Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on Monday 16 November 2026

Council tax precept consultation 2027-28

Contact for further information – Steven Brown, Director of Corporate Services and Treasurer, 01772 866804

Executive Summary

This report sets out the proposed consultation on a £5 increase in the Band D fire precept for 2027-28, from £94.73 to £99.73 a year, equivalent to approximately 10 pence extra per week. The proposal reflects the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and remains subject to confirmation of the annual council tax referendum principles.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the proposed consultation on a £5 increase in the Band D fire precept for 2027-28 and note the potential for future developments.

Information

The MTFS assumes annual Band D precept increases of £5 in both 2027-28 and 2028-29. This is consistent with the Government's published multi-year funding framework, although referendum principles remain subject to annual confirmation and parliamentary approval.

The fire precept is the part of the council tax bill that helps fund Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS). For a Band D property, the proposed £5 increase would raise the annual charge from £94.73 in 2026-27 to £99.73 in 2027-28, an additional approximately 9.6 pence per week (rounded to 10 pence).

Alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), LFRS will lobby government for greater council tax flexibility. For Lancashire, this will include seeking permission to raise the Band D fire precept to the average across all fire authorities. This is a separate request, not an approved increase; any higher proposal would require consideration of the applicable referendum principles and appropriate consultation.

Subject to the necessary approval, consultation is proposed to run from December 2026 into January 2027. It can begin before the provisional settlement, provided the proposal and uncertainties are clear. The material will explain the financial rationale, realistic alternatives and implications of a lower increase, and will be reviewed when the settlement is published. Material changes may require further consultation.

Residents and other stakeholders will be invited to respond. Consultation findings will be reported to Planning Committee and the CFA before the final budget and precept are determined in February 2027.

Business risk

Consultation will inform the budget decision and help assess the impact on households and services. A lower increase than assumed in the MTFS would reduce recurring income and require the financial plan to be revised. Additional flexibility cannot be assumed until confirmed.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

An equality impact assessment will be undertaken. Accessible consultation methods and equalities monitoring will support participation across the community.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Any personal data collected through consultation will be handled in accordance with data protection requirements and the Service's privacy notice.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

Consultation will be delivered by the in-house corporate communications team within its existing budget. The £5 proposal reflects the MTFS; any additional income from greater flexibility will only be incorporated once confirmed and approved.

Legal implications

Consultation over the council tax precept is a statutory requirement.

The consultation plan will be aligned to the Service's consultation strategy which is reviewed annually by the Planning Committee to ensure that it continues to meet statutory requirements and incorporate good practice.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper: Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Public Consultation Strategy
Date: February 2025
Contact: Dominic Howell, Monitoring Officer

Glossary

CFA – Combined Fire Authority
LFRS – Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
MTFS – Medium term financial strategy
NFCC – National Fire Chiefs Council