

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

Monday, 28 April 2025 in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton commencing at 10.30 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

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1. **Chair's Welcome and Introduction**

Standing item.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests**

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

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 24)**

5. **Minutes of meeting Wednesday 5 March 2025 of Performance Committee (Pages 25 - 52)**

6. **Minutes of meeting Wednesday 26 March 2025 of Resources Committee (Pages 53 - 64)**

7. **Minutes of meeting Thursday 27 March 2025 of Audit Committee (Pages 65 - 70)**

8. **Urgent Decision Arrangements at Election Time (Pages 71 - 72)**

9. **Members Allowance Scheme and Indices (Pages 73 - 86)**

10. **Member Champion Activity Report (Pages 87 - 94)**

11. **Fire Protection Reports (Pages 95 - 98)**
12. **Operational Incidents of Interest (Pages 99 - 102)**
13. **Member Complaints**

Standing item.

14. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Authority will be held on **Monday 23 June 2025** at 1030 hours at Washington Hall Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.

15. **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 Chair 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.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 17 February 2025 at 10.30 am in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton

Minutes

Present:

N Hennessy (Chair)

Councillors

S Serridge (Vice-Chair)

U Arif

G Baker

P Britcliffe

S Clarke

M Clifford

F De Molfetta

M Desai

D Howarth

T Hurn

H Khan

Z Khan MBE

D O'Toole

M Pattison

P Rigby

M Salter

S Serridge (Vice-Chair)

J Shedwick

J Singleton

D Smith

R Woollam

B Yates

64/24	Chair's Welcome and Introduction
	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) on being awarded the King's Fire Service Medal in the New Year's Honours List and welcomed the new Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Sam Pink, who joined the service in February. The ACFO thanked the Chair and remarked that she was proud to lead the service.</p>
65/24	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from Councillors J Hugo and F Jackson and County Councillor S Morris.
66/24	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	Resolved: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 16 December 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.
67/24	Minutes of meeting Wednesday 27 November 2024 of Resources Committee
	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 27 November 2024 be noted.
68/24	Minutes of meeting Thursday 28 November 2024 of Audit Committee

	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 28 November 2024 be noted.
69/24	Minutes of meeting Wednesday 4 December 2024 of Performance Committee
	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 4 December 2024 be noted.
70/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
71/24	Minutes of meeting Monday 3 February 2024 of Planning Committee
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) advised members of a correction to the minutes, the final paragraph within resolution 24/24 of the minutes (page 73 of the agenda pack) made reference to more information on prevention being brought to a future Planning Committee, this was corrected to information on protection.</p> <p>The DCFO reminded members that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services (LFRSs) His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection had commenced today. The inspection team would work remotely for the first three weeks whilst they reviewed service documentation and data. The inspection team would physically be in service for weeks 4 and 6 (w/c 10 and 24 March) and conduct interviews, reality testing and further reviews, weeks 5, 7, and 8 were all remote, inspection activity would conclude early April. The service would receive a hot debrief on 1 May 2025 which would provide insight into the possible outcome of the inspection with a draft report expected in June 2025.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 3 February 2025 be noted.</p>
72/24	Report from members on Outside Bodies
	<p>The Chair presented the report which detailed key points raised at Local Government Association (LGA) meetings of the Fire Service Management Committee and Fire Service Management Commission.</p> <p>The Chair advised members of a correction to the report, the entry relating to the Fire Service Committee on Friday 9 June 2023 (on page 85 of the agenda pack) should refer to the Fire Service Management Commission rather than committee.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be noted.</p>
73/24	Annual Statement of Assurance
	The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the report to members. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) set out the Government's high-level

	<p>expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) in England. Included within the framework was the requirement that all FRAs must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.</p> <p>The Statement of Assurance aimed to provide the required accountability and transparency to Lancashire communities and the Government that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) continued to deliver efficient, effective value for money services.</p> <p>This statement sat alongside the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Progress Report. It detailed what measures were in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance was efficient, economic, and effective and provided further evidence that LFRS continued to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and its own Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority approved the Annual Statement of Assurance 2023-24 as presented and approved the signing of this by the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.</p>
74/24	<p>Pay Policy Statement 2025/26</p>
	<p>The Director of People and Development (DoPD) presented the report. In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 a pay policy statement for 2025/26 was considered by Members.</p> <p>The pay policy published data on senior salaries and the structure of the workforce and it demonstrated the principles of transparency.</p> <p>The pay policy statement set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The remuneration of its chief officers; • The remuneration of its lowest paid employees; and • The relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and that of other employees who were not chief officers. <p>The statement included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer; • Remuneration range for chief officers on recruitment; • Methodology for increases and additions to remuneration for each chief officer; • The use of performance-related pay for chief officers; • The use of bonuses for chief officers; • The approach to the payment of chief officers on their ceasing to hold office under, or be employed by, the authority; and • The publication of and access to information relating to the remuneration of chief officers.

	<p>It also included the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to other terms and conditions applying to its chief officers.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole remarked that the Service needed to ensure that it was prioritising the remedy of firefighter pensions, which whilst they were often complex, it was vital to resolve as soon as possible.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Pay Policy Statement be approved.</p>
75/24	<p>Budget Report 2025/26</p>
	<p>The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) / Treasurer advised that appendices A to D in the Budget Report were linked, with changes in one impacting on the others: A) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) set out the financial outlook and estimated borrowing over the next five years, B) the Capital Strategy set out major expenditure for investment within the Service (including the ten-year capital programme), C) the Reserves Strategy set out savings and how they were planned to be used over the next 5 years, and D) the Treasury Management Strategy set out investment, borrowing, repayment and how money was set aside to repay borrowing.</p> <p>The DoCS presented the report that set out the Council Tax Precept and Budget for 2025/26 along with the associated appended documents.</p> <p>The Authority was required to set a balanced budget and council tax precept for the next financial year by 1 March 2025. The Authority had to ensure it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considered the link between capital investment decisions and the revenue implications. • Considered the results of the Council Tax Precept Consultation. • Considered the Treasury Management implications of revenue and capital decisions. • Provided value for money. • Reflected best practice. <p>The Budget and appended documents in the report formed the Service's financial strategies which were part of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) strategic planning activity and governance framework which set out the direction of the Service and how it would achieve the aim of making Lancashire safer. These financial strategies were one of six core strategies that set out how LFRS, would provide services in line with the following priorities in the five-year Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valuing our people. • Preventing fires. • Protecting people and property. • Responding to fire and other emergencies. • Delivering value for money. <p>Financial Context</p>

The outlook for the UK economy in 2025 was mixed. Modest improvements in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) were expected, but still below pre pandemic levels and inflation was expected to stabilise at 2% by the end of 2025, but there could be temporary increases due to factors like rising gas prices. Interest rates were expected to continue to reduce gradually and whilst personal finances remain relatively strong, employers had raised concerns about job creation due to rises in National Insurance contributions. Overall, while there were positive signs of recovery, challenges such as geopolitical issues and global trade frictions could impact the UK's economic performance.

Nationally the Fire Service continued to face financial pressures from increasing legislative demands, environmental and societal changes, inflationary pressures, particularly on capital projects, above inflation pay settlements and increasingly more complex demands on resources.

Funding

Funding for the fire sector had changed in the last 15 years. The 2008 banking crisis was followed by a period of austerity in the sector. During this period government grants for the fire sector reduced. Changes to the funding methodology during this period also meant that changes in the economy, that impacted on benefits claimant numbers or business rates, impacted on funding levels. With Council Tax and Business Rates representing 81% of LFRS funding these changes had presented an additional risk. The main sources of funding in 2024/25 were:

Table 1 – Sources of Funding	£m	%
Council Tax	39.4	53%
Business Rates	21.3	28%
Revenue Support Grant	13.5	18%
Other Grants	1.0	1%
Total	75.2	100%

Funding for capital schemes had changed over this period, with the sector now almost exclusively funding new capital schemes from local sources of funding such as revenue contributions, reserves, capital receipts and borrowing (that was repaid from revenue budgets).

Prior to the Autumn Budget and finance settlement the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and LFRS asked Government to consider increased council tax precept flexibility, protect grant funding in real terms, and provide suitable capital grant funding.

The Autumn 2024 Budget announced the Government's intention to pursue a comprehensive set of reforms to place local government in a more sustainable position, and the Autumn Budget promised a deprivation-based approach in 2025/26, followed by broader reform through a multi-year settlement from 2026/27. On 18 December 2024, the Minister of State (Minister for Local Government and English Devolution) released the provisional local government finance settlement for 2025/26. The main headlines for the 2025/26 budget were:

- Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) would be able to raise council tax (for a band

D property) by up to £5 (for information the threshold for Police will rise to £14).

- The Funding Guarantee Grant received in 2023/24 would not continue (for LFRS this was £0.9m in 2023/24). For information this grant was designed to ensure that no local authority would see a reduction in their Core Spending Power compared to the previous year.
- Standalone FRAs were not eligible for the one-off Recovery Grant; this grant was designed to support local authorities in managing financial pressures and ensuring the continuity of essential services.
- The September Consumer Price Index (CPI) figure of 1.7% had been applied to increase business rates grants and Revenue Support grant funding; last year this was an increase of 6.7%. The 2025/26 increase was below the current CPI rate which was 2.5% at the time of writing.
- The Autumn Budget included an increase to employer's National Insurance contributions with a commitment that additional funding would be provided for the public sector to help manage the increased costs. The provisional finance settlement provided guidance on this additional funding and for LFRS there was a funding shortfall that resulted in an unfunded pressure of £0.7m.
- No capital grant funding was provided for in the provisional settlement.

Government measured the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery through a mechanism called Core Spending Power (CSP), it did not exactly mirror spending but was a useful measure when considering spend across the sector. Following the settlement, and assuming all fire authorities increased council tax by £5, Government had confirmed that CSP for the fire sector had increased by 2.8%, which was broadly in line with current CPI inflation, for LFRS the increase was 3.2%. After taking into account the shortfall in national insurance funding this resulted in an increase of just 2.2%, which was below inflation and created additional financial strain for the Authority.

Against the NFCC and LFRS budget asks of government; for increased council tax precept flexibility, to protect grant funding in real terms, and provide suitable capital grant funding, only the precept flexibility had been delivered (assuming the £5 precept was agreed by the CFA), and ultimately this settlement represented a real term reduction in funding for LFRS.

Funding Reform

For almost a decade local government funding reform had been on the horizon and presented both a risk and an opportunity for authorities. The recent national election had brought about some renewed momentum in this area:

- Alongside the Provisional Settlement Government published a consultation on funding reform. The local government funding formula had not been updated since 2013/14 and there was consensus amongst independent voices and across the political spectrum that it no longer reflected need, and reform was necessary. The aim of this reform was to allocate funding efficiently to reflect an updated

assessment of local need and revenues and build on the previous government's proposed 'Fair Funding' reforms. It was expected that 2026/27 would be the first multi-year funding settlement for local government. Initial projections indicated that funding for individual fire authorities may increase or decrease by as much as 15%, although there would likely be a phasing in of these changes.

- Whilst developing and implementing funding reforms Government also intended to implement the proposals in the English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024.
- The business rates reset for local authorities was also scheduled to take place in the 2026/27 financial year. For those authorities that had experienced a real term growth in business rates, as part of the business rates retention system, there was a risk that the reset may result in the redistribution of the growth to those authorities that had experienced a reduction. LFRS benefitted from the growth experienced across Lancashire and therefore there was a risk that business rates funding may reduce by approximately £1m per year; again, the service would expect a phasing in of these changes.

Certainty of funding was essential for long term planning and whilst a one-year settlement was expected, progress with funding reform was beneficial for the sector.

Council Tax income was based on the precept approved by the Authority and the estimated taxbase; this was the number of band D equivalent properties in the area. Factors influencing the taxbase included changes to property numbers, collection rates in each local authority, local authority discounts and changes in benefit claimants. The estimated taxbase for 2025/26 increased by 1.43% compared with 1.38% in 2024/25. Table 3 paragraph 17 on page 122 of the agenda pack set out the taxbase and proposed Council Tax precept for 2025/26.

Proposed Revenue Budget 2025/26

The 2025/26 budget proposals were based on the latest funding assumptions set out in the report and a maximum increase in the council tax precept allowed of £5 at Band D was assumed to give total funding of £77.5m. The net expenditure budget took account of inflation, previous commitments, required permanent and one-off increases and decreases in resources to give a net budget requirement of £77.5m. The following table sets out the proposed 2025/26 budget and subsequent paragraphs set out the key changes underpinning the net budget requirement:

Table 2 – Budget Proposals 2025/26		£'m
Budget	Base Budget	75.2
	Inflation	2.7
	Commitments	(0.7)
	Permanent increases in Resourcing	0.6
	One-off items	0.1
	Permanent decreases in Resourcing	(0.5)
	Proposed Net Budget Requirement	77.5

Funding	Council Tax	(42.3)
	Business Rates	(21.6)
	Revenue Support Grant	(13.7)
	Other Grants	0.0
	Total Funding	(77.5)

Precept (Council Tax – Band D) per annum	£89.73
Precept (Council Tax – Band D) per week	£1.73
Increase from 2024/25 Band D of £84.73	£5.00
Increase per week Band D	10p

The proposal delivered a balanced budget as required by law. If the precept was reduced additional savings would be required, for example, a reduction of 1% would reduce funding by £0.4m which equated to a loss of £4m in funding over 10 years.

The main elements that made up the Proposed Budget Requirement for 2025/26 are set out below and were detailed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in Appendix A:

- Economic changes
 - Pay - An allowance of 3% for pay awards in 2025/26 had been included with 2% thereafter. If pay awards were higher than assumed they would need to be met from reserves or in year savings in 2025/26 with additional savings made in future years. Each 1% increase resulted in an additional £0.5m and £0.1m for Grey book and Green book staff respectively.
 - Inflation – Government Grants were updated by the September Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) CPI figures which was 1.7%. Non-pay budgets had been increased by 1.7% in line with grant increases in 2025/26 and 2% thereafter. Specific increases in price inflation for known areas had been assumed. At the time of writing the latest CPI rate (December 2024) was 2.5%.
 - Interest earned – The interest earned on cash balances in the MTFS was updated to reflect the amended use of reserves and gradual reduction in interest rates. The budget in 2025/26 was expected to increase to £1.4m and then reduce over the period of the MTFS to £0.3m by 2029/30.
- Commitments – These reflected the impact of previous decisions that had a financial consequence in 2025/26 or were due to policy, legal or regulatory changes. The main adjustment in 2025/26 related to one off funding of £0.4m provided in 2024/25 to support pressures in support services which had been reversed in 2025/26, resulting in a (£0.4m) adjustment.
- Permanent increases in Resourcing - Several growth proposals totalling £0.7m were included in the budget for 2025/26; £0.3m related to initiatives to continue to improve the availability and future sustainability of the retained duty system and £0.3m related to an increase to support services to provide additional capacity.
- Permanent decreases in Resourcing – A reduction of £0.5m was required in 2025/26 to balance the budget; this would be delivered by using the Dynamic Cover Tool, for the effective deployment of resources and effective management

of overtime, and delivery of changes to resources agreed as part of the previous Emergency Cover Review.

Council Tax Precept

Council Tax funding was based on the estimated taxbase (band D equivalents) provided by each local authority. Compared to 2024/25, the overall taxbase had increased by 1.43% (6,633 properties), last year the increase was 1.38%. The following table shows the number of Band D equivalents and proposed precept for each local authority based on the band D precept increase of £5.

Table 3 – Proposed Precepts 2025/26	Number of Band D Equivalents	Precept on Collection Fund
Burnley Borough Council	24,104	2,162,852
Chorley Borough Council	38,752	3,477,218
Fylde Borough Council	32,665	2,931,030
Hyndburn Borough Council	22,163	1,988,686
Lancaster City Council	43,702	3,921,380
Pendle Borough Council	25,118	2,253,838
Preston City Council	44,182	3,964,469
Ribble Valley Borough Council	25,649	2,301,485
Rossendale Borough Council	21,152	1,897,969
South Ribble Borough Council	38,233	3,430,669
West Lancashire District Council	39,038	3,502,840
Wyre Borough Council	39,784	3,569,834
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	37,503	3,365,133
Blackpool Council	38,856	3,486,549
Total	464,268	42,253,952

Band	Proposed 2025/26 £	Actual 2024/25 £	Change per year £	Change per week £p
A	59.82	56.49	3.33	0.06
B	69.79	65.90	3.89	0.07
C	79.76	75.32	4.44	0.09
D	89.73	84.73	5.00	0.10
E	109.67	103.56	6.11	0.12
F	129.61	122.39	7.22	0.14
G	149.55	141.22	8.33	0.16
H	179.46	169.46	10.00	0.19

The increase for a Band D property per year was £5; that was 10 pence per week.

Council Tax Precept Consultation

The legal requirements for council tax increases were primarily governed by the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. A consultation with the public was launched on 7 January 2025 on a £5 increase in the council tax precept for the year ahead. The consultation ended at 5pm on Monday 3

February 2025 and the results were set out in Appendix E of the agenda pack along with the response from the Fire Brigade Union to the budget in Appendix F.

602 responses were received, 76% supported the increase in the precept, 6% neither supported nor opposed the increase and 17% did not support the increase.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The purpose of the MTFS was to provide the Authority, staff, the public and other stakeholders with information on the financial outlook and the estimated available funding over the next five years. It took into account future estimates on funding and potential high level revenue and capital expenditure over the period. A summary of the MTFS Revenue budget is set out below:

Table 4 – Revenue MTFS	25/26 £m	26/27 £m	27/28 £m	28/29 £m	29/30 £m
Base Budget	75.2	77.5	79.8	82.1	84.3
Inflation	2.7	2.3	1.7	2.0	1.8
Commitments	(0.7)	1.0	0.6	0.6	(0.3)
Increases in Resourcing	0.6	0.4	1.4	1.3	0.7
One-off items	0.1	(0.4)	0.0	(0.2)	0.6
Decreases in Resourcing	(0.5)	(1.0)	(1.5)	(1.5)	(0.5)
Net Budget	77.5	79.8	82.1	84.3	86.6
Council Tax	(42.3)	(43.8)	(45.5)	(46.9)	(48.4)
Business Rates	(21.6)	(22.1)	(22.5)	(22.9)	(23.4)
Revenue Support Grant	(13.7)	(13.9)	(14.2)	(14.4)	(14.7)
Other Grants	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funding	(77.5)	(79.8)	(82.1)	(84.3)	(86.6)

Note that Council Tax increases were assumed at 2.5% in 2026/27 reducing to 2% per annum from 2028/29.

Some of the key financial assumptions and estimates over the period of the MTFS are set out below:

- Inflation – The pay awards for 2025/26 were estimated at 3% then 2% thereafter. Non-pay budgets had increased by the latest Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) CPI figures; 1.7% in 2025/26 and 2% thereafter. Income earned on investments was expected to reduce as cash balances reduced and interest rates reduced from 4.25% to 3.5% over the period of the MTFS.
- Commitments – The 2026/27 budget allowed for a £0.5m increase in Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) contributions and increase in revenue contribution to Capital of £0.5m which was also budgeted for 2027/28 and 2028/29. By the end of the MTFS the revenue contribution to capital would be £4m.
- Increases in Resourcing:
 - 32 of LFRS's 58 Fire Engines were crewed by firefighters working the on-

call duty system. There were national challenges in relation to on-call Fire Engine availability and LFRS was facing similar challenges. An extensive work programme was underway and there were signs of improvement in the emergency cover provided by our On-Call crews. It was anticipated that additional revenue costs would be required in order to continue to improve the availability and future sustainability of this duty system, therefore it would be prudent to assign up to £0.5m additional revenue costs across the 32 On-Call appliances.

- Investment in support services in 2025/26 and capital financing costs from 2026/27 to meet the costs associated with borrowing to largely fund the major projects in the capital programme; by the end of the capital programme borrowing costs were forecast at £3.8m per annum.
- Decreases in resourcing were required to balance the budget and meet the costs associated with funding the borrowing costs. Over the period of the MTFS £5m of savings was required to be delivered; £0.5m in 2025/26, £1.0m in 2026/27, £1.5m in 2027/28 and 2028/29 and £0.5m in 2029/30. To deliver the savings a review of services would commence in 2025.
- Funding – Detailed assumptions were included in the MTFS, in broad terms the funding was expected to increase between 2% to 3% however, the outcome of the comprehensive spending review and review of the funding formula was likely to impact on these assumptions which was expected to be determined during late 2025.

The key variables within the budget were inflation assumptions, in particular pay awards, and funding levels. The MTFS in Appendix A considered a range of risks and scenarios that impact on the MTFS. The analysis showed that whilst the general reserve was sufficient to meet all the worst-case risks in 2025/26 and 2026/27, with reliance on earmarked reserves, major structural changes would be required alongside government support beyond year two of the MTFS.

Capital Strategy

In addition to the revenue budgets a programme of capital investment was proposed for 2025/26, this was set out in detail in the Capital Strategy in Appendix B. The purpose of the Strategy was to provide the Authority, staff, the public and other stakeholders with information on the Capital plans. Capital plans needed to be affordable, prudent and sustainable and treasury management decisions taken in accordance with good professional practice and in full understanding of the risks involved. A summary of the capital programme and funding is set out below:

Table 5 – Capital Programme	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m
Vehicles	4.5	2.8	2.0	2.5	2.9
Operational Equipment	1.6	1.2	0.1	0.6	0.6
Buildings	3.9	9.4	27.8	9.6	11.0
ICT	2.8	1.3	0.1	0.6	0.6
	12.8	14.8	30.1	13.1	15.1
Funding					

Revenue Contributions	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.0
Capital Reserve	10.3	6.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Capital Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
Grants	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Borrowing	0.0	4.2	26.6	9.1	9.5
	12.8	14.8	30.1	13.1	15.1

The 2024/25 five-year capital programme approved by the Authority in February 2024 included four major projects; Leadership and Development Centre Training Facilities (£10m), Headquarters and Stores relocation (£18m), Fulwood replacement station (£7m) and Preston replacement station (£10m). Together with the Member Capital Working Group officers had been reviewing the scope of the projects, costings to reflect changes in prices, timings for these three major capital projects and the Masterplan for the Leadership and Development Centre in Chorley. The key changes considered by the working group were reflected in the updated 2025/26 capital programme proposed, these included:

- Leadership and Development Centre Training Facilities – A modern and progressive service required high quality facilities to help in the initial training and ongoing maintenance of competency requirements across a broad spectrum of operational activities. The existing facilities were reviewed alongside more modern facilities in the region. The review identified that greater investment was required to meet the services requirements and an estimate of £18m was included in the programme between 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- Headquarters and Stores relocation – This project combined the Headquarters and Training Facility and relocated the Stores at the Leadership and Development Centre, replacing the current Headquarters at Fulwood and office / training / catering space in Lancaster House. This would provide modern office and training facilities that met current environmental and design requirements. It would also ensure that LFRSs people had the best facilities to support health and wellbeing by providing a safe and positive work environment. The costings were updated during the year to reflect the latest inflation forecast and an estimate of £18m was included in the programme between 2028/29 and 2030/31.
- The relocation of Headquarters necessitated the need to invest in a new station to replace Fulwood either on the existing site or at an alternative location. This formed part of the Preston review and was included in the programme at an estimate of £7m in 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- Preston replacement station – A review of emergency cover in the Preston area had commenced. The aim of the review was to create a new, modern station for Preston and consider the impact on other stations in the area, either in the same place or another location, that serves both LFRS staff and the local community well. The budget was £10m, which assumed any cost of new land (if the station was relocated) was offset by capital receipts from the sale of the existing site and was programmed for 2027/28.

Whilst LFRS had sequenced the projects as detailed, the Authority should remain flexible, and the years that the projects were delivered may change due to

opportunities of land and other matters, details of which would be discussed with the Working Group and approvals sought as required.

To fund the Capital Programme table four showed that in addition to utilising the Capital Reserve and revenue contributions, £49m of new borrowing was required. The long-term revenue costs of this borrowing, based on the latest borrowing forecasts, was over £4m per annum which was included in the MTFS.

Following the capital investment set out above the Authority's reserves and borrowing levels would be commensurate with similar sized fire services based on current levels across services.

Reserves Strategy

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 placed a requirement on the Section 151 Officer to formally report on the adequacy of the reserves. The DoCS assessed this in the context of the strategic, operational and financial risks and opportunities facing the Authority.

While holding reserves was a recognised and recommended financial management tool, the levels of such reserves must remain prudent, appropriate to the level of risk and opportunity and not excessive. This was set out within the Reserves Strategy attached at Appendix C, which included details of the reserves held and their proposed usage over the next five years.

It was good practice for an Authority to review its reserves on a regular basis to consider each reserve. This was to ensure that the level was both prudent and adequate for the current climate, but not excessive. A review had been undertaken based on historical analysis and the current environment and future forecasts; this review had not resulted in any material change.

The General Reserve existed to cover unforeseen risks and expenditure that may be incurred outside of planned budgets. The minimum level of General Reserve advised by the Treasurer for the 2024/25 budget was £3.75m. A generally accepted level was one that was equivalent to 5% of the net revenue budget but that must be considered alongside specific Authority risks; 5% of the net revenue budget was approximately £3.85m. Considering the risks facing the Authority the Treasurer recommended increasing the minimum level for 2025/26 to £3.85m. The level of the General Reserve at 1 April 2025 was estimated at £5m, this was above the minimum level of General Reserve recommended. Over the period of the MTFS the level of the General Reserve remained above this minimum level.

Treasury Management

Treasury Management covered the cashflow, investment and borrowing activities together with the impacts of budgetary decisions on such activities. The Treasury Management Strategy was included at Appendix D and comprised of four main elements:

- Capital Expenditure Plans and Prudential Indicators.
- Borrowing Strategy and Prudential Limits.
- Annual Investment Strategy.

- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement.

The Strategy reflected the revenue and capital estimates contained in the MTFS and Capital Strategy. Treasury Management in the public sector was heavily regulated and transparency with the Authority on its activities was paramount. The Resource Committee oversaw Treasury activities, but it was a legal requirement that the Authority approved the Strategy.

Statement of Robustness of Estimates

Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 placed a requirement on the “Chief Finance Officer” of an Authority to report on the robustness of the estimates used in preparing the budget. There was then a requirement for the Authority to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer when making decisions on its budget. At Lancashire Fire Authority, the Chief Finance Officer was the DoCS.

The statutory requirement was reinforced by the Prudential Code, which required authorities to have regard to affordability when considering recommendations about future capital programmes.

The Authority had a medium term planning process that took account of service demands and the financial scenario covering a 5-year period to 2030. The aim of the Medium Term Financial Strategy was to provide a realistic and sustainable plan that reflected the Authority’s priorities and anticipated the future impact of current decisions. Alongside this, future capital programmes were planned taking into account forecasted Government funding, borrowing limits and council tax.

For 2025/26, full consideration of these issues had led to:

- Policy and expenditure proposals that reflected the Local Government Finance.
- Settlement together with the on-going revenue impact of new capital projects, whilst recognising the outstanding issues and uncertainties.
- A proposed capital financing budget based on the 2025/26 capital programme.

In assessing the robustness of the 2025/26 proposals and the estimates on which they were based, the DoCS had been assured that:

- The budget proposals were based on the advice of service managers (supported by finance staff) or were based upon or supported by information that the DoCS considered reasonable to accept.
- The budget proposals had been fully reviewed and endorsed by the Executive Board and the implications on performance, if any, had been identified and assessed.
- The proposed budget provided for all known future developments either within the revenue budget itself or as part of the Reserves Strategy.

When using estimates in preparing the budget every effort was taken to ensure that

they took into account the most up to-date-data. There was, however, always the potential for the actual impact to vary from the estimates used in setting the budget, particularly as a result of:

- Variations in the rate of price inflation, pay awards and pension increases;
- Service financial performance (i.e. variances on budgets);
- Ability to deliver policy proposals and/or achieve projected savings; and
- Unforeseen additional operational demands and activities.

The potential for unanticipated events to occur that may impact on the budget, reinforced the importance of prudent financial management including:

- Promoting a robust approach to financial management requiring budget holders to monitor expenditure against budget and to take early action in reporting and responding to projected variances;
- Regular reporting of the projected budgetary outturn supplemented by exception reports to prompt remedial action if necessary; and
- Maintaining an appropriate and proportionate contingency, as part of the General Reserve, to cushion the impact of unexpected events and emergencies.

Based on the advice and assurance set out above and the process by which the budget had been constructed, the DoCS was satisfied that the estimates were robust and could be relied upon for approval as part of the proposed budget.

County Councillor S Serridge joined the meeting at 11:03.

County Councillor D O'Toole thanked the DoCS for the report and stated that his party had discussed the proposals and read the comments from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) included at appendix F of the report. He requested that there be a named vote in relation to the report recommendations.

The Authority voted unanimously in favour of the recommendations by a named vote.

Resolved: - That the Authority: -

- Agreed the 2025/26 budget, including the net budget requirement of £77.5m (as set out in table 2 paragraph 14 on page 121 of the agenda pack), which takes account of adjustments set out and detailed in Appendix A;
- Agreed the proposed Council Tax increase of £5 for a Band D Council tax precept of £89.73 for 2025/26;
- Agreed the levels of Council Tax precept set out in Table 3, paragraph 17 on page 122 of the agenda pack;
- Approved the capital programme and associated funding for 2025/26 set out in table 5, paragraph 24 on page 125 of the agenda pack;
- Approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix A;
- Approved the Capital Strategy set out in Appendix B;
- Approved the Reserves Strategy set out in Appendix C;
- Approved the Treasury Management Strategy in Appendix D which included

	<p>the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision as set out in the appendix;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the results of the Council Tax Precept Consultation set out in paragraph 19 on page 123 of the agenda pack and Appendices E and F; and • Noted the Statement of Robustness of Estimates set out in paragraph 35 on page 127 of the agenda pack.
76/24	<p>Proposed amendment to Members role & Community Safety Champion role description</p>
	<p>The Clerk to the authority presented the report to members on the proposed amendment to the members role and Community Safety Champion role description. At the November 2024 Member Training and Development Working Group, some proposals for minor changes were made, with regard to the current financial climate and uncertainties around Local Government funding. Other cosmetic changes were also proposed in relation to the role of Member Champions.</p> <p>The amendments, proposed by County Councillor Salter, in respect of the change to the Description of the Role of members was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change the wording on Page 2 of appendix 1 of the report from ‘Deliver Affordable and Sustainable Services’, to ‘Deliver Realistic Future Planning’. • To remove the bullet point ‘Planning for future grant reductions’. <p>The proposal to change the Role Description of Member Champions attached in the report at appendix 2 was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change the wording of the bullet point ‘Engage with other Fire Authority Members to promote awareness of older people issues and to seek their views’, to ‘Engage with other Fire Authority Members to promote awareness of issues effecting older people and seek their views’. <p>The proposals were mindful of the need to review the Authority’s functions and adapt to changes within the social and economic climate, which was consistent with good governance principles.</p> <p>The proposals, whilst relatively minor, did potentially engage with paragraph 3.1.d of the Authority’s Constitutional Procedural and Contractual Standing Orders, and therefore it was a requirement that the proposals were ratified by the Authority.</p> <p>The proposals were consistent with the Authority’s Member Training and Development Strategy, which was last approved by the CFA on 22 February 2021.</p> <p>Councillor D Smith remarked that he would welcome a review of the strategy as proposed in the report.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Councillor D Smith and County Councillor M Salter for the proposal at the recent Member Training and Development Working Group.</p>

	<p>Resolved: - That the authority approved the minor amendments and revised Role of Members and Role Description for the Member Champions.</p>
77/24	<p>Climate Change Operational Response Plan 2022-27 - Interim Report on Progress</p>
	<p>The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the report to members.</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services (LFRSs) Climate Change Operational Response Plan (CCORP) was published in 2022 and spanned 5 years to 2027 in line with the services Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). It provided an overview of LFRSs intentions to strengthen the provision of services to communities in response to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>The report provided the Authority with a mid-point review of progress against the aspirations contained within the CCORP across the key themes.</p> <p>As the extremes of foreseeable weather events became increasingly evident, LFRSs CCORP considered flooding and wildfire as two separate areas of focus, whilst recognising that several of the proposed actions LFRS would take, would serve to mitigate elements of both risks in tandem.</p> <p>In delivering against this plan, LFRS continued to aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the threat posed to citizens of Lancashire. • Improve firefighter safety. • Reduce costs and impact upon our communities, partners and the Service. <p>The CCORP was developed around 6 key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in partnership with other agencies and/or private bodies to make our communities safer. • Delivering prevention activities serves to educate and inform and thereby reduce potential risks. • Empowering communities to play their part can increase local resilience and assist planning and response. • Utilising operational debriefing and learning supports continuous improvement in the delivery of our services. • Working to support local, regional, and national policy design through learning and sharing areas of best practice. • Responding effectively when required, with the right vehicles, trained staff, best equipment, and operational tactics. <p>The overarching aim was to strengthen the services plans in relation to risks posed by both Flooding and Wildfires across the key areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention, protection and education • Emergency Planning • Training

- Operational Response
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Welfare

The CCORP 2022/2027 was a comprehensive and ambitious document that demonstrated LFRS's commitment and leadership in adapting to and mitigating effects of climate change both locally and nationally.

LFRS's progress against the CCORP included;

Prevention, protection and education

- Implementation of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO's) in collaboration with local authorities and Lancashire Constabulary. This restricted the use of barbecues and open fires in high-risk areas, such as moorlands and woodlands, to prevent wildfires. PSPO's were launched with partners on 4 March 2024. Breach of a PSPO was a criminal offence and could result in a fine of up to £1000. PSPO's were a tool that could be used by LFRS and its partners to reduce wildfire risk within Lancashire.
- Established a Lancashire Water Safety Partnership (LWSP) which was officially launched in April 2023 and was chaired by LFRS officers. LWSP had identified high risk locations for the installation of water safety boards including at nearby Cuerden Valley Park and was scoping the potential for use of PSPO's for two high risk water sites in Lancashire.
- Properties within urban interface areas with wildfire risk had been identified and Fire Protection and Community Fire Safety Teams would work together to deliver appropriate advice. LFRS would deliver targeted Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) in domestic premises for known wildfire risk areas.

Emergency planning

- Collaborated and shared best practice with other fire and rescue services, local authorities, and partner organisations, through networks, forums, and working groups, such as the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Climate Change Coordination Committee, the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) Climate Change Group, the Northwest Fire and Rescue Services (NWFRS) Climate Change Network and NW Region Wildfire Group chaired by Group Manager (GM) Caroline Harrison.
- LFRS's National Wildfire Tactical Advisors were signed up to the UK Danger Rating System and receive updates on forecasted impacts to the Service.

Training

- Increased its cohort of level 5 trained Flood Water Incident Managers (FWIM's), from 6 to 8 to provide additional resilience across the Service.
- Trained an additional Level 4 Wildfire Tactical Advisor, enhancing the services capability to respond both within Lancashire and nationally.

Operational response

- Two Hagglund offroad vehicles had been introduced into Service. They had undergone additional modifications for use at both flooding and wildfires.
- Invested in rescue sleds and floatation devices for the Hagglund vehicles. These were successfully used to rescue people stranded in their vehicles during recent flooding in December 2024.
- LFRS had developed and trained staff to provide an additional water rescue pump and swift water rescue team in Morecambe to supplement the existing team at Lancaster. This unit went live in January 2025.
- Contributed towards the NFCC Asset register and maintained the Lancashire Fire Operations Group (LFOG) Asset register.
- Work continued to procure two large and two smaller 4x4 fire engines with off-road capabilities. One of each size would be purchased in the coming year with the other two following in the next business year.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Dedicated Wildfire PPE and protective footwear had been rolled out to all operational staff. In addition, tactical backpacks had been issued to all operational staff to increase welfare provision at incidents.
- LFRS had reviewed national guidance regarding the use of personal flotation devices for evacuees during flooding incidents. This had led to lifejackets being made available on Hagglands for use by members of public during flooding incidents.

Welfare

- Enhanced welfare provisions at incidents, improved quality and met the needs of a diverse workforce with vegan, vegetarian, halal, kosher options amongst others.

The CFO summarised that the Service had delivered extensive progress to date and continued work to deliver against the remaining activities in the plan, which underpinned the ambitions within the Service CRMP and underpinned LFRS aim of making Lancashire safer.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Shedwick in relation to LFRS representatives attending local flood action groups, the CFO confirmed that Station Managers should be available to attend and support the groups.

In response to a question from Councillor M Desai in relation to the use of PSPOs and reporting mechanisms, the CFO confirmed that LFRS would exercise its PSPO powers during periods of increased climatic risk and would use the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) to alert partner agencies. The CFO advised that there was high interest globally with recent wildfires in California and Australia, and although the same devastation was not evident here in the UK and locally in Lancashire, wildfire was identified as one of the

	<p>Service key risks, during analysis conducted under the Strategic Assessment of Risk. In terms of reporting, information could be found on the LFRS website. The CFO added that further to investment made by the Authority, LFRS operational response had improved with the introduction of the Hagglund offroad vehicles which often allowed wildfires to be contained to a much smaller area and managed more effectively with a reduced draw on resources.</p> <p>Councillor M Desai asked a further question in relation to partnership working and the potential for further collaboration with local councils to prevent duplication of approach across the agencies. The CFO confirmed that partnership working was coordinated through Lancashire Fire Operations Group (LFOG) and the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) with all partner agencies very supportive. The DCFO added that the LRF carried out planning around risks within Lancashire and had a Lancashire risk register which fed into a national risk register with information from this passed onto councils and other partner agencies. The DCFO confirmed that he was happy to discuss this further outside of the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair remarked that she was proud of LFRS and the equipment and resources that had been introduced throughout the Service.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority noted the progress delivered as detailed within the report.</p>
78/24	<p>Member Champion Activity Report</p>
	<p>The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007. A review of the areas of focus for Member Champions was considered at the Authority meeting held in June 2017 where new areas of responsibility were agreed. The current Member Champions and their areas of responsibility were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety – County Councillor Matthew Salter • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan • Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan • Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson <p>Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period up to 16 February 2025. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference.</p> <p>County Councillor M Salter remarked that the Community Safety Teams had done some fantastic work with children and young people, including the road safety campaign delivered at Edge Hill University. He further remarked that the partnership work with West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC) in relation to identifying damp and mould as part of Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) was very important.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor D Smith in relation to the possibility of the identification of mould and damp as part of HFSCs being rolled out across the county, the CFO confirmed that this approach was instigated by WLBC and LFRS would evaluate the approach and consider expanding it. Area Manager (AM) Matt</p>

	<p>Hamer added that Community Safety Advisors looked beyond fire risks to educate tenants on reporting concerns and were strengthening relationships with local authorities with a view to adopting similar approaches.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.</p>
79/24	<p>Fire Protection Report</p>
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented the report which summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005.</p> <p>On the 24 January 2025, sentencing took place at Preston Crown Court regarding a fatal fire in July 2019 at 284 Burnley Road, Colne where the responsible person, Potensial were sentenced to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fine of £135,000.00 • Ordered to pay costs of £18,705.00 to Lancashire Fire and Rescue. <p>The offences to which Potensial pleaded guilty to were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to take such general fire safety precautions so as to ensure the safety of residents and staff. Article 8(1)(b). • Failure to make a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment. Article 9(1). <p>The DCFO advised members that this was the first prosecution nationally for an organisation of this type.</p> <p>LFRS had two cases relating to the same premises within the court system. These related to two responsible persons at a care and nursing home. One case was set for sentencing on the 29 January 2025 at the Magistrates Court. The second case had a dismissal hearing on the 24 March 2025 at Crown Court along with a trial date set for the 28 July 2025. One further case was set for trial on the 14 July 2025 relating to student accommodation.</p> <p>LFRS had been engaged with two appeals against the issuing of Enforcement Notices. One appeal had been withdrawn and costs paid to LFRS, with the other appeal withdrawn following the company in question no longer having any level of control over the premises, thus no longer a responsible person. Regulatory activity continued to be in place on the premises to ensure fire safety compliance.</p> <p>Members noted that there had been no arson convictions during the reporting period. There were 14 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that were continuing to be progressed.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be noted.</p>
80/24	<p>Operational Incidents of Interest</p>

	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented the report which provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note. As the operational period had been very busy, the report detailed only the larger deployments or more complex incidents. As a result, some incidents that Members had been made aware of locally, may not have formed part of the report. Full details of the following incidents were provided in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescue of persons from flood water in Bacup (23/11/24) • Response to persons in flood water in Colne (23/11/24) • Commercial building fire in Preston (23/11/24) • Fire involving hay bales in Chorley (29/11/24) • Road Traffic Collision in Darwen (9/12/24) • Domestic property fire in Chorley (9/12/24) • Domestic property fire in Morecambe (13/12/24) • Rescue of person in Blackburn (21/1/25) • Commercial building fire in Blackburn (23/1/25) • Derelict hotel fire in Blackpool (27/1/25) <p>County Councillor M Pattison thanked officers for their quick response and attendance at a recent fire at student accommodation in Lancaster on 8 February 2025.</p> <p>The Chair expressed her thanks to officers for their response to the flooding in Ormskirk on New Years Day. 11 residents were rescued and appliances attended from Leyland and Wesham. The Chair remarked that Station Manager (SM) Scott Nickson was very supportive and officers carried out a great operation.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor M Clifford in relation to a recent fire in Whittle-Le-Woods and the Services knowledge of contaminated sites, the DCFO confirmed that the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) allowed partners to share knowledge and understand risks. Any identified risks would then inform LFRS response and emergency planning. The DCFO encouraged members to feed back any information they had to continue to identify risks and inform emergency planning.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole remarked that the report showed the variety of jobs that LFRS attended, where officers looked after residents and saved lives.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole then welcomed the ACFO to the Service on behalf of the Conservative party.</p> <p>The ACFO thanked members for their welcome and commented that the incidents contained within the report were varied and the response provided with LFRS assets highlighted the importance of continued investment. She further stated that wildfire events that would previously have happened once every 10 years were now happening much more frequently and in consecutive years.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted the report.</p>
81/24	Member Complaints

	<p>The Monitoring Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints since the last meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the current position be noted.</p>
82/24	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 28 April 2025 at 10:30am at the Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.</p> <p>Councillor D Smith left the meeting at 11:45.</p>
83/24	Exclusion of Press and Public
	<p>Resolved: That the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.</p>
84/24	Urgent Business - Pensions Update
	<p>(Paragraphs 4 and 5)</p> <p>Councillor D Smith rejoined the meeting at 11:47</p> <p>The Director of People and Development (DoPD) provided a verbal report to members on an issue which had arisen in respect of changes to the pension schemes applying to uniformed members of the fire service.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the verbal report be noted with a more detailed update to be prepared for the next Resources Committee.</p>

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Proceedings of Performance Committee held 5 March 2025

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Performance Committee meeting held 5 March 2025.

Recommendation(s)

To note the proceedings of Performance Committee as set out at appendix 1 now presented.

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Performance Committee meeting held on 5 March 2025.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR 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: N/A

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Performance Committee

**Wednesday, 5 March 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
P Britcliffe	
M Clifford	
F De Molfetta (Chair)	
N Hennessy	
T Hurn	
D O'Toole	
P Rigby	
M Salter	
B Yates	

Officers
J Charters, Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) J Rossen, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) S Barnes, Station Manager, Protection Transformation Manager (LFRS) J Kirton, Communications Officer (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance
J English, FBU Representative

23/24	Apologies For Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor Hasina Khan.
24/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
25/24	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 04 December 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26/24	Q3 Performance Management Information
	<p>The Chair welcomed Jess Kirton, Communications Officer, who was present to observe, to the meeting.</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer introduced Station Manager Steven Barnes, Fire Protection, who would provide Members with a presentation on Building Regulation Consultations in the following agenda item.</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer presented a comprehensive report to the Performance Committee. This was the 3rd quarterly report for 2024/25 as detailed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027.</p> <p>In quarter 3, two Key Performance Indicators (KPI), 1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime (WT), and 2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks, were shown in positive exception and two Key Performance Indicators were shown in negative exception. These were 1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook and 3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance.</p> <p>Members examined each indicator in turn focusing on those KPIs in exception as follows:</p> <p>KPI 1 – Valuing our people so that they can focus on making Lancashire safer</p> <p>1.1 Overall Staff Engagement</p> <p>Members received an update on how staff were engaged during the period.</p> <p>From October to December 2024, 33 station visits were carried out by Principal Officers and Area Managers as part of the service-wide engagement programme. In addition, three online engagement events were held with on-call units across the county.</p> <p>Forty-eight wellbeing interactions were undertaken ranging from workshops with crews to wellbeing support dog interactions.</p> <p>The views of staff were sought by surveys in relation to a cleaning contract and to obtain feedback about the Service's Celebration of our People event. Furthermore, a staff focus group was held which focussed on evaluation. A pulse survey to measure levels of staff engagement began in December with a January closing date.</p> <p>The Service engaged with staff over several topics that related to the Service's fleet and equipment, which included firefighting gloves and washing equipment for decontaminating fire helmets. Staff engagement over improvement works at Blackpool Fire Station continued and was undertaken in relation to office moves at Service Headquarters. The Service's employee voice groups were consulted over a range of topics that included an upcoming positive action campaign.</p>

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

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

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

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

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

1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime

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

Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.

Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters = 2

Quarter shifts lost: 1.071

Cumulative total number of shifts lost: 4.271

The Chief Fire Officer explained that, from previous reports, the KPI had been an area of challenge but was now in positive exception which was contributed to by the measures the Service had taken to manage absence. The Service had an Absence Management Policy which detailed its approach to how it would manage absence to ensure that staff time was managed effectively, but also members of

staff were supported back to work or exited from the Service in a compassionate way.

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

The Service had several support mechanisms available to support individuals to return to work or be exited as appropriate which included guidance from Occupational Health, access to Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and the Firefighters Charity.

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

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

To ensure that Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service (LFRS) was managing sickness levels in line with good practice nationally, the Service undertook a peer review and learning with another Service. The work led to a number of updates and improvements to sickness procedures.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that the graph on Page 40 of the agenda pack showed a downward trend with levels of absence improving every quarter.

The Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an extract (Page 32 Section 7: Summary Performance – BVP12i, BVP 12ii), from Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service's National Sickness Absence Report Quarter 3 2024/25. LFRS was listed at the bottom of both charts for Wholetime & Control, and Wholetime, Control and Green Book, as having the lowest number of duty days lost per staff member. The National Average Number of Duty Days lost for Wholetime and Control staff was 7.56 from April 2024 – December 2024, with the National Average of 7.14 days for Wholetime, Control and Green Book staff. The number of days lost for LFRS were 4.27 and 4.51 respectively.

In response to a question from County Councillor O'Toole regarding the periods of quarters, the Chief Fire Officer explained that the quarters followed the financial year with the first quarter occurring from April to June. County Councillor O'Toole commented that it was useful information in relation to statistics as absences could

be seasonal i.e. winter flu.

County Councillor Hennessy congratulated those involved in improving absence levels and praised the work undertaken with another FRS to implement shared learning. The Chief Fire Officer stated that the learning had resulted in increased scrutiny, changes to policy, and changes to the management of sickness absences.

1.2.2 Staff Absence On-Call (OC)

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

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

Cumulative on-call absence (as a % of available hours cover) at the end of the quarter, 1.23%.

1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook

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

Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.

Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters: 2

Quarter shifts lost: 2.170

Cumulative shifts lost: 5.098

The negative exception report was due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target for quarter 3.

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for Green Book staff, which equated to a target of 6.00 shifts lost per employee per year for quarters 1 to 3. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff was 5.10, which was 0.90 below target. During the same period of the previous year, 6.22 shifts were lost which was a reduction of 1.12 shifts lost per green book employee compared to the same period last year.

During April – December 2024, absence statistics showed non-uniformed personnel absence above target for the period. During the quarters 1 to 3, 1,305 non-uniformed absence shifts lost = 5.10 against a target of 6.00. There was one case of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 3 months which related to Mental Health - Stress.

The number of long-term absence cases recorded in the quarter rose from 7 in Q2 to 13 in Q3:

Reason	Case/s
Musculo Skeletal	6
Mental Health	3

During the quarter, 406 shifts were lost as a result of the 13 cases of long-term absences, this was in comparison to 185 shifts lost during the previous quarter. These cases accounted for 1.59 shifts lost per person over the quarter and an increase of 0.85 shifts lost from the previous quarter.

Respiratory related absences accounted for 40 lost shifts, which included Coronavirus absence. This was compared to 27 shifts lost in Q2. This showed an increase of 0.05 shifts lost from the previous quarter.

The Service had an Absence Management Policy which detailed its approach to how it would manage absence to ensure that staff time was managed effectively, but also members of staff were supported back to work or exited in from the Service in a compassionate way.

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

The Service had several support mechanisms available to support individuals to return to work or be exited as appropriate which included guidance from Occupational Health, access to Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), access to an Employee Assistance Programme and the Firefighters Charity.

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

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

The Chief Fire Officer stated that when the figures were reported annually, the KPI was in positive exception which highlighted an anomaly with quarterly reporting. He suggested that the KPI be taken through Planning Committee to set an Upper and Lower XmR, (Value [X] over a moving [m] range [R]), limit of 10% of the current standard so consequently, if the number of shifts shifted between the two limits, it would not fall into negative or positive exception. Members agreed to taking the KPI to Planning Committee to add XmR limits with commencement in quarter 1 2025/26.

County Councillor Rigby congratulated the Chief Fire Officer and all who contributed on the impressive figures.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity

This indicator measured diversity as a percentage.

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

Gender:	Female 23%(20%)	Male 77%(80%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 4%(3%)	White 92%(94%)	Not stated
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 4%(4%)	Heterosexual 60%(56%)	Not stated
Disability:	Disability 3%(3%)	No disability 94%(94%)	Not stated

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

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

Gender:	Female	Grey book 11%	Green book 61%
	Male	Grey book 89%	Green book 39%
Ethnicity:	BME	Grey book 3%	Green book 6%
	White	Grey book 93%	Green book 85%
	Not stated	Grey book 4%	Green book 9%
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT	Grey book 4%	Green book 3%
	Heterosexual	Grey book 59%	Green book 64%
	Not stated	Grey book 37%	Green book 33%
Disability:	Disability	Grey book 3%	Green book 5%
	No disability	Grey book 95%	Green book 89%
	Not stated	Grey book 2%	Green book 6%

County Councillor O'Toole stated that asking for the personal details of staff was unnecessary and not relevant to their ability to do their job. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the diversity of Fire Service staff and effectiveness to change the workforce profile was a focus of the Service, Home Office and HMICFRS. The Service had an annual EDI action plan which detailed the Service's aims to better reflect the community it serves. Whilst there was a Service KPI, there were no numerical diversity targets in LFRS and the submission of equal opportunities monitoring information by staff was entirely voluntary and not obligatory. In addition, the Chief Fire Officer reminded Performance Committee that approval

was given by Members through Planning Committee to present the data in the current format.

County Councillor Clifford stated that the LGA Fire Essentials training provided the reason as to why the information was needed. The next HMI inspection would focus heavily on EDI and it was important that the information was monitored and available. He recommended more training for Members to be brought up to date with topics of importance.

1.3.2 Workforce Diversity Recruited

This new indicator measured workforce diversity recruited as a percentage.

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

Gender:	Female 39%(29%)	Male 61%(71%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 7%(5%)	White 65%(88%)	Not Stated 28%(7%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 3%(4%)	Heterosexual 85%(89%)	Not stated 12%(7%)
Disability:	Disability 7%(2%)	No disability 88%(94%)	Not stated 5%(3%)

During quarter 3, there were a total of 40 new entrants.

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

1.4 Staff Accidents

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

Total number of staff accidents, 14 for quarter 3; year to date 44; previous year to date 46. Quarterly activity increased 16.67% (2 incidents) over the same quarter of the previous year.

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

2.1 Risk Map Score

This indicator measured the fire risk in each Super Output Area (SOA), of which there were 942. Risk was determined using fire activity over the previous 3 fiscal years along with a range of demographic data, such as population and deprivation. The County risk map score was updated annually and presented to the

Performance Committee in the quarter 1 reporting period.

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

$(\text{Dwelling Fires} \div \text{Total Dwellings}) + (\text{Dwelling Fire Casualties} \div \text{Resident Population} \times 4) + \text{Building Fire} + (\text{IMD} \times 2) = \text{Risk Score}.$

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

County Councillor Salter asked for clarification on the process of identifying risk for areas, particularly the higher-level risk grades. The Chief Fire Officer explained that the count of risk areas had shown an improving position. The Risk Map was refreshed annually in quarter 1 and would remain unchanged throughout the year. Over the past 10 years, the dark blue areas (Low Risk Grade) had become more expansive and the red areas (Very High Risk Grade), and yellow areas (High Risk Grade) had decreased significantly. He referred Members to the formula to calculate the Fire Risk Score in each Super Output Area on Page 49 of the agenda pack. The objective was to reduce the risk in all areas down to low which had been effectively achieved each year using the risk map approach. The formula used historic incident data and included a calculation around the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to determine the risk to each SOA. At a future point, due to extensive reduction of risk for SOAs, it was probable that the risk map would need to be reviewed.

County Councillor O'Toole asked, and the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the map was comprised of all types of fires in dwellings which included accidental and deliberate. County Councillor O'Toole suggested that accidental and deliberate fires be separated on the map as it could affect the numbers. The Chief Fire Officer stressed the importance of arson risk reduction work as part of the overall risk reduction strategy and that this was the reason that the formula included both accidental and deliberate fires. The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the Service carried out work to manage arson risk in communities which was assisted by successful prosecutions and sentencing. County Councillor Hennessy pointed out that the figures were broken down on Page 51 of the agenda pack and stated that deliberate fires were difficult to predict.

Station Manager, Steven Barnes, advised that in respect of arson, the Service carried out preventative measures such as HFSCs and educating residents to reduce risk. The Service also worked with partners such as Lancashire Constabulary to share intelligence around arson vulnerability to reduce risk of fires in circumstances of a known threat. In such a case, the Service would engage with an individual regarding their property and put measures in place. He emphasised that there was a conscious effort to reduce arson threat.

2.2 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that LFRS attended with one or more pumping appliances. Incidents attended included fires, special service calls, false alarms and collaborative work undertaken with other emergency services

i.e.: missing person searches on behalf of the Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and gaining entry incidents at the request of the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

Incidents attended, year to date 12,947; previous year to date 13,716. Quarterly activity increased 2.07% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In quarter 3, the Service attended 4,278 incidents. The report presented a chart which represented the count and percentage that each activity had contributed to the overall quarter's activity:

- Total False Alarm Calls (due to apparatus, good intent and malicious) – 1916, 45%
- Total Primary Fire Calls (accidental dwelling / building and deliberate dwelling / commercial fires and other primary fires) – 437, 10%
- Total Secondary Fire Calls (deliberate and accidental fires) – 613, 15%
- Total Special Service Calls (critical incidents, gaining entry, RTCs, Flooding and other critical incidents) – 1286, 30%

2.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

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

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

Accidental Dwelling Fires, 189 in quarter 3; year to date 518; previous year to date 553. Quarterly activity increased 5.59% over the same quarter of the previous year, with the cumulative to date decreasing by 6.33%.

2.3.1 ADF – Harm to people: Casualties

This indicator reported the number of fire related fatalities, slight and serious injuries at primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known.'

A slight injury was defined as; a person attending hospital as an outpatient (not precautionary check). A serious injury was defined as; at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient.

Fatal	2 in quarter 3; year to date 7; previous year to date 3
Injuries appear Serious	4 in quarter 3; year to date 6; previous year to date 8
Injuries appear Slight	9 in quarter 3; year to date 24; previous year to date 14

Quarterly activity increased 200.00% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that sadly, 2 fatalities had occurred in quarter 3. One 58-year-old male from Blackburn with Darwen and one 58-year-old male from South Ribble lost their lives. Both fatalities were subject to ongoing

investigations.

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

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

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

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

Current quarter, combined percentage of 86% against same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 90%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore decreased 4.26% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4 Accidental Building Fires (ABF) (Commercial Premises)

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

ABF (Commercial Premises), 57 in quarter 3; year to date 188; previous year to date 185. Quarterly activity decreased 1.72% over the same quarter of the previous year.

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

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

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

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

- current quarter, combined percentage of 70% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 77%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore decreased 7.4% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a private garage, private

shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known.'

ABF (Non-Commercial Premises), 16 in quarter 3; year to date 58; previous year to date 62. Quarterly activity increased 23.08% over the same quarter of the previous year.

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

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

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

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

- current quarter, combined percentage of 37% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 31%.

Combined quarterly activity had therefore increased 6.7% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6 Deliberate Fires Total: Specific performance measure of deliberate fires

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

Deliberate Fires – 440 in quarter 3; year to date 1,477; previous year to date 1,508. Quarterly activity increased 21.21% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings

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

Deliberate Fires – Dwellings, 21 in quarter 3, year to date 63; previous year to date 70. Quarterly activity remained static over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.2 Deliberate Fires - Commercial Premises

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

Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises, 31 in quarter 3; year to date 102; previous year to date 105.

Quarterly activity decreased 6.06% over the same quarter of the previous year.

A second incident activity line was shown on the graph which excluded Crown premises which fell outside of the Service's legislative jurisdiction.

In response to a question from County Councillor Salter in relation to the reason for the drop in incidents (excluding Crown premises), for commercial premises in the months of November and December, the Chief Fire Officer stated that the successful work through BFSCs could be a significant factor in managing down the arson risk. The checks not only focused on the risks inside buildings but also external adjacent risks which had resulted in a reduction of incidents in every quarter. Having a separate line on the graph which excluded crown premises gave a true reflection of the number of incidents, and it was prudent to take a long-term view of spikes and drops in activity as there were many variables which could affect deliberate fire setting.

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

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

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

Deliberate Fires – Other, 388 in quarter 3; year to date 1,312; previous year to date 1,333. Quarterly activity increased 25.57% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.7 Home Fire Safety Checks

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

An improvement was shown if:

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

HFSCs completed, 6,010 in quarter 3; year to date 18,185; previous year to date 17,465. Quarterly activity increased 4.9% against the same quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs with high-risk outcomes, Quarter 3, 51%; previous year Quarter 3, 54%.

High risk outcomes decreased 3% against the same quarter of the previous year.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that there had been an increase in productivity of HFSCs and BFSCs completed. The Service was required to submit a productivity and efficiency return to the Home Office (HO) which could change as the Service moved under the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). HFSCs were important in terms of influence and education and the number showed increases each quarter when compared to the previous year.

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

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

ChildSafe, 189 sessions delivered to 5,592 students;
RoadSense, 153 sessions delivered to 4,638 students;
SENDSafe, 2 sessions delivered to 55 students;
Wasted Lives, 5 sessions delivered to 590 students;
Biker Down, 5 sessions delivered to 130 attendees;
FIRES, 44 referrals opened prior to Q3 and carried over. 40 referrals received in Q3. 38 referrals closed in Q3. 48 referrals carried to 2024-25, Q3;
Partner Training (including care providers), 22 sessions delivered to 253;

Specific Education packages – delivered Water Safety, BrightSparx, ASB, Deliberate Fire Setting etc (Covers key stages 2, 3 and 4). 45 Bright Sparx sessions, delivered to 3,432 students. 8 virtual sessions delivered to 19 schools and 7,979 pupils.

Arson Threat Referrals – 186.

County Councillor Clifford stated that he had shared a Biker Down session locally on social media which had very quickly become fully booked. He asked if the Service needed to increase the number of Biker Down sessions offered. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the number of sessions offered was demand-led. Biker Down was a well-received product which had extensive positive feedback further to courses being delivered.

2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks

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

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

A +/-10% tolerance was applied to the completed BFSCs and the year to date

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

BFSCs completed, 883 in quarter 3; Cumulative 2,750; YTD target, 1,875; previous YTD 2,581.

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being satisfactory, 2,392. Top 5 completed satisfactory premise types (Shops 895, Factories/Warehouses 324, Other Workplaces 310, Offices 240, Other Public Premises 187).

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being unsatisfactory, 358. Top 5 completed unsatisfactory premise types (Shops 165, Factories/Warehouses 50, Licensed Premises 34, Other Workplaces 31, Offices 21).

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

Service delivery personnel had carried out BFSCs in their respective districts over the last 2 years, and BFSC work was now embedded into business-as-usual activity. The KPI dashboard and District Intel Profiles were used to identify and target both the business types and business locations for that activity.

County Councillor Nikki Hennessy congratulated the Team for their great work on BFSCs as it was relatively new process.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that the risks identified were 'new risk', as the types of premises that were checked, previously would not have featured highly in terms of the Service's Risk Based Intervention Programme and, therefore, the Service would not have dedicated resources to visit them. Delivering BFSCs through operational crews meant that the risk could be reduced within 'unsatisfactory' premises noted within the Performance report.

Steven Barnes advised Members that all wholtime operational staff were trained to carry out BFSCs in LFRS, which was extremely positive and under-pinned the high levels of performance.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity (including Business Fire Safety Checks)

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

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

Total Fire Safety Enforcement Inspections, Quarter 3, 499;
Formal Activity in Quarter 3, 8%, same quarter of the previous year 5%.
Quarterly activity remained static against the same quarter of the previous year.

Members noted the cumulative number of Fire Safety inspections undertaken for 2024/25 was 1,560.

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

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

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

In Quarter 3, Building Regulation Consultations received 226, of which 219 were completed within the timeframe (LFRS should make comments in writing within 15 working days of receiving a BRC).

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that, in the last HMI inspection, the Service received an 'area for improvement' whereby completion percentage rates at that time were 50-60% compared to the high 90s currently. Station Manager, Steven Barnes, would explain the journey in the following agenda item.

KPI 3 - Responding to fire and other emergencies quickly

3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

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

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

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

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

Standards were achieved when the time between the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident, averaged over the quarter, was less than the relevant response standard. Expressed in minutes & seconds.

Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, Quarter 3, Very High 06:03

min; High 06:09 min, Medium 07:35 min, Low 08:14 min.

Q3 overall 07:37 min. Year to date overall 07:39 min. Previous year to date overall 07:24 min.

The negative exception report was due to the critical 1st fire appliance average response time to very high risk areas marginally exceeding the standard in quarter 3.

The standard within a very high risk area was 6 minutes. The average time achieved during quarter 3 exceeded this by 3 seconds.

The monthly average response times to very high risk areas:

October	November	December	Quarter 3
05:30	05:41	07:19	06:03

The monthly average response times showed that only December exceeded the 6 minute average, with an average time of 07:19 being made up of just three incidents, of which two recorded a response longer than six minutes.

The first incident was within a domestic property where unattended food on a hob activated smoke detection. The nearest pump to the incident was engaged at another incident, which led to the first attending pump responding from another station area, hence an extended run time.

The second incident involved dried towels within a kitchen of a retail premises that had self-combusted due to oils within the cloths. The delay was due to the nearest appliance being engaged at another incident.

Response times were consistently monitored and, where they did not meet the target, the reason why was reported on and then scrutinised at regular performance monitoring meetings. This allowed for trends to be identified, and improvements implemented, as necessary.

County Councillor Clifford commented on the Communications social media post in relation to the potential combustion risk when drying oily cloths in a dryer which he was not aware of.

3.2 Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

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

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

(which measured call handling time and fire engine response time).

Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, 08:50 min in quarter 3; year to date 08:36 min; previous year to date 08:34 min.

3.3 Total Fire Engine Availability

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

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

Total Fire Engine Availability, 89.30% in quarter 3; year to date 87.45%; previous year to date 88.59%.

Quarterly availability increased 0.84% over the same quarter of the previous year.

A progress update was provided up to the end of quarter 3.

Overall availability across all stations for the quarter recorded 88.30%, with the month of December exceeding the 90% standard, recording 90.35%.

The availability by each of the stations designated first pump crewing type during quarter 3:

Wholetime – 99.39%

Day Crewing Plus – 98.85%

Flexi Day Crewing – 99.42%

On-Call – 76.43%

Total – 89.30%

Whilst all the Whole-Time (WT) appliances achieved exceptional availability, the 1st appliance at the wholly On-Call stations contributed to the availability falling below the 90% standard. However, throughout quarter 3, LFRS had seen a significant increase in On-Call availability.

Actions being taken to improve performance:

- The On Call Improvement Programme (OCIP) was driving transformation across the Service with several workstreams to improve recruitment, development, and retention.
- A shortage of staff with the Officer in Charge (OIC) skill had been a significant contributing factor to low On-Call availability. On-Call Support Officers (OCSOs) had worked with station-based staff and management, together with the Leadership and Development Centre, to support those in development and identify opportunities for staff to acquire skills earlier in their career.
- Incident Command trainers had reviewed the process for On-Call Incident Command Courses, which had resulted in a significant uplift in staff trained as OICs in 2024.
- On-Call Performance Management training for Station Managers and Unit

Managers was completed, which included the roll-out of sector-leading innovative software for On-Call Availability, Recruitment and Skills (OARS). The software had improved the efficiency and effectiveness of workforce planning, development, and performance. OARS was the first of its kind nationally, and the Service demonstrated the project and software as best practice at the NFCC On-Call Conference in 2024.

- On-Call recognition events commenced in Q3, to acknowledge the dedication and efforts of the Service's On-Call firefighters, their families, and their employers.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that a lot of work had been undertaken to improve on call performance and it was the amalgamation of that work that had resulted in the improvement of on-call availability. Since August 2024, there had been an upward momentum in the availability of on-call pumps. Quarter 3 was the first quarter that had shown the positive impact of the hard work with the target being exceeded.

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

4.1 Progress Against Allocated Budget

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

The annual budget for 2024/25 was set at £75.1 million. Spend at the end of December 2024 was £51.8 million. The annual forecast was £75 million, which was a small underspend of (£0.1) million.

The revised capital budget for 2024/25 was £12 million and spend at the end of December was £2.5 million. The total annual spend forecast was £5.9 million, and £0.2 million savings had been identified predominantly in Information Technology (IT). It was also anticipated £5.9 million expenditure would slip into 2025/26. Extended lead times and resourcing shortfalls ensued the slippage.

Quarter 3 variance -0.13%.

4.2 Partnership Collaboration

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

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

- **Improved Outcomes** – The collaboration maintains or improves the service we provide to local people and local communities;
- **Reduce Demand** – The collaboration should contribute towards our longer-term strategic objective of decreasing risk in communities and reducing demand on

services;

- **Better Value for Money** – The collaboration produces quantifiable efficiencies either on implementation or in the longer term;
- **Reduced inequalities within our communities** – The collaboration contributes towards reducing inequalities wherever possible.

This indicator provided Members with an update on the progress against key workstreams being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB) partnership collaboration during the period.

Leadership Development

Collaboration between Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon) and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) had continued to explore efficiencies and build professional working relationships across the Blue Light Services. The potential for a collaborative coaching and mentoring network had also been identified, which led 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 wellbeing and self-care and was hosted by LFRS. It aimed to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of staff, which would have positive effects for each organisation. Several efficiencies were enabled for the session, by using the Leadership and Development Centre and the cost for the guest speaker was shared between all three services.

The Services were planning the next session which would be hosted by NWAS in February 2025, where the focus for that event would be on 'Media'.

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

Missing from Home

The missing from home collaboration between LFRS and LanCon focused 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, had 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 ensured that missing persons were located earlier, using the best available technology such as LFRS drones. Furthermore, the use of LFRS trained dogs enhanced the canine capabilities for other fire specific deployments both within the UK (through USAR and other requests) and overseas (ISAR deployments). Real life incident exposure for the dogs was invaluable and without which, their ability to develop would become limited. Where required, LFRS recovered costs under the nationally agreed National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) / National Resilience recharge protocol and locally agreed MOUs.

LFRS received 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, NWAS, and LanCon aimed 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 had resulted in efficiencies and shared facilities. The shared working arrangements had also built positive relationships and a greater understanding of the differing roles across the Blue Light community. In an operational context, it would no doubt have improved outcomes for the people of Lancashire.

The revised Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation document had 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 Department at LFRS, NWAS and LanCon had identified that the potential benefits were greater than just co-location. The project objective, principles and benefits had been redefined and in-scope works updated. Examples of areas of collaborative working, in addition to site sharing, were knowledge sharing in relation to systems, sharing of procurement specification documents, along with supplier framework procurement and opportunities.

Community First Responders

UK FRSs had 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 outweighed the initial investment required. The analysis estimated an overall financial return on investment of £4.41 per £1 invested.

The Community First Responder (CFR) workstream involved 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 arrived, including patients that were unresponsive / collapsed, not breathing, cardiac arrests, seizures, strokes, and choking. In providing additional CFRs in areas that saw extended response times from NWAS, LFRS had improved outcomes for Lancashire communities. This had been achieved by ensuring a quicker response to those people that required help with a medical emergency and staff had delivered lifesaving interventions whilst awaiting the arrival of ambulance colleagues, with around 200 incidents attended since 2023.

Evaluation

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

Two new Blue Light Collaboration Workstreams were being established – 'Wellbeing (Mental Health and Welfare)', and 'Recruitment Initiatives'.

4.3 Overall User Satisfaction

	<p>People surveyed included those who had experienced an accidental dwelling fire, a commercial fire, or a special service incident that the Service attended. The standard was achieved if the percentage of satisfied responses was greater than the standard.</p> <p>Annual Standard: 97.50%</p> <p>In quarter 3, 51 people had been surveyed and the number satisfied with the service was 51. The running number of people surveyed for the year was 3,771 with 3,723 of those people being satisfied with the Service; 98.73% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.26%.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Chief Fire Officer for a positive report.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Performance Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 3 Measuring Progress report, including two positive and two negative exceptions.</p>
27/24	<p>Building Regulation Consultations Plan and Presentation</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Station Manager, Protection Transformation, Steven Barnes, to provide the Committee with a presentation which gave an overview of the Service's actions pertaining to Building Regulation Consultations.</p> <p>Following Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) 2021/22 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection, an 'Area for Improvement' was highlighted regarding completion of Building Regulation (BR) Consultations within the statutory timeline of 15 working days. The reported stated "The Service should make sure it allocates enough resources to respond effectively and in time to statutory building control consultations". The Service had a responsibility to ensure that the fire safety measures put in place within the buildings were suitable and sufficient.</p> <p>Initially, a review of internal process took place to identify how the Service could improve current working practices to increase performance and ensure delivery of statutory duties. The 3 areas of fire safety in Lancashire were Eastern/Pennine, Northern/Western, and Southern/Central. The review identified that BR consultations were received locally via Area Based offices from Local Authority Building Control Bodies and Approved Inspectors. This could be by way of email or 'in person' deliveries. Plans were then stored on local drives and manually input on an excel spreadsheet. With the volume of consultations varying from area to area, the impacts and ability to respond could be greatly impacted. In addition, the number of inspectors qualified to undertake BR consultations was limited in certain areas. This area-based view limited the ability for the department leadership team to manage BR holistically across the County.</p> <p>The graph in the presentation showed the total number of Buildings Regulations received and the number completed within the set date.</p>

To support the Service's commitment to BR Consultation timelines, KPI 2.10 Building Regulation Consultations (BRC) was introduced.

Investment initially took place in training to ensure staff had the required competencies to undertake BR consultations. To further improve performance, a single mailbox was established and shared with all Local Authorities and Approved Inspectors, monitored by a dedicated BR team. This team then input the initial consultation, and an action was allocated to an appropriately qualified inspector. The CFRMIS (Community Fire Risk Management Information System) was the main repository for buildings within Lancashire and a Data Management System was also introduced where all Building Regulation information was stored. This provided the leadership team with a pan-Lancashire view of current activity and distributed the work across all qualified inspectors regardless of area, allowing for an even spread of workloads. The investment in digital systems ensured the Service tracked responses and managed performance consistently.

The outcomes from the implementation of the new ways of working were that there was a single truth which provided live monitoring including assigned persons, and there was a simple reporting and monitoring process by Fire Safety Managers.

It was noted by Members that the current completion rate was 96.9%.

The priorities for the future direction of the Service were:

- Resourcing to Risk – focus would be directed on trends and incidents identified, and reviews would be undertaken to ensure the 'highest risk' buildings were inspected.
- Grenfell Enquiry Phase 2 Recommendations – there were 58 recommendations within the document. The documents that the Service used for Building Regulation were changing regarding the fire reaction and fire resistance of materials used and the move from British Standards (BS) to BS ENs (a standards adopted by the European Community). BS ENs were more robust and allowed for challenges to be made on materials used.
- Building Safety Regulator – to comply with the Building Safety Act, the Service had a dedicated resource that would work on high rise premises, and work with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) engaging the Service at Gateway 2. Once a construction method was agreed at Gateway 1, it had to be seen through to completion with no changes to materials or dimensions.
- Battery Energy Storage Systems – it was a government wide agenda for renewable energy. The Service was not a statutory consultee and so had no input. The NFCC were lobbying planners and developers for the Fire Service to be consulted.
- Mid Rise Building Stock – previously, there had been no dedicated person, but as of August 2024, Mid Rise buildings were treated similarly to High Rise. Currently, 160 premises had been identified as Mid Rise and consultation letters had been sent to request information on the buildings. The buildings would then be rated for inspection to ensure fire safety measures were put in place.

County Councillor Hennessy asked, out of the 160 Mid Rise premises, how many replies had been received from the consultation letters. Station Manager Barnes

confirmed that 110 replies had currently been received, however, if there was no response, the property could be elevated, resulting in a face-to-face visit. Under the Fire Safety Order, the Service could use Article 27 to gather information and enforce consultation within 28 days. All the information was stored in the CFRMIS system.

In response to a question from County Councillor Hennessy regarding staff in the department, Station Manager Barnes explained that there were 45 staff across 3 Fire Safety Departments across Lancashire, with a Fire Safety Manager, a number of Business Safety Advisors and Inspectors who were qualified to Levels 3 and 4.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that the government focus had shifted from High Rise Buildings (18M +) to Mid Rise (11m – 18m or 7 floors), and the volume of Mid Rise buildings. The national estimates were between 90,000 to 150,000 buildings. The Service had a designated officer that was working with all Local Authorities to determine the number of Mid Rise properties in Lancashire, how they would be triaged, how many had construction deficiencies to make safe, and how many were compliant. It was important to know the extent of the risk regarding combustible cladding etc.

Station Manager Barnes explained that there was a directive for the Responsible Person to carry out an external wall survey using a government template to risk rate the building and identify whether there were flammable or combustible materials for which, remedial work would need to be undertaken. Government funding was available for High Rise remediations, however, at present, there was no fund for Mid Rise remediations. Previous guidance for High Rise buildings was for residents to stay within their flats in the event of a fire, but in the case of external combustible materials, evacuation could be needed for which a 24-hour waking watch could be required (typical costings for such a provision had been in excess of £25k per month).

In response to a question from County Councillor O'Toole as to whether the Service could withhold a Fire Safety Certificate from those buildings with combustible cladding, Station Manager Barnes, advised that under the Fire Safety Order 2005, the accountability was put onto the Responsible Person to carry out a fire risk assessment which would identify any deficiencies. When the Fire Service carried out an inspection, a letter could be issued which stated that fire safety measures were in place and the building was suitable for purpose. If it was not suitable, the Fire Service could potentially enforce or prohibit.

County Councillor O'Toole queried, on cases where residents owned their apartments but not the leasehold and the maintenance of the building was via a management company, whether there was legislation to enforce combustible cladding removal. Station Manager Barnes, explained that the Service could use Land Registry to identify the Responsible Person whose duty it was to enact requirements. The Service tried to work with Responsible Persons to introduce fire safety measures to manage risks.

County Councillor Yates asked whether the Service was consulted regarding new build properties. Station Manager Barnes confirmed that the Service was a statutory consultee with any property over 2 floors with residents with a building

	<p>over 18m going to the Building Safety Regulator and HSE. In the case of high rise buildings, the Service would be consulted at Gateways 2 and 3.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Station Manager, Steven Barnes for a wonderful presentation.</p> <p>Resolved: - that the Performance Committee noted the report.</p>
28/24	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 25 June 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 03 September 2025 and 03 December 2025 and agreed for 11 March 2026.</p>

**LFRS HQ
Fulwood**

**M Nolan
Clerk to CFA**

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Proceedings of Resources Committee held 26 March 2025

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Resources Committee meeting held 26 March 2025.

Recommendation(s)

To note the proceedings of Resources Committee as set out at appendix 1 now presented.

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Resources Committee meeting held on 26 March 2025.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR 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: N/A

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

**Wednesday, 26 March 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
G Baker	
F De Molfetta	
Z Khan MBE	
D O'Toole	
M Pattison (Vice-Chair)	
S Serridge (Chair)	
D Smith	
R Woollam	
B Yates	

Officers
S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) E Sandiford, Director of People and Development (LFRS) B Warren, Director of People and Development (LFRS) J Meadows, Head of Finance (LFRS)

38/24	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor T Hurn. Vice-Chair County Councillor M Pattison chaired the meeting as the Chair had been delayed.
39/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
40/24	Minutes of the Previous Meeting
	Councillor G Baker asked if the Revenue Budget section within the Financial Monitoring report could include an action column to summarise the actions taken. The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) confirmed that this could be implemented for some points within the report and would be reviewed for future reports.

	<p>Councillor G Baker asked about the accuracy of the forecast for interest rates from Arlingclose. The DoCS confirmed that Arlingclose were professional advisors used by a number of organisations and their forecasts were generally reliable, although a number of factors could impact forecasts such as election results.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>																							
41/24	Financial Monitoring																							
	<p>The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) advised that this report set out the current budget position in respect of the 2024/25 revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>Revenue Budget</p> <p>In February 2024 the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) agreed the Service's 2024/25 revenue budget at £75.155m. This Financial Monitoring report was for the ten-month period to the end of January 2025. The forecast outturn was £74.066m, which was an underspend of (£1.089m). Of the forecast underspend, (£0.962m) related to non-pay costs, and (£0.127m) to pay costs.</p> <p>The year-to-date and forecast positions within all departmental budgets were set out in Appendix 1 of the report, with the major variances of note shown separately in the table below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th><th>Year to Date Variance £m</th><th>Reason</th><th>Forecast Outturn Variance £m</th><th>Reason</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Service Delivery - Pay</td><td>0.509</td><td>As previously reported the grey book pay award of 4% for 2025/26 was effective from July 2024 and was 1% higher than the services budgeted assumptions, this accounted for the majority of the overspend.</td><td>0.516</td><td>The variance was largely due to higher than budgeted pay assumptions. On call and support staff budgets were mainly within allocated budgets. The forecast had reduced by c£0.150m since the November report due to a reduction in overtime costs.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prevention and Protection - Pay</td><td>(0.418)</td><td>The year-to-date underspend was due to vacancies within the department.</td><td>(0.550)</td><td>The variance was due to vacancies, this saving had increased by (c£0.100m) as staffing levels were anticipated to increase.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Bank Interest</td><td>(0.385)</td><td>More interest had been earned</td><td>(0.552)</td><td>The forecast reflected the full year effect of</td></tr> </tbody> </table>				Area	Year to Date Variance £m	Reason	Forecast Outturn Variance £m	Reason	Service Delivery - Pay	0.509	As previously reported the grey book pay award of 4% for 2025/26 was effective from July 2024 and was 1% higher than the services budgeted assumptions, this accounted for the majority of the overspend.	0.516	The variance was largely due to higher than budgeted pay assumptions. On call and support staff budgets were mainly within allocated budgets. The forecast had reduced by c£0.150m since the November report due to a reduction in overtime costs.	Prevention and Protection - Pay	(0.418)	The year-to-date underspend was due to vacancies within the department.	(0.550)	The variance was due to vacancies, this saving had increased by (c£0.100m) as staffing levels were anticipated to increase.	Bank Interest	(0.385)	More interest had been earned	(0.552)	The forecast reflected the full year effect of
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		because of higher cash balances invested, due to slippage on the capital programme, and higher than budgeted interest rates. Interest earned on the Home Office pension grant received ahead of Matthews two and the McCloud remedy had been assumed to be transferred to an earmarked reserve.		slippage on the capital programme and higher than budgeted interest rates. The forecast had increased by c£0.350m due to updated cash balance and interest rate assumptions.
Property – non pay	(0.394)	Utility rates had been lower than budgeted resulting in the underspend.	(0.393)	The forecast underspend largely related to lower than budgeted utility costs. The forecast also assumed any committed property work slippage would be approved to carry forward which was forecast at £0.400m.

Future Pressures

Emerging pressures to report to the Resources Committee included inflation forecasts. As reported to the CFA in February, government grants were increased by the September rate of inflation (1.7%). The latest rate of inflation was now 3% which was likely to put pressure on budgets in 2025/26.

There were no further new pressures to report since the last meeting, the green book pay award and firefighter employer pension contributions had been included in the 2025/26 budget approved by the CFA in February.

Savings Targets

A reduction in the contribution to Capital of £1.5m was agreed in the medium-term Financial Strategy resulting in a revenue contribution in 2024/25 of £2.5m. The budget had been reduced to this effect.

General Fund

The year end forecasted general fund position is summarised below:

	£'m
Opening balance of LFRS general fund	(4.987)
Forecast revenue underspend	(1.089)

Forecast closing balance of general fund	(6.076)
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Capital Budget

The original Capital Programme for 2024/25 was £12m including slippage from 2023/24, this was revised to £5m by the CFA in February 2025 when they approved the updated capital strategy. To date £2.793m had been spent predominantly on fleet and operational equipment. A summary of the programme is set out in the table below and in more detail in Appendix 2 of the report.

Area	Budgeted Items	Budget (£m)	Year to Date (£m)	Slippage 2025/26 (£m)
Operational Vehicles	<p>The budget included costs of two water towers, and a prime mover. All vehicles were on target to be delivered in 2024/25. An update on items in the original budget is below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pumping appliances were in the procurement process. • Aerial ladder appliance was due for delivery in early April 2025. • Large climate change vehicle was in the procurement process and the small one was at specification stage. 	1.409	0.924	(0.002)
Other vehicles	<p>This budget allowed for the replacement of various operational support vehicles including several cars, vans, and a beavertail lorry. A few vehicles had been delivered which was originally expected to be delayed to 2025/26, an update against the original budget is provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Toyota Rav4 were now delivered, and two small vans were due for delivery April 2026. • Two double cab vans were in the procurement process and delivery was expected in May 2025. • Two rescue team vans had slipped due to delivery and conversion lead times, expected May 2025. 	0.529	0.710	(0.181)

	Operational Equipment	<p>This budget allowed for operational equipment purchases including CCTV cameras for appliances, body armour, and road traffic collision equipment. Slippage against the original capital programme is set out below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Armour – the trial period had been completed and the procurement process was underway. • Flow meters and hose reel were on trial in Blackpool. It was anticipated there would be an additional budget requirement. • Breathing apparatus compressor was on order with an early 2025/26 lead time. • CCTV on appliances was put on hold in December pending specification requirements. • Road Traffic Collision (RTC) phase 4 was due for completion in June 2025. 	1.359	0.959	0.361
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	Building Modifications	<p>This budget included the continued programme of Drill Tower Replacements, Blackpool facilities upgrade and budget for the initial works to support the upgrade to Preston station. Slippage to date against the original capital programme had been identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enhancement of facilities at Blackpool (W30) had incurred some initial costs however would see final completion in 2025/26. • Most Drill Tower replacement works had slipped due to unsuccessful initial award of the contract. • Wylfa training props programme was due to start on site April 2025. • Options appraisal was underway for suitable land acquisition. • Estates improvements would continue into 2025/26. • Elements of the Preston upgrade had been delayed to early 2025/26. 	1.066	0.153	0.266
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IT systems	<p>This budget included various projects including upgraded Firewalls, network upgrades and replacement of pooled PPE and stock management systems. Slippage to date against the original capital programme had been identified as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The replacement systems for the management of stock, assets and pooled PPE, public switched telephone network. Existing contracts had been extended. • The incident ground radios project had also slipped to next year due to other interdependencies with the breathing apparatus project. • Firewall project was complete however delivery would slip to 2025/26. • North West Fire Control (NWFC) Computer Aided Dispatch had been extended until spring 2026. • Community Fire Risk Management System (CFRMIS) replacement was undergoing the procurement process into 2025/26. • Retained Duty System (RDS) Alerters and Officer Pagers scoping had changed and would slip to 2025/26. 	0.850	0.197	0.448
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Potential Financial Risks

There were several potential scenarios that had not been reflected in this monitoring report that, if they materialised, may give rise to an increase in revenue and capital expenditure. To provide some information about potential significant financial risks these had been quantified to provide an estimated worst-case scenario, these were set out in Appendix 3 of the report. Taking all these risks overall and adjusted for the remainder of the year, a potential worst-case scenario would impact the Revenue Budget and Capital Budget accordingly:

£m	Worst Case
Revenue Budget - unbudgeted costs	1.08

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Capital Budget – Additional Expenditure</td><td>0.22</td></tr> </table> <p>The potential worst-case scenario could be funded from available budgets but would reduce the general fund balance to below the minimum acceptable level agreed by the CFA.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole and Councillor D Smith remarked that it was very difficult to forecast the budget due to a number of changing factors including central governments imminent budget announcement.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Committee;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted and endorsed the financial position; and 2. Approved additional slippage in the capital programme of £0.892m to 2025/26. 	Capital Budget – Additional Expenditure	0.22
Capital Budget – Additional Expenditure	0.22		
42/24	Date and Time of Next Meeting		
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 1 July 2025 at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.</p> <p>Further meeting dates were noted for 24 September 2025 and 26 November 2025.</p> <p>County Councillor S Serridge joined the meeting at 10:12.</p>		
43/24	Exclusion of Press and Public		
	<p>Resolved: That the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.</p>		
44/24	Update from Capital Projects Working Group		
	<p>(Paragraph 3)</p> <p>The DoCS presented the proceedings of the Capital Projects Working Group held on 18 November 2024 and 3 February 2025.</p> <p>Resolved: That the proceedings of the Capital Projects Working Group be noted.</p>		
45/24	High Value Procurement Projects		
	<p>(Paragraph 3)</p> <p>Members considered a report that provided an update on all contracts for one-off purchases valued in excess of £100,000 and high value procurement projects in excess of £100,000 including: new contract awards, progress of ongoing projects and details of new projects.</p>		

	Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.
46/24	Pensions Update (Standing Item)
	<p>(Paragraphs 4 and 5)</p> <p>Members considered a report that provided an update on the various issues which had arisen in respect of the changes to the pension schemes applying to the uniformed members of the Fire Sector.</p> <p>Resolved: That the committee noted the current situation.</p>

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Proceedings of Audit Committee held 27 March 2025

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Audit Committee meeting held 27 March 2025.

Recommendation(s)

To note the proceedings of Audit Committee as set out at appendix 1 now presented.

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Audit Committee meeting held on 27 March 2025.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR 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: N/A

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Audit Committee

**Thursday, 27 March 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
S Clarke	
M Clifford (Chair)	
N Hennessy	
F Jackson	
A Kay	
J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)	
Officers	
S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS)	
J Meadows, Head of Finance (LFRS)	
A Latham, Financial Accountant (LFRS)	
S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS)	
In attendance	
L Rix, Internal Audit, Lancashire County Council	
L Luddington, External Audit, Grant Thornton	
C Wallace, External Audit, Grant Thornton	
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union	
28/24	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor J Singleton and Councillor J Hugo with County Councillor N Hennessy attending as substitute.
	The Chair welcomed County Councillor A Kay back to the authority and welcomed External Auditors Liz Luddington and Curtis Wallace to the meeting.
29/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
30/24	Minutes of the Previous Meeting

	Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 28 November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
31/24	Internal Audit Monitoring Report
	<p>The Internal Auditors produced a summary of progress against the annual plan for each Audit Committee meeting, setting out progress to date and any significant findings. The report for the period 01 April 2024 to 04 March 2025 was presented by Laura Rix, Senior Auditor.</p> <p>Members were informed that the Cybersecurity Internal Audit had now been completed and an overall assurance rating of moderate achieved. Overall, the audit had been positive, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) attained its Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation in August 2024, an advanced level of the UK Government-backed Cyber Essentials scheme. The ICT service took part in regular online meetings as part of the National Fire Chief Councils (NFCC) cyber group which provided a platform for shared learning and collaboration with fellow services. LFRS was recognised as the 'Cyber Team of the Year' by the NFCC in 2024. Some improvement actions were identified, and the report would be shared with members before the next meeting.</p> <p>To date, 63.5 days had been spent this financial year on completion of the 2024/25 plan, equating to 91% of the total planned audit activity of 70 days. The table in the report showed the current status of all audit work, it was noted that since the report was published all audit activity had been completed.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Chair, Laura Rix confirmed that all actions within the report had been completed. County Councillor N Hennessy asked if an updated report would be brought to the next Audit Committee meeting showing all actions had been completed, Laura Rix confirmed that it would.</p> <p>County Councillor J Shedwick thanked Laura Rix for her report and remarked that moderate could be perceived in a number of ways. Laura Rix confirmed that the outcome had been rated as moderate, but it was a good positive report.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Chair in relation to Cybersecurity testing, Laura Rix confirmed that testing had been done throughout the service.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Committee noted the report.</p>
32/24	Internal Audit Plan
	<p>The Internal Auditors were required to produce an Annual Audit Plan, which set out areas they intended to review during the year. The plan amounted to a total resource of 70 audit days in 2025/26 which equated to an overall cost of £28,266 (the daily rate for auditors would be £380 and audit managers £450), which was consistent with previous years.</p> <p>A proposed plan was presented by Laura Rix, Senior Auditor.</p> <p>The Internal Audit annual plan was a critical tool for ensuring that Internal Audit</p>

	<p>effectively supported the organisation's objectives. By adhering to the new Global Internal Audit Standards, the plan ensured a risk-based, strategically aligned approach that enhanced governance, risk management, and control processes. Internal Audit focus should be proportionate and appropriately aligned.</p> <p>The plan would remain fluid and subject to ongoing review and amendment in consultation with senior management within the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, to ensure it continued to reflect the organisation's needs and risks. Any significant amendments to the plan would be reported to the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The deployment of audit resources was proposed as follows: -</p> <table> <tr> <td>Governance and business effectiveness</td><td>3 days</td></tr> <tr> <td>Service delivery and support</td><td>22 days</td></tr> <tr> <td>Business Processes</td><td>30 days</td></tr> <tr> <td>Other components of the audit plan</td><td>15 days</td></tr> <tr> <td>Total</td><td>70 days</td></tr> </table> <p>It was noted that, for 2025/26, the assurance level 'moderate assurance' had changed to 'reasonable assurance' following feedback.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Chair in relation to the audit work being completed within the proposed 70 days, Laura Rix confirmed that this was achievable but could narrow the scope and would require flexibility.</p> <p>Members noted that the audit charter that was usually presented at this committee would be presented at the next Audit Committee as it was being revised, and a progress report would also be brought outlining how those changes would affect the committee.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor N Hennessy in relation to any identified changes as part of the audit charter review, Laura Rix confirmed that there would be changes to the way that equality assessments were completed with the Audit Committee more involved in this. The review would be completed next year.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Audit Committee agreed the Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26.</p>	Governance and business effectiveness	3 days	Service delivery and support	22 days	Business Processes	30 days	Other components of the audit plan	15 days	Total	70 days
Governance and business effectiveness	3 days										
Service delivery and support	22 days										
Business Processes	30 days										
Other components of the audit plan	15 days										
Total	70 days										
33/24	<p>External Audit - Audit Progress Report and Sector Update</p>										
	<p>Liz Luddington, Key Audit Partner introduced herself and Curtis Wallace as the services new External Audit leads. Liz Luddington presented the Audit Progress and Sector Update report to the Committee which provided Members with the progress in delivering Grant Thornton's responsibilities as the Service's external auditors. The report also included a summary of relevant emerging national issues and developments.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor J Shedwick in relation to potential delays relating to the pension scheme, Liz Luddington confirmed that assurances would need to be obtained which could take time. County Councillor S Clarke</p>										

	<p>asked for assurance that the Audit would be ready in November. Liz Luddington confirmed that this was the aim and if required the report could come to the committee without the IAS19 assurances however they could not be signed off without this.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor S Clarke in relation to the External Audit fees, Liz Luddington confirmed that the fees were set by the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) as a scale fee nationally. She explained that the complexity of Audit over the last 10 years had increased but there had not been an increase in fees until two years ago. The Chair added that there would be no additional costs incurred above the fee.</p> <p>County Councillor N Hennessy remarked that she was pleased to see details included in the report of webinars relating to devolution. Liz Luddington confirmed that she would send details of webinars to the Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) and the Chair.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Committee noted the report.</p>
34/24	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled on Thursday 24 July 2025 at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood but this meeting would be brought forward to June and the details published.</p> <p>Further meeting dates were noted for 25 September 2025 and 27 November 2025.</p>

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Urgent Decision Arrangements at Election Time

Contact for further information:

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

Executive Summary

The Authority needs to ensure there are adequate arrangements to enable any urgent decisions to be taken in the event of the Chair and the Vice-Chair retiring from office as Lancashire County Councillors, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the date of the Combined Fire Authority's Annual Meeting scheduled for 23 June 2025.

Recommendations

Contingency planning is vital to the resilience of the Service and in respect of the overarching governance obligations of the Authority. The Authority is asked to Authorise the Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk to the Authority to take any urgent decisions upon any matters arising, for this short period. The relevant period will run from the fourth day after the ordinary day of the Lancashire County Council elections and the Lancashire County Council Annual Meeting, in the event of the Chair and Vice-Chair not being re-elected.

Information

As set out in the Executive Summary.

Business Risk

The Authority needs to make arrangements for the delegation of urgent decisions for business continuity purposes and to ensure resilience in decision making within the Service in the event there is no Chair and/or Vice-Chair holding office.

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

As determined by the Members' Allowance Scheme.

Legal Implications

In the event of the absence of a Chair and/or Vice Chair to the Authority, this could impact adversely upon the constitutional resilience of the Authority to transact urgent business and therefore to enable the Service to make important changes to its operations. Contingency planning is therefore necessary to ensure consistent leadership, on the understanding that this temporary measure will cease on the appointment of a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Members' Allowance Scheme and Indices

Contact for further information: Mark Nolan – Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority - Tel No. 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The Members' Allowance Scheme has not been reviewed since June 2016, since then there have been further changes to the economic climate in the delivery of emergency and public services and a marked increase in statutory and operational obligations to ensure best value and efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness within the current climate in which the Authority operates to govern the delivery of emergency services. Some proposed amendments have been made to bring the Scheme up to date (Appendix 1 refers.)

Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 also permit a Members' Allowance Scheme to make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to an index which must be reviewed every 4 years. Whilst this review would not ordinarily be required until 2026, it is considered appropriate to review the indices in line with the proposal to change the Scheme wording. Members are asked to consider whether to continue to use the existing indices.

Recommendations

The Authority is asked to consider and approve the proposed changes to the Scheme and also the indices used and to continue with the existing indices for a further four-year period.

Information

Members' Allowance Scheme

The Authority has had a Members' Allowance Scheme in place since 2003 in line with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Scheme has been amended in line with the Regulations in June 2006, April 2008, April 2012 and June 2016 with the indices reviewed in September 2014, June 2016, September 2018 and October 2022.

Annual adjustment changes are made in line with the Authority's approved indices as follows:-

- Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees' Allowances are index linked on an annual basis in line with the annual Local Government National Pay Award for green book staff at new spinal column point 43 (formerly point 49).
- Subsistence Allowances are reviewed annually (with effect from 1 April in every year) in line with the Consumer Price Index (all items) published in November of the preceding year.

- Travel Allowances mirror the County Council's rates which are revised annually with effect from 1 April in every year in accordance with the maximum allowance for Income Tax purposes, as determined by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

To ensure the Authority complies with the regulations to have regard to the recommendations made by the independent remuneration panels of its home authorities s19 (2), the current indices used by home authorities are as follows: -

Allowances	Lancashire County Council	Blackpool Council	Blackburn with Darwen Council
Basic, Special responsibility and carers/dependents allowance	Annual uprating on 1 April which equates to the average annual % increase in employees' pay under the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services pay structure.	Annual uprating of the Scheme in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service pay award.	Annual uprating of the Scheme in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Service pay award.
Overnight accommodation, travel abroad and subsistence allowances	Increased annually from 1 April in line with the Consumer Price Index published in November of the preceding year.		
Motor car, motor cycle, and bicycle travelling allowances	Revised annually with effect from 1 April in every year in accordance with the maximum allowance for Income tax purposes as determined by HM Revenue and Customs.	Upated at the same time as staff mileage allowances.	Revised annually with effect from 1 April in every year in accordance with the maximum allowance for Income tax purposes as determined by HM Revenue and Customs.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 permit a Members' Allowance Scheme to make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to an index which must be reviewed every 4 years. Members are therefore asked to consider whether the indices used remain appropriate, reasonable and transparent.

Financial Implications

The existing arrangements for Members' Allowances have been included in the revenue budget.

Business Risk

None identified.

Environmental Impact

None identified.

Equality & Diversity Implications

The Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme does not provide for the payment of Members of an allowance in respect of such expenses of arranging for the care of their children or dependants. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 exclude the Authority from including a provision for dependants carers' allowance in its Scheme. Members are, however, entitled to claim this allowance from their constituent authority.

HR Implications

None identified.

Legal Implications

See equality and diversity implications, above.

The proposed changes fall inline with the requirement for the Authority to operate in such a way as to provide best value for the Community of Lancashire in its governance and regulatory duties, in all cases.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**List of background papers**

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 28 April 2008

Contact: Clerk to the Authority

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 16 April 2012

Contact: Director of Corporate Services

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 8 September 2014

Contact: Clerk to the Authority

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 20 June 2016

Contact: Clerk to the Authority

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 17 September 2018

Contact: Director of Corporate Services

Paper: Report to CFA

Date: 3 October 2022

Contact: Clerk to the Authority

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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Members' Allowance Scheme

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following Scheme:

- 1.0 This Scheme shall have effect for the year commencing 1st April 2025 and subsequent years.
- 2.0 In this Scheme

"Authority" means Lancashire Combined Fire Authority.

"Member" means a Member of the Combined Fire Authority who is an elected Member of one of the constituent Authorities.

"Year" means the twelve months commencing 1st April.

"Meetings" means a meeting of the Authority, its Committees or a body of Members formally established by the Authority or its Committees.
- 3.0 In this scheme, the total allowances shall consist of Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowance. (For the avoidance of doubt, Attendance Allowance shall not be payable under this Scheme.)
- 3.1 These total allowances shall be index linked on an annual basis in line with the annual local government pay percentage increase at new spinal column point 43 (formerly point 49).
- 4.0 **Basic Allowance**
 - 4.1 Subject to paragraph 7.0 below, an equal Basic Allowance shall be paid to every Member. The amount of Basic Allowance is detailed in paragraph 1.0 of Schedule 'A' of this Scheme.
 - 4.2 This Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment expected of Members to enable them to carry out their duties effectively and to recognise that Members use their own homes and facilities in carrying out their work.
- 5.0 **Special Responsibility Allowance**
 - 5.1 Subject to paragraph 7.0 below, each Member who holds a special responsibility as specified within this Scheme, will normally receive a Special Responsibility Allowance as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of Schedule 'A' of this Scheme in addition to the Basic Allowance.
- 6.0 A Member (including a co-opted Member) may elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an Allowance under this Scheme. Such election shall be in the form of a written notice delivered to the Treasurer to the Authority (**Director of Corporate Services.**)

- 7.0 The provisions of this section shall regulate the entitlements of a Member (including a Co-opted Member) to Allowances where, in the course of a year:
- (a) The scheme is amended.
 - (b) A person becomes, or ceases to be, a Member.
 - (c) A Member accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a Special Responsibility Allowance is payable.
 - (d) A Member is suspended from the Authority.
- 7.1 If, during the year, the Scheme is amended and this results in a change to a Member's entitlement to a Special Responsibility Allowance and/or Basic Allowance and/or Co-optees' Allowance, the actual entitlement shall be based on:
- (a) A proportion of the original annual Allowance based on the number of days up to the date of amendment plus;
 - (b) A proportion of the revised annual Allowance based on the number of days from the date of amendment.
- 7.2 When the term of office of a Member either begins and/or ends during the course of a year, the entitlement to a Basic/Co-optees' Allowance shall be based on the number of days in office during that year. Similar pro rata entitlements will apply in situations where a Basic/Co-optees' Allowance is amended under sub-paragraph 7.1 above.
- 7.3 Where a Member has special responsibilities (as defined within this Scheme) for part of a year, the entitlement to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall be based on the number of days during that year that the Member has held such special responsibilities. The entitlement shall be pro rata to a full year. Similar pro rata entitlement will apply in situations where Special Responsibility Allowances have been amended under sub-paragraph 7.1 above.
- 7.4 A member must not receive an allowance from any other authority for his/her duties as a Member of the Combined Fire Authority.

8.0 Travel Allowances

- 8.1 Members (including Co-opted Members) may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary travelling expenses by public transport (at Standard Class), including the actual and receipted cost of taxi fares, where appropriate, incurred in order to undertake Authority business. ~~If travelling by rail, Members are entitled to travel first-class.~~

If air travel is required, prior approval of the Clerk should be obtained. In all circumstances, Members should demonstrate where necessary they have sought best value costings in respect of all travel expenses incurred in order to avoid incurring a disproportionate and unreasonable cost for the Authority, in the best interests of the efficiency and efficacy of the Authority and the Service.

- 8.2 Where a Member (including a Co-opted Member) uses his/her own motor car/motor cycle or bicycle, an appropriate mileage rate may be claimed. These mileage rates are set out in Schedule 'B' of this Scheme.

9.0 Subsistence Allowances

- 9.1 Subsistence Allowances are payable where such expenditure has been **actually and necessarily incurred** in the performance of an approved duty (as defined in Schedule C) where a ~~Member of the Authority-councillor~~ or co-opted member is absent from their normal place of residence.
- 9.2 Where the nature of the duties being undertaken result in a Member being absent overnight from ~~their his/her~~ usual place of residence, hotel accommodation will either be booked and paid for directly by the Authority or paid ~~for~~ by the Member and subsequently reimbursed based, on actual receipted expenditure. This reimbursement shall be subject to the **maximum** allowances detailed in paragraph 3.1 of Schedule 'B'.
- 9.3 In the case of an absence from the usual place of residence an appropriate subsistence allowance may be claimed in accordance with the rates of allowances set out in Schedule 'B' of this Scheme.
- 9.4 Subsistence allowances are not normally subject to taxation. However, where these allowances are paid for a period of attendance at the place where the meetings of the Authority or Committee normally take place, such payments are subject to tax and national insurance.
- 9.5 When main meals (i.e. full breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is entitlement to day subsistence, the actual cost of meals (based on receipted expenditure and including VAT) may be reimbursed in full, ~~provided Members can again demonstrate best value when incurring subsistence costs.~~
- 9.6 A Councillor or co-opted Member submitting a claim for subsistence allowances should, wherever possible, ~~demonstrate best value principles in the best interests of the efficiency and efficacy of the Service,~~ and produce receipts to accompany their claim in respect of expenditure incurred.

10.0 Co-optees' Allowance for Independent Person(s)

- 10.1 Subject to section 7.0 above, an annual Co-optees' Allowance shall be payable to the Independent Person(s) for attendance at meetings and conferences. The amount of this annual Allowance, which shall be the same for each Independent Person(s), is set out in paragraph 3.0 of Schedule 'A' of this Scheme.

11.0 Method of Payment

- 11.1 Payments of Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance and Co-optees' Allowance shall be made monthly in arrears by the last working day of each month. The monthly amount payable shall be one-twelfth of the annual allowance(s) specified in this Scheme and subject to paragraph 7.0 above.

- 11.2 Separately, individual claims for travel, subsistence and other incidental allowances shall be made on a monthly basis and be submitted to the Treasurer to the Authority as soon as possible at the end of each month. In particular, it should be noted that claims for allowances covering the period up to 31 March **must** be submitted to the Treasurer (**Director of Corporate Services**) by the end of May. Failure to submit these year-end claims within this time scale could result in **claims for payment being rejected. non-payment.**
- 11.3 Each travel and subsistence claim shall be certified by the claiming Member that **they he/she** **haves** not made and will not make any other claim in respect of the matter to which the claim relates otherwise than under this Scheme.
- 11.4 Claims received by the Treasurer (**Director of Corporate Services**) on or before the 6th **day** of each month will be paid with that month's end payment of Basic/Special Responsibility Allowance(s). Claims received after the 6th **day** of the month will be paid with the following month end payment.
- 11.5 Any claims that are over three months old will only be considered under exceptional circumstances, such as when the delay is due to absence through sickness. **Such claims may otherwise be rejected.**

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Members' Allowance Scheme

Schedule 'A'

1.0 Basic Allowance

An annual Basic Allowance of £3,289.95 is payable to each Member.

2.0 Special Responsibility Allowance

2.1 The individual annual Allowances are as follows:

<u>OFFICE</u>	£
Chair man of the Authority	19,105.38
Vice-Chair man of the Authority	9,553.96
Majority Opposition Group Spokesperson	4,777.00
Minority Opposition Group Spokesperson	3,821.58
North West Fire & Rescue Management Board Representative	1,471.76
Chair men of Resources, Planning, Performance and Audit Committee	2,387.89
Vice-Chair men of Resources, Planning, Performance and Audit Committee	1,193.95
Chair man of Appeals Committee and Member Training and Development Working Group	1,193.95
Vice-Chair man of Appeals Committee and Member Training and Development Working Group	597.59
Member Champions	1,193.95

3.0 Co-optees' Allowance for Independent Person(s)

An annual Co-optees' Allowance of £1,107.79 is payable to each Independent Person.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**Members' Allowance Scheme****Schedule 'B' – Travel and Subsistence Allowances****1.0 Travel Allowance – Mileage Rate**

1.1 The appropriate mileage rate for travel by a Member's own motor car is 45p per mile in line with the Lancashire County Council's rate and any future changes to the County Council's rate will be mirrored by changes in the CFA's rate.

1.2 The rate set out in 1.1 above may be increased by not more than the amount of any expenditure incurred on public transport, on tolls, ferries or parking fees, including overnight garaging.

~~1.3 The appropriate mileage rate for travel by a Member's own motor cycle or moped is 24p per mile in line with the Lancashire County Council's rate and any future changes to the County Council's rate will be mirrored by changes in the CFA's rate.~~

~~For the purposes of the rate specified in 1.1 and 1.3 above, the cylinder capacity (cc) shall be that entered in the vehicle registration book or document by the Secretary of State under the Vehicles (Excise) Act 1971.~~

1.3 The mileage rate for use of a bicycle is 20p per mile. This rate should be revised in accordance with the maximum allowance for Income Tax purposes as determined by HM Revenue and Customs. ~~the Inland Revenue.~~

2.0 Subsistence Allowances

2.1 Members may claim up to the maximum amounts of the following fixed allowances when absent for the period stated below from their normal place of residence; subject to costs being actually and necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties for and on behalf of the Authority:-

- a) a period less than 4 hours - £8.67
- b) a period between 4 and 8 hours - £17.24
- c) a period between 8 and 12 hours - £34.50
- d) a period in excess of 12 hours - £51.72

Actual expenditure in excess of £51.72 may be reimbursed subject to production of receipts.

These allowances shall be reviewed annually in line with the consumer price index as published in November of the preceding year. (As agreed at the CFA meeting held 20 June 2016.)

3.0 Overnight Allowance

3.1 Wherever possible, Members should organise their accommodation requirements through the Authority, which **should be** pre-booked and pre paid in advance.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible for the Authority to make a direct booking on behalf of a Member, the actual receipted cost of accommodation, including breakfast will be reimbursed to the Member. Such reimbursement will be subject to a maximum allowance per night of £198.14 for London and £172.51 elsewhere in the UK. These maximum allowances shall be reviewed annually in line with the consumer price index as published in November of the preceding year. (As agreed at the CFA meeting held 20 June 2016.)

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**Members' Allowance Scheme****Schedule 'C' – Travel and Subsistence – Approved Duties**

Appropriate travel and subsistence allowances may be claimed in accordance with the above details where such travelling and / or subsistence has been undertaken in connection with one or more of the following duties:

- (a) The attendance at a meeting of the Authority or of any Committee, Sub-Committee, Task Group, Working Group, Board, Forum, Panel or of any body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any Committee or Sub-Committee of such a body.
- (b) The attendance at any other meeting or event, the holding of which is authorised by the Authority, or a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority.
- (c) For the purposes of paragraphs (a) and (b) above, claims for travel and subsistence can only be made in respect of attendance at meetings of which the Councillor claiming is a Member.
- (d) The carrying out of any other duty approved by the Authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or any of its Committees or Sub-Committees. All duties which derive from a position of responsibility for which a Member receives a special responsibility allowance are approved duties for the purpose of this paragraph.
- (e) Members should not assume that they have the Authority's permission to attend any other meeting or event without the express permission of the Authority and permission should be sought in good time, prior to the meeting or event, in order to ensure contingency plans are in place, should the Authority not grant such permission. The Authority will be required to ensure that the proposed attendance is in the best interests of the Authority and its constitutional and legal obligations, as well as in the best interests of the efficiency, efficacy and betterment of the Service and the Authority.

Version 1 – wef: 01 April 2025 – figures for Schedule A require uplifting following confirmation of the employee pay settlement for 2025/26 which will take effect from 1 April 2025, Schedule B (no change) and Schedule C has been uplifted in line with CPI Inflation Rate at November 2024, 2.6%.

Version 2 – 07.04.25 Revision and amendment to main core terms and conditions of the Scheme, in accordance with best practice and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999.

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Member Champion Activity Report

Contact for further information – Assistant Chief Fire Officer Sam Pink

Tel: 01772 866802

Executive Summary

This paper provides a report on the work of the Member Champions for the period up to 27 February 2025.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information

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

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

- Community Safety –County Councillor John Singleton
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan MBE
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan
- Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions are provided on a regular basis to the Authority. During this period, all have undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference. Their activity to date is as follows:

Community Safety – County Councillor John Singleton

The Southern Area Community Fire Safety (CFS) team has intensified efforts to work with partner agencies that engage with and support young males living with mental health conditions. Following two fire fatalities and one gaining entry fatality, work between the CFS Team and the Chorley and South Ribble and West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership (CSP), has highlighted the vulnerability of these individuals, and how best to target them.

While the CFS Team represented the Fire Service at the Chorley and South Ribble CSP meeting, Pubwatch extended an invite to their next Proprietors Network in April, where approximately 30 licensees will share best practice in order to support the safety and wellbeing of pub-goers and local communities. It is anticipated that as some lone males frequently attend these local pubs, the CFS Team could raise awareness via the Network by obtaining their assistance to help get important fire safety messages out to this vulnerable group.

Continuing with efforts to reach lone males, the CFA Team attended Bamber Bridge Men's Shed; a community space where men can enjoy practical hobbies, make friends, and learn and share skills. During the visit, the Team delivered a quiz and held a forum specifically designed to engage the group's interest in fire safety. The visit was very well received and lots of discussion was prompted; a brilliant social media post was also sent out following the visit to advertise the excellent work which had been done.

To engage further with lone males, the CFA Team have also been working with 'Andy's Man Club' and 'Strongmen'; a charity that supports men following bereavement. They have also been working closely with veteran groups across the Southern Area with the overarching aim to increase referrals and reduce the number of incidents.

On Wednesday, 19 March 2025, the CFS Team attended the National Social Prescribing Day at Chorley Town Hall. Approximately six years ago, social prescribing – which is a key component in NHS England's Universal Personalised Care Plan – was introduced to Chorley. The aim of the approach is to enable pathways to connect people to activities, groups and services in their community, in order to meet practical, social and emotional needs that effect their health and wellbeing, such as loneliness, debt, or stress due to financial pressures or poor housing.

This year, the annual event was held to celebrate the people, organisations and communities that make social prescribing happen. The event was well attended by both public and partners, and on the day the Team raised awareness of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) services and activities, and generated five Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referrals. It was also an ideal opportunity to provide those who attended with safe cooking advice, as it fell within the cooking campaign period. Since social prescribing started in Chorley, the CFS Team have developed strong ties with the link workers, who make very high-quality referrals and provide mutual support during joint 'Safe and Well' visits.



To note, CFS teams in general have received an increased number of referrals for patients on end-of-life care. These referrals are often received due to an increase in the amount of hospital equipment they have at home including, in some cases, the introduction of oxygen. Teams have reported feeling uncomfortable at times or have

struggled to know how to communicate best with family members and loved ones of someone receiving this form of care. So, training has been secured in order to assist learning and understanding of how to have difficult conversations under stressful and upsetting circumstances.

Also, within this last reporting period, the CFS Team attended St Catherine's Hospice to complete their 'Last Days Matter' training delivered by hospice volunteers. The training was completed alongside care agency staff and nursing professionals and touched on the many aspects of end-of-life care, and how those caring for someone can be supported.

In addition, over the course of the training, the Team were made aware of the bereavement café led by volunteers. This information was especially important as statistically, after the loss of a loved one, some people can be left feeling isolated and alone, which can increase vulnerability of fire risk. Therefore, as part of a broader strategy, conversations are taking place for the CFS Team to visit more regularly and raise awareness to those who might otherwise have limited access to targeted fire safety information, such as knowledge of our HFSC.

To conclude, at Olive High School in Burnley, the CFS Team were invited by health partners to deliver a presentation to parents and guardians on fire safety, in particular; smoke alarm maintenance, cooking safely, how to escape plan and contacting emergency services.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan MBE

Over the last quarter, representatives from the Service have been actively engaging with employees and communities in various ways.

To reduce accidental home fires, we continue to target at risk groups, including those affected by age, disability, and lifestyle. Recently, the Southern Area CFS team attended the Edge Hill University Freshers Fayre, focussing on the risks to young people, promoting awareness about drink driving, and providing fire safety advice tailored to students. A crashed car display reinforced the message.

The Service also remains focussed on reducing the frequency and severity of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), especially among young people. This quarter, the Service participated in a media interview with That's Lancashire TV to highlight its role in educating road users. Two Wasted Lives sessions were delivered at Springfields and West Lancs College to provide real life insights into RTC consequences. A multi-agency event at Burnley College featured a demonstration of an RTC and focused on the 'Fatal 5' causes of fatal collisions.

The 2024 Bright Sparx campaign ran from 01 October to 18 November, targeting the Bonfire Night period. Demographic data from district profiles was used to strategically target the most vulnerable members of the community.

The Service is enhancing accessibility across the Service. Co-Pilot software and dyslexia support tools are being trialled, and Articulate software has been purchased to make e-learning more accessible. The Service is working towards a bronze level accreditation as a Dyslexia Friendly Workplace with the British Dyslexia Association.

Additionally, Human Resources has created an 'Everything You Need to Know' document to support candidates through the recruitment process.

Following input from the Race and Religion Employee Voice Group, a new translation app has been rolled out, replacing the previous limited version. This will increase the number of languages available. A name badge trial has been introduced to highlight staff language skills to members of the public, further strengthening engagement and communication with the public.

A positive action recruitment event was delivered at the Learning and Development Centre on 8 March 2025, International Women's Day, promoting employment opportunities with LFRS.

Promoting health and wellbeing, a wellbeing update session was delivered to all Flexi-Duty Officers (FDOs) as part of the Flexi Friday programme, with each officer receiving a 'red bag' containing key wellbeing resources.

This quarter, the Service raised awareness for Stammering Awareness Day and Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week, sharing information via the Engine House.

The Service continues to invest in facilities; the welfare facility upgrades at Blackpool are due for completion in July 2025 and minor works at Preston Fire Station are underway.

In identifying ways to improve our organisational culture, a gap analysis was conducted to compare our position against the recommendations from South Wales and Dorset and Wiltshire culture reports. Any learning from culture reports feeds into our Departmental and Training and Organisational Development Plans.

Health, Wellbeing and Climate Change – County Councillor Hasina Khan

We continue to promote awareness around food waste, encouraging staff to make sure all food is removed to the new food waste bin before washing up or putting in the dishwasher.

The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024 provides details of the six recyclable waste streams which are plastic, paper and card, glass, metal, food waste and garden waste. From the 31 March 2025, organisations with 10 or more full-time employees must separate food waste and dry recyclables for collection. This is to avoid as much food waste as possible ending up in landfill.

Service Headquarters (SHQ), Leadership and Development Centre (LDC) and all wholetime stations will have to collect food waste separately in specific caddies, which will be provided via the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Department's waste contract management process. Food waste collections will be arranged to start in time for the 31 March 2025 and posters will be updated sharing further details for this.

Food waste on LFRS sites is not additional to our usual waste and, although concerns have been expressed by stations, that food waste will be left in internal bins overnight or in external bins for up to a week between collections, this is no different to the waste management process now. The only difference is that food waste is currently not separated from other waste. Whilst this legislation does mean an increase in the number of bins, it does not mean an increase in waste. Going forward, this waste will also contribute to our recycling percentage as it will no longer be disposed of as general waste and will therefore help achieve, SHE Objectives and Actions.

The last quarter has been spent focusing on the 'health' element of Health and Wellbeing; exploring the link between physical health and mental health.

In December/January we rolled out new functional fitness kit (dumbbells, adjustable benches, resistance bands) to LFRS owned gyms. We also completed the first phase of a cardio fitness equipment replacement programme, for those pieces of fitness equipment that are over 10years old or no longer financially viable to repair. 'Circuit cards' will shortly be introduced to all stations, to supplement the installation of functional fitness kit, to provide staff with guidance of how to use the kit and encourage staff to maintain good levels of functional fitness.

One of our Service Personal Training Instructors (PTIs) is also a Yoga Instructor, so we were fortunate to be able to host a yoga session in February, which was streamed over Teams so colleagues across the Service could join in wherever they were. The session was also recorded, to enable those who were not able to join at the time to access it at a time convenient to them.

We have facilitated two Fire Fighters Charity accompanied wellness workshops, linking both mental and physical health together. These workshops were Promoting Relaxation and Managing Stress, providing an opportunity for staff to gain an understanding of how relaxation techniques can help reduce or manage stress, and the impact that can have on their physical health as well as their mental health. Over the next 12 months we will continue to facilitate similar workshops to promote personal resilience and provide support to staff, across the whole of the Service.

Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson

Between September to December 2024, five young people tragically lost their lives on Lancashire's roads. This prompted a significant focus on road safety in our 16 to 25 age groups, mainly in colleges.

The first event took place on the dangers of reckless driving at Burnley Fire Station. This involved Green Watch Firefighter Gervaise and Firefighter Buck who spent a morning in January delivering the Wasted Lives initiative to a group of forensic science students in a classroom-based setting. The session was well received, with all students fully engaged. As well as contributing to the knowledge they required for their course, they also learnt valuable life-skills from the perspective of better road safety understanding.



The second, larger event took place at Lancaster and Morecambe College. This was a multi-agency event organised via the Fire Service, consisting of a number of road safety organisations in a 'marketplace' setting.

At the event, the Community Fire Safety team utilised the crashed car display to create an impactful visual for students to observe. Lancashire County Council provided virtual reality headsets for students to listen to important safety messages about the dangers of drink and drug driving.

Westgate Tyres also kindly supported the event and provided tyre safety advice. The day was rounded off with students receiving important fire safety information via fire crew members from Lancaster and Morecambe.

On the day, feedback from staff and students was very favourable. More than 400 students attended, and Safeguarding Lead, Beverley Martingale, said of the event, "It just gets better every year".



The largest event to run was at Myerscough College, where more than 600 students had timetables rescheduled in order to observe and take part in a 90-minute Road Safety Roadshow.

The event started off in the drama theatre with a 30 minute Wasted Lives presentation. Students were then chaperoned to the marketplace area, where they watched a coordinated Road Traffic Collision (RTC) demonstration via the On-Call crew from Garstang Fire Station. Afterwards, they were able to see the aftermath and causes through the impactful nature of the crashed car display. A number of partner agencies were also in attendance, delivering important safety messages and raising awareness of services. In particular, the event was supported by the LFRS Community Fire Safety Team, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service.

The event was another huge success for this reporting period, and we intend to roll out the model in 2025/26. Feedback from Emily Curtis, Student Services, was: "It was a fantastic day, it gave the students a fantastic, informative and educational experience".



Business risk

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

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

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

Some Member and Officer time commitments.

Financial implications

Activities are within budget.

Legal implications

None identified.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**List of background papers**

Paper:

Date:

Contact: ACFO Samantha Pink

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Fire Protection Report

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

Executive Summary

This report summarises Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences, in addition to convictions resulting from arson incidents which have been progressed via the criminal justice process.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Fire Safety Convictions

Prosecution Case Progress

LFRS currently have two cases relating to the same premises within the court system. These relate to two responsible persons at a care and nursing home. One case has been moved to sentencing on the 7 May 2025 at the Magistrates Court. The second case had a dismissal hearing on the 24 March 2025 at Crown Court. The dismissal hearing application was not upheld with the defendant now due at a pre-trial hearing on the 6 June 2025 at Crown Court prior to trial, set for the 28 July 2025.

One further case is set for trial on the 14 July 2025 relating to student accommodation.

LFRS have recently issued summons for two cases, one relating to a commercial car parts/garage premises and the other relating to two House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) premises owned by the same person.

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to sixteen premises where offences are believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005, which include the following:

- Care and Nursing Home x 1
- House in Multiple Occupation x 3
- Residential Flats x 1
- Mixed commercial and Residential x 6
- Commercial but not residential (Used for sleeping) x 1
- Nightclub x 1
- Healthcare setting x 1
- Hotel x 1
- Supported Living x 1

Arson Risk Reduction

R v Craig Newman

Address - Alexandra Street, Preston

Date and Time of Call – 14/12/2023, 01:42

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a two storey mid-terrace house which caused severe damage to the staircase and moderate damage to the remainder of the property. The adjoining properties were occupied at the time of the incident.

The occupier of the property was charged with arson reckless as to whether life endangered and was sentenced to 32 months in prison.

R v Amanda O'Brian

Address – Imperial Street, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 28/05/2024, 01:57

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a two storey mid-terrace house. Evidence indicated the fire was caused by the ignition of combustible items located close to the front door inside the property. The fire caused severe damage to the entire property and contents. The adjoining properties were occupied at the time of the incident.

The defendant was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

R v Finlay Cunningham

Address – Hollin Bridge Street, Blackburn

Date and Time of Call – 25/05/2023, 02:21

This incident involved an ignited piece of material inside a 'baked bean sized' tin which was thrown in the direction of the rear of a domestic property. The fire was extinguished by the occupant before the arrival of the Fire Service. The material from the tin had burnt but there was no damage to the property because the items thrown did not come into contact with the building or hit the building and bounced off. The tin and material were seized by Lancashire Constabulary and subsequently sent for ignitable liquid residue analysis. The results indicated the tin and contents were contaminated with an ignitable liquid, most likely being white spirit.

The defendant was charged with arson and received 10 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months.

There are another 14 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that we are continuing to progress.

Business risk

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

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

No

HR implications

None

Financial implications

None

Legal implications

Failure of Responsible Persons to meet new legislative requirements placed upon them, may result in LFRS undertaking additional prosecution cases in future.

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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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Operational Incidents Of Interest

Contact for further information – Assistant Chief Fire Officer Samantha Pink
Tel: 01772 866802

Executive Summary

This report provides Members with information relating to operational incidents of interest since the last report to the Authority.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Information

This report provides Members with information relating to operational incidents of interest. This has been a busy operational period, therefore the report details only the larger deployments or more complex incidents attended. As a result, some incidents that Members have been made aware of locally, may not form part of the report.

The following summarises the incidents with further detail provided within the body of the paper:

- Commercial building fire in Lancaster (8/2/25)
- Derelict Building Fire in Skelmersdale (19/2/25)
- Domestic building fire in Barnoldswick (25/2/25)
- Electric car fire in Haslingden (4/3/25)
- Electric LGV fire in Chorley (4/3/25)
- Domestic building fire in Preston (9/3/25)
- Rescue of persons from water in Lancaster (15/3/25)
- Building fire in Blackpool (27/3/25)
- Road Traffic Collision in Clitheroe (30/3/25)
- Commercial building fire in Blackburn (31/3/25)

LFRS station area:	N11 Lancaster
Date:	8 February 2025
Time:	12:55

At 12:55 hours on 8 February 2025, several fire engines and an Aerial Ladder Platform from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), attended an incident on Parliament Street, Lancaster. The fire involved the roof of a commercial building consisting of five floors. Firefighters used three jets and an Aerial Ladder Platform to extinguish the fire and were detained for approximately three hours.

LFRS station area:	S56 Skelmersdale
Date:	19 February 2025
Time:	20:50

On Wednesday 19 February 2025, four fire engines from Skelmersdale, LFRS and Wigan, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue, an Aerial Ladder Platform from Preston and a water bowser from Leyland fire stations, attended a fire involving a derelict property on Beacon Lane in Dalton. On scene fire crews utilised two hose reels, a water tower and 1 handheld jet to fight the fire. Crews also used Holmatro cutting equipment while on scene. Crews remained on scene overnight to bring the incident to a successful conclusion.

LFRS station area:	P93 Barnoldswick
Date:	25 February 2025
Time:	22:22

At 22:22 hours Tuesday 25 February 2025, three fire engines from Barnoldswick, Earby and Colne attended an incident on Queen Street, Barnoldswick. The fire involved the ground floor of a domestic property. Firefighters wearing breathing apparatus used one positive pressure ventilation fan to clear heavy smoke logging. LFRS gave first aid to one casualty before the casualty was handed into the care of North West Ambulance Service. Fire crews were in attendance for three hours and ten minutes.

LFRS station area:	N11 Lancaster
Date:	28 February 2025
Time:	13:06

At 13:06 hours on 28 February 2025, four fire engines from Lancaster, Morecambe, Bolton le Sands and Carnforth attended a vehicle fire on the M6 southbound between junctions thirty-five and thirty-four. One casualty was treated for burns by ambulance crews and air ambulance doctors at the scene, and then air lifted to hospital. Firefighters were on scene for two hours fifty minutes.

LFRS station area:	P75 Haslingden
Date:	4 March 2025
Time:	10:03

At 10:03 hours Tuesday 4 March 2025 four fire engines, two from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue from Bury, Ramsbottom, and two from LFRS from Hyndburn and Rawtenstall attended an incident off Bentwood Road, Haslingden, Rossendale. The fire involved an electric hybrid car. Fire crews used four breathing apparatus, two hose reels and one water curtain to extinguish the fire and mitigate and damage to nearby buildings. Crews were in attendance for six hours and thirty five minutes.

LFRS station area:	S54 Chorley
Date:	4 March 2025
Time:	10:51

At 10:51 hours Tuesday 4 March 2025 two fire engines from Chorley attended an incident off Friday Street, Chorley. The fire involved an electric refuse wagon. Fire service used foam to cool and extinguish the fire and a thermal imaging camera to identify hot spots. Crews were in attendance for approximately three hours and thirty minutes.

LFRS station area:	C50 Preston
Date:	9 March 2025
Time:	21:45

At 21:45 hours on the 9 March 2025 five fire engines from Preston, Penwortham, Longridge and Blackpool along with the aerial appliances from Blackpool, Preston and Hyndburn with their support pumps attended an incident on Wellington Road, Preston. Fire crews attend a fire involving a domestic property. One casualty suffering burns to upper body was taken to hospital. Fire crews used six breathing apparatus, three hose reel jets, two thermal imaging cameras, a smoke curtain, two positive pressure ventilation fans and a 10.5 meter ladder to extinguish the fire and safely bring the incident to a conclusion. Fire crews remained on scene into the next day.

LFRS station area:	N11 Lancaster
Date:	15 March 2025
Time:	12:04

At 12:04 hours on 15 March 2025, four fire engines from Lancaster, Morecambe, Hornby and Carnforth along with the boat from Preston with supporting appliances from Preston and a further appliance from Lancaster and the drone attended Halton Road, Lancaster. Fire service personnel Swift Water Rescue Technicians rescued two casualties who were stranded on an island off the river Lune due to the tide coming in using one rescue sled. Fire crews were on scene for approximately one hour.

LFRS station area:	W30 Blackpool
Date:	27 March 2025
Time:	15:07

On 27 March 2025 at 15:07 hours four fire engines from South Shore, Bispham, St Annes and Blackpool and Aerial Ladder Platform from Blackpool attended Park View Court, Blackpool. The fire involved flat roof on block of flats consisting of three floors. Fire service used six breathing apparatus, one main jet, one 13.5 metre ladder and two hose reels to bring the incident under control. The incident required a multi agency response including local authorities.

LFRS station area:	E91 Clitheroe
Date:	30 March 2025
Time:	10:23

At 10:23 on the 30 March 2025, fire crews from Clitheroe, Hyndburn and Bamber Bridge along with the Urban Search and Rescue unit responded to a Road Traffic Collision that resulted in a tractor in a ditch. One casualty was suffering from a cardiac arrest whilst still in the vehicle. Fire crews extricated the casualty alongside North West Ambulance Service staff. These efforts did result in a pulse being regained. The casualty was conveyed to hospital via air ambulance. Fire crews were in attendance for approximately one hour and forty minutes.

LFRS station area:	E71 Blackburn
Date:	31 March 2025
Time:	00:45

At 00:45 hours on Monday 31 March 2025, ten fire engines from fire stations across LFRS along with special appliances and a number of officers attended a fire on Sett End Road West, Blackburn. Fire service personnel used Water Towers and Aerial Ladder Platforms to extinguish and suppress the fire. Handheld jets and ground monitors were also used. The High Volume Pump was also established to supply water to the incident ground. The Command Unit and welfare unit supported the protracted incident. Crews remained in attendance for two days. In the early stages this was declared a Major Incident before being stood down once the incident became stabilised.

Business risk

None.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

Potential impact on local environment in relation to operational incidents. Significant incidents benefit from the attendance of specialist water towers and the hazardous materials unit both of which have positive impacts on firefighting operations and reduce environmental impacts.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

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

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: Insert Exemption Clause