

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 June 2026

Pilot flexible day crewing at Fleetwood Fire Station

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Executive Summary

This report provides the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) with an overview of a proposed pilot to change the crewing model at Fleetwood Fire Station from the current wholetime 2/2/4 duty system to a Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) system.

The proposal is informed by a detailed assessment of risk, incident demand, workforce availability and operational performance in the Fleetwood area. Analysis of incident data (2023–2025) demonstrates that Fleetwood has the lowest demand of all wholetime stations, with approximately 636 incidents annually and relatively low levels of critical fire incidents and casualties.

Risk modelling confirms that the station currently meets required response standards and that an FDC model would continue to achieve those standards, including during on-call hours when crews respond from nearby locations.

Workforce analysis indicates a viable staffing model, with a cohort of wholetime and on-call personnel living within a five-minute response radius. Travel time analysis shows that a potential FDC crew could achieve an average response-to-station time of approximately 3 minutes, comparable to or better than existing on-call performance.

The proposal also supports broader organisational objectives, including improving workforce sustainability, reducing reliance on compulsory transfers, and releasing wholetime resources to support wider service pressures.

Subject to approval, the pilot would operate for 18 months, with formal reviews at 6 and 12 months to ensure service effectiveness is maintained.

The Service has consulted the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and local staff on the potential pilot proposal and there is broad support to progress. In addition, the Service is currently undertaking a wider public consultation on the proposals from 1 June to 30 June 2026.

Recommendation(s)

The CFA is requested to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the evidence supporting the proposed pilot.
2. Approve the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to take a final decision on the implementation of the Fleetwood Flexible Day Crewing pilot, taking account of consultation outcomes and further analysis.

Appendix 1

Information

1.1 Background and Context

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) allocates resources based on risk through its Community Risk Management Plan, risk modelling, and service reviews. Fleetwood Fire Station is currently crewed on a wholtime 2/2/4 system, providing immediate response at all times. However, its activity levels and risk profile differ significantly from other wholtime stations.

Flexible Day Crewing (FDC) is already used successfully across the Service. Under FDC, a wholtime crew provides immediate response during daytime hours (08:00–18:00), with an on-call response overnight from staff living within five minutes of the station.

The pilot is to change a crewing system, not to reduce the number of fire engines covering the area.

1.2 Risk and Demand Analysis (Appendix A)

Analysis of Fleetwood's risk profile demonstrates:

- No Very High Risk areas within the station footprint; one High Risk area located close to the station.
- Current response standards (8 minutes for high risk) are consistently achieved.
- Modelling indicates that an FDC model would continue to meet response standards across the various risk categories.
- Incident demand is comparatively low: Approximately 636 incidents per year, the lowest of all wholtime stations.
- Around 44 critical fire incidents annually, broadly comparable with existing FDC locations.
- Fleetwood is the least utilised wholtime pump in the Service when considering mobilisations.
- Casualty data also indicates relatively low levels of serious fire outcomes compared to other wholtime stations.

1.3 Workforce and Operational Feasibility (Appendix B)

A detailed workforce assessment demonstrates that:

- 27 employees currently live within five minutes of the station, including both wholtime and on-call staff.
- 13 wholtime staff are potentially eligible to support the pilot.

Reaction time modelling shows an average on-call response-to-station time of approximately 3 minutes. Potential FDC wholtime responders achieve an average of 2 minutes 56 seconds, demonstrating comparable performance.

These findings indicate that a sustainable and effective crewing model could be delivered under FDC arrangements.

1.4 Pilot Proposal

Appendix 1

The pilot is designed to:

- Confirm that FDC can meet operational risk and demand in Fleetwood.
- Improve workforce sustainability and reduce reliance on compulsory transfers and significant detachments into the station under the current crewing model.
- Support wider service resilience by releasing wholetime resources.

Key features:

Duration: 18 months (July 2026 – 31 December 2027).

Staffing: 12 wholetime equivalent posts, aligned to FDC arrangements.

Recruitment: Primarily from existing Wholetime staff within a 5-minute radius, supplemented if required, from existing on-call firefighters.

Review points: 6 and 12 months to assess operational performance.

Whilst the initial preference is for Wholetime staff to be offered the opportunity to pilot the FDC system, and the Service has currently written to all 13 eligible, should insufficient numbers come forward there is an opportunity to offer some existing on-call staff an 18 month fixed term contract, subject to a suitable process.

1.5 Consultation

The Service has consulted the FBU who are in broad support for the pilot subject to “.....assurances that the posts removed from W32 Fleetwood will be ring-fenced within the establishment, as we cannot support any reduction in overall firefighter posts”. There is no intent during the pilot to remove any posts from the establishment; those that do not wish to work the FDC system will be relocated to other stations to support staffing challenges elsewhere.

Engagement with staff currently based at Fleetwood and also some of those potentially eligible for the pilot but currently based at other stations, has also been conducted and feedback has been positive. The Service has formally written to eligible staff to gauge appetite should the pilot progress.

The Service is also undertaking a public and stakeholder consultation from 1 June to 30 June 2026.

Collectively, this will ensure that community views, staff feedback, and representative body input are fully considered prior to final decision-making.

Business risk

Potential risk to emergency response performance will be mitigated through modelling, monitoring, and staged review points. In addition, focused community safety and wider prevention activity will take place across the Fleetwood station area to support a ‘prevention first’ approach to community safety.

Workforce risks (availability, recruitment, retention) are a key driver of the proposal and are expected to improve under FDC.

Appendix 1

Reputational risks will be managed through transparent consultation and evidence-led decision making. Should the pilot be successful, any final proposed change to crewing at Fleetwood station would be subject to wider public and stakeholder consultation as part of a future Service-wide Emergency Cover Review.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

No direct environmental impact identified.
Potential indirect benefits through more efficient use of resources and workforce deployment.

Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed this indicates that there is no negative impact on any equality group. However, the assessment will be updated and finalised further to the consultation.

The pilot provides an opportunity to support more flexible working arrangements and potentially broaden access to roles.

Data Protection (GDPR)

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

HR implications

Temporary contractual variations will be required for staff participating in the pilot. Pay and conditions will align with existing FDC agreements, subject to final agreement. The proposal supports workforce planning and future recruitment strategies.

Financial implications

The proposal will release wholetime capacity to support broader service pressures. There is no intention to reduce the Service staffing levels on the basis of the pilot. Within the term of the pilot the additional allowances paid to staff equate to circa £100,000 per annum however these costs are offset by vacancy management across the Service.

Legal implications

The Authority is required to consider consultation outcomes before implementation, which is requested to be delegated to the Chair and Chief Fire Officer.

Changes to duty systems will require appropriate contractual and employment law compliance.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

None

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause