

Public Document Pack

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

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

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

Agenda

Part 1 (open to press and public)

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

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

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

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 12)**

4. **Financial Monitoring (Pages 13 - 20)**

5. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report (Pages 21 - 86)**

6. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee has been agreed for 10:00 hours on **Wednesday 26 November 2025** in the Main Conference Room, at Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meetings are: scheduled for 25 March 2026
 proposed for 29 June 2026

7. **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.

8. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

Part 2

9. **Update from Capital Building Projects Working Group (Pages 87 - 94)**

(Paragraph 3)

10. **High Value Procurement Projects (Pages 95 - 98)**

(Paragraph 3)

11. **Pensions Update (Standing Item) (Pages 99 - 104)**

(Paragraphs 4 & 5)

12. **Urgent Business (Part 2)**

An item of business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Clerk should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

**Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Resources Committee**

Tuesday, 8 July 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 Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) J Meadows, Head of Finance (LFRS) J Hutchinson, HR Manager - Pay, Pensions and Performance (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Service Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

1-25/26	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies were received from County Councillor L Parkinson and Councillor G Baker. County Councillor A Riggott was in attendance as substitute.
2-25/26	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	County Councillor A Riggott declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 10 pertaining to his role as both County and Borough Councillor as the proposed development was within his division.
3-25/26	Minutes of the Previous Meeting

	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 26 March 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4-25/26	Year End Treasury Management Outturn 2024/25
	The Director of Corporate Services advised that this report set out the Authority's borrowing and lending activities during 2024/25. All treasury activities undertaken throughout the year were in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25. Economic Overview UK inflation had been relatively static throughout 2024/25. Having started the financial year at 2.3% (April), the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation briefly dipped to 1.7% in September before ending the financial year at 2.8%. The latest data showed CPI was 3.4% (June 2025) and expectations were that it would average 3.2% over the financial year; this compared to the 2% budgeted figure. Against that backdrop and the global economy, the Bank Rate reductions had been limited. Bank Rate currently stood at 4.5%, despite the Office for Budget Responsibility reducing its 2025 GDP forecast for the UK economy to only 1% (previously 2% in October). Borrowing was currently expensive although rates were expected to reduce over the coming year or two. Borrowing Overview The borrowing levels of the Fire Authority remained unchanged at year end at £2m with no new long-term loans being taken. The existing loans were taken out with the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) in 2007 when the base rate was 5.75%; with 3 loan amounts, maturity dates and respective interest rates set out in the report. Total interest paid on PWLB borrowing was £90k, which equated to an average interest rate of 4.49%. The approved capital programme had no requirement to be financed from borrowing until 2026/27 and the debt related to earlier years' capital programmes. While the borrowing was above its Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which was the underlying need to borrow for capital purposes, this was because the Fire Authority had a policy of setting aside monies in the form of statutory and voluntary minimum revenue provision (MRP) in order to repay debt as it matures or to make an early repayment. If the loans were to be repaid early there would be an early repayment (premium) charge. Previous reports on treasury management activities had reported that the premium and the potential loss of investment income had been greater than the savings made on the interest payments therefore it was not considered financially beneficial to repay the loans especially with the potential for increased interest rates. However, at 31 December the Authority would save £10k in interest, split over 10-years, if the loans were to be repaid early. As the Authority was budgeting a borrowing requirement to fund the capital programme from 2026/27, the additional interest on new loans would outweigh the £10k saving achieved from early repayment. Investments

Both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code and the then Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Guidance required the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. Throughout the year when investing money, the key aim was to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return.

To reduce credit risk to the Authority, HM Treasury's Debt Management Office was the main counterparty for the Authority's investments via the operation of overnight deposits at 31 March 2025. This changed from the operation of a call account with Lancashire County Council from 1 October 2024.

The Treasury Management Strategy does permit investment with other high-quality counterparties including other local authorities. During the year the total cash held by the Authority had been positive with the highest balance being £60.2m and the lowest £27.0m. For the monies invested with Lancashire County Council/Debt Management Office the range was £38.1m to £3.5m. The overnight deposit with the Debt Management Office at year end was £29.5m.

By placing monies in longer term fixed rate investments, it was anticipated a higher level of interest would be earned. However, having fixed term deals did reduce the liquidity of the investments and therefore their use was limited. At the year-end fixed investments of £20.0m were in place. During the year seven fixed term investments had matured and six new investments were made. The table on page 13 of the agenda pack showed the interest earned on fixed term investments in 2024/25.

The call account provided by Lancashire County Council paid six base points (0.06%) below the base rate to 30 September 2024. From 1 October 2024 the overnight deposits with the Debt Management Office averaged five base points (0.05%) below the base rate. Each working day the balance on the Authority's current account was invested to ensure that the interest received on surplus balances was maximised. The average balance using these investments during the year was £22.5m earning interest of £1.08m.

The overall interest earned during this financial year was £2.27m at a rate of 5.07% which compared favourably with the backward-looking 1-month index (Sterling Overnight Index Average) which averaged 4.94% over the same period. The main factor for this was fixed deposits commencing in 2024/25 with high interest rates.

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

Cash flow and interest rates continued to be monitored by the Director of Corporate Services and the Authority's finance team, and when rates were felt to be at appropriate levels further fixed term deposits would be placed.

Prudential Indicators

In order to control and monitor the Authority's treasury management functions, several prudential indicators were determined against which performance could be measured. From 1 April 2024 the Fire Authority were required to implement

	international accounting standard IFRS 16 Leases, replacing IAS 17. The standard eliminated the distinction between finance and operating leases for lessees, which required most leases to recognise a right of use asset and liability on the balance sheet. IFRS 16 had an impact on the Fire Authority's private finance initiative (PFI) agreements which had resulted in an increase of the Authority's other long-term liabilities, which had been included in the actual totals in the table on page 15 of the agenda reports pack. The Fire Authority had identified several property leases which were impacted. The liability for these properties was not included in the table however, the impact was expected to be within the authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt. The revised indicators for 2024/25 were presented in the report alongside the actual outturn position. In response to a question from County Councillor A Riggott in relation to the variance in levels of investment in 2024/25, the DoCS confirmed that the service had received a Pensions Grant of £10m which had earned interest for the service, this had now began to be paid to members of the pension scheme. County Councillor A Riggott asked a further question in relation to why the split of investments had changed, the DoCS confirmed that the decision had been made to invest in more longer term investments, lasting 12 months as this was a more fruitful process. In response to a question from Councillor S Sidat in relation to the Services reserves, the DoCS confirmed that the service had an estimated £5m in general reserves, £5/6m in earmarked reserves, £20m in Capital Reserves which would be utilised as part of the capital projects and £5m in PFI reserves which would be fully utilised. The Chair requested that members of Resources Committee be emailed a summary of reserves and details of earmarked reserves. Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the outturn position report.
5-25/26	Financial Monitoring - Provisional Outturn 2024/25
	The Director of Corporate Services advised that this report presented the financial outturn position for 2024/25, and the impact of this on usable reserves. The revenue outturn position showed an underspend of £0.569m after proposed transfers to earmarked reserves. The Capital outturn expenditure for the year was £4.091m which was also in line with the previous forecast. Revenue Provisional Outturn The annual budget for the year was set at £75.155m. The provisional outturn position showed net expenditure of £74.586m, giving a total overspend for the financial year of £0.569m. The total underspend was made up of a (£0.774m) underspend relating to non-pay costs, and a £0.205m overspend relating to pay costs. The detailed provisional revenue outturn was considered by members as set out in appendix A of the report with more significant variances of note shown separately in the table below: -

Area	Overspend/ (Underspend) £m	Reason and Action
Service Delivery - Pay	0.648	As reported previously to the Committee the variance was largely due to higher than budgeted pay assumptions. On call and support staff budgets were mainly within allocated budgets. The budget for 2025/26 was taken account of the higher than budgeted pay award therefore no further action taken.
Prevention and Protection - Pay	(0.509)	The outturn variance was due to vacancies as reported through the year, this underspend had increased further as efforts to reduce the number of vacancies continued. The budget for 2025/26 had been adjusted for expected vacancies, no further action taken.
Training Centre – non pay	(0.111)	A number of budgets were slightly underspent at the end of the year resulting in the underspend of just over £0.1m, no further action taken.
Property – non pay	(0.168)	The underspend related to a number of factors including lower than budgeted utility costs and maintenance costs.
Bank Interest	(0.449)	The underspend reflected slippage on the capital programme, higher than budgeted interest rates and additional returns from a more proactive investment strategy. The underspend was presented after a £0.5m transfer to the capital reserve reflecting additional returns on grants received.

Future Pressures

Emerging pressures to report to the Resources Committee included inflation forecasts. As reported to the CFA in February, government grants were increased by the September rate of inflation (1.7%) whereas the latest rate of inflation was now 3.5%, which would put pressure on budgets in 2025/26.

The grey book pay award had also been agreed at 3.2% effective from July, this compared to the budgeted assumption of 3%, at the time of writing the green book pay award had not been agreed.

Finally, the Spending Review was announced on 11 June which set out the future departmental spending plans. All fire functions and associated budgets had transferred from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as of 1 April 2025 which meant fire funding was now embedded within MHCLG's departmental totals which had increased by 1.2% in real terms over the period of the Spending Review. The impact on the fire service would emerge later in the year and with certainty for Lancashire in the Provisional Settlement that was traditionally announced in December.

Savings Targets

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

General 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 £3.85m. Following the provisional outturn the level of the General Reserve at 31 March 2025 was £5.556m, this was above the minimum level of General Reserve set by the Authority.

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves were all funds that have been identified for a specific purpose. Appendix B of the report set out the proposed transfers to earmarked reserves not previously approved of £1.677m. The balance of all the earmarked reserves was £28.926m as at the 31 March 2025; this included the Capital Reserve of £18.501m and Private Finance Initiative (PFI) reserves of £5.036m.

Capital Budget Provisional Outturn

The revised Capital Budget for 2025/26 was £5.213m. Total capital expenditure for the year was £4.091m, with slippage of (£1.123m) proposed to be transferred to the 2025/26 Capital Budget and a net over spend of £0.070m. Members considered the provisional outturn for the main programmes and projects set out in appendix C of the report.

The original approved capital programme for 2025/26 was £12.761m. This was updated for £1.123m of slippage outlined previously giving a revised Capital Budget for 2025/26 of £13.884m. The revised 2025/26 Capital Budget and funding was set out in appendix D of the report.

In response to a question from the Chair in relation to the large Climate Change Vehicle, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) explained that it was agreed in the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) in 2022 that a Climate Change Vehicle would be procured in place of a fire engine for use during flooding and wildfire incidents to allow the vehicle to go off road. The tendering process had concluded with the vehicle overbudget, the service was therefore revising its requirement for a smaller vehicle.

In response to a question from Councillor S Sidat in relation to the services 5 year plan for its capital growth programme, the DoCS confirmed he would share this after the meeting.

In response to a question from County Councillor A Riggott in relation to the most challenging aspect of managing the budget, the DoCS explained that pay made up 75% of the services budget and was the more difficult to forecast due to retirements, pay awards and overtime for large scale incidents.

County Councillor J Tetlow asked if the recent national insurance and tax changes had had an impact on the services budget, the DoCS confirmed that the national insurance changes had come in to effect from 1 April 2025 meaning the service

	had had time to budget for the change. He explained that the changes had equated to £1.2m, the service had received some funding taking the cost to £0.7m which had been factored into the budget. County Councillor J Tetlow asked if this funding would continue, the DoCS confirmed it would and the £0.7m pressure would continue. In response to a question from Councillor S Sidat in relation to replacement of firefighters following retirement, the DCFO explained that it was difficult to predict retirements due to a number of different pensions schemes being in operation. The service tried to plan ahead with recruitment and ran new recruit courses throughout the year. The service had tried to hold some posts vacant due to forecasted funding pressures and currently had 10 firefighter vacancies across the service. In response to a question from the Chair in relation to vacancies across the service, the DCFO explained that it was challenging to recruit to green book roles and had been since the covid pandemic with many employers now offering working from home and other benefits. He confirmed that most grey book positions were filled with only 10 vacancies across the service. The DCFO explained that there were additional challenges within the Prevention and Protection Teams, although it was important to note that grey book staff delivered prevention activities as part of their role. Green book staff were trained and upskilled in Protection Team roles but then often left for the private sector with greater financial benefits. The Service was working to utilise operational staff in the best way to keep fire engines available. Councillor D Smith noted that the service had an underspend of £0.569m with a budget of over £75m, he praised the service for keeping the budget within 1% variance. The DCFO explained that this was largely due to increased interest rates and underspend and overspend in staffing areas balancing each other out. Resolved: That the Committee: - i) Noted the Revenue Budget provisional revenue outturn. ii) Noted the Capital Budget provisional outturn. iii) Noted and endorsed the revised Capital Budget for 2025/26. iv) Approved the transfer of 2024/25 slippage to the 2025/26 capital budget. v) Noted and endorsed the transfer to earmarked reserves and year end reserve levels.
6-25/26	Local Pensions Board Annual Report HR Manager Jayne Hutchinson presented the report to members. The Public Service Pensions Act (PSPA) 2013 introduced the requirement to have a Local Pension Board (LPB) to assist in the governance of the Scheme. The Board had no remit as a decision-making body but was established to assist Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) as the Scheme Manager to fulfil its functions which covered all aspects of governance and administration of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). The Combined Fire Authority delegated its functions to Bob Warren, then Director of People and Development. Although he had retired from that role, due to the current complexity and pension agenda relating to the Age Discrimination and Part Time Workers remedies which had resulted in the implementation of new pension and HMRC legislation and the development of new policy, he had continued assisting in the pension's activity for

an interim period.

Work Programme during 2024/25

The focus of pension workload during this year had been reported to the Local Pension Scheme Board and was primarily a continuation of the work on the implementation of the following major projects:

- The Sargeant/McCloud judgement related to age discrimination, this arose after the implementation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 and followed a successful challenge by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) of age discrimination in relation to the protections put in place for existing members.
- Matthews's judgement affecting on-call members commonly referred to as the 'Second Options Exercise'. This arose following a legal challenge around on-call firefighters who were eligible to join the pension scheme from the start of employment.

Sargeant/McCloud Age Discrimination Remedy

During the first quarter of 2024/25 Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) completed the pay, tax and contribution data for almost 1,000 members affected by the age discrimination remedy. This allowed the services pension administrator, the Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) to issue Annual Benefit Statement – Remediable Service Statements (ABS-RSS) to active employees. 50 active employees did not receive ABS-RSS due to a number of reasons principally caused by late or non-receipt of Government guidance. As a result of this it was necessary for the Scheme Manager to report a breach of statutory duties to The Pensions Regulator (TPR).

368 Immediate Choice members (retired before 1 October 2023 with legacy scheme service) were due to receive an Immediate Choice Remediable Service Statement (IC-RSS) before 31 March 2025. 54 individuals did not receive the IC-RSS due to data processing difficulties and late notification of government guidance and the Scheme Manager notified the Pensions Regulator of this breach in statutory procedures as required. The Pension Scheme Manager in accordance with the legislative procedures also notified the Pensions Regulator that due to the necessary government guidance not being issued it was necessary to defer the deadline for the issuing of the IC-RSS for 64 individuals. The reasons for many of the delays was due to the need for the Matthews remedy to be enacted and resolved before the McCloud correction could be progressed.

Individuals who were not going to receive their RSS statement were individually notified before the deadline.

The Pensions Regulator had acknowledged the breaches and deferment and currently had not requested any further information.

The failure to issue both the ABS- RSSs and the Immediate Choice Remediable Service Statement (IC- RSSs) applied across all Fire Authorities in respect of the Firefighter pension schemes. Lancashire's performance in conjunction with close liaison with the services pension provider was significantly better than most Fire

Services.

The service was endeavouring to progress the outstanding IC-RSSs as soon as possible. It was anticipated that all the IC-RSSs would be issued by 31 July 2025.

Matthews Second Options Exercise

The Service had identified over 600 existing and former members of staff who were eligible to express an interest in the exercise to allow members to join or purchase additional pension under the Modified Pension Scheme. The Service had made reasonable endeavours to contact all eligible members, this had involved sending several follow-up letters to each individual where necessary using their last known address. As many individuals left LFRS employment over 20 years ago this had also involved the use of a tracing service to 'track down' individuals at their current address. To date 400 individuals had responded, and the Service continued to make repeated attempts to contact individuals.

Calculations for the exercise were complicated and, in a small number of cases, required data going back as far as the 1960's and 1970's. To date approximately 270 calculations/options packs had been sent to members. This work would continue into 2025/26.

Measures were currently being explored to reduce the timeframe of putting the resulting pensions into payment.

Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure and Pensions Ombudsman

In 2020/21, the Service implemented the pensionable allowances project, retrospectively applying backdated pensionable allowances for six years to existing and former employees who had worked a range of duty systems where allowances were previously non-pensionable. As a result of this, the Service had received a number of Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures (Appeals) from employees and former employees. All applications were from members who were dissatisfied that they were not included in the pensionable allowances exercise due to the backdating period or the non pensionability of their pay associated with the temporary nature of their role. The Board had also been informed about a number of complex cases that had been dealt with at Stage 1 and Stage 2 over this period, including through the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (Appeals). The Service had now been contacted from the Pensions Ombudsman regarding a number of cases, information had been provided but no Pensions Ombudsman outcome had yet been advised.

Pensions Dashboard

The Pensions Dashboard Programme continued to publish regular updates and newsletters in the leadup to the pension schemes beginning their connections in April 2025. The services connection date had been advised as 31.10.2025.

The Board continued to focus on key areas identified by the Pensions Regulator and maintained an oversight of the key risks to the fund. The Risk Register had continued to be reviewed at Board meetings. The service was involved in the LPPA project plan for implementation that was on track.

Risk Register

	A key activity of the Local Pensions Board during the year was monitoring and reviewing the Firefighter Pensions Risk Register. In response to a question from Councillor D Smith in relation to the 31 July 2025 deadline for IC-RSSs to be issued, Jayne Hutchinson confirmed that the LPPA had set out a program up to October 2025 with different pension categories still awaiting guidance. Councillor D Smith asked if all pensions would be paid by October 2025, the DCFO explained that the timeline had slipped and was out of the services control, he acknowledged that LPPA had done all that they could. Jayne Hutchinson added that there were two providers of the pensions system Civica and Heywoods. Heywoods had not built a solution meaning that manual calculations were required, the service used Civica. The DCFO added that fire and rescue services were only one part of the pensions issue. Jayne Hutchinson added that she met fortnightly with the LPPA and the scheme manager met with the LPPA monthly. In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to the financial impact, Jayne Hutchinson confirmed that the different pension schemes afforded different benefits but previous tax relief and interest had to be considered. The DCFO added that the service had received government grant funding meaning there had been no impact on the budget position. He added that the previous day crewing plus pension (DCP) remedies did have a financial impact on the service and any cases that were upheld by the Pension Ombudsman would have a financial impact on the authority. The Chair requested that any information received in relation to pensions be distributed to members of the committee to help newer members gain an understanding of the background information. Resolved: That the Committee noted the report.
7-25/26	Date and Time of Next Meeting
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 24 September 2025 at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 26 November 2025 and 25 March 2026.
8-25/26	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.
9-25/26	Update from Capital Building Projects Working Group
	(Paragraph 3)

	Members were provided with an update from the Capital Building Projects Working Group. Resolved: That the report be noted.
10-25/26	High Value Procurement Projects
	(Paragraph 3) Members considered a report that provided an update on all contracts for one-off purchases valued in excess of £100,000 and high value procurement projects in excess of £100,000 including: new contract awards, progress of ongoing projects and details of new projects. Resolved: That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.

**LFRS HQ
Fulwood**

**M Nolan
Clerk to CFA**

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

Meeting to be held 24 September 2025

Financial Monitoring 2025/26

(Appendices 1 and 2 refer)

Contact for further information:

Steven Brown - Director of Corporate Services – Telephone Number 01772 826804

Executive Summary

The report sets out the budget position to the end of July in respect of the 2025/26 revenue and capital budgets.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- note and endorse the financial position; and
- approve slippage in the capital programme of £1.232m to 2026/27.

Information

Revenue Budget

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's 2025/26 revenue budget has been set at £77.511m. The budget profiled to the end of July 2025 is £25.452m and expenditure for the same period is £25.497m which is essentially breaking even. Both pay and non-pay budgets are 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.

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 is higher over the summer period, management information shows that overtime has been avoided and therefore we are forecasting that these savings will be met. Overall, a small overspend is forecast of £0.147m, which is just 0.2% of our net budget, this reflects the higher than budgeted pay awards of 3.2% for all staff compared to the 3% budgeted. There are inflationary pressures that are highlighted in the Future Pressures section, although at this stage these are not reflected in the forecast position as more information will be needed to provide a more accurate position.

The year-to-date and forecast positions within all departmental budgets are set out in Appendix 1, with the major variances of note shown separately in the following 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 is 0.2% above our budgeted assumptions which largely accounts for the forecast variance.
Prevention and Protection - Pay	(£0.110m)	(£0.155m)	Several vacant posts exist in the current staffing establishment for which recruitment is planned long term. Challenges persist in recruitment and retention due to competition from the private sector.
Fleet – Non-Pay	£0.105m	£0.054m	Vehicle repair and maintenance costs remain high due to inflationary pressures and demand for parts across the industry however this is projected to reduce during the year.

Future Developments

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. For Grey Book staff, the uplift applies from 1 July 2025 and covers 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 is 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 will place an additional pressure on the 2026/27 budget.

As of August 2025, the UK Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rate stands 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 will 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 is notably higher than the 2% general inflation assumption included in the budget and is placing pressure on both revenue and capital non-pay budgets.

Utility costs are also higher than the 2% inflation assumption at over 6% which is largely due to geopolitical instability. Longer-term projections suggest energy bills will 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 has gradually declined from 4.75% to 4.00%, with forecasts suggesting a further drop to 2.75% by the end of 2026. Investment returns have followed suit which is higher than budgeted levels, it is therefore likely future projections will include additional income from investment returns.

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 shows that:

- There are real term cuts to government grants for the sector.
- There is a reduced share of funding for those fire authorities with lower population growth and higher levels of deprivation.
- Business rates funding from growth is removed.
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service unfortunately may experience one of the largest cuts based on this modelling, of the 43 services Lancashire will be the sixth most affected and represents a total cut over the Spending Review period of over £7m (a reduction in the budget of £3.6m from 2028).
- There are other risks that may compound this such as an assumption that all fire authorities increase the council tax precept by the maximum allowed. This is extremely disappointing, and strong representations have 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 is 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 will 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 can 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 is adequate fire cover in the area. The one-month initial review shows that the policy so far has been effective in reducing overtime costs whilst maintaining response standards. This monitoring report assumes the success of this policy will be maintained for the year and the savings will be delivered, although it is still early in the financial year.

The Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2025/26 includes £0.572m of savings to be delivered in 2025/26; the delivery of £0.5m has been explained above. The balance of £0.072m is a balance of some smaller initiatives such as procurement savings, this will 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 is £13.884m and to date £1.602m has been spent. A summary of the programme is set out in the table below and in more detail in Appendix 2.

Area	Budgeted Items	Budget	Year to Date
Operational Vehicles Budget	The budget includes initial costs of six large Type B pumping appliances, two smaller Type A pumping appliances. All are on target for delivery this financial year.	£2.911m	£0.0m
Other vehicles Budget	This budget allows for the replacement of various operational support vehicles including several cars, vans and a welfare unit. All are on target for delivery this financial year.	£1.284m	£0.289m
Operational Equipment Budget	This budget allows 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 includes the continued programme of Drill Tower Replacements, upgrades to Preston and Blackpool stations.	£4.538m	£0.793m
IT systems Budget	This budget includes 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 has identified areas where expenditure will 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 will slip to 2026/27 due to vehicles interdependencies.
Building Modifications	(£1.190)	The Development and Land Acquisition budget of £0.840m is 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. Also £0.350m is also requested to be slipped to next year following revision of the programme.
	(£1.232)	

Financial Implications

As outlined in the report.

Legal Implications

None.

Business Risk Implications

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Human Resource 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

Appendix 1

BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT JULY 2025 DFM Expenditure	Revised Annual Budget	Year to Date Budget	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Variance	Year to Date Variance Pay	Year to Date Variance Non-Pay	Forecast Outturn Variance O/Spend (U/Spend)	Forecast Outturn Variance Pay	Forecast Outturn Variance Non-Pay
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Service Delivery									
Service Delivery	44.231	15.688	15.798	0.110	0.098	0.012	0.195	0.155	0.040
Prevention & Protection	3.865	1.302	1.218	(0.084)	(0.110)	0.026	(0.116)	(0.115)	(0.002)
Control	2.237	1.118	1.100	(0.018)	0.000	(0.018)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Youth Engagement (inc Princes Trust)	0.022	0.242	0.272	0.030	0.002	0.028	0.023	0.025	(0.002)
Special Projects (ISAR)	0.002	0.001	(0.010)	(0.010)	0.000	(0.010)	(0.031)	0.000	(0.031)
Strategy & Planning									
Service Improvement	2.592	0.918	0.925	0.007	0.021	(0.014)	0.022	0.046	(0.025)
Training & Operational Review	4.429	1.627	1.695	0.069	0.098	(0.029)	0.225	0.241	(0.016)
Fleet & Technical Services	3.401	1.291	1.468	0.177	0.072	0.105	(0.023)	0.031	(0.054)
Digital Data and Technology (DDAT)	4.561	1.941	1.899	(0.042)	(0.032)	(0.010)	(0.049)	(0.076)	0.027
People & Development									
Human Resources	1.011	0.334	0.382	0.049	0.039	0.009	0.086	0.105	(0.019)
Occupational Health Unit	0.372	0.124	0.064	(0.060)	(0.023)	(0.037)	(0.064)	(0.064)	0.000
Corporate Communications	0.503	0.167	0.137	(0.030)	(0.019)	(0.011)	(0.057)	(0.052)	(0.006)
Safety Health & Environment	0.335	0.107	0.111	0.004	0.008	(0.004)	0.015	0.024	(0.009)
Corporate Services									
Executive Board	1.197	0.443	0.461	0.018	0.023	(0.005)	0.069	0.073	(0.005)
Central Admin Office	0.766	0.255	0.194	(0.061)	(0.051)	(0.010)	(0.098)	(0.089)	(0.010)
Finance and Procurement	1.284	0.443	0.455	0.013	(0.005)	0.017	(0.040)	(0.068)	0.028
Property	3.576	1.067	0.953	(0.113)	(0.053)	(0.061)	(0.189)	(0.149)	(0.040)
External Funding	0.000	0.004	0.000	(0.004)	0.000	(0.004)	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)
TOTAL DFM EXPENDITURE	74.384	27.070	27.123	0.052	0.070	(0.017)	(0.034)	0.089	(0.123)
Non DFM Expenditure									
Pensions Expenditure	1.452	0.456	0.455	(0.000)	0.000	(0.000)	0.003	0.000	0.003
Other Non-DFM Expenditure	1.675	(2.074)	(2.081)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.002)	(0.027)	(0.015)	(0.011)
NON-DFM EXPENDITURE	3.126	(1.618)	(1.626)	(0.007)	(0.005)	(0.002)	(0.023)	(0.015)	(0.008)
TOTAL BUDGET REQUIREMENT	77.511	25.452	25.497	0.045	0.065	(0.020)	(0.057)	0.074	(0.131)
Use of Reserves	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
NET BUDGET	77.511	25.452	25.497	0.045	0.065	(0.020)	(0.057)	0.074	(0.131)

Appendix 2

Capital Budget Monitoring Month Ending 31st July 2025					
CAPITAL BUDGET 2025/26	Revised Programme as per July 25 Resources	Slippage to be approved at September resources	Revised Programme	Actual as at 31st July 2025	Projected Year End Outturn
Operational Equipment					
Operational Equipment	1.897	(0.042)	1.855	0.077	1.855
	1.897	(0.042)	1.855	0.077	1.855
Buildings Modifications					
Update Preston Facilities	0.433	-	0.433	0.052	0.433
Development & Land Acquisition	0.840	(0.840)	-	-	-
Blackpool Dormitory	0.498	-	0.498	0.402	0.498
Drill tower replacements	1.731	(0.350)	1.381	0.101	1.381
Wylfa Prop	0.175	-	0.175	0.070	0.175
Estate Improvement Provision	0.861	-	0.861	0.168	0.861
	4.538	(1.190)	3.348	0.793	3.348
ICT					
IT Systems	3.254	-	3.254	0.443	3.254
	3.254	-	3.254	0.443	3.254
Total Capital Requirement	13.884	(1.232)	12.652	1.602	12.652
Funding					
Revenue Contributions	2.500	-	2.500	1.602	1.602
Capital Reserves	11.384	(1.232)	10.152	-	11.050
Total Capital Funding	13.884	(1.232)	12.652	1.602	12.652
Fleet	4.195	0.000	4.195	0.289	4.195
Equipment	1.897	(0.042)	1.855	0.077	1.855
Property	4.538	(1.190)	3.348	0.793	3.348
ICT	3.254	0.000	3.254	0.443	3.254
	13.884	(1.232)	12.652	1.602	12.652

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Resources Committee

Meeting to be held on 24 September 2025

Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2024 – 2025 and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2026

(Appendices 1 and 2 refer)

Contact for further information: Liz Sandiford, Director People and Development
Tel: 01772 866856

Executive Summary

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2024 – 2025 and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2026 offers a comprehensive overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing commitment to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion across its operations. Shaped by statutory obligations including the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, LFRS's approach is further informed by inspections from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue (HMICFRS).

This report demonstrates how LFRS is managing risks to its workforce and the communities it serves, advancing equality of opportunity, and promoting good relations among all groups. It details performance in fulfilling legal duties, outlines strategic delivery plans, and identifies key areas of focus such as accessibility, recruitment, training, and community engagement. The report also highlights the Service's method for evidencing compliance and transparency in meeting its public sector equality obligations.

Recommendation

The Resources Committee is asked to note the report.

Information

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services (LFRS) response to equality diversity and inclusion is shaped by:

- Identifying and managing risk whether this is risk to its employees, the environment in which it operates, or in the society that it serves as identified in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) which plays a key role in inspecting Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England, including their approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), established under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires public bodies, including LFRS, to consider how their policies, services and decision-making processes impact people. The general duty obliges the Service to have due regard to three key aims; eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected

characteristic and those who do not, foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2024 – 2025 and Delivery Plan 2025 – 2026, attached at Appendix 2, is one of the ways in which the Service can demonstrate transparency, in terms of how it is complying with the Equality Duty.

The report documents the Service's performance in terms of meeting its legal duties over the period 2024 – 2025 and the Plans for 2025 – 2026. It is part of a suite of delivery plans which supports the delivery of the Service's People Strategy and details the Service's areas of focus in terms of minimising risks in local communities, improving accessibility, recruitment and selection, training and development.

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications directly arising from this report.

Human Resource Implications

The Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report is one of the key documents which supports the delivery of LFRS People Strategy.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The action plans included within the Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report details the Service's approach to delivering Response, Protection, Prevention and Departmental activity which supports the Services in meeting its legal obligations.

Business Risk Implications

It is a legal requirement for the Service to publish how it is complying with the public sector equality duty.

Environmental Implications

None.

Legal Implications

No legal obligations arising from the report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:	Equality Act 2010
Date:	April 2011
Paper:	HMICFRS Values and Culture report
Date:	March 2023
Paper:	HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour. The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services.
Date:	August 2025
Contact:	Liz Sandiford

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

Initial Equality Impact Assessment/ Equality Analysis Screening Tool form HR/IEIA

Name of Proposal, Policy, Decision, Strategy being considered (Please indicate)	Equality Diversity Inclusion Culture Annual Report
Name Lead Officer Job Designation	Liz Sandiford Director of People and Development
Department	People and Development
Telephone Number E-Mail Address	07814866182
Date of Assessment	15.08.2025

We carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to analyse the effects of our decisions, policies or practices. The EIA should be undertaken/started at the beginning of the policy development process, before any decision is made. It will be updated through the decision making/policy development process until the conclusion of the decision making/ policy development process and then it is completed. Further guidance is available from Human Resources.

1. Overview

The main aims/objectives of this policy¹ are:
The EDIC Annual Report refers to how equality, diversity and inclusion activity is embedded within our Corporate Planning process and how we are shaping and delivering our services to meet the needs of our diverse communities. The report includes data that we are required to report in terms of our workforce profile, our completed action plan for last year and our actions for next year. The delivery of the action plan is monitored through the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Culture Board.

Is the policy or decision a new policy or a policy you are reviewing or an existing²

New/Proposed ☐

Modified/Reviewed/Updated/Adapted ☒

Existing but new EIA ☐

List the groups of people potentially affected by this proposal (e.g. job applicants, employees, customers, members of the public):
Employees and the Communities of Lancashire

¹ Policy refers to any policy strategy, procedure, function, decision or delivery of service

² To tick the box: Hover over the box with the icon, right click the mouse, click on properties, click check the box

2. Equality Impact

Quick Look Impact /Initial Screening – is there a risk to people with the proposal?
Consider the initial positive and negative impacts of your policy or plan below?

Equality Group	Positive Impact It could benefit	Negative Impact It could disadvantage	Neutral/No Impact	Evidence for initial conclusions and any mitigating actions already in place to reduce any negative impact or reasons why it will be of positive impact
Age Older Younger	x			The EDIC Annual report details the actions that the Service will deliver which will have a positive impact on the diverse communities of Lancashire and employees who are underrepresented within the Service.
Disability Physical, Learning Disability Learning Difficulty Mental Health	x			
Gender Identity/ Gender Reassignment	x			
Pregnancy and Maternity	x			
Race Ethnicity Nationality	x			
Belief or Religion	x			
Gender Male/Female	x			
Sexual Orientation Lesbian, Gay and bisexual, straight people	x			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	x			

(employment only)				
Other groups who are not protected under the Equality Act Examples include social economic factors (i.e. poverty, isolation), unemployment, homelessness, rurality, health inequalities any other disadvantage	x			
Contributes to equality of opportunity	x			
Contributes to fostering good relationships between different groups	x			
The decision will be taken in compliance with Human Rights³	YES			x
	NO			

If there is a negative impact on a particular group or a lack of clarity about if there is an impact on a particular group, a full equality impact assessment is required.

3. Negative Impact

Does this proposal require a full EIA is not, please state why:

3.1 The completed EIA should be attached to the management/project report, so the details can be considered as part of the decision-making process at the relevant Board/Meeting.

3.2 Update the EIA monitoring spreadsheet on the R Drive.

³ Human Rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in Europe regardless of nationality and citizenship. Human Rights are based on the five FREDA principles: Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity, Autonomy

Equality Impact Assessment Approved By: Executive Board Date Approved: 18 August 2025

Further guidance on completing Equality Impact Assessments is available from Human Resources.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2024 - 2025 and Delivery Plan for 2025 - 2026

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Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Annual equality diversity inclusion and culture report 2025-2026

1. Background to the report updated

The Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (LCFA) is responsible for governing Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS). The Service employs in the region of 1200 people who are employed on Grey Book (operational) and Green Book (support services) terms and conditions. These roles include managerial members of staff, operational firefighters, administrators, fire safety, community safety and business support staff.

As an employer our aim is to recruit and develop a workforce which is diverse, can meet the needs of the diverse communities within Lancashire and to ensure that our workforce feels valued, can work with dignity and respect, protected from any type of prejudice or discrimination.

This Annual Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Report highlights our performance in relation to:

- Meeting our legal duties over the year 2024 – 2025.
- Our workforce profile as of 31 March 2025.
- Our plans in relation to equality, inclusion and diversity for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026.
- Activity we deliver which supports our employees to thrive.
- Key monitoring equality data/information.

It makes visible how we are meeting our legal obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. It requires public authorities to consider how their policies and decisions might affect people with protected characteristics, aiming to advance equality and foster good relations.

2. Introduction, aims, values and ethics

2.1 Lancashire Fire and Rescue aims

Making Lancashire safer is our commitment to making sure that everything we do improves the safety of our diverse communities. We do this by using our skills, experience and resources to make people safer in much broader terms across life's stages:

- helping people to start safe
- live safe
- age safe

- be safe on our roads

LFRS is committed to its purpose of “making Lancashire safer” and it has developed the following priorities to support this intention:

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

2.2 Lancashire Fire and Rescue Values

We define the expectations of our staff within our Annual Service Plan and our values define how we STRIVE to achieve our purpose of “making Lancashire safer” by ensuring what we do is guided by strong principles of:

- **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.
- **Value:** We actively listen to others.
- **Empowered:** We contribute to decisions and improvements.

Risk is dynamic and fire disproportionately affects certain demographic groups. We therefore focus on the potential root causes and the people who are most vulnerable to them; those living alone, with health issues, with impaired mobility, affected by socio-economic deprivation and drug and/or alcohol users; these risks are reflected in our strategic risk assessment and how we meet and mitigate them is captured within our core strategies.

2.3 The National Code of Ethics

We abide by the Core Code of Ethics which sets out a clear set of principles in terms of the professional standards of practice and behaviour. The code identifies five primary ethical principles which reflect best practice principles and has been designed to underpin the way we serve our communities, carry out our role, and work together:

- Putting our communities first – we put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

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

We require all our employees and everyone in LFRS to behave in accordance with the Service values and to follow the Core Code, including those working with or on behalf of the Service.

3. Meeting our legal duties and equality diversity and inclusion objectives

Our Annual Service Plan 2025-2026 and Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027 outline our priorities and vision for "making Lancashire safer."

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture (EDIC) Annual Report, along with the Workforce Plan, Operational Training Strategy, Training and Organisational Development Plan, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan, detail the initiatives supporting our mission, values, and People Strategy.

In 2024, the EDI Steering Group became the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Board to better oversee efforts in fostering an environment where everyone can thrive. Chaired by our Chief Fire Officer, the EDIC Board manages the governance and delivery of the EDIC Annual Report.

(i) The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and equally. The Act has two main purposes; it brings together and simplifies all the existing discrimination law and strengthens the law to further support progress on equality.

In the exercise of its functions (including any functions carried out by an external supplier/organisation) LFRS must have due regard to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are often called the three main aims of the general duty and are detailed in the Equality Act 2010 Section 149. The Equality Duty is supported by two main specific duties which require public bodies to:

- Publish equality information at least annually.
- Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

LFRS reports progress against its equality objectives and how it is meeting its obligations under the equality duty via the annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report.

(ii) The Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 requires all public bodies and organisations carrying out public functions to uphold the fundamental rights and freedoms afforded to individuals throughout the UK, regardless of nationality or citizenship. These rights are grounded in the principles of fairness, respect, equality, dignity, and autonomy—often referred to collectively as FREDAs. The Act sets out a series of convention rights which must be protected and considered in the delivery of public services and in the exercise of organisational duties.

(iii) Equality Objectives

Further to our review of the risks within the communities of Lancashire, the Service has developed the following equality objectives in supporting:

Our Communities:

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

Our Workforce:

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

(iv) Protected Characteristics (or protected groups)

LFRS follows the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 regarding the protected characteristics listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – including ethnic or national origins, colour, or nationality
- Religion or belief – including lack of belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

(v) Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Equality Analysis

Equality analysis and the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) enable the Service to fulfil its legal obligations under the public sector equality duty by systematically identifying and evaluating the effects on staff and communities. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of these impacts and allows for effective mitigation of any adverse outcomes. EIAs are conducted whenever individuals or communities may be affected, with the Service utilising the NFCC toolkit to guide its approach.

In 2025/2026, we will expand our methodology by introducing People Impact Assessments (PIA), allowing us to gain a holistic understanding of the implications for all groups of staff and communities, beyond those with protected characteristics. Furthermore, we will digitise the process to enhance the monitoring and quality assurance of PIA completion.

(vi) Commissioning and Procuring Services

LFRS ensures all partnerships comply with equality principles and duties. Contracts must accept LFRS terms, including equality clauses, and additional scrutiny is applied to procurement when needed. Lead stakeholders are responsible for initial

equality screenings and full assessments as required, ensuring changes are made before procurement proceeds. The Head of Property, part of the NFCC National Fire Estates Group, helps advance dignified facilities and EDI standards.

4. The communities of Lancashire

According to the 2021 Census, Lancashire's population stands at 1,531,127, reflecting a 4.8% increase since 2011. The region contains some of the most deprived areas nationally, as indicated by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), which may contribute to elevated community risk profiles. The largest ethnic group in Lancashire is white (86.6%), with other ethnicities comprising 13.4% of the population.

The Census also notes that 20.1% of Lancashire's residents are aged 65 or over, 59.1% are between 18 and 64, and 20.8% are under 18.

In Pendle, 29.4% of the population belong to ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities), while this figure is 27.4% in Preston. Blackburn with Darwen reports the highest proportion of ethnic minorities at 39.6%. In contrast, Blackpool records just over 7,500 individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds, representing slightly above 5% of the population. Among minority groups, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani is the largest in Lancashire.

On Census day in March 2021, 806,000 Lancashire residents identified as Christian, 479,900 reported no religion, 141,300 stated they were Muslim, 82,000 provided no response, and the remaining religious groups together totalled 22,000. Blackburn with Darwen (35.0%) and Pendle (26.0%) had the highest proportions of Muslim residents. In Ribble Valley, 66.4% identified as Christian. Notably, Preston has above-average representation of Hindus (3.0%) and the highest percentage of Sikhs (0.7%) within Lancashire.

Deprivation across England is assessed using the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD 2019), the official measure for Lower-Level Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Various forms of deprivation, such as health and environmental factors, often interact to increase vulnerability and risk. In 2019, Lancashire contained 186 LSOAs (5.7%) ranked among the top 1% most deprived neighbourhoods nationwide. The Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) incorporates IMD data into its fire risk model to optimise resource allocation and prioritise those most at risk.

5. Workforce Profile

Public authorities must publish data showing compliance with the general equality duty, including information about employees or others affected by their policies who

share relevant protected characteristics. LFRS provides workforce demographics (Appendix A) and recruitment analysis (Appendix B).

Tracking equality and diversity helps LFRS assess the impact of employment policies and spot potential disparities among staff groups. Demographics are monitored by the EDIC Board and Performance Committee.

6. Summary of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Activity (EDIC)

The detail of our progress in relation to EDIC is summarised in our completed action plan attached at Appendix D. The new Action Plan 2025 -2026 is attached at Appendix E.

7. Other areas of focus relating to equality, diversity and inclusion

7.1 Accessibility

The LFRS Corporate Communications Department ensures information is disseminated across various formats and channels to effectively engage Lancashire's diverse communities. The Service upholds its commitments to equality and diversity by promoting these values in key publications and informational resources both internally and externally. Information is available in print and through digital means, including the LFRS website.

Ensuring website and mobile app accessibility entails making them usable for as many individuals as possible, including those with:

- visual impairments,
- motor difficulties,
- cognitive impairments or learning disabilities,
- deafness or hearing loss.

The Service's website complies with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) version 2.2 AA standard, an internationally recognised framework developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to support improved web accessibility. The Service is committed to enabling all users, including those with disabilities, to access vital information and services efficiently and clearly. For instance, users can:

- adjust colours, contrast levels, and fonts,
- zoom in up to 300% without causing text overflow,
- navigate most of the website using only a keyboard,
- utilise speech recognition software for navigation,

- access content via screen reader technology.

It is acknowledged that certain accessibility challenges persist within specific areas of the site, such as the home fire safety check form. Collaborative efforts are underway with other fire and rescue services to develop an accessible booking form. Meanwhile, individuals who experience difficulties accessing the form are encouraged to contact the Service by telephone to ensure their needs are met.

In 2024-25, the website experienced increased visitor numbers, likely attributable to enhancements in design and accessibility following its relaunch in 2023-24. The most recent compliance test against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines V2.2 level A and AA was conducted in July 2024 by Web Usability Partnership Ltd using the Website Accessibility Conformance Evaluation Methodology.

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 are also provided in British Sign Language. Fire safety advice is distributed in accessible formats on social media platforms. Staff continue to receive training to produce accessible social media content. All video content, including public safety footage from emergency incidents, is published with subtitles. Approximately 60 staff members received accessibility training during the year through in-person, online sessions, and a webinar, now available to all employees, to ensure that website and intranet content remains accessible.

The Corporate Communications Department actively supports LFRS prevention initiatives by partnering with prevention, community fire safety, and operational teams. Campaigns are 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 aims to encourage safer practices among targeted groups and is 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%.

The communications strategy sets out principles ensuring all communications are inclusive and accessible in terms of design, format, and language relevant to

intended audiences. A core objective is to deepen understanding of Lancashire's diverse communities and equip the Service to communicate with them as effectively as possible, utilising a variety of channels such as email newsletters, podcasts, local media, and direct mail.

7.2 Engagement and Consultation

The Service has a consultation strategy, providing a framework for understanding public opinion on significant policy changes. This strategy undergoes annual review to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance, as well as to incorporate insights gained from previous public consultation exercises. In 2024-25, a comprehensive public consultation regarding the council tax precept was conducted. The responses demonstrated strong geographical representation, an equitable distribution between male and female participants, inclusion of all age groups—most notably a high proportion of respondents aged over 65—and 21% identifying as disabled. Ethnic diversity among respondents, however, was limited and will be a focal point for improvement in 2025-26.

Routine surveys are conducted with members of the public who have experienced emergencies, enabling the Service to monitor satisfaction levels; in 2024-25, the overall public user satisfaction rate reached 98.68%.

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 evaluates 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.

To inform its cooking safety campaign and tailor communications, the Service surveyed 59 individuals who had experienced kitchen fires. Additionally, a public survey was conducted during the campaign which generated 5,635 responses, providing substantial insight into community cooking behaviours.

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', is 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.

An internal communications strategy details the approach to staff engagement, supported by a structured programme of activities reviewed annually. Staff engagement is tracked as a key performance indicator and reported to the Combined Fire Authority. Engagement activities include station visits, digital staff sessions, appraisals, and team meetings.

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.

Periodic comprehensive staff surveys provide insights into leadership, management, training, development, and equality, diversity, inclusion and culture. Results shape ongoing actions and improvements. The survey includes a staff engagement index measuring pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration, and motivation. The latest score was 74% (2023), with a targeted action plan implemented ahead of the next full survey in 2025. A digital-only pulse survey in December 2024, with a 20% response rate, yielded a staff engagement index score of 79%, indicating positive engagement at that time.

Surveys and consultations addressing specific topics have been conducted over the past year, including appraisals, staff recognition, leadership development, and on-call communications. The Engine House, the Service's intranet, hosts a discussion forum ("Shout Up") where staff contribute ideas, feedback, and participate in equipment trials and process innovation.

Partnerships remain integral, particularly within the Lancashire Resilience Forum, which includes local authorities and law enforcement. The quarterly 'Hot Topics' newsletter provides partners with Service news and updates. Additional newsletters, "Prevention Matters" and "Protection Matters", disseminate fire safety information to prevention partners and businesses respectively.

Five employee voice groups, representing race and religion, women and families, LGBTQ+, neurodiversity, and disability, offer valuable perspectives for policy development, recruitment, education, and intelligence sharing about emerging communities. These groups facilitate consultation and feedback, ensuring that potential negative impacts are identified and addressed.

Business Fire Safety, Community Fire Safety, and Service Delivery actively engage with communities through preventive initiatives and routine safety checks, furthering the goal of keeping Lancashire residents safe.

