Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 21 September 2026 in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton commencing at 10.30 am

Car parking is available on the Main Drill ground.

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

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

Reform UK – Pendle Room
Labour Group – Lancaster House 4
Conservative Group – Lancaster House 5
Progressive Lancashire – Lancaster House 6

Agenda

Part 1 (open to press and public)

Chair's Announcement – Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014
Any persons present at the meeting may photograph, film or record the proceedings, during the public part of the agenda. Any member of the press and public who objects to being photographed, filmed or recorded should let it be known to the Chair who will then instruct that those persons are not photographed, filmed or recorded.

Monitoring Officers Announcements

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

2. **Apologies for Absence**

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

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

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 16)**

5. **Notes of the meeting Monday 15 June 2026 of Strategy Group (Pages 17 - 24)**

6. **Minutes of the meeting Monday 29 June 2026 of Resources Committee (Pages 25 - 46)**

7. **Minutes of the meeting Tuesday 30 June 2026 of Audit Committee (Pages 47 - 60)**

8. **Minutes of the meeting Wednesday 8 July 2026 of Performance Committee (Pages 61 - 84)**

9. **Minutes of the meeting Monday 13 July 2026 of Planning Committee (Pages 85 - 98)**

10. **Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting Tuesday 18 August 2026 of Audit Committee (Pages 99 - 108)**

For decision:

11. **Change of membership of Performance Committee (Pages 109 - 110)**

12. **New Constitution (Pages 111 - 378)**

13. **Flexible Day Crewing trial at Fleetwood Fire Station (Pages 379 - 422)**

For noting:

14. **Member Champion Activity Report and Feedback (Pages 423 - 430)**

15. **Fire Protection Reports (Pages 431 - 436)**

16. **Operational Incidents of Interest (Pages 437 - 440)**

17. **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 Monitoring Officer should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

18. **Date of Next Meeting**

    The next meeting of the Authority will be held on **Monday 14 December 2026** at 1030 hours at Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 15 June 2026 at 10.30 am in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton

Minutes

Present:

Councillors

G Mirfin (Chair)
A Blake
N Alderson
A Ali OBE
U Arif
S Asghar
J Ash
G Baker
P Buckley
M Clifford
I Duxbury
J Fox
D Howarth
J Hugo
F Jackson
A Joynes
Z Khan MBE
B Langford
L Parker
A Riggott
M Ritson
S Sidat MBE
J Tetlow
R Walsh
E Worthington

1-26/27	**Apologies for Absence**
	None received.
2-26/27	**Appointment of Chair**
	The Monitoring Officer invited nominations for the appointment of Chair for 2026-27. County Councillor U Arif proposed County Councillor G Mirfin which was seconded by County Councillor I Duxbury. No further nominations were received. The Monitoring Officer explained that the constitution stated that the vote would be by way of show of hands unless members wished for an alternative vote to be taken. County Councillor U Arif proposed that an anonymous vote be taken, this proposal was seconded by County Councillor A Ali, members voted by show of hands and this proposal was not carried. Members voted by show of hands for the proposal of County Councillor G Mirfin to be Chair of the authority for 2026-27, 23 members voted in favour, 1 against and 1 abstained. The motion was therefore **carried** and it was: **Resolved**: That County Councillor G Mirfin be appointed Chair of the Combined Fire Authority for 2026-27.

3-26/27	**Appointment of Vice-Chair**
	At the request of the Chair, the Monitoring Officer invited nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chair for 2026-27. County Councillor G Mirfin proposed County Councillor L Parker which was seconded by County Councillor E Worthington. County Councillor A Ali proposed County Councillor U Arif which was seconded by Councillor S Sidat and County Councillor S Asghar proposed County Councillor I Duxbury which was seconded by County Councillor M Clifford. Following clarification of the voting process with members, the Monitoring Officer held a vote by way of show of hands with the third nomination; County Councillor I Duxbury taken first, 5 voted in favour, 2 against and 18 abstained. The Monitoring Officer then held a vote for the second nomination; County Councillor U Arif, 12 members voted in favour and 13 against. The Monitoring Officer then held a vote for the first nomination; County Councillor L Parker, 16 voted in favour and 9 against. The motion was therefore **carried** and it was: **Resolved**: That Country Councillor L Parker be appointed Vice-Chair of the Combined Fire Authority for 2026-27.
4-26/27	**Chair's Welcome and Introduction**
	The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, he explained that due to the result of recent local elections in Blackburn with Darwen, Reform UK had gained a seat on the authority, he welcomed new members Councillor B Langford who had replaced Councillor D Smith and County Councillor A Joynes who had replaced County Councillor L Hutchinson. The Chair remarked that it was important that the fire authority was kept politically neutral with members focussing on service delivery across Lancashire. He commented that there had been a number of large fires recently and acknowledged that this was a challenging time for the service due to budget pressures. He added that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was an exceptional fire and rescue service and was continuing to operate whilst resources were challenged. He added that the service and members would continue lobbying for additional funding where appropriate. The Chair expressed his praise and gratitude to the former Vice-Chair County Councillor U Arif who he commented had done an exceptional job as Vice-Chair, he thanked County Councillor U Arif for his support over the past year. County Councillor A Riggott expressed his congratulations to County Councillor G Mirfin and L Parker and thanked County Councillor U Arif for his work over the past year.
5-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests**

	County Councillor M Clifford declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Director of Cuerden Valley Park. The Chair requested that new members ensure they had completed a register of interests form.
6-26/27	**Composition of the Combined Fire Authority**
	An amendment to the published report was noted, that County Councillor L Hutchinson had been replaced on the authority by County Councillor A Joynes. **Resolved**: That the Composition approved by the 3 Constituent Authorities for 2026-27 for the Combined Fire Authority be noted and endorsed, and the new Members appointed for 2026-27 be welcomed.
7-26/27	**Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees**
	The Monitoring Officer to the Authority presented the proposed Chairs and Vice-Chairs for the Authority's Committees and Working Groups. An amendment to the proposal was noted with Councillor J Hugo proposed as Chair of the Member Training and Development Working Group. It was noted that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Strategy Group were the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority. In response to a question from County Councillor M Clifford in relation to the Chair of the authority also being the Vice-Chair of the Member Training and Development Working Group, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that there was no restriction in relation to this. **Resolved**: That the following Members be appointed as Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and Working Groups of the CFA for 2026-27: Appeals Committee — Chair: County Councillor M Ritson; Vice-Chair: County Councillor J Ash Audit Committee — Chair: County Councillor M Clifford; Vice-Chair: County Councillor U Arif Performance Committee — Chair: County Councillor E Worthington; Vice-Chair: County Councillor J Tetlow Planning Committee — Chair: County Councillor I Duxbury; Vice-Chair: County Councillor R Walsh Resources Committee — Chair: County Councillor A Ali; Vice-Chair: County Councillor N Alderson Member Training and Development Working Group — Chair: Councillor J Hugo; Vice-Chair: County Councillor G Mirfin

	ii) That the Authority confirmed appointment of the following four Member Champions for 2026-27 as:- • Community Safety – County Councillor A Blake; • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Councillor S Sidat; • Health & Wellbeing - County Councillor S Asghar; • Road Safety – County Councillor J Ash.
8-26/27	**Representation on Outside Bodies**
	The Authority was requested to determine its representation on outside bodies for the 2026-27 municipal year. The report was moved by County Councillor A Ali and members voted in favour of the report. **Resolved**: i) That County Councillor G Mirfin, Chair of the Authority be authorised to cast the Authority's vote at the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual General Assembly; ii) That County Councillors G Mirfin and L Parker (as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority) be appointed to the Local Government Association Fire Commission; iii) That County Councillor G Mirfin, Chair of the Authority can authorise additional representation(s) to either the LGA Fire Commission or the Fire Services Management Committee as appropriate; iv) That County Councillors G Mirfin and L Parker (as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority) be appointed as North West Fire Control Directors for 2026-27.
9-26/27	**Membership of Committees**
	The Authority was requested to note and endorse the membership of the committees of the Combined Fire Authority for 2026-27 as set out below. An amendment to the proposal was noted with County Councillors A Joynes and B Langford proposed as members of Audit Committee and County Councillor A Joynes proposed as a member of Appeals Committee.

Committee	Total	Reform UK	Labour	Progressive Lancashire	Conservative	Liberal Democrat
Full CFA	25	13	4	4	3	1
Performance	10	6 B Langford G Mirfin M Ritson J Tetlow R Walsh E Worthington	1 M Clifford	2 S Asghar S Sidat	1 A Riggott	0

	Planning	10	5 N Alderson J Ash I Duxbury L Parker R Walsh	2 J Hugo F Jackson	1 S Asghar	2 G Baker P Buckley	0
	Resources	10	5 N Alderson I Duxbury G Mirfin M Ritson J Tetlow	2 J Hugo Z Khan	2 A Ali S Sidat	1 G Baker	0
	Audit	7	4 J Ash A Blake A Joynes B Langford	1 M Clifford	1 U Arif	1 P Buckley	0
	Appeals	7	4 J Ash I Duxbury M Ritson A Joynes	1 M Clifford	1 U Arif	1 A Riggott	0
	Member Training and Development Working Group	6	3 N Alderson G Mirfin L Parker	1 Z Khan	1 S Sidat	1 A Riggott	0
	Capital Projects Working Group	10	5 N Alderson I Duxbury G Mirfin M Ritson J Tetlow	2 J Hugo F Jackson	2 A Ali S Sidat	1 G Baker	0

The report was proposed by County Councillor A Ali and seconded by the Chair and members voted in favour of the recommendation.

Resolved: The Authority noted and endorsed the membership of the committees of the Combined Fire Authority for 2026-27.

10-26/27 **Programme of meetings**

The Authority was requested to agree the programme of meetings for the 2026-27 municipal year.

The Chair requested that officers review meeting calendars to avoid clashes with

	home authority meetings wherever possible. **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the full CFA meetings: -** 21 September 2026 14 December 2026 22 February 2027 (Budget Meeting) 14 June 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Audit Committee meetings: -** 30 June 2026 1 October 2026 15 December 2026 25 March 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Performance Committee meetings: -** 8 July 2026 15 September 2026 9 December 2026 3 March 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Planning Committee meetings: -** 13 July 2026 16 November 2026 8 March 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Resources Committee meetings: -** 29 June 2026 30 September 2026 25 November 2026 16 March 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Capital Building Projects Working Group meetings: -** 13 July 2026 16 November 2026 26 April 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Member Training and Development**

	Working Group meetings: - 22 October 2026 22 April 2027 **Proposed dates for 2026-27 for the Strategy Group meetings: -** 2 November 2026 14 June 2027 The report was proposed by County Councillor A Ali and seconded by the Chair with all members voting in favour of the recommendation. **Resolved**: That the authority agreed the programme of meetings for the Combined Fire Authority for 2026-27.
11-26/27	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**
	The previous minutes were proposed by County Councillor A Ali and seconded by County Councillor I Duxbury. **Resolved**: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 April 2026 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.
12-26/27	**Minutes of the meeting Thursday 23 April 2026 of Member Training and Development Working Group**
	The report was proposed by County Councillor A Ali and seconded by County Councillor R Walsh. **Resolved**: That the proceedings of the Member Training and Development Working Group held on Thursday 23 April 2026 be noted and endorsed.
13-26/27	**Pilot flexible day crewing at Fleetwood Fire Station**
	The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented the report to members. The report provided an overview of a proposed pilot to change the crewing model at Fleetwood Fire Station from the current wholetime 2-2-4 duty system to a Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) system. The proposal was informed by a detailed assessment of risk, incident demand, workforce availability and operational performance in the Fleetwood area. Analysis of incident data (2023–2025) demonstrated that Fleetwood had the lowest demand of all wholetime stations, with approximately 636 incidents annually and relatively low levels of critical fire incidents and casualties. Risk modelling confirmed that the station met required response standards and that

	an FDC model would continue to achieve those standards, including during on-call hours when crews responded into station from nearby locations. Workforce analysis indicated a viable staffing model, with a cohort of wholetime and on-call personnel living within a five-minute response radius. Travel time analysis showed that a potential FDC crew could achieve an average response-to station time of approximately 3 minutes, comparable to or better than existing on call performance in some other parts of the county. Under the current wholetime duty system 24 firefighters were required, the implementation of a FDC system would reduce this requirement to 12 firefighters temporarily for the duration of the pilot facilitating the redistribution of the remaining firefighters to fill vacant posts across the service. The proposal also supported broader organisational objectives, including improving workforce sustainability, reducing reliance on compulsory transfers, and releasing wholetime resources to support wider service pressures. Subject to approval, the pilot would operate for 18 months, with formal reviews at 6 and 12 months to ensure service effectiveness was maintained. The Service had consulted the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and local staff on the potential pilot proposal and there was broad support to progress. In addition, the Service was currently undertaking a wider public consultation on the proposals from 1 June to 30 June 2026. In response to a question from County Councillor A Ali in relation to other stations using the FDC system and response times, the DCFO confirmed that Bacup, Fulwood, St Annes, Leyland and Ormskirk Stations all operated on the FDC system, he confirmed that although there would be a 3 to 4 minute delay with firefighters attending from nearby locations outside of core hours, the proposed pilot at Fleetwood would still allow for target response times to continue to be achieved including to high-risk areas and these response times would be monitored through the Performance Committee. County Councillor A Ali commented that he was pleased that safe staffing levels would be maintained. In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to on-call firefighters travelling to stations to attend incidents, the DCFO confirmed that firefighters did not have exemptions to pass through red lights when travelling to the station but did have exemptions when responding to emergency incidents on a fire appliance. He also explained that some on-call firefighters travelled to the station on foot or bicycle. In response to a question from County Councillor B Langford in relation to analysing response times individually rather than as an average and ensuring that triggers were in place to reverse the pilot decision should performance drop, the DCFO confirmed that the service would set clear trigger points and would enhance the community safety practitioners offering within the area. The DCFO confirmed that the service would continue to track responses to incidents and outlined that there were no national standards in relation to response times and Lancashire's response times were comparable to those in metropolitan fire services. He confirmed that the service would continue to consider the local impact and work with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) whilst ensuring that regular reports were taken to the Performance Committee to ensure transparency at all stages.

	In response to a question from the Chair in relation to benchmarking against other services, the DCFO confirmed that the duty systems used were recognised nationally and the service sought to achieve a demonstratable balance of effective and efficient systems. The report was proposed by County Councillor A Ali and seconded by County Councillor I Duxbury with all members voting in favour of the recommendation. **Resolved**: That the authority; 1. Noted the contents of the report and the evidence supporting the proposed pilot. 2. Approved the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to take a final decision on the implementation of the Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing pilot, taking account of consultation outcomes and further analysis.
14-26/27	**Appointment of Co-opted Independent Person (Audit, Risk and Governance Committee)**
	The Monitoring Officer presented the report to members. Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance recommended the appointment of an Independent Person (IP) to Audit Committees to increase its level of expertise. This report sought permission to recruit such an IP. The Audit Committee met four times per year and had seven politically balanced members drawn from the Combined Fire Authority (CFA). The Audit Committee's purpose was to provide those responsible for governance with independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, internal and external governance processes and the internal control environment. The documents that the committee considers were frequently complicated and technical in nature referring to accounting practices. In order to perform their role providing oversight and assurance, it was essential for the Audit Committee members to have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the material so that they could challenge it where necessary. CIPFA stressed that Audit Committees need members who could: • understand complex financial reporting • scrutinise risk, control, and assurance frameworks • challenge internal and external audit effectively • appreciate accounting judgments and governance implications Lancashire CFA already had two Independent Persons formally engaged to support it. These were contracted pursuant to section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 which required the views of an Independent Person to be taken in relation to allegation against members in relation to their code of conduct (the role had been expanded to encompass involvement in the disciplinary procedure against statutory officers as agreed at the February 2026 CFA meeting (resolution 68-25/26 refers)). This paper sought approval for a further Independent Person, not under the Localism Act, but specifically to sit on the Audit Committee as a specialist advisor

(although they would also chair any hearings under the members complaints procedure under new draft terms of reference for that committee). The members' constitution working group had approved new Audit Committee terms of reference that allowed for the appointment of this IP as an advisor and as chair of any member complaints hearings. The committee would also be renamed the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee.

What was sought was technical expertise and independence, not political independence. Most Fire Authority members did not have a background in audit, risk, finance, or governance. An IP would bring:

- professional-level scrutiny of accounts, governance structures and control frameworks
- continuity of knowledge despite political membership turnover
- confidence for external auditors and the public that scrutiny includes specialist input

It had proved to be difficult to find a 'rate' that was being paid to independent audit members that were already active for other public bodies. The sums that were found varied considerably from organisation to organisation. Some organisations were paying a sum per meeting (one as low as £50 per meeting) and some organisations were paying an annual sum (a few as high as £2,500, for four or five meetings). In view of this, officers felt that there was sense in considering the sums paid within the Members' Allowances Scheme.

The service paid its current Independent Persons £1,143.24 per annum which was index linked on an annual basis in line with the annual local government pay percentage increase at new spinal column point 43. In terms of workload, the current IPs in reality were not utilised often, whereas the Audit Committee IP would as a minimum prepare for and attend the 4 Audit Committee meetings every year. They would also be required to chair any member complaint procedure hearings (although it is accepted these may be few and far between). So the Audit Committee IP role was likely to require more time and would require more specialist knowledge than the current IP roles.

Recruitment process

A job description was being drafted and it was recommended that shortlisting and interviewing of candidates was delegated to an interview panel. It was also recommended that the actual appointment of the IP was delegated to the interview panel. The make-up of the interview panel was likely to be the Monitoring Officer; the Treasurer and the Chair of the Audit Committee. If this needed to change at short notice due to unavoidable lack of availability, either the vice-chair of the Audit Committee, Chair or vice-Chair of the full Authority or a member of the LFRS Executive Board would be substituted.

It was recommended that the appointment would be for a period of two years with the option to extend for a further two years before a new recruitment exercise was undertaken. Any such proposal for an extension of the original two years would be brought to the full Authority for approval.

Once the interview panel had made an appointment, a report for information would

	be brought to the next meeting of the full Authority. County Councillor M Clifford remarked that the appointment of an IP for Audit Committees was good practice. The report was proposed by County Councillor M Clifford and seconded by County Councillor J Ash with all members voting in favour of the recommendation. **Resolved**: That the authority; 1. approved the appointment of an IP to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee. 2. delegated responsibility for organising the recruitment process including selecting the interviewing panel to the Monitoring Officer. 3. delegated power of appointment of the most suitable candidate to the interviewing panel. 4. authorised amendment of the Members' Allowance Scheme to create a new allowance for the Audit IP at an annual rate of £1,500 (subject to increases on the same basis as other similar allowances).
15-26/27	**Safety, Health and Environment annual review**
	The Authority considered the Annual Safety, Health and Environment Report for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. As the body with ultimate responsibility for staff health, safety and environmental compliance it was important that all CFA Members were aware of performance in this respect. The report therefore provided a summary of overall progress and performance in respect of accidents and near misses, environmental performance, health and wellbeing initiatives, together with a look forward to planned improvement areas for 2026-27. The report summarised the arrangements in place to deliver the Service's Safety, Health and Environment Policy and provided a summary of safety, health and environment performance data. It included the reporting on occupational safety, health and environmental issues that had arisen during the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. **External Audit of Health Safety and Environment Management Systems 2026** Since initial certification in November 2011 surveillance visits had been conducted annually with re-certification every 3 years to maintain external certification of the Health and Safety and Environment Management Systems. In February 2026, the auditor from British Assessment Bureau (BAB) carried out an audit against the International Standards for health and safety ISO 45001:2018 and environment ISO 14001:2015. The audit scope for both standards was 'The Provision of Fire, Rescue and Supporting Services across Lancashire'. This broad scope encompasses all LFRS activities with audit visits to the Service Headquarters (SHQ) site, Leadership

and Development Centre (LDC), seven fire stations operating different duty systems together with several supporting departments. Continued certification was granted noting no major non-conformities and one minor non-conformity.

Health and Safety Performance
During 2025-26 there were 75 accidents, 111 near misses and 12 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) events. The report provided a summary of the total accident and ill-health statistics for 2025-26.

Vehicle Accidents
During 2025-26 there were 86 vehicle related accidents. The majority of incidents occurred during low-speed manoeuvring activities.

The Road Risk Review Panel (RRRP) examined the trends and outcomes from fleet vehicle accidents and current working practices. The RRRP group members had been meeting during the year to identify learning from vehicle accidents, identify wider trends about the cause and what measures could be taken to improve performance. A key enhancement in the area was the continued roll-out of vehicle CCTV systems being fitted to fleet vehicles.

Health and Wellbeing
The focus of mental health awareness training across the Service was personal resilience; building and maintaining. The aim of the Service's programmes was to increase personal resilience of staff and includes elements of positive psychology, relaxation, coping strategies and suicide awareness.

'Wellbeing Wednesdays' continued to be received well by colleagues. Staff from the SHE Department arranged to work from a different station or office on a regular basis to provide the opportunity for staff to ask questions about the wellbeing resources, receive wellbeing toolbox talks, have a visit from a Wellbeing Support Dog and have a general wellbeing chat.

All LFRS staff continued to have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) delivered by external specialist provider, Health Assured. The EAP was a confidential and independent support service for employees and immediate dependants to help deal with personal problems that might adversely impact on daily life, health and wellbeing.

Due to the traumatic nature of some operational incidents, LFRS operated a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) team. TRiM was not a medical intervention, but a peer-led support process designed to help staff deal with traumatic events they may encounter during their everyday work.

Fitness
During 2025-26, a further investment was made to replace cardiovascular fitness equipment nearing the end of its operational life, ensuring firefighters have access to modern equipment that supports the maintenance of operational fitness.

Work had also commenced to digitise fitness assessment forms, helping to streamline the annual recording process, reduce paperwork and maintain the quality and integrity of records.

Environmental Performance
The current Carbon Management Plan included a target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2030 from a baseline of 4352 tonnes of CO^2 in 2007-08. The Service had achieved an overall reduction of 23.2% by March 2026 which related to measured carbon emissions for gas, electric and fleet vehicle fuel. Separately water was currently seeing a 31% reduction from the baseline year.

The total waste created in 2025-26 was 139.8 tonnes. The overall recycling rate across the Service remained very good at 48.7%.

A look ahead to 2026-27
The report also detailed key safety, health and environmental priorities for 2026-27 which included: maintaining certified standards; continuing to implement the Health, Safety and Wellbeing 5-year Plan and progress aspirational development items; focus on safety, health and environmental issues to enhance internal checks; reducing accidents and related sickness absence; engage and support Environmental Champions to assist the continued reduction of carbon emissions from energy and fuel use, and reduce waste collected and increase waste recycled; delivering the programme of wellbeing promotional and awareness activities; refreshing fitness equipment issued to fire station gyms; and reviewing the Service's position against further released guidance and best practice arrangements.

In response to a question from County Councillor L Parker in relation to when the next ISO 45001:2018 assessment was expected, the DCFO confirmed that this was expected in February 2027.

The report was proposed by County Councillor I Duxbury and seconded by County Councillor J Ash with all members voting in favour of the recommendation.

Resolved: That the Authority noted and endorsed the report and associated safety, health and environment performance outcomes.

16-26/27 **Member Champion Activity Report and Feedback**

The newly appointed Member Champions and their areas of responsibility were:

- Community Safety – County Councillor Andy Blake
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Salim Sidat
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Sohail Asghar
- Road Safety – County Councillor Joanne Ash previously County Councillor Jordan Fox

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period up to 26 April 2026.

	Member Champions and the ACFO highlighted details within the reports and expressed thanks to the officers who supported them in their roles. County Councillor M Clifford informed members that the Firelight family fun day had been postponed due to operational and resource demands across blue light services and a clash with another event in the local community. County Councillors J Ash and E Worthington expressed their thanks for the invitation to attend the recent wellbeing dogs passing out event and encouraged members to attend future events. The Chair expressed his thanks to County Councillor J Fox for the work he had done as the Community Champion for Road Safety over the previous year. County Councillor J Ash had now been appointed to this role. **Resolved**: That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.
17-26/27	**Fire Protection Reports**
	The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented the report which summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005. **Prosecutions** There had been no sentencings since the previous Combined Fire Authority report dated 27 April 2026. Four other cases currently sat within the court system. Protection teams continued to investigate and build case files in relation to 14 other premises where offences were believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Members noted that on 6 April 2026 the Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025 introduced new statutory duties on Responsible Persons to identify residents who may struggle to self-evacuate, develop person-centred evacuation arrangements, and share relevant information with Fire and Rescue Services where consent was provided. This legislation implemented key recommendations from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and marked a shift toward risk-based, person-centred planning for vulnerable residents. While compliance sat with Responsible Persons, the Regulations had significant implications for LFRS, including receiving and managing evacuation information, ensuring robust data governance, strengthening pre-incident planning and response arrangements, and preparing operational staff to use information safely and proportionately during incidents. Several actions had been undertaken to prepare and inform Responsible Persons of their duties and to raise awareness of the new legislation including information, advice and guidance along with a new Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referral portal for Responsible Persons to support the person-centred approach.

	Members noted that there had been three arson convictions during the quarter. There were another eight live arson cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that the Service was continuing to progress. In response to a question from the Chair in relation to funding in relation to high-rise buildings, the DCFO explained that since the Grenfell Tower tragedy the government had supported fire and rescue services with an annual uplift grant. He added that plans were in place relating to pre-determined attendances to ensure that the right amount of resources were sent to an incident. The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) added that the service was engaged with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) created post-Grenfell, and which oversaw a building's lifecycle from design, through construction, and into occupancy, with a post funded by way of a recharge for work undertaken in support of the BSR function. **Resolved:** That the report be noted.
18-26/27	**Operational Incidents of Interest**
	The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented the report which provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note. As the operational period had been very busy, the report detailed only the larger deployments or more complex incidents. As a result, some incidents that Members had been made aware of locally, may not have formed part of the report. Full details of the following incidents were provided in the report: • Residential building fire in Bispham (1/4/26) • Commercial building fire in Charnock Richard (7/4/26) • Wildfire in Bacup (26/4/26) • Commercial building fire in Burnley (4/5/26) • Domestic building fire in Whalley (5/5/26) • Rescue of person in Edgeworth (18/5/26) • Road Traffic Collision in Clitheroe (21/5/26) • Rescue of entrapped person in Darwen (23/5/26) • Rescue of person from water in Ribchester (26/5/26) • Commercial building fire in Burnley (26/5/26) • Road Traffic Collision in Tarleton (28/5/26) **Resolved:** That the Authority noted and endorsed the report. Area Manager (AM) Phil Jones gave a presentation to members on the building fire at Warburtons, Burnley. The first call in relation to the incident was received at 14:47 on 4 May 2026, initially eight fire engines and an Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) were in attendance, this was then increased to 12 fire engines. AM Jones explained that there was a large amount of interest in the incident on social media. Considerations during the incident included signs of collapse in the roof, a complex layout within the building, significant heat and smoke, hazardous

	materials present, live utilities present and the risk of fire spread. Lancashire Police managed a cordon around the area and the service worked with the North West Ambulance Service and social media teams to ensure clear messaging to local residents. The service also worked with Burnley Borough Council, Electricity North West and Cadent Gas to ensure the safe conclusion of the incident. It had been determined that the cause of the fire was accidental. Members asked questions in relation to the procedures in place at Warburtons in relation to fire safety, AM Jones confirmed that no issues had been identified and that the process after every fire was for a full evaluation and debrief to take place with any relevant actions and lessons learnt identified. This would include a multi-agency debrief.
19-26/27	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday **21 September 2026** at 10:30am at the Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Notes of Strategy Group meeting held 15 June 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Strategy Group meeting held 15 June 2026.

Recommendation(s)

To note the proceedings of Strategy Group as set out at appendix 1 now presented.

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Strategy Group meeting held on 15 June 2026.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

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Appendix 1

Strategy Group meeting - Monday 15 June 2026

Attendees:

County Councillor Nigel Alderson

County Councillor Azhar Ali

County Councillor Joanne Ash

Councillor Graham Baker

County Councillor Peter Buckley

County Councillor Ian Duxbury

Councillor Jane Hugo

Councillor Fred Jackson

County Councillor Ashley Joynes

Councillor Bradley Langford

County Councillor Ged Mirfin

County Councillor Luke Parker

County Councillor Aidy Riggott

County Councillor Russell Walsh

County Councillor Ella Worthington

Independent Person – Julie Byrom

Independent Person – Ann Highton

Apologies:

County Councillor Andy Blake

County Councillor Usman Arif

County Councillor Sohail Asghar

County Councillor Mark Clifford

County Councillor Jordan Fox

County Councillor David Howarth

Councillor Zamir Khan

County Councillor Mackenzie Ritson

Councillor Salim Sidat

County Councillor Joel Tetlow

Introduction – Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Charters

- Fire Funding
- National Framework Document
- College of Fire consultation
- Pay negotiations
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – North England engagement event
- Sector risks -
    - Extreme weather events
    - Workforce recruitment, retention and skills
    - Culture, Leadership and Reform
    - Emerging Technology risks
    - Multi-agency resilience and National Security

- Fire safety regulation and Building Risk
- Prevention and Community Risk Reduction

Productivity and efficiency – Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) Steven Brown

- Track record of making efficiencies
- 2026-27 productivity and efficiency plan
  - Modern Ways of Working Forum
  - Lancashire delivered £1.616 million non-pay efficiencies in 2025-26 which equated to 6.79% of non-pay budgets
  - Dynamic Resource Management delivered £500,000 recurring budget saving in 2025-26.
  - Major recurring and one-off efficiencies from 2026-27 onwards
  - £1.8 million recurring from optimised wholetime crewing changes
  - Reviews planned for Protection and Prevention operating models
  - Other planned savings include fleet asset lives and digital ICT changes

Capital Projects including building condition surveys – Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) Steven Brown

- 5 year capital programme
- Major building schemes
- Service Headquarters masterplan
- Training Centre facilities
- Building condition surveys

Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and Service Review – Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Steve Healey

- CRMP 2027-2032
    - Prevention Strategy
    - Protection Strategy
    - Response Strategy
    - People Strategy
    - Data, Digital and Technology Strategy
    - Financial Strategy
- Optimising resources programme
    - Prevention review
    - Protection review
    - Support services review
- CRMP timeline
    - 13 July 2026 – Draft CRMP presented to Planning Committee (approval to consult)
    - 14 July 2026 – 6 October 2026 – CRMP Consultation (12 weeks)
    - October 2026 – Formulate consultation report and prepare amended CRMP
    - 16 November 2026 – CRMP presented to Planning Committee
    - 14 December 2026 – CRMP presented for approval at CFA
    - April 2027 – CRMP 2027-2032 published
- Overview of potential ECR and Service Review

Innovation – Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Steve Healey

- Changing landscapes
- Technology and equipment within the service;

    - Robotic Firefighting Systems - Reducing firefighter exposure to hazardous conditions and contamination.
    - Joint work on drone technology
    - Internal and External Drones - Enhancing situational awareness.
    - Thermal Imaging Cameras - Improving search and rescue effectiveness.
    - Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV) with Sonar Technology. National Resilience Asset.
- Development in digital, data and technology

Culture – Director of People and Development (DoPD) Liz Sandiford

- Promoting an organisational culture where everyone can thrive.
- Celebration of success events
- Establishment of a professional standards function
- Case management system
- Coaching and mentoring
- Leadership and development
- Wellbeing support

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Proceedings of Resources Committee held 29 June 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Resources Committee meeting held 29 June 2026.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Resources Committee meeting held on 29 June 2026.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

Appendix 1

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Resources Committee

Monday, 29 June 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
N Alderson (Vice-Chair)	
A Ali OBE (Chair)	
G Baker	
I Duxbury	
G Mirfin	
J Tetlow	

Officers
S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) E Sandiford, Director of People and Development (LFRS) J Hutchinson, HR Manager - Pay, Pensions and Performance (LFRS) D Howell, Monitoring Officer (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance

1-26/27	**Apologies for Absence**
	Apologies were received from County Councillor M Ritson and County Councillor I Duxbury had been delayed.
2-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	County Councillor J Tetlow declared a non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of the Lancashire County Council Pension Fund Committee.
3-26/27	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
	County Councillor G Mirfin asked for an update in relation to fuel supply, the Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) advised that he would provide an update outside of the meeting.

	County Councillor G Mirfin suggested that the introduction of a Pensions Committee be considered. The Chair advised that this would be considered outside of the meeting. The previous minutes were moved by the Chair and seconded by County Councillor G Mirfin. **Resolved**: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 25 March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4-26/27	**Financial Monitoring - Provisional Outturn 2025-26**

The DoCS advised that this report presented the financial outturn position for 2025-26, and the impact of this on usable reserves. The draft 2025-26 financial statements had been prepared using this provisional information and presented to the External Auditors following the Audit Committee meeting.

The annual budget for the year was set at £77.511 million. The provisional outturn position showed net expenditure of £77.243 million, giving a total underspend for the financial year of (£0.268 million). The detailed provisional revenue outturn was set out in Appendix A of the agenda pack, with the major variances of note shown separately in table 1.

Area £ million	Year to Date (under) or over	Reason
Service Delivery - Pay	0.352	The variance was due to a number of factors; the pay award of 3.2% from July 2025 was 0.2% above the services budgeted assumptions, and higher than budgeted activity levels for on call staff.
Prevention and Protection - Pay	(0.411)	As previously reported to the Committee vacant posts had remained throughout the year until completion of the service review.
Leadership and Development Centre – Non-Pay	(0.197)	The underspend mainly reflected lower spend on external training course providers than in previous years, particularly in quarter 4.
Digital Data and Technology (DDAT) - Non-Pay	(0.173)	Efficiencies were made across a number of equipment and communication budgets resulting in the underspend.
Non devolved financial management (DFM) - Insurance Liability	0.588	The net overspend mainly reflected one-off pension and liability costs in the year, partly offset by lower ill-health retirement costs and one-off income. Overall, these offsets reduced, but did not remove, the underlying pressure.

Table 1 – Major variances of note

Future Pressures
Although the 2026-27 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) included prudent allowances for pay and price inflation (including 4% for pay in 2026-27 and 3.8% general inflation in 2026-27, reducing to 2% thereafter), the continued conflict risk in the Middle East increased the likelihood of inflation remaining higher for longer and becoming more volatile across key cost drivers, particularly energy and supply chain dependent goods and services. In-year indicators already showed this volatility, with utility costs tracking materially above the planning assumption. The Authority had previously established a utility volatility reserve of £0.600 million to help manage short-term movements in energy costs above budget, alongside other in-year mitigations and monitoring. However, the most significant longer-term risk related to pay: national pay negotiations for Green Book (from April 2026) and Grey Book (from July 2026) remained unresolved and there was a risk they could settle above the budgeted assumption; each additional 1% added around £0.600 million of in-year cost pressure (circa £0.500 million Grey Book and £0.100 million Green Book) and, because pay awards were cumulative, any above-assumption settlement created an ongoing baseline pressure that was not fully offset by Consumer Price Index (CPI) linked income in later years and would therefore need to be funded through additional recurring savings or service redesign.

An Inflation Sensitivity Assessment was provided at Appendix D of the agenda pack. The assessment concluded that, based on the credible sources reviewed, Scenario B (extended disruption) was the most consistent with current central expectations: this meant an inflation shock was likely, that was material but time-limited (circa 12–18 months), with Consumer Price Index (CPI) peaking at a little over circa 3.5% around the end of 2026 before easing back towards the 2% target over time. By contrast, non-pay volatility (particularly utilities) was expected to be more manageable.
The specific actions to be taken included:

- use of the £0.6 million utility volatility reserve to help manage short-term movements in energy costs above budget;
- appropriate vacancy management as work progressed on the service review;
- supporting cost saving initiatives including digital efficiencies and projects through the Modern Ways of Working Forum;
- active management of contract indexation, including checking, challenging and validating inflation-related uplifts where appropriate;
- re-profiling discretionary non-pay spend where required to help contain in-year pressures;
- enhanced financial monitoring and exception reporting where forecast pressures exceeded agreed triggers; and
- working through sector bodies and other channels to lobby Government for recognition of inflation pressures and any appropriate funding support.

At this stage, no budget adjustment was sought.

Savings Targets
To deliver the £0.5 million savings required for 2025-26 the Dynamic Resource Management (DRM) policy came into effect on 1 July which provided steps which could be taken prior to using overtime to fill shortfalls and redistributing the crew from second pumps at two pump wholetime stations where there was adequate fire cover in the area.

The Productivity and Efficiency Plan for 2026-27 included £0.569 million of savings delivered in 2025-26; the delivery of £0.5 million had been explained above, the balance related to some smaller initiatives such as procurement savings. In addition, £1.078 million of non-recurring efficiency savings had been realised in 2025-26, these largely related to procurement savings of £0.827 million, the most significant element being the savings realised on the purchase of new Breathing Apparatus sets, and various initiatives to reduce the capital requirement which were outlined in the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2026-27.

General Reserve
The General Reserve existed to cover unforeseen risks and expenditure that may be incurred outside of planned budgets. In February 2026 the Authority approved the minimum level of General Reserve as advised by the Treasurer at £4 million. Following the provisional outturn the level of the General Reserve at 31 March 2026 was £5.989 million, this was above the minimum level of General Reserve set by the Authority.

Earmarked Reserves
Earmarked reserves were all funds that had been identified for a specific purpose. Appendix B of the report set out the proposed transfers to earmarked reserves of £1.665 million, this included one off grant monies received in advance. The balance of all the earmarked reserves was £29.012 million as at the 31 March 2026; this included the Capital Reserve of £18.331 million and Private Finance Initiative (PFI) reserves of £5.290 million.

Capital Budget Provisional Outturn
The Capital Programme for 2025-26 was approved by the Authority at £6.971 million, after £0.080 million was transferred from the Kings Trust, the revised budget was £7.051 million. A total of £6.151 million had been spent resulting in net slippage of (£0.885 million), that was proposed to be transferred to the 2026-27 budget, and a small overspend of £0.015 million. A summary of the programme was set out in Appendix C of the report.

The approved 2026-27 capital programme included £0.500 million for two Type A smaller pumps and £0.195 million for a prime mover. Following the tender exercise for the Type A requirement, tendered costs were above budget and did not represent value for money when compared with the larger Type B appliance option. A review of fleet requirements identified a stronger operational need for a water carrier, which was a specialist vehicle designed to transport and supply large volumes of water to support firefighting at major or prolonged incidents where hydrant access or water pressure may be limited. It was therefore proposed that the existing budgets for the Type A appliances and prime mover were reallocated to fund the purchase of one Type B appliance and one water carrier, with the 2026-27 capital programme amended accordingly. The new Water Carrier would be a dual-purpose vehicle used by driver training, resulting in the Type B fleet reducing by one. The Service was keen to explore smaller pumping appliances and work was ongoing in this regard.

Potential Financial Risks

Throughout the year some sensitivity analysis was undertaken of several potential scenarios that had not been reflected in the monitoring report that, if they materialised, may give rise to an increase in revenue and capital expenditure. As this report presents the provisional outturn for 2025-26, there were no further in-year budget risks affecting the reported position. However, the figures remained subject to completion of the external audit process and could change if any material audit adjustments were identified. Any such changes would be reported back to Members.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to considering service redesign should the pay awards be agreed at higher than budgeted levels, the DoCS confirmed that the service would expect Government would adjust income levels to be in line with inflation levels which would mean that any financial pressures would be short term, however, if this did not happened, further options, including service redesign where appropriate, would be considered alongside the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) CRMP and wider financial planning. The DoCS added that the service was currently undertaking its CRMP.

In response to a further question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to mitigation for the possibility of the Inflation Sensitivity Assessment scenario C, the DoCS confirmed that the service still expected Government would adjust for income levels to catch up to inflation but scenario C would result in higher financial pressures. County Councillor G Mirfin asked what the impact would be if there was zero growth and rising inflation, the DoCS confirmed that this would result in further options, including service redesign where appropriate, would be considered alongside the CRMP and wider financial planning. He added that the government had set the council tax levels in line with inflation rates and the service would continue to lobby where appropriate.

In relation to contract indexation, County Councillor G Mirfin asked if the service had sufficient resources to manage complex procurement. The DoCS explained that the procurement team worked across the service to set contracts but did not manage all contracts. He explained that procurement recruitment was a difficult market, the team had two new members expected to join the Service over the next few months, which would strengthen procurement capacity.

In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to additional risks that were considered but not included within the report, the DoCS advised that a risk assessment was conducted for each financial monitoring report but as this was the outturn report full details of risks considered were not included within the report. The risks considered included changes to the capital programme, industrial action and wildfire and flooding incidents.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked if the underspend within prevention and

	protection had had a significant impact on the service, the DoCS explained that the underspend related to vacant posts within the prevention and protection teams and the service had received good ratings for prevention and protection as part of its His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection. The DoPD added that there were challenges around recruitment but the service had developed specific pathways to assist with recruitment. She explained that the teams performance against it's resources had been good and a review of the team was ongoing. County Councillor J Tetlow asked which roles were challenging to recruit to, the DoPD explained that Fire Safety Inspectors had to hold a level five accreditation and would join the service as Building Safety Inspectors with a level three accreditation, she added that the private sector was very competitive for these roles in terms of salary but LFRS was able to offer other benefits such as an attractive pension scheme and flexible working arrangements, she emphasised the importance of recruiting the right people. The DoPD added that this was a national challenge and the introduction of a Business Fire Safety apprenticeship was being explored. The Chair asked if a shared service had been considered with other public bodies, the DoPD explained that this could be explored further. The Chair asked if the service was working with the Environment Agency and Public Health, the DoPD confirmed that work was ongoing in that area. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS), the DoCS explained that the BCIS were used for industry forecasting relating to building costs and the service used Colliers for procurement indexing and tender prices. **Resolved**: That the Committee: - 1. Noted the Revenue Budget provisional revenue outturn. 2. Noted the Capital Budget provisional outturn. 3. Noted and endorsed the revised Capital Budget for 2025-26. 4. Approved the transfer of 2025-26 slippage to the 2026-27 capital budget. 5. Approved the transfer to earmarked reserves and year end reserve levels. 6. Noted the actions to be taken to mitigate the 2026-27 inflationary pressures.
5-26/27	**Local Pension Board Annual Report**
	The DoPD presented the report to members. **Information** The role of the Local Pension Board, was defined by the Public Service Pensions Act (PSPA) 2013 Sections 5(1) and (2), was to assist Lancashire Combined Fire Authority as Scheme Manager, in ensuring the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. The Board's role included assisting the Scheme Manager in securing compliance with: • The Pension Scheme regulations. • Other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Pension Scheme.

- Requirements imposed by The Pensions Regulator.

The Board was not a decision-making body but provided oversight and assurance to support the effective and efficient governance of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes.

The Combined Fire Authority had delegated its Pension Scheme Manager responsibilities to the Director of People and Development.

Governance Overview

The Board met twice during 2025-26 as set out in its terms of reference. Meeting activity focused on:

- Maintaining oversight on key pension risks, including review of the pensions risk register
- Receiving regular updates on the implementation of age discrimination remedy and the Matthews Second Options exercise
- Receiving and reviewing quarterly pension reports from the Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) relating to the performance of LPPA.
- Receiving regular updates on Internal Disputes Resolution cases and Pension Ombudsman matters.
- Monitoring compliance with statutory requirements and emerging issues.

Age Discrimination Remedy (McCloud/Sargeant)

The McCloud/Sargeant judgment confirmed that the transitional protections introduced under the 2015 Firefighters' Pension Scheme reforms were unlawfully age discriminatory. As a result, from 1 April 2022, all active members were moved to the reformed scheme (FPS 2015), with retrospective remedy now being implemented for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

The Pension Board had actively monitored progress and performance in relation to the implementation of the McCloud/Sargeant remedy.

During 2025-26, the Board received updates on implementation progress, administrative impacts, and emerging risks associated with the remedy programme.

Matthews Second Options Exercise

The Matthews remedy provided eligible on-call (retained) firefighters with the opportunity to access pension benefits under the Modified Pension Scheme. Legislative changes introduced by the Government from 1 April 2026 required the Second Options exercise to be completed by 31 March 2027.

The Board would continue to monitor progress and performance closely, particularly in relation to legislative changes, outstanding cases and emerging risks.

Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure and Pensions Ombudsman

In 2020-21, the Service implemented the pensionable allowances project, applying pensionable allowances retrospectively for a six-year period. As a result, the Service had received several Internal Dispute Resolution Procedures (IDRP) appeals from current and former employees. These applications related to members who were dissatisfied that they were not included in the pensionable allowances exercise, either because of the type or temporary nature of the allowance, or because their service falls outside of the backdating period, 01 June 2015 to 31 May 2021. The Board had been kept informed of several complex cases considered at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Disputes Procedures. The Service had also been contacted by the Pensions Ombudsman regarding several cases.

During 2025-26, the Board also received updates on IDRP cases arising from contingent decision issues linked to remedy implementation, including the potential impact of delayed national guidance on case progression and member communications.

Pensions Dashboard

The Board continued to receive regular updates on progress with the Pensions Dashboard Programme (PDP). LPPA completed connection of its schemes to the dashboard infrastructure in December 2025 and was awaiting further confirmation from the PDP on the date the dashboard would become publicly available.

The Board continued to monitor progress of the development of the Dashboard against key project milestones.

Risk Management and Administration Oversight

The Board had maintained oversight of:

- The pensions risk register, which was reviewed at each meeting
- The performance of the pension administrator (LPPA)
- Key risks relating to data quality, programme delivery and resource capacity.

The following key risks had been identified during the year:

- Data quality, particularly in relation to historic records required for the Matthews Second Options exercise and the Pensions Dashboard Programme, much of which was outside the direct control of the Service.
- Resource capacity, considering competing demands arising from major national projects relating to pensions activity.
- Dependency on national guidance, particularly relating to contingent decisions, which may result in delays in decision making.
- Complexity of legislative changes, increasing the administrative burden, which then created a risk of non-compliance.
- Member expectations and communication challenges, particularly where outcomes were uncertain, or legislation was awaited.

Mitigating actions included enhanced governance oversight, additional resourcing, and continued engagement with national bodies.

Training

Maintaining a high level of knowledge and understanding was a statutory requirement for Local Pension Board members. In 2025-26, all Board members continued to develop their pension knowledge through a variety of ways, including:

- Attendance at Local Government Association (LGA) training sessions
- Access to regular LGA bulletins
- Use of The Pensions Regulator's Public Service Toolkit
- Ongoing engagement with the Scheme Manager and HR teams

Work Programme for 2026-27

The Board's work plan would focus on:

- Continued implementation of the McCloud/Sargeant age discrimination remedy.
- Continued implementation of the Matthews Second Options exercise, including legislative changes arising from the Government's consultation process.
- Improvement of data quality and pension administration processes.
- Monitoring and responding to national consultations.
- Preparing for and responding to Pensions Dashboard requirements.
- Enhancing member communication and engagement.
- Ongoing development of the Board's knowledge and skills.
- Reviewing compliance with The Pensions Regulator's data quality expectations.

The work plan would be reviewed regularly to respond to emerging risks and priorities.

In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to the reporting of Pension Ombudsman outcomes to members, the HR Manager confirmed that updates were reported to the Resources Committee. The DoPD added that the service was awaiting the outcome of some cases that were being considered by the Pension Ombudsman.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked a question about the business risks associated with pensions, the DoPD explained that decisions relating to pensions were often made in accordance with the legislative framework, or guidance, however there could be a cost implication where additional funding is not made available which could present a financial pressures and therefore issues were reported to members of the Fire Authority via the Resources Committee.

In response to a question from the chair in relation to the members of the pension board, the DoPD confirmed that membership of the board was made up of, two Fire Brigades Union (FBU) representatives, and two employees, who were currently the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer. In addition, the DoPD, the Payroll and Pensions Manager and the Pensions Coordinator attended as advisors. The Chair explained to members that following

	the Constitution Working Group it had been suggested that two Combined Fire Authority (CFA) members be introduced to the Pension Board rather than introducing a new pensions committee. The DoPD acknowledged that this would keep members up to date in relation to pension activity. In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to support from the LPPA, the DoPD explained that there had been challenges. The Chair requested that any challenges be shared with County Councillor J Tetlow as the Chair of Lancashire County Councils Pension Committee. **Resolved**: That the Committee noted the report.
6-26/27	**Pensions Update**
	The HR Manager presented the report to members. **Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure – Stage 2 (IDRP)** Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had several cases that had previously progressed through both stages of the IDRP process. These related to the payment of pensionable allowances within LFRS. Some members remained dissatisfied, particularly regarding the limitation of backdated allowances to six years or the classification of allowances as non-pensionable when applied to temporary roles. The Pensions Ombudsman had contacted the Service regarding these cases. While LFRS had provided the relevant information, no formal outcomes had been received to date. **Changes to Superannuation Contributions Adjusted for Past Experience (SCAPE) Rate** The SCAPE discount rate was a government set actuarial assumption used in public service pension calculations. Changes to this rate affected the factors used to calculate certain pension options and, for some members, could reduce the lump sum available on retirement. On 19 May, the Local Government Association (LGA) advised Scheme Managers that HM Treasury had confirmed through a Written Ministerial Statement that the SCAPE discount rate was to increase with effect from 19 May 2026. This change triggered a review of the actuarial factors used within the scheme. This included, but was not limited to: • Lump sum commutation for the Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS) 1992 • early retirement factors • transfers in and out of the scheme • pension debits and added pension. On 21 May, Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) published the revised FPS 1992 lump sum commutation factors, which took immediate effect for any retirements on or after 21 May 2026. As a result of the increase to the SCAPE discount rate, commutation factors had reduced. In some cases, the reduction in the lump sum could be up to 5% but this would vary depending on personal circumstances.

The immediate impact for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was administrative and member-facing, as retirement illustrations and packs needed to be reissued where affected. Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) was managing this process.

Age Discrimination Remedy (McCloud/Sargeant)

In 2015, the Government introduced reforms to public service pension schemes, including the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (FPS 2015). Transitional protections were applied so that some members of the legacy schemes (FPS 1992 and FPS 2006) remained in those schemes for longer, or did not move to FPS 2015 at all, depending on their age. Following the legal challenge known as McCloud/Sargeant, these transitional protections were found to be unlawfully age discriminatory.

From 1 April 2022, all serving members were moved to FPS 2015. The current phase of work was the implementation of the retrospective remedy for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. This required eligible members to be given a choice between legacy scheme benefits and reformed scheme benefits for the remedy period.

A central part of the remedy was the issue of Remediable Service Statements (RSSs), which set out the pension benefit choices available to affected members. The original statutory deadline for issuing these statements was 31 March 2025. As with other public service pension schemes, implementation had been challenging due to the complexity of the legislation, the sequencing required with other pension remedies, system limitations, and the volume of manual processing required in some cases. Of 367 pensioner and beneficiary cases identified, 312 statements have been issued and 55 remained outstanding.

Of the 43 outstanding non-ill-health pensioner cases, 7 related to tapered or unprotected members and were expected to be issued by 30 June 2026. The remaining cases were primarily more complex records, including members affected by the Part-Time Workers (Matthews) remedy, where additional manual processing was required. Beneficiary cases were also more complex and were currently expected to be completed by 31 December 2026, alongside the remaining outstanding pensioner cases.

For active and deferred members, the outstanding RSSs were expected to be issued through the 2026 Annual Benefit Statement exercise. It was anticipated that all 51 outstanding active and deferred member statements would be issued by 31 August 2026.

The Pension Scheme Manager had reported the position on delayed RSS issuance to The Pensions Regulator (TPR), including LPPA's action plan and revised delivery timetable. The Regulator had acknowledged the original breach notification and had not requested any further information at this stage.

A total of 82 pensioner members had elected to take alternative pension benefits. Of these, 71 cases had been processed for payment and the remaining 11 were progressing through the payment process.

The Pensions Ombudsman had updated its approach to McCloud-related complaints. The Ombudsman had indicated an intention to publish significant determinations on common McCloud issues to support more consistent complaint resolution. LFRS would review any such determinations and consider any implications for local administration and member communications.

Contingent Decisions

The age discrimination remedy regulations allowed certain decisions made by members during the remedy period to be revisited. A contingent decision arose where a member may have made a different choice had the 2015 pension reforms not applied. This included decisions to opt out of the pension scheme and, in some cases, whether a firefighter would have purchased additional years in their legacy scheme had they remained eligible to do so.

LFRS had received 29 contingent decision applications, all contingent decision applications received had been approved by the Scheme Manager. The next stage was for individuals to receive a Contingent Decision Remediable Service Statement (CD-RSS), enabling them to decide whether to elect to opt back into their legacy scheme or to purchase added years for the remedy period.

On 26 March 2026, the Government issued a Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) addressing a legislative issue affecting some FPS 1992 members who opted out of pensionable service as a result of the 2015 reforms. The current wording of the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 prevented some individuals from being reinstated into their original legacy scheme through the contingent decision process. The WMS confirmed the Government’s intention to address this through further regulations so that eligible members could have their opted-out service for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022 treated as pensionable in the legacy scheme in which they last accrued service.

The Scheme Advisory Board had obtained legal advice on the position of fire and rescue authorities considering whether to progress affected cases before the supporting regulations were in force. LFRS did not currently propose to proceed ahead of legislation. This approach was intended to ensure that decisions were made on a clear statutory basis and applied consistently. The position would continue to be reviewed as further guidance and regulations were issued.

Part Time Workers (Matthews 2) Remedy

The Matthews remedy addressed historic pension access for on-call firefighters who, for many years, were unable to join the Firefighters’ Pension Scheme on the same basis as wholetime firefighters. For LFRS, the current focus was on identifying eligible individuals, issuing options and calculation packs, and progressing elections into payment where members choose to join the Modified Pension Scheme.

The Service had identified more than 600 existing and former employees who were eligible to express an interest in joining the Modified Pension Scheme or purchasing additional pension. Reasonable endeavours had been made to contact all eligible individuals, this work remained ongoing. 420 individuals had expressed an interest, and 390 calculation and options packs had been issued.

A total of 287 individuals had elected to join the scheme. Of these, 176 were Special Pensioner Members. LPPA had brought 124 of these cases into payment, with the remaining cases progressing through the payment process.

Further legislation came into force on 1 April 2026 following Government consultation. This legislation made amendments in relation to deceased members, additional death grants and conversion options. As a result, fire and rescue authorities had a further implementation period to 31 March 2027 to complete outstanding work and apply the legislative changes fully. The Government Actuary's Department was also developing a calculator to support processing of additional cases arising from these amendments, which was expected to be available by the end of June 2026.

One area that remains unresolved nationally was aggregation. This affected individuals who previously served in an on-call role and later moved into a wholetime role, and who may wish to combine pension benefits across periods of service. No final mechanism had yet been confirmed for these cases, and the Service was awaiting the outcome of relevant legal processes expected during 2026 and 2027.

A small number of on-call firefighters had been identified as being affected by an unintended gap in pension scheme membership arising from the interaction of the Matthews remedy and the McCloud remedy. These were employees who remained in continuous service beyond 31 March 2022, but who had not previously joined the Firefighters' Pension Scheme. As a result, while they may now be able to remedy historic pension access issues, a further gap arose from 1 April 2022 onwards unless specific action was taken. To address this, the Scheme Manager had considered the use of discretion under Regulation 12(5) of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 to allow affected individuals to opt into the Scheme with effect from 1 April 2022. Where this option was taken up, affected members would be required to pay the employee pension contributions due for the relevant period (with effect from 1 April 2022 to current date), with the Service meeting the associated employer contributions. The estimated maximum cost to the Authority, assuming full take-up by all eligible individuals, was circa £80,000.

Resources

The implementation of the Age Discrimination (McCloud/Sargeant) remedy and the Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) remedy continued to place significant demands on both LFRS and its pension administrator, Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA). LPPA has increased its staffing resource to support the additional workload, while LFRS continued to manage remedy implementation alongside business-as-usual pension administration responsibilities.

The Government had extended the deadline for completion of the Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) exercise to 31 March 2027. This provided additional time for fire and rescue authorities to complete outstanding cases and incorporated the effect of subsequent legislative changes.

The concurrent implementation of two substantial and complex national pension remedy programmes remained resource intensive. To support delivery, the

	temporary Pensions Coordinator role continued to provide additional capacity, with the current arrangement in place until 31 March 2027. **Dashboards** The Pensions Dashboard Programme aimed to enable individuals to access their pension information online, securely and all in one place. LPPA completed connection of their schemes to the central digital portal in December 2025. Following this connection, the government would issue LPPA with a Dashboard Available Point (DAP). This was the date when the pension dashboard would become publicly available. This date was set by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and would provide a minimum of six months' advance notice. In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to funding of the pension schemes, the HR Manager explained that the firefighter pension scheme was not an invested fund, with contributions today funding active pensions. The Chair expressed his thanks to the HR Team. **Resolved:** That the committee noted the report and its implications for pension administration and member communication.
7-26/27	**Year End Treasury Management Outturn 2025-26**
	The DoCS advised that this report set out the Authority's borrowing and investment activity during 2025-26. All treasury management activity undertaken during the year was carried out in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy for 2025-26, which was approved by the Combined Fire Authority in February 2025. **Economic Overview** As in 2024-25, inflation remained above the Bank of England's 2% target during 2025-26. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) was 3.5% in April 2025 and peaked at 3.8% between July and September 2025. It then fell to 3.0% in January and February 2026 before ending the year at 3.3% in March 2026. The latest available figure was 2.8% for April 2026. However, forecasts indicated that CPI could rise above 4.5% during 2026-27. At its March 2026 meeting, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously to maintain Bank Rate at 3.75%. However, the MPC indicated that rates may need to rise if inflationary pressures increased materially. The Committee stated that it "stands ready to act as necessary" and remained alert to the risk of domestic inflationary pressures feeding through into wages and prices. This economic context was relevant to Members because changes in inflation and interest rates directly affect the Authority's treasury position. They influenced how much it would cost to borrow in future, the level of income that could be earned on surplus cash, and the extent to which treasury performance supported the overall financial position of the Authority.

Borrowing

The Authority's borrowing remained unchanged at £2.0 million at 31 March 2026, with no new long-term borrowing undertaken during the year. The existing loans were taken from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), a government body that lent to local authorities and similar public bodies, in 2007, when Bank Rate was 5.75%.

The capital programme approved for 2026-27 in February 2026 did not require borrowing until 2027-28. The current debt therefore related to earlier capital programmes. Borrowing remained above the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which represented the Authority's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. This was because the Authority had historically set aside revenue each year to repay debt through Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), while the remaining external loans continued until their maturity dates unless repaid early. In practice, this meant the Authority had reduced its underlying need to borrow more quickly than the actual loans had been repaid.

If the loans were repaid early, a premium would be payable. Although early repayment could generate an estimated saving of £32,000 in future interest costs, the Authority was currently planning for a need to borrow from 2027-28 onwards. Any saving from early repayment would therefore need to be considered alongside the likely cost of replacement borrowing, which was expected to be at higher rates than the existing loans.

This was relevant to Members because it explained why no action had been taken to repay debt early. Although an early repayment might reduce future interest costs, it could also create additional costs now and may not represent best value if the Authority expected to borrow again in the near future.

Investments

Both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) investment guidance required the Authority to invest its funds prudently, with primary regard to security and liquidity before yield. During the year, the Authority's approach continued to be to secure an appropriate balance between risk and return.

To reduce credit risk, the Authority used an account facility with the Debt Management Office (DMO), which was part of His Majesty's Treasury, as its main counterparty for overnight investments. This provided a highly secure place to hold short-term cash while maintaining immediate access to funds.

The Treasury Management Strategy also allowed investment with other high-quality counterparties, including local authorities. During the year, the Authority maintained positive cash balances throughout, ranging from a high of £60.0 million to a low of £36.7 million. Amounts invested with the DMO ranged from £28.9 million to £6.7 million, with an overnight DMO balance of £9.1 million at 31 March 2026.

Longer-term fixed rate investments could generate higher returns than overnight

	deposits, but they reduced liquidity and were therefore used selectively. At the year end, fixed investments totalled £30.0 million. During 2025-26, five fixed-term investments matured and seven new investments were placed. £1.5 million of interest was earned on fixed-term investments during the year. Overnight deposits with the DMO averaged five basis points (0.05%) below Bank Rate. Surplus balances on the Authority's current account were invested each working day to maximise the return on cash holdings. The average balance invested in this way during the year was £15.6 million, generating interest of £0.6 million. Total interest earned in 2025-26 was £2.1 million, representing an average return of 4.48%. This compared favourably with the benchmark 7-day Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA), which averaged 4.02% over the same period. SONIA was a widely used market benchmark for short-term sterling interest rates. Achieving a return above SONIA indicated that the Authority earned more than a simple overnight market benchmark, mainly because it was able to place some funds in fixed-term deposits at favourable rates while still maintaining sufficient liquidity and operating within the approved risk framework. All investments were made in accordance with the approved 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 finance team. Where market conditions were considered appropriate, further fixed-term investments would be placed in line with the approved strategy and the Authority's liquidity requirements. **Prudential Indicators** A range of Prudential Indicators were used to control and monitor the Authority's treasury management activity. These were effectively the guardrails within which treasury decisions must be taken. They were approved by Members in advance and covered matters such as how much the Authority could borrow, how borrowing was structured, and the limits that applied to investments. Overall, the Prudential Indicators showed that treasury management activity during 2025-26 remained within the limits approved by Members. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to the reporting of Treasury Management, the DoCS explained that traditionally Treasury Management would be reported to Resources Committees. **Resolved**: That the Committee noted and endorsed the outturn position report.
8-26/27	**Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2026-27**
	The Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) presented the report to members. Productivity and Efficiency Plans had been produced annually since 2024-25 and formed part of the national framework for fire and rescue authorities in England.

	For 2026-27, responsibility for the plan had moved to MHCLG and the format of the plan was prescribed nationally. The national requirements for 2026-27 were broader than in previous years. The plan now required: multi-year financial information through to 2028-29; an efficiency narrative showing how savings had been achieved; a productivity narrative supported by stronger evidence where possible; reporting for both wholetime and on-call activity; and a new section on service changes and achievements. Direct employee savings could still be described in the wider financial strategy, but they no longer counted towards the headline efficiency total in the same way as under the previous approach. The key elements of the plan included: • Strong delivery in 2025-26, including significant non-pay efficiencies and operational improvements linked to dynamic resource management and reduced standby activity. • A pipeline of future opportunities from 2026-27 onwards, including fleet, ICT, estates, charging and operating model changes, with delivery subject to the normal approval, assurance and consultation arrangements where required. • A broader set of productivity initiatives, such as digitisation of operational processes, improvements in training delivery, on-call development changes and better capture of workforce activity, which were intended to release capacity for front-line and support priorities. • Finally, the plan highlighted the Service's collaboration activity, income generation work and Modern Ways of Working arrangements as part of a wider approach to continuous improvement. The plan set out a number of material headlines for Lancashire, including non-pay efficiency savings delivered in 2025-26, the continued benefits of dynamic resource management and dynamic cover approaches, a pipeline of future efficiency opportunities, and a wider range of productivity initiatives covering operational, digital, training and workforce activity. The full productivity and efficiency plan was included at appendix A within the agenda pack. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to premises expenditure, the DoCS explained that this related to day-to-day running costs. In response to a question from County Councillor J Tetlow in relation to direct

	employee costs, the DoCS explained that this related to an assumption on pay awards and staffing numbers which was set out within the authorities budget within establishment. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to the lifespan of vehicles and depreciation, the DoCS explained that the lifespan of vehicles would be expanded where it represented value for money, with fleet vehicles moved around the service as appropriate to support this. County Councillor J Tetlow asked how vehicles at the end of their life cycle were disposed of, the DoCS explained that vehicles at the end of their life cycle had a very low financial value and were therefore donated to charity and often taken abroad by charities. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to the reduction on expenditure in relation to fire protection, the DoPD explained that this could be attributed to utilising resources more efficiently. The Chair added that there could be more synergy with Public Health Services which he encouraged members to promote. County Councillor G Mirfin remarked that electric vehicles often had expensive hidden costs, County Councillor J Tetlow had recently completed some research into this which he suggested be shared and considered by the DoCS. County Councillor J Tetlow added that battery replacements could be very expensive for electric vehicles. In response to a question from County Councillor G Mirfin in relation to social value benefits, the Chair confirmed that the committee had recently received a report in relation to the social value benefits achieved during the Blackpool Fire Station refurbishment. County Councillor G Mirfin suggested that co-location could be considered with other blue light and local authority services. The Chair added that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) could result in a number of locations becoming available and merging of fire stations could be considered. Members agreed that some buildings were no longer fit for purpose and suggested possible alternatives including the services Leadership and Development Centre and Lancashire County Councils County Hall. The Chair added that members would continue to lobby MP’s in relation to funding for fire and rescue services. **Resolved**: That the Committee noted the report.

9-26/27	**Date and Time of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on **Wednesday 30 September 2026** at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 25 November 2026 and 16 March 2027.
10-26/27	**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.
11-26/27	**Firefighters' Pension Scheme - Compensatory ill Health**
	(Paragraph 1) Members considered a report in relation to compensatory ill health within the firefighters' pension scheme. **Resolved**: That the Committee noted the report.
12-26/27	**High Value Procurement Projects**
	(Paragraph 3) Members considered a report that provided an update on contracts valued above £175,000 since the last report in March 2026. **Resolved**: That the Committee noted the report.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Proceedings of Audit Committee held 30 June 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Audit Committee meeting held 30 June 2026.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information
Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Audit Committee meeting held on 30 June 2026.

Business Risk
None.

Environmental Impact
None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk
None.

HR Implications
None.

Legal Implications
None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Audit Committee

Tuesday, 30 June 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
M Clifford (Chair)	
U Arif (Vice-Chair)	
J Ash	
A Blake	
P Buckley	
A Joynes	
B Langford	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Brown, Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) D Howell, Monitoring Officer (LFRS) A Latham, Financial Accountant (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance

1-26/27	**Apologies for Absence**
	None received.
2-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.
3-26/27	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
	The minutes were moved by County Councillor J Ash. **Resolved**: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 26 March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4-26/27	**Annual Governance Statement**
	The report was introduced by the Director of Corporate Services (DoCS). It was noted that the Authority was required to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) alongside its Statement of Accounts. The AGS must be supported by an annual review of the effectiveness of the Authority's governance framework and system of internal control. The self-assessment, AGS and Local Code of Corporate Governance set out the key elements of that framework, the assurance sources considered, and the Authority's overall conclusion on the effectiveness of its arrangements. The DoCS drew attention to page 8 of the report and the ongoing review of the constitutional and policy framework, development of board arrangements, the embedding of arrangements to oversee performance, productivity, efficiency and value for money. The overall conclusion was that the Authority's governance arrangements remained sound and continued to operate effectively. No significant governance issues had been identified. The report did, however, recognise that good governance was not static and identified areas where arrangements would continue to be strengthened, including policy review, programme governance, assurance reporting, productivity and efficiency oversight, and the tracking of audit and improvement actions. Members were asked to approve the updated documents on the basis that they provided a clear and evidence-based account of the Authority's governance arrangements, while also demonstrating that identified improvements were being managed through established governance, assurance and performance arrangements. In response to a question from County Councillor P Buckley in relation to it being stated that there were no significant governance issues identified but that arrangements should continue to be strengthened, the DoCS responded that the aim was to bring through matters of governance that need improvement, including the review of the constitution and providing more information on internal audit follow up recommendations. These were captured as part of the governance review. County Councillor J Ash moved to note the report which was seconded by County Councillor P Buckley and all members voted in favour. **Resolved: -** That the Committee; • Noted and endorsed the self-assessment at Appendix A and the Annual Governance Statement at Appendix B, including the conclusion that no significant governance issues had been identified. • Recommended that the Chair of the Authority sign the Annual Governance Statement as formal confirmation of the Authority's governance assurance for 2025-26. • That the Committee noted and endorsed the updated Local Code of

	Corporate Governance at Appendix C as the framework against which the Authority's governance arrangements will continue to be reviewed.
5-26/27	**Internal Audit - Charter and mandate**
	It was noted that the Internal Audit Charter and Mandate established the framework within which Lancashire County Council's Internal Audit Service operated to best serve the Combined Fire Authority and to meet its professional obligations under applicable professional standards. The Charter and Mandate had been reviewed for 2026-27 by the Head of Service – Internal Audit (Head of Internal Audit) and updated to reflect the Global Internal Audit Standards and the associated UK public sector application requirements, which replaced the previous Public Sector Internal Audit Standards from April 2025. It is presented to the Audit Committee for approval. County Councillor J Ash moved the report which was seconded by County Councillor P Buckley and all members voted in favour. **Resolved:** - That the Committee approved the 2026-27 Internal Audit Charter and Mandate.
6-26/27	**Compliments and complaints**
	The DoCS indicated that this report provided an overview of the compliments and complaints activity during 2025-26 and explained the changes the Service was making in response to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code, which would be used by the Ombudsman when considering compliance from 1 April 2026. The report was intended to provide members with assurance that complaints were being monitored, that learning was being identified, and that the Service was strengthening its arrangements in line with recognised good practice. Attention was drawn to page 67 of the agenda pack and the general process for processing complaints with a greater focus on learning and development. In 2025-26, it was noted that the Service received a total of 105 compliments and 65 complaints. Appendix 1 of the report set out the breakdown of the complaints, the main messages from the 2025-26 data being: • Complaint volumes had increased; • Email and website routes were now the main channels for complaints; • 41% (27) of complaints were 'Against the Service' Complaints against the Service were spread across a wide range of issues, with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) procedures the largest single category, alongside one-off concerns about inspections, communications, social media, signage and noise. 20% (13) of complaints were 'Against LFRS Staff' – these were mainly about behaviour and professional conduct; • The two other significant areas related to damage to property (10) and driving (11).

Most complaints were resolved early and quickly. While complaint volumes had increased, themes pointed to opportunities to improve communication, consistency in procedures, and public interaction.

In response to a question from County Councillor A Blake in relation to why there was a downward trend in complaints in 2024-25 but a subsequent increase seen in 2025-26, the DoCS explained that the reason was unclear. However, looking back over the past decade, it was usual for the volume of complaints to fluctuate. There were no particular trends evident and the use of communication channels had been consistent over the past few years.

In response to a comment from County Councillor J Ash regarding driving related complaints, it was noted that there were an increased volume of vehicles on roads in recent years, as well as an increase in the number of communication channels being used by the Service for complaint handling, these factors could have led to an increased volume of complaints. However, it was felt that overall the volume of complaints was relatively low in comparison to other services.

The Chair commented that it was surprising that the LFRS social media had received complaints as he felt that it was very good. A compliment was then shared by the Chair with regards to a summer fair event held last weekend in Clayton-le-Woods which fire service teams from Chorley and Bamber Bridge were attended and with whom members of the public had enjoyed interacting.

The Chair also noted that member complaints were dealt with separately to the complaint handling process.

County Councillor P Buckley asked for clarification on compliments volume and commented that there could be more focus on positives. The DoCS responded that there were often many compliments received from the public at the site of incidents or in stations but that these were not necessarily always fed through formal channels though this was being encouraged.

County Councillor U Arif asked about the method of capturing compliments. The DoCS responded that the area admin teams should be capturing these centrally and they could come via phone, letter or email. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) added that there was a satisfaction survey that the service ask users of the Service to complete, though this was a slightly different process.

County Councillor P Buckley enquired whether there was a follow up done with LFRS event organisers to capture any feedback in terms of compliments. The ACFO responded that the Service would not normally pursue the capture of compliments on these occasions.

County Councillor J Ash commented that she felt that the public had an expectation that LFRS would operate to high standards as a norm and were therefore less likely to issue compliments.

County Councillor J Ash moved the report; this was seconded by County Councillor P Buckley, and all members voted in favour.

Resolved: - That the Committee

- Noted the compliments and complaints activity for 2025-26.
- Endorsed the revised complaint handling arrangements to align with the Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- Supported the introduction of enhanced governance and reporting arrangements.
- Noted a further annual report including performance against the new Code and identified service improvements will be provided at the end of 2026-27.

7-26/27 **Accounting Estimates**

The DoCS presented the report to members.

It was noted that the International Standard on Auditing (UK) 540, Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures, were revised in December 2018 and applied to audits of financial statements for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2019. The revised standard strengthened the focus on estimation uncertainty, complexity, subjectivity, management bias and the adequacy of related disclosures. The standard was relevant because a number of balances in the Authority's Statement of Accounts could not be measured with absolute certainty and therefore required management judgement, specialist advice and the use of assumptions. Auditors were required to understand and evaluate the nature and extent of the oversight and governance arrangements in place over management's financial reporting process for accounting estimates.

It was noted that the Audit Committee should understand which significant estimates are included within the Statement of Accounts. Significant estimates are those that:

- Require significant judgement by management to address subjectivity;
- Have high estimation uncertainty;
- Are complex to make;
- Had, or ought to have had, a change in method, assumptions or data compared to previous periods; or
- Involve significant assumptions.

The Statement of Accounts included balances based on assumptions about future events or other matters that were inherently uncertain. Estimates were made having regard to historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. As a result, actual outcomes may differ materially from those estimates.

The Statement of Accounts were prepared in accordance with the most recent edition of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code), published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

It was noted that the Statement of Accounts were prepared on a 'going concern' basis, reflecting the Authority's assessment that its financial position remained sustainable for the foreseeable future, having regard to the 2026-27 budget-setting process approved in February 2026, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the

	reserves position and the statutory framework within which fire and rescue authorities operate. Accounting standards required management to undertake an annual assessment of going concern. Although the Code recognises that local authorities could only be created or dissolved through statutory provision, the accounts must nevertheless be prepared on a going concern basis. Management had completed this assessment and was not aware of any material uncertainty that would prevent the Authority from continuing to provide services for the foreseeable future. Members considered the significant Accounting Estimates for 2025-26 including the estimated value, degree of uncertainty and methodology used for the: 1. Valuation of land and buildings 2. Depreciation of property and equipment 3. Valuation of Firefighter (FF) and Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) liability 4. Valuation of LGPS pension asset 5. Holiday pay expenditure accrual. It was noted that each year the Executive Board was asked to consider whether there were any transactions, events, or conditions (or changes in circumstances) that may require either the recognition of a further significant accounting estimate or disclosure as a contingent liability. This provided a formal management check that the estimates and disclosures remained complete and up to date. Based on the confirmations received from Executive Board, the contingent liabilities note had been updated to reflect the current position. One additional contingent liability had been identified in 2025-26 in respect of on-call sick pay, with an estimated potential exposure of £300,000. This matter was disclosed as a contingent liability rather than recognised as a provision because the timing, likelihood and final value of any obligation remained uncertain. In response to a question from the Chair in relation to the valuation of land and buildings, the DoCS indicated that to the value had depreciated due to a change in the construction cost and valuation indices that were being used. **Resolved: -** The Chair moved to note the report.
8-26/27	**Financial Statements Update**
	The report, presented by the DoCS, updated the Audit Committee on progress in preparing the Authority's 2025-26 unaudited Financial Statements. The latest draft core financial statements were included at Appendix 1 of the agenda pack for information. The statements remained subject to final quality assurance and external audit. These were not presented for approval by the Committee at this stage, and the figures could change before the audited accounts were presented to the Committee later in the year.

	For the financial year 2025-26, it was noted that the Authority must publish its draft accounts by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2026. The audited accounts were expected to be available by 30 November 2026, subject to completion of the external audit. This report provided the Committee with an update on the latest draft financial statements prepared for publication and audit. It was noted that there was no statutory requirement to present the unaudited accounts to the Committee before the external audit process commenced. However, presenting the latest draft core financial statements provided members with early visibility of the Authority's financial position and supported transparent financial governance. The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 applied to the preparation, approval and audit of the Statement of Accounts and other financial statements. These regulations were based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which sought to present accounts in a consistent format across the public and private sectors with the aim of improving transparency. The Authority's revenue outturn and statutory financial statements were prepared on different bases. The revenue outturn reflected financial performance against the Authority's budget. The statutory financial statements then applied required accounting adjustments, including pension and asset valuation entries. These adjustments were necessary for compliance with accounting standards but did not affect the Authority's available revenue funding. The latest draft Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Movement in Reserves Statement, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement were set out in Appendix 1 of the report. Subject to final quality assurance processes, these would form part of the accounts submitted for external audit. The draft financial statements did not identify any immediate issues affecting the Authority's ability to deliver operational services. There were no questions raised by Committee members. The Chair thanked the team who put the report together. The DoCS echoed his thanks and congratulations to the Finance Team. **Resolved: -** That the Committee • Noted progress in preparing the Authority's 2025-26 unaudited Financial Statements; • Noted the Authority's latest draft core financial statements at Appendix 1; and • Noted that the figures remain subject to final quality assurance and external audit and may therefore change before the audited accounts are presented for approval.
9-26/27	**Risk Management**
	The DoCS presented the report. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had continued to strengthen its approach to organisational risk management, aligning policy and practice with ISO 31000:2018, National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance, and HM Treasury's Orange Book: Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts. Risk management remained embedded within the Service's governance

	framework, supporting ongoing scrutiny, informed decision-making and proportionate allocation of resources to risk treatment. The Corporate Risk Register reflected a broadly stable overall position: • Retention and recruitment of on-call staff and replacement of the existing mobilising system remained the highest-rated corporate risks. • During the latest review cycle, one risk had increased (fuel due to uncertainties with the geopolitical environment), one risk was archived, and two new strategic risks were added relating to the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), Emergency Services Network (ESN) and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). During the reporting period, governance arrangements for strategic risk oversight were revised, with scrutiny of the Corporate Risk Register transferring from the Senior Management Team Corporate Programme Board to the Business and Development Board. This change had strengthened the alignment between risk, organisational development and resource planning. The Service had also continued to develop its risk management framework through closer alignment with HM Treasury's Orange Book. This included enhancements to the Corporate Risk Register to improve visibility of risk treatment requirements, resource implications and associated financial considerations, enabling the financial and value-for-money consequences of risk treatment to be considered alongside operational risk exposure. In response to a question from the County Councillor P Buckley in relation to the recent heatwave and the potential increase in wildfire events The ACFO explained that a national tactical approach to wildfires had recently been launched by the Fire Minister and training had been undertaken overseas for members of specialised teams. Lancashire’s Chief Fire Officer was the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) lead for Wildfires. This was a very new national resilience group which recognises the need to be more prepared and responsive to wildfires. County Councillor P Buckley asked if the 2018 Winter Hill wildfire was affected by the high occurrence of peat in the area. The ACFO explained that composition of the ground was a factor that affected the behaviour of wildfires, as was the increased growth of vegetation that followed wet summers. It was also noted that the Service worked closely with local landowners to encourage them to put in fire breaks. County Councillor P Buckley asked if there would be an entry in the Risk Register to cover this risk, the DoCS explained that the Corporate Risk Register was there to capture strategic risks and the corporate response to these. This would include contingency arrangements required to respond to events such as flooding or wildfires. The ACFO added that the Service received early warnings of wildfires and had the benefits of better equipment and technical innovations to deal with these well. County Councillor J Ash commented that the majority of wildfires were caused by humans and asked if the Service had plans to launch a campaign to manage or reduce this risk. The Chair commented on discussions being held at Chorley

	Council regarding the protection of public spaces through the use of the 'Public Spaces Protection Order'. The ACFO added that the Service had improved its ability to predict wildfires and the Service worked with partners including the police to prosecute perpetrators which could assist as a deterrent going forwards. County Councillor A Blake asked a question about the new risk, the impact of Local Government Review (LGR) to the Service which he felt to be a higher risk than was captured in the report. The ACFO responded that mechanisms for sharing referrals with partners would shift, as would risk mapping, but further details were awaited. The Chair indicated that it would be mid-July before any indicators of structures started to emerge. County Councillor A Joynes enquired as to why pagers have dropped significantly as a risk. The ACFO explained that the Service was a keen innovator and had been trialling new pagers, the teething issues were now resolved. However, app based mobilising was also being utilised effectively and seemed to be preferred by Firefighters. A decision needed to be made on which system was adopt as the preferred one and whether the other system would become a resilience back up. County Councillor A Joynes asked if one system had more benefits that the other and the ACFO confirmed that the pager probably had greater coverage but it was noted that the IT Department were currently exploring the best mobilisation tools available on the market. **Resolved: -** That the Committee • Endorsed the Service's current risk management arrangements; and • Noted the latest position reflected in the Corporate Risk Matrix and Summary Register at Appendix A.
10-26/27	**Internal Audit - Annual report 2025-26**
	The report was presented by Sarah Oldendorp, Audit Manager. The Internal Audit Annual Report summarised the work undertaken by the Internal Audit Service during 2025-26 and key themes relating to risk management, governance and internal control. It provided the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's framework of governance, risk management and internal control. On the basis of the programme of work completed during 2025-26, the Head of Internal Audit confirmed substantial assurance regarding the adequacy of design and effectiveness in operation of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. **Internal Audit Work Undertaken** All 70 of the budgeted days were used to deliver the internal audit plan and all work had been completed. • **Governance, risk management and internal control** Overall substantial assurances were provided regarding the adequacy of design and effectiveness in operation of the organisation's frameworks of governance, risk management and control. Three reasonable and two substantial audits conducted within the year with a low number of resulting actions overall. A summary of actions was provided. Systems and processes were generally working effectively and ensured staff were aware of correct

processes. Action plans were agreed with Senior Managers for issues raised during the year.

- **VAT**
  Substantial assurance was provided. It was noted that the Service had a established and well-structured process for the administration of the VAT return, supported by experienced finance staff and comprehensive procedures and documentation.
- **Treasury Management**
  Reasonable assurance was provided. LFRS demonstrated strong strategic oversight of treasury management, appropriate oversight and effective reporting. However, the absence of approved Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) was discussed with the Deputy Finance Manager during the audit and was now being addressed. It remained a material control gap that must be resolved to ensure full compliance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and to strengthen operational resilience.
- **Procurement**
  Reasonable assurance was provided. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had made significant progress in strengthening its procurement governance, supported by an increasingly structured framework, improved tools, and a growing alignment with the Procurement Act 2023 (the 2023 Act). The foundations for effective, well-governed procurement activity were in place, and ongoing improvements demonstrate a proactive commitment to enhancing consistency, transparency, and assurance across procurement processes.

It was noted that LFRS had established a strong governance base, with Contract Standing Orders already updated to align fully with the 2023 Act and procurement staff completing training on the 2023 Act. Several supporting documents and tools, such as the newly introduced Process Workflow Guide, revised procurement initiation templates and the implementation of the Chest e-procurement system (the Chest platform), showed a clear direction of travel toward stronger compliance. Work was already underway to refresh remaining documents, including Terms and Conditions, and to update website information to accurately reflect current practice. These initiatives demonstrated a positive and forward-looking approach that would further strengthen organisational clarity, compliance, and governance.

The Procurement Team had taken important steps to modernise its transparency arrangements, with The Chest now established as the primary platform for tendering and publication. This transition represented a significant improvement, with built-in safeguards that support compliance and consistency. While some gaps were noted during the review, such as delays in publishing contract awards and updating the contracts register, staff were already embedding new processes and strengthening record retention practices. Continued adoption of the Chest platform, together with the ongoing population of the live contracts register, would further enhance transparency, assurance, and public confidence.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Ash in relation to group procurement with other public services to get better deals, the DoCS explained that LFRS liaised wherever possible with other areas and there was a very good Blue Light Network.

	County Councillor A Joynes asked when the Treasury Management Plan would be completed. The Deputy Head of Finance explained that this was the next priority after the financial statements were finalised and would be completed by the end of the financial year. **Resolved: -** That the Audit Committee noted and approved the report.
11-26/27	**Internal Audit - Monitoring report**
	Sarah Oldendorp, Audit Manager, presented the report which set out progress against the Internal Audit Plan for 2026-27 for the period ended 15 June 2026. It was brought to the attention of the Committee that it has been agreed previously that the Plan can be flexible in approach. Therefore, it had been decided after consultation with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) not to look at health and wellbeing or contaminants in this cycle as it might be repeating work that had already taken place and would not be the best use of resources. It had been proposed to replace these with reviews of the Complaints Management Process and Protection activity instead. Members were asked to note that the internal auditors had recorded four days of work against the 2026-27 Plan to date, all relating to management activity. The remaining planned audit work had not yet started and no assurance opinions had therefore been issued. The monitoring report asked the Committee to note the proposed replacement of two planned reviews with reviews of the Complaints Management Process and Protection activity. **Resolved: -** That the Committee noted the report.
12-26/27	**External Audit - Audit progress report and sector updates**
	The report presented by Curtis Wallace, Public Sector Audit Manager, provided the Audit Committee with an update on progress in delivering the external audit for 2025-26, together with sector updates on matters of relevance to local government, fire and rescue authorities and audit committees. The report confirmed that the 2024-25 financial statements audit had been completed, with an unmodified audit opinion issued on 17 December 2025. It also confirmed that the detailed risk assessment for the 2025-26 audit was substantially complete, the 2025-26 Audit Plan was presented to the Committee on 26 March 2026, and audit fieldwork was expected to commence between mid-June and early July 2026 following receipt of the draft financial statements. Grant Thornton had indicated that the results of the audit would be shared in the Audit Findings Report, with the aim of issuing the audit opinion on the Statement of Accounts by 30 November 2026. The auditor's value for money risk assessment for the year ended 31 March 2026 had also been completed and did not identify any risks of significant weakness. The Auditor's Annual Report was expected by November 2026.

	It was noted that there are no additions to the current engagement fees which were set at £105,900. The sector update included matters for members' awareness, including changes to the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection cycle, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code changes to the accounting for non-investment assets, CIPFA Bulletin 23 on closure of the 2025-26 financial statements, devolution and local government reorganisation, recent legal and regulatory developments, workforce-related issues and audit committee resources. Audit was progressing well with nothing else to report. **Resolved: -** That the Committee noted the external auditor's progress report and sector updates.
13-26/27	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday 1 October 2026 at 10:00 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 15 December 2026 and agreed for 25 March 2027.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Proceedings of Performance Committee held 8 July 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Performance Committee meeting held 8 July 2026.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information
Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Performance Committee meeting held on 8 July 2026.

Business Risk
None.

Environmental Impact
None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk
None.

HR Implications
None.

Legal Implications
None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

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Appendix 1

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Performance Committee

Wednesday, 8 July 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
S Asghar	
B Langford	
G Mirfin	
A Riggott	
S Sidat MBE	
J Tetlow (Vice-Chair)	
E Worthington (Chair)	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) J Turner, Head of People P Jones, Area Manager - Head of Service Delivery I Armistead, Group Manager - Protection C Burscough, Prevention Support Officer D Howell, Monitoring Officer J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance
K Matthews, North West Fire Control - Head of Operations

1-26/27	**Apologies For Absence**
	Apologies were received from County Councillor M Clifford and County Councillor L Parker who was a substitute for County Councillor R Walsh. County Councillors G Mirfin and J Tetlow were delayed. County Councillor M Ritson and North West Fire Control (NWFC) Head of Operations K Matthews joined the meeting remotely.
2-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.

3-26/27	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**
	The minutes were moved by County Councillor E Worthington. **Resolved**: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4-26/27	**Performance Management Information for Quarter 4, 2025-26**
	The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented a comprehensive report which provided a clear measure of the Service's progress against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as detailed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027. The Performance Committee was asked to note and endorse the report which included two positive and one negative exception. Members examined each indicator in turn: **1.1 Overall Staff Engagement** Members received an update on staff engagement during the period. From January to March 2026, 17 station visits were carried out by principal officers and area managers as part of a service-wide engagement programme. 40 wellbeing interactions were undertaken ranging from workshops with crews to wellbeing support dog engagements. An extended leadership workshop was held with middle and senior managers, and eight Watch Managers' Forum events took place to keep wholetime and functional watch managers informed of what was happening in service delivery and provided an opportunity to share feedback and be involved in changes. Engagement took place regarding improvements to Garstang Fire Station and several offices at Service Headquarters and the Leadership and Development Centre. The Service engaged with staff over topics relating to Service fleet and equipment including thermal imaging and situational analysis cameras, which were being trialled by breathing apparatus instructors. An 'On the Menu' online event was open to everyone in the Service to learn about equality impact assessments. It was noted that the Service has an engagement index which was calculated based on five questions measuring pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration and motivation. In 2025, the response rate was 44% and the engagement index was 69% which was a drop from the two previous survey years (2023 = 74%, 2020 = 79%). The survey results highlighted areas of success as well as areas for development and the feedback was considered by the Service and used to inform planning, as well as being provided to staff to demonstrate that views had been listened to in terms of action taken as a result. **1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime** It was noted that absence was calculated using the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for all wholetime staff divided by the total average headcount strength. This followed the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) reporting methodology. • Annual standard: Not more than eight shifts lost

- Annual shifts lost ÷ 4 quarters = 2
- Quarter shifts lost: 2.49
- Cumulative total number of shifts lost: 9.85

The agreed target performance level was eight shifts lost per employee per year across all staff. Actual shifts lost for both for 2025-26 was 8.70 shifts lost per employee, 0.70 above target. The negative exception report was due to the number of shifts lost per employee being above the Service target for Quarter 4 (period covered was from 1 January to 31 March 2026).

The agreed target performance level was 2 shifts lost per employee per quarter for wholetime staff. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff was 2.49, 0.49 shifts above target for the quarter. During the same quarter the previous year, 2.23 shifts were lost, which was an increase of 0.26 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same quarter last year.

1,493 wholetime absence shifts were lost in the quarter equalling2.49 against a target of 2.00. The number of cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the three months remained at 4 cases in Quarter 4. The absence reasons being mental health, musculo skeletal, hospital or post-operative, skin condition. 197 shifts were lost during the quarter as a result of the above four cases of long-term absence, this was in comparison to 46 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. These cases accounted for 0.33 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

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

- Mental health - 11
- Musculo skeletal - 9
- Other absence types - 5
- Hospital/ post-operative procedure – 2

In 2025-26, the agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for wholetime staff. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff was 09.85 which was 1.85 shifts above target for the year. During the same period the previous year, 8.28 shifts were lost which was an increase of 1.57 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same period last year.

6,035 wholetime absence shifts were lost in the year which equated to 9.85 against a target of 8.00.

The increase in number of shifts lost between 2024-25 and 2025-26 were primarily explained by increased absences as a result of Musculo-skeletal and mental health absences. Musculo skeletal absence increased by 396 shifts lost and mental health absences by 371, which accounted for an increase in 767 shifts lost and for most of the overall 849 rise.

Councillor S Sidat asked whether the Service had any preventative or supportive measures in place for those staff who were sustaining Musculo-skeletal injuries at work. The ACFO commented on the fitness culture that the Service promoted, the availability of physio support and the role of the Fire Fighters charity in supporting post injury rehabilitation.

	County Councillor G Mirfin expressed concern regarding the number of absences and asked about the overall health of staff. The ACFO responded that the staff were very fit and healthy but that firefighters worked in a role that placed significant demands on physical fitness and required a high level of physical capability and endurance. It was noted that, in addition to their own personal fitness regimes, firefighters were required to do two hours a day of robust training exercises. As well as healthy training and fitness regimes, staff were also aware of the benefits of healthy nutrition. The Group Manager – Protection also reassured members of the Service's procedures in the event of a near miss. The Head of People – Human Resources then commented on the Service's focus on good nutrition and gave the example of encouraging staff towards the use of air fryers to cook healthier meals. The Chair asked if injuries were sustained in or out of work and the ACFO commented that either could be the case. The ACFO indicated that we now were comparing benchmark data which evidenced national trends for firefighter injuries which could be built into future reports. County Councillor G Mirfin commented on firefighters' fitness and resilience in the past compared to the present and commented that the higher incidence of mental health issues was of concern. The ACFO commented that a high level of base fitness was very important when joining the Service. Mental health-related absence was attributed to a range of factors, most commonly personal circumstances, but also workplace-related stress arising from events or incidents experienced at work. Area Manager Phil Jones noted an increase in staff experiencing trauma following attendance at distressing incidents. County Councillor A Riggott enquired as to how the KPI was set and the ACFO confirmed that it was set according to a national standard. The Chair asked whether most absences where typically in one block of time and the ACFO confirmed this was the case with long-term sickness cases. County Councillor A Riggott commented that it would be helpful to know the percentage figures for staff who had no time off at all, against the data for staff who did have significant absences. The ACFO noted this and also shared that absence trends were monitored by the Service, to identify whether there were patterns around weekends or during school holidays. County Councillor G Mirfin commented on the small number of long-term absence cases which contributed significantly to the overall figures. The number of instances of absences increased at a broadly similar rate to the increase in shifts lost. The largest increases in instances related to musculo skeletal absences, which rose from 38 occurrences in 2024-25 to 67 occurrences in 2025-26, an increase of 29 separate periods of absence. Mental health absences increased from 34 occurrences to 60. Absence was predominantly medically supported and longer-term, not short-term sickness. Respiratory and gastrointestinal illness remained prevalent, particularly in

winter months but were typically short-term and self-resolving. The majority of time lost related to longer-term, medically supported absence, rather than repeated short-term episodes. Self-certified absences of under seven days also accounted for a significant proportion of absences with 114 occurrences which affected 109 wholetime staff.

The Service managed staff absence through an Absence Management Policy supported by the Human Resources (HR) system I-Trent which provided monthly absence reports to line managers and HR Business Partners. Employees absent due to a mental health or a stress related condition were referred early to the Occupational Health Unit and all returning employees had a return-to-work interview and relevant stress risk assessments. Support mechanisms included Occupational Health guidance, Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), access to an Employee Assistance Programme and the Firefighters Charity. If an employee did not return to work promptly, absence review meetings were held to explore support options such as modified duties or redeployment; outcomes could include dismissal or ill health retirement.

Formal review thresholds were triggered by:

- Short-term absence: three or more periods of absence in six months or 14 days
- Long-term absence: reviews at three, six, nine and 11 months.

During Quarter 4, 14 Stage 1 and one Stage 2 meeting were conducted.

1.2.2 Staff Absence On Call
This indicator measured the percentage of contracted hours lost due to sickness for all on-call contracted staff. The annual standard was for no more than 2.5% lost as a % of available hours of cover. Cumulative on-call absence (as a % of available hours cover) at the end of the quarter was 1.47%.

1.2.3 Staff Absence Green Book
This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for support staff divided by the average strength.

- Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.
- Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters: 2
- Quarter shifts lost: 1.69
- Cumulative shifts lost: 5.97

This was a positive exception report due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being below the Service target. The agreed target performance level was eight shifts lost per employee per year for Green Book staff. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group of staff was 5.97, which was 2.21 within target. During the same period the previous year, 7.22 shifts were lost which was a decrease of shifts lost compared to the same period last year.

During the period, January 2026 – March 2026, absence statistics showed non-uniformed personnel absence below target for the quarter, with 1.69 shifts lost in the quarter against a target of 2.00 shifts lost.

1,482 non-uniformed absence shifts lost equated to 5.97 against a target of 8.00

during quarter 1 to quarter 4. There were no cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the three months. The number of long-term absence cases recorded in the quarter remained at four in Quarter 4:

- Mental health: 3 cases
- Other absence types: 1 case

179 shifts were lost during the quarter as a result of the above four cases of long-term absences in comparison to 188 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. These cases accounted for 0.69 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

1,482 Green Book absence shifts lost in the year equated to 5.97 against a target of 8.00.

During 2025-26, Green Book absence was largely driven by a small number of long-term absence cases, relating to mental health conditions, Musculo-skeletal and hospital or post-operative recovery. Stress related absences related to a small number of individuals, accounting for 175 shifts lost over six individual occurrences.

Short-term absence due to respiratory infections, gastro-intestinal illness and headaches or migraines, followed a seasonal pattern, with higher levels in the autumn and winter.

In summary, absence was predominantly medically supported and longer term, not short-term casual sickness. Absence management, employee support and formal review thresholds were as detailed under KPI 1.2.1.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity
This indicator measured diversity as a percentage and a combined diversity percentage of all staff. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter and the percentage within the brackets illustrated the same quarter of the previous year:

- Gender – Female 23% (21%), Male 77% (79%)
- Ethnicity – Other than white 4% (3%), White 91% (94%), Not stated 5% (3%)
- Sexual orientation – LGBT 5% (4%), Heterosexual 64% (57%), Not stated 31% (39%)
- Disability – Disability 4% (3%), No disability 93% (94%), Not stated 3% (3%)

1.3.2 Workforce Diversity Recruited
This indicator measured workforce diversity recruited as a percentage. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter and the percentage within the brackets illustrated the same quarter of the previous year:

- Gender – Female 26% (32%), Male 74% (68%)
- Ethnicity – Other than white 4% (5%), White 86% (90%), Not Stated 10% (5%)
- Sexual Orientation – LGBT 3% (8%), Heterosexual 83% (87%), Not stated 14% (5%)
- Disability – Disability 3% (4%), No disability 88% (94%), Not stated 9% (2%)

During Quarter 4, there were a total of 37 new recruits. The ACFO reported that the recruitment figure was generally consistent each quarter.

	1.4 Staff Accidents This indicator measured the number of accidents which occurred to staff members at work within the quarter. Total number of staff accidents was 11 for quarter 4; year to date 55; previous year to date 61. Quarterly activity increased 31.25% (5 incidents) over the same quarter of the previous year. Year to date activity decreased 9.84% over the same period of the previous year. **2.1 Risk Map** This indicator measured the fire risk in each Super Output Area (SOA). Risk was determined using fire activity over the previous 3 fiscal years along with a range of demographic data, such as population and deprivation. The annual standard was to reduce the risk in Lancashire – an annual reduction in the County risk map score. Calculation used: (Dwelling Fires ÷ Total Dwellings) + (Dwelling Fire Casualties ÷ Resident Population x 4) + Building Fire + (IMD x 2) = Risk Score. The current score was 30,532 and the previous year's score was 30,750 which meant that the fire risk continued to reduce. County Councillor G Mirfin and County Councillor A Riggott asked whether more detail could be provided in the report about changes to the risk profile of particular areas. **2.2 Overall Activity and Breakdown** This indicator measured the number of incidents that LFRS attended with one or more pumping appliances. Incidents attended included fires, special service calls, false alarms, and collaborative work undertaken with other emergency services such as missing person searches on behalf of Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and gaining entry incidents at the request of the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). • Incidents attended year to date - 17,663 • Previous year to date - 16,939 • Quarterly activity decreased 5.80% over the same quarter of the previous year. In Quarter 4, the Service attended 3,786 incidents. The report presented a chart which represented the count and percentage that each activity had contributed to the overall quarter's activity: • False Alarm incidents made up 45% of activity. Fire alarm due to apparatus incidents accounted for 28% of incidents, good intent false alarm 16%, and malicious false alarms accounted for 1%. • Fire Primary incidents encompassed Accidental Dwelling Fires, which accounted for 45% of primary fires (KPI 2.3). • Fire Secondary incidents, caused by either a deliberate or accidental act, or the cause was not known. Deliberate fires mainly involved loose refuse and accounted for 51% of secondary fires, with 49% due to accidental or not known cause. • Special Service incidents were made up of many different activities, so only a selection of types, such as Gaining entry to a domestic property on behalf

of NWAS and Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), effecting entry, flooding incidents can be shown. Types of other types ranged from hazardous materials incidents, to spill and leaks or advice only.

Councillor B Langford enquired as to whether the Service charged fines for false alarms caused by faulty apparatus. The ACFO confirmed the Service did not do so. The Group Manager - Protection shared that these call outs might include those from hospitals or from vulnerable, elderly individuals in sheltered accommodation and therefore the practice was not to issue fines. It was noted that the approach was different for commercial premises that generated false alarms and they received informal communications and advice to check their apparatus to avoid any recurrence. Prevention and protection work was also undertaken with organisations. The incidence of false alarms tended to decline following this informal approach to communications.

The Chair suggested a campaign could be useful to raise awareness about issues with false alarms and reduce incidences going forwards as any reduction would save the Service money. The ACFO commented that the Service tended to prefer to work directly with repeat offenders.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked for more detailed information on false alarms by district if possible. The Group Manager - Protection commented that he would share this outside the meeting.

County Councillor J Tetlow enquired whether other Services charged for false alarm calls as without fines there were no real sanctions or incentives for those responsible for the false alarms to take the appropriate remedial action. The Group Manager - Protection commented that some services do issue fines, but for LFRS it would be an additional resource requirement and therefore LFRS preferred to use the current approach to deter false alarms. County Councillor J Tetlow suggested that this activity could be outsourced and did not necessarily need to be undertaken by Service staff. County Councillor J Tetlow added that, although LFRS excels in many areas, this could be an opportunity to learn good practice from other services.

2.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected, and the cause of the fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not known'. Members noted that a primary fire was one involving property (excluding derelict property) or any fires involving casualties, rescues or any fire attended by 5 or more pumping appliances.

- Accidental Dwelling Fires, 178 in Quarter 4
- Year to date 742; previous year to date 690
- Quarterly activity had increased 3.49% over the same quarter of the previous year.

The ACFO shared that the hot weather period in Q1 saw an increase in accidental dwelling fires due to spread from outdoor fires. Cooking related incidents had also been prevalent which had led to a social media educational campaign. There was discussion of the increasing incidence of fires caused by air fryers, although the overall source for domestic fires still tended to be white goods.

The Chair asked how air fryers could ignite. The Group Manager - Protection responded they could be switched on for too long, overfilled, had the wrong materials placed inside or were not positioned appropriately.

Councillor B Langford commented that there could be issues with faulty models. The Chair asked if there should be a campaign about safer use of air fryers. The Group Manager - Protection responded that the Service issued regular communications and campaigns about cooking related issues. The Chair asked for statistics regarding how many fires are related specifically to air fryers – the request was noted.

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

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

- Fatal - 3 in Quarter 4; year to date 5; previous year to date 6
- Injuries appear Serious - 10 in Quarter 4; year to date 17; previous year to date 7
- Injuries appear Slight - 8 in Quarter 4; year to date 27; previous year to date 31

County Councillor J Tetlow asked whether there was a common cause for fatalities. The ACFO responded that the elderly and people who lived alone could be more susceptible to fire. Concern was expressed about the tendency for elderly people to use flammable blankets and sit too close to heating appliances in order to keep warm which increased the risk of fire. County Councillor J Tetlow suggested a winter campaign to promote heated blanket use as they were very effective at heating the individual and very energy efficient.

2.3.2 ADF – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)
The KPI related to the extent of fire, heat and smoke damage recorded at the time the STOP message was sent and included all damage types. The table provided in the report gave a breakdown of fire severity at ADFs, with a direction indicator comparing the current quarter to the same quarter of the previous year. The percentage for Quarter 4 was noted as 88%, an increase of 3.25% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4 Accidental Building Fires (ABF) – Commercial Premises
The KPI related to the number of primary fires (48 in Quarter 4) where a building had been affected, other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling, and the cause of fire recorded as Accidental or Not known. Quarterly activity decreased had 26.15% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4.1 ABF (Commercial Premises) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)
This indicator related to the extent of fire, heat and smoke damage recorded at the

time the STOP message was sent and included all damage types. The table in the report provided a breakdown of fire severity at ABFs, with a direction indicator comparing the current quarter to the same quarter of the previous year. The percentage for Quarter 4 was noted as being 73% and it was noted that the combined quarterly percentage had decreased 3.45% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Commercial Premises)
This indicator related to the number of primary fires where a private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected, and the cause of fire has recorded as Accidental or Not known. Quarter 4 activity was noted as comprising of 14 incidents, 110 in the year to date (previous year's Quarter 4 total was 13, previous year to date 71.)

2.5.1 ABF (Non-Commercial Premises: Private Garages and Sheds) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)
This indicator related to the extent of fire, heat and smoke damage recorded at the time the STOP message was sent and included all damage types. As the property types of sheds and garages were typically a single room construction, there was an increased likelihood that the whole building was affected. The figure for Quarter 4 was noted at 29%, the combined quarterly percentage had increased 13.19% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6 Deliberate Fires Total: Specific performance measure of deliberate fires
This indicator related to the number of primary and secondary fires where the cause of fire has been recorded as deliberate. The Quarter 4 figure was 293 (2,064 year to date). Quarterly activity decreased 34.74% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings
This indicator related to the number of primary fires where a dwelling was affected and the cause of fire has been recorded as deliberate. The Quarter 4 figure was 10 (year to date 67). Quarterly activity had decreased 52.38% over the same quarter the previous year.

2.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises
This indicator recorded the number of primary fires where the property type was a building, other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate. A second incident activity line was shown which excluded Crown premises which fell outside of the Fire Service's legislative jurisdiction. Quarter 4 activity was noted as being comprised of 20 incidents, 137 year to date. Quarterly activity had decreased 47.37% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In terms of deliberate fires which occurred in Crown premises, there was discussion of the launch of fire prevention, education and self-safety programmes for prisoners. Councillor S Sidat asked whether the Service had the ability to monitor released prisoners who had previously set fires in prison. The ACFO commented that it was difficult when a person moved outside the area but that there would be a move to a person-centred rather than an address based area-focused approach going forward.

County Councillor J Tetlow asked about the use of vapes to set fires in cells and enquired why these were made available to prisoners. The Group Manager – Protection and ACFO confirmed that it was not possible to ban access to or use of vapes by prisoners. There was however a collaborative approach with the prison service to consider ways to mitigate the risks of vape usage in cells.

2.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Other (Rubbish, grassland, vehicles)
This indicator recorded the number of primary and secondary fires where the property type was other than a building, except where the building was recorded as disused, and the cause of fire recorded as deliberate. The majority of deliberate fires were noted as being outdoor secondary fires and included grassland and refuse fires. Abandoned vehicle fires were also included under secondary fires. There had been 263 incidents in Quarter 4 and 1860 in the year to date. Quarterly activity had decreased 32.56% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.7 Home Fire Safety Checks (HF SC)
This indicator showed the percentage of completed HFSCs, excluding refusals, carried out by LFRS personnel in the home, where the risk score was determined to be high. Quarterly activity was noted as being 54%, an increase of 11.1% against the same quarter of the previous year, whilst the high-risk outcomes remained static.

2.8 Prevention Activities delivered
The ACFO spoke about the incredibly high prevention and education engagement the Service had with different groups via a range of strategies and programmes. The various road safety programmes were detailed in the report to follow later in the meeting.

2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks
This indicator recorded the number of Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC) - interventions which looked at different aspects of fire safety compliance and included risk assessments, fire alarms, escape routes and fire doors. If the result of a BFSC was unsatisfactory, fire safety advice was provided to help the business comply with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. If critical fire safety issues were identified, a business safety advisor conducted a follow-up intervention. Quarter 4 activity was recorded as being 810; cumulative year to date activity was 3060; 2774 checks were judged satisfactory and 286 were unsatisfactory. This was a positive exception as the number of completed Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC) was greater than 10% of the quarterly target, and the cumulative year to date target.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity
This indicator showed the number of Fire Safety Enforcement inspections carried out within the period. These inspections supported businesses to improve and become compliant with fire safety regulations or would result in the taking of formal action of enforcement and prosecution of those that failed to comply. Formal activity was defined as one or more of the following: enforcement notice or an action plan, alterations notice or prohibition notice. Quarterly activity remained static against the same quarter of the previous year at 5%.

2.10 Building Regulation Consultations (BRC)
With regards to Building Regulations, it was noted that if a business intended to carry out building work it had to do so in accordance with the requirements of current Building Regulations. There were two building control bodies that were able to be used, the Local Authority or an Approved Inspector. These bodies were responsible for ensuring compliance with building regulations which generally applied when:

- Erecting a new building
- Extending or altering an existing building
- Providing services or fittings in a building
- Altering the use of a building

The purpose of the consultation process was noted: If the Regulatory Reform, Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO), applied to the premises, or would apply following the work, the building control body must have consulted with LFRS. LFRS would then comment on FSO requirements and might also provide additional advice relevant to the building type which, if adopted, would enhance safety or resilience (for example, use of sprinklers). LFRS did not have the authority to enforce building regulations but could offer observations to the building control body regarding compliance if it was felt the proposals might not comply. In addition to securing a safe premises, an important outcome of the process was to ensure that the completed building met the requirements of the FSO once occupied, so that no additional works were necessary.

County Councillor A Riggott enquired as to whether there could be additional detail provided in future reports on the number of consultations progressed by the Service before planning decisions were made.

3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance
This indicator was in relation to critical fire incidents which were defined as incidents likely to involve a significant threat to life, structures or the environment. Response standards, in respect of critical fires, were variable and determined by the risk map (KPI 2.1) and subsequent risk grade of the Super Output Area (SOA) in which the fire occurred. The response standards included call handling and fire engine response time for the first fire engine attending a critical fire, as follows:

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

The Service achieved set standards when the time between the ‘Time of Call’ (TOC) and ‘Time in Attendance’ (TIA) of the first fire engine which arrived at the incident, averaged over the quarter, was less than the relevant response standard. The Quarter 4 response time average was noted as 7:46 minutes which the ACFO commented was extremely fast.

3.2 Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance
This indicator related to critical special service incidents which were non-fire incidents where there was risk to life, for example, road traffic collisions, rescues and hazardous materials incidents. For these incidents there was a single response

standard which measured call handling time and fire engine response time. The response standard for the first fire engine which attended a critical special service call was 13 minutes – the quarter response was noted as being 9:05 minutes (the year to date response time was 8:49 minutes, compared to previous year to date of 8:46 minutes).

3.3 Fire Engine Availability
The ACFO commented that there would be a report presented later in the meeting specifically related to this KPI.

4.1 Progress Against Allocated Budget
This indicator was regarding the total cumulative value of the savings delivered to date compared to the year's standard and the total. As a public service, LFRS were committed to providing a value for money service to the community and was committed to maintain spending within the set budget.

The 2025-26 revenue outturn position was £77.2 million against a £77.5 million net annual budget. The £0.3 million saving was mainly attributable to savings on pay due to carrying vacant posts.

The 2025-26 capital outturn was £6.2 million against a revised budget of £7.1 million. The remaining £0.9 million would slip into 2026-27. Extended lead times and resourcing shortfall ensued the slippage.

4.2 Partnership Collaboration
This indicator provided an update on work with partners. The ACFO commented on various strands such as:

- **Leadership Development** – opportunities for work with other Blue Light organisations who faced similar leadership challenges as well as an established coaching and mentoring network.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – an example given was The Firelight Project developed by Cuerden Valley Park Trust in collaboration with LFRS, Lancashire Police and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). The project aimed to establish a mental health and wellbeing hub within Cuerden Valley Park which provided support to those serving in Blue Light and associated services. In March, LFRS had the privilege of taking part in the inaugural Experience Day, with the pilot programme launched on 29 April 2026.
- **Estates and Co-location** – the initiative between LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon aimed to identify opportunities for shared sites, enhancing collaboration and value for money. Successful co-location at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston, and other Fire Stations had improved operational efficiency and fostered stronger inter-service relationships, ultimately benefiting Lancashire communities. The group had also proved successful in providing an understanding of each organisation's structures, processes, procedures and planned change in relation to the Estate and Asset Management. Current work included sharing of Fire Safety best practice from LFRS.
- **Fleet** – it was reported that Heads of Fleet departments across the three services met regularly and shared best practice, information and standards. Work took place to identify areas of similarity where collaboration would be beneficial and ensured that interoperability was factored into any strategic

fleet decisions. A specific workstream was looking at the introduction of electric vehicles into the fleet and the shared access to charging infrastructure.

- **Recruitment** – was the most recent subgroup set up with HR representatives from all three services. This group looked at opportunities for joint recruitment initiatives, improvements to vetting and reference protocol, reviewed best practice for supporting applicants with neurodiverse conditions and considered cost saving collaboration through shared recruitment events and recruitment material.
- **Procurement** – the LFRS Procurement department operated with several public sector collaborative procurement streams. Recent examples where savings have been made included the procurement of fire ground radios, Altberg boots (worn by all operational personnel) and gym equipment purchase. A blue light savings tracker was maintained by procurement to keep track of these savings. LFRS were currently undergoing a process to introduce new Breathing Apparatus sets across the service. These sets were purchased as part of a regional procurement process which offered not only value for money, but also improved resilience, standardisation, interoperability and governance across multiple organisations.

The Chair asked whether there was progress with Lancashire County Council in terms of collaboration and use of some of their sites. The ACFO responded that the Director of Corporate Services (LFRS) had looked at a number of suggested sites and felt they needed significant investment but that discussions continued about the options available for co-location and shared sites to be discussed in the capital working group.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked for a copy of the updated Blue Light collaboration document – the request was noted by the ACFO.

In terms of Fleet collaboration, County Councillor G Mirfin commented that there were many maintenance facilities in Council highways yards and there could be an opportunity for a shared service model. County Councillor G Mirfin suggested this was an area where economies could be made.

Regarding procurement, County Councillor G Mirfin expressed interest in finding out more detail about the partners with whom the LFRS procurement department collaborated and commented that it could be useful for them to engage in some joint procurement exercises with Lancashire County Council. The ACFO commented on the tight parameters the Service worked on within procurement and the usage of Blue Light frameworks. County Councillor G Mirfin enquired whether there could be improvements made to the procurement cycle in terms of tendering timeframes and indicated that there were Members with experience in this regard. The ACFO noted the comments for sharing with the Director of Corporate Services (DoCS).

4.3 Overall User Satisfaction

This indicator recorded the percentage of people who were satisfied with the service received from the total number of people surveyed. The Quarter 4 figure was noted as 98.56% which was above Service standard of 97.5%. It was noted that the people surveyed include those who had experienced an accidental

	dwelling fire, a commercial fire, or those who were present at a special service incident. During the quarter, 100 people were surveyed; 98 responded that they were very or fairly satisfied. County Councillor J Tetlow asked about the nature of negative user feedback and the ACFO gave an example of when the Service had gained entry to premises in support of the NHS Ambulance Service in cases of medical emergency and the resident of the property had objected. **Resolved: -** That the Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 4 Measuring Progress report, including two positive and one negative exception.
5-26/27	**North West Fire Control Quarter 4 2025-26**
	K Matthews, Head of Operations at North West Fire Control, was welcomed to the meeting by the Chair and provided Members with a summary of North West Fire Control's performance during Quarter 4 of 2025-26. **Number of Emergency Calls** In Quarter 4, the average mobilisation times to fire related incidents was 85 seconds. This represented a 3 second increase compared with the same quarter last year, but performance remained within 5 seconds of the 90 second KPI.There was a decrease from Quarter 3 in average call duration from to 125 seconds. **Incoming Administrative Calls** The average call duration for Quarter 4 2025–2026 was 71.3 seconds, representing a decrease of 3 seconds compared with Quarter 3 2025–2026 and a 4-second reduction compared with the corresponding quarter in 2024–2025. **Outgoing Administrative Calls** Due to a loss in telephony reporting data between January to February 2026, the period contained gaps and anomalies within the data set. **Incoming Group Request to Speak (GRTS)** Group Request to Speak were incoming radio message transmissions from Fire and rescue service (FRS) appliances to Fire Control. Supporting crews at incidents was noted as one of NWFC's core functions. Analysis of Quarter 4 performance indicated that incoming GRTS averaged 69 seconds which represented a 3 second reduction compared with the previous quarter. NWFC continued to monitor performance trends and associated data. **Average Time to Answer Emergency Calls** Based on the available call data, average call answer times showed a strong and consistent improvement trajectory. In Quarter 4, the average dropped to 5.2 seconds, down from 6.8 seconds in Quarter 3. This built on significant year on year improvement from 8.0 seconds in Quarter 4 for the previous year and showed sustained improvements in responsiveness and the continued effectiveness of operational improvements in reducing customer call waiting times. **Calls Not Requiring a Mobilisation** Call Challenges were used by NWFC to ask set questions to decide if an

immediate response was required. 98% involved Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) or Gaining Entry for NWAS. Based on the average number of minutes spent travelling to AFAs and Gaining Entry, attending incidents and travelling back to station, data taken over an 8-day period highlighted this time equated to a 30-minute period. Quarter 4 had 3978 non-mobilisations, which equates to £220,421 in cost if one pump had been mobilised to these incidents.

Further data analysed from January to March 2026, indicated a total of 11,042 incidents (42%) were not mobilised to (including above mandatory FRS required scripted calls). This did not include repeat calls. If the same cost model as above was utilised, 11,042 incidents equated to £611,837 for Quarter 4. Call handling times for non-mobilisations were noted as often being more protracted. It was acknowledged these did not create physical savings for partners, however without the call challenge, activities such as training, exercising, community events and inspections would be impacted or would need to be resourced by other means.

Percentage of Shifts Covered
The figure for Quarter 4 was noted as being 79%. It was reported that no shift fell below critical or essential staffing thresholds or was without relevant supervision. Sickness had impacted staffing numbers, as had vacancies within the rota.

Skill Levels of Control Room Operators (CROs)
Proficiency levels remained strong, with 81% of staff assessed as 'Proficient or above' across the control room. This reflected a solid baseline of operational competence and capability within the teams. While this figure was expected to temporarily reduce in the next quarter due to the introduction of four new recruits in May 2026, this was a positive indicator of ongoing workforce expansion and investment in future capacity. The organisation continued to actively monitor experience levels within the control room to ensure safe and effective operations were maintained. The restructure of CRO pay during 2024-2025, as part of a broader strategy to enhance retention and strengthen long-term workforce stability, had demonstrated a clear and positive impact. Recruitment continued to be a key priority, with further CRO hiring initiatives actively progressed under the oversight of the Workforce Planning and Development Committee to support sustained operational resilience.

Skill Level of Supervisors
Competency remained high and stable. Temporary secondments had resulted in opportunities for other staff to act up in roles and succession planning was in place.

Absence – number of shifts lost per person
The number of shifts lost per person was 3.59. Consistent with trends seen throughout the year, mental health remained one of the leading causes of absence and accounted for 39% of all absences recorded in 2025-2026. This highlighted the ongoing importance of targeted wellbeing initiatives, early intervention, and supportive management practices. National Fire Control sickness data for Quarter 4 2025–2026 was not available.

Mobilising enquiries raised by Fire and Rescue Service
NWFC received approximately 28,500 emergency calls during Quarter 4, which resulted in 17 enquiries made regarding mobilisations. Four of these enquiries

determined that NWFC attributed to the cause, equating to 1 enquiry per 7125 emergency calls at a percentage of 0.01%.

Exercises and Formal debriefs
During Quarter 4, NWFC conducted a total of 30 exercises, of which 24 were facilitated and 6 were participation based. There were 6 debriefs held.

Overall Summary
- Performance was stable and improving
- Call handling was significantly improved
- Workforce capability was improving and strong.

Key risks
- System data issues had affected the data for this report – an internal debrief would discuss how this could be mitigated going forwards.
- Absence trends needed to be monitored, return to work meetings held and staff supported to return to the workforce.
- Recruitment – a campaign was planned for September 2026 and January 2027.

County Councillor J Tetlow asked whether there was confidence that the data presented was accurate, given some data had been lost due to a system failure. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) replied that the data loss was for a week in December and a three week period in January and February 2026. In relation to the call data provided, it was a relatively low loss and information had been generated from other sources such as the recording of 999 calls and mobilisation data.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked for details of the nature of the outage that took place. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) explained that it was due to a telephony and radio system upgrade and a resulting configuration issue. A fall back system (landline phones with no recording function) had been utilised but it was not possible to retrieve data from that system.

Councillor B Langford commented on the number of shifts lost due to personal mental health issues and asked whether staff had access to an employee engagement programme for support. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) confirmed this was in place as well as access to other support mechanisms and counselling provision. It was noted that control room staff were exposed to some traumatic calls and incidents and the service was conscious of the importance of providing appropriate wellbeing support for colleagues.

Councillor B Langford asked whether the various mental health support that staff accessed was felt to be successful. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) responded that the Business Support Team reviewed this and noted that there was success in getting staff back into work, sometimes with modified duties.

Councillor B Langford enquired about staff recruitment and staff turnover, what were the challenges, were exit interviews routinely held and were there any staffing resources that could be utilised from other services. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) responded that there had been recent improvements in staff

	recruitment and retention. It was shared that staff from NWAS and the Police had attended for interviews though call handling was noted as being different to that across other services. Salaries were competitive with other services following a review. Exit interviews were held and recent responses indicated that the role did not suit the individuals due to the nature of shift work. The Service was aware that the role was challenging but training, support and development opportunities for those who wished to progress were in place. Councillor B Langford asked if there were experience days offered for colleagues from other Blue Light services. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) responded that there were exercises such as familiarisation days offered to other agencies, as well as inter agency control room networking opportunities. Collaborative work across the emergency services had increased. County Councillor J Tetlow asked whether there was a drive to increase numbers of male recruits in the control room and enquired whether a hybrid working pattern was possible or was there a benefit from being based in the control room centre. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) responded that the control room role was not just about the call handling itself but also included incident management which benefitted from being part of a wider team based in the control room. In terms of male recruitment, a broader pool of applicants had emerged but recruitment was based on the experience and skills of individual candidates for the role. The Chair asked whether the data provided for the North West region could be broken down into Lancashire data and asked if there was an option to obtain information on the total amount of shifts lost and total number of individuals involved. The Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) indicated that she would look into obtaining the shift data. In terms of the call data however, this could not be separated into Lancashire calls but LFRS would already have access to data regarding the number of incidents. The Chair thanked the Head of Operations (North West Fire Control) for the report. **Resolved: -** That the Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 4 performance report for North West Fire Control for 2025-26.
6-26/27	**Road Safety Intervention Activity Annual Report 2025-26**
	The ACFO handed over to the Prevention Support Officer who presented an update on activities undertaken in 2025-26. It was noted that the Road Thematic Road Safety Group continued to meet every quarter and there were strong links with CFA Member and Road Safety Champion. Updates were given on the following initiatives: • **Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP)** – LFRS continued to work with partners on the strategy 'Ambition for Vision Zero' to reduce those killed or seriously injured on the roads. LFRS had a particular role in the delivery of education. • **Road Safety Core Prevention Offer** – included the Road Sense road safety education programme delivered to Year 6 pupils. The focus was on

five key road safety themes selected to reflect Lancashire's issues with young people: In Car Safety, Pedestrian Safety, Cycle Safety, Be Safe Be Seen, Bus Safety, E-bikes & E-scooters. Positive feedback had been received from schools. Due to the increasing issues with E-bikes and E-scooters, the CFA Road Safety Champion agreed to an additional A5 fun activity sheet being printed to hand out at the end of the session which highlighted the law around these vehicles and fire safety considerations. During the current reporting period, 19,759 Year 6 pupils were recorded as receiving this input, with 593 sessions being delivered, the highest delivery since the package was developed.

- **'Wasted Lives' Young Driver Road Safety Education Programme** – LFRS was now the only delivery partner for Wasted Lives on behalf of LRSP. The programme was aimed at young and pre-drivers and aimed to influence behaviour and change attitudes. For the period 2025-2026, LFRS recorded delivery of the programme to 11,081 young people over 97 sessions. Whilst the focus was primarily on delivering in high schools, there had been an increase in the number of requests for delivery to apprentice groups and colleges following the removal of 'Safe Drive Stay Alive' intervention through LRSP. A Christmas Road Safety Campaign was also organised in conjunction with the military at Halton Barracks focused on Lancashire's Fatal 5 (Speeding, Drugs, Alcohol, Mobile Phones and Seatbelts). Over 90 soldiers attended a well-received half-day session. Statistically, the military lose more soldiers to RTCs than in war zones. Further engagement work had taken place through the delivery of Wasted Lives sessions to both Police and Air Cadet groups, covering pre-drivers and new drivers who might not be in mainstream schools. A project to deliver an adapted Wasted Lives session to Young Farmers groups, including the Crashed Car, continued following its launch in December.
- **'The Crashed Car'** – a complement to the 'Wasted Lives' provision which used a vehicle from a real incident where a fatality had occurred. During the 12-month reporting period, crashed car use had increased at Mosques during Friday Prayers and work had been undertaken in the Central, Eastern and Pennine areas, alongside the Imams to deliver key messages prior to prayers. This kind of engagement continued to improve, with Lancashire Council of Mosques working alongside the Service to reinforce the importance of key messages. This was highlighted at the first Road Safety Summit held in Pendle, which was broadcast on the radio to thousands of listeners nationwide. The event included a clear call to action for influential members of the community to come together and drive positive behaviour change.
- **Biker Down** – a free 3-hour course offered to members of the public, with three modules covered: Incident Management, First Aid and The Science of Being Seen. LFRS worked with LRSP to ensure delivery was complementary to Bike Safe, a Police-led initiative. During this reporting period 165 motorcyclists were killed or seriously injured. Lancashire's statistics showed riders were 72 times more likely to die on a motorcycle than in a car on our roads, which was higher than the national average of 60. There were 384 attendees at 18 Biker Down sessions in the last 12-months and appetite for the courses continued to grow. The pre and post questionnaire continued to show very positive behaviour change. This year,

Biker Down was able to purchase First Aid Kits through the CFA Road Safety Champion budget. Over the last 12-months, the team had developed links with a motorbike franchise which supported delivery for six months and new links had since been made with another franchise based in Blackpool.

- **Alive to Drive Events –** over the last 12-months, five of the main Road Safety Summer Events have taken place across the county: in Leyland, Preston, Blackpool, Morecambe and Blackburn. Over the years, the event had grown significantly with support from many partners. The initial aim had been to encourage people to sign up to the Institute of Advanced Motorist/ Motorcyclist courses, and whilst this was still a key focus, the event had expanded to ensure there is relevant information for all ages and types of road users. The pinnacle of the event was the RTC demonstration. This was a multi-agency demonstration between LFRS, NWAS and Lancashire Constabulary which allowed members of the public to see what happens inside a road closure during an incident. The events also provided the opportunity to interweave key safety messages around Lancashire's Fatal 5 and the factors which contribute most to serious and fatal road traffic collisions. This year's events also featured a display of illegal E-bikes/ E-scooters to highlight the dangers they pose, explained which vehicles were road legal, and outlined the implications of being prosecuted for using illegal vehicles. This complemented Lancashire Constabulary Operation Centurion, which had a primary focus on anti-social driving. Alarmingly, these illegal vehicles were involved in six fatalities and 200 injuries last year on Lancashire's roads. A partnership was also established with Global Ardour, who now sponsored the events and provided a scrap car for the RTC demonstration free of charge.

- **Road Safety Week 2025** – this was very successful and busy, with extensive activity delivered through a multi-agency approach. It included the delivery of Wasted Lives sessions in colleges, high schools, and for targeted groups of apprentices. There was an increase in road safety activity across each area, with very targeted education taking place. Each area was tasked with delivering two Wasted Lives sessions to at risk groups (Year 10 or 11 in high schools or apprentice groups), many areas did more than asked. During this reporting period, the LFRS Biker Down team also represented the programme at the NEC National Motorcycle Show. Over the course of the show, an estimated 80,000 people attended. Social media posts reached nearly 60,000 people, with over 2,000 engagements, allowing messages to be shared while also highlighting the key road safety campaign work delivered. In addition, through a partnership with EG Garages, an animated Fatal 5 clip was played on forecourts across the UK. The same clip was also shown on the big screens at all Blackburn Rovers matches at half time, following a road safety awareness event in the run-up to Christmas which included an RTC demonstration.

In summary, the last 12-month period was a very positive period for road safety education and engagement. Road safety education has been delivered to around 34,000 people in schools, colleges, workplaces and at events. The Service continued to be an active member of the LRSP.

In terms of priorities for 2025-26, there were plans for further development of

	engagement at primary and secondary school and higher education level and with groups outside these settings, including the Child and Youth Justice Service, to deliver bespoke Wasted Lives sessions. Evaluation of all initiatives and campaigns was ongoing to ensure these were targeted appropriately, influenced positive behaviour change and presented value for money. Each road death costed society £2.3 million but more importantly, behind each death was a bereaved family whose lives were changed forever. Service staff were well placed to educate local communities and reinforce that road safety was everyone's responsibility. The Chair thanked the Prevention Support Officer for the comprehensive report. County Councillor G Mirfin confirmed that County Councillor J Ash had now replaced County Councillor J Fox as Road Safety Champion. **Resolved: -** That the Committee noted and endorsed the report.
7-26/27	**Annual Review of Key Performance Indicator 3.3 - Fire Engine Availability**
	The ACFO presented the report. Further to the scrutiny of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by Members of the CFA Performance Committee, the Service was asked to reflect on the suitability of the 'Fire Engine Availability' KPIs with particular reference to the On Call (OC) measure. On the 17 July 2023, Members of the CFA Planning Committee approved the recommendation to combine the two Wholetime (WT) and OC availability performance measures, into a single station-based performance measure (resolution 08/23). Members agreed to change the previous KPIs (3.3.1) WT availability target of 99.5% and the (3.3.2) OC target of an aspirational 95%, into a combined (KPI 3.3) 90% first pump availability target across the 39 fire stations in Lancashire. It was agreed this would be reviewed annually. Members were recommended to maintain the combined 90% first pump availability target across the 39 fire stations in Lancashire. It was also proposed that the requirement for an annual review be removed. This 'Availability KPI' reported on the combined availability of the primary asset at each of the 39 locations, in percentage terms, whether that was a WT or OC appliance. This aligned with the Response Standard KPI approach which measured 1st pump response times and gave a true indication of the speed of response and first intervention provided across each of the 39 risk areas. As such the KPI reported availability by virtue of all first pumps at WT, flexi day crewed and day crewing plus stations in addition to the first pumps at stand-alone OC stations. At the national level, on-call availability remained a significant challenge, as emphasised by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Ongoing efforts, both locally and nationally, were focused on addressing these key issues. Within the Service, considerable initiatives were underway to enhance recruitment, training, retention, and the wider use of on-call personnel, all while maintaining

	realistic role expectations given the limited training hours available each week. The total availability over 2025-26 was 89.55%, slightly below the 90% target. However, availability had increased over the year with the latest quarter being above the standard: Quarter 1 – 89.32% Quarter 2 – 88.58% Quarter 3 – 89.67% Quarter 4 – 90.67% Four months of the year recorded above the standard: April 90.08%, December 90.53%, January 91.78%, and March 90.29%. The Service KPI change appeared to provide an appropriate balance of oversight and ambition for fire engines crewed by both WT and OC firefighters. The 90% availability performance standard was supplemented by further internal KPIs for use by local managers to drive contractual performance and ensure value for money. County Councillor A Riggott moved the report which was seconded by County Councillor J Tetlow and all members voted in favour. **Resolved: -** That the Committee recommended to maintain the combined 90% first pump availability target across the 39 fire stations in Lancashire. That the requirement for an annual review be removed.
8-26/27	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 10:00 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for Wednesday 9 December 2026 and Wednesday 3 March 2027.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Proceedings of Planning Committee held 13 July 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Planning Committee meeting held 13 July 2026.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Planning Committee meeting held on 13 July 2026.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

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Appendix 1

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Monday, 13 July 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
N Alderson	
S Asghar (Vice-Chair)	
J Ash	
G Baker	
I Duxbury (Chair)	
F Jackson	
A Joynes (Substitute)	
R Walsh	

Officers
S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) S Collinson, Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement (LFRS) T Powell, Area Manager, Head of Service Improvement (LFRS) T Cookson, Area Manager, Head of Leadership and Development (LFRS) D Howell, Monitoring Officer (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance

1-26/27	**Apologies for Absence**
	Apologies were received from Councillor J Hugo and County Councillor L Parker with County Councillor A Joynes in attendance as substitute.
2-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.
3-26/27	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**
	Resolved: That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 2 February 2026 be

	confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4-26/27	**Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2027-32, Service Review and Consultation**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report to members, the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2027-2032 provided details of what Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service intended to do over the forthcoming five-year period to identify, assess and mitigate the full range of fire and rescue related risks within Lancashire. The risk management planning processes provided the opportunity to demonstrate how the service intended to fulfil its responsibilities in a clear, cohesive way, to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services teams, communities, and other interested parties. In writing a Community Risk Management Plan each Fire Authority must pay due regard to the National Framework guidance issued by central government, maintaining a clear and current understanding of the risks that affected Lancashire's communities underpinned everything that the service does – driving both its governance and planning arrangements.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained the approach taken in producing the Community Risk Management Plan including timelines and outlined the approach to the service review which would entail reviewing all Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services to ensure they were well prepared to deliver the activities and interventions in the new Community Risk Management Plan.

The Community Risk Management Plan 2027-2032:-

- Highlighted Lancashire's risks;
- Explained how Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service would manage and reduce fire and rescue related risk in Lancashire;
- Set out the services priorities and values;
- Identified the services core strategies
- Set out the services ambitions against each priority and stated how the service aimed to deliver these;
- Illustrated how Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service would measure and assure performance.

The paper taken to Planning Committee on 17 November 2025 outlined the services approach to the development of the Community Risk Management Plan. Initially it was intended that development work and consultation would include a wider Service Review, delivered at the same time. Whilst elements of the Service Review were underway, it was proposed that the Response (Emergency Cover Review) element of the Service Review which would include public consultation, would now commence in July 2027 and would include reviews of prevention, protection, response and corporate services.

A pre-consultation document was submitted in December 2025 to the full Combined Fire Authority meeting for approval to engage with communities and staff. The two-phased approach to consultation allowed the service to gather early insight to inform the development of the draft Community Risk Management Plan.

Phase one Consultation was carried out from 13 January 2026 to 15 March for nine weeks and explained the challenges and drivers for change and invited views on the services proposed direction of travel. Phase one allowed the service to listen and learn about the services communities' and workforce priorities.

There were 2,223 responses to the consultation including:

- 1,911 residents representing every district in Lancashire.
- 119 partner agencies, parish and town councils, voluntary and community groups.
- 73 businesses.
- 110 employees.

There were high levels of agreement with overall views on Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service including the degree to which people trust the services safety advice, believed the service served the community well and delivered value for money. Awareness levels varied in terms of different services provided by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and house fires were perceived as the greatest risk in communities.

High levels of agreement were received with future direction statements in the consultation which related to using resources more effectively, modernising, and delivering a high-performance efficient service.

A full phase two consultation would take place during summer 2026 where the service would present and seek feedback on the Community Risk Management Plan 2027-2032. The phase two consultation would undertake structured engagement with a wide range of groups, including residents, businesses, partners and employees, to understand what mattered most to Lancashire's communities and how proposed changes may affect them.

Feedback from both stages would help ensure the final plan reflected community needs and expectations and that resources were prioritised effectively to manage risk, demand and vulnerability across Lancashire.

The new Community Risk Management Plan would go live from April 2027.

The Community Risk Management Plan identified the services priorities as;

- Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer
- Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening
- Protecting people and property when they happen
- Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently
- Using digital, data and technology to drive continuous improvement
- Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

The drivers influencing the Community Risk Management Plan were;

- Changing community risk: Climate change, emerging technologies, demographic change, deprivation, the built environment, major transport networks and evolving patterns of vulnerability were reshaping risk across Lancashire.

- Demand and complexity: Demand was not only about volume. Incidents were increasingly varied and some were more complex, protracted and resource intensive than ever before.

- Digital and data opportunity: Better use of data, digital tools, AI and automation could improve targeting, mobilising, productivity, learning and decision-making across the organisation.

- Partnership working: No single organisation could manage every risk alone. Strong collaboration with local authorities, health partners, police, other fire and rescue services, resilience forums, voluntary organisations and communities was essential.

Key areas of focus within the Community Risk Management Plan included;

- Resourcing and availability of appliances
- Identifying and assessing risk
- Response standards - As part of the Community Risk Management Plan consultation, the service wanted to gauge views on whether the current response standard model was appropriate, or whether the service should move to simpler single response standards whilst retaining the fire risk formula for prevention and resource allocation.
- Strategic Priorities
    - Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer
        - Culture, values, standards and behaviours
        - Employer of choice and workforce planning
        - Leadership and management capability
        - Talent management and succession planning
        - Wellbeing, skills and workforce capability
        - Engagement, communication and change
    - Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening
        - Home Fire Safety
        - Prevent Fires
        - Resilience to Severe weather
        - Safer Roads
        - Stronger Resilient Communities
    - Protecting people and property when fires happen
        - Target risk
        - Safer buildings
        - Stronger systems
        - Supporting delivery and performance
    - Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently
        - Availability area of focus
        - Competence area of focus
        - Preparedness area of focus
        - Operational excellence and continuous improvement

- Using digital, data and technology as a key enabler of safer, more efficient services
    - Digitally enabled workforce
    - Data maturity insight
    - Strong technical foundations
    - Cyber security and resilience
    - Value for money and continuous improvement
    - Emerging technology
    - National alignment and collaboration
- Delivering value for money in how the service uses its resources
    - Financial sustainability and resilience
    - Prioritisation and resource allocation
    - Productivity and efficiency
    - Asset sustainability and investment
    - Assurance, transparency and accountability

Progress would be measured through key performance indicators, with any changes to key performance indicators managed through the Planning Committee.

In response to a question from County Councillor J Ash in relation to response standards, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that historically there had been national standards for response, however services now set their own response standards as part of the Community Risk Management Plan process, with national research suggesting that many services across the country now utilised one response standard. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service had four response standards for critical fires and would consult as part of the Community Risk Management Plan on moving to a single response standard. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that often the service only knew which response standard it should have achieved on conclusion of an incident once a full assessment of the incident had taken place, as response standards were linked to the risk of lower-layer super output areas which were reassessed annually as part of the services strategic assessment of risk. Having one set response standard would ensure there were clear response expectations for both the service and members of the public.

Councillor G Baker asked if there was a penalty should response standards not be met, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that there was no penalty however this would be assessed by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services. The Inspectorate was interested whether the standards set were being met. He added that a small number of fire services did not set standards. He also emphasised that the service would always send the fire engine that would reach the incident the quickest, using technology such as Automatic Vehicle Location Systems and would always send more than one fire engine to property fires. Resources were also moved to where they were most needed to maintain a quick and effective response to members of the public.

County Councillor J Ash emphasised the importance of transparency within public services and added that she felt moving to one response standard would provide more transparency. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that the results of the consultation would be brought to the next Planning Committee meeting in November 2026, and that any proposed changes to Key Performance Indicators following the Community Risk Management Plan consultation would be included in

	any recommendations to the Planning Committee in November. The report was moved by County Councillor J Ash and seconded by Councillor G Baker with all members voting in favour. **Resolved:** That the Planning Committee; 1. Approved the draft Community Risk Management Plan 2027-2032 and consented to proceed to public consultation on 14 July 2026. 2. Noted and endorsed the revised timelines for the Service Review.
5-26/27	**His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) update**
	Area Manager Tom Powell presented the report to members. **2025-27 Inspection:** The 2025-27 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services inspection process was well underway; there was a greater focus on governance arrangements and their effects on services. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services would not evaluate the governing authority itself; instead, they would assess how Combined Fire Authority governance directly influenced Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. The people assessment would consider whether governance and oversight frameworks promoted a positive organisational culture, as well as whether the established code of conduct standards effectively supported workforce health and well-being. Leadership at all levels, values and culture, and a more detailed review of major incident preparedness would also be examined. **Change in Leadership:** Michelle Skeer OBE QPM had been appointed as His Majesty's interim Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, following approval by His Majesty the King. Michelle took up the role on 1 April 2026, succeeding Sir Andy Cooke, who left office at the end of March. Michelle brought 36 years of experience across policing and fire and rescue and would become the first woman to hold the post. **Northern Region His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and Chief Fire Officer Roadshow** Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service would host a Northern Region His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and Chief Fire Officer Roadshow on Monday, 20 July 2026. The purpose of the roadshow was to provide an opportunity for members of the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and Chief Fire Officer team to meet with Chief Fire Officers and their Deputies from across the North. This engagement aimed to support constructive dialogue, explore current challenges, enhance transparency around the inspection approach and strengthen working relationships. Early feedback and insight from services would also be gathered in order to shape the development of the 2028-2030 inspection programme.

2025– 27 Inspection Activity Update:
A total of fourteen inspections had now been completed with ten reports published. The Organisational Assurance Team continued to monitor national trends and learning from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services reports.

Department and Service Delivery Visits:
The Organisational Assurance Team had developed and implemented the new reality-testing station visit for Service Delivery. The visit content had been systematically aligned to both the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services characteristics of good and the Fire Standards Board criteria, ensuring that assurance activity was focused on the most relevant and appropriate areas. The reality-testing visit covered 33 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services characteristics of good performance and 43 Fire Standards criteria. The primary objective of the visits was to provide assurance to the organisation regarding crew knowledge and understanding across a range of critical topics. The station visits went live on 1 April 2026, and to date 6 units had been completed.

Annual Spring Data Collection:
The annual data collection was submitted on Thursday 4 June 2026. This data collection would form key lines of enquires during the services round four inspection.

Round three Area for Improvement:
The Service received one area for improvement in its round three inspection concerning Equality Impact Assessments.

Update actions included;
1. The Equality Impact Assessments Form and Guidance had been updated and published on the intranet.
2. The mechanism for administering Equality Impact Assessments had been built into a SharePoint site, this was currently being tested and should make it easier from a quality assurance and tracking of actions perspective. The SharePoint site was now live.
3. An "on the menu" session was held on Friday 6 March 2026 to raise awareness for staff on the completion of the Equality Impact Assessment process.
4. A further "On the Menu" session was scheduled for 26 June 2026, focusing on providing staff with step-by-step guidance on completing an Equality Impact Assessment.
5. Quarterly meetings were held with the Organisational Assurance Team and Human Resources to track progress and submit updates to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services portal.
6. The Organisational Assurance Team were working with Human Resources to ensure that Equality Impact Assessment quality assurance processes are robust and embedded.
7. All actions and evidence relating to the area for improvement were being managed and tracked via the Assurance Monitoring System.
8. Further Equality Impact Assessment training scheduled for 02 July 2026.

	Service Liaison Lead The Service had been appointed a new service liaison lead, Andy O'Brien who had formally spent some of his early career at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service would be inspected in early 2027 and was the last service to be inspected on this round of inspections. **Resolved:** That the Planning Committee noted the report.
6-26/27	**Annual Service Report**
	The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report to members. The Annual Service Report was produced annually by the Service as part of its accountability to measure progress against the items set out as deliverables as part of the Annual Service Plan. These actions were derived from the medium-term strategic goals highlighted in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27. The Annual Service Report highlighted a number of key deliverables against the priority areas of people, prevention, protection, response and value for money related work streams: • **Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer** o Create an organisational culture where diversity is encouraged and valued o Develop leaders who build and maintain trust in the Service o Tailor training and development for on-call firefighters o Invest in safety, health and wellbeing initiatives o Encourage and listen to employee voice o Service headquarters and leadership and development centre masterplan o Upgraded fire station facilities o A Celebration of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Services people o Honours and awards • **Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening** o Deliver targeted fire prevention activity o Evaluate Year 2 education packages o Expand fire safety community engagement • **Protecting people and property when fires happen** o Transform fire protection and business safety o Deliver tailored protection advice in diverse business communities o Implement organisational learning in response to national events o Address mid-rise premises risk across the county o Support national activity to address unsafe cladding on buildings • **Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently** o Review emergency cover in Preston o Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software o Strengthen our response to climate change emergencies o Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities o Adapt on-call response to increase emergency cover o Invest in our fleet and equipment

	The report included a summary of the Service's performance in relation to responding: Overall activity • 17,663 incidents attended • 5,342 fires attended • 668 road traffic collisions attended • 110 missing person searches • 745 gaining entry to property incidents in support of North West Ambulance Service Average attendance time • Overall - 8 minutes 54 seconds • Critical fire response – first fire engine attendance – 7 mins 50 seconds • Critical special service response – first fire engine attendance – 8 minutes 49 seconds Total availability of the first fire engine at each of the services 39 fire stations – 89.55%. • **Delivering value for money in how we use resources** o Review how we use our resources o Maximise productivity and efficiency o Drive efficiencies through digitalisation o Improve performance management culture o Collaborate with other public services County Councillor J Ash congratulated the Deputy Chief Fire Officer on his award of the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) Servant Leader Listening Award, details of which were contained within the report. **Resolved:** That the committee noted and endorsed the Annual Service Report 2025-26.
7-26/27	**Consultation relating to pilot duty system change at Fleetwood Station**
	The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report to members. At the Lancashire Combined Fire Authorities Annual General Meeting on Monday 15 June 2026, a paper was brought in relation to piloting a change to the crewing system at Fleetwood fire station from the current wholetime 2-2-4 duty system to a Flexible Day Crewing system (resolution 13-26/27). The Combined Fire Authority approved the request that the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer take a final decision on the implementation of the Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing pilot, taking account of consultation outcomes and further analysis.

	It was noted in that paper that a public consultation on this proposed change had started on 1 June and ran until 30 June. Decisions on whether or not to run public consultations ordinarily sat within the remit of the Planning Committee. However, as this pilot, if it was to be effective, needed to be implemented as soon as possible, waiting until the date of this Planning committee meeting to seek authorisation for the public consultation was not feasible. As such, the urgent business procedure was used to seek approval for the public consultation. The Chair and vice-Chair of the full Authority, and the Chair of the Planning committee were all consulted by the Chief Fire Officer and all consented to the running of the public consultation. In accordance with the urgent business procedure, this report on the use and outcome of that procedure was being brought to the next committee meeting for information. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer provided an update that following the public consultation, where the service had received around 150 responses, and carried out various local engagement with crews, the public and local Elected Members, including the Local MP, the Chief Fire Officer and the Chair of the authority had agreed the progression of the pilot with frequent reviews being undertaken to understand the impact. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that the main feedback received as part of the consultation related to response times to incidents and that around 150 responses had been received and many of them citing concerns over longer attendance times at night. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that these responses were expected, as ultimately it would be viewed by many as a reduction in service; however he also explained that the data presented to the Combined Fire Authority recently, included comparisons to risk levels in other areas of the county that had a similar crewing model in place, to what was being proposed as part of the Fleetwood pilot. He also explained that the pilot had been supported by the Fire Brigades Union and staff that live in Fleetwood but worked at other stations in the county, who would likely transfer to the station and trial system. Councillor G Baker commented that the public appeared to feel that this was a backwards step, he also advised that he had been contacted by a reporter for comment on the pilot. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that there would be no change to the number of fire engines at Fleetwood Fire Station and a fire engine would still be available at all times with other fire engines also available in the wider area, including Bispham. Five comparable stations across the service were operating the Flexible Day Crewing system effectively and should the pilot be unsuccessful the station would revert back to the previous duty system. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer emphasised that the pilot was not focusing on efficiency savings but on redistributing firefighters across the service, better aligning resources to risk and demand. He added that there would be a few minutes delay in response to incidents overnight but there would still be a very quick response. Councillor G Baker stated that he thought there was a challenge with recruiting firefighters and asked if there was a policy in relation to rehousing firefighters. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that there was a relocation allowance scheme that could be used if needed, however the service had recently had over 1000 applications for its wholetime firefighters recruitment campaign, but the main recruitment challenge was relating to on-call firefighters. He explained that the Flexible Day Crewing system was a Wholetime system and also attracted

	additional allowances including a housing allowance, retainer fee and call out fees in the evenings. **Resolved:** That the committee noted the report.
8-26/27	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on **Monday 16 November 2026** at 10:00 hours in the main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 8 March 2027 and agreed for 14 July 2027. Councillor G Baker remarked that the service being inspected last by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services reflected the positive performance of the service and commended officers for this.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Proceedings of Audit Committee held 18 August 2026

(Appendix 1 refers)

Contact for further information:
Sam Hunter, Member Services Manager - Tel: 01772 866720

Executive Summary

The proceedings of Audit Committee Extraordinary meeting held 18 August 2026.

Recommendation(s)

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

Information

Attached at Appendix 1 are the proceedings of the Audit Committee Extraordinary meeting held on 18 August 2026.

Business Risk

None.

Environmental Impact

None.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

Financial Risk

None.

HR Implications

None.

Legal Implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

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Appendix 1

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Audit Committee

Tuesday, 18 August 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
A Blake	
B Langford	
U Arif (Vice-Chair)	
A Joynes	
J Ash	
P Buckley	
M Clifford (Chair)	

Officers
S Collinson, Assistant Director - Communications and Engagement (LFRS) D Howell, Monitoring Officer S Hunter, Member Services Manager J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
In attendance

14-26/27	**Apologies for Absence**
	There were apologies from the following: County Councillor Usman Arif had been delayed.
15-26/27	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.
16-26/27	**New Constitution**
	The Monitoring Officer (MO) introduced the item. It was noted that a separate working group had been set up to revise and update the constitution for Lancashire Combined Fire Authority; the group had met several

	times to work up the draft document which was also externally assured by an experienced monitoring officer. The MO indicated that the draft constitution was in alignment with best practice from other authorities and existing legislation. The final draft comprised of three main sections: a scheme of delegation; terms of reference for the various committees and standing orders which set out the technical details about how matters would be dealt with. There were also several other miscellaneous documents which completed the picture. It was noted that further changes might be required in due course following the constitution's implementation. The document would be reviewed regularly, at least on an annual basis. Local government reorganisation would also mean that certain sections would need to be re-visited once the new unitary authorities were in place. The following sections of the constitution were particularly significant or had undergone major revision. The Chair indicated that the best course of action in the meeting was to discuss the main changes. The purpose of this extraordinary Audit Committee was to review the current draft document prior to its submission at the September 2026 full CFA meeting for approval. **Scheme of delegation** National guidance on a fire authority's scheme of delegation and legislation about operational independence of Chief Fire Officers was known to be in development. However, this was not currently available and there was no clarity as to when it would be finalised. The new scheme of delegation had been drafted so far as possible to take into account anticipated requirements of any such guidance, and schemes of delegation from a number of other authorities had been reviewed in order to distil best practice. Paragraph 6 (page 5 of the constitution) set out the matters that were reserved to the full authority These were the high level, strategic matters such as budget setting and overall direction of the fire service. Other matters were delegated to one of the three statutory officers (Chief Fire Officer; Treasurer and Monitoring Officer). Once the authority set the strategic direction, the discharge of these duties at an operational level would then be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer. It was not intended that this revised scheme of delegation would make any significant change to the current split of decision-making abilities between the authority and the service, but rather it simplified and clarified what was previously a lengthy and technical document. Of note, paragraphs 8 to 12 set out general principles of delegation which should ensure that no issue which should be considered by the Authority would be able to by-pass that crucial oversight and governance. It was noted that any major changes to the constitution (for example to the terms of reference) would need to be submitted to the full Authority for approval, but minor, grammatical, non-substantive changes or those to align the document with updated legislation would be made by the MO.

The MO referred to item 6 (page 5) and the decisions which were reserved to the full Authority.

It was noted that, in line with best practice, an appointments committee would be set up for senior level appointments.

County Councillor A Joynes asked if the anticipated government white paper was likely to generate further changes to the draft constitution. The MO confirmed that this was possible, but it was hoped that the current draft covered the anticipated direction of travel, though further tweaks might be needed.

County Councillor P Buckley thanked the MO for the work that had been undertaken on the constitution review to date. County Councillor P Buckley indicated he had shared some slight anomalies he had recently found with the Chair and MO prior to this meeting as a further check and balance. It was agreed that these be considered by the MO outside the meeting. The MO indicated that he would subsequently feedback any final revisions to the Constitution Working Group via email. The committee agreed on this course of action subject to the revisions not being major ones.

The MO took the committee through the sections of the constitution which related to the general and specific principles of delegation to officers, the major area being delegation to the Chief Fire Officer (page 8).

County Councillor B Langford commented on section 16.6 regarding the CFO's power to use expenditure of up to £200,000, outside of budget, in each financial year and asked in what circumstances this would be used and how it would be reported upon for the purposes of transparency. The Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement (ADCE) confirmed that the expenditure was often used for emergency incidents and there would be consultation with the Chair in that circumstance. The MO agreed to amend this section and the committee agreed for a standing agenda item to be added to the Audit Committee terms of reference to facilitate reporting on this expenditure. County Councillor B Langford commented that tracking outside budget spend could also be helpful in terms of future budget setting.

Committee and working group terms of reference

In the main, these had not changed significantly but the following key changes were noted:

- Audit Committee had been re-named to Audit, Risk and Governance with the addition of a function determining member complaints (under the section on standards) and the addition of an independent person which would in due course be a legislative requirement. The MO shared that interviews were due to take place next month for the appointment of an independent person to this committee. It was also noted that the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee would have the authority to change minor matters relating to the constitution.

	• Performance Committee - the ADCE shared that the Planning Committee had previously asked the Performance Committee to undertake an annual review of KPI 3:3 on Fire Engine Availability. This had been taking place but the Performance Committee had agreed at the 13 July 2026 Performance Committee meeting that they were comfortable that this could be removed as an annual item and monitored through the Measuring Progress report. Section 3.2 (on page 17) would therefore now be removed from the committee terms of reference. • Planning Committee - the MO indicated that the committee dealt with many major items but most of these were fed through to the full Authority for approval. • Resources Committee - the MO highlighted the addition of approval of severance payments above £100,000; removal of appointments to the Executive Board (appointments of statutory officers would be dealt with by an appointments committee formed by Authority members, all other appointments were now delegated to the Chief Fire Officer). Pension appeals had also been removed from this committee. • Appeals Committee - As noted above, there had been the addition of pensions appeals, Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures (IDRP 2) which were previously heard by Resources Committee. There had also been the addition of hearing appeals from Audit relating to member complaint matters. County Councillor U Arif asked whether member training would be available for those with a role on this committee who did not have previous relevant background knowledge or experience, this suggestion would be raised at the Member Training and Development Working Group. • Appointments Committee - This was a new committee and would deal with the appointment of the three statutory officers. It was noted there was also now a standing order which dealt with disciplinary action including dismissal of the statutory officers. Subject to political balance rules, the committee would include both the Chair and Vice Chair of the full Authority. County Councillor B Langford raised a query regarding section 5 which stated that the CFO would act as advisor to the appointments committee. He asked if it be better practice to make the advisor independent of the Executive Board. The MO indicated that there would generally be representation from HR on the appointments committee too, the Chair provided reassurance that a similar practice was the case at Lancashire County Council (LCC) and worked well. County Councillor J Ash asked if the wording of section 11 (page 26) could be made clearer – the MO agreed to add a comma after the word 'members'. County Councillor A Blake then raised a matter relating to Standing Order 5 (page 45) and asked if this was reflective of the process used at the most recent CFA meeting in June 2026 for the election of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority.

The MO indicated the starting point was a show of hands for a named vote, but this could then lead to a vote by show of hands for an anonymous ballot. It was intended that the section on page 41 (Standing Order 5 – Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Combined Fire Authority) would clarify this process. Members discussed the voting process used at the previous CFA meeting in June 2026 and the advantages and disadvantages of different voting methods. The MO referred members to Standing Order 7 (page 50) and the details provided regarding recorded (named) voting and anonymous ballots. Members commented that a named vote did not need to be agreed by a majority at LCC (it could be agreed by 6) and that this seemed to be standard for local government. A change was suggested to the wording of sections 43 and 45 on page 50 to take out the word 'majority' and to replace this with 5 members' votes. There was discussion over whether priority would be given to a request for a named or anonymous vote depending on which was requested first. It was agreed that the MO would try to source best practice on this matter of sequencing and feedback to working group members.

The Chair suggested and it was agreed by members of the committee that there could be a default position for anonymous voting for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair at the CFA Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- Strategy Forum - members noted a change of name from Strategy Group to Strategy Forum. It was noted that this was not a committee as the forum did not make decisions and was a private meeting. Feedback from each forum meeting would be presented to the next CFA meeting.

- Capital Building Projects Working Group - The terms of reference had been streamlined and it was clarified that the group would make recommendations into the relevant decision-making committee or the full Authority.

Standing Orders

Standing orders (SOs) 1 to 8 dealt with the specifics of how meetings would run. These were revised to reflect best practice and existing legislation.

Attention was drawn by the MO to section 11 of SO1 which the Constitution Working Group had felt important to retain.

A suggestion was raised by County Councillor U Arif regarding the term of office for members serving as Chair or Vice Chair. It was felt that these positions could require some time for members to become fully established in their roles. Therefore, he suggested that consideration be given to extending the term of office to 2 years so that the CFA could benefit from greater stability and continuity in these key positions. The MO and Chair explained that this was not within the CFA control, that home authorities determined membership of the CFA and political balance could also change from year to year. The MO indicated that the term of the Chair and Vice Chair was only set for 12 months and this was set out in legislation and could not be changed.

County Councillor A Blake asked whether there would be any impact to membership of the CFA after the shadow local government elections took place in 2027. The MO indicated this would not have any impact on the CFA until 2028.

SO3 was new and related to replacement and temporary members. The point was made by the Chair that members should not sit on both Resources and Audit, did this need to be stated here or would that be overly prescriptive. The MO indicated that the restriction was documented within the committee terms of reference.

SO7 had been extensively reviewed and was intended to be comprehensive but may need some modification in practice.

SO8 was also new and related to the urgent business procedure. The other SOs had been re-worked and were amended versions of SOs that were already in place.

SO9 was drafted with input from HR and had been approved earlier in the year by the full Authority.

Miscellaneous

The member complaints procedure was new and outlined a detailed procedure for dealing with any complaints. The members' code of conduct and relevant appendices were noted.

With regards to the member champion roles (page 106), the addition of item 7 was noted as a suggestion from County Councillor P Buckley at a previous working group meeting and was regarding engagement with relevant partners.

The member's allowance scheme (page 250 onwards) had been amended to add a dependents' carers' allowance and also an allowance for the Audit Committee independent person. A special responsibility allowance had been added for the leader of the ruling group if they were not also Chair or Vice-Chair of the authority and it was now clarified that it was possible to have more than one Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).

In terms of Members' Allowance Scheme Schedule 'B' – Travel and Subsistence Allowances, it was noted that the mileage rate had been increased. There was also discussion of which expenses were taxable.

In terms of the new Appointments Committee, there was discussion as to whether an SRA should apply, given it would only meet infrequently. It was proposed by the Chair that there was no SRA applied, this was seconded by County Councillor P Buckley and agreed unanimously by members.

The MO raised some anomalies with regards to SRAs for the various working groups and asked members to decide whether these should remain as they were, be standardised or removed. It was agreed that the SRAs would remain for the Appeals Committee and the Member Training and Development Working Group but would not be applied for the Capital Building Projects Working Group.

	This brought the meeting to the end of the constitution document. The MO clarified that any further amendments would be sent to the working group via email ahead of the document being taken to the full Authority meeting in September 2026. **Resolved: -** That the Committee; Reviewed the final draft of the constitution and made necessary recommendations for further amendments before the document was sent to the full authority meeting on 21 September 2026 for approval and adoption.
17-26/27	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday 1 October 2026 at 10:00 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 15 December 2026 and agreed for 25 March 2027.

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Changes to committee membership

Contact for further information – Dominic Howell, Monitoring Officer
Tel: 07810 772851

Executive Summary

Membership of the various Fire Authority committees was agreed at the AGM on 15 June 2026. Changes to the make-up of the Performance Committee are proposed below for approval by the Authority.

Recommendation(s)

To approve the changes to the membership and roles of the Performance Committee as set out in this paper.

Information

It is proposed that County Councillor Luke Parker and County Councillor Liam Thomson join the Performance Committee.

County Councillor Russell Walsh will leave the Performance Committee. As County Councillor Ella Worthington is no longer a member of the Fire Authority, she is also by default no longer a member of any committee.

All four above named members are from Reform and therefore the political balance is unchanged.

County Councillor Mackenzie Ritson is already a member of the Performance Committee but will take up the role of Chair which has been vacated by County Councillor Ella Worthington.

Business risk

None.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? N
If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

New Constitution

Appendix 1 – Final draft of the constitution

Contact for further information – Dominic Howell, Monitoring Officer
Tel: 07810 772851

Executive Summary

A refreshed and updated constitution has been drafted for Lancashire Combined Fire Authority which sets out how the Authority carries out its governance and scrutiny roles. This has been drafted by officers in conjunction with a working group of members and been externally assured by an experienced monitoring officer from another fire authority. It has also been reviewed at an extraordinary meeting of the Audit Committee and all necessary changes adopted. A summary of the most significant parts of the constitution is set out below.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to approve the new constitution for adoption from 21 September 2026.

Information

It is good practice to publish a comprehensive constitution which sets out how the fire authority manages its business. The proposed document attached at appendix 1 broadly comprises 3 sections: a scheme of delegation; terms of reference for the various committees which have been set up; and standing orders which set out the technical details about how matters are dealt with. There are also a number of other miscellaneous documents which complete the picture.

It should be noted that as this is a major revision of what has existed previously, further changes may be required once implemented and operated against. It is, in any event, good practice to review constitutions regularly, at least on an annual basis. Should Local Government Reorganisation in Lancashire proceed, certain sections will need to be re-visited at that point to reflect the changes.

Below are highlighted sections of the constitution which are particularly significant or have undergone major revision.

Scheme of delegation

National guidance on what should be in a fire authority's scheme of delegation, and also legislation about operational independence of Chief Fire Officers is potentially forthcoming at some stage in the future. However, this is not currently available and there is no clarity as to when it will be finalised. The new scheme of delegation has been drafted so far as possible to take into account anticipated requirements of any such guidance, and schemes of delegation from a number of other authorities have been reviewed in order to distil best practice.

Paragraph 6 (page 5 of the constitution) sets out the matters that are reserved to the authority (or its committees). These are the high level, strategic matters such as budget setting and overall direction of the fire service. All other matters are delegated to one of the three statutory officers (Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Monitoring Officer). It will be seen by comparing paragraphs 6 and 16 for example, that once the authority sets the strategic direction, discharging these duties at an operational level is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer.

It is not intended that this revised scheme of delegation makes any significant change to the current split of decision-making abilities between the authority and the service, but rather it simplifies and clarifies what was previously a lengthy and technical document. Of note, paragraphs 8 to 12 set out general principles of delegation which should ensure that no issue which should be considered by the authority is able to by-pass that crucial oversight and governance.

Committee and working group terms of reference

In the main, these have not changed significantly. Key changes are as follows:-

Audit Committee
Re-naming to Audit, Risk and Governance; addition of function determining member complaints and the addition of an independent person (which will in due course be a legislative requirement).

Resources Committee
Addition of approval of severance payments above £100,000; removal of appointments to the Executive Board (appointments of statutory officers will be dealt with by an appointments committee formed by authority members, all other appointments are now delegated to the Chief Fire Officer).

Appeals Committee
Addition of pensions appeals (Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures (IDRP)) Stage 2). These were previously heard in Resources Committee. Addition of hearing appeals from Audit relating to member complaint matters.

Appointments Committee
This is new and will deal with the appointment of the three statutory officers (note there is also now a Standing Order which deals with disciplinary action including dismissal of statutory officers).

Capital Building Projects Working Group
This has been streamlined and clarified that it will make recommendations into the relevant decision-making body.

Standing Orders

Standing orders (SOs) 1 – 8 as listed deal with the specifics of how meetings will run. These have been revised to reflect best practice and legislation where that applies.

SO 3 relating to replacement and temporary members is new, as is SO8 relating to the 'Urgent Business' procedure. The other SOs are re-worked and amended versions of SOs that were already in place.

Miscellaneous

The member complaints procedure is new and sets out a detailed procedure for dealing with any complaints that come in.

The member's allowance scheme has been amended to add a dependents' carers' allowance and also an allowance for the Audit Committee independent person. A special responsibility allowance has been added for the leader of the ruling group if they are not also chair or vice chair of the authority and it has been clarified in paragraph 5.1 that it is possible to have more than one Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).

Business risk

Lack of a comprehensive and up to date constitution would hinder good governance of the Authority.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? N
If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

Addition to members' allowance scheme: £1,500 for the Audit Independent Person. The SRA for the leader of the ruling group and dependents' carers' allowances may or may not be incurred in any given year.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper: Combined Fire Authority – Governance Review
Date: 15 December 2025
Contact: Dominic Howell, Monitoring Officer

Paper: Audit Committee – New Constitution
Date: 18 August 2026
Contact: Dominic Howell, Monitoring Officer

Glossary

IDRP – Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures
SO – Standing Order
SRA – Special Responsibility Allowance

Appendix 1

Lancashire CFA Constitution

Overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is a stand-alone fire and rescue service delivering fire, safety, and rescue functions to the whole of Lancashire. This is achieved by raising awareness about fire safety through visiting homes and education, enforcing fire safety laws, and being available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year to respond to emergencies. Support services assist operational staff in providing frontline services to residents, businesses and visitors.

Leadership of LFRS is through its Executive Board headed by the Chief Fire Officer and through its wider Service Management Team.

Overview of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Oversight and governance of LFRS is through a Combined Fire Authority which is comprised of elected members representing the whole of Lancashire.

The Lancashire Fire Service (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 (the Scheme) established the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (the Authority) to cover the whole of Lancashire, which comes under the control of the two unitary and a county council, namely Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

The Scheme restricts the number of members that may sit on the Authority to a maximum of 25. It also requires each of the constituent authorities to appoint representatives to be members of the Authority in proportion to the size of the electorate in their area. There are currently 25 elected members of the Authority, 19 from Lancashire County Council and three each from Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

The Authority operates a committee system rather than an executive or cabinet model. The Authority makes all the key decisions but delegates most decision-making to one of its six committees: Audit, Risk and Governance; Appointments; Resources; Planning; Performance; and Appeals.

There are also a number of working groups which are informal and not decision-making but are set up from time to time to consider and advise on specific matters such as the training needed for Authority members.

The day-to-day running of LFRS is delegated through a scheme of delegation to the Chief Fire Officer and the two other statutory officers (the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer).

Details of meetings of the Authority and its committees are published on the Service's website and are generally open to the public (unless exempt information is being discussed).

The fundamental role of the Authority is to scrutinise the operation of LFRS and to hold the Chief Fire Officer to account.

Overview of Constitution

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority has agreed a constitution which sets out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures which are followed to ensure that they are efficient, transparent, and accountable to local communities. Some of the processes are required by law, while others are a matter for the Authority to choose.

The constitution is set out below and comprises the scheme of delegation (which sets out which decisions are reserved to the Authority and which are delegated to LFRS); the terms of reference of committees; and detailed standing orders which set out the procedure for meetings and how the business of the Authority is conducted. There are also other documents including the Members' Code of Conduct.

This constitution will be reviewed annually. Any in-year changes deemed necessary will be dealt with through the structure of meetings of the full Authority, or Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, the urgent business procedure or the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the change needed.

Index

Scheme of delegation to officers

Overview

1. In order to be able to operate efficiently and effectively Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) needs a scheme of delegation which enables decisions to be made quickly and by the right person whilst preserving the crucial oversight of and accountability to the Combined Fire Authority (the Authority).

2. The Authority's decision-making arrangements operate in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 under which decisions are made either by the full Authority (or by a committee of the Authority operating within terms of reference set by the Authority); or by an officer exercising delegated authority.

3. For those matters delegated to an officer, some are delegated specifically to one of the three statutory officers (the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer) as set out below. These delegations may only be exercised by them personally or by an officer authorised by them for that purpose. Everything else is delegated nominally to the Chief Fire Officer and they can arrange for those functions to be carried out by other officers as appropriate.

4. The Chief Fire Officer is the Authority's Head of Paid Service; together with the Responsible Finance Officer (Treasurer) and the Monitoring Officer, these are the three statutory officers the Authority is required to appoint. The Authority has adopted the [Code of Practice on Good Governance for Local Authority Statutory Officers.]

5. This scheme of delegation should be read in conjunction with any statutory guidance issued under the Fire and Rescue National Framework as updated from time to time. Where there is any ambiguity or lack of clarity around any particular matter, the interpretation offered by the statutory guidance shall take precedence.

Decisions reserved to the full Authority (or its committees)

6. The decisions which the full Authority has reserved to itself are:

6.1 Approval of the Community Risk Management Plan and any significant amendments to it.

6.2 Approval of any significant and permanent changes to service delivery or to plans and policies which will have a significant effect on service delivery.

6.3 Approval of the annual budget and the precept to give effect to the budget and associated statutory documents including the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, Capital Strategy, Reserves Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and Pay Policy Statement.

6.4 Approval of the constitution including standing orders, terms of reference for its committees, and this scheme of delegation.

6.5 Appointment and dismissal of the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer.

6.6 Notwithstanding the above list, the Authority may of its own accord, or at the request of officers, deal with or be advised of any other matter.

7. The matters listed in the terms of reference of any committee are delegated to that committee, to the extent set out in the terms of reference.

General principles of delegation to officers

8. Any action by an officer under delegated powers shall be in accordance with the overall policies approved by the full Authority or any relevant decision of a committee. Officers will also comply with principles for good decision-making, namely:

8.1 Proportionality (the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome).
8.2 Due consultation and the taking of professional advice as needed.
8.3 Respect for human rights.
8.4 A presumption in favour of openness.
8.5 Clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

9. If authority to act has been reserved to the full Authority or delegated to a committee then no officer may exercise delegated authority in relation to that matter without the approval of the Authority or committee. This limitation includes the ability to make key decisions. A key decision is one which has financial implications for the Authority in excess of any current provision already made and that will have a significant impact. Key decisions will be made by the full Authority only.

10. Before exercising any delegated power, officers must consider whether the decision to be made is of such a nature that it should be referred for a decision by the full Authority. Through the Chief Fire Officer, clear communication must be maintained with the chair of the Authority. Where significant decisions are made under delegated powers, the Chief Fire Officer should always consider whether a report should be made of that decision to the Authority.

11. All officers have a responsibility to advise the Chief Fire Officer and elected members on the areas in which they lead and are accountable to members for the performance of those services.

12. Where a proposed exercise of delegated authority is such that the Chair should be consulted and the Chair is absent or otherwise unavailable, then the Vice Chair should be consulted. Similarly, in the absence of the Chair of a committee, a Vice Chair should be consulted.

General indemnity

13. All members and officers involved in decision making on behalf of the Authority are protected by a general indemnity, which protects each of them from personal liability for the consequences of action taken in good faith on behalf of the Authority.

Specific delegations to statutory officers

14. The starting point for the delegated authority to staff is the general authorisation in sections 8-12 above, given to all officers to act within their roles. There are instances where the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and the Monitoring Officer retain very specific powers to act and these are set out below.

Chief Fire Officer role

15. The Chief Fire Officer is the Head of Paid Service responsible for operational leadership of the Service and is also the Authority's professional adviser on all matters which are not the responsibility of either the Treasurer or the Monitoring Officer.

16. Decision-making is delegated to exercise all powers necessary to fulfil the role and duties of Chief Fire Officer that are not specifically reserved to the Authority or one of its committees including but not limited to the following powers:

> 16.1 Appointment and dismissal of fire service staff other than the statutory officers and any steps necessary to achieve this.
>
> 16.2 Allocation of staff to meet strategic priorities and any steps necessary to achieve this.
>
> 16.3 Configuration and organisation of resources and any steps necessary to achieve this.
>
> 16.4 Deployment of resources to meet operational requirements and any steps necessary to achieve this.
>
> 16.5 Balancing of competing operational needs and any steps necessary to achieve this.
>
> 16.6 Expenditure outside of budget up to £200,000 in each financial year. For the avoidance of doubt, this expenditure does not constitute a "key decision" under paragraph 9 above unless it will also have a significant impact. A report on the use of this delegated power will be brought to each meeting of the Audit, Risk and Governance committee, even if it is a nil report.

Fire safety

16.7 To exercise all the powers of the Authority under fire safety legislation including as an enforcement authority, statutory consultee or adviser to other agencies.

Health and safety

16.8 To discharge the responsibilities and duties of the Authority under health and safety legislation.

General

16.9 After consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair and group leaders, to respond to consultation documents on behalf of the Authority.

16.10 In consultation with the Chair and Monitoring Officer, the Chief Fire Officer may sign up to external charters provided it is within the general scope of delegations associated with this role. Where this is not within scope of their delegations, the Chair in consultation with the Monitoring Officer may decide the appropriateness of tabling this as a matter for consideration by the Authority.

Treasurer

17. The Treasurer (the Authority's Chief Finance Officer) is legally responsible for ensuring that the Combined Fire Authority manages public money properly, transparently and in line with the law. Their specific powers are all functions assigned to the Treasurer with the financial regulations including but not limited to:

> 17.1 Acting as the Authority's "Proper Officer" for finance. They carry out legally defined duties under the Local Government Act 1972, including:
>
> > 17.1.1 Receiving and accounting for all money owed to the Authority.
> >
> > 17.1.2 Issuing statutory financial certificates.
> >
> > 17.1.3 Ensuring the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs.
>
> 17.2 Maintaining financial standards and governance: set and oversee the Authority's financial rules, ensure compliance with national accounting requirements, and provide professional advice so members can make informed and lawful decisions.
>
> 17.3 Overseeing budgets and financial reporting: the Treasurer is responsible

for budget management, financial monitoring, the annual Statement of Accounts, and ensuring the Authority provides clear and accurate financial information to the public.

17.4 Managing treasury, investments and financial risk: controlling the Authority's borrowing, investment and cashflow arrangements, ensuring decisions are prudent and protect the Authority from financial risk.

17.5 Raising concerns where something may be unlawful: if any proposed action could lead to unlawful spending or pose a serious financial risk, the Treasurer has the authority to intervene and formally advise the Authority.

17.6 To deal with all matters arising under the Firefighters Pension Scheme 1992, Firefighters Pension Scheme 2006, Firefighters pension Scheme 2015 and the Firefighters Compensation Scheme (England) Order 2006 and any associated regulations and the Local Government Pension Scheme.

17.7 All financial delegations shall be exercised in accordance with the Authority's Financial Regulations.

Monitoring Officer

18. The Monitoring Officer is the Authority's professional adviser on legal, procedural and conduct matters. The Monitoring Officer will receive copies of all Executive Board agendas and minutes including any confidential items. Decision-making is delegated to the Monitoring Officer to exercise all powers necessary to fulfil the role and duties of Monitoring Officer including but not limited to the following powers:

19. To be "Proper Officer" in relation to all provisions in the Local Government Act 1972 concerning:

19.1 Receipt of any written notice of resignation from members.

19.2 The summoning of meetings.

19.3 Receipt of notice and recording of any member's interest in contracts with or tenancies of premises owned by the Authority (Section 96(1)).

19.4 In Section 225, the officer who will take receipt of documents deposited with the Authority by any person and in Section 229 the officer certifying a photographic copy of an original.

19.5 In Section 234, the officer who shall certify and authenticate official documents on behalf of the Authority.

20. To be “Proper Officer” in relation to the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 regarding political groups; the allocation of seats to committees and sub-committees and the appointment of members to those seats in accordance with the wishes of group leaders (including the appointment of temporary substitutes).

21. To be "Proper Officer" for the purposes of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 relating to exclusion of information from publicly available reports.

22. To keep the Authority’s common seal and seal or sign any order, deed or other document necessary to give effect to a decision of the Authority or a committee or officer acting under delegated powers. This power can be delegated by the Monitoring Officer to another appropriate officer.

23. To act as the “qualified person” to determine whether information should be regarded as exempt from publication under Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

24. To make in-year changes to committee memberships in consultation with political group leaders.

25. To instruct counsel or seek external legal advice whenever the Monitoring Officer considers this to be necessary or in the interests of the Authority.

26. To make any necessary minor, non-material amendments consequential upon legislative changes, other decisions of the Authority or to correct errors in the constitution.

27. In consultation with the Chair (or Vice-Chair) of the Authority and the Chair of the Committee in question, to appoint temporary substitute members to committees where the appointed member is unavailable. This will be carried out in accordance with Standing Order 3 – Appointment of temporary substitutes to committees, sub-committees and working groups.

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Audit, Risk, and Governance Committee is a key component of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's governance framework. The committee's purpose is to review and scrutinise the Authority's financial affairs; review and assess the Authority's risk management, internal control and governance arrangements; review and assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used in discharging the Authority's functions; and make reports and recommendations to the Authority in relation to these matters.

2. The powers of this committee are set out below. They are delegated to this committee by the Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Minutes of this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances, the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

Audit

3. Consider and approve all matters relating to internal and external audit, including, but not limited to:
    - 3.1 Internal Audit Monitoring Report.
    - 3.2 Internal Audit Plan.
    - 3.3 Internal Audit Annual Report (includes Audit Charter and Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme and National Fraud Initiative).
    - 3.4 External Audit - Letter of Representation.
    - 3.5 External Audit - Audit Findings Report.
    - 3.6 External Audit - Audit Report and Sector Update.
    - 3.7 External Audit - Auditors Annual Report.
    - 3.8 External Audit - Understanding How the Audit Committee Gains Assurance from Management.
    - 3.9 External Audit - Audit Plan.
    - 3.10 External Audit - Interim Audit Findings Report.

3.11 Appointment of External Auditors (five-yearly).

3.12 Inspection agency reports.

3.13 Expenditure outside of budget (up to £200,000 in each financial year).

Risk

4. Consider and approve all matters relating to internal and external risk, including but not limited to:

4.1 Receiving and proposing action on any reports related to whistleblowing complaints.

4.2 Considering the effectiveness of the Authority's risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements.

4.3 Receiving assurances that action is being taken on risk related issues identified by auditors and inspectors.

4.4 Being satisfied that the Authority's assurance statements properly reflect the risk environment and identify the proportionate actions required to improve it.

4.5 Receiving and proposing action on any reports related to any other risk to the governance of or public confidence in the Authority.

4.6 Monitoring business continuity management systems.

Governance

5. Review of contract standing orders, financial regulations, (procedural) standing orders and the scheme of delegation. These form the bulk of the Authority's constitution (along with the terms of reference of the various committees and other miscellaneous documents). Minor and inconsequential changes including inflationary increases in financial thresholds and limits, or changes that are mandated by law, or some other guidance or best practice that must or should be followed, can be authorised by the Monitoring Officer under delegated powers. This committee will make final recommendations on any more substantial changes to the full Authority.

6. Consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement (part of year end processes).

7. Monitor and ensure compliance with the Internal Governance and Assurance Fire Standard.

8. Receive the Compliments and Complaints Report.

Financial

9. Oversee financial management and value for money by considering and approving the annual accounts and work of external audit (noting that the Resources Committee will also monitor the financial position throughout each financial year, including the year-end out-turn position) including the following documents:

    9.1 Accounting estimates.
    9.2 Financial statements update.
    9.3 Statement of Accounts.
    9.4 Revisions to the Statement of Accounts.

Standards

10. Advise the Authority on any revisions to the Members' Code of Conduct through monitoring its operation and overall effectiveness.

11. Determine the truth of allegations made under the Members' Code of Conduct Procedure and impose any necessary sanctions.

12. Refer any appeal from this process to the Authority's Appeals Committee.

13. The committee may also consider any items referred to it by the Authority or Strategy Forum.

Quorum

14. This committee ordinarily meets four times each year. The dates of these meetings will usually be set at the annual general meeting of the full Authority but can be amended by the Chair of this committee, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and for good reason.

15. When dealing with complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct Procedure, the committee is empowered to set additional meetings as necessary to deal with these issues expeditiously.

16. The number of seats for voting members is seven drawn from the full Authority. Political balance rules and regulations apply. A member cannot sit on both the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee and the Resources Committee.

17. In addition, there will be one co-opted independent member. This co-opted independent member will provide technical expertise and specialist subject matter knowledge in relation to the matters brought to this committee under the audit, risk, governance and financial headings above. They will not have voting rights with regards to these matters.

18. For matters relating to standards (the Members' Code of Conduct), the co-opted independent member will sit as Chair and will have voting rights and in case of equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

19. This committee will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least three voting members present. If the co-opted independent member has not in fact been appointed or is not present, this shall not affect quoracy. Should the committee be inquorate it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

20. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Performance Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Performance Committee's key responsibility is to scrutinise performance against established key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the Planning Committee to ensure that performance standards are maintained.

2. The powers of this committee are set out below. The powers are delegated to this committee by the full Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Minutes of this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

3. The Performance Committee's remit includes all aspects of performance monitoring including reviewing the following:

   3.1 Measuring Progress Reports (quarterly).

   3.2 North West Fire Control Performance Report for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

   3.3 Annual Report on Road Safety Intervention Activity.

   3.4 Any items referred to the committee by the Authority or Strategy Forum.

Quorum

4. The Performance Committee meets four times each year and consists of 10 voting members. Political balance rules and regulations apply. The dates of these meetings will usually be set at the annual general meeting of the full Authority but can be amended by the chair of this committee, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and for good reason.

5. The Performance Committee will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least four members present. Should the committee be inquorate it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand

finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

6. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Planning Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Planning Committee's key responsibility is to consider and approve specific plans and strategies as set out below. The powers are delegated to this committee by the full Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Final approval of any of the items listed below are only delegated to this committee where this does not conflict with the powers of the full Authority to approve any significant and permanent changes to service delivery or to plans and policies which will have a significant effect on service. Minutes of this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

2. The Planning Committee's remit is to consider, and approve where appropriate:

   2.1 Strategic Assessment of Risk.

   2.2 Community Risk Management Plan.

   2.3 Annual Service Plan.

   2.4 Annual Service Report.

   2.5 Prevention Strategy.

   2.6 Protection Strategy.

   2.7 Response Strategy.

   2.8 Emergency cover reviews.

   2.9 Climate Change Operational Response Plan.

   2.10 Consultation Strategy.

   2.11 Communications Strategy.

   2.12 Items for public consultation and the outcomes of consultations.

2.13 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services updates.

2.14 Other strategic plans required of the Service by commissioning authorities or central government, as required from time to time.

2.15 Any items referred to the committee by the Authority or Strategy Forum.

3. To make recommendations to the full Authority on the Community Risk Management Plan.

Quorum

4. The Planning Committee meets three times each year and is made up of 10 voting members. Political balance rules and regulations apply. The dates of these meetings will usually be set at the annual general meeting of the full Authority but can be amended by the Chair of this committee, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and for good reason.

5. The Planning Committee will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least four members present. Should the committee be inquorate, it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

6. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Resources Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Resources Committee's remit includes matters related to finance, human resources, health and safety, property, and equipment.

2. The powers of this committee are set out below. The powers are delegated to this committee by the full Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Minutes of this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

3. The Resources Committee's functions are to consider and approve documents and reports as set out below:
   - 3.1 Special severance payments above the limit set out in Statutory guidance on the making and disclosure of Special Severance Payments by local authorities in England, as it may change from time to time (currently £100,000).
   - 3.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report.
   - 3.3 People Strategy.
   - 3.4 Recommendations from the Capital Building Projects Working Group.
   - 3.5 Procurement Strategy.
   - 3.6 Data and Digital Strategy.
   - 3.7 ICT Plan.
   - 3.8 Fleet Asset Management Plan.
   - 3.9 Property and Estates Management Strategy.
   - 3.10 High value procurement projects.
   - 3.11 Pensions updates.
   - 3.12 Local Pension Board Annual Report.
   - 3.13 Year End Treasury Management Outturn.
   - 3.14 Year End Capital Outturn.
   - 3.15 Year End Revenue Outturn.
   - 3.16 Year End Useable Reserves and Provisions Outturn.
   - 3.17 Financial monitoring.

3.18 Treasury Management Mid-Year Report.

3.19 Other relevant issues which are not delegated to the Service under the scheme of delegation.

Quorum

4. This committee meets four times each year. The dates of these meetings will usually be set at the annual general meeting of the full Authority but can be amended by the Chair of this committee, in consultation with the Vice-Chair and for good reason.

5. The number of seats for voting members is 10 drawn from the full Authority. Political balance rules and regulations apply. A member cannot sit on both the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee and the Resources Committee.

6. This committee will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least four voting members present. Should the committee be inquorate it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

7. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Appeals Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Appeals Committee meets only when required and at a date and time as determined by the Chair of this committee.

2. The powers of this committee are set out below. The powers are delegated to this committee by the full Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Reports of all matters dealt with by this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting following the decision, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

3. The Appeals Committee's functions are as follows:

   3.1 Hear and determine appeals from the stage one Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) in relation to pensions. Stage one decisions are made by the Chief Fire Officer (or by an officer designated by them). The appeals following stage one are known as IDRP stage two appeals and will be heard by this committee.

   3.2 To hear and determine unresolved grievances against the Chief Fire Officer.

   3.3 To hear and determine appeals against action short of dismissal against the Chief Fire Officer, Director of Corporate Services (Treasurer) and Monitoring Officer.

   3.4 To hear and determine appeals against dismissal of those officers accountable to the Chief Fire Officer, excluding Director of Corporate Services (Treasurer) and the Monitoring Officer.

   3.5 To hear and determine appeals from the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in relation to any complaints determined under the Member Code of Conduct Procedure.

4. It is preferable, although not essential, that members of the committee have some background knowledge in business or people management or within a trade union.

Quorum

5. The number of seats for voting members is seven drawn from the full Authority. Political balance rules and regulations apply.

6. In addition, there will be one co-opted independent member. Where this committee is sitting to hear appeals from the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in relation to any complaints determined under the Member Code of Conduct Procedure, the co-opted independent member will sit as Chair and will have voting rights and in case of equality of votes, a second or casting vote. The co-opted independent member will not form part of this committee other than for this function.

7. It will only be quorate and therefore constitutionally able to conduct business and make decisions if there are at least three voting members present. Where this committee is sitting to hear appeals from the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in relation to any complaints determined under the Member Code of Conduct Procedure, one of those members must be the co-opted Independent Member (who will sit as Chair). Should the committee be inquorate it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

8. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Appointments Committee for the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer Terms of Reference

1. The Appointments Committee meets only when required and at a date and time as determined by the Chair of this committee.

2. The powers of this committee are set out below. The powers are delegated to this committee by the full Authority and (unless stated otherwise) they are empowered to make final decisions on matters within their remit. Reports of all matters dealt with by this committee should be sent to the full Authority at its next meeting following the decision, or a subsequent one if that is not possible, for noting. In exceptional circumstances the committee may instead refer issues to the full Authority for a decision.

3. The Appointments Committee's function is to make a recommendation for the appointment of the three statutory officers that by law the Authority is required to appoint, namely the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer.

4. The appointments committee shall commission and instruct the Director of People and Development to carry out its functions, such as drafting documents and arranging interview dates.

5. The Chief Fire Officer of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service shall act as advisor to the appointments committee for appointments to the role of Monitoring Officer and Treasurer. The Appointments Committee may be supplemented by other specialist advisors as required.

6. The Director of People and Development or their representative will act as Human Resources Advisor to the Appointments Committee.

7. The minutes of the Appointments Committee will be recorded by a representative from the Human Resources department.

8. The Appointments Committee will make a recommendation to the full Authority and it will be for the Authority to make any appointment.

9. It is also recommended that members of the committee (and any substitutes) attend appropriate training where possible.

Quorum

10. The number of seats for voting members is three drawn from the full Authority Political balance rules and regulations apply.

11. Subject to political balance rules, the committee will include both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority. If political balance rules mean that both the Chair and Vice-Chair cannot be members, one or the other shall be appointed.

12. The committee will only be quorate if all three members are present.

Member Training and Development Working Group Terms of Reference

1. The Member Training and Development Working Group is an informal working group whose aim is to deliver and review the member training and development strategy.

2. This group is responsible for analysing and agreeing the training needs of members and ensuring the delivery of professional member development activities.

3. The group has a total membership of six drawn from the full Authority and political balance rules do not apply.

4. The group shall make recommendations in relation to member training and development in general. In exceptional circumstances, the group may refer issues to the Authority for a decision.

5. As it is an informal group, there are no requirements as to quoracy.

6. There are two meetings per year and meetings are held via Microsoft Teams.

Strategy Forum Terms of Reference

1. The purpose of the Strategy Forum is to provide a private discussion forum for all members of the Combined Fire Authority – in essence it is a 'think tank'.

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

3. The terms of reference include:
   - 3.1 To brief members and facilitate an exchange of views in relation to:
     - 3.1.1 New policy areas, taking into account the impact of proposals on the staff and financial resources of the Authority.
     - 3.1.2 Formulation of the Authority's objectives.
     - 3.1.3 Priority of those objectives.
     - 3.1.4 Issues arising.
   - 3.2 To consider proposals of government departments and other national or regional bodies which have implications that would affect the Authority.
   - 3.3 To consider presentations from any organisation or individual it feels would be useful in achieving the role of the Strategy Forum.

4. In order to promote the widest possible discussions and free exchange of views, members are reminded that strict confidentiality must be maintained regarding any discussions during Strategy Forum meetings, until such time as the issues discussed are tabled at a formally constituted meeting or in the public domain.

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

6. The forum will meet twice a year or more frequently if required, without a fixed timetable, to remain flexible to respond to any need for urgent change.

7. The purpose of the Strategy Forum is for discussion and it does not have decision-making powers. To have decision-making powers it would need to be a committee covered by openness and transparency rules. Meetings of the Strategy Forum will not therefore be open to the public and confidentiality should be maintained by members of the group. Notes of the Strategy Forum meetings will be presented at the next full Authority meeting either under part one or part two of the agenda depending on the nature of the matters discussed.

8. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's Executive Board is responsible for identifying issues to be considered by the Strategy Forum. However, the Authority, individual committees and individual members may on occasions wish to refer items for discussion.

Capital Building Projects Member Working Group

Terms of Reference

1. As agreed at the Combined Fire Authority meeting held on 20 February 2023 (resolution 67/22 refers) the purpose of the working group is for member engagement in the potential relocation of Service headquarters to the Leadership and Development Centre (LDC), the redevelopment of Preston Fire Station and a review of training props at LDC.

Composition

2. The group comprises a politically balanced group of 10 Authority members in total.
3. Meetings are also attended by the Chair of the Capital Projects Programme Board (Director of Corporate Services), Head of Property and the Project Manager, plus other officers as required according to the agenda.
4. The meetings may also be attended by the Head or Deputy Head of Procurement, who will be the point of contact for procurement services and will collate relevant procurement information on behalf of the Service for presentation to the working group.
5. The group meets three times each year.
6. Members unable to attend can provide their views in writing given the non-legal status of the working group.

Status and purpose of the working group

7. The Capital Buildings Projects Member Working Group does not have committee, sub-committee or any other constitutional legal status and has been set up for the following purposes:

    7.1 Member engagement, given the scale and size of all three programmes for consideration.

    7.2 To discuss options with members based on officers' specialist views and expertise, prior to agreement and before engaging with public procurement and tendering processes.

    7.3 To update members on progress made by the Service in all stages of the programmes and to seek views on that progress.

7.4 Where possible to collaborate with members on aspects of the programme that cannot be dealt with by Service leaders under the scheme of delegation, provided it is compliant with all aspects of public sector procurement legislation.

7.5 To seek general views and where possible consensus on financial and strategic planning decisions that have been proposed by Service leaders prior to application of the Authority's legal and administrative obligations.

7.6 To seek general views and where possible consensus on financial and strategic planning decisions falling outside the Authority's scheme of delegation, prior to ratification by the full Authority and engagement and compliance with public sector procurement regulations.

7.7 For members to be updated by Service leaders in relation to those procurement decisions made under the current scheme of delegation and within the budgetary limits.

Items for consideration

8. At each meeting the group will receive a report with the following content:

    8.1 General progress.
    8.2 Work done in last period.
    8.3 Tasks for next period.
    8.4 Updated programme.
    8.5 Updated budget position.
    8.6 Risk review.

Recommendations

9.1 Where appropriate, recommendations of this working group on any of the matters discussed during meetings will be reported into the relevant decision-making process for the specific matter, and those recommendations will be taken into account by the decision-maker.

9.2 The "relevant decision making process" referred in paragraph 9.1 will differ depending on the matter under discussion but may be the Resources or Planning Committee; the full Authority; or a relevant department within the Service.

9.3 Any such recommendations must be compliant with all relevant public sector procurement regulations and the Service’s internal contract standing orders.

Minutes

10. In addition to any recommendations made under paragraph 9 above, the minutes of this working group will be reported to the next Resources Committee meeting for information.

Standing Order 1 - Membership of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

1. This standing order has been drafted in compliance with the Lancashire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 which is secondary legislation having effect under section 4 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. If this legislation changes such that the terms of this standing order conflicts with the new legislation, then the relevant terms of the new legislation will take precedence over any terms in this standing order that are not compatible with that new legislation.

2. The Authority shall consist of no more than 25 members.

3. Each member of the Authority shall be appointed by a constituent authority from its own members in accordance with its own procedures. The constituent authorities are the councils of the boroughs of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool and Lancashire County Council.

4. It is a matter for each constituent authority to determine how they appoint members to the Authority and for what period. Members are appointed for set periods as specified by their authority, in accordance with the procedure set out in the Lancashire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 (Statutory Instrument 1997 No. 2760) (the Combination Scheme).

5. Lancashire County Council appoints 19 representatives annually at their annual general meeting (AGM) for a 12-month period. Blackburn with Darwen Council also appoints three representatives at their AGM for a 12-month period. Blackpool Council appoints three representatives at their AGM for a period of four years.

6. A member of the Authority shall come into office on the date of their appointment and, subject to paragraphs 7, 8, 9 and 11, hold office for such period or periods as determined by the constituent authority which appoints them.

7. A member of the Authority may resign their membership by giving notice in writing to that effect to the Monitoring Officer of the Authority.

8. Members may be removed from the Authority by their appointing constituent authority (whether or not they also remain a member of the constituent authority), subject to that authority complying with their own rules and procedures for this process.

8.1 A member of the Authority who ceases to be a member of the constituent authority which appointed them shall cease to be a member of the Authority.

8.2 A person shall be disqualified from being a member of the Authority if they hold any paid office or employment (other than the office of chair or vice-chair), appointments to which are or may be made or confirmed by the Authority, by any committee or sub-committee of the Authority, or by a joint committee or board on which the Authority is represented.

9. Subject to sub-paragraph 8.1, if a member of the Authority resigns, becomes disqualified or otherwise ceases to be a member of the Authority before the expiry of their period of office, the constituent authority which appointed them shall appoint a representative to replace them, who shall come into office on the date of their appointment. Unless they resign, become disqualified or otherwise cease to be a member of the Authority, they shall hold office for the remainder of the period for which their predecessor would have held office had they not resigned, become disqualified or otherwise ceased to be a member of the Authority.

9.1 If a member of the Authority resigns, becomes disqualified or otherwise ceases to be a member of the Authority within six months before the end of their period of office, the constituent authority which appointed them shall not be required to appoint a representative to replace them for the remainder of the period. The exception is unless, on the occurrence of the vacancy (or in the case of a number of simultaneous vacancies, the occurrence of the vacancies), the total number of unfilled vacancies in the membership of the Authority exceeds one third of the number of members of the Authority referred to in paragraph 2.

10. Where more than one third of the members of the Authority become disqualified at the same time, then, until the number of members in office is increased to at least two-thirds of the number of members of the whole Authority, the quorum of the Authority shall be determined by reference to the number of members of the Authority who remain qualified instead of by reference to the number of members of the whole Authority.

11. Subject to paragraph 12 below, if a member of the Authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance to attend any meeting of the Authority, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiry of that period, the relevant constituent Authority shall be invited to appoint a replacement for the remainder of that member's term. Any such approval by the Authority should be instigated by the Monitoring Officer bringing a report following consultation with the member.

12. Attendance as a member at any meeting of the Authority including any committee or sub-committee shall be deemed for the purposes of paragraph 11 above to be attendance at a meeting of the Authority.

13. If the Chair or Vice-Chair of any committee fails to attend the committee meetings that they Chair (or Vice-Chair) for a period of six consecutive months they shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be the Chair or Vice-Chair of that committee.

Standing Order 2 - Quorum of meetings of the full Authority

1. This standing order has been drafted in compliance with the Lancashire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 which is secondary legislation having effect under section 4 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. If this legislation changes such that the terms of this standing order conflicts with the new legislation, then the relevant terms of the new legislation will take precedence over any terms in this standing order that are not compatible with that new legislation.

2. The quorum for a meeting of the full Authority shall be one third of the total number of members of the Authority including at least one representative from each constituent Authority. No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the full Authority unless it is quorate.

3. In the event of a meeting of the full Authority being inquorate, it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

4. The consideration of all business which is on the agenda of a meeting of the full Authority brought to an end under paragraph 3, and which has not been completed before the meeting is brought to an end, shall be postponed to the next meeting of the full Authority, whether ordinary or extraordinary, as arranged by the Chair under paragraph 3.

5. At any postponed meeting of the full Authority arranged under paragraph 3, no business can be transacted other than the unfinished business of the original meeting. Any new business that was not on the original agenda may only be transacted at a meeting of the full Authority separately constituted in accordance with standing orders, but nothing shall prevent this separate meeting from taking place immediately after the conclusion of the postponed meeting.

Standing Order 3 - Appointment of temporary substitutes to committees, sub-committees and working groups

1. Appointment to committees, sub-committees and working groups is by the Authority although agreement between the political group leaders is usually sought. In the case of committees, these must, by law, be politically balanced.

2. Should any member be unable to attend a particular meeting of a committee, sub-committee or working group, the Monitoring Officer has delegated power to designate a temporary substitute for that particular meeting. This substitute must already be a serving member of the CFA.

3. The Monitoring Officer will consult with the Chair (or Vice-Chair) of the Authority and the Chair of the committee, sub-committee or working group before making the substitution. So far as is practicable, political balance rules must still be applied.

Standing Order 4 - Schedule of meetings (full Authority, committees and extraordinary)

Annual and ordinary meetings of the full Authority

1. The administrative year shall commence on 1 April. The Authority shall hold an annual meeting of the full Authority between 1 April and 30 June each year. The date of this is to be determined at a meeting of the full Authority in the preceding administrative year.

2. The programme of scheduled ordinary meetings for the full Authority shall be determined by the Authority at the annual meeting. Where it is necessary to change the date, time or place of any scheduled ordinary meeting of the full Authority, the meeting shall take place on such date, place or time as determined by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Authority and group leaders.

Extraordinary meetings of the full Authority

3. The Chair of the Authority may at any time call an extraordinary meeting of the Authority.

4. If the office of Chair is vacant, or if the Chair is unable to act for any reason, the Vice-Chair of the Authority may at any time call an extraordinary meeting of the Authority.

5. Three members of the Authority may call an extraordinary meeting of the Authority if a request for such a meeting has been presented to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Authority and either they have refused to call a meeting, or no extraordinary meeting has been called within seven days of the presentation of the request.

6. Where any person or persons decides to call an extraordinary meeting of the Authority, they shall inform the Monitoring Officer that they have done so, the business to be transacted and the date and time for which the meeting is called. The Monitoring Officer shall ensure that the notice and summonses required by Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 are published and sent.

Committee meetings

7. Meetings of committees constituted in accordance with Standing Order 6 shall be held as and when deemed necessary at the discretion of the Chair of the Authority or the Chair of the committee in question, and in compliance with any requirements set out in the terms of reference of that committee.

Venue

8. The venue of all meetings of the full Authority and committees shall be fixed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Authority or the Chair of the committee in question.

Meeting papers

9. Notice of the time and place of public meetings will be displayed at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's headquarters and published on its website, at least five clear working days before the meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

10. An item of business may only be considered at a public meeting where a copy of the agenda or part of the agenda including the item has been available for inspection by the public as required by regulation 7 (paragraph 9.1) for at least five clear working days before the meeting.

11. A copy of the agenda and every report for a meeting will also be made available for inspection by the public and on the website at least five clear working days before the meeting.

12. If a meeting is convened at shorter notice than five clear days (for example an extraordinary meeting), then the notice and publication of the agenda and papers will be published at the time the meeting is convened.

13. Notwithstanding paragraph 9 above, any item of business may be considered at a meeting if by reason of special circumstances, which shall be

specified in the minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Standing Order 5 - Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Combined Fire Authority

1. This standing order has been drafted in compliance with the Lancashire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 which is secondary legislation having effect under section 4 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004. If this legislation changes such that the terms of this standing order conflicts with the new legislation, then the relevant terms of the new legislation will take precedence over any terms in this standing order that are not compatible with that new legislation.

2. Appointments in relation to committees are dealt with in Standing Order 6 – Appointment of Committees, Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Members of Committees.

3. The Authority shall elect a Chair, and may elect a Vice-Chair, from among its members at the annual meeting of the full Authority. This shall be the first order of business.

4.The Monitoring Officer will invite nominations for the Chair of the Authority, and if required for the Vice-Chair. Once moved and seconded a vote is taken, which will be an anonymous vote, and the new Chair (or Vice-Chair) will take up their role.

5. If more than one nomination is received for the Chair or Vice-Chair then there will be sequential votes, eliminating the candidate with the least number of votes each time unless and until one member receives an overall majority of the votes cast.

6. The Chair and the Vice-Chair, if elected, shall, subject to paragraphs 4 to 9 of Standing Order 1 – Membership of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority, hold office until the next annual meeting or as the Authority shall determine.

7. Paragraph 6 shall not prevent a person who holds or has held office as Chair or Vice-Chair, from being elected or re-elected to either of those offices.

8. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Authority shall elect from its members a person to replace the Chair or Vice-Chair.

9. The election to replace the Chair under paragraph 8 shall take place not later than the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.

Standing Order 6 - Appointment of Committees, Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Members of Committees

Number of committees, membership, and terms of reference

1. At the annual meeting of the full Authority, it will resolve:
    1.1 What committees and sub-committees will be appointed.
    1.2 Who the chairs and vice-chairs will be.
    1.3 What the committee terms of reference are.

2. It may also resolve on the appointment of independent persons, non-voting members, advisers, or other persons that may contribute to the work of a committee, on a permanent or temporary basis to any committee or sub-committee. It may also delegate that resolution to the committee itself.

3. The terms of reference for each committee shall make it explicit in what matters the committee has the power to make a final decision, which would be binding on the full Authority, and in what matters it may only make a recommendation to the full Authority. It shall however be open to any committee to submit a matter to the Authority for decision, even if the matter falls within the delegated powers of the committee.

Political balance

4. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the 1989 Act”) requires the Authority to allocate seats on its various committees according to political balance rules.

5. The principles to be followed are set out in full in s.15(4) of the 1989 Act but in summary:

    5.1 Not all the seats on the body should be allocated to the same political group.

    5.2 A political group must comprise at least two members.

5.3 If one political group has an overall majority of the seats on the Authority, that group must have a majority of the seats on each committee.

5.4 So far as reasonably practicable and subject to (5.3) above, the total number of seats allocated to each political group across all committees shall be proportionate to the total number of seats that political group has on the Authority.

5.5 Subject to (5.3) and (5.4) above, the number of seats on each committee will be allocated to political groups in the same proportion as each group's seats on the full Authority.

Committee reports

6. Committees shall submit minutes of their meetings to the next scheduled meeting of the full Authority. Members of the Authority may ask questions regarding any matter contained in the report minutes of a committee. Unless the minutes contain specific recommendations for decision by the Authority, they shall be regarded as being submitted for the information of the Authority only.

7. The adoption of the recommendations of a committee shall be moved by the Chair of the committee, or in the absence of the Chair by the Vice-Chair, or in the absence of both, by the person presiding at the Authority's meeting, and shall be seconded. The Authority may disapprove, amend or refer back for further consideration any recommendation of a committee relating to a matter for decision by the Authority.

8. Subject to the agreement of the Chair of the committee, a member of the Authority who is not a member of that committee and so not entitled to speak at a committee or sub-committee, shall be entitled to do so but not to vote at a meeting of the committee or sub-committee.

9. The quorum of any committee shall be set out in the terms of reference for that committee.

10. In the event of any meeting being inquorate, it shall stand temporarily adjourned for 30 minutes and if, thereafter, there is still not a quorum the meeting shall stand finally adjourned. At the point of adjournment, or

subsequently, the Chair may agree arrangements for the meeting to be reconvened.

Standing Order 7 - Conduct of meetings

Chair of meeting

1. The Chair of the Authority shall preside at meetings of the Authority. The Chair of each committee shall preside at the meeting of that committee. The exception to this is at the annual general meeting, or when neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair are present (as set out in paragraph 2 below) when the first order of business is the election of the Chair. The Monitoring Officer will preside over the meeting until the Chair is elected.

2. In the absence of the Chair at any meeting, the Vice-Chair shall preside at the meeting. In the absence of both, the members present shall, as their first item of business move to appoint one of them to be Chair of the meeting.

3. The ruling of the Chair upon the meaning and application of these standing orders shall be final.

4. For the avoidance of doubt, this standing order shall apply to all formal meetings of the Authority including committees.

Attendance

5. The names of the members present at a meeting of the Authority shall be recorded.

6. Members of the Authority shall be entitled to attend meetings of committees other than those of which they are members but shall not take part in any proceedings without the consent of the committee nor in any case vote.

Agendas and papers

7. The order of business for any meeting shall be determined by the agenda for that meeting.

8. With the exception of the election or appointment of the Chair, the order of business as set out in the agenda may be varied by the Chair at their discretion.

9. Agenda items will be determined by the Monitoring Officer and relevant Chair in line with:

9.1 Matters reserved to the full Authority.

9.2 Committee terms of reference.

9.3 Notice of motions submitted by members.

10. Every item of business shall be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Authority has a function or is within the terms of reference for the relevant committee.

11. An item of business not included in the agenda shall only be considered if the Chair and Monitoring Officer are of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. The circumstances shall be specified in the minutes.

12. In order to allow for a report under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to be prepared and considered, notice of any alternative budget proposals to the one being considered must be given as soon as practicable, and no later than seven working days in advance of the meeting.

13. Agendas for meetings of committees shall, subject to paragraph 14, be furnished only to members of such committees. Reports contained in part two of agendas for the Authority and committees shall be marked as "Private and Confidential. Not for publication by virtue of paragraph ( ) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972".

14. Members not serving on such committees may, on request in writing to the Monitoring Officer and subject to agreement of the Chair, be supplied with part one and part two of the agenda for the committees concerned, where allowed under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 subject to those reports in part two being treated as private and confidential.

Minutes

15. Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the Authority shall, subject to paragraph 16 below, be drawn up and entered in a book kept for that purpose. They shall be signed at the same or at the next suitable meeting of the Authority

by the Chair, and any minute purporting to be so signed shall be received in evidence without further proof.

16. Notwithstanding anything in any enactment or rule of law to the contrary, the minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Authority may be recorded on loose leaves consecutively numbered, signed, and each leaf initialled, at the same or next suitable meeting of the Authority, by the Chair. Any minute purporting to be so signed shall be received in evidence without further proof.

17. Until the contrary is proved, minutes of meetings that have been made and signed in accordance with paragraph 15 or 16 shall be deemed to have been duly convened and held, and all the members present at the meeting shall be deemed to have been duly qualified.

18. For the purposes of paragraphs 15 and 16, the next suitable meeting of the Authority is their next following meeting or, where standing orders made by the Authority in accordance with regulations under section 20 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provide for another meeting of the Authority to be regarded as suitable, either the next following meeting or that other meeting.

Conduct

19. Members will at all times conduct themselves in accordance with the Code of Conduct, the Nolan principles, the Core Code of Ethics, and will abide by rules of common courtesy. The Chair is empowered to take action or make directions as necessary to maintain this.

20. Members will at all times follow the procedures in this constitution to ensure meetings run effectively and efficiently. The Chair is empowered to take action or make directions as necessary to maintain this.

21. If the Chair acts to call a member to order or to direct the course of the proceedings, the member speaking shall give way.

22. If any member refuses to obey the ruling of the Chair, the Chair shall be empowered to 'name' such offending member and it may be moved and seconded (without debate) that the offending member be suspended from the

meeting. If upon such motion being carried, the offending member refuses to comply, the Chair may take steps for the removal of the offending member.

23. During debate, only one member may speak at a time.

24. A member when speaking shall address the Chair.

25. If two or more members indicate a wish to speak, the Chair shall call on one to speak in the order they indicated; the other or others shall then be silent.

26. While a member is speaking, the other members shall remain silent, unless indicating a point of order or personal explanation (as set out at paragraphs 34-39).

Questions from members of the Authority

27. A member of the Authority may ask the Chair of the meeting any question upon an item in a report when that item is under consideration by the Authority or committee.

28. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

29. An answer may take the form of:

29.1 A direct oral answer.

29.2 A reference to a publication where the desired information is contained.

29.3 A written answer circulated to members and documented in the minutes where the reply to the question cannot conveniently be given there and then.

Content and length of speeches

30. A member shall direct their speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order.

31. Unless the Chair decides otherwise in a particular case, each speech shall be limited to five minutes.

32. A person exercising a right of reply shall be limited in their reply to five minutes.

When a member may speak again

33. A member who has spoken on any matter shall not speak again whilst that matter is the subject of debate, except:

33.1 In exercise of a right of reply.

33.2 On a point of order.

33.3 By leave of the Chair.

33.4 By way of personal explanation.

Personal explanations

34. A member may raise a personal explanation and with the approval of the Chair shall be entitled to be heard at that time.

35. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by them that may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate.

36. The ruling of the Chair on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall be final.

Points of order

37. A member may raise a point of order and be entitled to be heard at that time.

38. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a standing order or statutory provision and the member shall specify the standing order or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been broken.

39. The ruling of the Chair on a point of order shall be final.

Voting

40. The details of the exact procedural steps relating to any manner of voting shall be explained by the Monitoring Officer. The Authority shall normally vote

upon matters by a show of hands expect where the vote is for the appointment of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Authority (which will be an anonymous vote) or in accordance with paragraphs 44 to 47 below.

41. If both a recorded (named) vote and an anonymous vote are proposed and voted in favour for the same item, then it is the recorded (named) vote that will take precedence.

42. The Chair and Monitoring Officer shall ascertain the number voting for or against any question and their declaration as to the result shall be conclusive.

43. In the event of an equality of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

Recorded (named) vote

44. The Authority shall normally vote upon matters by a show of hands but where any member proposes that a recorded vote be taken, a vote will be taken on this.

45. If five members vote in favour, then the names of the members present and their votes on the original matter shall be taken by the Monitoring Officer and recorded in the minutes.

Anonymous ballot

46. An anonymous ballot may be held if it is proposed and five of the members vote in favour. Standing Order 5 also provides that an anonymous ballot must be held for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority.

Recording of voting

47. Where immediately after a vote (other than a recorded vote or an anonymous ballot) is taken, if requested by any member it shall be recorded in the minutes how that member voted (or abstained).

Press and public

48. Subject to this standing order, members of the public (which includes employees of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service) are not allowed to speak or take part in any such meetings.

49. Should a member of the public wish to draw any matter to the attention of the full Authority or a committee, they should submit a written submission to be read out. This should be submitted to the Monitoring Officer for consideration at least three working days before the date of the meeting (not including the date of the meeting).

50. If the member of the public wishes to address the meeting orally rather than in writing, this should be detailed in the written submission with reasons as to why an oral address is needed.

51. In exceptional circumstances, a member of the public may speak during a meeting without prior notice and a written submission as set out in this paragraph. This will be at the discretion of the Chair (taking into account the factors listed at paragraph 53 below) and will only be considered where it was not reasonably practicable for notice and a written submission to have been prepared (for example something arising unexpectedly during a meeting).

52. Whether any such submission is in fact read out at the meeting (or an oral address is allowed) is at the discretion of the Chair of that meeting in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Vice-Chair.

53. In exercising their discretion referred to in paragraphs 51 and 52 above, the Chair should consider the following (this is a non-exhaustive list and other factors may be deemed relevant):

> 53.1 The relevance of the subject to be raised to items on the agenda or matters under discussion in the meeting.
>
> 53.2 What other evidence or discussion has already or will be heard on the same subject and whether this is a repetition of matters already aired.
>
> 53.3 Whether there is any other appropriate forum or channel for the member of the public to raise this subject and have their voice heard.

53.4 The level of disruption the intervention may cause to the meeting (in terms of time; the nature of the subject to be aired; whether it is considered to be a vexatious or malicious point or delivered in an abusive fashion).

53.5 The overall impact of the intervention on the efficient and orderly running of the meeting.

54. Unless the chair decides otherwise in a particular case, members of the public will be limited to speak for five minutes.

55. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting the Chair shall warn them. If they continue the interruption, the Chair shall order their removal. If the Chair considers it essential for the purpose of the effective conduct of business, they may adjourn the meeting to another place, day or time.

56. The Authority or a committee may, by resolution, exclude the press and other members of the public from a meeting during an item of business. This is on the basis that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if they remained present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972. If moved and seconded, a majority vote on the exclusion of the press and public will be taken.

57. The press and other members of the public shall be excluded from a meeting whenever it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed to them in breach of the obligation of confidence.

58. Any business subject of a resolution under paragraphs 56 and 57 of this standing order shall stand adjourned until all other business of the meeting has been transacted. At that point the press and other members of the public shall leave the meeting and the adjourned business shall be considered.

59. Pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public are permitted to attend any meeting of the full Authority or its committees (subject to exclusion in accordance with this standing order).

Notices of motion

60. Subject to paragraph 10, no motion shall be moved at any meeting of the Authority unless notice has been given:

    60.1 in writing;

    60.2 signed by the member or members of the Authority giving the notice (an email by the member or members giving notice would be regarded as sufficient for this purpose);

    60.3 and delivered (or emailed) to the Monitoring Officer at least 14 clear working days before the next meeting of the Authority, not counting the day of the meeting.

61. The Monitoring Officer shall keep a record of the date motions were received and the order in which they were received.

Notices of motion not accepted

62. The Chair of the Authority shall have discretion not to accept any notice of motion where:

    62.1 In the opinion of the Monitoring Officer the notice of motion is out of order, illegal, irregular, or improper.

    62.2 The Chair, after consultation with the Monitoring Officer, determines that the matter can be more appropriately dealt with in some other way.

63. The Monitoring Officer shall notify the member as to the reasons for non-acceptance of any notice of motion.

Motions to be set out in agenda

64. The Monitoring Officer shall set out in the agenda for every meeting of the Authority and committees, all motions which have been duly given in the order in which they have been received.

65. If a motion set out in the agenda is not moved either by:

    65.1 a member who gave notice of it; or

65.2 another member at the member's request and on their behalf, with the concurrence of the Chair of the Authority, it shall, unless postponed by consent of the Authority, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

66. A member of the Authority who has proposed a motion which has been referred to any committee shall be entitled to attend that committee and to speak to the item.

Motions and amendments (which may be moved without notice)

67. The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice:

67.1 Appointment of a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is made.

67.2 Motions relating to the accuracy of the minutes.

67.3 That an item of business specified in the agenda is dealt with earlier in the meeting.

67.4 That any item of business be referred to a committee.

67.5 That a committee, sub-committee or working group be appointed in connection with any item mentioned in the summons to the meeting.

67.6 Adoption of reports and recommendations of any committee or officer and any consequent resolutions.

67.7 That leave be given to withdraw a motion.

67.8 Extending the time limit for speeches.

67.9 Amendments to motions.

67.10 That the Authority proceeds to the next business.

67.11 That the question now be put.

67.12 That the debate be now adjourned.

67.13 That the Authority do now adjourn.

67.14 Suspending any standing orders.

67.15 Motions to exclude the public, under Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972.

67.16 That a recorded vote or anonymous ballot be taken.

Amendments to motions

68. An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either:

68.1 To refer a subject of debate to a committee, sub-committee or working group for consideration or re-consideration.

68.2 Amend the words but any such omission, insertion or addition of words shall not have the effect of negating the motion.

69. If an amendment is lost, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.

70. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall (without any formal vote to this effect) become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

Withdrawal of motion

71. The mover may, with the consent of the seconder and members in the meeting, withdraw a motion or amendment by way of a vote and no person may then speak upon it.

Rules of debate

72. A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded and it shall, if required by the Chair, be put into writing and handed to the Chair and Monitoring Officer before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.

73. A member when moving a motion or amendment may introduce the motion or reserve their speech until a later period of the debate.

74. A mover of a motion or amendment also has a right to reply at the close of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.

75. A reply shall be strictly confined to answering previous speakers and shall not introduce new matters.

76. Once a motion has been moved and seconded any member can speak on it.

Standing Order 8 - Urgent business procedure

1. Decisions made by the Combined Fire Authority should be taken by the Authority itself, its committees in accordance with terms of reference, or by its officers under delegated powers.

2. Where matters arise which require urgent action that fall outside of the scheme of delegation to officers and would ordinarily be dealt with by the full Authority or one of its committees, consideration should first be given to the possibility of setting up an extraordinary meeting of the Authority. Where, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, setting up an extraordinary meeting is not possible, practicable or the best course of action in the circumstances, then decisions relating to matters which require urgent action are to be taken by the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer or the Treasurer depending on the nature of the business concerned.

3. Matters dealt with under this procedure should only be matters of genuine urgency that cannot wait until the next relevant meeting of the Authority or committee.

4. Before taking any urgent action on behalf of the Authority or any of its committees, where possible the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer or Treasurer, will seek the views of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority or of the committee which would otherwise deal with the matter. If for any reason none of the four members named above (Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority or of the committee which would otherwise deal with the matter) are available, the views can instead be sought of the Chair or Vice-Chair of any other committee, or of any of the leaders of the political groups as seems most appropriate.

5. Where prior consultation has not proved possible, notification as soon as possible thereafter will be undertaken.

6. A record will be maintained of the urgent action authorised by the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer or Treasurer following the decision being made and will

be reported for information to the next meeting of the Authority or committee as appropriate.

7. The decision taken must not be contrary to a previous decision of the Authority or established practices.

Standing Order 9 – Disciplinary Procedure for Statutory Officers

Introduction

1. This procedure outlines the process to be followed when dealing with disciplinary matters for statutory officers in Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. It is intended to provide a fair and consistent process specifically for dealing with disciplinary action, the use of suspension, carrying out investigations, dismissals and appeals for the post-holders who hold the office of Head of Paid Service (Chief Fire Officer), Monitoring Officer and Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), referred to as statutory officers. This procedure only applies to employees of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

61. The following has been considered in the development of these procedures:

2.1 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders (England) Regulations 2015 amended.

2.2 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulation 2001 regarding the disciplinary procedure for statutory positions within authorities.

2.3 The Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) has issued a revised edition of the National Salary Framework and Conditions of Service Handbook for Local Authorities' Chief Executives. The included Model Disciplinary Procedure (England and Wales) forms the basis of this procedure (applies to Treasurer and Monitoring Officer).

Disciplinary Action

62. The disciplinary action in relation to this process includes any action occasioned by alleged misconduct or poor performance which, if proven, would be recorded on the statutory officer's personal file. This includes any proposals for dismissals of the statutory officer for any reason other than

redundancy, permanent ill health or infirmity of body where another more appropriate procedure may be invoked.

63. Where an allegation is made in respect of a statutory officer which could constitute either misconduct or gross misconduct, then the Authority may initiate this disciplinary procedure.

64. If the employee raises a grievance during the disciplinary procedure, the employer can pause the disciplinary investigation or hearing and deal with the grievance first. It may be appropriate to deal with both at the same time if the grievance and the disciplinary case are related.

Right to be accompanied

65. The statutory officer will have the opportunity to be accompanied by their trade union representative or some other person of their choice (at their own cost), excluding, in exceptional circumstances, where there is a need to suspend the statutory officer in an emergency.

66. The statutory right to be accompanied applies only to hearings where disciplinary action may be taken or confirmed. Whilst every effort will be made to agree suitable dates the unavailability of a representative cannot unduly delay the procedure. In this procedure the statutory right to be accompanied would arise as follows:

    7.1 Where the Investigation and Disciplinary Committee (IDC) considers the report of the Independent Investigator (II) and provides the statutory officer with the opportunity to state their case before making its decision.

    7.2 During any appeal against the decision taken by the IDC for action short of dismissal.

    7.3 At a full Authority meeting considering a recommendation for dismissal which also fulfils the requirement relating to a right of appeal.

8. At any of these detailed stages the statutory officer, where the representative is unavailable, will have the right to postpone the meeting for a period of up to ten calendar days.

9. If the statutory officer representative is unable to attend within that period the Authority has the right to proceed with the hearing without further delay,

although reasonable consideration should be given to arranging an alternative date.

Suspension

10. The Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Authority or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair holds the delegated power to suspend the Director of Corporate Services and the Monitoring Officer immediately in an emergency. The Chair and any leaders of other political groups will be advised that a statutory officer has been suspended on emergency grounds.

11. Where there is a consideration to suspend the Chief Fire Officer, an Investigation and Disciplinary Committee (IDC) will be established and the facts considered.

12. Suspension will not take place until the provision of appropriate welfare arrangements have been considered. This includes but is not limited to:

12.1 Referral to Occupational Health.

12.2 Appointment of a welfare officer – this may be internal or external.

12.3 An internal point of contact whose role is to keep the officer regularly updated on progress of the investigation or next steps.

12.4 Signposting to the Employee Assistance Programme.

12.5 Safeguarding.

12.6 Consideration of the involvement of the Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

Informal fact finding

13. This procedure will allow for an initial fact finding or preliminary investigation to be undertaken. The purpose of the initial fact finding, or preliminary investigation is to determine if a potential question of discipline exists and, if it does, whether it could not be resolved by a quiet word, informally (such as, through an unrecorded informal warning).

14. However, it will depend upon the seriousness of the situation. The working context will also be considered, for example a challenging period for employees or communities such as industrial action or changes to service delivery. The potential for a vexatious complainant or smear campaign will also be considered. Advice can be provided by the Chief Fire Officer, Monitoring Officer, Legal Services and Standards Manager, and Director People and Development, as applicable and depending on the circumstances of the case. Records should be kept of allegations and preliminary investigations.

15. On receiving the initial fact-finding report, the Monitoring Officer or their deputy, and if the matter relates to the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Fire Officer, (in consultation with the independent person) will determine whether a case should be referred to the IDC. The IDC will comprise a group of five members politically constituted with the Chair usually being the Chair of the Fire Authority.

Informal stage

16. If an allegation or other issue raised against a statutory officer is considered to require a full investigation, the following process will apply.

16.1 The Monitoring Officer, or their deputy will receive and refer the allegation or issue to the IDC. The Monitoring Officer or their deputy will act as Clerk to the IDC providing necessary procedural and administrative support including noting the meetings accordingly. The IDC will decide when receiving the initial allegation, the appropriate person to assist them with information gathering that may be required at this initial stage. This may be the Monitoring Officer, or their deputy, or another appropriate person as determined by the IDC.

16.2 Where the allegation or issue relates to the Monitoring Officer then the CFO will nominate an appropriate person to be responsible for the receiving and referring of the allegation or issue to the IDC. In such circumstances the Deputy Monitoring Officer will provide procedural and administrative support to the IDC as necessary. The IDC will decide, when receiving the initial allegation, the appropriate person to assist them with the information gathering at this stage. This may be the Deputy

Monitoring Officer, or another appropriate officer as determined by the IDC.

16.3 The IDC will, as soon as is practicable, inform the statutory officer in writing of the allegation or other issues under investigation. They will also provide, as soon as is practicable, them with any evidence the IDC is to consider. This includes the right to hear any oral evidence that may be presented.

16.4 The statutory officer will be invited to put forward written representations and provide any evidence, including evidence from any witnesses they wish the IDC to consider. The IDC will also provide the opportunity for the statutory officer to make oral representations direct to the IDC. The IDC, having considered the allegation or other issues, supporting evidence, written or oral representations of the statutory officer and report (oral or written) prepared by the information gatherer, will decide whether the allegation or issues considered:

16.4.1 Require no further action.

16.4.2 Can be resolved via issue of an unrecorded oral warning.

16.4.3 Should be referred to an independent investigator.

17. In determining whether an allegation of misconduct by a statutory officer should be investigated in accordance with the Authority's approved procedures, it may be decided to take no action if one or more of the following applies:

17.1 Insufficient information has been provided on which to base a decision on whether the allegation should be investigated.

17.2 The allegation appears to be simply malicious or "tit-for-tat".

17.3 The allegation is deemed vexatious.

17.4 Based on the evidence, the allegation is unfounded, by reference to a cursory examination of the facts on a balance of probability.

18. Where an informal or unrecorded oral warning is to be issued the Monitoring Officer, (or the deputy for issues involving the Monitoring Officer), will make

necessary arrangements for the statutory officer to attend a planned meeting of the IDC.

19. The threshold test for the appointment of an independent investigator is where the IDC considers:

> 19.1 There is sufficient evidence in support of the allegation to require further investigation.
>
> 19.2 Should the allegations be upheld it would lead to either dismissal or another formal sanction that would be recorded on the statutory officer's file.

20. The IDC will aim to advise the statutory officer in writing of its decision within a maximum period of two months, following initial submission of the allegation or complaint to the IDC. In exceptional cases where the IDC anticipates further time is necessary beyond two months, the statutory officer will be notified of this.

21. The IDC will request officer support, when required, to ensure the formal stages can progress procedurally as necessary. This may involve the Monitoring Officer, their deputy, the Director of People and Development, members of Democratic Services or relevant deputies as appropriate to ensure the procedure can progress in a timely manner.

Formal Stage

Independent Investigator

22. The IDC are responsible for the appointment of an independent investigator. This may be from the nationally maintained list, Northwest Employers, a suitably qualified and trained investigator, or a fire sector expert. The IDC will be provided with three names which will then be provided to the statutory officer who is subject to the complaint. The statutory officer will be invited to select one of the names and may only discount names where a genuine conflict of interest exists. If the statutory officer has not agreed a name within 14 days, the IDC will select the investigator from the names provided.

23. The IDC will be responsible for ensuring the independent investigator is provided with terms of reference for their role and has sufficient facilities, support, access to information and officers, and is appropriately remunerated for this role.

24. Once appointed, the independent investigator should carry out a thorough investigation in line with the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievances to gather evidence and establish the facts promptly, ensuring a written record is made at all stages for later reference.

25. Where the statutory officer is to be interviewed by the independent investigator as part of an investigation they will be advised of the purpose of the meeting in advance. When making these arrangements this should not frustrate or delay the investigation.

26. The statutory officer or their representative will be given the opportunity to present their case and any relevant evidence to the independent investigator. Any technical expertise or witnesses relevant to the case will also be made available where necessary.

27. Notes of any interviews taken as part of the investigation process should be treated as confidential and also treated with discretion. However, those taking part in the process should be advised that any records, notes and statements or interviews, taken as part of the process, may be shared as appropriate, if assessed as relevant information to be considered within the context of this policy and procedure.

28. Having investigated and established the facts, the independent investigator will refer the completed investigation report and evidence gathered, including any recommendations with rationale as to the way forward, to the IDC via either the Monitoring Officer, their deputy, or other appropriate officer as pre-determined by the IDC.

Consideration and decision of the IDC

29. The IDC will consider the report of the independent investigator and the recommendations made during a formal disciplinary hearing conducted in accordance with the ACAS Code of Practice and its supporting guidance, before deciding on the course of action to take.

30. During the hearing, the statutory officer will be provided with the opportunity to make representations or provide mitigating circumstances at the hearing and may be accompanied. The statutory officer will have the opportunity to challenge the recommendations of the Independent Investigator and question any witnesses.

Recommendation of the IDC

31. Following the Formal Hearing the IDC will make a recommendation as follows:
    - 31.1 No case to answer.
    - 31.2 Disciplinary action short of dismissal.
    - 31.3 Dismissal.
32. Where there is no case to answer the IDC will advise the statutory officer, in writing, of their decision confirming the ending of any suspension, if required.
33. In such instances, appropriate communication can be prepared in consultation with the statutory officer to ensure as far as possible that there is no damage to their reputation.

Disciplinary action short of dismissal

34. The IDC when recommending disciplinary action short of dismissal, will be responsible for taking the action and imposing any appropriate penalty. There is no requirement for full Authority to approve action short of dismissal. The actions short of dismissal available to the IDC are as follows:

35. Issue a written warning;

    - 35.1 A verbal warning valid for 6 months from the date of issue.
    - 35.2 A written warning valid for 12 months from the date of issue.
    - 35.3 A final written warning valid for 18 months from the day of issue.

36. The IDC will communicate its decision to the statutory officer in writing outlining the rationale for the decision. The statutory officer will have the right to appeal disciplinary action short of dismissal to the Appeals Committee.

Recommendation for dismissal

37. Where the IDC decision is to recommend dismissal, the statutory officer must be notified in writing of the recommendation and advised that this recommendation will be sent to the Independent Panel, along with copies of the independent investigators report. The statutory officer must be advised of the option to submit a written representation to the Independent Panel.

The Independent Panel

38. The Independent Panel (IP) is an advisory committee appointed by the Authority that consists of two independent persons appointed under S28 (7) of the Localism Act 2011, established for the purpose of advising the Authority on matters relating to the dismissal of the statutory officers. Guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) recommends that the Independent Panel should consist of independent persons only. This approach is consistent with the JNC for Local Authority Chief Executives Model Disciplinary procedures.

39. The IP will be responsible for considering any recommendation from the IDC to dismiss a statutory officer and will consider both the IDC decision report along with the report from the independent investigator. The IP meeting is not a re-hearing, and witnesses will not be called. The statutory officer however should be present at the meeting of the IP, and the IDC should be represented by a nominated person.

40. The statutory officer will be entitled to submit written representations for consideration by the IP as well as being afforded the opportunity to make oral representations at the meeting of the IP. The nominated representative of the IDC will be invited to respond to any of the points made by the statutory officer during the meeting. Both parties may be questioned as necessary by the IP.

41. The Independent Panel will consider the IDC recommendations, the submission of the statutory officer and the report of the Independent Investigator and make their recommendations in a report for full Authority. The report of the IP will outline a clear rationale if they disagree with the recommendation of the IDC to dismiss. The panel may give advice, express its views and make its own recommendations before the Authority to consider whether to approve a proposal to dismiss a statutory officer.

42. The panel may have access to external legal and professional advice as necessary.

Full Authority

43. A report will be submitted to full Authority by the Monitoring Officer or their deputy, or another appropriate officer as necessary which includes:

43.1 The recommendation of the IDC.

43.2 The Independent Investigators Report.

43.3 The comments made on the recommendation for dismissal from the Independent Panel.

44. The full Authority will consider the recommendation to dismiss the statutory officer. The meeting will not be a re-hearing, and witnesses will not be called. However, the statutory officer will be invited to attend this meeting and given the opportunity to address the Authority. The independent investigator may also be invited to attend to provide clarification if required.

45. Following full consideration, the Authority should either confirm or reject the recommendation to dismiss. It is a statutory requirement that the full Authority must take into account any advice, views or recommendations of the Independent Panel when they are considering the proposed dismissal of a statutory officer and before dismissal (with or without notice) is confirmed to them.

46. The Authority will vote on whether to dismiss (majority vote) and their decision will be final.

47. If rejecting the recommendation, the Authority may elect to impose a lesser disciplinary sanction or take no further action.

48. If the recommendation is confirmed the statutory officer will be notified in writing.

49. An interlude is required of at least 20 working days between the Independent Panel and the full Authority meeting.

Appeals

Appeals against disciplinary action short of dismissal

50. The statutory officer has the right to appeal against action short of dismissal to the Appeals Committee. The statutory officer must appeal within seven calendar days of receiving the notice of the sanction and the outcome of the hearing. The notice of any appeal must be in writing and should clearly specify one or more of the grounds of appeal such as:

> 50.1 There was a defect in the procedure.
> 50.2 The independent investigators report being inaccurate or incomplete.
> 50.3 The issue is not proven on the balance of probabilities.
> 50.4 The disciplinary sanction was too severe.
> 50.5 New evidence has come to light since the hearing which will have an impact on the decision.

51. The Appeals Committee will consider the report of the independent investigator and any other relevant information considered by the IDC. The statutory officer will have the opportunity to appear at the meeting of the Appeals Committee and present their case.

52. The Appeals Committee will consider all matters before deciding as to whether to:

> 52.1 Reject the appeal and confirm the IDC's decision.
> 52.2 Allow the appeal in part and impose alternative action short of dismissal.
> 52.3 Allow the appeal and take no further action against the statutory officer.

53. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

Appeals against dismissal

54. The ACAS Code of Practice requires that an employee who is dismissed is provided with the opportunity to appeal against the decision.

55. The whole Authority should approve a dismissal before notice of dismissal is issued. There may be some concerns about the ability to offer a fair appeal if the whole of the Authority is familiar with the issues and already taken the provisional decision to dismiss.

56. All information will be provided to all Authority members in line with statutory requirements providing an opportunity for members to raise objections.

57. The statutory officer will have the option to make written representations in advance to the Authority and attend the meeting to make oral representations before the decision is taken on the recommendation to dismiss. Those representations constitute the statutory officer's final right of appeal.

Protocol for Filming or Recording Public Meetings

1. Members of the public and press are entitled to attend and report on any of the Authority's meetings that are held in public. These public meetings can be reported by filming, photographing, making an audio recording or otherwise reporting on them for example through the use of social media.

2. You do not need prior permission to attend and report, but it would be helpful if members of the public give notice of their intention so any necessary practical arrangements can be made. Contact: CFA@lancsfirerescue.org.uk

3. The primary purpose of the public meeting is to transact its business in a transparent manner. If a member of the public or press is present at the meeting, they are not permitted to provide an oral commentary on the meeting as it takes place. The Authority will as far as practicable provide reasonable facilities for members of the press or public who wish to report on proceedings. Reporting may only be carried out from within the areas designated for the press and public or as directed by the Chair of the meeting, from where the meeting can be viewed and heard. This may only be done in a non-disruptive way and must not impede the view of other attendees or access to the meeting room. There is limited space for tables but if there are specific requirements and advance notice is given of these, they will be accommodated as much as is practicable.

4. This protocol is about the right to report the proceedings of the meeting. Other members of the public may also be present as observers only and may not wish to be filmed or recorded. Their wishes should be complied with if they actively indicate an objection to being filmed or recorded. This does not apply to formal public participation in the meeting.

5. Members of the public and press are not able to attend or report private meetings or those where the press and public have been excluded, and must not leave any recording equipment in the room where a private meeting is held.

6. Members of the public and press must not behave in a way which is disruptive, and to do so could result in them being stopped from reporting on the meeting or even excluded from it. Disruptive behaviour could be any action or activity which disrupts the good conduct of the meeting or impedes others from being able to see, hear or

themselves film the proceedings. Examples include moving outside the areas designated for the press or public without the Chair's consent; excessive noise in recording, setting up or re-siting equipment during the meeting; intrusive lighting; any flash photography; or interrupting the meeting in any way. The Chair of the meeting has responsibility for ensuring the proper conduct of the meeting's business and may require people to stop reporting or even exclude them from the meeting entirely if they are being disruptive.

Members’ code of conduct

Definitions

1. For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “member” means a member or co-opted member of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who:

   1.1 is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the Authority, or;
   1.2 is a member of, and represents the Authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority;
   1.3 and who is entitled to vote on any question that fails to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

2. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a member, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow members, officers and the reputation of the Authority. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all members and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The Authority encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of members and local government.

General principles of member conduct

3. Everyone in public office at all levels: all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors, Combined Fire Authority members and officers should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles (Appendix A).

4. Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for your role as member co-opted on the Combined Fire Authority.

5. In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:
   - 5.1 I act with integrity and honesty.
   - 5.2 I act lawfully.
   - 5.3 I treat all persons fairly and with respect.
   - 5.4 I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of member.

6. In undertaking my role:
   - 6.1 I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community.
   - 6.2 I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person.
   - 6.3 I avoid conflicts of interest.
   - 6.4 I exercise reasonable care and diligence.
   - 6.5 I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my Authority's requirements and in the public interest.
   - 6.6 I will adhere to the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services.

Application of the Code of Conduct

7. This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you become a member of the Authority or are appointed as a co-opted member, and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a member or co-opted member.

8. This Code of Conduct applies to you when:
   - 8.1 You are acting in your capacity as a member or as a representative of the Authority.
   - 8.2 You are claiming to act as a member or as a representative of the Authority.
   - 8.3 You are giving the impression that you are acting as a member or as a representative of the Authority.

8.4 You refer publicly to your role as a member or use knowledge you could only obtain in your role as a member.

9. The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

9.1 At face-to-face meetings.

9.2 At online or telephone meetings.

9.3 In written communication.

9.4 In verbal communication.

9.5 In non-verbal communication.

9.6 In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

10. You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times.

11. Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

Standards of member conduct

12. This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a member. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

13. Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

14. Respect

As a member:

14.1 I treat other members and members of the public with respect.

14.2 I treat Authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations, and those volunteering for the Authority with respect and respect the role they play.

14.3 Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

14.4 In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in members.

14.5 In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow members, where action could then be taken under the Member Code of Conduct, and employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the member-officer protocol.

15. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a member:

15.1 I do not bully any person.

15.2 I do not harass any person.

15.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

15.4 The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

15.5 The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

15.6 Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

15.7 The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

16. Impartiality of members of the Authority

As a member:

16.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the Authority.

16.2 Officers work for the Authority as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

17. Confidentiality and access to information

As a member:

17.1 I do not disclose information:

17.1.1 Given to me in confidence by anyone.

17.1.2 Acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:

- I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
- I am required by law to do so;
- the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
- the disclosure is:
    - reasonable and in the public interest; and
    - made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and
    - I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.

17.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a member for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

17.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

17.4 The Authority must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

18. Disrepute

As a member:

18.1 I do not bring my role or the Authority into disrepute.

18.2 As a member, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other members and the Authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest or deceitful can bring the Authority into disrepute.

18.3 You are able to hold the Authority and fellow members to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Authority whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

19. Use of position

As a member:

19.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

19.2 Your position as a member of the Authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

20. Use of Authority resources and facilities

As a member:

20.1 I do not misuse Authority resources.

20.2 I will, when using the resources of the Authority or authorising their use by others:

20.2.1 act in accordance with the Authority's requirements; and

20.2.2 ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.

20.3 You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a member. Examples include:

20.3.1 Office support.

20.3.2 Stationery.

20.3.3 Equipment such as phones, and computers.

20.3.4 Transport.

20.3.5 Access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

20.4 These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a member more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

21. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a member:

21.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Authority.

21.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation or determination.

21.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

21.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

21.5 It is extremely important for you as a member to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the Authority

22. Interests

As a member:

22.1 I register and declare my interests.

22.2 You need to register your interests so that the public, Authority employees and fellow members know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should declare an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be declared by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

22.3 You should note that failure to register or declare a disclosable pecuniary (financial) interest is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

22.4 Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and declaring interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

23. Gifts and hospitality

As a member:

23.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.

23.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.

23.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

23.4 In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a member. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a member, such as gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a member. If you are unsure, contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support these principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B – Registering and declaring interests

1. Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in paragraph 16 (Other Registerable Interests).

2. "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

3. "Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

4. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.

5. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.

6. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in Table 1, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not

remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.

8. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as part of the urgent business procedure, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

9. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests paragraph 16, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

10. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

11. Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects;

    11.1 your own financial interest or well-being;

    11.2 a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or

11.3 a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registrable Interests as set out in paragraph 16

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

12. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 11 above) affects the financial interest or well-being:
    12.1. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
    12.2. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

13. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

14. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

15. Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as part of the urgent business procedure, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by them in carrying out their duties as a councillor, or towards their election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or their spouse or civil partner or the

	councillor is living as if they were spouses or civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council: (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses or civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.

Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge): (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses or civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where: (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or their spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses or civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

* ‘director’ includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* ‘securities’ means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Other Registerable Interests

16. Any Body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the council;

16.1 exercising functions of a public nature;

16.2 directed to charitable purposes; or

16.3 one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union);

16.4 of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Member complaints procedure

1. Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a relevant authority must have in place arrangements under which allegations can be investigated, and arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made. This document sets out those arrangements. The Local Government Association's Guidance on Member Model Code of Conduct Complaints Handling (21 September 2021) has been referred to in drafting this document. If there is any ambiguity, lack of clarity or gaps in this document, that Guidance may be referred to in order to assist comprehension and to provide more detailed guidance on how to approach any of the steps described in this document. For the avoidance of doubt, reference in this procedure to the "authority" means Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and does not refer to the member's home authority.

2. There are no specific timescales in this document for any step in the process. This is because of the number of variables that may be encountered which could make timescales impossible to meet. Equally, allowing too long a period of time when matters could be progressed more quickly is to be avoided. It is however recognised that in almost every case, dealing with complaints as promptly as possible will likely be in the best interests of all involved and the overarching aim should be to deal with all steps under this process as efficiently and swiftly as possible without compromising fairness; impartiality; transparency and thoroughness.

3. The Localism Act further provides that arrangements put in place by a relevant authority to investigate and decide upon allegations must include provision for the appointment by the authority of at least one Independent Person. Their views must be sought, and taken into account by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate. Details of Lancashire Combined Fire Authority's Independent Persons can be found on Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's website.

4. The views of the Independent Person may also be sought: (i) by the authority in relation to an allegation in any circumstances, even if it has not yet decided to investigate; or (ii) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person's behaviour is the subject of an allegation. The views of the Independent Person can

therefore be sought by the authority or the member complained of at any stage in this procedure.

5. Any complaint received must be put into writing (if not already – section 28(9) Localism Act) and contain sufficient detail for the matter to be looked into along with contact details of the complainant. This should be sent to the Monitoring Officer who will acknowledge receipt. If the Monitoring Officer identifies a conflict of interest which prevents them from involvement in an investigation, either the Deputy Monitoring Officer or a Monitoring Officer from another authority will be engaged to undertake the role normally performed by the Monitoring Officer.

6. The Monitoring Officer will normally disclose details of the complaint to the member who the complaint is about at this stage, as well as the identity of the complainant. There is discretion however to not disclose some or all of this detail in exceptional circumstances, for example if doing so may prejudice the investigation; potentially lead to intimidation of the complainant or witnesses; lead to the compromise or destruction of evidence; or some other good reason.

7. The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Independent Person will make an initial assessment of the written complaint and determine whether to:

7.1 Take no action.

7.2 Arrange for the matter to be dealt with informally if possible.

7.3 Refer the matter for formal investigation.

7.4 They may also refer the matter to the police or other regulatory agency (for example for failing to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest) but this will be in addition to one of the actions above.

8. In assessing the complaint at this stage, the Monitoring Officer will apply the 'public interest' test when filtering complaints:

8.1 Can the complaint be investigated: Is the person a member of the authority? Is the conduct covered by the Code? When did the alleged conduct occur?

8.2 Should the complaint be investigated: Is there potentially evidence to support the complaint? Is it obviously vexatious, petty or malicious? (A vexatious complaint is one which is likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustifiable level of distress, disruption or irritation. A petty complaint is one that at its highest is trivial and of minimal importance. A malicious complaint is one that appears untrue and whose main purpose is to cause harm). Is the behaviour complained of historic, and if so what is the reason for any delay? Is this a matter that has already been investigated or dealt with in some other way? Would an investigation be proportionate and in the public interest?

9. Where the initial assessment decision is to take no action, this will be communicated to the complainant and the member in writing along with a rationale for the decision. This decision is final and there is no appeal against this.

10. If the Monitoring Officer believes that the matter can be reasonably resolved without the need for a hearing (local resolution), they will consult the Independent Person, the complainant and the member and seek to agree a fair resolution, for example the member accepting that their conduct was unacceptable and offering an apology, or agreeing to go on training.

11. If either one or both of the complainant and the member do not agree the proposed local resolution, this will be taken into consideration by the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person but will not be in itself the sole determinant of whether or not this would be the appropriate method of resolution. The Monitoring Officer can decide that this will be the outcome despite their disagreement. Clearly if the proposal would involve a positive action by the member and they refuse to carry this out, this would be a strong factor indicating local resolution is unworkable.

12. If local resolution does take place, the Monitoring Officer will report the matter to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee but will take no further action. If the Monitoring Officer does not believe that local resolution appropriate, or if it is attempted but for some reason not successful, they will progress the matter to a hearing. It should be noted that if the matter is dealt with by local resolution, there will have been no finding of fact, although the member may have admitted some or all of the conduct complained of.

13. Where the Monitoring Officer decides that the complaint requires a formal investigation a suitable impartial investigator will be appointed by the Monitoring Officer.

14. The investigator will produce a written report which should be proportionate to the nature of the complaint but should incorporate the following:

14.1 Executive Summary – an outline of the allegation, who made it, the relevant provisions of the Code and whether there has been a breach.

14.2 The member's official details – a brief outline of when the member was elected, term of office, details of committees served on and any relevant training.

14.3 Summary of facts and evidence gathered, highlighting facts which are in dispute and setting out the investigator's conclusions based on the balance of probabilities.

14.4 Findings as to whether there has been a failure to comply with the Code on the balance of probabilities. Dealing with each allegation in turn and outlining whether the investigator considers there has been a breach and any aggravating or mitigating facts.

14.5 Schedule – a list of witnesses interviewed and copies of relevant documents.

15. A copy of the report will be sent first to the Monitoring Officer who will then circulate it to the member and complainant to check for factual accuracy. Both will have the opportunity to make written submissions at this stage, but these are limited to correcting factual inaccuracies or drawing attention to further relevant evidence that has not been considered. The Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person can also at this stage make comment to the investigator if they feel any parts of the report may need amendment for any reason, or if further investigation is needed. If a third party is named and criticised in the report, consideration should be given to allowing them to make comment on any parts that concern them. Any such submissions or comments will be fed back to the investigator who will make such further investigations as appropriate and make any amendments to the report before submitting a final draft to the Monitoring Officer.

16. On receipt of the final draft of the report, the Monitoring Officer can:

16.1 decide to take no further action;

16.2 seek to resolve the matter informally; or

16.3 refer the matter to a hearing.

In doing so the Monitoring Officer must consult with the relevant Independent Person.

17. Where the investigator concludes that there is no evidence of a failure to comply with the Code, the Monitoring Officer will review the report in consultation with the Independent Person. If the Monitoring Officer is satisfied with the investigator's conclusion, they will write to the complainant and to the member, enclosing a copy of the final report and telling them that no further action will be taken.

18. Where the investigator concludes that there is evidence of a failure to comply with the Code, the Monitoring Officer will review the report in consultation with the Independent Person and will either send the matter for hearing before the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (either at its next scheduled meeting or at a meeting set up specially for this purpose) or, after consulting the Independent Person, seek local resolution.

19. If proceeding to a hearing, the Monitoring Officer will ensure that all relevant papers are before the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee which will conduct a hearing before deciding whether the member has failed to comply with the Code and, if so, what action if any to take. This hearing will be chaired by an Independent Person sitting on the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee and not its usual Chair. The Monitoring Officer will advise this committee to ensure that the process is fair and in accordance with the law and this procedure (unless there is a conflict of interest in which case with the Deputy Monitoring Officer or a Monitoring Officer from another authority will perform this role).

20. The Monitoring Officer and the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Independent Person may meet before the hearing in order to discuss arrangements as to how the hearing will be conducted and to issue any necessary instructions to relevant people in advance of the hearing. If the member wishes to have

representation at the hearing, the Monitoring Officer should be advised as soon as possible so that this can be considered and factored in.

21. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee will consider the complaint made about the member afresh, having regard to the investigator's findings and all relevant information presented to the hearing by the complainant and the member.

22. The Independent Person must be consulted and their views taken into account before any decision is made on an allegation which has been investigated. The Independent Person will ordinarily be present at the hearing to present their views in person, but this is not vital if it would serve no useful purpose or is otherwise not feasible and the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee are content that their views can be fully and adequately put before them in some other way.

23. Meetings of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee when conducting this hearing will be subject to the normal rules for publication of agendas and access to information.

24. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee will conduct the hearing in accordance with the rules of natural justice and make a decision on the balance of probabilities, but the format and procedure of the hearing will be at the discretion of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Independent Person in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee will announce its decision and any sanction at the end of the hearing.

25. The sanctions the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee can impose, it if finds a breach of the Code are:

25.1 Reprimand the member in writing by the Chair of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee.

25.2 Publishing the findings in respect of the member's conduct.

25.3 Report its findings to the Authority for information.

25.4 Recommend to the member's group spokesperson (or in the case of ungrouped member, recommend to the Authority) that the member be removed from any or all committees or sub-committees of the Authority or from a particular role within the Authority (for example member champion), along with the consequent loss of allowance.

25.5 Instruct the Monitoring Officer to arrange training for the member.

25.6 Recommend to the Authority that the member be removed from all outside appointments to which they have been appointed or nominated by the Authority.

25.7 Withdraw facilities provided to the member by the Authority, such as computer, email and internet access.

25.8 Exclude the member from the Authority's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending formal meetings.

25.9 The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee has no power to suspend or disqualify the member from the Authority.

26. As soon as practicable after the hearing, the Monitoring Officer will prepare a formal decision notice in consultation with the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee Independent Person and send a copy to the complainant and the member, who will be given the opportunity to correct any inaccuracies prior to publication.

27. The decision notice will be available for public inspection (if so ordered by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee) and posted on the Authority's website. It will be reported to the next meeting of the full Authority.

28. There is a right of appeal from the decision of the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee by both the complainant and the member to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee will follow a similar procedure to the above in relation to the hearing.

29. A matter that has already been complained of and dealt with under this procedure shall not be brought again unless there is sufficient new evidence or other substantial reason (such as a defect in process or other serious issue) that in all the circumstances makes it just and proper that this should happen.

Member complaints procedure aide memoire

1. Complaint in writing sent to the Monitoring Officer.

2. Monitoring Officer and Independent Person jointly make an initial assessment of the case.

3. After initial assessment there may be no further action; case dealt with informally; or case referred for further, formal investigation.

4. If the case proceeds to a formal investigation, the Monitoring Officer will appoint an impartial investigator who will prepare a report.

5. Upon receipt of the report, the Monitoring Officer jointly with the Independent Person decide whether to take no further action; deal with the case informally; or refer the case to a formal hearing.

6. The formal hearing is heard by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, chaired by its Independent Person.

7. If the matter is found proven by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee, it can impose the sanctions set out in paragraph 25 of this procedure.

8. An Appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee.

Member officer protocol

General principles

1. Members who serve on the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) and professional officers who are its employees or appointed to serve it, have complementary roles in providing local governance which is transparent and accountable. Effective partnership requires mutual respect and a proper understanding of the status and obligations of the individuals concerned.
2. Members and officers are expected to adhere to the principles relating to conduct and behaviour as laid down in their respective codes of conduct.
3. This protocol applies, where appropriate, to voting co-opted members (Independent Persons) of the CFA or any of its committees.

Expectations of officers by members

4. Members are the elected representatives of their communities and are accountable to the electorate for the delivery of policies and services. Officers are required to respect the representational role of members. Members should not involve themselves in the day-to-day management of services but they are entitled to be listened to when raising issues on behalf of the people they represent. In fulfilling their role, the following standards can be expected of officers:
    - 4.1 Officers to provide objective unbiased information and advice on matters of Authority business.
    - 4.2 Officers to act with integrity and respect confidentiality within the limits of their own responsibilities.
    - 4.3 Officers to respect and support the representational and leadership role of members and associated workloads and pressures.

Expectations of members by officers

5. Officers are accountable to the Authority for the implementation of policies and the delivery of services, and are responsible for the day-to-day management of services. In fulfilling these roles, officers can expect:
    - 5.1 To be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect by members.
    - 5.2 Members to provide mutual support and respect appropriate confidentiality.

5.3 Members to fulfil their commitments to attend and participate in public meetings and events.

5.4 Members to respect officers' working time and the level of seniority in their roles.

Officers

6. Officers employed by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service are accountable to the Chief Fire Officer. Although they should always seek to assist members, they must only do so within their role and responsibilities.

Relationships between officers and members performing particular roles

7. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority require regular briefings from the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Treasurer.
8. Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees will be consulted and briefed routinely as part of the process of preparing agenda reports for committees. Any advice given by officers must be considered by chairs and members of committees in reaching a decision.

Group briefings

9. Political Group spokespersons are entitled to request and receive regular briefings on issues of Authority business.

Non-group members

10. Members who do not belong to a political party group are entitled to seek and receive information on Authority business on a similar basis.

Officer relationships with political party groups

11. Officers will not normally provide advice or information to a political party group. Similarly officers should not normally be asked to brief political party group meetings or discussions which involve non-Authority representatives.

Member access to documents and information

12. Members can approach the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer or the Treasurer to provide them with information, and advice that they reasonably need to assist them in discharging their role as a member of the CFA. A request might be made for general information about a particular aspect of activities or for specific information on behalf of a constituent. If members wish to visit Authority

premises they should contact the Chief Fire Officer or Community Protection Manager so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

13. Members have rights to access documents that are to be discussed in public meetings, and further rights for exempt (part two) documents if they are to be discussed in full CFA meetings or if they are a member of a committee the documents are to be discussed at. When part two reports are provided to members this is on the basis that they are private and confidential and further disclosure may be unlawful. Any information contained within a part two report must not be given to the press or members of the public unless permission is specifically given by the Chair or Chair of a committee following advice from the Monitoring Officer.

14. A member of one political party group does not have the right to inspect a document that forms part of the internal workings of another political party group. The same applies to any document or part of a document containing advice provided by a political adviser or assistant.

Confidential information

15. The requirements of confidentiality referred to in the Code of Conduct for members must be strictly observed. Any material provided on a confidential basis must remain so unless permission to share that information is given by the person providing it. Officers must also at all times consider data protection and any other statutory provision relating to confidentiality.

Local Government Act 1986 - Publication of material

16. Under the Local Government Act 1986, material must not be published which in whole or in part appears to affect public support for any political party. Information published is restricted to the provision of information relating to the functions of the Authority only.

17. Under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000, restrictions also apply to the publication of material within 28 days of any local election or referendum.

Correspondence

18. Correspondence between an individual member and an officer should not normally be copied by the officer to any other member. Where it is felt necessary to copy the correspondence to another member, this should be made clear to the member who originated the enquiry. If the correspondence includes information relating to another member, then it will automatically be copied to the other member concerned, without reference to the member originating the enquiry.

Support services to members and political party groups

19. The only basis on which the Authority can lawfully provide support services such as stationery, typing, printing, photocopying, and transport to members is to assist them in discharging their role as CFA members. Support services must only be used for Authority business and must not be used in connection with party political campaigning activity. Members must ensure that they adhere to the relevant codes of conduct or procedures relating to the use of LFRS computers. They should also follow health and safety procedures.

Advice on the operation of the protocol

20. The protocol is intended to act as a guide for both members and officers. The Monitoring Officer to the Authority will offer advice on the implementation and operation of the protocol.

Role of members

Chair of the Authority and vice-chair in the chair's absence and chairs and vice-chairs of committees and group meetings

1. You are expected to:
    1.1 Act as the civic head of the Authority (Chair of the Fire Authority).
    1.2 Effectively chair meetings and manage the performance of committees and working groups to achieve objectives.
    1.3 Engage in local, regional and national networks to support the work of the Authority, promoting partnership and collaboration.
    1.4 Conduct appraisal of the Chief Fire Officer (Chair of the Fire Authority).

Members of the Authority

2. You are expected to:

    2.1 Lead and support the establishment and realisation of the Authority's priorities and values.

    2.2 Our aim is to make Lancashire safer. It's what we are here for: making Lancashire safer is our commitment to making sure that everything we do improves the safety of our diverse communities.

    2.3 Our priorities are the areas we focus our activities and resources on. They are what we deem important to helping us achieve our aim of making Lancashire safer and are further developed every year into specific actions which are set out in our Annual Service Plan:

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

    2.4 Our values are the qualities that we believe are the most important to us and describe the expectations the public have of us and that we have of each other. We use them every day to influence how we work to achieve our priorities and guide the professional behaviours we expect of our staff. We strive to make Lancashire safer in a way that is guided by strong principles of:

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

2.5 Our Service values are supported by the national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England. The code sets out five ethical principles, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

2.5.1 Putting our communities first – We put the interests of the public, the community and service users first.
2.5.2 Integrity – We act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.
2.5.3 Dignity and respect – Making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.
2.5.4 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.
2.5.5 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) – We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI both within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service 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.

Deliver realistic future planning

3. We will deliver an affordable value for money service by:

3.1 Ensuring resources are available and used in the best way possible.

3.2 Working collaboratively where appropriate.

3.3 Striving to continually identify efficiency and cost savings.

3.4 Effective management of staff attendance, performance and safety.

4. Agree the strategy and resources required for making Lancashire safer.
   4.1 Develop and agree risk management strategy for future services relating to community safety and cohesion.
   4.2 Determine resources required to implement agreed strategy.
   4.3 Develop policies to support the delivery of the strategy.

5. Lead and support the delivery of effective services consistent with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and local needs in Lancashire.
   5.1 Lead service strategy through effective decision-making whilst delivering value for money.
   5.2 Secure resources required to deliver risk managed strategic plans.
   5.3 Assess the effectiveness of service delivery:
   5.4 Agree key performance indicators, objectives and evaluation measures for Authority and Service performance.
   5.5 Review effectiveness of performance against targets.

6. Demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in line with the STRIVE values.

7. Represent individual communities within the Authority areas in relation to fire and rescue matters and act as an ambassador for the Authority at appropriate external functions.

8. Engage in local and regional networks to support the work of the Authority, promoting partnership and collaboration.

9. Be committed to continuing self-development including attendance on an induction programme for new members and appropriate learning and development.

10. All members are expected to have or acquire competency in the above areas by attending relevant training courses and undertaking personal development.

11. Members are expected to attend all meetings of the Authority and the Strategy Group and other committees and working groups of which they are members unless they provide an appropriate reason for their absence.

12. I shall endeavour to meet the expectations of the Combined Fire Authority.

Signed by: ....

Print name: ....

Date: ....

Member champion role descriptions

Community Safety Champion – role description

1. Promote and take an active interest in community safety activity.

2. Ensure community safety issues are taken into account in the preparation of key plans, for the organisations they have influence with.

3. Ensure community safety issues are taken into account during decision-making processes, in the organisations they have influence with.

4. Advocate good practice within the Authority on community safety issues.

5. Engage with other Authority members to promote awareness of issues affecting older people and to seek their views.

6. Engage with relevant community groups on community safety issues.

7. Engage with relevant partners on community safety issues.

8. Work with relevant Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) officers to promote better understanding of community safety issues including regular briefings with the lead officer as appropriate.

9. Provide challenge, internally and externally, on community safety issues.

10. Following approval from the Chair and in line with the Members' Allowance Scheme attend conferences, seminars and events to represent the Authority where appropriate.

11. Undertake awareness training, as necessary, in respect of community safety issues.

12. In conjunction with the designated LFRS lead officer, allocate member champion funding to community safety initiatives.

13. To be made aware of safeguarding issues and risks affecting LFRS, demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding, and hold LFRS to account regarding its safeguarding responsibilities.

14. Report the work of the member champion for community safety to the full Authority.

15. Work with other emergency services and partners to create, develop and deliver community safety initiatives.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Champion – role description

1. Promote and take an active interest in equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues and related fire and rescue service work.

2. Ensure equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues in the fire and rescue service are considered by organisations they have influence with, where the agenda can be furthered or organisations can offer support or learning of benefit to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS).

3. Advocate good practice within the Authority on equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues.

4. Engage with other Authority members to promote awareness of equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues and to seek their views.

5. Engage with relevant community groups on equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues regarding the Authority.

6. Engage with relevant partners on equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues regarding the Authority.

7. Work with relevant LFRS officers to promote better understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues including regular briefings with lead officers.

8. Provide challenge and scrutiny, internally and externally, on equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues.

9. Following approval from the Chair and in line with the Members' Allowance Scheme attend conferences, seminars, and events to represent the Authority where appropriate.

10. Undertake awareness training, as necessary, in respect of equality, diversity, inclusion and culture issues.

11. In conjunction with the designated LFRS lead officers, allocate member champion funding to equality, diversity, inclusion and culture initiatives.

12. Report the work of the member champion for equality, diversity, inclusion and culture to the full Authority.

13. Work with other emergency services and partners to create, develop and deliver equality, diversity, inclusion and culture initiatives.

Health and Wellbeing Champion – role description

1. Promote and take an active interest in health and wellbeing issues and related fire and rescue service work.

2. Ensure health and wellbeing issues are taken into account in the preparation of key plans, for the organisations they have influence with.

3. Ensure health and wellbeing issues are taken into account during decision making processes, in the organisations they have influence with.

4. Advocate good practice within the Authority on health and wellbeing issues.

5. Engage with other Authority members to promote awareness of health and wellbeing issues and to seek their views.

6. Engage with relevant community groups on health and wellbeing issues regarding the Authority.

7. Engage with relevant partners on health and wellbeing issues regarding the Fire Authority.

8. Work with relevant Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) officers to promote better understanding of health and wellbeing issues including regular briefings with the lead officer as appropriate.

9. Provide challenge, internally and externally, on health and wellbeing issues.

10. To be made aware of climate related issues and risks affecting LFRS, demonstrate a commitment to tackling severe weather events, and hold LFRS to account regarding its responsibilities.

11. Following approval from the Chair and in line with the Members' Allowance Scheme attend conferences, seminars, and events to represent the Authority where appropriate.

12. Undertake awareness training, as necessary, in respect of health and wellbeing issues.

13. In conjunction with the designated lead officer, allocate member champion funding to health and wellbeing initiatives.

14. Report the work of the member champion for health and wellbeing to the full Authority.

15. Work with other emergency services and partners to create, develop and deliver severe weather event initiatives.

Road Safety Champion – role description

1. Promote and take an active interest in road safety issues and related fire and rescue service work.

2. Work with other emergency services and partners in the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership to create, develop and deliver road safety initiatives across Lancashire.

3. Ensure road safety issues are taken into account in the preparation of key plans, for the organisations they have influence with.

4. Ensure road safety issues are taken into account during decision-making processes, in the organisations they have influence with.

5. Advocate good practice within the Combined Fire Authority on road safety issues.

6. Engage with other Authority members to promote awareness of road safety issues and to seek their views.

7. Engage with relevant community groups on road safety issues regarding the Authority.

8. Engage with relevant partners on road safety issues.

9. Work with relevant Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) officers to promote better understanding of road safety issues including regular briefings with the lead officer.

10. Provide challenge, internally and externally, on road safety issues.

11. Following approval from the Chair and in line with the Members' Allowance Scheme attend conferences, seminars and events to represent the Authority where appropriate.

12. Undertake awareness training, as necessary, in respect of road safety issues.

13. In conjunction with the designated LFRS lead officer, allocate member champion funding to road safety initiatives.

14. Report the work of the member champion for road safety to the full Authority.

Contract Standing Orders

1 Background

1.1 These Standing Orders set out how Lancashire Fire Authority will contract its various requirements in line with governance legislation.

1.2 Completing any Procurement Process, the Authority must have regard to the objectives set out in the relevant Public Procurement Legislation, National Procurement Policy Statement (NPPS) and internal Contract Standing Orders. Objectives include:

1.2.1 Delivering value for money

1.2.2 Maximising public benefit

1.2.3 Remove barriers for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Voluntary Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) and start-ups

1.2.4 Acting with integrity, transparency and proportionality

1.2.5 Sharing information and helping suppliers to better understand the authority procurement policies and decisions

1.2.6 Consideration for the inclusion of the Social Value Objectives

1.3 Contract Standing Orders aim to explain in simple terms the rules and procedures for obtaining written quotations and competitive tenders from Suppliers for the provision of Works, Goods and Services.

1.4 The Authority's constitution incorporates Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules that provide a framework for managing the Authority's financial affairs. They apply to every Member and Officer of the Authority and anyone acting on its behalf.

2 Governance

2.1 These Contract Standing Orders (“the CSOs”) are made further to Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972. These CSOs set out how the Contracting Authority will deliver against the obligation.

2.2 All procurement for contracts, by Authority staff (including where managed by an external organisation or public body on the Authority’s behalf), must comply with these CSOs, the Authority’s Financial Regulations, applicable Public Procurement Legislation and all other relevant UK legislation; with ‘applicable’ relating to the date on which the procurement is commenced or advertised, the Framework or Dynamic Market was established or where no competitive process is required, a purchase order is raised.

2.3 The Authority will comply with Procurement Policy Notes (PPNs) and the National Policy Procurement Statements (NPPS).

2.4 These CSOs should be read in conjunction with both the Financial Regulations and the Scheme of Delegation.

3 Officer responsibilities

3.1 Officers must ensure that each procurement requirement is dealt with in accordance with any statutory requirements including relevant legislation, is within budgetary provision and is in accordance with the constitution, these rules and all Service policies, procedures and strategies.

3.2 To ensure timely procurement activity, Chief Officers will delegate authority to appropriate employees within their Directorate, Services, Sections or Groups to procure on their behalf. Each Director must however provide and maintain a list of the officers authorised to initiate procurement, place orders and make payments specifying a maximum financial limit for each transaction within any pre-defined limits. The Scheme of Financial Delegation should be reviewed regularly. Officers must ensure before beginning any procurement that they have the appropriate authority to undertake it by means of delegated authority.

3.3 Chief Officers will ensure that all employees authorised to initiate procurement, place orders and make payments have the appropriate knowledge, skills and training to undertake the same.

3.4 The Procurement team is responsible for all procurement processes and compliance, including ownership of the project initiation documents, procurement option appraisals and process design, procurement training, procurement process management (including responsibilities for all notices up to the publication of the Contract Award Notice), ownership of the e-tendering portal, ownership and provision of all procurement templates, completion and approval of procurement templates and reports, and oversight of all activities to waivers, contract modifications or termination.

3.5 The Contract owner or Head of Service is responsible for supporting the planning for and management of all contracts (regardless of how they are procured); forward planning for re-procurement of cyclical requirements (including writing specifications for goods and services to be procured); overseeing all technical documents (including specifications); organising any legal documents that are required; supporting all stages of the procurement process; co-ordinating the resourcing of tender evaluation and moderation sessions; completing any procurement related reports and any pre-contract governance requirements.

4 Procurement thresholds and processes

4.1 Procurement thresholds determine which routes to market are available and what rules must be followed. Thresholds come from applicable Public Procurement Legislation and are based on the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA); these values are updated every other year.

4.2 The rules and available routes to market are determined by whether the estimated contract value is deemed to be "Above Threshold" (Covered Procurements or Public Contracts) or "Below Threshold."

4.3 The Procurement Thresholds (see table 1) apply to all spend where it is not included within the scope of the waiver category detailed in section 6.

4.4 All spend must be classified by type and regime before a procurement process can be designed; this is due to different types and regimes having different financial thresholds and obligations.

Types:

4.4.1 Goods (supplies or products)
4.4.2 Services (labour, consultants, or technical resources)
4.4.3 Works (Construction Projects)

Regimes:

4.4.4 Utilities (gas, electricity, water)
4.4.5 Light Touch (legal services)
4.4.6 Concession (supplier risk or aid by service users)
4.4.7 Exempt or Excluded (not covered)

4.5 Before a procurement process can be designed or commenced:

4.5.1 Officers need to decide both the initial and maximum contract durations (including any optional extension) and what might be the justification to apply those extensions.

4.5.2 Depending on the value and nature of the contract being procured, the duration may be limited by the Applicable Public Procurement Legislation. Officers must check with Procurement Manager before finalising the decision.

4.5.3 The estimated contract value must include the total value that could be paid over the maximum life span of the contract regardless of the chosen route to market. The value must incorporate all planned costs, additional requirements, fee or commissions, aggregate or associated goods and services or works, parts and labour, contract extensions. The contract value must include any applicable VAT.

4.5.4 Where the estimated total value of a Contract exceeds or is within 10% of the relevant threshold (as set out below), the procurement must be conducted in accordance with the appropriate Procurement Rules and the appropriate UK guidelines. The application of the Procurement Rules and the appropriate UK guidelines cannot be waived by the Authority.

4.5.5 When considering the above, the Authority have a duty to consider the use of lots and the potential benefits this may offer such as removing barriers to local SMEs, achieve economies of scale and to manage the potential market.

Table 1 – Threshold Procurement Process

Threshold Banding (including VAT)	**Requirement**	**Procurement Type**	**Method to Procure**
Up to £30,000: Goods and Services, Up to £50,000 Works.	Minimum of one written quote	Unregulated	Procurement portal for £30,000 and over.
Between £30,001 and £100,000:	Minimum of three written quotes	Regulated below threshold	Procurement Department, Procurement Portal and Find a Tender Service
Between £100,001 and £214,904:	Open Tender	Regulated below threshold	Procurement Department, Procurement Portal and Find a Tender Service
Over £214,904:	Open Tender Procedure or Competitive Flexi Procedure	Regulated above threshold	Procurement Department, Procurement Portal and Find a Tender Service

5 Excluded or exempt contracts (not regulated)

5.1 In line with the Public Procurement Legislation these standing orders do not apply to contracts that are classified as excluded or exempt as defined by the applicable public procurement legislation Exemptions include:

5.1.1 Contracting Authority to Contracting Authority (Subsidiary) arrangements, vertical or horizontal – subject to approval by the Monitoring Officer, for example:

5.1.1.1 Vertical - The Contracting Authority exercises a parent or similar control or joint control with other Contracting Authorities on the entity as it does with its own departments, the entity carries out more that 80% of its activities for the controlling Contracting Authorities and there is no private sector money in the entity.

5.1.1.2 Horizontal - Contracting Authority to Contracting Authority cooperation to achieve objectives which the Contracting Authorities have in common, through an arrangement that is solely for the public interest, and no more than 20% of the activities envisaged by the arrangement are intended to be carried out for reasons other than for the purposes of their public functions.

5.1.2 Subject matter exemptions:

5.1.2.1 Certain types of legal advice, such as relating to judicial proceedings or dispute resolution.

5.1.2.2 Certain types of financial advice, such as funding or financing arrangements, investment services.

5.1.2.3 Employment contracts.

5.1.2.4 Purchases made at public auction or of goods sold due to insolvency.

5.1.2.5 Land contracts (including leases, licenses, and transfers.

5.1.2.6 Grants of money, these cannot be contracts as there is no consideration, and they are not services required to be delivered by the Authority.

5.1.2.7 Any other arrangements excluded by the Applicable Public Procurement Legislation.

6 Waiver to Contract Standing Orders procedure

6.1 Any Officer requesting the right to waiver Contract Standings Orders must seek advice from the Procurement Team before engaging with any supplier. Any request to waiver the relevant procedure must be the form of a written report identifying the justification for requesting exemption. The waiver value must include all aggregated spend with the supplier and be inclusive of VAT. All exemption requested must be submitted to the Deputy Head of Procurement using the Waiver Request form.

6.2 Circumstances a waiver can be considered:

- 6.2.1 Effective competition is prevented due to government control.
- 6.2.2 The supply or service is unique to a single supplier such as proprietary or patented goods or is deemed necessary due to the requirements of operational alignment and there is no satisfactory alternative.
- 6.2.3 The service or works are of a specialist nature and can only be carried out by one supplier.
- 6.2.4 The emergency requirements are brought about by events that could not have reasonably been foreseen.
- 6.2.5 If the goods or services are not procured there is a risk of danger to life or property or a major impact on the Authority or the public.
- 6.2.6 The market is such that effective competition does not exist, and it can clearly be demonstrated that the proposed award represents best value for the Authority.

6.3 It is the responsibility of the Procurement Department to record any waivers on the contracts register and publish the award notice in accordance with the applicable Procurement Legislation.

6.4 For all procurement projects with a total Contract value under £100,000 (including VAT) the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer (Director of Corporate

Services) can approve a waiver. The Procurement Department will facilitate the request approvals from the relevant Officers.

6.5 Any waiver relating to procurement projects in excess of £100,000 but not exceeding the relevant Procurement Threshold (including VAT) must be approved in consultation with the Chair of Combined Fire Authority.

6.6 Please refer to table 2 below for authorisation signatories required in regard to financial limits for waivers:

Table 2 – Financial Limits

Financial Limit	**Head of Procurement**	**CFO**	**Treasurer and Executive Board**	**Combined Fire Authority**
Under £100,000 (including VAT)	Y	Y	Y	-
Over £100,001 (including VAT)	Y	Y	Y	Y

7 Contracts awarded under framework

7.1 The Authority may award a public contract or a regulated below threshold contract that is covered by a framework which the Authority has concluded, or which another Contracting Authority has concluded and which the Authority is permitted to use. Such contracts are also known as Call Off Contracts.

7.2 Any Call Off Contract must be signed by all parties no later than the last date of the enabling framework.

7.3 Any decision to award a Call Off Contract from a framework shall be taken in accordance with the terms and conditions of the relevant framework.

8 Pre-procurement and tender requirements

8.1 A full set of procurement or associated tender documents must be published alongside the tender notice of which suppliers can access on the Central Digital Platform and the Procurement Portal.

8.2 All competitive procedures must be managed and shared through the e-tendering portal including, supplier communications, and clarifications (with the exception of anything commercially sensitive).

8.3 The Procurement team will hold an organisation Pipeline. For all procurements valued at (£2 million including VAT) the authority must publish a Pipeline notice no later than the 26th of May each financial year.

8.4 Before publishing a tender notice for a Regulated Procurement, the Authority shall consider whether to undertake preliminary market engagement. Where the Authority undertakes preliminary market engagement, it shall, unless it has good reason not to publish a preliminary market engagement notice. Officers must ensure that any preliminary market engagement does not put any suppliers at an unfair advantage; or otherwise distort competition.

8.5 The Authority may undertake preliminary market engagement for any Unregulated Procurement in such a manner as it deems appropriate, provided such engagement does not put any supplier at an unfair advantage or otherwise distort competition.

8.6 Before commencing a Regulated Procurement, the Authority shall consider whether the requirement could reasonably be supplied under more than one contract and whether such contracts could appropriately be awarded by reference to Lots. Any reason to not include Lots must be recorded in the Tender Notice.

8.7 The Authority may make a direct award if the award meets the requirements of the Direct Award Justifications of Schedule 5 of the PA and must publish a transparency notice.

9 Regulated Procurement - tenders

9.1 Regulated Procurement shall be undertaken in a way which is fully compliant with the PA.

9.2 The scope of this section covers all of the Authority's above PA threshold requirements, except where the contract is awarded under a Framework or a Dynamic Market or a justification exists for a Direct Award.

9.3 Regulated Procurements shall be conducted applying either the Open Procedure or the Competitive Flexible Procedure. A decision to follow the Competitive Flexible Procedure shall be made only after consultation with the Procurement Team.

9.4 All tender opportunities must be commenced by the publication of a tender notice and be placed on the Procurement Portal and the UK E-notification service. In the case of a Competitive Flexible Procedure, the tender notice shall either invite suppliers to submit a request to participate in the process or invite suppliers to submit their first or only tender as part of the procedure. Officers shall seek the advice of the Procurement Team as to which of the forms of tender shall be used in those circumstances.

9.5 No tender opportunity shall be placed on the Procurement Portal and the UK E-notification service until the Authority has prepared a specification for the goods, works or services, the conditions of contract, the conditions of participation and the invitation to tender (Open Procedure) or participate in the Competitive Flexible Procedure.

9.6 Each invitation to tender or participate shall contain the following information:

9.6.1 A statement of the validity of a submitted tender (which shall not be less than 90 days).

9.6.2 An anti-collusion certificate.

9.6.3 A form of tender.

9.6.4 The evaluation criteria, the weighting to be applied to such criteria and the scoring methodology for assessing the evaluation.

9.6.5 In the case of a competitive flexible procedure a statement as to whether the procedure will be conducted in successive stages and if so whether the Authority intends to refine the evaluation criteria or the weightings.

9.6.6 A statement as to whether a parent company guarantee, a performance bond or other security is required from the suppliers.

9.6.7 A statement that the Authority is not bound to accept any tender.

9.6.8 Notification that tenders are submitted at the bidder's expense.

9.7 Clarification questions relating to the procurement may be asked by bidders up to six days prior to the tender submission deadline. The Authority shall respond to all clarifications as soon as reasonably possible and no later than four days prior to the tender submission deadline. All responses to clarification questions shall be provided to all bidders, unless the bidder requesting the clarification has indicated that the question is confidential. Where a bidder has indicated that a question is confidential, the officers shall seek confirmation from the Procurement Team as to whether it is agreed that the information is confidential. If the Authority agrees, the response shall be sent to the bidder who submitted the clarification question only. If the Authority disagrees, the bidder which submitted the question shall be given the opportunity to withdraw the question. If the question is not withdrawn, the response shall be provided to all bidders.

9.8 All communication with bidders in an Open Procedure shall be conducted through the Procurement Portal. Officers and members shall make no direct contact in person, telephone or email with suppliers under any circumstances.

9.9 All communication with bidders in a Competitive Flexible Procedure shall be conducted through the portal, except to the extent that the Authority has determined the formal structure of the procedure to include face to face or online meetings.

9.10 No post-tender clarification shall be undertaken in an Open Procedure except with the agreement of the Procurement Team.

9.11 Post-tender clarification may be undertaken in a Competitive Flexible Procedure provided it has been allowed for as part of the procedure or is authorised by the Procurement Team.

9.12 Post-tender negotiations are not permitted in an Open Procedure. Negotiations may be undertaken at any stage in a Competitive Flexible Procedure, provided that they have been allowed for as part of the procedure. However, even where such negotiations have been allowed for in the procurement as part of the outlined procedure, they shall not be undertaken without the presence of the Procurement Team.

10 Opening of tenders and quotations

10.1 After the designated deadline stipulated for submission of responses, the Procurement Department will co-ordinate the opening of all submissions which will be retained in a virtual 'sealed box' until the designated opening time.

10.2 All tender responses via the e-portal must be opened by the Procurement Department. A representative from the budget holders department can also attend if they wish to.

10.3 The Procurement Department is responsible for making arrangements to receipt, store and open tender documents.

11 Regulated Procurement – participation conditions and supplier exclusion

11.1 It is not a requirement of the PA to set Conditions of Participation, which assess a potential supplier's legal and financial and technical ability to carry out the contract. However, the Authority ordinarily will set Conditions of

Participation to ensure that a potential supplier has the requisite capacity and technical ability to perform the contract. The approval of the Procurement Team will be required to proceed with a procurement without the Authority setting Conditions of Participation as part of the procedure. Where Conditions of Participation are required, the PA does not prescribe the means of proof relating to these conditions, but any conditions set must be a proportionate means of ensuring suppliers have the relevant capacity or ability, having regard to the nature, cost and complexity of the contract. The Authority may not request information, as a Condition of Participation, which is expressly prohibited by section 22(4) of the PA.

11.2 The Authority may exclude a supplier from participating or progressing in a competitive tendering procedure when the supplier has not satisfied the Conditions of Participation.

11.3 The Authority shall disregard any tender from a supplier that is an Excluded Supplier. An Excluded Supplier is defined within the PA.

11.4 Before conducting the evaluation of an Open Procedure tender, the Authority shall consider whether the supplier is an Excludable Supplier.

11.5 Where the Authority receives a tender from an Excludable Supplier, it shall consider whether it shall allow or disregard that tender. No decision to allow or exclude an Excludable Supplier shall be taken without the agreement of the Head of Procurement.

11.6 As part of every tendering procedure, the Authority shall request information about whether a supplier is intending to subcontract any part of the performance of the contract and shall request that such information as is deemed necessary to determine whether the subcontractor is an Excluded Supplier or an Excludable Supplier.

11.7 Where a proposed subcontractor is an Excludable Supplier, the Authority shall treat the supplier as an Excludable Supplier.

11.8 Where the Authority determines to exclude the supplier it shall notify the supplier of its intention and give the supplier a reasonable opportunity to find an alternative subcontractor.

11.9 The Authority shall exclude a supplier if it acts improperly, and its behaviour puts it at an unfair advantage in relation to the award. A supplier is deemed to have acted improperly where it:

11.9.1 Fails to provide information requested by the Authority,

11.9.2 Provides incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information.

11.9.3 Accesses the Authority's confidential information; or

11.9.4 Unduly influences the Authority's decision making in relation to any contract.

11.10 Where the Authority excludes a supplier, it shall notify the Cabinet Office.

11.11 The Authority shall exclude a supplier which is on the Debarment List or is an Associated Person of a supplier on the Debarment List.

12 Regulated Procurement – evaluation

12.1 Officers are required to design and effectively communicate the evaluation or assessment methodology that will be applied to the tender responses submitted by suppliers. This must include detailing whether the assessment methodology will be based on lowest price (where permitted), price per quality point or a price to quality ration. In each case, the following with apply:

12.1.1 For quality and social value – the detailed questions include specific response guidance, the scoring methodology or matrix, and the importance or weighting to be applied to each question.

12.1.2 For price – details on how the value will be calculated and how it will be evaluated or divided by the quality score.

12.2 A public contract shall be awarded to the most advantageous tender which satisfies the Authority's requirements, and award criteria. The award criteria must relate to the subject matter of the contract and be clear, measurable, specific and proportionate having considered the nature, complexity and cost of the contract. Technical specifications of contracts must satisfy PA requirements.

12.3 Award criteria must not be amended after the Tender Notice had been published.

12.4 An evaluation must be made of all tender or quotation responses by an evaluation panel. The number of people on the evaluation panel will be a minimum of two but it can vary depending on the type and complexity of the Contract.

12.5 The evaluation will include a comparison of the tender sum against the estimate for the Goods, Services or Works prepared in advance of the Suppliers being invited to tender or quote. Where errors or discrepancies are found that may affect the tender or quote sum, the Supplier may be notified in writing and afforded an opportunity to confirm the submitted sum without amendment, amend their bid to correct an arithmetical error, or withdraw their bid. A written record of any revisions or withdrawals must be maintained.

12.6 The Authority will evaluate and award Contracts to the Supplier(s) it considers offers the best value having regard to both price and quality factors. This is referred to as the 'most advantageous tender' (MAT) and provides for the Contract to be awarded to the Supplier best able to meet the Authority's requirement, specification and budget.

12.7 Both supplier tender and quotation responses must be delivered to the designated e-tendering system by the date and time specified. Late tender and quotation responses should be rejected unless it is proven that the reason for the late submission was due to technical failure of the portal.

12.8 The Authority has the right (but is not obliged) to seek clarification on the submissions as part of the evaluation process. Where this prerogative is utilised, all suppliers will be treated equally.

13 Clarification and negotiations

13.1 After the receipt of responses, officers may need to contact bidders to clarify technical and contractual information as part of the evaluation process. Any such communication must be confidential, and a written record made of the reason for contact and the outcome.

13.2 Any negotiation with a bidder to specifically discuss the pricing submitted in their tender response should:

13.2.1 Be undertaken only by the Procurement representative in the presence of at least one officer who isn't involved in the project (the Independent Observer). All negotiations must be conducted confidentially and in a manner which provides equal opportunity for all Suppliers who have provided responses, and which maintains the highest levels of probity;

13.2.2 At the conclusion of negotiations each Supplier must be invited to submit a best and final price.

13.3 Where post-tender negotiation results in a fundamental change in specification (or contract terms) the contract must not be awarded and must be re-tendered.

13.4 If a supplier attempts to negotiate a contract post award, where this is not permitted, the Authority may disregard the supplier and award the contract to the next ranked compliant supplier.

14 Contract award – tenders and quotations

14.1 The award of a Contract to the successful Supplier(s) must be conditional upon the tender costs being within budgetary limits and subject to the appropriate approval being granted to proceed.

14.2 Following completion of the evaluation of responses to an opportunity with a value above £30,000, a tender evaluation report must be completed. The report will validate best practice and the requirements of the Authority's Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules.

14.3 A contract rewards report must be completed and authorised as outlined in the table below (on the basis that the relevant managers have been consulted with):

Financial Limit (including VAT)	**Department Head**	**Relevant Director**	**Treasurer**
Up to £30,000	Y	-	-
£30,001 - £100,000	Y	Y	Y
Over £100,000	Y	Y	Y

14.4 For all above threshold or covered procurements, the Authority must apply a minimum eight-day standstill period before entering into the contract (excluding Utilities, Light Touch or contracts awarded under Framework, in which case a standstill period is optional). This provides the opportunity for unsuccessful suppliers to request debrief information and to potentially challenge the decision formally before a Contract is signed.

14.5 All unsuccessful suppliers must be notified of the outcome of the procurement promptly in writing providing the reasons for elimination from the process including:

14.5.1 The criteria for the award of the contract.

14.5.2 The reason for the decision, including the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful tender.

14.5.3 The score (if any) obtained by the bidder to whom the notice is addressed and that of the successful bidder.

14.5.4 Social Value commitments.

14.5.5 Any reason why the unsuccessful bidder did not meet the technical specifications.

14.5.6 The name of the successful bidder.

14.6 Disclosure may be withheld if any of the following apply:

14.6.1 Impede law enforcement.

14.6.2 Otherwise be contrary to public interest.

14.6.3 Prejudice the legitimate commercial interests of any economic operator.

14.6.4 Might prejudice fair competition.

14.7 The formal contract award notice must be published on the Central Digital Platform within 30 days of the award of the contract.

14.8 The successful Supplier(s) should be notified promptly in writing following acceptance of the tender or quote response and the Contract must be issued to the Supplier with a formal request to sign and return two copies. On receipt of the signed Contracts from the Supplier, the Authority will sign the Contract to form the legally binding agreement, returning one copy to the Supplier(s). All Contracts and orders shall be in writing and made in the name of the Authority.

15 Contracts awarded under Dynamic Markets

15.1 The Authority may establish arrangements for the purpose of awarding public contracts known as a Dynamic Market by submitting a Dynamic Market Notice to the UK E-notification service and Procurement Portal.

15.2 In establishing a Dynamic Market, the Authority shall set conditions for participation relating to the legal and financial capacity to perform contracts to be awarded by reference to membership of the Dynamic Market and which have the technical ability to perform the contract. Such conditions shall be proportionate to the requirements, having regard to the nature, complexity and cost of the contract to be awarded.

15.3 To award a public contract under a Dynamic Market, the Authority must utilise the Competitive Flexible Procedure.

15.4 If a tender is submitted by a supplier which is not a member of the Dynamic Market, the Authority shall exclude the supplier unless the supplier has made an application for membership of the Dynamic Market and the Authority has accepted the application.

16 Purchasing from a Centralised Procurement Authority

16.1 The Authority may purchase goods, services or works from a Centralised Procurement Authority without the need for additional competition. Note this is not the same as a procurement framework which a Centralised Procurement Authority has set up.

17 Collaborative procurements

17.1 Where the Authority is required under its own powers or at the request of a partner authority to procure on its behalf, those procurements must apply with Applicable Public Procurement Legislation and other relevant legislation more generally.

17.2 Each Authority must comply with its own Contract Standing Orders with regards to financial, procurement and delegated authority requirements and its owner scheme of delegation for contract signing.

17.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 places a duty on police, fire and ambulance services to seek opportunities through collaboration where it is efficient or effective to do so.

17.4 The Procurement team will review all new procurement requirements, ensuring all opportunities to collaborate with partner organisations are exploited where they offer benefits to the Authority and collaborate with partners to develop new joint contracts.

18 Sealed contracts and record keeping

18.1 All Contracts which relate to the purchase of land or have potential long-term liabilities and would benefit from the added legal protection afforded by the process of sealing shall be made by affixing the Common Seal. This shall only be attested by the Monitoring Officer to the Authority, the Authority solicitor, the CFO (Chief Fire Officer), DoCS (Director of Corporate Services) or DoPD (Director of People and Development). All other contracts will be signed by either the DoCS or relevant Head of Department; Area Manager or member of the Executive Board.

18.2 In every written Contract for the execution of Works or the supply of Goods or Services the Supplier shall be prohibited from transferring or assigning or novating directly or indirectly to any person or persons whatever, any portion of that Contract without the written permission of the Authority. Sub-letting, other than that which may be customary in the trade concerned, shall be prohibited.

18.3 All submissions and supporting documentation for any procurement must be retained for seven years from the commencement of the Contract by the Procurement Team.

18.4 All ordinary contracts must be retained for seven years after expiry and contracts under seal thirteen years after contract expiry.

19 Contract management

19.1 All contracts must be managed in accordance with the Procurement Legislation. The Contract manager is the Budget Holder or Project Owner, and is responsible for meetings and Performance Management.

19.2 The Contract Manager will set up a series of meetings to kick off, administer and manage delivery of the contract. These meetings will as a minimum monitor and report on the following:

19.2.1 Supplier and Supply Chain Suitability – ensure that the Contracting Authority is not contracting directly or indirectly with unsuitable (Excluded or Excludable) suppliers.

19.2.2 Key Performance Indicators – delivery against the agreed criteria. KPIs are mandatory for all contracts over £5 million and must include a minimum of three KPIs.

19.2.3 Contract Performance, for example satisfactory delivery of the contract.

19.2.4 Contracting Authority Payment Performance –the Contracting Authority is required to pay the Supplier within 30 days of receiving a valid or undisputed invoice.

19.2.5 Supplier Payment Performance - the Supplier is required to pay their supply chain within 30 days of receiving a valid or undisputed invoice.

19.2.6 Supplier Contracts – the supplier is required to enter into a legally binging agreement with suppliers on whom they are relying on to meet the technical, legal, or financial conditions of participation.

19.2.7 Modifications – all modifications to a contract must be documented, along with the value and justification.

20 Term of Contract

20.1 The term of a Contract may be extended with the approval of the budget holder if there is provision within the Contract Terms and Conditions to extend and the agreement of the Director of Corporate Services has been given with regards to budgetary provision. If the Contract has already been extended to the full extent within the provisions of the existing Contract, it cannot be extended further.

20.2 If there is no provision within the Contract Terms and Conditions for the Contract to be extended the approval of the Monitoring Officer to the Authority, and the Treasurer must be sought to any proposed extension of the term of the Contract and a record kept of the reasons.

20.3 The Contract term cannot be extended where this would result in the total contract value exceeding the procurement thresholds.

20.4 In order to avoid any issues with the above it is best practice to ensure that Contracts are re-tendered in line with these Contract Standing Orders well in advance of their completion date.

21 Contract modifications

21.1 All modifications must be managed in accordance with the contract and in compliance of what is permitted under the applicable Public Procurement Legislation, namely Schedule 8 of PA.

21.2 It is necessary to publish a contract change notice for any modification except for a below threshold modification and a modification which increases or decreases the term of the contract by less than 10%.

22 Termination

22.1 In the event any performance requirements are not being met, the Contracting Authority may terminate the contract in accordance with the stated contract clauses. Where required, this is to be reported in accordance with Applicable Public Procurement Legislation.

23 Notices

23.1 Where required under Applicable Public Procurement Legislation, the Contracting Authority may be required to publish a notice. The notices that may be required include the following:

23.1.1 Contract Performance Notice – used to report on KPIs and whether the contract is being delivered to the required standards.

23.1.2 Payment Compliance Notice – used to publish the Contracting Authority's payment performance.

23.1.3 Contract Modification Notice – used to publish details of a proposed modification to a contract where there is an increase or decrease in the estimated contract value over a specific value.

23.1.4 Contract Termination Notice – used where the Contracting Authority terminates a contract in full.

24 Corrupt practices

24.1 In every written Contract a clause must be inserted to ensure that the Authority is entitled to terminate the Contract and recover from the Supplier the amount of any loss resulting from such termination, if the Supplier has:

24.1.1 Offered, given or agreed to give to any person a gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for doing or not doing anything related to the Contract or any other Contract with the Authority.

24.1.2 For favouring or not favouring any person in relation to a Contract, by any person employed by the Supplier or acting on their behalf.

24.1.3 The Supplier, or any person employed by them or acting on their behalf, has committed an offence under the Bribery Act (2010) or any amendment of the Act.

24.1.4 Shall have given any fee or reward, the receipt of which is an offence under the Local Government Act 1972.

24.1.5 All Authority members and officers must comply with the Authority's anti-fraud or anti-bribery policies and relevant codes of conduct.

25 Third parties

25.1 In cases where a third party, such as a local authority, private architect or consultant is employed to act for the Authority in the carrying out of Works or purchase of supplies, it shall be a term of their appointment that they shall:

25.1.1 Observe or otherwise secure the observance of the procedures prescribed within these Contract Standing Orders;

25.1.2 Produce on demand, all records maintained by them in relation to the Contract; and

25.1.3 On completion of a Contract, transmit all such records to the Procurement department.

Appendix A	-
Term	**Definition**
Assessment Summary	A letter detailing the outcome of the assessment of any Tenders received. For the winning Supplier it will include their scores and reasons for those scores against each of the published Award Criteria. For all losing Suppliers, the letter will include their scores and the reason for those scores against each of the published Award Criteria and the same information for the winning Supplier.
Authority	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS).
Award Criteria and Assessment Methodology	Criteria set in accordance with section 23 of the Procurement Act 2023 against which Tenders may be assessed for the purpose of awarding a Public Contract. These criteria must: • relate to the subject-matter of the Contract, • be sufficiently clear, measurable, and specific, • not break the rules on technical specifications in section 56, and • be a proportionate means of assessing Tenders, having regard to the nature, complexity, and cost of the Contract. Where there are several criteria, their weighting or relative importance must be stated. Tender documents must include a scoring matrix and where required detail the minimum score required by a supplier which if this isn't met they could be excluded from the process.

Below Thresholds Procurement	A procurement which is below the Covered Procurement threshold and not exempt from the Procurement Act 2023. PPN-11_23-New-Thresholds.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Best Value	The Best Value Duty relates to the statutory requirement for a local authority as defined in Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”.
Breach of Contract	Failure to meet and conditions of the contract.
Budget Holder	The Authority representative with budgetary responsibility.
Capital Expenditure	Expenditure involving the acquisition or enhancement of fixed assets with a long-term value to the Authority, such as land, buildings, and major items of plant, equipment, or vehicles.
Capital Programme	The programme of Capital expenditure agreed by Fire Authority.
Categories	Where establishing a dynamic market, the Authority may divide the DM into categories (lots or specialism) to facilitate access by SMEs and drive effective competition.
Central Digital Platform (CDP)	The Central Digital Platform will be where all UK Contracting Authorities publish information relating to procurement. It is also the place where identifiers are recorded or issued and for suppliers to input their commonly used information.
Closed Framework	A framework that opens for competition, one or more bidders are appointed and then the framework is closed for any new submissions for a period of time.
Code of Conduct	The code of conduct binding on all Officers of the Authority.
Common Assessment Standard	A standardised pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) for the construction sector. It aims to streamline the construction procurement process by providing a unified set of questions for assessing suppliers.

Competitive Flexible Procedure	This is a multi-staged procurement which can include: a discrete Conditions Of Participation stage, limiting Suppliers (following the SQ or other assessments), one or more Tender rounds (and intermediate assessments), refinement of the Award Criteria, modification of the Tender procedure, interaction with the Suppliers (negotiations, presentations, site visits) and then following a final submission, there is a potential to finesse the submission and subsequent staged awards – all of this being subject to what was specified in the Invitation to Tender document.
Competitive Selection Process	A procurement process where all the Suppliers on the Framework (or a specific Lot) are invited to submit a Tender in line with the Framework rules and in line with the Specification for the Contract to be let, and the Specification of the Framework.
Competitive Tendering Procedures	This includes the Open Procedure and the Competitive Flexible Procedure.
Concession Contracts	A Contract for the supply, for pecuniary interest, of works or services to an Authority where: a. at least part of the consideration for that supply is a right to exploit, and b. under the Contract the Supplier is exposed to a real operating risk. (It may also be paid for by service users rather than the Authority)
Conditions of Participation	These are conditions that a Supplier must satisfy if the Supplier is to be awarded the Contract. These conditions must be a proportionate means of assuring that a Supplier has: • the legal and financial capacity to perform the Contract, or • the technical ability to perform the Contract.

Conditions of Tendering	The rules and conditions by which a competitive procurement process will be conducted, and with which a Supplier must comply if they are not to be excluded from the procurement process.
Conflict Assessment	An assessment that has been carried out by the Authority and in which it identifies all and any potential or actual conflicts and the actions taken or to be taken to mitigate them to ensure equal treatment.
Conflict of Interest	The Act requires Contracting Authorities to identify and keep under review actual and potential conflicts of interest. Contracting Authorities must also mitigate conflicts of interest and address circumstances which they consider are likely to cause a reasonable person to wrongly believe there to be a conflict or potential conflict of interest ('perceived conflict of interest').
Contract	An agreement to be made or concluded in writing between the Authority and a Supplier for a specific set of requirements. For a low value contract, this may be made by way of raising a Purchase Order (PO) and attaching the Authority's standard PO terms and conditions.
Contract Award Notice	A notice that is published on the Central Digital Platform and that informs the market of and intent to award and where a Mandatory Standstill Period (or Voluntary Standstill Period) is required. This notice initiates that Standstill Period. There is a different form of notice for below and above threshold procurements.
Contract Change Notice	For Contracts let under the Procurement Act 2023, this is a notice that must be published before a Contract modification is applied in accordance with Section 75. For Contracts let under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, a modification notice must be published where a modification is made under Regulation72(b) or 72(c).

Contract Details Notice	A notice that confirms that the Contract has been entered into in accordance with Section 53 of the Procurement Act 2023. There is a different form of notice for below and above threshold procurements.
Contract Management	Contract Management is the active management of the relationship between the Authority and the Supplier over the term of the Contract for the provision of services, goods or works to a set of agreed standards.
Contract Management Notice	For Contracts valued over £5 million, under the Procurement Act 2023, the Authority is required to publish KPIs and an assessment of performance against those KPIs. In addition, the Authority must publish a poor performance notice where the Supplier has breached a Public Contract and that breach has resulted in termination, partial termination, award of damages, or a settlement agreement; or the Authority considers that a Supplier is not performing a Public Contract to the Authority's satisfaction (even if the Supplier is not in breach of the contract); and having been given a proper opportunity to improve performance has failed to do so.
Contract Managers or Contracting Officer	An Officer with responsibility for conducting the purchasing processes for the purchase of works, goods or services on behalf of the Authority and that manages the resultant Contract and ensures day-to-day activities are conducted in accordance with its terms and conditions.
Contract Modification	For Contracts let under the Procurement Act 2023, this is a modification permitted under Section 74 and Schedule 8 of the Act or is not a substantial modification or is a below-threshold modification. For Contracts let under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, this is a modification permitted under Regulation 72.
Contract Standing Orders (CSOs)	The key document which sets out the Authority's principles of procurement, roles and responsibilities, contract procedure

	rules and processes involved in purchasing services, goods, and works contracts.
Contracts Register	A register of the Authority’s Contracts that exceed £30,000, including VAT, made publicly available via the Authority’s E-Procurement System.
Contract Value	The estimated total monetary value of a Contract over its full duration and any extensions or potential variations. (N.B. not just the annual value.) Where the duration of a Contract is indeterminate, this will be taken to be the estimated value of the Contract over a period of four years.
Covered Procurement	An above threshold procurement that is intended to result in a Public Contract. PPN-11_23-New Thresholds.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)
Data Protection Act 2018	The legislation that controls how personal information is used by organisations, businesses, or the Government.
Dialogue	A discussion between the Authority and Suppliers about any aspect of the procurement.
Direct Award	The award of a Contract without a competitive process.
Discretionary Exclusion Grounds	These are set out in Schedule 7 of the Procurement Act 2023.
Dynamic Market	A list of Suppliers who have met the published conditions of membership and are eligible to submit a Tender against a competition let under the market. These markets can be set up to purchase any requirements that the Authority may wish to purchase and require the use of the competitive flexible procedure to award the Contract.
E-Procurement System	A system for the end-to-end tendering process. Both suppliers and buyers submit and respond to tenders electronically.
Equalities Act 2010	Protects individuals from various forms of discrimination and harassment relating to disability, age, gender, religion, belief, and sexuality.

Estimated Contract Value	The value being estimated by the Authority for the entire possible scope (including any optional extras) and duration (including any possible extensions) of the potential contract requirements including all other options, premiums, fees etc as may become due under the contract. This must include the anticipated whole life costs and be inclusive of VAT.
Excludable Supplier	An Excludable Supplier is a Supplier to whom a discretionary exclusion ground applies, and such exclusion ground circumstances are continuing or likely to occur again; or they are on the debarment list by virtue of a discretionary exclusion ground. Tenders from excludable Suppliers may be disregarded in any Competitive Tendering Process (PA s.26(2)) and Contracting Authorities may exclude an Excludable Supplier from participating in a Competitive Flexible Procedure (PA s.27(1)(b)). The Authority may also terminate a Contract with a Supplier who becomes an excluded Supplier after the award of the Contract or where one of their sub-Contractors is an excluded Supplier.
Excluded Supplier	An Excluded Supplier is a supplier to which a mandatory exclusion ground applies and the circumstances giving rise to the application of that exclusion ground are likely to occur again; or the supplier is on the debarment list by virtue of a mandatory exclusion ground.
Exempt Contracts	The kind of Contract listed in Schedule 2 of the Procurement Act 2023.
Financial Regulations	The Authority’s rules relating to financial procedures.
Framework	Frameworks help public sector buyers to procure goods and services from a list of pre-approved suppliers, with agreed terms and conditions and legal protections.
Freedom of Information Act	Freedom of Information Act 2000 is an act defining the ways in which the public may obtain access to government-held information.

Head of Service	An Officer of the Authority employed to manage and lead a particular service area.
Invitation to Tender (IIT)	The document that invites Suppliers to submit a Request to Participate or a Tender in response to a Tender Notice. It must include clear instructions of what is required, a description of the procurement process, the Conditions of Tendering, and the Award Criteria or Assessment Methodology as a minimum.
Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)	A factor or measure against which a Supplier's performance of a Contract can be assessed during the life cycle of the Contract.
Light Touch Regime	These are Contracts or procurements which cover Health, Social Care, Community Service, legal and Education related requirements.
Lots	Splitting the goods, services or works to be supplied into more than one Contract to make them accessible to SMEs with the aim of promoting effective competition.
Mandatory Exclusion Grounds	Schedule 6 of the Procurement Act 2023 sets out the grounds for mandatory exclusions.
Most Advantageous Tender (MAT)	Is the Tender that the Authority considers— a. Satisfies the Authority's requirements, and b. Best satisfies the Award Criteria when assessed against them.
Member	An elected Member to the Fire Authority.
Monitoring Officer	The statutory officer responsible for the legal governance of the Authority.
National Policy Procurement Statement (NPPS)	National procurement policy statement outlining the strategic priorities for public procurement.
Negotiation	A discussion between the Authority and a Supplier with a view to improving the content of Tenders.
Officer	Any member of staff within the Authority.
Open Framework	A scheme of Frameworks where the initial Framework is open for three years or less, and the subsequent Frameworks

	cannot last for more than five years before it must be re-opened. The maximum overall term being eight years.
Open Procedure	This is a single stage procedure where any interested Supplier can submit a Tender; and a Supplier's suitability, capacity and capability and their Tender response are all evaluated together.
Performance Bond	A performance bond is issued to the Authority as a guarantee against the failure of the Supplier to meet the obligations of the Contract. A performance bond is usually issued by a bank or an insurance company.
Pipeline Notice	The annual notice to be published by Contracting Authorities to inform the market of the Contracts to be procured or awarded in the coming reporting period. It is only relevant for Contracting Authorities that will pay more than £100 million under relevant contracts in the coming financial year.
Preliminary Market Engagement	This can be used for the purpose of developing the Authority's requirements and approach to the planned procurement.
Presentation Demonstration	A meeting with a Supplier where they present their proposed delivery methodology or demonstrate a specific element or product within their proposal to aid the Authority in understanding the proposed solution and how it meets the Specification.
Procurement Award Report	Document that details the procurement process including the evaluation.
Procurement Initial Report	Document that details the proposed procurement process including the budget, evaluation criteria, sourcing options.
Procurement Legislation guidance	The guidance issued by the Cabinet Office that is to be considered in the development and delivery of the procurement process. Procurement Act 2023 - Guidance documents - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) Procurement policy notes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Procurement Thresholds	The values that determine the available routes to market, set by the Cabinet Office and reviewed every two years.
Procurement Request Form	Document that outlines the key steps and requirements for initiating a procurement process.
Public Contract	This is a contract that is above the relevant threshold (for goods, services and works) and which is not an exempted contract.
Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012	The Act that places a requirement to consider the economic, environmental, and social benefits of the procurement.
Procurement Policy Notes	Documents that provide guidance on best practices for public sector procurement. They are issued by Government bodies, such as the Cabinet Office and Crown Commercial Service in the UK, to help public sector organisations and suppliers understand and comply with procurement regulations and policies.
Purchase Order	A commercial document issued by the Authority to a seller, specifying the types, quantities and agreed prices for products or services the Authority intends to purchase.
Quotation	The provision of a price to deliver the Authority's requirements (may include a method statement too), without the conduct of a formal (advertised) procurement process.
Relevant Public Sector Legislation	Including but not limited to • Local Government Act 1988 Part II, • Local government Act 1999, • Local Government Act 2000, • Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 • Equalities Act 2010 • TUPE 2006 • Localism Act 2011 • Small Business, Enterprise, and Employment Act 2015 • Modern Slavery Act 2015 • The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 • Local Government Transparency Code 2015

	• The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
Relevant Procurement Legislation	• Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 • Procurement Act 2023, Procurement Regulations 2024 • Provider Services Regime 2023 where the procurement relates to health care services.
Request to Participate	The submission of a response to the Conditions of Participation published with a Tender Notice where these Conditions of Participation are a discrete stage in a Competitive Flexible Procedure.
Sensitive Commercial Information	Information that constitutes a trade secret or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person if it were published or otherwise disclosed.
Site Visit	A visit to an office, or project location to aid a Supplier in understanding the Contract requirements or specification and to aid in putting in an effective and compliant Tender.
Specification	The document that sets out the Authority's specific requirements for a specific contract or project.
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises – fewer than 250 employees and annual turnover not exceedingly approximately £50 million.
Standstill Period	A period of eight working days commencing on the day that the Contract Award Notice was published on the Central Digital Platform. Mandatory for all Covered Procurements other than for the following exceptions, for which a Voluntary Standstill Period of eight working days may still be applied. • Direct Award • Award under a Framework • Award by reference to a Dynamic Market • A light touch Contract
Suppliers	Economic operators, tenderers, bidders, contractors (or subcontractors), third party organisations supplying goods, services or works to the Authority.

Tender Notices	An invitation issued by the Authority to Suppliers to submit proposals or bids to provide goods or services.
Tender Records	A record of all decision made during the life of a Covered Procurement.
Tender Stages	Initial, intermediate, or final Tender stage in a Competitive Flexible Procedure.
Treaty State Supplier	A supplier that is entitled to the benefits of an internation agreement (part of the WTO or other formal arrangement).
Utilities Contracts	A Contract for the supply of goods, services or works wholly or mainly for the purpose of a utility activity (gas, electricity, water).
Value for Money	The balance of quality and price deemed representative of the Most Advantageous Tender.

Financial Regulations

Introduction

1.1 The Authority's governance structure is laid down in its Constution, which sets out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that are followed.

1.2 Financial Regulations provide the framework for managing the Authority's financial affairs. They apply to every member and officer of the Authority and anyone acting on its behalf.

1.3 The Regulations identify the financial responsibilities of the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and other members of the Senior Management Team (SMT). SMT Officers should maintain a written record where decision making has been delegated to members of their staff, including seconded staff. Where decisions have been delegated or devolved to other responsible officers references to the SMT officer in the Regulations should be read as referring to them.

1.4 All members and staff have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of the assets under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, is properly authorised, provides value for money and achieves best value.

1.5 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Regulations and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the Authority for approval. The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is also responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches of the Financial Regulations to the Authority.

1.6 The Authority's detailed financial procedures, setting out how the Regulations will be implemented, are contained in the appendices to the Financial Regulations.

1.7 SMT Officers and budget managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff in their departments are aware of the existence and content of the Authority's Financial Regulations and other internal regulatory documents and that they comply with them. They must also ensure that an adequate number of copies are available for reference within their departments.

1.8 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for issuing advice and guidance to underpin the Financial Regulations that members, officers and others acting on behalf of the Authority are required to follow. He is also responsible for ensuring that adequate training is available to allow SMT Officers and managers to comply with their duties.

Financial Regulation A: Financial Management

Introduction

A.1 Financial management covers all financial accountabilities in relation to the running of the Authority, including the policy framework and budget.

The Authority

A.2 The Authority is responsible for approving the policy framework and budget within which the Authority operates. It is also responsible for approving and monitoring compliance with the Authority's overall framework of accountability and control. The framework is set out in its Standing Orders. The Authority is also responsible for monitoring compliance with the agreed policy and related decisions.

A.3 The Authority is responsible for approving procedures for the delegation of powers to committees and officers and recording and reporting decisions taken. These delegations and details of who has responsibility for which decisions are set out in the scheme of delegation and powers and duties of committees contained with the Authority's Procedural Standing Orders or Committee Terms of Reference.

A.4 The Authority is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the financial management arrangements and systems of internal controls are adequate and effective, and will amongst other things:

A.4.1 Appoint a responsible financial officer (Treasurer)
A.4.2 Approve the financial control framework, including financial regulations
A.4.3 Set a budget and agree a precept
A.4.4 Review spending against budget, and take appropriate action where required
A.4.5 Monitor financial outcomes

A.4.6 Determine an affordable borrowing limit having regard to the Prudential code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities

A.4.7 Approve the Statement of Accounts and publish it with an Annual Governance Statement

A.4.8 Maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and systems of internal control

A.4.9 Adopt a member code of conduct

The Statutory Officers

Chief Fire Officer

A.5 The Chief Fire Officer is responsible for the corporate and overall strategic management of the Authority as a whole. They must report to and provide information for the Authority and its committees. They are responsible for establishing a framework for management direction, style and standards and for monitoring the performance of the organisation.

Monitoring Officer

A.6 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of member conduct. The Monitoring Officer is also responsible for reporting any actual or potential breaches of the law or maladministration to the Authority, and for ensuring that procedures for recording and reporting key decisions are operating effectively.

A.7 The Monitoring Officer must ensure that Authority decisions and the reasons for them are made public. They must also ensure that members are aware of decisions made by the Authority, its committees and of those made by officers who have delegated responsibility.

A.8 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising all members and officers about who has authority to take a particular decision.

A9 The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising the Authority about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the policy framework.

A.10 The Monitoring Officer (together with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)) is responsible for advising the Authority about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the budget. Actions that may be 'contrary to the budget' include:

A.10.1 Initiating a new policy
A.10.2 Committing expenditure in future years to above the budget level
A.10.3 Incurring interdepartmental transfers above virement limits
A.10.4 Causing the total expenditure financed from council tax, grants and Corporately held reserves to increase, or to increase by more than a specified amount.

Treasurer and Director of Corporate Services

A.11 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the Authority. This statutory responsibility cannot be overridden. The statutory duties arise from:

A.11.1 Section 73 and 105(1) of the Local Government Act 1985
A.11.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1988
A.11.3 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989
A.11.4 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015

A.12 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) has a statutory responsibility to:

A.12.1 Ensure the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs.

A.12.2 Nominate a properly qualified member of staff to deputise should they be unable to perform the duties.

A.12.3 Ensure that adequate systems and procedures exist to account for all income due and expenditure made and that controls operate to protect the Authorities assets form loss, waste, fraud or other impropriety.

A.12.4 Report to the Authority or external auditor if it appears that the Authorities expenditure is likely to exceed available resources.

A.12.5 Report to the Authority or external auditor any decisions or actions made or taken (or about to be made or taken) which involves incurring unlawful expenditure.

A.12.6 Produce the Statement of Accounts in accordance with appropriate codes of practice and reporting standards.

A.12.7 Report to the Authority on the robustness of the estimates produced for the purpose of budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves.

A.12.8 Report to the Authority where reserves are likely to be inadequate, outlining the reasons and the actions to be taken.

A.12.9 Ensure that all matters required to be taken into account in respect of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities are reported to the Authority for consideration.

A.12.10 Establish procedures to monitor and report performance against all prudential indicators.

A.13 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) has delegated responsibility, under the Accounts and Audit Regulations, to maintain a continuous adequate and effective internal audit of the Authorities accounting, financial and other processes, including the approval of the strategic and annual audit plans.

A.14 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is the Authorities professional adviser on financial matters, which involves a responsibility to:

A.14.1 Provide financial advice to the Authority on all aspects of its activity, including the budget, strategic planning and policy making process

A.14.2 Advise the Authority on financial propriety

A.14.3 Ensure that accurate financial information is provided to the Authority

A.14.4 Prepare statutory and other accounts

A.14.5 Make all banking arrangements

A.14.6 Provide a treasury management function

A.14.7 Advise on security of assets including risk management and insurance

A.14.8 Determine issue and receive the precept

Senior Management Team (SMT)

A15 Officers on the SMT are responsible for ensuring that Authority members are advised of the financial implications of all proposals and that the financial implications have been agreed by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

A16 It is the responsibility of SMT Officers to consult with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and seek approval on any matter liable to affect the Authority's finances materially, before any commitments are incurred.

Other financial accountabilities

Virement

A.17 The Authority is responsible for agreeing procedures for virement of expenditure between budget headings.

A.18 SMT Officers are responsible for agreeing in-year virements within delegated limits, in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) where required. They must notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) of all virements.

Treatment of Year- End Balances

A.19 The Authority is responsible for agreeing procedures for carrying forward under- and overspendings on budget headings.

Accounting Policies

A.20 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for selecting accounting policies and ensuring that they are applied consistently.

Accounting Records and Returns

A.21 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for determining the accounting procedures and records for the Authority.

The Annual Statement of Accounts

A.22 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for ensuring that the annual statement of accounts is prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) (CIPFA and LASAAC). The Authority is responsible for approving the annual statement of accounts.

Financial Regulation B: Financial Planning

Introduction

B.1 The Authority is responsible for agreeing the policy framework and budget. In terms of financial planning, the key elements are:

B.1.1 The Community Risk Management Plan
B.1.2 The budget
B.1.3 The capital programme

Policy framework

B.2 The Authority is responsible for approving the policy framework and budget. The policy framework comprises the following plans and strategies:

B.2.1 Revenue budget (incorporating the Medium-Term Financial Strategy)
B.2.2 Capital programme
B.2.3 Treasury management policy statement and strategy
B.2.4 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

B.3 The Authority is also responsible for approving procedures for agreeing variations to approved budgets, plans and strategies forming the policy framework and for determining the circumstances in which a decision will be deemed to be contrary to the budget or policy framework. Decisions should be referred to the Authority by the Monitoring Officer.

B.4 The Authority is responsible for setting the level at which officers may reallocate budget funds from one service to another. SMT Officers are responsible for taking in-year decisions on resources and priorities in order to deliver the budget policy framework within the financial limits set by the Authority.

Preparation of the Corporate Plan and Community Risk Management Plan

B.5 The Chief Fire Officer is responsible for proposing the corporate plan and CRMP to the Authority for approval.

Budgeting

Budget Format

B.6 The general format of the budget will be approved by the Authority on the advice of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). The draft budget should include allocation to different services and projects, proposed precept and business rates charges and contingency funds.

Budget Preparation

B.7 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for ensuring that a revenue budget is prepared on an annual basis and a medium term financial strategy is incorporated into this for consideration by the Authority. The Authority may amend the budget before approving it.

B.8 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for issuing guidance on the general content of the budget in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer as soon as possible following approval by the Authority.

B.9 It is the responsibility of SMT Officers to ensure that budget estimates reflecting agreed service plans are submitted and that these estimates are prepared in line with guidance issued.

Budget Monitoring and Control

B.10 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for providing appropriate financial information to enable budgets to be monitored effectively. They must monitor and control expenditure against budget allocations and report to the Authority on the overall position on a regular basis.

B.11 It is the responsibility of SMT Officers to control income and expenditure within their area and to monitor performance, taking account of financial information provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). They should report on variances within their own areas. They should also take any action necessary to avoid exceeding their budget allocation and alert the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to any problems.

B.12 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for regularly reporting to the Authority on expenditure against budget allocations and in the event that expenditure cannot be contained within the overall budget allocation.

Resource Allocation

B.13 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for developing and maintaining a resource allocation process that ensures due consideration of the Authority's policy framework.

Preparation of the Capital Programme

B.14 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for ensuring that a capital programme is prepared on an annual basis for consideration by the Authority.

B.15 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) must assess the affordability of the proposed capital programme and advise the authority in setting an affordable borrowing limit in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

B.16 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for regularly reporting to the Authority on expenditure compare to the approved capital programme.

Maintenance of Reserves

B.17 It is the responsibility of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to advise the Authority on prudent levels of reserves for the Authority.

Financial Regulation C: Risk Management and Control of Resources

Introduction

C.1 It is essential that robust, integrated systems are developed and maintained for identifying and evaluating all significant operational risks to the Authority. This should include the proactive participation of all those associated with planning and delivering services.

Risk Management

C.2 The Authority is responsible for approving the Authority's risk management policy statement and strategy and for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management.

C.3 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for preparing the Authority's risk management policy statement, for promoting it throughout the Authority.

C.4 SMT members are responsible for reviewing risks, developing appropriate risk management controls in their own areas of responsibility.

C.5 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for maintaining a corporate risk register, and reporting this to the Audit Committee at least annually.

C.6 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for advising the Authority on insurance matters and is responsible for ensuring that proper insurance cover exists and that adequate resources are available to fund uninsured risks.

Internal Control

C.7 Internal control refers to the systems of control devised by management to help ensure the Authority's objectives are achieved in a manner that promotes economical, efficient and effective use of resources and that the Authority's assets and interests are safeguarded.

C.8 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for advising on effective systems of internal control. These arrangements need to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes and regulations, and other relevant statements of best practice. They should ensure that public funds are properly safeguarded and used economically, efficiently, and in accordance with the statutory and other authorities that govern their use.

C.9 It is the responsibility of SMT Officers to establish sound arrangements for planning, appraising, authorising and controlling their operations in order to achieve continuous improvement, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and for achieving their financial performance targets.

C.10 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and Chief Fire Officer must ensure that the system of internal control is reviewed at least annually and that an Annual Governance Statement is submitted to the Authority for approval and inclusion in the Statement of Accounts.

Audit Requirements

C.11 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 issued by the Secretary of State require every local authority to maintain an adequate and effective internal audit.

C.12 Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd is responsible for appointing external auditors to each local Authority. The basic duties of the external auditor are governed by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

C.13 The Authority may, from time to time, be subject to audit, inspection or investigation by external bodies such as HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), who have statutory rights of access.

Preventing Fraud and Corruption

C.14 The Monitoring Officer (in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)) is responsible for the development and maintenance of an anti-fraud and whistle-blowing policy.

C.15 SMT Officers must ensure that disposals and write-offs of redundant or surplus assets, stock and inventory are actioned in accordance with financial procedures.

Assets

C.16 SMT Officers should ensure that records and assets are properly maintained and securely held. They should also ensure that contingency plans for the security of assets and continuity of service in the event of disaster or system failure are in place.

Treasury Management

C.17 The Authority has adopted CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities.

C.18 The Authority is responsible for approving the Treasury Management Policy Statement, in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice for the Public Services. The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the approved policy and associated practices.

C.19 All money in the hands of the Authority is controlled by the officer designated for the purposes of section 73 and 105(1) of the Local Government Act 1985, referred to in the code as the Director of Corporate Services.

C.20 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for reporting to the Authority a proposed treasury management strategy for the coming financial year at or before the start of each financial year.

C.21 All executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities.

C.22 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for reporting to the Authority on the activities of the treasury management operation; one such report will comprise an annual report on treasury management for presentation by 30 June of the succeeding financial year.

Staffing

C.23 The Authority is responsible for determining how officer support for executive and non-executive roles within the Authority will be organised.

C.24 The Chief Fire Officer is responsible for providing overall management to staff. They are also responsible for ensuring that there is proper use of the evaluation or other agreed systems for determining the remuneration of a job.

C.25 SMT Officers are responsible for controlling total staff numbers by:

C.25.1 Advising the Authority on the budget necessary in any given year to cover estimated staffing levels.

C.25.2 Adjusting the staffing to a level that can be funded within approved budget provision, varying the provision as necessary within that constraint in order to meet changing operational needs.

C.25.3 The proper use of appointment procedures.

Financial Regulation D: Systems and Procedures

Introduction

D.1 Sound systems and procedures are essential to an effective framework of accountability and control.

General

D.2 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for the operation of the Authority's accounting systems, the form of accounts and the supporting financial records. Any changes made by SMT Officers to the existing financial systems or the establishment of new systems must be approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). However, SMT Officers are responsible for the proper operation of financial processes in their own departments.

D.3 Any changes to agreed procedures by SMT Officers to meet their own specific service needs should be agreed with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

D.4 SMT Officers should ensure that their staff receive relevant financial training that has been approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

D.5 SMT Officers must ensure that, where appropriate, computer and other systems are registered in accordance with data protection legislation. SMT Officers must ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities under freedom of information legislation.

Income and expenditure

D.6 It is the responsibility of SMT Officers to ensure that a proper scheme of delegation has been established within their area and is operating effectively. The scheme of delegation should identify staff authorised to act on the SMT officer's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, together with the limits of their Authority. The Authority is responsible for approving procedures for writing off debts as part of the overall control framework of accountability and control.

Payments to employees and Members

D.7 The Director of People and Development is responsible for all payments of salaries and wages to all staff, including payments for overtime, and for payment of allowances to members. They are also responsible for the payment of pensions to retired firefighters.

Taxation

D.8 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for advising SMT Officers, in the light of guidance issued by appropriate bodies and relevant legislation as it applies, on all taxation issues that affect the Authority.

D.9 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for maintaining the Authority's tax records, making all tax payments, receiving tax credits and submitting tax returns by their due date as appropriate.

Trading Accounts and Business Units

D.10 It is the responsibility of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to advise on the establishment and operation of trading accounts and business units.

Financial Regulation E: External Arrangements

Introduction

E.1 The Authority provides a distinctive leadership role for the community and brings together the contributions of the various stakeholders. It must also act to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of its area.

Partnerships

E.2 The Authority is responsible for approving delegations, including a Partnership Protocol for partnerships. The Authority is the focus for forming partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs.

E.3 The Authority can delegate functions – including those relating to partnerships – to officers. These are set out in the Authority scheme of delegation. Where functions are delegated, the responsible officer remains accountable for them to the Authority.

E.4 The Monitoring Officer and Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) are responsible for promoting and maintaining the same high standards of conduct with regard to financial administration in partnerships that apply throughout the Authority.

E.5 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) must ensure that the accounting arrangements to be adopted relating to partnerships and joint ventures are satisfactory. They must also consider the overall corporate governance arrangements and legal issues when arranging contracts with external bodies. They must ensure that the risks have been fully appraised before agreements are entered into with external bodies.

E.6 SMT Officers are responsible for ensuring that risks relating to significant partnership working has been properly assessed and that appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded in relation to work with external bodies.

E.7 SMT Officers are responsible for evaluating the contribution of partnership working to the achievement of the Authority objectives.

External funding

E.8 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.

Work for third parties

E.9 SMT Officers are responsible for approving the contractual arrangements for any work for third parties or external bodies, subject to any advice provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) following advice.

Appendix A

Financial Management

Financial Management Standards

Why is this important?

1.01 All staff and members have a duty to abide by the highest standards of probity in dealing with financial issues. This is facilitated by ensuring everyone is clear about the standards to which they are working and the controls that are in place to ensure that these standards are met.

Key controls

1.02 The key controls and control objectives for financial management standards are:

1.02.1 Their promotion throughout the Authority.

1.02.2 A monitoring system to review compliance with financial standards, and regular comparisons of performance indicators and benchmark standards that are reported to the Authority.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.03 To ensure the proper administration of the financial affairs of the Authority.

1.04 To act as the Authority's professional advisor on financial matters, including the budget, financial planning, strategy and policy making.

1.05 To ensure that all reports to the Authority have full and clear financial implications identified.

1.06 To set the financial management standards and to monitor compliance with them.

1.07 To ensure proper professional practices are adhered to and to act as head of profession in relation to the standards, performance and development of finance staff throughout the Authority.

1.08 To advise on the key strategic controls necessary to secure sound financial management.

1.09 To ensure that financial information is available to enable accurate and timely monitoring and reporting of comparisons of national and local financial performance indicators.

Responsibilities of SMT Officers

1.10 To promote the financial management standards set by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) in their departments and to monitor adherence to the standards and practices, liaising as necessary with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

1.11 To promote sound financial practices in relation to the standards, performance and development of staff in their departments.

Managing expenditure

Scheme of virement

Why is this important?

1.12 The scheme of virement is intended to enable the SMT Officers and their staff to manage budgets with a degree of flexibility within the overall policy framework determined by the Authority, and therefore to optimise the use of resources.

Key controls

1.13 Key controls for the scheme of virement are:

> 1.13.1 It is administered by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) within guidelines set by the Authority. Any variation from this scheme requires the approval of the Authority.
>
> 1.13.2 The overall budget is approved by the Authority. SMT Officers and budget managers are therefore authorised to incur expenditure in accordance with the estimates that make up the budget. The rules below cover virement; that is, switching resources between approved estimates or heads of expenditure. For the purposes of this scheme, a budget head is considered to be a line in the approved estimates report.
>
> 1.13.3 Virement does not create additional overall budget liability. SMT Officers are expected to exercise their discretion in managing their budgets responsibly and prudently. For example, they should aim to avoid supporting recurring expenditure from one-off sources of savings or additional income, or creating future commitments, including full-year effects of decisions made part way through a year, for which they have not identified future resources. SMT Officers must plan to fund such commitments from within their own budgets.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.14 To issue instructions and guidelines to all budget managers in order that the scheme of virement can operate within the policies set by the Authority.

1.15 To issue documentation for completion by budget holders for the satisfactory management control of the virement process.

1.16 To prepare jointly with the SMT Officer a report to the Authority where virements in excess of £200,000 are proposed.

Responsibilities of SMT Officers

1.17 Virements can be exercised within the limits shown below, subject to the provisions in paragraphs 1.18 to 1.20 below:

Limit	**Department Head**	**Director**	**Chief Fire Officer**	**Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)**	**Authority**
Up to £50,000	Y	-	-	-	-
£50,000-£100,000	Y	Y		-	-
£100,000-£200,000	Y	Y	Y	Y	-
Over £200,000	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table 1 – Virements limits

1.18 The prior approval of the Authority is required for any virement, of whatever amount, where it is proposed to change Authority policy.

1.19 Virement that is likely to impact on the level of service activity of another SMT Officer should be implemented only after agreement with the relevant SMT Officer.

1.20 No virement relating to a specific financial year should be made after 31 March in that year.

1.21 Where an approved budget is a lump-sum budget or contingency intended for allocation during the year, its allocation will not be treated as a virement, provided that the amount is used in accordance with the purposes for which it has been established.

Treatment of Year-End Balances

Why is this important?

1.22 The rules below cover arrangements for the transfer of resources between accounting years, also known as a carry-forward.

1.23 These are administered by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) within guidelines set by the Authority. Any variation from the scheme requires the approval of the Authority.

Key controls

1.24 Appropriate accounting procedures are in operation to ensure that carried-forward totals are correct.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.25 To approve carry forward requests of up to £100,000 in respect of specific items of expenditure. Such sums to be included in specific earmarked reserves and included in the Statement of Accounts.

1.26 To administer the scheme of carry-forward within the guidelines approved by the Authority.

1.27 To report all overspendings and underspending on service estimates carried forward to the executive and to the Authority.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

1.28 Any overspending on service estimates in total on budgets must be carried forward to the following year, and will constitute the first call on service estimates in the following year. The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) will report the extent of overspendings carried forward to the Authority.

1.29 Net underspending on service estimates under the control of the SMT Officer may be carried forward, subject to:

- 1.29.1 50% of the underspend being transferred to general reserves.
- 1.29.2 A maximum limit of £50,000, any carry forward in excess of this requires approval of Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).
- 1.29.3 An annual review of the reasonableness of individual balances created this way.

Accounting policies

Why is this important?

1.30 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's statement of accounts, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the format required by the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA and LASAAC), for each financial year ending 31 March.

Key controls

1.31 The key controls for accounting policies are:

1.31.1 Systems of internal control are in place that ensure that financial transactions are lawful.

1.31.2 Suitable accounting policies are selected and applied consistently.

1.31.3 Proper accounting records are maintained.

1.31.4 Financial statements are prepared which present fairly the financial position of the Authority and its expenditure and income.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.32 To select suitable accounting policies and to ensure that they are applied consistently. The accounting policies are set out in the statement of accounts, which is prepared at 31 March each year, and covers such items as:

1.32.1 Separate accounts for capital and revenue transactions.

1.32.2 The basis on which debtors and creditors at year end are included in the accounts.

1.32.3 Details on substantial provisions and reserves

1.32.4 Non-current assets

1.32.5 Depreciation

1.32.6 Capital charges

1.32.7 Work in progress

1.32.8 Stocks and stores

1.32.9 Deferred charges

1.32.10 Government grants

1.32.11 Leasing

1.32.12 Pensions

Responsibilities of SMT officers

1.33 To adhere to the accounting policies and guidelines approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Accounting records and returns

Why is this important?

1.34 Maintaining proper accounting records is one of the ways in which the Authority discharges its responsibility for stewardship of public resources. The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its annual accounts to present fairly its operations during the year. These are subject to external audit. This audit provides assurance that the accounts are prepared properly, that proper accounting practices have been followed and that quality arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the Authority's resources.

Key controls

1.35 The key controls for accounting records and returns are:

1.35.1 All members, finance staff and budget managers operate within the required accounting standards and timetables.

1.35.2 All the Authority's transactions, material commitments and contracts and other essential accounting information are recorded completely, accurately and on a timely basis.

1.35.3 Procedures are in place to enable accounting records to be reconstituted in the event of systems failure.

1.35.4 Reconciliation procedures are carried out to ensure transactions are correctly recorded.

1.35.5 Prime documents are retained in accordance with legislative and other requirements.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.36 To determine the accounting procedures and records for the Authority. Where these are maintained outside the finance department, the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) should consult the SMT Officer concerned.

1.37 To arrange for the compilation of all accounts and accounting records under his or her direction, including statistical and government returns.

1.38 To comply, as far as practicable, with the following principles when allocating accounting duties:

1.38.1 Separating the duties of providing information about sums due to or from the Authority and calculating, checking and recording these sums from the duty of collecting or disbursing them.

1.38.2 Employees with the duty of examining or checking the accounts of cash transactions must not themselves be engaged in these transactions.

1.38.3 Where such arrangements are not practical alternative controls must be agreed with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

1.39 To make proper arrangements for the audit of the Authority’s accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

1.40 To ensure that all claims for funds including grants are made by the due date.

1.41 To prepare and publish the audited accounts of the Authority for each financial year, in accordance with the statutory timetable and with the requirement for the Authority to approve the statement of accounts in line with statutory deadlines.

1.42 To administer the Authority's arrangements for under and overspendings to be carried forward to the following financial year.

1.43 To ensure the proper retention of financial documents in accordance with all legal requirements and as set out in the Authority's document retention schedule.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

1.44 To consult and obtain the approval of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) before making any changes to accounting records and procedures.

1.45 To comply with the principles outlined in paragraph 1.38 above when allocating accounting duties.

1.46 To maintain adequate records to provide a management trail leading from the source of income and expenditure through to the accounting statements.

1.47 To supply information required to enable the statement of accounts to be completed in accordance with guidelines issued by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

1.48 To ensure that all claims for funds, including grant funds, are made by the due date.

The Annual Statement of Accounts

Why is this important?

1.49 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to prepare its own accounts to present fairly its operations during the year. The Authority is responsible for approving the statutory annual statement of accounts.

Key controls

1.50 The key controls for the annual statement of accounts are:

1.50.1 The Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of these affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

1.50.2 The Authority's statement of accounts must be prepared in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA and LASAAC).

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

1.51 To select suitable accounting policies and to apply them consistently.

1.52 To make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.

1.53 To comply with the Code, financial reporting standards and Accounts and Audit Regulations.

1.54 To sign and date the statement of accounts, stating that it presents fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March.

1.55 To draw up the timetable for final accounts preparation and to advise staff and external auditors accordingly.

1.56 To liaise with external auditors during the audit of accounts.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

1.57 To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and to supply the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) with information when required.

Appendix B

Financial Planning

Performance plans

Why is this important?

2.01 The Authority has a statutory responsibility to publish various performance plans such as the risk management plans. The purpose of performance plans is to explain overall priorities and objectives, current performance, and proposals for further improvement.

Key controls

2.02 The key controls for performance plans are:

2.02.1 To ensure that all relevant plans are produced and that they are consistent.

2.02.2 To produce plans in accordance with statutory requirements to meet the timetables set.

2.02.3 To ensure that all performance information is accurate, complete and up to date.

2.02.4 To provide improvement targets which are meaningful, realistic and challenging.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.03 To advise and supply the financial information that needs to be included in performance plans in accordance with statutory requirements and agreed timetables.

2.04 To contribute to the development of corporate and service targets and objectives and performance information.

Responsibilities of the Director of Service Delivery

2.05 To ensure that systems are in place to measure activity and collect accurate information for use as performance indicators.

2.06 To ensure that performance information is monitored sufficiently frequently to allow corrective action to be taken if targets are not likely to be met.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.07 To contribute to the development of performance plans in line with statutory requirements.

2.08 To contribute to the development of corporate and service targets and objectives and performance information.

Budgeting

Format of the Budget

Why is this important?

2.09 The format of the budget determines the level of detail to which financial control and management will be exercised. The format shapes how the rules around virement operate, the operation of cash limits and sets the level at which funds may be reallocated within budgets.

Key controls

2.10 The key controls for the budget format are:

2.10.1 The format complies with all legal requirements.

2.10.2 The format complies with CIPFA's Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP).

2.10.3 The format reflects the accountabilities of service delivery.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.11 To advise the Authority on the format of the budget that is approved.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.12 To comply with accounting guidance provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Revenue budget preparation, monitoring and control

Why is this important?

2.13 Budget management ensures that once the budget has been approved by the Authority, resources allocated are used for their intended purposes and are properly accounted for. Budgetary control is a continuous process, enabling the Authority to review and adjust its budget targets during the financial year. It also provides the mechanism that calls to account managers responsible for defined elements of the budget.

2.14 By continuously identifying and explaining variances against budgetary targets, the Authority can identify changes in trends and resource requirements at the earliest opportunity. The Authority itself operates within an annual cash limit, approved when setting the overall budget. To ensure that the Authority in total does not overspend, each service is required to manage its own expenditure within the cash-limited budget allocated to it.

2.15 For the purposes of budgetary control by managers, a budget will normally be the planned income and expenditure for a service area or cost centre. However, budgetary control may take place at a more detailed level if this is required by the SMT Officer's scheme of delegation.

Key controls

2.16 The key controls for managing and controlling the revenue budget are:

- 2.16.1 Budget managers should be responsible only for income and expenditure that they can influence.
- 2.16.2 There is a nominated budget manager for each cost centre heading.
- 2.16.3 Budget managers accept accountability for their budgets and the level of service to be delivered and understand their financial responsibilities.
- 2.16.4 Budget managers follow an approved certification process for all expenditure.
- 2.16.5 Income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for.

2.16.6 Performance levels and levels of service are monitored in conjunction with the budget and necessary action is taken to align service outputs and budget, for example by budgetary virement.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.17 To establish an appropriate framework of budgetary management and control that ensures that:

2.17.1 Budget management is exercised within annual cash limits unless the Authority agrees otherwise.

2.17.2 Each SMT Officer has available timely information on receipts and payments on each budget which is sufficiently detailed to enable managers to fulfil their budgetary responsibilities.

2.17.3 Expenditure is committed only against an approved budget head.

2.17.4 All officers responsible for committing expenditure comply with relevant guidance, Contract Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations.

2.17.5 Each cost centre has a single named manager, determined by the relevant SMT Officer. As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making processes that commits expenditure.

2.17.6 Significant variances from approved budgets are investigated and reported by budget managers regularly.

2.18 To administer the Authority's scheme of virement.

2.19 To submit reports to the Authority, in consultation with the relevant SMT Officer, where a SMT Officer is unable to balance expenditure and resources within existing approved budgets under their control.

2.20 To prepare and submit reports on the Authority's projected income and expenditure compared with the budget on a regular basis.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.21 To maintain budgetary control within their departments, in adherence to the principles in 2.17, and to ensure that all income and expenditure are properly recorded and accounted for.

2.22 To ensure that an accountable budget manager is identified for each item of income and expenditure under the control of the SMT Officer (grouped together in a series of cost centres). As a general principle, budget responsibility should be aligned as closely as possible to the decision-making that commits expenditure.

2.23 To ensure that spending remains within the Service's overall cash limit, and that individual budget heads are not overspent, by monitoring the budget and taking appropriate corrective action where significant variations from the approved budget are forecast.

2.24 To ensure that a monitoring process is in place to review performance levels and levels of service in conjunction with the budget and is operating effectively.

2.25 To prepare and submit to the Authority reports on projected expenditure compared with its budget, in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) .

2.26 To ensure prior approval by the Authority for new proposals* of whatever amount, that:

2.26.1 Create financial commitments in future years.

2.26.2 Change existing policies, initiate new policies or cease existing policies.

2.26.3 Materially extend or reduce the Authority's services.

*A report on new proposals should explain the full financial implications, following consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) . Unless the Authority has agreed otherwise, SMT Officers must plan to contain the financial implications of such proposals within their cash limit.

2.27 To ensure compliance with the scheme of virement.

2.28 To agree with the relevant SMT Officer where it appears that a budget proposal, including a virement proposal may impact materially on another service area or SMT Officer's level of service activity.

Budgets and medium-term planning

Why is this important?

2.29 The Authority is a complex organisation responsible for delivering a wide variety of services. It needs to plan effectively and to develop systems to enable scarce resources to be allocated in accordance with carefully weighed priorities. The budget is the financial expression of the Authority's plans and policies.

2.30 The revenue budget must be constructed so as to ensure that resource allocation properly reflects the service plans and priorities of the Authority. Budgets (spending plans) are needed so that the Authority can plan, authorise, monitor and control the way money is allocated and spent. It is illegal for an Authority to budget for a deficit.

2.31 Medium-term planning (the Authority has adopted a five-year planning system) involves a planning cycle in which managers develop their own plans. As each year passes, another future year will be added to the medium-term plan. This ensures that the Authority is always preparing for events in advance.

Key controls

2.32 The key controls for budgets and medium-term planning are:

2.32.1 Specific budget approval for all expenditure.

2.32.2 Budget managers are consulted in the preparation of the budgets for which they will be held responsible and accept accountability within delegations set by the Authority for their budgets and the level of service to be delivered.

2.32.3 A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness and operation of budget preparation and to ensure that any corrective action is taken.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.33 To prepare and submit reports on budget prospects for the executive, including resource constraints set by the Government. Reports should take account of medium-term prospects, where appropriate.

2.34 To determine the detailed form of revenue estimates and the methods for their preparation, consistent with the budget approved by the Authority, and after consultation with SMT Officers.

2.35 To prepare and submit reports to the Authority on the aggregate spending plans of departments and on the resources available to fund them, identifying, where appropriate, the implications for the level of council tax to be levied.

2.36 To advise on the medium-term implications of spending decisions.

2.37 To encourage the best use of resources and value for money by working with SMT Officers to identify opportunities to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and by encouraging good practice in conducting financial appraisals of development or savings options, and in developing financial aspects of service planning.

2.38 To advise the Authority on proposals in accordance with their responsibilities under section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.39 To prepare estimates of income and expenditure, in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), to be submitted to the Authority.

2.40 To prepare budgets that are consistent with any relevant cash limits, with the Authority's annual budget cycle and with guidelines issued by the Authority. The format should be prescribed by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) in accordance with the Authority's general directions.

2.41 To integrate financial and budget plans into service planning, so that budget plans can be supported by financial and non-financial performance measures.

2.42 In consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and in accordance with the laid-down guidance and timetable, to prepare detailed draft revenue and capital budgets for consideration by the appropriate committee.

2.43 When drawing up draft budget requirements, to have regard to:

- 2.43.1 Spending patterns and pressures revealed through the budget monitoring process.
- 2.43.2 Legal requirements.
- 2.43.3 Policy requirements as defined by the Authority in the approved policy framework.
- 2.43.4 Initiatives already under way.

Resource allocation

Why is this important?

2.44 A mismatch often exists between available resources and required resources. A common scenario is that available resources are not adequate to fulfil need and desire. It is therefore imperative that needs and desires are carefully prioritised and that resources are fairly allocated, in order to fulfil all legal responsibilities. Resources may include staff, money, equipment, goods and materials.

Key controls

2.45 The key controls for resource allocation are:

- 2.45.1 Resources are acquired in accordance with the law and using an approved authorisation process.
- 2.45.2 Resources are used only for the purpose intended, to achieve the approved policies and objectives, and are properly accounted for.
- 2.45.3 Resources are securely held for use when required.
- 2.45.4 Resources are used with the minimum level of waste, inefficiency or loss for other reasons.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.46 To advise on methods available for the funding of resources, such as grants from central government and borrowing requirements.

2.47 To assist in the allocation of resources to budget managers.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.48 To work within budget limits and to utilise resources allocated, and further allocate resources, in the most efficient, effective and economic way.

2.49 To identify opportunities to minimise or eliminate resource requirements or consumption without having a detrimental effect on service delivery.

Capital Programmes

Why is this important?

2.50 Capital expenditure involves acquiring or enhancing fixed assets with a long-term value to the Authority, such as land, buildings, and major items of plant, equipment or vehicles. Capital assets shape the way services are delivered in the long term and create financial commitments for the future in the form of financing costs and revenue running costs.

2.51 The Government places strict controls on the financing capacity of the Authority. This means that capital expenditure should form part of an investment strategy and should be carefully prioritised in order to maximise the benefit of scarce resources.

Key controls

2.52 The key controls for capital programmes are:

- 2.52.1 Specific approval by the Authority for the programme of capital expenditure.
- 2.52.2 Expenditure on capital schemes is subject to the approval of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).
- 2.52.3 A capital scheme appraisal, including links to Authority objectives, associated risks, cost estimates including associated revenue expenditure, is prepared for each capital project prior to inclusion in the programme, this requires the approval of the relevant Director.
- 2.52.4 Approval by the Authority where capital schemes are to be financed from the revenue budget.
- 2.52.5 Proposals for improvements and alterations to buildings must be approved by the appropriate SMT Officer.

2.52.6 Schedules for individual schemes within the overall capital programme approved by the Authority must be submitted to the Executive Board for approval, or under other arrangements approved by the Authority.

2.52.7 The development and implementation of asset management plans.

2.52.8 Accountability for each proposal is accepted by a named manager.

2.52.9 Monitoring of progress in conjunction with expenditure and comparison with approved budget.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.53 To prepare capital estimates jointly with SMT Officers and to report them to the Authority for approval. The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) will make recommendations on the capital estimates and on any associated financing requirements to the Authority. Authority approval is required where a SMT Officer proposes to bid for or exercise additional borrowing approval not anticipated in the capital programme. This is because the extra borrowing may create future commitments to financing costs.

2.54 To prepare and submit reports to the executive on the projected income, expenditure and resources compared with the approved estimates.

2.55 To issue guidance concerning capital schemes and controls, for example, on project appraisal techniques. The definition of ‘capital’ will be determined by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), having regard to Government regulations and accounting requirements.

2.56 To provide advice to allow responsible officers to obtain authorisation from the Authority for individual schemes where the estimated expenditure exceeds the capital programme provision by more than the agreed criteria set out in section 2.63.

2.57 To report progress on capital contracts valued in excess of £100,000 to Resources Committee (this only relates to the capital element of any contract not any on-going revenue costs associated with-it, such as ICT licenses and support).

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.58 To comply with guidance concerning capital schemes and controls issued by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

2.59 To ensure that, where appropriate, all capital proposals have undergone a project appraisal in accordance with guidance issued by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

2.60 To prepare a quarterly return of progress to date and estimated final costs of schemes in the approved capital programme for submission to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and relevant Director.

2.61 To ensure that adequate records are maintained for all capital contracts.

2.62 To proceed with projects only when there is adequate provision in the capital programme and with the agreement of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), where required.

2.63 Where variations in estimated or contract costs occur the following shall apply:

Cumulative Variance	**Action**
Less than £10,000 or 5%, whichever is the greater	Retrospective notification to Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and relevant Director. No requirement to report to the Authority. (Where costs cannot be contained within overall capital programme or through an additional revenue contribution to the capital programme prior approval of the Authority is required).
Between £10,000 and £50,000 or 5% and 10%, whichever is the greater	Report to Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and relevant Director to seek approval, before any cost increases incurred. (Where costs cannot be contained within overall capital programme or through an additional revenue contribution to the capital programme prior approval of the Authority is required).
Between £50,000 and £100,000 or 10% and 15%, whichever is the greater	Report to Executive Board to seek approval, before any cost increases incurred. (Where costs cannot be contained within overall capital programme or through an additional revenue contribution to the capital programme prior approval of the Authority is required).
Over £100,000 or 15%, whichever is the greater	Approval required from the Authority before any cost increases incurred, other than in exceptional circumstances when the delay incurred would, in the option of the CFO and Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), be impractical in which case this must be reported retrospectively to the Authority.

Table 2 – Variations in estimated or contract costs

(Note, the approval by either Executive Board or the Authority means that all variations to date are incorporated into the revised contract sum. For the purpose of monitoring and reporting of future variations the cumulative value of variations begins again at zero).

2.64 To ensure that credit arrangements, such as leasing agreements, are not entered into without the prior approval of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and, if applicable, approval of the scheme through the capital programme.

Maintenance of reserves

Why is this important?

2.65 The Authority must decide the level of general reserves it wishes to maintain before it can decide the level of council tax. Reserves are maintained as a matter of prudence. They enable the Authority to provide for unexpected events and thereby protect it from overspending, should such events occur. Reserves for specific purposes may also be maintained, such as the purchase or renewal of capital items.

Key controls

2.66 To maintain reserves in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA and LASAAC) and agreed accounting policies.

2.67 For each reserve established, the purpose, usage and basis of transactions should be clearly identified.

2.68 Authorisation and expenditure from reserves by the appropriate SMT Officer in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

2.69 To advise the Authority on prudent levels of reserves for the Authority, and to take account of the advice of the external auditor in this matter.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

2.70 To ensure that resources are used only for the purposes for which they were intended.

Appendix C

Risk management and control of resources

Risk management

Why is this important?

3.01 All organisations, whether private or public sector, face risks to people, property and continued operations. Risk is the chance or possibility of loss, damage, injury or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event. Risk management is the planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk. Its objectives are to secure the assets of the organisation and to ensure the continued financial and organisational well being of the organisation. In essence it is, therefore, an integral part of good business practice. Risk management is concerned with evaluating the measures an organisation already has in place to manage identified risks and then recommending the action the organisation needs to take to control these risks effectively.

3.02 It is the overall responsibility of the Authority to approve the risk management strategy, and to promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the Authority.

Key controls

3.03 The key controls for risk management are:

- 3.03.1 Procedures are in place to identify, assess, prevent or contain material known risks, and these procedures are operating effectively throughout the Authority.
- 3.03.2 A monitoring process is in place to review regularly the effectiveness of risk reduction strategies and the operation of these controls. The risk management process should be conducted on a continuing basis.
- 3.03.3 Managers know that they are responsible for managing relevant risks and are provided with relevant information on risk management initiatives.

3.03.4 Provision is made for losses that might result from the risks that remain.

3.03.5 Procedures are in place to investigate claims within required timescales.

3.03.6 Acceptable levels of risk are determined and insured against where appropriate.

3.03.7 The Authority has identified business continuity plans for implementation in the event of disaster that results in significant loss or damage to its resources.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.04 To prepare and promote the Authority's risk management policy statement and strategy.

3.05 To develop risk management controls in conjunction with other SMT Officers.

3.06 To effect corporate insurance cover, through external insurance and internal funding, and to negotiate all claims in consultation with other officers, where necessary.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.07 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) immediately of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the Authority, together with any information or explanation required by those officers or the Authority's insurers.

3.08 To take responsibility for risk management, having regard to advice from the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and other specialist officers (such as crime prevention, fire prevention, health and safety).

3.09 To ensure that there are regular reviews of risk within their departments.

3.10 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) promptly of all new risks, properties or vehicles that require insurance and of any alterations affecting existing insurance's.

3.11 To consult the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and the Monitoring Officer on the terms of any indemnity that the Authority is requested to give.

3.12 To ensure that employees, or anyone covered by the Authority's insurance's, do not admit liability or make any offer to pay compensation that may prejudice the assessment of liability in respect of any insurance claim.

Internal controls

Why is this important?

3.13 The Authority is complex and beyond the direct control of individuals. It therefore requires internal controls to manage and monitor progress towards strategic objectives.

3.14 The Authority has statutory obligations, and, therefore, requires internal controls to identify, meet and monitor compliance with these obligations.

3.15 The Authority faces a wide range of financial, administrative and commercial risks, both from internal and external factors, which threaten the achievement of its objectives. Internal controls are necessary to manage these risks.

3.16 The system of internal controls is established in order to provide measurable achievement of:

3.16.1 Efficient and effective operations

3.16.2 Reliable financial information and reporting

3.16.3 Compliance with laws and regulations

3.16.4 Risk management

Key controls

3.17 The key controls and control objectives for internal control systems are:

3.17.1 Key controls should be reviewed on a regular basis and the Authority should make a formal statement annually to the effect that it is satisfied that the systems of internal control are operating effectively.

3.17.2 Managerial control systems, including defining policies, setting objectives and plans, monitoring financial and other performance and taking appropriate anticipatory and remedial action. The key objective of these systems is to promote ownership of the control environment by defining roles and responsibilities.

3.17.3 Financial and operational control systems and procedures, which include physical safeguards for assets, segregation of duties, authorisation and approval procedures and information systems.

3.17.4 An effective internal audit function that is properly resourced. It should operate in accordance with the principles contained in CIPFA's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and with any other statutory obligations and regulations.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.18 To assist the Authority to put in place an appropriate control environment and effective internal controls which provide reasonable assurance of effective and efficient operations, financial stewardship, probity and compliance with laws and regulations.

3.19 To prepare the Annual Governance Statement for approval by the Authority.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.20 To manage processes to check that established controls are being adhered to and to evaluate their effectiveness, in order to be confident in the proper use of resources, achievement of objectives and management of risks.

3.21 To review existing controls in the light of changes affecting the Authority and to establish and implement new ones in line with guidance from the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). SMT Officers should also be responsible for removing controls that are unnecessary or not cost or risk effective, for example, because of duplication.

3.22 To ensure staff have a clear understanding of the consequences of lack of control.

Audit requirements

Internal audit

Why is this important?

3.23 The requirement for an internal audit function for local authorities is implied by section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, which requires that authorities "make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs". The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, more specifically require that a "relevant Authority shall maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of their accounting records and financial control systems".

3.24 Accordingly, internal audit is an independent and objective appraisal function established by the Authority for reviewing the system of internal control. It examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal control as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

Key controls

3.25 The key controls for internal audit are:

3.25.1 That it is independent in its planning and operation.

3.25.2 The internal audit service has direct access to the Chief Fire Officer, all levels of management and directly to elected members.

3.25.3 The internal auditors comply with CIPFA's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.26 To ensure that internal auditors have the authority to:

3.26.1 Access Authority premises at reasonable times.

3.26.2 Access all assets, records, documents, correspondence and control systems.

3.26.3 Receive any information and explanation considered necessary concerning any matter under consideration.

3.26.4 Require any employee of the Authority to account for cash, stores or any other Authority asset under his or her control.

3.26.5 Access records belonging to third parties, such as contractors, when required.

3.26.6 Directly access the Chief Fire Officer, the Authority and its members.

3.27 To submit to the Authority for approval the strategic and annual audit plans, which take account of the characteristics and relative risks of the activities involved.

3.28 To ensure that effective procedures are in place to investigate promptly any fraud or irregularity.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.29 To ensure that internal auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

3.30 To ensure that auditors are provided with any information and explanations that they seek in the course of their work.

3.31 To consider and respond promptly to recommendations in audit reports.

3.32 To ensure that any agreed actions arising from audit recommendations are carried out in a timely and efficient fashion.

3.33 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) immediately of any suspected fraud, theft, irregularity, improper use or misappropriation of the Authority's property or resources. Pending investigation and reporting, the SMT Officer should take all necessary steps to prevent further loss and to secure records and documentation against removal or alteration.

3.34 To ensure that new systems for maintaining financial records, or records of assets, or changes to such systems, are discussed with and agreed by the head of internal audit prior to implementation.

External Audit

Why is this important?

3.35 The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 set up Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd, which is responsible for appointing external auditors to each local authority in England and Wales. The external auditor has rights of access to all documents and information necessary for audit purposes.

3.36 The basic duties of the external auditor are defined in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. In particular, part 5 of the 2014 Act requires the Comptroller and Auditor General of the National Audit Office to prepare a code of audit practice, which external auditors follow when carrying out their duties. The code of audit practice sets out the auditor's objectives to review and report upon:

3.36.1 The financial aspects of the audited body's corporate governance arrangements.

3.36.2 The audited body's financial statements.

3.36.3 Aspects of the audited body's arrangements to manage its performance.

3.37 The Authority's accounts are scrutinised by external auditors, who must be satisfied that the statement of accounts 'presents fairly' the financial position of the Authority and its income and expenditure for the year in question and complies with the legal requirements.

Key controls

3.38 External auditors are appointed by Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd. The National Audit Office prepares a code of audit practise, which external auditors follow when undertaking their audit.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.39 To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets that the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

3.40 To ensure there is effective liaison between external and internal audit.

3.41 To work with the external auditor and advise the Authority and SMT Officers on their responsibilities in relation to external audit.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.42 To ensure that external auditors are given access at all reasonable times to premises, personnel, documents and assets which the external auditors consider necessary for the purposes of their work.

3.43 To ensure that all records and systems are up to date and available for inspection.

Preventing fraud and corruption

Why Is It This Important?

3.44 The Authority will not tolerate fraud and corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside the Authority.

3.45 The Authority's expectation of propriety and accountability is that members and staff at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices.

3.46 The Authority also expects that individuals and organisations (such as suppliers, contractors, service providers) with whom it comes into contact will act towards the Authority with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud and corruption.

Key controls

3.47 The key controls regarding the prevention of financial irregularities are that:

3.47.1 The Authority has an effective anti-fraud and whistle-blowing policy and maintains a culture that will not tolerate fraud or corruption.

3.47.2 All members and staff act with integrity and lead by example.

3.47.3 Senior managers are required to deal swiftly and firmly with those who defraud or attempt to defraud the Authority or who are corrupt.

3.47.4 High standards of conduct are promoted amongst members as required in the Member Code of Conduct

3.47.5 The maintenance of a register of interests in which any hospitality or gifts accepted must be recorded.

3.47.6 Whistle blowing procedures are in place and operate effectively legislation including the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is adhered to.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.48 To develop and maintain an anti-fraud and whistle-blowing policy.

3.49 To maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements.

3.50 To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Head of Internal Audit, the Chief Fire Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the Authority as appropriate.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.51 To ensure that all suspected irregularities are reported to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) or the Monitoring Officer.

3.52 To instigate the Authority's disciplinary procedures where the outcome of an audit investigation indicates improper behaviour.

3.53 To ensure that where financial impropriety is discovered, the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is informed, and, in consultation with the Head of Internal Audit, where sufficient evidence exists to believe that a criminal offence may have been committed, the police are called in to determine with the Crown Prosecution Service whether any prosecution will take place.

3.54 To ensure compliance with the Employee Code of Conduct and maintain a departmental register of both financial and non-financial interests declared by the employees which they consider could bring them into conflict with the Authority's interests.

3.55 To retain a record of gifts and hospitality received in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the relevant service order.

3.56 To ensure that the register of interests is kept up to date.

Assets

Security

Why is this important?

3.57 The Authority holds assets in the form of property, vehicles, equipment, furniture and other items worth many millions of pounds. It is important that assets are safeguarded and used efficiently in service delivery, and that there are arrangements for the security of both assets and information required for service operations. An up-to-date asset register is a prerequisite for proper accounting and sound asset management.

Key controls

3.58 The key controls for the security of resources such as land, buildings, fixed plant machinery, equipment, software and information are:

- 3.58.1 Resources are used only for the purposes of the Authority and are properly accounted for.
- 3.58.2 Resources are available for use when required.
- 3.58.3 Resources no longer required are disposed of in accordance with the law and the regulations of the Authority so as to maximise benefits.

3.58.4 An asset register is maintained for the Authority, assets are recorded when they are acquired by the Authority and this record is updated as changes occur with respect to the location and condition of the asset.

3.58.5 All staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding the Authority's assets and information, including the requirements of the Data Protection Act and software copyright legislation.

3.58.6 All staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding the security of the Authority's computer systems, including maintaining restricted access to the information held on them and compliance with the Authority's computer and internet security policies.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.59 To ensure that an asset register is maintained in accordance with good practice for all non-current assets. The function of the asset register is to provide the Authority with information about non-current assets so that they are:

3.59.1 Safeguarded

3.59.2 Used efficiently and effectively

3.59.3 Adequately maintained

3.60 To receive the information required for accounting, costing and financial records from each SMT Officer.

3.61 To ensure that assets are valued in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA and LASAAC).

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.62 The appropriate SMT Officer shall maintain a property database for all land and property currently owned or used by the Authority. Any use of property by a department or establishment other than for direct service delivery should be supported by documentation identifying terms, responsibilities and duration of use.

3.63 To ensure that leasees and other prospective occupiers of Authority land are not allowed to take possession or enter the land until a lease or agreement, in a form approved by the SMT Officer in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and legal services, has been established as appropriate.

3.64 To ensure the proper security of all buildings and other assets under their control.

3.65 Where land or buildings are surplus to requirements, a recommendation for sale should be the subject of a joint report by the SMT Officer and the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

3.66 To pass title deeds to the appropriate officer, who is responsible for custody of all title deeds.

3.67 To ensure that no Authority asset is subject to personal use by an employee without proper Authority.

3.68 To ensure the safe custody of vehicles, equipment, furniture, stock, stores and other property belonging to the Authority.

3.69 To ensure that the department maintains a register of moveable assets in accordance with arrangements defined by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

3.70 To ensure that assets are identified, their location recorded and that they are appropriately marked and insured.

3.71 To consult the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed.

3.72 To ensure cash holdings on premises are kept to a minimum.

3.73 To ensure that keys to safes and similar receptacles are held securely, loss of any such keys must be reported to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) as soon as possible.

3.74 To record all disposal or part exchange of assets that should normally be by competitive tender or public auction, unless, following consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), the SMT agrees otherwise.

3.75 To arrange for the valuation of assets for accounting purposes to meet requirements specified by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

3.76 To ensure that all employees are aware that they have a personal responsibility with regard to the protection and confidentiality of information, whether held in manual or computerised records. Information may be sensitive or privileged, or may possess some intrinsic value, and its disclosure or loss could result in a cost to the Authority in some way.

Inventories

3.77 To maintain inventories and record an adequate description of furniture, fittings and equipment valued at £1,000 or more.

3.78 To carry out an annual check of all items on the inventory in order to verify location, review, and condition and to take action in relation to surpluses or deficiencies, annotating the inventory accordingly.

3.79 To make sure that property is only used in the course of the Authority's business, unless the SMT Officer concerned has given permission otherwise.

Stocks and Stores

3.80 To make arrangements for the care and custody of stocks and stores in the department.

3.81 To ensure stocks are maintained at reasonable levels and are subject to a regular independent physical check. All discrepancies should be investigated and pursued to a satisfactory conclusion.

3.82 To investigate and seek approval to remove from the Authority's records (write off) discrepancies as necessary from the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), or to obtain Authority approval if they are in excess of £10,000.

3.83 To authorise or write off disposal of redundant stocks and equipment (following approval by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)). Procedures for disposal of such stocks and equipment, valued in excess of £1,000, should be by competitive quotations or auction, unless, following consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), the officer decides otherwise in a particular case. The most appropriate means of disposal should be used for stocks and equipment valued at less than £1,000, as determined by the Head of Procurement.

3.84 To seek the approval of the Authority to the write-off of redundant stocks and equipment in excess of £20,000.

Intellectual property

Why is this important?

3.85 Intellectual property is a generic term that includes inventions and writing. If these are created by the employee during the course of employment, then, as a general rule, they belong to the employer, not the employee. Various Acts of Parliament cover different types of intellectual property.

3.86 Certain activities undertaken within the Authority may give rise to items that may be patentable, for example, software development. These items are collectively known as intellectual property.

Key controls

3.87 In the event that the Authority decides to become involved in the commercial exploitation of inventions, the matter should proceed in accordance with the Authority's approved intellectual property procedures. Guidance may be sought from the Head of Procurement.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.88 To ensure that controls are in place to ensure that staff do not carry out private work in Authority time and that staff are aware of an employer's rights with regard to intellectual property.

3.89 To develop and disseminate good practice through the Authority's intellectual property procedures.

Asset disposal

Why is this important?

3.90 It would be uneconomic and inefficient for the cost of assets to outweigh their benefits. Obsolete, non-repairable or unnecessary resources should be disposed of in accordance with the law and the regulations of the Authority.

Key controls

3.91 Assets for disposal are identified and are disposed of at the most appropriate time, and only when it is in the best interests of the Authority, and best price is obtained, bearing in mind other factors, such as environmental issues or reputational issues. For items of significant value, disposal should be by competitive tender or public auction.

3.92 Fire appliances will be disposed of for humanitarian purposes, linked to the organisational objectives, priorities and values of the Service, at, or below, market value, or crushed and sold as scrappage (subject to the appliance having a market value of less than £10,000).

3.93 Procedures protect staff involved in the disposal from accusations of personal gain.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.94 To provide guidance on best practice for disposal of assets.

3.95 To ensure appropriate accounting entries are made to remove the value of disposed assets from the Authority's records and to include the sale proceeds if appropriate.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.96 To seek advice from procurement on the disposal of surplus or obsolete materials, stores or equipment.

3.97 To ensure that income received for the disposal of an asset is properly banked and coded.

Treasury management

Why is this important?

3.98 Many millions of pounds pass through the Authority's books each year. This led to the establishment of codes of practice. These aim to provide assurances that the Authority's money is properly managed in a way that balances risk with return, but with the overriding consideration being given to the security of the Authority's capital sum.

Key controls

3.99 That the Authority's borrowings and investments comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and with the Authority's treasury management strategy.

Responsibilities of Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), treasury management and banking

3.100 To arrange the borrowing and investments of the Authority in such a manner as to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Authority's treasury management strategy.

3.101 To report the following to the Authority, as a minimum:

- 3.101.1 An annual treasury management strategy, before the commencement of the new financial year.
- 3.101.2 A mid-year update on treasury management activity
- 3.101.3 An annual report on treasury management activity in the preceding year, before 30 June.
- 3.101.4 The outcome of any debt restructuring undertaken.

3.102 To operate bank accounts as are considered necessary opening or closing any bank account shall require the approval of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). All arrangements for the opening of bank accounts in the name of the Authority and for the ordering and issue of cheques shall be made by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). All cheques drawn on behalf of the Authority shall be signed by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) or by such officers as may be nominated by him for that purpose. Any indemnity required by the Authority's bankers regarding the signature of cheques by a computer or mechanical means, or where the services of a security firm are used for the deposit or receipt of cash at the bank shall be given by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) on behalf of the Authority.

Responsibilities of SMT officers - treasury management and banking

3.103 To follow guidance provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) on banking arrangements

Responsibilities of Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) - investments and borrowing

3.104 To ensure that all investments of money are made in the name of the Authority or in the name of nominees approved by the Authority.

3.105 To ensure that all securities that are the property of the Authority or its nominees and the title deeds of all property in the Authority's ownership are held in the custody of the appropriate SMT Officer.

3.106 To effect all borrowings in the name of the Authority.

3.107 To act as the Authority's registrar of stocks, bonds and mortgages and to maintain records of all borrowing of money by the Authority.

Responsibilities of SMT officers – investments and borrowing

3.108 To ensure that loans are not made to third parties and that interests are not acquired in companies, joint ventures or other enterprises without the approval of the Authority, following consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Responsibilities of SMT officers – trust funds and funds held for third parties

3.109 To arrange for all trust funds to be held, wherever possible, in the name of the Authority. All officers acting as trustees by virtue of their official position shall deposit securities, etc relating to the trust with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), unless the deed otherwise provides.

3.110 To arrange, where funds are held on behalf of third parties, for their secure administration, approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), and to maintain written records of all transactions

3.111 To ensure that trust funds are operated within any relevant legislation and the specific requirements for each trust.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) - imprest accounts

3.112 To provide employees of the Authority with cash or bank imprest accounts to meet minor expenditure on behalf of the Authority and to prescribe rules for operating these accounts. Minor items of expenditure should not exceed the prescribed amount of £50 per transaction, other than in circumstance agreed by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

3.113 To determine the petty cash limit and to maintain a record of all transactions and petty cash advances made, and periodically to review the arrangements for the safe custody and control of these advances.

3.114 To reimburse imprest holders as often as necessary to restore the imprests, but normally not more than monthly.

Responsibilities of SMT officers - imprest accounts

3.115 To ensure that employees operating an imprest account:

- 3.115.1 Obtain and retain vouchers to support each payment from the imprest account. Where appropriate, an official receipted VAT invoice must be obtained.
- 3.115.2 Make adequate arrangements for the safe custody of the account.
- 3.115.3 Produce upon demand by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) cash and all vouchers to the total value of the imprest amount.
- 3.115.4 Record transactions promptly.
- 3.115.5 Reconcile and balance the account at least monthly; reconciliation sheets to be signed and retained by the imprest holder.
- 3.115.6 Provide the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) with a certificate of the value of the account held at 31 March each year.
- 3.115.7 Ensure that the float is never used to cash personal cheques or to make personal loans and that the only payments into the account are the reimbursement of the float and change relating to purchases where an advance has been made.
- 3.115.8 On leaving the Authority's employment or otherwise ceasing to be entitled to hold an imprest advance, an employee shall account to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) for the amount advanced to him or her.

Staffing

Why is this important?

3.116 In order to provide the highest level of service, it is crucial that the Authority recruits and retains high calibre, knowledgeable staff, qualified to an appropriate level.

Key controls

3.117 The key controls for staffing are:

3.117.1 An appropriate staffing strategy and policy exists, in which staffing requirements and budget allocation are matched.

3.117.2 Procedures are in place for forecasting staffing requirements and cost.

3.117.3 Controls are implemented that ensure that staff time is used efficiently and to the benefit of the Authority.

3.117.4 Checks are undertaken prior to employing new staff to ensure that they are appropriately qualified, experienced and trustworthy.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

3.118 To ensure that budget provision exists for all existing and new employees.

3.119 To act as an advisor to SMT Officers on areas such as National Insurance and pension contributions, as appropriate.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

3.120 To produce an annual staffing budget.

3.121 To ensure that the staffing budget is an accurate forecast of staffing levels and is equated to an appropriate revenue budget provision (including on-costs and overheads).

3.122 To monitor staff activity to ensure adequate control over such costs as sickness, overtime, training and temporary staff.

3.123 To ensure that the staffing budget is not exceeded without due Authority and that it is managed to enable the agreed level of service to be provided.

3.124 To ensure that the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is immediately informed if the staffing budget is likely to be materially over or underspent.

Appendix D

Financial systems and procedures

General

Why is this important?

4.01 Departments have many systems and procedures relating to the control of the Authority’s assets, including purchasing, costing and management systems. Departments are increasingly reliant on computers for their financial management information. The information must therefore be accurate and the systems and procedures sound and well administered. They should contain controls to ensure that transactions are properly processed and errors detected promptly.

4.02 The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) has a professional responsibility to ensure that the Authority’s financial systems are sound and should therefore be notified of any new developments or changes.

Key controls

4.03 The key controls for systems and procedures are:

- 4.03.1 Basic data exists to enable the Authority’s objectives, targets, budgets and plans to be formulated.
- 4.03.2 Performance is communicated to the appropriate managers on an accurate, complete and timely basis.
- 4.03.3 Early warning is provided of deviations from target, plans and budgets that require management attention.
- 4.03.4 Operating systems and procedures are secure.
- 4.03.5 Appropriate segregation of duties.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

4.04 To make arrangements for the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs, including to:

- 4.04.1 Issue advice, guidance and procedures for officers and others acting on the Authority's behalf.
- 4.04.2 Determine the accounting systems, form of accounts and supporting financial records.
- 4.04.3 Establish arrangements for audit of the Authority's financial affairs.
- 4.04.4 Approve any new financial systems to be introduced
- 4.04.5 Approve any changes to be made to existing financial systems.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

4.05 To ensure that accounting records are properly maintained and held securely.

4.06 To ensure that vouchers and documents with financial implications are not destroyed, except in accordance with arrangements approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

4.07 To ensure that a complete management trail, allowing financial transactions to be traced from the accounting records to the original document, and vice versa, is maintained.

4.08 To incorporate appropriate controls to ensure that, where relevant:

- 4.08.1 All input is genuine, complete, accurate, timely and not previously processed.
- 4.08.2 All processing is carried out in an accurate, complete and timely manner.
- 4.08.3 Output from the system is complete, accurate and timely.

4.09 To ensure that the organisational structure provides an appropriate segregation of duties to provide adequate internal controls and to minimise the risk of fraud or other malpractice.

4.10 To ensure there is a documented and tested disaster recovery plan to allow information system processing to resume quickly in the event of an interruption.

4.11 To ensure that systems are documented and staff trained in operations.

4.12 To consult with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) before changing any existing financial system or introducing new systems.

4.13 To establish a scheme of delegation identifying officers authorised to act upon the SMT Officer's behalf in respect of payments, income collection and placing orders, including variations, and showing the limits of their authority.

4.14 To maintain an appropriate finance system approval hierarchy and supply lists of authorised officers, with specimen signatures and delegated limits, to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services), together with any subsequent variations.

4.15 To ensure that effective contingency arrangements, including back-up procedures, exist for computer systems. Wherever possible, back-up information should be securely retained in a fireproof location, preferably off site or at an alternative location within the building.

4.16 To ensure that, where appropriate, computer systems are registered in accordance with data protection legislation and that staff are aware of their responsibilities under the legislation.

4.17 To ensure that relevant standards and guidelines for computer systems issued by the SMT Officer are observed.

4.18 To ensure that computer equipment and software are protected from loss and damage through theft or vandalism, for example.

4.19 To comply with the copyright, designs and patents legislation and, in particular, to ensure that:

4.19.1 Only software legally acquired and installed by the Authority is used on its computers.

4.19.2 Staff are aware of legislative provisions.

4.19.3 In developing systems, due regard is given to the issue of intellectual property rights.

Income and expenditure

Income

Why is this important?

4.20 Income can be a vulnerable asset and effective income collection systems are necessary to ensure that all income due is identified, collected, receipted and banked properly. It is preferable to obtain income in advance of supplying goods or services as this improves the Authority's cashflow and also avoids the time and cost of administering debts.

Key controls

4.21 The key controls for income are:

4.21.1 All income due to the Authority is identified and charged correctly, in accordance with an approved charging policy, which is regularly reviewed.

4.21.2 All income is collected from the correct person, at the right time, using the correct procedures and the appropriate stationery.

4.21.3 All money received by an employee on behalf of the Authority is paid without delay to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) or, as they direct, to the Authority's bank account, and properly recorded. The responsibility for cash collection should be separated from that:

- For identifying the amount due
- For reconciling the amount due to the amount received

4.21.4 Effective action is taken to pursue non-payment within defined timescales.

4.21.5 Formal approval for debt write-off is obtained.

4.21.6 Appropriate write-off action is taken within defined timescales.

4.21.7 Appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action.

4.21.8 All appropriate income documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule.

4.21.9 Money collected and deposited is reconciled to the bank account by a person who is not involved in the collection or banking process.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

4.22 To agree arrangements for the collection of all income due to the Authority and to approve the procedures, systems and documentation for its collection.

4.23 To satisfy themselves regarding the arrangements for the control of all receipt forms, books or tickets and similar items.

4.24 To establish and initiate appropriate recovery procedures, including legal action where necessary, for debts that are not paid promptly.

4.25 To approve all debts to be written off, up to £20,000, in consultation with the relevant SMT Officer and to keep a record of all sums written off up to the approved limit and to adhere to the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

4.26 To obtain the approval of the Authority in consultation with the relevant SMT Officer for writing off debts in excess of the approved limit of £20,000.

4.27 To ensure that appropriate accounting adjustments are made following write-off action.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

4.28 To establish a charging policy for the supply of goods or services, including the appropriate charging of VAT, and to review it regularly, in line with corporate policies.

4.29 To separate the responsibility for identifying amounts due and the responsibility for collection, as far as is practicable.

4.30 To issue official receipts or to maintain other documentation for income collection.

4.31 To ensure that when post is opened that money received by post is properly identified and recorded.

4.32 To hold securely receipts, tickets and other records of income for the appropriate period.

4.33 To lock away all income to safeguard against loss or theft, and to ensure the security of cash handling.

4.34 To ensure that income is paid fully and promptly into the appropriate Authority bank account in the form in which it is received. Appropriate details should be recorded on to paying-in slips to provide an audit trail. Money collected and deposited must be reconciled to the bank account on a regular basis.

4.35 To ensure income is not used to cash personal cheques or other payments.

4.36 To supply the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) with details relating to work done, goods supplied, services rendered or other amounts due, to enable the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to record correctly the sums due to the Authority and to ensure accounts are sent out promptly. SMT Officers have a responsibility to assist the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) in collecting debts that they have originated, by providing any further information requested by the debtor, and in pursuing the matter on the Authority's behalf.

4.37 Levels of cash held on the premises must be minimised.

4.38 To recommend to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) all debts to be written off and to keep a record of all sums written off up to the approved limit. Once raised, no bona fide debt may be cancelled, except by full payment or by its formal writing off. A credit note to replace a debt can only be issued to correct a factual inaccuracy or administrative error in the calculation or billing of the original debt.

4.39 To obtain the approval of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) when writing off debts, and the approval of the Authority where required.

4.40 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) of outstanding income relating to the previous financial year as soon as possible after 31 March in line with the timetable determined by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Ordering and paying for work, goods and services

Why is this important?

4.41 Public money should be spent with demonstrable probity and in accordance with the Authority's policies. Authorities have a statutory duty to achieve best value in part through economy and efficiency. The Authority's procedures should help to ensure that services obtain value for money from their purchasing arrangements. These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Authority's Contract Standing Orders.

General

4.42 Every officer and member of the Authority has a responsibility to declare any links or personal interests that they may have with purchasers, suppliers or contractors if they are engaged in contractual or purchasing decisions on behalf of the Authority, in accordance with appropriate codes of conduct.

4.43 Official orders must be in a form approved by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). Official orders must be issued for all work, goods or services to be supplied to the Authority, except for supplies of utilities, periodic payments such as rent or rates, petty cash purchases or other exceptions specified by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). Telephone orders should not be placed in advance of the official order.

4.44 Each order must conform to the guidelines set by the Head of Procurement (in consultation with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). Standard terms and conditions must not be varied without the prior approval of the Head of Procurement.

4.45 The normal method of payment from the Authority shall be by automated electronic payments (BACS), cheque or other instrument or approved method, drawn on the Authority's bank account by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). The use of direct debit shall require the prior agreement of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

4.46 Official orders must not be raised for any personal or private purchases, nor must personal or private use be made of Authority contracts.

Key controls

4.47 The key controls for ordering and paying for work, goods and services are:

- 4.47.1 All goods and services are ordered only by appropriate persons and are correctly recorded.
- 4.47.2 All goods and services shall be ordered in accordance with the Authority's Contract Standing Orders unless they are purchased from sources within the Authority.
- 4.47.3 Goods and services received are checked to ensure they are in accordance with the order. Goods should not be received by the person who placed the order.
- 4.47.4 Payments are not made unless goods have been received by the Authority to the correct price, quantity and quality standards, apart from under exceptional circumstances (such as examples listed in 4.60 (i)).
- 4.47.5 All payments are made to the correct person, for the correct amount and are properly recorded, regardless of the payment method.
- 4.47.6 All appropriate evidence of the transaction and payment documents are retained and stored for the defined period, in accordance with the document retention schedule.
- 4.47.7 All expenditure, including VAT, is accurately recorded against the right budget and any exceptions are corrected.

4.47.8 In addition, the effect of e-business, e-commerce and electronic purchasing requires that processes are in place to maintain the security and integrity of data for transacting business electronically.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

4.48 To ensure that all the Authority's financial systems and procedures are sound and properly administered.

4.49 To approve any changes to existing financial systems and to approve any new systems before they are introduced.

4.50 To approve the form of official orders and associated terms and conditions.

4.51 To make payments from the Authority's funds on the SMT Officer's authorisation that the expenditure has been duly incurred in accordance with financial regulations.

4.52 To make payments, whether or not provision exists within the estimates, where the payment is specifically required by statute or is made under a court order.

4.53 To make payments to contractors on the certificate of the appropriate SMT Officer, which must include details of the value of work, retention money, amounts previously certified and amounts now certified.

4.54 To provide advice and encouragement on making payments by the most economical means.

4.55 To report progress on contracts valued in excess of £200,000 to Resources Committee.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

4.56 SMT Officers are required to comply with the Contract Standing Orders, which outline how Lancashire Fire Authority contracts its requirements in accordance with governance legislation and relevant procurement objectives, including value for money, transparency, and the inclusion of social value principles.

4.57 To ensure that employees are aware of the Employee code of conduct.

4.58 To ensure that loans, leasing or rental arrangements are not entered into without prior agreement from the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services). This is because of the potential impact on the Authority’s borrowing powers, to protect the Authority against entering into unapproved credit arrangements and to ensure that value for money is being obtained.

4.59 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) of outstanding expenditure relating to the previous financial year as soon as possible after 31 March in line with the timetable determined by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

4.60 With regard to contracts for construction and alterations to buildings and for civil engineering works, to document and agree with the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) the systems and procedures to be adopted in relation to financial aspects, including certification of interim and final payments, checking, recording and authorising payments, the system for monitoring and controlling capital schemes and the procedures for validation of subcontractors’ tax status. Under no circumstances should a pre-payment be agreed without prior consent of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

4.61 To notify the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) immediately of any expenditure to be incurred as a result of statute or court order where there is no budgetary provision.

4.62 To ensure that all appropriate payment records are retained and stored for the defined period, in accordance with the document retention schedule.

Payments to employees and members

Why is this important?

4.63 Staff costs are the largest item of expenditure for Authority services. It is therefore important that payments are accurate, timely, made only where they are due for services to the Authority and that payments accord with individuals' conditions of employment. It is also important that all payments are accurately and completely recorded and accounted for and that members' allowances are authorised in accordance with the scheme adopted by the Authority.

Key controls

4.64 The key controls for payments to employees and members are:

4.64.1 Proper authorisation procedures are in place and that there is adherence to corporate timetables in relation to:

- Starters
- Leavers
- Variations
- Enhancements

4.64.2 and that payments are made on the basis of time records or claims.

4.64.3 Frequent reconciliation of payroll expenditure against approved budget and bank account.

4.64.4 All appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule.

4.64.5 That HMRC Regulations are complied with.

Responsibilities of the Director of People and Development

4.65 To arrange and control secure and reliable payment of salaries, wages, compensation or other emoluments to existing and former employees, in accordance with procedures prescribed by them, on the due date.

4.66 To record and make arrangements for the accurate and timely payment of tax, superannuation (pension) and other deductions.

4.67 To make arrangements for payment of all travel and subsistence claims or financial loss allowance.

4.68 To make arrangements for paying members travel or other allowances upon receiving the prescribed form, duly completed and authorised.

4.69 To provide advice and encouragement to secure payment of salaries and wages by the most economical means.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

4.70 To ensure appointments are made in accordance with the regulations of the Authority and approved establishments, grades and scale of pay and that adequate budget provision is available.

4.71 To notify the Director of People and Development of all appointments, terminations or variations which may affect the pay or pension of an employee or former employee, in the form and to the timescale required by the Director of People and Development.

4.72 To ensure that adequate and effective systems and procedures are operated, so that:

- 4.72.1 Payments are only authorised to bona fide employees
- 4.72.2 Payments are only made where there is a valid entitlement
- 4.72.3 Conditions and contracts of employment are correctly applied
- 4.72.4 Employees' names listed on the payroll are checked at regular intervals to verify accuracy and completeness

4.73 To maintain an up-to-date list of the names of officers authorised to submit electronic records to the Human Resources Department for payment. Appropriate checks are carried out by the officers whilst compiling the electronic records for submission.

4.74 To ensure that payroll transactions are processed only through the payroll system. SMT Officers should give careful consideration to the employment status of individuals employed on a self-employed consultant or subcontract basis. The HMRC applies a tight definition for employee status, and in cases of doubt, advice should be sought from the Director of People and Development.

4.75 To certify travel and subsistence claims and other allowances. Certification is taken to mean that journeys were authorised and expenses properly and necessarily incurred, and that allowances are properly payable by the Authority, ensuring that cost-effective use of travel arrangements is achieved. Due consideration should be given to tax implications and that the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is informed where appropriate.

4.76 To ensure that the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) is notified of the details of any employee benefits in kind, to enable full and complete reporting within the income tax self-assessment system and HMRC regulations.

4.77 To ensure that all appropriate payroll documents are retained and stored for the defined period in accordance with the document retention schedule.

4.78 To ensure that there are adequate arrangements for administering superannuation matters on a day-to-day basis.

Responsibilities of members

4.79 To submit claims for members' travel and subsistence allowances on a monthly basis and, in any event, within one month of the year end.

Taxation

Why is this important?

4.80 Like all organisations, the Authority is responsible for ensuring its tax affairs are in order. Tax issues are often very complex and the penalties for incorrectly accounting for tax are severe. It is therefore very important for all officers to be aware of their role.

Key controls

4.81 The key controls for taxation are:

- 4.81.1 Budget managers are provided with relevant information and kept up to date on tax issues.
- 4.81.2 Budget managers are instructed on required record keeping.
- 4.81.3 All taxable transactions are identified, properly carried out and accounted for within stipulated timescales.
- 4.81.4 Records are maintained in accordance with instructions.
- 4.81.5 Returns are made to the appropriate authorities within the stipulated timescale.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

4.82 To complete all HMRC returns regarding PAYE.

4.83 To complete a monthly return of VAT inputs and outputs to HMRC.

4.84 To provide details to the HMRC regarding the construction industry tax deduction scheme.

4.85 To provide guidance for Authority employees on taxation issues.

4.86 To maintain and monitor the Authorities partial exemption position.

Responsibilities of officers

4.87 To ensure that the correct VAT liability is attached to all income due and that all VAT recoverable on purchases complies with HMRC regulations.

4.88 To ensure that, where construction and maintenance works are undertaken, the contractor fulfils the necessary construction industry tax deduction requirements.

4.89 To ensure that all persons employed by the Authority are added to the Authority's payroll and tax deducted from any payments, except where the individuals are bona fide self-employed or are employed by a recognised staff agency.

4.90 To follow guidance on taxation issued by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

Trading accounts and business units

Why is this important?

4.91 Trading accounts and business units have become more important as local authorities have developed a more commercial culture. Under best value, authorities are required to keep trading accounts for services provided on a basis other than straightforward recharge of cost. They are also required to disclose the results of significant trading operations in the Statement of Accounts. The Authority no longer has a trading account.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

4.92 To advise on the establishment and operation of trading accounts and business units.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

4.93 To observe all statutory requirements in relation to business units, including the maintenance of a separate revenue account to which all relevant income is credited and all relevant expenditure, including overhead costs, is charged, and to produce an annual report in support of the final accounts.

4.94 To ensure that the same accounting principles are applied in relation to trading accounts as for other services or business units.

4.95 To ensure that each business unit prepares an annual business plan.

Appendix E

External arrangements

Partnerships

Why is this important?

5.01 Partnerships are likely to play a key role in delivering community strategies and in helping to promote and improve the well being of the area. Local authorities are working in partnership with others, public agencies, private companies, community groups and voluntary organisations. Local authorities still deliver some services, but their distinctive leadership role is to bring together the contributions of the various stakeholders. They therefore need to deliver a shared vision of services based on user wishes.

5.02 Local authorities will mobilise investment, bid for funds, champion the needs of their areas and harness the energies of local people and community organisations. Local authorities will be measured by what they achieve in partnership with others.

General

5.03 The main reasons for entering into a partnership are:

- 5.03.1 The desire to find new ways to share risk
- 5.03.2 The ability to access new resources
- 5.03.3 To provide new and better ways of delivering services
- 5.03.4 To forge new relationships

5.04 A partner is defined as either:

- 5.04.1 An organisation (private or public) undertaking, part funding or participating as a beneficiary in a project; or
- 5.04.2 A body whose nature or status give it a right or obligation to support the project.

5.05 Partners participate in projects by:

5.05.1 Acting as a project deliverer or sponsor, solely or in concert with others.

5.05.2 Acting as a project funder or part funder.

5.05.3 Being the beneficiary group of the activity undertaken in a project.

5.06 Partners have common responsibilities:

5.06.1 To be willing to take on a role in the broader programme appropriate to the skills and resources of the partner organisation.

5.06.2 To act in good faith at all times and in the best interests of the partnership's aims and objectives.

5.06.3 Be open about any conflict of interests that might arise.

5.06.4 To encourage joint working and promote the sharing of information, resources and skills between public, private and community sectors.

5.06.5 To hold confidentially any information received as a result of partnership activities or duties that is of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature.

5.06.6 To act wherever possible as ambassadors for the project.

Key controls

5.07 The key controls for Authority partners are:

5.07.1 If appropriate, to be aware of their responsibilities under the Authority's Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders.

5.07.2 To ensure that risk management processes are in place to identify and assess all known risks.

5.07.3 To ensure that project appraisal processes are in place to assess the viability of the project in terms of resources, staffing and expertise.

5.07.4 To agree and accept formally the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners involved in the project before the project commences.

5.07.5 To communicate regularly with other partners throughout the project so that problems can be identified and shared to achieve their successful resolution.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

5.08 To advise on effective controls that will ensure that resources are not wasted.

5.09 To advise on the key elements of funding a project. They include:

5.09.1 A scheme appraisal for financial viability in both the current and future years.

5.09.2 Risk appraisal and management.

5.09.3 Resourcing, including taxation issues.

5.09.4 Audit, security and control requirements.

5.09.5 Carry-forward arrangements.

5.10 To ensure that the accounting arrangements are satisfactory.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

5.11 To maintain a register of all significant partnerships.

5.12 To maintain a register of all contracts entered into with external bodies in accordance with procedures specified by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

5.13 To ensure all partnerships entered into contribute to the achievement of the Authority's objectives.

5.14 To ensure that, before entering into significant agreements with external bodies, a risk management appraisal has been prepared for the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

5.15 To ensure that such agreements and arrangements do not impact adversely upon the services provided by the Authority.

5.16 To ensure that all agreements and arrangements are properly documented.

5.17 To provide appropriate information to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to enable a note to be entered into the Authority's statement of accounts concerning material items.

External funding

Why is this important?

5.18 External funding is potentially a very important source of income, but funding conditions need to be carefully considered to ensure that they are compatible with the aims and objectives of the Authority. Local authorities are increasingly encouraged to provide seamless service delivery through working closely with other agencies and private service providers. Funds from external agencies provide additional resources to enable the Authority to deliver services to the local community. However, in some instances, although the scope for external funding has increased, such funding is linked to tight specifications and may not be flexible enough to link to the Authority's overall plan.

Key controls

5.19 The key controls for external funding are:

5.19.1 To ensure that key conditions of funding and any statutory requirements are complied with and that the responsibilities of the accountable body are clearly understood.

5.19.2 Arrangements are in place to ensure that all relevant grant claims are identified, accurate and prepared on a timely basis.

5.19.3 To ensure that funds are acquired only to meet the priorities approved in the policy framework by the Authority.

5.19.4 To ensure that any match-funding requirements are given due consideration prior to entering into long-term agreements and that future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.

5.19.5 To ensure that the consequences of withdrawal of funding at the end of the period is given appropriate consideration.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

5.20 To ensure that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Authority's accounts.

5.21 To ensure that the match-funding requirements are considered prior to entering into the agreements and that future revenue budgets reflect these requirements.

5.22 To ensure that audit requirements are met.

5.23 To ensure that the consequences of withdrawal of funding at the end of the period are considered and plans are in place to ensure that this does not affect future service provision.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

5.24 In respect of external funding bids valued in excess of £25,000, to submit details of proposals to SMT or Executive Board prior to bidding, such reports to state how the proposed funding will contribute towards achievement of the Authorities objectives.

5.25 To ensure that all claims for funds are made by the due date.

5.26 To ensure that the project progresses in accordance with the agreed project and that all expenditure is properly incurred and recorded.

Work for third parties

Why is this important?

5.27 Current legislation enables the Authority to provide a range of services to other bodies. Such work may enable a unit to maintain economies of scale and existing expertise. Arrangements should be in place to ensure that any risks associated with this work is minimised and that such work is intra vires.

Key controls

5.28 The key controls for working with third parties are:

5.28.1 To ensure that proposals are costed properly in accordance with guidance provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services).

5.28.2 To ensure that contracts are drawn up using guidance provided by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and that, where required, the formal approvals process is adhered to.

5.28.3 To issue guidance with regard to the financial aspects of third party contracts and the maintenance of the contract register.

Responsibilities of Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services)

5.29 To issue guidance with regard to the financial aspects of third party contracts and the maintenance of the contract register.

Responsibilities of SMT officers

5.30 To ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained before any negotiations are concluded to work for third parties.

5.31 To maintain a register of all contracts entered into with third parties in accordance with procedures specified by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) .

5.32 To ensure that appropriate insurance arrangements are made.

5.33 To ensure that the Authority is not put at risk from any bad debts.

5.34 To ensure that no contract is subsidised by the Authority.

5.35 To ensure that, wherever possible, payment is received in advance of the delivery of the service.

5.36 To ensure that the department or unit has the appropriate expertise to undertake the contract.

5.37 To ensure that such contracts do not impact adversely upon the services provided for the Authority.

5.38 To ensure that all contracts are properly documented.

5.39 To provide appropriate information to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) to enable a note to be entered into the Statement of Accounts.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Members' Allowance Scheme

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

1.0 This scheme shall have effect for the year commencing 1st April 2026

2.0 In this scheme:

"Authority" means Lancashire Combined Fire Authority.

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

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

"Meetings" means a meeting of the Authority, its committees or a body of members formally established by the Authority or its committees.

3.0 In this scheme, the total allowances shall consist of basic allowance, special responsibility allowances and co-optees' allowance. (For the avoidance of doubt, Attendance Allowance shall not be payable under this scheme.)

3.1 These total allowances shall be index linked on an annual basis in line with the annual local government pay percentage increase at new spinal column point 43 (formerly point 49).

4.0 Basic allowance

4.1 Subject to paragraph 7.0 below, an equal basic allowance shall be paid to every member. The amount of basic allowance is detailed in paragraph 1.0 of Schedule 'A' of this scheme.

4.2 This basic allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment expected of members to enable them to carry out their duties effectively and to recognise that members use their own homes and facilities in carrying out their work.

5.0 Special responsibility allowance

5.1 Subject to paragraph 7.0 below, each member who holds a special responsibility as specified within this scheme, will normally receive a special responsibility allowance as detailed in paragraph 2.1 of Schedule 'A' of this scheme in addition to the basic allowance. If they hold more than one special responsibility, they will receive an allowance for each role.

6.0 A member (including a co-opted member) may elect to forego any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme. Such election shall be in the form of a written notice delivered to the Treasurer to the Authority (Director of Corporate Services.)

7.0 The provisions of this section shall regulate the entitlements of a member (including a co-opted member) to allowances where, in the course of a year:

- (a) The scheme is amended.
- (b) A person becomes, or ceases to be, a member.
- (c) A member accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a special responsibility allowance is payable.
- (d) A member is suspended from the Authority.

7.1 If, during the year, the scheme is amended and this results in a change to a member's entitlement to a special responsibility allowance, basic allowance or co-optees' allowance, the actual entitlement shall be based on:

- (a) A proportion of the original annual allowance based on the number of days up to the date of amendment plus;
- (b) A proportion of the revised annual allowance based on the number of days from the date of amendment.

7.2 When the term of office of a member either begins or ends during the course of a year, the entitlement to a basic or co-optees' allowance shall be based on the number of days in office during that year. Similar pro rata entitlements will apply in situations where a basic or co-optees' allowance is amended under sub-paragraph 7.1 above.

7.3 Where a member has special responsibilities (as defined within this scheme) for part of a year, the entitlement to a special responsibility allowance shall be based on the number of days during that year that the member has held such special responsibilities. The entitlement shall be pro rata to a full year. Similar pro rata entitlement will apply in situations where special responsibility allowances have been amended under sub-paragraph 7.1 above.

7.4 A member must not receive an allowance from any other authority for their duties as a member of the Combined Fire Authority.

8.0 Travel allowances

8.1 Members (including co-opted members) may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary travelling expenses by public transport (at standard class), including the actual and receipted cost of taxi fares, where appropriate, incurred in order to undertake Authority business.

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

8.3 Where a member (including a co-opted member) uses their own motor car, motorcycle or bicycle, an appropriate mileage rate may be claimed. These mileage rates are set out in Schedule 'B' of this scheme.

9.0 Subsistence allowances

9.1 Subsistence allowances are payable where such expenditure has been actually and necessarily incurred in the performance of an approved duty (as defined in Schedule C) where a member of the Authority or co-opted member is absent from their normal place of residence.

9.2 Where the nature of the duties being undertaken result in a member being absent overnight from their usual place of residence, hotel accommodation will either be booked and paid for directly by the Authority or paid for by the member and subsequently reimbursed based, on actual receipted expenditure. This reimbursement shall be subject to the maximum allowances detailed in paragraph 3.1 of Schedule 'B'.

9.3 In the case of an absence from the usual place of residence an appropriate subsistence allowance may be claimed in accordance with the rates of allowances set out in Schedule 'B' of this scheme.

9.4 Subsistence allowances are not normally subject to taxation. However, where these allowances are paid for a period of attendance at the place where the meetings of the Authority or committee normally take place, such payments are subject to tax and national insurance.

9.5 When main meals (full breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is entitlement to day subsistence, the actual cost of meals (based on receipted expenditure and including VAT) may be reimbursed in full, provided members can again demonstrate best value when incurring subsistence costs.

9.6 A councillor or co-opted member submitting a claim for subsistence allowances should, wherever possible, demonstrate best value principles in the best interests of the efficiency and efficacy of the Service, and produce receipts to accompany their claim in respect of expenditure incurred.

10.0 Co-optees' allowance for independent person(s)

10.1 Subject to section 7.0 above, an annual co-optees' allowance shall be payable to the independent person(s) for attendance at meetings and conferences. The amount of this annual allowance is set out in paragraph 3.0 of Schedule 'A' of this Scheme.

11.0 Method of payment

11.1 Payments of basic allowance, special responsibility allowance and co-optees' allowance shall be made monthly in arrears by the last working day of each month. The monthly amount payable shall be one-twelfth of the annual allowance(s) specified in this scheme and subject to paragraph 7.0 above.

11.2 Separately, individual claims for travel, subsistence and other incidental allowances shall be made on a monthly basis and be submitted to the Treasurer to the Authority as soon as possible at the end of each month. In particular, it should be noted that claims for allowances covering the period up to 31 March must be submitted to the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) by the end of May. Failure to submit these year-end claims within this time scale could result in claims for payment being rejected.

11.3 Each travel and subsistence claim shall be certified by the claiming member that they have not made and will not make any other claim in respect of the matter to which the claim relates otherwise than under this scheme.

11.4 Claims received by the Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) on or before the 6^{th} day of each month will be paid with that month's end payment of basic or special responsibility allowance(s). Claims received after the 6^{th} day of the month will be paid with the following month end payment.

11.5 Any claims that are over three months old will only be considered under exceptional circumstances, such as when the delay is due to absence through sickness. Such claims may otherwise be rejected.

Members' Allowance Scheme Schedule 'A'

1.0 Basic allowance

An annual basic allowance of £3,507.27 is payable to each member.

2.0 Special responsibility allowance

The individual annual allowances are as follows:

Office	£
Chair of the Authority	20,367.40
Vice-Chair of the Authority	10,185.06
Leader of the ruling group if they are not also Chair or Vice-Chair of the Authority	5092.55
Majority opposition group spokesperson	5092.55
Minority opposition group spokesperson	4074.02
North West Fire Control Board of Directors	1568.98
Chair of Resources, Planning, Performance and Audit Committee	2545.62
Vice-Chair of Resources, Planning, Performance and Audit, Risk and Governance Committee	1272.82
Chair of Appeals Committee and Member Training and Development Working Group	1272.82
Vice-Chair of Appeals Committee and Member Training and Development Working Group	637.06
Member champions	1272.82

3.0 Co-optees' allowance for independent person(s)

3.1 An annual co-optees' allowance of £1,180.97 is payable to each independent person. The allowance paid to the co-opted independent person to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee is £1,500 per annum.

4.0 Dependents' carers' allowance

4.1. Subject the rules in this section, a dependents' carers' allowance may be claimed at a rate equivalent to the current value of the Living Wage Foundation "Real Living Wage" as updated from time to time, or the actual cost of providing care, whichever is the lesser amount for the care of each dependent who is a child aged 14 or under.

4.2 For the care of named dependants where there is medical or social evidence that care is required either a rate equivalent to the current value of the Living Wage Foundation "Real Living Wage" as updated from time to time, or the actual cost of providing the care, whichever is the lesser amount, or an allowance equivalent to the 'Home Care Rate' for adult social care payable at the time by Lancashire County Council's Adult Services.

4.3 In the case of an older child with special educational needs, members may claim up to the Home Care Rate with agreement in advance from the Monitoring Officer.

4.4 Payment of dependents' carers' allowance shall:

a) Be based on actual additional receipted expenditure subject to a maximum hourly rate equivalent to the current value of the living wage.

b) Not be made where a member already receives a carer's allowance from the Department for Works and Pensions or from their home authorities for the same care.

c) Not be payable where the care is provided by a member of the claimant's immediate family comprising members of the same household, grandparents, uncles and aunts.

4.5 The dependents' carers' allowance may be claimed where the actual expenditure has been incurred in connection with the approved duties in line with the same criteria as set out in the Members’ Allowance Scheme Schedule ‘C’ – Travel and Subsistence – Approved Duties (below).

Members' Allowance Scheme Schedule 'B' – Travel and Subsistence Allowances

Travel allowance – mileage rate

1.0 The appropriate mileage rate for travel by a member's own motor car is 55p per mile in line with the Lancashire County Council's rate and any future changes to the county council's rate will be mirrored by changes in the Authority's rate.

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

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

2.0 Subsistence allowances

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

a) a period less than 4 hours - £8.95

b) a period between 4 and 8 hours - £17.79

c) a period between 8 and 12 hours - £35.60

d) a period in excess of 12 hours - £53.38

Actual expenditure in excess of £53.38 may be reimbursed subject to production of receipts.

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

3.0 Overnight Allowance

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

3.2 In exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible for the Authority to make a direct booking on behalf of a member, the actual receipted cost of accommodation, including breakfast will be reimbursed to the member. Such reimbursement will be subject to a maximum allowance per night of £204.48 for London and £178.03 elsewhere in the UK. These maximum allowances shall be reviewed annually in line with the consumer price index as published in November of the preceding year. (As agreed at the full Authority meeting held 20 June 2016).

Members' Allowance Scheme Schedule 'C' – Travel and Subsistence – Approved Duties

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

(a) The attendance at a meeting of the Authority or of any committee, sub-committee, task group, working group, board, forum, panel or of any body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body.

(b) The attendance at any other meeting or event, the holding of which is authorised by the Authority, or a committee or sub-committee of the Authority.

(c) For the purposes of paragraphs (a) and (b) above, claims for travel and subsistence can only be made in respect of attendance at meetings of which the councillor claiming is a member.

(d) The carrying out of any other duty approved by the Authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Authority or any of its committees or sub-committees. All duties which derive from a position of responsibility for which a member receives a special responsibility allowance are approved duties for the purpose of this paragraph.

(e) Members should not assume that they have the Authority's permission to attend any other meeting or event without the express permission of the Authority and permission should be sought in good time, prior to the meeting or event, in order to ensure contingency plans are in place, should the Authority not grant such permission. The Authority will be required to ensure that the proposed attendance is in the best interests of the Authority and its constitutional and legal obligations, as well as in the best interests of the efficiency, efficacy and betterment of the Service and the Authority.

Version 1 – with effect from 01 April 2026 – figures for Schedule A require uplifting following confirmation of the employee pay settlement for 2026-27 which will take effect from 1 April 2026, Schedule B (no change) and Schedule C has been uplifted in line with CPI inflation rate at November 2025, 3.2%.

Version 2 – with effect from 25 August 2026 - figures for Schedule A have been uplifted following confirmation of the employee pay settlement for 2026-27 (at 3.3%) which are effective from 1 April 2026.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Pilot flexible day crewing at Fleetwood Fire Station

Contact for further information – Steve Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Tel: 01772 866261

Executive Summary

This report provides the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) with an overview of the decision to trial a change to the crewing model at Fleetwood Fire Station from the current wholetime 2/2/4 duty system to a Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) system.

Following a report at the CFA meeting on 15 June 2026, the Authority granted the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer approval to take a final decision on the implementation of the Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing trial, taking account of public consultation outcomes and further analysis.

A decision to proceed with the trial was made by the Chair and Chief Fire Officer on 10 July 2026, following a detailed review of operational evidence, community risk data and feedback received through the consultation.

At the request of the Chair, a meeting was held at Fleetwood Fire Station on 6 August 2026 involving a number of local councillors to discuss and review the supporting evidence, operational rationale, matters raised in the consultation and anticipated outcomes ahead of implementation.

The 18-month trial started on 7 September 2026 and will be closely monitored and evaluated at regular intervals to ensure no adverse impacts on public safety.

In the Annual Service Plan for 2026-27, the Service stated its intention to review all services to meet changing risk and demand in Lancashire, including trialling different ways of working that make better use of resources and inform the approach to delivering services in the future. This is the first trial.

Recommendations

The CFA is asked to:

1. Note the contents of the report and evidence supporting the decision.
2. Approve monitoring of trial evaluation at 6, 12 and 18 months by the Performance Committee.

Information

Trial details

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) allocates resources based on risk through its Community Risk Management Plan, risk modelling, and service reviews. Emergency cover must reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. Some areas have more resources than others because there are greater community risks and activity levels are higher.

Fleetwood Fire Station had two fire engines: one wholetime fire engine crewed by firefighters working the wholetime 2/2/4 duty system and one on-call fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters. The trial affects the wholetime fire engine which has changed from 2/2/4 to flexible day crewing (FDC) for a period of 18 months. The trial is to change a crewing system, not to reduce the number of fire engines covering the area, and there is no change to the on-call fire engine.

The decision to proceed with the trial was informed by a detailed review of operational evidence, community risk data and feedback received through the consultation. Views from employees, representative bodies, local residents, and other stakeholders were carefully considered before a decision was reached.

The FDC duty system is already operating successfully at five other Lancashire fire stations, providing valuable experience and evidence to support this trial.

The trial is designed to:

- Confirm that FDC can meet operational risk and demand in Fleetwood.
- Improve workforce sustainability and reduce reliance on compulsory transfers and significant detachments into the station under the current crewing model.
- Support wider service resilience by releasing wholetime resources.

The anticipated impacts are:

- At night, the response time from call receipt to crews attending the incident is expected to increase slightly as firefighters will need to travel to the station within five minutes before mobilising.
- Emergency response standards are maintained with FDC crewing arrangements.
- No overall reduction in firefighter posts.
- Prevention and protection activities will be maintained.

Consultation outcomes

Consultation with stakeholders began at the start of 2026 and public consultation took place via an online survey and public events during June 2026. The Consultation Document is available at Appendix 1.

The proposal received the support of the Fire Brigades Union and a majority of employees who responded during the consultation period. A public survey was conducted and a public information event was held at the fire station to give residents the opportunity to share their views and ask questions directly. 8 people attended the public event and there were 148 responses to the public survey. In response to a question about the trial in principle:

- 18% strongly agreed or agreed with the proposed trial in principle
- 2% neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposed trial in principle
- 80% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposed trial in principle

Further details are available in Appendix 2.

Consultation respondents who disagreed with the trial expressed concerns about the potential impact on response times at night and community safety. These concerns were carefully considered and assessed against operational evidence. A predominantly low risk area, Fleetwood has some medium risk areas and one high risk area. There are no very high-risk areas. The FDC duty system aligns firefighter availability with community risk and incident levels in Fleetwood, and maintains the Service's ability to meet its emergency response standards, both locally and across Lancashire.

There are also robust systems in place to monitor and manage risk and incident levels across the county in real-time, enabling the Service to move fire engines and firefighters to where they are needed at any given time. The closest fire engines are always mobilised to critical incidents. This may not be those based in the nearest fire station, which may already be attending an incident or involved in training or other activities. There are 58 fire engines and 45 specialist appliances in Lancashire and they are moved around the county to meet risk and demand.

Importantly, emergency response deals with the consequences of risk, while prevention activity reduces or removes the risk in the first place. Dedicated prevention services will continue in Fleetwood communities throughout the trial to keep reducing the likelihood of fires and other emergencies occurring. These include the home fire safety check and business fire safety services, fire safety education, and prevention campaigns.

It was identified in the consultation that some people held a perception that the trial could lead to the loss of the on-call fire engine at Fleetwood or the closure of the station. This is not the case.

Implementation

The trial started on 7 September 2026. The staffing model is 12 wholetime firefighter posts, aligned to FDC duty system arrangements, with all posts ultimately being filled from existing wholetime staff living within a five-minute radius of the station.

Firefighters displaced from Fleetwood have been placed at stations with crewing requirements across the county. This has largely resulted in a reduction in travel time and distance for these members of staff. Fleetwood is now crewed by firefighters living within a five-minute radius of the station, which is predicted to give a more sustainable crewing model, using members of the local community.

There is no change to the on-call crewing arrangements at Fleetwood and there has been no reduction in the overall number of firefighters in the Service.

Evaluation

The 18-month trial will be subject to robust monitoring and formal evaluation at 6, 12 and 18 months, providing assurance that public and firefighter safety remain paramount throughout. The evaluation will assess emergency response performance, appliance availability and operational resilience, incident demand, prevention and protection activity, operational preparedness and competence, any actions identified in the equality impact assessment and workforce sustainability. It will also consider staff and stakeholder feedback and any unintended consequences arising from the change.

Performance will be considered against appropriate pre-trial baseline data and agreed measures, enabling any emerging issues to be identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

It is proposed that an evaluation report is taken to the next Performance Committee meeting following 6, 12 and 18 month points in the trial:

1. 7 March 2027
2. 7 September 2027
3. 7 March 2028

The final evaluation will provide members with a comprehensive evidence base to inform any decision regarding the future crewing arrangements at Fleetwood Fire Station. A copy of the evaluation criteria is included as Appendix 4.

Business risk

Potential risk to emergency response performance will be mitigated through modelling, monitoring, and staged evaluation points. In addition, focused community safety and wider prevention activity will take place across the Fleetwood station area to support a 'prevention first' approach to community safety.

Workforce risks (availability, recruitment, retention) are a key driver of the proposal and are expected to improve under FDC.

Public confidence risks are being managed through transparent consultation and evidence-led decision making. Should the trial be successful, any final proposed change to crewing at Fleetwood station would be subject to wider public and stakeholder consultation as part of a future Service-wide emergency cover review.

Sustainability or environmental impact

Less carbon emissions as ultimately all members of staff working from Fleetwood will be local to the area and therefore no requirement for excessive vehicle use to travel to / from the workplace.
Sustainable, as recruitment from local area.
Potential indirect benefits through more efficient use of resources and workforce deployment.

Equality and diversity implications

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and this indicated that there is no negative impact on any equality group. This was updated further to the consultation which identified no negative impact. However, the assessment will be reviewed further to the completion of the trial.

The pilot provides an opportunity to support more flexible working arrangements and potentially broaden access to roles.

Data protection (GDPR)

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

HR implications

Temporary contractual variations have been put in place for employees participating in the Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing trial. These arrangements are time limited to the 18-month trial period and are being managed in line with agreed duty system provisions terms and conditions, existing policies and relevant employment requirements.

Financial implications

The trial will release wholetime capacity to support broader service pressures. There is no intention to reduce the Service staffing levels on the basis of the trial. Within the term of the trial the additional allowances paid to staff equate to circa £100,000 per annum however these costs are offset by vacancy management across the Service.

Legal implications

The Authority is required to consider consultation outcomes before implementation, and this delegation was provided to the Chair and Chief Fire Officer following the CFA meeting of 15 June 2026.

Changes to duty systems require appropriate contractual and employment law compliance.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Consultation relating to pilot duty system change at Fleetwood Station
Planning Committee, Monday 13 July 2026

Pilot flexible day crewing at Fleetwood Fire Station
Combined Fire Authority, Monday 15 June 2026

Appendix 1

Proposal to trial Flexible Day Crewing at Fleetwood

What is the Proposal?

To change the crewing arrangements at Fleetwood Fire Station for a trial period.

Fleetwood Fire Station is located on Radcliffe Road in the town and has two fire engines:
1. One wholetime fire engine crewed by firefighters working the wholetime 2/2/4 duty system.
2. One on-call fire engine crewed by on-call firefighters.

We propose changing the duty system for the wholetime fire engine from 2/2/4 to flexible day crewing (FDC) for a trial period. FDC is the best system to meet Fleetwood's community risk and incident levels. It would mean the fire station is completely staffed by local people.

This would mean no change to emergency cover during the daytime however firefighters would respond from their home at night (as per on-call arrangements), instead of from the station. A change to FDC will increase the time it takes to respond to emergencies during the evenings (approximately four minutes) but does not affect our ability to meet our response standards.

In our Annual Service Plan for 2026-27, we stated our intention to review all our services to meet changing risk and demand in Lancashire, including trialling different ways of working that make better use of our resources and inform our approach to delivering services in the future. This proposal is the first of a series of trials we are planning.

Trial period

If agreed, the trial would begin in summer 2026 for a period of 18 months and would be evaluated every six months to measure any impacts on emergency response, fire engine availability, prevention activity and business fire safety services.

Crewing systems

Wholetime 2/2/4
Firefighters provide 24-hour cover from the station. Four watches of six firefighters.

Flexible Day Crewing
Firefighters provide cover from the fire station during the day (8am - 6pm) and respond from their home address within five minutes of the station outside of these hours (6pm – 8am) in the same way as on-call firefighters (see below). One watch of 12 firefighters.

On-call

On-call firefighters live or work very close to the fire station (within five minutes of the station) and often have another job outside Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS). They respond to emergencies in the community from home or work. They receive the same training as wholetime firefighters and attend the same incidents.

Day Crewing Plus
Firefighters provide cover from the station during the day (8am- 8pm) and from purpose-built accommodation based within the station grounds in the evenings (8pm-8am).

Community risk in Fleetwood

A predominantly low risk area, Fleetwood has some medium risk areas and one high risk area. There are no very high-risk areas.

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

Lancashire is split into small geographical areas and risks are calculated for each area based on the probability of an incident occurring and the consequences if it does. This calculation grades each area as one of four risk levels, from low to very high.

Risks are identified annually in our Strategic Assessment of Risk and our Community Risk Management Plan and supporting strategies set out how we respond to them. Each year we aim to reduce overall fire risk in Lancashire and over the last 15 years we have seen risk go down by 18%.

Emergency cover

Emergency cover must reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. Some areas have more resources than others because there are greater community risks and activity levels are higher.

We always send the closest fire engines to critical incidents which may not always be those based in your local fire station, which may be at an incident already or involved in training or other activities. There are 58 fire engines and 45 specialist appliances in Lancashire and we move them around the county to meet risk and demand, positioning firefighters and fire engines in precisely the locations they are needed.

Incident levels in Fleetwood

Fleetwood has an average of 636 incidents per year within its station area, the lowest of any of Lancashire's wholetime 2/2/4 crewed stations. Incident numbers align with FDC crewed stations.

There are 44 critical fire incidents per year in Fleetwood on average which also aligns with FDC crewed stations.

Fleetwood's 2/2/4 fire engine is mobilised 710 times per year on average. This makes it the least utilised 2/2/4 fire engine and aligns it with FDC crewed stations.

The majority of incidents take place during daytime hours when FDC crewing provides immediate response from the station.

Reasons for the trial

- Response standards are maintained with FDC crewing arrangements.
- FDC crewing aligns with community risk and incident levels in Fleetwood.
- FDC already works effectively at five other fire stations in Lancashire.
- No change to emergency cover during the daytime.
- Station retains two fire engines.
- Challenges maintaining 2/2/4 staffing due to location at the tip of the Fylde Coast peninsula – FDC is more sustainable.
- FDC will mean the station is crewed by firefighters who live in Fleetwood and all surplus firefighters will be redeployed to other stations.
- Prevention and protection services will be maintained to continue lowering risk.

Considerations

There will be an on-call response to incidents between 6pm and 8am
(+ approximately 4 minutes).
Response:

- This does not affect our ability to meet our emergency response standards.
- Home fire safety and business fire safety check services will be maintained.
- FDC crewing arrangements meet community risk and incident levels reflecting better use of resources and value for money.
- The trial will be closely monitored and evaluated at regular intervals to ensure no adverse impacts.

Overall view

Crewing Fleetwood in line with risk and demand in the area would make more efficient use of our resources while maintaining sufficient emergency cover in the area, with two fire engines retained and a total of 10 fire engines available on or near the Fylde Coast.

Emergency response standards

Each fire and rescue service sets its own emergency response standards; ours are some of the most challenging in the country and our performance is among the best.

Critical fires
We have response standards in relation to critical fires, which are incidents involving a significant threat to life, structures or the environment.

- Response time: the time from the initial call to our control centre to the arrival of the first fire appliance at the incident.
- Response standard: the response time we must achieve which is determined by risk levels in the area (see below).

Very high risk area – 6 minutes

High risk area – 8 minutes
Medium risk area – 10 minutes
Low risk area – 12 minutes

Critical special service incidents
We also have a response standard for critical special service incidents, which are not fires but still present a risk to life, such as road traffic collisions and rescues.

All critical special service calls – 13 minutes

We have achieved our response standards when the response time of the first fire engine arriving at critical fires and critical special service incidents, averaged over each quarter of the year, is within the relevant number of minutes.

About Lancashire Fire and Rescue

There are 39 fire stations across Lancashire. Service headquarters is located in Fulwood and our Leadership and Development Centre is located in Chorley.

The Service has 58 fire engines with different purposes and equipment carried onboard. We also have numerous special vehicles and equipment ranging from aerial ladder platforms to rescue boats.

Our services

Prevention
Making safety interventions in the homes of those most at risk of fire and supporting people to adopt safe practices. We constantly endeavour to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening. Prevention is always preferable to response and is by far the most effective way to make Lancashire safer. We identify those who are most vulnerable in our communities, and design and target our prevention activities to support people to reduce their risk. Our core prevention service is the Home Fire Safety Check service where we make practical interventions in the homes of those most at risk of having a fire.

Protection
Supporting businesses and landlords to keep their buildings safe and taking action if they do not. Our fire protection services aim to reduce the number of fires that occur in commercial premises and the impact on life, property, and business disruption when fires do occur. We support businesses, employers, and landlords to meet their legal duties and keep people safe in their buildings with a county-wide inspection programme including our Business Fire Safety Check service.

Response
Responding to fires and a wide range of other types of emergencies quickly and competently. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service strives to deliver the highest standards of operational response by focussing on availability, preparedness, and operational competence. Risks in communities are changing and the types of emergencies we attend are increasingly varied. We constantly review and adapt our approach to ensure we have the right appliances, equipment, skills, and technology to respond to any incident quickly and competently.

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

Funding

Our budget is made up of government grants, council tax, and business rates.

Lancashire residents pay £94.73 per year for our services which means that LFRS is one of the lowest-cost services in the country, at £1.82 per week (on a band D property).

Find out more at www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/funding.

Performance

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of fire and rescue services in the public interest.

In our last inspection in 2025, the Service was awarded six 'outstanding' and five 'good' ratings across 11 inspection areas.

We also has a number of challenging targets for a range of key performance indicators which help us to monitor and measure our performance in achieving success and meeting our priorities.

Find out more at www.lancsfiresrescue.org.uk/performance.

Consultation

We welcome your views on our proposals through our consultation. Your feedback will be considered before any decisions are made.

Why are we consulting?
We have considered data, met with staff and trade unions, and looked at new and emerging risks to ensure our emergency cover is fit for the future. We believe that the proposal will enable us to trial more effective and efficient crewing arrangements.

But we want to know what you think of our proposals. Do you agree with them? What impact might they have on you? Is there anything else we should consider?

Who are we consulting with?
We have identified a range of different stakeholders we feel could have important feedback on our proposals. This includes residents, businesses, partners, staff and elected representatives.

How do people take part?
We are also talking to people in the community and we have also put together a set

of questions in a survey to help us collect feedback. This is available for anyone to complete online on our website at www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/fleetwood.

What will we do with the feedback?
Once the consultation closes, all the feedback will be reviewed and we will consider how we can mitigate any areas of impact or act on suggestions given.

When will the consultation close?
The consultation closes on 30 June 2026.

Further information
For further information visit www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/fleetwood or email consulation@lancsfirerescue.org.uk.

Data

All incidents in station area – average / year
Wholetime 2/2/4 stations

- Blackburn – 1672
- Preston – 1273
- Burnley – 1226
- Blackpool - 1209
- Hyndburn – 1044
- Lancaster – 993
- South Shore – 789
- Morecambe – 764
- Skelmersdale – 702
- Fleetwood – 636

All incidents in station area – average / year
Flexible Day Crewing stations

- Fulwood – 806
- Fleetwood – 636 (inserted in FDC for comparison)
- Leyland – 618
- Ormskirk – 543
- St. Annes – 356
- Bacup – 312

Appendix 2

Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing Trial
Summary Consultation Report

Matters consulted on:

- Views on the proposed trial (see Consultation Document for full details).
- Identify any concerns or alternative suggestions.

Stakeholders whose views were sought:

- Fleetwood residents
- Fleetwood business owners
- LFRS staff
- Representative bodies
- Elected members
- Partner agencies

Objectives

1. Provide opportunities for stakeholders to share their views.
2. Generate feedback from stakeholders via online survey and community engagement.

Consultation period and activity
W/c 1 June – 1 July 2026

- Staff engagement
- Engagement with the Fire Brigades Union
- Online survey
- Public event
- Community engagement
- Engagement with local MP

Consultation findings

Responses
A total of **148 responses** were received.

- I am a resident of Fleetwood x 116
- I work in Fleetwood x 10
- My family / friends live in Fleetwood x 32
- I am an employee of LFRS x 8
- I live or work in another part of Lancashire x 14

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed trial provides effective and efficient emergency cover given risk and incident levels in Fleetwood?

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither / nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
20	6	3	13	105	1	148
13.6%	4.1%	2.0%	8.8%	71.4%	0.1%	100%

Q Please tell us why you feel this way

Analysed 148 responses; 134 included comments, 14 were blank.

Theme	Indicative count
Response time / delay concerns	82
Risk to life, safety or property	62
On-call staffing practicalities	53
Local risk / geography / incident profile	48
Need for 24/7 or wholetime cover	41
Cost-cutting / reduced service concern	37

Q To what extent do you agree it is appropriate to trial this change and evaluate the impact?

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither / nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
23	9	1	18	97	148
15.5%	6.1%	0.7%	12.2%	65.5%	100%

Q To what extent do you agree that 18 months is an appropriate trial period with evaluation carried out every six months?

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither / nor	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Total
19	9	13	11	94	2	148
12.8%	6.1%	8.8%	7.4%	63.5%	1.4%	100%

Q [If you answered in disagreement] Please tell us how long you think the trial should last.

148 responses reviewed, 108 included comments, 40 were blank

Theme	Indicative count
No trial / should not proceed	68
Conditional safety concerns / stop if unsafe	21
Shorter trial up to 6 months	11
12 months suggested	5
Longer than 18 months	4
Trial seen as predetermined / permanent	6

Q We intend to monitor emergency response standards, fire engine availability, and community safety services during the trial. Is there anything else you would expect us to evaluate?

148 responses reviewed, 96 included comments, 52 were blank

Theme	Indicative count
Safety outcomes / life / property risk	28
Fire engine availability / cover resilience	25
Response times / mobilisation	24
Public / resident / community feedback	21
Firefighter welfare / workforce impact	20
No trial / do not proceed	19
Independent review / transparency	8

Q Are there any alternatives to this proposal that you think we should consider?

148 responses reviewed, 97 included comments, 51 were blank

Theme	Indicative count
Keep current service / leave as is	44
Maintain 24/7, wholetime or fully manned cover	21
Do not proceed / reject proposal	15
Find savings or funding elsewhere	15
Alternative shift / crewing models	14
Avoid increased response times	11
Evidence, modelling or risk assessment first	8
No alternative / none stated	8

Q Do you have any further comments on this proposal?
148 responses reviewed, 74 included comments, 74 were blank

Theme	Indicative count
Safey / life / property risk	26
Local service loss / community impact	25
Do not proceed / stop proposal	21
Cost-cutting / cuts concern	14
No further comment / “No”	14
Staffing / firefighter availability	11
Response-time delay concerns	10
Trust / consultation concerns	8

Overall position of respondents

- The most frequently cited concern was the potential impact of increased response times, raised in 39% of responses explicitly.
- The dominant overarching theme was perceived risk to life and property, referenced in approximately 60% of responses.
- A significant proportion of respondents (approx. 28%) interpreted the proposal as a cost-saving measure rather than risk-led change.
- Concerns around staffing were raised in 47% of responses.
- Approximately 44% of respondents explicitly stated a preference to retain full-time or 24-hour cover.
- Around 43% of responses referenced Fleetwood-specific risk factors including geographic isolation and access routes, industrial and commercial risks, recent fire incidents and population vulnerability.

Public drop-in event feedback

- Held on 18 June 2026, 2pm-7pm.
- 7 residents and 1 MP attended.
- The event provided an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to discuss the proposal directly, ask questions, and raise concerns in person.
- Partners were invited to attend in the morning on the same date however this was not taken up by any organisations.
- The feedback received at the event was consistent with the themes identified in the wider consultation responses.
- Attendees most frequently raised concerns about increased response times at night.

- A perception by some at the event was that the proposal could lead to the loss of the second pump or the closure of Fleetwood Fire Station (reassurance was provided).
- The recent Lord Street fire was mentioned by everyone who engaged at the drop-in event.
- Lorraine Beavers MP also attended and voiced similar concerns on behalf of residents.
- There was some evidence that direct engagement helped to reassure certain attendees: one resident who initially wanted an overview of the proposal later stated that they felt reassured and were content with the proposal.

Fleetwood Town Council meeting feedback

- Held on 30 June 2026, attended by AM McCreesh and GM West.
- 15-20 residents in attendance including some who had been to the drop-in event.
- Themes raised were broadly consistent with the wider consultation.
- Key concerns focused on response times, night-time risk, how personnel would travel to and mobilise from the station, and whether the proposal would put lives at risk.
- Other recurring points included whether the proposal was cost-driven, what would happen to Fleetwood crews and staff moving out of the station, and whether recruitment would be paused.
- The meeting also included concerns about increased road risk from personnel driving to the station, as well as discussion about the Combined Fire Authority process.
- There was a request for response times and performance data to be shared publicly as part of any trial evaluation.

Staff feedback

- Meetings held with all four wholetime watches at Fleetwood.
- Broad understanding that the risk levels in the area match the Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) duty system – no opposition to the proposal.
- Majority of feedback raised questions about practicalities both from those who live within the catchment area and wish to work FDC and those who do not live in Fleetwood and would be deployed elsewhere in the county.
- Of the eight members of staff who completed the consultation survey, six agreed with the proposal, two did not.

Fire Brigades Union feedback

- FBU fully supportive of proposed FDC trial at Fleetwood.
- This follows several meetings and discussions as the proposal was developed and confirmed in a meeting on 3 July 2026.

Summary of opportunities for stakeholders to share their views (as at 30 June)

Consultation webpage	Views: 3,447
Combined social media coverage (including advert targeted to Fleetwood postcodes)	Reach: 45,000+ Link clicks: 2,165

	Social media sentiment was consistent with consultation feedback. The strongest recurring concern was the reported increase in night-time response times, particularly in the context of the recent large fire on Lord Street.
Media coverage	Number of articles – 11 including Fleetwood Weekly News, Blackpool Gazette and BBC Radio Lancashire Media sentiment was largely negative
In the Know to subscribers in Fleetwood	Emails delivered: 3,051 Emails read: 1,157 Link clicks: 155
Stakeholder communications	Consultation emailed to 24 stakeholders (partners, housing providers, local authority, representative bodies etc) plus the Community Safety Partnership
Public drop-in event (18 June 2pm – 7pm)	7 residents attended and 1 MP
Fleetwood Town Council meeting (30 June, attended by AM McCreesh and GM West)	15-20 residents attended
Internal communications	Station visits with all Fleetwood watches and on-call unit Promoted on Service intranet Inclusion in service-wide Team Brief

Respondent analysis

Respondent connection to Fleetwood/LFRS	Count	Share
I am a resident of Fleetwood	116	78.4%
I work in Fleetwood	10	6.8%
My family / friends live in Fleetwood	32	21.6%
I am an employee of LFRS	8	5.4%
I live or work in another part of Lancashire	14	9.5%

Gender identity	Count	Share
Female	69	47.3%
Male	61	41.8%
Non-binary	1	0.7%
Prefer not to say	15	10.3%

Ethnicity	Count	Share
Any other White background	1	0.7%
Any other mixed or multiple ethnic background	2	1.4%
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	128	87.7%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller Roma	1	0.7%
Prefer not to say	12	8.2%

Other	2	1.3%
Sexual orientation	**Count**	**Share**
Bisexual	7	4.9%
Gay	2	1.4%
Heterosexual/straight	113	79.0%
Lesbian	1	0.7%
Prefer not to say	19	13.3%

Age	**Count**	**Share**
16-19	1	0.7%
20-24	2	1.4%
25-29	6	4.1%
30-34	11	7.6%
35-39	12	8.3%
40-44	12	8.3%
45-49	14	9.7%
50-54	10	6.9%
55-59	23	15.9%
60-64	16	11.0%
65-69	17	11.7%
70-74	11	7.6%
75 or over	10	6.9%

Disability	**Count**	**Share**
No	87	59.6%
Prefer not to say	22	15.1%
Yes	37	25.3%

Religion/belief	**Count**	**Share**
Christian	77	53.1%
Jewish	1	0.7%
Muslim	1	0.7%
No religion	47	32.4%
Prefer not to say	18	12.4%
Other	1	0.7%

Appendix 3

Consultation survey comments

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed trial provides effective and efficient emergency cover given risk and incident levels in Fleetwood? Please tell us why you feel this way.

- Fleetwood contains significant risks and requires full time provision, however a FDC approach would cover these risks in a more cost effective and efficient way.
- To slow a response during a time when responses need to be quicker is a mistake that could cause the loss of life
- Any incident that does occur at night would then impact the response times for a given period of time during the next day
- Fleetwood in my opinion cover a large area. I personally believe there should be constant 24/7 coverage for at least the one appliance. The four minute extra response time could make all the difference between life and death. We have just had a large fire on lord street and that was at the start of an evening. Lancashire fire and rescue also seem to rely on other stations to support at big incidents. We the community pay for a service and I believe it should be staffed for the quickest response time day and night.
- More cutbacks and increased response times. Beginning of the end for a vital service that taxes pay for.
- Reduces response times however. Station is very quiet at night however reduces response times into the wider fylde area. reducing an immediate response from only Blackpool Southport and Bispham at night. One or two large scale incidents and response times are hugely affected
- Fleetwood is out of the way and due to resent fire on the main shopping street fire engines could get there faster if we don't have a full man station then fires like this could be detrimental to this town by time fire men was dispatched to fleetwood more damage would be done we have lots of shops and hotels in fleetwood and feel it would not be appropriate to cut back on the running of fleetwood Station
- In the case of a house fire with persons reported, reducing the station to one pump is going to cause serious delays before a BA team can enter the property.
- I believe it will lead to a reduction in firefighters and leave us vulnerable to late night arson attacks
- It's as if LFRS are treating the people of Fleetwood like second class citizens.
- I had a house fire recently and luckily the engine arrived within 4.5 minutes which saved my life and those of 2 of 3 of my pets. Without the quick response I dread to think what would have happened.
- Incidents at night will have worse response times, increasing the risk of injury or property damage.
- Always super fast to my employment when our alarm is triggered.
- It will meet the needs of the community and help with crewing issues
- A large town that isn't easily accessible from nearby busy tourist areas/ towns, should have a fully 24hr operational fire service which can also service/support neighbouring towns.
- Services are already at stretching point, this would have higher Rick to the residents of Fleetwood and the surrounding areas
- We should keep it manned 24/7.

- Fleetwood don't turn out enough to be a Full whole time station, FDC is more than adequate for this level of activity and wouldn't even matter if the service removed the on call pump
- Fleetwood was previously staffed on the dcp system which was hugely popular and effective for the staff who worked it - albeit disliked by the trade unions at a national level. Changing to FDC reduces staff numbers to previous levels allowing these staff to be deployed elsewhere in the county, providing an effective value for money for Lancashire's residents
- Incident levels in Fleetwood:
    - Fleetwood has an average of 636 incidents per year within its station area, the lowest of any of Lancashire's wholetime 2/2/4 crewed stations. Incident numbers align with FDC crewed stations. Do these 636 incidents per year in the Fleetwood Station Area include incidents in the Thornton and Cleveleys area?
    - There are 44 critical fire incidents per year in Fleetwood on average which also aligns with FDC crewed stations. Do these 44 critical fire incidents per year include critical fire incidents in Thornton and Cleveleys?
    - Fleetwood's 2/2/4 fire engine is mobilised 710 times per year on average. This makes it the least utilised 2/2/4 fire engine and aligns it with FDC crewed stations. How many of these 710 incidents are involving house fires with persons reported, road traffic incidents with persons trapped, and how many of these 710 incidents happen in the evening, night time and early morning.
    - The majority of incidents take place during daytime hours when FDC crewing provides immediate response from the station. So exactly, how many of these incidents do happen in the evening, the night time and early morning?
    - There are 58 fire engines and 45 specialist appliances in Lancashire and we move them around the county to meet risk and demand, positioning Firefighters and fire engines in precisely the locations they are needed. Isn't the real reason you move these fire appliances and Firefighters around due to a shortfall in staffing levels?
    - How many fire appliences covered Lancashire 15 years ago?
    - How many operational Firefighters are presently employed in Lancashire? How many operational Firefighters were employed 15 years ago?
    - I believe other Fire Services struggle recruiting on call Firefighters which could compromise fire appliance availability.
- A six minute or more delay, in a fully staffed fire appliance turning out from the Fire Station can be the difference between a life and a death, consequently, I believe your proposals would mean a worsening of the present fire protection of the Fleetwood community.
- Crewing levels remain the same during daytime hours when most incidents occur, and maintain an acceptable level of response time during nighttime hours. Also saves taxpayers money.
- I feel that to take away full time service at the fire station would be detrimental to Fleetwood and all other council tax payers in the area. The fire service provide an almost immediate service 24/7- to ask people to come from home, get their kit on then attend a fire is adding precious minutes do an urgent-often life threatening- incident. Given the fires in Fleetwood recently then it's a big NO from me….. what cost is life??

- The nearest fire service is Bispham which would then have to cover Bispham, Cleveleys, Thornton, Fleetwood and maybe some areas near Poulton. How would Bispham Station cope if there was more than one/two fires at the same time. There has been a rise in fires in Fleetwood over the last couple of years, likewise in Blackpool. Blackpool has had some large fires which has needed crew from both Bispham and Fleetwood. Peoples lives will be put at risk if this goes ahead.
- Increasing the time taken to reach an emergency is risking lives
- Risk to public safety
- Fleetwood has a large number of elderly residents and many empty buildings in the town centre next to occupied ones I worry that any extra time being called out would be fatal
- Clearly if FF are at the station already they will respond immediately, the suggested 4 minute delay is a joke
- 4 minutes may not sound allot but if that costs a life you should be held personally responsible, shame on you penny pinching people.
- Being a retired police officer I am well aware how crucial it is to attend emergencies as quickly as possible. I fear that the delay in on call firefighters travelling to their base would be detrimental to public safety.
- Night time is when you have sleeping risks and response times matter
- Many fires occur after 6pm. Lives are at risk if you implement this change. Response times increase, people die.
- I DON'T THINK FIRESERVICE HOURS OR CREW SHOULD BE SCALED DOWN TO SAVE MONEY LIVES WILL BE RISKED
- Response time and the fact only lately we have had 3 fires in a short time scale 1 extremely serious
- This is a blatant erosion of a critical emergency service.
- The population of the town has increased massively over the years, as has the number of buildings and cars on the roads, so the suggestion that any reduction in emergency services is even remotely acceptable is laughable.
- More residents means more council tax. Service should be going up, not down. If Lancashire Fire and Rescue are unable to adequately fund the same fire station that's been here for decades, then they are clearly doing something terribly wrong.
- Should be manned all the time
- Why change something that already works. If it changes lives would be put as risk as response times would lengthen
- Because fdc require firefighters to come from the local community. I feel this builds stronger connections between the crew and the local community they protect. Also provides more incentive for on call recruitment
- Various industries nearby including vitrex. Numerous serious fires in the area and frequent incidents where Fleetwood have been needed to help with other serious fires
- Putting people's lives at risk
- Crew should be ready 24 hours day
- I've had a house fire and they were there in minutes if it took longer a lot more off the property would off been damaged
- Longer response time at night, meaning fires will develop more, putting more people at risk

- It makes sense to use local people to cover this area as they have local knowledge.
- Fleetwood needs a local station as it takes too long to get to us from Bispham and especially Blackpool (during the lights) lives are at risk over attendance times
- Our fire station has always worked perfectly well. Dont try to fix what isnt broken!!!
- An emergency response by on call will never be as fast as on site duty crew, those lost 8 minutes can be the difference in a positive outcome
- Putting lives at risk not being manned 24 hours a day.
- Number of both residential premises and business premises in the area are increasing and not increasing, therefore potential increase in out of hours call out, which doesn't appear to have been considered in the proposals, which seems very short sighted, and seems to solely be money saving exercise to detriment of potential life saving, 4 minutes delay could be difference between life and death, and 1 fatality is 1 too many to save a few pounds
- How much longer would it take firefighters to get from their house and fully prepped and at the fire, compared to when they are already located at the fire house
- Fire crews in Fleetwood are busy and very helpful with advice at all times. I would not feel safe with the proposal. They saved me once before but I have had family die in a fire.
- Worked out on statistics no problem
- Fleetwood is a large town and the residents need a fire service to respond to all emergencies and the firemen should be in attendance at all times.
- I don't feel the information provided is balanced. It reads heavily weighted in what the service wants as opposed to what shift system is best suited to the community and crew.
- For 1 we have just had a major fire in the town. Which prob would have be worse if we didn't have our own fire brigade. Then there was another incident a few days later.
- Until the trial is initiated, it is not possible to see if it is effective and efficient
- I believe you can't put residents safety on trial. The government website states that in the UK, over 50% of all accidental house fires occur in the evening, peaking heavily between 5:00 PM and 9:00 PM. Midday and Midnight: Data indicates that roughly 74% of all home fires occur during the midday to midnight window, which using the FDC strategy, would mean that a large portion of this window would not be covered.
- Being an emergency service it needs to be manned 24/7
- We need a full time fire station
- Because if there is a fire then you have to wait for the staff to get the station and then there uniforms etc before ever setting off to the emergency and the amount of time they been called out especially lately you can see how quickly an emergency can turn to life threatening and the delay that it will take from them coming from home to the station before setting off instead of been there all ready could be the difference between life and death in some cases
- Minutes of delay can be lethal, recent fires in fleetwood have demonstrated the need for immediate fire services.
- Reducing emergency services and expecting the community to allow for longer response times is unacceptable.

- There have been fires recently that have proved demand is there.
- The police station has already been shut.
- If this is taken into action will the council tax be reduced to reflect this?
- Only station near enough to attend quickly as the last week has shown. The town is being gradually degraded as it is. The poor relation who doesn't matter.
- The response time for crews leaving there home could put significant lives at risk when fires spread quickly.
- The exposure across the region warrants the whole time stations we have now including Fleetwood Fire Station
- Local firefighters will still be able to reach the fire station in a timely manner without it causing a problem to the service.
- I think it will serve Fleetwood better. But let's find out what the trial period finds.
- The benefits to the local people
- Attendance times (as you are aware) will be affected more than people realise. A whole time crew can be going out of the doors before on call firefighters arrive and then have to take more time waiting for a full crew and to get dressed etc.
- Would the local people be called in only when there is a fire fallout like in the RNLI? Or would they be full time staff at the station? Is the flexitime based on the number of call outs in Fleetwood?
- I think the station should be manned 24 hours a day irrespective of the number of incidents.
- Firefighters must be at the station day and night, every second counts and this puts lives at risk. Even a trial could result in a tragedy for some family. For a fireperson to get to the station then get into their gear would take to long and could not meet the required call out requirements.
- Recent events have proven we need permanent cover. It is a town with a lot of problems and less affluent than surrounding areas with a lot of anti social behaviour. Nuisance fires are a common problem. On a peninsula with basically one way in and out so help from other fire stations means increased time pressures risking lives. Close to a very dangerous landfill that is at risk of fires starting and is a major accident waiting to happen due to historical unknown hazards that have been buried. A lot of empty properties that are forever being broken into like the recent large one on Lord St as one example
- They should be fireman on duty at all times to respond quickly
- You are increasing response times. This is an efficiency for your organisation, not the people of Lancashire and specifically the people of Fleetwood. The current arrangement is effective. I strongly object.
- It has been trialled in other brigade and doesn't work
- With the amount of industries that are in the area of Fleetwood should be staffed full time as they will be able to attend incidents quicker than waiting for Blackpool to respond
- Worsening fire cover is a disgrace and should not be happening.
- Reducing operational cover
- You cant predict an incident not happening just because of lower call numbers. The call out time will then increase as you rely on people coming from further afield just to get to the station as they arent directly at the station, they then have to get to the incident.
- Your taking a full time assessment and adding unsessary variables
- A reduction in fire cover cannot be passed, delayed turnout at night means a reduction which we strongly oppose

- Minutes count in fires both from death & injury, also damage. The minutes lost in attending from homes critically increase these risks. Fire by its very nature is often a fast accelerating process and it’s effects time critical.
- The extra 5 minutes could mean life or death, you can't put money first.
- any extra delay could cost lives or property loss fleetwood population has increased.
- Statistically, Fleetwood is aligned to other FDC stations, it will allow staff to be placed elsewhere due to shortages, and longer term has the potential to reduce revenue expenditure
- If you consider the location of the existing fire stations in the north fylde area and actually measure the radius of their reach and response times, it makes much more logic to keep Fleetwood with a full time response engine and the covert Bispham to a voluntary crew. Additionally, from information available online, Fleetwood has more call outs than Bispham. Fleetwood should maintain a full time crew 24 hours, together with Blackpool. It makes no sense when considering the facts. Please actually look the location on the map together with access roads/routes/response times. The Thornton-Cleveleys area can be covered from Fleetwood with good response times. The Bispham and Poulton areas covered from north (Fleetwood) and south (Blackpool), with additional support from the voluntary Bispham site. Please actually consider this constructive feedback. I believe the proposed plans put lives in danger and do not provide adequate covered with in the North Fylde. Fleetwood should remain with a full time crew on site to provide coverage for the North Fylde.
- Arson attacks are on the up in the changing climate. Your proposed change is based on old statistics. Arson attacks are being committed all across Lancashire currently and beyond and this crime is unfortunately at the forefront of the cases on a day by day basis currently within the Court system where I am an employee.
- Changing staffing patterns at this time is a risk with the growth of this type of crime
- Our town needs a fire service to be there. Look for businesses to sponsor individual staff based on their personalities and work related achievements. The money could be used to fund their training, equipment and the businesses get their advertisements or logos on clothing or at the station for the public to see.
- Having the crew on site means faster response times to emergency call outs. It’s ridiculous to think otherwise!
- The town needs all the emergency services available 24 hours a day, those extra minutes it takes to get from home to the fire station could very easily cost a life.
- Because every second can matter for someone potentially trapped in a burning building. I can't believe that you can even think it's a good idea to not have a 24/7 fire crew and engine. So you're putting people lives at risk for a cost saving exercise. It's like when towns lose their fire station as cost cutting measures. Safety should be number 1 priority above any costs.
- There are lots of care and nursing homes in Fleewood and the surrounding area with a massive sleeping risk. The time it takes to respond from home and get to an address is to long and will result in unnecessary fatalities. The old ICI site in Thornton still has many factories with a large work force, it would take far too long to respond to a major incident there. Also bear in mind Rossell school is a boarding school and in the north part of town there is an area full of houses in multiple occupation. The town also has variety of holiday accommodation with two large caravan sites, not forgetting the Euston and Savoy hotel's and

numerous airb/bns. Let's not forget the recent tragedy where a woman became trapped between boulders being used as sea defence in a coastal town, she drowned because Police and Coast Guard could not free her, the Fire Brigade did but did not arrive in time (not their fault). But time was crucial this type of sea defence is present at Roswell Beach.

- Reducing the number of staff is not the best solution to any problem.
- I think we need the fire station and people 24 hours. It's an important part of the community and with the fires lately it proves how quickly they git there being just around the corner as it would have been a lot worse with more businesses affected if the fire people were not in fleetwood to start the control
- Every town deserves a fire station manned!!
- Proposals primarily cost driven rather than anything else
- Makes better use of resources
- Fire growth is exponential. A delay of even one minute can be the difference between a room-contained fire and a fully involved structure. Slower response times increase the likelihood of injury, smoke inhalation, and fatalities.
- Insurance and fire-engineering data show that every minute of delay significantly increases structural loss, rebuild costs, and the likelihood of total property destruction.
- Older adults, disabled residents, and those living in flats or terraced housing are disproportionately affected by slower evacuation and higher smoke-spread risk.
- UK fire-service benchmarks (e.g., attendance within 8 minutes for life-risk incidents) exist because delayed intervention is known to cause preventable deaths. This proposal moves response times in the wrong direction.
- Crews arriving later face hotter, more unstable structures, increasing the danger of collapse and flashover.
- Larger fires mean higher insurance claims, longer business closures, and greater public-sector recovery costs. Any short-term savings from this proposal will be outweighed by long-term financial losses. (see loss of tram access after the current fire in Lord St).
- Fire authorities have a statutory duty to protect life and property. A proposal that knowingly worsens response capability risks breaching that duty
- The fire service should be 24 hrs a day and day and night 7 days a wk regardless of costs there should be no price on someones life
- An extra 4 minutes can be the difference between a good outcome and a tragic one. Traffic is also getting worse in Fleetwood which will have an ongoing impact on response times, day or night and leave the town and nearby areas at risk.
- Need a full time crew on call time save lives

To what extent do you agree that 18 months is an appropriate trial period with evaluation carried out every six months? If you answered in disagreement, please tell us how long you think the trial should last.

- Shouldn’t be introduced in the first place.
- I do not think this should be trialled
- Shouldn’t be a trial
- I think all are aware this is not a trial. it is for pensionable reasons and allows staff not staying on FDC to be relocated where the service sees fit
- Not at all if it has too 6 months max
- 12 months maximum

- No time
- There should be no trial in the first place
- I don't think there should be a trial. There is a clear need for tbe service in this town, both as a resident and an employee of a local high school.
- Zero months but if there really isn't any other option 12 months or less.
- Fleetwood is a deprived area which has an increase in issues which requires the support of the Fire Services
- It shouldn’t it puts lives at risk
- We should not trial it. We need a fire station
- Two years would provide more comparable data and provide enough time to qualify all new staff in the specialist skills, so the same incident requirements can be met.
- The trial is dangerous and should not take place
- There should be no trial, don’t fix what isn’t broken!
- If there had to be a trial it would need to be of a reasonable length to get a true picture however I think it should also be terminated immediately if at one time there was not a crew available to attend an incident, be it a fire or RTC etc, within the required time scale.
- No trial should take place
- It should not happen at all public safety
- Not at all
- It shouldn't
- Do not change what works
- See answer to Q4
- Trailing could have negative impact
- There should be no trial. The station should be manned 24/7
- I dont agree with any trail
- 3 months if at all
- There should be no trial, because this change is clearly unacceptable!
- No need to trial, disagree completely
- There should not be any trial time just leave alone
- Shouldn’t happen at all. The amount of residents and risks increase yet you propose this, it’s insane
- At least 5 years
- 3 months
- N/A
- There shouldn’t be a trial period
- There shouldn't be a trial period. Its too late when somebody dies to decide it isnt working
- I don't think it should be trialled
- Never
- Abandoned the idea and leave status quo
- I don’t think there should be one.
- Never
- Not at all
- I don’t believe in trialling something that could cost lives. I also feel that on e you have made the change you are likely to keep it even if it’s not proven successful.
- We shouldn't have a trial. It should stay as it is.

- Although it may be possible to evaluate over 12 months, depending when the trial started and if it mainly covers greater need
- I don’t think residents safety should be put in trial at all.
- No trial at all
- No trial at all
- You dont need to trial an easily computer modelled statistic, putting lives in danger is never a reason to trial something.
- This shouldn’t happen at all. Not even a trial.
- Not at all.
- I don’t think you should be trailing any change, we pay our council tax for a fully supported service this proposal does not fully support the service with quick response times.
- 24 months
- 12 months should be sufficient to cover all seasons etc. Although being on the coast we're not as affected as some outlying stations.
- No trial should take place.
- It should not happen
- Shouldn't even start as we all know a trial will mean a permanent change
- I strongly object to the change. The trial could be for 6 months or 2 years and there be a fatal fire the week after where the engine being mobilised earlier would have made a difference.
- Shouldn't happen
- I think that the trial should not go ahead
- The trial should not exist at all. Trialling a duty system outside the recognised grey book duty systems is outrageous.
- 18 months is far too long a gamble.
- Any trial period puts resident risk even for 1 single night
- Should not be considered, for the reasons answered in Q4.
- I don't think it needs trialling at all. Shift patterns should not be something that can be used to play about with.
- No trial. This station needs to remain manned at all times.
- no trial. have normal night crew present but don't use them. what happens when night call out and then they are on day shift
- Trial should not proceed. This cost cutting exercise is not appropriate and puts lives and properties in danger. The proposed plans does not consider the coverage and location of other stations. Bispham could instead make this trail to ensure better coverage for north fylde
- I think it should be put on pause due to recent events and the increasing popularity of this crime in our area in the current climate.
- There should be no trial, you are putting lives at risk.
- It shouldn’t even be considered in the first place. Leave things alone as they are.
- There should be NO TRIAL period as once that happens it is afait accompli
- I don't think the trial should even be on the cards.
- Shouldn't be even considered
- 3 months
- No trial you shouldn't be taking away such public services
- There should be no change to 24 hour cover.
- No trial
- I don't agree it be trialled.
- Never

- An eighteen-month trial may conclude with few, or even no, significant fire or emergency incidents. However, the absence of a major event during that limited period cannot be taken as evidence that the reduction in immediate Fire and Rescue Service provision is safe or without risk. There remains the possibility that a serious incident could occur after the trial has ended, potentially placing lives at risk or, in the worst-case scenario, resulting in a loss of life. A short-term trial cannot accurately predict when such rare but devastating emergencies may arise, and therefore should not be relied upon as a definitive measure of the long-term impact on public safety. In my opinion, decisions involving the protection of life must be based on preparedness for the worst possible circumstances, not solely on whether those circumstances happen to occur during a trial period.
- DCP not FDC has already been implemented and was shown to work for the area. FDC impacts response times at night and part of the day.
- No time as I've said previously there are more properties being built in the wyre area so realistically there is no reason to go to on call hours overnight.
- 18 months is a fair amount, however reviewed quarterly
- It shouldn't happen at all
- Not in agreement with trial in first place
- Dont Do A Trial At All it Works Well As It Is To Save So Many Lives
- It shouldn’t be happening in the first place.
- There should not be one
- I don't consider a trial in reduced cover is appropriate. Can it be guaranteed that call outs can cover any possible emergency cover after hours?
- Well I think it is risky trialling this change, a lot could happen in that trial time and I also believe that it is easy to let the trial slide on for much longer.
- This should not be trailed under any circumstances.
- It shouldn’t residents are been put at risk
- if the trial goes ahead it should be evaluated every six months
- Don’t agree with proposed changes
- Not at all leave it as it is. Firefighters do a fantastic job as it is
- No trial period is appropriate. The proposal should not proceed. Fleetwood should not be used to test slower night-time attendance at life-risk incidents. Public safety is not a pilot scheme. If the change cannot be proved safe before implementation, it should not be implemented.
- 6 months
- There shouldn't be a trial at all, as 27000 people living in Fleetwood deserve a fire station which is fully manned at all times.
- 4-6 months if you go ahead with a trial which I disagree with
- There shouldn't be a trial, a big mistake and a stupid idea.
- No trial at all. This is just a cost cutting exercise.
- 0 years, 0 months, 0 weeks, 0 days, 0 minutes, 0 seconds
- 6 months
- 12 MONTH TRIAL EVALUATED EACH MONTH TO AVOID DELAYS IN EVALUATION AND CHANGE TO SYSTEM IF NEEDED
- shoud not start
- It just shouldn’t happen

We intend to monitor emergency response standards, fire engine availability, and community safety services during the trial. Is there anything else you would expect us to evaluate?

- Get independent analysis
- How about how many people's lives are put at risk or property damaged due to increased response times
- Its people and staff should be the priority amongst the safety of the community. Are the staff happy with the new shift system does it work? are those not staying on FDC looked after as it is a forced move after all barring in mind the majority at fleetwood are there from previous forced moves and have had constant rejections of transfers to be closer to home
- Yes distance to fleetwood from other stations could mean safety of high street and people are put at risk with despatch time at distance
- There appear to be more fires recently why change the hours when you're already doing so well keeping us safe. If it isn't broken don't fix it. I'm proud of our firefighters and their dedication to the safety of us residents. Please don't change
- There should be no trial in the first place
- You are excellent in my opinion
- Towns reasurrance, regular understanding of the towns vibe and safety. Fleetwood have experienced significant fire and safety issues over the last couple of years. We have no Ambulance base here and the Fire service offers some forms of safety.
- Impact on local community
- Actual benefit of it being a crewed station vs 1 pump on call
- What effect will it have on incident numbers for Bispham. With the delayed response during nightime hours will it increase bisphams incidents numbers due to them having a faster turn out time compared to the 5 minute delay of FDC stations?
- Specialised skills availablity, staff recovery time compared to other established FDC stations.
- The trial is dangerous and should not take place
- n/a
- Emotional welfare of crews. Rest/eating time of crews throughout their shift. Response times. Are injuries/fatalities of public/crew increasing?
- Should not be happening
- You should not be putting lives at risk at any time
- Disagree with the changes
- So some one paying with there life is how you justify this trial shame on you.
- NO CHANGE and NO TRIAL
- Efficiency as causes crewing problems
- There should be no change at all.
- The risk of any change in the system that works on life should a fire crew take longer to get to a fire
- Yes!
- Your own bias!
- From your posts and information, you're clearly already sold on this blatant penny-pinching exercise. I have no confidence whatsoever that you will conduct a fair, open and honest analysis.

- What are you going to do if the evidence shows that these changes are not suitable?
- Do you have the funding to carry on as you are if needs-be, or is this already a done-deal and you're trying to soften the blow with an elaborate show of "trialling"" your proposed reduction in service to convince the public?"
- No need to trial if manned all the time
- Ask yourself the question why you are actually doing this. We all the know the answer to save money!!!!
- Suggest you evaluate the proposal and consider the increase in population
- Would need to evaluate people's feelings about this as many people already feel very vulnerable
- Has the risk in fleetwood or surrounding areas reduced? Fires at the moment seem to be increasing
- No
- Management jobs should go not front line fire fighters
- Yes. The impact on fleetwood could be massive. Especially given the recent incidents
- Time difference to depart the station from initial call and changes in the intensity of fires on arrival on scene
- Why change something that's not broken
- Neglect by doing this trial
- Why change what is keeping us safe
- N/A
- Crew morale, community opinion, impact on neighboring areas e.g. 2nd pump turn out time.
- No
- Leave it as it is lives being put at risk
- Have no trial especially with the amount of emergency calls there has been lately especially towards fires
- How many peoples lives are effected by letting a fire burn longer, loss of life and property. Impacts of longer burning fire on the community and health.
- Reduction in council tax to reflect the reduced services available in the community
- Town moral.
- The fire stations do not operate in isolation so the key element here is the avoidance of the loss of life in the first instance wherever it may occur. The review needs to reflect the correlation between direct station response and the provision of support st other incidents, wherever they may occur.
- Nothing to add.
- How it affects staff efficiency and moral
- Do not agree with the trial.
- Monitoring is only a numbers game.
- Just reconsider, this is just a money cutting exercise risking lives
- Yes, evaluate whether your employees are supportive of increasing response times as well and seek the views of your fire authority and local MP's. Are senior officers not fighting to protect our service.
- Any hazardous industries should be checked more often to make sure that they are safe
- Evaluate the person/s who came up with this idea as they’re not suitable for the position they hold.

- Staff feedback
- Response times. Injury and death ☠ especially when they go up.
- Rds availability cannot be guaranteed how many times has the RDS been unavailable in the past year?
- You are putting peoples lives at risk by gambling on probabilities!
- stress fatigue of workforce
- As above.
- Recent statistics as in the past month Arson attacks are on the up across Lancashire.
- The impact upon the community. Its not a community fire station if it doesn't serve the community.
- Monitoring does not save lives firemen do
- The abilities for the fire fighters to get to their vehicles and if there vehicles don't start you have 1 less firefighter than would normally be there. If a beeper malfunctions, there's one less firefighter, If it's an IT error that all beepers fail you don't have any fire fighters for the emergency. It's just a crazy situation to think it's a good idea.
- Whether this should even be considered
- The impact on staff morale - we need firefighters who feel valued and not having to worry about their jobs.
- Listen to local people who know how necessary and protective we feel just knowing you are there and trying to keep us safe not like all the other services that have left us
- Yourselves for even thinking about this
- The ability to respond to other areas when their appliances are already responding so making them unavailable
- No
- Actual response-time changes — Not just “standards”, but the real minute-by-minute change in attendance times for life-risk incidents, compared with historic baselines.
- Impact on life-risk incidents — How many incidents during the trial involved people reported trapped, smoke-logged properties, or delayed rescues.
- Fire severity on arrival — Whether crews are arriving to more advanced fires (e.g., beyond room of origin), which is a direct consequence of slower attendance.
- Near-miss reporting — Incidents where a delayed response almost resulted in serious harm must be captured, not ignored.
- Community risk profile changes — Whether the trial increases risk in specific neighbourhoods.
- Economic and insurance consequences.
- Public confidence and complaint data — Residents’ trust in emergency cover is a measurable safety factor and should be monitored."
- No
- Your greed in try in to cut this service
- In addition to emergency response standards, fire engine availability and community safety services, I would expect the evaluation to consider the wider impact on vulnerable residents, particularly those living in care homes, sheltered accommodation and housing for elderly and disabled members of our community.

- The assessment should include whether any increase in response times could affect the safe evacuation of residents who may have limited mobility or require additional assistance during an emergency. Consideration should also be given to the confidence and reassurance provided to staff working within these facilities, who rely on the knowledge that prompt professional assistance will be available when needed.
- Furthermore, I believe the evaluation should acknowledge the limitations of a short-term trial. The absence of a major incident during the trial period should not automatically be viewed as evidence that the changes are safe or sustainable in the long term. The potential consequences of a single serious incident, however rare, should form a key part of the overall risk assessment.
- Ultimately, any evaluation should place the protection of life and the safety of Fleetwood's most vulnerable residents at its heart.
- Withdraw of water rescue provision
- Response times and qualitive data to include support to other incidents in Cleveleys, Poulton, Over Wyre and Blackpool
- Good you need to monitor it but properly not rubber pencil recording.
- We have already lost a manned police station, ambulance service and now your on about having volunteer firemen. Take the locals word for it when we say our service is needed.
- Take Notice What The Residents Of Fleetwood Are Saying That They Dont Want A Trial To Be Done At All
- Will you be able to staff emergency call outs or is there a danger that you may lose full time staff as a result of changes.
- How will this affect training? Training in the normal course of events can take place evenings and weekends when necessary!
- I believe those staff on call need to live with a 5 minute response time - is this realistic?
- I am also concerned about fire cover in places other than Fleetwood: scenario where Bispham is engaged elsewhere, serious domestic fire in Thornton, the first two pumps will take some time to arrive. I also recall seeing many TV fire safety messages saying how every second counts? Fleetwood has some deprived areas, 'vulnerable at risk communities' and once again are being neglected.
- Pay scales for middle management and directors. Deaths and serious injuries directly linked to the withdrawn provisions.
- I do not believe this trial should go ahead.
- How many residents suffer because of the trial
- number of times the service is needed in Fleetwood and number of times it is called to help other areas leaving Fleetwood vulnerable
- No it should be left as it is. What would be evaluated in the trial, how many lives were lost in what timescale. Minutes and seconds count in these situations
- Just dont do this its cutbacks again for fleetwood residents
- Welfare of firefighters, working in the station and on call.
- I do not accept that the trial should proceed. If it does, evaluation must go beyond routine averages.
- LFRS should assess resilience: the ability to respond when events are not normal, predictable, or convenient. Emergencies do not occur to timetable. Severe weather, flooding, arson, road traffic collisions, medical incidents, rescues, simultaneous calls, major incidents, seasonal demand, and lithium-ion battery fires can all place sudden pressure on cover.

- The evaluation should publish incident-level data, not only quarterly summaries: call time, mobilisation, turnout, travel, first attendance, second-appliance arrival, time of day, incident type, casualties, rescues, fire spread, property loss, and whether delay affected outcome.
- It should separately examine night-time incidents, life-risk incidents, vulnerable people, delayed discovery, absent alarms, simultaneous incidents, reliance on neighbouring stations, whether neighbouring cover is itself degraded, crewing shortfalls, firefighter fatigue, and any reduction in prevention, or business safety work.
- There must also be clear, public stop criteria. If the model worsens attendance, weakens resilience, reduces cover, or adversely affects any life-risk incident, the trial should end immediately.
- Yes not to do it
- As an ex retained firefighter at Fleetwood I know from experience that it takes at least 3 minutes for a retained pump to be despatched on a shout. If you are to solely depend on this mobilisation method those 3 minutes could mean the difference between property damage and a lot worse. I know the importance of a full time manned pump at Fleetwood.
- Emergency response times and if the 'retained' vehicle always has a enough staff available in an emergency
- Give the Fire Crew more respect
- Don't do it at all. Lives will be put at risk.
- If this working is it the right thing as your leaving other areas without operational appliances because they are over here which might leave other areas short which could be an arsonist s day which will make their firefighters job even more hard than it already is
- Public satisfaction. Level of Council Tax you can reduce by not needing as much money for the hourly rate of a firefighter staying in the station.
- I would also expect careful consideration to be given to how these changes will affect your firefighters. It is important to understand the impact on their current shift patterns and overall wellbeing.
- In addition, I would be interested to know how firefighters who do not live within the proposed five-minute response area will be affected. Will they be disadvantaged or penalised as a result of where they live? It is important that any new arrangements are implemented fairly and do not place undue pressure on existing staff or negatively affect morale and retention.
- ON GOING VIEWS OF RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY, AND VIEWS OF STAFF
- No, just don't do it

Are there any alternatives to this proposal that you think we should consider?

- Look at any shift pattern that doesn't increase any response time
- Don't play with fire
- Should it really of ever been changed to 2-2-4? is there learning been had over the money wasted on trying to make 2-2-4 work?
- Yes rethink all of it we need a fully working 24hr service
- Keeping the fire station as it is now.
- No
- 1 pump on call only

- Do we have the technology to predict map what incidents/activity levels would look like if fleetwoods wholetime appliance was removed and bispham was changed to 224? Is it a possibility to move Bispham to a better location to suite covering the northern end of the Fylde coast and change fleetwood to 1 on call appliance only?
- Nucleus crewing, would achieve greater savings and provide staff with more flexibility of shift choice. It would require the On-Call availability to be guaranteed in evenings and weekends.
- Yes, leave the Fleetwood Service as it is!
- Leave things as they are.
- Carry on as at present
- Yes make both engines full cover. We are paying for the service!
- Talk to your loyal workforce and listen to how they would change anything it's them on the front lines not you!
- Leave it as it is
- If it works leave it alone, Get rid of the top brass instead, would love to know there earnings and saving from cutting them.
- Keep as whole time
- Don't change anything. Leave the station manned 24/7
- Why change a system that works as proven by the fast response to situations in Fleetwood
- Yes!
- Secure proper funding and retain full service as normal!
- No, if it ain't broke don't fix it
- Again it should not be happening in the first place
- No, the decision is unacceptable and many people aren't even aware of this proposal
- Just crazy how you are putting people's lives at risk
- Keep the same standard of fire cover as we have now, what are council tax increases covers
- No
- Scrapping it
- Peoples lives. Loss of property. Loss of support to other services
- 24 / 7 crewed pump
- Don't do it.
- Keep system as is
- Leave it as it is
- Yes. No change to how it is now
- This should be answered by your own evaluation
- Yes, do not do it
- No
- Dont change something that works as it is
- Computer modelling, data anaylsis and impact studies. Actual trial and error should never involve something that could involve the loss of life. Those few minutes for a crew to travel, prepare and set off can make all the difference from it being a small to a huge fire.
- Leave the emergency services as they are and look at cutting other services that aren't needed if you're looking to save money.
- The community shouldn't suffer
- Leave as is.

- No change to the service
- None.
- Leave the station manned
- Yes, find savings elsewhere.
- Stay on 2/2/4
- None
- Sticking to recognised 2-2-4 duty system. Immediate response in the evenings/night and better work life balance for firefighters.
- This should remain a wholetime station
- Look at 4 on 4 off with crew on station whole tome
- No
- Yes discount the proposal and remain manned overnight.
- Stay where you are. You can't put a cost on lives, it's not worth the savings to increase the chance of death by delayed response.
- Leave this fire station fully manned 24/7
- stay as present increase crews for the bad fires that happen not too often.
- As above
- Remain as you are for the next 6 months monitor recent statistics and see if the ongoing criminal trend reduces
- Utilise staff to cover more community work. Teaching in schools, educate future generations like we were when we were kids.
- Leave things as they are not everything is about money
- I believe alternative ways of saving money should be looked into first. This could include sharing specialist resources with nearby stations, reviewing administrative costs, seeking additional funding. The priority should be maintaining a fully staffed 24/7 response capability for Fleetwood rather than reducing emergency cover and putting peoples lives at risk.
- Leave things alone
- Yes, leave things as they are currently- subject to staff and union agreement.
- Leave things alone!
- No
- 24 hour coverage as is current
- No
- Leave as is.
- Keep it as it is
- Before proceeding with any reduction in immediate Fire and Rescue Service provision, I believe all possible alternatives should be fully explored. This could include identifying other areas where efficiencies or savings may be achieved without increasing potential risks to public safety, particularly in a community such as Fleetwood with a high proportion of elderly and vulnerable residents.
- Alternative approaches could include retaining a level of full-time cover, exploring revised staffing models, increasing recruitment and retention initiatives for retained firefighters, or implementing other measures that do not result in longer response times during critical emergencies.
- Any proposed changes should be supported by robust, long-term evidence and a comprehensive risk assessment that fully considers the needs of care homes, sheltered accommodation, disabled residents, and those who may be less able to evacuate quickly without assistance.
- While I appreciate the financial challenges faced by public services, cost-saving measures should not compromise the ability to protect life. I believe that

maintaining the highest possible level of emergency response for Fleetwood's residents should remain the priority."

- Day Crewing Plus
- One Watch System with self rostering.
- No it should be kept open due to increase in properties in wyre area.
- Don't take the current service away
- Full time crew at station at all times
- Time Costs Lives The Firecrews In Fleetwood an Surrounding Areas Do A Great Job As It Is if It's Not Broken Leave It ALONE PLEASE
- Change the station back to dcp as it was prior to the emergency cover review.
- Its the same staff needed as flexible day cover. Without the reduction in night time emergency response.
- Keep the staff full time
- It's proven time and again - cost cutting can kill - why change what works.
- if you are proposing a form of day crewing, why not use the expensive accommodation that was provided for the previous 'flexi crewing' system? Surely this would reduce turn out times
- Yes, save money elsewhere. Let's stop this cuts and austerity obsession because it's absolute madness and, as pointed out before, we have learnt nothing from the fire disasters of the past.
- Keep things as they are currently. The risk to life is not worth it just to save some money. Look at other services where cuts can be made where necessary but you should not be changing an emergency service to an on call service.
- Keep things exactly as they are we have had several fires in the last year, the crews attend call outs to our sheltered accommodation to help move people, the crews attend car accidents as well as routine work
- leave it as is
- Things remaining as they are now
- The alternative to this is to leave well alone and have the station manned the way it is now.
- No just leave it as it is lives will be lost if u dont
- Combined emergency response as we have lost our ambulance station.
- Yes. Do not slow emergency response.
- First, cut or pause non-essential spending before touching night-time cover.
- Second, review daytime crewing if LFRS says demand is lower at certain times, rather than weakening the period when discovery may already be delayed.
- Third, seek national reform so emergency cover cannot be compromised by industrial action.
- The alternative is simple: protect 24-hour station-based response at Fleetwood and find savings elsewhere.
- Keep it the same, put one of the Blackpool ones on it instead.
- A population in the town of 27000 warrants a full time manned pump at Fleetwood.
- Keep manned 24 hrs
- Put all ideas in the bin and shut the lid tight.
- Keep it as it is.
- Keep Fleetwood operational and manned around the clock as Bispham is already unmanned from 20:00 til 08:00 which is putting more pressure on the only full-time manned station forest gate in Blackpool so it doesn't make sense as it could be risking lives making the changes that's being proposed

- Keeping the firefighters in the station or just enough for to fill one fire engine
- Remain whole time crewed.
- NO
- Remain a 24hr cover station. I believe there are other shift systems that provide this.
- Either leave it as it is or change back to DCP

Do you have any further comments on this proposal?

- I don't agree with any of it
- Yes stop it before it gets going
- These services are vital to the local community, this will put lives at risk
- The trial is dangerous and should not take place
- I truly hope I'm wrong, but it seems to me that it's a tragedy waiting to happen
- No
- Not in the interest of the public!
- I understand it's all about money and cutting costs ,but it's only one step away from shutting it down completely and that would be a tragedy waiting to happen
- No
- Stop this now
- The fire service is like a insurance service you need it asap when required not waiting for them to get to station
- Fleetwood is increasing in size and population. Any cuts to fire services are detrimental to the people, homes and businesses of the town.
- Yes refuse to scale down there has been recent increase in fire in Fleetwood this needs a increase in goverment funding for emergency services and less on mp and counciliors expenses
- It's a joke. At least I hope it's a joke!
- Leave well alone, it's a good and necessary requirement,
- What is the point nobody listens to residents anyway
- Ludicrous
- Lobby mps and government for extra funding
- No
- No
- No
- If it is to save money then will this be shown in council tax payments. I would rather keep paying
- N/A
- No
- It can take approximately 4-5 minutes for a house to become fully engulfed in flames. 4-5 minutes for your life to be changed, for you to loose everything.
- You have stated that this change would add on an additional 4 minutes to your response time. That's an additional 4 minutes.
- I admit my knowledge is limited on your strategies and your timings however I believe that this change does not benefit the residents of this town.
- Crews that are on call should be paid the same as if they are in the station as it still impacts on their lives, so there should be no cost savings with not having a crew on site. Cutting service has never made things better
- Strongly disagree with the whole premise

- Not good enough for a growing town. More houses means more possible safety issues.
- No
- Fleetwood fire station I would assume doesn't just serve the fleetwood area, surely Thornton, cleveleys and Poulton are factored in to this as they don't have their own stations and are close to fleetwood
- No
- No.
- Are there many of your wholetime firefighters actually living within 5 minutes of the station? for those that aren't, will they be expected to move closer or be relocated to other stations?
- Am I correct in understanding that this is already going to happen? as I've heard that job vacancies have already been posted.
- I've worked at a day manning/retained station in the past in another county so do have some understanding of response times etc.
- Please keep us informed say every 6 months as to how it seems to be working and whether it is affecting staff moral
- I get the impression that it is only being considered to save money.
- We have already lost ambulance station and police station is part time hence increased crime in town
- Don't do it. I will be speaking to councillors and MP's to try and stop this.
- It should not go ahead
- This is a risk to the community,
- Strongly disagree that this has even made it to consultation
- The broad costs of loss of lives and injuries should not be compared to cost savings.
- how did the lord street fire get so bad station half a mile away.
- As above.
- No
- It’s putting lives at risk, creating delays to response times. Crews need to be on site for immediate response.
- None that are printable
- Fleetwood is a coastal town with residential areas, businesses, industrial sites and a busy road network. Residents deserve confidence that a fully staffed fire engine is immediately available whenever an emergency occurs. While I appreciate the need to manage budgets, public safety should come first. I am concerned that once emergency cover is reduced, even as a trial, it could become permanent. I would urge the Fire Authority to keep Fleetwood’s current level of fire cover and look for other solutions that do not increase risk to the public.
- By reducing the service you are risking lives.
- The incident at commercial premises on Lord Street recently demonstrates the need for firefighting staff to be available- even if we are ‘medium risk’

- What on earth do you think k your doing to fleetwood no police now no fire your just killing the town!
- No
- This proposal introduces avoidable and foreseeable harm. Fire does not wait for administrative convenience. When seconds matter, any policy that slows emergency response is not merely inefficient—it is dangerous. I urge

decision-makers to reject this proposal and instead prioritise measures that maintain or improve current response times, ensuring the safety of residents, firefighters, and the wider community.

- You are putting lives at risk with this plan
- My overriding concern is that this proposal appears to place too much emphasis on achieving financial efficiencies without giving sufficient weight to the potential consequences for public safety.
- Fleetwood is a town with a significant elderly population, numerous care homes, sheltered accommodation and residents living with disabilities or reduced mobility. In an emergency, these individuals may be unable to evacuate quickly without the immediate assistance of trained emergency personnel. A delay of even a few minutes can have devastating consequences.
- I fully recognise and appreciate the dedication of retained firefighters and the vital role they play within our Fire and Rescue Service. However, the reality remains that a retained response system cannot provide the same immediate availability as a fully crewed fire engine already stationed and ready to respond.
- I also believe that a six-month trial cannot provide a true reflection of the long-term risks involved. A period without a major incident should not be interpreted as proof that reduced cover is safe. Emergency services exist to be prepared for the incidents we hope never happen.
- I respectfully ask that the decision-makers carefully consider not only the financial implications of this proposal, but the human cost of getting this decision wrong. The safety and protection of Fleetwood’s residents — particularly the most vulnerable — should be the paramount consideration."
- It's OK doing trials but these services never usually come back. They are cut in many ways.
- As a resident of Fleetwood i feel this proposal if implemented will be detrimental to the safety of our town. Full stop.
- Yes let the fire crest carry on doing what they do now that is Saving Lives
- Stop putting money and budgets before lives
- I have absolutely no idea why you think my age, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation is relevant to your procedure trial.
- You say that it will only affect night time cover: what about day cover after the night crew have been at an incident during the night and are taking compensatory time off - ie starting later than normal
- Make sure you read my comments out and have it noted down that the person who even dreamt up this idea should not hold any position of responsibility whatsoever. How dare you gamble with the lives of myself and my family like this. Also, it's quite damning that the letter of the Blackpool North and Fleetwood MP was not considered, or read out, in the authority meeting.
- Our Fire Station needs to be manned 24/7, 365 days per year. It is an EMERGENCY SERVICE with a risk to people's lives. What next? An on call emergency ambulance service? This is disappointing to say the least.
- It’s disgusting taking more services from a area that is already struggling and so cut of
- Fleetwood is getting more and more isolated with regard to services and this would be one more example
- What will happen to the Fleetwood fire cadet unit?
- The fire service need to be left as is, it is not worth the risk of lives being lost due to it taking longer for emergency services to reach incidents. Fleetwood has

already lost its ambulance station, the police station is not as it was and this would be the start of it losing its fire station.

- Do Not Let Fleetwood Residents Down With Cut Backs if its a matter of money no ones life is worth losing
- Yes. This proposal is playing with fire — and Fleetwood residents may be the ones burned.
- It knowingly accepts slower attendance at night, when emergencies may already be advanced before anyone calls 999. That is the central danger. The delay is not theoretical; it is built into the model.
- If harm follows, it will not be unforeseeable. It will be the consequence of a deliberate decision to reduce immediate night-time cover.
- No quarterly average can rescue a person who needed help four minutes earlier. The proposal should be rejected.
- SAVE OUR FIRE STATION
- No
- No
- Who's the new manager to bring in such nonsense change?
- Also why do you need the next few questions about a person? In protest I've lied on each question relating to my gender, religion, sexual orientation, age etc
- Really concerned that this is already decided as the way to cut operating costs and will be implemented regardless
- For many years the fire service has maintained that the speed and weight of attack is key to a positive outcome at a fire or road crash, so any system that slows this response time down can only impact negatively on the safety of the residents of Fleetwood and the wider area.

Appendix 4

Evaluation Plan

Title of activity being evaluated	Flexible Day Crewing Pilot at Fleetwood Fire Station
Overview of activity	Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is undertaking an 18-month pilot of a Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) duty system at Fleetwood Fire Station, replacing the previous 2-2-4 shift system for the duration of the trial. Under the FDC arrangement, a single unit of firefighters provides positive hours at the station during the daytime and emergency response cover through on-call arrangements overnight. The model is intended to better align operational resources with identified risk and demand while maintaining an effective emergency response capability and supporting the delivery of prevention, protection, training and other station-based activities. The pilot will be formally evaluated at 6, 12 and 18 months to understand its impact and inform a decision regarding future crewing arrangements at Fleetwood.
Evaluation Level	Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 YES
Statement of purpose	This evaluation will provide Executive Board and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority with evidence regarding the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the Flexible Day Crewing pilot in order to determine whether the FDC arrangement should be retained, amended or discontinued at Fleetwood Fire Station following the 18-month pilot period. The evaluation will specifically consider whether the crewing system of FDC maintains operational response performance and resilience, appropriately matches resources to risk and demand, enables effective prevention and protection activity, provides a sustainable working arrangement for staff, and delivers anticipated organisational benefits.
Evaluation activity	The evaluation will run concurrently with the 18-month FDC pilot and will establish a baseline using an appropriate period prior to implementation Performance will be monitored throughout the pilot with formal evaluation points at 6 months, 12 months and 18 months. The evaluation will combine: • Response standards • comparison against pre-pilot baseline performance • incident and demand analysis • appliance availability and crewing information

	• prevention and protection activity; • training and operational competence data – performance against District Plan • workforce information including absence, overtime and staff turnover • financial information • staff surveys/focus groups • feedback from relevant managers and departments • consideration of community/stakeholder feedback where appropriate • recording of unintended positive or negative consequences
Resources	Resources required will include operational performance and incident data, Service Improvement support, HR/workforce information, finance data, availability and crewing information, prevention and protection performance information, operational competence/training records, staff time to complete surveys or participate in focus groups, station and district management input, and appropriate analytical support to compare pre- and post-implementation performance.
Outputs	The evaluation will directly deliver: • agreed pre-pilot baseline dataset (used for decision making and consultation) • 6-month interim evaluation report • 12-month interim evaluation report • 18-month final evaluation report • staff feedback findings • analysis of operational performance, resilience and response • analysis of prevention/protection and productive activity • financial and workforce impact assessment • lessons learned and identification of unintended consequences • final recommendations on whether FDC should be retained, modified or discontinued
External Factors	A number of factors may affect performance during the pilot and should be recorded so that changes are not automatically attributed to FDC. These include significant or prolonged incidents, seasonal variation in incident demand, extreme weather - flooding or wildfire periods, changes in Fleetwood's local risk profile, changes to neighbouring appliance availability or crewing, organisational changes elsewhere within LFRS; recruitment, vacancies or long-term absence, industrial relations issues, changes in national or local policy, major community events and changes to prevention/protection programmes.

Evaluation details

Evaluation question	SMART outcome	SMART indicators	Evaluation tools	Timescales
1. Has FDC maintained an effective emergency response from Fleetwood?	Throughout the 18-month pilot, operational response performance will remain within agreed LFRS standards/tolerances.	First appliance response times, % incidents meeting LFRS response standards, response performance by day/night, comparison with baseline/equivalent previous periods.	Incident data and pre-pilot baseline comparative analysis.	Continuous monitoring, formal review at 6, 12 and 18 months.
2. Has the FDC model maintained appropriate appliance availability and operational resilience?	Fleetwood appliance availability and crewing will remain at or above the agreed organisational requirement throughout the pilot, with any periods of unavailability understood and addressed.	% appliance availability, number/hours unavailable, reasons for unavailability, occasions minimum crewing cannot be achieved (detachments/overtime), appliance movements/standbys required to maintain cover	Availability data, mobilising data, rota	Monthly monitoring; 6, 12 and 18 months.
3. What impact has FDC had on the wider LFRS response model?	Implementation of FDC will not create a significant adverse impact on neighbouring stations, appliance movements or wider operational resilience.	Number of incidents attended by neighbouring appliances in Fleetwood (to be compared against previous data set), any changes in neighbouring response performance.	Mobilising data and incident data.	6, 12 and 18 months.
4. Does the FDC model appropriately align resources with Fleetwood's risk and	The deployment of resources under FDC will demonstrate an appropriate alignment between staffing arrangements and the pattern	Incident volumes by hour/day, day vs night demand, incident types, risk profile and comparison with data sets used when developing the proposal.	Incident analysis, Strategic Assessment of Risk/District Intelligence profile, risk mapping.	Baseline plus 6, 12 and 18 months.

incident demand?	of risk and operational demand throughout the pilot.			
5. Has FDC affected the delivery of prevention and protection activity?	Fleetwood crews will maintain or improve appropriate levels of risk-led prevention and protection activity during the pilot, taking account of agreed local priorities and operational demand.	Home Fire Safety Checks/targeted interventions, prevention activities, community engagement, protection activity undertaken by crews (BFSC numbers), comparison with baseline and planned activity.	Prevention/protection systems, district plan monitoring, activity records.	Quarterly, formal assessment at 6, 12 and 18 months.
6. Has FDC affected operational preparedness and competence?	Staff operating FDC will maintain required operational competence and preparedness throughout the trial.	% completion of required training, maintenance of core skills, exercises, risk information/site-specific activity.	Training/competence systems (eLMS), station records & District Plan, audit/assurance activity.	Monthly/quarterly; 6, 12 and 18 months.
7. Is the FDC duty system sustainable for the workforce?	The FDC model will provide a sustainable staffing arrangement, with workforce indicators showing no significant adverse trend attributable to the duty system over the 18-month period.	Sickness absence, vacancies, retention, overtime/detachments - ability to maintain crewing, requests to leave FDC, welfare issues, working-hours compliance.	HR data, crewing records, management information, staff survey/focus groups.	Baseline; 6, 12 and 18 months.
8. What is the staff experience of FDC?	Staff participating in the pilot will be given structured opportunities at each evaluation point to provide	Staff satisfaction, work-life balance, fatigue, morale, teamwork, perceived operational effectiveness,	Anonymous survey, focus groups, exit feedback where staff leave the pilot.	6, 12 and 18 months.

	feedback regarding the effectiveness, benefits and challenges of FDC.	willingness to continue under FDC.		
9. Has the change had an impact on the service provided to the Fleetwood community?	There will be no evidence of a significant adverse impact on the accessibility or quality of emergency response and risk-reduction services provided to the Fleetwood community attributable to FDC.	Complaints/compliments, response performance, prevention activity, stakeholder feedback, relevant consultation/community feedback, significant issues raised by elected members/partners.	Corporate feedback systems, stakeholder engagement, performance data, consultation records.	6, 12 and 18 months.
10. Have there been unintended consequences arising from FDC?	Positive and negative unintended consequences will be systematically identified, recorded and assessed throughout the pilot, with mitigating actions implemented where required.	Issues identified, near misses/operational learning, workforce issues, benefits not anticipated, mitigating actions and completion, learning captured.	Evaluation, debriefs, staff feedback, health & safety reporting, operational assurance.	Continuous; reviewed at 6, 12 and 18 months.
11. Is FDC an effective and sustainable future crewing model for Fleetwood?	By the end of the 18-month pilot, sufficient evidence will be available to make a documented recommendation regarding the future duty system at Fleetwood.	Overall performance against agreed evaluation criteria, benefits achieved, risks/issues, staff sustainability, operational effectiveness, stakeholder impact.	Consolidated evaluation report drawing on all evidence streams.	Final evaluation at 18 months.

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Member Champion Activity Report and Feedback

Contact for further information – Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Sam Pink.
Tel: 01772 866802

Executive Summary

This paper provides a report on the work of the Member Champions for the period up to 20 September 2026.

Members are invited to provide any feedback they may have for the period up to 20 September 2026.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is requested to note the report of the respective Member Champions and share any feedback received in relation to associated Service activities.

Information

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

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

- Community Safety – County Councillor Andy Blake
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Councillor Salim Sidat
- Health and Wellbeing & Climate Change – County Councillor Sohail Asghar
- Road Safety - County Councillor Joanne Ash

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

Community Safety - County Councillor Andy Blake

During the reporting period, Lancashire Fire and Rescue (LFRS) prevention teams have continued to deliver targeted activity across Lancashire, focusing on identified community risks and working closely with partner organisations to improve safety, reduce incidents and engage those most at risk.

Water safety has remained a significant priority, particularly during the summer period. LFRS delivered water safety education across schools, youth groups, holiday activity programmes and community events, alongside targeted engagement at high-risk open water locations. Messages focused on cold-water shock, the dangers of entering open water and how to respond in an emergency, including the ‘Float to Live’ message. Across the Western Area alone, 1,445 pupils received water safety education, with 1,158 receiving face-to-face sessions and a further 287 virtually.

Home Fire Safety activity continued to support vulnerable residents through targeted Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs), community engagement and partnership referrals. For example, a joint community event in Preston resulted in 20 HFSCs being completed, with further residents receiving advice and information on accessing the service.

The 'F.R.E.E. Protecting Your Tomorrow' (Fire, Reintegration into the community, Enrichment and personal development, Education and future opportunities) programme has continued to develop through LFRS's partnership working with HMP Lancaster Farms. The programme was established in response to concerns around deliberate fires within cells, fire safety awareness and the challenges prisoners face when preparing to return to the community.

Since September 2025, LFRS has delivered 15 sessions to 183 prisoners. The programme covers fire safety in the home, including electrical, cooking and smoking risks, alongside road safety, landlord responsibilities, housing and homelessness, employment and fire service recruitment. Information is also provided to support individuals returning to communities outside Lancashire, including referral pathways to neighbouring fire and rescue services. The programme is demonstrating encouraging early results. There were eight deliberate cell fires at HMP Lancaster Farms during April 2024 to March 2025, compared with three during April 2025 to March 2026, representing a 62.5 per cent reduction.

Youth Engagement and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) remained an important area of prevention activity. LFRS worked with schools, youth services, sports programmes and partner agencies to engage young people around deliberate fire-setting, dangerous behaviour and the consequences of ASB. Direct engagement with young people who can be difficult to reach, demonstrated the value of operational crews and prevention staff working together to build trust and provide real-life insight into the consequences of emergency incidents.

Community safety campaigns were delivered in response to emerging and seasonal risks. The World Cup campaign provided targeted advice around alcohol consumption, cooking, social gatherings and safe celebrations. Community Safety Advisors engaged directly with communities through local events, supermarkets, markets and multi-agency drop-in sessions, working alongside police, councils and housing partners.

In addition, following a fatal e-bike fire, LFRS undertook targeted community engagement and HFSC activity whilst strengthening partnership working with police and Trading Standards to promote safer use and charging of e-bikes and e-scooters.

The breadth of activity delivered across Lancashire continues to reflect the Service's commitment to prevention, early intervention and partnership working, helping to create safer, healthier and more resilient communities

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Salim Sidat

LFRS continues to deliver prevention, engagement and improvement activities that support community safety, staff wellbeing and future service delivery.

A service-wide cooking safety campaign ran from 08 June to 10 July 2026, and targeted groups at greater risk of cooking-related fires, including residents of flats, Houses in

Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and sheltered accommodation, and those with additional vulnerabilities. Key messages were promoted through HFSCs, community events, partner organisations and targeted prevention activity.

Staff attended the Women in the Fire Service National Training and Development Event in June, benefiting from leadership development, networking and shared learning opportunities that support inclusion and positive cultural change across the Service.

Community engagement remained a priority throughout the summer. LFRS attended the Caribbean Festival in Preston, promoting water safety, grass fire prevention and BBQ safety, while Armed Forces Day events in Lancaster and Morecambe provided opportunities to engage with the public, promote recruitment and strengthen links with the Armed Forces community. As part of the World Cup prevention campaign, teams also delivered targeted safety messages around alcohol consumption, social gatherings, cooking and celebrations.

Following feedback from operational crews and stakeholders, a new Incident Support Unit (ISU) is now operational. The vehicle provides welfare facilities at prolonged incidents, including refreshments, rest areas and toilet facilities, supporting the wellbeing of personnel during operational activity.

A refreshed digital exit interview process has also been introduced, providing a more accessible way to capture feedback from employees leaving the Service and helping to inform future organisational improvements.

The Service is currently consulting on the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2027-2032, following extensive engagement with staff, partners and communities which has generated more than 2,000 responses. Dedicated staff engagement sessions have also been introduced to ensure employees can contribute to proposals relating to future priorities, resource allocation and operational response, including Automatic Fire Alarm attendance.

Digital transformation work continues, with preparations underway for Service Delivery staff to transition to Windows 11 and Microsoft 365 tools. Staff are also being encouraged to join the Digital Champions Network to support colleagues and assist with the roll-out of new technology.

The King's Trust Pendle Team has supported summer wildfire and water safety campaigns at Pendle Hill and Barley, working with local businesses and visitors to raise awareness and reinforce key prevention messages.

These activities demonstrate LFRS's continued commitment to prevention, community engagement and continuous improvement. Through targeted interventions, staff investment and consultation on future priorities, the Service remains focused on delivering effective and inclusive services that meet the changing needs of Lancashire's communities.

Health and Wellbeing and Climate Change – County Councillor Sohail Asghar

Climate Change and Environment

During Quarter 1 (Q1), there was strong engagement from Environmental Champions as part of the quarterly focus on 'recycling in a throwaway society'. This theme provided an opportunity to reinforce the importance of reducing waste, reusing resources where possible, and supporting more sustainable behaviours across the Service.

As part of this activity, a clothing donation competition was delivered in partnership with The Fire Fighters Charity, encouraging staff to give clothing a second life while also generating charitable donations. This initiative supported both environmental and social value outcomes by diverting reusable items from waste streams and contributing to a recognised charity supporting the fire service community. Hyndburn achieved the highest volume of clothing donations and was recognised as the winning station, demonstrating positive engagement at station level.

In addition, several crews expressed interest in increasing biodiversity across station sites. This presents an opportunity to explore practical measures that can support local habitats and contribute to wider environmental objectives, while ensuring that operational safety and site suitability remain central considerations. This reflects a growing awareness among staff of the role stations can play in supporting environmental improvement at a local level.

Overall, attitudes towards recycling have improved significantly over the past 12 months, with progress continuing through Q1. The increased engagement from Environmental Champions, combined with targeted campaigns and improved awareness, is contributing to a greater proportion of waste being recycled and a reduction in the amount sent to landfill. This represents positive progress against the Service's wider climate change and environmental priorities, and demonstrates the value of sustained communications, local ownership and practical action. Continued momentum will be important to ensure these positive behaviours are maintained and further embedded across all stations and workplaces.

Health and Wellbeing

During Q1, health and wellbeing activity continued to focus on strengthening the support available to staff and promoting positive mental health across the Service. As part of this work, two wellbeing workshops were delivered by The Fire Fighters Charity, covering 'Managing Stress' and 'Introducing Relaxation and Mindfulness'. These sessions provided staff with practical tools and techniques to help recognise and manage stress, build personal resilience and incorporate simple wellbeing practices into day-to-day routines. Continued access to this type of preventative support helps reinforce a culture where mental health and wellbeing are openly discussed and proactively supported.

A paper has been approved by the Health, Safety and Environment Advisory Group to establish the LFRS 'Wellness Walks' group. The group will provide an inclusive opportunity for LFRS staff, retired members, families and friends to come together, be active and support their mental health and wellbeing in a sociable and accessible way. Walking routes will be planned and led by a qualified lowland leader and will be no longer than three hours, including a refreshment stop halfway where possible. This approach will help ensure the walks are safe, well organised and suitable for a range of abilities, while also encouraging connection, peer support and time outdoors. It is anticipated that the first 'Wellness Walk' will take place in September 2026.

These activities are complemented by ongoing investment in physical wellbeing, including the servicing of gym facilities across Service sites and the completion of 579 fitness tests during Q1 of the 2026-27 testing period. This demonstrates continued engagement with physical fitness and supports the Service's commitment to maintaining a healthy, capable and resilient workforce.

Road Safety – County Councillor Joanne Ash

June and July were busy months for 'Alive to Drive' road safety events, with events taking place in Leyland, Morecambe and Rawtenstall. LFRS were joined by staff from Lancashire County Council (LCC) Road Safety Team, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), Institute of Advanced Motorists, Highways Agency and Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon).

At Rawtenstall and Morecambe, Car Seat Safety joined the team and carried out free car seat checks for members of the public. This was a very welcome addition to the events, given the recent increase in fatal and serious injuries due to children being poorly restrained.

The pinnacle of the event was the Road Traffic Collision (RTC) demonstration. This was a multi-agency demonstration between LFRS, NWAS and LanCon, which allowed members of the public to see what happened inside a road closure during an incident. Live commentary was given throughout the demonstration via a PA system, which explained each organisation's role at these types of incidents. It also provided the opportunity to interweave key safety messages around Lancashire's 'Fatal 5' and the factors which contribute most to serious and fatal RTCs: inappropriate speed, driving under the influence, mobile phone use, lack of seatbelt compliance and careless and reckless driving. Two smaller events took place in Darwen and Chorley which included road safety professionals, but no RTC demonstration.

An enhanced version of 'Wasted Lives' was delivered to 180 students at Penwortham Priory High School; LFRS were approached to do so following the death of an ex-pupil in an RTC. The session covered the usual 'Fatal 5' messaging but was adapted to focus more on passenger safety, including the importance of wearing a seatbelt, especially in the rear of the vehicle where the lack of seatbelt compliance is higher. This session was complemented by LCC Road Safety Team attending with their 'e-bike and e-scooter' stand and interactive 'Batak' reactions board.

A young farmers' event brought crews from Carnforth and Kirkby Lonsdale in Cumbria together for a cross-border RTC demonstration, following an adapted 'Wasted Lives' session. This event was well received and attended by young people from the target audience age range of 15 to 22.

LFRS also attended Lytham Car Show with LCC and it proved to be one of the busiest events of the season, with lots of interested members of the public. The LFRS focus for the event was children's car seats and information relating to the law was shared. The crashed car also drew a lot of attendance from the 8,000 car exhibitors. More staff were planned to attend next year, as it was a fantastic opportunity for positive engagement.

Member Feedback and Champion Contributions

Members are encouraged and welcomed to share verbal feedback on the content of this report and to contribute with any updates on event they've attended that they would wish to share.

Member Champions are kindly encouraged to provide updates within their respective areas, outlining progress, emerging issues, and opportunities for further engagement. This approach is intended to support informed discussion, enhance member involvement, and help ensure that Champion roles continue to add value to service delivery and governance.

Business risk

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

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

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

HR implications
Some Member and Officer time commitments.

Financial implications
Activities are within budget.

Legal implications
None identified.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of background papers
Paper:
Date:
Contact: ACFO Sam Pink

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

Glossary

ASB - Anti-Social Behaviour
CRMP - Community Risk Management Plan
HFSC - Home Fire Safety Check
HMO - Houses in Multiple Occupation
ISU - Incident Support Unit
LanCon - Lancashire Constabulary
LCC – Lancashire County Council
LFRS – Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
NWAS – North West Ambulance Service
Q1 – Quarter 1
RTC – Road Traffic Collision

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 21 September 2026

Fire Protection Report

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

Executive Summary

This report covers the period from 15 June 2026 to 21 August 2026 and provides a summary of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions relating to fire safety offences, alongside convictions arising from arson incidents progressed through the criminal justice process.

Given the pace of regulatory change in building fire safety, this report also provides an update on Fire Protection and Business Support. It outlines how the Service is adapting its delivery model and developing its workforce to keep pace with these changes, while continuing to improve public and firefighter safety within the built environment.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

This report is provided to inform Members of current fire safety prosecution activity, arson-related convictions, and the wider Protection and Business Support context. It highlights live cases, emerging demand, and the regulatory environment in which LFRS is continuing to develop its capability and maintain a robust approach to public and firefighter safety.

The report is structured in three parts: fire safety convictions, prosecution cases currently in progress or development, and arson-related convictions and current cases. This structure is intended to give Members a clear view of enforcement activity, case progression, and the wider risk context for Protection and Business Support.

Fire safety convictions

Prosecutions

There have been no sentencings since the previous Combined Fire Authority report dated the 15 of June 2026.

Prosecutions in the Court system

Five cases currently sit within the court system, and one awaits summons being issued.

The responsible person and company for two HMO (House of multiple occupation) premises in Bacup and Darwen, both owned by the same responsible person, pleaded guilty to breaches of the Fire Safety Order at Preston Magistrates Court on 13 August 2025. The sentencing hearing, originally listed for 7 January 2026, was adjourned and subsequently listed for 16 April 2026 at Preston Crown Court. A further adjournment was then granted due to personal circumstances. The hearing, which was later listed for 19 May 2026, has now been rescheduled to 28 September 2026.

An NHS Trust and a maintenance company appeared at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 1 October 2025 in relation to a fatal fire and alleged breaches of the Fire Safety Order at a mental health unit in Blackburn in late 2023. The hearing was adjourned until 18 November 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court and was subsequently transferred to Preston Crown Court.

The initial plea and case management hearing took place on 15 December 2025, at which no pleas were entered. A further plea and case management hearing was listed at Preston Crown Court for 22 April 2026. Pleas have now been entered by the Trust. The maintenance company has indicated its pleas and is awaiting a plea hearing date at Preston Crown Court. Once both parties have formally entered pleas, a sentencing date will be allocated.

The responsible persons and company were due to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 18 February 2026 in relation to breaches of the Fire Safety Order at a nightclub in Burnley. The defendants did not attend court on that date but subsequently appeared at Lancaster Magistrates Court on 26 March 2026. At that hearing, one responsible person pleaded guilty to all charges, while the second responsible person and the company pleaded not guilty.

The case was then transferred to Preston Crown Court, with a hearing listed for 23 April 2026. A further hearing was listed for 5 June 2026 due to the absence of legal representation at the previous hearing. Both responsible persons have now pleaded guilty, and sentencing is scheduled for 12 October 2026 at Preston Crown Court.

Two companies and a charity were due to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 28 January 2026 in relation to breaches of the Fire Safety Order at mixed commercial and residential student accommodation in Preston. The case was subsequently transferred to Preston Crown Court after no pleas were entered in the Magistrates Court.

A hearing was held at Preston Crown Court on 6 March 2026, at which no plea indications were given. A further hearing was listed for 3 July 2026. On 11 May 2026, offers were accepted under several articles on a full facts basis, which resulted in the charity no longer being subject to prosecution. At present, no plea has been received from the second company.

As LFRS has not received acceptable pleas from all parties, a trial date has now been set for 7 June 2027 at Preston Crown Court.

The responsible person for a mixed commercial and residential building in Morecambe was issued with a summons on 20 April 2026, with the matter listed for hearing at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 10 June 2026. The case proceeded to Crown Court on 15 July 2026. At that hearing, defence counsel requested further time to instruct their client. A new hearing date has been set for 13 October 2026.

Prosecution cases currently being developed and reviewed

Protection teams continue to investigate and develop case files relating to sixteen other premises and one fire risk assessor where offences are believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. These include:

- Care and Nursing Home x 4
- Supported Living premises x 1
- House of Multiple Occupation x 2

- Residential Flats (Student Accommodation) x 1
- Commercial premises (shop) x 1
- Mixed Commercial and residential (Takeaway & Flat) x 1
- Large Nightclub x 1
- Large theatre & after show bar x 1
- Hotel x 3
- Fire risk assessor x 1

Arson risk reduction

R v Kian King and Locklan Marsden-Price

Address
Hacketts York House Hotel, 14-18 Queens Promenade, Blackpool, FY29SQ.

Date and Time of Call
24/04/2023 14:46

This incident involved a fire on the ground floor of a derelict hotel on Blackpool's seafront. The building had previously been subject to multiple deliberate fires linked to anti-social behaviour. The fire spread rapidly through the building due to voids created by previous smaller fires and the general condition of the premises. A witness reported seeing two children enter the building but not leave, resulting in the incident being upgraded to a persons reported incident. Following searches by crews, the building was confirmed to be empty.

This was a protracted incident and investigation involving LFRS and partner agencies. The incident required the attendance of a significant number of appliances over the following four days and was notable for the high use of breathing apparatus, with 20 breathing apparatus wears completed by crews during the emergency phase. There was significant disruption to neighbouring residents. The incident resulted in the destruction of the derelict hotel and its subsequent controlled demolition.

The defendants were charged with arson in relation to the Hacketts Hotel fire, as well as a further arson offence relating to a smaller fire near Seasiders Way. They were also charged with burglary for stealing the hand sanitiser used in the Hacketts Hotel arson. Both defendants pleaded guilty before the hearing. Sentencing took place in February 2026. Kian King received a Community Order, as he was a youth at the time of the offence, and Locklan Marsden-Price received a two-year prison sentence.

R v Darren Davies

Address
16 Carr Lane, Hambleton, FY6 9AZ

Date and Time of Call
27/03/2026 09:50

This incident involved an explosion at an occupied domestic bungalow. LFRS mobilised four fire engines, one aerial ladder platform and the drone, and the incident was initially categorised as a persons reported fire. On arrival of the first fire engine, the missing occupant was found outside the property suffering from minor burns. During the investigation, the occupant became the suspect after confessing to starting the fire.

Darren Davies had poured ignitable liquid inside the property and placed domestic gas cylinders around the building. His intent was to destroy the property following a misunderstanding about its future ownership in a recent will. Fire investigation concluded that the fire was caused by the deliberate ignition of ignitable liquid rather than by the cylinders.

The building sustained total damage, resulting in the controlled demolition of the remaining structure. Several nearby properties were also damaged, and local residents were affected by the incident. The response and investigation involved LFRS, Cadent Gas, United Utilities and Lancashire County Council.

Darren Davies was charged with arson reckless as to whether life would be endangered. He pleaded guilty at the plea and trial preparation hearing and was sentenced on 30 July 2026 to four years and four months' imprisonment.

Current cases

There are still currently 11 outstanding cases going through the criminal justice process that LFRS are involved with.

Arson Sentencing Guidelines

The maximum sentence for arson in the UK is life imprisonment, as it's considered an exceptionally dangerous offense under the Criminal Damage Act 1971. While life imprisonment is the potential maximum, actual sentences vary significantly based on intent, harm caused (like endangering life), and specific circumstances, with ranges from discharges or fines for minor incidents to many years in custody for severe cases.

Business risk

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

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

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

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

Glossary

LFRS – Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
HMO – House of multiple occupation
NHS – National Health Service

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 21 September 2026

Operational Incidents of Interest

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

Executive Summary

This report provides Members with information relating to operational incidents of interest between June and August 2026. The incidents selected reflect larger deployments, complex rescues, significant commercial and domestic fires, rural and environmental impact incidents, and incidents involving casualties.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Information

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

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

- National Resilience and Major Incident support across varying Fire and Rescue Services
- Building fire in Fleetwood (3/6/26)
- Commercial building fire in Chorley (17/6/26)
- Rescue from major entrapment in Accrington (22/6/26)
- Commercial building fire in Ormskirk (30/6/26)
- Waste fire in Preston (18/7/26)
- Fire involving agricultural building in Bispham (21/7/26)
- Derelict building fire in Chorley (11/8/26)
- Domestic dwelling fire in Nelson (22/8/26)

LFRS national deployment	South Wales, Derbyshire, Hampshire, Mid and west Wales, Nottingham and Greater Manchester
Date:	June - August
Time:	34 days deployed

Through the reporting period Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service through National Resilience arrangements have supported several Counties in response to Major Incidents, or National Resilience requests for support to assist with operational support and response to climate related incidents such as wildfires. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service have deployed with the newly formed National Resilience wildfire capability to support significant incidents whilst maintaining our own provision within county to effectively respond to our risk.

LFRS station area:	W32 Fleetwood
Date:	3 June 2026
Time:	16:59

At 16:59 hours on 3 June 2026, eight fire engines from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, two aerial ladder platforms from Preston and Morecambe, the command unit from Fulwood, hose laying lorry from South Shore, breathing apparatus unit from Preston and the drone attended an incident on Lord Street, Fleetwood. The fire involved a commercial premises consisting of three floors, approximately thirty metres by fifty metres. Firefighters used fourteen breathing apparatus, two hose reels, three jets and two thermal imaging cameras. An attendance was maintained and providing support to partners and damping down for two days.

LFRS station area:	S54 Chorley
Date:	17 June 2026
Time:	23:06

At 23:06 on 17 June 2026, six fire engines, one aerial ladder platform, one command unit and two drones from Lancashire attended a fire on Lawrence Lane, Eccleston. The fire involved a commercial premises. Crews used six breathing apparatus, two main jets and one hose reel jet to extinguish the fire. Crews were detained for approximately five hours.

LFRS station area:	E70 Accrington
Date:	22 June 2026
Time:	09:52

At 09:52 on 22 June 2026, three fire engines from Hyndburn, Rawtenstall and Chorley, together with the urban search and rescue team from Chorley and Bamber Bridge, attended an incident on Fountain Street, Accrington. Fire service personnel rescued one casualty from an industrial machine. Fire service resources were in attendance for approximately two hours and twenty minutes.

LFRS station area:	S51 Ormskirk
Date:	30 June 2026
Time:	06:16

At 06:16 hours on 30 June 2026, six fire engines from Ormskirk, Skelmersdale, Blackburn, Hindley and Wigan, together with the command unit, Stinger and fire service drone, attended Rainford Road, Bickerstaffe in Ormskirk. The fire involved a commercial building approximately thirty metres by sixty metres, which was well alight. The Fire and Rescue Service remained in attendance for 2 days damping down before safely handing the incident over.

LFRS station area:	C50 Preston
Date:	18 July 2026
Time:	01:25

At 01:25 hours on 18 July 2026, several appliances, the high volume pump, command unit, double hose box, aerial ladder platform and drone from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service attended a fire at Longridge Road, Preston. Firefighters used main jets, and aerial firefighting to extinguish a fire involving large quantities of waste and metal the fire and crews remained in attendance for over twelve hours.

LFRS station area:	S51 Ormskirk
Date:	21 July 2026
Time:	20:09

At 20:09 hours on 21 July 2026, eight fire engines, one water bowser and a control unit from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service attended a large fire involving a large quantity of hay in a hay storage area on a farm off Lee Lane, Bispham near Ormskirk. Firefighters extinguished the fire using three main line jets and six breathing apparatus. Three casualties sustained slight smoke inhalation, all declined hospital treatment, and crews remained in attendance at the time of reporting.

LFRS station area:	S54 Chorley
Date:	11 August 2026
Time:	16:22

On 11 August 2026 at 16:22 hours, four fire engines from Fulwood, Bamber Bridge and Leyland, with the aerial ladder platform from Preston, attended a derelict building fire on Preston Road in Clayton. Crews used hose reels, main jets and breathing apparatus, and were on scene for approximately ten hours.

LFRS station area:	P94 Nelson
Date:	22 August 2026
Time:	18:45

At 18:45 on 22 August 2026, four fire engines from Hyndburn, Blackburn, Burnley and Nelson attended an incident on Summer Street, Nelson. The persons reported fire involved three casualties who were taken to hospital. Fire service personnel used four breathing apparatus and two hose reels to extinguish the fire. Crews were detained for four hours and thirty minutes.

Business risk

None.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? No
If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact: