Public Document Pack

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Resources Committee

Tuesday, 13 October 2026 in Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood commencing at 10.00 am.

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

Agenda

Part 1 (open to press and public)

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

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

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

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 1 - 20)**

For decision:

4. **Financial Monitoring (Pages 21 - 30)**

5. **Dissolution of Pensions Sub-Committee (Pages 31 - 32)**

For noting:

6. **Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 - 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 - 2027 (Pages 33 - 134)**

7. **Pensions Update (Pages 135 - 142)**

8. **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.

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

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee has been agreed for 10:00 hours on **Wednesday 25 November 2026** in the Main Conference Room, at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meetings are: scheduled for Tuesday 16 March 2027
proposed for Wednesday 23 June 2027

10. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

Part 2

For noting:

11. **Update from Capital Building Projects Working Group (Pages 143 - 152)**

(Paragraph 3)

12. **High Value Procurement Projects (Pages 153 - 156)**

(Paragraph 3)

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

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

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
Resources Committee
Meeting to be held Monday 13 October 2026

Financial Monitoring 2026-27
(Appendices 1 - 3 refer)

Contact for further information:
Steven Brown - Director of Corporate Services – Telephone Number 01772 866804

Executive Summary
The report sets out the budget position to the end of July in respect of the 2026-27 revenue and capital budgets. Revenue expenditure of £25.616 million has been incurred against a profiled budget of £26.070 million, giving a year-to-date underspend of £0.454 million. The forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.524 million that would increase the forecast General Reserve balance to £6.580 million, which remains above the Authority's approved minimum level of £4.000 million.

The capital budget is £10.145 million, with £1.351 million spent to the end of July. £0.480 million relating to ICT is requested to be transferred into 2027-28, reducing the revised 2026-27 capital programme and projected year-end outturn to £9.664 million.

Recommendation
The Committee is asked to:
- Note the financial position.
- Approve slippage of £0.480 million in the capital programme to 2027-28.

Information

Revenue Budget
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's 2026-27 net revenue budget is £80.525 million. Net expenditure to the end of July is £25.616 million against a profiled budget of £26.070 million, giving a year-to-date underspend of £0.454 million. The forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.524 million, which is just less than 1% of the net budget. This is a controlled position, and the main variances are set out in Appendix 1 and Table 1.

Area	Year to Date	Forecast	Reason
Service Delivery - Pay	£0.134 million	£0.470 million	The 2026-27 budget approved by the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) was reduced by £1.800 million to reflect planned savings from optimising crewing arrangements, including reducing wholetime crewing levels from 13 to 12 on relevant two-pump wholetime, flexible day-crewed and day-crewing stations. Wholetime pay remains within budget. The year-to-date pressure of £0.134 million relates mainly to increased on-call firefighter hours at incidents and training. If the current trend continues, the forecast pressure is £0.470 million, this will continue to be monitored through normal budget management arrangements.
Prevention and Protection - Pay	(£0.254 million)	(£0.495 million)	The underspend relates to several vacant posts pending completion of the prevention review.
Leadership and Development Centre - Pay	(0.085 million)	(0.230 million)	The underspend relates mainly to vacancies within the Leadership and Development Centre pay budget. The position will continue to be monitored as training activity and staffing plans progress during the year.
Central Admin Office - Pay	(0.039 million)	(0.113 million)	The underspend relates to current vacancies within the Central Admin Office pay budget.

Table 1 – major variances of note

Future Developments

The previous financial monitoring report included a detailed assessment of potential inflationary pressures arising from geopolitical uncertainty. Pay awards were the most significant risk at that stage. The 2026-27 budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy include 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. Since the June Resources Committee meeting, both the 2026 Grey Book and Green Book pay awards have been agreed within the approved budget position. This has significantly reduced the year pay-related inflation risk in 2026-27.

Wider geopolitical uncertainty does however continue and remains a risk to inflation, particularly in relation to energy costs, fuel, contract indexation and supply-chain dependent goods and services. However, the position has not materially deteriorated

since the June report and there is no specific budget adjustment proposed at this stage. Utility costs continue to be monitored closely against the planning assumptions, and the Authority retains its £0.600 million utility volatility reserve to help manage short-term movements above budget if required.

The table below summarises the main inflation assumptions included in the 2026-27 budget and the latest position reflected in this monitoring report. Overall, settlement of the Grey and Green Book awards has reduced pay-related risk, while utilities and fuel remain the main areas of volatility to be monitored:

Inflation area	2026-27 budget assumption	Latest 2026 position and assumption	Current assessment
Grey Book pay	4.0%	3.8%	Settled below budget assumption; risk reduced.
Green Book pay	4.0%	3.3%	Settled below budget assumption; risk reduced.
Utility costs	3.8%	<5%	Continue to monitor; £0.600 million utility volatility reserve available if required.
General Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation	3.8%	Around 3.5% peak by late 2026	Broadly in line with planning assumption; expected to be time-limited.
Fuel inflation	3.8%	+12% to +14%	Continue to monitor; £0.600 million utility volatility reserve available if required.

Table 2 – inflationary pressures

Savings Targets

The 2026-27 budget approved by the CFA included a £1.800 million saving from optimising crewing arrangements, including reducing wholetime crewing levels from 13 to 12 on relevant two-pump wholetime, flexible day-crewed and day-crewing stations. The saving target has been delivered.

General Reserve

The General Reserve exists 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.

The forecast year-end General Reserve position is set out below. The forecast balance remains above the Authority's approved minimum level.

-	£' million
Opening balance of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) general fund	6.056
Forecast revenue underspend	0.524
Forecast closing balance of general fund	£6.580

Table 3 - year end forecasted general fund position

Capital Budget

The revised Capital Programme for 2026-27 was approved by the Authority at £10.145 million, to date £1.351 million has been spent to the end of July. A summary of the programme is set out in the table below and in more detail in Appendix 2.

Area	Budgeted Items	Budget	Year to Date
Operational Vehicles Budget	The budget includes the purchase of Type B pumping appliances, Water Carrier, Foam Pod and the final stage of the Aerial ladder platform.	£3.470 million	£0.734 million
Other vehicles Budget	This budget allows for the replacement of various operational support vehicles including several cars, vans, telehandler and a forklift.	£0.550 million	£0.110 million
Operational Equipment Budget	This budget allows for operational equipment purchases including Breathing Apparatus, body armour and helmets, flow meters and hose reel, gas tight suits, equipment tracking, decontamination unit, inflatable boat and safety shower.	£1.959 million	£0.067 million
Building Modifications Budget	This budget includes the continued programme of Drill Tower Replacements, upgrades to Preston and Blackpool stations, condition survey works, property improvement works, stock condition and decarbonised surveys.	£1.555 million	£0.081 million
IT systems Budget	This budget includes various projects including pooled Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) system, stock system, storage area network, geographic information system, wide area network, incident recording system, server replacement, further digitisation of the appliances, North West Fire Control (NWFC) computer aided design (CAD), service desk improvement, Microsoft 365 and Azure, Cyber security, desktop provision, firefighting robot, uninterrupted power supply (UPS) replacements, digital signage and teams room equipment.	£2.611 million	£0.359 million
-	-	**£10.145 million**	**£1.351 million**

Table 4 - revised capital programme

Reprofiling of £0.480 million relating to ICT is requested to be transferred to the 2027-28 capital programme resulting in a revised capital programme of £9.664 million.

Potential Financial Risks
The Authority monitors a number of financial risks that are not included in the current forecast because they have not materialised. For assurance, these risks have been modelled as stress scenarios and are set out in Appendix 3. The table below shows the estimated impact if these scenarios were to arise during the remainder of the year.

£ million	Worst Case
Revenue Budget - unbudgeted costs	4.3
Capital Budget – Additional Expenditure	0.9

Table 5 – potential worst-case scenario revenue budget and capital budget

These are stress scenarios for assurance purposes and are not forecast pressures. If all modelled risks materialised in full, the impact could be managed in the short term but would require further reporting to members because the General Reserve could fall below the Authority's approved minimum level.

Financial Implications
As outlined in the report.

Legal Implications
The recommendation is within the Committee's delegated financial authority and will be managed in accordance with the Authority's financial regulations.

Business Risk Implications
The financial and delivery risks identified in the report are being managed through established budget monitoring, programme governance and risk management arrangements. Material changes will be reported to members.

Environmental Impact
None.

Equality and Diversity Implications
None.

Human Resource Implications
The forecast includes pay variances arising from vacancies and recruitment profiles. Staffing plans are being monitored alongside operational and organisational delivery requirements.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of background papers
Paper: None
Date: None
Contact: None

Appendix 1

Directorate Finance Management Budget Monitoring Statement July 2026	Revised Annual Budget £000	Year to Date Budget £000	Year to Date Total * £000	Year to Date Variance £000	Year to Date Variance Pay £000	Year to Date Variance Non-Pay £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Overspend (Underspend) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Pay £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Non-Pay £000
Service Delivery									
Service Delivery	45.030	15.415	15.502	0.087	0.134	(0.047)	0.412	0.470	(0.057)
Prevention and Protection	4.226	1.458	1.154	(0.305)	(0.254)	(0.050)	(0.536)	(0.495)	(0.041)
Control	2.378	1.189	1.139	(0.050)	0.000	(0.050)	(0.100)	0.000	(0.100)
Youth Engagement (including King's Trust)	0.057	0.153	0.149	(0.004)	0.002	(0.006)	(0.012)	0.006	(0.017)
Special Projects (International Search and Rescue)	0.002	0.001	(0.007)	(0.007)	0.000	(0.007)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Strategy and Planning									
Service Improvement	2.743	0.946	0.942	(0.004)	0.004	(0.008)	0.099	0.103	(0.004)
Leadership and Development Centre	4.857	1.737	1.647	(0.089)	(0.085)	(0.004)	(0.295)	(0.230)	(0.065)
Fleet and Technical Services	3.790	1.275	1.320	0.046	0.016	0.030	0.136	0.085	0.051
Digital Data and Technology (DDAT)	4.630	1.881	1.855	(0.027)	(0.024)	(0.003)	(0.053)	(0.040)	(0.013)
People and Development									
Human Resources	1.074	0.370	0.373	0.003	0.004	(0.002)	0.039	0.034	0.005
Occupational Health Unit	0.390	0.130	0.088	(0.041)	(0.012)	(0.029)	(0.112)	(0.054)	(0.057)
Corporate Communications	0.507	0.168	0.147	(0.021)	(0.019)	(0.002)	(0.062)	(0.056)	(0.006)
Safety Health and Environment	0.343	0.110	0.121	0.011	0.002	0.010	0.032	0.014	0.018
Corporate Services									
Executive Board	1.256	0.468	0.480	0.011	0.011	0.001	0.033	0.035	(0.002)
Central Admin Office	0.798	0.261	0.218	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.004)	(0.122)	(0.113)	(0.009)
Finance and Procurement	1.352	0.405	0.347	(0.058)	(0.023)	(0.035)	(0.061)	(0.062)	0.001
Property	3.471	1.015	1.050	0.035	0.016	0.019	0.081	0.059	0.022
Subtotal	**76.905**	**26.980**	**26.524**	**(0.456)**	**(0.267)**	**(0.189)**	**(0.520)**	**(0.245)**	**(0.275)**
Non Directorate Finance									
Pensions Expenditure	1.507	0.467	0.467	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Other Non-Directorate Finance Management Expenditure	2.113	(1.377)	(1.375)	0.002	(0.006)	0.008	(0.004)	(0.014)	0.010
Total	**80.525**	**26.070**	**25.616**	**(0.454)**	**(0.273)**	**(0.180)**	**(0.524)**	**(0.258)**	**(0.266)**

Table 6 - Directorate Finance Management Budget Monitoring Statement

Appendix 2

Capital Budget 2026-27 £ million	2026-27 Budget agreed at Resources June 2026	Slippage to 2027-28 to be approved	Revised Programme	Actual Spend as at end of July 2026	Projected Year End Outturn
Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-
Operational Vehicles	3.470	-	3.470	0.734	3.470
Support Vehicles	0.550	-	0.550	0.110	0.550
Subtotal	**4.020**	**-**	**4.020**	**0.844**	**4.020**
Operational Equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Operational Equipment	1.959	-	1.959	0.067	1.959
Subtotal	**1.959**	**-**	**1.959**	**0.067**	**1.959**
Buildings Modifications	-	-	-	-	-
Blackpool Dormitory	0.047	-	0.047	0.019	0.047
Drill tower replacements	0.217	-	0.217	-	0.217
Update to Preston Facilities	0.184	-	0.184	0.015	0.184
Estate Improvement Provision	1.107	-	1.107	0.047	1.107
Subtotal	**1.555**	**-**	**1.555**	**0.081**	**1.555**
DDaT	-	-	-	-	-
IT Systems	2.611	(0.480)	2.131	0.359	2.131
Subtotal	**2.611**	**(0.480)**	**2.131**	**0.359**	**2.131**
Grand Total	**10.145**	**(0.480)**	**9.664**	**1.351**	**9.664**
Funding	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue Contributions	2.500		2.500	1.351	2.500
Capital Reserves	7.645	(0.480)	7.164	-	7.164
Total Capital Funding	**10.145**	**(0.480)**	**9.664**	**1.351**	**9.664**

Table 7 – Capital Budget 2026-27

Potential significant risks have been quantified as assurance stress scenarios. They are not included in the current forecast because they have not materialised.

	Revenue or Capital	**Worst Case (Full Year) £ million**
Industrial Action (Risk 1a) – Costs based on reported figures from other fire authorities adjusted for inflation and size of authority.	Revenue	2.5
Pandemic (Risk 1d) – Based on direct costs of COVID19, this was funded but this scenario assumes no funding provided.	Revenue	1.3
Inflation and cost pressures affecting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Risk 2b) – based on the highest one-year CPI increase experienced of 13.5%.	Revenue	2.0
As above	Capital	1.3
Loss of Utilities (Risk 3) and ICT (Risk 4) – Includes additional repair costs, overtime, hire costs etc	Revenue	0.2
Operational Event (Risk 11) – large scale incidents and events can be significant however there are funding mechanisms such as Bellwin in place. This cost assumes a prolonged period of overtime that would not be met from national funding schemes.	Revenue	0.5
Revenue Total	-	**6.5 (residual risk in 2026-27 4.3)**
Capital Total	-	**1.3 (residual risk in 2026-27 0.9)**

Table 8 – Worst case scenario of potential significant risks

Glossary

CAD – Computer Aided Design
CFA – Combined Fire Authority
CPI – Consumer Price Index
DDAT – Digital, Data and Technology
LFRS – Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
NWFC – Northwest Fire Control
PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
UPS – Uninterrupted power supply

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Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Resources Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 October 2026

Dissolution of Pensions Sub-Committee

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

Executive Summary

A Sub-Committee of the Resources Committee was set up in 2008 to deal with some pensions matters. It has not sat since 2009 and there is no identifiable work for it. The recommendation is that it is dissolved.

Recommendation(s)

To approve the dissolution of the Pensions Sub-Committee.

Information

1. A meeting of the Resources Committee on 1 April 2008 set up a Special Sub-Committee with delegated powers to "act, to consider and determine individual cases of dispute over injury pensions." The content of the paper makes it clear that this was in response to a particular issue that had arisen relating to over and under payment of injury pensions. This is no longer a current issue.

2. So far as can be determined, this sub-committee met only a few times and last met on 11 February 2009.

3. At a meeting of the Resources Committee on 27 November 2024, the Sub-Committee was renamed as the Pensions Sub-Committee. This was to allow the Sub-Committee to cover a wider remit, but it is not set out what this wider remit was. There is no record of this re-named sub-committee ever sitting.

4. Currently, a report on pensions matters goes to the full Resources Committee. Pensions appeal (Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) – Stage 2) cases also used to go to the full Resources Committee but following the adoption of the new constitution on 21 September 2026, IDRP 2 appeals will now be heard by the Appeals Committee. Two members of the Authority also sit on the local pensions board which deals with matters relating to firefighters' pensions.

5. It seems that the original purpose for the sub-committee no longer exists and there is no identifiable work that it could consider as all pensions matters are dealt with either by the Resources or the Appeals Committee. This meeting is therefore asked to resolve that the Pensions Sub-Committee is dissolved.

Business risk

An unused and redundant sub-committee is not good for governance.

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

None.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

Glossary

IDRP - Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Resources Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 October 2026

Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027

(Appendix 1 refers)

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

Executive Summary

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027 provides a comprehensive overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing commitment to fostering equality, diversity, and inclusion across its operations. Shaped by statutory obligations including the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, LFRS's approach is further informed by inspections from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

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

Recommendation

The Resources Committee is asked to note the report.

Information

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

- Identifying and managing risk whether this is risk to its employees, the environment in which it operates, or in the society that it serves as identified in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) which plays a key role in inspecting Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England, including their approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), established under Section 149 of the Equality Act 20210, which requires public bodies, including Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, to consider how their policies, services and decision-making processes impact people. The general duty obliges the Service to have due regard to three key aims; eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between

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

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 – 2026 and Delivery Plan 2026 – 2027, attached at Appendix 1, is one of the ways in which the Service can demonstrate transparency, in terms of how it is complying with the Equality Duty.

The report documents the Service's performance in terms of meeting its legal duties over the period 2025 – 2026 and the Plans for 2026 – 2027. It is part of a suite of delivery plans which supports the delivery of the Service's People Strategy and details the Service's areas of focus in terms of minimising risks in local communities, improving accessibility, recruitment and selection, training and development.

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

Sustainability or Environmental Impact
None.

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

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

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

Legal implications
No legal obligations arising from the report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

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

Date: August 2025
Contact: Liz Sandiford

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

Glossary

AFSA - Asian Fire Service Association
EDI – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIC – Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture
EIA – Equality Impact Assessment
FRS – Fire and Rescue Service
HMICFRS – His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
LFRS – Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
PSED - Public Sector Equality Duty

Full Equality Impact Assessment and Equality Analysis

Name of Proposal (Policy, Decision, Strategy, Service, Function, Other (Please indicate)	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2026-27
Name Lead Officer **Job Designation**	Jennifer Turner Head of People
Department	Human Resources
Telephone Number **E-Mail Address**	jenniferturner@lancsfirerescue.org.uk
Date of Assessment	02/09/2026

We carry out Full Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and analysis where we are unsure or know that the proposal, policy or decision will have an impact on an equality group or further to completing an initial analysis negative impacts have been identified. The EIA should be undertaken or started at the beginning of the proposal or policy development process before any decision is made. It will be updated through the decision making or policy development process to inform the decision-making process and then it is completed.

1. Overview

The main aims and objectives of this proposal (project, function, service, policy[1])

The Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture (EDIC) Annual Report sets out how equality, diversity and inclusion objectives are embedded within the Service's corporate planning processes and service delivery arrangements.

The report demonstrates how the Service is shaping and delivering services that meet the needs of Lancashire's diverse communities while also supporting an inclusive workplace culture. The report includes:

- Workforce equality profile data.
- Progress against the previous year's EDIC Action Plan.
- Planned equality, diversity and inclusion objectives and actions for the forthcoming year.
- Evidence of compliance with equality duties and organisational commitments.
- Arrangements for monitoring and governance through the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Board.

The report supports the organisation's commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Is the policy or decision new or under review or existing[2]

New or Proposed ☐

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

[2] To tick the box: right click, properties, click check the box

Modified, Reviewed, Updated or Adapted ☒
Existing but new EIA ☐

List the groups of people potentially affected by this proposal (such as, job applicants, employees, customers, members of the public):
Employees and workers across the Service. Job applicants and future employees. Volunteers and partner organisations. Communities across Lancashire. Service users and stakeholders.

2. Findings or Evidence

Findings or Evidence: The following information and data has been considered in developing this proposal (this may include census data, the results of any consultation with community groups or representative bodies.)
What did you do or consider **What did it say and what are your findings**
List any methods used to analyse data to understand the impact on people and provide details (such as, work force census profiles, performance, incident data) **List any consultation with employee voice groups, employees, unions, members of the public.**
The EDIC Annual Report has been developed using a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including workforce demographic data, recruitment and retention statistics, equality monitoring information, employee engagement feedback, service performance data, consultation with Employee Voice Groups, and ongoing review through established governance arrangements. The purpose of the report is to assess progress against equality, diversity, inclusion and culture objectives, identify areas of under-representation, and inform actions that promote a more inclusive workforce and equitable service delivery. The report supports the organisation's commitment to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Analysis of workforce data indicates that progress continues to be made in creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace. However, some protected characteristic groups remain under-represented within the workforce when compared with local population demographics. Key findings include: • Women represent 20.8% of the overall workforce but only 10.3% of employees in operational (Grey Book) roles. • Employees from ethnic minority backgrounds represent 3.5% of the workforce overall, rising to 4.9% within Green Book roles. • Employees declaring a disability represent 3.4% of the workforce. • Employees identifying as LGBT+ represent 4.4% of the workforce.

- The operational workforce remains predominantly male, highlighting the continued importance of targeted attraction, recruitment, progression and retention initiatives.
- Workforce data suggests that declaration rates for some protected characteristics may not fully reflect workforce composition, reinforcing the need to continue building confidence in equality monitoring and disclosure processes.
- The average workforce age is 40 years, highlighting the importance of effective succession planning alongside the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.

Consultation with Employee Voice Groups and staff networks identified several recurring themes, including the importance of inclusive recruitment practices, equitable access to career development opportunities, employee wellbeing support, inclusive leadership behaviours, and fostering a culture where individuals feel valued, respected and able to contribute fully.

Comparison with local demographic data has been undertaken to assess the extent to which the workforce reflects the diversity of the communities served. This analysis helps identify potential barriers to recruitment, progression and retention for under-represented groups and informs targeted interventions designed to improve equality of opportunity.

The Service also engages with external organisations, including the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA), to inform its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and to apply relevant sector best practice where appropriate.

Evidence from the most recent Wholetime recruitment campaign demonstrates increased engagement from individuals belonging to some under-represented groups, including disabled applicants, LGBT+ applicants and applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds. This information will continue to be monitored to assess the effectiveness of recruitment and attraction activities and to identify opportunities for further improvement.

The findings from the report have directly informed the EDIC Action Plan. Actions are intended to improve workforce representation, address potential barriers to recruitment and progression, strengthen organisational inclusion, and support continued compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. As such, the overall impact of the EDIC Annual Report is expected to be positive across all protected characteristic groups, particularly those currently under-represented within the workforce.

Workforce Demographics LFRS

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT+	Average Age
1324[3]	1277	47	1048	276	45	58	40 yrs
%	96.5	3.5	79.2	20.8	3.4	4.4	

Workforce Demographics LFRS Grey Book

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

Workforce Demographics Business Support Staff Green Book

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

- Women represent 20.8% of the overall workforce but only 10.3% of operational Grey Book employees.
- Employees from ethnic minority backgrounds represent 3.5% of the workforce.
- Employees declaring a disability represent 3.4% of the workforce.
- Employees identifying as LGBT+ represent 4.4% of the workforce.
- Green Book roles show greater gender balance, with 60.7% female representation, compared with operational roles.
- The operational workforce remains significantly male-dominated, demonstrating the continued importance of targeted attraction, recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Workforce diversity data highlights the importance of ongoing monitoring to identify potential barriers affecting under-represented groups.

Lancashire (E47000018) - ONS
Nomis - 2021 Census Area Profile - North West Region
Strategy – Asian Fire Service Association

Data from our most recent Wholetime recruitment campaign:

Total Applications	1027	% of total
Male	873	85%
Female	128	12.5%
BME	46	4.5%
(BME) Prefer Not to Say	16	1.5%
LGBTQ+	105	10%
(LGBTQ+) Prefer Not to Say	58	6%
Disabled	92	9%
(Disabled) Prefer Not to Say	26	2.5%
On Call	118	11.5%

3. Equality Impact

Using the table below please indicate what impact will the implementation of this proposal have on people who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Equality	**Positive Impact** It could benefit	**Negative Impact** It could disadvantage	**Neutral or No Impact**	**Reason why there is a positive and negative impact** and any mitigating actions already in place to reduce any negative impact
Age People of all ages			X	The report includes workforce demographic information and actions designed to promote inclusion and accessibility for employees and members of the public across all age groups. Actions aimed at recruitment, talent development, leadership opportunities, learning and development, and employee engagement have the potential to improve representation and participation among both younger and older individuals. Monitoring of workforce data and recruitment outcomes will continue to identify any age-related disparities and inform future actions.
Disability Physical, Learning Disability Learning Difficulty Mental Health, Carers of disabled people			X	The report identifies actions to support employees and communities with disabilities, including those with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, learning difficulties, neurodiverse conditions and mental health needs. The ongoing review of workplace practices, reasonable adjustments, accessibility arrangements and inclusive recruitment processes supports the advancement of equality of opportunity for disabled people. Regular monitoring through workforce data and staff engagement mechanisms

				will continue to identify barriers and inform improvements. The EDIC Report format aligns with the new accessibility standards (WCAG 2.1)
Gender Identity or Gender Reassignment			X	The report promotes an inclusive workplace culture where all employees are treated with dignity and respect regardless of gender identity. Actions supporting inclusive policies, awareness, education and employee support networks contribute to creating environments where transgender and non-binary individuals can participate fully and safely. The Service will continue to review policies and training to ensure they remain inclusive and compliant with current legislation and best practice.
Pregnancy and Maternity			X	The report reinforces organisational commitments to supporting employees during pregnancy, maternity leave and return-to-work arrangements. Monitoring workforce experience and supporting flexible and family-friendly approaches contributes to equality of opportunity. Existing employment policies and management arrangements provide safeguards against any unintended disadvantage.
Race Ethnicity Nationality			x	The report contains workforce representation data and actions designed to improve diversity, inclusion and engagement among employees from ethnic minority backgrounds and across different nationalities.

				The actions contribute to improving representation, reducing barriers and ensuring services meet the needs of Lancashire's increasingly diverse communities. The organisation works collaboratively with the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) and considers its recommendations when developing and reviewing policies, practices and initiatives aimed at improving equality, diversity and inclusion. Progress against recruitment, retention and workforce representation objectives will be monitored through the EDIC governance framework.
Belief or Religion			x	The report promotes a culture where religious belief, faith and non-belief are respected and valued. The actions outlined support inclusive working practices and encourage understanding between different communities and groups. Employee feedback and equality monitoring data will continue to be reviewed to identify emerging issues.
Gender Men or Women			X	The report includes actions designed to support equality of opportunity for all genders and monitor workforce representation. The analysis of workforce data enables the organisation to identify any disproportionate outcomes and address barriers to progression, development and recruitment.

				Gender-related workforce measures will continue to be reviewed through established reporting mechanisms.
Sexual Orientation Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and straight people			X	The report supports the creation of an inclusive workplace where lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual employees are treated fairly and respectfully. Planned actions contribute to improved awareness, visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ+ communities. Ongoing engagement with staff networks and equality monitoring will help identify opportunities for improvement.
Marriage and Civil Partnership (employment only)			X	No adverse impact has been identified. The report promotes equality and fairness for all employees regardless of marital or civil partnership status.
Other groups who are not protected under the Equality Act Examples: social economic factors (such as poverty and or isolation), unemployment, homelessness, rurality, health inequalities, other carers, On-Call staff, part or full time employees or any other disadvantage			X	Many actions within the EDIC Annual Report have the potential to improve accessibility and inclusion for individuals experiencing disadvantage, even where they are not protected by the Equality Act 2010. The report supports fair access, engagement and consideration of diverse community needs during service planning and delivery. The Service will continue to use community insight, feedback and equality data to monitor the effectiveness of actions.
Contributes to equality of opportunity	x			The proposal contributes positively to the Public Sector Equality Duty by:

				• Identifying and addressing barriers experienced by under-represented groups. • Using workforce and community data to inform decision making. • Promoting equitable recruitment, retention and progression opportunities. • Supporting inclusive service delivery. • Improving accessibility and engagement across diverse communities.
Contributes to fostering good relationships between different groups	x			The proposal contributes positively to fostering good relations between people from different backgrounds through: • Promoting understanding and inclusion. • Raising awareness of equality, diversity and cultural issues. • Supporting employee networks and engagement opportunities. • Encouraging respect and dignity in the workplace. • Strengthening relationships with Lancashire's diverse communities.
The decision will be taken in compliance with Human Rights [4]	Yes			
	No			

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

Analysis Rating: please tick 1 box ✓(The analysis rating is identified after the analysis has been completed - See Completion Notes).	**Red**		**Amber**		**Green**	X	The EDIC Annual Report is intended to have a positive impact on equality, diversity and inclusion across the Service. Whilst workforce data identifies areas where some groups remain under-represented, no adverse or disproportionate impacts arise from the report itself. The actions contained within the EDIC Action Plan are designed to improve representation, remove barriers and support inclusive outcomes for employees, applicants and communities. Progress will be monitored through the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Board to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Red: As a result of performing this analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination exists (direct, indirect, unintentional, or otherwise) to one or more of the nine groups of people who share Protected Characteristics (or local non-legislative factors (such as social economic, rurality)). In this instance**, it is recommended that the use of the activity or policy be suspended** until further work or analysis is performed, or the activity or policy can be amended

If this risk of discrimination is objectively justified, or the use of this proposal (policy, activity, function) is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim; this should be indicated and further professional advice taken.

