.5%	51.9%

Low	↑	0.0%	20.0%	7.7%	12.5%	11.1%
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## 1.6 Deliberate Fires

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

Deliberate Fire Type	2021/22 Quarter 1	2020/21 Quarter 1
1.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Anti-Social Behaviour	552	556
1.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings	28	18
1.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises	41	29

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there was a rise in the number of deliberate fires in spring which also occurred in the previous year. The Service would continue to work closely with the Police and numbers would be monitored as it was a worrying trend.

## 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 Deputy Chief Fire Officer stated that it was pleasing that, since moving out of lockdown, the number of completed HFSC's had increased 61% over the same quarter as the previous year. However, although there were still challenges presented by the pandemic, the modified HFSC engagement process had enabled the Service to deliver HFSCs to the most vulnerable.

	2021/22	2020/21
	% of High HFSC outcomes	% of High HFSC outcomes
Q1	66%	71%
Q2		
Q3		
Q4		

To help illustrate the importance of the Home Fire Safety Check service;

properties that had not accepted the offer of a HFSC, but subsequently suffered an Accidental Dwelling Fire, were monitored. During this quarter 8 properties recorded an ADF after not accepting a HFSC during the previous rolling 12-month period.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed that the wording of 'properties recorded an ADF after refusing an HFSC' would be amended as it was not necessarily that the resident had refused but could be that they were not available. A letter from the Service would have been sent to offer the HFSC, however, the resident may not have responded.

### 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.

An improvement was shown if the percentage of positive influence on participant's behaviour was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year. This data was not available due to the ongoing pandemic.

During quarter 1, to ensure road safety messages continued to be available, the service had undertaken 3 Wasted Lives sessions involving 25 attendees, along with 2 sessions which trialled the new virtual delivery package. It was presented to 2 full year groups of 360 pupils. Five Road Sense sessions were delivered to 125 students that missed the course due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Service also continued to engage with people via social media platforms with road safety videos on the 'Biker down' page and engagement via Twitter and Facebook.

A new virtual delivery pack had been updated and trialled and would be offered to schools into the new academic year.

### 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.

	2021/22				2020/21	
	*No. of Inspections	Requiring		Satisfactory Audit	% requiring Formal Activity	% requiring Formal Activity
		Formal Activity	Informal Activity			
Q1	344	25	211	69	7%	4%
Q2						
Q3						
Q4						

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was pleased to report that frontline crews (as well as carrying out Home Fire Safety Checks), were also carrying out Business Fire Safety Checks in lower risk business premises so that the specialised dedicated team could concentrate on high-risk premises. The number of Inspections and Audits would increase in the coming months.

## **KPI 2 – Responding to fire and other emergencies quickly and competently**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer wanted to reiterate the standard set in Lancashire was one of the quickest, outside metropolitan districts, that were seen anywhere in the country and to achieve a 90% 6-minute attendance (including call handling), was a fantastic achievement.

### 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 1 – 1st pump response increased 0.67% of total first fire engine attendances over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	<b>2021/22 Quarter 1</b>	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 4
89.17%	<b>89.17%</b>	88.50%	<b>88.50%</b>

### 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.

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

- Very high-risk area = 9 minutes
- High risk area = 11 minutes
- Medium risk area = 13 minutes
- Low risk area = 15 minutes

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

Quarter 1 – 2nd pump response decreased 0.17% of total second pump attendances over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	<b>2021/22 Quarter 1</b>	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 1
83.48%	<b>83.48%</b>	83.65%	<b>83.65%</b>

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that the drop in response standards in June could correlate to the availability of on-call fire fighters in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. If the on-call firefighters were furloughed from their primary employer, they could respond more quickly. However, once they returned to their primary employment, their availability declined, and back-up appliances support would have to travel from further afield.

### 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 Deputy Chief Fire Officer was pleased to inform that the Service had met the 1<sup>st</sup> pump attendance standard with the standard reached being 91.53%.

The latest quarter 1st pump response increased 0.54% over the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	<b>2021/22 Quarter 1</b>	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 1
91.53%	<b>91.53%</b>	92.07%	<b>92.07%</b>

### 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

Staff sickness was also highlighted as a reason for fire engines being unavailable.

Standard: 99.5%

Year to date availability of 99.19% was a decrease of 0.09% over the same period of the previous year.

Year to Date	<b>2021/22 Quarter 1</b>	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 1
99.19%	<b>99.19%</b>	99.28%	<b>99.28%</b>

The negative exception report was due to the percentage of wholetime (WT) pumps being available to respond to emergencies being below the lower control limit during the month of May.



The availability of WT pumps during May was recorded at 98.82% which was 0.05% outside of the 98.87% control limit and below the Service's 99.5% standard. Two appliances accounted for 41% of off the run hours during May. A significant proportion of the time these two pumps had recorded as being off the run was attributed to crew welfare due to recovery following a protracted gas explosion incident at Heysham. The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) function was shared between the Chorley and Bamber Bridge stations.

The likelihood of the USAR function of both stations being deployed at the same incident for a prolonged period of time would be rare and the appliances being off the run due to extended welfare may rarely reoccur. The Service would continue to monitor for such occurrences in the future. During the welfare recovery periods, the On-Call pumps also based at the Chorley and Bamber Bridge stations continued to provide cover for the surrounding areas.

#### 2.4 Fire Engine Availability – On-Call Duty System

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

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

- Manager deficient 59%
- Crew deficient 79%
- Not enough BA wearers 67%
- No driver 36%

Standard: above 95%

Year to date availability 85.07%, an 11.18% decrease against the previous year to date total availability of 96.25%.

Year to Date	2021/22 Quarter 1	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 1
85.07%	<b>85.07%</b>	96.25%	<b>96.25%</b>

The negative exception report was due to the percentage of On-Call (OC) pumps available to respond to emergencies being below the lower control limit during the month of June.

The availability of OC pumps during June was recorded at 82.02% which was 1.36% outside the 83.38% control limit and below the Service's 95% aspirational standard. A contributing factor may also have been the changes due to the national lockdown ending and the effect on the OC's crew's primary employment.

Two stations within the Western area were running below their optimum function. Lytham station had seen a number of staff losses with a Firefighter transferring to another station and the resignation of a watch manager. St Annes had also lost three Firefighters during the quarter. Availability shortfalls were being managed by staff working above their contracted hours, and existing staff increasing their skill qualifications to cover vacant posts. The latest recruitment campaign had seen 22 applicants across both stations.

Actions being taken to improve performance were:

- Continue with a driven recruitment strategy, utilising a targeted approach to stations that are in exception.
- A focused look at existing contract alignment whilst ensuring staff are fulfilling existing contracts when under contracted hours.
- Lack of Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) and Officers in Charge (OIC) continue to be an issue on stations.
- On-Call Support Officer's (OCSOs) and unit managers to support Firefighter development to assist with future OIC/LGV development.
- Support national On-Call campaigns and utilise their recruitment literature and designs.
- Invest in On-Call through recruitment material and resources.
- Fill OCSO Team vacancies to ensure all units receive the support required.

Local action plans for stations with availability of less than 85% would continue to be produced in conjunction with Station District Managers, Unit Managers and OCSOs to tailor the support required to each unit.

#### 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 On-Call crewed engines were available for quarter 1 was 82.95%. This excluded the wholetime detachments shown in KPI 2.4. The cost of detaching wholetime firefighters to on-call stations was significant, with not

a significant impact on appliance availability across the county.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there was software available which could actively identify any gaps in emergency cover which it would display on a map and pumps would be sent to the area requiring cover. A report to the future meeting of the Performance Committee would be provided.

## 2.5 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the number of staff accidents.

The number of staff accidents during the latest quarter increased by 4 incidents against the same quarter of the previous year.

Year to Date	2021/22 Quarter 1	Previous year to Date	2020/21 Quarter 1
21	21	17	17

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

### 3.1 Progress against Savings Programme

The annual budget for 2021/22 was set at £58.2m with a budget to 30 June of £15.4 million. The spend for the same period was £15.2m giving an underspend of £0.2m.

### 3.2 Overall User Satisfaction

Since April 2012, 2,726 people had been surveyed and the number satisfied with the service was 2,696; %, satisfied was 98.90% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.44%.

During the latest quarter, 52 people were surveyed and 51 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**

### 4.2.1 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 1.809.

The negative exception report was due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target for each month during

quarter 1.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with the analysis, that during quarter 1, April 2021 – June 2021, absence statistics showed above target for all three months for both Whole-time personnel and Non-uniformed personnel during May and June. There were 2 cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 3 months with the reason being:

<b>Green Book</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Case/s</b>
Mental Health	1

<b>Grey Book</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Case/s</b>
Cancer	1*

*\*This employee has now retired on the ground of ill-health.*

There were 28 further cases of long-term absence which were also recorded within the 3 months:

<b>Green Book</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Case/s</b>
Mental Health	1
Neurological	1

<b>Grey Book</b>	
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Case/s</b>
Muscular skeletal	8
Mental Health	7
Hospital/post-operative	5
Coronavirus	3
Blood Disorder	1
Cardiac	1
Neurological	1

During the quarter, 18 of the 30 employees returned to duty. At the end of June 2021, the cumulative totals showed that non-uniformed staff absence was above target at 0.526 shifts lost per employee, for whole-time uniformed staff absence was also above target at 1.88 shifts lost per employee.

Overall absence for all staff (except On Call staff) was 1.809 shifts lost which was above the Service target of 1.25 shifts lost for the quarter.

The cumulative figures in the period included employees absent due to coronavirus but did not include those required to self-isolate as a result of coronavirus.

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, ensuring the appropriate management of 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 manager's understanding and interpretation of the policy;
- Encouraging employees to make use of the Employee Assistance Programme provider Health Assured and The Firefighter's Charity;
- HR to be in attendance at Stress Risk Assessment meetings to support managers and to offer 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 (PTIs);
- 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, 0.99%.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Fire Officer for a comprehensive report. He was pleased that performance had improved. The standard for response times was very high and the Service achievement was excellent. He noted that the public were very satisfied and congratulated the Service on their performance. He also asked that his congratulations were passed onto the Firefighters.

In response to Councillor Singleton's question regarding whether a target should be placed on accidental fires as this was out of the Service's remit, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service was able to have a positive impact on accidental fires through the provision of advice on commercial buildings in terms of alarms, fire doors etc. The target was to reduce the severity of an incident and if those measures were working, they should have a positive effect. The Service also provided fire safety advice in the home, smoking cessation advice and support for those who were most vulnerable. The Prevent and Protection teams were also utilised to give advice. Councillor Singleton stated that the response times were excellent and congratulated all involved in responding to incidents.

In response to a question from Councillor Singleton concerning the reason for the information on page 40 being provided in percentages and the information on page 41 being provided in numbers, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that the percentages related to the severity of incidents and the numbers on page 41 was the number of deliberate fires. He added, in response to an additional question from Councillor Singleton in relation to the percentage of fires being a result of arson on page 40, that the information displayed the severity of fires in non-commercial premises and therefore, did not correlate with deliberate fires on page 41. The Chairman informed that he and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer had

been in discussion regarding how to improve the presentation of the information to the Committee in future.

Councillor Beavers raised the issue of retaining on-call firefighters due to the number of hours of cover expected and the level of training required. She asked if resources would be better spent recruiting full time firefighters and reducing the number of on-call firefighters. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that part of his role on the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) focused on the on-call firefighter role. He advised that there was some research being done by NFCC looking at other countries to see how they managed to keep crews available and looking at how firefighters were remunerated. He confirmed that in Lancashire, on-call firefighters were paid more than the national terms and conditions and a lot of work was being done to attract and retain them. This included looking at whether the 5-minute area catchment could be extended to 6 or 7 minutes. It was noted that an Emergency Cover Review (ECR) would be considered on a refreshed Community Risk Management Plan to look at how many and what types of appliances would be needed and the associated crewing arrangements. The ECR would be considered by the Authority early next year once the Government financial settlement was known. The NFCC was also looking at lessons that could be learned from other organisations and whether something could be done with primary employers.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Smith regarding cross-border support, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the whole sector was doing as much as it could to improve the availability of on-call firefighters to ensure the duty system was sustainable now and in the future. He confirmed the nearest engine would be sent to an incident and cross-border support was provided. It was noted that this was high on the agenda of the Inspectorate.

In response to a question from Councillor Singleton regarding whether there were any instances where an appliance was not available, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that this report tracked engine availability for wholetime, day crewing and day crewing plus and the on-call duty system. He advised that there were occasions when an appliance was off the run for staff welfare or vehicle defects. Across the country, there were occasions where engines were not available, but the Service always responded.

## **ANNUAL REPORT ON ROAD SAFETY INTERVENTION ACTIVITY 2020/21**

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

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

### **Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service Prevention Support – Road Safety**

Clare Burscough, Prevention Support Officer (LFRS), provided the meeting with a presentation regarding Road Safety which explained the Service's core prevention offer and also the issues on Lancashire's roads.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue has a statutory duty to attend Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), however, not to deliver road safety education. She informed the meeting that, in 2019, sadly, 46 people lost their lives and unfortunately, 1011 were injured on Lancashire's roads with 14% being children up to the age of 15 years old. Nationally, the number of people killed or seriously injured on UK roads was rising each year. The Service had a wide role in community safety issues risk management and play an active role in preventing road safety concerns.

Statistics for those killed or seriously injured were split into age groups which enabled people to be educated collectively and in a similar way as the Service had to consider how to best use resources. Statistics were also available for each district so local issues could be discussed with crews and community safety staff. Trends could help identify if current Road Safety Prevention measures were working or if the focus needed to shift. As part of the Road Safety Partnership, the emphasis was on the core prevention offer.

The cost of road fatalities to society was £2.3 million with serious injuries costing £189,000 and slight injuries costing £18,000. The Service was an active member of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP). The aims of the partnership were: to reduce the number and rate of road traffic fatalities across Lancashire; to reduce the number and rate of road traffic injuries across Lancashire; to reduce the fatalities and injuries rate across road user and age group; to adapt and change the attitude and perception of road safety across the population; and to improve the community response to road safety. The Service aimed towards a figure of zero for road traffic accidents as it was felt that no number of casualties was an acceptable figure. A large number of collisions were preventable and so they were investigating the reason for those and how to tackle the issues.

In terms of engagement, Lancashire Fire and Rescue was a trusted brand seen as an educator and not an enforcer. The Service provided good role models for young people (the 16-24 hard to reach) and communities. They were tied in with schools to deliver 'safety' messages through the national curriculum which was a relationship they could then build on. This year, Road Safety Week (15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November) would be hosted by Brake (the road safety charity). Staff from the Service had carried out a lot of prevention work as it was an easier year in respect of engagement, however, they were not good at celebrating success.

Some key partners were not able to deliver their road safety engagement during

the Covid-19 pandemic, however, Lancashire Fire and Rescue continued to successfully deliver Road Sense. Road Sense was delivered to Year 6 children in primary school as at age 10 – 11, they become at risk as pedestrians, cyclists, and bus users. The Year 6 delivery was revisited and it now included fire plans in the home, deliberate fire setting and the road safety offer. Road Sense was delivered to 6,000 children across Lancashire using MS Teams and the chat facility which enabled feedback. It was noted that the behaviour of the children changed when they were able to feedback.

An updated suite of packages was available for Wasted Lives in 2021. Sessions could now be delivered in person or virtually and either in an assembly format which would accommodate a full year group, or in a class with up to 35 students. These sessions explored Lancashire's fatal five which included: drink and drug driving; speeding; mobile phone use; seat belts; and distractions. The sessions helped young people to explore issues and with coping strategies. There was a successful delivery of Wasted Lives throughout Covid-19 and it would be relaunched for Road Safety Week in November.

Motorbike users accounted for less than 1% of the road user population, although they accounted for 50% of Lancashire's fatalities in the last 12 months. Biker Down sessions could not be run throughout the Covid-19 pandemic due to restrictions. Short video clips were created for social media which were successful in obtaining 30,000 interactions from the public. Biker Down was a free three-hour course which was offered to members of the public which offered them practical skills in incident management, first aid, and the science of being seen. The first course would take place on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The Chairman thanked the Prevention Support Officer for her presentation which was excellent. He had been the Lead Member for Highways and took Road Safety Prevention very seriously. It was pleasing that education was being delivered to schools and the issues facing bikers was being tackled.

In response to a question from Councillor Woollam in relation to what age group of people riding motorbikes were involved in fatal road traffic accidents, the Prevention Support Officer explained that there was an increase in 'born again bikers'. These were people over 40 years old who were now financially stable and had returned to biking. It was this group that the Service should focus resources on. 17-Year-olds were more likely to use a 125cc bike and wear unsuitable clothing. If they wore suitable clothing, their injuries would be less severe. Different age groups would be educated using different methods. Over 40s used social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and young used platforms such as Snapchat and Tiktok. Prior to Covid-19, the Service was working with colleges to attempt to obtain a mannequin which would provide a visual demonstration of injuries to young people.

Councillor Singleton questioned how the cost for road traffic collision fatalities came to £2.3 million. The Prevention Support Officer informed that the information was provided by the Department for Transport which was collected nationally and included costs for closing a motorway or carriageway for 5-9 hours, costs of people missing work, the cost of people missing appointments and the



cost of resources such as the police and repairing the road etc.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee endorsed the Quarter 1 Measuring Progress report and noted the content of the 4 negative exception reports.

#### 10-20/21 COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE

The Chairman agreed that the comparative performance report could be taken in Part 1 (the public part of the meeting) in view of the fact that all of the data within it was openly available. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the April 2020 to March 2021 Comparative Performance Report to the meeting. Arrangements were in place within the old Best Value (BV) family group 4 to compile an annual comparative report in respect of the two (now withdrawn) national fire indicators.

The comparative fire and rescue service continued to comprise those which made up the old BV family group 4 as detailed in table 1 below:

TABLE 1 – COMPARATIVE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES

Avon	Kent
Cheshire	Lancashire
Cleveland	Leicestershire
Derbyshire	Lincolnshire
Essex	N. Ireland
Hampshire	Nottinghamshire
Hereford & Worcester	South Wales
Hertfordshire	Staffordshire
Humberside	Surrey

Lancashire Fire and Rescue were high in levels of progress in reducing each of the indicators and performance had improved. The only area in which Lancashire was over the Family Group 4 average was in the number of primary fires per 100,000 population, which needed to be improved upon. Performance, on a whole, was better than the previous year.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed that the information contained within the report was open to the public and was brought to committee once per year. The Services within the family group were very different and he proposed that he would bring something in the report for the broader KPIs from 2022 onwards that would allow members to consider if there was value within the Comparative Performance Report and whether to continue to bring the report to the Performance Committee. Councillor Beavers acknowledged the differences between the areas in the Family Group, however, she felt that the comparison was a good way of informing how well the Service was performing and the report should be kept, although, perhaps not with the same family.

RESOLVED :- That the Performance Committee noted the report and considered the comparative outcomes.

11-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 15 December 2021 at 10:00 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meeting dates were noted for 16 March 2022 and agreed for 29 June 2022.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### AUDIT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 28 September 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

### MINUTES

### PRESENT:

#### Councillors

J Shedwick (Chairman)  
N Hennessy (Vice-Chair)  
S Clarke  
M Dad  
A Kay  
J Singleton

#### Officers

K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)  
J Baines, Head of Finance (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, 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

#### 14-20/21 ANNOUNCEMENT

The reports were not available to the public within the necessary strict statutory timeframe governed by the Local Government Act 1972, section 100B(4) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, however as the Authority's accounts needed to be signed off quickly and efficiently the Chairman had agreed the items should be considered at the meeting given the public had notice of the agenda and were at liberty to attend for comment.

#### 15-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Fred Jackson.

#### 16-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

17-20/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18-20/21 REVISIONS TO STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report.

The draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2021 presented to Resources Committee and Audit Committee in July confirmed that: i) the unaudited Statement of Accounts would be signed by the Treasurer to certify that it presented a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2021; ii) this would be subject to review by the Authority's external auditors, Grant Thornton; iii) that a further report would be presented to the Audit Committee in September, following completion of the external audit; and iv) at that meeting the Chair of the Audit Committee would be asked to sign the final statement of accounts, as well as the Treasurer. In light of this the Committee noted and endorsed the report and accounts. Subsequent to that the full set of accounts was submitted for audit to Grant Thornton.

The Statement of Accounts had been updated to reflect the following changes identified during the audit (as reported in the Audit Findings Report – elsewhere on the agenda) and a revised statement of accounts was considered by Members.

Adjusted Misstatements

There were no adjusted misstatements impacting the key statements.

Misclassifications and disclosure changes

A number of misclassifications and disclosure changes which had been adjusted in the accounts were noted as follows: -

- Accounting policies – in the draft financial statements i) the accounting policy for provisions was very brief; ii) there was no accounting policy for joint control; and iii) there was an accounting policy for non-current assets held for sale, even though the Authority did not have any – auditor recommendations were: - i) to include more detail in the accounting policy for provisions; ii) include a policy for how joint control was accounted for; and iii) to remove the policy for non-current assets held for sale.
- Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation and uncertainty – disclosure was made that Local Government Pension Scheme property related assets were subject to material valuation uncertainty at the LCPF which was not the case – auditor recommendation was therefore to remove this disclosure.
- Critical judgements – i) additional reliefs S31 grant 2020/21 were disclosed as a critical judgement. These did not appear to be critical judgements and should be disclosed elsewhere; and ii) disclosure of the judgements around the Authority's assessment that North West Fire Control Limited was a joint

operation and that group accounts were not required were not included in the note, but would be useful for users of the accounts to understand these judgements - auditor recommendations were: i) remove the going concern as a critical judgement disclosure; and ii) consider whether business rates additional reliefs s31 grant 2020/21 would be better disclosed as an estimation uncertainty if there was a significant risk of resulting in a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year; and iii) include a discloser of judgements around the accounting for North West Fire Control Limited.

- Narrative report – in the draft financial statements, the narrative report said the reserves policy had a minimum level of £3.2m. According to the reserves polity this was actually £3.5m – auditor recommendation was to update the disclosure of the minimum level of reserves in line with the policy.
- Private Finance Initiative – the wrong retail price index figure was used in the model for the calculation for the future payments of services for the Balfour Beatty Fire and Rescue NW Limited scheme. The assumed 2.5% should have been replaced by 4.489% which led to a total difference of £78k over the payables within 1-20 years – auditor recommendation was to update the disclosure based on the correct retail price index figure used in the PFI model.
- Financial Instruments – in note 8 of the draft financial statements i) current investment of 2019/20 was wrongly disclosed as £15,000k instead of £5,000k; ii) £3,387k of Other trade receivables was erroneously excluded from financial instruments; and iii) trade payable of 2019/20 was wrongly disclosed as £6,086k instead of £4,255k – auditor recommendation was to update the disclosure for the issues noted.

As all changes requested by Grant Thornton had been made to the accounts the Treasurer to the Fire Authority and the Chair of the Audit Committee were therefore required to approve the revised accounts by signing off the Statement of Responsibilities and the Balance Sheet.

As the audit was not completed it was agreed that if there were any further changes required to the accounts, authority was delegated to the Audit Committee Chairman and the Treasurer to consider and agree any amendments to the Statement of Accounts on behalf of the Committee.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Singleton regarding the classification of 'other income' referred to on page 19 of the agenda pack, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the vast majority of it came from colleges for the Service to deliver the Prince's Trust programme.

In response to a further question raised by County Councillor Singleton regarding long-term borrowing, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the Authority had 3 long-term loans which valued £2.0m. These were taken out in 2007/08 and ran to 2035/36. All were with the Public Works Loan Board and all were fixed term. He advised that the Resources Committee discussed the loans and considered any potential for debt restructure.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee re-approved the revised Statement of

Accounts and authorised the Audit Committee Chairman and Treasurer to consider and agree any further amendments to the Statement of Accounts.

19-20/21 EXTERNAL AUDIT - LETTER OF REPRESENTATION

As part of the year-end process the Authority was required to sign a letter of representation. This letter confirmed that the Authority had disclosed all relevant information in its accounts for the year in question and that all issues which should have been brought to the attention of the auditors had been.

The Treasurer confirmed he would sign the letter, as there were no issues which he felt required disclosure.

RESOLVED: - That the Audit Committee authorised the signing of the letter by the Chair of the Committee.

20-20/21 EXTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT

Mr Smith, Key Audit Partner attended the meeting remotely to answer any questions. He introduced the report and confirmed that many areas of the audit had been completed which included processing samples of debtors, creditors, income and expenditure which had been identified as an outstanding matter on page 97 of the agenda pack. Other items outstanding included completing work on journals, PPE valuations and pension valuations, a response from Lancashire County Pension Fund auditor to a request for assurance over IAS 19 was awaited and clearance of issues from the audit quality review process. Mr Smith advised that it was more difficult to deliver the audits remotely but there was a lot of hard work being done to meet the deadline of Thursday, 30 September 2021. Mr Smith then introduced Mr Ayre, Audit Manager to present the report.

Under the statutory Code of Audit Practice for Local Government bodies the Authority's external auditors, Grant Thornton were required to issue a report to those charged with governance summarising the conclusions from their audit work.

Mr Ayre advised that at the time of writing the report the audit work was substantially complete and there were no matters of which they were aware that would require modification of the audit opinion or material change to the financial statements, subject to outstanding matters, as mentioned previously.

There was one recommendation relating to self-authorisation of journals as set out on page 20 of the report (page 114 of the agenda pack): -

“Our risk assessment of journal controls noted that there are no automated controls on the finance system to prevent members of finance staff approving their own journals. Whilst our audit work on journals so far has not identified any significant issues as a result of this weakness in internal controls, we recommend that the authority establishes an authorisation control to reduce the risk of financial reporting fraud and/or error in future.”

The response to this was “We have considered the recommendation. We believe our financial monitoring processes are sufficient to identify if such an instance occurred. Neither ourselves, nor internal and external audit, have discovered any instances of error or reporting fraud that the implementation of this would have prevented. Hence, given the size of our finance team (3.5 FTE including the Head of Finance), we don’t feel that introducing further controls is practical or proportionate to the risk.”

There were no adjusted misstatements impacting the key statements. There were several minor disclosure omissions in the draft accounts which had all been rectified.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the deadline to publish the audit findings report was Thursday that week. If this was not possible it would be necessary to publish an explanation as to why there was a delay and then publish the report when able. He advised that it was expected there would be many authorities unable to publish on time. Mr Smith advised that incomplete audits was a current issue across the public sector with less than 25% audits signed off. This was due to the challenges set out in the Redmond Review and the recruitment of qualified and experienced auditors. He apologised for the delay and advised that they were making every effort to meet as many deadlines as possible.

In response to a question from County Councillor Singleton, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the £15m that the Government had put aside for councils following the Redmond Review had yet to be allocated. The Chairman requested a report to a future meeting on the allocation of the £15m.

In response to questions from the Chairman, Mr Smith advised that a response from Lancashire County Pension Fund auditor was expected before the deadline however, time would be needed to consider it. In relation to the valuation of buildings, he advised that this should be cleared in good time before the deadline. He confirmed the audit would not be completed before Thursday and was subject to no major issues arising.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Clarke, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the information was awaited from the Lancashire Pension Fund, which was for support staff not firefighter pensions.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were concerned that all the information was not available for the meeting. The Vice-Chairman stated that the audit fee was £38.9k which was a lot of money to pay for something that was not available on time. The Chairman advised that the provision of external auditing services would be re-tendered and re-considered in the near future.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee: -

- i) Noted and endorsed the matters raised in the report;
- ii) Noted the anticipated “unmodified” audit opinion on the financial statements;
- iii) Noted that the auditors had not yet completed all of their value for money

work and so were not in a position to issue a report on that;  
iv) It was agreed that in the event the External Auditors found anything significant from the matters outstanding the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee would consider and note relevant action or determine whether to convene an urgent meeting.

21-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 30 November 2021 at 10:00 hours in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

Further meeting dates were noted for 29 March 2022 and agreed for 26 July 2022 and 27 September 2022.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood



## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 29 September 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

#### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

##### Councillors

T Williams (Chairman)  
D O'Toole (Vice-Chair)  
K Iddon  
H Khan (for L Beavers)  
J Mein  
G Mirfin  
M Pattison  
S Serridge  
R Woollam

##### Officers

K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)  
B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)  
J Baines, Head of Finance (LFRS)  
T Cousins, Head of Fleet and Engineering Services (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

#### 16-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors Lorraine Beavers and Stuart Morris.

#### 17-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

#### 18-20/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Pattison regarding whether consultation had taken place with staff regarding the Maternity Policy, what form this had taken and whether any feedback had been received the Director of People and Development confirmed that the consultation had largely taken place with interest groups, the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) and the Fire Officers' Association before the paper was brought to the Committee. No changes were made to the policy at the last Authority meeting therefore, further consultation was not specifically required. Feedback had subsequently been received from the FBU who had raised an issue of the day crewing allowance

continuing when pay had ceased; however, this issue was and already had been refused.

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 7 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 19-20/21 FLEET ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr Tom Cousins, Head of Fleet and Engineering Services presented to Members the Fleet Asset Management Plan (FAMP). This was the fifth Fleet Asset Management Plan which continued to build on a structured approach to the management of operational vehicles, equipment, breathing apparatus and hydrant assets.

The FAMP was key in determining strategic decisions regarding assets and defining how resources were efficiently and effectively utilised. This would ensure that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) vehicles and equipment provided a resilient service to meet the changing needs of a modern Fire and Rescue Service and the communities it served.

While the FAMP projected asset replacement over the next 20 years, in reality it set out an improvement plan for the next 3 years. The plan would be refreshed on a 3-year cycle to ensure it continued to accurately reflect the operating environment. This approach secured stability in capital and revenue budgets and facilitated the introduction of new technologies through a staged approach. The FAMP also covered short to medium term business planning improvement objectives.

Running a modern Fleet was a safety critical operation that must ensure employee and public safety. This was achieved through best practice in vehicle inspection, maintenance, operation and procurement. LFRS also ensured compliance to Department of Transport and Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) regulations on construction, use and roadworthiness.

Key projects in the 2021/24 FAMP were:

- Body worn and vehicle CCTV;
- Battery RTC Tools;
- Aerial Appliance provision;
- Replace Command Support Units;
- Breathing Apparatus and Telemetry Equipment;
- A Greener, more environmentally sustainable fleet.

The Head of Fleet and Engineering Services advised that in addition to the above key projects, wildfire, flooding and all-terrain provision was currently being assessed.

Running alongside the FAMP, Fleet and Engineering Services department also held an improvement plan, which focused on four key performance areas:

- Customer – building stronger working relations and meeting requirements;
- Financial – achieve efficiency savings and maintain a healthy replacement

- plan;
- Systems – continued development of asset management systems;
- Development / Growth – invest in staff training and development.

The above, in conjunction with the FAMP, ensured that the Fleet and Engineering Services continued to provide the best possible support to Service Delivery.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Pattison regarding appliance availability due to maintenance issues and particularly the availability of the Stinger vehicle, the Head of Fleet and Engineering Services reassured Members there was reserve fleet provision and a management system that recorded vehicle off road time to manage maintenance and repairs. He confirmed that in his experience, currently the Stinger vehicle was no more prone to defects than any other appliance. This perhaps was not the case when the vehicle was first delivered 4 years ago as it was in its development stage; the appliance was now a much more refined product.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Mein regarding whether fleet maintenance was provided by Lancashire County Council (LCC), the Head of Fleet and Engineering Services confirmed that LCC was currently the main provider for the maintenance of the fleet however, some work was undertaken at the Service's new workshops alongside other specialist providers (ie: electrical work) to ensure maximum availability of appliances.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted the report and endorsed the 2021-2024 Fleet Asset Management Plan.

## 20-20/21 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. The current Procurement Strategy covered the period 2018-2021. This was approved in May 2018 and attached to the report as appendix 1. It was noted that a new Procurement Strategy would usually be produced for 2022-2025 however, the Government had published a green paper 'Transforming Public Sector Procurement' in December last year. The proposals within the Green Paper were intended to shape the future of public procurement in this country for many years to come.

The Government's goal was to speed up and simplify procurement processes, place value for money at their heart, and unleash opportunities for small businesses, charities and social enterprises to innovate in public service delivery. The current regimes for awarding public contracts were too restrictive with too much red tape for buyers and suppliers alike, which resulted in attention being focused on the wrong activities rather than value and transparency. It was now felt that a progressive, modern regime was required which could adapt to the fast-moving environment in which business operated. Markets and commercial practice were constantly evolving and the need to ensure that the new regulatory framework could drive a culture of continuous improvement to support more resilient, diverse and innovative supply chains.

The Government proposed to comprehensively streamline and simplify the complex framework of regulations that currently governed public procurement.

Rationalising and clarifying the parallel rules in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016, the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 and the Defence and Security Public Contracts Regulations 2011, replacing them all with a single, uniform set of rules for all contract awards. This would be supplemented with sector-specific parts or sections where different rules were required for effective operation or to protect our national interest, for example in the defence or utilities sectors.

The Government's stated aim was to provide the UK with a modern, fit-for-purpose set of rules, to minimise the bureaucratic burden for contracting authorities and businesses, facilitate innovation and the participation of small and medium sized enterprises and improve the process of challenging decisions in the courts. If the proposals were implemented, they would have a significant and long-term impact on public sector contracting.

The consultation closed on 10 March 2021. It was suggested that reforms were unlikely to be in place before the end of 2021 and some had suggested not until 2022/2023 but at this stage no guidance or outcomes of the consultation had been shared. Hence until such time as this was received it was proposed to extend the existing Strategy.

County Councillor O'Toole commented that some years ago the North West Fire Forum was set up (which included Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Merseyside, Cumbria and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Authorities). This worked well for continuity of procurement across the North West with the procurement of interchangeable equipment. County Councillor O'Toole queried whether this procurement collaboration continued. In response, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that Fire Services in the North West did continue to collaborate. He advised that consideration of national and regional frameworks would be given when commencing a procurement exercise but, collaboration was not always feasible due to timing and compatibility considerations.

In relation to Section 4 on Applicability (on page 78 of the agenda pack), County Councillor Mirfin queried whether the sector advised the Government of its thoughts on how the procurement process should change in relation to the threshold values of goods and how this should be advertised to the general public. In response, the Director of Corporate Services advised that discussions were held nationally across all sectors and there were responses to the green paper from the fire sector as a whole.

County Councillor Mirfin commented that part of the levelling up agenda was a greater focus on local businesses within the economy. He asked whether there would be an impact on the procurement process going forward. In response, the Director of Corporate Services advised that any procurement would need to comply with the eventual rules and it was hoped therefore, that the government would provide more flexibility, but that there was a limited supplier market for many of the items procured for the fire sector which also limited the scope for this.

**RESOLVED:** - That the Resources Committee extend the current Procurement Strategy to cover the period 2022/23.

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report which set out the current budget position in respect of the 2021/22 revenue and capital budgets and performance against savings targets.

Section 31 Grant in respect of Business Rates Relief - update

Members were aware that part of the Authority's funding came from business rates in the form of a locally retained share and a top-up grant. As reported previously, the 2021/22 revenue budget assumed the receipt of £1.9m S31 grant for additional reliefs in respect of items such as retail, nursery and newspapers, announced prior to the 2021/22 budget setting exercise, to offset the shortfall carried forwards on the business rate collection fund. The grant amount had been confirmed and was anticipated to be received later in the financial year, most likely in Q4 2021/22, however it was likely to be paid over as part of the reconciliation carried out by central government after the completion of the Business Rates 2020/21 year-end returns submitted by billing authorities, which may affect the actual amount eventually received dependent on the overall reconciliation. This would be reported to Members in due course.

Local Tax Income Guarantee scheme

The government had announced proposals to support billing authorities by providing an additional grant equivalent to 75% of the shortfall in collection rates, for both Council Tax and Business Rates, during 2020/21. When the 2021/22 budget was set, billing authorities were unable to reliably estimate the grant due to the Authority, therefore this sum was excluded from the budget setting process, as reported to the Authority.

The shortfalls were calculated as part of the billing authority collection fund outturn reporting, and £132k was accrued in relation to this. In early June Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) confirmed that we would receive an 'on account' payment of the sum of £74k for Business Rates, being 50% of their estimate of our entitlement under this guarantee scheme. The corresponding estimate for Council tax was nil. The final calculated grant was expected to be £160k (£28k higher than accrued) and the outstanding grant sum of £86k would be paid after a reconciliation of the submitted 2020/21 year-end returns. This was expected to result in an additional £28k income in 2021/22.

Pay awards 2021/22

As previously reported the unbudgeted grey book pay award of 1.5% would cost approx. £450k in 2021/22. The pay award for green book staff had not yet been agreed, but the pay offer had been increased to 1.75%, which would, after allowing for anticipated vacancies, cost approximately £100k more than allowed for in the budget.

Wholetime Staffing

Forecasting early retirements was extremely difficult, due to the uncertainty surrounding changes to pensions. Hence at the time of setting the budget it was highlighted that "actual retirements may vary from this due to the impact of either the transitional pension arrangements or making allowances pensionable, which may increase early leavers leading to a higher vacancy factor". This had proven to be the case, with a large number of wholetime leavers in the first four months

of the year (33), which included 12 early leavers. Overall, this meant that at the end of July there were 10 fewer wholetime members of staff than budgeted, resulting in an underspend of circa £150k against budgeted establishment levels. If this position was maintained throughout the rest of the year this would result in an underspend of £425k. It was also noted that the wholetime budget anticipated two recruits' cohorts during the year, with 48 recruits in total, however current numbers only allowed for 38, with a subsequent increase in 2022/23 to compensate. This in-year shortfall resulted in an underspend of approx. £200k. If there were no further early leavers for the rest of the year (which seemed unlikely), there would have been an average of 13 vacant wholetime posts, equating to an underspend circa £625k. As such the anticipated underspend would more than offset the unfunded pay award in year.

### Revenue Budget

The overall position at the end of July was an underspend of £0.1m, largely as a result of staffing vacancies.

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)		Reason
	30 July 2021	Forecast	
	£'000		
Service Delivery	(65)	(196)	The underspend for both the first four months, and the year-end forecast, largely related to the reduced activity levels, in particular for smoke detector purchases, as was the case last financial year. It is worth noting that difficulties were currently being experienced in the supply chain for smoke alarms, and this may impact final spend in year.
Covid-19	-	-	Total funding of £1.6m had been received since March 2020. In addition, as previously reported, £0.2m of travel/mileage budgets had been transferred into this reserve to reflect savings in respect of differing working practices during the pandemic, resulting in total funding of £1.8m. Spend to the end of July was £1.6m, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional staff costs £0.4m</li> <li>• Additional cleaning £0.1m</li> <li>• Consumable items £0.2m</li> <li>• Remote working and video conferencing equipment £0.2m</li> <li>• PPE £0.7m</li> </ul>

			With effect from 1 September, LFRS reduced the level of support offered to the large vaccination centres, handing over control back to the NHS. It was anticipated that the staffing costs in July and August would fully utilise the funding.
Property	(103)	(110)	Whilst non-essential maintenance was re-instated prior to the end of the last financial year, departmental capacity due to a vacant surveyor post, and the ongoing situation meant that there was an underspend to date. Whilst we had recruited to this post the new starter did not commence until November, and hence this situation was expected to continue for the short term, resulting in an underspend by year end.
Non DFM	117	345	The year to date and outturn overspend reflected the £0.3m funding gap identified at the time of setting the budget in February.
Wholetime Pay (including associate trainer costs)	34	240	<p>As reported above, there had been several early leavers during the first four months, in excess of the number expected in the budget which caused an underspend.</p> <p>This was more than offset by: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased overtime costs, associated with covering vacancies, and staff absences. As the May recruits are posted to station in September the reliance on overtime should reduce in the second half of the year.</li> <li>the unbudgeted grey book pay award of 1.5% will cost approx. £400k in 2021/22.</li> </ul> <p>The net of all the above factors was the forecast overspend of £240k, however it should be noted that should we continue to experience higher than expected early leavers this overspend may reduce.</p>
On Call Pay	9	(31)	The position within On-call staffing was broadly breakeven, with the unbudgeted pay award being broadly offset by slightly higher staff vacancies than budgeted.

Support staff (less agency staff)	(159)	(197)	<p>The underspend related to vacant posts across various departments, in excess of the 3.75% vacancy factor built into the budget. This was partly offset by spend on agency staff, which amounted to £24k in the period.</p> <p>Although recruitment activity had now recommenced the labour market had become more challenging and we were experiencing difficulties in filling posts. As such a high level of vacancies was anticipated to remain throughout the year.</p> <p>This would be partly offset by the eventual pay award for green book staff. This had not yet been agreed, but the pay offer had been increased to 1.75%, which had been reflected in the forecast outturn position which would be updated throughout the year.</p>
Apprentice Levy	(5)	(20)	<p>The apprentice levy was payable at 0.5% of each month's payroll costs, the budget for this was set at anticipated establishment levels, hence the underspend against this budget reflected the various pay budget underspends reported above.</p>

It was noted that significant cost increases were being seen across various supply chains, and in particular in construction projects and this may affect the final outturn expenditure levels. This would continue to be monitored alongside other trends, to ensure that they were reflected in future year's budgets, as well as being reported to the Committee.

#### Capital Budget

The capital budget for 2021/22 currently stood at £10.5m.

Since the last meeting work had been undertaken with budget holders to review spend to date and anticipated timing of future spend. The current position against the programme being set out below: -

Pumping Appliances	<p>The budget allowed for 7 replacement pumping appliances. Starting a procurement exercise in the second half of the financial year was anticipated, however due to lead times it was not anticipated incurring any costs in the current year and hence had moved the budget out of 2021/22.</p>
Other vehicles	<p>This budget allowed for the replacement of various operational support vehicles, the most significant of which were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two Command Support Units (CSU);</li> <li>• Two Water Towers;</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Turn Table Ladder (TTL);</li> </ul> <p>Differing procurement routes were being considered for each of these, and the use of national frameworks where appropriate was planned, however due to departmental capacity to progress several projects and associated lead times, anticipated spend had been moved out of 2021/22.</p> <p>The budget also allowed for various other operational support vehicles which were being progressed with several already received.</p>
Operational Equipment/Future Firefighting	<p>This budget allowed for: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the progression of CCTV on pumping appliances, where it was proposed trialling this in the first instance and hence the project would not be complete by year end;</li> <li>• replacement of capital items from the equipment replacement plan, namely defibrillators and a replacement drone which had been ordered and light portable pumps, which had yet to be purchased.</li> </ul> <p>Again, where appropriate, it was intended to make use of existing procurement frameworks to progress these once specifications were completed.</p>
Building Modifications	<p>This budget allowed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a new workshop, BA Recovery and Trainer facility at STC. Spend to date was £1.9m. Work was expected to be completed within the budget in October 2021. A contract variation of £42k had been agreed for Compressor and furniture items that ISG had manufactured and installed;</li> <li>• South Shore refurbishment and extension had had a small amount of spend reflecting work completed in the new financial year, including a number of minor variations totalling £13k. This project was now complete;</li> <li>• Enhanced facilities at Hyndburn fire station, this was under review prior to moving to the procurement phase;</li> <li>• The budget for enhanced facilities at Blackpool fire station had been moved into 2022/23;</li> <li>• £0.3m budgetary provision for replacement drill towers, as it was the early stages of the procurement phase of the project, it was unlikely to fully spend this year's money and hence 50% had been moved into 2022/23;</li> <li>• £0.2m in relation to fees associated with</li> </ul>

	<p>progressing the business case for a SHQ relocation.</p> <p>As with the revenue budget, current departmental capacity to progress these was limited, hence removing £0.475m of budget.</p>
IT systems	<p>The majority of the capital budget related to the national Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP), to replace the Airwave wide area radio system and the replacement of the station end mobilising system. The ESMCP project budget, £1.0m, was offset by anticipated grant, however the timing of both expenditure and grant was dependent upon progress against the national project. This national project had suffered lengthy delays to date, hence had been slipped into the next financial year.</p> <p>The balance of the budget related to the replacement of various systems and ICT hardware, in line with the ICT asset management plan. Whilst initial scoping work was on-going to facilitate the replacement of some of these systems, the need to replace others was still being reviewed, hence the slippage of £0.755m into future financial years.</p>

The committed costs to date would be met by revenue contributions.

The following table set out the anticipated slippage, outlined above, into 2022/23. These assumptions were estimates based on the current position, and similarly to the previous year, may be subject to change. The slippage represented a timing issue between financial years rather than incorrect budget requirements. In almost all cases, the slippage was caused by the ongoing effects of the pandemic, as departments were struggling with capacity issues when trying to catch up with delayed projects whilst continuing with business-as-usual activities, combined with lead times on procurement.

Item	Budget £m
Pumping appliances x 7	1.490
Command support units x 2	0.580
Turn table ladder (TTL) x 1	0.675
Water Tower x 2	1.000
Prime mover x 1	0.215
Pod x 1	0.028
CCTV on appliances	0.100
Enhanced station facilities at Blackpool	0.200
Drill tower replacements	0.150
ESMCP	1.000
Various ICT systems/hardware under review prior to replacement	0.755
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.193</b>

Offsetting this was £55k of contract variations outlined above in respect of BA Recovery and Trainer facility at STC and South Shore Station refurbishment and extension. These changes brought the revised capital programme for 2021/22 to £4.383m.

#### Delivery against savings targets

The performance to date was already ahead of the annual target, largely due to staffing vacancies and procurement savings. It was anticipated that the savings target for the financial year would be met.

In response to a question from County Councillor Mein regarding the shortfall in wholetime recruits (as detailed on page 88 of the agenda pack) the Director of People and Development confirmed there was an extensive process to ensure the recruitment of appropriate people to be firefighters. At the end of the process the best people were appointed. Because of a gap before starting some people had subsequently dropped out or got a job elsewhere. To recruit more people, it would be necessary to re-run the whole process. Due to the shortfall in numbers this year, near misses were considered and extra numbers required would be added into the next campaign (which had now started) to hopefully address the balance. Early leavers through changes to the pension scheme had disrupted plans considerably.

County Councillor Mein queried whether, based on experience the Service could have anticipated the number of early leavers and taken account of an additional proportion of recruits to compensate for those expected to drop out. In response, the Director of People and Development advised that some firefighters had retired early due to current uncertainty around changes to pensions; hence it was difficult to predict the scale of this. It was acknowledged that the number of early leavers could continue until the pension situation was resolved. This was therefore, being monitored very carefully and factored into future requirements.

In response to a query from County Councillor Mein regarding the difficulties recruiting to support staff vacancies the Director of People and Development advised that currently a number of people were making career choices that before the covid-19 pandemic they would not have done. For example, people were looking at flexibility which was one of the reasons the Service had made significant changes to its flexible working processes.

#### RESOLVED: - That the Committee: -

- i) note the updates on the Business Rates relief and Local Tax Income Guarantee grants;
- ii) note the effect of the 1.5% pay award for grey book personnel;
- iii) note the potential effect of the 1.75% pay award offered to support staff;
- iv) approve the amendment to the capital programme to remove expected slippage;
- v) to make an additional revenue contribution of £55k into the capital programme to reflect the contract variations agreed on BA Recovery and Trainer facility at Service Training Centre and South Shore Station refurbishment and extension, and note the corresponding increase in the capital programme; and
- vi) note and endorse the financial position.

The Director of People and Development presented the report. As a public body there was a requirement to publish information which demonstrated compliance with the Equality Duty. As an employer the aim was to recruit and develop a diverse workforce and to ensure that the workforce could work with dignity and respect, protected from any type of prejudice or discrimination.

The Director of People and Development advised that an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group had been established which was chaired by the Chief Fire Officer to reflect that equality, diversity and inclusion was across all parts of the Service.

Equality objectives (as set out on page 104 of the agenda pack) were:

Our communities:

- Support local businesses to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation;
- Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire;
- Develop and deliver a Prevention service targeting our most vulnerable communities.

Our workforce:

- Promote equality in our workforce policies and workforce practices;
- Develop our staff to ensure they can respond competently meeting the different needs of our diverse communities.

It was noted that the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) was no longer a legal requirement however, it was considered EIA was an effective tool in demonstrating how the Service met its legal requirements under the public sector equality duty, identifying the impact of policies and decisions on staff and communities and ensuring that the impact was fully understood and any negative impact mitigated. The Service ensured that any partnership operated in line with equality principles and associated equality duties.

Members noted other areas of focus related to equality, diversity and inclusion set out in section 7 of the report (which commenced on page 106 of the agenda pack) were: -

Accessibility

Information was made available in a variety of formats using multiple channels to best reach Lancashire's diverse communities. Equality and diversity values were promoted in key publications and information sources internally and externally. Information was provided in printed form and via digital channels including the website. The website met web content accessibility guidelines and work was ongoing towards compliance with public sector bodies (websites and mobile applications) accessibility regulations 2018. Key messages were targeted at those who were most at risk. Positive action campaigns were undertaken when recruiting to encourage women and under-represented groups

to apply. National campaigns and special events were supported (such as: Pride Month, I'm not a Muslim but I will Fast for One Day and International Women's Day). Information was also available in alternative formats (large print, additional languages on request and videos were produced with subtitles). Measures from the British Dyslexia Association's style guide were also applied to both internal and external material.

### Training and Development

The Service had a proactive approach to training and development in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Service prioritised the development of a strong organisational culture where its values were understood, receiving 'outstanding' in its inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services. In addition to its STRIVE values, the Service had adopted the Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association.

### Recruitment and Selection

The Service continued its journey to improve the diversity of its workforce to ensure that it represented the community it served. During 2018/19 the Service was successful in becoming an employer provider and recruited its first cohort of apprentices. During 2020, the Service experienced real challenges in delivering positive action through the covid-19 pandemic with community engagement events postponed. The recruitment campaign was delivered digitally, and while was positive in attracting women was less successful in recruiting candidates from black and minority ethnic communities. During 2021, there was an opportunity to commence re-engagement with communities on a face-to-face basis with a view to promoting the Service as an employer of choice and the role of firefighter as an occupation open to people of all abilities, races, faiths, genders and backgrounds.

### Workforce Strategies and Policies

The Service ensured its employment procedures were Equality Impact Assessed to ensure that equality was considered transparently in the development and implementation of its policies. The Service monitored the composition of its workforce (as now considered at appendix A). It looked to promote equality of opportunity in recruitment, selection, pay, promotion, training, grievance and exit from employment. Members considered (appendix B which showed) a breakdown of candidates recruited and selected during the period 1/4/20-31/3/21; an updated total number of applications during the period was tabled at the meeting. There were a number of policies which supported employees with protected characteristics including: bullying and harassment, maternity, shared parental leave, grievance policy and the EDI policy. During 2021, the maternity, paternity and adoption provisions had been improved. Due to the pandemic the service had to work flexibly and would be looking how it could develop new ways of hybrid working, creating flexibility for staff. In light of the new Code of Ethics a number of existing Service policies would be reviewed to embed the code into existing employment practices.

### Engagement and Consultation

The Service engaged with staff formally through the Trade Unions through formal and informal consultation meetings. Workforce and employment-related decisions and documents were reviewed with trade union representatives and other appropriate staff. It was noted that the staff survey had become and

effective way of receiving feedback from staff, and this was used by Heads of Department to inform the development of local policies and communication. Employee voice groups were used to consult with staff. There had been an increased use of Zoom and Teams during the pandemic which enabled a greater reach to communicate with wider groups of people. The new Engine House intranet was successful and the 'shout up' section allowed staff to discuss and share views on a range of topics. It was noted that the Service had produced learnpro modules for staff information which included 4 videos from staff telling their stories about what it was like to work in the Service.

The Service continued to collaborate and work with partners, particularly those in the Lancashire Resilience Forum and the Service had a Consultation Strategy which set out how it consulted.

#### Performance Management

The Annual Service Plan detailed the activities undertaken in year to deliver the strategy set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan. All staff had a performance appraisal where objectives were set which supported the delivery of plans and feedback was given on performance in relation to our values. Within the appraisal was the opportunity to have a career conversation, a useful tool to inform workforce planning. During 2021, supervisory managers would be developed to use this more effectively to identify training needs, communication promotion pathways, identify talent and nurture potential.

#### Bullying and Harassment

The Service had highly effective employee grievance and bullying and harassment procedures for dealing with employee complaints. It had promoted the principle of having an informal word at the right time and then adopting the more formal approach where issues were identified, and this had worked successfully. The Service had reviewed its existing arrangements with a view of checking if there were issues of concern within the workplace and the benefits of establishing a mechanism of formally reporting informal issues raised however, the review concluded that it would be onerous and would damage the principle of dealing with issues informally. In addition, further to a recent review of the capability procedure, Trade Union representatives advised addressing issues informally and not recording them was of benefit in terms of engaging members of staff and effecting change.

#### Gender Pay Gap

It was noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic the government had removed the requirements relating to the gender pay gap reporting for 2020. The Director of People and Development advised that the 2021 Gender Pay Gap would be reported to a future meeting.

Additional appendices considered were appendix C, Disciplinary, Grievance, Harassment and Bullying, appendix D, EDI Completed Action Plan 2020/21 and appendix E – EDI Action Plan 2021/22.

County Councillor Woollam referred to page 112 of the agenda pack which detailed the average age of wholtime firefighters to be 43 for all roles and 47 for strategic and first line supervisor roles. He queried what work was being done to encourage more people into the fire service, in particular the recruitment of younger people. In response, the Director of People and Development advised

that the average age reflected the length of employment and low turnover. Recruits tended to be newer to the job market (including graduates), or after having some work experience and were therefore younger. He confirmed that the Service did not employ anyone younger than 18 unless they had joined as a fire cadet.

In addition, the Director of People and Development confirmed there were close links with the University of Central Lancashire who ran a Fire degree course which the Service had at times provided input into. It was noted that a further challenge regarding workforce planning was the requirement for more qualified fire safety inspectors following regulatory changes in technical fire safety.

In relation to page 116 of the agenda pack regarding the number of potential harassment and bullying cases County Councillor Pattison queried whether there were team building/training days. In response, the Director of People and Development advised that as part the apprentice training there was a residential element which concentrated on our values. He confirmed that during a person's career there were various learning and development activities that included elements of team building. In relation to bullying and harassment, he would be very disappointed if someone who worked for the Service did not understand the STRIVE values and knew what was expected of their behaviours around STRIVE values and the Code of Ethics.

County Councillor Mirfin, referred to the age profile on page 113 of the agenda pack. He commented there were a lot of people in the age groups 45-49 and 50-55 and queried how the Service addressed the potential loss of institutional memory as experienced people left the Service. In response the Director of People and Development advised that due to constraints the Authority decided not to recruit firefighters for an extended period rather than make people redundant. The resulting gap in the workforce was being addressed through workforce planning and organisational development. There was a challenge to maintain operational experience however, the Service was looking at promotional pathways to develop people with the right abilities to be available at the right time and place. Contingency planning was also required for personnel in support functions.

RESOLVED:- That the report be noted.

## 23-20/21 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Organisational Development Plan was presented by the Director of People and Development. The document was a dynamic and evolving plan as more issues were identified or their importance increased or decreased and approaches to address deficiencies were progressed.

Changes as a result of experience would need to be factored into actions taken when fully known and understood as would the developing picture in respect of the apparent deficits in the protection of the built environment impacted on proposals for the Protection activity arising from the implications of the Grenfell incident. Progress would be impacted by sourcing and the availability of funding. However, the plan demonstrated the thrust in respect of organisational development and measures being developed and progressed.

The Organisational Development Plan was part of a suite of documents that informed and guided the Authority's Human Resources policies. It set out strategic people priorities, Service STRIVE values (Service, Trust, Respect, Integrity, Valued and Empowered) which were supported by the national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England; and organisational development priorities (which included embedding Service values and behaviours and developing capability and resilience of leaders).

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted the report.

24-20/21 DEBT RESTRUCTURING REPORT

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. The Authority currently held £2.0m of debt, incurring annual interest charges of £90k on this. As such the report considered options around early repayment.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that the Authority's 2021/22 Treasury Management strategy outlined the following position in respect of existing debt.

*"The Authority's debt has arisen as a result of prior years' capital investment decisions. It has not taken any new borrowing out since 2007 as it has been utilising cash balances to pay off debt as it matures, or when deemed appropriate with the authority making early payment of debt. The anticipated holding of debt at 31 March 2021 is £2.0m. All the debt is from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) and is all at fixed rates of interest and is repayable on maturity. The table below shows the maturity profile and interest rate applicable on these: -*

<i>Loan Amount</i>	<i>Maturity Date</i>	<i>Interest rate</i>
<i>£650k</i>	<i>December 2035</i>	<i>4.49%</i>
<i>£650k</i>	<i>June 2036</i>	<i>4.49%</i>
<i>£700k</i>	<i>June 2037</i>	<i>4.48%</i>

*(Note, this debt was taken out in 2007 when the base rate was 5.75% and when the Authority was earning 5.84% return on its investments.)*

*Given the high interest rates payable on these loans, relative to current interest rates, we have again reviewed opportunities for debt repayment/restructuring. The level of penalty applicable on early repayment of loans now stands at £1.180m. (As previously reported the level of penalty is dependent upon two factors, the difference between the interest chargeable on the loan and current interest rates, the greater this difference the greater the penalty, and the length to maturity, the greater the remaining time of the loan the greater the penalty. Hence as interest rates increase or as loans get closer to maturity the level of penalty will reduce.)*

*Outstanding interest payable between now and maturity is £1.407m.*

<i>Penalty incurred</i>	<i>1.180</i>
<i>Savings on interest payable</i>	<i>(1.407)</i>
<i>Gross Saving</i>	<i>(0.277)</i>



*However as highlighted previously, any early repayment means that cash balances available for investment will be reduced and hence interest receivable will also be reduced. The extent of which is dependent upon future interest rates. It is estimated that if interest rate on investments are at 0.7% over the remaining period of the loan then repaying the loans now will be broadly neutral.*

*It is also worth noting that the capital budget does allow for additional borrowing within the next 5 years. Current long-term borrowing rates are 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 is considered beneficial to retain these loans.”*

A further update on this position had now been prepared in line with the resolution of the June Resources Committee.

Total debt remained at £2.0m, incurring £0.090m of interest payments each year. Outstanding interest payable between now and maturity totalled £1.363m. The penalty payable on early repayment now stood at £1.063m. (It was noted that the penalty changed on a daily basis and therefore actual cost would not be known until a request had been made to PWLB.)

Savings on interest payable	(1.363)
Penalty incurred	1.063
Gross Saving	(0.300)

Any early repayment meant that cash balances available for investment would be reduced and hence interest receivable would also be reduced. The extent of this was dependent upon future interest rates, which were unknown hence the following possible scenarios had been calculated: -

	Investment rate	Lost Investment Income
Current Base Rate	0.10%	0.047
Current 5-year Investment rate	1.00%	0.474
Estimated 10-year Investment rate	1.25%	0.592
Estimated 15-year Investment rate	1.50%	0.710

- If interest rate remained at the current historically low level of 0.10% throughout the next 15/16 years, which seemed very unlikely, and the investment was left in the call account, the lost interest receivable £0.047m would not outweigh the net saving from paying off the loan, and hence it would be financially beneficial to pay the loans off.
- The current 5-year investment rate was approx. 1.00%, if the cash balance in this type of investment was maintained throughout the next 15/16 years, then the lost interest receivable £0.474m would outweigh the net saving from paying off the loan, and hence it would not be financially beneficial to pay the loans off.
- Looking at potential 10-year and 15-year investment rates of 1.25% and 1.50% the lost interest was even higher and hence paying off the loan was even less attractive. (It was noted that these were estimated interest rates as

a broker would be needed to offer these investments if there was interest in fixing longer term investments.)

The breakeven position occurred at an interest rate of 0.63%, whereby lost interest receivable netted off exactly against the net saving from paying the loan off early.

The position was further complicated by additional borrowing requirements shown in the current draft capital programme 2021/26. This showed new borrowing of £9m being required in 2025/26, hence if the loans were paid off now the amount of borrowing required in future years would simply be £2.0m more than currently forecast, £11m as opposed to £9m. The current rate for long-term borrowing was between 1.65% and 1.85%, which again were historically low levels. Even at the lower of these rates, the additional £2.0m of borrowing would incur additional interest charges of £0.396m over the next 15 years. These more than offset the gross saving of £0.300m identified earlier, which demonstrated that paying off the loans early and re-borrowing due to future capital plans would result in a net additional cost of £0.096m (ignoring any lost investment income), £0.144m if there was an allowance of £0.047m for lost investment income.

## Summary

The following table summarised the position:

	Current 0.10% Investment Income	Breakeven 0.63% Investment Income	Notional 1.00% Investment Income	New Capital Borrowing
Penalty Incurred	1.063	1.063	1.063	1.063
Interest saved on current loans	(1.363)	(1.363)	(1.363)	(1.363)
Lost Investment Income	0.047	0.300	0.474	0.047
Cost of new borrowing required in 25/26				0.396
(Surplus)/Deficit Net Position	(0.252)	-	0.174	0.144

Ultimately any decision regarding early repayment of debt relied on future interest rates and future borrowing requirements. Future interest rates could not be known with any degree of certainty, hence there was always a risk that any decision would be incorrect. Paying off the debt early gave certainty; it enabled all the costs to be met in the current year and eliminated the interest payable budget (until such time as additional borrowing was taken out in future years), reducing the pressure on the revenue budget in future years. The Authority had sufficient cash balances to meet any repayments costs, but the penalty costs associated with this would be charged to the revenue budget, which would result in a significant in-year overspend.

However, the over-riding considerations in any decision had to be the net financial impact allowing for either lost interest receivable on investment opportunities and/or additional interest charges on new borrowing. Both of these meant that paying off the debt did not make financial sense, as any net saving

was more than offset by either lost interest receivable and/or the additional interest payable on the new borrowing.

County Councillor Woollam noted that all the loans were at a fixed rate with the Public Works Loan Board. He queried whether consideration had been given to other lending facilities. In response, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the loans were taken out in 2007 and no further borrowing had been taken out since then. He confirmed there were a range of options if there was a need for future borrowing and consideration would be given to the best options. In terms of investments, the Treasury Management Strategy was approved in February each year and investment was made with other local authorities because of the Authority's low risk appetite.

The Chairman advised that he had undertaken some comparison with other local authorities borrowing which had been taken out at a similar time and he was pleased to advise that the interest rates payable on the Authority's borrowing was far lower.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee agreed to leave the debt/investment portfolio as it currently stands and review further if the penalty on early repayment reduces significantly.

#### 25-20/21 MODERN SLAVERY

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) supported the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act consolidated slavery and trafficking offences, introduced tougher penalties and sentencing rules and provided more support for victims.

The Service recognised its responsibilities as an employer and procurer / commissioner of services and was committed to doing all that it could to prevent slavery and human trafficking in corporate activities and to ensuring that supply chains were free from slavery and/or human trafficking.

Modern slavery was a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It took various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which had in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain. To tackle these crimes, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 was introduced. The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement, as considered by Members, set out the current position within the Service following the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

It was noted that the Service would support the Act through: i) staff training and education; ii) supporting victim identification; iii) partnership working in collaboration with relevant agencies and groups; and, iv) adopting responsible procurement practices.

It was also noted that an action plan was provided which stated that the Service would: redesign the online safeguarding package, provide additional training packages relevant to specific roles and continue to develop targeting and delivery of prevention and protection activities through closer working Gangmasters and the Labour Abuse Authority, Police and Local Authorities.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee approve the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for publication.

26-20/21 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 1 December 2021, at 1000 hours in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

Further meeting dates were noted for 30 March 2022 and 6 July 2022 and agreed for 28 September 2022.

27-20/21 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.

28-20/21 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.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on Monday 13 December 2021

### NOTES OF STRATEGY GROUP HELD ON MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

Contact for further information:

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

#### **Executive Summary**

Report on proceedings of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Strategy Group held at the Service Training Centre, Euxton on Monday, 18 October 2021.

#### **Recommendation**

That the Authority note the proceedings as set out in this report.

#### PRESENT:

##### Councillors

D O'Toole (Chairman)  
J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)  
L Beavers  
P Britcliffe  
S Clarke  
M Dad  
N Hennessy  
J Hugo  
K Iddon  
F Jackson  
A Kay

H Khan  
J Mein  
G Mirfin  
M Pattison  
J Rigby  
P Rigby  
S Serridge  
J Singleton  
D Smith  
T Williams  
R Woollam

#### **Information**

##### 4-20/21 NATIONAL CONTEXT

The Chief Fire Officer presented Members with an overview of the National Context which included the delayed White Paper on Fire Services Reform. This tied in with work nationally, work with the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC), and also the Fire & Rescue Services National Employer's 'Fit for the Future'. He provided an update on the expected Comprehensive Spending Review which would be released in December. He advised that the Grenfell recommendations would go before parliament that week which would affect building safety regulations and impact on the responsibilities of fire and rescue services and it was noted that the HMICFRS 'State of Fire 3' report would be released in December.

5-20/21 AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM (AFA) ATTENDANCE POLICY CONSULTATION REVIEW

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided Members with a presentation and gave an update on the consultation around Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) Attendance Policy Consultation Review. The proposals would go forward to the Planning Committee on 15 November 2021.

An overview of the proposed Implementation Plan was provided to Members.

6-20/21 COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN - POST CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer gave Members a presentation and provided a post consultation overview of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-2027. He advised that over 90% of respondents agreed with Service priorities with proposed amendments received via the dedicated consultation inbox.

Monitoring of the progress and success of the CRMP will be achieved through:

- The Annual Service Plan.
- The Annual Service Report.
- Strategic Assessment of Risk.
- The Performance Committee.
- The Corporate Programme Board.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the consultation feedback had been collated and considered. Amendments had been made to the document and the draft report would go to the Planning Committee in November 2021. Subject to approval, the report would go to the full CFA in February 2022 for approval to publish.

7-20/21 EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW

The Deputy Director for Operational Response provided Members with an overview of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) which was a cyclical review of operation service delivery. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the Service had the right assets in the appropriate places to meet the risks in the different areas of the County which were designated from very high risk through to low risk. It also provided an opportunity to review provision relating to finances which was a mechanism with which to deliver a balanced budget. He advised that the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) would dictate the route that the proposals would come through the Authority. Ideally, the prepared proposals would go to the Planning Committee and then to the Full Fire Authority.

8-20/21 DAY CREWING PLUS

The Director of People and Development provided Members with a presentation and update on the position regarding Day Crewing Plus (DCP) shift system.

Members were informed by the Director of People and Development that a report would be presented to the forthcoming Planning Committee outlining options for

the future.

9-20/21 PENSION UPDATE - IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT

The Director of People and Development provided Members with a presentation and an update on the position regarding Immediate Detriment in relation to Firefighter Pensions. A report would be presented to the CFA at it's meeting in December to consider the Immediate Detriment remedy.

10-20/21 HMICFRS UPDATE

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) would carry out an Inspection between 22 November 2021 and 21 January 2022. He informed Members on the process for the 6 weeks.

**Business Risk**

None

**Environmental Impact**

None

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

None

**HR Implications**

None

**Financial Implications**

None

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

**List of Background Papers**

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

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

Notes of meeting held via Teams, on Thursday, 4 November 2021.

#### PRESENT:

##### Councillors

S Morris (Chairman)  
D Smith (Vice-Chair)  
N Hennessy  
A Kay  
J Rigby

##### Officers

B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)  
Richard Edney, Senior Communications Officer (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

#### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Zamir Khan. The Chairman, Stuart Morris joined the meeting at Item 4.

#### NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the previous meeting held on 29 April 2021 were confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

#### MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Vice Chairman welcomed Nikki Hennessy, and Jean Rigby as new members on the Member Training and Development Working Group.

The Director of People and Development presented the report which detailed the various means available for elected Members of the Combined Fire Authority to access training and development opportunities.

##### Personal Development Plans

Over the previous year, due to Covid-19 restrictions, Personal Development Plan (PDP) Reviews had been conducted virtually. With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, PDPs had now returned to being held face to face. Ten new Councillors had joined the Authority since the April 2021 meeting of which all had an initial PDP and induction discussions. Currently 100% of Members had a PDP in place.

### e-Learning

Members were encouraged through the Member Information Bulletin to view North West Employers Organisation and the Local Government Association websites to access training opportunities where available.

### Members' Handbook

The handbook for the municipal year 2021/22 had now been issued to all Members.

### Co-ordination of Training

Democratic Services continued to contact home authorities where relevant to co-ordinate member training and development opportunities and avoid duplication.

### Member Information Bulletin

The Member Information Bulletin was considered by Officers as the key document for keeping Members updated and this was valued by Members as very informative. It set out upcoming Fire Authority meeting dates, Member Training and Development opportunities together with news and events.

### Member Information Bulletin Reformat - Presentation

The Director of People and Development proposed a reformat of the Member Information Bulletin and advised that the Senior Communications Officer had been invited to attend the meeting to present to Members how staff were kept up to date via a weekly Routine Bulletin.

The Senior Communications Officer explained that the Routine Bulletin was an online platform that acted as a mini-intranet. Access was sent out via a link contained in a weekly email. It was proposed that Members moved the Member Information Bulletin to this online platform. Various headings would be customised to Members' requirements. Other benefits included that videos could be embedded, all Member information would be in one place and a search facility would be available. There would be minimal cost implications in the design of the new format and ongoing hosting which could be managed within budget.

In response to a question asked by County Councillor Hennessy, the Senior Communications Officer explained that Democratic Services Officers would be able to see the number of views of a page, however, they would not be able to see which Councillors had viewed the page. Members discussed and agreed a new format would be of benefit and should be pursued.

The Chairman, County Councillor Stuart Morris, joined the meeting at this point and the Senior Communications Officer provided him with an update on the new proposed format for the Member Information Bulletin.

Members discussed the format of the newly formatted Member Information Bulletin. The Principal Member Services Officer suggested that in addition to the information already provided in the Bulletin, information regarding the forward calendar could be made available (such as the current Bright Sparx campaign) together with advice and information that Members could forward to their constituents and partners using their social media platforms with subsequent additions reporting outcomes of campaign activity. She added that, following the release of the new revised format, Members could report on how they found it.

Councillor Dave Smith advised that once Members had seen the first Bulletin, they could bring ideas forward. Councillor Jean Rigby stated that updates on the Prince's Trust were useful.

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy asked if an officer name list with photos could be added to the new format. The Principal Member Services Officer advised that information could be taken from the Member Handbook and uploaded on the new format.

In response to a comment from County Councillor Andrea Kay for Members to report on what they were doing, the Principal Member Services Officer suggested that there could be a Member led page or section.

Councillor Jean Rigby asked when the use of the new format would begin. The Senior Communications Officer explained that work would need to be undertaken with the design company to create the template which could take 4-6 weeks. It was proposed that the newly formatted Member Information Bulletin be used from the January 2022 edition.

RESOLVED: - That Members noted and endorsed the content of the report including the development of a revised format for future Member Information Bulletins.

#### MEMBER TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS 2020/21

The Member Training and Development Working Group was responsible for analysing and agreeing the training needs of Members that linked to the objectives, priorities and vision of the Authority.

Members were updated on the action that had been taken in response to training needs identified from the Training Needs Analysis undertaken in 2020 and the Personal Development sessions that had been held with Members throughout 2020/21.

Members' Personal Development Plans (PDPs) had now returned to being conducted face-to-face. Democratic Services started the process of circulating review documentation to all Members.

Following consideration, Members agreed that their training needs were being met and agreed the training needs for 2021/22 as follows:

- To continue to promote Fire Safety Safe and Well Service and the work of the Member Champions;
- To continue to attend service area inductions / meetings at stations and information sessions on key issues to support decision-making;
- To maintain good attendance at all Strategy Group meetings, encouraging all Members to attend;
- To continue with the informal buddy system;
- To support the principle to use electronic systems where preferred / available;
- To attend a 'SafeDrive StayAlive' (SDSA) event.
- To support the improvement of Member communication to constituents.

County Councillor Andrea Kay expressed that she was happy with how her development had progressed from when she started. She commented that understandably during Covid-19, events at fire stations had declined. The Director of People & Development agreed to speak with County Councillor Kay at the end of the meeting to discuss her role as Member Champion for Health & Wellbeing.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Hennessy, the Director of People & Development explained that new Members were offered a 1-2-1 meeting with the Chief Fire Officer and were encouraged to meet with area personnel as their diaries allowed. He confirmed that staff did appreciate visits but there were sometimes difficulties with availability.

To encourage those Members who wanted to visit their local fire station, County Councillor Andrea Kay queried whether it would be helpful to split the county into sections for groups of Members to be invited to attend stations in their own area and to attend other areas as convenient.

County Councillor Andrea Kay advised that she posted information in relation to health and wellbeing on her Facebook page and she had also been into high schools to talk about climate change. She had taken some of the children to a fire station to meet staff and ask questions. Councillor Dave Smith stated that he also posted Fire Service information to Facebook which he felt all Members should do as routine. The Director of People & Development stated that Member communication of Fire Service announcements to the public through social media was encouraged.

In response to a question regarding wellbeing support to firefighters and a comment from County Councillor Kay regarding therapy dogs, the Director of People & Development confirmed that Wellbeing Support Dogs were one element of the wellbeing support provided. He suggested to Members that he take a report to the Resources Committee so that Members were informed of the options available as there were a variety of measures.

In response to a query from the Chairman, who in his LCC role as Mental Health Champion for Lancashire, asked whether gymnasiums were available for staff at fire stations as one of the measures, the Director of People and Development confirmed that gymnasiums were available for staff to use.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee agreed the training development needs for 2021/22 as set out in the report.

#### MONITORING, REVIEW & EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES

The report provided an update on Member Training and Development activities since the previous meeting. The report showed opportunities and outcomes of activity taken by Members to support the achievement of Service objectives or positive outcomes for communities. Some activities such as visits to local stations, involvement at local open days and other leadership events had been curtailed due to the pandemic and were now beginning to open back up to Members.

### Involvement at Area Level

Local events were beginning to resume and Members would be invited to attend. The Chairman had attended a virtual wholetime Recruits Passing Ceremony in August 2021. Local fire stations were starting to ease restrictions and open up to Member visits. Members could contact area personnel to arrange a visit to their local fire stations to discuss local key issues.

### IT and Mileage Claim Sessions

Members were invited to attend IT sessions for i) help with access to the Mod.gov app and private papers, and ii) Mileage claim sessions for support to input mileage claims online. Members' training sessions were held in August 2021 at Service Headquarters, Fulwood and were attended by Democratic Services, Finance and ICT Officers. Sessions were successfully attended with 14 Members attending either one or both sessions. No further issues had been identified, however, ongoing support was provided on a 1-2-1 basis by Democratic Services Officers.

### Members' Visit to Cheshire Safety Central

Members had previously attended a tour around Safety Central at Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Interactive Life Skills Education Centre. This had given Members the opportunity to view their indoor village which provided a learning environment where people of all ages could develop the skills and knowledge they required to stay safe and well in their homes and college in their local areas.

Members' evaluation of the visit was that it was informative, fascinating and educational. They felt that the facility was unique and interactive with a strong safety message. They recommended that Members visit the centre. The opportunity for a further visit had been identified on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 10:00am – 12:00pm which was considered appropriate by the Working Group.

### Visit to North West Fire Control

Members of the Performance Committee had expressed a wish to visit North West Fire Control, Warrington. All Members were subsequently invited and visits took place on 4<sup>th</sup> October and 26<sup>th</sup> October. The visits included a presentation and tour of the Control Room. The feedback from Members was very positive and they found the visit interesting and informative.

### Strategy Day Evaluation

Strategy meetings were held on 01.07.2021 and 18.10.2021. Political leaders encourage all Members to attend these informative meetings. Member evaluation included that the presentations were excellent, although at times complex, particularly for new Members and suggestions were made to the venue layout.

### Annual LFRS Open Day

Members noted that the annual Service-wide Open Day at the Service Training Centre did not take place due to Covid-19 restrictions.

**RESOLVED:** - That the Group noted and endorsed the content of the report as presented and approved the Combined Authority Members' visit to Cheshire Safety Central.

## FUTURE MEETING DATES

The next meeting of the Working Group would be held on Thursday 28 April 2022. A further meeting date was agreed for Thursday 03 November 2022.

Members agreed that future meetings of the Working Group should be held virtually. On behalf of the Working Group, the Chairman thanked the officers present for their support to Member Training and Development.

B WARREN  
Director of People and Development

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 15 November 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

##### Councillors

G Mirfin (Chairman)  
S Clarke (Vice-Chair)  
M Dad  
N Hennessy  
J Hugo  
F Jackson  
D O'Toole  
J Shedwick  
J Singleton  
T Williams

##### Officers

J Johnston, Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
B Norman, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)  
M Hutton, Area Manager, Head of Prevention and Protection (LFRS)  
M Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority  
S Collinson, Head of Media and Communications (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

#### 10-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

#### 11-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

#### 12-20/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 12 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 13-20/21 ANNUAL SERVICE REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer, Justin Johnston presented the report and an accompanying video.

The Annual Service Report (ASR) was produced annually by the Service as part of its accountability to measure progress against the items set out as deliverables as part of the Annual Service Plan 2020-2022 which were derived from the Integrated Risk Management Plan 2017-2022.

The last Annual Service Plan was produced in 2020 and had been extended to cover a two-year (2020-2022) period due to the Covid-19 pandemic changing organisational direction and priorities. During this time the Service diversified its offerings to support the local, regional, and national response.

The Annual Service Report as now considered by Members, reviewed progress through the 2020 – 2021 reporting year and highlighted the fantastic work that had been delivered in the face of a global crisis: -

### **Making Lancashire safer during the Covid-19 pandemic**

The Service played a central role in the response to the pandemic from an early stage, working as one team alongside partner agencies in the Lancashire Resilience Forum. Over 500 members of staff offered to carry out new activities delivering essential services.

The Service: i) visited over 1,400 vulnerable residents delivering interventions and welfare checks; ii) co-ordinated distribution of PPE supplies to health and social care settings across the county from the training centre; iii) provided P3 face mask fitting to hospital and social care workers; iv) supported the establishment of a temporary hospital and morgue; and v) trained 54 staff to assist with mass casualties.

The Service also adapted to support people in alternative ways including: i) donating 57 reconditioned iPads to hospitals and hospices for virtual visits; ii) creating digital fire safety education sessions when face-to-face engagement couldn't take place in schools; iii) launching a digital Prince's Trust programme for vulnerable young people who lost support and coping mechanisms during the pandemic; iv) with public events unable to take place and Bonfire Night presenting an increased risk of fires and injuries across the county with people holding celebrations at home, the Service worked with local authorities, Lancashire Police and North West Ambulance Service to carry out tactical prevention activity in communities and co-respond to incidents over the period; v) delivered digital Bright Sparx education sessions, designed to educate young people about bonfire and fireworks safety, to over 10,000 pupils; and vi) a public safety campaign encouraged people to enjoy the event in alternative ways, including watching a family fireworks display which was streamed online.

By Christmas 2020 attention turned to supporting local NHS services to establish vaccination centres. The Service led the sector taking on this role and: provided site management, marshalling, administration and logistics support to mass vaccination venues and community sites. Firefighters and support services staff worked at vaccination centres seven days a week: meeting and greeting patients, completing patient health checks, reassuring people as they prepared for the vaccine, helping clinical staff when needed, giving post vaccine support and administering vaccines directly to patients. By the end of March 2021, the Service had supported the delivery of 170,500 vaccinations, with 19,800 vaccines administered by staff.



The Service continued to help to deliver Lancashire's vaccination programme and would continue to do so for as long as needed.

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

A breakdown of prevention and protection activity showed there had been 17,334 incidents including 5,221 fires attended with an average of 7 minutes 40 seconds attendance time. There had been 869 accidental dwelling fires of which 2 people sadly lost their lives and there were 35 casualties reported. The majority, 95% of accidental dwelling fires were of a low or medium fire severity. In addition, the Service attended 38 missing person searches, 811 gaining entry to property incidents and 497 road traffic collisions. During the period 44 on-call firefighters were recruited, 11,903 HFSCs were delivered, 21,100 young people received prevention education, 5,957 people took part in road safety education, 63 fire safety enforcement notices were issued and 11 businesses were prohibited from operating.

### Review of the Home Fire Safety Check

Extensive work with partners involved assessing the quality of Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referrals and providing feedback, establishing a focus group to improve communication and referral management and the design of a partnership cycle which enabled the maintenance of effective partner relations. An ongoing quality assurance process ensured appropriate referrals were received and identified any gaps. Improvements had been made to the HFSC re-visit policy, aligning it to the person and risk identified within the property, and the establishment of a seamless process when unable to contact someone. A trial with referring partners to increase the opportunity for successful contact which resulted in a visit was ongoing.

### Embed Adverse Childhood Experience awareness

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) awareness toolbox talks had been held across the Service and an e-learning module released to the whole organisation. ACE awareness was now part of the wholetime firefighter recruits' course so, from the start of their careers new recruits learned about the impact of traumatic experiences in childhood on behaviour and how this related to community engagement.

### Built Environment Assessment Team

The built environment assessment team was established to address the evolving risks posed by an increasingly complex built environment and the potential for buildings to perform unexpectedly in a fire, the team increased our knowledge and understanding of buildings in Lancashire. A series of recommendations to strengthen and improve core services across prevention, protection and operational response was currently being implemented within the Service.

## **Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently**

### Strengthen operational assurance

There had been significant progress made in developing an assurance monitoring system (AMS), which was improving the way data was analysed, trends were identified and learning from exercises and incidents was applied. The AMS was enabling the Service to plan training more effectively and track actions robustly, including those related to national learning. The development

included features, such as the automatic transfer of data from the incident debrief app and the ability to review key metrics on an intuitive dashboard. This automated end-to-end process was leading the way in the fire sector in terms of assuring safe and effective operations.

#### Respond to the impacts of climate change

The Service's commitment to reducing environmental impact recognised the reality of climate change and the carbon management plan contained a target to reduce carbon emissions by 40% by 2030. As part of an ongoing vehicle replacement programme, which had included a move away from diesel vehicles, the Service had introduced several hybrid blue light response cars into the fleet and planned to trial all-electric cars in prevention and protection services. During the year, there had been continued development of response capabilities in relation to the increasing impact climate change was having on certain incident types, particularly wildfires and flooding. Investment had been made in specialist equipment and highly trained people had been developed, such as wildfire tactical advisors and waste fire tactical advisors, to respond to and manage incidents at local and national levels. Tactical flood plans in known flood hot spots had greatly improved preparedness for dealing with flooding incidents effectively.

#### Optimise rota management

During 2020-21, a comprehensive trial was carried out to introduce several new processes designed to make detachment and overtime planning more efficient. This included a new staffing management app to advertise opportunities for people to cover shortfalls and maintain operational response arrangements and the procedure for identifying rota breaches and causes. Feedback and learning from the trial were being used to inform policies and the Service was working with its rota management provider to devise a more automated approach, further streamlining how staffing levels were managed across shift systems.

#### Replace incident command units and software

Work was ongoing with the incident command software. A supplementary document had been produced to describe in simplistic terms how the incident command worked, what was required and why. A further review of the whole project had been undertaken to broaden the scope to incorporate additional requirements that supported needs in relation to large scale incident management. This had included collaborative work to ensure a regional and consistent approach was taken in the procurement of command support resources and software.

#### Evaluate tools to strengthen our response

During 2020-21 a pre-alerting system, designed to reduce incident response times to wholetime and on-call fire stations was rolled out. As a result of findings during initial trials, a system had been created to fully assess each pre-alert and provide accurate reporting. This data showed that the system improved average reaction times across all duty systems by 55%. The improvement ranged from 26 seconds up to 1 minute and 31 seconds dependent on the shift system and time of day. All mobilisations were previously based on a standard delay that was appropriate to the shift system. The Service had now moved to a data-led, real-time response across all stations which would effectively mobilise the nearest and quickest asset for any specific incident type. The next step was to implement pre-alerting at stations with both wholetime and on-call appliances. The system was constantly under review to identify learning and improve

processes.

## **Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer**

### Develop a strong organisational culture based on values and well-being

A programme of work to develop an organisational culture that promoted a healthy state of well-being and truly represented the Service's STRIVE values: service, trust, respect, integrity, value and empowerment included:

- Planned leadership development events were moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this led to identifying new ways of delivering future events. The events focused on the leadership framework within LFRS, the concept of psychoneuroimmunology, leadership styles, the importance of positive emotions at work, how to encourage engagement and innovation whilst building resilience and maintaining productivity;
- The Service's approach to talent management was developed and this was being rolled out across the Service. Promotion pathways were being reviewed to ensure that opportunities to identify and develop future leaders for the future were fully explored and utilised;
- Health and well-being support during 2020-21 principally focused on the impacts of Covid-19 and supporting staff through uncertain times. This included how to access urgent mental health support, supporting family and friends through the pandemic, how to apply a positive mindset, managing anxiety, well-being support for our Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff, coping with grief, and helping managers to support their staff.
- To embed revised performance management arrangements, briefing sessions continued to be delivered across the Service in relation to talent management and the importance of coaching and developmental feedback within the appraisal conversation. The appraisal process had been built within HR systems enabling more accurate reporting and accessible information to inform workforce planning.
- Promotion process policies and guidance had been merged into one holistic policy, making the communication of options and opportunities more straightforward, and shared across the organisation. The internal selection process for fire protection roles had been refined to ensure staff who wished to develop and work in this essential area were selected based on aptitude and suitability for the demanding specialism, rather than incident command skills which was historically the case.
- 360-degree assessments were delivered to all station managers and above to inform their personal development. This was now included as an element within supervisory and middle manager development programmes.
- The Service supported 36 operational members of staff to access the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) levels 3 and 6, and five business support staff had undertaken ILM levels 3 and 5, one via an apprenticeship. Three operational and two business support leaders had been supported to achieve Level 7 Strategic Leadership, with two people completing these through apprenticeships. External coaching was provided to 47 members of operational and non-operational staff.

### Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within the Service

Recruiting, developing and retaining a workforce that is inclusive and more reflective of Lancashire's communities is central to serving our communities as effectively as we can.

- During the pandemic, community engagement was particularly focussed on Lancashire's BAME communities in Preston and East Lancashire. Local radio, targeted publications and online platforms and material in alternative languages were used by staff in those areas to help share critical health information and encourage vaccination take-up. Members of staff working in vaccination centres were able to correct misinformation and reassure people. We also worked with mosques to discuss fire safety and the need for updated fire risk assessments and fire drills when students returned to study. The Service's equality, diversity and inclusion employee voice groups steered this work, identifying needs and opportunities to improve engagement to help keep people safe.
- A trial of flexible annual leave arrangements began at Blackpool and South Shore fire stations, with all staff at those locations volunteering to participate. A mid-year evaluation had been completed and findings would be considered once the trial was complete.
- Face to face opportunities to engage with our diverse communities and promote opportunities to work for the Service was a challenge last year due to the pandemic. However, the recruitment approach was broadened through targeted online media, which proved successful in increasing the number of female applicants interested in joining the Service as an apprentice firefighter.

#### Expand apprenticeship opportunities

The Service continued to offer firefighter apprenticeship courses throughout the pandemic to ensure the needs of the workforce profile were met. Development of apprenticeships remained a priority to ensure the most appropriate apprenticeship programmes were offered relative to the knowledge, skills and behaviours of those employed.

#### Upgrade fire station accommodation

South Shore fire station had been extended and work to improve accommodation and facilities completed, providing a positive working environment that enhanced health and wellbeing. Similar plans were in place to upgrade Blackpool and Hyndburn fire stations.

### **Delivering value for money in how we use our resources**

#### Invest in training and equipment

- Investment in a programme of significant, long-term improvements continued to ensure that our people had the best equipment and training available to deliver effective services now and in the future.
- Construction work was underway to expand the existing fleet garage and provide a purposely designed breathing apparatus training school at our training centre in Chorley, with completion expected in 2021-22.
- A review of drill tower provision across the Service had now been completed to produce a medium to long term replacement plan based on specialist skills and the condition of existing facilities. Implementation would start in 2021-22.
- Following extensive staff consultation and trials, the Service introduced new duty rig uniform for operational and business support staff purchased through regional collaborative procurement arrangements. More comfortable and practical trousers and new safety boots offered increased versatility to meet the needs of our activities (both emergency and non-emergency)
- Due to the need to rationalise on-vehicle technology and consider integrated

vehicle systems, plans to install CCTV on fire appliances were paused during 2020/21 while further exploration and analysis was undertaken. This had the potential to reduce the number of stand-alone vehicle systems, enabling remote monitoring of specific vehicle operations. As a result, and in collaboration with regional fire and rescue services and blue light partners, the Service was currently evaluating emerging cloud-based, in-vehicle technology with a view to integrating CCTV, telematics, and on-board diagnostics.

#### Collaborate with other public services

Covid-19 caused plans through the Blue Light Collaboration Board to be put on hold but presented new ways for the Service to diversify and work with partners to support the pandemic response in Lancashire, as noted in the Service's response to the pandemic discussed earlier.

#### Replace performance and analysis software

Initial plans to replace reporting software had developed due to technological advances. The project now included a wider range of key performance indicators across all areas of the Service, to enable more efficient and effective monitoring. The new requirements had been scoped and underpinning work to support the new developments was underway, with a view to delivering a phased approach over the next two years.

Members also noted the details of a number of significant, complex and demanding incidents which included multiple wildfires, widespread flooding and numerous large-scale fires attended during the period.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Hennessy in relation to the review of the Home Fire Safety Check, as detailed on page 20 of the agenda pack Area Manager, Mark Hutton advised that the Service engaged extensively with 'preferred partners' who were organisations that already worked with people most at risk. Details of any vulnerable person would then automatically be referred to the Service to carry out a home fire safety check. He advised that circa 70% of referrals were those classed as at high or very high risk.

In response to questions raised by County Councillor Hennessy in relation to the response activity detailed on page 21 of the agenda pack, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that part of the process to improve rota management included a new staffing management app which replaced a manual telephone system. The app advertised to staff opportunities to book onto shifts where there were shortfalls and thereby maintain operational response. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer also advised that work was ongoing to replace performance software to improve data quality to front line staff to assist to bring performance reports to the Performance Committee. Work was also ongoing that looked to tweak the key performance indicators, which would be brought back to relevant committees in due course.

County Councillor O'Toole expressed thanks to all staff for their hard work and dedication during such a difficult year.

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

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report.

At the Planning Committee meeting of the Combined Fire Authority on 12 July 2021, Members endorsed the publication of the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 - 27 for consultation over a ten-week period from 14 July 2021 to 21 September 2021.

The consultation plan was created in line with the Service's consultation strategy and following an equality impact assessment of the impact of the draft CRMP on groups likely to be affected. The aim was to consult local communities and stakeholders about the risks in Lancashire to inform how the Service mitigated and responded to them and provide opportunities for stakeholders. Matters consulted on included: whether the plan identified the greatest risks to the communities and people of Lancashire; identified any unmet need; measures in place to mitigate and respond to risk; and the plan's overarching aim and priorities.

During the consultation period, the draft documents were made available on the Service's website together with an online survey. Printed copies were made available on request. Identified stakeholders included Service employees; local authorities; emergency services and other public agencies; town and parish councils; third sector partners such as voluntary groups and charities; businesses; representative bodies; landowners; community groups; and members of the public. Communications activity was tailored to target audiences and ranged from writing directly to partner organisations and staff engagement sessions to digital advertising and email marketing. Feedback was accepted via the online survey, by email and in comments on social media platforms.

Overall, the consultation feedback endorsed the draft CRMP, the Service's priorities and approach to community risks in Lancashire. Full details of the consultation feedback, process requirements and resulting amendments (which had been included in the proposed final version of the CRMP and attached as appendix 2) were now considered by Members.

Members were impressed with the format of the report and the draft CRMP. The Committee Chairman found the report fascinating and pertinent against the background of the recent global climate change discussions where, as Lancashire became hotter and wetter it was likely there would be more flooding, wildfire and water related incidents.

As part of the final recommendations to the full Combined Fire Authority meeting scheduled for 21 February 2022, Members agreed to include a data and digital strategy, which was currently being drafted.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee:

- i) Endorsed the consultation process surrounding the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 - 27 as adequate in scale and scope; and
- ii) Referred final recommendations to the full Combined Fire Authority meeting of 21 February 2022 for approval to publish.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report.

A recommendation made by the Performance Committee at its meeting on 17 March 2021 (resolution 45/19 refers) to remove attendance to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) at non-sleeping premises, unless presence of fire was confirmed, staged over two years; to be introduced during the day in year one and during the night from year two, was considered and approved for public and stakeholder consultation at full Fire Authority on 21 June 2021 (resolution 14-20/21 refers).

The resulting consultation commenced on 12 August 2021 and concluded on 21 September 2021. In accordance with standing terms of reference, the consultation outcomes and associated recommendations were brought back for consideration by the Planning Committee.

The report as now considered by Members summarised the consultation strategy, its outcomes, and policy development and implementation approach previously adopted elsewhere in the North West and nationally.

The recommendations related to the AFA attendance policy and the wider unwanted fire signals (UWFS) reduction benefits that could be achieved through the implementation campaign and associated improvements to the wider UWFS policy. All options proposed aligned with current National Fire Chiefs Council [guidance](#).

It was noted that the report did not consider the broader issue of escalating alarms originating from Telecare systems in domestic dwellings. This would be considered separately through the creation of a specific policy in the 2022-23 LFRS Prevention Department Plan.

County Councillor O'Toole sought reassurance from Officers regarding the serious claims made by the FBU, as referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 of their response to the consultation on page 151 of the agenda pack. In response the Chief Fire Officer advised that the comments did not seem to fit with areas both within the Community Risk Management Plan and AFA consultations regarding areas for change as neither made any staffing reductions.

The Chairman thought the data presented was very good and advised that if required further analysis of the free text could be possible to gain further insight into why people responded in the way they had.

**RESOLVED:** - That the following be recommended to the full Authority on 13 December 2021: -

1. Adopt a False Alarm Reduction and Emergency Call Management (ECM) policy already in use by one North West Fire and Rescue Service within North West Fire Control as the baseline for the revised LFRS approach;
2. Exempt Grade 1 and 2\* Heritage premises (\* subject to meeting specific criteria) from the non-attendance policy;
3. Exempt Primary and Secondary Education premises from the non-attendance policy;

4. Exempt premises with 'Enhanced Reliability Alarm Systems' from the non-attendance policy;
5. Undertake a three-month implementation phase to engage stakeholders, and launch the new policy from 1 April 2022;
6. Ensure Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations sign up to refreshed 'call back' agreements;
7. Implement changes by day in year 1 (Day 08:00hrs to 19:00hrs) and review thereafter.

16-20/21 STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISK 2021/22

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report.

The Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) was first published in 2016. It was updated each year and had been refreshed for the year 2021/22. It utilised data from the Incident Recording System which helped the identification of highest risk activities / incidents and was informed by the Lancashire Resilience Forum Community Risk Register.

The Strategic Assessment of Risk reflected the knowledge and experience of a variety of specialist departments and was consolidated each summer to allow for departmental plans to be produced and for the Service's annual planning day. The document supported the publication of the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022/27 and moreover the draft Annual Service Plan 2022/23 by capturing the dynamic picture of the changing risk in Lancashire.

Risk in Lancashire would always remain dynamic; it changed over time, differed by area and demographic, and needed different interventions to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring or to lessen its consequences.

Through the risk management framework changing risk was constantly assessed and prioritised our response framework. A wider consultation had also taken place, involving District Councils, Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Constabulary, in order to gain a more complete collaborative picture of the perceived risk from the viewpoint of all organisations.

The 201/22 SAoR built on previous versions of the annual risk assessment methodology whereby each of the 32 incident types such as domestic fires, flooding and road traffic collisions had been quantified using a likelihood and consequence score. The likelihood element looked at the frequency of the incident type occurring within Lancashire utilising the incident data for the previous 3 years. The consequence score was determined by an average derived from seven categories, these being loss of life, injury, economic, environmental, societal, political and impact upon staff.

Maintaining a clear and current understanding of the risks that affected Lancashire's communities underpinned everything that the Service did; driving both governance and planning arrangements.

RESOLVED: - That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the Strategic Assessment of Risk 2021/22.

17-20/21 PREVENTION, PROTECTION, RESPONSE STRATEGIES

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report.



Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) were required by the National Framework to produce a local Community Risk Management Plan that set out the Authority's strategy, in collaboration with other agencies, for reducing the commercial, economic, and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents. This report detailed how the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27 had been drafted to include 5 underpinning strategies providing a greater level of detail:

1. Prevention strategy- preventing- fires and other emergencies from happening;
2. Protection strategy- protecting people and property when they happen;
3. Response strategy- responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently;
4. People strategy- valuing our people so they can focus on Making Lancashire safer;
5. Finance strategy- delivering value for money in and how we use our resources.

Whilst there were 5 key Strategies within the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027, this report provided detail with regards to:

- i) Prevention Strategy, preventing fires and other emergencies from happening;
- ii) Protection Strategy, protecting people and property when they happen, and;
- iii) Response Strategy, responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently, appendices 1-3 as now considered by Members.

The People Strategy which sought to recruit and deliver a workforce which was resilient, highly skilled, flexible, diverse and which could deliver the Service's aim of keeping the people of Lancashire safer would be presented to Resources Committee in December 2021 for review and approval.

The Finance Strategy provided details with regards to revenue, capital and reserves and balances; this would be presented to the Combined Fire Authority meeting in February 2022 for the review and approval.

As mentioned earlier on the agenda the addition of a Data and Digital Strategy was currently be drafted for inclusion. This would also be brought to the CFA meeting in February 2022.

**RESOLVED:** - That the Committee noted the 6 key strategies that underpinned the draft CRMP 2022-2027 and approved the Prevention, Protection and Response Strategies.

#### 18-20/21 SUB 18M HIGH RISE RESIDENTIAL UPDATE

The report, presented by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, responded to a question raised by the Committee Chairman at the Planning Committee meeting held 12 July 2021 on 'whether mid to high-rise buildings were in the same position as high-rise buildings?'. It was noted that the fire safety guidance and legislation had evolved and changed significantly since the Grenfell tragedy and that it continued to do so at pace.

This report provided an overview of how the legislation and associated guidance had evolved and how this related to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) increasing duties as the Enforcing Authority for the Fire Safety Order 2005, Fire Safety Bill 2021, and Building Safety Bill (Draft). It was likely that there were sub 18m residential premises with external wall systems that had flammability performance which would not be acceptable if they had floors over 18m. Government guidance, and thus regulatory capability to address such issues (by any regulator) had evolved significantly in recent months away from a default inference to remove and remediate the cladding (the inferred position immediately post Grenfell) towards a much greater emphasis on proportionality, accepting a limited degree of flammability, and adopting risk assessed approaches.

It was vital that the Service had clear and unambiguous national guidance to follow so that when enforcement powers relating to external wall systems were conferred upon Fire and Rescue Service's [in October 2021] by virtue of the Fire Safety Bill, the Service (and Fire Authority) were first and foremost able to 'make Lancashire Safer', but also in doing so were able to discharge legal responsibilities in a manner that matched national expectation, did not cause unjustifiable duress to leaseholders, and did not lead to enforcement action being successfully appealed in a manner that might impact significantly on the physical and financial resources of the Authority.

It was noted that the report did not detail the wider regulatory and resource issues concerning the new Building Safety Bill as that legislation related specifically [at that time] to Higher Risk Residential Buildings over 18m which would be jointly enforced by the Service working as part of the new Building Safety Regulator (with HSE / Building Control). This was being developed and planned to receive Royal assent in April 2022 and be enabled in 2023.

#### Building Risk Review

Lancashire had 69 higher risk residential premises which had all been fully audited under the Building Risk Review process. In addition to reporting back to the National Fire Chiefs Council, Home Office and Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government on the make up of the external wall systems, the process had allowed inspectors to identify other aspects of fire safety non-compliance.

To date 6 premises in this height range have been identified as having non-compliant external wall systems; all have interim measures in place. A further 3 premises also implemented interim measures; not due to inadequacy of their external wall systems, but instead due to other serious fire safety non-compliance issues such as internal compartmentation breaches or smoke management system defects.

The Building Safety Bill would, in future, tightly define Higher Risk Residential Buildings (HRRBs) as all buildings (new and existing) that were at least 18 metres in height or had at least 7 storeys, and had at least two residential units. The initial Building Risk Review (BRR) data set provided by the NFCC contained premises of 6 floors and above.

In Lancashire all residential premises 6 floors and above had been audited by LFRS Protection staff. This approach had been taken in order to quality assure the data and to ensure that none of the buildings that fell into the 18m or above

category were overlooked. It also ensured that risk information was gathered on buildings that fell into LFRS's operational definition of 'high-rise' (6 floors and above) as this allowed risk information to be captured and placed on mobile data terminals. As part of the process protection teams were also asked to identify any additional buildings of 6 floors and above which might have been omitted from the original data.

In line with future Building Safety Bill requirements (18 metres in height or at least 7 storeys) LFRS had identified 38 premises 'in-scope' for the future regulations. All 38 premises had been fully audited of which the full make up of the external wall system was known for 19 premises with reports awaited for the remaining 19 (resulting in 6 enforcement notices and 30 notifications of deficiencies, 1 received informal advice and 1 was satisfactory).

It was noted that Lancashire had 31 residential premises of 6 floors which had also been inspected as part of the initial building risk review of which the full make up of the external wall system was known for 2 premises with reports awaited for the remaining 29 (resulting in 3 enforcement notices and 25 notifications of deficiencies, 1 received informal advice and 2 were satisfactory).

Sub 18m residential tall buildings had not been targeted for audit primarily due to the scale of the housing stock below 18m, with the Service not yet having enforcement powers beyond the common areas and the ongoing developments in the guidance.

It was noted that the National Property Gazetteer indicated Lancashire currently had 2,226 purpose-built flats of 4 or 5 storeys and 7,715 of 3 storeys or less. However, in the past 3 years, inspectors had audited 79 premises of 4/5 storeys (resulting in 6 enforcement notices and 49 notifications of deficiencies) and 195 premises of 3 storeys or less (resulting in 10 enforcement notices and 137 notifications of deficiencies).

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted the report.

19-20/21

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

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection of the Service was due to be conducted in April/May 2020. This had been suspended due to the recall of staff within the HMICFRS returning to their own services to plan and manage the implications of the Covid-19 outbreak. The inspection was now scheduled for week commencing 22 November 2021.

In terms of preparations, the Organisational Assurance team had been liaising with departmental heads to ensure that ongoing work concerning items identified at the previous inspection had been prioritised effectively and demonstrable progress made.

A strategic brief was being developed and would be delivered during the first week of inspection. The narrative for this brief provided an opportunity to highlight distance travelled for areas that were identified as 'areas for development' from the previous inspection, as well as key areas of strength, potentially including some areas where the Service was demonstrating sector

best practise.

The inspection itself would commence 22 November 2021, over six weeks in total, and was expected to be delivered using a hybrid approach i.e., some weeks would be in person and some elements delivered virtually. This had moved on from tranche one of the inspection process, which was completely virtual. After the conclusion of week four (week commencing 13 December), there would be a three-week break prior to recommencement for weeks five and six, from 10 January 2022. A debrief would be held in week eight.

The first tranche of inspections was due to be published early December 2021, along with the State of Fire and Rescue 2021 report. Tranche two reports, including Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, were expected sometime in Summer 2022.

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

## 20-20/21 BLUE LIGHT COLLABORATION

The report was presented by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

It was noted that the formal meetings of the Blue Light Collaboration Board were put on hold during the pandemic to enable resources to be directed into priority areas supporting the NHS. As previously reported, there was an incredible amount of work between the 3 Blue Light Services delivered during this period. Collaborative efforts included:

- LFRS delivering face fitting of masks to assist North West Ambulance Service and the NHS.
- LFRS assisting in the establishment of a temporary mortuary.
- LFRS developing a policy and training for movement of bodies.
- LFRS coordinating logistics for vast quantities of PPE to be used in healthcare settings.
- LFRS working with partners to support the operation of mass vaccination sites and then gaining the capability for injecting vaccines.

As services moved from the emergency phase of the pandemic into recovery, there had been an opportunity to reconvene the Blue Light Collaboration Board meetings. There had been two meetings held recently, the first of which was primarily utilised to reflect upon the evaluation report that provided a review of the deliverables and benefits realised from collaboration work prior to the pandemic. This review and associated report were carried out by Shared Service Architecture consultants who were recognised by both the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) as sector leads. The second meeting was to start considering what items could be included in the next iteration of the work plan.

There was a further meeting planned towards the end of November to evaluate the ideas that had been put forward for the refreshed work plan. Furthermore, a communications item was being developed for each of the services to use to brief respective management teams internally. Following that, a presentation would be delivered to the executive level sponsors in a meeting scheduled for January 2022, where it was proposed the new workplan would be signed off and progressed.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Shedwick the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that emerging areas and opportunities were always considered by the Service (for example, the impact of climate change and the current development of a digital data strategy). He confirmed that he did not expect the new workplan to have the same scale and scope as the initial 31-point plan.

In response to a question from Councillor Williams regarding the current national shortage of computer chips the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that there had been some delays as the pandemic had accelerated the purchase of more equipment and although this was identified as a risk register item the shortage had not yet had an impact on the Service.

In response to a question from the Committee Chairman regarding the provision of fire ports (as used in Canada), the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Authority had 2 boats deemed to be rescue boats which were used on inland water and there were also 6 swift water rescue teams. He advised that the CRMP detailed work that focussed on flooding and water rescue which aimed to maintain swift water rescue, flood rescue technicians and boat capability at strategic locations to address the growth seen and anticipated risks due to climate change.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted and endorsed.

21-20/21 APPRENTICE FIREFIGHTER OFSTED NEW PROVIDER MONITORING VISIT

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report.

He advised that on 12 July 2021 the Service was notified by Ofsted that they would be undertaking their new provider monitoring Visit on 14 and 15 July. There were three HMI inspectors (one acting as an observer) who were based at Service Training Centre. They visited Operational Stations and met a number of staff from various departments over the two days. Ofsted published the monitoring visit main findings report on 26 August (attached to the report as appendix 1 and now considered by Members). The Service was judged as making 'reasonable progress' against three themes:

- How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision? (leadership and management theme);
- What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? (the 'coal face' learner experience theme);
- How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? (learners are safe theme).

The lead HMI praised the progress to date and was very complimentary of the people they interacted with during their visit saying that everyone clearly demonstrated the organisation's values and behaviours.

Following the visit key stakeholders met to discuss the feedback and learning. An action plan was developed on areas for further development, a number of

those items have already been discharged as complete. Within the Training and Operational Review (TOR) department, Firefighter Apprentice progress was continually monitored, and a considerable amount of time and effort was placed on the delivery of this scheme. TOR worked alongside Service Delivery, Human Resources and Finance colleagues to ensure the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship was delivering high quality Firefighter Apprentices. The next Ofsted visit would be a full inspection expected to take place between 12 – 40 months.

Members were pleased with the support provided to young people and the Committee Chairman recommended that this excellent work be widely publicised.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee noted the report.

22-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 7 February 2022 at 1000 hours in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

Further meeting dates were noted for 18 July 2022 and agreed for 21 November 2022.

23-20/21 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.

24-20/21 DAY CREWING PLUS FUTURE

(Paragraphs 3 and 4)

Members discussed a report on the future of the day crewing plus shift system.

RESOLVED: - that the recommendations in the report be approved.

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### AUDIT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 30 November 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

### MINUTES

### PRESENT:

#### Councillors

J Shedwick (Chairman)  
N Hennessy (Vice-Chair)  
S Clarke  
F Jackson  
A Kay  
J Singleton

#### Officers

K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

#### In attendance

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

#### 22-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from County Councillor Munsif Dad.

#### 23-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

#### 24-20/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 28 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 25-20/21 EXTERNAL AUDITORS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Mr Ayre, Audit Manager presented the report.

The report re-affirmed the draft opinion on the accounts previously reported to the Committee that the external auditors had completed their audit of the

Authority's financial statements and issued an unqualified audit opinion.

The review of value for money arrangement covered the 3 areas of i) financial sustainability; ii) governance and iii) improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The auditor's review did not identify any significant weaknesses in arrangements across any of these areas, but had made 4 improvement recommendations as set out pages 10, 14, 15 and 16 of the report and now considered by Members: -

1. Recommendation – that the Authority should continue to identify and develop sufficient savings plans to avoid depleting General Fund reserves below the minimum level. Management Comment - Agreed, this had been in abeyance awaiting a multi-year settlement, hence this would form part of future years budgets/medium term financial strategy;
2. Recommendation - Within the Corporate Risk Register it was recommended that each risk be mapped to the relevant corporate objective. Management Comment – We do not believe this will assist as many of the risks span across more than one objective;
3. Recommendation - that the Authority should remove discharged risks from the Corporate Risk register. Management Comment – We do not accept this recommendation; the inclusion of discharged risks demonstrates which risks have previously been considered by the Authority. The reporting of risks made it clear that these had previously been discharged, and did not impact on Members focusing on 'live' risks;
4. Recommendation - Review the adequacy of procedures around members declaring interests. Also, implement a regular completeness check to identify any gaps in declarations. For example, this may include a search of Companies house records to compare directorships held to those recorded on the register of interests. Management Comment - We will conduct a review about adequacy of procedures around the declaration of Members' interests, including consideration of what, if any, verification process is required.

It was noted that the final audit fee was £38.9k, which was consistent with the fee agreed as part of the Audit Plan. This was £15.2k higher than the scale fee identified by Public Sector Audit Appointments, reflecting the increased work associated with changes to auditing standards, as previously reported. The increase in fees was broadly consistent with similar audited bodies. The Government had however, provided an additional £15m of funding to compensate authorities for increased audit fees, arising from changes to auditing standards etc, and the Authority's share of this was £12.2k. As such net audit fees were £26.7k.

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



26-20/21 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 12 November 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 to date that 39 days had been spent this financial year on the 2021/22 plan which equated to 56% of the totalled planned activity of 70 days.

Progress to date in relation to the plan was provided and discussed by Members. Audit work across the 3 key financial systems (accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger) had been completed in November and an opinion of substantial assurance provided with no areas for improvement identified. Substantial assurance was also provided in relation to treasury management with no areas for improvement suggested.

In relation to training, learning and development. The audit report was finalised in August 2021 and 4 medium and 3 low residual risk actions had been agreed to enhance the internal review and reporting arrangements in relation to compliance with mandatory training timescales and the recording of training needs, and the formal approval and distribution of the current training plan and policy documents.

It was noted that an interim review had already been completed and an overall opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and control arrangements would be reported as part of the 2021/22 Annual Report of the Head of Internal Audit.

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

27-20/21 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. At its meeting on 20 February 2017 the Authority opted into Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) auditor appointment arrangements (resolution 6/16 refers), whereby PSAA was responsible for appointing an auditor to principal local government and police bodies that had chosen to opt into its national auditor appointment arrangements. This appointment covered the period 2018/19 to 2022/23. The Authority therefore now needed to determine how to appoint its external auditors when that arrangement expired.

It was noted that there were 3 ways for a principal local government or police body to appoint its auditor for the five financial years from 2023/24:

1. undertake a stand-alone individual auditor procurement and appointment exercise;
2. undertake a joint audit procurement and appointing exercise with other

- bodies; or
3. join PSAA's sector led national scheme.

These options were considered in 2017 and appendix 1 set out the advantages / disadvantages of the options. At that time the Authority determined that pursuing the sector led approach represented the best option. This was again proposed given the following advantages were still identified: -

- avoid the necessity to establish an independent auditor panel (detailed requirements specified by the [Local Audit & Accountability Act, 2014](#));
- avoid the need to manage their own auditor procurement, including the costs of doing so;
- benefit from PSAA undertaking a robust process to validate fee variation proposals; and
- assuming a high level of participation, be able to support market sustainability and encourage realistic prices in a challenging market.

A local auditor must be appointed no later than 31 December in the financial year preceding the financial year of the accounts to be audited, i.e. for the audit of the accounts of the 2023/24 financial year, there must be a local auditor appointed by 31 December 2022.

#### PSAA's sector led national scheme

In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations), PSAA formally invited all eligible bodies to join the national auditor appointment arrangements for the audit years 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 in its role as a specified appointing person. Attached as appendix 2 as now considered was the Prospectus that PSAA issued at the time.

A decision to become an opted-in authority must be taken in accordance with the Regulations by the Members of an Authority meeting as a whole, i.e. the full Authority. The closing date to give notice to PSAA of the authority's acceptance of the invitation was 11 March 2022.

Following the completion of the procurement of audit services (envisaged as August 2022), the [auditor appointment process](#) would be:

- publish the process for making individual auditor appointments for opted-in bodies from 2023/24 during spring/summer 2022;
- consult with opted-in bodies on proposed auditor appointments during the late summer/autumn 2022; and
- confirm all auditor appointments by 31 December 2022.

#### Audit Fee

The external audit fee for 2020/21 account was £39k. In recent years this fee had increased due to the additional requirements placed on auditors by the Financial Reporting Council. Audit firms had expressed a view that the existing fees were not sustainable and hence any procurement exercise was likely to

result in higher fees, irrespective of how it was conducted.

Opting into a national sector led approach with PSAA provided some opportunity to limit the extent of any increases by entering in to a large-scale collective procurement arrangement and it was felt that a sector led approach was likely to result in the best compromise between sustainable fees and quality of audit. It would also remove the costs of establishing an auditor panel, required under the other two approaches, which if selected, would need to be incorporated into future years budgets.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee propose that the full Authority accepted PSAAs invitation to opt into the national scheme.

## 28-20/21 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report. The report highlighted action taken in respect of corporate risk since the last Audit Committee meeting. The latest review of the corporate risk register identified 1 new risk which warranted inclusion on the corporate risk register:

### Increase in energy costs

The Service currently spent approx. £400k on energy. The contracts for both gas and electricity (let via a national framework agreement) fixed the tariff at the start of each year, meaning that the increased costs on the market would not be passed onto the Service in the current financial year. However, when prices were fixed for next year, there was the potential for a significant increase in costs. The potential increase was currently being reviewed for inclusion in the budget setting exercise, however even a 25% uplift would result in an increase in excess of £100k.

In order to mitigate the risk of a significant increase a YPO framework was used to fix prices. YPO actively reviewed the market, attempting to fix prices at the most favourable rates. The Service also looked to introduce more energy efficient lighting and heating as well as improving thermal qualities of buildings (e.g. replacing windows/ doors/ facades).

Given the potential cost increase, this was a medium risk as whilst the increase seemed certain the overall financial impact in terms of the total budget was relatively low.

An updated corporate risk register was considered by Members with changes summarised in the report.

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

## 29-20/21 STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISK

The Director of Corporate Services presented the Authority's Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) which was presented to the Planning Committee at

its meeting on 15 November. Given the SAoR linked to the risk management processes and the corporate risk register the report presented to Planning Committee, together with a tabled document that set out the highest risk incident types was considered by Members.

RESOLVED: - That the Strategic Assessment of Risk be noted and endorsed.

30-20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 10:00 hours in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

Further meeting dates were noted for 26 July 2022 and 27 September 2022 and agreed for 29 November 2022.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

### RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 1 December 2021, at 10.00 am in the Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton.

### MINUTES

#### PRESENT:

##### Councillors

T Williams (Chairman)  
D O'Toole (Vice-Chair)  
L Beavers  
J Mein  
G Mirfin  
M Pattison  
S Serridge  
R Woollam

##### Officers

S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)  
K Mattinson, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)  
B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS)  
J Baines, Head of Finance (LFRS)  
B Ford, Safety, Health and Environment Advisor (LFRS)  
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)  
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

##### In attendance

D Shaw, FBU

#### 29-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from County Councillors Keith Iddon and Stuart Morris.

#### 30-20/21 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

#### 31-20/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 29 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 32-20/21 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22

The Director of Corporate Services presented the report which set out the

current budget position in respect of the 2021/22 revenue and capital budgets and performance against savings targets.

The overall position at the end of September was an underspend of £0.2m, with a forecast outturn position of an underspend of £0.4m. Both were a combination of the level of staffing vacancies, the slow return to business-as-usual spending activities, less the funding gap identified at budget setting and the unbudgeted pay awards.

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)		Reason
	30 Sept 2021	Forecast	
	£'000		
Service Delivery	(51)	(104)	<p>The underspend for both the first six months, and the year-end forecast, largely related to the reduced activity levels in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoke detectors, in addition recent difficulties in the supply chain for smoke alarms were partially resolved, however a potential increase in costs had been identified which may impact final spend in year;</li> <li>• Travel budgets, were significantly underspent, it was expected that changing working practices for non-operational staff would mean reduced usage in the future</li> </ul>
Covid-19	-	-	<p>We have received total funding of £1.6m since March 2020. In addition, as previously reported, we have transferred £0.2m of travel/mileage budgets into this reserve to reflect savings in respect of differing working practices during the pandemic, resulting in total funding of £1.8m.</p> <p>We have spent £1.7m to the end of September, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional staff costs £0.5m</li> <li>• Additional cleaning £0.1m</li> <li>• Consumable items £0.2m</li> <li>• Remote working and video conferencing equipment £0.2m</li> <li>• PPE £0.7m</li> </ul> <p>With effect from 1 September, LFRS</p>

			reduced the level of support offered to the large vaccination centres, handing over control back to the NHS. The remaining had been partially utilised during October, with some staff overtime and the order for personal issue P3 masks costing £21k, leaving an estimated balance of £50k for use in November/December.
TOR	(44)	(209)	<p>The current and forecast underspend largely related to the position with apprentice levy income for wholetime recruits. At the time of setting the budget it was anticipated that the recruit numbers would fully utilise the balance in the levy account, therefore the income budget was set at £0.2m. During the year, levy drawdown forecasts had been updated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following a nationwide review of the wholetime fire-fighter apprenticeship programme, which LFRS participated in, the government apprentice levy setting body agreed an uplift to the funding for each apprentice starting after January 2021 from £12k to £14k over the 24 month apprenticeship, resulting in additional income circa £46k in 2021/22;</li> <li>• levy account shortfalls would be met by 95% funding (known as co-investment) from the Government, which meant we will benefit from £163k additional levy income in the financial year.</li> </ul> <p>TOR had been catching up on training during the year and spend on external training was currently in line with budget.</p>
Property	(203)	(148)	<p>Whilst non-essential maintenance was re-instated prior to the end of the last financial year, departmental capacity due to a vacant surveyor post, and the ongoing situation meant that there was an underspend to date. The post was filled from the start of November; therefore the outturn forecast assumed that there would be some catch up spend for the final few months, reducing the current level of underspend.</p>

Non DFM	273	582	<p>Both the year to date and outturn overspend position reflected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the £0.3m funding gap identified at the time of setting the budget in February</li> <li>• additional RCCO for the capital programme STC workshop and South Shore refurbishment previously approved, plus</li> <li>• the request for the approval of additional £0.1m RCCO in relation to the purchase of a second Haglund vehicle (see capital budget below).</li> </ul>
Wholetime Pay (including associate trainer costs)	114	66	<p>As previously reported there had been significantly more early leavers than allowed for in the budget. At the end of September, we had 10 fewer wholetime members of staff than budgeted, resulting in an underspend of circa £200k against budgeted establishment levels. It was extremely hard to predict leavers for the remainder of the year, however assuming that early leavers slowed down in the second half of the year, we anticipated an underspend against establishment of approx. £0.5m. In addition, as previously reported, there was a shortfall in recruit numbers this year, with 35 recruits compared with a budgeted 48, which lead to a further underspend of £130k.</p> <p>Broadly speaking these were offset by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the unbudgeted grey book pay award of 1.5%, at a cost of £0.4m, as previously reported.</li> <li>• increased overtime costs, associated with covering vacancies, and staff absences,. (As the May recruits were posted to station in September the reliance on overtime should reduce during the second half of the year.)</li> </ul> <p>The net of all the above factors was the forecast overspend of £66k, however it should be noted that if we continued to experience higher than expected early leavers this overspend may reduce or, in all probability, become an underspend.</p>



On Call Pay	(42)	(49)	The position within On-call staffing was slightly underspent, with the unbudgeted pay award being more than offset by higher staff vacancies than budgeted.
Support staff (less agency staff)	(228)	(239)	The underspend related to vacant posts across various departments, circa 12% of the establishment in early October, far in excess of the 3.75% vacancy factor built into the budget. This was partly offset by spend on agency staff, which amounted to £41k in the period. Although recruitment activity had now recommenced the labour market had become more challenging and we were experiencing difficulties in filling posts. As such we anticipated the high level of vacancies remaining throughout the year. This would be partly offset by the eventual pay award for green book staff. This had not yet been agreed, but the pay offer has been increased to 1.75%, which had been reflected in the forecast outturn position which would be updated as we progressed through the year.
Apprentice Levy	(9)	(23)	The apprentice levy was payable at 0.5% of each months payroll costs, the budget for this was set at anticipated establishment levels, hence the underspend against this budget reflected the various pay budget underspends reported above.

It was noted that significant cost increases across various supply chains, and in particular in construction projects was being seen and this may affect the final outturn expenditure levels. This would continue to be monitored, and other trends, to ensure that they were reflected in future year's budgets, as well as being reported to Resources Committee.

#### Grant Funding

The Authority receives specific grants from the Government in respect of various new initiatives. These were included in the revenue budget position but were shown separately in the report. The forecast outturn assumed that all grant was spent in year, but any that was not would be carried forward as an earmarked reserve to use in the new year.

#### Capital Budget

The approved capital budget for 2021/22 stood at £4.4m.

It was noted that following discussions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee the budget had been increased to allow for the purchase of a

second Haglund to enhance operational response to emergencies in remote/inaccessible locations. These machines were ex-military machines which used rubber tracks instead of wheels, had low ground pressure, despite their size, and could cross soft ground with relative ease. This capability enabled the Service to provide year-round emergency cover in response to natural disasters across the County, especially flooding, which was becoming more severe and intense. The original capital budget allowed for the purchase of one such machine, and a Climate Change Operational Response Plan was currently being drafted which would recommend the purchase of a second machine. Initially it had been planned to include this in next year's capital programme, but the supplier confirmed that buying both at the same time would generate a saving of £9k across both machines.

To date £2.7m of the programme had been committed, with an anticipated year end spend of £4.0m, as set out below: -

	Spend to 30 Sept 2021 £m	
Other vehicles	0.2	This budget allowed for the replacement of various operational support vehicles. Whilst some of the operational support vehicles had been ordered and delivered, others were still being reviewed and it appeared increasingly unlikely that the budget would be fully utilised in year.
Operational Equipment / Future Firefighting	0.1	This budget allowed for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replacement of capital items from the equipment replacement plan, namely defibrillators and a replacement drone which had been delivered</li> <li>• replacement of light portable pumps, which had yet to be ordered</li> <li>• progression of CCTV on pumping appliances, where it was proposed trialling this in the first instance and hence the project would not be complete by year end</li> </ul> The anticipated slippage relating to the latter two programmes
Building Modifications	2.4	This budget allowed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a new workshop, BA Recovery and Trainer facility at STC. Committed spend to date was £2.4m. Work had been completed and the building was handed over to the Authority at the end of October 2021. A contact variation of £42k had been agreed for Compressor and furniture items that ISG</li> </ul>

		<p>had manufactured and installed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced station facilities comprising the final payment in respect of South Shore refurbishment and extension, and changes at Hyndburn fire station, where final designs were being reviewed prior to moving to the procurement phase, but where budget seems likely to slip into 2022/23;</li> <li>• Replacement drill towers where a partner contractor had been appointed to take the project forward, with a view to commencing construction prior to the year end;</li> <li>• Fees associated with progressing the business case for a SHQ relocation, which were unlikely to be spent in year.</li> </ul> <p>As with the revenue budget, current departmental capacity to progress these was previously limited, hence the slippage indicated in Appendix 2.</p>
IT systems	-	The budget related to the replacement of various systems and ICT hardware, in line with the ICT asset management plan. Whilst initial scoping work was on-going to facilitate the replacement of some of these systems, utilising the budget in the current year was still forecast.

The committed costs to date would be met by revenue contributions (£2.4m) and capital reserves (£0.3m). With the remaining in year spend being funded from a further £1.3m use of capital reserves.

As highlighted earlier significant cost increases were being seen across various supply chains, and in particular in construction projects and this may affect some of the capital projects as they progressed through the procurement stage.

#### Delivery against savings targets

The performance to date was already ahead of the annual target, largely due to staffing vacancies.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Pattison regarding whether the apprentice scheme had an age limit the Director of People and Development confirmed that the Service recruited apprentices at the start of their career with the fire service which could be aged 18 or much older. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that apprentice operational firefighters had a minimum age of 18. The Service also recruited apprentices for green book staff from the age of 16.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Beavers regarding continued provision of covid support monies, the Director of Corporate Services advised that the Government had previously issued funding in tranches. The

Service was currently awaiting a decision on the ongoing level of funding in light of the recent new covid-19 variant (Omicron) and any potential impact on the Service given the pace of its support to the vaccination programme had slowed in recent months.

Councillor Williams commented that nationally, businesses appeared to be experiencing recruitment problems. He expressed concern regarding firefighters leaving before their pensionable age and the challenge of recruiting back-office staff.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee:

- i) Noted and endorsed the financial position; and
- ii) Approved the virement to transfer £68k RCCO into the capital programme to fund the purchase of an all-terrain vehicle.

### 33-20/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT - MID YEAR REPORT 2021/22

In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice and to strengthen Members' oversight of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Resources Committee received a treasury management mid-year report and a final outturn report. Reports on treasury activity were discussed on a quarterly basis with Lancashire County Council Treasury Management Team and the Authority's Director of Corporate Services and were used as a basis for this report to the Committee.

#### Economic Overview

The economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic continued to dominate the first half of the financial year both in the UK and many other parts of the world. However, in its September 2021 policy announcement, the Bank of England (BoE) noted it now expected the UK economy to grow at a slower pace than was predicted in August, as the pace of the global recovery had shown signs of slowing and there were concerns inflationary pressures may be more persistent. Bank expectations for GDP growth for the third (calendar) quarter were revised down to 2.1% (from 2.9%), in part reflecting tighter supply conditions.

The BoE held Bank Rate at 0.1% and maintained its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion throughout the first half of the year. However, there were some concerns around inflation with the CPI inflation now expected to rise slightly above 4% in the last three months of 2021, due to higher energy prices and core goods inflation. Therefore, although policy rates had remained unchanged there was a greater expectation that rates may increase in late 2021 or early 2022.

An increase in gas prices in the UK and EU, supply shortages and a dearth of HGV and lorry drivers with companies willing to pay more to secure their services, had caused problems for a range of industries and, in some instance, will likely lead to higher prices.

#### Treasury Management position and Policy

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 treasury management activity was influenced both by the position at the beginning of the year and the plans in year. The position at the start of the financial year was summarised in the report indicating that the level of loans was above the borrowing requirement. 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. This had resulted in the CFR being reduced but due to early repayment charges it had not been financially beneficial to repay the existing loans.

It was not anticipated that the new capital expenditure would be funded from borrowing in the year while it was anticipated that there may be some reduction in the level of reserves held.

### Borrowing

There had been no new borrowing in the first six months of the financial year. This was consistent with the position that the current borrowing was already above the CFR and that the capital programme did not include any expenditure to be financed from borrowing.

The long-term debt outstanding of £2m was from the Public Works Loan Board. The maturity profile of the Authority's borrowings, along with the interest rate paid was summarised in the report. It was noted that consideration had been given to the early repayment of the loans. However, these would be subject to an early repayment (premium) charge. It was not considered to be financially beneficial to repay the loans with the estimated premium charge to repay the three loans being £1.180m.

Whilst there was no need to borrow at the present time it was worth highlighting that a key source for long term borrowing was the PWLB. The PWLB lending was offered at a fixed rate of 1% above the gilt yields. For most authorities which qualify for the certainty rate, including the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority, this meant a 0.2% reduction on these standard rates so equated to 0.80% above the gilt yields.

Current PWLB maturity loan rates were at extremely low levels of 1.81% for 10 years, 2.19% for 25 years and 2.06% for 40 years.

### Investments

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 of receiving low investment returns and having the value of reserves eroded by inflation.

The Authority principally invested in a call account provided by Lancashire County Council which paid the base rate. Each working day the balance on the Authority's Current Account was invested in this to ensure that interest was received on surplus balances within an acceptable risk framework. During the

period all new investments were placed with the County Council via this arrangement. At 30<sup>th</sup> September there was a balance of £31.900m invested in LCC while the average for the period was £26.115m.

In addition, in order to increase the rate earned on current balances, the authority have placed fixed investments with other local authorities. To attract a higher rate of interest than is available on the call account these investments will need to be fixed for a longer period of time. The report identified the investments that had been in place during the year. At 30 September there was £10m fixed term investment in place, therefore the total investment held at 30 September was £41.900m. The overall the rate of interest earned during this period was 0.51% which compared favourably with the benchmark 7 day index which averaged 0.14% over the same period.

All investments were made in accordance with the current Treasury Management Strategy and the CIPFA treasury management code of practice.

#### Prudential Indicators

In order to control and monitor the Authority's treasury management functions a number of prudential indicators were determined against which performance may be measured. At its meeting on 22 February 2021 the Authority approved the indicators for 2021/22 which were detailed in the report alongside the current actual.

#### Revenue Budget Implications

The 2021/22 revenue budget for treasury management activity showed that anticipated income exceeded expenditure by £36k. Taking into account the activity for the first six months of the year and estimated cash-flow for the remainder of the year the latest forecast was as shown below:

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Variation</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Interest Payable	0.090	0.090	-
Minimum revenue provision	0.010	0.010	-
Interest receivable	(0.136)	(0.193)	(0.057)
<b>Net budget</b>	<b>(0.036)</b>	<b>(0.093)</b>	<b>(0.057)</b>

The interest receivable was above budget as the balances were slightly higher than anticipated when setting the budget. The forecast assumed interest rates remained constant for the remainder of the financial year.

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

#### 34-20/21 PEOPLE STRATEGY 2021 - 2024

The Director of People and Development presented the People Strategy 2021 – 2024 which set out the strategic direction over the next 3 years, setting out the areas of priority that were required to ensure the development of a Service that was capable of continuous improvement and which responded positively to change. It sought to recruit and deliver a workforce that was resilient, highly skilled, flexible, diverse and which could deliver the aim of keeping the people of Lancashire safer.

The report set out the current position, its values and ethics and aspirations. The delivery of the strategy would be achieved through the delivery of the plans for: Organisational Development, Training, Equality Action, Workforce and Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

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

35-20/21 WELLBEING AND WELLNESS INITIATIVES

The Director of People and Development introduced Bekki Ford, Safety, Health and Environment Advisor who presented Members with the various opportunities that the Service had enabled to address the wellbeing and wellness agenda.

The support resources included: -

- Employee Assistance Programme – short-term solution focussed counselling and advise;
- Engine House – Library of information;
- Mental Health First Aiders – courses on an ad hoc basis predominantly for Community Fire Safety;
- Occupational Health – in-house provision available on a referral basis for all staff;
- Pre-retirement course – information from a financial, psychological and physical point of view;
- Personal Training Instructors and Service Fitness Advisor – to support operational staff to maintain levels of required fitness;
- Signposting Peer Support Pocketbook – to help individuals signpost colleagues or choose the most appropriate support for themselves;
- Social Events – to foster positive relationships
- Sports Events – to encourage all members of staff to be more active therefore improving and maintaining both physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- Trauma Risk Management – intervention to support staff to be able to reflect on a traumatic event without emotion and be able to ‘file’ the experience away as a memory to refer back to if needed;
- Wellbeing Support Dogs – to improve wellbeing, build self-esteem / confidence and help someone open up about their feelings and provide signposting;
- Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks – initiative started in July 2019, in the first instance delivered to all stations and groups of staff across the whole of the Service to support crews with a range of wellbeing related topics during face-to-face sessions.

In addition, as a responsible and considerate employer the Service also provided day-to-day support via:

- Ageing Workforce Task & Finish Group
- Apprenticeship Health and Wellbeing Session
- CFA Member Health and Wellbeing Champion
- Coaching and Mentoring/Pastoral Care
- Distress Management and Self Care course

- Flexible Working Arrangements
- Healthy Eating Choices (at STC)
- Leadership Visits
- Leave Entitlement
- Oscar Kilo Blue Light Wellbeing Framework
- Personal Training Instructors/Service Fitness Advisor
- Routine Bulletins
- Service Orders/Standard Operating Procedures
- Time to Change Employer
- Top Management 'buy-in'
- Wellness Events Calendar
- Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks

In response to a question raised by County Councillor O'Toole regarding the arrangements in place to deal with any allegations of harassment, bullying or racism the Director of People and Development advised that all allegations were taken very seriously, were recorded and investigated. Individuals could raise their concerns with their line manager, senior manager, HR or use the whistleblowing policy.

In response to a further question raised by County Councillor O'Toole, regarding how involved the Service was with the Firefighters Charity, the Safety, Health & Environment Advisor confirmed that the Service remained heavily involved and undertook a lot of fundraising either in groups or individual firefighters set their own challenges. The Service had also collaborated with the Firefighters Charity during the pandemic which was hoped would be developed further.

In response to a further question raised by County Councillor O'Toole regarding how well attended were the social and sports events the Director of People and Development advised that this was dependent on the event however, attendance was encouraged.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Authority Chairman had attended an awards event the previous week (which celebrated long service, good conduct, commendations, staff who had received academic qualifications and staff nominated by their peers for demonstrating the Service STRIVE values). The event was followed by the Firefighters Charity Ball which was attended by over 300 people. He advised that for the year 2020/21 a total of circa £120k had been raised by staff across the Service.

Councillor Williams advised that he had attended a Prince's Trust event the previous week held in Blackpool which had been a fabulous opportunity to see the young people at the end of the programme become focussed, to have worked as a team and gain additional skills.

In response to a query from Councillor Williams regarding the provision of support to staff regarding domestic abuse and suicide prevention the Safety, Health & Environment Advisor advised that although there was nothing specific for domestic abuse Trauma Risk Management support was available for traumatic events occurring at home and work.



The level of training provided for those supporting individuals was dependent on the role e.g. the Wellbeing Support Dog Handler 3 day peer support programme was developed in-house by the Safety, Health & Environment Advisor, mental health first aid was provided by an external training provider, LFRS had a bespoke mental health course developed by Lancashire MIND – Distress Management and Self-care, collaboration with Fire Fighters Charity to deliver mental health and wellbeing sessions jointly between Safety, Health & Environment Advisor and the charity's Wellbeing coaches.

The Director of People and Development added that there was an array of interventions and activities which ranged from talking to a friend through to medical interventions dependent upon the situation. He reassured Members that where staff needed training the Service was careful to monitor activity. There was no expectation to go beyond their knowledge base. He confirmed that the Service was also involved in safeguarding issues if required.

In response to a further question from Councillor Williams the Safety, Health & Environment Advisor confirmed that she had quarterly account meetings with providers to review their services. She also reviewed the signposting directory at least every 6 months which included at the last update Frontline Assistance for Stress and Trauma.

County Councillor Mein queried the availability of support resources for staff, how much support was delivered face-to face and who could access the Trauma Risk Management counselling including who determined the referral. In response the Safety, Health and Environment Advisor advised that it was not possible to measure every interaction with the wellbeing resources. The Service received usage data from EAP. This was a mini citizens advice service that covered a lot of information. It was independent to the Service, providing short-term counselling and advice to staff and their immediate family. She confirmed that the Service was above benchmark re: usage. She advised that the Trauma Risk Management intervention team were volunteers who could meet at any time. The requests to the TRIM team would be made by the individual concerned so that they would be engaged. She also confirmed that wellbeing visits were instigated by the individual with their watch or crew manager and line managers made referrals to occupational health. She also confirmed that the idea of wellbeing dogs was scientifically proven to lower blood pressure, stress and anxiety levels and various interventions were available.

RESOLVED: - That the report and comprehensive nature of interventions available to assist staff be noted.

36-20/21 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 1000 hours Washington Hall, Service Headquarters, Euxton.

Further meeting dates were noted for 6 July 2022 and 28 September 2022 and agreed for 30 November 2022.

37-20/21 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.

38-20/21 PENSIONS UPDATE

(Paragraphs 4 and 5)

Members considered a report that provided an update on the various issues which had arisen in respect of the changes to the pension schemes applying to the uniformed members of the Fire Sector.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

39-20/21 PFI CONTRACT - RE-FINANCING OF THE SENIOR DEBT

(Paragraph 3)

Members considered a report concerning the refinancing of the senior debt within the PFI Contract.

RESOLVED: - That the recommendations outlined in the report be agreed including that the agreeing and signing and sealing of any re-financing deal and associated documentation be delegated to the Treasurer, following consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman of the Authority.

40-20/21 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 and endorsed the report.

M NOLAN  
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ  
Fulwood

## **LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

Meeting to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021

### **REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Contact for further information:

Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer - Telephone 01772 86720

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

#### **Executive Summary**

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

#### **Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to note and endorse the report.

### **Information**

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy has attended the following Local Government Association meeting and is privy to confidential conversations and would like to draw Members' attention to the following:

#### **Fire Services Management Committee (Virtual) Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2021**

#### **Building Safety Bill (BSR) – published 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

LGA's initial general concerns

- The Bill did not resolve the issue of costs to leaseholders of remediation work;
- Links with planning reform, in particular, concerns around building safety in buildings converted under permitted development rights ;
- The proposals on product safety lacked detail and there were concerns about whether they would actually work in practice;
- Limited removal of private sector competition in building control.

The main task to recruit the approximately 200 new fire protection staff that the Home Office estimate would be required to support the work of the new Building Safety Regulator (BSR). Given the 4-5 years of training required to become a fire engineer, it would not be possible to get all 200 in place by the time the new regime was scheduled to begin in April 2023. A high-level plan has been developed with the NFCC to recruit and train staff, largely through in-house

upskilling and backfilling. Money has been secured through the Protection Uplift Grant to deliver new duties under the Fire Safety Order but a further bid for funding had been submitted to the Treasury.

The shortage was a real concern that could be exacerbated by loss to the private sector where pay was generally higher agreed that there needed to be greater detail and clarity on where the BSR made demands on FRAs that might be at odds with their IRMPs.

## **Fire Commission (Virtual) 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

### **Update on the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) Full Business Case**

A confidential report was delivered, and it was agreed that a member of the ESMCP focus group should be established to both draft a response to the Home Office on the Full Business Case, and to address wider concerns of FRAs moving forward.

### **New Providence Wharf Fire and Building Safety Update**

A presentation was given of the fire which occurred on the 8th floor of the block on 7 May 2021, and in particular spoke about the improvements in the LFB's response compared to the Grenfell Tower fire.

It was agreed that the LGA's sprinkler task group should be restarted.

### **Workforce update**

- The first national Firefighter pension website [www.fpsmember.org](http://www.fpsmember.org) went live in May, to provide a central resource for firefighters to find out about their pension scheme and the benefits and options that are available;
- Scheme Advisory Board launched a consultation with FRAs to better understand the current arrangements for managing the pension scheme in general and, more specifically, for implementing the age discrimination remedy;
- There were still a number of gaps in the new updated Home Office guidance on immediate detriment which pose problems for FRAs with retiring firefighters who wanted to access benefits on the old system. The LGA was having urgent discussions with legal officers but the issues were complex and caveated by legal privilege.

### **Fire Commission update**

FSMC Lead Members had agreed to set up a governance task and finish group to inform the LGA's response to the Fire Reform White Paper.

## **Firefighter's pensions (England) Scheme Advisory Board (Virtual) 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

Bulletins are produced monthly to provide guidance to scheme and board members. They include fact sheets, updates on legislations and technical queries etc.

[Bulletins \(fpsregs.org\)](https://www.fpsregs.org)

## **National Fire Chiefs Council – Community Risk Program (CRP) (Virtual) 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

The programme hosted its first Roundtable session with wider sector stakeholders in the West Midlands.

The CRP intention is to produce a set of standardised tools for FRSs, enabling consistent identification, assessment and mitigation strategies for community risks. The toolkit will be digitised and will be accessible and applicable by all UK FRSs.

Further information can be found.

[CRP \(nationalfirechiefs.org.uk\)](https://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk)

### **Financial Implications**

None

### **Sustainability or Environmental Impact**

None

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None

### **Human Resource Implications**

None

### **Business Risk Implications**

None

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

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	

## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT

Contact for further information:

DCFO Steve Healey – Tel No: 01772 866801

#### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides a report on the work of the Member Champions for the period up to September-November 2021 (Quarter 3).

#### **Recommendation**

The Authority is requested to note and endorse the report and acknowledge the work of the respective Champions.

#### **Information**

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007 with a review of the roles in 2017.

The Authority appoints its Member Champions at its Annual Meeting in June, and the current Member Champions are:

- Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan
- Health and Wellbeing and Climate Change – County Councillor Andrea Kay
- Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions are provided on a regular basis to the Authority.

This report relates to activity for the period up to June – August 2021.

During this period, all have undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference. Their activity to date is as follows:

#### **1. Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby**

As the new academic year started, LFRS crews and community safety staff started making bookings with all schools in Lancashire to deliver education packages – RoadSense to Year 6 and ChildSafe to both year 2 and 3 (the latter on hold from last year due to prioritisation of delivery to Year 6 during Covid restrictions). The digital options that were developed during Covid as an alternative delivery method were also offered however the majority of schools have requested a return to face-to-face delivery in line with general trends in society away from digital where possible.

The Fire Cadet units were welcomed back onto six Fire Stations across Lancashire after a successful recruitment period. The pandemic has really affected some young

people, so teams are mindful that youth offerings, like cadets and Prince's Trust, are more important than ever. Prince's Trust are also coming to the end of their first team programmes of the academic year across the nine locations that they operate from.

The BrightSparx campaign ran from mid-October and into early November. This involved a number of different departments within LFRS and also multi agency working with a range of partners. A virtual package, to educate around the dangers of fireworks, bonfires, and consequences of anti-social behaviour, was offered to schools with multiple dates and times available to allow as much flexibility as possible. This was delivered to 28 schools and 13,163 students with a further 14 schools and 4,563 students provided with face-to-face sessions. The night itself involved close working with Police, Ambulance and Local Authorities to deal with incidents in the most effective, efficient, and safe way. All activities, including the online virtual firework display, are being evaluated and included in the BrightSparx campaign plan to inform even more effective delivery next year.

Safeguarding remains an integral part of LFRS prevention activities and processes are in place to ensure that each referral is quality assured and followed up. Plans are currently being developed for awareness sessions to be provided to all front facing staff to reiterate good practice and procedures. LFRS are represented on the NFCC Safeguarding Group and chair the Regional Safeguarding Group. Two members of the Prevention Support team have recently attended a bespoke NFCC level 4 safeguarding course, which will build on the already strong position.

LFRS recognise the risk to all age groups but particularly young people by open water across the county and have launched a Water Safety thematic group to sit with our other thematic groups which are Start Safe, Age Safe, Live Safe, Road Safety and Community Mental Health.

Across Districts there has been a wide range of activities completed by both the Community Safety teams and the operational crews. One example is in Southern Area where the Community Safety Team have worked with a local high school and trained 621 dementia friends. This work has also inspired the school to run a dementia café, which will be supported by the team in conjunction with obtaining high risk Home Fire Safety Check referrals.

## **2. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan**

The Service is currently recruiting to firefighter apprenticeships. Prior to recruiting, the Service undertakes positive action with a view to attracting applicants from underrepresented groups within the workforce. The positive action takes a variety of different forms including Have A Go Days where interested potential applicants can come and meet operational firefighters, representatives from Human Resources and learn a little more about the job role. This year to attract a more diverse group of people, the events were delivered in community venues. We delivered 13 Have A Go sessions, the attendees were diverse including 17% women, 15% LGBT+ and 11% were from the Black Minority Ethnic Community the events were also supported by a positive action recruitment campaign, which further to advertisement resulted in 11% of applicants from women, 10.2% from applicants who declared themselves as being LGBT+, 10.8% from applicants who declare themselves as having a disability and 6.2%



from applicants who declare themselves as being from a Black Minority Ethnic Community.

To ensure that we fully consider the impact of our decision making and policy development on underrepresented groups we have relaunched our Equality Impact Assessment process supported by training. This has included training commissioned by the NFCC and commissioning our own training. The training commenced in July 2021 and to date 38 members of staff have completed. We have also established an Equality Impact Assessment Forum to review and scrutinise Equality Impact Assessments and a monitoring process ensuring that we take measures to address any negative impact. Our employee voice groups continue to support us in sharing their views in making LFRS an inclusive place to work and have been key in developing our approach to EDI including flexible working and changes to buildings.

### **3. Health and Wellbeing and Climate Change – County Councillor Andrea Kay**

On the 24 September 2021, the Service took part in the Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee morning with coffee mornings across the Service and a Bake-Off competition at Service Headquarters (SHQ). Staff baked sweet and savoury treats to raise awareness and money to support Macmillan Cancer Support, raising £157.50 at SHQ alone.

The library of Workplace Wellbeing Toolbox Talks has been expanded to support suicide prevention/awareness discussions. This is in response to wider wellbeing conversations with staff, to support staff with their own struggles as well as supporting an increase in attendance to attempted suicide incidents. Such work coincides with the launch of the Mind #BlueLightTogether website and supporting guidance, which LFRS have been involved in developing and continue to promote as just one of the support resources available to all staff.

Following a discussion at SHQ, a presentation was delivered to Resources Committee on the extent of the wellness measures available to employees.

With regards to Climate Change related events; battery recycling bins have been issued to all sites along with posters to be displayed and encourage staff to recycling used batteries. The environmental campaign for Q3 was **Unblocktober**, a month promotion in October to raise awareness to improve the health of drains, sewers, watercourses, and seas by providing posters for all sites to understand what should not be put down drains or toilets.

Over the next quarter we will be developing a draft Wellness and Environmental Events calendar to provide a wide range of support and awareness campaigns to engage with as many LFRS staff as possible.

### **4. Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam**

Since the start of September LFRS' delivery of Road Safety activities has moved back to in-person delivery, still giving schools the option of virtual delivery if they wish.

Wasted Lives was relaunched utilising an updated format as part of Road Safety week. All schools received a letter and information was sent out via the 'moodle' portal. This academic year Wasted lives has already been delivered to 750 students from Year 10

and 11. Responding to feedback, the delivery is now a mix of classroom-based groups and 'assembly' format.

Road Sense (the Year 6 Education Package) delivery is progressing well. To date 31 sessions have been delivered to 972 pupils. Feedback from these sessions has been very positive, the updated package, which reflects intelligence on the main risks to young people in Lancashire, has been well received by pupils and teachers with many commenting they are pleased with the reintroduction of the fire safety reminders (first covered in Year 2) at the start of the session.

Biker Down is a free package lasting three hours which covers incident management, first aid and the science of being seen. Biker Down has restarted and is fully booked until March 2022. To date 46 attendees have attended the sessions. These are still running with slightly reduced numbers (a maximum of 12 students) to ensure appropriate Covid safety measures remain in place and this in turn allows for more time to be spent on the practical elements of the course. Due to the popularity of the course, two additional dates have been released in February and March 2022 as part of Road Safety week. First aid kits have been ordered which will be given out to attendees following completion of the course. These have been purchased using the CFA Road Safety Champion budget and will have a big impact in being able to put into practice what is covered on the course if needed.

As part of our commitment to Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP), LFRS are leading on the Children and Young Peoples working group. This group is looking at current road safety delivery across the county by all partners and identifying any gaps to tackle the issues identified in the killed and seriously injured (KSI) statistics. A comprehensive report on RTCs throughout the county has just been received and the group is working on processing this to ensure all road safety education is still aligned to the risk in Lancashire for each road user type and age group.

Road Safety Week took place 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> November with a theme of 'Road Safety Heroes.' This theme was very fitting for LFRS staff as many of the staff are also involved in the delivery of road safety education. The week was utilised to celebrate the hard work of staff delivering Wasted Lives, Biker Down and Road Sense on social media. Key safety messages were also shared with our partners in LRSP to showcase road safety and the work of different partners.

### **Financial Implications**

Activities are within budget.

### **Business Risk Implications**

Whilst no formal obligation is placed on the Authority to have Champions, effective utilisation of such roles offers a number of benefits.

### **Environmental Impact**

The Member Champion role provides leadership on environmental issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to protecting the environment.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

The Member Champion role provides leadership on equality and diversity issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to equality and diversity.

## **Human Resource Implications**

Some Member and Officer time commitments.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

### **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact DCFO Steve Healey
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2020-21 (Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information – Justin Johnston – Chief Fire Officer  
Tel: 01772 866800

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

#### **Executive Summary**

The Fire & Rescue National Framework for England (2018) sets out the Government's high level expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in England. Included within the framework is the requirement that all FRA's must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

The attached Annual Statement of Assurance (appendix 1) aims to provide the required accountability and transparency to our communities and the Government that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) continues to deliver efficient, effective, value for money services.

This statement sits alongside our Community/Integrated Risk Management Plan (C/IRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Service Report. It details what measures are in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance is efficient, economic and effective and provides further evidence that LFRS continues to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and our own Risk Management Plan.

#### **Recommendation**

The Authority is asked to approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21 as presented and approve the signing of this by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.

#### **Information**

The attached Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21 provides assurance in three core areas: -

- Financial Assurance.
- Assurance on Governance.
- Operational Assurance.

*"The statement sets out how we demonstrate assurance in these areas, culminating in the following declaration: -*

*The Chairman of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service are satisfied that the Authority's financial, governance and operational assurance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively and meet the requirements detailed within the Fire and Rescue National Framework."*

**Business Risk**

None arising from this report.

**Environmental Impact**

None arising from this report.

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

None arising from this report.

**HR Implications**

None arising from this report.

**Financial Implications**

None arising from this report.

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

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	



# **Annual Statement of Assurance 2020-21**

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## **1. Introduction**

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) provides overall strategic direction to English Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA). It sets out the Government's priorities and objectives and places a requirement on all FRA's to provide assurance to their communities and to Government on financial, governance and operational matters.

This Statement of Assurance aims to provide the necessary accountability and transparency to the people of Lancashire and evidence that their Fire and Rescue Service continues to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and our own Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).

This statement sits alongside our IRMP, Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement and recently re-designed Annual Service Plan and Annual Service Report. It details what measures are in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance is efficient, economic and effective.

### **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) is made up of 25 elected councillors drawn from Lancashire County Council (19) and the unitary authorities of Blackburn-with-Darwen (3) and Blackpool (3). The CFA is responsible under the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 for providing a Fire and Rescue Service in Lancashire. This involves the provision, training and equipping our staff to undertake firefighting operations, fire safety work, rescue of persons from road traffic collisions and preparing for our response to other emergency situations. The CFA is the body legally responsible for enforcing the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and is a designated Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The CFA ensures that the work of the Fire and Rescue Service is efficient, effective and provides best value for money. To achieve this, they operate under a framework of five full meetings each year which are supplemented by a number of smaller committees focusing upon Planning, Performance, Resources, Audit and Appeals.

Further information on the afore-mentioned committees is accessible via our website at <https://cfa.lancsfireandrescue.org.uk/>

## **The County of Lancashire**

Lancashire comprises of 14 districts, 12 of which are within the Lancashire County Council area (Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre) and 2 unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn-with-Darwen. The area is home to a resident population of circa 1.46 million people (Census 2011) and is one of the most populated and urbanised shire counties within Great Britain, with a legacy of historical, industrial heritage.

Lancashire covers just over 3,000 square kilometres including 123 kilometres of coastline stretching from Morecambe Bay in the north of the county, down to the sands of West Lancashire in the south. The County has an extensive motorway network, port facilities, nuclear installations and airports and is home to a diverse demographic, with almost 20% of our population being over retirement age and 10% representing Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

The County is bordered by Cumbria to the north and North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside moving from east to south. The major conurbations are Lancaster, Preston, Burnley, Blackburn, Accrington, Chorley and the seasonal town of Blackpool which receives around 18 million visitors per year.

## **Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS)**

LFRS is the service provider on behalf of the CFA. We currently operate from 39 locations (with 58 front-line fire engines and a fleet of specialist vehicles), a specialist Urban Search and Rescue unit, Service Headquarters in Fulwood and our Service Training Centre in Euxton, Chorley. LFRS staff deliver an extensive range of prevention, protection and emergency response services throughout Lancashire.

To deliver these services, we employ circa 950 operational staff in a wide variety of roles using a variety of shift systems; Whole-time, On-Call, Day Crewed, Day Crewing Plus and Day Duty.

Our Mobilising and Control Centre moved to North West Fire Control (NWFC), Warrington in 2014. We work collaboratively with Cumbria, Greater Manchester and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services.



Figure 1 - Service Delivery Areas and Fire Station locations

## 2. Financial Assurance

All local authority accounts are required to adopt 'proper accounting practice' based on either statutory requirements or the code of practice on local authority accounting. These specify the principles and practices of accounting required to prepare a Statement of Accounts that 'present a true and fair view'.

The Treasurer to the CFA provides publicly available annual accounts which are approved by the Audit Committee.

An independent audit of the accounts is undertaken by an external auditing body, Grant Thornton. The external auditor undertakes a review of the accounts and forms an overall opinion which is published each year. The audit for 2020/21 was conducted in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and provided the following opinions –

- An unqualified opinion on the financial statements, which give a true and fair view of the Authority's financial position as of 31 March 2021 and of its income and expenditure for the year.
- There were no significant weaknesses identified in value for money arrangements, across the three strands of financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

A copy of the Auditors Annual Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021 is available on our website.

### **3. Assurance on Governance**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the CFA to publish an Annual Governance Statement along with the Authority's financial statements, following a review of the effectiveness of the internal controls in place. It sets out the key elements of the Authority's governance framework, how these have been evaluated, the outcome of the assessment of effectiveness and any areas for improvement.

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

Included within the Code are the following core principles: -

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;

5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The code also sets out the principles which support each of these core elements, as well as how the Authority will address each of these.

The Authority has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The 2020/21 review was supported and informed by the work of both internal audit, which is undertaken by Lancashire County Council, and external audit, which is undertaken by Grant Thornton. This self-assessment formed the basis of the Authority's Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 which concluded that Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has in place a satisfactory system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk, and that no significant governance issues were identified.

## **4. Operational Assurance**

The National Framework outlines the requirement placed upon FRA's to provide assurance on operational matters which are determined locally by them in partnership with their local communities; citizens, businesses and others.

FRA's function within a clearly defined statutory and policy framework of which the key legislative documents defining these responsibilities are:

- Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire and Rescue Services (Emergencies) (England) Order 2007
- Localism Act 2011
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
- The Policing and Crime Act 2017

This section aims to provide assurance that our service is delivered in line with our statutory

responsibilities and with due regard to the expectations set out in our IRMP including cross-border, multi-authority and national incident arrangements.

## **Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)**

Our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) is a public facing document covering the period 2017-22. This plan is in place to provide the opportunity for LFRS to demonstrate how, we as an organisation, identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks and challenges that could affect our communities over the 5-year period and how we plan to mitigate such risks or reduce their potential impact.

Key to the successful identification and management of risk is our ability to maintain a clear and current understanding of the present and future threats to Lancashire's communities. Risk in Lancashire remains dynamic, constantly changing and differs between districts, which requires varying preventative activities. As a result, no single activity to reduce risk is adequate in all circumstances and a mix of prevention, protection and response activities delivered by a range of organisations is needed to reduce the likelihood of the risk event occurring or to lessen its consequences. This depth of understanding underpins everything we do, driving our governance and planning arrangements; our findings are published within the [Strategic Assessment of Risk](#).

### **Planning & Performance**

To meet the requirements of the IRMP the Service reviews its priorities and targets annually, this supports continual improvement and provides the opportunity to ensure that we undertake activities dependent on the requirements of our environment. Our Corporate planning process has been developed to provide a rigorous yet flexible process that allows the Service to assess and respond to opportunities and threats as and when they emerge. Whilst the IRMP is in place to set out the strategic direction of the Service in the medium term, the Service also has in place a forward-looking [Annual Service Plan](#) which clearly sets out what we will deliver over the coming 12 months, this is complimented by the [Annual Service Report](#) which reflects our achievement against those objectives at the year end.

In addition to this on a quarterly basis, we produce a performance management report known as '[Measuring Progress](#)'. The content of this report is considered at Senior Management Team meetings and by the Performance Committee of the CFA.

## **Consultation**

External and internal consultation is an essential part of the development of the IRMP and subsequent reviews, and as such we have a clearly defined [Consultation Strategy](#). We use a variety of methods for engaging with community members and for every consultation exercise completed, a summary report is provided to the relevant committee of the CFA. This process ensures that key stakeholders are consulted, involved and informed of the proposals to ensure that their input is considered within the final plans.

## **Community Risk Management**

Our approach to integrated risk management is supported by the use of modelling. The Office of National Statistics categorises every part of the UK into a small neighbourhood called a Lower Layer Super Output Area (SOA). There are 941 SOA's in Lancashire, containing an average of 1,500 people. We use information about where fires have taken place in the past and combine this with various social deprivation data to give each area a risk grade.

The information is then used to identify geographic areas at higher risk where a combination of Prevention, Protection and Response activities can have the greatest impact.

This is utilised alongside the provision of tailored Safe and Well visits or Home Fire Safety Check service (HFSC) which is geared towards occupant risk and importantly, to those in greatest need and at greatest risk of fire.

We update the risk model on a regular basis and use the outcomes to direct and reprioritise our activities. Risk reduction progress over the last 11 years is depicted in the table below.

	VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	OVERALL SCORE
	SOA Count	SOA Count	SOA Count	SOA Count	Risk Score Change
2010	60	118	310	452	36,532
2011	60	114	303	463	36,238
2012	53	100	313	474	35,558
2013	40	93	301	507	34,228
2014	32	95	306	508	33,648
2015	41	86	281	533	33,268
2016	32	76	314	519	32,990
2017	25	74	321	521	32,398
2018	22	74	321	524	32,114
2019	21	68	310	542	31,816
2020	23	74	324	520	32,448
2021	21	61	338	521	31,862
OVERALL CHANGE	<b>-65%</b> ↓	<b>-48%</b> ↓	<b>9%</b> ↑	<b>15%</b> ↑	<b>-13%</b> ↓
	OVERALL REDUCTION IN VERY HIGH RISK SOAs	OVERALL REDUCTION IN HIGH RISK SOAs	OVERALL INCREASE IN MEDIUM RISK SOAs	OVERALL INCREASE IN LOW RISK SOAs	OVERALL REDUCTION IN RISK SCORE

Figure 2 - Changes in Fire Risk 2010-2021

## Prevention and Protection

Our Prevention activities continue to evolve in line with changing societal risk, and are shaped by data, intelligence, and equality impact assessment, remaining focussed around the four key themes of helping people to Start Safe, Live Safe, Age Safe and be Safe on our roads with a continued focus on working collaboratively with other organisations. Our person centred Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) Service continues to include Safe & Well brief interventions including, where appropriate, falls risk assessments, alcohol and mental health advice, and promoting access to other services. This provides the gateway for further collaboration with colleagues in health and social care with a joint aim to improve the health and quality of life for those most at risk in our communities, which in turn reduces fire risk. LFRS remains focussed on identifying those most at risk from fire and continues to refine thematic campaign and referral generation approaches to achieve this e.g., our dementia cafes and referrals for Telecare systems. The Service currently has over two hundred approved partners ranging from Lancashire wide collaborations with health trusts and home oxygen providers, to local third sector organisations. In addition to delivering our role within Community Safety Partnerships our District based Community Safety teams work with Health and Social Care Early Action and Multi-Disciplinary teams to ensure that the fire risk component of complex cases is recognised. We continue to provide campaign activity which is based on national trends but shaped to meet local needs, drawing increasingly on the reach offered by social media as well as more traditional outlets which meet the needs of Lancashire’s diverse communities. Education continues to be a priority and the Service has fire, water and road safety packages tailored for all Key Stages of education. Significant work has been undertaken to add Water Safety



as a thematic group and we have worked with utility provider and owners of open water to support the introduction of throw lines and water safety boards at high risk locations and work continues, with key partners, to raise awareness of water risk across all age groups but particularly teenage years. LFRS remains a member of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership and plays a key part in the delivery of Road Safe, Wasted Lives and Safe Drive Stay Alive education sessions to Lancashire's young people as well as running and supporting a wide range of campaigns for all road users based on the National Police Chiefs Council campaign calendar. We continue to provide the Princes Trust Team program and have Fire Cadet Units at a range of locations across Lancashire, complimented by a range of other youth engagement activities tailored to local need. Our Incident Intelligence Team continues to gather evidence to assist arson investigations, and intelligence to drive the continual development of prevention activities which keep pace with the perpetually evolving nature of risk in our society, sharing intelligence with organisations such as Trading Standards, Building Research Establishment and the Office for Product Safety and Standards so benefits are felt further afield. We will continue to develop the training we provide our staff to ensure we play our part in tackling broader issues such as modern slavery, serious violence (a new duty) and safeguarding those at risk of harm or radicalisation.

The Grenfell Tragedy in 2017, and the resultant public enquiries and technical reviews, has initiated the most far reaching and fundamental changes to Building Regulations and Fire Safety legislation seen in decades. The enquiries have exposed extensive failures in the way the built environment has been designed, constructed, and regulated over the past two decades and the requirements to address these historical failings now extend to all aspects of the construction industry and regulators. Following a period of review and consultation, legislative change is now taking place and LFRS has invested in a Protection Transformation Team to ensure it is well placed to meet future challenges. Specifically, the Service is preparing to receive additional regulatory powers in 2021 with respect to existing residential buildings and the suitability of their fire safety management systems, fire doors and external walls (including cladding and balconies). These will be followed in 2022 with additional regulations for some residential buildings with respect to information supplied to residents, boxes containing emergency plans, improved way finding signage for firefighters, fire door maintenance and requirements to proactively share building plans and information on firefighting equipment operational status (lifts and smoke control etc). In 2023 the Service will also become a joint regulator with the Health and Safety Executive and Building Controls at all stages of the design, construction, occupation, and operation of Higher Risk Residential Buildings. These advances will be undertaken alongside complimentary improvements in Building Regulations and increasing competence

expectations of everyone in the construction and regulatory sectors. LFRS is investing in developing a highly skilled Protection workforce to ensure we are equipped to deal with these changes. Whilst this increased focus on the safety of residential buildings is welcome, such buildings make up only a proportion of Lancashire's built environment, and the Service will continue to utilise a Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) to identify the wider range of premises at risk from fire and undertake fire safety audits to assure compliance. Whilst support to business and commerce remains a priority, we will maintain the ability to enforce and indeed prosecute where fire safety law has been ignored or flouted. Business support will continue to be provided by our Business Safety Advisors, campaign activity and website support, and we will continue to contribute to the principles of better regulation through our Primary Authority Schemes. Whilst specialist and highly skilled Fire Safety Inspectors will undertake 'audits' we will increase our ability to 'check' compliance by introducing Business Fire Safety Checks which will be undertaken by our Operational Crews (in businesses) and Community Safety Advisors (in Houses of Multiple Occupation). These visits will evaluate simple measures linked to effective fire safety management and where there are failings that cannot be addressed at the time these will be referred on to specialist inspectors. These visits will also be an opportunity to collect risk information and provide arson risk reduction advice. Through these improvements, and how we use technology to support our protection activities and connect these to the quality of our operational response and training, LFRS is committed to taking a detailed and holistic approach to transforming Protection Services and adapting to regulatory change.

## **Mutual Aid Agreements**

The National Framework states that Fire and Rescue Authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with mutual aid agreements. LFRS maintain mutual agreements for reinforcements with our five bordering Fire and Rescue Authorities - Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. These agreements are periodically reviewed to maintain currency and provide optimal response arrangements.

## **National Resilience**

For the purposes of this document, National Resilience (NR) is defined as the capacity and capability of Fire and Rescue Authorities to work together and with other Category 1 and 2 responders to deliver a sustained, effective response to major incidents, emergencies and disruptive challenges, such as (but not limited to) those identified in the National Risk Register of Civil Emergencies. It refers to risks that need to be planned for on a strategic, national basis because their impacts and consequences would be of such scale and / or

complexity that local resources would be insufficient, even when considering mutual aid arrangements.

LFRS is a signatory to the National Mutual Aid protocol and has deployed assets to major incidents outside the region. The costs of such mobilisations are borne by the FRA within whose area the incident occurs and are therefore re-claimed by LFRS.

We remain subject to the National Resilience audit processes which test the various aspects of our NR capabilities. National Resilience has transferred from The Home Office to Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service as the Primary Authority.

## **Business Continuity**

Business Continuity Management (BCM) is an integral part of our corporate risk management process. In relation to BCM processes and procedures, all FRA's have to satisfy the requirements of both the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004.

We are required to 'write and maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that if an emergency occurs the Authority is able to continue its functions'. This includes periods of industrial action.

In order to ensure that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service comply with both pieces of legislation, our BCM complies with the Business Continuity Institutes' Best Practice Guidelines. This provides a framework through which:

- Critical processes are identified
- Assessments of both internal and external risks which may impact on business continuity are made;
- Strategic and Tactical Plans have been produced to ensure an acceptable level of service can be maintained following disruption;
- Procedures are developed to invoke the BCP;
- Arrangements are made to test the BCP;
- All key personnel are trained to understand their role within the plan;
- Responsibilities are clearly identified and assigned.

Each year the plans are reviewed and tested to ensure our plans are fit for purpose. The protracted Coronavirus pandemic demonstrated the Service's ability to deal with a Major Incident, whilst at the same time responding to other emergencies in a timely manner and continuing with business as usual, as much as reasonably practicable.

## Safety, Health & Environment

The Combined Fire Authority meets regularly to consider local and national Safety, Health and Environment issues and to provide strategic political leadership to the Service. The Authority has overall responsibility for the effective governance of Safety, Health and Environment (SHE), including:

- Agreeing the [SHE Policy](#) which outlines their commitments and ensuring adequate resources is available for the establishment, ongoing implementation and control of a Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) and Environmental Management System (EMS).
- Providing a clear direction for the Executive Board and Senior Management Team to establish policies and manage health and safety and environmental responsibilities effectively.
- Monitoring performance through receipt of the Annual SHE Report, to provide governance and assurance that an effective HSMS and EMS is operational within LFRS.

Our HSMS is based on the model Plan, Do, Check, Act laid down in the Health and Safety Executive publication HS(G)65 – Successful Health and Safety Management and written and implemented to the International Standard for Health and Safety Management Systems, ISO 45001:2018. The EMS is written and implemented to the International Standard ISO 14001:2015. Certification for both standards has been in place since 2011/12 with re-certification taking place every 3 years followed by annual surveillance audits. The last successful audit took place in 2021, where certification was extended with no non-conformances identified by the external audit team. As part of the audit process, the auditors visit a range of stations and departments and examine the 'Full provision of fire, rescue and supporting services across Lancashire' delivered by the Combined Fire Authority from a health and safety and environmental perspective.

Each year a performance review of Safety, Health and Environment is carried out and reported to the Combined Fire Authority in the [Annual SHE Report](#). Part of business-as-usual is the review of all policies, procedures, instructions, support for staff wellbeing and guidance to ensure that we continue to meet our legal obligations in respect of safety, health and environment and we validate this by a system of internal and external audits. To ensure continuous improvement is made in both the HSMS and EMS, we have developed an action plan to assist in delivering future improvements.

## **Training and Development**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Training and Operational Review policy is designed to provide training and development to personnel to enable the organisation to fulfil its vision of 'Making Lancashire Safer'. Training is based on the needs of the organisation with a strong focus on ensuring that personnel are safe and competent in the delivery of the prevention, protection and response services we provide.

The training programme takes into account learning identified through our own operational review processes as well as from reports describing learning from events of national significance. The Training and Operational Review department supports continual learning and organisational development through a wide range of programmes tailored to role and responsibility, as well as managing the selection processes which identify managers for advancement. Ongoing development and maintenance of competence is a key focus and this is facilitated through a robust maintenance of skills programme linked to an e-learning system which is continually updated.

Trainers are selected and developed across an extremely diverse variety of specialisms ranging from the intricacies of boat handling and rope rescue through to the complexities of mounting a successful fire safety prosecution. Where necessary, support is commissioned from specialist providers.

The Training and Operational Review Department work in conjunction with other Departments within the Service, such as Human Resources and the Safety, Health and Environment Department, to provide training and development for all members of the Service. There is a particular focus on the Leadership Development across the Service.

## **5. Assurance Declaration**

The Chairman of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Chief Fire Officer of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service are satisfied that the Authority's financial, governance and operational assurance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively and meet the requirements detailed within the Fire and Rescue National Framework.

Justin Johnston - Chief Fire Officer

David O'Toole – CFA Chairman

Date:

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### STRATEGIC AERIAL APPLIANCE REVIEW

Contact for further information:

Deputy Director of Operational Response Jon Charters - Tel. 01772 866801

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

#### **Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on the proposals brought to the Authority in relation to the replacement of the 4<sup>th</sup> aerial appliance presently based at Preston fire station.

In December 2020 the CFA approved “the purchase of a turntable ladder (TTL) to replace the 4th Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) (subject to further evaluation of 32m and 42m options)”.

Following completion of an evaluation exercise in relation to the options available within the marketplace and their potential suitability for meeting tall building risk in Lancashire, the findings suggest that the Service should look to procure a replacement Aerial Ladder Platform as opposed to the Turntable Ladder option that was originally proposed.

#### **Recommendation(s)**

The Authority is asked to note the Service intention to go to market for a replacement Aerial Ladder Platform within the existing budget provision.

#### **Background**

LFRS has a history of Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) preference, but given the opportunity to reflect on sector learning, such as Grenfell Tower and the more recent Cube incident in Manchester, it was both pertinent and prudent for the Service to review available aerial appliance options presently available in the marketplace and consider their suitability for use in managing built environment risk in Lancashire.

That work has now been concluded in Service and focused upon vehicle characteristics rather than specific manufacturers or vehicle types. In exploring what the market had to offer, the Service considered factors such as:

- Height of reach
- Horizontal outreach
- Ability to deploy below ground
- Appliance length and manoeuvrability
- Speed of deployment with water
- Operational implications associated with deployment
- Steering options
- Accessibility of risk locations and likely extent of reach

- Rescue cage capacity and acceptable load restrictions
- Cage versatility and functionality

Whilst a number of demonstrator vehicles were observed and each had a variety of positive features, similarly some had limitations that would constitute concessions being made by the Service.

Overall, the 45 metre Aerial Ladder Platform demonstrated the most favourable characteristics, in terms of the potential to best mitigate tall building risk in Lancashire.

In summary, it would offer the highest reach, the longest outreach (beneficial when pitching over smaller buildings / obstructions), the deepest below-ground capability and negligible difference in time to deploy with water when compared to turntable ladder options. Similarly, the versatility, manoeuvrability and capacity of the rescue cage outstrips TTL options.

The 45 metre Aerial Ladder Platform provides the opportunity to acquire the greatest ALP capability currently available in the UK. As such, the Service now intends to go to market to procure a suitable Aerial Ladder Platform replacement vehicle.

### **Business Risk**

High – Changes to legislation and regulation of the built environment are significant. The emergence of new learning from incidents nationally prompts the Service to consider our current appliance capabilities and disposition. The ability to respond quickly and effectively to life risk in all building types including tall buildings, is a significant priority and failure to do so may present high reputational risk to the Combined Fire Authority.

In the residential or commercial setting, LFRS has a proven ability to deliver an efficient and effective operational response to larger fires and these proposals seek to ensure that risk arising from such incidents does not increase.

### **Environmental Impact**

Low – reduced vehicle emissions rates expected in line with technological advancements.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Equality Impact Assessment demonstrates that an ALP offers more positive applications in certain incident types thus benefiting members of our communities.

### **HR Implications**

None

### **Financial Implications**

Within budget previously agreed by CFA.



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

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

(Appendix 1 refers)

#### Contact for further information:

Keith Mattinson – Director of Corporate Services – telephone 01772 866804.

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

#### **Executive Summary**

The Authority needs to determine how to appoint its external auditors for audit years 2023/2024 to 2027/2028. This decision cannot be delegated to a committee.

As such the Audit Committee at its meeting on 30 November considered the attached report and recommended that the Authority accepts PSAAs invitation to opt-in to the national scheme.

#### **Decision Required**

The Authority is asked to accept Public Sector Audit Appointments invitation to opt-in to the national scheme.

#### **Information**

As set out in the Executive summary and the attached report.

#### **Financial Implications**

The external audit fee for 2020/21 accounts was £39k.

In recent years this fee has increased due to the additional requirements placed on auditors by the Financial Reporting Council. Audit firms have expressed a view that the existing fees are not sustainable and hence any procurement exercise is likely to result in higher fees, irrespective of how it is conducted.

Opting-in to a national sector led approach with PSAA provides some opportunity to limit the extent of any increases by entering in to a large scale collective procurement arrangement and it is felt that a sector led approach is likely to result in the best compromise between sustainable fees and quality of audit.

#### **Human Resource Implications**

None

#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None

## **Business Risk Implications**

As there are only a limited number of external audit firms who have the capacity and specialist teams to undertake local authority audits and therefore there is a risk that in trying to procure in isolation/in a small group, we may get a low level of interest, and/or higher cost, as the external audit firms would be likely to focus their efforts in securing a larger contract through the PSAA procurement exercise.

## **Environmental Impact**

None

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

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY****AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on 30 November 2021

**APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS**

(Appendices 1 and 2 refer) – Appendix 2 not provided

Contact for further information:

Keith Mattinson – Director of Corporate Services – telephone 01772 866804.

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

**Executive Summary**

The initial 5-year appointment process for our external auditors, run by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) ends in 2022/23. As such the Authority need to determine whether to opt into a new exercise, for a further 5 years, or to seek alternative means of appointing external auditors.

**Recommendation(s)**

The Committee is asked to recommend that the Full Authority accepts PSAAs invitation to opt into the national scheme.

**Information**

In 2017 the Authority opted into Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) auditor appointment arrangements, whereby PSAA is responsible for appointing an auditor to principal local government and police bodies that have chosen to opt into its national auditor appointment arrangements. This appointment covered the period 2018/19 to 2022/23.

As this arrangement will expire in 2022/23 the Authority needs to determine how to appoint its external auditors when this arrangement expires.

There are three ways for a principal local government or police body to appoint its auditor for the five financial years from 2023/24:

- undertake a stand-alone individual auditor procurement and appointment exercise;
- undertake a joint audit procurement and appointing exercise with other bodies; or
- join PSAA's sector led national scheme.

These options were considered in 2017 (appendix 1 sets out the advantages / disadvantages of the options that were considered in 2017). At the time the Authority determined that pursuing the sector led approach represented the best option. We do not believe this position has changed with the following advantages still being identified for this option: -

- avoid the necessity to establish an independent auditor panel (detailed requirements specified by the Local Audit & Accountability Act, 2014);
- avoid the need to manage their own auditor procurement, including the costs of doing so;
- benefit from PSAA undertaking a robust process to validate fee variation proposals; and
- assuming a high level of participation, be able to support market sustainability and encourage realistic prices in a challenging market.

Regardless of which option is chosen a local auditor must be appointed no later than 31 December in the financial year preceding the financial year of the accounts to be audited, i.e. for the audit of the accounts of the 2023/24 financial year, there must be a local auditor appointed by 31 December 2022.

### **PSAA's sector led national scheme**

In accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations), PSAA formally invited all eligible bodies to join the national auditor appointment arrangements for the audit years 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 in its role as a specified appointing person. Attached as appendix 2 is the Prospectus that PSAA issued at the time.

A decision to become an opted-in authority must be taken in accordance with the Regulations by the Members of an Authority meeting as a whole, i.e. the full Authority.

The closing date to give notice to PSAA of the authority's acceptance of the invitation is 11 March 2022.

Following the completion of the procurement of audit services (envisaged as August 2022), the auditor appointment process will be:

- publish the process for making individual auditor appointments for opted-in bodies from 2023/24 during spring/summer 2022;
- consult with opted-in bodies on proposed auditor appointments during the late summer/autumn 2022; and
- confirm all auditor appointments by 31 December 2022.

### **Financial Implications**

The external audit fee for 2020/21 account was £39k. In recent years this fee has increased due to the additional requirements placed on auditors by the Financial Reporting Council. Audit firms have expressed a view that the existing fees are not sustainable and hence any procurement exercise is likely to result in higher fees, irrespective of how it is conducted.

Opting into a national sector led approach with PSAA provides some opportunity to limit the extent of any increases by entering in to a large scale collective procurement arrangement and it is felt that a sector led approach is likely to result in the best compromise between sustainable fees and quality of audit.

It would also remove the costs of establishing an auditor panel, required under the other two approaches, which if selected, will need to be incorporated into future years budgets.

### **Human Resource Implications**

None

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None

### **Business Risk Implications**

As there are only a limited number of external audit firms who have the capacity and specialist teams to undertake local authority audits and therefore there is a risk that in trying to procure in isolation/in a small group, we may get a low level of interest, and/or higher cost, as the external audit firms would be likely to focus their efforts in securing a larger contract through the PSAA procurement exercise.

### **Environmental Impact**

None

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

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	Audit Findings Report
Date:	September 2021
Contact:	Keith Mattinson
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	

## Options for local appointment of External Auditors – Reported in March 2016

There are three broad options open to the Authority under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act):

- Option 1 To make a stand-alone appointment
- Option 2 Set up a Joint Auditor Panel/local joint procurement arrangements
- Option 3 Opt-in to a sector led body

### Option 1 To make a stand-alone appointment

In order to make a stand-alone appointment the Authority will need to set up an Auditor Panel. The members of the panel must be wholly or a majority independent members as defined by the Act. Independent members for this purpose are independent appointees, this excludes current and former elected members (or officers) and their close families and friends. This means that elected members will not have a majority input to assessing bids and choosing which firm of accountants to award a contract for the Authority's external audit. A new independent auditor panel established by the Authority will be responsible for selecting the auditor.(assuming there is no existing independent committee such as the Audit Committee that might already be suitably constituted).

#### Advantages/benefit

- Setting up an auditor panel allows the Authority to take maximum advantage of the new local appointment regime and have local input to the decision.

#### Disadvantages/risks

- Recruitment and servicing of the Auditor Panel, running the bidding exercise and negotiating the contract is estimated by the LGA to cost in the order of £15,000 plus on going expenses and allowances
- The Authority will not be able to take advantage of reduced fees that may be available through joint or national procurement contracts.
- The assessment of bids and decision on awarding contracts will be taken by independent appointees and not solely by elected members.

The disadvantages appear to outweigh the advantages on this option and as such I believe this option should not be pursued

### Option 2 Set up a Joint Auditor Panel/local joint procurement arrangements

The Act enables the Authority to join with other authorities to establish a joint auditor panel. Again this will need to be constituted of wholly or a majority of independent appointees (members). Further legal advice will be required on the exact constitution of such a panel having regard to the obligations of each Authority under the Act and the Authority need to liaise with other local authorities to assess the appetite for such an arrangement.

#### Advantages/benefits

- The costs of setting up the panel, running the bidding exercise and negotiating the contract will be shared across a number of authorities.



- There is greater opportunity for negotiating some economies of scale by being able to offer a larger combined contract value to the firms.

#### Disadvantages/risks

- The decision making body will be further removed from local input, with potentially no input from elected members where a wholly independent auditor panel is used or possible only one elected member representing each Authority, depending on the constitution agreed with the other bodies involved.
- The choice of auditor could be complicated where individual Authority's have independence issues. An independence issue occurs where the auditor has recently or is currently carrying out work such as consultancy or advisory work for the Authority. Where this occurs some auditors may be prevented from being appointed by the terms of their professional standards. There is a risk that if the joint auditor panel choose a firm that is conflicted for this Authority then the Authority may still need to make a separate appointment with all the attendant costs and loss of economies possible through joint procurement.

This option has some merit but it is felt that the potential advantages of pursuing a Sector Led Body approach are more significant. Informal discussions with other Treasures indicated a similar position.

### **Option 3     Opt-in to a sector led body**

In response to the consultation on the new arrangement the LGA successfully lobbied for Authority's to be able to 'opt-in' to a Sector Led Body appointed by the Secretary of State under the Act. A Sector Led Body would have the ability to negotiate contracts with the firms nationally, maximising the opportunities for the most economic and efficient approach to procurement of external audit on behalf of the whole sector.

#### Advantages/benefits

- The costs of setting up the appointment arrangements and negotiating fees would be shared across all opt-in authorities
- By offering large contract values the firms would be able to offer better rates and lower fees than are likely to result from local negotiation
- Any conflicts at individual authorities would be managed by the Sector Led Body who would have a number of contracted firms to call upon.
- The appointment process would not be ceded to locally appointed independent members. Instead a separate body set up to act in the collective interests of the 'opt-in' authorities. The LGA are considering setting up such a body utilising the knowledge and experience acquired through the setting up of the transitional arrangements.

#### Disadvantages/risks

- Individual elected members will have less opportunity for direct involvement in the appointment process other than through the LGA and/or stakeholder representative groups.
- In order for the Sector Led Body to be viable and to be placed in the strongest possible negotiating position the Sector Led Body will need Authority's to indicate their intention to opt-in before final contract prices are known.

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

Contact for further information – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Ben Norman  
Tel: 01772 866802

*Table 1 Executive Summary and Recommendations*

#### **Executive Summary**

This report summarises Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) led prosecutions with respect to fire safety offences, and also sets out convictions resulting from arson and malicious call incidents for which Officers (mainly from the Incident Intelligence Team) have contributed evidence to the Police led Criminal Justice process.

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

#### **Recommendation(s)**

The Authority is asked to note the report.

### FIRE SAFETY CONVICTIONS

#### **Prosecutions**

A pre-trial preparation hearing has been heard at Preston Crown Court with respect to a premises being used for commercial and sleeping purposes with inadequate fire safety measures. All three defendants entered not guilty pleas. Due to all three defendants attending court without legal representation the Judge adjourned and set a plea hearing date of 10/12/2021 to allow the defendants to seek legal advice. A trial date has provisionally been set for 05/09/2022 should all three defendants wish to take the case to trial following legal advice.

Currently LFRS Protection teams are investigating and building case files with respect to eight further cases where offences are believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005.

### FIRE PROTECTION & BUSINESS SUPPORT INFORMATION

#### **Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)**

Work continues to refine the data which drives the risk-based inspection programme. This will see further developments in the way data is presented to staff to ensure both Fire Safety Inspecting Officers and Operational Crews are targeting the premises with the greatest potential for harm if the Responsible Persons managing them are not doing so in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Safety Order.

The programme will be continually refined to reflect ongoing changes in legislation and guidance particularly regarding the Fire Safety Act and new Article 24 Regulations.

## **Protection Transformation Team**

### **Fire Safety Act Update.**

Although the Fire Safety Act received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021 it has not yet been enabled. Responsible Persons and Enforcing Authorities are being advised that the delay is in relation to the development of a 'prioritisation tool'. The tool is intended to give freeholders and managing agents the ability to prioritise the speed with which they have their external wall systems assessed. This is a necessary addition to the implementation of the Act, in order to manage its regulatory impact, as nationally the new legislation brings into scope an additional 1.7m residential premises of all heights and there are insufficient numbers of qualified and chartered engineers to accurately assess all premises of all heights immediately.

The Act will expand the scope of the existing Fire Safety Order (FSO) to clarify that where a building contains 2 or more sets of domestic premises, the FSO applies to:

- The building's structure and external walls (including windows, balconies, cladding, insulation, and fixings) and any common parts
- All doors between domestic premises and common parts such as flat entrance doors (or any other relevant door)

In addition to the Fire Safety Act changes, Parliament are also shortly due to consider the addition of eight new Regulations to Article 24 of the Fire Safety Order resulting from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Part I recommendations. Indications are the Regulations could potentially come into force as early as April 2022 however this may move depending on the parliamentary process. The regulations will include the need for Responsible Persons (for varying heights of residential premises) to:

- Provide Floor Plans to FRS' electronically;
- Provide Information Boxes containing building & emergency plan information;
- Have, and provide to FRS', external wall construction information;
- Notify FRS' if firefighting lifts/equipment is unavailable for more than 24 hours;
- Undertake fire door checks on common areas and apartment entrance doors;
- Provide fire fighter's way finding signage;
- Provide FRS' with current evacuation plans;
- Provide residents with relevant fire safety information regularly.

All of the above will apply to HRRBs above 18m, some will apply to residential premises below 18m. Each regulation will be accompanied by a guidance note setting out how compliance can be achieved.

To support local freeholders, leaseholders and managing agents through the regulatory change the LFRS Protection Support team will update the LFRS website content as and when new guidance becomes available and intends to write to larger premises advising of the forthcoming changes and the need to prepare. The primary purpose of the letter will be to raise awareness of the importance of effective fire

doors and encourage early and *self-motivated compliance* as intelligence from audits to date suggests fire door maintenance is an area where compliance may be lacking.

### **Building Risk Review (BRR) update**

LFRS has completed the BRR ahead of the NFCC deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2021. With respect to future Building Safety Bill definitions of what will comprise an in-scope premises (18m in height, or at least 7 storeys) Lancashire currently has 38 premises.

Although all 38 premises have been fully inspected there remains a small number of reports outstanding in relation to external wall systems, for the most part this is due to an increase nationally in the need for these specialist reports and a lack of capacity in the chartered surveying sector to match the demand.

Although the initial BRR work is complete Inspectors continue to address the outstanding information and is continuing to support both owners and residents. Recently a series of letters have been sent to building Responsible Person(s) in line with the NFCC guidance with information continuing to steadily flow in.

Audited	Full Makeup of EWS <sup>1</sup> Known	Awaiting EWS Report	Left to Audit
38	29	9	0
<b>Inspection outcome</b>			
Satisfactory	Informal Advice	Non-Statutory Written	Enforcement
1	1	30	6

Further work continues with those buildings currently just out of scope of the BRR (6 floors), of which inspections and follow up support is being undertaken to ensure compliance. Lancashire has 31 premises at 6 floors, broken down as follows -

Audited	Full Makeup of EWS Known	Awaiting EWS Report	Left to inspect
31	16	15	0
<b>Inspection outcome</b>			
Satisfactory	Informal Advice	Non-Statutory Written	Enforcement
2	1	25	3

### **Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC)**

The project team has completed development of the software that managers will use to allocate a BFSC as well as the mobile application crews will use to undertake the check itself. Both pieces of development are state of the art and sector leading and will ensure BFSCs are completed with a high degree of consistency and that the Service will in future be able to assure the contribution to risk reduction which is being made by the initiative as the mobile application measures compliance as the crew initially arrives at a premises (the pre-score) and the level of compliance as they leave having identified areas for improvement (the post-score). The system also ensures the visit is followed up with an e-mail to the Responsible Person which is tailored to the specific findings of the BFSC. The app automatically advises crews to contact fully qualified Fire Safety Inspectors if major non-compliance is identified

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<sup>1</sup> EWS: The external wall system made up of the outside wall of a residential building, including cladding, insulation, fire break systems, balconies, and anything else attached to the exterior of the building

which is causing imminent risk to life and cannot be addressed at the time (e.g. inoperable fire alarms or permanently inaccessible fire escapes). Pilot BFSCs have been completed in Northern and Western Areas with feedback from both crews and businesses being positive.

In 2022 BFSCs in Northern and Western will move from pilot to business as usual status and the approach will be rolled out across the whole of Lancashire.

### **Protection training**

In line with the NFCC Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators, and the recent release of the 'contextualised register' by the NFCC Protection Policy Reform Unit, four LFRS inspecting officers have embarked on attaining their Engineering Technician (Eng Tech) status with the Institution of Fire Engineers. This work is essential to support the future accreditation of inspecting officers both within LFRS and across the UK, with the initial four individuals undertaking both accreditor and reviewer roles on behalf of the accrediting body (IFE). In addition to ensuring consistent and high-quality inspections in high risk premises in their broadest sense, this accreditation is an essential pre-cursor the HSE has stipulated to enable Fire and Rescue Services to form part of the new 'Building Safety Regulator' when the Building Safety Bill is enacted therefore it is important to act now in readiness for future requirements.

In addition to the BFSC training being delivered to operational crew's, significant additional protection related training is now being developed and delivered for use at point of entry, as a component of ongoing maintenance of skills training and during incident command development (relevant to role). A variety of training methods are being used including dedicated course content as well as on-line learning packages with material being sourced from the NFCC as well as the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) national Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which FRS' can now access to ensure technical development of staff matches the increasing complexity of the sector. These improvements will ensure LFRS can serve its communities most effectively and enable the Service to demonstrate compliance with the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Part I Action Plan.

### **Protection Organisational Development**

This paper has provided a concise update on the scale and scope of work being undertaken by Officers to ensure LFRS can meet future regulatory demands, support commerce and residential freeholders and leaseholders through a period of challenging change, and whilst doing so keep Lancashire as safe as possible.

A consultation has started with staff and trade unions regarding changes to Fire Safety Inspector and Managerial roles and internal structures which recognises that in order to deliver these changes sustainably and effectively LFRS must be able to recruit, develop and retain a driven, ambitious and competent Protection workforce that not only audits buildings in a targeted and intelligent manner, but also works closely with operational crews to ensure optimal preparedness and response.

## **ARSON & MALICIOUS CALL RISK REDUCTION**

### **R v Jake HALLERD**

44 Dall Street, Burnley BB11 3LB  
INCIDENT – 2009010614

Date and Time of call – 30/09/2020 14:51

This incident involved a deliberate fire set in the ground floor front room of a terraced property. The fire caused damage to a section of carpet and skirting board in the room of origin and smoke damage to the remainder of the property.

On 13/05/2021 the occupier of the house Jake HALLERD pleaded guilty to Arson being reckless as to whether life is endangered and was sentenced to 20 months imprisonment and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £156.

### **R v Michaela McCARTHY**

52 Whitehall Street, Nelson BB9 9JD  
INCIDENT – 2008005608

Date and Time of call – 15/08/2020 04:14

This incident involved a deliberate fire set in the kitchen of a terraced property. The fire caused severe damage to the room and contents. The remainder of the property suffered moderate smoke damage.

The occupier, Michaela McCARTHY pleaded guilty to Arson being reckless as to whether life is endangered and was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment suspended for 18 months and ordered to participate in a Rehabilitation Activity Requirement for 25 days and to complete 140 hours unpaid work.

### **R v Habib Sultan ARIF**

Various locations in NELSON

Date and Time of calls – March/April 2020

This case involved a prolific malicious caller from Nelson.

Habib Sultan Arif was sentenced at Burnley Crown Court to:

28 weeks imprisonment suspended for 2 years  
40 days rehabilitation activity requirement as ordered by the court.  
9 month drug rehabilitation requirement as ordered by the court.  
To be supervised by the probation service.

**R v (restricted due to patient confidentiality)**

Edisford Ward MHU, Royal Blackburn Hospital  
INCIDENT – 2106012070

Date and Time of call – 30/06/2021 19:51

This incident involved a patient attempting to set fire to various materials on an hospital ward with a cigarette lighter. No serious damage was caused. The perpetrator is a prolific arsonist with previous convictions.

The defendant was fined & received a Conditional Discharge for 6 months.

**R v Laura HOWATSON**

Great Harwood Allotments, Blackburn Rd, Great Harwood  
INCIDENT – 2104010877

Date and Time of call – 25/04/2021 06:39

This incident involved a deliberate fire which destroyed two wooden framed greenhouses and several large conifers causing £2,264 worth of damage.

The defendant pleaded guilty to arson and received a 6 month suspended sentence.

**R v Adam LEWIS and Hadrian GRAHAM**

2 Ward Street, Chorley, PR6 0SF  
INCIDENT – 2103007154

Date and Time of call – 23/03/2021 06:51

This Incident involved 1 car well alight outside a domestic property. Heat from the vehicle had affected the front door of the property and cracked the front window. 2 persons evacuated the property from the rear.

The defendants pleaded guilty to arson being reckless as to whether life is endangered and received the following sentences:

Adam LEWIS - 4 and a half years imprisonment with a 3 year extended licence period.

Hadrian GRAHAM - 4 and a half years imprisonment with a 2 year extended licence period.



## **R v Tiernan DARNTON**

53 Levens Drive, Heysham, LA3 1JW

Date and Time of call – 28/05/2018 04:06

This incident involved a fire which resulted in the tragic death of 94 year old Mary Gregory.

Following a joint Police and Fire investigation the incident was initially treated as an accidental fire. However, in 2019 the case was reopened after Mrs Gregory's grandson Tiernan Darnton confessed to a counsellor that he had started the fire.

Following a trial at Preston Crown Court the defendant was convicted of Murder and sentenced on the 12 November to life with a minimum term of 15 years.

### **Business Risk**

Moderate – Members need to be aware of prosecutions related to fire safety activity and/or arson within Lancashire 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**

*Table 2 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	
Date:	
Contact:	
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	

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## LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 13 December 2021

### OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF INTEREST

Contact for further information:

Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey, Director of Service Delivery

Tel: 01772 866801

#### **Executive Summary**

The report provides Members with information relating to operational incidents of note since the last report to the Authority.

#### **Recommendation**

The Authority is asked to note the report.

#### **Information**

The report provides Members with information relating to operational incidents of note over the period from 1 September 2021 – 30 November 2021.

The following summarises the incidents with further detail provided over the following pages:

- 8 fire engines attended a building fire in Darwen.
- Large response to reports of a building explosion in Chorley.
- 6 fire engines attend a commercial building fire in Bamber Bridge.
- Fatal domestic dwelling fire in Blackpool.
- 5 fire engines attend a large house fire in Nelson.
- Crews rescue a casualty from property fire in Blackpool.
- 6 fire engines attend a property fire on the Promenade in Blackpool.
- 6 fire engines attend a fire at a waste recycling site in Morecambe.
- Properties damaged by a tornado in Skelmersdale.
- 8 fire engines attended a farm fire in Garstang.

District council area:	Blackburn with Darwen
LFRS area:	E76 Darwen
Date:	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2021
Time:	0017hrs

Following reports of a commercial building fire on Lower Eccleshill Road in Darwen, 4 fire engines from Darwen, Hyndburn and Blackburn were mobilised. The fire was located at a waste recycling site and involved a building approximately 60m x 20m in size. Within the building there was approximately 300 tonnes of waste material involved in the fire.

At the height of the incident there were 8 fire engines in attendance from across the county, as well as support from Greater Manchester FRS. Also in attendance was, a Station Manager, Group Manager, the breathing apparatus unit and an aerial ladder platform.

Fire crews were assisted by site staff using heavy machinery to remove the burning material. Several breathing apparatus wearers were utilised, along with several firefighting water jets. LFRS staff were in attendance for approximately 12 hours. The fire is believed to have started accidentally.

District council area:	Chorley District
LFRS area:	S54 Chorley
Date:	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
Time:	1322hrs

North West Fire Control was alerted to reports of an explosion, with smoke and flames issuing from one of the houses. The initial attendance was made by 3 fire engines from Penwortham, Leyland and Preston, along with the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) unit from Chorley and Bamber Bridge.

A Station Manager was also mobilised along with a Group Manager who was taking up the role of USAR tactical advisor. Ten minutes after the initial call, the firefighters on scene requested a further 5 fire engines, which came from Chorley, Fulwood, Wesham and Blackburn, along with the Command Support Unit. An Incident Intelligence Officer was also mobilised for the fire investigation and drone capability, along with a second group manager to oversee the complex incident.

A large number of residents were evacuated to nearby rest centres, whilst the cause of the blast could be established. Firefighting water jets were used to tackle the fire, whilst USAR operators carried out an initial search of the rubble, along with aerial reconnaissance from the drone.

After approximately 2 hours, a male casualty was discovered, unfortunately he was declared deceased by the ambulance medics. The search continued for further casualties.

There was severe fire and explosion damage to 2 properties, with both suffering building collapse to varying degrees. LFRS staff were part of a multi-agency investigation providing the LFRS canine dogs and specialist investigators.

District council area:	South Ribble
LFRS area:	S53 Bamber Bridge
Date:	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Time:	0320hrs

Six fire engines from Bamber Bridge, Penwortham, Chorley, Preston and Fulwood, along with the Command Support Unit were called to a commercial fire on Berkeley Drive, Cuerden. The fire involved the compressed wood fibre flooring of the 15m x 5m building. Four breathing apparatus and two firefighting water jets were used to bring the fire under control.

Fire crews were in attendance for approximately 8 hours, damping down and carrying out a fire investigation. At this time it's believed the fire was started deliberately, with Police continuing the investigation to ascertain the people involved.

District council area:	Blackpool
LFRS area:	W37 South Shore
Date:	26 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Time:	1009hrs

Three fire engines from South Shore and Blackpool, attended a domestic dwelling fire, where it was believed people were trapped. The first fire engine booked in attendance 3 minutes after being mobilised.

There was an established fire within the first floor flat. Four firefighters wearing breathing apparatus tackled the fire with 2 firefighting water jets. A casualty was rescued from the flat and given first aid by fire crews. Unfortunately the casualty was declared deceased a short time later by ambulance staff.

Firefighters were involved in damping down operations and assisting with the fire investigation for approximately 24 hours. Specialist fire investigators were on scene for several days. The cause of the fire is being treated as accidental.

District council area:	Pendle
LFRS area:	P94 Nelson
Date:	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Time:	0136hrs

Following reports of a kitchen fire on Every Street, 2 fire engines from Nelson and a Station Manager were mobilised. Shortly after the first arrival, a request was made for 3 additional fire engines and an aerial ladder platform. These resources were mobilised from Colne and Burnley, with the aerial appliance coming from Hyndburn. A further Group Manager was mobilised to support the incident operations.

The fire involved the entire first floor and roof void of the gable end terraced house. The fire had spread into the roof of the neighbouring 2 properties, leading to an evacuation. Several firefighters wearing breathing apparatus used water jets to tackle the fire, with the aerial ladder platform fighting the fire from above.

Fire crews were in attendance for approximately 12 hours, continuing damping down operations and assisting with the fire investigation, which was conducted by the Incident Intelligence Officer, in conjunction with Police Crime Scene Investigators. The LFRS fire dog also attended to see if any traces of accelerants could be found. The cause of the fire has been recorded as deliberate ignition.

District council area:	Blackpool
LFRS area:	W30 Blackpool
Date:	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2021
Time:	2257hrs

North West Fire Control received a report of a domestic building fire with persons trapped inside. Three fire engines from Bispham, South Shore and Blackpool attended the incident. The first fire engine took less than 4 minutes to arrive at the incident. The fire involved a bed and mattress within a first floor flat. The remainder of the flat was severely damaged by heat and smoke.

Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the flat, utilising firefighting jets to search for casualties and extinguish the fire. One male casualty was rescued from the flat and given oxygen therapy until paramedics arrived. Fire crews remained at the scene for 2 hours, with the fire investigation taking place the morning after.

District council area:	Blackpool
LFRS area:	W37 South Shore
Date:	2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2021
Time:	1915hrs

Four fire engines from Blackpool, Bispham and South Shore were mobilised to reports of a property fire on Blackpool Promenade. The first fire engine in attendance from South Shore arrived in less than 4 minutes. Shortly after arrival a further 2 fire engines were requested for additional breathing apparatus crews, which came from St Anne's.

The building involved was a converted house of multiple occupation, consisting of 3 floors and approximately 20m x 40m in size. The fire was located on the first floor of the property. Six breathing apparatus wearers entered the building with firefighting water jets. The fire was involving a settee and mattress, with severe smoke logging to the upper floors.

One casualty was treated at the scene by firefighters and passed to the care of the ambulance staff on arrival. LFRS were in attendance for 3 hours, whilst damping down and carrying out a fire investigation. The cause of the fire was recorded as deliberate ignition.

District council area:	Lancaster
LFRS area:	N12 Morecambe
Date:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021
Time:	1642hrs

Following reports of a fire in the open at White Lund Industrial estate, a fire engine from Morecambe was mobilised and arrived in less than 3 minutes. Within a short time of arrival, a further 5 fire engines were requested, which came from Lancaster, Silverdale, Garstang and Bolton le Sands. This was accompanied by 2 Station Managers and the Command Support Unit from Fulwood.

The fire involved a pile of recyclable plastic and metals, weighing approximately 30 tonnes, covering an area of 40m x 30m. The radiated heat from the fire was affecting an adjoining industrial unit.

Fire crews in breathing apparatus used 6 firefighting water jets to bring the fire under control. Crews were in attendance for 14 hours, damping down and minimising damage to the environment.

District council area:	West Lancashire
LFRS area:	S56 Skelmersdale
Date:	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Time:	1846hrs

Fire Engines from Tarleton, Blackburn and Skelmersdale were sent to reports of a tornado damaging properties on Eskdale and Hurston Avenue, Skelmersdale. Two fire engines went to each address and found a large quantity of houses had been damaged by extremely strong winds. Approximately 30 houses had roofs, chimney and aerial damage. A multi-agency approach was instigated, involving the district council, police and ambulance.

Fire crews spent most of the day at both locations, removing dangerous overhanging items from roofs and attempting to minimise damage to properties.

District council area:	Wyre
LFRS area:	N18 Garstang
Date:	21 <sup>st</sup> October 2021
Time:	0830hrs

North West Fire Control received reports of a farm fire on New Lane, Claughton on Brock. Two fire engines from Preston and Fulwood attended, along with a hazardous materials and environmental protection officer. Shortly after arrival a request for an additional 2 fire engines was made, which came from Preston and Bamber Bridge. The fire involved a grain drier containing 8 tonnes of produce. The drier was within an industrial unit approximately 60m x 40m in size. The fire was difficult to deal with due to it being contained within the metal hopper and the high voltage intake was yet to be isolated. A short time later an additional 4 fire engines were requested, due to the requirement for additional breathing apparatus wearers. These came from Longridge, Penwortham, Lancaster, Bamber Bridge, being supported by the Aerial Ladder Platform from Preston and Command Unit from Blackburn.

Water supplies were sourced from the nearby canal and crews wearing breathing apparatus used tools to access the hopper and apply water. The farmer assisted at the scene with a mini digger, moving the burning grain to a safe area. The Aerial Ladder Platform made ventilation holes in the 10m high roof in order to clear the smoke from the unit.

LFRS was in attendance for 15 hours, making sure there were no hot embers which could reignite the grain within the hopper. Although the exact cause of the fire is yet to be determined, it is believed to be accidental ignition.

## **Business Risk**

None

**Environmental Impact**

Potential impact on local environment in relation to operational incidents. Significant incidents benefit from the attendance of specialist water tower resources (Stingers) which make a positive impact on firefighting operations and ultimately reduce the environmental impact.

**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 2 if appropriate:	



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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