

Public Document Pack

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Monday, 3 February 2025 in Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood commencing at 10.00 am.

If you have any queries regarding the agenda papers or require any further information, please initially contact Sam Hunter on telephone number Preston (01772) 866720 and she will be pleased to assist.

Agenda

Part 1 (open to press and public)

Chair's Announcement – Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

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 Chair who will then instruct that those persons are not photographed, filmed or recorded.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **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.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 12)**
4. **Consultation Strategy (Pages 13 - 22)**
5. **Annual Service Plan 2025/26 (Pages 23 - 38)**
6. **Blue Light Collaboration Board update (Pages 39 - 44)**
7. **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Update (Pages 45 - 52)**
8. **Council tax precept consultation (Pages 53 - 54)**
9. **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.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee has been agreed for 10:00 hours on **14 July 2025** in the Main Conference Room, at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meetings are: scheduled for 17 November 2025
 proposed for 2 February 2026

**Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Planning Committee**

**Monday, 18 November 2024, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
G Baker	
S Clarke	
N Hennessy (Vice-Chair)	
J Hugo (Chair)	
F Jackson	
H Khan	
S Serridge	
J Shedwick	
J Singleton	
B Yates	

Officers
S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) E Price, Group Manager - Planning, Performance & Assurance (LFRS) M Fish, Head of Safety, Health & Environment (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance

10/24	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor D O'Toole with County Councillor B Yates attending as substitute.
11/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
12/24	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 July 2024 be confirmed

	as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
13/24	Emergency Cover Review
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) advised that the report updated on the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) 2022-25 implementation, outlining the work that was ongoing and had been completed to date.</p> <p>With many ECR workstreams now concluded or in the final phase of implementation, all ongoing workstreams were being managed as projects through programme boards. It was proposed that any future updates on work associated with the ECR was brought through the relevant programme board or by exception to Planning Committee. Resources committee would be updated in relation to the capital programme, which would impact on some of the projects within the ECR.</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was required to review emergency response arrangements periodically to ensure that provision remained effective and consummate with the dynamic risk profile. This process was a robust assessment of historic data and emergent risk and was delivered in the format of an Emergency Cover Review (ECR).</p> <p>The changes identified in the ECR 2022-25 reflected the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. Lancashire's Combined Fire Authority (CFA) agreed the proposed changes on 19 December 2022. The changes would result in LFRS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining all 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances • Maintaining their outstanding response standards • Creating an increase in overall firefighter jobs by eight <p>An ECR implementation plan was developed with five key workstreams, updates on the workstreams were as follows:</p> <p>Introduce more resilient and flexible crewing arrangements</p> <p>The implementation of all the proposed change of duty systems and establishment numbers, with the exception of Penwortham, took place on the 1 March 2024. The changes in duty system at Penwortham would be worked through as part of the Preston Area review project which was ongoing.</p> <p>An evaluation of the implementation was underway to ensure both positive practice and areas of learning were captured to inform any future emergency cover reviews.</p> <p>Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software</p> <p>The dynamic cover software was being used widely internally to monitor coverage and plan relief strategies during incidents and on a day-to-day basis within the Command Support Room.</p> <p>The project's current focus was on the implementation and use at North West Fire Control, empowering Control Room Operators to make coverage and relief moves</p>

based on real-time risk and demand.

Extensive modelling work had been undertaken to better understand the impact and use of the software once fully implemented. Over 200 real-time activity periods had been modelled, these had included when there had been high demand on resources such as large, protracted incidents including periods when resource availability had been reduced. Analysing the predicted coverage move results, LFRS could determine that overall standby numbers would broadly remain similar, however both the deploying appliance and the standby fire station destination would likely change. This would see LFRS move away from traditional static pre-defined key stations to dynamically determining cover moves based on risk, current demand, and live resource availability. Using the dynamic cover software as intended would provide Lancashire with better emergency cover based on risk, demand and resource availability.

Extensive consultation had taken place on all aspects of the ECR which included the dynamic coverage software. Virtual engagement sessions had been held with On Call units, which included demonstrating the tool and likely impacts to cover moves, accepting that by their very nature moves are dynamic based on what is happening across the county at a point in time. Further engagement sessions were due to be scheduled with the most impacted stations and units and Trade Unions had been fully engaged. A phased implementation would commence from January 2025, aiming to have full implementation by the end of March. This moved the Service away from traditional key stations to a more intuitive, risk-based deployment of resources using the latest technology and software so that LFRS resources had the best disposition based on current risk, demand and available resource.

Strengthen our response to climate change emergencies

Investing in four Fire Appliances with Off-Road Capabilities

With the re-baselining of the larger vehicle specification, new estimated timelines had been developed. Project groups were established with staff engagement to ensure the specifications were developed with LFRS teams to deliver the most suitable appliances to meet the changing risk profile. It was anticipated a procurement process for one large and one small climate change appliance would take place in the next quarter, with both the larger and smaller appliances due to be delivered and rolled out in early 2026.

The vehicles would be evaluated prior to the potential purchase of two further vehicles (one large and one small).

Both projects were being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and would therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

Introduce Flood Water Incident Managers and Flood Water Tactical Advisors

Flood Water Incident Managers and a Flood Water Tactical Advisor were all now trained and in place for operational deployment.

Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities in high-rise and commercial buildings

Introduce a 45m Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)

Members had previously been made aware of the delays to this project due to supply chain issues. The company who won the contract, had agreed a new delivery timeline with the Service and final delivery was expected in April 2025, with a period of training before being fully operational.

This project was being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and would therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

Invest in two Additional Water Towers

The Water Towers were due to be rolled out in Spring 2025. They would be located at St Annes and Lancaster.

This project was also being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and would therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

Broaden on-call firefighting capabilities to strengthen operational response

A significant amount of work continued within LFRS's On Call improvement programme. Work was ongoing in relation to On Call staff supporting specialist appliance resilience including the two new Water Towers, and On Call unit's in Southern area supporting the deployment of our Water Bowser.

In response to a question from County Councillor S Clarke in relation to a new Water Tower being located at St Annes Fire Station, the DCFO advised that the Service was aspiring to have a Water Tower in each of the four areas of the county and other Fylde coast stations had other specialist capabilities. County Councillor S Clarke further asked for clarification of the turn out time at St Annes during the night. The DCFO confirmed that the crew at St Anne's operated on the Flexible Day Crewing system which provided a 'standby' response whereby firefighters responded to incidents from their home address during the evening. The turn out time was roughly 5 minutes and it was a countywide resource that could be deployed to a protracted incident anywhere in the county.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Shedwick in relation to how the availability of On Call fire appliances was determined by the dynamic cover software, the DCFO confirmed that the software was used by North West Fire Control (NWFC) and knew all appliances availability as the Service's mobilising system fed into the dynamic cover software which updated in real time. The dynamic cover software knew the historical risk of all areas based on the previous 5 years of critical incident data and monitored response times, setting thresholds across different areas.

County Councillor N Hennessy joined the meeting at 10:22.

	<p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the report.</p>
14/24	<p>Strategic Assessment of Risk</p>
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented a report on the Service's Strategic Assessment of Risk for 2023/24.</p> <p>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. These risks were identified in the Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) which was refreshed annually and was also informed by the Lancashire Resilience Forum Community Risk Register and the services Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological and Infrastructure, Environmental, Legislative and Organisational (PESTELO) analysis. Through its risk management framework, the Service continually assessed changing risk and prioritised its response framework.</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment of Risk reflected the knowledge and experience of a variety of specialist departments and utilised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) Incident Recording System (IRS) data to derive a data driven methodology that highlighted the incident types that posed the greatest risk to the county of Lancashire and the individuals who lived and worked within it.</p> <p>This year's document built on previous iterations as LFRS sought to continually improve its risk management processes. Pages 36 – 52 of the agenda pack detailed a number of risks including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UK Government Fire Reform White Paper ○ Wars, conflicts and political unrest • Economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deprivation ○ Inflation/ Cost of living ○ Fuel Poverty • Socio-Cultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Population changes ○ Dwellings and households ○ Cultural Diversity ○ Health and Wellbeing • Technological (and Infrastructure) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emerging Technology – Electrical vehicles (EVs) and energy storage systems ○ Emerging Technology – Hydrogen ○ Artificial Intelligence/ Robotics/ Autonomous Vehicles ○ Infrastructure • Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climate change – wildfires ○ Climate change – flooding ○ Built environment • Legal

- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- The Fire Safety Act 2021
- Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023
- Organisational
 - Risk that service funding over the medium term was insufficient to achieve 2022-27 CRMP objectives
 - LFRS resilience issues e.g. staff availability, recruitment, retention, loss of key staff
 - Impact of public inquiries e.g. Grenfell and Manchester Arena

Pages 57- 83 of the agenda pack detailed the risk associated against the 32 incident types which had resulted in some movement in the ranking of the highest risk incident types.

The Chair remarked that the DCFO was the chair of the Lancashire Resilience Forum and that LFRS was the national lead in relation to drones and the service's Digital Team worked closely with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) lead.

In response to a question from County Councillor N Hennessy in relation to the dissemination of risk information, the DCFO confirmed that each district had a district plan which identified risks in each area, this information informed individual officer appraisals to ensure all staff knew how they were contributing to keeping Lancashire safer. In response to a further question the DCFO confirmed that each station was aware of their district plan and the service was developing its use of Power BI to allow each station to display their progress and contribution to a safer Lancashire.

Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the Strategic Assessment of Risk for publication.

15/24

Blue Light Collaboration Update

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) advised that the report updated on progress of the ongoing workstreams that were being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board. The workstreams were being managed effectively through both the Strategic and Tactical Boards and were contributing towards improving outcomes, providing better value for money, reducing demand, and reducing inequalities within communities.

Leadership Development

Partners had scoped collaboration opportunities for leadership development. Each Service agreed to host a leadership development event for senior leaders from all three organisations. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) hosted the first event in October, which focussed on 'Leadership and well-being' and explored cross-coaching. The event was a success with over 60 people attending from across all three services and the partners would meet again in November to develop cross-coaching opportunities.

The Services were planning the next session which would be hosted by North West

Ambulance Service (NWS) in early February 2025, where the focus for the event would be on 'Media'.

The final session would be hosted by Lancashire Police in Spring 2025. The group were considering an interesting area around 'Generational Differences' with a view to potentially exploring this as the final topic.

Estates and Co-location

This was a long-term workstream which could deliver significant efficiencies and effectiveness where co-location sites were identified.

In October the project objectives were reviewed and affirmed, aligned to the Strategic Board objectives. The Estates and Co-location workstream focused on four key areas: Sharing knowledge and information, estates and asset integration, resilience and shared opportunities in support functions, and financial opportunities.

Blue Light partners were reviewing property asset management strategies to identify potential areas for co-ordinating future development plans over the next 5-10 years and discussions were continuing in relation to future opportunities. All current locations for each organisation had been mapped, with the focus now on understanding of longer-term plans for each service. The LFRS 'Preston Area Review' continued to be discussed and considered with Blue light partners regarding collaboration opportunities.

Community First Responder

This workstream involved LFRS staff volunteering as Community First Responders (CFR) to support NWS. 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.

The Service had 13 LFRS staff volunteers responding to life threatening emergencies in Lancashire from the workplace and administering life-saving interventions in the initial vital minutes before NWS colleagues arrive. Since the workstream commenced in 2023, LFRS had responded to more than 180 CFR incidents including unresponsive/ collapsed, not breathing, cardiac arrests, seizures, strokes, and choking. This had resulted in many successful outcomes.

The Service was scoping 'phase 3' of the workstream which would involve on call staff volunteers becoming CFRs within more remote parts of the county, where NWS resources and response times could be more challenging. This would further improve outcomes for medical emergencies within those communities.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Singleton in relation to the potential for the authority to be combined by the Police and Crime Commissioner, the DCFO advised that this was a political issue and he was unable to comment, he acknowledged that there were a number of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCC's) nationally. County Councillor N Hennessy added that a motion was going to Lancashire County Councils (LCCs) next full council meeting

	<p>in December and she had asked the Fire Minister's view at the recent HMICFRS Chairs and Chiefs event and was reassured that nothing was on the agenda in relation to PFCCs taking over Fire Authorities.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor S Clarke in relation to charging other services for drone use, the DCFO confirmed that there was a memorandum of understanding signed by all blue light partners and recharges were sought where appropriate.</p> <p>County Councillor N Hennessy requested an update on the blue light leadership development session. Group Manager (GM) Emma Price and the Head of Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Martin Fish attended and remarked that they found the session to be very engaging, a good opportunity to build relationships and allowed them to understand what other services have in place in terms of wellbeing.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted the report.</p>
16/24	<p>HMICFRS update</p>
	<p>GM Price presented the report to Members regarding His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) activity and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services (LFRS) planning arrangements.</p> <p>Round 3 Overview</p> <p>HMICFRS commenced Round 3 inspections in early 2023, the three pillars; effectiveness, efficiency, and people remained the same as Round 2. Likewise, the 11 diagnostics under each pillar which inspectors made graded judgements against.</p> <p>Although LFRS had not yet received confirmation of the new inspection date, it was anticipated that the Service's inspection would take place in early 2025. Phil Innis had been appointed as LFRS's new Service Liaison Lead, to assist with engagement prior to the inspection, an Inspecting Officer from HMICFRS, Viv Horton, would also remain as an LFRS point of contact. Viv Horton met with members of the executive board in August 2024 and was in regular contact with LFRS Service Liaison Officer, Area Manager Tom Powell as part of the engagement process.</p> <p>The Organisational Assurance Team within the Service Improvement Department continued to track progress against the Service's previous inspection, monitor national themes and prepare LFRS for it's Round 3 inspection.</p> <p>HMICFRS had published 24 Round 3 inspection reports. A summary of the gradings for all 24 Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) inspected so far in Round 3 were included in the report.</p> <p>FRS inspection programme 2025/27 public consultation</p> <p>HMICFRS public consultation on the proposals for the FRS inspection programme</p>

for 2025/27 was launched on 19th August 2024 and closed on 15th September 2024. LFRS provided a detailed response. HMICFRS received around 61 responses to the public consultation, including almost all FRSs, as well as some from governing bodies, trade unions and national bodies. Overall, the HMICFRS received strong support for their proposals, however, respondents also raised issues with these planned changes, provided additional areas they thought should be covered, areas they should inspect less, and ways they could improve their reports.

HMICFRS final plans would be published in the form of an Inspection Programme and Framework document in the spring of 2025, alongside a formal response to the consultation.

Positive Practice

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Positive Practice Portal provided details about interventions, which had been developed by one or more Fire and Rescue Service to address a particular need, concern or organisational change recognised by the NFCC or HMICFRS as an innovative or positive practice. These practices were in different functional areas and may include operational and non-operational responses, business practices and good ideas.

LFRS actively engaged with the positive practice process and had 10 submissions published on the portal and a further 5 submissions in progress.

As requested at the previous planning committee, a summary of the first HMICFRS Fire and Rescue Positive Practice Masterclass event is detailed below. There were presentations on the following topics:

- Opening address, HMCI Andy Cooke, HMICFRS
- 'Our findings, positives practices and improvement', HMI Roy Wilsher, HMICFRS
- 'Greater Manchester FRS's improvement journey', CFO Dave Russel, GMFRS and Deputy Mayor Kate Green
- 'People strand positive practices in Cambridgeshire FRS', Hayley Douglas, CAMFRS
- 'How learning and development promotes improvements in policing', Ray Clare, College of Policing
- 'How the leadership fire standards can support services to improve', Independent Chair Suzanne McCarthy, Fire Standards Board
- 'How the NFCC can support services to improve', Chair Mark Hardingham, NFCC
- Panel session - Dave Russell, Hayley Douglas, Suzanne McCarthy, Ray Clare, Mark Hardingham, Roy Wilsher

LFRS would continue to monitor positive practice submissions and attend future events, benchmarking LFRS's own progress against areas identified, and exploring potential areas for improvement.

HMICFRS Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services

HMICFRS published their Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services report in August 2024. This followed the detailed inspection of 10 FRSs, as well as analysing data provided by all 44 FRSs in England about their grievance and discipline cases. The service was making progress through the reports 15 recommendations.

Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services

Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services remained a focus for HMICFRS, LFRS continued to work proactively in terms of promoting its values and engendering an organisational culture where all employees can thrive. LFRS submitted its updated report on the progress the service was making regarding the HMICFRS and NFCC recommendations in relation to values and culture in March 2024.

HMICFRS Autumn Data Collection

The Autumn Data collection opened on Monday 14th October and would close on Friday 22nd November.

County Councillor N Hennessy stated that she had requested an update be brought to the next CFA Meeting in December 2024 in relation to standards of behaviour within the service.

The Chair remarked that the service was doing everything it could in preparation for the next HMICFRS Inspection.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Singleton in relation to the services' misconduct cases, the DCFO confirmed that there were a low number of disciplinary cases and the statistics were reported to HMICFRS. In terms of the number of cases, an update would be included in the report going to the full CFA around progress against the recent HMICFRS cultures and values report.

Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the report.

17/24

Budget Consultation

The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) provided a verbal report in relation to the budget consultation.

The DoCS advised that the service was required to consult the public on the proposed precept. The service was expecting an update on how much the precept could be raised by in late December, the precept in 2023/24 was 2.99% and in 2022/23 it was £5 which equated to about 6%.

Consultation with the public would commence once it is known to what extent the precept could be raised. This would then be discussed with the chair of the authority and an update be brought to Planning Committee and the full CFA in February.

Resolved: That the verbal report be noted.

18/24	Environmental Sustainability Plan 2024-29
	<p>The Head of Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) presented the report on the service's Environmental Sustainability Plan 2024-29.</p> <p>Climate change was already having an impact on the Fire and Rescue Service; the service was responding to new and evolving risks, such as wildfires, and new technologies designed to address climate change, including electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries and highly insulated buildings. Rising temperatures would have the greatest impact on the most vulnerable, such as reducing food and water availability. Changing heating systems, insulating buildings, moving to an alternatively fuelled fleet and planting trees was essential in contributing to net zero, however, environmental sustainability was much wider.</p> <p>The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050 whilst the Paris Agreement committed the UK and other countries to a global temperature rise this century of below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.</p> <p>Since launching LFRS's Carbon Management Plan in 2009 the service had made good progress in terms of reducing its carbon footprint, however Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) recognised there was more work to do. Environmental enhancements on LFRS premises had been made as part of business-as-usual (BAU) investment, for example new build premises meeting Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) standards, boiler replacement and LED light installs. The Service had not used dedicated funding for aspects such as photovoltaic installations, in order to make further process this approach needed to be reconsidered in conjunction with our wider Estates Strategy. A similar approach had been taken to the LFRS fleet, with BAU investment providing environmental enhancements as technology had changed.</p> <p>Since 2009 LFRS had been monitoring use of gas, electricity, fleet vehicle fuel and water on the services sites. Conversion factors were applied using a toolkit to generate a carbon emissions total with the target of reducing this by 40% (initially by 2020 and then extended to 2030 following CFA approval). The conversion factors for emissions were kept constant and therefore never fully reflected any changes such as decarbonisation of the grid, however based on this toolkit, as of 31st March 2024, fuel, gas and electric emissions had reduced by 25.4%. Water emissions had reduced by 30.1%.</p> <p>A new Environmental Sustainability Plan was proposed for LFRS and this plan outlined the initial actions the service must take in order to continue to reduce the organisations environmental impact. This plan aimed to outline LFRSs commitment to minimising its impact on the environment and to provide a clear approach to the progress of actions that would contribute to the long-term achievement of becoming a Net Zero organisation. This was the first of five, 5-Year Plans in the journey to Net Zero by 2050.</p> <p>The governance of the revised plan would be overseen through the Health, Safety</p>

	<p>and Environment Advisory Group (HSEAG) and annual reporting to the CFA as part of the Annual SHE Report.</p> <p>The Carbon Management Team had been renamed the Environment and Sustainability Group and would continue to be responsible for practical implementation and delivery of the areas outlined within the plan.</p> <p>County Councillor J Singleton remarked that since 2009 the team had established good improvements.</p> <p>The Chair remarked that it was good to see momentum behind the agenda.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee support the revised approach with the adoption of the new plan with the long term net-zero aspirational vision for the Service.</p>
19/24	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 3 February 2025 at 10:00 hours in the main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.</p> <p>Further meeting dates were noted for 14 July 2025 and 17 November 2025.</p>

**M Nolan
Clerk to CFA**

**LFRS HQ
Fulwood**

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on Monday 3 February 2025

Consultation Strategy – Annual Review

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information – Steve Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Tel: 01772 866801

Executive Summary

The Authority has a consultation strategy which provides a framework through which it can seek public opinion on major change issues.

Each year the planning committee reviews the strategy (attached as appendix 1) to assure continued compliance with guidance or legislation and to incorporate learning from any public consultation exercises undertaken.

This year's review concludes that the strategy continues to be legally compliant and in line with good practice. There are no material changes.

Recommendation

The planning committee is asked to note and endorse the consultation strategy.

Information

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's consultation strategy has been in place since community risk management planning arrangements were introduced in 2003. It is reviewed on an annual basis.

The strategy has been reviewed and continues to be legally compliant and in line with good practice.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service will undertake public consultation on a range of issues on behalf of the Authority to ensure that the views of communities, partners, and stakeholders are used to inform decision-making.

Any requests to consult with the public will be made to the Authority's planning committee. The committee will be provided with details about the issue and options being considered and permission to consult with the public sought.

Business risk

The consultation strategy provides the necessary framework to help the Authority ensure that the Service provides relevant stakeholders with the opportunity for a genuine exchange of views and to influence decisions, policies and services.

Effective consultation gives the Service better understanding of the needs of our communities and stakeholders, and helps to create services that are more closely aligned to those needs.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The strategy sets out that equality impact assessments should be undertaken for all consultations. These assessments inform stakeholder analysis of who to involve and how; describe the positive and reasonable adjustments that may be made to reach groups of people with protected characteristics; and understand the barriers that may be encountered when trying to involve them.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? No

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

Legal implications are set out in Section 9: Data use and subjects and transparency obligations.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Public Consultation Strategy

1. Background

The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's consultation strategy has been in place since the integrated risk management planning arrangements were introduced in 2003.

The strategy is reviewed annually by the Planning Committee to ensure that it continues to meet statutory requirements; incorporates good practice; and provides the public and stakeholders with timely opportunity to influence development of their fire and rescue service.

2. Scope

This strategy sets out the Authority's arrangements for public consultation which are delivered on its behalf by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. The Authority acknowledges the significant contribution of fire and rescue service staff in terms of service delivery and encourages the active participation of employees in consultation exercises. Arrangements to consult staff are not included in this strategy as they feature within internal documentation.

3. Definitions

Engagement is an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining links with stakeholders. It is not in itself consultation, although consultation uses these links to reach people or individuals to take part in a specific consultation. It is a term given to a range of techniques that give stakeholders opportunities to influence how organisations work and the services that are delivered.

Consultation is one of these techniques and is a process through which the views of relevant stakeholders are sought about a particular issue, proposal or options over a defined period of time, to which due consideration is given by the Authority in reaching a decision.

Other engagement techniques include:

Informing – telling people what is going on, what decisions have been made and what action will be taken but views are not actively sought.

Involving – asking people for views to help shape the development or implementation of options, plans and activity on an ongoing basis or at the start of a policy development.

Collaborating – involving people in working together to develop solutions or proposals.

Negotiating – discussion with people to seek a jointly owned outcome where differences are addressed.

Empowering – giving people the power to control decisions and services within available resources in a specific area.

A public consultation led by the Authority may also involve some of these techniques as part of the consultation plan. Particularly, it will seek to involve people throughout work undertaken to develop options for change and will inform them about actions that will be taken which will not be subject of a consultation exercise.

4. Public consultation approach

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service will undertake public consultation on a range of issues on behalf of the Authority to ensure that the views of communities, partners, individuals who have characteristics that are protected in the Equality Act and stakeholders are used to inform decision making.

4.1 Subjects of public consultation

The extent of the consultation will be proportionate to the nature and extent of any proposals being considered. It may include consultation on:

- The draft community risk management plan.
- Annual service plans.
- Budget and council tax.
- Proposals which may have a major effect on the services we provide to the public.

In some cases, a formal consultation exercise may not be necessary. For example:

- Where it is necessary to implement a legal judgement or Government instruction.
- Where stakeholders have influenced proposals by early involvement in the consideration of options and planning of proposals.
- Where minor adjustments are being advocated.
- Where issues can be resolved without formal consultation.
- Where the Authority has already reached consensus and consultation results are unlikely to influence a decision.
- Where there are no genuine options except for that which is proposed.
- Where the Authority has already taken a decision through its usual democratic process.

