



Lancashire Fire  
and Rescue Service

# ANNUAL SERVICE REPORT 2018-2019



# Welcome to our Annual Service Report for 2018-19

Last year, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service dealt with the largest moorland fire in its history, at Winter Hill. During the incident we welcomed Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in the first tranche of inspections.

We were the only fire and rescue service to be given an 'outstanding' in any category in the first tranche, for promoting the right values and culture, and received 'good' ratings in all other areas. That this was achieved during a major incident is testament to the attributes of our staff that were so rightly recognised by the HMICFRS.

Our people are central to everything we strive to achieve and were the focus of many of our priorities last year. A comprehensive staff survey obtained views from people in all roles and ranks on what it's like to work for the Service. The results are providing insight and influencing activity in a variety of areas.

Consultation on the way we undertake the appraisal conversation has led to improvements including new appraisals for on-call firefighters, and managers at all levels have benefitted from leadership development on topics such as building resilience and increasing staff engagement.

A longstanding commitment to ensuring that we offer the best equipment and training has resulted in the Service having some of the most innovative facilities in the country. The Stinger appliance has enhanced both firefighter safety and firefighting capability; our air support unit has transformed the way we fight fires using aerial intelligence; and

collaboration with North West Ambulance Service has resulted in a state-of-the-art community fire and ambulance station in Lancaster.

Prevention campaigns aimed at reducing cooking fires in the home and fires related to heating during winter have targeted those most at risk of experiencing these prevalent emergencies. Young people in schools across Lancashire have taken part in educational activities on everything from water safety and wildfires to anti-social behaviour and road safety.

Long term initiatives are progressing and will bring lasting benefits including extensive renovations at Service Training Centre, replacement of incident command units and further development of an app designed to strengthen operational assurance.

I am honoured to lead a strongly performing, forward-thinking Service that is at the forefront of improvements and innovations in our sector.



**Justin Johnston**  
Chief Fire Officer





# Our year in numbers



**17,062** incidents attended



Average attendance time **7 mins 44 secs**



**5,817** fires



**8** people lost their lives in fires



**41** casualties from ADFs



**815** accidental dwelling fires (ADFs) - the lowest in 10 years



**86%** of damage limited to item first ignited or room of origin minimising property loss



On-call fire engines available to respond to incidents **87%** of the time



**62** missing person searches



**737** gaining entry to property incidents



**640** road traffic collisions



**87** on-call firefighters recruited



**14,908** home fire safety checks delivered



**482** schools visited on **1,098** occasions and **45,929** pupils received prevention education



**17,220** people took part in road safety education packages



**145** fire safety enforcement notices issued



**9** businesses prohibited from operating

# Annual Service Plan Progress Report

Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening, protecting people and property when they happen and responding quickly and competently

## Evaluate tools to strengthen our response

### Pre-alerting

The pre-alerting project was rolled out as a pilot from early 2019 at four fire stations; Preston, Penwortham, Bamber Bridge and Fulwood. It is now being extended to include an on-call station at Hornby. This is allowing the Service to measure the impact of early mobilisation messages on performance levels across different shift systems.

### Dynamic cover tool

The dynamic cover tool has been viewed by our staff and some business benefits have been noted. However, the costs currently outweigh the benefits therefore it hasn't been procured. The Service is exploring the possibility of collaborating with our bordering fire and rescue services and North West Fire Control in order to consider if this approach is more feasible.

## Strengthen our operational assurance

### Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Following inspection by HMICFRS we received an 'outstanding' in promoting the right values and culture and 'good' in all other categories. We are currently the only Service in the country to be graded as at least 'good'

against every category whilst also receiving an 'outstanding' grade in one.

### National Operational Guidance

The Service continues to review and update its Standard Operational Procedures, bringing them, and training, in line with National Operational Guidance where appropriate.

### Integrate water towers into our fleet

The Fleet and Engineering Department has worked alongside operational members of staff to capture a qualitative evaluation of Stinger 1 at Blackburn Fire Station. This has allowed the Service to request modifications from the manufacturer to be made to the vehicle in order to improve its operational capabilities.

We have procured a second Stinger, which at the time of writing is at Skelmersdale Fire Station hosting the required crew training. This will be operational from autumn 2019.



## **Assurance monitoring system app**

The Service has been working towards delivering an assurance monitoring app that collates information and intelligence from numerous sources. Crews are currently operating on a debrief function of the app and further work is planned to provide benefits such as the identification of early trends and issues regarding policy, equipment or training. This work is expected to be completed later this year.

## **Replace incident command units**

A functional specification has been produced for two new incident command units. This specification has been produced to support the command model that we operate towards. The Service has made the decision to, when the time arrives, place the new units at the stations they are currently hosted at: Fulwood and Blackburn.

Lancashire Constabulary and wider Lancashire Resilience Forum members have been engaged to ensure the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) requirements will be met. The vehicles will be owned by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and a joint procurement exercise won't be taking place.

## **Emergency Services Network (ESN)**

The Service continues to support this Home Office led project; there is a funded post from the programme that is filled by an

experienced operational station manager. Early work remains ongoing with regards to helping the programme shape the required deliverables and deployment plans. The full business case is due to be presented to Government by the Home Office Programme Team later this year and transition timescales are anticipated at that time. Our current Airwave provision remains fit for purpose and effective in the interim.

## **Optimise availability of front-line services**

A range of duty systems operate within the Service to ensure fire engines and special appliances are crewed appropriately based on risk. Rota management software and smart phone apps are currently utilised by whole-time and on-call operational crews, as well as administration teams, to achieve this. This project was established as it became apparent that, although we are consistently very good at ensuring appliance availability, improvements could be made to some of the processes used to achieve this. The project team has reviewed the full range of processes, software, policies and guidance and authored an improvement action plan which is being progressed in 2019-20. The improvements were identified through extensive staff engagement and the independence of the findings was assured through involvement of audit. The outcomes of the project are not specifically intended to enhance appliance availability (as this is already well supported by existing processes) however they will release significant amounts of time for operational and administrative teams to be re-invested in other activities.

# Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer



## Develop a strong organisational culture where our values are understood

### Consult with staff on the appraisal conversation

The Service has consulted with staff on how to improve the way we undertake the appraisal conversation. This work is being used to develop new arrangements in relation to how we carry out appraisals. For 2019, the feedback from the consultation has been used to develop new appraisals for on-call firefighters.

### Performance manage appraisals

Following feedback from staff, an electronic recording system has been developed to allow all managers to record completion of appraisals centrally; this is known as PDR Pro.

### Develop a range of tools to improve the appraisal conversation

The Service has explored opportunities for implementing an online appraisal tool to enable accurate reporting and recording, and a solution is being progressed. Further to feedback from staff, the documentation which sits within the appraisal process is being updated. Development has been provided to all crew managers in terms of having difficult conversations and this will continue to be a feature of their development programme.

### Encourage and listen to employee voice

#### Staff survey

A survey for staff at all levels and in all roles ran for seven weeks during 2018 to find out their views on: what it's like to work for the Service, leadership and management, training and development, recognition and communication in order to inform future activity. There was an increase in both response rates and engagement levels than in previous surveys. The results are being used to provide insight and influence activity in a variety of areas across the Service.

#### Intranet

A new intranet has been developed reflecting feedback from the staff survey in terms of information and features people most wanted. The site aims to connect staff from across the Service and provide forums for expression of views and knowledge sharing. It also represents the first phase of a new corporate document store.



## **Develop our leaders**

A development day for middle managers has been held which included an outline of our Annual Service Plan and direction in terms of a positive, ambitious and realistic future. There was also a focus on dealing with change, developing resilience and increasing staff engagement.

In addition, the Service hosted several events which opened up the opportunity for staff to listen and learn from the international keynote speaker and performance coach, who combines his background in psychology with humour and practical insights.

## **Promote equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the Service**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service works hard to promote working opportunities to our vastly diverse population and shape inclusive services through a representative and informed workforce. Our chief fire officer leads the EDI steering group which develops and shapes our EDI action plan. This plan is further refined through staff engagement in the format of LGBT, women and families, ethnicity and culture and disability employee voice groups. The work of these teams has enabled the Service to shape policy, deliver positive action recruitment and diversify the workforce. The EDI action plan and delivery against the objectives are reported to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority annually.

## **Expand apprenticeship opportunities**

In the previous 12 months the Service has offered a more diverse range of apprenticeships including: project

management, procurement, finance, business administration, human resources and fleet and engineering. The Service has been awarded accrediting body status for apprenticeships and the 18 recruits commencing their training in September will be a part of our apprenticeship growth.

## **Build a strong and resilient workforce**

### **Embed TRiM**

Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) is a recently developed risk assessment based approach to trauma support for all staff within the Service. This new system has replaced critical incident debriefing and is being delivered by trained practitioners from across the Service.

## **Review research on the effects of contaminants at fires on firefighters' health**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service developed its understanding of the potential risks posed by contaminants on firefighting personal protective equipment. Following current best practice guidance, the Service has developed a new policy and risk assessment on how we manage this risk. We have included improvements to managing contamination within a new design for breathing apparatus training facilities at Service Training Centre. We have signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) to become the first fire service in the UK to support the research on contamination being developed by UCLAN and the Fire Brigades Union.

# Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

## Invest in training and equipment

### Area-based training hubs

Scoping work for an area based training hub for the north of the county has been ongoing. A utilisation exercise has been completed to calculate the projected periods of time the hub would be used and by which staff. Consultation is still ongoing with this project and a cost benefit analysis will take place to ensure the feasibility of the project.

### Service Training Centre improvements

Consultation with staff across the Service has been ongoing regarding our new plans to upgrade Service Training Centre. The detailed specifications for a new building that includes breathing apparatus, equipment and maintenance, staff welfare facilities and trainer offices are complete, tender documents are drafted and we now move towards the procurement phase.



## Virtual reality training software

XVR virtual reality training software has been extensively evaluated and the required benefits were not identified, therefore we will no longer be pursuing this.

## Develop wider ranging incident command software

Research into software that delivers what the Service requires is ongoing and has merged with work to replace incident command units.

### Review duty rig

A project team has been exploring a wide variety of options for duty rig. The team is working closely with staff consultation groups to ensure that any changes to uniform meet the needs of our diverse workforce across all areas of business.

## Collaboration with Lancashire Constabulary

Collaboration with Lancashire Constabulary has been building momentum over the year since a joint temporary project officer post was created. There has now been a series of Blue Light Collaboration Boards and Executive Collaboration Boards that have inserted a structure into the programme as well as a governance pathway.

Within this, the original 32 opportunities proposed in February 2018 have been streamlined into 15 positive opportunities to work on together. These include major projects such as missing person searches, real time demand management and co-

location of a public order training site, as well as smaller local projects such as shared asset management, vehicle maintenance and fuel business continuity.

In addition, there have been other relationship developments such as collaboration over the changes required following the General Data Protection Regulation legislation, duty officer communication links and also a joint emergency services open day, which includes the three blue light services as well as other partners such as Blood Bikes, Mountain Rescue and the RNLI.

### **Property collaborations and co-location**

The Service, working alongside North West Ambulance Service, has completed the build of a joint fire and ambulance station in Lancaster. This was finished in early 2019 and both fire and ambulance colleagues



using the site are reporting positively on the environment and enhanced working relationships.

## **Information Management Strategy**

### **Records management**

A records management officer has been appointed to lead this work to improve how records are managed, stored and deleted within the organisation.

### **Integrated Planning Platform**

An interim solution for district-level key performance indicator reports has gone live. This builds on work delivered earlier in the year whereby post incident records were created and analysed digitally to ensure that all learning and reactive prevention measures were delivered in a timely and effective manner.

## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Service has been working to raise awareness of the Data Protection Act 2018. Staff members who handle sensitive information have all received specialised training on how to work in compliance with the act. We have also provided all members of staff with an e-learning module to educate them of the changes in the new act. A project team has created a GDPR action plan delivering the key priorities whilst developing improvements and longer term changes to ensure the Service remains compliant.

# Making Lancashire safer

In addition to the priorities set out in our Annual Service Plan, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service provides a wide range of services throughout the year to help keep people safe.

Reducing incidents of cooking fires in the home, fires related to heating and people getting into difficulty in water have been a focus of prevention work over the last year.

The Service launched bespoke key stage 3 educational packages in schools covering water, mud and sand safety. TeenSafe offers teenagers the opportunity to learn about issues such as cold water shock and tombstoning, and helps them understand the often underestimated dangers of Lancashire's coasts and estuaries.



In addition, we have worked with private land owners and partners to install water safety boards at the reservoir within Cuerden Valley Park in Preston. The boards provide vital life-saving advice, accurate location details and throw lines. Since the first boards were installed, more have been added at several high risk locations across the county.

Cooking fires are the most common cause of accidental dwelling fires and 'Keep it clean, keep it clear' provided the theme of our campaign to reduce the most common types of incidents: items stored or placed on the hob or in the oven inadvertently catching fire

and unclean grill pans and ovens. We also focussed on checking microwaves twice to avoid the settings being too high or too long, along with making sure appropriate materials were used inside them.

Heating related fires are another common type of accidental dwelling fire, with unsafe heaters, inappropriate use of heaters and candles all contributing to incidents during winter. We targeted those most at risk of experiencing these issues with our home fire safety check service and campaigned to encourage people to help make sure vulnerable friends and relatives were safe, warm and well.

The number of accidental dwelling fires in 2018-19 is the lowest in ten years and we intend to continue driving down the number of people and properties affected by fires that can be prevented.

Our protection teams support local businesses to reduce risk and take action against those that fail to comply with fire safety legislation. During the year we served 145 fire enforcement notices on Lancashire businesses to ensure they comply with fire safety regulations and standards, and prohibited 9 businesses from operating as a result of non-compliance.

Following inspection last year by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, we have started looking at how we can build on our 'good' and 'outstanding' ratings. This includes making the most of collaboration opportunities that offer value for money, enhancing our arrangements for identifying and developing high-potential staff and reviewing how technology can be used to strengthen protection services.

# Winter Hill moorland fire



Last summer Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service dealt with the largest moorland fire in its history on Winter Hill near Bolton.

The incident ground spanned around 18 square kilometres of moorland. It began on 28 June and didn't end until six weeks later on 8 August. Winter Hill TV transmitter, which serves six million people in the North West, is located within the area.

At its height, there were over 30 fire engines and 150 firefighters supported by multiple partners, specialist wildfire fighting teams and fire and rescue services from other areas of the country.

Firefighters used beaters to extinguish the flames together with water sprays, with high-volume pumps and kilometres of hoses taking water from reservoirs in the surrounding valleys. Water tankers, including farmers' slurry tanks adapted to carry water, were also used and helicopters dropped water onto the fire directed by firefighters on the ground.

Control lines were put in place in the form of trenches dug by excavator and preventative burning was carried out in places to stop the fire spreading beyond established borders and protect areas of high risk.

Once the surface vegetation on the moorland had burned away, the peat below the ground continued to burn across much of the moorland. Water was constantly applied around the perimeter and across the moor, steadily extinguishing hot spots that continued to smoulder underground.

The Service's drone was used to overfly the area, giving firefighters a vital aerial perspective of the fire and equipping them with thermal maps of the peat fires burning under the surface, revealed by infra-red imagery.

Many messages of support and donated supplies were received from the local community, providing a welcome boost to morale as those involved worked long hours in hot and difficult conditions.

With the support of partners, the Service successfully protected people, property and infrastructure from harm. There was much learning from the incident and we have been working since to progress how we prepare for and respond to wildfires, including establishing a specially trained wildfire burn team and sharing our experiences with colleagues across the fire and rescue service.

# Significant incidents

## WASTE FIRE IN DARWEN, JUNE 2018 (A)

Multiple fire engines, an aerial ladder platform and the air support unit were called to a fire involving approximately 350 tonnes of waste in a commercial property in Darwen.

## WASTE FIRE IN COLNE, JUNE 2018 (B)

Eight fire engines, an aerial ladder platform and the Stinger attended a fire involving large quantities of waste in the open in Colne. Firefighters prevented the fire spreading to a nearby industrial unit.

## COMMERCIAL PREMISES FIRE IN GREAT HARWOOD, JULY 2018 (C)

Seven fire engines, the Stinger and an aerial ladder platform attended a fire involving approximately 600 wooden pallets at a commercial unit in Great Harwood.

## COMMERCIAL BUILDING FIRE IN BAMBER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 2018 (D)

Multiple fire engines and an aerial ladder platform attended a fire at a commercial property in Bamber Bridge that had spread to the thatched roof of the property.



## COMMERCIAL BUILDING FIRE IN PRESTON, DECEMBER 2018

14 fire engines, three aerial ladder platforms and the air support unit attended a fire in Preston involving a number of commercial units and a car dealership. Nearby residents were evacuated as firefighters brought the incident under control.

## COMMERCIAL PREMISES FIRE IN PRESTON, JANUARY 2019 (E)

12 fire engines, the Stinger, an aerial ladder platform and the air support unit attended a fire involving approximately 100 cars at a recycling plant in Preston.

## COMMERCIAL BUILDING FIRE IN ADLINGTON, FEBRUARY 2019

12 fire engines, two aerial ladder platforms and the Stinger were deployed to a fire in a commercial building in Adlington. Local residents were evacuated as firefighters worked to stop the fire spreading to other parts of the multi-occupancy site.




[www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk](http://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk)

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