

Public Document Pack

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 15 December 2025 in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton commencing at 10.30 am

Car parking is available on the Main Drill ground.

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

Rooms have been made available for Political Group meetings from **0900 hours** onwards, and tea/coffee will be available in the Canteen from **0845 hours**.

Reform UK – Pendle Room

Labour Group – Lancaster House 4

Conservative Group – Lancaster House 5

Progressive Lancashire – Lancaster House 6

Agenda

Part 1 (open to press and public)

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

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

1. 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 - 12)

5. Minutes of meeting Wednesday 3 September 2025 of Performance Committee (Pages 13 - 44)

6. Minutes of meeting Wednesday 24 September 2025 of Resources Committee (Pages 45 - 56)

7. **Minutes of meeting Thursday 23 October 2025 of Member Training and Development Working Group (Pages 57 - 66)**
8. **Minutes of meeting Monday 17 November 2025 of Planning Committee (Pages 67 - 80)**
9. **Minutes of meeting Wednesday 26 November 2025 of Resources Committee (Pages 81 - 92)**
10. **Proposed amendments to Strategy Group Terms of Reference (Pages 93 - 96)**
11. **Community Risk Management Plan pre-consultation (Pages 97 - 106)**
12. **Governance Review (Pages 107 - 110)**
13. **Member Champion Activity Report (Pages 111 - 116)**
14. **Fire Protection Reports (Pages 117 - 120)**
15. **Operational Incidents of Interest (Pages 121 - 124)**
16. **Celebrating our people (Pages 125 - 128)**
17. **Member Complaints**

Standing item.
18. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Authority will be held on **Monday 23 February 2026** at 1030 hours at Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.
19. **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.
20. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Authority is asked to consider whether, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, they consider that the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.
21. **Notes of Strategy Meeting held 3 November 2025 (Pages 129 - 140)**

(Paragraph 3)

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 15 September 2025 at 10.30 am in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton

Minutes

Present:

G Mirfin (Chair)

Councillors

A Ali OBE

U Arif

S Asghar

A Blake

M Clifford

I Duxbury

J Fox

D Howarth

J Hugo

L Hutchinson

F Jackson

Z Khan MBE

G Mirfin

L Parker

A Riggott

M Ritson

S Sidat MBE

D Smith

J Tetlow

R Walsh

19-25/26	Chair's Welcome and Introduction
	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and congratulated all members, firefighters, officers and the Chief Fire Officer on a fantastic His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) report.</p> <p>The Chair provided statistics relating to new housing targets across the county and explained that the target for Lancashire was to build over 4000 new homes, which could impact response times should fair funding not be agreed for all fire authorities. The chair therefore proposed a motion, discussion ensued, and it was agreed that the motion would be considered under urgent business further in the agenda, subject to the motion being justified as an item of urgent business, upon advice from the Clerk to the Authority.</p>
20-25/26	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillors N Alderson, J Ash and P Buckley and Councillor G Baker.
21-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests
	It was agreed that the disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests would be revisited later in the agenda once the details of the motion were known.
22-25/26	Minutes of Previous Meeting

	Resolved: That the Minutes of the CFA held on 23 June 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.
23-25/26	Minutes of meeting Wednesday 2 July 2025 of Performance Committee
	<p>County Councillor E Worthington remarked that the meeting had been very productive and congratulated the team at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) on it's outstanding performance. County Councillor J Tetlow added that the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service (HMICFRS) results were an amazing achievement. The Chair added that the service had received the best results across the country.</p> <p>County Councillor D Howarth left the meeting at 11am.</p> <p>County Councillor M Clifford added that the next HMICFRS inspection would continue to focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and training should be carried out for members to ensure the service remained as outstanding in its next inspection.</p> <p>County Councillor D Howarth re-joined the meeting and County Councillor L Parker left the meeting at 11:02am.</p> <p>Resolved: That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 2 July 2025 be noted and endorsed.</p>
24-25/26	Minutes of meeting Tuesday 8 July 2025 of Resources Committee
	<p>County Councillor A Ali remarked that the meeting had been a good introductory meeting and the services treasury management strategy was good with investment in the right places. He thanked officers for producing the reports.</p> <p>County Councillor L Parker re-joined the meeting at 11:03am.</p> <p>Resolved: That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 8 July 2025 be noted and endorsed.</p>
25-25/26	Minutes of meeting Monday 14 July 2025 of Planning Committee
	<p>County Councillor I Duxbury remarked that the service had received a positive HMICFRS inspection result, the planning committee had reviewed the services blue light collaboration and annual service report during a productive and instructive meeting. County Councillor S Asghar added that the first meeting went well and received good engagement. County Councillor J Tetlow added that members of the public might not realise how much the service was involved with supporting other blue light services, with community first responders attending incidents to support the ambulance service and provide lifesaving support.</p> <p>County Councillor A Blake left the meeting at 11:06am.</p> <p>The Chair remarked that committees were important to the work of the authority.</p>

	<p>Resolved: That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 14 July 2025 be noted and endorsed.</p>
26-25/26	<p>Minutes of meeting Wednesday 16 July 2025 of Audit Committee</p>
	<p>County Councillor A Blake re-joined the meeting at 11:07.</p> <p>County Councillor M Clifford remarked that the internal audit annual report had received lots of substantial reassurances which was very positive.</p> <p>Resolved: That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 16 July 2025 be noted and endorsed.</p>
27-25/26	<p>Membership of Committees 2025/26</p>
	<p>The Clerk to the Authority presented the report to members. The Combined Fire Authority was required to confirm the membership of committees in accordance with the political balance rules set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.</p> <p>This meant that the makeup of each committee must reflect the proportions of seats held on the Combined Fire Authority by each political group. The composition of each committee was set out within the report.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted and endorsed the membership of the committees of the Combined Fire Authority for 2025/26.</p>
28-25/26	<p>Proposed amendment to Strategy Terms of Reference</p>
	<p>The Clerk to the Authority presented a report for Members to consider amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Strategy Group to reflect its expanding remit and ensure the Group maintained its principle aims and objectives to suit the changing needs of the Authority.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor M Clifford, the Clerk advised members that a further amendment would be required to clarify the confidentiality of the group.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor J Hugo relating to the notes of the Strategy Group being included as a part two item, the Clerk advised that the notes had been included to allow newer members to understand the business transacted and for transparency.</p> <p>County Councillor D Howarth remarked that the item should be agreed in principle with the terms of reference brought back to the next full authority meeting in December with new wording relating to confidentiality.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority approved the amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Strategy Group.</p>

29-25/26	Proposed amendment to Member's Code of Conduct
	<p>County Councillor E Worthington left the meeting at 11:15am.</p> <p>The Clerk to the Authority presented the report to members.</p> <p>Whilst the current Code was fit for purpose and remained relevant, having been based on a model Code recommended by the Local Government Association, the Committee on Standards in Public Life recently published a report called “Leading in Practice” which outlined guidance into building an ethical culture within public organisations. The previous upgrade of the Code for the most part pre-empted the recommendations made by the Committee, subsequently, save and except for a very minor addition, which was now corrected.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority approved the amendments to the Terms of Reference for the Strategy Group.</p>
30-25/26	Member Champion Activity Report
	<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 Andy Blake • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Salim Sidat • Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Sohail Asghar • Road Safety – County Councillor Jordan Fox. <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 14 September 2025. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference.</p> <p>Member Champions went through the detail of their reports and expressed thanks to the officers who supported them in their roles.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted and endorsed the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.</p>
31-25/26	Fire Protection Reports
	<p>The report summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences.</p> <p>On 26 June 2025 sentencing took place at Preston Crown Court for the responsible person (Mr Shahzad Syed Haider) for breaches of the Fire Safety Order at a commercial car parts /garage premises in Blackburn. This incident also</p>

involved a fire death on the premises. Mr Shahzad Syed Haider was sentenced to:

- 9 months imprisonment suspended for 18 months
- 100 hours community service
- £10,000 costs.

On 26 June 2025 sentencing also took place at Preston Crown Court for the responsible person (Mr Sean Broadhurst) and company (St Lukes (Preston) Ltd) for breaches of the Fire Safety Order at a set of residential flats in Preston. The sentencing outcomes were as follows:

- Sean Broadhurst was fined £17,000 and £14,161.66 costs.
- St Lukes (Preston) Ltd were fined £60,000 and £14,161.66 costs.

On 11 July 2025 Fire Safety Officers attended Preston Crown Court for an outcome appeal by Fylde Fire Systems who were sentenced on 7 May 2025. Fylde Fire Systems Limited were originally sentenced and received the following sanctions due to their actions at the Morvern Care Home, Thornton-Cleveleys.

- A fine of £30,000, and a £2,000 victim surcharge.
- Ordered to pay £18,725 in costs to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Judge upheld the initial fine and costs to Fylde Fire Systems, a reduction in the victim's surcharge was awarded.

Three cases sat within the court system.

Members also noted there had been four arson convictions during the quarter resulting in a number of suspended sentences. There were 18 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System.

County Councillor M Clifford remarked that it was disappointing that convictions had resulted in suspended sentences but acknowledged that this was outside of the services control. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) explained that it was positive that all cases had resulted in a guilty plea based on the strength of evidence provided which was testament to Area Manager Matt Hamer and the team.

In response to a question from County Councillor M Ritson in relation to responsible persons with cases in the court system, Area Manager Matt Hamer confirmed that the protection team engaged with responsible persons and utilised companies house and the land registry to identify and inspect other properties with the same responsible person. This often required collaborative working with other fire and rescue services and local authorities.

In response to a further question from County Councillor M Ritson in relation to sharing details of cases within the court system, Area Manager Matt Hamer confirmed that details of live cases could not be shared but press releases were prepared once sentencing had taken place and these could be shared with members.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

32-25/26	Operational Incidents of Interest
	<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"> • Derelict building fire in Burnley (31/5/25) • Commercial building fire in Hornby (5/6/25) • Commercial building fire in Preesall (18/6/25) • Commercial building fire in Blackpool (21/6/25) • Major entrapment in Carnforth (23/06/25) • Commercial building fire in Morecambe (13/7/25) • Road Traffic Collision in Bacup (22/7/25) • Road Traffic Collision in Blackburn (22/7/25) • Domestic building fire in Blackpool (31/7/25) • Waste fire in Chorley (2/8/25) <p>Members noted a correction to the report with the final waste fire incident having taken place in Chorley rather than Leyland as stated in the report.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor D Howarth in relation to the challenges of responding to waste fires, the ACFO explained that waste fires can be challenging incidents requiring a multi-agency response.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.</p>
33-25/26	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Update
	<p>The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the report to member to provide an update on Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS's) HMICFRS Round 3 inspection report findings, and the national results.</p> <p>LFRS had been awarded an unprecedented six 'Outstanding' and five 'Good' ratings across all the 11 inspection areas. This remarkable achievement included being the only service in the country to receive a minimum rating of 'Good' across every category. LFRS had received the best ratings of any fire and rescue service in England.</p> <p>Area Manager Tom Powell and Group Manager Emma Price gave a presentation to members on the HMICFRS inspection and results.</p> <p>LFRS HMICFRS Round 3 inspection commenced on 20 January 2025, initiated by a request for a collection of documents, a self-assessment and three surveys (staff survey, human resources survey and a trade union survey) to assist with preparation for the fieldwork phase of the inspection. The inspection lasted</p>

several weeks and included staff engagement across the organisation, from Firefighter to Chief Fire Officer, inspectors visited a number of fire stations and departments, hosted staff focus groups and analysed numerous data sets and documents. HMICFRS inspectors also engaged with some of the services partner organisations and visited North West Fire Control.

As part of the inspection, a strategic brief was presented by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Charters, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Steve Healey, and Director of People and Development (DoPD) Liz Sandiford. It was an opportunity for the Service to brief the HMI and Service Liaison Lead, providing a summary of performance, achievements, and work completed on previous areas of improvement. Following the brief, the Chair of the Fire Authority was interviewed.

The feedback from the HMICFRS inspectors acknowledged that every staff member they interacted with was highly engaging, and they felt genuinely welcomed throughout the organisation.

In mid-June the Service received the draft inspection report, which afforded the opportunity to conduct factual accuracy checks. The official report was released publicly on 14 August 2025 along with a HMICFRS press release.

LFRS attained two Outstanding ratings in the People pillar during the inspection, making it the only service in the country to receive Outstanding in this category. LFRS were among only 3 services, out of a total of 44, that attained an Outstanding rating in protection, understanding risk, and making best use of resources. Five areas of promising practice were also recognised in the report.

The Inspectorate praised the Service for its excellent performance and recognised LFRS's commitment to continuous improvement, the Service's collaborative approach with partners, and the Service's ability to adapt to new challenges and legislation. The Service's commitment to inclusivity, staff wellbeing, and community engagement were also highlighted as sector leading.

One area for improvement was identified which was that the Service should make sure it had robust processes in place to carry out equality impact assessments and review any actions agreed as a result. This was an area that the Service had done a lot of work in, and work was ongoing to track and report progress. Progress against this area for improvement would be reported into Planning Committee.

HMICFRS had published their inspection schedule for 2025-27, the dates for the inspection programme would be released in three phases. The first inspections of the new round had recently commenced. Currently, LFRS were listed as the last service to undergo inspection, which was anticipated to take place around Spring 2027, although this was subject to potential amendments.

The 2025-27 inspection programme would involve a number of changes from the previous round, there would be some focus on the impact of governance on fire and rescue services, impact of leadership at all levels, a review of benefit realisation from projects, and a reduction in inspection areas from 11 to 10. The

Service continued to engage with the Service Liaison Lead from HMICFRS.

In response to a question from County Councillor L Parker in relation to learning from other services who had received outstanding in areas Lancashire had not, Area Manager Tom Powell explained that as HMICFRS reports were published, they would be reviewed and benchmarking exercises undertaken to further improve the service.

County Councillor A Riggott congratulated the Chief Fire Officer and wider Authority and suggested that a copy of the HMICFRS report be sent to the former chairs and vice-chairs of the authority, former County Councillors Nikki Hennessy, Sean Serridge, David O'Toole and John Shedwick. County Councillor A Riggott then asked where progress against the area for improvement would be tracked. The CFO confirmed that progress against the area for improvement would be reported into the Planning Committee and the Clerk to the Authority added that the minutes from the Planning Committee would then be reported into the full CFA Meeting, for commentary by the Authority, in due course.

The CFO explained that the focus of the next HMICFRS inspection would include the impact of governance on the effective running of the service, the effectiveness of leadership at all levels and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) benefits. The Service would also focus on the one area of improvement identified in this inspection and would continue lobbying for sustainable funding for all fire and rescue services.

In response to a question from Councillor J Hugo in relation to the impact of equality impact assessments (EIAs), Area Manager Tom Powell explained that examples of when EIAs were used were at the start of a new project or when new equipment was introduced to assess and understand the impact on staff members and the public. He explained that the outcome of an EIA may impact the approach taken. The CFO added that the service was happy with its use of EIAs but the systems and processes needed to be reviewed to ensure EIAs were properly documented.

County Councillor M Ritson left the meeting at 11:56am.

County Councillor M Clifford congratulated the service on its positive HMICFRS result and thanked former County Councillors David O'Toole, John Shedwick, Nikki Hennessy and Sean Serridge.

County Councillor M Ritson rejoined the meeting at 11:58am.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to the two outstanding gradings achieved in the people section, Area Manager Tom Powell explained that the feedback received from the HMICFRS inspectors was that they felt very welcomed to the Service by everyone they met. He explained that a lot of work had been done to engage and develop staff whilst being open and honest and to get the right people in the right roles. The CFO added that lots of work had been done through the services EDI Culture Board with the service learning from culture and misconduct reviews and other services and ensuring that leadership

	<p>and cultural expectations and standards were clear across the Service.</p> <p>County Councillor E Worthington left the meeting at 12:05pm.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that the service could look at commercialisation to generate income and sessions could be held for staff and members to discuss opportunities to save money. The CFO confirmed that work was ongoing with a series of workshops being held for leaders to generate efficiency ideas and members could be involved through the Strategy Group Meetings.</p> <p>County Councillor E Worthington rejoined the meeting at 12:08pm.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted the report.</p>
34-25/26	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>
35-25/26	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 15 December 2025 at 10:30am at the Training Centre, Euxton.</p>
36-25/26	Urgent Business
	<p>Proposal of Motion</p> <p>Following discussion earlier in the agenda, the following motion was proposed by the Chair.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fire Authority to ask the Director of Corporate Services to explore opportunities under CIL / Section 106 and provide information back to the CFA at the next meeting (15 December 2025), specifically writing to Planning Authorities, including Unitary Planning Authorities, for information and a view as to the funding arrangements. 2. Additionally, to write to the Fire Minister to explore conversations relating to Fair Funding for the Combined Fire Authority. 3. To ask the Chair, Vice Chair, and Chief Fire Officer to lobby Lancashire MPs in relation to the Fair Funding Review. <p>In response to a question from County Councillor A Riggott, the Chair confirmed that the County Councils Planning Authority was also included.</p> <p>County Councillor A Ali proposed an amendment to point 2 of the motion as follows.</p>

	<p>2. Additionally, to write to the Fire Minister to ask for a meeting to explore conversations relating to Fair Funding for the Combined Fire Authority.</p> <p>The proposed amendment was accepted by the Chair.</p> <p>Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests Following the notice of motion the following members declared non-pecuniary interests relating to their roles within other councils; Councillor D Smith, County Councillors M Clifford, D Howarth, R Walsh and M Ritson.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor A Ali relating to members declaring an interest due to being on a planning committees, the Clerk confirmed that members did not need to declare an interest simply as a matter of course, it would be a decision for individuals but was supportive of the requirement for best practice.</p> <p>The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) explained to members that a new Fire Minister had recently been appointed, and the Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) would be writing to them within the very short term over funding. Councillor J Hugo added that she was a member of the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission and could assist with support in that capacity.</p> <p>The Chair moved the motion which was seconded by County Councillor A Ali. The motion was then put out to a vote and was carried.</p> <p>Resolved: That;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Fire Authority to ask the Director of Corporate Services to explore opportunities under CIL / Section 106 and provide information back to the CFA at the next meeting (15 December 2025), specifically writing to Planning Authorities, including Unitary Planning Authorities, for information and a view as to the funding arrangements. 2. Additionally, to write to the Fire Minister to ask for a meeting to explore conversations relating to Fair Funding for the Combined Fire Authority. 3. To ask the Chair, Vice Chair, and Chief Fire Officer to lobby Lancashire MPs in relation to the Fair Funding Review.
37-25/26	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>
38-25/26	Strategy Meeting Notes
	(Paragraph 3)

	<p>Members were provided with the notes and presentation from the Strategy Group Meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: That the notes and presentation of Strategy Meeting held on 23 June 2025 be noted.</p>
39-25/26	Appointment of the Clerk and Monitoring Officer
	<p>(Paragraph 1)</p> <p>The Clerk to the Authority withdrew from the meeting for this item.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority approved the extension of contract of Mr Mark Nolan as Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for a period of six months and approved that the Legal Services and Standards Manager be designated as Deputy Monitoring Officer, enhancing resilience in this statutory function.</p>

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Proceedings of Performance Committee held 3 September 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 3 September 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 3 September 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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Performance Committee

Wednesday, 3 September 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
S Asghar	
M Clifford	
J Hugo	
G Mirfin	
A Riggott	
J Tetlow (Vice-Chair)	
E Worthington (Chair)	

Officers
<p>S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Collinson, Head of Media and Communications (LFRS) M Hamer, Area Manager, Prevention and Protection (LFRS) P Jones, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) J Rossen, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) J Nottingham, Group Manager, Community Protection Manager (LFRS) R Harvey, Station Manager, National Operational Guidance (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)</p>

In attendance
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

8-25/26	Apologies For Absence
	Apologies were received from Councillor S Sidat and County Councillor M Ritson.
9-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
10-25/26	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	Councillor J Hugo raised a spelling error from the minutes on Page 9 of the agenda

	<p>pack with the amendment being agreed by the Chair.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 02 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the agreed amendment.</p>
11-25/26	<p>Performance Management Information</p> <p>The Chair reminded Members of the importance of political neutrality within the Performance Committee Meetings to ensure a cohesive approach for the benefit of the Service and residents of Lancashire.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated the Service on a fantastic HMI report, especially in the areas of prevention & protection, people, and culture.</p> <p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented a comprehensive report to the Performance Committee. This was the 1st quarterly report for 2025/26 as detailed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027.</p> <p>In quarter 1, three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), 1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime (WT), 1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook, and 2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks, were shown in positive exception and three KPIs were shown in negative exception. These were 2.5 ABF (Non-Commercial Premises), 2.6 Deliberate Fires Total: Specific performance measure of deliberate fires, and 2.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Other (rubbish, grassland, vehicles etc).</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>Between April and June 2025, 15 station visits were carried out by Principal Officers and Area Managers as part of the service-wide engagement programme. In addition, two online events were held with flexi duty officers on the financial outlook.</p> <p>Forty-seven wellbeing interactions were undertaken ranging from workshops with crews to wellbeing support dog interactions.</p> <p>Four ‘On the Menu’ digital sessions were held on the following topics: development opportunities for operational and service support staff; supporting staff with neurodiversity; and using social media.</p> <p>Surveys were conducted in relation to social media use and a new operational welfare unit.</p>

Four in-person workshops were held at Service Headquarters on how to use different apps and tools in Microsoft 365.

The Service engaged with staff over several topics which related to fleet and equipment including duty rig uniform, body worn cameras, and new water tower appliances. Staff engagement over the redevelopment of the Service's staff newsletter also took place.

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: 1.982

Cumulative total number of shifts lost: 1.982

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

The element of that section of the report referred to sickness absence rates for the period 01 April 2024 to June 2025.