Proactive outreach continues through community safety advisors with refugee and minority groups, alongside broader engagement with new communities to promote fire safety messages—such as risks associated with candles and incense, exemplified by work with the Chinese community during New Year celebrations. Hajj Safety messaging has also been sustained for those travelling to Saudi Arabia.

Consultation with Trade Unions occurs via both formal and informal meetings, with the Service now recognising the Fire and Rescue Service Association (FRSA) and Fire Officers Association (FOA). Workforce-related decisions and documentation are reviewed collaboratively with trade union representatives and other staff members.

8. Values and establishing a culture where people thrive

Numerous cultural reviews have been conducted across various Services, resulting in a range of recommendations, including those provided by HMICFRS. The EDIC Board has been established as the mechanism for monitoring progress on these recommendations and overseeing activities designed to foster a positive Service culture where all staff members can thrive. Additionally, the EDIC receives reports and details pertaining to grievances and misconduct. The Service Management Team is informed about instances where disciplinary action has been taken and the key themes.

The anonymous reporting helpline remains an effective channel for employees to raise concerns, with appropriate actions and interventions implemented in response to certain reports. Standard DBS checks are now routinely completed for all staff, accompanied by a role-based risk assessment to determine if an Enhanced or Enhanced with Barred List check is necessary. The position of Legal Services and Standards Manager has been created to oversee all misconduct cases and staff-related complaints, ensuring that such matters are addressed fairly, consistently, and promptly. Welfare Officers are now assigned to support any staff member under investigation, internal complainants, and, in some cases, internal witnesses throughout challenging processes.

To support the delivery of the Service's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Person in Crisis (PiC) initiative has been launched, featuring an eLearning module, and will continue through the 2025/26 period with a particular emphasis on suicide prevention and mental health awareness. A series of wellbeing sessions with crews, peer support conversations, and wellbeing support dog interactions have also taken place, alongside ongoing delivery of TRiM and TIB's sessions.

9. Training and Development

The Service implemented 360-degree feedback for all Watch Managers and above, including Senior Leaders and non-uniform equivalents. The questionnaire is associated with STRIVE and is periodically used upon request for development purposes. LFRS provides access to external coaching for all staff members, covering topics such as managing challenging situations and conducting difficult conversations. An internal mentoring scheme, Lift and Climb, is also available. Since its inception, 44 individuals have requested a mentor, with 10 requests from women.

In October 2024 and March 2025, LFRS partnered with LanCon and NWS to offer three leadership development events, which addressed resilience and well-being, effective crisis communication, and generational differences. Training and management development opportunities are provided to both Grey and Green Book staff members and are promoted through the Engine House.

10. Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and progression data is analysed and reported to the EDIC Board. The demographic profile of the Service is reported quarterly to the Performance Committee. LFRS continues its journey to improve the diversity of the workforce to ensure that it represents 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 has 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 work 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 are planned for 2025/26.

The "Have a Go" days offered taster sessions simulating physical assessments and were designed to attract under-represented groups, including women, ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals.

Of the 74 people who attended across the events all registered their interest in becoming a wholetime firefighter. Of these 5.5% were BME; 20% were female and 3% were from the LGBTQ+ community.

Previously an internal audit was carried out on the Service's approach to positive action and concluded that "the current recruitment activity adopts Positive Action approach, the processes and controls that are in place are adequate, efficient, and

effective at ensuring the right person is recruited to each individual role”, with no actions or recommendations identified.

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 are included at Appendix B.

The Service's talent gateway enables faster advancement for operational staff with high potential, and functional routes support those not wanting to pursue incident command. The updated Leadership and Development Pathways Service Order clarifies available development and promotion options, complemented by 'On the Menu' sessions and a visual flipbook outlining career pathways.

11. Achievement, turnover and progression of wholetime firefighter apprentices

LFRS provides firefighter operational apprenticeships. As of 31 March 2025, 139 firefighter apprentices completed their end point assessment, with 13 earning distinctions. There are currently 45 apprentices progressing through the programme.

12. Workforce Strategies and Policies

LFRS has numerous policies which support employees with a protected characteristic including:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Maternity Handbook (incorporating Paternity and Adoption).
- Shared Parental Leave.
- Grievance Policy.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Flexible Working.
- Recruitment and Selection.
- Living with the Menopause.
- Supporting People with Dyslexia.
- HIV.
- Equality Impact Assessment/Equality Analysis.
- Code of Conduct.
- Flexitime Policy.
- Neurodiversity.
- Transition at Work.
- Domestic Abuse.

- Career Breaks.

The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act introduced a 2024 duty requiring employers to take "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment at work. Guidance on the Engine House outlines what constitutes sexual harassment, its impacts, prevention measures, and support for employees. Leaders received a briefing on keeping colleagues safe, and both the LFRS Bullying and Harassment Service Order and eLearning materials were updated. Additional face-to-face briefings and a standards toolkit were provided to help leaders understand how to address workplace concerns.

LFRS monitors the demographics of employees who are involved in disciplinary action, grievances and harassment and bullying complaints. A profile is attached at Appendix C. However, the full details in some areas of the profile are not reported in public due to the low numbers and the need to preserve confidentiality of the employee.

13. Performance Management

The Annual Service Plan outlines yearly activities to implement our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), with major tasks overseen by the Leadership Team via the Corporate Programme Board. Local Delivery Plans support strategy execution at the departmental and district level.

Staff undergo performance appraisals to set objectives aligned with our plans and receive feedback on values. The appraisal tool is now simpler following staff input and includes a career conversation for workforce planning. Appraisal completion rates were 96% for Wholetime, 97% for On Call, and 92% for Green Book staff.

14 Bullying and Harassment

LFRS follows a bullying and harassment procedure to address employee complaints about inappropriate behaviour. Complaints are investigated under this procedure or the disciplinary process, depending on the information provided. See Appendix C for details.

15. Issues of concern of employees

The Service addresses employee concerns primarily through its grievance procedure for a broad range of issues beyond misconduct. The Standards Toolkit encourages informal resolutions by managers, escalating to formal processes if needed, which has proven effective. Senior Managers supplement this with station visits and cross-checking reported concerns to identify underlying themes. The anonymous 'Safe Call' reporting line allows volunteers, staff, and cadets to raise issues; seven reports

have led to investigations, training, or action. The LFRS Safeguarding Policy now includes guidance on managing allegations against staff.

16. Gender Pay Gap (GPG)

The government has recently completed a consultation of the Equality (Race and Disability) Bill which aims to enhance equality and tackle pay discrimination by introducing mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting for larger employers (those with 250 or more employees). Consultation on the Bill closed in June 2025 and LFRS are making initial preparations on the data that may be required as a result of this Bill passing through parliament, with the potential for reporting on ethnicity and disability pay gap information from March 2026.

16.1 Provision of Gender Pay Gap Information

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, LFRS is obligated to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap report. Organisations with 250 or more employees must disclose their Gender Pay Gap data using a snapshot date of 31 March 2025. This information must be made available on both the LFRS and Government websites and provides an assessment of the disparity in hourly earnings between male and female employees.

The Gender Pay Gap serves as an equality metric, illustrating differences in average earnings between men and women within the workforce. It does not measure pay inequality for equivalent roles—unequal pay for men and women is prohibited by law. Rather, it reflects variations in hourly pay rates and bonuses received by gender, thereby highlighting any areas of imbalance. The factors contributing to the Gender Pay Gap are multifaceted; for instance, a higher proportion of women pursue careers in lower-paid sectors such as administration. Additionally, some industries remain predominantly male, and a significant proportion of women work part-time, with part-time staff typically earning less than their full-time counterparts.

Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) indicates that the national Gender Pay Gap has gradually decreased over time, falling by approximately one quarter over the past decade. According to ONS figures for April 2024, the UK average Gender Pay Gap among all employees declined to 13.1%, down from 14.2% in 2023 and 14.9% in 2022.

16.2 Employees for the purposes of the Gender Pay Gap

As of the snapshot date, 31 March 2025, LFRS employed 1,195 individuals. The Service employs a considerably higher percentage of men than women, primarily due to the larger number of operational roles, which have historically been filled

predominantly by men and typically experience low turnover. In contrast, women represent a greater proportion of staff in support positions.

16.3 Mean Gender Pay Gap

The mean (average) Gender Pay Gap is determined by calculating the average hourly pay for all female employees and for all male employees, then finding the difference between these two figures. This method is used at LFRS and indicates a mean Gender Pay Gap that differs from the national average of 19.09%. At LFRS, women on average earn £2.75 per hour more than men.

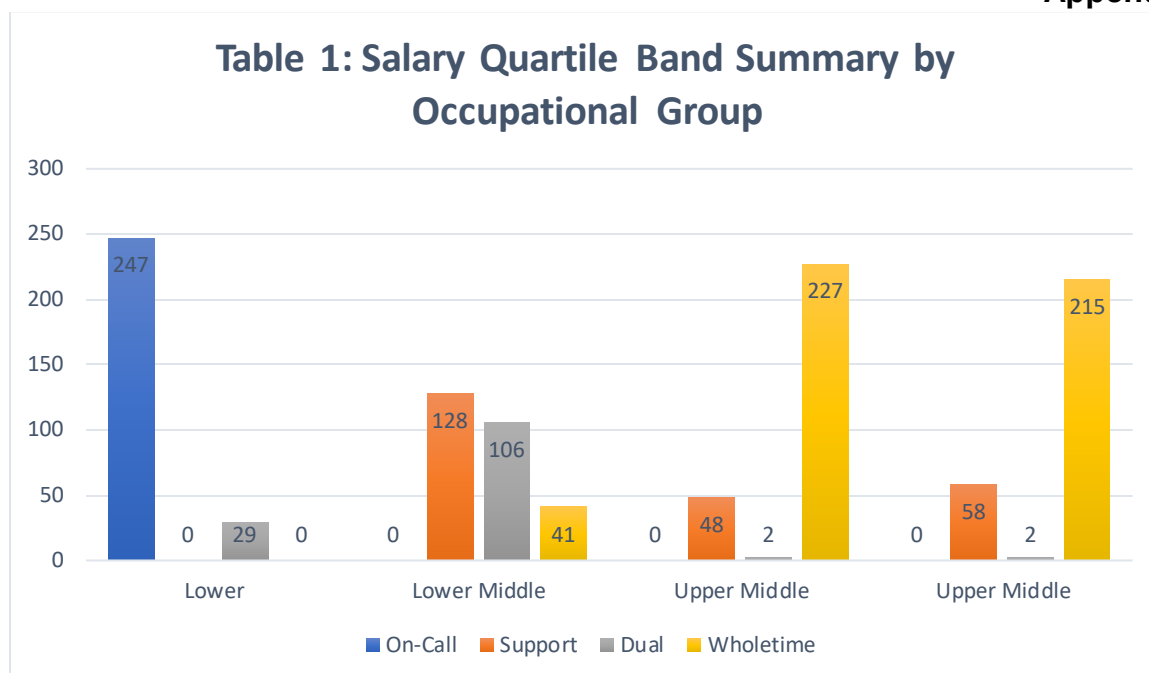
16.4 Median Gender Pay Gap

To calculate the median Gender Pay Gap, women's hourly earnings are ranked, as are men's, to determine the middle value for each group. The difference between these values is referred to as the median pay gap. At LFRS, the median Gender Pay Gap is 4.48%, meaning men earn an average of £0.77 more per hour than women.

The inclusion of On-Call and dual contracted staff, who are predominantly male, has a significant impact on both the mean and median Gender Pay Gap. The structure of their earnings results in a higher concentration of men with lower hourly pay at the bottom of the ranking, which influences the overall calculations.

16.5 Occupational Group

Analysis shows that 89% of employees in the lowest quartile are On-Call staff, comprising 22% of the total workforce.



Most female part-time support staff are in the lower-middle quartile, with fewer in the upper quartiles. The proportion of women in the upper quartiles matches their overall representation at LFRS. Since most Firefighters are men, the upper-middle quartile is male dominated.

Men employed under 'Grey Book' terms and conditions receive extra allowances not available to 'Green Book' support staff, who are mostly women; this raises Grey Book average earnings, placing them in the lower-middle quartile.

Women are notably under-represented among operational staff. LFRS aims to increase female firefighter recruitment as part of its EDIC Action plan, launching initiatives to attract diverse applicants and monitoring local recruitment activity to identify and address barriers.

Workforce diversity profile as at 31 march 2025

Employment monitoring data is collected and reported annually for all protected groups, except for gender reassignment, because of the sensitive and confidential nature of this information.

The following figures represent the total number of staff posts, including cases where employees hold dual contracts and are therefore counted more than once, as they occupy multiple roles within the Service.

1. Workforce Demographics LFRS

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT +	Average Age
1324 ¹	1277	47	1048	276	45	58	40 yrs
%	96.5	3.5	79.2	20.8	3.4	4.4	

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 identify as LGBT+ increased from 3.7% to 4.4%.

2. Workforce Demographics LFRS Grey Book

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT +	Average Age
1063	1031	32	954	109	32	52	39
%	96.9	3.1	89.7	10.3	3	4.9	

The proportion of females in grey book positions rose by 0.3% over the past year. BME representation fell from 3.3% to 3.1%. Disability declarations increased slightly, while LGBT+ representation grew by 1%.

3. Prevention and Protection

(i) Protection: Business Fire Safety Staff

%	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age in years
	94.6	5.4	64.9	35.1	2.7	48

¹ The figure refers to the total number of posts occupied by members of staff which allows for dual contracted members of staff to be included twice due to them undertaking two roles.

(ii) Prevention: District Community Safety Staff and HQ Prevention Staff

%	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age in years
	89.8	10.2	30.6	69.4	6.1	46

Prevention and protection are more positively diverse.

(iii) Prevention: Princes Trust Programme Support Green Book staff

%	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age in years
	100	0	17.6	82.4	0	38

The number of women at the Princes Trust has slightly decreased, while more men have joined, increasing departmental diversity. The number of BME employees remains unchanged.

4. Response Grey Book Operational staff including resilience and specialist capability**(i) Wholetime Firefighters (including apprentices) : 224, Flexible Day Crewing and DCP duty roles**

Role	Total No of staff Headcount	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age
Strategic	8	8	0	7	1	0	47
Middle Manager (GM SM)	39	38	1	31	8	1	46
Supervisory (WM CM)	144	142	2	136	8	5	43
FF	366	351	15	322	44	13	38
Total excluding Day Duty	557	539	18	496	61	19	40

The number of women in the wholetime Service has declined, while BME representation and the proportion of people declaring a disability remain unchanged from last year.

(ii) On-Call – includes dual contract

Role	Total No of On-call staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age
WM	29	28	1	28	1	1	44
CM	102	98	4	97	5	1	41
FF	302	294	8	271	31	8	34
Total	433	420	13	396	37	10	

The On-call Service has seen more women and BME employees, along with a slight rise in staff declaring disabilities.

(iii) . Support Staff Grey Book (Including TOR, Control, Day Duty staff - refers to terms of employment)

Total No of staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age
48	48	0	42	6	2	43
%	100	0	87.5	12.5	4.2	

The number of women and BME individuals has decreased, while disability declarations are unchanged from last year.

5.(i) Female Firefighter operational workforce²

Women employed in operations rose from 108 to 109.

Crewing System	Rank	Female	BME
224	FF	37	11
	CM	5	0
	WM	2	0
DC	FF	3	1
	CM	0	1
	WM	0	0
DCP	FF	3	3
	CM	0	1
	WM	1	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	CM	4	0
	WM	6	1
	SM	1	0
FDO Brigade Manager	SM	3	1
	GM	5	0
	ACO	1	0
On-call	FF	31	8
	CM	5	4
	WM	1	1
Trainee Recruit	FF	11	0
TOTAL		109	32

² Day Duty included, not included in the operational response section

The total of 109 represents all women in table 4: 61 from 4.i, 37 from 4.ii, and 6 from 4.iii who work day duty in LDC, plus 5 grey book Fire Safety staff.

There are now 24 female supervisory managers, down from 25.

5 (ii). BME Firefighter operational workforce³

BME has decreased from 35 to 32.

Crewing System	Rank	BME
224	FF	11
	CM	0
	WM	0
DC	FF	1
	CM	1
	WM	0
DCP	FF	3
	CM	1
	WM	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	CM	0
	WM	1
	SM	0
FDO	SM	1
	GM	0
On-call	FF	8
	CM	4
	WM	1
Trainee Recruit	FF	0
TOTAL		32

The total of 32 includes 18 from table 4.i, 13 from table 4.ii, and 1 from the grey book staff in Fire Safety.

There are now 8 BME supervisory managers, up from 7 previously.

6. Business Support Staff Green Book

Total No of staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Ave Age
183	174	9	72	111	10	46
%	95.1	4.9	39.3	60.7	5.5	

BME staff have risen from 3.5% to 4.9%. The proportion of women in support services is high and unchanged.

³ Day Duty included, not included in the operational response section

7. Turnover

Staff Category	Male	Female	Total	Ethnic Minority	Disabled	% of females	% of BME
Wholetime	42	8	50	0	2	16%	0%
RDS	42	2	44	4	1	4.5%	9.1%
Control	0	0	0			0	0
Service Delivery (CFS)	4	1	5	0	0	20%	0
Support Staff	8	17	25	1	2	68 %	4%
TOTAL	96	28	124	5	5		

There has been an increase in women, people with declared disabilities, and BME individuals leaving the service.

8. Age Profile

Staff Category	Age Under 34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-55	Age 56-60	Age 61+
Wholetime	136	169	89	94	119	20	3
On Call	160	118	50	50	28	19	8
Control	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Service Delivery (CFS)	13	9	4	8	7	9	8
Support Staff	46	22	28	19	36	28	23
TOTAL	355	318	171	171	191	76	42

The proportion of individuals aged under 34 years employed in the Wholetime Service has declined, but this group still represents 22% of the workforce, consistent with the previous year.

Recruitment Profile

Applications during the period 1.4.2024 – 31.3.2025

Total Applications	Male	Female	BME	% of female	% of BME	LGBTQ+	% of LGBTQ+	Disabled	% of Disabled
1659	1085	574	330	34.5	19.9	115	6.9	121	7.3
Shortlisted									
785	555	230	87	29.3	11.1	52	6.6	51	6.5
Successful									
160	118	42	7	26.3	4.4	7	4.4	12	7.5

Number of applications

Total applications for LFRS roles fell by almost 31% since 2023-2024. Male applicants decreased by nearly 42%, now making up 65% of applications (down from 77%), while female applicants rose by 6.3%. This change is primarily due to not running a wholtime firefighter recruitment during the periods. BME applicants increased by 14% but had grown by 16% in the previous year, now accounting for almost 20% of all applicants. There was a 23% drop in disabled applicants, but they represented just under 1% more of the total than before. LGBTQ+ applicants dropped by 57, with only a 0.3% decrease in total percentage. Overall, LFRS continues to attract more candidates from under-represented groups.

Shortlisting

BME applicants made up 11.1% of those shortlisted (up from 8% in 2023/24), with nearly 27% of BME applicants successful at this stage. Female candidates accounted for 29.3% of shortlisted applicants—an increase of almost 4%—but the success rate among female applicants dropped by 4% to around 40%. LGBTQ+ individuals comprised 6.6% of those shortlisted (down 1.5%), with just over 45% of these applicants advancing, unchanged from last year. Disabled applicants represented 6.5% of those shortlisted, a 0.7% decrease, while their shortlisting success remained steady at just under 43%, consistent over the past three years.

Appointments

The Service made 160 appointments in 2024/25, down from 264 in 2023/24. Of the new appointees, nearly 74% were men and just over 26% were women, both dropping by 3% from last year. New starters from BME groups made up 4.4% (down from 6%), LGBTQ+ new appointees also accounted for 4.4% (7% in 2023/24), and 7.5% declared a disability, up 3% from last year.

Grey Book Promotion Recruitment Stats: April 2024 – Mar 2025

Principal Officer

Successful	3
Male	2
Female	1
BME	0

Station Manager Talent Gateway – May 2024

Successful	4
Male	4
Female	0
BME	0

Supervisory Manager – Crew and Watch Manager – Aug 2024

Successful	28
Male	25
Female	3
BME	0

C.i Disciplinary Cases for the period 1.4.2024 – 31.3.2025

From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, there were 18 disciplinary investigations—10 fewer than the previous year.

Male	Female	BME	Disability	LGBTQ+	Appeals	Appeal Upheld
15	3	2	1	1	0	0

Outcomes of these cases were:

- 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 remains 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.

C.ii Matters of Grievance for the period 1.4.2024 – 31.3.2025

There were ten grievance cases from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, one more than the previous year. Two cases were collective grievances: one involved four people, the other twenty. The breakdown below includes all individuals involved.

Male	Female	BME	Disability	LGBTQ+	Appeals	Appeal Partially Upheld
24	3	1	1	2	1	0

One grievance was upheld, six were not, two were withdrawn, and one continues into 2025/26. One appeal was lodged but not upheld.

Grievances concerned:

- Annual Leave/Terms and Conditions
- Disciplinary Process
- Pay
- Unfair Treatment
- Unfair Treatment/Perceived Bullying & Harassment

No evidence of disproportionate impact on minority groups was found.

C. iii Harassment and Bullying Cases 1.4.2024 – 31.3.2025

During the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, one case was addressed under the Bullying and Harassment policy, representing an increase of one case compared to the previous year.

Completed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024 – 2025

Equality Objectives: Our Communities

- (i) Support local business to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation.
- (ii) Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire.
- (iii) Develop and deliver a Prevention Service targeting our most vulnerable communities.

What we will deliver		Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Actions Delivered
1	Present the EDI Annual Report to the Fire Authority.	Members are aware of their commitments. and accountabilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty Members are aware of progress to date.	Chief Fire Officer	September 2024	The EDI Annual Report was considered by Resources Committee on 25 Sept 24 and subsequently went to the Fire Authority.
2	Reduce accidental fires in the home through targeting those people who are at risk due to a range of factors including age, disability and lifestyle.	Reduce accidental fires. 1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires 1.4 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2025	Produced and distributed quarterly prevention, protection and partner stakeholder e-newsletters featuring relevant content including risk information and details of services, for wider knowledge and sharing by other agencies and businesses who meet our residents. Established a Data and Intelligence Group to investigate the root causes of incidents, identify at-risk groups, and analyse trends

					and indicators throughout the county. Delivered training to enhance individual data collection from incidents, emphasising demographic and societal trends. Used District plan data to analyse Violence Reduction Datasets, Wildfire Data, Water Safety data, and Community Safety Partnership data. Determining specific interventions and requirements for each area. Implemented targeted fire safety interventions and messaging during Ramadan (10 March – 11 April 2025), aimed to raise awareness for key cooking and road safety risks during Ramadan and Eid. Delivered an event at Blackburn Community Fire Station bringing together community leaders, faith leaders, partner organisations, and the public to share vital safety messages. Similarly, the Preston CFS team hosted an event to engage with at-risk groups. Additionally, a Safety During Ramadan talk was delivered to the Quawatul Halqah Ladies' Group in Preston. Customised fire safety interventions were carried out for asylum seekers to aid their integration in the UK. Tailored fire safety and broader community safety measures were implemented at asylum and immigration hotels in the county. Additionally, efforts
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					were made to conduct Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) with dispersal housing allocations, in collaboration with Local Authority housing. Continuous enhancements have been made to the Services partnership referral portal to improve the system and ensure equal access to services for the most vulnerable. Trialled a fire safety intervention for home-schooled children. After evaluating these sessions, the service will determine the best options to ensure inclusive fire safety messaging for all children, including those who are home-schooled. Delivered a 15.2% reduction in accidental house fires, which is more than double the national average reduction of 4.5% over the past two years. Delivered 21,520 Home Fire Safety Checks. The number of accidental dwelling fires has reduced to 690 which is a decrease of 15 compared to 23/24.
3	Work with at risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction and severity of road collisions in	Reduce those killed or seriously injured.	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2025	Road Sense, our Road Safety Education Package for Year 6 children, continues to be delivered. The Service is on track to provide this package to all schools by the end of the summer term. A comprehensive review of the Road Sense package has been

	Lancashire. Young People are particularly at high risk of being killed or seriously injured.				completed to ensure it remains suitable for different age groups and aligns with emerging trends. This review has led to the inclusion of additional slides and information on electric vehicles and charging. The Biker Down Team has produced several short videos to help individuals prepare their motorbike for riding. Bespoke road safety activity has been delivered at mosques in Pennine to strengthen road safety messaging. The Lancashire Road Safety Partnership will be writing to all optometrists and GPs to reinforce their duty of care concerning road risk. The Southern Area CFS team attended the annual Freshers Fayre at Edge Hill University to emphasise the dangers of drink driving and driving the next day while potentially still under the influence. They used a crashed car display and provided fire safety advice specifically tailored to students. Two Wasted Lives Sessions have been delivered at Springfields for their apprentices and at West Lancs College for their students. These sessions aimed to help individuals witness and better understand
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					what happens in the event of a road traffic collision (RTC). A multi-agency event was held at Burnley College, featuring a road traffic collision demonstration with participation from college students. The day began with an assembly-style presentation of Wasted Lives, emphasising Lancashire's 'Fatal 5', which highlights the five most common causes of fatal collisions.
4	Ensure our services are accessible and meet the needs of people in the community by ensuring that fire prevention material is linked to a range of risks including cultural risks.	CRMP is informed by disaggregated data and takes into account differential impacts and varying needs	Head of Service Improvement	March 2025	Water safety presentations in schools were made more accessible following research indicating that individuals with neurodiverse conditions are 160 times more likely to drown in open water. Prevention advice on our website and social media is published in an accessible format. This includes adding messages about safe buying behaviours for e-bikes and e-scooters in various languages on our website. An accessibility tool was trialled on our website, and over a 3-month period, features such as screen reader and keyboard assist were used by 2,389 people. This tool is now permanently available on the website.
5	Use a wide range of communication channels ensuring our	Reduction in KPI activity.	Head of Corporate	March 2025	A weekly slot was delivered on Pendle Community Radio – Awaz 103.1 FM, which provides dedicated programming for the

	safety messages meet the different needs of our communities in terms of timing of the campaign and types of risk.		Communication		Asian Muslim population in Pendle, East Lancashire. The 2024 Bright Sparx campaign ran from 1 October to 18 November minimising risk during bonfire night. High-risk areas were targeted using social media content, email marketing, and media outreach, along with operational and community safety activities. The overall engagement rate of communications activity during the campaign was 19%. The cooking safety campaign utilised a multi-platform strategy for public messaging, featuring a radio advertisement that reached over 500,000 listeners. Prior to the campaign, a survey was conducted with 59 individuals who had experienced kitchen fires, allowing the messaging to address the most common risks. The campaign achieved an overall engagement rate of 20%. A dedicated podcast episode was produced, targeting businesses and focusing on business continuity planning for emergencies. This episode featured specialists from multiple organisations.
6	Attend any FRS hosted conferences and events to identify learning best practice	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	All Heads of Department	March 2025	Several colleagues attended the Women in the Fire Service Regional event hosted by GMFRS on 11 April 2024. The event featured workshops on Road Traffic

	and create networking opportunities for minority members of staff				Collisions, Community Risk, and Incident Command. A group of staff attended the AFSA development events and Women in the Fire Service development events.
7	Attend Pride events in 2024/25 promoting LFRS Prevention and Protection work streams and promoting LFRS as an employer of choice.	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Head of Service Delivery	March 2025	The LGBTQ+ EVG has developed comprehensive guidance and risk assessments for attending Pride events promoting safety messages and highlight LFRS as an employer of choice.
8	Use demographic data to inform the risk profile	Keeping communities safe	Head of Service Delivery	March 2025	Demographic data from district profiles has been used to identify and target the most vulnerable members of the community. Additionally, a county-wide strategic intelligence profile is used to inform the annual campaigns calendar. Both the district and strategic profiles include data on languages.
9	Identify opportunities to improve engagement with diverse community groups across Lancashire	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Head of Corporate Communication	March 2025	Colleagues from Prevention attended the Preston Caribbean Carnival and the Preston Windrush Festival to engage with communities, distributing fire safety and recruitment information. A Windrush vs. Fire Service football game took place, with the winner receiving the Arthur Wharton Trophy. Arthur Wharton was

					the first black footballer to play for Preston North End. A Name Badge Trial was conducted to demonstrate the additional languages spoken by staff members, strengthening trust and engagement with the public. Following the civil disturbances in Southport, there has been significant community focus in the area, with Home Fire Safety Checks and Business Fire Safety Checks continuing. During the recent Diwali celebrations, the CFS team visited supermarkets across Preston to distribute fire safety literature. LFRS actively engaged with the Chinese community to ensure a safe festive season. FRS community safety teams shared important cooking and fire safety tips tailored to the festivities. The Chinese community at Lancaster University were visited to provide key fire safety information. The “I’m not a Muslim, but I will fast (for one day)” initiative took place on Tuesday 11 March 2025. This community initiative by One Voice promotes unity and understanding across diverse communities. Non-Muslim staff were encouraged to participate as a show of solidarity during Ramadan 2025.
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					A dedicated podcast episode was produced on the King's Trust programme to encourage participation by young people, featuring a young person who had been on the programme. The Young people who access the Princes Trust are diverse; with 16.4% being from a non-White background and 15% identifying as LGBT+.
10	Embed the equality impact assessment process	Leading to better policy development and the needs of staff and the community are full considered	Asst Director HR	March 2025	Members of the HR Team have been reviewing the monitoring arrangements and undertaking quality assurance of equality impact assessments, but more work in this area has been identified.
11	Develop a list of buildings which do not meet accessibility requirements.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Property	October 2025	The Estates Strategy has been updated to include accessibility requirements for the estate. A building condition and station facilities review is currently underway to identify areas needing investment. Accessibility is a key component of the Building Condition survey reports.
12	Review and improve internal systems in relation to accessibility	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Digital Transformation / ICT	March 2025	The ICT team have acquired a site licence for an assistive technology tool called Read and Write and are exploring a range of tools and artificial intelligence which can assist neurodivergent people. The Service celebrated Global Accessibility Awareness Day to highlight digital access and inclusion for all. Articulate software is being utilised to ensure that e-learning is accessible.

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13	Use language and risk data in local intelligence profiles to provide fire safety advice in relevant languages	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2025	A new translation app has been implemented which supports more languages and is more inclusive.
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Equality Objectives: Our Workforce

- (i) Promote Equality in our workforce policies and practices
- (ii) Develop our staff to ensure they can respond competently meeting the different needs of our diverse communities.

What we will deliver		Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	
14	Recruit, promote and retain a workforce which is diverse which meets the needs of the community we service . .	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce.	Director People and Development	March 2025	We are exploring the creation of a buddying scheme to support individuals from underrepresented groups within the Service and to assist those interested in joining. The Service has engaged with UCLAN to promote career opportunities with LFRS. Quarterly 'Have a Go' days were supported by the EDICB. These events will provide attendees with the opportunity to improve their fitness and strength or address any gaps in their knowledge and experience to prepare them for when we recruit for Wholetime Firefighters. The Service received the Employer Recognition Gold Award for its efforts in supporting Defence People objectives. This includes employing serving and former members of the Armed Forces community and

					showing flexibility towards training and mobilisation commitments for Reservists and Cadet Force Adult volunteers. The Service is in the process of achieving bronze-level accreditation as a Dyslexia Friendly Workplace with the British Dyslexia Association. A positive action recruitment event, 'Have a Go Day', was held on International Women's Day (8 March 2025) at the Leadership and Development Centre. The event was well attended. HR has produced an 'Everything You Need to Know' document. This document aims to provide candidates with additional information for each recruitment stage to help alleviate any concerns. Four positive action events, 'Have a Go Days', were held in February and March 2025. These events aimed to maintain engagement and educate the public about WT FF recruitment, On Call FF recruitment, and support staff roles. A 'Have a Go Day' was delivered to encourage people to consider USAR, which is currently not
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					very diverse. Twenty-five people attended, and 50% were from diverse groups. A Station Manager worked with schools and colleges to enhance their understanding of LFRS as an employer, beyond just FF roles. The 'talking heads' and podcast ideas related to recruitment were progressed, with some EVG members willing to share their lived experiences of living with, or caring for someone with, a disability. The Fit for Fire initiative provided fitness sessions and practical assessment support to individuals who were unsuccessful in the on-call recruitment process. A presentation was given to the Disability EVG by the Futures Programme, which aims to collaborate with employers to support individuals with neurodiverse conditions in finding jobs, career pathways, and future employment after leaving school. The programme operates across the Witherslack Group SEN schools in the North West.
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15	Engage and communicate with staff through: Regular engagement with representative bodies Supporting external diversity and inclusion networks which promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and share Information. Supporting existing internal networks	A workforce which feels inclusive and is more engaged	Chief Fire Officer EDI Steering Group DCFO EDI leads	March 2025	On 13 May 2024, the Service commemorated Mental Health Awareness Week with the theme of 'Moving More for Mental Health'. This reiterated the importance of regular movement as the body and mind are connected. A free workshop on 21 May 2024 was facilitated by a Wellness and Behaviour Coach from the Firefighters Charity via Microsoft Teams. The mental health awareness training across the Service focused on building and maintaining personal resilience. A 12-month pilot programme was introduced to enhance personal resilience through positive psychology, relaxation coping strategies, and suicide awareness. Wellbeing Wednesdays continue to provide opportunities to discuss wellbeing resources, attend wellbeing talks, and enjoy visits from the wellbeing support dogs. Two Women in the Fire Service walks took place on 17 April 2024 and 24 July 2024.
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					Stammering Awareness Day on 21 October 2024 and Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week from 1 to 7 December 2024 were highlighted through communications on the Engine House to raise awareness. Wellbeing and fitness events took place in February 2025. A yoga session was held over lunch time in mid-February at the SHQ gym, open to all staff and streamed live via MS Teams. The Maternity Policy was reviewed supported by the maternity experience working group to ensure more inclusive terminology, and additional information was provided to Line Managers and individuals. A 'Making a Difference' leadership and development event took place on 14 January 2025, which focused on Inclusive Leadership. On Call recognition events continue to be held across the County to acknowledge the efforts and ongoing commitment of our On Call Staff, their families, and the employers who release firefighters when the pager sounds.
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					Half day priority setting engagement sessions were arranged for Station, Watch, Crew Managers, and Community Fire Safety Team Leaders. Representative bodies were engaged and briefed on preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, presenting a united front. Green and Grey Book induction forms were updated to include references to all EVG's and the Workplace Support Form, with appropriate signposting on the Engine House.
16	Undertake smaller pulse surveys	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued.	Head of Media and Communications	Remove action for 2024/2025	A staff engagement pulse survey was conducted in December 2024, with 252 respondents. The overall employee engagement figure was 79, an increase from 74 in 2023. In April 20224, a survey was conducted to ask aspiring leaders among staff if they would like to attend future development sessions. 62 people responded. In July and August 2024, all staff were surveyed on the usefulness of appraisal conversations. With 147 responses, the appraisal form was

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					subsequently reduced to just two stages based on the feedback. A staff focus group on evaluation was held, attended by staff from service delivery and support departments, including on-call staff.
17	Job Evaluate Green Book posts as per the National Evaluation Scheme.	Ensure equality of pay and grading as per legislative requirements	Asst Director HR	March 2025	Job evaluations for roles are ongoing as new posts arise.
18	Develop a strong organisational culture where the behaviours of our leaders are understood and championed with a view to embedding our values.	Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change.	Asst Director HR	March 2025	Further to the implementation of the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 is set to take effect on 26 October 2024, face to face briefings, written briefings and an On the Menu Session was held for staff and line managers. Relevant policies and E Learning has been updated. As part of the Flexi Friday programme, wellbeing update sessions have been provided to all Flexi-Duty Officers (FDO).
19	Support relevant campaigns promoting awareness of issues impacting on minority ethnic communities.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued and contributes to effective decision making	All EDI leads	March 2025	The Electrical Safety campaign was delivered via TikTok, targeting students and young people who use electric scooters and bikes as a more affordable mode of transport. A video

					featuring safe charging tips for e-bikes was promoted on the platform, reaching 20,500 people, with 65% of viewers aged 18-24. The water safety campaign utilised a combination of TV, radio, and online media to reach various audiences, achieving an overall engagement rate of 18%. The wildfire prevention campaign focused on targeted advertising in high-risk areas, resulting in an overall engagement rate of 9.6%. Joint communications activities were conducted where wildfire and water risk sites overlapped. During our Ramadan safety campaign, fire safety advice was featured in a column in the Asian Leader, and our messages were included in a community letter from the Lancashire Council of Mosques. We also provided a Ramadan safety podcast episode to Pendle Community Radio – Awaz 103.1 FM for broadcast.
20	Involve representatives from EDI groups in relation to any proposed changes to property or	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued	Head of Property	March 2025	Proposed development plans for Blackpool were shared with Voice Groups for review and feedback.

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	equipment and ensure an EIA is completed.				An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was conducted for upgrade and investment projects ensuring the views of underrepresented groups were considered.
21	Invest in our estate to upgrade station facilities to meet the needs of the users	A workforce who have facilities to operate from that are fit for purpose.	Head of Property	March 2025	The capital project to upgrade welfare facilities at Blackpool was implemented providing individual bedrooms. Minor works to upgrade facilities at Preston were in delivered which included converting the shared bedrooms into single rooms and separating the cleaner's sink from the men's WC area.
22	Identify any learning from cultural reviews and deliver interventions accordingly	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Asst Director HR	March 2025	A gap analysis was undertaken for the Service against the report recommendations for South Wales and Dorset & Wiltshire, with any learning being implemented into LFRS interventions and development. Internal communications were delivered to increase transparency, covering how the Service is handling concerns about values and behaviours, the numbers and outcomes of misconduct cases, and how to raise concerns.

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23	Develop an eLearning module on the Code of Ethics, improving the accessibility of training for On-Call members of staff.	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Asst Director HR	August 2024	The Core Code of Ethics eLMS module was rolled out across the Service on Monday 30 September 2024.
24	Improve welfare facilities for members of staff.	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement	March 2025	Aunt Flow dispensers were installed at locations identified through a Pulse Survey. A Design Guide for Estate works was being developed to assist with improvement projects ensuring the needs of all members of staff are met.
23	Promote information in relation to the talent gateway	Promotion pathways are transparent and properly understood	Asst Director HR	August 2024	The Promotions Pathway Service Order was updated, and “On the Menu: Leadership and Development Pathways – Take the Next Step in Your Career” sessions were held on 10 and 11 February 2025, with one session held in the evening to provide flexibility for On Call/night shift personnel. Printed and digital materials were produced and distributed to all staff groups, outlining development pathways. Staff were involved in user testing the materials to ensure the end products were clear and informative.

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25	Developing Incident Command Awareness	A diversity of applications in relation to Incident Command roles	Head of Service Improvement	March 2025	An Incident Command Awareness taster session was held on Monday 24 March 2025 at the Leadership and Development Centre. The day included; career planning, confidence building, incident command awareness, and leadership development support. 7 women from across LFRS attended.
26	Complete any actions from the HMI recommendations on culture	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Asst Director HR	March 2025	All DBS checks for Grey Book members of staff were completed, DBS checks for Green Book staff were completed as per a risk assessment. HMICFRS recommendations as per the culture and values report and the misconduct report were implemented. A professional standards function has been established to provide additional scrutiny and oversight to investigations and where issues of concern are raised ensuring fairness and transparency. Cases will be evaluated to identify trends and ensure that any learning is applied.
27	Menopause Awareness	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement	October 2025	Several health and wellbeing programmes and workshops have been communicated, focusing on maintaining fitness, building personal

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					resilience, living with menopause, and overall health and wellbeing. The second NFCC Menopause in Fire Conference took place on 11 September 2024. LFRS attended and contributed speakers.
28	Deliver training in relation to making written documentation accessible	Meet the needs of the workforce and the community in terms of the provision of accessible information	Head of Communications	October 2025	Accessibility training has been delivered to approximately 60 members of staff through in-person and online sessions, as well as a webinar that is now available to all staff. Accessible Word document templates have been produced for all documents, with supporting information made available on the Engine House.
29	Explore how aspiring Firefighters and Crew Managers wish to access leadership development events, deliver training interventions that meet those needs.	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Asst Director HR	September 2024	Further to attendance at the Dignity at Work NFCC training a programme is in development.
30	Update the Neurodiversity policy with a list of adjustments which neurodivergent members of staff can access	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Lead of Neurodiversity	June 2025	A Workplace Support Form has been introduced, highlighting available support options. Several assistive technology features have also been introduced and communicated

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					through short video clips on the Engine House.
31	Utilise AI to streamline policies advising individuals how to raise matters of concern	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Asst Director HR	September 2024	HR policies are gradually being made accessible supplemented with an aide memoire to assist understanding.
32	Respond to staff survey results	A workforce where everyone feels valued	All	March 2025	Leadership: An open seat on the executive board was offered to SMT, and on SMT to FDO's, a Staff Survey Guide for Leaders was produced and distributed in Annual Service Plan packs, the Employee Engagement for Managers e-learning module was made available to all managers on eLMS. Recognition: A full list of star award nominees was published, a star award for environmental efforts was introduced, and colleagues could nominate each other throughout the year. Changes to the appraisal were implemented further to feedback from members of staff. Communication: Staff survey results and next steps were published internally, "On the Menu: Chat with the Chief" events were delivered on 30 April and 1 May, open to all staff. A Quarterly Team Brief was established to be delivered face-to-

					face by managers. A text messaging service was launched as an internal communication channel following a pilot with a staff focus group. Internal videos on key topics such as fitness, ICT/Digital, and training and development were produced. “Your feedback, our action” internal communications were created to highlight actions related to staff feedback. Health and Wellbeing: A Trauma Support Task and Finish Group was established to review feedback related to post-traumatic incident support. PiC (Person in Crisis) Training for Operational Staff was expanded. A standard operating procedure for Person in Crisis incidents was produced and launched, supported by an eLMS module. The EAP Health Assured Wisdom app was launched, including helpful hints and tips to build good mental health routines as part of daily life. Fitness provision was enhanced following a new gym equipment contract, with a focus on the Wellness Events calendar. On Call Specific: A new quarterly on-call newsletter (digital and print) was
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					produced to keep on-call staff informed on relevant topics. On-call recognition events were introduced at stations. An On-Call Employer of the Year Award was introduced to the Star Awards. Top-performing stations were recognised quarterly in On Call News. Training and Development: Leadership content on employee engagement was developed on The Engine House, Green Book development opportunities were published together on The Engine House. Power BI was introduced to make eLMS reporting easier. A new approach to BA training for on call staff was implemented. Changes were made to the Safe to Command development programme. A new development handbook for crew and watch managers was created. Breathing apparatus guidelines were removed due to new technology.
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025 – 2026 New

Equality Objectives: Our Communities

- (iv) Support local business to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation.
- (v) Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire.
- (vi) Develop and deliver a Prevention Service targeting our most vulnerable communities.

What we will deliver		Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date
1	Present the EDI Annual Report to the Fire Authority.	Members are aware of their commitments and accountabilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. Members are aware of progress to date.	Chief Fire Officer	September 2025
2	Reduce accidental fires in the home through targeting those people who are at risk due to a range of factors including age, disability and lifestyle.	Reduce accidental fires. 1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires 1.4 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026
3	Work with at risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction and severity of road collisions in	Reduce those killed or seriously injured.	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026

	Lancashire. Young People are particularly at high risk of being killed or seriously injured.			
4	Ensure our services are accessible and meet the needs of people in the community by ensuring that fire prevention activity is linked to a range of risks including cultural risks.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026
5	Use a wide range of communication channels ensuring our safety messages meet the different needs of our communities in terms of timing of the campaign and types of risk.	Reduction in KPI activity.	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2026
6	Attend any FRS hosted conferences and events to identify learning best practice and create networking opportunities for minority members of staff	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	All Heads of Department	March 2026

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7	Attend Pride events in 2025/26 promoting LFRS Prevention and Protection work streams and LFRS as an employer of choice.	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Head of Service Delivery	March 2026
8	Identify opportunities to improve engagement with diverse community groups across Lancashire	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2026
9	Embed the people impact assessment process	Leading to better policy development and the needs of staff and the community are fully considered	Director of People and Development	March 2026
10	Develop a list of buildings which do not meet accessibility requirements.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Property	October 2025
11	Review and improve internal systems in relation to accessibility	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Digital Transformation / ICT	March 2026
12	Reduce community risk by providing safety advice, engaging with migrant communities, refugees, asylum	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2026

	seekers, seasonal workers and students			
13	Promote Water Safety targeting underrepresented groups	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2026
14	Develop targeted education packages for Home Schooled and mobile children	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026
15	Review rural farm safety messaging	Reduce the number of fires within rural communities	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026
16	Deliver targeted Business Safety advice to ethnic minorities	Reduce the number of fires in businesses and the need for prosecution	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026

Equality Objectives: Our Workforce

- (iii) Promote Equality in our workforce policies and practices
- (iv) Develop our staff to ensure they can respond competently meeting the different needs of our diverse communities.

What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date

17	Recruit, promote and retain a workforce which is diverse which meets the needs of the community we serve.	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce.	Director People and Development	March 2026
18	Engage and communicate with staff through: Regular engagement with representative bodies Supporting external diversity and inclusion networks which promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and share Information. Supporting existing internal networks	A workforce which feels inclusive and is more engaged	Chief Fire Officer EDI Steering Group DCFO EDI leads	March 2026
19	Job Evaluate Green Book posts as per the National Evaluation Scheme.	Ensure equality of pay and grading as per legislative requirements	Director of People and Development	March 2026
20	Develop a strong organisational culture where the behaviours of our leaders are understood and championed with a view to embedding our values.	Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change.	Director of People and Development	March 2026
21	Support relevant campaigns promoting awareness of issues impacting on minority ethnic communities.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued and contributes to effective decision making	All EDI leads	March 2026

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22	Involve representatives from EDI groups in relation to any proposed changes to property or equipment and ensure an EIA is completed.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued	Head of Property	March 2026
23	Refresh the People Impact Assessment Policy and Process	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director People and Development	August 2025
24	Improve the PIA workflow, logging of actions and retention of Data	Continue to empower our people to access information and data easily on a range of systems and devices, invest in new technology, and drive efficiencies through digitisation.	Director People and Development	October 2025
25	Invest in our estate to upgrade station facilities to meet the needs of the users	A workforce who has facilities to operate from that are fit for purpose.	Head of Property	March 2026
26	Identify any learning from cultural reviews and deliver interventions accordingly	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026
27	Improve welfare facilities for members of staff.	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement	March 2026
28	Embed information in relation to the talent gateway and develop a shared understanding of talent	Promotion pathways are transparent and properly understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026
29	Respond to any areas of improvement/recommendations from the LFRS HMICFRS inspection	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026

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30	Deliver Menopause Awareness	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement	March 2026
31	Explore how aspiring Firefighters and Crew Managers wish to access leadership development events, deliver training interventions that meet those needs.	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026
32	Conduct a comprehensive staff survey and ensure any actions taken as a result of the staff survey are communicated across the Service	A workforce where everyone feels valued / Encourage and listen to employee voice	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement All	March 2026
33	Develop Religion and Belief Policy	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	People Manager – Business Partnering	September 2025
34	Establish two workplace assessors	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Director of People and Development	March 2026
35	Determine if there is a more effective way of communicating outcomes and decisions of complaints	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Director of People and Development	March 2026
36	Refresh the Exit Interview process	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce.	Head of People	March 2026

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