Amber: As a result of performing this analysis, it is evident a risk of discrimination (as described above) exists and this risk may be removed or reduced by implementing the actions detailed within the Action Planning section of this document.

Green: As a result of performing this analysis, no **adverse effects** on people who share Protected Characteristics or local non-legislative (such as social economic, rurality) factors are identified - no further actions are recommended at this stage.

4. Outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment: Actions to be taken

What course of action does the Equality Impact assessment Suggest you take	
Green Risk Factor - No major change required The EIA has not identified any potential discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.	☒
Amber Risk Factor - Adjust the policy To remove the negative impact identified in the EIA or to promote better equality.	☐
Red Risk Factor - Continue with the policy despite negative impact – Stop and Think You need to ensure the Equality Impact Assessment clearly sets out the justification for continuing with it. You should consider whether there are sufficient plans to reduce the negative impact and to monitor impact. Complete the EIA Action Plan. If you cannot objectively justify any negative impact you must stop planned or current practices and seek guidance from the Head of People as this shows the EIA demonstrates a significant impact on people with a protected characteristic	☐

5. Equality Impact Assessment or Analysis Action Plan and Review

As a result of performing this analysis, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any negative impact of adverse outcomes identified on people (employees, applicants, customers, members of the public) who share characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 or who are non-legislative characteristics.

Further action required: Yes ☐ No ☒

Impact identified on the Protected Characteristics	Action Required	Responsible Officer	Completion Date	Review Date

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

5.2 Send the EIA to your departmental content author and request it is uploaded onto the Equality Impact Assessment Sharepoint site and submitted for approval.

Equality Impact Assessment Approved By: Gill Irving
Date Approved: 4/9/27

Further guidance on completing Equality Impact Assessments is available on the Engine House under 'Equality and Diversity' and from Human Resources.

Appendix 1

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Annual Report 2025 -2026 and Delivery Plan for 2026 - 2027

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Background to the report

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

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

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

- Meeting our legal duties over the year 2025 – 2026.
- Our workforce profile as of 31 March 2026.
- Our plans in relation to equality, inclusion and diversity for the period 1 April 2026 - 31 March 2027.
- Activity we deliver which supports our employees to thrive.
- Key monitoring equality data/information.

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

Introduction, aims, values and ethics

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service aims

Making Lancashire safer is our commitment to making sure that everything we do improves the safety of our diverse communities. LFRS is committed to its purpose of "making Lancashire safer" and it has developed the following priorities to support this intention:

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

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Values

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

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

Risk is dynamic, and fire impacts some demographic groups more than others. We focus on root causes and the most vulnerable people. Higher incident rates and poorer outcomes are concentrated in specific districts and wards, particularly those experiencing high deprivation, older housing stock, an ageing population, and for those with increased health and social vulnerability. Our strategic risk assessment identifies these factors, and our core strategies address and mitigate them.

The National Code of Ethics

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

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

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

Meeting our legal duties and equality diversity and inclusion objectives

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

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

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

The Equality Act 2010

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Human Rights Act 1998

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

Equality Objectives

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

Our Communities:

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

Our Workforce:

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

Protected Characteristics (or protected groups)

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

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

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) - Equality Analysis

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

In 2025-2026 work began to digitise the process with the establishment of a SharePoint site, to enhance the monitoring and quality assurance of EIA completion. This will continue to be embedded within the Service during 2026-2027.

Commissioning and Procuring Services

LFRS ensures all partnerships comply with equality principles and duties. Contracts must accept LFRS terms, including equality clauses, and additional scrutiny is applied to procurement when needed. Lead stakeholders are responsible for initial equality screenings and full assessments as required, ensuring changes are made before procurement proceeds. The Head of Property, is part of the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) National Fire Estates Group, helps advance dignified facilities and EDI standards.

The communities of Lancashire

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

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

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

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

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

Workforce Profile

Public authorities must publish data showing compliance with the general equality duty, including information about employees or others affected by their policies who share relevant protected characteristics. LFRS provides workforce demographics (Appendix A) and recruitment analysis (Appendix B).

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

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

The detail of our progress in relation to EDIC is summarised in our 2025-2026 completed action plan attached at Appendix D. The new Action Plan for 2026 -2027 is attached at Appendix E.

Other areas of focus relating to equality, diversity and inclusion

Accessibility

During the year, the Communications team strengthened the organisation's approach to accessibility, helping to ensure that information is easier for everyone to access, understand and use.

A more structured and strategic approach was developed, including the commissioning of external accessibility support and regular engagement with a specialist provider. An external accessibility audit on the website and debrief provided a clear assessment of current performance, identified areas for improvement, and established a baseline to inform future activity.

To build internal capability, a programme of accessibility training was delivered for staff. This included introductory and more advanced sessions on accessible document creation, complex documents and accessible data presentation. Colleagues from a range of teams took part, with the training focused on practical steps staff can apply in their day-to-day work to create content that meets accessibility standards and is easier to navigate.

Internal guidance was also promoted and embedded to support consistent practice across the Service. The accessibility guide continues to provide staff with clear advice on document formatting, plain language, use of images, alternative text and digital content. This helped establish a shared reference point for producing accessible and inclusive communications.

There is evidence that accessibility practices are becoming more embedded at a local level, with staff increasingly using built-in Microsoft accessibility tools to identify and address issues such as missing alternative text and document formatting errors. This reflects a positive shift towards considering accessibility as part of everyday communication and content creation, supported by initiatives such as Digital Champions and wider internal engagement.

This work supports the Service's wider equality, diversity and inclusion objectives by helping to remove barriers and improve access to information for staff, communities and stakeholders. It also links with broader inclusion activity, including support for neurodiversity.

Engagement and Consultation

The Service has a consultation strategy, providing a framework for understanding public opinion on significant policy changes. This strategy was reviewed in February 2026 to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance, as well as to incorporate insights gained from previous public consultation exercises. In 2025-26, two public consultations took place.

From December to February, the public were consulted regarding the proposed council tax precept. There were 970 respondents. 99% were Lancashire residents with broad geographical representation, an equitable distribution between male and female participants, and inclusion of all age groups, and 23% identified as disabled. 94% of respondents identified as White, 2% as Asian and 4% as other ethnic groups.

From January to March, consultation on the Service's next Community Risk Management Plan was carried out in the first phase of our Shaping our Service for the Future consultation to understand community needs and expectations. It was promoted in a variety of ways to give communities opportunities to take part. This included: digital advertising; printed postcards signposting to the survey were distributed by community fire safety teams while doing community engagement activity; direct mail and emails to people who had used our services in the past two years; and media activity.

There were 2,223 responses to the consultation, the highest number achieved to-date, including: 1,911 residents representing every district in Lancashire; 119 partner agencies, parish and town councils, voluntary and community groups; 73 businesses; and 110 employees. 69% were aged 60 and above, 60% of respondents were women and 36% were men, and 25% indicated they had a disability. Some respondents opted to select 'prefer not to say' in answer to the equalities questions and they are not obliged to answer the questions in order to take part in the consultation.

The consultation feedback showed high levels of agreement with overall views on LFRS including the degree to which people trust our safety advice, believe we serve the community well and deliver value for money. Awareness levels varied in terms of different services provided by LFRS 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. The feedback was used to shape the CRMP 2027-32 and the public will be consulted again in 2026-27 in a second phase of consultation.

Routine surveys are conducted with members of the public who have experienced emergencies, enabling the Service to monitor satisfaction levels. In 2025-26, the overall public user satisfaction rate reached 98.56%. During the year, the survey was redeveloped to include more questions about the service received and subsequently more insight into resident experiences.

Social media engagement varied across platforms during 2025-26, with average engagement rates above the industry average on Facebook (6.25%), LinkedIn (8.83%), and TikTok (4.07%), contrasted by lower engagement rates on Instagram (1.62%) and NextDoor (0.76%). The Service continuously evaluates the demographics of followers and content performance across each platform to determine optimal channels for reaching diverse groups. Targeted social media advertising helped to reach more people with campaign messages with a low cost-per-engagement rate demonstrating good value for money. To inform its wildfire prevention campaign and tailor communications, the Service ran a social media survey to understand perceptions, awareness levels and behaviours relating to this issue.

Email newsletter subscribers increased from 101,061 to over 105,000 and the Service's website saw an increase in visitors from 624,000 to 792,000. The website includes an accessibility tool called 'Assist Me' which enables visitors to change colour contrasts, change the size of the text and change the way the text appears to make it easier for people with dyslexia and ADHD, for example, to read. It is mainly used to make the site easier to view by changing colours of titles which indicates users with mild, cognitive issues needing help to navigate the site.

On-call recruitment and fitness for firefighter recruitment were the topics of episodes published in the Service's podcast series, Out of the Ashes: Stories from Lancashire. Pendle Community Radio was a key platform for engaging diverse communities throughout the rear on topics including fire safety, seasonal campaigns such as water safety and wildfire prevention, and electrical safety.

A new fire safety initiative for churches was launched across Lancashire, working with local dioceses and stakeholders to promote preventative measures. The project focused on awareness, training, and practical steps such as candle and electrical safety during festive periods, aiming to protect heritage buildings and strengthen community engagement.

An internal communications strategy details the approach to staff engagement, supported by a structured programme of activities reviewed annually. Staff engagement is tracked as a key performance indicator and reported to the Combined Fire Authority.

Engagement activities include station visits, digital staff sessions, appraisals, and team meetings.

During 2025-26, principal officers, directors, and area managers completed 92 station visits, and several in-person extended leadership events were held for middle and senior managers. There were 176 wellbeing interactions including workshops, support dog visits, and station drop-in.

The latest comprehensive staff survey ran from 2 July until 29 August 2025. An independent research service coordinated the survey. It was delivered online and via paper copies which were sent to all stations. The survey was supported by 51 visits to on-call and wholetime crews on station by the communications team. Three focus groups with on-call staff, wholetime supervisory managers, and support staff were also held to gain qualitative feedback to complement the survey data. In total, 511 responses to the survey were received (equating to 44% of staff). The responses reflected good representation across different roles, ranks, and geographical areas of the service

The survey provided insights into leadership, management, training, development, and equality, diversity, inclusion and culture. It also included a staff engagement index measuring pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration, and motivation. The 2025 index score was 69%, down from 74% in 2023. The score varied significantly by staff group; for wholetime firefighters the score was 53%, and for both on-call firefighters and service support staff, it was 81%. The survey results highlighted areas of success as well as areas for development and the feedback is used to inform current and future planning.

During the year, the Service engaged with staff over several topics relating to our fleet and equipment, including several trials, and topics such as optimising crewing, social media use, a new operational welfare unit, and using Microsoft 365 tools and apps. An On the Menu staff session was held on the topic of equality impact assessments, their importance, and a new submission process, with the opportunity for attendees to ask questions throughout the event.

In November, the Service held its annual Celebration of our People event to recognise dedication and achievements across the organisation. More than 50 people were honoured with Long Service Good Conduct Awards, Star Awards, Chief Fire Officer's Commendations, Bravery Awards, Academic Achievements and Humanitarian Medals. One hundred and thirty-six submissions were received from members of staff nominating their colleagues for a Star Award.

The Service launched a new Modern Ways of Working Forum during the year, to encourage staff across the Service to submit ideas for smarter ways of working using technology that leads to improvements in efficiency and productivity. A new regular Watch Managers' Forum was also established to keep wholetime and functional watch managers informed of what is happening in service delivery and give them the opportunity to share feedback and be involved in changes.

The Engine House, the Service's intranet, hosts a discussion forum ("Shout Up") where staff contribute ideas, feedback, and participate in equipment trials and process innovation. In 2025-26 there were 81 discussions with 304 engagements in those conversations.

Partnerships remain integral, particularly within the Lancashire Resilience Forum, which includes local authorities and other emergency services. In 2025-26, the Service published eight stakeholder e-newsletters with these partners in mind: Prevention Matters and Protection Matters offering fire safety information to prevention partners and businesses respectively; and Hot Topics, which provides Service news and is distributed to partner organisations, MPs, town and parish councils, and community groups.

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

Business fire safety, community fire safety, and operational crews actively engage with communities through preventive initiatives, such as visiting wildfire risk sites during hot weather, and routine safety checks, furthering the goal of keeping Lancashire residents safe.

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

Values and establishing a culture where people thrive

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

The anonymous reporting helpline remains an effective channel for employees to raise concerns, with appropriate actions and interventions implemented in response to certain reports. Standard DBS checks are routinely completed for all staff, accompanied by a role-based risk assessment to determine if an Enhanced or Enhanced with Barred List check is necessary. The Legal Services and Standards Manager oversees all misconduct cases and staff-related complaints, ensuring that such matters are addressed fairly, consistently, and promptly. Welfare Officers are assigned to support

any staff member under investigation, internal complainants, and, in some cases, internal witnesses throughout challenging processes.

Workplace wellbeing sessions will be delivered across all watches, units, and teams to support the Service's Safety, Health and Wellbeing Plan. These sessions will introduce a library of bite-sized videos designed to raise awareness of key wellbeing topics and support the development and maintenance of personal resilience among staff. Topics include personal resilience, trauma management, effective wellbeing conversations and nutrition. Additionally, the Wellbeing Support Dog (WSD) cohort has been refreshed, and available to support post-incident trauma response resources, alongside delivery of TRiM and TiB sessions.

Training and Development

The Service implemented 360-degree feedback for all Watch Managers and above, including Senior Leaders and non-uniform equivalents. The questionnaire is associated with STRIVE and is periodically used upon request for development purposes. LFRS provides access to external coaching for all staff members, and has launched an internal mentoring scheme, Lift and Climb. Since its inception, 57 individuals have requested a mentor, with 12 requests from women.

In October 2024 and March 2025, LFRS partnered with LanCon and NWAS to offer three leadership development events, which addressed resilience and well-being, effective crisis communication, and generational differences. Further training opportunities in collaboration with LanCon and NWAS are planned for 2026-2027. Get a Grip of your Leadership Development Programme is a 3-day programme delivered between April - September 2026. This programme has been created to support leaders to step up confidently, take ownership, and lead teams in a way that builds capability rather than dependency. The 3 modules are: It Always Starts with You; Your Team Culture and Feedback and Accountability.

Training and management development opportunities are provided to both grey and green book staff members and promoted through the Engine House (or via a Talent Management Gateway). These opportunities include Level 3, 5 and 7 Leadership and Management qualifications; Strengths Based Coaching, Performance Management and Confident Conversations, Managing Effective Investigations; Report Writing and Project Management.

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and progression data is analysed and reported to the EDIC Board. The demographic profile of the Service is reported quarterly to the Performance Committee. LFRS continues its journey to improve the diversity of the workforce to ensure that it represents the community it serves. The Service has taken an integrated approach in relation to delivering positive action and promoting LFRS as an employer of choice;

colleagues from human resources and operational staff work together to deliver attraction events, termed “Have a Go” events, supported by other colleagues from the Service’s employee voice groups. Further “Have a Go” events will be planned for 2026-2027 to support the recruitment of under representative groups to Wholetime and On Call Firefighter roles.

The “Have a Go” days offer taster sessions simulating physical assessments and are designed to attract under-represented groups, including women, ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+ individuals.

Previously an internal audit was carried out on the Service’s approach to positive action and concluded that “the current recruitment activity adopts Positive Action approach, the processes and controls that are in place are adequate, efficient, and effective at ensuring the right person is recruited to each individual role”, with no actions or recommendations identified.

Whilst no Wholetime Firefighter recruitment took place in 2025-2026, 59 other recruitment campaigns associated with Grey and Green Book staff occurred between 01/04/2025 and 31/03/2026, full details are included at Appendix B.

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

Achievement, turnover and progression of wholetime firefighter apprentices

LFRS provides firefighter operational apprenticeships. As of 31 March 2026, 153 firefighter apprentices completed their end point assessment, with 15 earning distinctions. There are currently 9 apprentices progressing through the programme.

Workforce Strategies and Policies

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

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

In 2024, The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act introduced a duty requiring employers to take "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment at work. This is likely to be updated in October 2026 and the Employment Rights Act 2025 will place an obligation on employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their workers instead of reasonable steps.

The Act also introduces employer liability for third-party harassment. This liability is not just limited to sexual harassment, but extends to harassment on the grounds of age, disability, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Guidance on the Service intranet, Engine House has been updated. The guidance outlines what constitutes sexual harassment, its impacts, prevention measures, and

support for employees. The LFRS Bullying and Harassment Service Order and eLearning materials have been updated to reflect the requirements set out in the duty.

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

Performance Management

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

Staff participate in performance appraisals to establish objectives that are consistent with organisational priorities and to receive feedback related to core values. The appraisal system offers the opportunity for career discussions, which supports individual development and workforce planning. Completion rates for appraisals were 93% for Wholetime staff, 91% for On Call, and 90% for Green Book employees.

Bullying and Harassment

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

Issues of concern of employees

The Service addresses employee concerns primarily through its grievance procedure for a broad range of issues beyond misconduct. The Standards Toolkit encourages informal resolutions by managers, escalating to formal processes if needed, which has proven effective. Senior Managers supplement this with station visits and cross-checking reported concerns to identify underlying themes. The anonymous ‘Safe Call’ reporting line allows volunteers, staff, and cadets to raise issues; 10 reports have led to investigations, training, or action. The LFRS Safeguarding Policy now includes guidance on managing allegations against staff.

Gender Pay Gap (GPG) Reporting

The government has completed its consultation on the proposed Equality (Race and Disability) Bill, which seeks to introduce mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting for larger employers. In March 2026, the Government confirmed its intention to legislate for these requirements, aligning them closely with the existing gender pay gap reporting framework.

While these reporting obligations are not yet in force and the implementation timetable is still to be confirmed, it is expected that they will apply to employers with 250 or more employees, including LFRS. The Service is therefore undertaking preparatory work to review data availability, quality and disclosure rates to ensure readiness for future reporting requirements.

Provision of Gender Pay Gap Information

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, LFRS is obligated to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap report. Organisations with 250 or more employees must disclose their Gender Pay Gap data using a snapshot date of 31 March 2026. This information must be made available on both the LFRS and Government websites and provides an assessment of the disparity in hourly earnings between male and female employees.

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

Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) continues to show a gradual downward trend in the Gender Pay Gap. For all employees the gap decreased from 13.1% in April 2024 to 12.8% in April 2025. For full-time employees, the gap reduced slightly from 7.0% to 6.9%, while part-time employees continue to show a negative gap, with women earning marginally more than men. These figures demonstrate that gender pay disparities remain driven primarily be workforce composition, occupational distribution and working patterns rather than unequal pay for equivalent roles.

Employees for the purposes of the Gender Pay Gap

As of the snapshot date, 31 March 2026, LFRS employed 1,148 individuals. The Service employs a considerably higher percentage of men than women, primarily due to the larger number of operational roles, which have historically been filled predominantly by men and low turnover. In contrast, women represent a greater proportion of staff in support positions.

Mean Gender Pay Gap

The mean (average) Gender Pay Gap is calculated by comparing the average hourly earnings of male and female employees. At LFRS, the mean Gender Pay Gap is –24.6%, meaning that the average hourly rate of female employees is higher than that of

male employees. A female earns on average £18.06 and a male £14.49, a difference of £3.57 per hour.

This differs from the UK national average of approximately 12.8%, where men typically earn more than women. However, the LFRS position is influenced by workforce composition rather than difference in pay for equivalent roles. In particular, the Service employs a significant number of on-call firefighters, who are predominantly male and have lower hourly rates, which reduces the overall male average.

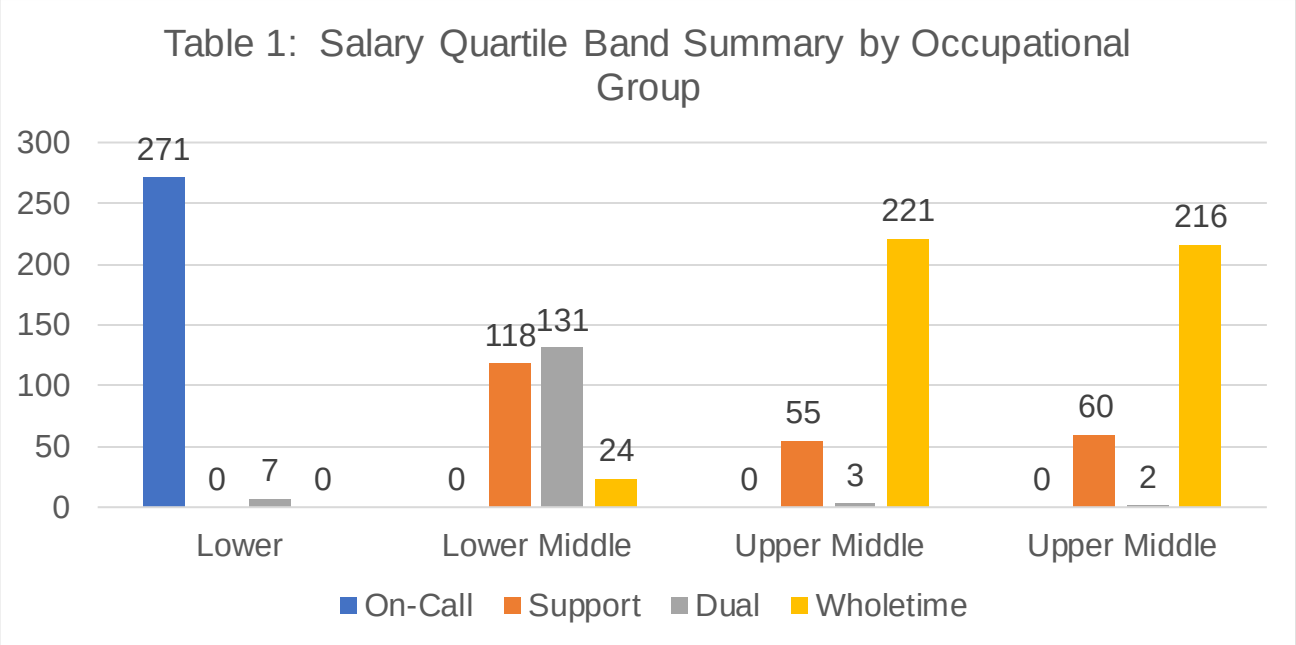
Median Gender Pay Gap

To calculate the median Gender Pay Gap, women's hourly earnings are ranked, as are men's, to determine the middle value for each group. The difference between these values is referred to as the median pay gap. At LFRS, the median Gender Pay Gap is 0%, meaning that when comparing the midpoint of earnings, there is no difference between make and female employees.

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

Occupational Group

Analysis shows that 97% of employees in the lowest quartile are On-Call staff, who are predominantly male and have lower hourly rates due to the nature of their contracts. This has a significant impact on the overall Gender Pay Gap.



Female employees are primarily concentrated within support roles and are most represented within the lower middle pay quartile. Most female part-time support staff are

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

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

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

Appendix A - Workforce diversity profile as at 31 March 2026

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

Workforce Demographics LFRS

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT+	Average Age
1303[1]	1254	49	1028	275	53	58	40 yrs
%	96.2	3.8	78.9	21.1	4.1	4.5	

Since 2024/25, the proportion of women employed increased from 20.8% to 21.1%. The percentage of employees identifying as BME increased from 3.5% to 3.8%. The proportion of staff declaring a disability rose from 3.4% to 4.1%.

Workforce Demographics LFRS Grey Book

Total No of roles	White or unknown	BME	Male	Female	Disability	LGBT+	Average Age
1045	1010	35	936	109	37	51	39
%	96.7	3.3	89.6	10.4	3.5	4.9	

The proportion of females in grey book positions rose by 0.1% over the past year. BME representation rose from 3.1% to 3.3%. Disability declarations increased by 0.5%, while LGBT+ representation stayed the same.

Workforce Demographics Prevention and Protection

Protection: Business Fire Safety Staff

	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age in years
%	97.3	2.7	64.9	35.1	8.1	48

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

The number of employees declaring a disability has risen from 2.7% to 8.1%, whilst this indicates a significant increase, it is low numbers reflective of the low proportion compared to members of staff who do not declare themselves disabled. BME representation has fallen from 5.4% to 2.7%.

Prevention: District Community Safety Staff and HQ Prevention Staff

	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age in years
%	89.4	10.6	31.9	68.1	8.5	46

Within Prevention, there has been a slight reduction in female representation (69.4% to 68.1%); an increase in employees declaring a disability (6.1% to 8.5%), whilst BME representation has remained stable.

Prevention: Kings Trust Programme Support Green Book staff

	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age in years
%	100	0	20	80	0	36

The number of female employees working within the King's Trust (formerly Prince's Trust) has slightly decreased, while more men have joined, increasing departmental diversity. The number of BME employees remains unchanged.

Workforce Demographics Response Grey Book Operational staff including resilience and specialist capability

Wholetime Firefighters (including apprentices): 224, Flexible Day Crewing and DCP duty roles

Role	Total No of staff Headcount	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age
Strategic	8	8	0	6	2	0	48
Middle Manager (Group Manager Station Manager)	39	38	1	33	6	1	46

Supervisory (Watch Manager Crew Manager)	144	143	1	136	8	5	43
Firefighter	337	321	16	294	43	12	39
Total excluding Day Duty	528	510	18	469	59	18	41

The number of females in the wholetime Service has slightly decreased (61 to 59), while BME representation and the proportion of people declaring a disability remain unchanged from last year.

On-Call – includes dual contract

Role	Total No of On-call staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age
Watch Manager	29	27	2	28	1	1	44
Crew Manager	93	90	3	89	4	4	42
Firefighter	329	318	11	294	35	9	34
Total	451	435	16	411	40	14	

The On-call Service has seen an increase in the number of females and BME employees, along with a slight rise in staff declaring disabilities.

Support Staff Grey Book (Including Leadership and Development Center, Control, Day Duty staff - refers to terms of employment)

Total No of staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age
43	42	1	37	6	2	44
%	97.7	2.3	86	14	6.6	

The percentage of women, BME and those declaring a disability have all increased, however this is due to an overall decrease in the number of staff employed (48 to 43).

Female Firefighter operational workforce[2]

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

Women employed in operations remained at 109.

Crewing System	Rank	Female	BME
224	Firefighter	39	11
224	Crew Manager	5	0
224	Watch Manager	1	0
Day Crewing	Firefighter	2	2
Day Crewing	Crew Manager	1	0
Day Crewing	Watch Manager	0	0
Day Crewing Plus	Firefighter	2	3
Day Crewing Plus	Crew Manager	0	1
Day Crewing Plus	Watch Manager	1	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	Crew Manager	3	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	Watch Manager	6	1
Day Duty (including Protection)	Station Manager	1	0
Flexi Duty Officer	Station Manager	1	1
Flexi Duty Officer	Group Manager	5	0
Brigade Manager	Area Manager	1	0

Assistant Chief Fire Officer	Assistant Chief Fire Officer	1	0
On-call	Firefighter	35	11
On-call	Crew Manager	4	3
On-call	Watch Manager	1	2
TOTAL		109	35

The total of 109 represents all women, broken down as follows:

Wholetime Firefighters (including apprentices): 224, Flexible Day Crewing and Day Crewing Plus duty roles	59
On-Call – includes dual contract	40
Support Staff Grey Book (Including Leadership and Development Center, Control, Day Duty staff - refers to terms of employment)	14
Fire Safety	5

There are now 22 female supervisory managers (Crew and Watch Managers), a reduction from 24.

BME Firefighter operational workforce[3]

The numbers of staff who are BME has increased from 32 to 35.

Crewing System	**Rank**	**BME**
224	Firefighter	11
224	Crew Manager	0

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

224	Watch Manager	0
Day Crewing	Firefighter	2
Day Crewing	Crew Manager	0
Day Crewing	Watch Manager	0
Day Crewing Plus	Firefighter	3
Day Crewing Plus	Crew Manager	1
Day Crewing Plus	Watch Manager	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	Crew Manager	0
Day Duty (including Protection)	Watch Manager	1
Day Duty (including Protection)	Station Manager	0
Flexi Duty Officer	Station Manager	1
Flexi Duty Officer	Group Manager	0
On-call	Firefighter	11
On-call	Crew Manager	3
On-call	Watch Manager	2
Trainee Recruit	Firefighter	0
Total		35

The total of 35 is represented as follows:

Wholetime Firefighters (including apprentices): 224, Flexible Day Crewing and Day Crewing Plus duty roles	18
On-Call – includes dual contract	16
Support Staff Grey Book (Including Leadership and Development Center, Control, Day Duty staff - refers to terms of employment)	0
Fire Safety	1

There are now 7 BME supervisory managers, down from 8 in the previous year.

Workforce Demographics Business Support Staff Green Book

Total No of staff	White	BME	Male	Female	Disability	Average Age
182	174	8	69	113	12	46
%	95.6	4.4	37.9	62.1	6.6	

BME staff have decreased from 4.9% to 4.4%. The proportion of women in support services is high and has increased from 60.7% to 62.1%.

Turnover

Staff Category	Male	Female	Total	BME	Disabled	% of females	% of BME
Wholetime	37	3	40	2	2	7.5%	5%
On Call	52	6	58	1	2	10.3%	1.7%
Control	0	0	0			0	0
Service Delivery (CFS)	2	2	4	0	0	50%	0
Support Staff	14	19	33	0	2	57.6%	0
TOTAL	105	30	135	3	6		

There has been a slight increase in the number of females (from 28 to 30) and people with declared disabilities (from 5 to 6) leaving the service compared to the previous year. The main reasons for leaving were identified within these groups as resignation or retirement, with only one female wholetime employee leaving, to transfer to another Service.

Slightly fewer BME individuals have left.

Age Profile

Staff Category	Age Under 34	Age 35-39	Age 40-44	Age 45-49	Age 50-55	Age 56-60	Age 61+
Wholetime	105	168	101	90	104	23	3
On Call	177	115	68	37	29	19	6
Control	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Service Delivery (CFS)	11	9	7	6	9	9	7
Support Staff	42	25	26	28	32	26	20
TOTAL	335	317	202	161	175	77	36

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

Appendix B - Recruitment Profile

Applications during the period 1.4.2025 – 31.3.2026

Total Applications	% of Male	% of Female	% of BME	% of LGBTQ+	% of Disabled
1514	63.7	22.3	22.3	5.9	6.7
Shortlisted					
497	65.8	33	16.3	6.8	7.2
Successful					
113	74.3	23	8	6.2	4.4

Number of applications

Total applications for LFRS roles fell by almost 9% compared to 2024/25. Male applicants decreased by around 11%, and now account for approximately 64% of applications, a slight reduction from 65% in the previous year. The number of female applicants declined by around 13%, from 34.5% in the previous year.

BME applicants increased by just over 2%, continuing an upward trend, and now represent 22.3% of all applicants compared with 19.9% previously. LGBTQ+ applicants decreased by 1%, with their overall representation reducing from 6.9% in the previous year.

There was a 16% reduction in disabled applicants; however, they continue to account for a notable proportion of the total, at 6.7%, only slightly below the previous year's 7.3%.

Overall, LFRS continues to attract a diverse range of candidates, with increased representation from some under-represented groups despite a reduction in total application volumes.

Shortlisting

The proportion of female candidates shortlisted increased to 33%, up from 29.3% in the previous year, continuing a positive trend in female representation at this stage.

BME applicants made up a larger proportion of those shortlisted, rising from 11.1% to 16.3%, showing a notable improvement in representation.

LGBTQ+ representation among shortlisted candidates remained relatively stable, increasing slightly from 6.6% to 6.8%.

The proportion of disabled applicants shortlisted also increased from 6.5% to 7.2%.

Overall, the Service has seen improved proportional representation across all under-represented groups at the shortlisting stage.

Appointments

The total number of appointments decreased compared to the previous year, however this is consistent with there being fewer vacancies advertised (99 to 59). Male appointees made up a slightly higher proportion of successful candidates at around 74.3% (up from 73.8%), while female representation increased from 23% to 26.3%.

The proportion of appointees from BME backgrounds increased notably from 4.4% to 8%, indicating an improvement in representation at the final stage.

LGBTQ+ representation among new appointees also increased, rising from 4.4% to 6.2%.

In contrast, the proportion of appointees declaring a disability decreased from 7.5% to 4.4%.

Overall, while fewer appointments were made, there was improved representation among BME and LGBTQ+ groups, although this was offset by a decline in female and disabled representation.

Grey Book Promotion Recruitment Stats: April 2025 – Mar 2026

Temporary Area Manager – February 2026

Successful	1
Male	1
Female	0
BME	0

Group Manager Talent Gateway – December 2025

Successful	10
Male	7
Female	3
BME	0

Station Manager Talent Gateway – February 2026

Successful	16
Male	16
Female	0
BME	0

Supervisory Manager Talent Gateway – Crew and Watch Manager – July 2025

Successful	27
Male	24
Female	3
BME	1

Appendix C - Disciplinary, Grievance, Harassment and Bullying

Disciplinary Cases for the period 1.4.2025 – 31.3.2026

From 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, there were 22 disciplinary investigations - 4 more than the previous year.

3 of the 22 investigations included multiple individuals, accounting for a further 15 people who have been included in the below breakdown, totalling 37 individual formal investigations over the period.

Of these collective formal investigations 1 investigation involved 8 individuals. A further investigation involved 3 individuals. In addition to a third investigation involving 4 individuals.

Male	Female	BME	Disability	LGBTQ+	Appeals	Appeal Upheld
32	4	5	1	1	2	0

Outcomes of these cases were:

- 2 - dismissals
- 3 - final written warnings (18 months)
- 5 – first written warnings (12 months)
- 3 - recorded oral warnings (6 months)
- 10 - management letters
- 8 - no case to answer or no further action
- 1 - resigned before the hearing. This would have been considered Gross Misconduct and would have resulted in dismissal.
- 1 – retired prior to a formal investigation; therefore, no disciplinary sanction was determined.
- 4 - ongoing into 2026-27

Disciplinary investigations during the 2025-26 reporting period continued to address alleged breaches of Service policy and misconduct.

No disproportionate impact was found on any minority group.

Matters of Grievance for the period 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

There were 6 grievance cases recorded between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, representing a decrease of 4 cases compared to the previous year.

Male	Female	BME	Disability	LGBTQ+	Appeals	Appeal Partially Upheld
6	0	0	0	1*	1	1

3 of the grievances were partially upheld, 1 was not upheld and 2 were withdrawn.

1 appeal was received, and both the original grievance outcome and the appeal outcome were partially upheld.

Grievance investigations during the 2025-26 reporting period addressed a range of employee concerns relating to workplace conduct and organisational practices.These included concerns regarding management style and leadership approach. Additional matters raised included issues relating to pay, and concerns arising from workforce planning and recruitment processes. Further grievances related to the allocation of leave entitlement and perceived breaches of data protection requirements.

No evidence of disproportionate impact on minority groups was found.

Harassment and Bullying Cases 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

During the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, no new cases were raised under the Bullying and Harassment policy. However, one case from the previous reporting period, 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, carried over into this period and was concluded, with the outcome being partially upheld.

Appendix D - Completed Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Action Plan 2025 – 2026

Equality Objectives: Our Communities

1. Support local business to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation.
2. Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire.
3. Develop and deliver a Prevention Service targeting our most vulnerable communities.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
1	Present the EDI Annual Report to the Fire Authority.	Members are aware of their commitments and accountabilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. Members are aware of progress to date.	Chief Fire Officer	September 2025	The EDI Annual Report was considered by Resources Committee on 24 September 2025 and subsequently went to the Fire Authority.
2	Reduce accidental fires in the home through targeting those people who are at risk due to a range of factors including age,	Reduce accidental fires. 1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires 1.4 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	Community Fire Safety (CFS) teams attend sessions on rotation to promote Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) and address accidental dwelling fires. To address the increased number of cooking related accidental dwelling fires in Brierfield, LFRS partnered with community leaders and the local Imam to host a Fire Safety Surgery at a

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	disability and lifestyle.				mosque during Friday prayers. The event generated 66 HFSC referrals and strengthened trust within the community. Feedback highlighted risks linked to the use of tandoor ovens among elderly residents, informing future targeted prevention work. The number of accidental dwelling fires has risen to 742 which is an increase of 52 compared to 2024-25. However, this remains the third lowest annual total recorded since 2009-10, with the previous year representing the lowest on record. Cooking-related fires continue to be the most common cause of ADFs, although the number recorded in 25-26 was slightly lower than the previous year and the lowest seen in the last five years. Analysis also indicates that fires were generally more contained than the five-year average, with a higher proportion resulting in heat and smoke damage only. Increases were noted in fires where the ignition source was linked to the spread of secondary fires, particularly during warmer months,

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					suggesting a correlation with external environmental factors. Smaller increases were also identified in incidents involving electric sources and white goods, highlighting the need for continued targeted prevention activity. Offered 30,596 Home Fire Safety Checks and completed 21,976.
3	Work with at risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction and severity of road collisions in Lancashire. Young People are at particularly high risk of being killed or seriously injured.	Reduce those killed or seriously injured.	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	LFRS marked the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims on 16 November 2025, with the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and the Prevention Support Officer attending a multifaith service at County Hall, Preston. The event honoured those killed or seriously injured on the roads and reinforced our commitment to road safety and community support. Road safety awareness work was delivered in partnership with Blackburn Rovers FC, with digital safety adverts displayed across the stadium's screens throughout the Christmas period. These messages reached large matchday audiences, promoting safe driving and

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					highlighting seasonal road risks. The collaboration enhanced the Service's ability to engage diverse communities through high visibility platforms and supported wider road safety objectives.
4	Ensure our services are accessible and meet the needs of people in the community by ensuring that fire prevention activity is linked to a range of risks including cultural risks.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	During Eid Milad un-Nabi, LFRS delivered an electrical safety campaign across the Pennine district, distributing leaflets on cooking and electrical safety in local shops. The initiative focused on safe use of decorative lighting and preventing overnight fire risks, resulting in zero electrical fires during the period. This engagement strengthened community trust and generated Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) opportunities.
5	Use a wide range of communication channels ensuring our safety messages meet the different needs of our communities in terms of timing of the	Reduction in KPI activity.	Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2026	A letter regarding wildfire prevention and open water safety was distributed to the Lancashire Council of Mosques and shared with affiliated councils in Greater Manchester, Bolton, Bradford, and the UK Islamic Mission. To reinforce the message, safety posters are being displayed in mosques and madrassahs throughout the summer. This initiative

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	campaign and types of risk.				supports inclusive communication and ensures key safety advice reaches diverse communities across the Northwest. LFRS worked with EG On the Move to display wildfire and water safety adverts free of charge on digital screens across Northwest petrol forecourts until the end of August 2025, helping reach thousands of people each day. The Chief Fire Officer visited the Blackburn site to thank EG On the Move for its support and discuss future partnership opportunities. Building on this partnership, LFRS worked with EG On the Move and NFCC to share bonfire safety messages nationally on forecourt digital screens free of charge. The campaign ran until 9 November 2025 and supported seasonal prevention activity. • To support wildfire and water safety awareness, targeted digital advertising was deployed in high-risk areas during hot, dry

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					weather. This was complemented by: • 32 outdoor banners placed at wildfire risk sites. • 669 letters sent to residential properties offering safety advice and tailored HFSC's. • 87 businesses contacted with commercial-specific prevention guidance. • Rural fire safety advice shared with farmers, anglers, and gamekeepers via 'In the Know' emails and distributed to parish and town councils. These actions reflect our commitment to inclusive, location-specific prevention messaging. LFRS Eastern area has established a partnership with Blackburn Rovers Football Club (BRFC) to share fire and road safety messages with matchday audiences via digital screens and scoreboards. The collaboration includes community initiatives with BRFC's

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					Community Trust and safety sessions for academy players, which started in December 2025. Pendle Community Radio continues to be a key platform for engaging diverse communities. Through the regular 'Community Hour' programme, LFRS has shared safety messages and built trust, featuring guests such as the ACFO on female empowerment and fire safety, and Pendle CFS teams discussing seasonal campaigns including water safety and wildfire prevention. CFA Vice Chair Councillor Arif Usman appeared on Pendle Community Radio's 'Community Hour' to promote winter fire safety and smoke alarm checks. He highlighted the CFA's role, praised LFRS's use of digital engagement, and reinforced the importance of community connection and safety awareness during the festive season. Northern area continues to strengthen relationships with HMP Lancaster Farms

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					through regular prevention work. 300 Christmas cards with supportive messages and fire safety advice were shared with vulnerable prisoners, helping promote wellbeing and reduce fire risk during a challenging period. The Central CFS Team Leader joined Pendle Community Radio to share electrical safety advice ahead of the festive period, highlighting risks linked to increased seasonal appliance use, lithium battery safety, and the importance of buying certified electrical products. The session helped raise awareness across diverse communities, promoting safer choices throughout the holidays. Across our social media platforms, we align key safety messaging with religious and cultural events such as Lent, Holi, Hanukkah, Ramadan and Diwali, tailoring advice to reflect specific risks linked to those celebrations (for example, cooking, candles and open flames). We also recognise national

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					awareness days including International Women's Day, International Men's Day, Remembrance Day, Neurodiversity Week and World Mental Health Day, resharing relevant content such as podcast episodes and wellbeing resources to engage different audiences. In addition, we provide social media toolkits to local station accounts and partners, enabling consistent, risk-based messaging to be amplified at a community level and delivered at the most appropriate time. The Service continues to support Muslim communities during Ramadan by promoting key fire safety messages linked to fasting and increased cooking activity. Engagement work includes sharing advice on safe meal preparation, checking in on vulnerable family members, and reducing the risk of cooking-related fires during suhoor and iftar. Alongside this, staff observing Ramadan are supported through considerate scheduling and flexibility where possible. These efforts

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					strengthen our relationship with local Muslim communities and help ensure a safe and peaceful holy month for all. For the cooking safety campaign, Mosaic data was used to identify the groups most likely to be involved in cooking-related incidents in Lancashire. People who live in social housing and sheltered accommodation were identified as higher risk. In response, a new poster and leaflet were produced for these settings, with clear cooking safety advice and information about how to request a Home Fire Safety Check. These materials are being shared by Community Fire Safety staff in social and sheltered housing settings during March. Advertising on buses along routes in areas with high concentration of these groups also took place.
6	Attend FRS hosted conferences and events to identify learning and best practice and create	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS's aim of keeping them safer	All Heads of Department	March 2026	Attended NFCC Autumn Conference 9 and 10 October 2025. The conference provided some useful networking opportunities and sharing of policies regarding agreed shift system changes,

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	networking opportunities for minority members of staff				being cognisant of their Equality Impact Assessment.
7	Attend Pride events in 2025/26 promoting LFRS Prevention and Protection work streams and LFRS as an employer of choice.	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Head of Service Delivery	March 2026	Attended Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Morecambe and Lancaster Pride events during summer 2025. This was an opportunity to promote safety messages and LFRS as an employer of choice.
8	Identify opportunities to improve engagement with diverse community groups across Lancashire	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2026	A Western CFS team member appeared on two live shows on Awaaz Radio, discussing electrical safety, BBQ safety, and wildfire prevention during hot weather. The broadcasts addressed public protection orders and engaged listeners in Gujarati and Urdu, encouraging safer alternatives like picnics instead of BBQs. This initiative supported inclusive communication and

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					strengthened engagement with diverse communities. A Safety During Hajj presentation was delivered ahead of Hajj 2025, offering tailored advice on fire safety, crowd awareness, and simple safety measures for pilgrims. This bespoke session supported culturally relevant engagement and promoted safety during a significant religious event. Social media posts were shared to mark key cultural and historical events, including Pride Month, the 80th anniversary of VE Day, and Easter celebrations. These posts reflect our commitment to recognising and celebrating the diversity of our communities and workforce. In partnership with Benefit Mankind, a community awareness morning was held to engage with diverse communities and recognise the contributions of volunteers. The event highlighted the value of working with grassroots organisations and supported

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					relationship building aligned with our wider inclusion goals. LFRS proudly supported Visit My Mosque in October 2025. This year's theme, #OurStories #OurNeighbourhoods, highlights how mosques are not just places of worship, but part of the fabric of our neighbourhoods and wider society. The campaign celebrates the many ways mosques – and the people within them – help to build and support the communities around them. LFRS attended Diwali celebrations at BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir on 22 October 2025, led by the DCFO and CFA Vice Chair. The event promoted cultural understanding, unity, and fire safety though the introduction of battery-operated tea lights. LFRS will share this best practice nationally to support safe celebrations and strengthen community partnerships. LFRS has launched a fire safety initiative for churches across

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					Lancashire, working with local dioceses and stakeholders to promote preventative measures. The project focuses on awareness, training, and practical steps such as candle and electrical safety during festive periods, aiming to protect heritage buildings and strengthen community engagement. Northern CFS team and Lancaster red watch delivered Bright Sparx fire safety education at The Ridge Estate Half Term Club on 30 October 2025. Activities focused on fireworks and seasonal safety, engaging young people in an area with high ASB and fire risk. The visit strengthened community relationships and promoted proactive prevention ahead of bonfire night. As part of the Bright Sparx campaign, LFRS engaged high-risk communities in Burnley through a Fire Safety Surgery at a local mosque during Friday prayers, supported by the CFA Vice Chair. The event promoted bonfire and fireworks

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					safety, generated HFSC referrals, and strengthened community relationships. To mark Hanukkah, LFRS's CFS Team visited Shalom Lodge in Fylde to deliver fire safety advice to elderly residents, covering cooking, electrical safety, and safe candle use. HFSC's were completed, and residents were encouraged to raise concerns. This engagement reinforces our commitment to building strong relationships with the Jewish community and ensuring safety for all. As part of the 2026-27 Council Tax and Shaping our Services for the Future consultations, the community engagement officer helped community members complete paper copies of the consultation papers. The Shaping our Services for the Future consultation was promoted via a wide range of methods to give communities opportunities to take part. This included: digital advertising; printed postcards signposting to the survey were

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					distributed by CFS teams while doing community engagement activity; direct mail / email to people who had used our services in the past two years; media activity; stakeholder newsletters and internal communications. A social media advert was targeted at people living in postcodes within very high and high risk super output areas. The aim was to encourage feedback from people who are most at risk in Lancashire, so their views were better represented in the consultation. The advert reached 64,693 people and generated 2,846 clicks through to the survey. The Service attended the Lancashire Faith Forum, a multi-faith partnership event held in Blackburn that brings together faith communities and the public sector. LFRS already has strong relationships with faith groups across the county, and the Forum expressed interest in the Service signing the Faith Covenant, which would make LFRS the first fire and rescue service in the country to do so. This opportunity will be

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					considered as part of ongoing engagement with faith communities. A visit was arranged on 2 February 2026 to a newly opened mosque in Blackburn. All staff were welcome to attend, and further details were shared via the Engine House. This visit supported continued engagement with local faith communities.
9	Embed the equality impact assessment process	Leading to better policy development and the needs of staff and the community are full considered	Director of People and Development	March 2026	Work is underway to utilise SharePoint as the platform for managing Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). Supporting policy, guidance, and forms are currently being updated to improve accessibility and consistency across the organisation. An On the Menu session was held on Friday 6 March 2026, which talked about what an Equality Impact Assessment is, the importance of EIA's and the new submission process, with the opportunity for attendees to ask questions throughout the presentation.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					Further sessions will be delivered in 2026/27.
10	Develop a list of buildings which do not meet accessibility requirements.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Property	October 2025	Building Conditions Surveys were completed in January 2026, with findings informing the development of the 2026/27 Property Asset Management Plan. This work supports the identification of opportunities to improve accessibility, inclusivity, and suitability of Service buildings for staff, visitors, and community use.
11	Review and improve internal systems in relation to accessibility	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Digital Transformation / ICT	March 2026	Copilot Chat is now available to all staff through the existing Microsoft 365 licence, supporting improved communication and reducing administrative workload across the Service. Guidance, example prompts and learning resources are available via the Microsoft 365 Hub, with Digital Champions providing additional support. A series of webinars will also be delivered to help staff understand how to use Copilot effectively in their roles.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					Procurement processes have been updated so that all relevant digital solutions must meet WCAG accessibility standards. This ensures new systems are compliant and accessible from the point of purchase. Key corporate templates, including Service Orders and Standard Operating Procedures, have been updated into accessible formats to improve readability and support staff with diverse needs. Read & Write assistive software is now available to all employees, offering tools such as text-to-speech and reading support to enhance accessibility and inclusion across the workforce. DDaT continues to work closely with Employee Voice Groups and external focus groups to better understand accessibility needs and ensure user requirements are reflected in digital improvements.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					Accessibility considerations are now built into all internally developed digital systems from the outset, helping ensure new tools meet inclusive design standards. User interface and user experience guidance, along with WCAG-based accessibility advice, is also being shared with new Power BI developers to support the creation of dashboards that are clearer, more inclusive, and easier for all users to understand. Corporate Communications has engaged Web Usability Partnership Ltd to review internal and external systems using the WCAG-EM methodology, helping ensure ongoing accessibility compliance. Accessibility training has been delivered to key departments this year to prepare staff who will be responsible for developing and writing major Service documents over the next 12 months, ensuring accessible practice is embedded from the outset.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
12	Reduce community risk by providing safety advice, engaging with migrant communities, refugees, asylum seekers, seasonal workers and students	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2026	The Western CFS team delivered fire safety talks to local asylum seekers and refugees, including a tailored ESOL presentation at the Metropole Hotel for individuals from 16 nationalities. Clothing-related fire risks were identified, particularly among women, and a follow up safety package is being developed. The initiative aimed to build trust and reinforce key safety messages within vulnerable communities. To mark Refugee Week, teams across Lancashire engaged with residents who have sought refuge in the area, focusing on home fire safety education. This initiative supported inclusive outreach and helped build trust with vulnerable communities. Work is ongoing to maintain up to date risk information on the current Hotels being used to house migrants within Lancashire. Work has started with 'New Neighbours Together', supporting asylum seekers and ESOL learners to improve fire

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					safety awareness, particularly for those living in HMOs and alternative housing arrangements. Engagement is ongoing with eligible personnel residing at the Tickled Trout Hotel since their arrival in May last year. The work has focused on increasing awareness and understanding of evacuation procedures to ensure safety and support for the group. It was also noted that the appropriate terminology is 'eligible personnel' rather than 'refugees'.
13	Promote Water Safety targeting underrepresented groups	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2026	A Western CFS team member met with key leaders in Blackpool to plan visits to local madrassahs, aiming to promote water safety through culturally sensitive engagement. This supports proactive relationship building and tailored safety education. To mark World Drowning Prevention Day (25 July 2025), LFRS launched a joint water safety campaign with regional Councils of Mosques and UKIM, targeting madrassahs across the

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					North of England. A digital letter was distributed via mosque portals, reaching over 45,000 students, with many mosques incorporating safety messages into Friday sermons. This was our first use of digital platforms for this audience, supporting inclusive, culturally responsive communication.
14	Develop targeted education packages for Home Schooled and mobile children	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	A range of home education packages have been delivered this year through both virtual sessions and in-person visits, ensuring flexibility and accessibility for families with diverse needs. These packages have supported children educated at home with essential fire safety knowledge, tailored guidance, and opportunities to engage directly with prevention staff. As part of the Prevention Review, recommendations now focus on further refining and developing this offer, including exploring how the programme can be formalised and mainstreamed into future years to ensure a consistent, sustainable, and high-quality

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					intervention for home-educated children across Lancashire.
15	Review of rural farm safety messaging	Reduce the number of fires within rural communities	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	A review of our rural fire safety packages is currently underway to ensure they remain relevant and responsive to emerging risks. New materials are being developed to strengthen prevention activity in rural communities, with a particular focus on wildfire risk and safety within rural workplaces such as farms. This work aims to provide more targeted guidance, improve engagement with rural stakeholders, and enhance overall community resilience in isolated or higher-risk areas.
16	Deliver targeted Business Safety advice to ethnic minorities	Reduce the number of fires in businesses and the need for prosecution	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2026	Targeted interventions have been delivered to support responsible persons from ethnic minority communities. This has included the development of bespoke fire safety leaflets, tailored engagement sessions with business leaders, and dedicated support for places of worship. These

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
					activities aim to improve understanding of legal duties under fire safety legislation and to help responsible persons comply effectively with their obligations.

Equality Objectives: Our Workforce

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

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
17	Recruit, promote and retain a workforce which is diverse and which meets the needs of the community we serve	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce.	Director People and Development	March 2026	On Call Support Officers delivered four practical On Call recruitment sessions as Accrington and Rossendale College and Nelson and Colne college, engaging around 160 students. Activities included fitness tests and equipment challenges to showcase role requirements. 70% of participants were from BAME backgrounds and 7% were neurodivergent, supporting ongoing efforts to raise awareness and improve diversity in recruitment.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
18	Engage and communicate with staff through: Regular engagement with representative bodies Supporting external diversity and inclusion networks which promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and share information. Supporting existing internal networks	A workforce which feels inclusive and is more engaged	Chief Fire Officer EDI Steering Group DCFO EDI leads	March 2026	Internal communications covered a range of EDI and community safety topics, including Refugee Week fire safety, neurodiversity, Pride events, Preston's Gujarati Hindu community anniversary, Healthwatch Lancashire's Disability Voices survey, Hajj safety messaging, and guidance on supporting colleagues during Ramadan. Women in the Fire Service (WFS) weekend was held in June and had again proved to be a successful event. LFRS had seven delegates attend, with two delegates supporting the event by delivering some sessions. Further work is underway to understand the steps needed for the Service to progress towards White Ribbon accreditation, which demonstrates an organisation's commitment to preventing harassment, abuse, and violence against women and girls. To mark Dyslexia Awareness Week, LFRS celebrated being awarded the Bronze Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark,

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					recognising our commitment to accessibility and inclusive workplace practices. This achievement reflects the efforts of the Neurodiversity EVG and provided a foundation to work toward silver accreditation. The FBU has developed an Allyship School to strengthen support for LGBTQ+ members and promote inclusive behaviours within the fire and rescue sector. The programme focuses on developing understanding, advocacy skills, and active allyship, enabling participants to help create safer and more supportive workplaces. Attendance will be offered only to active members of the relevant EVG, ensuring participants are already engaged in representing workforce voices and contributing to cultural improvement. The updated Transition at Work Policy has been positively received by the LGBTQ+ EVG, reflecting strengthened support and clearer guidance for trans and gender-diverse staff. Following this,

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					LFRS was approached by a representative from NWAS expressing interest in collaborative working. An invitation has been extended for NWAS to attend a future LGBTQ+ EVG meeting to explore opportunities for shared learning, alignment of best practice, and the development of a joined-up regional approach to supporting staff through workplace transition. The Race and Religion EVG discussed the need to improve access to Chaplaincy support for staff across the Service. This action will be raised with the Safety, Health & Wellbeing Advisor and a Station Manager to identify options for enhanced spiritual and pastoral provision. The Disability EVG discussed the challenges On-Call staff face in participating in EVG meetings due to their working patterns. To improve inclusion and ensure wider access to EVG communications, the Director of

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					People and Development will attend an evening On-Call Unit Managers meeting to explore options for sharing updates more effectively. The Service continues to support staff observing Ramadan by encouraging line managers to hold early, respectful discussions about reasonable adjustments, including time for prayers, arrangements for breaking the fast, and annual leave around Eid. Guidance has been shared to help managers consider staff welfare during fasting.
19	Job Evaluate Green Book posts as per the National Evaluation Scheme.	Ensure equality of pay and grading as per legislative requirements	Director of People and Development	March 2026	Job roles are evaluated using the agreed job evaluation scheme.
20	Develop a strong organisational culture where the behaviours of our leaders are understood and championed with a	Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change.	Director of People and Development	March 2026	The Supervisory development programme has been updated utilising some of the learning from NFCC Allyship and Active Bystander Training supporting inclusive behaviours and a positive workplace culture.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
	view to embedding our values.				
21	Support relevant campaigns promoting awareness of issues impacting on minority ethnic communities.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued and contributes to effective decision making	All EDI leads	March 2026	A Station Manager appeared on Pendle Community Radio to launch our Cooking Safety Campaign, aimed at supporting Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. The broadcast also introduced our new Language Name Badges, designed to strengthen connections with diverse communities. The interview sparked positive local conversations and reinforced our commitment to inclusion, safety, and trust across Lancashire.
22	Involve representatives from EDI groups in relation to any proposed changes to property or equipment and ensure an EIA is completed.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued	Head of Property	March 2026	Property personnel are now represented at most EVG meetings, with plans to expand involvement further as capacity allows. This supports broader inclusion and cross departmental collaboration. EQIA process is followed for projects as appropriate.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
23	Refresh the EIA Policy and Process	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director People and Development	August 2025	The refresh is in draft. To strengthen governance, accountability, and ongoing oversight of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), an Equality Progress Update Report will be presented at every EDICB meeting from April 2026. This regular reporting will provide updates on completed EIAs, outstanding actions, trends or gaps identified, and any required organisational improvements. The process ensures EIAs remain active, monitored, and fully integrated into strategic decision making across the Service.
24	Improve the EIA workflow, logging of actions and retention of Data	Continue to empower our people to access information and data easily on a range of systems and devices, invest in new technology, and drive efficiencies through digitisation.	Director People and Development	October 2025	A dedicated SharePoint site has been launched to host all Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), ensuring transparency and easy access across the Service. All new and updated EIAs must now be uploaded to this site using updated templates, with an automated approval and publication process similar to Service Orders. Employee Voice Groups should be consulted during

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					drafting, and a prompt is being built into the Service Order update process to remind authors to review and update relevant EIAs.
25	Invest in our estate to upgrade station facilities to meet the needs of the users	A workforce who has facilities to operate from that are fit for purpose.	Head of Property	March 2026	Building Stock Condition Surveys undertaken in quarter 2 and quarter 3 of 25-26. Reports received and under review – January 2026. The findings will inform future investment decisions across the estate, supporting safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for all staff and visitors. Inclusive infrastructure improvements: • Blackpool upgrade works completed in December 2025. • Preston interim improvements ongoing – anticipated to be complete by Spring 2026. • LDC Masterplan planning submission under review. • Revenue-funded upgrades planned across various stations in 25-26 - going - covering

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					essential repairs and minor projects (such as Fulwood Fire Station new kitchen complete). These improvements support safe, accessible, and inclusive working environments across the estate. New furniture supply agreement has been awarded to Gresham Office Furniture, who bring experience working with Fire and Rescue Services nationwide. This marks a key step in enhancing our workspaces, aiming to create more comfortable, inclusive, and productive environments for staff.
26	Identify any learning from cultural reviews and deliver interventions accordingly	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026	A gap analysis was prepared against two independent cultural review reports into North Wales and Mid and West Wales fire and rescue services, which was presented at the EDICB meeting in July 2025. The purpose of this analysis was to identify areas of learning and improvement, which will be captured and included in the EDI Annual Report.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
27	Improve welfare facilities for members of staff.	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement Head of Property	March 2026	Funding has been secured to improve staff welfare at incidents. A survey was shared via the Engine House to ensure the new welfare vehicle is designed to meet the needs of all staff effectively and inclusively. Property investment – see section 25 above.
28	Embed information in relation to the talent gateway and develop a shared understanding of talent	Promotion pathways are transparent and properly understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026	The most recent Supervisory Manager Talent Gateway process concluded in July 2025, with outcomes and interview topic areas shared openly via the News page on the Engine House. This step was taken to promote transparency and ensure that all employees have a clear understanding of the expectations and criteria involved in the process. For the first time, candidate feedback was actively requested following the Talent Gateway. This marks a significant shift toward promoting employee voice, demonstrating our commitment to listening, learning, and continuously improving our internal development pathways. By embedding

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					feedback mechanisms, we aim to make our talent processes more inclusive, responsive, and reflective of the diverse experiences of our workforce.
29	Respond to any areas of improvement/recommendations from the LFRS HMICFRS inspection	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026	An area for improvement was in relation to equality impact assessments. A new approach to completing, recording and reviewing equality impact assessments has been implemented.
30	Deliver Menopause Awareness	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of Service Improvement	March 2026	As part of the Women and Families Group, a menopause nutrition session was delivered on Friday 16 January 2026 by Caroline Hill, a registered dietician specialising in supporting women through perimenopause and menopause. This initiative promotes inclusive practice by increasing awareness of menopause, providing practical guidance, and offering accessible support to staff across the Service. FireFit is conducting research on female firefighters and menopause to develop evidence-based toolkits and guidance.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					The project focuses on improving fitness, health, and wellbeing nationally. Participants have been sought internally to participate in an online survey that explores their experience during the menopause transition while working as a Firefighter. A news article has been shared on the Engine House from the NFCC Menopause in Fire Conference, including sessions by Dr. Newson and Hayley Douglas. These resources provide best practice and evidence-based guidance to support female firefighters through menopause, promoting health, wellbeing, and inclusion across the sector.
31	Explore how aspiring Firefighters and Crew Managers wish to access leadership development events, deliver training	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	Director of People and Development	March 2026	Firefighters and Crew Managers highlight a preference for leadership development opportunities that are flexible, accessible and compatible with operational demands. Delivery of development focuses on a blend of face-to-face learning, virtual sessions and shorter bite-sized interventions that

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
	interventions that meet those needs.				can be accessed around shift patterns and other commitments. Leadership development is designed and delivered using a range of formats, ensuring that learning opportunities are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the needs of different employee groups.
32	Conduct a comprehensive staff survey	A workforce where everyone feels valued / Encourage and listen to employee voice	All	March 2026	The staff survey was launched on 2 July 2025 and closed on 29 August 2025. 511 members of staff completed the 2025 survey, raising over £500 for charity and providing valuable feedback to shape future policies. Key findings include: 91% believe their work makes Lancashire safer; 89% know how to raise concerns; 88% feel supported by their team. Areas for improvement include job enjoyment, feeling informed, and feeling valued. Feedback will inform the Annual Service Plan 2026-27, with actions communicated in the coming months.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
33	Develop Religion and Belief Policy	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	People Manager – Business Partnering	September 2025	A Religion and Belief Policy has been drafted and shared with Employee Voice Groups for consultation. Feedback is currently being reviewed, with a revised draft to follow. This work will carry forward into the 2026-27 EDI Action Plan to ensure continued development and alignment with staff needs.
34	Establish two workplace assessors	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Director of People and Development	March 2026	In July 2025, the EDICB approved training for two Workplace Needs Assessors to support inclusive workplace practices. Volunteers were sought at the Neurodiversity EVG on 2 October. The training, funded via the Member Champion budget, will lead to a Level 4 qualification and is a key step toward achieving the Gold Dyslexia Friendly Quality Mark. Assessors will be based in functional departments with capacity to visit stations, ensuring tailored support for staff with specific needs. Two existing members of staff have now achieved the Level 4 qualification and

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
					work is underway to introduce the roles into Service.
35	Determine if there is a more effective way of communicating outcomes and decisions of complaints	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Director of People and Development	March 2026	A range of different communications tools are utilised including, team meetings, station visits, utilising of Teams, extended Leadership meetings and Watch Manager catch ups.
36	Refresh the Exit Interview process	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce	Head of People	March 2026	Work to refresh the Exit Interview process is ongoing, with an online form currently in development and pending approval. Once approved, testing will be undertaken to ensure functionality and user accessibility. Implementation of the new process will take place in the next financial year, with this action carried forward into the 2026-27 EDI Action Plan.
37	Provide coaching and mentoring opportunities to improve access and progression for	A workforce where everyone feels valued and supported	Leadership and Development Manager	March 2026	In 2025/26, 28 people accessed an external coach - 13 females; 15 males; 10 uniformed; 18 non-uniformed. 26 people engaged with the Lift and Climb Mentoring Programme – 3

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	Completed Actions
	under-represented groups				females; 23 males; 24 uniformed staff; 2 non-uniformed staff.

Appendix E - Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture Action Plan 2026 – 2027

Equality Objectives: Our Communities

1. Support local business to reduce the risk of fire and remain compliant within fire safety legislation.
2. Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire.
3. Develop and deliver a Prevention Service targeting our most vulnerable communities.

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
1	Present the EDI Annual Report to the Fire Authority.	Members are aware of their commitments and accountabilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty Members are aware of progress to date.	Chief Fire Officer	September 2026	
2	Reduce accidental fires in the home through targeting those people who are at risk due to a range of factors including age,	Reduce accidental fires. 1.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires 1.4 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	disability and lifestyle.				
3	Work with at risk groups and local partners to contribute to the reduction and severity of road collisions in Lancashire. Young People are particularly at high risk of being killed or seriously injured.	Reduce those killed or seriously injured.	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2027	
4	Ensure our services are accessible and meet the needs of people in the community by ensuring that fire prevention activity is linked to a range of risks including cultural risks.	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Prevention and Protection	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
5	Use a wide range of communication channels ensuring our safety messages meet the different needs of our communities in terms of timing of the campaign and types of risk.	Reduction in KPI activity.	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2027	
6	Attend any FRS hosted conferences and events to identify learning best practice and create networking opportunities for minority members of staff	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	All Heads of Department	March 2027	
7	Attend Community events in 2026-27 promoting LFRS Prevention and Protection work streams and LFRS	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Head of Service Delivery	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	as an employer of choice.				
8	Identify opportunities to improve engagement with diverse community groups across Lancashire	Engaged communities who are confident in LFRS aim of keeping them safer	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement	March 2027	
9	Embed the equality impact assessment process	Leading to better policy development and the needs of staff and the community are full considered	Director of People and Development	March 2027	
10	Review and improve internal systems in relation to accessibility	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Digital Transformation / ICT	March 2027	
11	Implement ideas from our new Modern Ways of Working Forum to drive improvements across the organisation through	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Digital, Data and Technology	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	digital innovation and better use of technology utilising the equality impact assessment process ensuring all members of staff are engaged with the change				
12	Reduce community risk by providing safety advice, engaging with communities at higher risk including migrant communities, eligible personnel, asylum seekers, seasonal workers and students	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2027	
13	Support local businesses to reduce the risk of fire and remain	Reduce the number of fires in businesses and the need for prosecution	Heads of Prevention and Protection	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	compliant within fire safety legislation				
14	Host the Winter AFSA Conference creating opportunities for learning and development	Members of staff develop their leadership skills and how to develop interventions which reduce the risk to those most at risk	Asst Director of Communications and Engagement	November 2026	
15	Develop and deliver a prevention service targeting our most vulnerable communities	Reduce the number of incidents within vulnerable communities	Head of Prevention & Protection	March 2027	
16	Reduce the number and impact of fire and other emergencies to our diverse communities across Lancashire	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Heads of Service Delivery	March 2027	
17	Consult with a wide range of stakeholders including residents,	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	Head of Service Improvement	December 2026	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	businesses, partner agencies and employees to produce a new CRMP for 2027-32		Asst Director of Communications and Engagement		
18	Review our Prevention Services ensuring that the most at risk are targeted	LFRS Meets the needs of different groups	ACFO	September 2026	

Equality Objectives: Our Workforce

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

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
19	Recruit, promote and retain a workforce which is diverse which meets the needs of the	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce.	Director People and Development	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
	community we serve.				
20	Engage and communicate with staff through: Regular engagement with representative bodies Supporting external diversity and inclusion networks which promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and share Information. Supporting existing internal networks	A workforce which feels inclusive and is more engaged	Chief Fire Officer EDI Steering Group DCFO EDI leads	March 2027	
21	Job Evaluate Green Book posts as per the National Evaluation Scheme.	Ensure equality of pay and grading as per legislative requirements	Director of People and Development	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
22	Develop a strong organisational culture where the behaviours of our leaders are understood and championed with a view to embedding our values.	Strengthen leadership and line management to support organisational change.	Director of People and Development	March 2027	
23	Support relevant campaigns promoting awareness of those at higher risk.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued and contributes to effective decision making	All EDI leads	March 2027	
24	Involve representatives from EDI groups in relation to any proposed changes to property or equipment and ensure an EIA is completed.	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued	Head of Property	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
25	Develop an approach supporting partners aimed at reducing violence against women and girls	A workforce who is engaged and feels valued	ACFO	December 2026	
26	Invest in our estate to upgrade facilities to meet the needs of the users with a specific focus on the replacement of training props	A workforce who has facilities to operate from that are fit for purpose.	Head of Property	March 2027	
27	Develop our Property Asset Management Plan to inform decisions about short, medium, and long-term investment required in our property and estates assets	A workforce who has facilities that are fit for the future.	Head of Property	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
28	Respond to staff survey results	A workforce where everyone feels valued / Encourage and listen to employee voice	All	March 2027	
29	Develop Religion and Belief Policy	An organisational culture where EDI is valued and understood	People Manager – Business Partnering	September 2026	
30	Embed the workplace needs assessors, monitor utilisation and impact to ensure effective support for employees	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Director of People and Development	March 2027	
31	Develop a mechanism to ensure appropriate support reaches members of staff who identify as neurodivergent.	A workforce where everyone feels valued	Head of People	March 2027	

	What we will deliver	Measure of Success	Owner	Target Date	In Progress
32	Roll out the new Exit Interview process and analyse leaver data to inform future retention strategies, workforce planning, and targeted EDI initiatives to improve employee experience and inclusion	Identify any key trends in relation to the workforce	Head of People	March 2027	.
33	Take proactive steps to support workers through menopause	A workforce who has facilities to operate from that are fit for purpose.	Head of People	March 2027	

Glossary

Acronym	Meaning
ACFO	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AFA	Automatic Fire Alarm
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CFA	Combined Fire Authority
CFO	Chief Fire Officer
CFS	Community Fire Safety
CM	Crew Manager
CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DCP	Day Crewing Plus
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EDIC	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
FF	Firefighter
FOA	Fire Officers Association
FRSA	Fire and Rescue Service Association
FREDA	Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy
GM	Group Manager
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LCFA	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
LDC	Leadership Development Centre
LFRS	Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and others
LSOA	Lower-layer Super Output Area
MP	Member of Parliament
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
NJC	National Joint Council
NWAS	Northwest Ambulance Service
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PSED	Public Sector Equality Duty
SM	Station Manager

SLT	Senior Leadership Team
STRIVE	Service, Trust, Respect, Integrity, Value and Empowered
TiB	Trauma-informed Briefing
TRiM	Trauma Risk Management
UNISON	Public service trade union
WM	Watch Manager
WSD	Wellbeing Support Dog

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Resources Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday 13 October 2026

Pensions Update

Contact for further information – Elizabeth Sandiford, Director of People and Development - 01772 866804

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on firefighter pension matters affecting Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. It summarises progress with the Age Discrimination (McCloud/Sargeant) remedy and Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) remedy, including Annual Benefit Statement delivery. The report also highlights the associated financial, administrative and member communication implications for the Authority.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the progress made to date, the ongoing work required to complete outstanding remedy cases, the arrangements in place to monitor administrator performance and regulatory compliance, and the continuing risks associated with delivery of the remaining remedy work.

Information

This paper provides oversight and the latest information on pension issues in respect of uniformed firefighters.

Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure – Stage 2 (IDRP)

The Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) is the formal two-stage process for reviewing complaints about pension decisions made either by the employer or the pension administrator. Stage 1 is determined by the Chief Fire Officer or Director of People and Development. Stage 2 is determined by the Appeals Committee. The purpose of the process is to ensure that pension decisions are reconsidered fairly, consistently and in accordance with the relevant regulations.

A number of existing disputes concerning the pensionability of allowances have completed the Authority's two-stage Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure, with some matters subsequently referred to The Pensions Ombudsman. The Authority has supplied the information requested in relation to those referrals and no formal determinations have been received.

No new IDRP applications or referrals to The Pensions Ombudsman were reported to the Local Pension Board on 14 September 2026.

Annual Benefit Statements

The statutory deadline for issuing 2026 Annual Benefit Statements (ABSs) was 31 August 2026. The Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) produced 1,757 statements for 1,844 eligible members, representing overall completion of 95.3%. Completion rates

were 95.3% for active members, 95.4% for deferred members and 88.2% for other eligible members.

Of 483 members eligible for a McCloud Annual Benefit Statement Remediable Service Statement, 438 statements were issued. 259 of 292 active-member statements and 179 of 191 deferred-member statements. 45 remaining cases failed to be issued by the deadline. This was due to outstanding technical and data issues, including instances where additional information was required, which prevented full completion of the ABS. LPPA will continue to progress them when the necessary information becomes available.

The Scheme Manager considers that this is a material breach and in accordance with The Pension Regulator's (TPR) guidance has reported the breach to the TPR along with an action plan.

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 is the implementation of the retrospective remedy for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. This requires eligible members to be given a choice between legacy scheme benefits and reformed scheme benefits for the remedy period.

Those members who are subject to the McCloud Remedy, who retired prior to 1 October 2023, are referred to as Immediate Choice members and are able to make a choice in relation to which pension scheme they wish to be in during the remedy period. In order to make this decision, they must be issued with a Remediable Service Statement (RSS). The Immediate Choice cohort comprised 367 members requiring an ABS RSS. By 31 August 2026, 319 statements had been issued, and 48 cases remained outstanding, comprising three tapered or unprotected cases, 33 protected-member cases and 12 beneficiary cases. Twenty-nine of the protected-member cases are linked to the Matthews remedy and cannot be completed until that work is resolved. All outstanding cases involve individual complexity, and LPPA currently anticipates completion by December 2026, subject to the availability of data, national guidance and administrative capacity.

As at 31 August 2026, 85 members had elected to receive alternative Immediate Choice benefits. Payments had been completed in 80 cases, with five remaining outstanding. Progress continues to depend on individual case complexity, completion of member documentation and administrator capacity.

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

Implementation challenges are not unique to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), and major administrative and data challenges are being experienced across

the fire sector and other public sector pension schemes. However, available sector intelligence indicates that LPPA remains ahead of the national position in progressing the age discrimination remedy.

The Local Pension Board continues to receive detailed information on outstanding cases. For the Resources Committee, the principal assurance considerations are the completion of complex cases, administrator capacity, compliance with regulatory requirements and the clarity of communications to affected members.

Contingent Decisions

The age discrimination remedy regulations allow certain member decisions made during the remedy period to be revisited where the member may have acted differently had the 2015 pension reforms not applied. These are known as contingent decisions and may include decisions to opt out of the pension scheme or, in specific circumstances, decisions relating to the purchase of additional service in a legacy scheme.

The Local Pension Board considered a detailed update on contingent-decision cases at its meeting on 14 September 2026. At that point, applications comprised five Added Pension cases, seven opted-out cases and 42 Matthews-related cases. The increase in applications reflects the progression of remedy implementation and the greater visibility of individual options as members receive further information.

Some cases remain dependent on national legislative developments affecting opted-out members of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992. The Authority will continue to apply the current statutory framework and published guidance, with any material developments reported through the established governance arrangements.

Part Time Workers (Matthews 2) Remedy

The Matthews remedy addresses 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 is 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 has identified more than 600 existing and former employees who are eligible to express an interest in joining the Modified Pension Scheme or purchasing additional pension. Reasonable endeavours have been made to contact all eligible individuals, including follow-up correspondence and the use of a tracing service where appropriate. This work remains ongoing. The Local Government Association has raised concerns nationally regarding the inconsistency of progress across Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), with some FRAs achieving over 90% response rate to expression of interest letters and other under 24% response rate. LFRS's response rate currently sits at 75%.

As at 31 August 2026, 622 individuals were within scope of the Matthews exercise. Of these, 445 had expressed an interest, 423 statements had been issued and 305 elections to join or purchase additional service had been received. This represents engagement from 71% of all individuals in scope, with statements issued to 95% of those expressing an interest. The statutory completion date for the Second Options Exercise is 31 March 2027.

From the 622 in scope individuals, 235 falls within the Special Pensioner Member cohort and are due immediate payment of pension if they elect to join. Of these 235 individuals, 215 had expressed an interest, 202 statements had been issued, and 182 elections had been received. Of these elections, 179 had been sent to the administrator and 131 pensions had been brought into payment. Thirteen statements and 15 member responses remained outstanding. LFRS has also identified 19 potential death-grant cases requiring specialist consideration, while other complex cases requiring manual intervention have been referred to the Government Actuary's Department and are expected to progress by December 2026.

Any case that enters the process, for example, the individual is traced and submits an expression of interest, must be processed by the deadline of 31 March 2027. Any case which misses this deadline will not be eligible to join the scheme. This then becomes a financial risk for the FRA as any compensatory pension would need to be paid from the Fire and Rescue Services operating budget. This is a clear financial risk. Cases can stall for many reasons, response rates from members can often be slow, progress in processing the case with the administrator has several levels of contact with the member, which can take time. These cases will be tracked on a weekly basis to ensure this risk is minimised.

Further legislation relating to the Matthews remedy 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 have a further implementation period to 31 March 2027 to complete outstanding work and apply the legislative changes fully. The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) is also developing a calculator to support processing of additional cases arising from these amendments; the third iteration of this calculator is delayed by GAD and is now expected to be available by 11 December 2026. This provides LFRS a limited window in which to process complex conversion cases required before 31 March 2027 and this area remains of significant risk. The LGA have indicated their intention to request for a further extension in relation to these cases due to the limited time in which FRAs have been afforded to process cases.

Aggregation

One area that remains unresolved nationally is aggregation. This affects 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.

In July 2026 the government reached agreement with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) in relation to the outstanding break in service issue. This agreement only covers individuals who are claimants in the litigation and does not extend to non-claimants, nor does it extend to breaks in service occurring after 6 April 2000. The agreement confirms that claimants with a break in service of one month or less will not be treated as disqualified solely because of the short gap before commencement of wholetime employment.

No final mechanism has yet been confirmed for these cases, and the Service is awaiting the outcome of relevant legal processes expected during 2027-8.

There is a potential that non-claimants will submit complaints to LFRS via the IDRP process.

Resources

The implementation of the Age Discrimination (McCloud/Sargeant) remedy and the Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) remedy continue to place significant demands on both LFRS and its pension administrator, LPPA. LPPA has increased its staffing resource to support the additional workload but has lost key individuals from the business with the appropriate knowledge to process complex cases. LFRS continues to manage remedy implementation alongside business-as-usual pension administration responsibilities. Dealing with cases continues to be complex, challenging and resources intensive.

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

The concurrent implementation of two substantial and complex national pension remedy programmes remains resource intensive. To support delivery, the temporary Pensions Coordinator role continues to provide additional administrative capacity, with the current arrangement in place until 31 March 2027. The postholder is primarily supporting the administration of the Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) exercise.

Dashboards

The Pensions Dashboard Programme aims to enable individuals to access their pension information online, securely and all in one place. Dashboards will provide clear and simple information about an individual's multiple pension savings, including their FPS and State Pension.

LPPA remains connected to the pensions dashboards infrastructure and is now focused on operational readiness, data quality, record matching and the accuracy of value data. The dashboard is expected to become available to members during summer or autumn 2027, subject to the formal Dashboard Available Point and national implementation arrangements. Continued monitoring is required because connection alone does not demonstrate full operational readiness.

Business Risk

The principal risks remain delays in completing complex remedy cases, dependence on manual calculations and evolving national guidance, administrator capacity, incomplete historic data and the potential for inconsistent or delayed member communications. These factors may result in member dissatisfaction, complaints, regulatory scrutiny, additional administration costs and financial liabilities. Mitigation includes regular monitoring through the Local Pension Board, escalation of overdue or complex cases, targeted member contact and continued liaison with LPPA and national pension bodies.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Service is required to implement the pension regulations as per legislative requirement. Challenges exist if the guidance is subsequently deemed not to comply with the Equality Act.

Data Protection (GDPR)

No identifiable sensitive or personal data is contained within this report.

The remedy requirements will require processing of personal data. The processing will be for a legitimate reason.

HR Implications

Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) administers pension schemes on behalf of seven fire and rescue authorities. As a result, LFRS is dependent on LPPA's wider delivery programme and prioritisation across all participating authorities, rather than solely on local demand.

This creates ongoing employee relations and communication challenges, particularly for Grey Book employees affected by the pension remedy programmes.

The scale and complexity of the changes, together with the time required to implement them, can lead to understandable frustration and may affect confidence and morale if not managed carefully.

However, measurable progress has been made during the last six months. This includes the retrospective adjustment of pension benefits for members making elections under the age discrimination remedy, together with progress in addressing the backlog of Special Pensioner Member cases. These cases are now increasingly being managed by LPPA as part of business-as-usual administration.

Financial implications

The pension remedy programmes continue to have significant financial implications for LFRS. While some costs remain subject to final calculation, the Authority is required to manage a combination of direct pension liabilities, administrative costs and remedy implementation expenditure.

In relation to the Age Discrimination (McCloud/Sargeant) remedy, the Service continues to record remedy-related costs in order to support claims for reimbursement from Government where this is applicable. However, administration associated expenditure is not recoverable.

Overall, the financial position remains complex and will continue to be monitored closely as national remedy programmes progress, outstanding cases are resolved, and final liabilities are confirmed.

Legal Implications

The matters set out in this report arise from statutory pension scheme requirements, associated remedy legislation, and the Authority's responsibilities as Scheme Manager for the Firefighters' Pension Schemes. Legal compliance is therefore central to the administration of the Age Discrimination (McCloud/Sargeant) remedy, the Part-Time Workers (Matthews 2) remedy, and the consideration of contingent decision cases.

The Authority is also required to operate and determine pension disputes in accordance with the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure and to respond appropriately to any complaints or determinations issued by The Pensions Ombudsman. In addition, the delay in issuing certain remediable service statements has been reported to The Pensions Regulator and remains subject to ongoing monitoring.

A number of aspects of remedy implementation continue to depend on further national guidance and, in some cases, additional legislation. The Authority's approach is

therefore to proceed on the basis of the current statutory framework and published guidance, while keeping any emerging legal developments under review to ensure decisions remain lawful, consistent and defensible.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:
Date:
Contact:

Glossary

ABS - Annual Benefit Statement
FBU - Fire Brigades Union
FPS - Firefighters' Pension Scheme
FRA - Fire and Rescue Authorities
GAD - Government Actuary's Department
IDRP - Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure
LFRS - Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
LPPA - Local Pensions Partnership Administration
RSS - Remediable Service Statement
TPR - The Pension Regulator

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