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year, and 2 shifts lost per quarter for wholetime staff. The actual shifts lost for the period for that group of staff was 1.98, which was 0.02 shifts below target. During the same period of the previous year, 2.14 shifts were lost which was a reduction of 0.16 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same period of the previous year.

A total of 1,243 wholetime absence shifts lost = 1.98 against a target of 2.00.

The number of cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 3 months increased from 1 case in Q4 of 2024-25 to 4 cases in Q1. The absence reasons were:

- Mental Health 2 cases
- Other absence types 2 cases

One Hundred and seventy-nine shifts were lost during quarter 1 as a result of the one case of long-term absence. This was in comparison to 80 shifts which were lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. Those cases accounted for 0.29 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

There were 27 cases of long-term absence which were recorded within the 3 months:

- Hospital/Post Operative Procedure 9 cases
- Musculo Skeletal 8 cases
- Mental Health 5 cases
- Unknown causes, not specified 2 cases
- Other absence types 3 cases

There were 61 shifts lost which related to Respiratory related absences including Coronavirus absence. This was compared to 117 shifts lost in the same quarter of 2024-25.

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.

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

In response to a question from County Councillor A Riggott at the last Performance Committee in relation to the possibility of including a breakdown of the 'other absence types category', the ACFO advised it would not be possible to provide the information because of confidentiality as it could identify individuals.

County Councillor M Clifford asked if any cases of sickness for firefighters were caused during their attendance at operational incidents. The ACFO explained that it was difficult to make a correlation between sickness and incidents, and in particular, long-term illness. There were some direct impacts from incidents, and it was acknowledged that firefighters could attend traumatic incidents. Robust support mechanisms were in place for staff with close monitoring taking place.

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, 1.24%.

County Councillor G Mirfin queried how Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) figures for the KPI compared with the benchmark of other Fire and Rescue

Services (FRSs). The ACFO advised that LFRS compared favourably with the other Services which was evidenced in the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness Absence Report where LFRS featured close to the bottom of the chart in relation to the number of sickness absence days. It was highlighted that the quarterly report could not be shared with Members due to confidentiality. The ACFO explained that On-Call firefighters worked less hours which impacted figures positively.

1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook

The ACFO explained that Grey book referred to operational staff and Green book referred to support staff who were generally non-operational. There were some dual contract green book staff who provided on-call cover whilst fulfilling their green book role.

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: 1.848

Cumulative shifts lost: 1.848

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year across both Grey and Green Book staff. The actual shifts lost for Green Book staff for Q1 was 1.85 shifts lost per employee, which was 0.15 below target. During the same period of the previous year, 1.35 shifts were lost which was an increase of 0.50 shifts lost per green book employee compared to the same period of the previous year.

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

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for Green Book staff. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff were 1.85, which was 0.15 below target. During the same period of the previous year, 1.35 shifts were lost which was an increase of 0.50 shifts lost per green book employee compared to the same period last year.

During April – June 2025, absence statistics showed non-uniformed personnel absence above target for the quarter with 1.85 shifts lost in the quarter against a target of 2.00 shifts lost.

425 non-uniformed absence shifts lost = 1.85 against a target of 2.00 during quarter 1. 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 reduced from 10 in Q4 of 2024-25 to 8 in Q1:

- Mental Health 2 cases
- Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory problems 2 cases
- Other absence types 4 cases

During the quarter, 245 shifts were lost as a result of the 8 cases of long-term absences, this was in comparison to 206 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. These cases accounted for 1.07 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

Respiratory related absences accounted for 27 lost shifts, which included Coronavirus absence. This was compared to 38 shifts lost in the same quarter of 2024-25.

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 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.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity

This indicator measured diversity as a percentage.

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

Gender:	Female 22%(22%)	Male 78%(78%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 4%(4%)	White 91%(93%)	Not stated 5%(3%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 5%(4%)	Heterosexual 62%(58%)	Not stated 33%(38%)
Disability:	Disability 3%(3%)	No disability 94%(95%)	Not stated 3%(2%)

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 5%
	White	Grey book 92%	Green book 85%
	Not stated	Grey book 5%	Green book 10%
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT	Grey book 5%	Green book 3%
	Heterosexual	Grey book 60%	Green book 67%
	Not stated	Grey book 35%	Green book 30%
Disability:	Disability	Grey book 3%	Green book 5%
	No disability	Grey book 94%	Green book 88%
	Not stated	Grey book 3%	Green book 7%

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 25%(90%)	Male 75%(10%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 0%(0%)	White 82%(40%)	Not Stated 18%(60%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 0%(0%)	Heterosexual 82%(90%)	Not stated 18%(10%)
Disability:	Disability 0%(0%)	No disability 89%(100%)	Not stated 11%(0%)

During quarter 1, there were a total of 28 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 certain periods.

The ACFO highlighted that the recruitment figure of 90% for the same quarter of the previous year for 'Female' was incorrect and would be amended.

In response to a question from County Councillor S Ashar regarding the representation of BME and disabled staff in operational roles, the ACFO explained that individuals with disabilities were accommodated and supported through the recruitment process where possible i.e. neurodiversity, however, there were some limitations with the role in relation to some disabilities. The Service, supported by Corporate Communications carried out, and were involved in, community events whereby LFRS were promoted as the employer of choice for all members of the community. Applicants also had the option to join the On-Call duty system if they were unable to dedicate their time to the Whole Time role.

County Councillor G Mirfin queried how Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) figures for the KPI compared with the benchmark of other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs). The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement (ADoCE), Steph Collinson, advised that the diversity figures for the Service were slightly above the UK average although, figures were low across the sector. The ACFO added that feedback from the HMI was that it recognised that BME communities were hard to reach, although the Service continued to make progress with diverse communities. The ADoCE stated that, in terms of Positive Action, the Service attempted to reach those who had never traditionally considered a career with the Fire Service and encourage them to contemplate joining. Community Safety Advisors and Operational staff assisted by engaging with communities, demonstrating that a role with the Fire Service was possible, and removing perceived barriers.

Members noted that 10% of Firefighters nationally were women, and in Lancashire the figure was 11%. Nationally, 4% of Firefighters were from a BME background with 3% in Lancashire.

County Councillor Joel Tetlow commented that Firefighters required a certain level of physical fitness compared to other types of jobs which could be the reason for the low disability recruitment figures across the sector.

Regarding applicants with disabilities, County Councillor M Clifford, asked if buildings in the Service were accessible and if the Service Headquarters had a lift to other floors. The ACFO confirmed that there was no lift in Headquarters. Area Manager (AM), Matt Hamer explained that he was the Chair of the Disability Voice Group that had requested an Estates Review with the Head of Property which was currently in progress. It was recognised that some of the buildings had been built prior to disability regulations, however, there was a Directory of Accessibility within the Service whereby accessible spaces were available when required. Improvements in the accessibility of buildings were being investigated with the possibility of grant funding being sought. The proposed redevelopment at LDC would be built incorporating disabled access and requirements.

Councillor Jane Hugo acknowledged the ongoing work of the Service to improve facilities in relation to gender and encouraging more women to apply. The work to reconfigure station facilities at Blackpool Fire Station had taken place.

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, 9 for quarter 1; year to date 9; previous year to date 21. Quarterly activity decreased 57.14% (12 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 941. 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 30,532 and the previous year's score was 30,750 which meant that the fire risk continued to reduce.

The ACFO advised the Service's software was in the process of being updated to identify the changes to the boundary of wards over the period. It would be sometime before the wards were redefined.

County Councillor G Mirfin stated that an influential factor on the calculation for the Risk Score was Total Dwellings due to an increase in the number of houses being built in Lancashire and consequentially, a rise in the population. He asked if the risk profile for each district could be provided as he would like to identify how the risk profiles had changed in relation to the increase in the number of houses and the demographics. He commented that the Risk Map demonstrated that the Service had managed the changes well and he had written to MPs to emphasise the need for an increase in funding for the Service. The ACFO stated that funding was key to addressing the Service's £5m deficit. The Service managed staff in an effective way to ensure cover and attendance times were met which also assisted in reducing the overtime bill. The outcome of the budget would not be known until the end of the year but seemingly, the North of the country was financially disadvantaged compared to the South which could result in cuts for the Service. In

consideration of the HMI report, the Service did not want to make cuts as the results had given emphasis to an effective working model, therefore any impact the Councillors could make towards funding would be crucial. The ACFO informed Members that the red, High Risk districts were located in Preston, Pendle, Chorley, with 9 in Blackpool.

Area Manager (AM), Phil Jones added that the Risk Score was based on fire and more houses resulted in more people taking part in leisure activities with the unintended consequence resulting in a rise in incidents. Peoples' lifestyles also changed in the warm weather which needed to be taken into consideration with Special Service Calls for ambulance interventions and RTCs.

Councillor J Hugo asked if a list of the districts could be added to the Risk Map to allow for easy identification of areas for analysis. She acknowledged the work of the Service in Blackpool around the Fire Station and areas of deprivation. The overall view was to locate areas of need, identify the type of population in those areas, and the work of the Service to minimise risk.

County Councillor M Clifford queried why Chorley had moved to the High Risk category.

AM, Matt Hamer explained that there were 941 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that underpinned the Risk Map which would change to 945 due to SOA boundary changes. The majority of the 12 areas in the Very High Risk Grade category were located in Blackpool and had been impacted by the number of dwelling fires versus the number of dwellings and the index of deprivation. Due to the number of areas within the spreadsheet, it was too large and complicated to share with Members, however, he had a simplified map diagram which he could share with Members on-screen, which showed risk reduction over the last years. In terms of location, Local Group Managers were provided with a District Intelligence Profile which contained information about local risk and informed targeted prevention activity in that area. Due to improved building regulations and standards, new housing did not necessarily constitute a higher number of fires.

The Chair noted that in Blackpool, incidents were linked to deprivation and population and queried if there was a specific building type that was at a higher risk. AM, Matt Hamer explained that risks were related to human behaviour, but that mosaic data was used that categorised individuals within an area along with national data and work to tackle risk was carried out with partners. Those in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) tended to be at higher risk in Blackpool. However, in the east of Lancashire, it was those in terraced houses, but it was the same type of individuals, and it was those individuals who were targeted. It was a great achievement that Lancashire only had 12 small areas of High Risk.

In response to a question from the Chair in relation to whether the owners of HMOs followed Fire Safety Regulations, AM Matt Hamer advised that, in Blackpool, a new Licensing Housing Scheme was being worked on by Community Fire Safety Team along with the Local Authority Housing Team. It was hoped that once landlords were aware of the work, they would be proactive in asking for help although it was acknowledged that not all would.

County Councillor A Riggott asked if information could be provided on those SOAs where the numbers had changed in the Very High and High Risk Grades on the Risk Map along with what support Members could provide in those areas. AM, Matt Hamer confirmed that he was happy to provide more details on those SOAs, and any support Members could give within their local district councils would be welcome. Councillor J Hugo highlighted that the CFA was a Combined Fire Authority which comprised of the Upper Tier authorities, Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, and Blackpool Council. It was clarified that Lancashire County Council had districts, but the other authorities did not.

County Councillor A Riggott stated, in relation to HMOs, that there were a number of districts out to consultation on licensing schemes and he asked how well informed the Service was with regards to conversions of properties. AM, Matt Hamer explained that the Service received Building Regulation Consultations and had a relationship with Council Planning Departments which enhanced awareness. Protection Teams were then able to intervene when people moved into those buildings to deliver behavioural safety messages.

Councillor G Mirfin remarked that local authorities were not made aware of smaller HMOs with less than 5 people as they did not require a licence. Lancaster and Preston had the highest number of HMOs in Lancashire. He added that Blackburn and Burnley had the fewest number of houses built over the last 27 years and Blackpool's 'dilapidated stock' may have added to the risk profile as it was possible in terraced houses that fires would not be contained.

Councillor J Hugo commented that the reason Blackpool may not have built housing stock was because of its high-density population and lack of space.

County Councillor J Tetlow referenced Bed & Breakfast accommodation in Blackpool which may have been converted to HMOs and asked if the Service received a full list of registered HMOs. AM, Matt Hamer explained that Local Authorities were the custodians of building type and use data which was passed to the Service with approximately 80% accuracy, with legacy recording possibly being responsible for some inaccuracies. The Service also kept its own records which were shared with custodians but there were difficulties when landlords did not register property conversions to HMOs. Local work carried out by Prevention and Response teams constantly changed in terms of new build housing and property conversions.

In response to a query from the Chair as to whether the Service worked with universities in relation to information for student accommodation properties, AM, Matt Hamer advised that the Service had working relationships with UCLan, Lancaster University, and Ormskirk University. Engagement work took place with landlords and during Freshers week around students' behavioural risks. Some universities had representation on Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) where information was shared, and the Service worked proactively.

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 5,086; previous year to date 4,273. Quarterly activity increased 19.03% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In quarter 1, the Service attended 5,086 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) – 1964, 39%
- Total Primary Fire Calls (accidental dwelling / building and deliberate dwelling / commercial fires and other primary fires) – 525, 10%
- Total Secondary Fire Calls (deliberate and accidental fires) – 1490, 29%
- Total Special Service Calls (critical incidents, gaining entry, RTCs, Flooding and other critical incidents) – 1100, 22%

The ACFO stated that the peak in activity and demand was due to the hot weather experienced throughout April and May.

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, 193 in quarter 1; year to date 193; previous year to date 166. Quarterly activity increased 16.27% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.3.1 ADF – Harm to people: Casualties

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

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

Fatal	1 in quarter 1; year to date 1; previous year to date 2
Injuries appear Serious	1 in quarter 1; year to date 1; previous year to date 0
Injuries appear Slight	8 in quarter 1; year to date 1; previous year to date 10

Quarterly activity decreased 16.6% over the same quarter of the previous year.

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 86%.

Combined quarterly percentage remained static compared to 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), 55 in quarter 1; year to date 55; previous year to date 72. Quarterly activity decreased 23.61% 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 65% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 78%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore decreased 12.32% 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), 39 in quarter 1; year to date 39; previous year to date 21. Quarterly activity increased 85.71% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The negative exception report was due to the number of accidental non-commercial building fires being above the upper control limit during April and May of quarter 1.

A high number of accidental fires involving private garden sheds were responsible for breaching the upper control limits in April and May, with 10 garden fires recorded each month, however, there was only 1 garden shed fire in following month of June.

The total number of incidents was 21 over the three-month period and equalled the 21 garden shed fires over the whole of the previous 2024-25 year.

Due to the nature of the construction, the majority of the sheds resulted in the extent of damage affecting the whole building. The most common cause of ignition was spread from a secondary fire due to the burning of garden or household waste.

Activity levels in June had now returned to below the previous three-year average.

Due to the prolonged period of dry weather in the first 2 months of quarter 1 (Met Office indicate that April 2025 was the sunniest on record), the Service saw a large increase in domestic accidental building fires, primarily sheds. The main reason for this was the lifestyle changes during periods of hot weather, such as spending more time outdoors, with activities using hot processes, such as barbeques, along with burning away of weeds and having fires to discard of garden waste and other waste.

The Key actions taken across all districts that saw an increase were:

- Utilising the virtual library to provide leaflets for Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs), warning of the dangers of garden fires and barbeques.
- Social Media posts by the Service and individual Service accounts.
- Post fire activity and leaflet drops in areas of accidental building fire activity.

AM, Phil Jones emphasised that the long period of hot, dry weather conditions, had exacerbated accidental fires caused by lifestyle changes and outdoor activities.

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 28% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 38%.

Combined quarterly activity had therefore decreased 9.89% 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 – 868 in quarter 1; year to date 868; previous year to date 491. Quarterly activity increased 76.78% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The negative exception report was recorded under KPI 2.6.3.

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, 19 in quarter 1, year to date 19; previous year to date 25. Quarterly activity decreased 24.00% 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, 42 in quarter 1; year to date 42; previous year to date 49.

Quarterly activity decreased 14.29% 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.

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, 807 in quarter 1; year to date 807; previous year to date 417. Quarterly activity increased 93.53% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The negative exception report was due to the total number of deliberate secondary fires being above the upper control limit during April and May of quarter 1.

April and May recorded an almost equal number of fires at 325 and 319 respectively, with both months recording a notable increase over the previous five-year April and May average.

Whilst a large number of property types were captured within this KPI, the largest increase was seen in the property type of loose refuse (incl. garden waste), which recorded 362 incidents in the quarter, compared to 151 in the same months of the previous year. Tree scrub recorded 52 fires, against 12 in the previous year's quarter 1, and grassland, pasture, grazing etc. 41 incidents against last year's 7.

Activity levels in June had since returned to near the previous three-year average. Fires of this nature were often seasonal, and followed periods of warm, dry weather.

Due to the prolonged period of dry weather in the first 2 months of quarter 1 (Met Office indicated that April 2025 was the sunniest on record), the Service had seen a large increase in deliberate fires primarily loose refuse, garden waste, tree/scrub, and grassland.

This increase was extremely sharp when compared to the same period in 2024 where April was the 6th wettest since 1836. Again, the warm protracted weather brought more people into the outdoors, and the environment was extremely dry.

Key actions:

- Increase In Environmental Visual Audits (EVA) and the reporting of waste.
- Increase in the reporting of insecure empty buildings.
- Targeting of businesses in the area of high Anti-social activity (ASB) fire activity with Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC).
- Targeting of homes and businesses within the identified rural/urban interface for Home Fire safety Checks (HFSC) and BFSC.
- Social media post and reminders of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in high-risk wildfire locations within Blackburn with Darwen.
- Proactive patrols from wildfire units and crews in high wildfire risk areas.
- Engagement with rural wildfire watch groups and Lancashire Fire Operations Group (LFOG) partners.

In response to a question from the Chair as to whether there was a specific area where those types of deliberate fires took place, AM, Phil Jones advised that wildfires tended to occur on larger areas such as West Pennine Moors, however,

the nuisance fires were more likely to occur in densely populated areas. He stated that more staff were using a system for data to identify ASB individuals and hotspot areas which allowed for proactive work to prepare for, and effectively manage, incidents. AM, Matt Hamer added that Community Protection Managers (CPMs) were provided with district intelligence and a map of the hotspots for antisocial behaviour in their areas, which were used in conjunction with those partners in the CSP to inform local joint working.

County Councillor M Clifford asked if Chorley was included in the social media post for reminders of the PSPO in high-risk wildfire locations within Blackburn with Darwen. AM, Phil Jones explained that the PSPO covered a large geographical range which included areas of Chorley.

2.7 Home Fire Safety Checks

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

An improvement was shown if:

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

HFSCs completed, 5,966 in quarter 1; year to date 5,966; previous year to date 5,880. Quarterly activity increased 1.5% against the same quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs with high-risk outcomes, Quarter 1, 52%; previous year Quarter 1, 53%.

High risk outcomes decreased 1% against the same quarter of 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, 71 sessions delivered to 2,201 students;
RoadSense, 88 sessions delivered to 3,271 students;
SENDSafe, 5 sessions delivered to 175 students;
Wasted Lives, 17 sessions delivered to 1,389 students;
Biker Down, 6 sessions delivered to 162 attendees;
FIRES, 53 referrals opened prior to Q1 and carried over. 66 referrals received in Q1. 31 referrals closed in Q1. 79 referrals carried to 2025-26, Q2;
Partner Training (including care providers), 8 sessions delivered to 66 delegates;

Specific Education packages – delivered Water Safety, BrightSparx, ASB, Deliberate Fire Setting etc (Covers key stages 2, 3 and 4). 62 in-school water safety sessions delivered to 11,393 students, and 8 Virtual sessions delivered to

9,135 pupils.

Arson Threat Referrals – 209.

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, 769 in quarter 1; Cumulative 769; YTD target, 625; previous YTD 924.

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being satisfactory, 692. Top 5 completed satisfactory premise types (Shops 240, Factories/Warehouses 100, Offices 89, Other Workplaces 88, Other Public Premises 53).

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being unsatisfactory, 77. Top 5 completed unsatisfactory premise types (Shops 31, Other Workplaces 18, Factories/Warehouses 10, Licensed Premises 5, Other Public Premises 3).

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.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity (including Business Fire Safety Checks)

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

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

Total Fire Safety Enforcement Inspections, Quarter 1, 402;

Formal Activity in Quarter 1, 5%, same quarter of the previous year 6%. Quarterly activity decreased 1% against the same quarter of the previous year.

Members noted the cumulative number of Fire Safety inspections undertaken for 2025/26 was 402.

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

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

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

In Quarter 1, Building Regulation Consultations received 104, of which 103 were completed within the timeframe (LFRS should make comments in writing within 15 working days of receiving a BRC).

KPI 3 - Responding to fire and other emergencies quickly

3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

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

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

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

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

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

Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, Quarter 1, Very High 05:50 min; High 05:47 min, Medium 07:05 min, Low 09:08 min.

Q1 overall 07:40 min. Year to date overall 07:40 min. Previous year to date overall

07:47 min.

County Councillor J Tetlow stated that LFRS' response times must be some of the best in the country. The ACFO agreed that the response times were excellent and advised that there were nuances with the way other services recorded response times as some did not include call handling times which impacted on the accuracy of those figures.

In response to a question from the Chair as to how the Service had lowered the High response time from 7:04 mins to 5:47 mins, the ACFO explained that the Dynamic Cover Tool (DCT) assisted to place resources in the most appropriate areas of risk which was managed within North West Fire Control and positively impacted attendance times. Additionally, AM, Phil Jones advised that the Service had introduced pre-alerts whereby the nearest fire station was alerted to an incident ahead of the call which was particularly advantageous to the attendance times of On Call firefighters. The ACFO highlighted that the quicker resources arrived at an incident, the more damage and severity of fires were limited and survivability increased.

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, 08:43 min in quarter 1; year to date 08:43 min; previous year to date 08:22 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, 89.26% in quarter 1; year to date 89.26%; previous year to date 86.91%.

Quarterly availability increased 2.35% over the same quarter of the previous year.

AM, John Rossen explained that On Call availability was a national challenge and, over the last 12 months, the On Call Improvement Programme (OCIP) had driven transformation across the Service with several workstreams to improve recruitment,

development, and retention, with expectations that fire engine availability would be sustained and improved upon. The ACFO stated that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), Steve Healey would host the National Fire Chiefs conference next month regarding On Call availability.

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 2025/26 was set at £77.5 million. The spend of £18.2 million was broadly in line with allocated budget at the end of the first quarter with a small overspend on pay offset by similar underspend on non-pay. Looking ahead, there were some risks around inflation being higher than budgeted, and £0.5m savings were required within the year.

The annual revised capital budget for 2025/26 was £13.9 million and spend at the end of June was £1.2 million. To date no slippage to 2026/27 had been identified.

Quarter 1 variance 0.0% (Revenue budget variance).

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.

The following were examples of partnership working from a number of departments across the Service. The aim was to increase efficiency and effectiveness of working practices whether this related to equipment, technology, appliances, or training.

The chair of both the Strategic and Tactical Blue Light Collaboration Boards had transferred to Lancashire Constabulary until 2026. Several workstreams were

	<p>ongoing with subgroups for Leadership, Wellbeing Mental Health and Welfare, Estates, and Recruitment.</p> <p>The Chair advised Members that she welcomed any ideas to save money to meet the £0.5m required savings and any possible partnerships that would create an income. County Councillor J Tetlow questioned whether political pressure could be applied to government to provide funding for LFRS considering the Service's recent rating as the top FRS in the country. County Councillor G Mirfin confirmed that the standard way to apply pressure would be to lobby hard, but it had to be recognised that ministers were new in post, inexperienced, and would need to be convinced with robust arguments. He updated Members that he was currently investigating fair funding for FRSs across the UK and would compose a non-political letter to MPs in Lancashire which would draw on data and evidence. The ACFO advised that public funding and spending was high on the agenda at the NFCC Spring Conference. The Service did not want to make cuts; however, the largest outgoing was wages. LFRS was the best performing FRS in the country, and it was important that the Service had a solid business case, with evidence, for its requirement for funding and maintaining standards.</p> <p>Councillor J Hugo commented that it would be useful to know what cuts had historically been made for the Service. She also stated that the Local Government Association (LGA), had a Fire Policy Committee on which she had a seat on behalf of Blackpool, and they were lobbying the government about the best funding options for FRSs across the country so there was a process through the LGA.</p> <p>4.3 Overall User Satisfaction</p> <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: 98.66%</p> <p>In quarter 1, 75 people had been surveyed and the number satisfied with the service was 73. The running total number of people surveyed was 3,946 with 3,893 of those people being satisfied with the Service; 98.66% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.16%.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Performance Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 1 Measuring Progress report, including three positive and three negative exceptions.</p>
12-25/26	Wildfire Prevention Campaign Presentation
	<p>The Chair welcomed Communications Officer, Lucinda Heavyside and Group Manager (GM), Community Protection Manager, Jonny Nottingham to provide the Committee with a presentation detailing the Service's response to wildfires. Station Manager (SM), Rob Harvey was also in attendance as a Subject Matter Expert in Wildfire.</p> <p>GM, Jonny Nottingham informed Members that the impact of wildfires was</p>

changing and increasing, with a particular turning point being the Winter Hill fire of 2018. The incident began on 28 June, ended 6 weeks later on 08 August, and spanned 18 Square Kilometres of moorland. The Winter Hill TV transmitter, which served six million people in the North West, was located within the area. At the height of the incident, there were over 30 fire engines, 150 firefighters supported by multiple partners, specialist wildfire fighting teams, and Fire and Rescue Services from other areas of the country. The incident consequently led to a number of positive and significant changes with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) leading the way with wildfire response.

Within Lancashire, 14 sites of risk had been identified with some sites known as Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) sites. Specifically, these sites were in Blackburn with Darwen, Chorley, and Bolton (as it bordered with Lancashire). LFRS had joined together with three local councils, using legal powers to protect the environment and prevent wildfire devastation to wildlife and reduce the risks of wildfire on the moors. When implemented in October 2023, the sites covered by the PSPO became the largest in the country with many of the sites crossing into, or bordering, neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services (FRS).

Wildfires were a nationally recognised issue, and a national reporting tool had been adopted. It was noted that nationally, there had been 995 wildfires in 2025 since January which was the highest ever recorded as 2022 had 994. The National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) had developed a working group for wildfires (chaired by the CFO, Jon Charters) and had also developed a wildfire awareness training programme to which LFRS was aligned. The Service had invested in new equipment and appliances to tackle wildfires. LFRS had a burns team and was leading the sector with equipment (haaglund's, drip torches, dams, blowers, and tactics). Wildfire Tactical Advisors (national assets / wildfire officers), were officers trained with additional skills and knowledge, specifically in wildfire tactics.

In terms of response, new tactics had been developed whereby enhanced resources were used at incidents in the early stages. This included a level 2 commander (Station Manager and above), burns team, and a wildfire officer, where available. There were 14 polygons of risk areas which had been identified and shared with North West Fire Control (NWFC), preventing small fires from becoming wildfires, and which needed to be considered when mobilising appliances to wildfires.

The Climate Change Operational Response Plan 2022-27 was a long-term plan to address the issues prevented by Climate events. Wildfire risks typically increased during warm spring and summer months due to dry fuel loads being vulnerable to ignition. This could be caused by inappropriate land management, deliberate acts, or accidental human interactions. The plan looked to address the risk posed, long term and continually.

SM, Rob Harvey added that there were restrictions for burning vegetation under the Heather and Grass Burning Code. Under the code, burning season took place between the 01 October and 15 April. Historically, land was managed by burning and cutting, however, there were restrictions through Natural England around some areas in Lancashire for deep peat (over 40cm deep), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), unless a specific licence was obtained. Aligning to climate change,

the intensity and severity of wildfires had increased.

County Councillor J Tetlow asked if the cause of the Winter Hill fire was known and if the Service carried out advanced burnings to prevent or stop fires. SM, Rob Harvey advised that, although there were no prosecutions, it was deemed a deliberate act, as an individual was seen in the area, however, there was no evidence or witnesses. In terms of burning, firefighting tactics had adapted over the years, and due to the prolonged dry spells, vegetation could be removed using a tactical burn. Two individuals were prosecuted for a significant deliberate fire on Darwen Moor in 2020; however, the incident provided the Service with the opportunity to deploy new, improved tactics. The Service struck the fire quickly, Burns Team tactics were deployed, collaboration took place with United Utilities and local land managers, resulting in the management of the perimeter and containment of the fire within a day.

In response to a question from Councillor J Hugo regarding if, dependent on the weather, the timeframes within the Heather and Grass Burning Code could be changed, SM, Rob Harvey advised that times were managed through a risk assessment conducted by the land manager. Variants were dependent on vegetation, whether the areas were an Area Of Natural Beauty, SSSI, nesting birds etc. A licence could be applied for through Natural England. If the depth of deep peat was changed to 30cm, it could have a serious impact on Lancashire as it would expand the area of rotational controlled burning and increase fuel loading.

There had been increased partnership working with Lancashire Fire Operations Group (LFOG), including Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon), United Utilities (UU), and other landowners. Heightened awareness had taken place through greater use of social media campaigns to inform the public and internal awareness through training, including NWFC mobilising due to more reports from the public.

It was highlighted, in terms of operational activity, that the highest-ranking role in attendance at an incident had organisational accountability which included officers from a bordering FRS. This could present issues with prevention activity as many geographical areas crossed into neighbouring FRSs. However, LFRS undertook joint training and exercises which focused on wildfire events. Wildfires put a demand on pumps and put a strain on everyday operations such as incidents, and prevention and protection work.

Climate change through continued global warming was projected to further intensify the global water cycle which included its variability, global monsoon precipitation, and the severity of wet and dry events. Additionally, a flood or wildfire could result in a loss of income from land due to the serious detrimental impact to agricultural land and livestock, eliminating income for many years. These events could also cause damage to property, disruption, and closure of local businesses adjacent to or within a risk area and have insurance impacts for landowners. Insect and animal life could be affected in catchment areas for drinking water.

Wildfires were arduous and dangerous, and the welfare of staff was of primary significance, particularly when operating over protracted periods, in difficult conditions. In recent years, LFRS had made considerable advances, including the implementation of a dedicated welfare unit, the use of generators, powered cool

boxes, individual food ration packs, shelters, and sun creams. Those resources allowed for a forward control / welfare point to be established at an easily accessible location on the fireground.

County Councillor A Riggott stated that there was a benefit to public health of providing safety messages and gaining the support of the Directors of Public Health as it was an opportunity for funding. GM, Jonny Nottingham advised that early operational deployment of appliances and tactics was important to reduce the impact of wildfires. He could not comment on the opportunity for funding from Public Health. The ACFO explained that, from a Local Resilience Forum (LFRS) perspective, when significant incidents occurred, the Service worked closely with the Environment Agency and Public Health to deliver safety message around keeping windows closed. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) currently chaired the LRF, and through that forum joint work and planning took place around prevention and preparedness.

County Councillor A Riggott clarified that where the areas surrounding the places for potential wildfires were densely populated, there was the opportunity to present a strong case in respect of accessing funding streams. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement (ADoCE), explained that significant wildfires were a relatively new phenomenon and therefore, national data collected was limited in relation to the impacts. SM, Rob Harvey concurred that UK wildfire data was minimal, and the UK Health Security Agency (HSA) used international data. Acid rain from the 80s and 90s was embedded within the moorland peat and the level of toxicity within wildfire smoke and impact on the public, was unknown. As the number of wildfires increased, so would the data. The ACFO informed Members that the Chief Fire Officer (CFO), was the Lead Officer for wildfire at NFCC and brought innovative research to the crossover work with the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) which created a challenge as some duties sat within their jurisdiction.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow as to whether data for the prevention and management of wildfires from hotter countries could be considered, SM, Rob Harvey explained that a lot of training was carried out in Spain with the Pau Costa Foundation with learning taken from continental partners. The approach they used was 'Massive Attack,' whereby a wildfire was hit hard and quickly. LFRS would now mobilise a full wildfire Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA) outside of the Heather and Grass Burning Code to the areas in the presentation. As the response was now much quicker, the national data showed fewer true definition wildfires. Drone technology could also be requested when required. Members noted that wildfires were caused by the behaviour of people.

County Councillor M Clifford stated that land use had changed over the years with many people investing in restoration projects and he asked whether the Service worked with United Utilities (UU) in respect of water levels and the draining of peatland, and the retainment of moss/heather in peatland restoration. SM, Rob Harvey advised that with regards to re-wetting the moorland, UU saved money by taking water out of water captured in the stagnant moss and using that for drinking water as there weren't as many chemicals to cleanse. In terms of Carbon offsetting, it was considered that trees being planted on the moorland before it had become rewetted could one day become fuel, but the Service worked closely with UU to

constantly review the position.

County Councillor Mirfin remarked that another element of Fair Funding was that a large percentage of Lancashire was rural and wildfires occurred on a regular basis. Additionally, he raised concerns regarding historical toxins and radiation in soils and referenced his experience of a 300-year-old elm tree which had died in the same year as the Chernobyl disaster. GM, Jonny Nottingham stressed the importance of putting fires out quickly in the early stages to prevent the release of toxins in smoke.

As agreed by NFCC, a wildfire was defined by meeting one of the following criteria:

- Involved a geographical area of at least one hectare (10,000 square metres).
- Had a sustained flame length of more than 1.5 metres.
- Required a committed resource of at least 4 appliances.
- Required resources to be committed for at least 6 hours.
- Presented a serious threat to life, environment, property, and infrastructure.

Public perception of the Service was very important in relation to its reputation although, wildfires could be difficult to tackle due to their nature.

Recent operational activity included:

- Flexible Duty Officer (FDO) training – thematic / FDO training took place in March.
- NWFC Training (Including 999 eye) – delivered by wildfire tacads to heighten awareness and response.
- Crew awareness – eLearning, EH articles, and social media.
- Prevention activity – banners and having presence.
- Campaigning – robust campaign plan.

Incident data from 2019 – 2024 showed that wildfire numbers fluctuated year on year, with hotspots consistently appearing in areas such as Rossendale, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley and Hyndburn. Notably, 2024 saw a significant reduction, with incidents almost halved compared to previous years although there had been a 14% increase of rainfall. It was noted by Members that the data included all grass and wildfires.

Communications Officer, Lucinda Heavyside provided Members with an overview of the wildfires campaign. The 2025 campaign's key objectives were to make sure that prevention advice reached the right people, which meant running targeted safety advice to properties and individuals in high-risk areas. Another target was to increase public understanding of risks that included behaviours such as using disposable barbecues, lighting campfires, or something as simple as discarding a cigarette or leaving litter.

Work was conducted with Service partners and the public to simplify target audiences. Regarding partners, collaboration work took place on communications and included local authorities such as Blackburn with Darwen, Chorley, and Bolton in terms of the Public Space Protection Order. It also included the Police, Wildlife Trusts, Marketing Lancashire, and United Utilities. Those organisations were key as they either managed land, had direct influence with local communities, or helped

the Service broadcast the message. Regarding the public, the focus was on people who were likely to enjoy Lancashire's great outdoors: walkers; cyclists; campers; families; and youth groups such as Scouts. The Service was particularly mindful of young people and visitors from outside the county, as they could be less aware of the risks. Properties and areas where PSPOs were already in place were targeted.

The strategy was to make sure the Service's activity was highly targeted. The wildfire campaign was triggered by an amber wildfire warning which was caused by long, hot, and dry weather for a prolonged period. The campaign for 2025 had been extremely active due to one of the sunniest April's on record and Summer 2025 was the hottest on record in the UK, according to the Met Office. During those periods, crews would carry out prevention activity around 14 identified high-risk sites as they were places where the landscape, footfall, and history of incidents, made wildfires more likely. Communications would also be concentrated around those same sites. If those sites attracted visitors, the Service would endeavour to find out where they travelled from so messages could be adapted accordingly. The Service had developed a tailored wildfire home fire safety check, so that properties in those risk areas received advice that was relevant to them and not generic fire safety messages. Members were informed that 2025 was the busiest year on record, nationally, for wildfires (995).

The 2025 campaign included a direct mail sent to 600 properties that had been identified as being located in high-risk wildfire areas with the intention of providing clear and tailored safety advice directly to the households most likely to be affected. The purpose was to ensure that residents in those areas had the right information at the right time to reduce risk and had the option to contact the prevention teams if they felt that they required further information. Additionally, 32 banners were ready to be fixed at key risk sites and high-footfall areas across Lancashire when there was a heightened wildfire risk.

Social media had been central to the campaign, which ran from March through to September, but which only became active during periods of increased wildfire risk. Key messages were pushed out through the Service's social channels which had received fantastic engagement. That was thanks to the staff across the Service who had shared photos and videos, in real time, through the corporate Facebook page and local station pages. A post that showed a vole rescued from a wildfire highlighting the devastating effect wildfires had on animals and the environment. The post reached over 211,000 people on Facebook and almost 250,000 on Instagram with almost 8,000 engagements. Across all social media posts, the campaign had reached more than 1.4 million people and had been a powerful way to showcase the reality of wildfire incidents to raise awareness across a huge audience.

The Service had also teamed up with Fire Services across the North West and EG On The Move to deliver joint safety messages. Adverts on wildfire prevention and water safety ran on digital petrol screens at petrol station forecourts across the region which were free of charge. The partnership meant that the Service could reach people directly at the roadside during the summer months. It was also a great way to target visitors and people travelling from outside Lancashire, who might not see or engage with messages through other channels. It was a strong example of collaboration with five Fire and Rescue Services speaking with one

	<p>voice to deliver consistent, life-saving messages to a wider audience than LFRS could reach alone.</p> <p>The campaign was still ongoing, however, once the wildfire season had ended (at the end of September), the Service would analyse incident data in full and assess how objectives had been met. The next steps would be to build on data gained from the campaign and the previous polls on social media to deepen understanding of who was most at risk, and the behaviours that contributed to wildfires. The Service planned to capture behaviour insight directly from young people by speaking with participants on the King's Trust programmes and fire cadets, to better understand their awareness and the choices that increased or reduced risk. New creative content was also being explored. One idea was a video which showed that when a fire looked like it was out on the surface, it could still be smouldering underneath. Those hidden embers could reignite hours later and spark a much larger fire. It was a powerful way to demonstrate why people needed to take extra care during prolonged dry spells.</p> <p>County Councillor J Tetlow queried if, due to climate change over the last 10 years, there were more fires due to peat not being used as fuel for fires. SM, Rob Harvey explained that peat harvesting was not routinely conducted in Lancashire and it was more so, in Yorkshire. In Lancashire, the peat was vegetation build up through degrading stagnant moss. Peat was drying out more than expected through climate change and earlier in year which presented a risk.</p> <p>County Councillor M Clifford asked if there was any enforcement data in relation to PSPOs. The ADoCE advised that there were no prosecutions for the previous year but the evaluation for the current year had not yet been carried out.</p> <p>The Chair thanked officers for their fantastic presentation.</p>
13-25/26	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 03 December 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 11 March 2026 and agreed for 08 July 2026.</p>

**LFRS HQ
Fulwood**

**M Nolan
Clerk to CFA**

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Proceedings of Resources Committee held 24 September 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 24 September 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 24 September 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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

Wednesday, 24 September 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
N Alderson (Vice-Chair)	
A Ali OBE (Chair)	
J Fox	
Z Khan MBE	
A Riggott (Substitute)	
M Ritson	
S Sidat MBE	
D Smith	
J Tetlow	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) E Sandiford, Director of People and Development (LFRS) B Warren, HR Lead - Pensions & NWFC (LFRS) J Meadows, Head of Finance (LFRS) J Hutchinson, HR Manager (LFRS) M Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

11-25/26	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor A Blake and Councillor G Baker with County Councillor A Riggott attending as substitute.
12-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.

13-25/26	Minutes of the Previous Meeting														
	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.														
14-25/26	Financial Monitoring														
	<p>The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) advised that this report set out the current budget position in respect of the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>Revenue Budget</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's 2025/26 revenue budget was set at £77.511m. The budget profiled to the end of July 2025 was £25.452m and expenditure for the same period was £25.497m which was essentially breaking even. Both pay and non-pay budgets were showing a small year to date overspend of £0.048m on pay, and a small year to date underspend of (£0.003m) on non-pay activities.</p> <p>The budget included £0.5m of savings to be delivered through effective deployment of resources and effective management of overtime, whilst the profile of overtime was higher over the summer period, management information showed that overtime had been avoided and therefore the service forecasted that these savings would be met. Overall, a small overspend was forecast of £0.147m, which was just 0.2% of the services net budget, this reflected the higher than budgeted pay awards of 3.2% for all staff compared to the 3% budgeted. There were inflationary pressures that were highlighted in the Future Pressures section, although at this stage these were not reflected in the forecast position as more information would be needed to provide a more accurate position.</p> <p>The year-to-date and forecast positions within all departmental budgets were set out in Appendix 1, 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</th><th>Forecast</th><th>Reason</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Service Delivery - Pay</td><td>£0.098m</td><td>£0.155m</td><td>The pay award of 3.2% was agreed effective from July 2025, this was 0.2% above the services budgeted assumptions which largely accounts for the forecast variance.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Prevention and Protection - Pay</td><td>(£0.110m)</td><td>(£0.155m)</td><td>Several vacant posts existed in the current staffing establishment for which recruitment was planned long term. Challenges persisted in recruitment and retention due to competition from the private sector.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Area	Year to Date	Forecast	Reason	Service Delivery - Pay	£0.098m	£0.155m	The pay award of 3.2% was agreed effective from July 2025, this was 0.2% above the services budgeted assumptions which largely accounts for the forecast variance.	Prevention and Protection - Pay	(£0.110m)	(£0.155m)	Several vacant posts existed in the current staffing establishment for which recruitment was planned long term. Challenges persisted in recruitment and retention due to competition from the private sector.
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	Fleet – Non-Pay	£0.105m	£0.054m	Vehicle repair and maintenance costs remained high due to inflationary pressures and demand for parts across the industry however this was projected to reduce during the year.
<p>Future Developments</p> <p>A pay award of 3.2% was agreed for both Grey Book and Green Book employees, that was above the 3% increase originally included in the budget. For Grey Book staff, the uplift applied from 1 July 2025 and covered all basic pay rates and CPD payments, with the trainee rate of pay removed from National Joint Council (NJC) pay scales. For Green Book employees, the same percentage increase was effective from 1 April 2025, applied as a consolidated, permanent uplift to all NJC pay points and relevant allowances. The unbudgeted element of this increase would place an additional pressure on the 2026/27 budget.</p> <p>As of August 2025, the UK Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate stood at 3.83%, continuing an upward trend from earlier in the year. Forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility and other independent analysts suggest that CPI inflation would average around 3.2% for the 2025/26 financial year, with a gradual decline expected towards 2.1% by March 2026. This level of inflation was notably higher than the 2% general inflation assumption included in the budget and was placing pressure on both revenue and capital non-pay budgets.</p> <p>Utility costs were also higher than the 2% inflation assumption at over 6% which was largely due to geopolitical instability. Longer-term projections suggested energy bills would remain at this high level into 2026 placing pressure this year and into the period of the next Budget.</p> <p>Since January 2025, the Bank of England base rate had gradually declined from 4.75% to 4.00%, with forecasts suggesting a further drop to 2.75% by the end of 2026. Investment returns had followed suit which was higher than budgeted levels, it was therefore likely future projections would include additional income from investment returns.</p> <p>After years of lobbying for a longer-term settlement and a fairer funding mechanism Government committed to a Spending Review and three-year settlement from 2026/27, and also to review the local government funding formula and business rates retention scheme. Whilst the June 2025 Spending Review announcement did not provide any detail regarding funding for the Fire Service, the subsequent 'Fair Funding 2.0 Consultation' that followed enabled the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to commission some financial modelling on potential medium term funding implications for the sector and services. In summary the financial modelling showed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were real term cuts to government grants for the sector. • There was a reduced share of funding for those fire authorities with lower population growth and higher levels of deprivation. 				

- Business rates funding from growth was removed.
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service unfortunately may experience one of the largest cuts based on this modelling, of the 43 services Lancashire would be the sixth most affected and represented a total cut over the Spending Review period of over £7m (a reduction in the budget of £3.6m from 2028).
- There were other risks that may compound this such as an assumption that all fire authorities increased the council tax precept by the maximum allowed. This was extremely disappointing, and strong representations had been made to Government from across the sector and us.

Savings Targets

Over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (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. The £0.5m required in 2025/26 to balance the budget would be delivered by using Dynamic Resource Management (DRM), for the effective deployment of resources and effective management of overtime.

The Dynamic Resource Management policy came into effect on 1 July which provides steps which could be taken prior to using overtime to fill shortfalls, including using the fifth crew member from the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) stations and redistributing the crew from second pumps at two pump wholetime stations where there was adequate fire cover in the area. The one-month initial review showed that the policy so far had been effective in reducing overtime costs whilst maintaining response standards. This monitoring report assumed the success of this policy would be maintained for the year and the savings would be delivered, although it was still early in the financial year.

The Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2025/26 included £0.572m of savings to be delivered in 2025/26; the delivery of £0.5m is explained above. The balance of £0.072m was a balance of some smaller initiatives such as procurement savings, this would be reported through our update of progress against the plan later in the year.

Capital Budget

The revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 approved by the Resources Committee was £13.884m and to date £1.602m had been spent. A summary of the programme was set out below and in more detail in Appendix 2.

Area	Budgeted Items	Budget	Year to Date
Operational Vehicles Budget	The budget included initial costs of six large Type B pumping appliances, two smaller Type A pumping appliances. All were on target for delivery this financial year.	£2.911m	£0.0m

Other vehicles Budget	This budget allowed for the replacement of various operational support vehicles including several cars, vans and a welfare unit. All were on target for delivery this financial year.	£1.284m	£0.289m
Operational Equipment Budget	This budget allowed for operational equipment purchases including Breathing Apparatus, CCTV cameras for appliances, stab vests and helmets, flow meters and hose reel, cutting and extrication equipment.	£1.897m	£0.077m
Building Modifications Budget	This budget included the continued programme of Drill Tower Replacements, upgrades to Preston and Blackpool stations.	£4.538m	£0.793m
IT systems Budget	This budget included various projects including upgraded Firewalls, network upgrades, Retained Duty System Alerts, North West Fire Control (NWFC) Dispatch System and replacement of each protection, pooled PPE and stock management systems, and a Firefighting Robot.	£3.254m	£0.443m

A detailed review of the Capital Programme had identified a number of areas where expenditure would slip into 2026/27, the table below sets out the main items of slippage:

Area	Slippage to 2026/27	Reason
Operational Equipment	(£0.042)	The project to replace disposable gastight suits would slip to 2026/27 due to vehicle interdependencies.
Building Modifications	(£1.190)	The Development and Land Acquisition budget of £0.840m was requested to be slipped to next year with the acquisition of land in the Preston area on hold due to the lack of availability of appropriate sites. £0.350m was also requested to be slipped to next year following revision of the programme.
	(£1.232)	

The Chair explained that some potential savings may be realised from the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) tri-annual review of the pension fund and suggested that the Director of Corporate Services write to Lancashire County

	<p>Council's Chief Executive to ascertain if this was the case.</p> <p>Additionally, the Chair explained that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service was lobbying MP's regarding the fair funding agreement and asked that scenario planning be undertaken by the service in anticipation of the settlement.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to the potential for pay freezes, the Director of People and Development (DoPD) explained that the service was part of a national pay negotiation agreement and whilst a freeze on pay could be agreed it was not something that the service could agree independently. She outlined that it was important that any pay decisions were balanced with employee relations within a competitive employment market.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the financial position and approved slippage in the capital programme of £1.232m to 2026/27.</p>
15-25/26	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report</p> <p>The Director of People and Development (DoPD) presented the report. The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2024 – 2025 and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2026 offered a comprehensive overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing commitment to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion across its operations. As a public sector body, the Service had a legal obligation to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. LFRS's approach was further informed by feedback from inspections in other Services and feedback and recommendations from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue (HMICFRS). The work undertaken by the Service in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), was focused on the identification of risk and undertaking action which would minimise risks and keep people safe.</p> <p>Key areas covered within the report included;</p> <p>Accessibility LFRS Corporate Communications Department ensured that information was made available in a variety of formats and using multiple channels to effectively engage Lancashire's diverse communities.</p> <p>In 2024-25, the website experienced increased visitor numbers, likely attributable to enhancements in design and accessibility following its relaunch in 2023-24. During the year, an accessibility tool was trialled and subsequently implemented permanently on the website; over a three-month period, features such as screen reader and keyboard assistance were utilised by 2,389 users. In 2024-25, messaging regarding e-bike and e-scooter safe purchasing behaviours was added to the website in various languages, complementing existing fire safety advice available in 26 additional languages to enhance accessibility for non-native English speakers. Fire safety videos were also provided in British Sign Language. Fire safety advice was distributed in accessible formats on social media platforms. Staff continued to receive training to produce accessible social media content. All video content, including public safety footage from emergency incidents, was published with subtitles. Approximately 60 staff members received accessibility training during the year through in-person, online sessions, and a webinar, now</p>

available to all employees, to ensure that website and intranet content remained accessible.

The Corporate Communications Department actively supported LFRS prevention initiatives by partnering with prevention, community fire safety, and operational teams. Campaigns were developed through a structured planning process, focusing on objectives and target audiences determined by data and risk analysis in areas such as cooking safety, rechargeable battery fires, and water safety. Each campaign aimed to encourage safer practices among targeted groups and was evaluated through structured debriefs. In January 2024, the department supported a positive action campaign encouraging women and under-represented groups to explore career opportunities at LFRS. In 2024-25, the department delivered 21 campaigns—including three recruitment efforts—reaching a combined audience of 80,420,611 people, generating 1,265,779 engagements with an overall engagement rate of 9%, compared to an industry average of 5%.

Engagement and Consultation

Social media engagement varied across platforms during 2024-25, with notable increases observed on Facebook (+24%), LinkedIn (+24%), and NextDoor (+17%), contrasted by decreases on Instagram (-28%, attributed to platform algorithm changes), TikTok (-10%, also due to algorithm fluctuations), and X (-75%, resulting from reduced usage). The Service evaluated the demographics of followers across each platform to determine optimal channels for reaching diverse groups. Email newsletter subscribers increased by 5.8% to a total of 101,061.

In 2024-25, the Service launched several e-newsletters focused on prevention, protection, and partnership, offering pertinent risk information and service updates for dissemination by agencies and businesses engaging with residents. The quarterly stakeholder e-newsletter, 'Hot Topics', was distributed to key stakeholders, including partner organisations, MPs, town and parish councils, and community groups.

The Service also produced episodes of its podcast series, "Out of the Ashes: Stories from Lancashire," featuring topics such as youth empowerment through The King's Trust Programme, the responsibilities of on-call firefighters, and preparations for unexpected business disruptions. These episodes included interviews with young people, on-call firefighters, and business representatives.

During 2024-25, principal officers, directors, and area managers completed 95 station visits; 12 in-person staff events were held with service delivery managers, accompanied by 10 online crew sessions. There were 176 wellbeing interactions—including workshops, support dog visits, and station drop-ins—as well as 12 "On the Menu" events covering various topics.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and progression data was analysed and reported to the equality, diversity, inclusion and culture (EDIC) Board and the demographic profile of the Service was reported quarterly to the Performance Committee. LFRS continued its journey to improve the diversity of the workforce to ensure that it represented the community it serves. Positive action was delivered to attract a diversity of candidates to fill the Wholetime firefighter apprenticeship course that began in

February 2025. The service had taken an integrated approach in relation to delivering positive action and promoting LFRS as an employer of choice; colleagues from human resources and operational staff worked together to deliver attraction events supported by other colleagues from the service's employee voice groups. Four "Have a Go" events were delivered by project members, at various stations including a flagship event held at our Leadership and Development Centre to coincide with International Women's Day, with a total of 74 attendees. Further "Have a Go" events were planned for 2025/26.

Whilst no Wholetime Firefighter recruitment took place in 2024/25, 99 other recruitment campaigns associated with Grey and Green Book staff occurred between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025, full details were included within Appendix B of the report.

Workforce Profile

Employment monitoring data was collected and reported annually in relation to all protected groups apart from gender reassignment due to the sensitive confidential nature of this data. Since 2023/24, the proportion of women employed increased from 20.8%. The percentage of employees identifying as BME decreased from 3.7% to 3.5%. The proportion of staff declaring a disability rose from 2.9% to 3.4%. The percentage of employees who identified as LGBT+ increased from 3.7% to 4.4%.

Disciplinary cases

There were 18 disciplinary investigations during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 which was 10 fewer than the previous year.

The outcomes of these cases where:

- Three dismissals
- No final written warnings
- Two formal written warnings
- Three management letters
- Four people resigned or retired before the hearing. Of these, two investigations were considered Gross Misconduct and would have resulted in dismissal, one was not deemed Gross Misconduct and therefore the outcome would not have been dismissal, whilst the fourth remained ongoing into 2025/26.
- Six ongoing into 2025/26

The disciplinary investigations addressed alleged breaches of Service policy—such as vehicle or property damage, inappropriate social media use, failure to follow instructions, non-responsiveness, and alleged criminal activity outside work.

No disproportionate impact was found on any minority group.

In response to a question from Councillor D Smith in relation to the report being brought to Resources Committee rather than other committees, the Clerk explained that the report was about people resources. The DoPD added that matters traditionally reported to Resources Committee had been about the people resource, and financial resources, but she acknowledged that a lot of the detail within the report was linked to performance, she confirmed that it was a member decision where the report would be reported. The Chair added that the report

	<p>could also be shared with Performance Committee.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor S Sidat in relation to the average age within the workforce being 40 years old, the DoPD explained that this had reduced in recent years. The average age used to be much older due to historical recruitment freezes, where there was also a reduction in new people joining the Service, she referenced that there has historically been lower staff turnover in comparison to the private sector and firefighters generally stayed within the Service until they could access their pension on retirement. She added that talent mapping was carried out to plan for the eventuality of people retiring from the Service. The Clerk added that other factors for the reduction in average age could include the changes to the default retirement age and pension scheme changes.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to utilising Instagram and Tiktok as part of recruitment campaigns, the DoPD explained that the service used a full range of social media with an evaluation carried out after each campaign. County Councillors M Ritson and J Tetlow asked about the reduction in engagement on Tiktok and it was agreed that the Assistant Director of Communication and Engagement would contact County Councillor J Tetlow outside of the meeting to discuss further.</p> <p>The Chair requested that any vacancies be shared with members via email to allow them to share recruitment opportunities.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be noted.</p>
16-25/26	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 26 November 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 25 March 2026 and 29 June 2026.</p>
17-25/26	<p>Exclusion of Press and Public</p> <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>
18-25/26	<p>Update from Capital Building Projects Working Group</p> <p>(Paragraph 3)</p> <p>Members were provided with an update from the Capital Building Projects Working Group.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be noted.</p>

19-25/26	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> <p>Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.</p>
20-25/26	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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Proceedings of Member Training & Development Working Group held 23 October 2025

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Member Training & Development Working Group meeting held 23 October 2025.

Recommendation(s)

To note the proceedings of Member Training & Development Working Group as set out at appendix 1 now presented.

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Member Training & Development Working Group meeting held on 23 October 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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Member Training & Development Working Group

Notes of hybrid meeting held on Thursday, 23 October 2025.

Present:	
Councillors	
A Ali OBE	
G Baker	
G Mirfin (Chair)	
M Ritson	
D Smith (Vice-Chair)	

Officers
E Sandiford, Director of People and Development (LFRS) D Howell, Deputy Monitoring Officer & Legal Services and Standards Manager (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from County Councillors Nigel Alderson and Aidy Riggott.
Councillor Graham Baker was present as a substitute.

Notes of Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on 24 April 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

Review of Member Training and Development Strategy

Liz, Sandiford, Director of People and Development (DoPD), introduced Members to Dominic Howell, Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO) and Legal Services and Standards Manager.

The Authority had had a Member Training and Development Strategy in place since 2006 which had been reviewed regularly.

Members reviewed and approved the strategy as presented.

CC G Mirfin commented that in the current political year, the Combined Fire Authority had experienced the largest replacement of Members in its history, and he recognised that it was an onerous task for Officers. He suggested an induction day event for Members and stated that the first CFA meeting, followed by the Strategy Meeting had been invaluable and proposed a similar event at Service Headquarters.

CC A Ali concurred that the first CFA meeting had been beneficial for new Members. He suggested setting time aside after CFA meetings for key training which would be a great help to those Members with busy diaries. Group Leaders could also be consulted to help with attendance from Members of their party. The DoPD explained that Member attendance at training and planned visits could be challenging and so, organising training following a committee meeting was an effective idea. CC A Ali advised that pre-group discussions could be held in relation to agendas, enabling quicker meetings, leaving more time for training.

CC A Ali suggested that some training sessions could be recorded to enable Members who were unable to attend to view at their convenience. He also proposed introducing desirable and essential training with timescales, and bite sized briefings. CC Mirfin agreed that it would be a useful way of building a library of resources. Members were informed that they could be given access to eLMS (e-Learning Management System), which was an online facility used to complete learning modules. The DoPD explained that there could be challenges with recording training sessions due to the impact on Resources in Corporate Communications.

With regards to Whistleblowing, CC G Mirfin stated that the number of cases in Lancashire County Council (LCC) had increased exponentially and there was a great need for Members to know how to respond. Councillor D Smith added that Social Media could exacerbate tensions with fake news and personal attacks. The DMO proposed a process whereby the Chair and Vice-Chair would filter Whistleblowing cases to pick up valid concerns. CC G Mirfin agreed to the approach with further discussion to take place outside of the meeting.

CC Ali raised concerns regarding Member posts on Social Media targeting other Members which could bring Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) into disrepute and could have serious repercussions and result in sanctions for Members. Members agreed to Standards training, provided by the Deputy Monitoring Officer following a CFA meeting which would incorporate the Nolan Principles, Social Media use, and Whistleblowing.

The DoPD explained that the Service were considering adding Governance to the remit of Audit Committee and CC G Mirin stated that Members would be supportive of this.

CC M Ritson raised concerns in relation to clashes with meetings and events between Lancashire County Council and LFRS. It was noted that Democratic Services now had access to view the internal calendar at LCC which would assist to avoid future clashes and plan training events following meetings.

CC G Mirfin advised that facilities at Lancashire County Hall could be utilised to hold future training sessions which would attract more Members.

Councillor D Smith stated that training should be Fire Authority specific, as a lot of generic training had been completed at Members' home authorities. Members were advised that a list of training had been received by home authorities to avoid duplication and topics of interest for training would be sought through Personal Development Plans. The DoPD emphasised that some training such as Cyber Security may need to be completed because of the risk identified to the Service, however, she would check with the Digital Data and Transformation (DDAT) Team.

In relation to training events, Councillor Baker advised that he preferred training face to face with paper copies of information to take away as a refresher.

Resolved: - That Members reviewed and approved the Member Training and Development Strategy.

Member Training & Development - Update Report

The Director of People and Development (DoPD), Liz Sandiford, presented the report which detailed the various means available for Elected Members of the Combined Fire Authority to access training and development opportunities.

Personal Development Plans (PDPs)

Personal Development Plans were predominantly held face to face, although they could be held over the telephone and electronically to support Members with busy diaries.

Fifteen new Councillors and five returning Councillors had recently joined the CFA since the April 2025 meeting. Of the 25 elected Members of the Authority, *56% had met with a Democratic Services Officer to draw up or review their Personal Development Plan. (*this number had changed since the creation of the report from 44%)

Training Opportunities and e-Learning

Members were encouraged through the Member Information Bulletin and emails, to view the North West Employers Organisation and the Local Government websites to access training opportunities. Democratic Services also emailed Members with details and invitations to training courses.

Members' Guide and Handbook

The Members' Guide for the municipal year 2025/26 had been issued to Members via email and the Members Information Bulletin, and the Members' Handbook was being created.

Member Information Bulletin

The Member Information Bulletin had been reformatted to web-based and was accessed via an electronic link with tabs for information. Although the bulletin was continuously in development, the first digital bulletin had been emailed to Members on 01 April 2022 and was emailed on a monthly basis.

In addition to providing meeting dates, Member Training and Development opportunities, news and events, presentations and demonstrations, the Bulletin also provided upcoming safety campaign information for Members to forward, as appropriate, to their constituents and key partners using their social media channels together with reporting to Members on the success of these campaigns in subsequent issues.

Co-Ordination of Training

Democratic Services arranged visits to outside bodies and organised demonstrations of Service equipment and facilities which helped Members to broaden their organisational knowledge and understanding of the work of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

Additionally, training such as the code of conduct and culture was provided after Committee meetings which helped Members with their roles.

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

CC G Mirfin encouraged Members to use the LGA to its maximum potential as it was an extremely useful resource. It was noted that Members were contacted with relevant training opportunities offered by the LGA and feedback had been positive.

CC G Mirfin requested that Group Leaders be contacted by Democratic Services to ascertain their availability for the LGA Annual Fire Conference in March 2026.

CC G Mirfin highlighted the importance of the Member Information Bulletin.

Councillor D Smith asked that Democratic Services aimed to complete 100% of PDPs by the next meeting.

Thanks were given to the Service by Members for the recent incident involving an overturned car near Clitheroe.

CC A Ali left the meeting at 11:03am.

Resolved: - That Members noted and endorsed the content of the report.

Monitoring, Review & Evaluation of Activities

The report provided an update on Member Training and Development activities since the previous meeting. The report showed opportunities and outcomes of activities undertaken by Members to support the achievement of Service objectives or positive outcomes for communities.

Involvement at Area Level

Members were routinely invited to attend local events such as Open Days, Charity Car Washes, 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' events, and were encouraged to contact area personnel to arrange to visit their local fire station to discuss local key issues.

Through the Member Information Bulletin, Members had been invited to and had attended King's Trust Presentation events in their local communities. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Spokesperson for the Opposition, and Vice-Spokesperson for the Opposition had been invited to attend the Wholetime Recruits Passing Out Parade on 02 May 2025 but were unable to attend due to election commitments.

Members had attended King's Trust Presentations at ACROSS Accrington, and Blackpool. A 'meet and greet' had taken place with a Councillor at Blackpool Fire Station, and an Alive to Drive road safety event had taken place on Blackpool Prom and was attended by Councillors. In addition, a 'Bubbles in the Park' event to promote community spirit event took place on Burnley's Thompson Park in August which featured Service attendance with some Members attending.

LGA Annual Fire Conference 2025

Four Members had attended the LGA Annual Fire Conference in March 2025 which had been held in Gateshead. Conference activity included plenaries consisting of presentations, and workshops consisting of various topics.

Events and Visits

- **LGA Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials**
Work was being carried out to secure bespoke virtual training from the LGA for all Members as the usual 2-day courses were restricted to 3 Councillors per authority. Members were emailed with the presentation from the previous year's LGA Leadership Essentials Course.
- **LGA Finance without Numbers – An Introduction to Local Government Finance Virtual Training**
Members had been invited, and several attended, the LGA Finance without numbers training in September and October.
- **LGA Virtual Masterclass – Leading Good Governance and Assurance as a Senior Councillor**
The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Party Leaders had been invited to attend the Virtual Masterclass – Leading Good Governance and Assurance as a Senior Councillor in December 2025.
- **North West Fire Control Visit**
Positive feedback had been received from previous visits to North West Fire Control and a Member visit had been arranged for 22 October 2025.
- **Equipment and Vehicle Demonstration at the Leadership & Development Centre**
Members attended a demonstration of several types of vehicles and equipment following the CFA Meeting on Monday September 2025. Members had commented that the demonstration was enjoyable and had improved their understanding of the Service's capabilities and how they support communities.
- **Carol Service**
The annual Carol Service would return to Blackburn Cathedral on 10 December 2025. The Chair, Vice-Chair, Spokespeople for the Opposition Parties, and the Clerk had been invited to attend the service.
- **Celebration of Our People Awards Event**
The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Spokespeople for the Opposition Parties had been invited to attend the 'Celebration of Our People' Awards Ceremony which provided an opportunity to reward colleagues for their outstanding service.

Member Information Bulletin

Members' views were requested to comment on what they felt worked well with the Member Information Bulletin and how engagement could be improved due to the low number of

views.

IT and Mileage Claim Sessions

Ongoing support on a 1-2-1 basis was provided by Democratic Services Officers to access the internet, assist Members to submit mileage claims, and access the Mod.Gov app to view private papers. A paper-based mileage claim system had been established and implemented during the year.

Social Media

The Service used a number of social media platforms which Members were encouraged to join to share protection and prevention information and promote the work of the Service.

The Service had social media accounts on Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn, as well as a Podcast (Out of the Ashes).

Member Training Survey Results

The results of the Member Training Survey were presented to Members following the Member Training Survey in August that related to proposed bite-sized Teams briefings and Local Government Association (LGA) Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials proposed tailored training.

Updates from the Last Meeting

Members were presented with the educational packages and campaigns which were delivered regarding the risks of electric bikes and scooters.

In relation to King's Trust programmes being delivered in West Lancashire, it was found that there were different delivery partners that provided King's Trust programmes and previously, Skelmersdale College had run a programme. However, funding was not provided to run a programme in that area.

Suggested Training

The below training was suggested and agreed:

- LGA Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials (2 half day virtual sessions).
- eLMS (e-Learning Management System) – (Members be given access to the system to complete recommended learning modules).
- EDI Training – EDI Training to be provided to Members following the Performance Committee.
- Whistleblowing Information – Members to receive Information/training on Whistleblowing following the next CFA meeting.

The DoPD explained that EDI & Culture training would be available on the eLMS system.

CC M Ritson encouraged Members to visit their local Fire Station as he had recently visited Bacup and felt that it helped to build relationships with local firefighters and Station Managers.

Councillor G Baker stated that there were a lot of new Members on the CFA and acknowledged that it could take time to gain confidence. To help new Members, he suggested that training be put in place as soon as possible.

Councillor D Smith requested and the DoPD agreed to explore options to introduce Kings Trust Programmes to West Lancashire. He expressed concern that there was no representation in that area but acknowledged that it was externally funded and employees were seconded from other agencies. He encouraged Members to attend presentations. Members were advised that an email with the next round of presentations had been sent to Members.

Councillor D Smith explained that he read the articles in the Member Information Bulletin, and it was a useful resource. He stated that some articles could be read without opening the item, which could be the reason for the low number of views.

The DoPD confirmed that adding Members to the eLMS platform would be explored.

Members agreed to the suggested training in the report.

Thanks were given to Officers for attending and for their work.

Resolved: - That the Group noted and endorsed the content of the report as presented.

Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on **Thursday 23 April 2026**. A further meeting was agreed for **Thursday 22 October 2026**.

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Liz Sandiford
Director of People and Development

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Proceedings of Planning Committee held 17 November 2025

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:

Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Planning Committee meeting held 17 November 2025.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17 November 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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

**Monday, 17 November 2025, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
N Alderson	
U Arif	
S Asghar (Vice-Chair)	
J Ash	
G Baker	
I Duxbury (Chair)	
J Hugo	
L Hutchinson	
F Jackson	
E Worthington	

Officers
S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) T Powell, Area Manager, Head of Service Improvement (LFRS) D Howell, Legal Services & Standards Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

10-25/26	Apologies for Absence
	No apologies were received but it was noted that County Councillor U Arif had been delayed.
11-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
12-25/26	Minutes of Previous Meeting

	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 14 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
13-25/26	Strategic Assessment of Risk 2025/2026
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented a report on the Service's Strategic Assessment of Risk for 2025/26.</p> <p>Risk in Lancashire would always remain dynamic: it changed over time, differed by area and demographic, and needed different interventions to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring or to lessen its consequences. These risks were identified in the Strategic Assessment of Risk (SAoR) which was refreshed annually and was also informed by the Lancashire Resilience Forum Community Risk Register and the services Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, Technological and Infrastructure, Environmental, Legislative and Organisational (PESTELO) analysis. Through its risk management framework, the Service continually assessed changing risk and prioritised its response framework.</p> <p>The Strategic Assessment of Risk reflected the knowledge and experience of a variety of specialist departments and utilised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) Incident Recording System (IRS) data to derive a data driven methodology that highlighted the incident types that posed the greatest risk to the county of Lancashire and the individuals who lived and worked within it.</p> <p>This year's document built on previous iterations as LFRS sought to continually improve its risk management processes. Pages 13 – 76 of the agenda pack detailed a number of risks including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UK Government Fire Reform White Paper ○ Wars, conflicts and political unrest • Economic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deprivation ○ Inflation/ Cost of living ○ Fuel Poverty • Socio-Cultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Population changes ○ Dwellings and households ○ Cultural Diversity ○ Health and Wellbeing • Technological (and Infrastructure) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emerging Technology – Electrical vehicles (EVs) and energy storage systems ○ Emerging Technology – Hydrogen ○ Artificial Intelligence/ Robotics/ Autonomous Vehicles ○ Infrastructure • Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climate change – wildfires ○ Climate change – flooding ○ Built environment • Legal

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

Pages 49- 73 of the agenda pack detailed the risk associated against the 32 incident types with commercial property fires identified as the highest risk.

In response to a question from County Councillor E Worthington in relation to types of commercial property, the DCFO explained that since the coronavirus pandemic there had been an increase in deliberate fires across commercial properties, this also included within prison environments. Additionally, there were a number of farm fires. Area Manager (AM) Tom Powell added that the risk was centred on the building type rather than the causation of the fire with a number of buildings derelict former commercial buildings.

In relation to the heat map on page 74 of the agenda pack, County Councillor E Worthington asked if deprivation was driving the increased risk. The DCFO explained that deprivation was a significant factor of the increased risk and added that some of the risk in Blackpool could be attributed to the number of derelict hotels within the Blackpool area since the pandemic. The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) explained that the fair funding review formula had not been updated since 2013/14 with 58% relating to population and 10% deprivation, due to bigger changes in population in other areas Lancashire would see a funding cut of 7%, although this was still in consultation.

At 10:18 County Councillors E Worthington left the meeting and U Arif joined the meeting.

In response to a question from County Councillor S Asghar in relation to additional resources and training for electric vehicle battery fires, the DCFO explained that there were high power 'cold cutting' systems that were used in some of the Scandinavian countries that were being explored along with the use of large fire blankets that could be used to restrict oxygen. However the use of a blanket could risk the battery reigniting once it had been removed. Manchester Fire and Rescue Service were using a mobile skip type vehicle to submerge cars allowing them to be towed away safely. AM Powell added that LFRS was working with recovery companies and educating partners in relation to the storage of electric vehicles following fires.

County Councillor E Worthington rejoined the meeting at 10:20.

Councillor G Baker asked how contaminated water was disposed of after use, the DCFO explained that the polluter was responsible for safe disposal of any contaminated water and in the case of electric vehicle fires this would be the

	<p>responsibility of the car owner/ insurers. He added that LFRS would take all the necessary steps to protect drains during incidents and would work with partners including the environmental agency to help contain and subsequently remove contaminated water.</p> <p>In response to a question from County Councillor E Worthington in relation to applying pressure to electric vehicle manufacturers, the DCFO commented that there were pros and cons to electric vehicles and explained that the National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) could lobby government in relation to this and he would report concerns into the appropriate NFCC workstream.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the Strategic Assessment of Risk for publication.</p>
14-25/26	<p>Business Continuity Planning and Testing</p>
	<p>County Councillor S Asghar left the meeting.</p> <p>AM Tom Powell presented the annual report to members.</p> <p>Significant progress had been made since the 2024 report, delivering on all of the developments previously presented to the Committee and embedding a mature, evidence-based Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) across Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS).</p> <p>A Business Continuity Management Group (BCMG), chaired by AM Tom Powell, provided central oversight of all business continuity activity. It had approved the updated Business Continuity Policy and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), endorsed the creation of an exercise and testing suite, and initiated the development of an LFRS-specific National Power Outage Plan.</p> <p>Following the introduction of standardised Business Continuity (BC) templates in 2024, all stations and departments had completed bespoke Business Impact Analyses (BIAs) and Business Continuity Plans (BCPs). An annual review cycle was now underway.</p> <p>The Business Continuity SharePoint system, live since April 2025, served as the single repository for all BC documentation.</p> <p>A comprehensive Exercise and Testing Suite, developed in 2024, was routinely used to validate operational plans. In November 2024, LFRS conducted its annual service-wide tactical and strategic exercise, simulating a wide-area power loss, which successfully tested escalation, decision-making, and interdepartmental coordination. Building on this, in 2025, the Service was participating in a Tier 1 national exercise, coordinated through the Lancashire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), focused on a pandemic scenario, alongside further tactical and strategic tests before year-end.</p> <p>Since the last report, there had been 51 BC exercises and 42 BC incidents across the Service. Of the 42 incidents, 9 triggered a tactical plan activation which included; major incidents such as significant fires, appliance degradation due to</p>

	<p>multiple incidents ongoing at once, and North West Fire Control in fallback conditions due to partial loss of communication methods. The 33 incidents which triggered an operational plan activation included; loss of utilities on LFRS premises such as water, power and heating, station break-ins, system outages and faults on fire alarms within LFRS premises.</p> <p>A service-wide internal audit of Business Continuity commenced in 2025, providing positive initial feedback on governance, documentation, and exercising arrangements. The final report was pending publication and was expected to confirm continued assurance that the BCMS meets both ISO 22301:2019 and Civil Contingencies Act requirements.</p> <p>At a national level, LFRS continued to lead the North West NFCC Business Continuity Group and had authored the national Fire and Rescue Service Business Continuity Guidance Document, due for formal NFCC adoption later this year.</p> <p>During its most recent inspection, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified Business Continuity as an area of significant improvement, recognising the Service's strengthened policies, processes, and governance.</p> <p>Areas of focus for 2025–26 included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous improvement and assurance • Lessons and learning integration • External validation and peer review • National and regional collaboration • Scenario development and resilience forecasting • People, training and awareness <p>Resolved: That members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Noted the significant progress made in strengthening LFRS's Business Continuity arrangements. (ii) Acknowledged the positive feedback received from HMICFRS and early findings of the internal audit. (iii) Endorsed the continued embedding of the Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) and the forward exercise programme.
15-25/26	<p>Blue Light Collaboration Board Update</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) advised that the report updated on progress of the ongoing workstreams that were being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board. The workstreams were managed effectively through both the Strategic and Tactical Boards and contributed towards improving outcomes, providing better value for money, reducing demand, and reducing inequalities within communities.</p> <p>Leadership Development</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon), and North West Ambulance Service (Nwas) continued to seek efficiencies and foster professional relationships across Blue Light Services.</p>

Over the last 12 months, each Service had hosted a Leadership Event, covering three shared themes identified using insights from each organisation. The first session, hosted by LFRS, saw 60 attendees from all three Services. The session, titled “Nourish to Flourish,” focused on self-care for effective leadership. The second session addressed media handling for Blue Light leaders. The final leadership event was held by LanCon and focussed on generational differences.

The group was exploring an ‘Outside-In’ Leadership program and the creation of a cross-coaching network for shared learning, potentially including a coaching exchange initiative.

County Councillor S Asghar rejoined the meeting at 10:37.

Health and Wellbeing

A new collaborative group was formed earlier this year, bringing together Health and Wellbeing leads from all three Services. The group’s goal was to understand and align the health and wellbeing offerings across Blue Light organisations, exploring joint opportunities to support staff.

The group’s initial step was to share policies and procedures for best practice and learning. NWAS had delivered menopause awareness sessions, and LFRS had developed a workshop to raise awareness of suicide from a responder’s perspective elements of which could be shared across all services.

Estates and Co-location

The estates and co-location initiative between LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon aimed to identify opportunities for shared sites, enhance collaboration and value for money. Successful co-location at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston, and other Fire Stations had improved operational efficiency and fostered stronger inter-service relationships, ultimately benefiting Lancashire communities.

An updated Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation Document had provided direction for the Estates and Co-location sub-group, which was exploring further collaboration. Quarterly meetings between Heads of Estates from LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon had shown that benefits extended beyond site sharing. The project’s objectives, principles, and expected benefits had been updated. The group was also considering system knowledge exchange, shared procurement specifications, and joint supplier frameworks.

Community First Responder (CFR)

A cost-benefit analysis by the New Economy showed that Emergency Medical Response (EMR) yielded a return of £4.41 for every £1 invested. In areas with EMR co-responding, firefighters were dispatched alongside ambulance services for suspected cardiac arrests, with the first to arrive providing life-saving care. This parallel response increased the likelihood of timely intervention and supported ambulance crews in advanced clinical work.

While this model had been successful in parts of the UK, the South Western Ambulance Service Foundation Trust was phasing out fire EMR in favour of strengthening its volunteer Community First Responder (CFR) scheme, a decision met with disappointment by FRS’ involved in EMR.

	<p>In Lancashire, the CFR workstream enabled LFRS staff volunteers to respond to life-threatening emergencies from their workplace. Since 2023, over 200 incidents had been attended, with LFRS staff providing life-saving interventions before ambulance arrival.</p> <p>The operational model had three phases:</p> <p>Phase 1: Green book staff respond voluntarily while on duty. Phase 2: Flexi Duty Officers (FDOs) respond while on duty. Phase 3: On Call staff respond within their communities. This phase was being developed with NWS and stations had been identified in the communities where NWS required most support.</p> <p>The DCFO explained that collaboration with unions was ongoing and it was hopeful that national agreement would be reached in relation to CFR's.</p> <p>The DCFO explained two additional workstreams had been developed that would be considered in the future, relating to recruitment and retention, including sharing the cost of recruitment fayres and sharing best practice and fleet, including the potential development of shared fleet maintenance resources.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted the report.</p>
16-25/26	<p>His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Update</p> <p>AM Powell presented the report to Members regarding His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) activity.</p> <p>Round 3 Overview</p> <p>LFRS HMICFRS Round 3 inspection concluded in April 2025. The inspection lasted several weeks and included staff engagement across the organisation, from Firefighter to Chief Fire Officer, inspectors visited a number of fire stations and departments, hosted staff focus groups and analysed numerous data sets and documents. HMICFRS inspectors also engaged with some of LFRS's partner organisations and visited North West Fire Control.</p> <p>The feedback from the HMICFRS inspectors acknowledged that every staff member they interacted with was highly engaging, and they felt genuinely welcomed throughout the organisation.</p> <p>The official report was released publicly on 14 August 2025 along with a HMICFRS press release included on page 93 of the agenda reports pack.</p> <p>LFRS Round 3 Report</p> <p>The Service had been awarded an unprecedented six 'Outstanding' and five 'Good' ratings across all 11 inspection areas. This remarkable achievement included being the only service in the country to receive a minimum rating of 'Good' across every category. LFRS had received the best ratings of any fire and rescue service in England.</p>

LFRS attained two Outstanding ratings in the People pillar during the inspection, making it the only service in the country to receive Outstanding in this category. LFRS were among only 3 services, out of a total of 44, that attained an outstanding rating in protection, understanding risk, and making best use of resources. Five areas of promising practice were also recognised in the report.

The inspectorate praised the Service for its excellent performance and recognised LFRS's commitment to continuous improvement, collaborative approach with partners, and ability to adapt to new challenges and legislation. The Service's commitment to inclusivity, staff wellbeing, and community engagement were also highlighted as sector leading.

Councillor G Baker left the meeting at 10:45.

HMICFRS Inspection 2025 – 27

HMICFRS had published their inspection schedule for 2025-27, the dates for the inspection programme would be released in three phases. The first inspections of the new round had recently concluded. Currently, LFRS were listed as the last service to undergo inspection, which was anticipated to take place around Spring 2027, although this was subject to potential amendments.

The 2025-27 inspection programme would involve a number of changes from the previous round, there would be some focus on the impact of governance on fire and rescue services, leadership, and a reduction in inspection areas from 11 to 10. The Service continued to engage with the Service Liaison Lead from HMICFRS.

HMICFRS Activity

A formal letter was sent to HMI Michelle Skeer, officially closing the six Areas for Improvement (AFIs) identified during the Round 2 inspection. The inspectors for Round 3 expressed their satisfaction with the progress made to address the AFIs that were previously identified.

The service would provide a quarterly report on the progress of its AFI regarding Equality Impact Assessments and work was already underway to progress this area. The Round 3 report had also been scrutinised to gather any further areas identified that may assist the service in elevating any aspects from good to outstanding. Department engagement was taking place to address any findings and actions would be tracked by the Organisational Assurance Team on the Assurance Monitoring System (AMS).

State of Fire and Rescue

The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2024–25 was published on 5 November. This was His Majesty's Chief Inspector's third annual report to the Secretary of State under section 28B of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

It was his first annual report on fire and rescue since the new Government came into power in July 2024. The report contained his assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of fire and rescue services in England, which was based on the inspection reports published between February 2023 and August 2025.

Between March 2023 and August 2025, the HMICFRS carried out their third full round of inspections of all 44 fire and rescue services in England. Several services made improvements in the Round 3 inspections. They closed 416 of 695 outstanding areas for improvement (AFIs) and issued fewer AFIs in this round. They also identified 67 examples of promising and innovative practice across 25 services.

Overall, 73 percent of the graded judgments awarded in Round 3 were 'adequate', 'good' or 'outstanding'. This meant services were able to show at least some of the characteristics of good performance in most areas and 43 percent of all grades met or exceeded the benchmark for good performance, where they issued good or outstanding grades. Overall, in this round, the HMICFRS gave the following proportion of grades:

- 4 percent outstanding
- 39 percent good
- 30 percent adequate
- 24 percent requires improvement
- 3 percent inadequate.

Councillor G Baker rejoined the meeting at 10:47.

LFRS were identified for positive practice on several occasions within the national report.

The full report could be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-state-of-fire-and-rescue-2024-to-2025>.

HMICFRS Chief and Chairs event

The annual Chiefs and Chairs event was held in Nottingham on 4 November 2025. Chief fire officers, authority chairs (and equivalents), sector leaders, and Government representatives were brought together to discuss key issues facing the sector. Chief Fire Officer Jon Charters and County Councillor Usman Arif attended on behalf of LFRS.

The day consisted of several presentations that were delivered by sector leaders, and the new Minister for Building Safety, Fire and Democracy Samantha Dixon MBE MP was also in attendance to deliver the keynote speech. The presentations and discussions focussed on:

- Key findings from the round 3 inspections
- Internal Governance
- Protection and Risk Based Inspection Programme
- Use of technology

HMICFRS Data Collection

The HMICFRS had discontinued the collection of Autumn data returns and transitioned to an annual return, which would next be requested in Spring 2026. The information included in the return was expected to be similar to the information requested in Spring 2025.

	<p>The DCFO encouraged members to read the state of fire and rescue report and explained that of seven national recommendations, four remained in progress;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Home Office, in consultation with the fire and rescue sector, should review and with precision determine the roles of: (a) fire and rescue services; and (b) those who work in them. • The Home Office, the Local Government Association, the National Fire Chiefs Council and trade unions should consider whether the current pay negotiation machinery requires fundamental reform. If so, this should include the need for an independent pay review body and the future of the 'Grey Book'. • The Home Office should consider the case for legislating to give chief fire officers operational independence. In the meantime, it should issue clear guidance, possibly through an amendment to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, on the demarcation between those responsible for governance and operational decision making by the chief fire officer. • By 1 March 2025, the Home Secretary should introduce amendments to Parliament concerning the inspectors of fire and rescue that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ place a requirement on fire and rescue authorities to publish comments, within 56 days, in response to HMICFRS inspection reports on their fire and rescue services; and ○ allow fire and rescue authorities, as well as mayors, county councils and police, fire and crime commissioners, to request that HMICFRS inspects the fire and rescue services in their areas. <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted the report.</p>
17-25/26	<p>Community Risk Management Plan and Service Review</p>
	<p>The DCFO presented the report to members.</p> <p>As required by the government's Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, each Fire and Rescue Service must produce a high-level Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) which explains how they will use their resources to respond to and reduce the risks they have identified in their local area.</p> <p>As part of LFRS's planning process, the service identified and assessed all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks across Lancashire and used this information to plan how to control these risks, respond to emergencies and deliver fire prevention and protection activities in the most efficient and effective way.</p> <p>This CRMP would set out the priorities, which supported LFRS's vision of 'making Lancashire safer', and would in turn be supported by its six key strategic documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Strategy • Prevention Strategy • Protection Strategy • People Strategy • Digital Strategy • Finance Strategy

	<p>Proposed approach</p> <p>Phase I From January 2026, for a minimum of eight weeks. The service would explain the challenges and drivers for change and invite views on it's proposed direction of travel.</p> <p>Phase I would allow the service to listen and learn about its communities' and workforce priorities, before detailed options were developed ahead of Phase II.</p> <p>A pre-consultation document would be submitted to December's full CFA meeting for approval to engage with communities and staff in early 2026.</p> <p>Phase II Following feedback from the pre-consultation, a draft CRMP and strategic strategies would be developed alongside options for how LFRS's services could be delivered in the future. A full consultation would then take place during summer 2026 where the service would present and seek feedback on the CRMP 2027-2032 and options for shaping the future of LFRS. The new CRMP would go live and the implementation of any proposed changes would take place from April 2027.</p> <p>Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 November 2025 Planning Committee: CRMP 2027-32 development overview and timeline for approval • 15 December 2025 Combined Fire Authority (CFA): Pre-consultation approval • January - February 2026: 8 week CRMP Pre-consultation engagement • January to June 2026: Review of core strategies, develop CRMP and Service Review documents • 13 July 2026 Planning Committee: Draft CRMP and Service Review documents approval to consult • July – October 2026: CRMP and Service Review full stakeholder consultation • 16 November 2026 Planning Committee: Final draft CRMP and Service Review proposals for consideration and recommending to full CFA • 14 December 2026 CFA: Final CRMP & Service Review proposals for approval • 1 April 2027: CRMP 2027-32 published • 1 April 2027 – 31st March 2032: Service Review implementation <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted, endorsed, and approved the approach taken for the production of the CRMP 2027-2032 alongside a Service Review.</p>
18-25/26	<p>Council tax precept consultation</p>
	<p>The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) presented the report to members.</p> <p>LFRS was required to consult the public on the proposed council tax precept for 2026-27.</p>

	<p>The draft local government finance settlement, which set out government funding and to what extent the precept could be raised, was usually announced in late December. Due to the timing, the Service would not be able to seek approval for consultation from the Planning Committee in sufficient time to undertake consultation prior to the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) annual budget meeting in February.</p> <p>For this reason, members had previously agreed to delegate approval to undertake consultation to the Chair in consultation with the Treasurer and the Chief Fire Officer. It was intended to consult the public between late December and early February.</p> <p>A report detailing consultation activity would be taken to the Planning Committee at its meeting on 2 February 2026 ahead of the final results being discussed at the budget meeting on 25 February 2026, where CFA members would consider and agree a final budget and the resultant council tax implications.</p> <p>The precept increase in 2024/25 was 5.9%, which was the equivalent of £5 per year on a Band D property, and in 2023/24 it was 2.99% which were the maximum precept increases permitted.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Planning Committee noted the report.</p>
19-25/26	Date of Next Meeting
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 2 February 2026 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 13 July 2026 and 16 November 2026.</p>

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Proceedings of Resources Committee held 26 November 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 November 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 November 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

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

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

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
A Blake	
N Alderson (Vice-Chair)	
A Ali OBE (Chair)	
G Baker	
J Fox	
Z Khan MBE	
D Smith	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) E Sandiford, Director of People and Development (LFRS) J Hutchinson, HR Manager - Pay, Pensions and Performance (LFRS) J Meadows, Head of Finance (LFRS) M Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority D Howell, Legal Services & Standards Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

21-25/26	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillors M Ritson and J Tetlow and Councillor S Sidat.
22-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
23-25/26	Minutes of the Previous Meeting

	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 24 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.										
24-25/26	Financial Monitoring 2025/26										
	<p>The Chair updated members that he along with the Chair of the Fire Authority, Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority, County Councillor M Clifford, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) and Fire Brigades Union (FBU) had recently met with the Fire Minister, Samantha Dixon to discuss the fair funding review to ensure that Northern Fire Services were not overlooked. Additionally, they met and lobbied Lancashire MP's.</p> <p>The DoCS advised that this report set out the current budget position in respect of the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets.</p> <p>Revenue Budget</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS's) 2025/26 revenue budget had been set at £77.511m. The budget profiled to the end of September 2025 was £37.475m and expenditure for the same period was £37.648m, which was essentially breaking even. Both pay and non-pay budgets were showing a small year to date overspend totalling £0.173m; £0.057m on pay budgets and £0.117m on non-pay budgets.</p> <p>The budget included £0.5m of savings to be delivered through effective deployment of resources and effective management of overtime, whilst the profile of overtime was higher over the summer period, management information showed that overtime had been avoided and therefore the service was forecasting that these savings would be met.</p> <p>Overall, a small overspend was forecast of £0.250m, which was just 0.3% of the net budget, this largely reflected the higher than budgeted pay awards of 3.2% for all staff compared to the 3% budgeted. 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</th><th>Forecast</th><th>Reason</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Service Delivery - Pay</td><td>£0.275m</td><td>£0.309m</td><td>The variance was largely due to two factors; the pay award of 3.2% from July 2025 was 0.2% above the budgeted assumptions, and higher than budgeted activity levels for on call staff. This pressure would need to be reflected in the 2026/27 budget.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Area	Year to Date	Forecast	Reason	Service Delivery - Pay	£0.275m	£0.309m	The variance was largely due to two factors; the pay award of 3.2% from July 2025 was 0.2% above the budgeted assumptions, and higher than budgeted activity levels for on call staff. This pressure would need to be reflected in the 2026/27 budget.
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Prevention and Protection - Pay	(£0.150m)	(£0.201m)	Several vacant posts existed in the current staffing establishment for which recruitment was planned long term. Challenges continued to persist in recruitment and retention due to competition from the private sector.
Fleet – Non-Pay	£0.105m	£0.122m	Vehicle repair and maintenance costs remained high due to inflationary pressures and demand for parts across the industry, this was however projected to reduce during the year.

Future Pressures

As previously outlined a pay award of 3.2% was agreed for both Grey Book and Green Book employees, this was above the 3% increase originally included in the budget.

As of September 2025, the UK Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate stood at 3.8%, continuing an upward trend from earlier in the year. This level of inflation was notably higher than the 2% general inflation assumption included in the budget and was placing pressure on both revenue and capital non-pay budgets.

Utility costs were also higher than the 2% inflation assumption at over 6% which was largely due to geopolitical instability. Longer-term projections suggested energy bills would remain at this high level into 2026 placing pressure this year and into the period of the next Budget.

Since January 2025, the Bank of England base rate had gradually declined from 4.75% to 4.00%, with forecasts suggesting a further drop to 3.75% by the end of 2026. £0.5m of additional investment returns were assumed to be transferred to the capital reserve due to higher cash balances, delays in the capital programme, and higher interest rates, this would assist towards inflationary pressures on the capital programme in future years.

At the last meeting the Committee received an update on the 'Fair Funding 2.0 Consultation' that potentially reduced future funding by an estimated £3.6m by the end of the spending review period in 2029. Whilst no further information had been received extensive lobbying had taken place with Government in recent weeks.

Savings Targets

Over the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) £5m of savings were 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. The £0.5m required in 2025/26 to balance the budget would be delivered by using the Dynamic Cover Tool, for the effective deployment of resources and effective management of overtime.

To deliver the £0.5m savings required for 2025/26 the Dynamic Resource Management (DRM) policy came into effect on 1 July which provided steps which could be taken prior to using overtime to fill shortfalls, including using the fifth crew

member from the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) stations and redistributing the crew from second pumps at two pump wholetime stations where there was adequate fire cover in the area. The initial data showed that the policy so far had been effective in reducing overtime costs whilst maintaining response standards. This monitoring report assumed the success of this policy would be maintained for the year.

The Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2025/26 included £0.572m of savings to be delivered in 2025/26; the delivery of £0.5m had been explained above. The balance of £0.072m was a balance of some smaller initiatives such as procurement savings, this would be reported through the update of progress against the plan later in the year.

General Reserve

The General Reserve existed to cover unforeseen risks and expenditure that may be incurred outside of planned budgets. In February the Authority approved the minimum level of General Reserve as advised by the Treasurer at £3.850m. The General Reserve at 31 March 2025 was £5.556m and with the forecast overspend this was set to reduce to £5.306, this remained above the minimum level of General Reserve set by the Authority.

Capital Budget

The revised Capital Programme for 2025/26 approved by the September's Resources Committee was £12.652m and to date £2.280m had been spent. A summary of the programme was set out in the table below and in more detail in Appendix 2 of the report.

Area	Budgeted Items	Budget	Year to Date
Operational Vehicles Budget	The budget included the initial costs of six large Type B pumping appliances, two smaller Type A pumping appliances. All were on target for delivery this financial year.	£2.911m	£0.0m
Other vehicles Budget	This budget allowed for the replacement of various operational support vehicles including several cars, vans and a welfare unit. All were on target for delivery this financial year.	£1.284m	£0.379m
Operational Equipment Budget	This budget allowed for operational equipment purchases including Breathing Apparatus, CCTV cameras for appliances, ballistic vests and helmets, flow meters and hose reel, cutting and extrication equipment.	£1.855m	£0.105m
Building Modifications Budget	This budget included the continued programme of Drill Tower Replacements and upgrades to Preston and Blackpool stations.	£3.348m	£1.301m

IT systems Budget	This budget included various projects including upgraded Firewalls, network upgrades, Retained Duty System Alerts, North West Fire Control (NWFC) Dispatch System and replacement of each protection, pooled PPE and stock management systems, and a Firefighting Robot.	£3.254m	£0.495m
		£12.652m	£2.280m

A detailed review of the Capital Programme had identified areas where expenditure would slip into 2026/27, the table below sets out the main item of slippage:

Area	Slippage to 2026/27	Reason
IT Systems	(£0.100)	A cloud solution was now being considered for the Geographic Information System.
	(£0.100)	

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 agenda pack. 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	3.25
Capital Budget – Additional Expenditure	0.65

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.

In response to a question from County Councillor A Blake in relation to repairing the services fleet vehicles, the Head of Finance explained that the service had a service level agreement (SLA) with Lancashire County Council (LCC) and if they did not have the capacity or facilities to provide the service a local supplier would be utilised. The service was going out to tender for its fleet repairs and maintenance.

In response to a question from Councillor D Smith in relation to utility costs, the DoCS explained that the service collaborated with other fire and rescue services to get the best prices which were usually fixed for reasonable periods of time.

Resolved: That the Committee;

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noted and endorsed the financial position; and 2. Approved slippage in the capital programme of £0.100m to 2026/27.
25-25/26	<p>Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2025/26</p> <p>The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) advised that the report set out the Authority's borrowing and lending activities during 2025/26. In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice and to strengthen Members' oversight of the Authority's treasury management activities, the Resources Committee received a treasury management mid-year report and a final outturn report. Reports on treasury activity were discussed on a quarterly basis with Lancashire County Council Treasury Management Team and the Authority's DoCS and the content of these reports were used as a basis for this report to the Committee.</p> <p>Economic Overview</p> <p>The first half of 2025/26 saw:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 0.3% pick up in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the period April to June 2025. More recently, the economy flatlined in July, with higher taxes for businesses restraining growth. • The 3-month comparison to the same three months last financial year rate of average earnings growth excluding bonuses had fallen from 5.5% to 4.8% in July. • Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation had ebbed and flowed but finished September at 3.8%, whilst core inflation eased to 3.6%. • The Bank of England cut interest rates from 4.50% to 4.25% in May, and then to 4% in August. • The 10-year gilt yield fluctuated between 4.4% and 4.8%, ending the half year at 4.70%. <p>From a GDP perspective, the financial year got off to a bumpy start with the 0.3% monthly fall in real GDP in April as front-running of US tariffs in quarter one (when GDP grew 0.7% on the quarter) weighed on activity. Despite the underlying reasons for the drop, it was still the first fall since October 2024 and the largest fall since October 2023. However, the economy surprised to the upside in May and June so that quarterly growth ended up 0.3% compared to the previous quarter. Looking ahead, ongoing speculation about further tax rises in the Autumn Budget on 26 November would remain a drag on GDP growth. GDP growth for 2025 was forecast by Capital Economics to be 1.3%.</p> <p>With the November Budget edging nearer, the public finances position looked weak. Public net sector borrowing of £18.0bn in August meant that after five months of the financial year, borrowing was already £11.4bn higher than the Office for Budget Responsibility's (OBR) forecast at the Spring Statement in March. The overshoot in the Chancellor's chosen fiscal mandate of the current budget was even greater with a cumulative deficit of £15.3bn. This was due to both current receipts in August being lower than the OBR forecast (by £1.8bn) and current expenditure being higher (by £1.0bn). Over the first five months of the financial year, current receipts had fallen short by a total of £6.1bn (partly due to lower-than-expected self-assessment income tax) and current expenditure had overshoot by a total of £3.7bn (partly due to social benefits and departmental spending).</p>

Furthermore, what mattered now was the OBR forecasts and their impact on the current budget in 2029/30, which was when the Chancellor's fiscal mandate would bite. As a general guide, Capital Economics forecasted a deficit of about £18bn, meaning the Chancellor would have to raise £28bn, mostly through higher taxes, if she wanted to keep her buffer against her rule of £10bn.

CPI inflation fell slightly from 3.5% in April to 3.4% in May, and services inflation dropped from 5.4% to 4.7%, whilst core inflation also softened from 3.8% to 3.5%. More recently, inflation pressures had resurfaced, although the recent upward march in CPI inflation did pause in August, with CPI inflation staying at 3.8%. Core inflation eased once more too, from 3.8% to 3.6%, and services inflation dipped from 5.0% to 4.7%. The Bank of England did not anticipate CPI getting to 2% until early 2027, and with wages still rising by just below 5%, it was no surprise that the September meeting saw the Monetary Policy Committee vote 7-2 for keeping rates at 4%.

The Authority's treasury advisors MUFG Corporate Markets assisted the Authority to formulate a view on interest rates. The Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) rate forecasted were based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 base points (bps)) which had been accessible to most authorities since 1 November 2012.

MUFG Corporate Markets' latest forecast on 11 August set out a view that short, medium and long-dated interest rates would fall back over the next year or two, although there were upside risks in respect of the stickiness of inflation and a continuing tight labour market, as well as the size of gilt issuance.

Treasury Management position and policy

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes was measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital were the underlying resources available for investment. The treasury management activity was influenced both by the position at the beginning of the year and the plans in year. The position at the start of the financial year is summarised in the Table below:

	Balance 31/3/25
	£m
Capital Finance Requirement	12.440
Less other debt liabilities	(12.440)
Borrowing Requirement	0.000
External borrowing	2.000

The table showed that the level of loans was above the borrowing requirement. This was the result of the Authority adopting a policy of setting aside additional Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to generate the cash to repay loans either on maturity or as an early repayment.

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

Borrowing

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

The long-term debt outstanding of £2m had been borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). A table included within the report showed the maturity profile of the Authority's borrowings, along with an interest rate paid.

If the loans were to be repaid early there would be an early repayment (premium) charge. At the reporting date the Authority could achieve an interest saving of £2k for early repayment of the loans above however, with the Authority budgeting a borrowing requirement to fund the capital programme from 2026/27, the additional interest on new loans would outweigh the £2k saving from early repayment.

Investments

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance required the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money was to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving low investment returns and having the value of reserves eroded by inflation.

In the period the Authority had invested funds in the Debt Management Office's (DMO) Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) overnight facility and other local authorities. Each working day the balance on the Authority's current account was invested in this to ensure that interest was received on surplus balances within an acceptable risk framework.

At 30 September, there was a balance of £12.385m invested in DMADF overnight facility while the average for the period for DMADF deposits was £18.757m. The current rate for these investments was 3.95% 25bps below the Bank of England base rate.

To increase the rate earned, the authority had placed fixed term investments with other local authorities. To attract a higher rate of interest than was available on the call account these investments would need to be fixed for a longer period of time. During the year the following investments had been in place:

Start	Finish	Principal £m	Interest Rate	Annual interest	Interest in 2025/26
29-Aug-24	28-Aug-25	5	4.80%	239,342	97,973
03-Feb-25	30-Sep-25	5	5.65%	184,979	140,863
02-Oct-24	01-Oct-25	5	4.70%	234,356	117,822
19-Feb-25	18-Feb-26	5	5.50%	274,247	243,356
22-Apr-25	21-Apr-26	5	4.50%	224,384	212,055
30-Apr-25	29-Apr-26	5	4.75%	236,849	218,630

30-Jul-25	29-Jul-26	5	4.15%	206,932	139,281
29-Sep-25	28-Sep-26	5	4.15%	206,932	104,603
30-Sep-25	29-Sep-26	5	4.25%	211,918	106,541

At 30 September, there was £35.0m fixed term investment in place, therefore the total investment held at 30 September was £47.385m.

The overall rate of interest earned during this period was 4.65% which was favourable when compared with the 7-day Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) which averaged 4.20% over the same period.

All investments were made in accordance with the current Treasury Management Strategy and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Current interest rates available for lending to other Local Authorities were detailed within the report.

Prudential Indicators

In order to control and monitor the Authority's treasury management functions, a number of prudential indicators were determined against which performance may be measured. The indicators for 2025/26 were approved by the Authority on 17 February 2025 which were detailed in the report alongside the current actual.

Revenue Budget Implications

The 2025/26 revenue budget for treasury management activity showed that anticipated income would exceed expenditure by £1.295m. Considering the activity for the first six months of the year and estimated cash-flow for the remainder of the year the latest forecast was as below:

	2024/25 Budget £m	2025/26 Forecast £m	2026/27 Variance £m
Interest payable	0.090	0.090	0.000
MRP	0.000	0.000	0.000
Interest receivable	(1.385)	(2.144)	(0.759)
Net budget	(1.295)	(2.054)	(0.759)

The interest receivable was above budget as the investment balances and interest rates were higher than anticipated when setting the budget. The forecast assumed interest rates achieved through deposits with the DMADF the call account averaged 3.87% for the remainder of the financial year.

Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.

26-25/26 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday **25 March 2026** at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

	Further meeting dates were noted for 29 June 2026 and 30 September 2026.
27-25/26	Exclusion of Press and Public
	Resolved: That the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.
28-25/26	High Value Procurement Projects
	(Paragraph 3) Members considered a report that provided an update on all contracts valued above £175,000. Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.
29-25/26	Pensions Update
	(Paragraphs 4 and 5) Members considered a report that provided an update on the various issues which had arisen in respect of the changes to the pension schemes applying to the uniformed members of the Fire Sector. Resolved: That the report be noted.
30-25/26	Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) - Stage 2
	(Paragraphs 1, 4 and 5) Members considered a report regarding an IDRP Stage 2 application under the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure. The report outlined the facts of the case. Resolved: That the stage one decision in relation to this application was upheld.

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 December 2025

Proposed Amendment to Strategy Group Terms of Reference

(Appendix 1 Refers)

Contact for further information: Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Telephone: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The Authority last reviewed the terms of reference of the Strategy Group on 15 September 2025, where they were largely left the same, save for some minor amendments to reflect its expanding remit and officers' desire for visibility on operational decisions taken against a backdrop of growing financial constraints and therefore involving members responsible for good governance

Members are asked to consider some further minor additions to the Terms of Reference of the Strategy Group to reflect the need for confidentiality of those discussions, which is essential to maintain the efficacy and usefulness of the dialogues within the Group and the continued efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Service and its changing needs and obligations.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to approve the additional two paragraphs added to the further revised terms of reference for the Strategy Group, as outlined in red at Appendix 1.

Information

The Terms of Reference for the Strategy Group were last reviewed, at the Authority meeting on 15 September, further to an expansion of the remit of the Strategy Group as a discussion forum for ideas, not only from the Service but also to promote and encourage ideas from the Authority.

As part of a wider review of governance arrangements and structures and also following issues raised around confidentiality between elected members, by members in previous meetings, the Clerk to the Authority felt that clarity was needed to ensure that all parties were assured of their duties in relation to confidentiality.

Clarity was particularly necessary when attending meetings which are not lawfully constituted meetings, but where elected members are still bound by duties of confidentiality, and compliance with the Code of Conduct.

The additional paragraphs hopefully provide both clarity and assurances for members, given their obligations to constituent communities.

The proposed changes are marked in red.

Business Risk

Governance arrangements form a key element of the control framework within which the Authority operates. The changes proposed are to protect and safeguard the free flow of dialogue between senior officers and members, without the risk that speculative proposals

which are not ultimately brought into operation are disclosed, potentially causing uncertainty or confusion in the service. This is also vital to maintain optimum efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness of LFRS operations.

Environmental Impact

None identified.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None identified.

HR Implications

None identified.

Financial Implications

None identified.

Legal implications

The proposal underpin the importance of compliance with the Authority's Code of Conduct for Members.

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

Paper: Report to CFA 89/17 and Report to CFA 28-25/26

Dates: 23 April 2018, 15 September 2025.

Contact: Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

CFA strategy group terms of reference

It is envisaged that the Group will meet twice a year, without a fixed timetable, to remain flexible to respond to any need for urgent change.

The purpose of the Strategy Group is to provide a private discussion forum for all Members of the Combined Fire Authority – in essence it is a ‘think tank’.

The Strategy Group is also a forum in which to share proposals for strategic and operational developments outside of the constitutional structure, in order to obtain general viewpoints and reactions to proposals and to promote healthy discussion and member engagement about some of them.

Senior officers need to discuss and share strategic proposals and information with members to obtain views and consider responses and best practice, in the best interests of efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness for the communities in which members serve. Members are reminded to ensure that strict confidentiality is maintained regarding the contents of discussions and proposals discussed during the Strategy Group or Strategy Day meetings, and that no information is divulged outside the Group, whatsoever, including to colleagues who are not members of the Combined Fire Authority, until such time as the issues discussed are tabled at a formally constituted meeting and/or in the public domain.

Members are reminded that they are still bound by the requirements of the Authority’s Code of Conduct, as they attend the Strategy Group in accordance with their duties as an elected member of the Authority. Should any member fail to comply with this requirement of confidentiality, this could result in potential adverse consequences for the operational resilience and damage to public confidence.

The proposed terms of reference are:

- To consider and make appropriate recommendations to the Authority on the contents of reports submitted by: Committees, Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Clerk in relation to new policy areas, taking into account the impact of such proposals on the staff and financial resources of the Authority;
- To consider and make appropriate recommendations to the Authority on the:
 - Formulation of the Authority’s objectives;
 - Priority of those objectives.
- To consider and make appropriate recommendations to the Authority or the appropriate Committee on significant changes to the:
 - Committee Structure;
 - Terms of Reference of Committees;

Appendix 1

- Powers of Committees;
 - Scheme of Delegation;
 - Constitutional Standing Orders.
-
- To consider proposals of government departments and other national or regional bodies which have national or regional implications which would affect the Authority in its relationship with other bodies and make appropriate recommendations to the Authority or appropriate Committee;
 - To consider presentations from any organisation/individual it feels would be useful in achieving the role of the Strategy Group.

The Strategy Group will not have decision-making powers; it will only be able to make recommendations to the Combined Fire Authority or a Committee. For it to have decision making powers it would need to be a Committee covered by 'openness and transparency rules'. Meetings of the Strategy Group will not therefore be open to the public. Notes of the meetings should not be disclosed to the public or any third parties outside of the Combined Fire Authority, including other elected officials who are not members of the Authority, as proposals may not be taken forward, voted up or ultimately adopted. This is an important requirement to ensure the respect for the free flowing dialogue within the Strategy Group is maintained.

The LFRS Executive Board will be responsible for identifying issues to be considered by the Strategy Group. However, the Fire Authority, individual committees and individual members may on occasions wish to refer items, should they wish to contribute towards effective dialogue to discuss issues with a view to positive change, in the event they wish to do so.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 December 2025

Community Risk Management Plan Pre-Consultation

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

Executive Summary

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) is a five-year plan for how we will make Lancashire safer. We have started work on our next CRMP, which will set out the direction of the Service from 2027 to 2032, based on the greatest risks to the people and communities of Lancashire.

The environment we operate in is constantly changing and new risks to our communities frequently emerge. It is our job to make sure we are equipped to deal with these changing risks by adapting our services and skills to prevent, protect and respond effectively.

To help shape the CRMP and options for how we deliver services in the future, we want to engage and consult with a wide range of stakeholders in two phases. This report details plans for phase one of consultation.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to endorse the first phase of consultation to take place in early 2026. The Service will use the feedback to draft the CRMP 2027-32 and to develop options for how our services may be delivered in the future, before consulting again in more detail in phase two during summer / autumn 2026.

Information

The government's Fire and Rescue National Framework for England requires each fire and rescue service to produce a high-level Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which explains how they will use their resources to respond to and reduce the risks they have identified in their local area.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) CRMP 2022-27 can be viewed on the Service's website. It is the Service's most important plan and sets out how we will achieve our aim of making Lancashire safer.

The environment we operate in is constantly changing and new risks to our communities frequently emerge. It is our job to make sure we are equipped to deal with these changing risks by adapting our services and skills to prevent, protect and respond effectively. This is the purpose of our CRMP.

Work has begun on the next CRMP, which will set out the direction of the Service for the period 2027-32, based on the greatest risks to the people and communities of Lancashire. It will be supported by six core strategies:

- Response Strategy
- Prevention Strategy
- Protection Strategy
- People Strategy
- Digital Strategy
- Finance Strategy

As part of our planning process, we identify and assess all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks across Lancashire and use this information to plan how to control these risks, respond to emergencies and deliver our fire prevention and protection services in the most efficient and effective way. To achieve this, it is vital that we understand the needs of Lancashire's communities as part of the planning process.

For this reason, we consult with a wide range of stakeholders including residents, businesses, service users, elected members, partner agencies, community groups, employees, and representative bodies. The Service is taking a two-phased approach to consultation.

Phase one

From week commencing 5 January to 15 March 2026, we will explain the challenges and drivers for change and invite views on our proposed direction of travel. Phase one will allow us to listen and learn about community and workforce priorities, before drafting our CRMP and developing options for how our services may be delivered in the future. There will then be a second phase of consultation in more detail.

Context

Our priorities and values

Our aim is to make Lancashire safer and our priorities are:

- Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer
- Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening
- Protecting people and properties when fires happen
- Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently
- Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

Our STRIVE values set out how we treat each other and how we serve the public:

- Service – Making Lancashire safer is the most important thing we do.
- Trust – We trust the people we work with.
- Respect – We respect each other.
- Integrity – We do what we say we will do.
- Valued – We actively listen to others.
- Empowered – We contribute to decisions and improvements.

Our performance

In 2025, LFRS set the national benchmark for excellence, achieving the best inspection outcome by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

The Service was awarded six 'outstanding' and five 'good' ratings across the 11 inspection areas.

Our budget

Our budget in 2025-26 was £77.5 million. This is made up from several funding sources:

- Council tax – 54%
- Business rates – 28%
- Government grants – 18%

Our budget has not matched rising costs and new demands in recent years - real-term funding has dropped by £10 million since 2016.

We are proud of the value for money we provide – we are one of the biggest fire and rescue services in the country, yet our council tax is below the national average. Lancashire residents pay £89.73 per year for our services (on a band D property) and fire and rescue accounts for just 4% of the overall council tax bill.

However, we have a shortfall in our funding – at least £5 million over the next five years - and must make savings to maintain our services and make vital investment in our service.

How we operate

We have 1,160 employees:

- Wholtime firefighters work full-time with LFRS.
- On-call firefighters often have another job outside LFRS and respond to emergencies in their communities from home or work when needed.
- Service support staff are specialist employees who provide technical expertise in a range of functions.

There are 39 fire stations across the county plus Service headquarters which is located in Fulwood and our Leadership and Development Centre in Chorley.

Our fleet has 58 fire engines:

- 26 crewed by wholtime firefighters
- 32 crewed by on-call firefighters

We also have numerous specialist vehicles and equipment ranging from aerial ladder platforms to rescue boats.

Although we have 58 fire engines in total, they are not all available all of the time and availability fluctuates. Through the daytime, particularly during the working week, the number reduces as some of our on-call fire engines are unavailable due to challenges of recruiting and retaining enough on-call firefighters, particularly in our rural areas. This is a national challenge.

Our county is highly diverse in terms of both deprivation and affluence, containing some of the highest and lowest risk areas in the country. LFRS provides a high level of service for a comparatively modest budget and does so more efficiently on a cost per-

person basis than many other services. This efficiency is achieved despite facing greater diversity and disparity in population needs than most comparable services.

Our services

Prevention: Making safety interventions in the homes of those most at risk of fire and supporting people to adopt safe practices.

We constantly endeavour to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening. Prevention is always preferable to response and is by far the most effective way to make Lancashire safer. Our approach recognises life's different stages and we focus on helping people start safe, live safe, age safe, and be safe on our roads and around water. We identify those who are most vulnerable in our communities, and design and target our prevention activities to support people to adopt safe practices and reduce their risk. Our main service is the home fire safety check service, where we make practical interventions in the homes of those most at risk of having a fire.

Protection: Supporting businesses and landlords to keep their buildings safe and taking action if they do not.

We aim to reduce the number of fires that occur in commercial premises and the impact on life, property, and business disruption when fires do occur. We support businesses, employers, and landlords to meet their legal duties and keep people safe in their buildings with a county-wide inspection programme. We take a risk-based approach to inspecting businesses: fire safety inspectors focus their activity on complex, high-risk premises and operational crews check lower risk premises such as schools, shops and offices through our business fire safety check service.

Response: Responding to fires and a wide range of other types of emergencies quickly and competently.

We strive to deliver the highest standards of operational response by continuously planning, preparing, and training for emergencies. Risks in communities are changing and the types of emergencies we attend are increasingly varied. We respond to everything from fires and road traffic collisions to flooding and building collapses. We also support other emergency services by responding to missing person searches and gaining entry for medical emergencies to support North West Ambulance Service. We constantly review and adapt our approach to ensure we have the right appliances, equipment, skills, and technology to respond to any incident quickly and competently.

Service support: Supporting the delivery of frontline prevention, protection and response services.

Support services are essential and incorporate a wide range of vital functions, from human resources to fleet and engineering, that support the delivery of prevention, protection and response services. Support services ensure that operations run smoothly behind the scenes and our frontline staff are equipped to deliver services.

Risk and demand in Lancashire

Community risk

The locations, numbers and types of fire stations, vehicles, equipment and skills with which we operate are matched to community risks and incident levels across the county. Our prevention and protection services are also targeted at reducing incidents in the areas of highest risk.

Risks are identified annually in our Strategic Assessment of Risk and our Community Risk Management Plan sets out how we respond to them. Community risks are constantly changing and new risks frequently emerge. Wildfires, illegal waste site incidents, and e-charging fires are all examples of emergencies that have become higher risks in recent years.

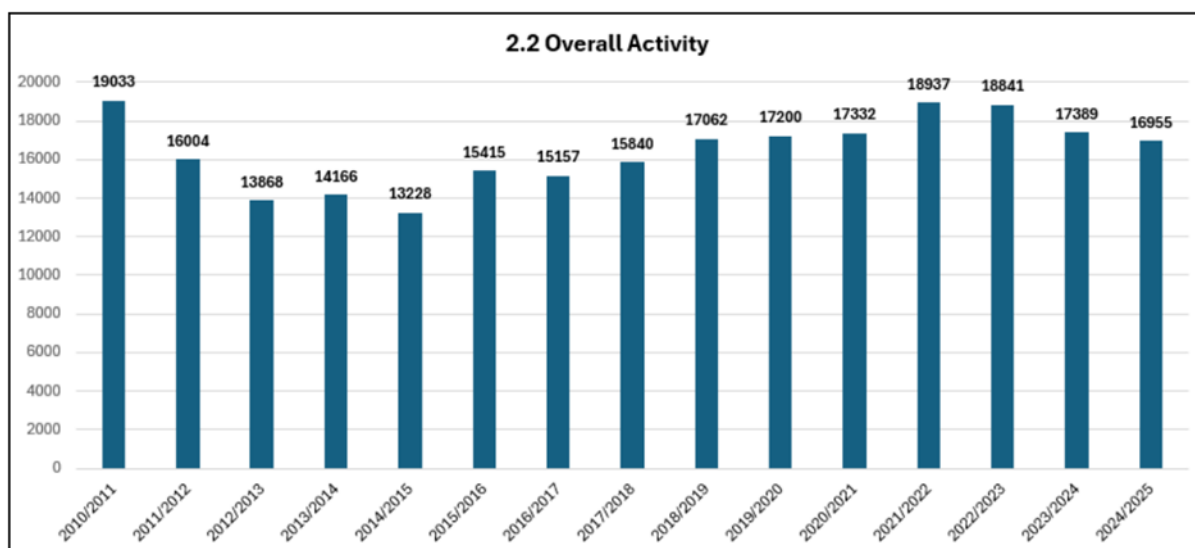
The top five risks in Lancashire at present are:

- Commercial property fires
- Wildfires
- Deliberate building fires
- Flooding
- Accidental house fires

The full list can be viewed in the Strategic Assessment of Risk on the Service's website.

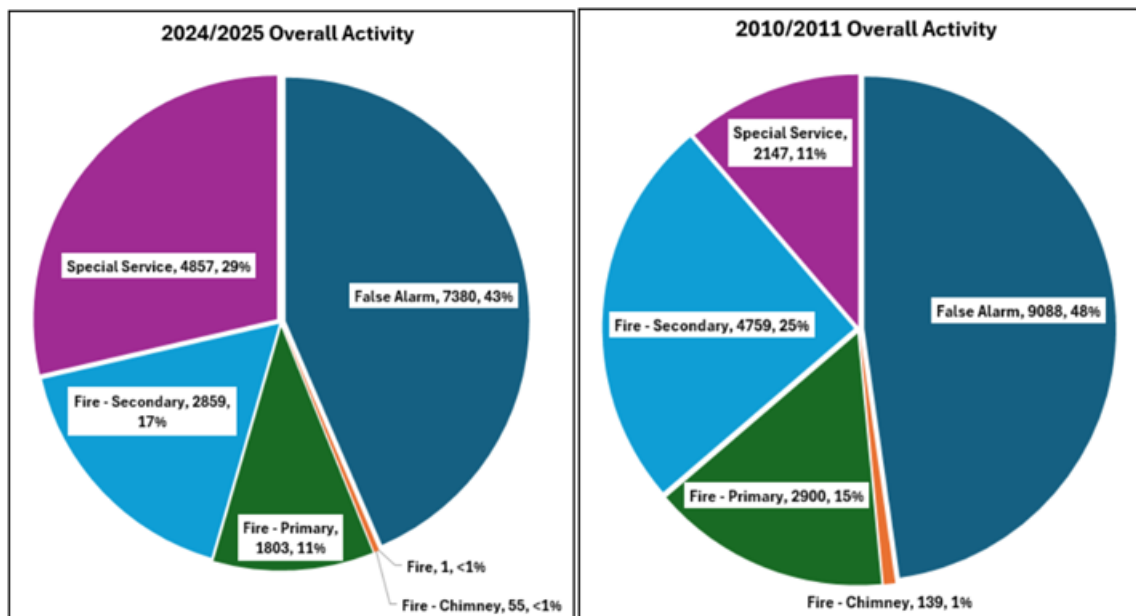
Demand

Demand also changes over time: the number of incidents we respond to has fluctuated over the last 15 years.



What has changed is the type of incidents we respond to:

- Fires have dropped from representing 40% to only 28% of all incidents.
- False alarms are broadly the same, representing 43% now compared to 48% in 2010-11.
- Special service incidents have increased from 11% of all incidents to 29%.



Primary fires are generally serious fires involving property or any fires involving casualties, rescues, or any fire attended by five or more fire engines.

Secondary fires are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property.

Special service incidents are made up of many different activities such as such road traffic collisions, flooding, and assisting other agencies (eg gaining entry to properties on behalf of the police and ambulance service during medical emergencies).

Shaping our service for the future

The ways we operate evolve as risks to public safety change. It is our job to make sure we are equipped to deal with changing risk and demand by adapting our services and skills to prevent, protect and respond effectively. At the same time, we must address operational and financial challenges so that we can continue to deliver high standards of services across Lancashire in the most efficient way.

Key challenges and drivers for change

- **Changing risk:** risks change over time, differ by area and demographic, and need different interventions to reduce the likelihood of happening or to lessen the consequences.
- **Changing demand:** the number and types of fires we attend has gone down and the types of emergencies we respond to has changed, with incidents such as assisting other agencies on the rise, and the challenges of dealing with climate change in respect of flooding and wildfire increasing.
- **Fire engine availability:** the number of fire engines available fluctuates during each day and the lowest availability is often when demand is highest, particularly in rural areas where on-call firefighter availability is reduced due to recruitment and retention challenges. We want to balance this to a sustainable model that provides more resources when demand is highest.
- **Lancashire's population:** the makeup of communities is changing and more vulnerable people require tailored prevention support.

- **Budget pressures:** income has not kept pace with rising costs and future funding is uncertain, requiring efficiency savings to ensure financial sustainability.
- **LFRS buildings:** many fire stations are outdated and not fit for modern operational needs, maintenance costs are increasing and vital investment is needed.
- **Technology and innovation:** there are opportunities to modernise the types of vehicles we use and how we get the right skilled people and equipment to incidents as quickly and safely as possible.
- **Future investment:** as a high performing fire and rescue service, we need to continually invest in our people, systems, and assets to deliver the best possible services.

Potential areas for change

Any future changes aim to address our challenges and capitalise on opportunities for the purpose of meeting Lancashire's needs now and in the future:

- Re-locating or merging stations and vehicles to better match risk and demand.
- Changing staffing (duty) systems to deploy resources more flexibly based on risk and demand.
- Reviewing the response model for attending emergencies.
- Reviewing the way prevention, protection and support services are delivered.
- Rationalising our estate and reinvesting in training facilities and more efficient buildings.

Consultation plan

Purpose

To understand community needs and expectations of LFRS to shape our CRMP and options for how we deliver services in future. We also want to strengthen trust and confidence between the community and the Service.

In phase one we will share information about our services, financial position, challenges and opportunities and ask for views on:

- The services we deliver and what is most important to people.
- The issues and risks we could face in the future, such as the impact of extreme weather, new technology, and how the area we serve grows and changes.
- What people think we should prioritise for investment.
- How we use and organise our resources in relation to risk and demand including people, systems and assets.

Implementation

An independent researcher with specialist skills will support the consultation to ensure effective activity with no perceived conflict of interest.

Consultation will be centred around an online survey which will be actively promoted to stakeholders through targeted communication methods. The online survey will be supported by community engagement activity by community fire safety staff to

encourage participation in the consultation. We will also engage with our staff and representative bodies.

A dedicated email inbox will also be made available for further information, questions and complaints.

All the feedback will be analysed independently. We will use the feedback to draft our CRMP 2027-32 and develop options for how we deliver our services in the future before consulting again in more detail in phase two during summer / autumn 2026.

Timeline

- W/c 5 January 2026: Phase one consultation starts.
- W/c 2 February 2026: Mid-point consultation review and implementation of any required adjustments to the consultation plan.
- W/c 9 March 2025: Closure review to determine if sufficient response has been obtained or whether additional activity is required.
- 15 March 2025: Phase one consultation ends.
- January to June 2026: Draft CRMP 2027-32, review core strategies, conduct Service Review and develop options for how services are delivered in the future.
- 13 July 2026 Planning Committee: Draft CRMP and Service Review documents approval to consult.
- July - October 2026: CRMP and Service Review phase two consultation.
- 16 November 2026 Planning Committee: Final draft CRMP and Service Review proposals for consideration and recommending to full Combined Fire Authority.
- 14 December 2026 full CFA: Final CRMP and Service Review proposals for approval.
- 1 April 2027: CRMP 2027-32 and core strategies published.
- 1 April 2027 - 31 March 2032: Service Review implementation.

Business risk

The Service is required to produce a Community Risk Management Plan and has designed an approach that involves listening to the people we serve to ensure the plan will be effective and efficient but also meets required standards within the sector:

- The national Fire Standard for Community Risk Management Planning states that fire and rescue services must ensure transparency in the community risk management planning process through either implementing and/or supporting ongoing engagement and formal consultation processes, ensuring these are accessible and publicly available.
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services assesses the extent to which fire and rescue services have a comprehensive understanding of the diverse needs of its communities and that prevention activity meets community expectations.

Failure to deliver plans and services that understand community needs and expectations risks loss of public confidence in the Service, reduced value for money for local taxpayers, and poor performance.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of equality objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, equality analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.

The CRMP and Service Review and associated consultation will be produced and delivered in accordance with accessibility guidelines and subject to full Equality Impact Assessments.

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

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

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

The cost of undertaking phase one consultation using an independent researcher is £6,600 financed from existing budget.

Legal implications

All Fire and Rescue Authorities are required to produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) under the government's Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

The approach to consultation is based on the Gunning Principles, a set of rules used to determine whether a consultation is lawful:

1. Must happen before the decision is made.
2. Must give sufficient context and information.
3. Should provide enough time for people to think things over.
4. Should demonstrate real deliberation and thought over the results.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper: Community Risk Management Plan and Service Review

Date: 17 November 2025

Contact: Steve Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 December 2025

Governance review

Contact for further information – Mark Nolan, Clerk and Monitoring Officer
Telephone: 07789 221106

Executive Summary

From later next year, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, (HMICFRS) will be considering, as part of their future inspections, how the Authority's governance arrangements (which should be distinguished from the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) internal and external governance, although there will be a need for symbiosis,) could and potentially do affect operational resilience, and efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of a wider review, it has been considered that it would be in the best interests of transparency, compliance purposes and regulatory resilience, if all aspects of the Authority's current Constitution, including its procedural policies and protocols, which are not currently a formal part of the Authority's Constitution, are brought together, in a single codified and referenced document, in the best interests of the move to more transparent governance.

Given that a significant portion of the Authority are new to their roles, it would be beneficial for members to get involved and take part in the shaping of this document, so that input into its contents can be captured and any concerns raised before a final version of the constitutional document is ratified by the full Authority, in due course.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to approve the establishment of a Constitution Working Group to ensure member engagement in the review and updating of governance procedures and documents.

Information

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is undertaking a review of internal and external governance to ensure oversight and scrutiny arrangements remain effective and efficient at keeping the public safe from fire and other risks.

This will involve codifying and updating existing Authority procedures as set out in its constitution, scheme of delegation and standing orders. At the same time, arrangements will be reviewed against best practice, such as the Local Government

Association's Improvement and Assurance Framework, and external assurance will be sought.

There are several drivers for the review including the introduction by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of a new assessment of how each fire and rescue service is affected by its Authority's governance. Policy and legislation changes are also planned such as the government's plans for strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England.

The Authority is asked to establish a member working group to work with officers to conduct this review ahead of any changes being brought to the Authority for approval. As the working group will not have any decision-making powers, there is no requirement for there to be political balance, but members may consider that in the collegiate interests of the Authority the group reflects broad political balance.

Business risk

None.

The existing provisions of the Authority's constitution, in its current state, will continue to be the reference point for all transactions of the Authority until the codified version of the Constitution has been legally adopted by the Authority.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

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

The proposal to create a fully adopted Constitution will ultimately result in constitutional and administrative certainty, as well as resilient governance and transparency.

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 15 December 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 14 December 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 Andy Blake
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Councillor Salim Sidat
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Sohail Asghar
- Road Safety - County Councillor Jordan Fox

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 Andy Blake

The 2025 BrightSparx campaign ran from 1 October to 9 November and continues to play a key role in helping the Service and our partner agencies ensure the safety and wellbeing of people in Lancashire during the Bonfire Night period. This year, nearly 22,000 secondary school-aged children received vital bonfire and firework safety information, with a particular focus on schools in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour.

As part of the campaign, an exciting poster competition was held in South Ribble, engaging pupils from eight schools with 300 entries. The competition was divided into categories by school years (Reception, Years 1-2, Years 3-4 and Years 5-6). The competition was supported by Chorley Council, who provided fantastic prizes for the winners, including a tablet, tickets to Worden Park bonfire for the group winners and family swim passes for the runners-up. The award presentation took place at Leyland Fire Station on Monday 10 November.

In addition to school initiatives, the Northern Community Fire Safety (CFS) Team and Prevention Support Team delivered the Bright Sparx campaign at Morecambe Road SEN School. Using visual props, they engaged students in discussions about firework

safety, demonstrated the correct way to hold sparklers and provided crucial advice on what to do if clothes catch fire. The session also raised awareness about fire safety for wheelchair users. The school praised the team for their inclusive and interactive approach, highlighting how well they engaged the students and helped them understand the safety messages.

The Northern CFS team has been actively working in the Ridge Estate in Lancaster to address high levels of anti-social behaviour and secondary fires. As part of a multi-agency approach, the team engaged with young people on the estate and hosted an event at the Ridge Community Centre. During the event, attendees took part in a range of activities, such as fire safety education, firework safety, hose running and a colouring competition. Staff feedback was highly positive, and the team has been invited to return for additional sessions with the young people at the after-school club on Mondays.

In recognition of National Older Persons Day, the Southern CFS Team attended an event at Age UK Lancashire in Ormskirk. The event focused on winter resilience, offering advice on staying safe, warm and well during the winter months. The team also highlighted safe driving as part of the 'Are your eyes fit to drive?' campaign. The following day, the team visited Birkacre Garden Centre in Chorley to raise awareness among older customers about the importance of regular eye testing.

In the Pennine area, CFS staff attended a community event held at Hussainia Mosque in Burnley, organised by the Intensive Home Support Service (IHSS). The event aimed to raise awareness of IHSS services and engage with the local Asian community. Held in the mosque car park, it provided an excellent opportunity for fostering community cohesion. The CFS team used the event to promote important fire safety messages, with a particular focus on cooking safety and the critical importance of having a working smoke alarm.

Additionally, a 12-week youth engagement programme took place from July to October, funded by Lancashire Partnership Against Crime (LANPAC), Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS). As a key LANPAC member LFRS supported the initiative aimed at addressing rising levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the area, particularly incidents of fire-setting involving young people. In total, approximately 160 young people were engaged through the Colne Youth Action Group (CYAG), who led the project.

The main focus of the initiative was to reduce general ASB and directly respond to local police reports of youth involvement in fire-setting behaviours. A key component of the initiative was the fire-setter intervention scheme, which educates young people about the dangers and consequences of fire-setting. The project team also worked to identify the underlying causes of these behaviours and raise awareness around fire safety.

The positive impact of the programme has strengthened CYAG's ability to continue providing safe spaces and behaviour-changing activities for young people, helping to steer them towards more positive choices in the future.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion - Councillor Salim Sidat

LFRS continued to strengthen its commitment to community safety, inclusion, and workforce development through a series of strategic initiatives and partnerships.

In the Eastern area, a new collaboration with Blackburn Rovers Football Club (BRFC) has been established to share fire and road safety messages with matchday audiences

via digital screens and scoreboards. This partnership will also deliver community initiatives through BRFC's Community Trust and provide safety sessions for academy players. Nationally, LFRS partnered with EG On The Move and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to deliver bonfire safety messages on forecourt digital screens free of charge, building on previous campaigns promoting water safety and wildfire prevention.

The Bright Sparx campaign featured targeted engagement in high-risk areas, including educational activities at The Ridge Estate Half Term Club and a Fire Safety Surgery at a Burnley mosque during Friday prayers, supported by the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) Vice Chair. These events promoted fireworks safety, generated Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referrals, and strengthened community relationships. Additional community engagement included a joint awareness event with Benefit Mankind, which recognised volunteer contributions and reinforced grassroots partnerships.

LFRS has continued to prioritise cultural inclusion through initiatives such as Visit My Mosque 2025, Diwali celebrations at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, and a new fire safety project for churches across Lancashire. These activities promoted cultural understanding and introduced practical safety measures, including battery-operated tea lights and festive electrical safety guidance. Work has also begun with 'New Neighbours Together' to support asylum seekers and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learners, improving fire safety awareness for those living in houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) and alternative housing arrangements.

Pendle Community Radio remains a key platform for engagement, with recent broadcasts launching the Cooking Safety Campaign and introducing Language Name Badges to strengthen connections with diverse communities. Further targeted prevention work included a Fire Safety Surgery in Brierfield, which generated 66 HFSC referrals, and an electrical safety campaign during Eid Milad un Nabi, resulting in zero electrical fires during the period.

Internally, LFRS continues to advance inclusion and transparency. The Service achieved the Bronze Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark during Dyslexia Awareness Week and is exploring White Ribbon accreditation to demonstrate its commitment to preventing violence against women and girls. A dedicated SharePoint site has been launched to host all Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), ensuring accessibility and streamlined approval processes. The most recent Supervisory Manager Talent Gateway concluded in July, with outcomes shared openly and candidate feedback actively sought for the first time.

Recruitment efforts have focused on diversity, with On-Call Support Officers (OCSOs) delivering four practical sessions at local colleges, engaging around 160 students. Notably, 70 per cent of participants were from BME backgrounds and 7 per cent were neurodivergent, supporting efforts to broaden representation within the Service.

Health and wellbeing remain a priority, with a menopause nutritionist session planned for World Menopause Month and LFRS contributing to national FireFit research on female firefighters and menopause.

Through these initiatives, LFRS demonstrates its ongoing commitment to safety, inclusion, and continuous improvement, ensuring that communities across Lancashire remain safe and supported.

Health, Wellbeing & Climate Change - County Councillor Sohail Asghar

Climate Change and Environment

As reported within the June 2025 update, AtkinsRéalis successfully completed comprehensive decarbonisation surveys across the LFRS estate. These surveys assessed energy consumption, carbon emissions, and opportunities for efficiency improvements at each site.

During the recent quarter, the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Department engaged with specialist consultants to review and validate the findings, ensuring accuracy and alignment with industry best practice. The finalised report provided detailed data and performance benchmarks for our buildings and operations, highlighting areas of high energy use and potential interventions, such as renewable energy integration, insulation upgrades, and behavioural change initiatives.

This robust analysis forms the foundation for our next phase of the carbon reduction strategy, which will include prioritisation of actions based on impact and cost-effectiveness, the setting of measurable targets for 2026 and beyond, and the exploration of funding opportunities to accelerate implementation. These steps will be critical to meeting our long-term sustainability commitments and supporting the organisation's transition toward net zero.

Health and Wellbeing

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) now includes a dedicated mobile app designed to provide confidential support, guidance, and counselling to individuals whenever needed. We have continued to actively promote this enhanced resource across the Service, to ensure staff were aware of its benefits and encouraged to register and engage with its features. The app has been fully integrated into the digital infrastructure, available on all LFRS-issued phones and tablets, and can be easily downloaded via the Company Portal.

Beyond its role as a reactive support tool during times of stress or difficulty, the app also offers a wide range of proactive wellbeing resources aimed at strengthening personal resilience and overall mental health. These include interactive mood tracking, guided meditation sessions, short yoga routines, healthy lifestyle tips, and access to professional advice. By embedding these tools into everyday routines, we aim to foster a culture of wellbeing where individuals feel empowered to manage challenges effectively and maintain a positive work-life balance.

In terms of the Fitness Function, 63% of Grey Book (operational) staff have completed their annual fitness assessment, indicating that the Service is on track to ensure all Grey Book staff complete an annual fitness assessment by the end of this training calendar (2025/26).

Road Safety – County Councillor Jordan Fox

In September LFRS organised two large multi-agency college events to support the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and National Police Chiefs Council's (NPCC) joint 'Operation Spotlight', aimed at young and inexperienced drivers. This year's theme highlighted the importance of not rushing the learning process, wearing seatbelts and avoiding carrying too many passengers shortly after passing the driving test (These three factors feature prominently in our statistics for young people who are killed and seriously injured).

The first event took place at Blackburn College, where 500 students were excused from their regular classes to participate. Throughout the day, they attended 30-minute assemblies focused on Lancashire's Fatal 5: Inappropriate Speed, Driving Under the Influence, Mobile Phones, Lack of Seatbelt Use and Careless/ Wreckless Driving. The session concluded with a poignant video about a tragic incident in Great Harwood, where 14-year-old Bonney Barrow tragically lost her life in a collision involving her cousin, the driver. At the time of the crash, her cousin was committing three driving offences. Following the assembly, students were divided into smaller groups and rotated through a 'Marketplace' of interactive, bite-sized activities. LFRS had two sections: a Crashed Car display and an operational demonstration by Blackburn fire crews, who showed their role in road traffic collisions and explained the equipment they use. Lancashire Constabulary, also contributed by running a workshop on the dangers and legalities surrounding 'E-bikes and E-scooters'. Blackburn with Darwen Council provided beer-goggle activities to simulate the effects of alcohol, while drug and alcohol misuse charities were available to offer support and advice.

The second event was held at Lancaster and Morecambe College, which hosted an even larger turnout of 1200 students, each attending for one hour. Students rotated through an expanded Marketplace where again LFRS had two sections, the same as Blackburn College. This event also featured Lancashire Constabulary's Roads Policing Unit and Lancashire County Council. Students had the opportunity to engage in Virtual Reality experiences and used beer-goggles to understand the effects of alcohol and learned about the legal status of E-bikes and E-scooters, and the risks of illegal use. This event supported Lancashire Constabulary's Operation Centurion, a comprehensive, county-wide campaign to combat anti-social driving, in response to the growing number of illegal vehicles involved in collisions. Alarming, last year alone, illegal vehicles were linked to six fatalities and 200 injuries on Lancashire's roads. Due to the large attendance, the 30-minute assemblies will be repeated to students at Lancaster and Morecambe College in December.

Following the events, students were asked to complete an anonymous evaluation form. A remarkable 100% of respondents reported that they found the day beneficial, and 88% said what they learned would influence them to drive more safely in the future.

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 Sam Pink

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 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.

Given the rapidly evolving regulatory change in building fire safety, an update on Fire Protection and Business Support may also be provided, detailing how the Service is adapting delivery whilst developing our workforce, to ensure that we keep pace with the changes and improve public and firefighter safety within the built environment.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Fire Safety Convictions

Prosecutions

On the 26 September 2025 the prosecution of the Article 5(3) person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) (Mr Rajeshkumar Chechani) was sentenced for breaches of the FSO for a residential care home in Thornton-Cleveleys.

The initial inspection and further prohibition of the premises required forty-five residents to be relocated during the Covid-19 period to other care homes over a period of two weeks. This was due to substantial fire safety deficiencies being identified within the premises.

The sentencing outcome was as follows.

- Rajeshkumar Chechani was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment suspended for 12 months, given a £10,000 fine and LFRS were awarded £33,000 costs.

Prosecutions in the Court system

The responsible person for two Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) premises, (located in Bacup and Darwen) pleaded guilty to breaches of the FSO on the 13 August 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court. A sentencing date is set for the 7 January 2026 at Preston Crown Court.

An NHS Trust and maintenance company were due to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on the 1 October 2025. This hearing was adjourned until the 18 November 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court.

The responsible persons and a company are to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on the 3 December 2025 for breaches of the FSO relating to a nightclub venue.

Prosecution cases currently being developed and reviewed

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to eleven other premises where offences are believed to have been committed under the FSO, which include the following:

- Care and Nursing Home x 1
- House in Multiple Occupation x 1
- Residential Flats x 2
- Mixed Commercial and Residential x 1
- Commercial premises (shop) x 1
- Commercial but not residential (Used for sleeping) x 1
- Large Nightclub x 1
- Theatre x 1
- Hotel x 1
- Supported Living x 1

Arson Risk Reduction

R v Samuel Beetham

Address – Allendale Street, Colne

Date and Time of Call – 9 September 2023, 21:10hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of items within the lounge of the defendant's purpose built flat. As well as the subsequent fire damage, the fire caused an explosion of a small gas cylinder in the lounge, resulting in damage to the roof structure.

The defendant was convicted of Reckless Arson (whether life endangered) and was sentenced to 3 years prison.

R v Mohammed Khan

Address – Waidshouse Road, Nelson

Date and Time of Call – 22 June 2024, 02:15hrs

This incident involved the deliberate act of igniting multiple fires in a bedroom in his home, when other members of his family were present.

The defendant was detained under the Mental Health Act. The Hospital Order is estimated to last several years.

R v Lucy Armstrong

Address – Pendleview Mental Health Unit, Blackburn

Date and Time of Call – 28 November 2024, 15:38hrs

This incident involved the deliberate act of igniting a mattress and bedding in a bedroom on the ward. Staff at the unit extinguished the fire before the arrival of LFRS.

The defendant received a Hospital Order, under The Mental Health Act.

R v Patrick Ruch

Address – Naventis Court, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 23 March 2024, 21:31hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of combustible materials in the communal bin chute room of a block of residential flats

The defendant pleaded guilty to reckless arson and was sentenced to 45 months in prison.

R v Gareth Morgan

Address – Cheetham Meadow, Leyland

Date and Time of Call – 18 May 2025, 02:38hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of a wheelie bin and contents against the door of a first floor flat. The fire spread to the flat front door, resulting in severe fire and smoke damage to the flat. The flat was occupied at the time of the fire, and the door was the only entrance/exit.

The defendant pleaded guilty to arson with intent to endanger life, and was sentenced to 7 years in prison, and received a 12-year restraining order.

There are also another 16 deliberate fire investigations currently ongoing within the criminal justice system.

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 15 December 2025

Operational Incidents of Interest

Contact for further information – Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) 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:

- Residential building fire in Lancaster (26/8/25)
- Derelict commercial building fire in Preston (4/9/25)
- Domestic building fire in South Shore (7/9/25)
- Out of County Incident in West Yorkshire (9/9/25)
- Derelict building fire in Bacup (17/9/25)
- Sinkhole in Darwen (21/9/25)
- Derelict building fire in Blackpool (27/9/25)
- Commercial building fire in Fleetwood (28/9/25)
- Rescue from water in Blackburn (28/9/25)
- Fire in high rise building in Preston (27/10/25)

LFRS station area:	N11 Lancaster
Date:	26 August 2025
Time:	13:39

At 13:39 on the 26 August 2025 six fire engines, an aerial ladder platform and support pump along with the drone from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) attended a building fire on Shakespeare Road, Lancaster. This was a fire involving the roof of a block of residential apartments. The incident was sectorised and fire crews extinguished the fire using six breathing apparatus, one hose reel jet and one jet. Fire crews remained in attendance for over 20 hours temperature monitoring before handing over the incident.

LFRS station area:	C50 Preston
Date:	4 September 2025
Time:	16:26

At 16:26 on Thursday 4 September 2025, six fire engines and numerous specialist appliance from LFRS attended a fire involving a derelict commercial property on Maudland Bank in Preston. On scene firefighters utilised two breathing apparatus, four main line jets and one ground monitor to fight the fire. Crews remained on scene working with partners and damping down for over 15 hours.

LFRS station area:	W37 South Shore
Date:	7 September 2025
Time:	18:47

At 18:47 on September 7, 2025, fire crews from Blackpool, Bispham, South Shore, St Annes, and Blackpool's aerial appliance responded to a house fire on Common Edge Road, Blackpool. Three people were treated for smoke inhalation by ambulance staff. Firefighters used six breathing apparatus sets, a ventilation fan, and two hose reels to extinguish the blaze. Crews remained on scene over 15 hours damping down and temperature monitoring.

LFRS station area:	Out of County – Todmorden, West Yorkshire
Date:	9 September 2025
Time:	01:23

At 01:23 on September 9, 2025, fifteen fire engines from Ramsbottom, Rochdale, Bacup, Hyndburn, Littleborough, Blackpool, Nelson, Bury, Blackburn, Padiham, Heywood, Leyland, Rawtenstall, Burnley, Chadderton, as well as the water bowser from Leyland and the drone team, responded to a building fire at a commercial premises on Bacup Road in Todmorden. This was an over the border incident in West Yorkshire. This incident was declared a Major Incident and Lancashire supported the host Service for several hours during the initial stages of the incident.

LFRS station area:	P73 Bacup
Date:	17 September 2025
Time:	19:34

At 19:34 on 17 September 2025, five fire engines and special appliances from Rawtenstall, Hyndburn, Haslingden, Bacup, and Ramsbottom responded to a fire involving the first floor of a derelict building on Hew Hall Hey Road, Rawtenstall. Firefighters extinguished the fire using six breathing apparatus wearers, two hose reels, one jet, and a positive pressure ventilation unit. The firefighting team remained at the scene for approximately two and a half hours.

LFRS station area:	E76 Darwen
Date:	21 September 2025
Time:	07:21

At 07:21 on Sunday 21 September 2025, one fire engine from Darwen Fire Station and the LFRS drone team responded to a sinkhole on Green Field, Darwen. The incident continued to escalate due to the sinkhole increasing in size and LFRS Aerial Ladder Platform and Urban search and Rescue Team worked with partner agencies to recover a car and skip from the edge of the sinkhole. The incident was ongoing for almost 2 days.

LFRS station area:	W30 Blackpool
Date:	27 September 2025
Time:	16:25

At 16:25 on Saturday 27 September 2025, multiple fire appliances, an aerial ladder platform, drone, and incident command unit from LFRS responded to an incident on Queen Street, Blackpool. The fire involved a derelict building. Firefighters utilised two jets to control the fire and protect surrounding premises, crews remained on scene for several days. LFRS supported partners over the following weeks to bring the incident to a safe conclusion.

LFRS station area:	N32 Fleetwood
Date:	28 September 2025
Time:	14:14

At 14:14 on Sunday 28 September 2025, five fire engines from Fleetwood, Blackpool, Bispham, and Preesall Fire Station, along with the aerial appliance from Preston, responded to a fire at a commercial premises on Fleetwood Road North. At the scene, crews used six breathing apparatus and two hose reels to address the fire. The response lasted for approximately seven hours.

LFRS station area:	E71 Blackburn
Date:	28 September 2025
Time:	20:29

At 20:29 on Sunday 28 September 2025, four fire engines from Penwortham, Blackburn, and Darwen, along with Preston's boat, responded to a water incident on Paterson Street, Blackburn. Teams rescued one person from the water using a sled. The casualty was treated by North West Ambulance Service and conveyed to hospital. The crews were on scene for about forty minutes.

LFRS station area:	C50 Preston
Date:	27 October 2025
Time:	20:04

At 20:04 on 27 October 2025, five fire engines, an aerial ladder platform, a supporting fire engine, and a drone from LFRS attended a domestic premises on Guildhall Street, Preston. Firefighters extinguished a fire located in the rear stairwell of a high-rise building using six breathing apparatus sets, two hose reels, one main jet, and four positive pressure ventilation fans. Two individuals were assessed for smoke inhalation by North West Ambulance Service, with one person transported to hospital by ambulance. Fire crews remained at the scene for approximately four hours and forty minutes.

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

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 December 2025

Celebrating our people

Contact for further information – Stephanie Collinson, Assistant Director
Communications and Engagement
Tel: 01772 866787

Executive Summary

Following the Service's annual staff celebration event on 20 November, the report sets out staff recognition activity and individuals celebrated for a variety of achievements in 2025.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is requested to note and endorse the report and acknowledge the achievements of award recipients.

Information

On Thursday 20 November 2025, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service marked the exceptional contributions of some of its most dedicated and talented staff at a celebration event held at Mytton Fold Hotel in Langho.

As part of the Service's staff recognition activity this year, more than 50 people were honoured with Long Service Good Conduct Awards, Star Awards, Chief Fire Officer's Commendations, Bravery Awards, Academic Achievements and Humanitarian Medals. All award recipients are invited to the celebration event or can choose to receive their award locally. Below is a summary of all awards presented in 2025.

Long Service Good Conduct Awards

In 2025, 37 Long Service Good Conduct Awards were awarded for long and meritorious service:

20 years

- Jonny Ashton, Group Manager
- Daniel Bennett, Stores Assistant and Firefighter
- Adam Coates, Crew Manager
- Benjamin Craze, Premises Support
- Darren Eales, Watch Manager and On-Call Support Team Leader
- Caroline Hooson, Youth Engagement Coordinator, The King's Trust
- Mark Hoyle, Watch Manager
- Daniel Lord, Crew Manager
- Matthew Lune, Operations Manager, North West Fire Control
- Paula Maudsley, Receptionist and Administration Support
- Matthew Midgley, Crew Manager
- Daniel Osborn, Crew Manager

- Samantha Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer
- Paul Robson, Firefighter
- Chris Rose, Firefighter
- Rod Steele, Station Manager
- Chris West, Acting Group Manager
- Gregory Wright, Senior Stores Assistant

30 years

- Iftikhar Ahmed, Crew Manager
- Carla Benaron, Fire Safety Inspector
- David Brown, Crew Manager
- David Cook, Firefighter
- Mark Cookson, Watch Manager and Drone Pilot
- Mark Corless, Firefighter
- David Dumigan, Watch Manager and Incident Intelligence Officer
- Kelvin Emmett, Crew Manager
- David Gilmore, Crew Manager
- John Hart, Firefighter
- Lister Haworth, Station Manager
- Lloyd Kellett, Firefighter
- Neil Taylor, Area Manager
- Lee Wade, Firefighter

35 years

- Stephen Brown, Watch Manager
- Michael Farmer, Firefighter
- Stuart Howarth, Stores Assistant
- Tim Murrell, Drone Manager

45 years

- Keith Bridge, Community Safety Advisor

Star Awards

The Star Awards recognise members of staff nominated by their peers for exemplifying the Service's STRIVE values and the national code of ethics for fire and rescue services. They highlight the people making a real difference to their communities and their colleagues. There are multiple categories and the winners are chosen by a panel of judges comprising award winners from the previous year.

In 2025, there were 136 nominations and the winners were:

- Northern Star Award: Tom Dicketts, Fire Safety Manager.
- Southern and Leadership and Development Centre Star Award: Jack Matthews, Crew Manager.
- Central and Service Headquarters Star Award: Andrea Box, Senior Administrator.
- Eastern Star Award: Mark Schofield, Crew Manager/On-Call Support Officer.
- Western Star Award: Mike Hewitt, Crew Manager.
- Pennine Star Award: Christian Lopez, Watch Manager.
- On-Call Firefighter of the Year: Stephen Brown, Watch Manager.

- On-Call Employer of the Year: Leyland Trucks Ltd.
- Rising Star Award: Amanda Anstey, Service Fitness Advisor.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Star Award: Ollie Pye, Watch Manager.
- Fundraiser of the Year: Mark Fletcher, Firefighter.
- Service Management Team Award for an Outstanding Star: Thomas Cookson, Group Manager.
- Team of the Year: Organisational Assurance Team - Tom Powell, Emma Price, Ian Nelson, Paul Harrison and Gail Hornby Elliot

Chief Fire Officer's Commendations and Bravery Awards

The chief fire officer gives personal commendations for acts of courage and determination that reflect the highest levels of commitment to serving communities.

- Scott Harris, Watch Manager – Bravery Award
On 7 September 2024, whilst off duty, Scott demonstrated exceptional courage in the face of a violent and life-threatening incident at Preston Railway Station in which a police officer was stabbed. He intervened, assisting officers in disarming the offender, and provided lifesaving first aid to the injured officer before going on to support the criminal justice process.

Academic achievements

The Service celebrated those who have successfully completed high-level academic qualifications alongside demanding job roles, reflecting outstanding commitment to personal development:

- Beth Simpson, HR Advisor - Level 7 Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Advanced Diploma in Strategic People Management.
- Beccy Barr, Firefighter - Master of Science in Disaster Management. Posthumously awarded with Distinction at Bournemouth University's Disaster Management Centre.

Humanitarian Medals

Four firefighters, along with search and rescue dog Davey, were recognised for their efforts as part of the UK International Search and Rescue Team, deployed in 2023 to an earthquake site in Morocco:

- Watch Managers Lindsay Sielski and Wayne Ward
- Crew Manager Ian McGee
- Firefighter Richard Cutler

The Humanitarian Medal, newly introduced by King Charles III, honours emergency and aid workers in disasters and conflicts abroad and in the UK. The team were presented with their medals by the chief fire officer at Chorley Fire Station.

Business risk

None.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

There is a specific category in the Star Awards for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Star. This is awarded to an individual or team that is committed to valuing and understanding equality, diversity, and inclusion; standing against all forms of discrimination; and celebrating difference.

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

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

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

Recognition activity is financed within existing departmental budgets.

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: Not applicable.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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