

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on Monday 27 November 2017

EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW 2017 – CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

(Appendices 1 - 6 refer *(note: for reasons of confidentiality and data protection, appendices 5 and 6 are for Member circulation only and should not be shared with third parties. Redacted versions are available for wider distribution)*)

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Executive Summary

At the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) meeting on the 17th July 2017 Members endorsed the publication of the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) proposals for consultation over a twelve week period from 19th July to 10th October.

The report supported a no change ECR proposal in terms of our fire appliances, specials appliances and associated crewing arrangements. Additional recommendations that supported changes to our mobilising practices in terms of reducing the levels of Unwanted Fire Signals, increasing the speed of response through pre-alerting methods, reviewing Dynamic Cover Tool software and the potential to uplift emergency response levels through further collaboration arrangements with partners were also presented for consideration.

The following was agreed:

1. That a no change ECR in relation to LFRS's 58 Fire appliances and the associated crewing arrangements was approved for consultation;
2. That the revised response to Automatic Fire Alarms / Unwanted Fire Signals was to be removed from the ECR consultation;
3. That pre-alerting as a policy position was approved for consultation, including the commissioning of further work to identify the potential benefits of a Dynamic Cover Tool.
4. That the principle that LFRS extends its collaborative response arrangements was approved for consultation;
5. To undertake a 12-week consultation commencing 19 July 2017 – 10 October 2017.

Following approval a consultation exercise was undertaken with staff, partners and service users, full details of which are contained in the body and appendices of this report.

Recommendation

The Authority is requested to:

1. Endorse the consultation process surrounding the ECR proposals as adequate in scale and scope; and
2. Refer relevant items to the full Combined Fire Authority meeting of the 18th December 2017 for final approval.

Information and Background

The CFA is required to review emergency cover arrangements on a periodic basis to ensure that response provision remains efficient and effective. This ECR and the subsequent consultation were aimed to contend with these requirements and provide the means for proposals for change to be influenced dependent upon the feedback obtained.

All Fire and Rescue Services are accountable to their communities for their actions and decision making, and processes must be in place to provide the opportunity for such communities to influence their local service. When deciding the extent of consultation the guiding principle is that any person or organisation that may have a legitimate interest in the proposals under consideration, or who may be affected by those proposals, should have the opportunity to express their views.

Government recommendations are that the scope of the consultation should be proportionate to the nature and extent of any changes proposed, whilst the public is naturally most interested in those aspects that impinge directly on the service provided to them and any perceived impact upon their safety.

Due to the nature of the proposals outlined within this ECR the approach of undertaking in-depth public consultation such as county wide forums has not been adopted. Nor was there a detailed staff consultation approach in the form of working groups / presentations. This is because whilst there are recommendations to support changes to mobilising and working practices, this ECR in the main supports a no change proposal in terms of our fire appliances, specials appliances and associated crewing arrangements.

Consideration was also given to the Authority's Public Consultation Strategy to ensure that the consultation exercise for this Emergency Cover Review was duly conducted in accordance with this agreed approach.

The Consultation Process

Emergency Cover Review 2017 – Timetable	
Draft ECR proposals approved and proposed consultation process endorsed.	CFA Planning Committee 17th July 2017
Consultation with the community, staff and other interested parties.	19th July 2017 – 10th October 2017
Consultation report and final recommendations to Planning Committee.	CFA Planning Committee 27th November 2017
ECR Proposals presented for final approval.	Full CFA meeting 18th December 2017
Feedback on final outcomes	January 2018

Consultation commenced on 19th July 2017 and ran for a twelve week period ending on 10th October 2017. Opinion on the proposals within the ECR was sought from a wide range of stakeholders digitally, with proposals cascaded through our website, social media and via email and letters.

The following were consulted:

THE FOLLOWING GROUPS WERE INFORMED AND INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSULTATION	
All LFRS Staff	Office of the PCC
All County Councillors	National Fire Chiefs Council
All Unitary/District Councillors	Lancashire Resilience Forum
CEO's of all District & Unitary Authorities	MP's and North West MEP's
CEO of Lancashire County Council	Parish Councils
Combined Fire Authority Members	Representative Bodies
Chief Fire Officers (NW Region)	North West Fire Control
Lancashire Constabulary	NW Ambulance Service
Other Miscellaneous	

During the consultation period on behalf of the CFA, the views of stakeholders were sought with the opportunity provided to consider the ECR proposals and to express an opinion on the changes. The majority of communication was done via email with a hyperlink provided to facilitate ease of access to the document and to reduce publication and postal costs. (See Appendix 1 for distribution details)

Links to the document were placed on the Service's external website (www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk) and further communication was undertaken via letter with consultation going out to appropriate parties when no email address was available. Hard copies of the document were available upon request however no requests were received. (See Appendix 2 for Internet details and Appendix 3 for the PDF document available via the link).

Consultation with LFRS Staff

All LFRS staff were invited to comment on the ECR through internal communication channels. Consultation with staff was undertaken via a link to the ECR document which was available on the intranet and via the weekly emailed Routine Bulletin (Appendix 4) with guidance provided to state the consultation period and the process to use for the submission of feedback, views or observations.

Staff representative bodies were advised of the consultation exercise via email and were provided with a link to the document and the process to use for the submission of feedback, views or observations.

Public Consultation

Public consultation was undertaken via the website and through our social media platforms Facebook and Twitter. Due to the nature of the proposals this was deemed to be appropriate in relation to the scale and complexity of the topic. Nevertheless the Service remains cognisant that the public are a valued stakeholder and any future proposals that are considered to require in-depth consultation will be actively communicated via the most appropriate channels, so that views and opinions can be obtained and considered.

Formal Responses

A total of 12 responses were received from the following:

- 3 from Fire & Rescue Services;
- 9 from elected representatives and/or other organisations.

One response that was received on the closing date of the official consultation period was considered to warrant an extension so that further clarity surrounding the proposals could be provided. An extension of one week was afforded together with the comprehensive ECR report and meeting minutes (that were otherwise available via the website) however no further feedback was obtained from the Town Council in question.

A table highlighting response total's is included within Appendix 5 with a summary of views detailed below.

Summary of Responses

In practical terms the majority of responses only required a customary acknowledgement as they contained standard comments without question. Many respondents welcomed the proposals with full support provided alongside gratitude of the work undertaken by the Service and its staff.

Responses from neighbouring Fire and Rescue Service's included support in the sharing of information to adopt the pre-alerting policy, agreement in the sensibility of the proposals and interest in the outcomes of the work undertaken to identify the potential benefits of a Dynamic Cover Tool.

Many responses from local and parish councils highlighted their full commitment to support community safety and welcomed such proposals to improve the responsiveness and effectiveness of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, particularly when considering the challenging financial conditions experienced across the public sector.

Agreement was given that the adoption of a pre-alerting policy within LFRS would assist in making effective use of limited resources, whilst having a positive impact on response times to emergency incidents.

The exploration of further collaboration opportunities with other emergency services was deemed to be a sensible development with potential benefits to both emergency service organisations and the general public.

All submissions are reproduced in full at Appendix 6, but as the originators and their respective contact details are clearly evident, circulation in this format is restricted to CFA and LFRS Executive Board members only. A redacted version is included in electronic format with the agenda paper on the LFRS website.

Next Steps

Subject to Planning Committee endorsement, a final version of the Emergency Cover Review proposals will be presented to the full CFA at the meeting on the 18th December 2017 for approval.

Following CFA sanction, work will be undertaken to progress the agreed proposals to ensure that as a Service we remain as efficient and effective as possible, whilst continuing to provide the most appropriate level of response to the communities of Lancashire.

Financials

Negligible.

Business Risk

Very High - The ECR 2017 provides important proposals in order to improve our service and continue to reduce risk to the communities of Lancashire, the proposals form an integral part of wider planning arrangements.

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

The proposals will be available in a variety of minority languages and/or formats on request

HR Implications

None

Paper	Date	Contact Justin Johnston Tel. 01772 866801
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		