

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Performance Committee

**Monday, 14 September 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room,
Service Headquarters, Fulwood.**

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
B Langford	
G Mirfin	
A Riggott	
M Ritson (Chair)	
L Thomson	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) I Armistead, Group Manager - Protection P Jones, Area Manager K McCreesh, Area Manager (LFRS) J Turner, Head of People D Howell, Monitoring Officer S Hunter, Member Services Manager J Kelly, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance

9-26/27	Apologies For Absence
	County Councillor S Asghar (apologies) County Councillor M Clifford (apologies) County Councillor L Parker County Councillor J Tetlow (apologies) Councillor S Sidat (apologies)
10-26/27	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
11-26/27	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	The minutes were proposed by County Councillor A Riggott and seconded by

	Councillor B Langford. Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 8 July 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
12-26/27	Performance Management Information: 2026-2027 Quarter 1 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. 1.1 Overall Staff Engagement Members received an update on staff engagement during the period. From April to June 2026, 12 station visits were carried out by principal officers and area managers as part of the service-wide engagement programme. 29 wellbeing interactions were undertaken ranging from workshops with crews to wellbeing support dog engagements and two engagement visits by the Human Resources team. An extended leadership workshop was held with middle and senior managers, and five Watch Managers' Forum events took place to keep wholetime and functional watch managers informed of what was happening in service delivery and gave them the opportunity to share feedback and be involved in changes. Two Staff Forum events were held for all staff to hear directly from the Chief Fire Officer about current work and future plans and also provided the opportunity for staff to raise issues and share ideas to help shape the direction of our Service. The Service engaged with staff over topics related to facilities, fleet, and equipment including breathing apparatus, personal protective equipment, training facilities and heavyweight drones. Our Firefighting Tactics Group had been evaluating various lengths of 38mm diameter hose, a lightweight firefighting hose, to identify any that could provide a greater amount of water with the agility of a lighter-weight hose. It was noted that the Service had 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 current and future 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 quarterly 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 1 actual shifts lost: 2.58 (During the same quarter the previous year, 1.98 shifts were lost, an increase of 0.60 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same quarter last year)

This was a negative exception report due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being above the Service target.

This section of the report refers to sickness absence rates for the period 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026.

1,515 wholetime absence shifts were lost in the quarter = 2.58 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 four cases in Quarter 1. The absence reasons being Musculoskeletal, Heart, Cardiac and Circulatory problems, and Hospital/ Post Operative. 134 shifts were lost during the quarter as a result of the above four cases of long-term absence, compared with 179 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2025-26. These cases accounted for 0.23 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

There were 36 long-term absence cases recorded within the three months (an increase from 27 in the previous Quarter):

- Musculoskeletal – 14
- Hospital/Post Operative Procedure – 6
- Mental health (other) – 5
- Other absence types – 5
- Mental health (work related stress) – 3
- Other known causes (not specified) – 3

During Quarter 1, long-term sickness was the main contributor to wholetime absence and accounted for 917 of the 1,515 shifts lost, compared with 598 shifts lost to short-term sickness. The highest causes of wholetime sickness by shifts lost were hospital/ post-operative absence, mental health and musculoskeletal conditions.

The Service managed staff absence (both long-term and short-term) 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 for staff 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, meetings were held to explore support options. 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.

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

Absence rates among Wholetime staff currently exceeded the Service target which highlighted the need for a targeted strategy to address this concern. In-depth analysis had been conducted on the leading causes of long-term absence. During the quarter, 49 individual absence episodes were attributable to musculoskeletal cases, 16 were classified as long-term (over 28 days) involving back, upper limb, and other/ undefined conditions. At the end of the quarter, four employees off due to long-term absence remained absent.

Regarding hospital/ post-operative absences, seven long-term cases were recorded; three employees had since resumed work. All cases received support from the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) and formal absence meetings were held as required by policy when absence triggers were met.

For mental health (other), five long-term cases were identified, primarily stemming from personal or family circumstances. Only two cases remained active. Absence management protocols were being implemented, with comprehensive support offered and discussions regarding modified duties underway to facilitate workplace reintegration.

Further to the above absence levels the service had also developed a comprehensive action plan aimed at reducing absence levels:

- HR absence data would be shared with Human Resource Business Partners and Service Delivery Managers, with a view to meeting staff who were taking excessive periods of time off.
- Area Managers and HR would review attendance levels and any action taken on a monthly basis.
- The ACFO and Head of People would continue to review long-term sickness absence cases to ensure absence management policy was being followed and cases managed appropriately.
- Welfare meetings with HR and the line manager would take place after four weeks of absence.
- Modified duty would be an active proposition for anyone off long-term sick.
- HR would deliver training on Absence Management and Individual Stress Risk Assessments.
- HR would identify those managers who did not take action and failed to complete the absence management process – these staff would be required to attend training.
- It was proposed that any member of staff who had hit a trigger or had a period of absence (excluding disability related absence) would be prohibited from undertaking Associate Trainer, or volunteering for overtime for a period of three months.
- The Absence Management Procedure would be updated.
- Weekly Absence Report which went to Station Managers/ Area admin teams and Area Managers would be reviewed.
- A People Dashboard would be developed and would include absence related data.

Area Manager P Jones spoke about various societal and national trends in terms of sickness absence, and the type of pressures that staff might be facing outside

work.

The Chair enquired about absence figures for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) in relation to national trends. The Head of People reported that the Service was placed eleventh out of 40 Services according to the latest available data. The lowest reported sickness absence figure by a service was one day per person and the highest 4.6 days; LFRS were 2.3 days per person and therefore above the national average.

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 percentage of available hours of cover at end of the quarter, was 1.66%.

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: 1.61

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 for Quarter 1 was 1.61, which is 0.39 within target. During the same quarter in the previous year, 1.85 shifts were lost, representing a decrease of 0.24 shifts lost per Green Book employee.

There were 412 non-uniformed absence shifts lost = 1.61 against a target of 2.00 during Quarter 1. 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 increased from four cases in Quarter 4 of 2025-26 to six cases in Quarter 1 of 2026-27:

- Mental health (other) – 3 cases
- Other absence types – 3 cases

320 shifts were lost during the quarter as a result of the above six cases of long-term absences, this was in comparison to 245 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2025-26. These cases accounted for 1.25 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

During Quarter 1, Green Book absence continued to be driven by a small number of long-term absence cases accounting for 1.25 shifts lost out of the total 1.61 shifts lost. The cases related to mental health conditions, Hospital/ Post operative recovery, Ear/ Nose/ Throat issues and Heart/ Cardiac conditions.

Mental Health was the highest cause of long-term absence accounting for 90 shifts over three individual occurrences. These absences were not specifically identified as work-related stress but other mental health issues.

In summary, absence was predominantly medically supported and longer term, not short term casual sickness.

County Councillor A Riggott and the Chair both queried why the Service would have the same absence standard for both Grey and Green Book staff, given the very different nature of roles. The Head of People responded that this standard came from National Fire Chiefs Council metrics. However, agreed that it would be reasonable to expect that Green Book staff sickness absence would be lower than Grey Book operational staff due to the nature of Green Book roles being mainly desk based with hybrid working. The ACFO and Head of People noted the comments and indicated that they would aim to feed these into the relevant national body.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity

This indicator measured workforce diversity for Grey and Green Book staff combined. The percentages outside the brackets represented the position at the current quarter, with the percentages in brackets illustrating the position at the same quarter the previous year:

- Gender: Female 23% (22%), Male 77% (78%)
- Ethnicity: Other than white 4% (4%), White 91% (91%), Not stated 5% (5%)
- Sexual orientation: LGBT 5% (5%), Heterosexual 65% (62%), Not stated 30% (33%)
- Disability: Disability 5% (3%), No disability 93% (94%), Not stated 2% (3%)

