Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Performance Committee

Wednesday, 4 September 2024, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
F De Molfetta (Chair)	
H Khan (Vice-Chair)	
T Hurn	
M Clifford	
M Salter	
D Smith	
G Baker (Substitute)	

Officers
J Charters, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) M Hamer, Area Manager, Prevention and Protection (LFRS) J Rossen, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) N Taylor, Area Manager, Head of Leadership and Development (LFRS) P Jones, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) B Maris, Station Manager, Organisational Performance (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS) G Basson, North West Fire Control

9/24	**Apologies For Absence**
	Apologies were received from County Councillors Peter Britcliffe, David O'Toole, Paul Rigby and Barrie Yates.
10/24	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.
11/24	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**
	Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the **26 June 2024** be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. County Councillor Clifford commented that he was impressed with the minutes and

	felt they were comprehensive. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer highlighted that he had brought the ward information from the review of the risk map, from the actions of the previous meeting. The handout sheet, which had been distributed to Members, showed areas of High Risk broken down to ward areas which would be presented in the performance management report agenda item under KPI 2.1. Councillor Baker requested confirmation of the risk categories and stated that the Stanley Ward in Blackpool did not appear on the handout sheet. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that there were over 940 Super Output Areas and the wards listed focused those where risk was categorised as 'Very High' or 'High', hence some wards were not listed. The four risk categories were: Very High; High; Medium; and Low. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that, following a request from County Councillor Hennessy at the previous meeting, he would share any measures that could be learnt from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service in relation to Sickness Absences under KPI 1.2.1.
12/24	**Performance Management Information**
	The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a comprehensive report to the Performance Committee. This was the 1st quarterly report for 2024/25 as detailed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027. This quarter, one Key Performance Indicator (KPI), 2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks was shown in positive exception and four Key Performance Indicators were shown in negative exception. These were 1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime (WT), 2.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises, 3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, and 3.3 Total Fire Engine Availability. Members examined each indicator in turn focusing on those KPIs in exception as follows: **KPI 1 – Valuing our people so that they can focus on making Lancashire safer** **1.1 Overall Staff Engagement** Members received an update on how staff were engaged during the period. From April to June 2024, 19 station visits were carried out by principal officers and area managers as part of the service-wide engagement programme. Six service delivery engagement sessions were held for local leaders across the county to reflect on progress achieved in 2023-24 and consider priorities for the year ahead. The Service also engaged with staff over several topics that related to the Service's fleet and equipment, which included water rescue buoys, fire flash hoods, devices to monitor heat stress in firefighters, and property projects such as improvement

works at Blackpool and Preston fire station.

As previously reported: A comprehensive staff survey was undertaken periodically to gain insight from all staff on a range of topics which included leadership, training and development, health and wellbeing, and equality, diversity, and inclusion. The feedback was used to shape future activity and bring about improvements and new ideas. The survey included a staff engagement index which was a measure of overall staff engagement based on levels of pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration, and motivation. The current staff engagement score index was 74% (2023).

Year	Engagement Index	Response Rate
2023	74%	49%
2020	79%	44%
2018	70%	43%
2016	64%	31%

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

For each respondent, an engagement score was calculated as the average score across the five questions, where strongly disagree was equivalent to 0, disagree was equivalent to 25, neither agree nor disagree was equivalent to 50, agree was equivalent to 75 and strongly agree was equivalent to 100. The engagement index was then calculated as the average engagement score in the organisation. This approach meant that a score of 100 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly agree to all five engagement questions, while a score of 0 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly disagree to all five engagement questions.

During the survey period, the corporate communications department visited wholetime and on-call crews on 51 occasions to encourage participation in the survey. Five focus groups were held with on-call units by the Service's independent researcher to obtain qualitative feedback on on-call specific matters, to complement the survey data.

1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime

This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for all wholetime staff divided by the total average strength.

Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.
Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters = 2

Cumulative total number of shifts lost: 2.141

The negative exception report was due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target for quarter 1.

The element of that section of the report referred to sickness absence rates for the

period 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024.

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for wholetime staff, which equated to a target of 2.00 shifts lost.

The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff was 2.14, which was 0.14 shifts over target. During the same period of the previous year, 2.10 shifts were lost which was a slight increase of 0.04 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same quarter of the previous year. Cases of long-term absence (over the whole quarter) had decreased by 0.11 shifts from the previous quarter.

During quarter 1, April to June 2024, there were 1,332 wholetime absence shifts lost = 2.14 against a target of 2.00.

The number of cases of long-term absence (over the whole quarter) had reduced from three in Q4 to two in Q1.

- Mental Health – Stress
- Cancer and tumours

80 shifts were lost during the quarter as a result of the above cases of long-term absences, this was in comparison to 158 shifts lost during the previous quarter. These cases accounted for 0.129 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

There were 31 other cases of long-term absence also recorded within the 3 months:

- Musculo skeletal – 10 cases
- Mental Health – 9 cases
- Hospital/Post Operative – 7 cases
- Other absence types (small or single returns) – 5 cases

117 shifts lost were related to Respiratory related absences, which included Coronavirus absence and equated to 0.189 shifts lost per person on Q1, in comparison to 154 shifts lost in Q4 of the previous year.

The Service had a robust Absence Management Policy which detailed the approach to managing periods of workplace absence to ensure that staff were supported back to work at the appropriate time based upon their individual needs and in a compassionate way.

The Human Resources (HR) system, I-Trent, automatically generated monthly reports to line managers and HR Business Partners in relation to employees and their periods and reasons for absence, and these were closely monitored. Where employees were absent due to mental health, or a stress related condition, they were referred to the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) as early as possible. Employees returning to work had a return-to-work interview and stress risk assessment, or individual health risk assessments were completed where required.

The Service had several support mechanisms available to support individuals to return to work or be exited as appropriate including guidance from Occupational

Health, access to Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and the Firefighters Charity.

Where an employee did not return to work in a timely manner, an absence review meeting would take place with the employee, the line manager and a representative from Human Resources. The meetings were aimed at identifying support to return an individual back to work which could include modified duties for a period, redeployment, but ultimately could result in dismissal, or permanent ill health retirement from the Service.

The Absence Management Policy detailed when a formal review of an employee's performance levels would normally take place. In terms of short-term absence, a formal review would take place where an employee had 3 or more periods of absence in 6 months, or an employee had 14 days absent. In terms of long-term absence, a formal review would normally take place at 3, 6, 9 and 11 months.

A key challenge for supporting operational staff returning to work was that the threshold for fitness and returning to work for operational firefighters was higher than in other occupations due to their hazardous working conditions.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that, at the previous meeting in June, County Councillor Hennessy had asked if there were any measures that could be learnt from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) with regards to achieving lower absence rates. He explained that, following a meeting with CFRS, learning taken from its absence processes would be implemented by the Service through policies and monitored as to whether there was a positive impact on the KPI. Adjustments had also been identified and applied in respect of Case Management Meetings and any findings would be reported back through a future committee meeting. It was highlighted that adjustments mainly focused on musculo skeletal absences.

In response to County Councillor Salter's request for examples of policy measures learnt from CFRS, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the Director of People and Development was amending the Modified Duties Policy and developing an Alternative Duties Policy, however, consultation with staff representative bodies would have to be carried out. These policies would be reviewed at a future point to measure effectiveness.

1.2.2 Staff Absence On-Call (OC)

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

Annual Standard: No more than 2.5% lost as a % of available hours of cover.

Cumulative on-call absence (as a % of available hours cover) at the end of the quarter, 1.25%.

1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook

This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness

for all green book support staff divided by the average strength.

Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.
Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters: 2

Cumulative shifts lost: 1.348

It was noted by Members that Wholetime Staff were those in a firefighter, uniformed, grey book role. Green book staff were typically those in non-uniformed, support roles such as Human Resources and Health and Safety etc. The policies and procedures relating to absences were consistent for both green book and grey book staff.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer highlighted to Members that the absence figures for green book staff were within target and had greatly improved from the previous year.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity

This indicator measured diversity as a percentage.

Combined diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter, with the percentage within the brackets illustrating the same quarter of the previous year:

Gender:	Female 22%(20%)	Male 78%(80%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 4%(3%)	White 93%(94%)	Not stated 3%(3%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 4%(4%)	Heterosexual 58%(53%)	Not stated 38%(43%)
Disability:	Disability 3%(3%)	No disability 94%(94%)	Not stated 3%(3%)

Diversity percentage by Grey Book Staff and Green Book Staff. Counts included double counts if the member of staff was dual contracted between Grey and Green Book.

Separate diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff:

Gender:	Female	Grey book 10%	Green book 61%
	Male	Grey book 90%	Green book 39%
Ethnicity:	BME	Grey book 3%	Green book 4%
	White	Grey book 95%	Green book 87%
	Not stated	Grey book 2%	Green book 9%
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT	Grey book 4%	Green book 3%
	Heterosexual	Grey book 57%	Green book 62%
	Not stated	Grey book 39%	Green book 35%

Disability:	Disability	Grey book 3%	Green book 4%
	No disability	Grey book 95%	Green book 90%
	Not stated	Grey book 2%	Green book 6%

1.3.2 Workforce Diversity Recruited

This new indicator measured workforce diversity recruited as a percentage.

Combined diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter, with the percentage within the brackets illustrating the same quarter of the previous year:

Gender:	Female 90%(41%)	Male 10%(59%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 0%(6%)	White 40%(76%)	Not Stated 60%(18%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 0%(6%)	Heterosexual 90%(76%)	Not stated 10%(18%)
Disability:	Disability 0%(6%)	No disability 100%(94%)	Not stated 0%(0%)

During quarter 1, there were a total of 10 new entrants.

It was noted that a further breakdown of the data would not be provided as it may enable the identification of individuals, due to the small numbers of persons recruited during the period.

1.4 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the number of accidents which occurred to staff members at work within the quarter: Wholetime, On-Call and Greenbook.

Total number of staff accidents, 20 for quarter 1; year to date 20; previous year to date 16. Quarterly activity increased 25.00% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed Members that there had been no significant incidents and fluctuations in the quarters was often dependent on incident types attended.

KPI 2 - Preventing, fires and other emergencies from happening and Protecting people and property when fires happen

2.1 Risk Map Score

This indicator measured the fire risk in each Super Output Area, of which there were 942. 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

County risk map score was updated annually and presented to the Performance Committee in the quarter 1 reporting period.

Annual Standard: To reduce the risk in Lancashire – an annual reduction in the County risk map score.

(Dwelling Fires ÷ Total Dwellings) + (Dwelling Fire Casualties ÷ Resident Population x 4) + Building Fire + (IMD x 2) = Risk Score.

The current score was 30,750 and the previous year's score was 31,170 which meant that the fire risk continued to reduce.

The handout sheet, which had been distributed to Members, showed areas of Very High and High Risk broken down to ward areas.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the overall risk score continued to reduce year on year and the ambition of the Service was to eradicate the Very High Risk graded areas from the risk map.

2.2 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that LFRS attended with one or more pumping appliances. Incidents attended included fires, special service calls, false alarms and collaborative work undertaken with other emergency services i.e.: missing person searches on behalf of the Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and gaining entry incidents at the request of the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

Incidents attended, year to date 4,274; previous year to date 5,105. Quarterly activity decreased 16.28% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In quarter 1, the Service attended 4,274 incidents. The report presented a chart which represented the count and percentage that each activity had contributed to the overall quarter's activity:

- Total False Alarm Calls (due to apparatus, good intent and malicious) – 1826, 43%
- Total Primary Fire Calls (accidental dwelling / building and deliberate dwelling / commercial fires and other primary fires) – 492, 12%
- Total Secondary Fire Calls (deliberate and accidental fires) – 739, 17%
- Total Special Service Calls (critical incidents, gaining entry, RTCs, Flooding and other critical incidents) – 1211, 28%

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the revised Automatic Fire Alarms policy had removed some unnecessary mobilisations and False Alarms incidents had deceased by almost 12% compared to the previous year.

2.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

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'.

Members noted that a primary fire was one involving property (excluding derelict property) or any fires involving casualties, rescues or any fire attended by 5 or more pumping appliances.

Accidental Dwelling Fires, 165 in quarter 1; year to date 165; previous year to date 203. Quarterly activity decreased 18.72% over the same quarter of the previous year.

It was noted by Members that the number of accidental dwelling fires had significantly reduced against the same quarter of the previous year and there had been a sustained a downward trend.

2.3.1 ADF – Harm to people: 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.

Fatal	1 in quarter 1; year to date 1; previous year to date 0
Injuries appear Serious	0 in quarter 1; year to date 0; previous year to date 3
Injuries appear Slight	15 in quarter 1; year to date 15; previous year to date 8

Quarterly activity increased 45.45% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed Members that sadly, the 1 fatality in quarter 1 was an elderly man in Burnley.

2.3.2 ADF – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

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'.

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

Current quarter, combined percentage of 87% against same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 84%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore increased 2.92% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4 Accidental Building Fires (ABF) (Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a building had been affected (which was other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling), and the cause of fire had been recorded as ''Accidental' or 'Not known'.

ABF (Commercial Premises), 71 in quarter 1; year to date 71; previous year to date 70. Quarterly activity increased 1.43% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4.1 ABF (Commercial Premises) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a building had been affected (which was other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling), and the cause of fire had been recorded as ''Accidental' or 'Not known'.

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

- current quarter, combined percentage of 78% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 66%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore increased 12.1% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known.'

ABF (Non-Commercial Premises), 21 in quarter 1; year to date 21; previous year to date 40. Quarterly activity decreased 47.50% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5.1 ABF (Non-Commercial premises: Private garages and sheds) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known.'

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

- current quarter, combined percentage of 38% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 38%.

Combined quarterly activity had therefore remained static over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6 Deliberate Fires Total: Specific performance measure of deliberate fires

This indicator provided an overall measure of primary and secondary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – 498 in quarter 1; year to date 498; previous year to date 684. Quarterly activity decreased 27.19% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that there had been a seasonal spike in the number of deliberate fires in early spring which had been managed at district level and had subsequently led to a reduction when compared to the same quarter last year.

2.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – Dwellings, 24 in quarter 1, year to date 24; previous year to date 24. Quarterly activity was static over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.2 Deliberate Fires - Commercial Premises

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the property type was a building, other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises, 48 in quarter 1; year to date 48; previous year to date 42.

Quarterly activity increased 14.92% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The negative exception report was due to the number of deliberate commercial premises fires being above the upper control limit during April of quarter 1.

Whilst the count of deliberate fires within the first quarter was within the tolerance for the months of May and June, April recorded a high of 21 incidents, which was one incident above the upper control limit. The month of April accounted for 43.8% of fires over the three-month period.

Over the quarter 1 period, 17 (35.4%) of the incidents occurred in prisons, which equated to over a third of all deliberate fires at commercial premises. The most common ignition source was smoking materials, such as an electronic vape (e-Cigarette) to intentionally cause a fire.

Although LFRS had no direct legislative power over Prisons as they were Crown Property, LFRS had established a Prison Working Group and was working closely with the Prisons within Lancashire to support and advise in relation to fire safety and incident reduction.

Fire protection teams continued to drive their performance through the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). This work was enhanced through operational staff carrying out Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs) on lower risk businesses. This work supported Lancashire business safety through advice and guidance and referral to Protection teams where appropriate.

In response to a query from Councillor Smith regarding the classification of prisons as commercial premises, the Assistant Chief Fire officer explained that, for Home Office reporting purposes, national reporting was structured so prisons were classed as commercial properties. In addition, other types of government buildings and crown premises were classed as commercial i.e. military barracks.

Councillor Smith suggested that crown premises data be reported separately to other commercial premises with an additional line on the graph as that data caused the KPI to be in negative exception. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer proposed the suggested change to the reporting of the KPI and it was agreed by Members.

2.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Other (rubbish, grassland, vehicles etc).

This indicator reported the number of primary and secondary fires where the property type was other than a building, except where the building was recorded as derelict, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

The majority of deliberate fires were outdoor secondary fires and included grassland and refuse fires. Derelict vehicle fires were also included under secondary fires.

Deliberate Fires – Other, 426 in quarter 1; year to date 426; previous year to date 618. Quarterly activity decreased 31.07% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.7 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:

- the total number of HFSC's completed was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year; and
- the percentage of high HFSC outcomes was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs completed, 5,807 in quarter 1; year to date 5,807; previous year to date

5,807. Quarterly activity remained static against the same quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs with high-risk outcomes, Quarter 1, 53%; previous year Quarter 1, 54%.

High risk outcomes decreased 1% against the same quarter of the previous year.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer informed members that the number of HFSCs delivered had increased significantly over the last few years.

2.8 Numbers of prevention activities such as Childsafe, wasted lives etc

Members received an update on the number of sessions delivered against the following prevention activities during the quarter:

ChildSafe, 1 session delivered to 30 students;
RoadSense, 89 sessions delivered to 3,210 students;
SENDSafe, 6 sessions delivered to 200 students;
Wasted Lives, 9 sessions delivered to 1,059 students;
Biker Down, 6 sessions delivered to 90 attendees;
FIRES, 40 referrals opened prior to Q1 and carried over. 46 referrals received in Q1. 35 referrals closed in Q1. 45 referrals carried to 2024-25, Q2;
Partner Training (including care providers), 15 sessions, to 11 different partners, to 161 delegates;

Specific Education packages – delivered Water Safety, BrightSparx, ASB, Deliberate Fire Setting etc (Covers key stages 2, 3 and 4). 39 in school water safety sessions, delivered to 5,468 students & 8 virtual sessions delivered to 9,147 pupils.

Arson Threat Referrals – 191.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that LFRS were active Members of the Water Safety Partnership and the water safety delivery aimed to reduce the number of water related fatalities in Lancashire.

County Councillor Clifford queried whether there was any statistical evidence that showed that water safety training had proved effective and reduced the number of water related incidents that the Service responded to. Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that sadly, nationally the number of water related incidents continued to rise. From a prevention perspective, targeting groups was difficult as 48% of people who lost their lives did not intend to enter the water. LFRS were active members of the Lancashire Water Safety Partnership (LWSP) and along with Swim England and the Mine Trust, considered prevention strategies using national data from the WAter Incident Database (WAID) and Lancashire specific data. Lancashire had large areas of open water and prevention activity was targeted at young males through school. Nationally, there was a focus on water safety and there had been advancement in the curriculum around safety in open water and access to public pools and swimming lessons for children. It was noted by Members that the Service did not have a statutory duty in terms of water related incidents, however, the Fire Service was mobilised as a rescue service.

2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks

This indicator reported the number of Business Fire Safety Check (BFSC's) completed and whether the result was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If the result of a BFSC was unsatisfactory, fire safety advice would be provided to help the business comply with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. If critical fire safety issues were identified, then a business safety advisor would conduct a follow-up intervention.

- The pro rata BFSC target was delivered through each quarter.

A +/-10% tolerance was applied to the completed BFSCs and the year to date (YTD) BFSCs, against both the quarterly and YTD targets. When both counts were outside of the 10% tolerance, they would be deemed in exception which enabled local delivery to flex with the needs of their district plan over the quarters.

BFSCs completed, 924 in quarter 1; Cumulative 924; YTD target, 625; previous YTD 826.

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being satisfactory, 791. Top 5 completed satisfactory premise types (Shops 323, Factories/Warehouses 128, Other Workplaces 78, Other Public Premises 71, Offices 70).

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being unsatisfactory, 133. Top 5 completed unsatisfactory premise types (Shops 57, Factories/Warehouses 27, Licensed Premises 11, Other Sleeping Accommodation 11, Other Workplaces 9).

The positive exception report was due to the number of completed Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs) being greater than 10% of the quarterly target, and the cumulative year to date target.

Crews continued to embed built environment knowledge and understanding. The first of two Built Environment Virtual Training (BEVT) sessions were delivered in 2023 and the second phase of BEVT roll out was due to begin soon.

Protection grey book staff would commence with strengthening operational awareness days in Q2 which would see them quality assure the BFSC delivery and support the transition of crews staring to undertake BFSCs in more sleeping risk premises types.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity (including Business Fire Safety Checks)

This indicator reported the number of Fire Safety Enforcement inspections carried out within the period which resulted in supporting businesses to improve and become compliant with fire safety regulations or where formal action of enforcement and prosecution had been taken for those that failed to comply.

An improvement was shown if the percentage of audits that required formal activity was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year.

Total Fire Safety Enforcement Inspections, Quarter 1, 530;
Formal Activity in Quarter 1, 6%, same quarter of the previous year 7%.
Quarterly activity decreased 1% against the same quarter of the previous year.

Members noted the cumulative number of Business Fire Safety Check follow-up visits undertaken for 2024/25 was 530.

2.10 Building Regulation Consultations (BRC) (number and completed on time)

Where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applied to premises (or would apply following building work) the building control body must consult with LFRS for comments / advice regarding fire safety. LFRS should make any comments in writing within 15 working days from receiving a BRC.

This indicator provided Members with information on the number of building regulations consultations received during the period together with improvement actions.

In Quarter 1, Building Regulation Consultations received 208, of which 207 were completed within timeframe (LFRS should make comments in writing within 15 working days of receiving a BRC).

Current focus within the department:

To comply with the NFCC Competency Framework for Fire Safety Regulators, Level 4 qualified Fire Safety Inspectors must complete consultations. It was the same inspectors who were required to complete intervention work in high risk, complex premises identified by the risk-based intervention program. Consequently, use of finite resources must be fully co-ordinated and balanced. To achieve this and ensure consultation timelines were achieved:

- The implementation of centralised building regulations onto the Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) and assigning dedicated resource to consistently input new applications, continued to improve the Services efficiency at responding to the majority within statutory timescales.

It was highlighted by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer that, in response to the last HMI inspection, there had been a reformat of the administration of consultations which had greatly improved the turnaround time over the previous 12 months with only 1 consultation being out of the timeframe within the current quarter.

KPI 3 - Responding to fire and other emergencies quickly

3.1 Critical Fire Response – 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, 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. Standards were achieved when the time between the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident, averaged over the quarter, was less than the relevant response standard. Expressed in minutes & seconds. Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, Quarter 1, Very High 06:02 min; High 07:12 min, Medium 07:02 min, Low 08:51 min. Q1 overall 07:41 min. Year to date overall 07:41 min. Previous year to date overall 07:30 min. The negative exception report was due to the critical 1st fire appliance average response time to very high risk areas marginally exceeding the standard in quarter 1. The standard within a very high risk area was 6 minutes. The average time achieved during quarter 1 exceeded this by 2 seconds. The monthly average response times to very high risk areas were: April – 07:19 May – 05.33 June – 05:26 Quarter 1 – 06:02 Only April exceeded the 6 minute average, with the average time of 07:19 being made up of just three incidents, of which, two recorded a response longer than six minutes. The first incident was suspected overheating of cables within an electric shower in a domestic property. The nearest pump to this incident was engaged at another incident, and the second pump was On-Call crewed and, at the time, was on the run as a Small Incident Unit (SIU), which led to the first attending pump responding from another station area, hence and extended run time. The second incident involved a wheelie-bin alight next to a fire exit of a commercial building. The delay was due to the roadworks on the main ring road, so the location was reached via busier than normal side roads. Response times were consistently monitored and, where they did not meet the target, the reason was reported on and then scrutinised at regular performance

	monitoring meetings. This allowed for trends to be identified and improvements implemented, as necessary. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the Service was working with on-call units and staff representatives to negotiate changes to the policy around dispatching SIUs to an incident which would improve response times. He referenced recent incidents where an SIU could have made a positive impact. At a future point, it was anticipated that the Service and local managers would make informed decisions about SIUs attending an incident. Work to implement the change to SIU appliance deployment was ongoing with revised risk assessments, and further dial-in sessions scheduled with on-call staff and Trade Unions. In response to a query from County Councillor Hurn in relation to necessary skills sets for dispatching an appliance, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that there were challenges with on-call firefighters and SIUs around having the required skill sets such as a Driver, Incident Commander, and BA qualified staff, to crew a fully available appliance. Currently, SIUs could respond to certain incidents but not all, due to skill set requirements. Work was underway to allow SIUs to have autonomy to make a risk assessed evaluation about whether they could attend an incident to improve the outcome. Recent incidents would be used as examples to illustrate the benefits of changes to the current deployment policy. County Councillor Clifford queried whether the 6 minute response standard for the first fire engine attending a critical fire was regularly reviewed and if advances in technology had improved response times. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that response times were reviewed as part of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which ran over 5 years. The response times had remained steady for a length of time, other than the call handling time being taken out of the overall target and subsequently re-added, due to the target being consistently achieved. Additionally, although fire engine technology had greatly improved, there were other contributing factors such as increased traffic volume and, in the future, funding settlements and fleet modifications could affect response times. Nonetheless, LFRS had some of the quickest response times in the country. The Chair commented that, over the years, response times had constantly improved, and he was pleased that the Service was amongst the top in the country for speed of response. In response to a statement from Councillor Baker regarding factors affecting response times and the Service responding as quickly as possible, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the call handling time comprised of the NWFC call handling time and mobilisation to the scene of an incident which could be at any location in Lancashire. County Councillor Salter commented that response times were important, as was having the right equipment to deal with an incident for which he believed the technology would have advanced over the years enabling the Service to deal with incidents more effectively. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that LFRS had made significant investments in fleet, equipment, and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) as it strived to be the best trained, best equipped, and most professional FRS in the country and through continued CFA investment, the Service benefitted from equipment with the latest advancements. Effectiveness at

incidents was measured by the KPI for User Satisfaction and the KPI for measuring fire spread in buildings.

3.2 Critical Special Service Response – 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 standard included how long it took the first fire engine to respond to critical special service (non-fire) incidents where there was a risk to life such as road traffic collisions, rescues, and hazardous materials incidents. For these critical special service call incidents there was a single response standard of 13 minutes (which measured call handling time and fire engine response time).

Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, 08:22 min in quarter 1; year to date 08:22 min; previous year to date 08:31 min. Again, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer highlighted that LFRS response times for this KPI remained very strong.

3.3 Total Fire Engine Availability

This indicator measured the availability of the 1st fire engine at each of the 39 fire stations. It was measured as the percentage of time the 1st fire engine was available to respond compared to the total time in the period.

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

Total Fire Engine Availability, 86.91% in quarter 1; year to date 86.91%; previous year to date 89.48%.

Quarterly availability decreased 2.57% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The negative exception report was due to the 1st fire appliance availability percentage being below the lower control limit during quarter 1.

Overall availability across all stations for the quarter recorded 86.91%, which was 3.09% below the 90% standard, although only the month of June recorded availability (86.25%) below the lower control limit of 86.80%

The availability by each of the stations designated first pump crewing type:
Wholetime – 99.28%
Day Crewing Plus – 98.86%
Flexi Day Crewing – 99.48%
On-Call – 70.97%
Total – 86.91%

Whilst all of the Whole-Time appliances achieved exceptional availability, the 1st appliance at the wholly On-Call stations contributed to the availability falling below the 90% standard. As such, the exception report was focused on On-Call

availability.

On-Call recruitment, development, and retention was a national challenge which had seen a downward trend in availability over several years.

A shortage of staff with the Officer in Charge (OIC) skill was a significant contributing factor to low On-Call availability. On-Call Support Officers (OCSOs) were working with station-based staff and management, together with Training Centre, to support those in development and identify opportunities for staff to acquire those skills earlier in their career.

Actions being taken to improve performance:

- The On Call Improvement Programme (OCIP) was driving transformation across the Service with several workstreams to improve recruitment, development, and retention.
- Incident Command trainers had reviewed the process for On-Call Incident Command Courses, which had resulted in an increase in staff being trained as OICs.
- The Service was exploring options to enable WT Managers and firefighters to provide additional OIC availability at On-Call units.
- On-Call Performance Management training for Station Managers and On-Call Unit Managers commenced in Q1, which included the roll-out of sector-leading innovative software for On-Call Availability, Recruitment and Skills (OARS). The software was developed in collaboration with an On-Call academic and a software designer. This would enhance the support for managers with workforce planning, development, and performance.
- The Service trialled a '365 Recruitment' model in July, which had enabled an additional 8 recruits to be trained outside of LFRS' two annual On-Call recruitment campaigns. A 'Local Area Training Hub' trial enabled the recruits to be trained at a local fire station. The trials would be evaluated in Q2 with the potential for wider roll out for future campaigns.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that approximately 15 projects were being undertaken to improve on-call availability. Each project would provide incremental benefits with the culmination of all expected to contribute towards the required improvement overall.

Area Manager, John Rossen informed Members that the Service would be showcasing as good practice, the innovative OARS software, which was being used by many Managers in the Service, at the National On-Call conference to be held this month. Additionally, a trial was taking place at Wesham Fire Station which allowed an on-call firefighter, who did not live within a 5-minute radius of the fire station, to work from the station alongside their primary employment role. The trial was in the process of being evaluated and, if successful, recruitment could be moved out of the traditional catchment area and potential on-call firefighters could work from an on-call station to provide valuable day time cover. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer added that other Fire Services were also trialling working from a fire station which was an opportunity that had been derived post Covid. It was noted by Members that the evaluation would need to consider a number of complexities before wider rollout could be achieved.

KPI 4 - Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

4.1 Progress Against Allocated Budget

Members received an update on spend against the approved budget for the year.

The annual budget for 2024/25 was set at £75.1 million. Spend at the end of June 2024 was showing a small underspend, particularly on grey book offset by overspend across non pay.

Quarter 1 variance -0.05%.

4.2 Partnership Collaboration

Under the Policing and Crime Act 2017, blue light services were under a formal duty to collaborate to improve efficiency, effectiveness and deliver improved outcomes.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service had met at both tactical and strategic levels and had agreed and signed a strategic statement of intent which contained the following aims:

- **Improved Outcomes** – The collaboration maintains or improves the service we provide to local people and local communities;
- **Reduce Demand** – The collaboration should contribute towards our longer-term strategic objective of decreasing risk in communities and reducing demand on services;
- **Better Value for Money** – The collaboration produces quantifiable efficiencies either on implementation or in the longer term;
- **Reduced inequalities within our communities** – The collaboration contributes towards reducing inequalities wherever possible.

This indicator provided Members with an update on partnership collaboration during the period.

Missing Persons (MisPer)

The Service had increasing experience and could provide local or specialist advice for consideration by LanCon. Searches had become streamlined which allowed for a more structured and effective approach to locating a high-risk missing person. The Service's drone development (aerial and sub-surface), for which LFRS had the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) lead role, had further enhanced the Service's capabilities for Missing Person Searches.

LFRS had provided significant support to Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) with its aerial drone assets, supported by an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Further investment in 2023/ 24 led to LFRS strengthening sub-surface

rescue/ recovery capability of persons, with an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV). This asset had been deployed locally, regionally, and nationally and delivered improved outcomes in incident resolution. LFRS received around 200 drone requests last year from LanCon, with most requests for Missing Persons searches.

Estates and Co-location
This project was a long-term work stream which could deliver significant efficiencies and effectiveness where co-location sites were identified.

A set of principles were being developed to identify high level areas of opportunities. Blue Light partners were currently reviewing their strategic property asset plans to identify areas for co-ordinating future development plans over the next 5-10 years.

All Blue Light partners were included in the discussions and options in relation to future opportunities. All current locations for each organisation had been mapped, with focus being moved to the understanding of longer-term plans for each service, consideration of site sharing opportunities at existing locations, along with a procedure to facilitate site sharing.

In addition to the physical estate and site sharing, Blue light partners had identified other areas for learning, development and sharing of information in support of the provision of efficient and effective estate management within respective organisations.

Community First Responders
A trial had commenced in 2023 that involved LFRS volunteering as Community First Responders (CFR) to support NWAS. LFRS staff volunteers undertook an initial CFR training programme at LFRS Training Centre. Once qualified, they could shadow existing CFR practitioners to develop their clinical abilities and build confidence in their newly acquired skills.

Following the successful 'Phase 1' implementation, five LFRS staff volunteers had been responding to life threatening emergencies in their communities from the workplace and would administer first aid in the initial vital minutes before NWAS colleagues arrived. The Service had now expanded its support to NWAS as it was a successful, life-saving initiative and several LFRS Flexible-Duty Officers (FDOs) completed CFR training in early July as part of the 'Phase 2' implementation.

Leadership Development
An analysis of leadership development was ongoing between the three organisations with the Services currently exploring three leadership development days.

Command Units
The aim of the project was to establish and deliver additional collaborative uses of the command units in LFRS to support effective multi agency working amongst emergency responders. The key objectives were to improve operational effectiveness and in line with the LFRS mission; 'Making Lancashire Safer.'

The Command Support Unit (CSU) project aimed to upgrade the vehicles and adopt technological advancements to support operational incidents. On-Call firefighters crewed a CSU, and as part of the agreed capital vehicle replacement project, two new larger Command Units (CUs) were now operational and had been deployed to several incidents, with excellent feedback received from the firefighters, FDOs, and partner agencies. LFRS continued to demonstrate the unit and software to other fire and rescue services with a recent visit from Northern Ireland FRS which took place in May. The Service had also carried out multi-agency familiarisations in June for the Blackburn-with-Darwen Emergency Planning Team.

The initial benefits realised had been improved information sharing and situational awareness aligned to improving and embedding the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP).

Members noted that Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and John Rossen, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery led partnership collaboration on behalf of LFRS.

4.3 Overall User Satisfaction

People surveyed included those who had experienced an accidental dwelling fire, a commercial fire, or a special service incident that the Service attended.
The standard was achieved if the percentage of satisfied responses was greater than the standard.

Annual Standard: 98.74%

In quarter 1, 75 people had been surveyed and the number satisfied with the service was 74. The running number of people surveyed for the year was 3,643 with 3,597 of those people being satisfied with the Service; 98.74% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.27%.

Associated Information to Members

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer referenced the Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Bill document that had been emailed to Members which would go through the parliamentary process (Link below).

Lithium-ion Battery Safety Bill

Members discussed concerns regarding Lithium-Ion batteries which included: -

- The increasing problem of thermal runaway caused by a design issue.
- Difficulties faced with extinguishing Lithium-Ion battery and Electric Vehicle fires.
- The need for the safety measures to be introduced for car parks, buildings regs etc as the UK moved towards Electric Vehicles.

In response to the issues raised, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the NFCC were engaged at government level regarding safety concerns of Lithium-Ion batteries. He added that thermal runaway occurred when batteries became

	damaged which could cause waste fires and Lancashire County Council had carried out work with household recycling centres to educate the public around the correct disposal of batteries to reduce the risk. There was also a domestic risk with e-scooters and e-bikes and people buying second hand parts. The associated risks with Lithium-Ion batteries were global and ongoing research was taking place with manufacturers to improve safety. The Service had a number of tools to help contain and extinguish Electric Vehicle fires, however, once they went into thermal runaway, fires were difficult to extinguish as water needed to be directly entered onto the battery cells. He assured Members that the Lithium-Ion Safety Bill encompassed all their concerns, and its purpose was to adapt the broader system and infrastructure for the UK. The Chair thanked the Assistant Fire Officer for a positive report. **Resolved: -** That the Performance Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 1 Measuring Progress report, including one positive and four negative exceptions.
13/24	**North-West Fire Control Presentation - Findings from Annual Report**
	The Chair welcomed Ged Basson, Senior Operations Manager, North West Fire Control (NWFC). Mr Basson provided the Committee with a presentation detailing the findings from the 2023-24 Annual Report and investment in people. Mr Basson explained that for the previous 19 years NWFC had been set up with a business plan for what it was expected to achieve and in 2023-24 NWFC published its first three-year business plan and first annual delivery plan. The impact of control rooms throughout incidents to a successful resolution had been recognised. The control room staff had received Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) training in with regard to their role, which had been integrated with other emergency services. The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) had set out an agenda that control rooms should have standards which included Occupational Standards and Fire Control Fire Standards. The four new organisational priorities that the plans included were: - Priority 1: To provide an effective and efficient control room function that satisfies our partner fire and rescue services' operational response requirements. (Impacting this priority were financial pressures, the new mobilising system, social changes & impacts, the threat of terrorism, and Grenfell tower phase 2 report). - Priority 2: To train and develop our people to provide a skilled, motivated, and competent workforce. (Achieving this priority involved JESIP collaboration, the right people with the right skills at the right time, new initiatives by the Police Service, and the impact of the Manchester Arena Inquiry and recommendations). - Priority 3: To provide professional business services to support the control room function and the training and development of our people. (Retention of staff in controls rooms was a national issue and to help tackle this, NWFC had established the People Development and Assurance Programme (PDAP) and would train test and exercise staff).

- Priority 4: To develop open and inclusive relationships with our people and partner fire and rescue services. (NWFC worked to strengthen collaboration, had a Board of Directors which met quarterly, had a Steering Committee, and an Operations Management Committee which oversaw the operational function of the control room).

The Annual Delivery Plan identified 37 commitments that provided the focus for the year with progress on completion of the commitments reported quarterly to the Operations Management Committee, Steering Committee, and Board. The commitments and projects for the upcoming years had been mapped out.

NWFC's partner fire and rescue services had approved additional investment of £860k funding for 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 for key commitments and projects in the annual delivery plan. Funding had been specifically provided for:
- A new mobilising system solution project team and specialist legal and procurement advice;
- An organisational improvement team;
- A programme management team;
- A resource to undertake a review of the control room's capacity, working patterns and associated arrangements; and
- A resource to undertake reviews of potential future operating models for fire control and the support provided by partner fire and rescue services and external bodies.

NWFC was out to tender for a new mobilising system and success of the tender process would be determined by the number of tenders received. Presently, 3 suppliers had successfully submitted tender bids with a deadline for tenders of 5 August 2024.

NWFC had set up an Organisational Improvement Team and employed an Organisational Improvement Manager as part of the PDAP to ensure staff adhere to National Operational Guidance (NOG) to provide Operational Assurance which were linked to the outcomes of the Manchester Arena Inquiry and Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations. A Programme Management Team would oversee the new mobilising system and Annual Delivery Plan, and delivery against the Fire Control Fire Standard.

A Capacity Review would take place to ensure NWFC had the right people with right skills in right place at the right time. A review of the staffing model was planned as it had remained unchanged for 10 years.

A key date for the future was 10 July 2033 as it was the end of the building lease and government subsidy. It would also be end of the new mobilising system contract and exit of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) from the partnership.

NWFC had enhanced and refined its governance arrangements. The Lead Principal Officers had been reengaged as the Operations Management Committee and New Mobilising System Solution Project Board. The Terms of Reference for the Board of Directors, Steering Committee, Company Leadership Team, and

Senior Leadership Team had been revised. Mobs and Comms had been renamed as the Operational Response and Mobilising Subcommittee which reported to the Operations Management Committee.

NWFC had adopted the National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) Core Code of Ethics as its values.

- Putting our communities first – we put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.
- Integrity – we act with integrity, including being open, honest, and consistent in everything we do.
- Dignity and respect – making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.
- Leadership – we are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexibility and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.
- Equality, diversion, and inclusion (EDI) – We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI both within the FRSs and wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

NWFC Key Achievements included:

- Completion of the reporting progress on the implementation of the Manchester Arena Inquiry recommended to the Chair of the inquiry – now reporting to the Home Office.
- Completion of a gap analysis of the Fire Control Standard and production of an action plan that ensures compliance with the standard's requirements.
- Development and approval of new operational training frameworks, competencies, and product packs – part of the People Development and Assurance Programme (PDAP) – in readiness for implementation in April 2024.
- Establishment of a project board to oversee the procurement of a new mobilising system solution and the issue of a survey questionnaire to potential suppliers. Official tender documentation was submitted 04 June 2024.
- Completion of the appointment of Operations Managers as part of a new leadership and command structure for control room teams.
- Introduction of a new business planning and reporting framework.
- Development of a refined appraisal process aligned to the NFCC's Core Code of Ethics and Leadership Framework.
- Completion of an induction programme for new board directors.
- Completion of an independent audit of our GDPR policies and associated documentation.
- Conduction of the third HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool Survey.
- Completion of an independent audit of business continuity arrangements.
- Registration of an audited copy the Statement of Accounts with Companies House.

NWFC Performance in 2023-24 included:

- 127,789 emergency calls – 350 calls a day.
- 229,542 administrative calls – 629 calls a day.
- Average of 979 calls a day.

- Call challenge reduced the number of mobilisations by 16,800 – 46 mobilisations a day.
- Average time to answer emergency calls: 6 seconds.
- 89% of emergency calls answered within 10 seconds.
- Average time to mobilise first response to fires: 82 seconds. (The Assistant Chief Fire Officer highlighted that the time to mobilise first response had reduced significantly over recent years and was now below the performance standard of 90 seconds).
- Average time to mobilise first response to all incidents: 93 seconds.
- 68% of control room operators achieved and maintained competence in role.
- 89% of team leaders achieved and maintained competence in role.
- 86% of team leaders and control room operators completed all their programmed training.
- Control room teams involved in 63 exercises.
- Maintained minimum staffing levels on 75% of occasions.
- Sickness absence: average of 10.2 days per person.
- News starters: 20.
- Leavers: 19.

The NWFC Board of Directors approved the Annual Delivery Plan for 2024-25 and associated budget at its meeting on 26 March 2024.

In response to a query from Councillor Salter as to the adequacy for safety of minimum staffing levels, Mr Basson advised that, 75% of the time, the required number of staff on shift was reached. However, it did not significantly impact the call handling time as it typically increased by 1 second. For every 7,000 calls there would be 1 call where NWFC could have improved its response and which learning could be taken from, but these were not due to staff inefficiencies. The staff model would be reviewed as it was formed many years ago and included staff welfare breaks, maternity leave, special leave, court leave, and sick leave, which could take the staffing levels below the minimum. It was recognised that the staffing levels were getting close to the minimum buffer which was the reason NWFC would be carrying out a capacity review. Retention was a national issue and the Mobilising Officers Group, which he was a member of, were investigating a recruitment initiative where they would investigate incentives for staff to remain.

Councillor Clifford asked for the reason that, if NWFC were the most cost-effective control centre in the country, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service had chosen to leave in 2033. Mr Basson explained that all fire and rescue services were encouraged to consider whether NWFC provided the right service for them, operationally and financially. GMFRS, consistent with the Manchester Arena Inquiry, had reviewed its operating model and the long-term view of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority was to exit in 2033.

The Chair thanked Mr Basson for his interesting and informative presentation. It was frustrating staff were leaving NWFC, however, it was the nature of the job as they worked shifts and rotas. He suggested organising a visit to NWFC at a future date and encouraged all Members to attend.

14/24	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on **04 December 2024** at 10:00 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 05 March 2025 and 25 June 2025 and agreed for 03 September 2025.

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood