

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY  
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 November 2021

**APPRENTICE FIREFIGHTER OFSTED NEW PROVIDER MONITORING VISIT  
(Appendix 1 refers)**

Contact for further information: ACFO Ben Norman – Director of Strategy and Planning  
Tel: 01772 866801

**Executive Summary**

This is an update regarding the Ofsted 'New Provider Monitoring Visit' for the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship which took place on 14 & 15 July 2021 with the report published on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

**Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to note this update and the Ofsted report.

**Information**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) endorsed the government's vision to train a highly skilled workforce through an increase in the quality and quantity of apprenticeships. This vision aligns to the LFRS equality aspirations to become a more diverse organisation.

In December 2017, the corporate strategic Workforce Development Programme Board made the decision to recruit wholtime apprentice firefighters and to apply for employer provider status to deliver the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship Standard; employer provider status was approved in June 2019.

The delivery of the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship Standard began in September 2019; as of October 2021 there are 92 Firefighter Apprentices. A further 26 will commence in May 2022. Recruitment of apprentices is aligned to the corporate workforce succession plans.

All new employer providers are visited by Ofsted to identify the progress that has been made since the introduction of the Apprenticeship scheme. New Provider Monitoring Visits focus on three themes:

- How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision? (leadership and management theme);
- What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices? (the 'coal face' learner experience theme);
- How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? (learners are safe theme).

There are no grades awarded however the organisation receives one of three progress judgements against each theme, but not an overall cumulative progress judgement, these judgments are; insufficient progress, reasonable progress and significant progress.

With two days' notice on 12 July 2021, LFRS were notified by Ofsted that they would be undertaking their New Provider Monitoring Visit on 14 and 15 July. There were three HMI inspectors (one acting as an observer) who were based at Service Training Centre, they visited Operational Stations and met a number of staff from various departments over the two days. Ofsted published the monitoring visit main findings report on 26 August (attached as appendix 1), LFRS were judged as making 'reasonable progress' against all three themes. The lead HMI praised the progress to date and was very complimentary of the people they interacted with during their visit saying that everyone clearly demonstrated the organisations values and behaviours.

Following the visit key stakeholders met to discuss the feedback and learning. An action plan was developed on areas for further development, a number of those items have already been discharged as complete. Within the Training and Operational Review (TOR) department, Firefighter Apprentice progress is continually monitored, and a considerable amount of time and effort is placed on the delivery of this scheme. TOR work alongside Service Delivery, HR and Finance to ensure the Level 3 Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship is delivering high quality Firefighter Apprentices.

The next Ofsted visit will be a full inspection, this will take place between 12 – 40 months.

**Business Risk**

Low - If a full Ofsted inspection grades LFRS as inadequate, it could cause reputational damage.

**Environmental Impact**

Low

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

Low

**HR Implications**

Low

**Financial Implications**

Low

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

**List of Background Papers**

*Table 1 Details of any background papers*

Paper:	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority: Ofsted Monitoring visit report
Date:	26 August 2021
Contact:	A/GM Tom Powell
Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate:	Full report attached to this paper