The diversity percentage by Grey Book staff and Green Book staff was outlined by:

- Gender: Grey Book - 11% Female and 89% Male; Green Book - 63% Female and 37% Male
- Ethnicity: Grey Book - 92% White, 4% Other than white, 4% Not stated; Green Book - 85% White, 6% Other than white, 9% Not stated
- Sexual orientation: Grey Book - 64% Heterosexual, 6% LGBT, 30% Not stated; Green Book - 69% Heterosexual, 4% LGBT, 27% Not stated
- Disability: Grey Book - 94% No disability, 4% Disability, 2% Not stated; Green Book - 86% No disability, 7% Disability, 7% Not stated.

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: 83% (25%) Female, 17% (75%) Male
- Ethnicity: 0% (18%) Other than white, 100% (82%) White
- Sexual Orientation: 0% (0%) LGBT, 100% (82%) Heterosexual, 0% (18%) Not stated
- Disability: 0% (0%) Disability, 100% (89%) No disability, 0% (11%) Not stated

During the quarter, there were a total of six new recruits. The ACFO and Head of People confirmed that most of the recruitment during the quarter was Green Book and those roles tended to attract more female applicants, hence the higher figure

for female recruitment as a result.

1.4 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the numbers of accidents which involved LFRS staff members at work within the quarter. Whilst not a negative exception, the total number of staff accidents was 19, which was an increase of ten incidents over the same quarter the previous year. The ACFO indicated that this data directly correlated with some of the staff absence data over the same period. There were no specific accident trends but events involved trips, falls, handling and lifting. As a result of some accidents, supplementary training would take place to ensure staff followed correct procedures.

County Councillor A Riggott commented that the rise in accident numbers could reflect an increased reporting culture which was positive, but there might be cause for concern if the increase in accidents reflected wear and tear of the estate. The ACFO responded that 7 of the accidents recorded in Quarter 1 had required the Service to follow Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and were reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Figures were acknowledged as high for the quarter and it was noted that some incidents were due to inattention or individual lapses, as a consequence supplementary training was put in place. The ACFO agreed that providing a higher level of detail regarding accident data in subsequent reports would be helpful to members in terms of better understanding workplace risks and how these might correlate, in some cases, with absence levels.

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 three 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.

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

An improvement was shown by a year-on-year decreasing 'Overall Risk Score' value. The 2026 score was 30,048, a reduction of 2% from the 2025 score of 30,532.

At the July 2026 Performance Committee, members had asked whether more detail could be provided in the report about changes to the risk profile of particular areas. The ACFO talked to members about which areas were classed as very high risk. County Councillor G Mirfin thanked the ACFO for providing the information. There was a query noted regarding Haslingden's classification and Area Manager P Jones indicated he would check the data and provide some feedback.

2.2 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that LFRS attended with one or more pumping appliances. Incidents included fires, special service calls, false alarms and collaborative work undertaken with other emergency services such as missing person searches on behalf of the Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and gaining entry incidents at the request of the North West Ambulance Service

(NWAS).

- Quarterly activity decreased 8.33% over the same quarter of the previous year.
- Incidents Year to Date 2026-27 (Quarter 1) – 4,646
- Previous year to Date 2025-26 (Quarter 1) – 5,068

The incidents attended by LFRS consisted of a myriad of different types, the report included a chart to represent the count and percentage each activity contributed to the quarter's activity:

- False Alarm incidents made up 41% of activity – of which 26% were due to apparatus incidents, good intent false alarms accounted for 15%, and malicious false alarms accounted for 1%.
- Fire Primary incidents encompass Accidental Dwelling Fires, which accounted for 40% of primary fires (KPI 2.3).
- Fire Secondary incidents are those caused by either a deliberate or accidental act, or the cause was not known. Deliberate fires mainly involved loose refuse and currently accounted for 47% of secondary fires, with 53% being an 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, Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), effecting entry and animal assistance incidents could be shown. Other types ranged from hazardous materials incidents, to spill and leaks or advice only.

2.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

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

- Accidental Dwelling Fires, 225 in Quarter 1 (year to date)
- The figure for the previous year to date/ Quarter 1 was 195
- Quarterly activity had increased 15.38% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.3.1 ADF – Harm to people: Casualties

This indicator reported on the number of fire related fatalities, slight and serious injuries recorded at Accidental Dwelling Fires. 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.

Casualty Status for Quarter 1 (Total – 13):

- Fatal – 2 (increase of 1 on previous year to date)
- Injuries appear Serious – 3 (increase of 2 on previous year to date)
- Injuries appear Slight – 8 (same as previous year)

2.3.2 ADF – 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 data 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 combined quarterly percentage was noted as 81%, a decrease of 5.20% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4 Accidental Building Fires (ABF) – Commercial Premises

This indicator related to the number of primary fires where a building had been affected, other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling, and the cause of fire had been recorded as Accidental or not known. A primary fire was noted as one which involved property (excluding disused property) or any fires which involved casualties, rescues, or any fire attended by five or more pumping appliances.

- Quarterly activity had increased 21.05% over the same quarter of the previous year.
- 2026-27 Year to date/ Quarter 1 - 69
- 2025-26 Year to date/ Quarter 1 - 57

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 combined percentage figure for the quarter was 64%, a decrease of 1.14% 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 recorded as Accidental or Not known. Quarter 1 activity was noted as comprising 34 incidents, compared with 39 in the previous year's Quarter 1. This was a decrease of 12.82% over the same quarter of the previous year.

This was a negative exception report due to the number of accidental non-commercial building fires being above the upper control limit during April and May of quarter one. A high number of accidental fires which involved private garden sheds, private garages, and other private non-residential buildings were responsible for breaching the upper control limits in the months of April and May. Fires within such building types were often seasonal, coinciding with periods of warm or dry weather, with this year's activity closely matching those of the previous year which recorded similar weather and temperatures.

Of the 34 incidents in Quarter 1, private garden sheds accounted for 32.4%, private garages 29.4%, and a mix of other non-residential buildings, such as outbuildings, allotment sheds or dog kennels accounted for the remainder. Due to the nature of the construction of these buildings 61.8% of the incidents resulted in the extent of damage affecting the whole building, 26.5% were limited to room or floor of origin, and 11.8% limited to the item first ignited or was smoke or heat damage only. The most common recorded cause of ignition was spread from a secondary fire due to

the burning of garden or household waste. The main reason for the increased number of incidents was given as lifestyle changes during periods of warm weather, such as spending more time outdoors, with activities using hot processes, such as barbeques, along with burning away of weeds and having fires to discard of garden and other waste. Activity levels in June returned to below the previous three-year average.

Members were informed of actions which had been taken to improve performance:

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

County Councillor G Mirfin asked if the graph in this section of the report could be amended to represent summer and winter months in red and blue font if possible. This request was noted.

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.

The figures gave a breakdown of fire severity at ABFs in Quarter 1:

- Limited to heat or smoke - 9%
- Limited to item 1st ignited - 3%
- Limited to room of origin - 6%
- Limited to floor of origin - 20%
- Spread beyond floor of origin - 0%
- Whole Building - 62%
- Combined percentage -18%

As the property types of sheds and garages were typically of a single room construction, there was an increased likelihood of the whole building being affected.

The combined quarterly percentage had decreased 7.35% 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 was recorded as deliberate. Quarterly activity decreased 33.33% over the same quarter of the previous year.

- 2026-27 Quarter 1 - 576
- 2025-26 Quarter 1 - 864

2.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings

This indicator related to the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected, and the cause of fire was recorded as deliberate. Quarterly activity had increased 26.32% over the same quarter of the previous year.

- 2026-27 Quarter 1 – 24

- 2025-26 Quarter 1 – 19

2.6.2 Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises

This indicator related to 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. Quarterly activity had increased 10.00% over the same quarter of the previous year.

- 2026-27 Quarter 1 - 44
- 2025-26 Quarter 1 - 40

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 had been recorded as deliberate. The majority of deliberate fires were outdoor secondary fires and included grassland and refuse fires. Abandoned vehicle fires were also included under secondary fires. Quarterly activity had decreased 36.96% over the same quarter of the previous year.

- 2026-27 Quarter 1 - 510
- 2025-26 Quarter 2 - 809

2.7 Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC)

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 had decreased 1.14% against the same quarter of the previous year, whilst the high-risk outcomes remained static.

2.8 Prevention Activities delivered

The Service had an incredibly high prevention and education engagement with different groups via a range of strategies and programmes, including:

- **ChildSafe:** Fire Safety education package offered to all Year 2 (key stage one) with 69 sessions delivered to 1,922 pupils
- **RoadSense:** Fire and Road Safety education package offered to all Year 6 (key stage two), 88 sessions delivered to 3,021 students
- **SENDSafe:** Fire Safety education package for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), offered to all SEND schools, one session delivered to 18 students
- **Wasted Lives:** Pre Driver information session in workshop or assembly format. Aimed at Year 10 or Year 11 in high school (key stage four), delivery target was aligned to district risk in the academic year. 13 sessions delivered to 1,309 students
- **Biker Down:** Three-hour course aimed at Powered 2 Wheel riders covering incident management, first aid and the science of being seen. Target to deliver a minimum of 12 sessions per year, three sessions held so far with 61 attendees
- **FIRES:** Fire setting intervention delivered to 4-17 year olds. Referrals made

by anyone who might work or support the family of a child who is setting fires. The target was to deliver an intervention to all referrals - 48 referrals opened prior to Quarter 1 and carried over. 57 referrals received in Quarter 1. 52 referrals closed in Q1. 56 referrals carried to 2026-27, Quarter 2

- **Partner Training** (including care providers): LFRS delivered a 'train the trainer' package to organisations or agencies within health and social care. There were currently 190 preferred partners, and 73 standard partners registered with LFRS. Partnerships were reviewed and Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated quarterly with a target to increase the number of partners rated green on the RAG report and continue to review partnerships and provide training. 23 sessions delivered to 240 delegates. County Councillor G Mirfin expressed interest in finding out more about this partnership model and what it involved. The ACFO indicated this was delivered to care and domiciliary workers and nurses, in environments where staff would come across vulnerable individuals and could help identify any critical issues for those individuals.
- **Specific education sessions** such as Water Safety & Bright Sparx delivered either virtually or in person to educate about Water Safety, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and deliberate fire setting to cover key stages two, three and four. 39 Water Safety in-person sessions delivered to 6,672 students, and 11 virtual sessions to 7,845 students. One ASB session held for 60 students
- **Arson Threat Referral:** a bespoke service where a threat of arson had been made. Referrals largely came from the Police with 218 visits completed.

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, including 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.

- 2026-27 Quarter 1 - 737 BFSCs completed against a quarter target of 625
- 2025-26 Quarter 1 - 769 BFSCs completed against a quarter target of 625

This was a positive exception due to the number of completed Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC) being greater than 10% of the quarterly target, and the cumulative year to date target. It was noted that Service delivery personnel had been carrying out BFSCs in their respective districts for over two years, and this work was now embedded into business-as-usual activity.

County Councillor G Mirfin expressed concern at the number of premises indicated as failing BFSCs and asked how the Service could benchmark this data. The Group Manager – Protection (GM) commented that it would be difficult to benchmark as not all Services undertook fire check activity. It was noted that the Service was finding risk and acting on it and more detail could be provided, including the national picture, at the next meeting. County Councillor G Mirfin also requested that details about Fire Safety Orders be included in the next report.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity

This indicator reported on 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 had increased 1% against the same quarter of the previous year. There were 467 Fire Safety Enforcement Inspections conducted in Quarter 1 2026-27, 11% (50 inspections) of which were classed as Formal Activity.

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 must 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 may exceed minimum requirements but, if adopted, would further enhance safety or resilience (such as use of sprinklers). LFRS could not 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.

2026-27 Quarter 1 - 268 Building Regulation Consultations were received and all were completed within timeframe (the deadline within which LFRS should make comments in writing was noted as being within 15 working days of receiving a BRC.)

At the previous Performance Committee meeting, County Councillor A Riggott had 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, the ACFO confirmed this was 100% for the quarter. The ACFO also confirmed that the Service could take action if, once buildings were erected, they were found to have not taken the fire safety advice given as part of the planning process.

The Chair enquired whether fire safety requirements form part of the planning application process and was advised that these considerations were not assessed until the Building Regulations stage.

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 the set standards when the time between the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident, averaged over the quarter, was less than the relevant response standard.

2026-27 Quarter 1 - Critical Fire Response times

- Very High - 5:47 minutes (previous year – 5:51 minutes)
- High - 6:12 minutes (previous year – 5:47 minutes)
- Medium - 7:02 minutes (previous year – 7:06 minutes)
- Low - 9:10 (previous year – 9:00 minutes)
- Overall 7:42 (previous year – 7:37 minutes).

While this was good, the ACFO indicated that the rise in attendance times was due to operational busyness.

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 a 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 attending a critical special service call was 13 minutes – the quarter's response time was 8:32 minutes (previous year to date was 8:37 minutes).

3.3 Fire Engine Availability

This indicator measured the total availability of the 1st fire engine at each of the 39 fire stations. It was measured as the percentage of time the 1st fire engine was available to respond compared to the total time in the period. Quarter 1 availability was recorded as 89.86% (previous year for the same quarter was 89.32%) against the standard of 90%.

County Councillor G Mirfin asked how LFRS compared with other authorities. The ACFO indicated this was very difficult to benchmark as Services differed in how they reported on this indicator. The ACFO shared that there was a national increase in dual contract staff which impacted staff availability and subsequently fire engine availability. Work was ongoing on a national campaign on the importance of fire engine availability.

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 annual revenue budget for 2026-27 was £80.5 million. Spend of £20.0 million was broadly in line with the allocated budget at the end of the first quarter with a small underspend on pay as a result of carrying vacant posts. The annual revised capital budget for 2026-27 was £10.1 million and spend at the end of June was £1.1 million.

4.2 Partnership Collaboration

This indicator provided an update on work with partners. The ACFO invited Area Manager K McCreesh to comment on this collaborative work:

- **Leadership Development:** Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon) and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) continued to identify efficiencies and strengthen professional relationships across blue light services. The second session of the 'Get a Grip of Your Leadership' programme had been delivered successfully, with the final session scheduled the day after this meeting. The programme brought together participants from all partner organisations to build leadership capability and support stronger cross-sector relationships. Following the links developed through the programme, each organisation had begun identifying potential mentors and mentees for a pilot cross-sector mentoring scheme.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** The group aimed to understand the health and wellbeing offer across each blue light service and identified opportunities to work collaboratively to support the wellbeing of colleagues in a joined-up way. A second Firelight Project Experience Day was held on 17 June 2026 and was well attended by representatives from all services. The pilot programme had concluded, and the evaluation had been shared with each service. Feedback indicated that the pilot was successful, with positive improvements reported against the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale across the majority of measures.
- **Estates and Co-location:** This initiative between LFRS, NWAS and LanCon sought to identify opportunities for shared sites that would improve collaboration and deliver value for money. Local Government Reorganisation also provided an important opportunity to consider a more joined-up approach to public-sector estates across Lancashire. As new unitary authorities reviewed their property portfolios, there might be scope to develop co-location, shared facilities and improved utilisation which would support more accessible and integrated community and public-safety services.
- **Fleet:** Heads of Fleet from the three services met regularly and shared best practice, information and standards across their respective fleets. Work continued to identify areas of similarity where collaboration could benefit the services and ensure interoperability was considered in strategic fleet decisions. A dedicated workstream was also exploring the introduction of electric vehicles and opportunities for shared access to charging infrastructure.

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. People surveyed include those who had experienced an accidental dwelling fire, a commercial fire, or a special service incident. The standard was achieved if the percentage of satisfied responses was greater than the 97.50% standard. During the quarter, 73 people were surveyed; 69 responded that they were very or fairly satisfied = total user satisfaction for the quarter was 98.49%. The ACFO then drew members' attention to the glossary of abbreviations at the end of the report which was intended to be useful for members, especially newer members. County Councillor G Mirfin referred to a new Highways Director being in post at Lancashire County Council, the ACFO confirmed that contact has already been made in order to arrange a meeting. The Chair summarised the items noted for further consideration at the next meeting: the difference between Green and Grey Book staff absence standards, further details on accident statistics, further detail on very high risk areas (Haslingden in particular) and a format change to the graph for indicator 2.5 of the report. Resolved: - That the Committee noted the Quarter 1 Measuring Progress report, including two positive and two negative exceptions.
13-26/27	False Alarm Report The GM provided members with information related to False Alarms over a 10-year timeframe and information on risk reduction measures taken by the Service. LFRS Automatic Fire Alarm and Unwanted Fire Signal Journey Prior to 2022, over a 5-year period, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) sent fire engines 32,685 times to premises after receiving an automatic signal from an automatic fire alarm. It was noted that Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs) provided an effective means of giving early warning of a potential fire within a premises and were especially effective and useful when the premises was unoccupied. However, these systems were not fool proof and the vast majority (99.13%) of actuations from these systems required no action by the fire service. Automatic fire detection could be actuated by many common airborne materials, such as dust, insects, steam, aerosol products or by faults with the system. When an actuation of a fire alarm was automatically sent to the fire service (usually via an Alarm Receiving Centre), and the fire service mobilised their resources to the premises when they were not needed, this was deemed to be an unwanted fire signal (UwFS) which cost businesses time and money and diverted firefighters from genuine emergencies and other duties. LFRS Phased Approach to AFA Policy Changes In April 2022, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) changed how it

responded to automatic fire alarms in non-sleeping risk premises, during the day between 8am and 7pm, seven days a week.

Since May 2023, LFRS no longer responded to automatic fire alarm activations, unless the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) confirmed that the premises provided sleeping accommodation.

LFRS continued to respond to confirmed fires and would always respond to automatic fire alarm calls 24 hours a day if:

- A backup call was received through 999 reporting a fire or signs of fire (such as a smell of burning).
- There had been a successful application to LFRS for a fire alarm exemption which had been granted.

Higher Risk Premises AFA Exceptions

These were noted as those which fell under the following categories: sleeping risk, single private domestic dwelling, sheltered accommodation, other residential premises such as hostel, hotel, student accommodation, care or nursing homes, registered Upper Tier Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) sites, nuclear sites covered by the Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information (REPPPIR) Regulations, high rise, hospitals, prison or young offenders' institutions, police station and military barracks, infant, primary and secondary education premises, Grade 1 and Grade 2 (star) heritage premises.

AFA Policy Change Progress

LFRS delivered a significant reduction in commercial premises AFAs which had generated:

- Improved fire engine availability
- Reduced the road risk proceeding to incidents under blue lights
- Contributed to reducing carbon emissions
- Improved operational effectiveness and ensured crews could focus on higher risk interventions and safety critical training
- Promoted improved fire safety arrangements for businesses
- Implemented a call challenge policy at NWFC to triage risk more effectively
- Joint prevention and protection interventions in response to unwanted fire signals.

Ongoing AFA Work:

There would be continued interventions in 'high risk' premises types and appropriate use of enforcement for premises which had repeat unwanted fire signals.

There would be continued work with responsible persons and partners (CQC, care and housing providers) to improve fire safety systems and promote awareness and continued campaigns and initiatives to target the most common AFA or UwFS causes such as cooking, inadequate detection systems, aerosols. In addition, work continued with NWFC and in terms of call challenge policies.

The Chair acknowledged the extensive support that was made available to the vulnerable and elderly to stay in their homes but asked if there was anything further that discharge services and care providers could do to work with the Service to

	enhance fire safety and fire prevention in the home to reduce the incidence of AFAs for this vulnerable cohort. The GM commented that fire prevention advice was already offered to care partners but was not necessarily effective in stopping AFAs. The caring provider's approach in the event of an AFA would be to make relevant checks on the individual but, if there was no response, that would generate a 999 call. The Service would always respond to such incidents for our most vulnerable people. County Councillor G Mirfin asked if there were any developments in smoke detection technology. The GM responded that there were development in terms of wireless equipment but that detection devices were generally doing the job they were designed for in dwellings. The GM shared a success story over the past five years in reducing UwFS following communications with Chief Executives to ask for their assistance. County Councillor B Langford asked whether the installation of a camera live feed in the homes of vulnerable residents would be useful for telecare services to help identify whether a fire alarm was genuine. The ACFO commented that this would not necessarily identify a fire or issue in areas that the camera live feed did not cover and could also be an invasion of privacy under GDPR. Resolved: - That the Committee noted the report.																														
14-26/27	Date of Next Meeting The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 9 December 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 3 March 2027 and Wednesday 7 July 2027. Glossary of acronyms <table> <tr> <td>ABF</td><td>Accidental Building Fire</td></tr> <tr> <td>ACFO</td><td>Assistant Chief Fire Officer</td></tr> <tr> <td>ADF</td><td>Accidental Dwelling Fire</td></tr> <tr> <td>AFA</td><td>Automatic Fire Alarms</td></tr> <tr> <td>ARC</td><td>Alarm Receiving Centre</td></tr> <tr> <td>ASB</td><td>Anti-Social Behaviour</td></tr> <tr> <td>BFSC</td><td>Business Fire Safety Checks</td></tr> <tr> <td>BLCB</td><td>Blue Light Collaboration Board</td></tr> <tr> <td>BRC</td><td>Building Regulation Consultation</td></tr> <tr> <td>COMAH</td><td>Control of Major Accident Hazards</td></tr> <tr> <td>CQC</td><td>Care Quality Commission</td></tr> <tr> <td>DCP</td><td>Day Crewing Plus</td></tr> <tr> <td>FDC</td><td>Flexible Day Crewing</td></tr> <tr> <td>FSO</td><td>Fire Safety Order</td></tr> <tr> <td>FTE</td><td>Full-time equivalents</td></tr> </table>	ABF	Accidental Building Fire	ACFO	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	ADF	Accidental Dwelling Fire	AFA	Automatic Fire Alarms	ARC	Alarm Receiving Centre	ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour	BFSC	Business Fire Safety Checks	BLCB	Blue Light Collaboration Board	BRC	Building Regulation Consultation	COMAH	Control of Major Accident Hazards	CQC	Care Quality Commission	DCP	Day Crewing Plus	FDC	Flexible Day Crewing	FSO	Fire Safety Order	FTE	Full-time equivalents
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GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HFSC	Home Fire Safety Check
HMO	House of Multiple Occupancy
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LanCon	Lancashire Constabulary
LCL	Lower Control Limit
LFRS	Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
NWAS	Northwest Ambulance Service
NWFC	Northwest Fire Control
OC	On-Call
OHU	Occupational Health Unit
Q	Quarter 1 etc.
RAG	Red-Amber-Green
REPIIR	Radiation Emergency Preparedness and Public Information Regulations
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
RTC	Road Traffic Collision
SEND	Special Educational Needs Disabilities
SOA	Super Output Area
TIA	Time in Attendance
TOC	Time of Call
TRiM	Trauma Risk Management
UCL	Upper Control Limit
UwFS	Unwanted Fire Signal
WT	Whole time
XmR	Value [X] over a moving [m] range [R]
YTD	Year to Date

D Howell
Monitoring Officer to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood