

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

Meeting to be held on 20th June 2016

FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This report deals with prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson incidents within the period 1 April 2016 to 31 May 2016.

In addition, fire protection and business support information is included in the report.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note and endorse the report.

FIRE SAFETY CONVICTIONS

Prosecutions under the regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005

There are no completed prosecution cases to report on this occasion, although Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) has cases booked in Court, relating to inadequate fire safety measures in premises used as rented accommodation in Ormskirk, Penwortham, and Fleetwood. In addition, further possible prosecution cases are being investigated in Blackpool, Preston and 3 in Burnley.

FIRE PROTECTION & BUSINESS SUPPORT INFORMATION

Letter of appreciation

In May, Fire Safety Officer Tony Buschini was awarded a letter of appreciation in relation to the sterling work carried out in the Pharos ward of Fleetwood during January 2016. Whilst passing a house of multiple-occupancy, he heard a smoke alarm and there was a smell of smoke emitting from the building. After a 999 call to North West Fire Control, Tony entered the building to investigate the flat involved. Whilst no persons were present in the flat Tony did discover an elderly gentleman in another part of the property who was then led to safety. Following this incident there was further collaboration of activity between Operational Crews, Prevention and Protection Officers.

Multi Agency inspections

On 21st April, 7 licenced take away premises in Chorley were visited by Fire Safety Officers, Electricity North West, Chorley Environmental Health and Chorley Housing Enforcement to ensure suitable risk reduction and management procedures were in place.

No serious breaches of Fire Safety Regulations were identified at the time of the visits however 2 premises with accommodation above are to be revisited and full Fire Safety Audits carried out.

Electricity North West confirmed interference with supplies at two premises and electricity supplies were disconnected to the shops.

Chorley Environmental Health and Housing identified that 3 of the 7 premises visited required new food business owners to register.

New Fire Safety Officers

With the review of fire Protection, 4 new Crew Manager Business Support Advisors have now been appointed who are undergoing Fire Safety training to enable them to better support and advise business across Lancashire in complying with regulations and in reducing the risk from fire. Currently they are focused on further reducing unwanted fire signals and carrying out post-fire inspections at business premises.

ARSON CONVICTIONS

R v Nauman Ahmed, Mohammed Zaib and Mazhar Iqbal
Leamington Rd, Blackburn.

This incident involved petrol being poured over a vehicle and set alight. At the same time a petrol bomb had been thrown at the owners' house but failed to ignite the property. CCTV footage showed the defendants pull up in their car and carry out the attack. A thorough fire investigation was prepared and submitted to the Police. Initially the 3 defendants pleaded not guilty but changed their pleas to guilty on the day of the full trial.

Mr Ahmed received 2 years imprisonment, a restraining order for 5 years and was ordered to pay £120 costs.

Mr Zaib received 2 years imprisonment, a restraining order for 5 years and was ordered to pay £100 costs.

Mr Iqbal received 10 months imprisonment, a restraining order for 5 years and was ordered to pay £100 costs.

R v Mohammed Patel
Linden Ave, Blackburn.

This was a very similar incident to the previous incident. A neighbour's CCTV showed Mr Patel pouring an accelerant over the rear near side of a car and igniting it. The fire had started to spread to an adjacent property upon arrival of the fire service. A stage 1 fire investigation was submitted where upon Mr Patel pleaded guilty at his Plea and Case Management Hearing to arson reckless as to whether life endangered. This negated a full Crown Court hearing being heard and our investigating Officer presenting evidence.

Mr Patel was sentenced to 4 years and 6 months imprisonment, extended license for 2 years and a restraining order with no time limit.

R v Robert Yates
Brookhaven Gough Lane, Bamber Bridge

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of a wardrobe and its contents which were in a bedroom of a secure institute for people with mental health issues. A full multi agency fire investigation was carried out with LFRS, the Police and Crime Scene Investigators. The defendant pleaded guilty at the earliest point in proceedings which negated the need for full Crown Court hearings. The case was adjourned for pre-sentencing reports, where upon Mr Yates was sentenced to 4 years imprisonment.

Business Risk

Moderate – Members need to be aware of prosecutions related to fire safety activity and/or arson within Lancashire in order to satisfy themselves that the required robust approach is being pursued.

Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

HR Implications

None

Financial Implications

None

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:		