In these instances, the Authority will communicate information to stakeholders to inform them and raise awareness of the changes that have been made or the decisions that have been taken.

4.2 Planning public consultation

The annual service plan, published in April, outlines the planned priorities to be delivered in the year that might require public consultation. These consultations may not take place immediately following publication of the plan but at the time that is most relevant to the planned priority. At this point the Authority's Planning Committee will be provided with details about the issue and options being considered and permission to consult with the public sought.

Due to the pace of change, issues may arise during the year that require public consultation, but which have not been considered within the annual service plan. In these cases, permission to consult with the public will be sought from the Planning Committee chair and chair of the Authority as urgent business, if the meeting schedule does not permit discussion at a meeting.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service will maintain a calendar to ensure that consultation exercises do not clash and to avoid public consultation overload or fatigue.

5. Timings

There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in a consultation. It is commonplace to use a standard 12-week period for public consultation (not including major public holidays or summer months when people are away) however the length of time given for consultees to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation. A minimum of four weeks should be given for small scale consultations. In setting timings, consideration will be given to:

- The scale of the issue or proposals.
- The size of the audience we need to consult with.
- The need to work with voluntary groups who require time to extend the consultation through their memberships.
- The time of year and any impact on the availability of target groups.
- The urgency with which a decision needs to be taken
- Allowing a realistic time to enable the formulation of a considered response.

All information provided about the consultation will provide details of the deadline for responses.

6. Targeting public consultation

Before undertaking any consultation exercise, identification and mapping of stakeholders will be undertaken to understand which audiences (stakeholders) are most likely to be impacted by any resulting proposals. An equality impact assessment of the proposals on groups likely to be particularly affected will also be carried out.

A plan will then be prepared which sets out which stakeholders with legitimate interest in the proposals it will attempt to consult with them to give them opportunity to express their views.

Where appropriate, this will include:

- The public in Lancashire – particularly those that are likely to be directly affected by the proposal or issue.
- Community organisations, including specific community groups, particularly those that represent the interests of people with legally protected characteristics. Protected characteristics that are legally protected include, but are not necessarily limited to: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership (including the right not to be married or in a civil partnership,) pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- Public representatives, such as Members of Parliament and local councillors.
- Businesses or business organisations.
- Local authorities, public agencies and other emergency services.
- Third sector organisations including voluntary groups and charities.
- Relevant government departments.
- Representative bodies.

7. Information about a public consultation

The focus of consultation will be on meaningful engagement, through relevant methods, with staff, the public, stakeholders and any other requesting body or individual, during which the following information will be provided on the Service website:

- Details of the issue and/or proposal.
- Why the issue has arisen and/or what is being proposed.
- How the proposals are likely to impact on the provision of service.
- Background statistics and assessments.
- The anticipated timescales for decision/implementation.

However, it is recognised that while this information is a useful reference, it is not in itself enough to secure consultee response. For all but the shortest written document, a concise summary will be provided for each consultation detailing the issue and options and setting out opportunities to contribute. This should be written or produced graphically using simple and engaging language in an accessible format. Information will be localised to ensure that people understand how plans may affect their local area. Assistance in providing information in alternative formats will be offered.

Information will be distributed using methods that are most appropriate to target relevant stakeholders, internally and externally. The Service's communications strategy sets out communication channels that should be considered including a range of options. For example, consultation about the community risk management plan could be communicated using news stories in the media, digital channels

including the Service's social media platforms and website, and public engagement events.

8. Consultation methodology

No single activity or mix of activity through which to consult will be right every time. Our approach is to create a dedicated consultation plan to address the specific objectives with a mix of activities designed to seek the views of the identified stakeholders. This may involve a mix of:

- Surveys
- Engagement events
- Focus groups
- Consultation through the Service's employee voice groups
- Feedback given at open public meetings
- Attendance at local authority meetings or scrutiny committees
- Debate and feedback given through social media
- Written submissions
- Public scrutiny panel
- Deliberative forum

Where it is feasible, participation in the consultation and responses received will be acknowledged and an audit trail kept of responses. Explanations, where requested and appropriate, will be given to respondents who ask why individual proposals have been rejected.

A mid-point review should be conducted as close as possible to the mid-point of the open consultation. It is an opportunity for a formal review of progress achieved and provides an opportunity for any adjustments to be made to the consultation plan as required.

9. Data use and subjects and transparency obligations

The Combined Fire Authority is under a duty to and will be compliant with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, which is the UK's implementation of the General Data protection Regulations (GDPR), as well as the re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, which came into force on 18 July 2015, subject to relevant exceptions.

The GDPR prohibits the processing of personal data unless there is a lawful basis for it such as doing so being in the public interest. The Combined Fire Authority will therefore need to process such data in relation to the legal obligations conferred upon it in the exercise of its public functions or in relation to any activity that supports or promotes democratic engagement.

The Authority will ensure that all relevant information provided by data controllers to data subjects and all communications with data subjects will be concise, transparent, intelligible and easily accessible, in clear plain language. This applies to but is not

limited to situations when the Authority collates special categories of personal data where more stringent compliance burdens are placed on organisations which process personal data relating to matters such as:

- Racial or ethnic origin.
- Disability status.
- Political opinions.
- Religious and philosophical beliefs.
- Trade union membership.
- Genetic data.
- Biometric data for uniquely identifying a natural person.
- Data concerning health.
- Sexual orientation.
- Marital status.
- Age.

10. The decision-making process

At the end of the consultation period a closing review will be undertaken to determine if sufficient response has been obtained to close a public consultation as scheduled, or whether an extension or specific additional activities are required to be undertaken to ensure that sufficient views have been obtained from potentially impacted groups.

A report on the consultation exercise will be presented to the Authority, or a relevant committee of the Authority, which will include a summary of statistical results and feedback and views offered. This will include an updated equality impact assessment.

Consultation rarely concludes in a single opinion and elected members will make their own judgements about the weight to be given to different views alongside other factors such as financial cost, environmental impact and professional experience and advice. However, all consultation responses will be available to the Authority, or a relevant committee of the Authority, before associated democratic decisions are taken.

11. Feedback and evaluation

Decisions made about proposals that have been the subject of public consultation will be conveyed via the Service's communications channels. More detailed feedback will be made available to consultation participants directly or through the Service's website, depending on the extent of their involvement with the consultation.

Specific and individual requests for feedback will be accepted but any decision to respond individually will be balanced against the general feedback already provided and the nature and reason for any specific request for an individual response.

Consultation exercises will be evaluated to assess the effectiveness of the processes adopted.

Reviewed January 2025

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 3 February 2025

Annual Service Plan 2025/2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information – Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey
Tel: 01772 866801

Executive Summary

This year's Annual Service Plan (ASP) continues to provide Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) with the platform to highlight the priority activities and projects the Service intends to deliver over the coming year. We are leading improvements and innovation in our sector with some of the best firefighting equipment in the country and a highly skilled and motivated workforce.

The year ahead will see us build on our achievements by staying focused on continuous improvement that makes the people of Lancashire safer, particularly the most vulnerable members of our communities. Many of our priorities are initiatives that will transform the way we work and bring lasting benefits.

This year's ASP provides the direction and deliverables that have been identified to deliver against the strategic aims of our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and supporting core strategies.

Recommendation(s)

The Planning Committee are asked to note and endorse the ASP for publication.

Information

The ASP is a core part of our planning framework which sets out the activities we intend to deliver during the next 12 months and is built around the Service's five corporate priorities that are detailed in the CRMP. These are:

1. **Valuing** our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer
2. **Preventing** fire and other emergencies from happening
3. **Protecting** people and property when fires happen
4. **Responding** to fire and other emergencies quickly and competently
5. **Delivering** value for money in how we use our resources

Role in the planning framework

The Annual Service Plan sits at the heart of our framework and informs activity that will be led across the Service, as well as locally within district plans. Activities that we plan to deliver also inform our staff performance appraisal process, so all staff understand our plans and are involved in helping to deliver our key activities.

As in previous years, detailed under each corporate priority is a series of activities and projects with a brief description of each item to give further clarity and context. This ensures that all staff and the public are informed of the changes and activities the Service aims to progress and how these items fit within our priorities. This provides the opportunity for the Service to ensure that we continue to provide transparency and visibility of our plans in a clear and concise format. The governance arrangements for delivery of the ASP items will continue to be monitored through the Service's Corporate Programme Board and Service Management Team.

As always, we aim to continually improve and refine our planning processes and this year's document aims to add focus on achievable progress within the year, acknowledging that a proportion of items are continued from the 2024/25 Plan, reflecting our commitment to a number of long-term projects. It is presented in a style to remain consistent with that of the CRMP 2022-27.

Business risk

The Annual Service Plan forms an integral part of the Service's corporate planning process. It sets and communicates a clear strategic direction of travel for the next 12 months. The provision of such a document ensures that proper business planning takes place.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Annual Service Plan has been produced in accordance with accessibility guidelines. The overarching strategic documents have also had equality impact assessments carried out.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? N

If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

No implications, however, the ASP should form part of the district planning process and will link through to individual appraisals.

Financial implications

The updated ASP directs the Service's focus over the next 12 months. All items within the Annual Service Plan are either already within revenue and capital budgets or will be progressed accordingly through the Resources committee, as required.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause

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Welcome to our annual service plan

At Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service we strive to deliver the best possible services in our communities. Every day we respond to emergencies, visit homes, businesses and schools, and work behind the scenes to make Lancashire safer.

Concerted efforts to prevent fires in recent years have significantly reduced the number of fires people experience; at the same time the types of emergencies affecting communities are evolving. Maintaining the highest levels of operational competence against this backdrop remains a firm priority.

We rigorously review our operational activity, learning from the smallest events to the most significant incidents to ensure continuous improvement. Applying learning from national events and the sector further afield, at all levels of operational response, will continue to strengthen the Service's ability to meet future challenges.

A programme of improvements to support on-call firefighters will continue to broaden development opportunities, improve retention, and increase emergency cover. This includes a more agile delivery model for training to make it easier for on-call crews to acquire and maintain skills following staff feedback.

Extensive reform to fire safety and building control standards has taken place to make buildings safer for occupants following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in 2017. We have transformed our fire protection services to deliver these changes expertly and will continue to support local businesses to comply with legislation and reduce the risk of fire in their premises.

At the centre of all our plans are highly-skilled, dedicated people who serve Lancashire with pride. Investing in their safety and wellbeing is a longstanding priority and we remain committed to ensuring activity in this area reflects progress in research, methods, and technology.

Effective leadership at every level of the Service is crucial to sustain our strong organisational culture and achieve our goals. Supporting leaders to engage and energise their teams, uphold standards, and nurture talent is a key area of focus.

Financial challenges lie ahead to maintain our services and meet vital investment needs. We are focussed on becoming more flexible and dynamic in how we use our resources, creating capacity, and improving productivity. One of the ways we will achieve this is by using data, digital and technology to work smarter, freeing-up time to concentrate our energies on the activities that have the greatest impacts.

A new staff efficiency forum is being established this year to pull together ideas from across the organisation, encourage innovation, and empower people to initiate better ways of working that reduce unnecessary demand, improve efficiency and increase productivity.

The Service has a strong track record of balancing the budget and delivering the best possible services that represent excellent value for money for the people of Lancashire. We remain strongly committed to this priority.

Jon Charters

Chief Fire Officer

Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer

The Service relies on the collective expertise and experience of its staff to achieve our purpose of making Lancashire safer. Investing in their training, development, facilities, and wellbeing is at the core of creating a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to make a positive contribution whatever their role.

Create an organisational culture where diversity is encouraged and valued

Our STRIVE values and the national Core Code of Ethics guide the professional behaviours of all our staff. We are proud of our culture in Lancashire and the high levels of trust the public have in our Service. However, we remain focussed on building a more inclusive service where diversity is nurtured and valued.

We will:

- Attract talent and promote opportunities to diversify the workforce, aligned to the People Strategy.
- Implement the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, taking measures to prevent sexual harassment.
- Develop a professional standards function to oversee the investigation of misconduct concerns in a fair and transparent way.

Develop leaders who build and maintain trust in the Service

Leaders who role model and actively promote an environment that creates and maintains trust throughout the Service, engage others, energise them to overcome barriers, welcome feedback, and challenge poor behaviour if it occurs.

We will:

- Deliver leadership development training to crew managers to support them in promoting a culture where everyone can thrive.
- Ensure leaders at every level are sufficiently informed to engage with their teams, so all our staff feel well informed, involved, and listened to.

Tailor training and development for on-call firefighters

We are focused on giving on-call firefighters the best training and development that supports them to deliver the best possible services. Following staff feedback, we are focussed on adapting how and where we deliver training to on-call crews to make it easier to acquire and maintain skills and knowledge.

We will:

- Develop a more agile delivery model for some elements of on-call training, improving the quality and accessibility of training and development, and creating efficiencies in the provision of mandatory training.
- Support the acquirement of incident command competency to develop on-call staff and increase emergency cover.

Invest in safety, health and wellbeing initiatives

We aspire to the highest standards of health, safety, and wellbeing for our staff. This year we will strengthen this area by investing in new technology and equipment to keep people safe, in addition to increasing accessibility of our workplace wellbeing offer.

We will:

- Conclude and evaluate a trial of body worn cameras to enhance operational learning, improve firefighter safety, and provide increased transparency during incidents.
- Continue work to lessen the impacts of fire contaminants in line with our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan, providing new personal protective equipment on stations and fire engines.
- Develop a new delivery model for workplace wellbeing toolbox talks which includes a bitesize health, emotions and wellness offering in response to staff survey feedback.
- Continue to replace cardio equipment in station gyms, providing upgraded treadmills, rowers, and bikes to ensure a consistent standard of facilities.

Encourage and listen to employee voice

We recognise the positive influence on both our employees' wellbeing and organisational success when there are opportunities for people to be involved, listened to, and invited to contribute their experience, expertise, and ideas. Ensuring our people feel informed, engaged, and valued is a lasting priority.

We will:

- Conduct a comprehensive staff survey to understand the topics and concerns that are important to our people and inform Service activity.
- Following a successful pilot, empower our firefighting tactics staff group to propose and test changes to firefighting guidance and practice.

Service headquarters and leadership and development centre masterplan

Work started last year to create a masterplan for the redevelopment of Service headquarters and our leadership and development centre in Chorley, including new training props and modernised learning and office space. The redevelopment

represents vital investment in aging buildings that are uneconomical to maintain and will lead to efficiency, sustainability, and modernisation gains.

We will:

- Continue to build the masterplan focussing on feasibility and design development, ensuring training provision is aligned to the risks identified in our Strategic Assessment of Risk.

Upgrade fire station facilities

Investment in fire stations is part of our commitment to ensuring our people have the best facilities to support their health and wellbeing by providing a safe and positive working environment.

We will:

- Complete the construction stage of improvements to the rest and welfare facilities at Blackpool Fire Station to better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce.
- Make improvements to Preston Fire Station so it remains fit for purpose and better meets the needs of a diverse workforce, while plans to replace or relocate the station are explored as part of a review of emergency cover in the area.
- Update our Property Asset Management Plan following building condition and decarbonisation surveys to inform decisions about short-, medium-, and long-term investment in our property and estates assets.

Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening

We constantly endeavour to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening. Prevention is always preferable to response and is by far the most effective way to make Lancashire safer. Our approach is to identify those who are most vulnerable in our communities, and design and target our prevention activities to reduce their risk.

Deliver targeted fire prevention activity

Evaluation of fire prevention activity is giving the Service greater understanding of which activities and interventions are most successful. Combined with local risk profiles, we are able to better target those most vulnerable and focus resources on reducing risk in our communities.

We will:

- Deliver a tailored home fire safety check service to residents living in wildfire risk areas to provide bespoke safety advice, prevent the ignition of fires and mitigate the effects if they do occur.
- Continue to embed evaluation of targeted prevention activities delivered in communities identified through local district planning.

Evaluate Year 2 education package

Firefighters and community fire safety staff aim to visit every Year 2 and Year 6 class in Lancashire every year, delivering lessons tailored for each age group about fire risks and what to do if a fire does happen or the alarm is raised.

We will:

- Evaluate and quality assure our Year 2 Childsafe package to ensure it remains aligned to emerging risk in local communities.

Expand fire safety community engagement

Supporting vulnerable people living in the community is at the core of our prevention services, which are targeted behaviourally, geographically, demographically, and thematically according to known risk factors. Understanding the diverse and changing needs of Lancashire's communities is essential to achieving this.

We will:

- Trial a new Lancashire-wide community engagement role which aims to deepen understanding of local risks among diverse communities, strengthen sustainable and trusted relationships, and identify additional ways to provide interventions.

Protecting people and property when fires happen

Our fire protection services aim to reduce the number of fires that occur in commercial premises and the impact on life, property, and business disruption when fires do occur. We support businesses, employers, and landlords to meet their legal duties and keep people safe in their buildings with a county-wide inspection programme.

Transform fire protection and business safety

Significant changes to fire safety and building control standards in recent years have changed the way fire and rescue services operate. We continue to invest in and develop our protection services, to ensure we remain well-placed to support those responsible for fire safety in their buildings.

We will:

- Introduce a new digital protection system to realise greater efficiency, effectiveness and productivity through mobile working, merging workflows and automating processes.

Deliver tailored protection advice in diverse business communities

There are over 75,000 businesses in Lancashire and almost half of them are forecast to grow in the next year. Our regulatory activity focusses on premises where people are at greatest risk. Following changes to fire safety laws, we remain focussed on ensuring an inclusive approach to business support and adapting our regulatory activity to meet the needs of our communities.

We will:

- Engage with business owners to support them in meeting their legal duties and keeping people safe in their buildings.

Implement operational learning in response to national events

The tragic incident at Grenfell Tower in 2017 was the catalyst for changes in fire safety legislation and across the construction industry. The findings of the public inquiry have resulted in a number of recommendations which both directly and indirectly impact on fire and rescue services.

We will:

- Work locally, regionally and nationally to implement the direct and indirect impacts of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations.

Address mid-rise premises risk across the county

Since the completion of the national building risk review undertaken following the Grenfell Tower fire, we have actively worked throughout the county to address risk in low, medium and high-rise premises. We have worked closely with other regulators to address areas of non-compliance and speed up remediation plans to ensure the safety of residents and relevant persons.

We will:

- Work with local authorities to identify and triage all mid-rise premises (11-18 metres tall).
- Inspect all known mid-rise premises identified as having unknown or unsafe external wall systems.

Support national activity to address unsafe cladding on buildings

In December 2024, the government published a Remediation Acceleration Plan to address residential buildings with unsafe cladding. The plan sets out the steps government will take, collaborating with partners including fire and rescue authorities, to increase the pace of building remediation, identify buildings at risk and better protect residents and leaseholders.

We will:

- Support government and other regulators to overcome the most significant barriers that have been identified as slowing the remediation process.

Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service strives to deliver the highest standards of operational response by continuously planning, preparing, and training for emergencies. Risks in communities are changing and the types of emergencies we attend are increasingly varied. We constantly review and adapt our approach to ensure we have the right appliances, equipment, skills, and technology to respond to any incident safely.

Review emergency cover in Preston

A review of emergency cover across Preston and the surrounding area has started including exploring options to rebuild or relocate Preston Fire Station, which has been identified for redevelopment. The purpose of the review is to ensure fire engines are situated and staffed in ways that provide the best response to local risks and emergencies.

We will:

- Conclude a land review and exploration of options to replace or relocate Preston Fire Station.
- Determine the most effective and efficient disposition of resources in the area aligned with risk and demand.

Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software

Dynamic cover software provides operators with visual data on community risks and emergency cover in real-time to inform decision-making on how best to deploy resources. This innovative software helps us to position firefighters and appliances dynamically and with greater precision to improve emergency cover and response times, particularly during periods of high demand.

We will:

- Monitor and review the implementation of dynamic cover software at North West Fire Control and within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure the most effective and efficient deployment of resources across the county.

Strengthen our response to climate change emergencies

Our climate change operational response plan aims to address the increasing threat of flooding and wildfires, lessen the impacts on communities and public services, and improve firefighter safety when dealing with these emergencies.

We will:

- Commission and introduce one large and one small fire appliance suitable for off-road travel to give improved access to rural areas in the event of flooding and wildfires.

Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has six search dogs trained in specialisms including victim recovery, fire investigation and high-risk missing person searches. The dogs can search small and dangerous spaces that crews are unable to reach, increasing the safety of responders at incidents.

We will:

- Train search dogs in the use of laser, drone, and commands via a radio system to prioritise search areas by providing intelligence to incident commanders.

Several new fire appliances are due to join our fleet this year to strengthen our response to fires in tall buildings and climate change emergencies, requiring a programme of training.

We will train firefighters to operate:

- Our highest ever aerial appliance, a 45-metre aerial ladder platform.
- Two additional water towers with increased reach of 20 metres.
- Two off-road fire appliances suitable for climate change emergencies.

Adapt on-call response to increase emergency cover

Lancashire has 32 fire appliances crewed by on-call firefighters, who often have another job outside Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. They live or work very close to the fire stations they operate from and respond to emergencies in their communities from home or work.

We will:

- Explore the feasibility of cluster stations, where on-call firefighters at stations in close proximity are available to respond to emergencies together, increasing fire cover over a wider area.
- Evaluate our online on-call planning tool used to identify optimum skill levels, prioritise training, monitor contractual performance, and inform recruitment needs.
- Expand our initiative to recruit on-call firefighters who, instead of working from home in their primary job, work from our stations and respond to emergencies during their working hours.

Invest in our fleet and equipment

The Service conducts extensive research and development to ensure we continue to invest in appliances and equipment with advanced technology and capabilities, which will lead to a more effective response to emergencies and increased firefighter safety.

We will:

- Start the procurement of new breathing apparatus (BA) to provide the most effective, modern equipment that gives the highest level of firefighter safety.
- Evaluate the trial of a firefighting robot, an innovative multi-functional crawler vehicle which can be deployed in places that are too dangerous for firefighters.
- Scope and procure improved welfare provision at operational incidents, taking into account the views of our staff to inform requirements.
- Review our light vehicle fleet across the Service to identify areas for improvement, innovation, and efficiency.
- Support the replacement of the mobilising system at North West Fire Control to ensure it is fit for the future, serves the needs of Lancashire's communities, and provides value for money.
- Progress work to replace drill towers at nine stations as part of a service-wide replacement programme, investing over £2.5 million over the next five years.

Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

We aim to use our resources efficiently to provide the best possible fire and rescue service for the people of Lancashire and to ensure the Service is affordable, now and in the future. A culture of continuous learning and innovation across all aspects of our organisation and services is central to achieving this.

Review how we use our resources

Financial challenges lie ahead to maintain our services and meet vital investment needs. We have a strong track record of balancing the budget and will continue to find ways to save money and make the best use of our resources.

- Review how we use our resources to ensure the Service remains affordable and represents value for money for the whole of Lancashire.

Maximise productivity and efficiency

Through continuous learning, review, and innovation we aim to increase efficiency and productivity across the Service, in line with national requirements. This enables the Service to invest savings and resources in frontline activity that delivers long-term improvements and value for money.

We will:

- Establish a productivity and efficiency forum in the Service to drive cross-organisational efficiency and sustainability improvements.
- Consider options for alternative fuelled vehicles, supporting our Environmental Sustainability Plan and carbon reduction aspirations.
- Embed the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 in our processes, including the provision of information about public contract opportunities by publishing a forward-looking procurement pipeline.

Drive efficiencies through digitisation

Building on our digital first culture, we will continue to empower our people to access information and data easily on a range of systems and devices, invest in new technology, and drive efficiencies through digitisation.

We will:

- Continue to roll out new technology and mobile devices on our fire appliances to provide a mobile office environment, better connected incident grounds, and greater overall efficiencies.
- Following a trial, replace communication devices used to alert officers and on-call firefighters to emergencies with new pagers offering improved functionality and enhanced security.
- Replace radio equipment used by firefighters on the incident ground making use of advancements in digital technology to provide better communications.

- Engage with the Home Office-led project to replace our current incident recording system with a national fire data collection system.

Improve performance management culture

Microsoft Power BI is being used in the Service to collate and interrogate performance data via a single platform, developed specifically to the user or department's needs through a dashboard. We plan to continue developing these dashboards to improve performance management culture.

We will:

- Continue the rollout of Power-BI dashboards to increase capacity for operational staff.
- Embed financial reporting in dashboards and a self-service tool across the organisation.
- Create local performance dashboards tailored to meet departmental requirements.

Collaborate with other public services

Through our Blue Light Collaboration Board with Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service, and by working jointly with other partners, we aim to collectively improve services to the public and provide maximum value for money.

We will:

- Expand the Community First Responder volunteer initiative to more people within the Service supporting North West Ambulance Service, particularly in rural areas where there is community need.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 3 February 2025.

Blue Light Collaboration Board Update

Contact for further information: DCFO Steve Healey
Tel: 01772 866802

Executive Summary

This paper provides an update regarding Blue Light Collaboration.

Recommendation

Planning Committee to note the report.

Information

The Police, Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), and Ambulance Service are required to collaborate under the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The goals are to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and deliver better outcomes.

This paper provides an update on the progress of key workstreams being advanced under the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). These workstreams are effectively managed through Strategic and Tactical level meetings and contribute to improving outcomes, providing better value for money, reducing demand, and addressing inequalities within communities.

Leadership Development

Collaboration between Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon) and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) has continued to explore efficiencies and build professional working relationships across the Blue Light Services. The potential for a collaborative coaching and mentoring network has also been identified, leading to shared learning on a more regular basis and improved on-the-ground relationships when working together.

It was agreed for each Service to host a Leadership Event, and through intelligence from each organisation, three common themes were identified.

The first session, 'Nourish to Flourish', focussed on well-being and self-care and was hosted by LFRS. This aims to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of

staff, which will have positive effects for each organisation. Several efficiencies were enabled for this session, by using our Leadership and Development Centre and the cost for the guest speaker was shared between all three services.

The Services are planning the next session which will be hosted by NWS in February 2025, where the focus for this event will be on 'Media'.

The final session will be hosted by LanCon in Spring 2025. The group are considering an interesting area around 'Generational Differences'.

Missing From Home

This collaboration between LFRS and LanCon focusses on supporting high-risk missing person searches. The partnership led to the development of a Standard Operating Procedure and training for front-line personnel. LFRS assets, such as drones and search dogs, have proved effective in locating missing persons and improving public perception whilst maximising effectiveness and the potential for successful outcomes to the people of Lancashire.

Empowering trained resources from LFRS to respond to such incidents with partner agencies ensures that missing persons are located earlier, using the best available technology such as LFRS drones. Furthermore, the use of LFRS trained dogs enhances the canine capabilities for other fire specific deployments both within the UK (through Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and other requests) and overseas (International Search and Rescue (ISAR) deployments). Real life incident exposure for the dogs is invaluable and without which, their ability to develop becomes limited. Where required, LFRS recover costs under the nationally agreed National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) / National Resilience recharge protocol and locally agreed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

LFRS receive around 200 drone requests each year from LanCon, with most requests for missing persons searches.

Estates and Co-location

The co-location of estates between LFRS, NWS, and LanCon aims to identify opportunities for site sharing to improve collaboration and value for money. Successful site-sharing arrangements at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston and Lytham Fire Stations has resulted in efficiencies and shared facilities. The shared working arrangements have also built positive relationships and a greater understanding of the differing roles across the Blue Light community. In an operational context this will no doubt have improved outcomes for the people of Lancashire.

The revised Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation document has provided the Estates and co-location sub-group leads with a renewed focus for potential areas of collaboration. The quarterly Estates sub-group meetings between Heads of Estates Departments at LFRS, NWAS and LanCon has identified that the potential benefits are greater than just co-location. The project objective, principles and benefits have been redefined and in-scope works updated. Examples of areas of collaborative working, in addition to site sharing, are knowledge sharing in relation to systems, sharing of procurement specification documents, along with supplier framework procurement and opportunities.

Community First Responder

UK FRS have been providing Emergency Medical Response (EMR) services to the public in recent years. According to a cost-benefit analysis conducted by the New Economy, the benefits of EMR far outweigh the initial investment required. The analysis estimates an overall financial return on investment of £4.41 per £1 invested.

The Community First Responder (CFR) workstream involves LFRS staff volunteers responding to life threatening emergencies in their communities from the workplace and administering life-saving interventions in the initial vital minutes before NWAS colleagues arrive, including patients that are unresponsive/ collapsed, not breathing, cardiac arrests, seizures, strokes, and choking. In providing additional CFRs in areas that currently see extended response times from NWAS, LFRS has improved outcomes for Lancashire communities. This has been achieved by ensuring a quicker response to those people requiring help with a medical emergency – and our staff have delivered lifesaving interventions whilst awaiting the arrival of ambulance colleagues, with around 200 incidents attended since 2023.

Going forward, with the assistance of a heat map from NWAS, which identifies areas within Lancashire that are proving difficult to recruit CFRs through the current traditional model, will enable LFRS to target local On-Call Firefighters who are interested in volunteering for the scheme.

Evaluation

Through evaluation LFRS has considered the value and benefits of several workstreams and has considered how the BLCB contributes to LFRS' aim of "Making Lancashire Safer".

Two new Blue Light Collaboration Workstreams are currently being established – ‘Wellbeing (Mental Health and Welfare)’, and ‘Recruitment Initiatives’.

Financial Implications

All collaboration projects within this update are included within existing agreed revenue and capital budgets.

LFRS have reviewed the policy for recharging other organisations and agencies for use of LFRS personnel and equipment at non-statutory incidents. The policy provides decision-makers with guidance on how and when charging is appropriate and is aligned to the NFCC published guidance on recharge costs.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

N/A

Equality and Diversity Implications

N/A

Data Protection (GDPR)

N/A

HR Implications

N/A

Business Risk

Risk if there is limited evidence regarding the duty to collaborate.

Legal implications

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 introduced a statutory duty to collaborate on the Police, Fire, and emergency Ambulance Services where it is in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness. The duty to collaborate is non-prescriptive and locally enabling.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: N/a

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 3 February 2025

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Update

Contact for further information – Steve Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Tel: 01772 866801

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) activity.

Additionally, it provides information regarding Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing preparations for HMICFRS Round 3 inspection, the inspection process, and wider HMICFRS activity including misconduct, and values and culture within Fire and Rescue Services.

Recommendation

Planning Committee are requested to note and endorse the update.

Round 3 Overview

HMICFRS commenced Round 3 inspections in early 2023, the three pillars; effectiveness, efficiency, and people remain the same as Round 2. Likewise, the 11 diagnostics under each pillar which inspectors make graded judgements against.

LFRS inspection will start on 17 February 2025. The inspection team will work remotely for the first three weeks whilst they review service documentation and data. The inspection team will physically be in service for weeks 4 and 6 (w/c 10 and 24 March) conducting interviews, reality testing and further reviews, weeks 5, 7, and 8 are all remote, inspection activity will conclude early April. The strategic brief is the opportunity for our chief fire officer and executive board to brief the HMI, service liaison lead and inspection team, setting out an overview of performance and any successes or areas for improvement. The chair of the fire authority will also attend and following the brief they will be interviewed. This will take place on Friday 28 March.

On Monday 20 January, HMICFRS will issue LFRS with a document request and self-assessment which must be completed and returned prior to the official start date. HMICFRS will also issue three surveys; staff survey, human resources survey and a trade union survey.

Area Manager Tom Powell and Group Manager Emma Price have continued to hold weekly engagement meetings with Phil Innis our Service Liaison Lead (SLL). Phil is unable to complete our inspection due to leading Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) inspection; a handover process has commenced with our temporary SLL for this inspection, Vicky Lowry.

Vicky is new to HMICFRS, starting on the 6th January, Vicky is currently Head of Admin, Policy, and Strategy – Prevention and Protection at London Fire Brigade. Vicky will be supported by Spencer Rowland who is an SLL and has led Cheshire, West Yorkshire and Cleveland FRS inspections during round 3.

The Organisational Assurance Team within the Service Improvement Department continue to track progress against the service’s previous inspection, monitor national themes and prepare LFRS for our Round 3 inspection.

HMICFRS have now published 26 Round 3 inspection reports.

A summary of the gradings for all 26 FRSs inspected so far in Round 3 can be found below.

	Effectiveness						Efficiency		People					
	Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other risks	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Responding to fires and other emergencies	Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders			
Beds. Round 3:		G	RI	RI	RI	A		RI	G		RI	A	A	A
Beds. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	G		RI	G		G	G	G	G
Camb. Round 3:		G	G	G	A	A		O	G		G	A	G	RI
Camb. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	RI		G	G	G	G
Cheshire Round 3:		A	A	G	A	A		A	G		G	G	G	G
Cheshire Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	RI
Warwicks. Round 3:		A	RI	RI	A	A		RI	RI		A	RI	RI	RI
Warwicks. Round 2:		RI	I	RI	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Cornwall Round 3:		A	RI	A	A	RI		RI	RI		A	RI	I	RI
Cornwall Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	G		RI	RI		G	RI	RI	RI
Surrey Round 3:		A	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	A		G	A	RI	RI
Surrey Round 2:		RI	G	G	RI	RI		RI	G		G	G	RI	RI
Bucks. Round 3:		RI	RI	I	RI	A		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Bucks. Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	G	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Merseyside Round 3:		G	O	G	G	O		O	G		A	A	A	G
Merseyside Round 2:		G	O	G	G	O		O	G		G	G	RI	G

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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	Effectiveness	Effectiveness					Efficiency	Efficiency		People	People			
		Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other risks	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Responding to fires and other emergencies	Responding to major and multi-agency incidents		Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future		Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
Lincs. Round 3		A	A	RI	G	G		A	A		RI	G	RI	RI
Lincs. Round 2		RI	RI	RI	G	G		RI	G		G	RI	RI	RI
Manchester. Round 3:		G	G	G	G	A		G	G		G	G	G	G
Manchester. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	RI		RI	G		G	G	G	RI
Norfolk. Round 3:		G	RI	A	A	G		A	G		A	RI	A	RI
Norfolk. Round 2:		G	I	G	G	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Essex. Round 3:		G	G	RI	RI	A		RI	G		RI	RI	RI	A
Essex. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Glos. Round 3:		RI	A	I	A	RI		RI	RI		I	RI	I	RI
Glos. Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	RI		I	RI	I	RI
West Yorks. Round 3:		G	RI	A	G	G		A	G		A	G	G	G
West Yorks. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	G
Oxford. Round 3:		A	A	A	A	A		RI	A		RI	A	RI	RI
Oxford. Round 2:		G	G	G	RI	G		G	G		G	RI	G	RI
Northampts. Round 3:		A	RI	G	A	G		A	G		RI	A	RI	A
Northampts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		RI	G	RI	RI
Notts. Round 3:		G	G	A	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	G
Notts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	G
Staffs. Round 3:		G	A	A	G	O		G	G		G	G	A	A
Staffs. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		O	G	G	G

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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	Effectiveness						Efficiency			People				
		Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other risks	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Responding to fires and other emergencies	Responding to major and multi-agency incidents		Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future		Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
W. Sussex. Round 3:		G	G	G	A	A		G	A		A	G	A	A
W. Sussex. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	RI		G	G		RI	G	RI	RI
Avon Round 3		I	I	A	I	A		RI	RI		I	RI	RI	RI
Avon Round 2		RI	RI	RI	G	G		RI	G		G	RI	RI	RI
Her. & Worc. Round 3		A	A	G	A	A		A	A		A	G	G	G
Her. & Worc. Round 2		RI	RI	G	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Northumb. Round 3		A	G	A	A	A		A	G		G	G	A	A
Northumb. Round 2		RI	RI	G	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Dorset & Wilts. Round 3:		G	RI	A	G	A		G	G		A	G	RI	RI
Dorset & Wilts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		O	G		G	O	G	G
Tyne & Wear. Round 3:		A	A	G	A	G		A	A		A	A	RI	A
Tyne & Wear. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	RI	RI
London. Round 3:		G	G	A	G	O		G	G		A	A	A	RI
London. Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Shropshire. Round 3:		G	A	RI	A	A		I	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Shropshire. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	G

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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Positive Practice

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Positive Practice Portal provides details about interventions, which have been developed by one or more Fire and Rescue Service to address a particular need, concern or organisational change recognised by the NFCC or HMICFRS as an innovative or positive practice. These practices are in different functional areas and may include operational and non-operational responses, business practices and good ideas.

LFRS actively engages with the positive practice process and have made two further submissions since the previous report, taking the total submissions published on the portal to 11:

- ROV/Underwater Drone
- On Call Stations Work Hubs
- Safety during Hajj Campaign
- Climate Response - Partnership Working
- Climate Response - Innovation
- Composite Fencing
- NFCC BCP E-learning package
- SSRI Info Risk Based Calculator
- Public Space Protection Order
- New – Assurance monitoring system
- New – Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP)

A further 3 submissions are in progress:

- Organisational Development – Developing current and new leaders
- Management of PPE
- Responding to trauma and emotions / wellbeing programme

LFRS will continue to monitor positive practice submissions and attend future events, benchmarking our own progress against areas identified, and exploring potential areas for improvement.

HMICFRS Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services

HMICFRS published their [Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services](#) report in August. This followed the detailed inspection of 10 FRSs, as well as analysing data provided by all 44 FRSs in England about their grievance and discipline cases.

The service is continuing to make progress through the reports 15 recommendations which are virtually all completed.

Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services

Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services remains a focus for HMICFRS, LFRS continues to work proactively in terms of promoting its values and engendering an organisational culture where all employees can thrive.

The HMICFRS has asked FRS not to provide any written updates at this point, as they are introducing their interactive monitoring portal. LFRS is due to be onboarded on to the portal prior to our inspection, the Organisational Assurance Team have attended online briefing sessions in preparation for this change in reporting.

The role of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group has been expanded to include culture, the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Culture Board (EDICB) provide the governance and monitoring of the Service in relation to EDI and culture, annual reports are also submitted to the Fire Authority.

HMICFRS Chief and Chairs event

As previously reported, the latest HMICFRS Chief and Chairs event took place on 14 November, with the then CFO, Justin Johnston, ACFO Jon Charters and CC Nikki Hennessy attending.

Presentations and discussions focused on the following topics:

- Fire protection and the Grenfell Tower Inquiry
- Our 2025-27 inspection programme
- Staff misconduct
- Leadership and improving performance

HMICFRS Autumn Data Collection

The Autumn Data closed on Friday 22 November. LFRS submitted the return on time with no issues or queries received.

Business risk

The inspection will monitor LFRS's direction of travel since 2022, it could cause reputational damage if it is perceived that we have not made reasonable progress.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

None.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on Monday 3 February 2025

Council tax precept consultation

Contact for further information – Steven Brown, Director of Corporate Services
Tel: 01772 866804

Executive Summary

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service is currently consulting the public on its council tax precept for the year ahead.

The purpose of this report is to update members of the planning committee on the consultation plan following announcement of the provisional local government finance settlement in December 2024.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Information

A consultation plan is being implemented to consult the public on Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's council tax precept for the year ahead.

The consultation aims to understand levels of support for a proposed increase in 2025-26 which equates to £5 per year (on a Band D property).

An online consultation was launched on 7 January 2025 at www.lancsfireandrescue.org.uk/budget.

320 stakeholders from organisations including local authorities, town and parish councils, and community groups have been invited to take part in the consultation, along with 79,752 subscribers to the Service's In The Know email newsletter.

It is also being publicised on social media platforms and internal communication channels within the organisation.

The consultation closes at 5pm on Monday 3 February 2025. A full report will be provided to the Authority as an appendix to the budget report at its budget meeting on Monday 17 February 2025.

Approval to undertake the annual budget consultation is delegated to the Chair of the CFA in consultation with the Treasurer and the Chief Fire Officer, due to the limited amount of time between the announcement of the local government financial settlement and the Authority's budget meeting.

Business risk

Ascertaining support levels for the Service's financial plans and views from communities and stakeholders is essential to provide opportunity to influence development of their fire and rescue service and will be used to inform decision making.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and equalities monitoring is in place to understand if the consultation has reached all parts of the community.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? Y/N

If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

The consultation is being delivered by the Service's in-house corporate communications department without any additional resources.

Legal implications

Consultation over the council tax precept is a statutory requirement.

The consultation plan is aligned to the Service's consultation strategy which is reviewed annually by the Planning Committee to ensure that it continues to meet statutory requirements and incorporate good practice.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper: Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Public Consultation Strategy

Date: January 2024

Contact: Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause